Section 1: INTRODUCTION

My passion for tablet weaving was ignited when I attended Peter Collingwood's workshop in Portland, just after Convergence, 1996. I had already been astounded by his magnificent book, which had made me realize that tablet weaving wasn't just child's play

I was particularly interested in pattern-making -- studying the structure theoretically, and using that understanding to produce patterns in a systematic way. The patterns would enable a weaver to control colour and texture, and be confident that the woven textile would be structurally sound by controlling long floats.

Once the theory of four-holed patterns became clear, I turned my attention to six-holed tablets. As there is far less written about six-holed tablet weaving this seemed to be an area ripe for investigation. After much experimentation, many yards of sampling, and countless hours at my computer keyboard, I devised reliable ways to produce pattems for several techniques of six-holed tablet weaving:

- threaded designs;
- diagonals;
- diagonals with floats;
- repp;
- twill.

These are similar to the same named techniques of four-holed tablet weaving. But because of the extra holes in the tablets, six-holed tablet weaving offers:

- more colour options;
- more structure options;
- a larger design block;
- and, it weaves a thicker, stronger textile.

The colour options for six-holed tablets are half again what you have with four-holed tablets. So the 2-tone techniques that you're familiar with on four-holed tablets (diagonals, double-face and 3/1 twill) can now be designed in three colours. And diagonals with floats (known as "Snartemo" on four-holed tablets) can now have six colours rather than just four.

Similarly, there is an increase in the possible structures that can be woven. With four-holed tablets, a tablet can be one of four positions; but with six-holed tablets, it is one of six positions. This greatly increases the number of possible structures, and adds textural and quality of line variation.

A larger design block is of particular importance for threaded-in designs since it enables more detail. Therefore, more complex images can be woven with very simple turning sequences, and the number of possible patterns increases substantially.

As for weaving a stronger, thicker textile, this happens because a twined cord with six component strands will be 50% thicker and stronger than one woven with four strands, but this is not necessarily an advantage.

This purpose of this monograph is to describe the design process for the various techniques, and provide a means for making patterns. The pattems can be drawn by hand on grid paper, or by using "grid-editing" software on a computer (I use CorelDraw and Microsoft Excel).

There are eight sections to this monograph:

1. Introduction;
2. Terminology and Notation;
3. Threading-Defined Designs;
4. Turning-Defined Designs;
5. Diagonals;
6. Diagonals with Floats;
7. Repp;
8. Twill.

Section 2, “Terminology and Notation”, establishes a set of default definitions that pertain to the making of a pattern and then weaving from it. Most weavers will be inclined to use some of the terms a different way, as there is considerable lack of standardization and common understanding of what the threading directions and turning directions are called. I have adhered to Peter Collingwood’s definition for these.

Because it is advantageous for the patterns to be read from the top down, the orientation of the weaver in this monograph is assumed to be looking at the front of the textile, with the woven part above the shed and the tablets and the unwoven warp below it. This point, and others pertaining to the notation and wording used, are fully explained in Section 2.

Section 4, “Turning-Defined Designs”, covers general principles that apply to the techniques covered in the remaining sections. The rest of the sections present, in detail, an approach to designing and making a pattern for a particular technique of six-holed tablet weaving. The techniques listed are interpretations of similar techniques on four-holed tablets; there is ample room for additional research into colour arrangements and weave structures unique to the six-holed platform.