



FRANCES L. GOODRICH'S COVERLET AND COUNTERPANE DRAFTS

By Barbara Miller and Deb Schillo

Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 4880 Lower Valley Road, Atglen, Pennsylvania, 19310. 2016. Hardcover. 176 pages. \$45.00.

Barbara Miller and Deb Schillo returned to the archives of the Southern Highland Crafts Guild for their second book entitled *Frances L. Goodrich's Coverlet and Counterpane Drafts*. The authors include overshot drafts not found in their first book, *Frances L. Goodrich's Brown Book of Weaving Drafts* and they added a new dimension with their exploration of counterpane drafts.

The authors describe a counterpane as a lightweight, white on white, cotton bed covering used during the hot summer months. It was found in the Appalachia Mountain area and in rural communities all along the Eastern Seaboard. Miss Goodrich only included drafts, no drawdowns, for the counterpanes in her little black book. The authors make these early drafts come to life. They include drafts and drawdowns for thirty-one patterns with samples woven by either Sarah Nelson in the twentieth century or by Barbara Miller for the book. The clear photographs show the texture of the cloth with the dimples and raised areas typically found in the dimity, honeycomb, huck, satin, and M's & O's weave structures. For the overshot drafts they include Miss Goodrich's water colored drawdowns as well as the threading drafts and easy-to-read computer-generated drawdowns created with Fiberworks.

While the main portion of the book presents the coverlet and counterpane drafts, two sections at the beginning provide biographical information about Miss Goodrich's pursuits with the settlement schools and her collection of early drafts, as well as other noted draft collectors from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The book concludes with a brief history of the settlement movement and Miss Goodrich's role in it, providing a context to the drafts.

This past spring I started to work on a research project concerning a collection that included both coverlet and counterpane drafts belonging to the Tusing Sisters from the mountains of West Virginia. While I am well versed in overshot drafts, I am not as adept at drawdowns for the counterpane. Little has been written on the topic, so Barbara and Deb's book has been a welcomed reference for me. It helped me determine how to weave a draft entitled "American Beauty" in the dimity and honeycomb weave. Barbara and Deb have contributed to my appreciation of the subtle beauty and texture of the early counterpanes.



Counterpane sample woven by the reviewer, inspired by the book.

Miss Goodrich would be pleased to learn that Barbara Miller and Deb Schillo have continued her work to "save the old arts from extinction" particularly with their chapter on counterpanes. *Frances L. Goodrich's Coverlet and Counterpane Drafts* would be an important addition to the libraries of textile historians and weavers who appreciate this early textile. I know it was published at just the right time for me.

*Reviewed by Gay McGeary
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