

Quilt Heritage MUSEUM

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

It's All About Balance

Balance is undervalued today. Today we are bombarded with messages that encourage us to indulge every impulse, embrace the most extreme,

do nearly anything to stand out in a crowd and absorb glossy commercial sensationalism on every subject thinkable. It can be tough to find balance.

As quilters, we need balance as well. How? Well, lighter fabric choices make the darker ones emphatic. A design that includes too many busy prints is just that—too busy. Even our quilting stitches need to strike a balance. The quilting needs to fill the open spaces and still leave places for our eyes to “rest”. A seasoned quilt appraiser once told me that a quilt that is quilted within an inch of its life is like “getting too much sugar for a dime”. What a wise soul.

Wishing you a full and balanced quilting journey,

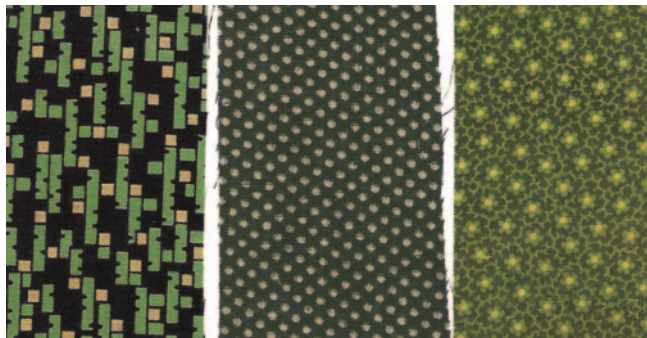


Joyce Shoemaker

ABOUT THE GREEN FABRICS OF THE 1860-1880'S...

Many fabric dyes were made from plant and vegetable sources. Green did not have a single vegetable dye. A dyer had to first dye the fabric yellow and then overdy it blue to make it green. In addition, many of the early greens were fugitive—they ran or bled.

Mineral dyes were developed during the first half of the 1800's. Some of these mineral greens were quite stable and fading or bleeding was less of a problem.



Solid greens applied in a single step came from synthetic dyes after 1875 according to historians.

This selection of greens is thought to be made between 1860 and 1880.

Scan the QR Code below to go directly to the Museum Building donation website.



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Bob's Crib Quilt

This delightful crib quilt was recently donated by Laurie Osborne of Littleton, CO. The note pinned on the quilt indicates that it was made for young Bob by his Great Aunt Betty.

There are five 12" square hand-pieced blocks of 1 1/2" squares of solid yellow, blue and pink on a white background. The plain alternating blocks also measure 12" square. The body of the quilt is completed with 4 pieced borders. Two borders are made of 1" square blue blocks alternating with white spacing rectangular blocks. Two alternating borders are made of 1"



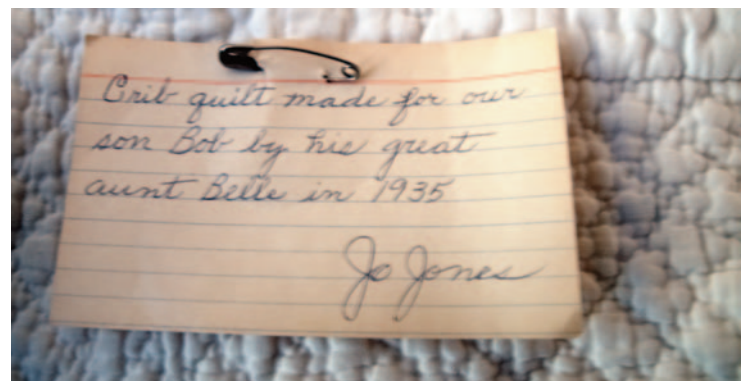
x 2" yellow rectangles with white spacing blocks. The borders add movement and compliment the interior of the quilt.

This crib quilt is hand-pieced, hand-quilted and machine-bound. It is heavily quilted at 6 stitches per inch in white thread. This quilt has a small stain in one corner and shows fairly heavy surface wear. Nonetheless it is a very nice example of a crib quilt and was made in 1935.

As one might surmise, crib quilts marked the arrival of a child. Crib quilts are generally square



but certainly rectangular-shaped ones were made. In contrast to full bed-size quilts, far fewer crib quilts were made. Even fewer survived the hard use and many, many washings. Antique crib quilts



in good condition are valued by quilt collectors because they are few in number today.

Paper-Piecing the New York Beauty Block Workshop - Part 2

BY STEVE SCHMID



After mastering sewing arches in the first part of the New York Beauty workshop, we then moved on to

curved seams. Oh, curved seams! They keep showing up in what I think should be relatively straightforward projects and remind me to stay humble. Very humble! This was a “no waste”



curved seam, like a Drunkard's Path block. Our stitching was to be precise and not trimming up to hide any mistakes. And just to be extra fussy, each block required two curved seams. The audacity!

By the end of the class I had produced a hand-



ful of reasonably square and usable blocks. Adding to my surprise what how well bright green was working with the entire layout.

It has now been almost a year since the class. So much has happened. I have memories of where and when I was able to work on the blocks. I know who has helped and encouraged me to get it done. Just yesterday I surrendered it to Joyce to have it longarm quilted and eased this amalgam

Cont. pg 4

New York Beauty Block, cont.

of once perfectly good fabric that I chose to chop up, into the final steps that make it a quilt.

The quilt will not be what I had set out for it to be. An odd parallel is that neither am I. The master-quilter I was a few years ago has changed. Sometimes by humbling and following the rules, and sometimes for being brave enough to know when to break out the rules proves most fruitful. We need to recognize that it is okay to ask for help. Maybe more importantly the lesson is to allow the project to speak and learn how to listen.

Historical Footnote

Historian Stella Rubin has stated that the New York Beauty acquired its name around 1932, when batting company Mountain Mist printed the pattern and directions on its batting wrapper. Mountain Mist's version was a simplified one of an older 19th-century design. No evidence exists that the block design was a favorite of that state.

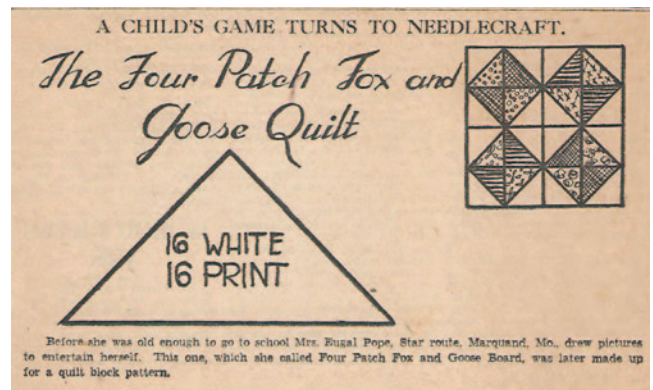
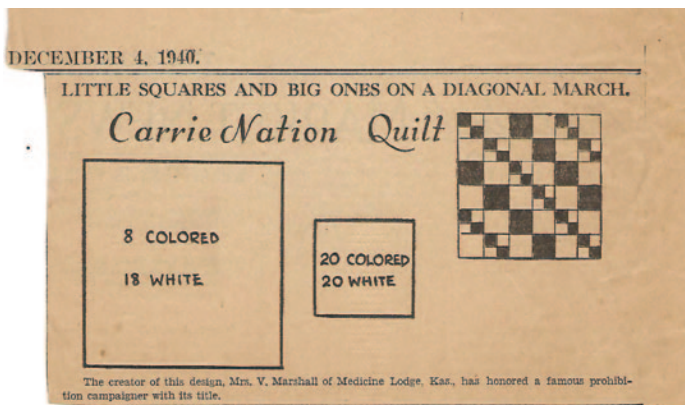
Rubin further tells us that examples of the older design with names including Rocky Mountain Road, Sunset, and Crown of Thorns were made throughout the 19th century, some as early as 1800. The Mountain Mist version of this spiky design remained one of the very popular for more than 30 years.

A Bit About Quilt Block Patterns

From 1865 to 1900, post-Civil War regional circumstances were reflected in quilts but styles became more homogeneous because of national magazines and national exhibit influences. Variety and complexity of pieced patterns increased with each passing decade. Today's standards like Drunkard's Path, Ocean Wave, Schoolhouse and Pine tree appeared. The popular Log Cabin pattern, pieced on a foundation fabric, led the way for other foundation designs such as Pineapple, the String Quilt and the Crazy Quilt.

Magazines that had started printing patterns in the 1890's expanded their offerings by asking readers to share original and traditional designs in columns. Many magazines also had a mail order pattern department from which an array of quilt patterns could be ordered. One such, Ladies' Art Company, boasted of a book of 400 designs. Magazine designers were the first to develop patterns specifically for children's quilts.

Below are two examples of printed quilt block patterns.



Rail Fence Tobacco Sack Coverlet

This coverlet was donated to Quilt Heritage Museum by Juanita Lauderdale of Yukon, OK in July 2022.

The donor tells us that this was made in 1936 by family members Gertrude H. Roberts and Bertha I. Roberts-Thies. These ladies resided in Texas County, Oklahoma. The handwritten note by the daughter of these two quiltmakers states: “Pieced in 1936 by ripping Bull Duram



Rail Fence Quilt

tobacco sacks apart, dyeing them with Rit dye and piecing them together.” The tobacco sacks are dyed in green, gold and pink. No batting was used between the top and backing, which technically makes it a coverlet and not a quilt. Due to its geographical origin, a thicker and warmer quilt was likely not needed.

Given that the U.S. Depression of 1929 was still affecting daily life when this quilt was made, it’s not hard to imagine that fabrics from nearly any source was repurposed.

This quilt measures 67” x 82”. Rail fence blocks make up the horizontal rows. It was

hand-pieced and hand-quilted. The finished edges are a bit unusual. Two edges have a knife-



Rail Fence Quilt Detail of Hand Quilting



Rail Fence Quilt Piecing Detail

edge finish, one edge has a back-to-front finish which is machine applied and the final edge is front-to-back which is machine applied. These dissimilar edge treatments prompt the thought that perhaps the edges became so worn over time that the edges were re-finished. The backing is made to two pieces of muslin hand-pieced together to fit the quilt dimensions.

We are grateful to Juanita for donating this Depression-era quilt to our collection.