

OCTOBER WEAVING SAMPLE BY HEATHER HUBBARD

Benjamin DeLong's "Kesmen – pretty"

This draft from Benjamin DeLong's manuscript is labeled "Kesmen – pretty". The word kesmen is a variation of the word kerseymere or cassimere which was probably derived from the word cashmere, either the place or the fiber.

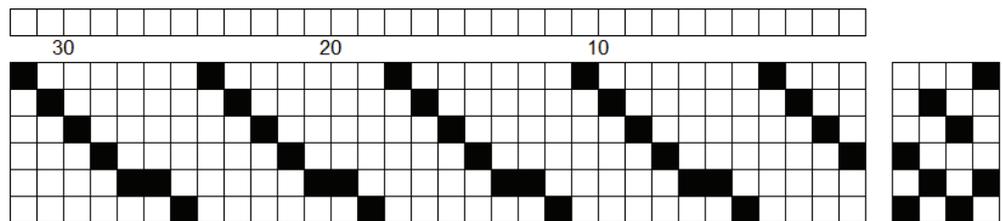
Verla Birrell in her book The Textile Arts (1959, page 472) defines cassimere as "A thin cloth of wool or other fibers in plain or twill weave with a soft finish". Florence Montgomery in Textiles in America {1650 – 1870} (2007, page 192) has quite a lot to say about cassimere (kerseymere) from various sources. She describes cassimeres of several weights and qualities from medium weight to superfine, from plain to "fancy varieties, patterned and sometimes mixed with silk, cotton or mohair for coats and waistcoats". It was apparently popular for household draperies. Montgomery even had found some sample swatches of cassimere. This book is available in the PPWG library.

This draft is a lovely twill variation. Shafts 3 through 6 are threaded in a straight 4 shaft twill and tied up as a broken twill. Shafts 1 and 2 are a grouped threading, one thread on shaft 1 then two threads on two heddles of shaft 2, so they run neatly side by side. Shafts 1 and 2 are tied up as plain weave.

My red warp is 24/2 "Lambspun" worsted from Jagerspun. The red weft is the same as the warp. The same color weft shows up the cloth's delicate texture. The black weft is a mill end 18/2 wool. The contrasting weft color really shows up the doubled plain weave ends and gives a more striped appearance to the cloth. The sett is 28 epi sleyed 2-3-2 in a 12 dent reed. This warp made lovely soft scarves. The sample was finished by hand washing in hot then cold water and pressed then dried flat. If you are weaving a warp of much length you will want to rearrange the tie up for a walking treading.



Using cotton materials for toweling would be nice, perhaps with color stripes in the warp to use up those odds and ends. Linen would also make wonderful cloth in this pattern for pillow cases or table linens. In silk or rayon as well as the fine wools it would make lovely draping cloth for clothing.



I have collected a number of different cassimere threadings all showing a twill, sometimes with a fancy pattern in it, divided into stripes by another structure (plain threaded as canvas or rib, and sometimes satin). There are so many variations of cassimere it would make a wonderful subject for a study group.

