

Shuttle-Craft Guild Bulletin #7, April 1925

This Bulletin's weave structure, the Bronson weave was first introduced last month as one of the recommended structures for baby blankets. The Shuttle Craft Bulletin #7 article gets into more detail.

Mary called this structure the Bronson weave as she originally found it in the book, *Domestic Manufacturer's Assistant and Family Directory in the Arts of Weaving and Dyeing*, by J Bronson and R. Bronson, printed 1817. She stated that the weave appeared nowhere else as far as she knows. The Bronson book is available as a Dover publication, as an e book or in paperback (at some very reasonable prices –see this link: [amazon.com/Early-American-Weaving-Dyeing-Americana/dp/0486234401](https://www.amazon.com/Early-American-Weaving-Dyeing-Americana/dp/0486234401)).

The Bronson weave is a spot weave from England and was used for linens and for shawls, but in Colonial America, it was used for linens exclusively. Mary thought it was used so because the new country did not have many elaborate looms for weaving damask and that the Bronson weave permits pattern weaving in linen on a simple loom. Five Bronson weave patterns are included in the bulletin, with a drawdown diagram for each.

The threading for the Bronson weave is such that half the warp threads are threaded on one shaft, usually shaft 1, closest to the weaver. The other shafts control the pattern block, which form weft floats or spots on one side of the fabric, usually in pairs, and warp floats or spots, also usually in pairs on the other side. Shaft 1 then, forms tabby a, while all the other shafts form tabby b, so plain weave would be woven by treadingling tabby against tabby b.

In an undated article by Mary Atwater, "The Bronson Weave –Four Ways," Mary calls it one of the most valuable of the old weaves to be revived. See

cs.arizona.edu/patterns/weaving/articles/tw_6_2-02.pdf

The Bronson weave goes by many other names: Marguerite Davison in *A Handweaver's Pattern*

Spot Bronson draft from Anne Dixon: *The Handweaver's Pattern Directory*. Straight diagonal order for blocks; weft spots-see page 173, middle draft.

Book calls it barleycorn and has many 4 shaft drafts in Chapter 10 (pages 83-92). Davison writes that the weave is ideal for linens and specifically, calls out the Mildred Keyser Linen weave for toweling (page 86). It is also known as droppdräll in Sweden and diaper by the Mary's original source (Bronson 1817). A diaper pattern weave refers to a small repeating overall pattern.

Anne Dixon's book *The Handweaver's Pattern Directory* includes several examples of 4-shaft Spot Bronson. Dixon states that this weave produces a delicate textured cloth. Her examples of most of them are shown in two light colors-see the draft below. The Bronson weave is commonly woven in one color for both warp and weft, although Mary Atwater states that a second color may be added in the weft and a third color may be introduced for the tabby, that is, shaft 1. Dixon recommends a loose tabby sett for this weave and the use of a floating selvedge.

Weaver's Craft Issue 23 has several projects in Barleycorn. This issue includes an article on designing in Barleycorn and the use of a special selvedge. I'm sure that we will see more of this weave in future bulletins, and its lace derivative, the Atwater Bronson lace, so stay tuned.

