

APPALACHIAN QUILTS OF  
FLOYD COUNTY, VIRGINIA

by

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The Blue Ridge is an area well known to many Americans as evidenced by the numbers of yearly visitors. The Blue Ridge Parkway which runs the length of the Blue Ridge is under the jurisdiction of the National Park Service. In 1976, more than one half as many people visited the nation's four National Parkways as visited the thirty-seven National Parks.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the Blue Ridge which spans nearly a third the width of the nation, differs from these parks; not only does the serene beauty of the countryside attract visitors, but remnants of a way of life long past stirs kindred spirits.

Like an antique cradle used by successive generations, the Blue Ridge has the smooth, worn look of a country well used.. Clapboards now disguise original log structures and the sagging doorsills worn thin, bring to mind the proud and independent people who managed to eke out a living from the land, instilling in their children a respect for family unity and religion tempered by their own kind of music.

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Statistical Abstract of the United States. (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1977).

The culture of the Blue Ridge people has been primarily an oral one. Precious little has been written of their customs and lifestyles. In this century, a considerable amount has been written about the area known as Appalachia which includes a major part of the Blue Ridge. Until recently, the majority of these writings have been written by outsiders, commenting on a land and a people with whom they were unfamiliar. This of course produced somewhat biased accounts.

The first decades of the century saw a rash of publications on Appalachian culture. Among these were Thompson's 1910 publication of Highlanders of the South<sup>2</sup> and Campbell's The Southern Highlander and his Homeland<sup>3</sup> published in 1921. In 1929, the well known Our Southern Highlanders<sup>4</sup> appeared, a rather romantic portrayal of highland life by Horace Kephart. In 1937, Allen Eaton published Handcrafts of the Southern Highlands<sup>5</sup> adding impetus to the

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<sup>2</sup> Samuel H. Thompson. The Highlanders of the South. (New York: Eaton and Mains; Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1910).

<sup>3</sup> John C. Campbell. The Southern Highlander and his Homeland. (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921).

<sup>4</sup> Horace Kephart. Our Southern Highlanders. (New York: The McMillan Co., 1929).

<sup>5</sup> Allen H. Eaton. Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands. (New York: Dover, 1973 reprint of 1937 edition).

movement for revival and preservation of mountain crafts.

In the last two decades, society has again turned its attention to the Appalachian people. Perhaps because of contemporary tastes, the first works of this period such as Caudill's Night Comes to the Cumberlands<sup>6</sup> and Weller's Yesterday's People<sup>7</sup> stress the deprivation and grim poverty of the highlands in an attempt to inspire the public's interest in the richly textured culture and needs of the mountain people. The seventies, however, have seen the return of nostalgia. Recent publications about Appalachia differ from early publications since they arise out of public demand and interest rather than in hopes of provoking it. Even so, books such as Wigginton's Foxfire Books<sup>8</sup> and Mountain People, Mountain Crafts<sup>9</sup> by Elinor Horwitz, resemble Eaton's 1937 publication: so much so, in fact, that Eaton's text was reprinted in 1973 for the first time since it originally appeared. The most recent outgrowth of the

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<sup>6</sup> Harry M. Caudill. Night Comes to the Cumberlands. (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1963).

<sup>7</sup> Jack E. Weller. Yesterday's People. (Lexington: Kentucky Paperbacks, 1966).

<sup>8</sup> Eliot Wigginton. The Foxfire Books. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1979).

<sup>9</sup> Elinor Lander Horwitz. Mountain People, Mountain Crafts. (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1974).

public's thirst for history is Our Appalachia,<sup>10</sup> the culmination of the Appalachian Oral History Project based at Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, Kentucky. In the book the authors attempt to provide "A history of the Central Appalachian Region that will, without romanticising, counteract some misconceptions and stereotypes which bombard us daily through television and comic strips".<sup>11</sup>

Most often recent writings deal with the westerly mining communities, portraying lifestyles significantly different from the agricultural, small scale farm society prevalent on the Blue Ridge. Very little has been written about these people, particularly their daily activities, those common occurrences that shaped character and developed the democratic ideas upon which the nation was built.

Although there is no written information on such everyday incidents, visual documentation does exist, nonetheless, in the form of various mountain crafts. Perhaps the best known of these crafts is quilting--an activity in which women of all social classes have participated, not

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<sup>10</sup> Laurel Shackelford and Bill Weinberg. Our Appalachia. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977).

<sup>11</sup> Shackelford and Weinberg, 1977, p. 12.



only on the Blue Ridge, but throughout the country. Although the age old art of quilting was brought to this country by the colonists, new surroundings and necessities spurred creativity and the patchwork quilt became an easily identifiable American art form.

For the women of the Blue Ridge, quilting has been one of the central disciplines of their upbringing. Although the quilts are no longer needed strictly for warmth, many women still find themselves spiritually tied to the creative process.

The fabrics and filling as well as designs, techniques and end uses of quilts have changed over the years--all indications of social and environmental adjustments. In this way a history has been written. As one elderly quilter confessed: "My whole life is in that quilt...All my joys and my sorrows are stitched into those little pieces. When I was proud of the boys...when the girls annoyed me or when they gave me a warm feeling around my heart. And John too...and all the thirty years we were married...So they are all in that quilt, my hopes and fears, my joys and sorrows, my loves and hates..."<sup>12</sup> Or as Cooper and Buford have

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<sup>12</sup> Marguerite Ickis. The Standard Book of Quilt Making and Collecting. (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1949) p. 270.

put it: "The quilts are an artistic expression of their selves [the quilters'] and their whole experience."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Buford. The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art. (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978) p. 15.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research was to study the evaluation of handmade quilts in Floyd County, Virginia, as a means of documenting the life and culture of the county natives. The researcher conducted the second part of a larger study<sup>12</sup> that will examine quilts as a means of documenting the life and culture of the Appalachian people and will include all the counties of Appalachian Virginia.

The objectives of the study were:

- I. To examine the fiber, color and design of the handmade quilts of Floyd County, Virginia, in relation to the geographic, economic and cultural environment.
- II. To study the development of the handmade quilts of Floyd County, Virginia, in an attempt to define area aesthetics.
- III. To determine whether those quilters exhibiting the best craftsmanship also exhibit the best design ability.

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<sup>12</sup> This same research procedure will be used to document a complete history of quilts in all 18 counties of Appalachian Virginia. The project will be conducted through the Department of Clothing, Textiles and Related Art at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

IV. To examine the handmade quilts of Floyd County in relation to those of Washington County, another county in Appalachian Virginia.

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following definitions are given in an attempt to provide clarification of their usage throughout the study:

Appalachia: Usually considered to consist of West Virginia and portions of these eleven states: New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Kentucky, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia.

Appalachian Virginia: That area in Southwest Virginia which contains the following 18 counties: Lee, Wise, Dickinson, Buchanan, Scott, Russell, Tazewell, Washington, Smyth, Bland, Giles, Craig, Montgomery, Pulaski, Wythe, Grayson, Carroll, and Floyd.<sup>14</sup>

"Before Quilts":<sup>15</sup> Quilts constructed out of necessity -- made for use as a cover opposed to use as a decorative or sale item.

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<sup>14</sup> William C. Pendleton. Political History of Appalachian Virginia 1776-1927. (Dayton: The Shenandoah Press, 1927).

<sup>15</sup> Ruth McKendry. Traditional Quilts and Bed Coverings. (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1979) p. 133.

Block: The square component of a quilt top defining the area which repeats.

Blue Ridge: The part of Appalachia extending from northernmost Virginia to northeastern Georgia.

Design Ability: Creative competence relating to quilts as judged by a panel of professional designers.

Filling: Also called batting. The fluffy middle layer of the quilt, creating warmth and insulation. It enhances the quilting by puffing up slightly around the line of stitches.

Highlanders: A term often given to the mountain people of the Appalachian region.

Joining: Strips of fabric which connect quilt blocks.

Lining: The bottom layer of fabric used with the quilt top to sandwich the filling.

Piecing: The sewing together of the individual segments of fabric to form the quilt top.

"Put-in" a Quilt:<sup>16</sup> To put the quilt into the quilting frame.

Quilt Frame: The structure on which a quilt is stretched for quilting.

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<sup>16</sup> A term commonly used by Floyd County quilters on interview tapes.

Quilt Pattern: The overall design of a quilt.

Quiltin': A group of women working at one time to stitch a quilt.

Quilting: The process of stitching the layers of a quilt together.

Quilting Pattern: The design formed by the individual quilting stitches.

Scotch-Irish: Those people immigrating to the United States from Ulster Ireland.

"Special Quilt": Quilts using "prettier patterns" and better quality fabrics. They are often saved for company use or given as wedding gifts.

Tied Quilts: Also called tacked quilts or "comforts." Short knotted pieces of yarn are used to hold the layers of the quilt together as opposed to quilting them.

Top: The uppermost surface of a quilt.

## CHAPTER 2

### PROCEDURE

The procedure for this study was based on that established by Catherine McKinney in her study of Washington County, Virginia quilts.<sup>1</sup> The researcher examined both documents and relics in on-site study in Floyd County, Virginia, during the period extending from September to December, 1979.

#### DOCUMENTS

One major source of written documents searched were those housed in the county courthouse in Floyd, Virginia. Those found to be most useful were wills and appraisals of individual households and inventories of store merchandise from 1831 to 1900. The wills and appraisals of household goods listed values given individual property by the county. These documents listed bedding and quilts individually. It is traditional in Floyd County to dispose of personal property of the deceased at an auction and these bills of sales were included with the county appraisals. This allowed for

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<sup>1</sup> Catherine McKinney. "Twentieth Century Quilts of Appalachian Virginia, Washington County". (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1979).

comparison of the appraised value of quilts with the actual value given them by neighbors--what they were actually willing to pay. When a storekeeper died, the store merchandise was listed as individual property and the name procedure was usually followed. The researcher was able to find one such listing dated 1852 for the Greasy Creek Store located in the Indian Valley section of Floyd County, fifteen to twenty miles from the county seat. It could thus be determined what factory manufactured fabrics were available to county residents by the mid nineteenth century as well as the cost of those fabrics.

Other written documents were found at the Newman Library at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the Floyd Branch of the Montgomery Floyd Regional Library. The latter housed an unpublished paper on the history of Floyd County by Curtis A. Sumpster, retired Commonwealth Attorney, written in 1951. This paper contained stories which had previously been transmitted by word of mouth and directed the researcher to other published sources containing references to county history. Several of these sources were found at the Newman Library as well as various published State of Manufacturing and census reports.



Another major source of information was the unwritten form of documents or oral interviews. The researcher interviewed twenty-two resident quilters of Floyd County. These quilters were referred to the researcher by personal acquaintances in the county and by the Floyd County Extension Home Economist. Selection of interviewees was based on their quilting experience as well as origin and residence in Floyd County or the immediate area. The subjects lived in both town and country and were located throughout the county (Appendix B, FIGURE 1).

All subjects were asked the same set of questions (Appendix A, ITEM 1) and the interviews, whenever possible, were recorded on tape. (The researcher has completed twenty-one taped interviews.) Prior to each interview, the subjects were asked to sign a release form for information given to the interviewer; this form included a guarantee of anonymity for the quilter (Appendix A, ITEM 2).

#### Visual Instrument

Along with the interview schedule and questions, a four part instrument was developed to be used in identifying design preference, fabric fiber preference, color preference and pattern and color combinations in relation to specific quilt designs. This instrument was used to

substantiate subject responses. For example, the Wedding Ring quilt pattern did not always mean the same pattern to all quilters and likewise, the adjective red could mean a number of different colors. The instrument was shown the subject following the interview.

Part I: Design Preference. To aid in evaluating the subject's design preference, twelve quilt patterns were chosen and represented by individual blocks (Appendix A, ITEM 3). The designs were selected from various sources: 1) Designs 2, 3, 5, 8 and 12 were known to have been quilted in Floyd County from observation at local craft shops and craft fairs. 2) Designs 3, 5, 8, 9 and 12 were known to have been popular quilts in Washington County.<sup>2</sup> 3) Designs 1, 4, 6, 7 and 11 were designs appearing frequently in quilt books as patterns that were popular throughout the country. The subject was first asked to identify familiar quilts, those she knew the names of, or had herself made. Then she was asked to choose one block as her favorite, without considering the number of pieces or construction difficulties the design would entail. The twelve quilt blocks were duplicated on individual cards

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<sup>2</sup> McKinney, 1979, Appendix A, ITEM 6.

and used as reference for the remaining sections of the instrument.

Part II: Fabric Fiber Preference. To determine the fibers and fabrics the subjects preferred to work with, eight white fabrics of different fibers and fabric structure were chosen: 1) polyester, plain weave, 2) nylon knit, 3) cotton, plain weave, 4) wool twill, 5) polyester, double knit, 6) cotton sateen, 7) polyester, brushed knit, 8) cotton flannel. The subjects were asked to choose a fabric they deemed suitable for constructing the quilt block they had chosen as their favorite. A specific quilt pattern was designated because the researcher was aware that the complexity of the design often influenced the fabric and fiber content chosen.

Part III: Color Preference. To determine color preferences by the subjects, 30 cotton/polyester broadcloth samples were presented representing the range of the color spectrum as well as varying values of each color. The subjects were asked to choose a basic color scheme to use in a quilt to be constructed in the pattern previously selected.

Part IV: Pattern and Color Combination. This segment of the instrument included the 30 color swatches from Part III with the addition of a white sample and 67 cotton and cotton/polyester broadcloth print samples. These prints varied in color and included stripes, dots, checks, plaids, florals and geometric patterns in a variety of scales and motifs. The subjects were asked to choose the fabrics they would use constructing the previously chosen quilt block. The various quilt blocks had the individual components of the design coded by letter for easy identification (Appendix A, ITEM 3). For ease of handling, the fabric samples were enclosed in an acetate envelope and attached to a hook and loop fastener from which they could be easily removed for closer inspection and matching of colors.

Subject responses were recorded on a Design/Fabric Preference sheet (Appendix A, ITEM 4). This sheet also included a Fabric Combination Scale and Rating. This was for use by a panel of three judges with professional design backgrounds in evaluating subject choices made in Part IV of the instrument. The selections were judged on a five point scale from very poor to excellent. This rating was

used in partial fulfillment of Objective III: To determine if those quilters exhibiting the best craftsmanship also exhibit the best design ability. In so doing, the Design/Fabric Preference was compared to a Craftsmanship Rating (Appendix A, ITEM 5 and ITEM 6, no.9). The Craftsmanship Rating was based on the same five point scale as the Fabric/Combination Rating and was determined by the researcher upon examination of quilts made by the subjects.

#### RELICS

The relics examined consisted of the quilts shown to the researcher by the interview subjects. All relics were photographed and recorded on Quilt Record Sheets along with pertinent information referring to the quilter, pattern name, date of construction, size of quilt and quilt block, fabrics used and type of batting. Often unusual stitching patterns were sketched for later reference (Appendix A, ITEM 6).

#### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The recorded interviews of the twenty-one subjects were transcribed by the researcher. The editing procedure was accomplished along with the initial transcription and included grammatical corrections and an attempt to form

complete sentences for smoother reading. Names were deleted from the transcriptions as were any lengthy extraneous narratives of a personal nature.

All data, both from transcriptions and other documents, was transferred to bibliographic sort cards. These cards contain 91 numbers for coding of information. The researcher, wherever possible, used the code established by McKinney for continuity in the larger context of the study (Appendix A, ITEM 7).

In order to investigate the relationship of design and craftsmanship, it was necessary to establish the correlation between the design rating assigned by the panel and the craftsmanship rating by the researcher. The design rating for each quilter was obtained by averaging the three ratings assigned by panel members. The craftsmanship rating was obtained by averaging the scores given to all quilts made by a subject that were examined by the researcher. The relationship between the scores was figured by the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient.

## CHAPTER 3

### A HISTORY OF THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The craggy outline of the Blue Ridge, shrouded in early morning mist, towered over the fertile Piedmont to the East. Giant peaks of slate, basalt and granite forested by uninterrupted stands of oak, hickory, pine, poplar and chestnut, rose majestically like sentinels guarding unknown lands to the West. At the time of its earliest exploration in the mid seventeenth century, Floyd County, along with neighboring Carroll County, comprised the valley and plateau of the New River Valley which at that time was inhabited by the Canawhay tribe of Indians (Appendix B, FIGURE 2). Unknown to them, they resided in the vast domain of Augusta County. That part of Augusta County lying beyond the Alleghanies was sometimes referred to erroneously as "West Augusta", stretching from the top of the Alleghanies westward to the Mississippi River, if not to the open sea.<sup>1</sup>

The first white man known to have entered the valley was Colonel Abraham Wood in 1654. Wood, who was from the area where Petersburg, Virginia now stands, had obtained

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<sup>1</sup> David E. Johnston. A History of the Middle New River Settlements and Contiguous Territory. (Huntington, W. Va.: Standard Printing and Publishing Co., 1906).

from the government authority to open trade with the western Indians. Colonel Wood crossed the Alleghanies at a place in Floyd County which to this day is called Wood's Gap (Appendix B, FIGURE 1) and followed the Little River to the New River, which, being unknown to him, he promptly named "Wood's River", the name appearing on some of the oldest maps of Virginia. Colonel Wood and two or three other explorers and their parties were the only white men to enter this wilderness until nearly a century later.<sup>2</sup>

For many years it has been claimed that the first white settlement made in the New River Valley was the Draper's Meadow settlement near where Blacksburg, Virginia now stands. This 1748 settlement has been contested as the first due to findings in 1780 of log cabin remains and a grave in the present Giles County. The headstone of the grave bore the inscription "Mary Porter was killed by the Indians November 28, 1742".<sup>3</sup> Regardless of which settlement was the first, it is clear that the first inhabitants of the New River Valley arrived shortly before the mid eighteenth century.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



These settlers were some of America's first true pioneers. Many were the Scotch-Irish<sup>4</sup>--those rugged individuals whom James I persuaded to leave Scotland for Ireland hoping they would intermarry and convert the Irish to Protestantism. However, the Scots did more fighting than courting or converting and James I went back on his promise of cheap land and low interest loans and instead levied heavy taxes on the whiskey the Irish taught them to make and forbade them to bear arms. Believing the freedom to make whiskey, bear arms and practice one's own religion to be every man's birthright, they immigrated to the colonies in 1717. The first to arrive were well educated, God-fearing people, who settled along streams in the rich bottomland of Pennsylvania, building churches and schools. By the third wave of immigrants arriving in 1740-1741, it was found that the best lands were taken. Thus began the move south along the great trading path of the Indians, into the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia whose southern extremity led to North and South Carolina. Numbers of second generation English Americans and Germans moved south with the Scotch-Irish as well.

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<sup>4</sup> James G. Leyburn. The Scotch-Irish. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962).

By the 1740's, settlers had reached the James River and crossed it at what is now known as Buchanan. It was thirty miles south, at the present site of Roanoke, that the valley ended. From this point, the settlers had a choice of proceeding in a southwesterly direction toward the rugged Appalachian Range or southward through very hilly country into North Carolina. Although by 1775 the area of the first route was flourishing,<sup>5</sup> in 1740, few settlers chose this alternative. The country to the west was as yet unexplored and the valley seemed to dead end at the Appalachian mountains. The majority, instead, chose the southeasterly route from Roanoke heading for the abundant land of the North Carolina Piedmont. These settlers passed through the Staunton River Gap of the Blue Ridge and followed the rugged ridge south. Only a few hearty individuals dropped out of the southward movement to settle in the isolated central portion of the Blue Ridge.<sup>6</sup>

It is evident that most historians do not consider this southward migration to be a part of the founding of

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<sup>5</sup> Lewis P. Summers, History of Southwest Virginia, 1746-1786 and Washington County 1777-1870. (Richmond: n.p., 1903).

<sup>6</sup> Leyburn, 1962.

the American Frontier or the settlers themselves to have possessed what has become known as the "pioneer spirit". Nearly all historians of the American Frontier begin with the movement of settlers into the Ohio Valley after the Revolution.<sup>7</sup> They suggest that independence was a prerequisite for the kind of frontier life that developed the character and the democratic ideals that have since made the settler's descendants into Americans and not simply relocated Europeans.

Many Americans possess an image of a "typical pioneer" which may be influenced to a large extent by the romanticism of television. Generally this picture consists of a family living a rough but simple life in a log cabin, farming with crude implements, occasionally fighting off Indians, drinking a great deal of home-brewed whiskey and having a fondness for dancing and making music. Along with this, the settler himself is perceived to be of sound character; a person whose motives are morally in line with the ideals of a democratic society.

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<sup>7</sup> Frederick L. Paxton. History of the American Frontier. (Boston and New York: Houghlin Mifflin, 1924). E. E. Branch. Westward: The Romance of the American Frontier. (New York: Cooper Square, 1969 reprint of 1939 edition).

For the most part, the settlers of the Central Blue Ridge fit this image every bit as well as the American pioneers portrayed by frontier historians. Geographically isolated from central trade centers and European contacts, the Blue Ridge settlers displayed some of the same characteristics as the pioneers heading west after the Revolution. Each began as a "Jack-of-all-trades". Farming was his main concern and as he developed individual skills, he practiced these along with farming. Neighbors worked together, often calling on the specific skills of another paid by produce or a return service.<sup>8</sup>

Lying in the "heart" of the Blue Ridge, Floyd County is rich in the traditions of its early American heritage. Bounded by Montgomery County on the North, Patrick County on the South, Franklin County in the East, and Pulaski and Carroll Counties in the West (Appendix B, FIGURE 1), Floyd County is approximately 35 miles from East to West or 376 square miles.<sup>9</sup>

Floyd County became part of Botetourt County when

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<sup>8</sup> Leyburn, 1962.

<sup>9</sup> Handbook of Virginia. (Richmond: Department of Agriculture, 1923).

Augusta County was subdivided in January of 1770. The County of Botetourt included much of the unknown "West Augusta" territory. However, it was found that because of the remoteness of the settlements west of the Alleghanies and those along and to the west of the New River, the inhabitants had difficulties reaching the courts held in the town of Fincastle. Therefore, effective December 1772, the county was subdivided forming the new Fincastle County, comprising the southern portion of the previous Botetourt County with the northern half retaining that name.<sup>10</sup>

On January 20, 1775, the Freemen of Fincastle County assembled at the Lead Mines in what is now Wytheville and unanimously agreed to write a declaration of liberty. Here they recounted their arrival in the new land and their suffering of much adversity for the sake of rights and liberties which were denied them in their native land. The Freemen expressed a desire to work and to support the British government if it showed understanding and consideration, but declared that if cheated of their freedom and reduced to a state of slavery, they were "determined never

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<sup>10</sup> Johnston, 1906.

to surrender...but at the expense of [their] lives".<sup>11</sup>  
This was the first declaration of its kind in America.

The spirit of independence and freedom inherent in the declaration by the Freemen of Fincastle County testifies to the principled dedication and perserverence of the Southwest Virginia settlers. In his history of early Southwest Virginia settlements and their settlers, Johnston claims that among these Scotch-Irish people "were found the bravest and most valiant soliders in all our wars".<sup>12</sup>

Shortly after this assembly, in December of 1776, the County of Fincastle was dissolved forming three counties in its stead: Kentucky, Washington and Montgomery. In 1831, the Floyd Territory of Montgomery County became Floyd County, during John Floyd's term as governor of Virginia. The county seat was established at Jacksonville, named for Andrew Jackson, the seventh president of the United States. In 1896, the town name was changed to Floyd.

According to the New and Comprehensive Gazateer of Virginia and the District of Columbia, published in 1835,

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 55-57. From the American Archives, 4th Series, 1st Volume, p. 1166. (See Appendix A, ITEM 8).

<sup>12</sup> Johnston, 1906, p. 57.

the county seat was located in the most fertile and healthy part of the county, 227 miles from Richmond, 305 miles from Washington and 100 miles from Lynchburg, its chief market and place of trade. The county population was recorded as somewhere between seven and eight thousand and rapidly increasing. The town of Jacksonville, boasted five private dwellings with a number of others in progress, two mercantile stores, one house of public entertainment, one tannery, one saddler, one blacksmith shop and a post office.<sup>13</sup>

The Gazateer further noted that the county was not very fertile and was better adapted to grazing than to raising grain; wheat, rye, oats and buckwheat were raised in greatest abundance, although only horses, oxen, hogs and sheep were raised for market and provided the only staples.<sup>14</sup> The Handbook of Virginia, published in 1879 and 1886, also stated that the land was best adapted to grass, but declared the land fertile and well adapted to grain as well. The Handbook specifically mentions a fine grade of

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<sup>13</sup> Joseph Martin. New and Comprehensive Gazateer of Virginia and the District of Columbia. (Charlottesville, Va.: Moseley and Tompkins, printers, 1835).

<sup>14</sup> Martin, 1835.

tobacco that was grown and brought considerable revenue to the county.<sup>15</sup> The 1886 edition commented that "The land of this county is principally rolling, but very little of it is too steep to be conveniently cultivated. There is a sufficiency of bottom land on the numerous streams to produce all the hay necessary for the present wants of the farmers, who winter all the stock they can graze, and if we had a railroad, could increase the hay product so as to have a considerable quantity to ship from the county".<sup>16</sup> The nearest railroad at the time was the Norfolk and Western which passed through adjoining Montgomery and Pulaski counties. Although many residents hoped the Franklin and Pittsylvania Railroad would extend into the county, it did not. To this day, Floyd County is the only county in Virginia without direct access to a railroad.<sup>17</sup>

Timber is plentiful in Floyd County. The most common trees are white oak, red oak, black oak, chestnut, yellow poplar, white pine, hickory, ash, walnut and hard maple.

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<sup>15</sup> Handbook of Virginia. (Richmond: The Commissioner of Agriculture, 1879, 1886).

<sup>16</sup> Handbook of Virginia, 1886, p. 151.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



As late as 1879, half of the county was still covered with original forest timber.<sup>18</sup> Again, because of the lack of railroad facilities, the timber industry was slow getting started and even to this day, remains a small scale operation.

There are currently no mining activities in Floyd County, although in the late nineteenth century iron, copper and gold were mined. The county has the distinction of having the only arsenic mine in the country, but it has not been in operation since the end of World War I.<sup>19</sup>

Manufacturing was slow to develop in Floyd County primarily because of inaccessability. In 1860, Floyd had ten manufacturing establishments with a total of \$13,515 invested capital and eighteen male employees. By 1930, this had expanded to twelve industrial concerns (TABLES 1 and 2). A 1930 industrial survey of the county reported that the poor transportation facilities which had hindered past industrial progress, were becoming less of a problem and suggested that the county was, in fact, capable of handling

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<sup>18</sup> Handbook of Virginia, 1879.

<sup>19</sup> R. L. Humbert. Industrial Survey of Floyd County. (Blacksburg, VA.: Engineering Extension Division, VPI & SU, 1930).

TABLE 1  
Manufacturing Establishments

The Blue Ridge Counties in 1860 furnished the following manufacturing returns:

Counties	Number of Establishments	Capital Invested	Cost of Raw Materials	No. of Hands Employed		Annual Cost of Labor	Annual Value of Products
				Male	Female		
Carroll	42	\$121,400	\$53,377	136	---	\$29,382	\$105,007
Floyd	10	\$ 13,515	\$14,894	18	---	\$ 4,326	\$ 23,210
Grayson	10	\$ 22,600	\$56,470	16	---	\$ 3,936	\$ 70,240
<u>Industries</u>							
Boots and Shoes	1	\$ . 215	\$ 305	1	---	\$ 360	\$ 1,100
Fire-arms	1	\$ 1,500	\$ 472	3	---	\$ 360	\$ 1,100
Flour and Meal	30	\$ 40,150	\$93,656	36	---	\$ 7,334	\$117,528
Cabinet Furniture	2	\$ 1,600	\$ 482	4	---	\$ 1,620	\$ 2,280
Leather	8	\$ 6,350	\$ 8,885	15	---	\$ 2,940	\$ 14,860
Distilled Liquors	1	\$ 500	\$ 405	1	---	\$ 336	\$ 700
Saddlery & Harness	2	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,040	4	---	\$ 1,050	\$ 2,780
Wool carding	3	\$ 4,400	\$ 5,170	3	---	\$ 340	\$ 6,384
Copper Ore	4	\$ 70,000	\$ 5,700	78	---	\$17,570	\$ 31,633
Copper Smelting	1	\$ 25,000	\$ 2,100	12	---	\$ 2,880	\$ 5,880
Iron Castings	1	\$ 500	\$ 500	2	---	\$ 600	\$ 2,000
Lumber-sawed	5	\$ 2,800	\$ 4,036	6	---	\$ 1,200	\$ 8,122
Linseed oil	1	\$ 500	\$ 360	1	---	\$ 120	\$ 810
Tin, Copper & Sheet Iron Ware	2	\$ 2,700	\$ 1,630	4	---	\$ 984	\$ 3,300

These enumerate industries were distributed among the counties as follows: Boots and shoes, fire-arms and distilled liquors were only made in Floyd; Copper mining and smelting, iron casting and linseed oil making were confined to Carroll; Flour and meal and leather were made in all the counties; Cabinet furniture, saddlery and harness and wool carding were industries of Floyd and Carroll; Lumber sawing and tin and copper were conducted in Carroll and Grayson.

Virginia, a Geographical and Political Survey. (Richmond: Published under the supervision of the Board of Immigration, 1987) p. 104-105.

TABLE 2

## Floyd County Industries 1930

Food and Kindred Products

Harman and Webb Roller Mill	(Floyd)
Floyd Milling Company	(Floyd)
Tise and Vest Mill	(Floyd)
J. W. Epperly's Mill	(Floyd)
A. T. Harman	(Floyd)
Moses and Phillips	(Willis)
E. F. Strong	(Willis)

Textiles and Their Products

J. T. Dunn	(Willis)
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Lumber and Allied Products

J. J. Poff	(Copper Hill)
Yopp and Spangler	(Floyd)
G. T. Spangler	(Floyd)

Paper and Printing

The Floyd Press	(Floyd)
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R. L. Humbert. Industrial Survey of Floyd County Virginia. (Blacksburg, VA.: Engineering Extension Division, VPI & SU, 1930) p. 14.

more industries, namely bakeries, canneries, small scale meat packing and sausage making firms, a creamery and ice factory, and woodworking and textile industries. It was noted that an ample supply of female labor should prove attractive to future industrial concerns.<sup>20</sup>

It was not until approximately 1940, that any of the three state maintained gravel roads became hard surfaced (Appendix B, FIGURE 1). About this same time, the first manufacturing concern which employed a substantial number of laborers was established -- J. Freezer & Son Shirt Factory which employed nearly seventy women. Today there are three garment factories in the county employing primarily women and one furniture factory as well as several small scale sawmill operations, graineries, and woodworking establishments. It is evident from comparing real estate value in Floyd County that the major source of wealth has been and still does lie in land rather than in manufacturing (TABLE 3).

Reports reviewed have shown Floyd County to have an abundance of churches and schools (TABLE 4). The residents are almost entirely Protestant subscribing to the Baptist,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

TABLE 3

1876 Valuation of Estate Real and Personal

<u>Counties</u>	<u>Real.</u>	<u>Personal.</u>	<u>Aggregate.</u>
Carroll	582,432	304,727	887,159
Floyd	1,050,887	369,236	1,420,123
Franklin	2,013,072	754,452	2,767,524
Montgomery	2,825,749	677,819	3,503,568

M.F. Maury. Physical Survey of Virginia #2. (Richmond, VA.: N. V. Randolph, 1878) pp. 126-127. From the Report Auditor of Virginia for 1976.

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Land and Labor Valuation

<u>Counties</u>	<u>Average Cost/Acre</u>	<u>Average Labor Cost/Hour</u>
Carroll	\$ 2.00 - \$ 5.00	\$15.00 - \$26.00
Floyd	\$ 3.00 - \$10.00	\$ 5.00 - \$20.00

Maury, 1978, pp. 110-111

TABLE 4

## 1886 School Populations

1886 NUMBER OF SCHOOLS, ENROLLMENT, ETC.

<u>Counties</u>	<u>Schools</u>			<u>Enrollment</u>			<u>Average Daily Attendance</u>		
	<u>White</u>	<u>Colored</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Colored</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Colored</u>	<u>Total</u>
Floyd	80	8	88	3,641	325	3,966	2,036	212	2,248
Franklin	89	30	119	3,824	1,477	5,301	1,938	891	2,829
Montgomery	71	21	92	1,900	500	2,400	1,323	389	1,712

Handbook of Virginia. (Richmond: Commissioner of Agriculture, 1886).

Presbyterian, Brethern and Methodist faiths. Although many of the county's early schools were parochial, in later years they became part of the county school system or simply died out.

From the time Floyd County was first settled until well into the twentieth century, it has been practically lost to outside influence. The few roads that existed were scarcely more than animal trails and were used only by the people who lived there. For generations, the mountain people and the people of the lowlands interacted as though they belonged to different countries.<sup>21</sup> The isolation has been so great that even today, characteristics attributed to the early pioneer can be easily traced in their descendants.

In many cases, the way a Floyd County resident lives is still dependent on his energy and life still revolves around the home. Families continue to rely on one another and on their kinfolk for help. The concept of self-sufficiency has remained paramount in the mind of the Floyd County resident. Many homes are still heated entirely by

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<sup>21</sup> Eaton, 1973.

wood. Garden produce is avidly canned and frozen for winter use and many families raise and butcher their own beef and pork. During the last two centuries, much of the Old World language has remained unchanged. Some words are spoken as they were in Shakespeare's age; "sallet" for salad, "sech" for such and "afeard" for afraid. Like Chaucer, they rhyme "yet" with "wit"; this word then becomes "hit" for emphasis. Often double words are used for clarity -- biscuit-bread, ham-meat, ham-bacon, toad-frog, church-house, auction-sale, or granny-woman (midwife).<sup>22</sup>

But even such remaining evidences of the past have now begun to disappear. With the advent of mass media and improved roads, the county has been opened to outside influence. Because of our increasingly mobile society, inhabitants of Floyd County have become more mobile. Residents who until only recently had not crossed the county line, might now make regular trips to Christiansburg and Roanoke. Some may have even visited such far away places as Richmond.

The population of Floyd County has consistently

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<sup>22</sup> Richard C. Davids. The Man Who Moved a Mountain. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970).



declined since the turn of the century (TABLE 5). Since 1950, the net migration out of the county has exceeded the natural increase in population. Most of the out-migrants are young persons entering the labor force, causing a rise in the median age for the county (TABLE 6). A listing of categories of jobs held by Floyd County residents in 1970 shows that over 65% are employed as operatives, craftsmen, foremen, laborers or farm related workers (TABLE 7). The large percentage of nonprofessionals is due to low numbers of high school graduates seeking higher or further education (TABLE 8) and by the 8.1 median years of schooling for those over age 25 (TABLE 9). The number of jobs available in the county for college educated persons is below the state average, and an analysis of data from the 1970 Census, indicates that over 55% of the county's workers were then employed outside Floyd County. This number has risen since 1960.

Incomes in Floyd County are below the national average. In 1970, the Floyd County median family income was \$6,661 compared to the national median family income of \$12,531. Because the unemployment rate for the county has traditionally been roughly 2%, some of the low income

TABLE 5

## Floyd County Population

1840-----	4,453
1850-----	6,458
1860-----	8,236
1870-----	9,482
1880-----	13,255
1890-----	14,405
1900-----	15,388
1910-----	14,092
1920-----	15,388
1930-----	13,115
1940-----	11,698
1950-----	11,967
1960-----	10,462
1970-----	9,775

Floyd County - Net Migration and Natural Increase  
1950 to 1960 to 1970

## 1950 to 1960\*

## Net Migration

Number	-1,936
Percent	-17.1

## Natural Increase

Number	+1,047
Percent	+9.2

## 1960 to 1970\*\*

## Net Migration

Number	-1,102
Percent	-10.5

## Natural Increase

Number	+445
Percent	+4.0

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\*Projections and Economic Base Analysis. (Floyd County, Aug., 1968). Division of Planning and Community Affairs.

\*\*Division of Planning and Community Affairs, Research Section (1960, 1970 Data).

TABLE 6

Age Data for Floyd County

1960 and 1970

	<u>1960</u>					
	0-19		20-64		65-Over	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Floyd County	4,000	38.2	5,256	50.2	1,206	11.5
	<u>1970</u>					
Floyd County	3,330	34.1	5,256	52.2	1,344	13.7

Division of State Planning and Community Affairs, 1976.

TABLE 7

## Floyd County Employment--Job Type All Persons

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Professional, Technical and Kindred Workers	232	6.5
Managers and Administrators	170	4.8
Sales Workers	87	2.4
Clerical and Kindred Workers	303	8.5
Craftsmen, Foremen	593	16.6
Operatives	1,139	31.9
Transportation Equipment Operatives	163	4.6
Laborers	228	6.4
Farmers and Farm Managers	352	9.8
Farm Laborers and Farm Foremen	97	2.7
Service Workers	189	5.3
Private Household Workers	23	0.6
	<hr/>	
TOTAL	3,565	

U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970

TABLE 8  
Floyd County High School Graduates Continuing Education in Colleges

	<u>Total Graduates</u> <u>1973-1974</u>	<u>Attending</u> <u>4 Yr. College</u>	<u>Attending</u> <u>2 Yr. College</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Floyd County	142	25	8	33	23.2

Floyd County High School Graduates Continuing Education in Other Institutions

	<u>Total Graduates</u> <u>1973-1974</u>	<u>Business</u> <u>School</u>	<u>Trade-</u> <u>Technical</u>	<u>On-the-Job</u> <u>Training</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Floyd County	142	6	17	---	23	16.7

Floyd County High School Graduates Continuing and Not Continuing Education

	<u>Total</u> <u>Graduates</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Continuing</u>	<u>Percent</u> <u>Continuing</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Continuing</u>	<u>Percent Not</u> <u>Continuing</u>
Floyd County	142	56	39.4	86	60.6

Virginia State Board of Education, 1976.

TABLE 9

## Floyd County Median Years Schooling Completed

	Median School Years Completed Male 25 Yrs. & Over	Median School Years Completed Female 25 Yrs. & Over	Average Median School Years Male & Female
Floyd County	7.8	8.3	8.1

Virginia State Board of Education, 1976.

level has to be attributed to the increase in the numbers of residents on social security or other fixed incomes.

## CHAPTER 4

### A HISTORY OF QUILTING IN FLOYD COUNTY

For many Floyd County women, quilting was one of the central disciplines of their upbringing. Children learned by quilting to have an eye for excellence as well as to have patience. They learned to work with others, for many families were large, with as many as fifteen children. "We all worked together and farmed and raised the corn, wheat and ground our flour at the mill and raised everything--just plain old country folks."<sup>1</sup> With skills that could transform a rag bag into an object of beauty and function, they were far from "just plain old country folks".

The average age of the twenty-two Floyd County women interviewed was 68 years. About one-third of them began quilting as very young children. "I remember quilting when I was too short to sit in the chair and reach any other way. Of course that was on the corner and probably mother

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by a woman (Subject 14) one of twenty-two quilters interviewed by the researcher during the months September through December, 1979. These interviews were tape-recorded and form the foundation of the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project, Floyd County, Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Department of Clothing, Textiles and Related Art, Tape Collection (Hereinafter cited as Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County).



pulled it out because of bad stitches."<sup>2</sup> Many of the women learned only a part of the quilting technique at this young age. Most often, this was piecing. "My grandmother always lived with us and she would cut out simple shapes and...say 'it's easy'...I guess I didn't do a very good job because I was [so] young."<sup>3</sup> Often it was a grandmother who took on the role of teacher because the mother had so many other duties. One woman recalled her grandmother's words, "Now this is the most important thing for you to remember: Cut every piece exactly like your pattern...cut every piece exactly the right size. When you go to sew them up, make every seam the same...Your pieces will match up and you won't have a bit of trouble."<sup>4</sup> The Nine Diamond pattern (Appendix C, PLATES I-IV) was often a child's first quilt and for many it was only for a doll bed and was made of fabrics too worn to be used in "mother's quilt".

Slightly more than a third of the women learned to quilt at age eleven or twelve or for them the work was more demanding. "We used to [quilt] on bad days [when we

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<sup>2</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>3</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

<sup>4</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

couldn't go to school]. Everybody was supposed to help with the cutting or putting them together or something."<sup>5</sup> Some learned quilting techniques through observation and some were carefully shown. "[Mother] took the needle and showed me how to hold my hand and forefinger to make my needle go through and come back up again and hot to use a thimble."<sup>6</sup> The thimble seemed to be the most constant source of irritation. As one quilter remembered, "I couldn't use the thimble--I said my needle was too short and I finally got a long darning needle and was getting along so good...Of course I broke that needle. That's why I finally learned to use the thimble. When I started quilting I found you couldn't quilt without one."<sup>7</sup> For many, standards were high. "Everything had to be just exactly right or we had to do it over...[Mother] inspected and told us. Even if it was just an everyday quilt---she believed in teaching you to do it right regardless."<sup>8</sup>

A few women waited until the end of high school before learning to quilt. Because they had older sisters who

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<sup>5</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

<sup>6</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>7</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 3.

<sup>8</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 7.

helped with the family quilting, some women found that it really was not necessary for them to learn until they began to think of marriage. All quilters agreed that marriage introduced them to really serious quilting. "We started a family and everybody had to have quilts...My parents gave us some quilts when we got married and so did my husband's mother...Of course at that time I realized that wasn't going to last forever and I couldn't depend on somebody else to do for me and raise my family."<sup>9</sup>

In the early days of Floyd County, a young man and woman could start life with little more than a skillet and a hoe. Up where the trees were so big that there was no underbrush, the soil was loose and soft. There was no need to plow for planting because the kernels of corn could be hoed down in the soft dirt between the trees. After harvesting, the corn was stone ground at a nearby mill and then the fireplace coals baked it into a tasty johnny cake. The hills teemed with game in the summer--wild turkeys gobbled from oak thickets and deer and coon were fat from acorns and chestnuts. It was the winter that brought the hardships. The apples, corn meal, dried pumpkin and smoked

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<sup>9</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

hog, deer or rabbit that hung in the chimney, usually gave out long before spring. Life at best was a struggle.

Once canning jars were made available in the third quarter of the nineteenth century,<sup>10</sup> food was plentiful throughout the year. In the summers, women put up food in large quantities. It was not unusual to preserve ten bushels of peaches and even more of corn and beans. Apple butter was canned by the gallon as well as huckleberries, blackberries and strawberries picked by children.

These activities as well as tending the garden required a great deal of a woman's time. "They had too much to do outside in the summer [to quilt] --the gardens...the canning and the fruit gathering."<sup>11</sup> "Some years you would more than you did others."<sup>12</sup> And Sometimes that meant not at all. "[Mother] didn't make [quilts] every year because they would have to wait and collect scraps."<sup>13</sup> The average was two or three quilts a year. Even today, most county residents have gardens and put up produce in the late

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<sup>10</sup> The World Book Encyclopedia. (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corporation, 1977), Vol. 3, p. 146.

<sup>11</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

<sup>12</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 19.

<sup>13</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

spring to early fall and quilt during the other seasons of the year. The quilters who do not have gardens say they don't quilt in the summer because they like to be out-of-doors.

The piecing of quilt tops was most often accomplished in the coldest part of the winter because it is the one part of the quilting process that does not take a lot of space. Usually, in cold weather, most of the house was closed off and the families primarily lived in one or two rooms. Therefore, on cold, snowy days when children stayed home from school, the quilting frame could not be set up in the one room that was heated. Several quilters remembered their mothers sitting by lamplight piecing quilt tops by hand from neat piles of pre-cut squares.<sup>14</sup> Although they have used the sewing machine to piece quilts in recent years, many women said their mothers did hand work in early days for the sake of convenience. "[Mother] did most of her work at night in making the blocks. Of course we all had to sit around the fireplace to keep warm and she said there was just not space for that sewing Machine."<sup>15</sup> Today most quilters use the sewing machine

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<sup>14</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

<sup>15</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

to piece quilts "unless it's some I can't get to fit real good. Then I piece by my fingers".<sup>16</sup> One woman confessed, "I much prefer them by machine. I know they aren't as valuable to a lot of people, but I guarantee you, they will stay together a lot longer."<sup>17</sup>

In the fall of the year after the harvest and the canning or in the early spring, the quilt was "put-in" for quilting. The first step was to assemble the quilt frame. Traditionally, this has been made of four straight pieces of a lightweight wood such as cucumber (Tulip Poplar),<sup>18</sup> as long as the length and width of the quilt and about one and a half inches in diameter. These pieces were placed at right angles forming the outline of a square which was fastened at the corners with either wooden peg or large nails placed through a series of drilled holes (Appendix B, FIGURE 4). The frame then rested on the backs of four chairs or was suspended from ceiling staples with twine string where it could be raised or lowered according to need. "That would get it up where the children could play...

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<sup>16</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 8.

<sup>17</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

<sup>18</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 18.

and not be in the way when [they weren't] working on it. It didn't add much to the appearance of the room, but at least it was practical."<sup>19</sup> This type of frame remains very much in use today, but with a few improvements. Movable clamps are used to secure the corners and saw horses are most often used to provide a base.

Several other frames have also come into use recently. One is called the short or half frame (Appendix B, FIGURE 5). In the late 1940's, the Mountain Mist Company, a manufacturer of cotton batting, advertised plans for a half frame which one Floyd quilter obtained and constructed. Not only does this frame require less space, but has its own supports and ratchet tensioning device (Appendix C, PLATES V-VI). Another quilt frame which is sometimes used, although not common in Floyd County, is the hoop (See Appendix C, PLATE VII). The one woman who used the hoop claims that "it doesn't tire you near so badly and you can turn in every angle that you want to get your stitches neater."<sup>20</sup> This quilter does not use a stand with the hoop and feels that some experience is necessary to be able to use it

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<sup>19</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

<sup>20</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 6.

effectively. "You've got to pull underneath to get your lining pulled up right in the hoop...the experience needed to know the right grain of fabric and how it is pulled to get it straight..."<sup>21</sup>

The actual "putting-in" of the quilt was accomplished by laying the lining material across the quilt frame and sewing the edges to the wooden strips with twine string. "They sewed their lining in...with something like a big darning needle and twine thread. They'd whip it over the edge of the quilting frame."<sup>22</sup> Today this process is shortened by the use of thumbtacks. Next, the batting is laid down over the lining and finally, the quilt top is put down. In early days, the three layers were basted together to hold them smoothly in place, and although this is still done, pinning often takes its place. It is only after the quilting has progressed on all four sides as far as the arm can comfortably reach, that the completed section can be rolled on two sides and repegged or clamped.

On a half frame, the entire quilt is not laid out flat. Instead, the quilt is tacked to the two side pieces and the

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 1.



side away from the quilter is rolled until the top quilting surface is smooth and taut. At this point, the batting and quilt top are laid over the exposed lining and pinned or basted in place. The remaining batting and top are left to hang free or propped on chairs to be kept off the floor. This quilt frame generally has a canvas apron or strips on the ends to which the other sides of the quilt are attached (Appendix C, PLATE VI). As the quilting progresses, the lining is unrolled as the completed quilting is rolled on the opposite side.

The traditional way of "putting in" a quilt is to place the longest sides where they will roll or on the half frame, where the quilting is done. One quilter has learned from many years of experience that this is not the best way. "When placing your quilt in the frame, always put the short end on the side [where] you are going to start quilting. Start at the end and quilt the length of the quilt. If you start on the narrow [side] , you have less material to work with and you can keep it smoother [as you] work toward the edge of your lining."<sup>23</sup> She also warned against two people starting on the outside and quilting towards the center.

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<sup>23</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

This could cause a pucker or "backbone" and is a common problem when more than one person quilts at a time.

Before the actual quilting could begin, a quilt stitching pattern needed to be chosen. Until recent years, this was not a difficult choice to make. Nearly all quilts were quilted to the sides of diagonal (Appendix B, FIGURE 6). The fan pattern was the favorite, perhaps because it would hold up well through many washings. It was drawn on the quilt by means of "a string with a piece of chalk ties onto it." The quilter would "hold one end of the string [in one hand and draw an arc ] and then get up about an inch more on [the ] string [and draw another]. That would space the difference between the rows of [the fan.]"<sup>24</sup> Straight lines were drawn with chalk also or pencil, for a sharper line. One quilter remembered that her mother placed a string in a thin buckwheat batter, held it taut across the quilt and snapped it like a chalk line to get a straight mark. She recalled that when the batter dried, it just brushed off.<sup>25</sup> Another pattern was called the elbow and looks exactly as it sounds (Appendix B, FIGURE 6). The name could be derived

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<sup>24</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>25</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 1.

as well from the method by which it was drawn. "I can remember that [the women] laid their elbow down this way and made [a line] and then came out with it to make the length of their elbows...Some of the women would make great big ones and some would reach further than others and of course their elbows were never the same size."<sup>26</sup>

McKendry states that "most homespun quilts were quilted in fan patterns or in diagonal lines..No time was spent on the actual quilting other than to insure a firm and adequate attachment."<sup>27</sup> It appears that these quilting patterns were the last vestiges of the era of homespun quilts. Even though the fabrics had become finer and the fillings lighter, the stitching patterns changed more slowly than the quilt designs themselves. It is only in the last two decades that they have disappeared entirely. Most quilters today quilt by following the design on the quilt top. Although this type of quilting takes longer, most seem to be pleased with the result, particularly with a solid color lining. One woman remarked that the old stitching patterns "take away from the design on top".<sup>28</sup> In recent years,

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<sup>26</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

<sup>27</sup> McKendry, 1979, p. 125.

<sup>28</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 21.

several quilters have begun quilting fancy border patterns such as vines and feathers, but they are in the minority.

Another thing that has changed considerably in the last two decades is the size of the quilts that are being made. The primary influence on quilt size is the size of beds on which they are used. However, in the past, beds were much smaller than standard size beds today. "All the homemade beds were narrow...There was a trundle bed and it was small enough to go under the other bed to get it out of the way in the daytime. Then it was pulled out [at night] for the smallest children to sleep close to their mother. There were some [quilts] to fit it...[Most] were going to use it for a spread. [They were] longer and would fold over the pillows and hang over the sides too."<sup>29</sup> One woman recalled that "the old rule for making the quilts for covers was two yards wide and two and a half long. That was really the standard size".<sup>30</sup> Others simply recalled that their mothers bought five yards of lining material which came in thirty-six inch widths, cut it in half and joined it by one center seam.

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<sup>29</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

<sup>30</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

Although the majority of quilts were made for everyday use, quilters remembered their mothers having certain "special quilts". These were usually pieced from the "pret-tier patterns" out of a better quality cotton fabric,<sup>31</sup> "one they spent a little more time on, [and] was a little bit nicer..."<sup>32</sup> One woman recalled, "My mother had special quilts that she would bring down on Sunday morning and dress up the beds, particularly if she thought someone might drop in".<sup>33</sup> Another said "We weren't allowed to sleep under those quilts. She had them for company".<sup>34</sup> Most homes had a company bed in the front room on which the "special quilts" were displayed. "There was always one bed in what they called the family room where the children played and everything...The feather bed was put on there and the children were taught not to rub and scrub the bed. The bed must look nice and they learned that. I would no more have got up in the middle of my mother's bed made up in that room where people came and went than anything. Nobody else would

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<sup>31</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 22.

<sup>32</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 14.

<sup>33</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>34</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 10.

either".<sup>35</sup>

Sometimes "special quilts" were given to sons and daughters as wedding gifts. This was the primary time that quilts were given as gifts. Since scrap fabric took so long to accumulate and few could afford to buy new fabrics, quilts were rarely given outside the family. The one exception noted by several women was in the case of dire need such as a "burnout". This was not likely to be a "special quilt", but was one of more practical nature. Houses in Floyd County were almost entirely built of and heated by wood. Fire was a real and constant threat to these people and struck more often than any would have liked. This kind of tragedy often necessitated a gathering for the purpose of quilting and was simply called a "quiltin'".

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, women had little time for socializing. Travel was time consuming and difficult making it necessary to combine work with pleasure. "I can remember when men would help clear and prepare land for the spring crop. If there was something too big for just the family to roll like the logs or move what they had cut off the trees...to make into wood, they'd

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<sup>35</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

do that...The women would prepare the dinner and work what time they had on the quilts and then they'd finish up and quilt that evening [in Floyd County, evening means afternoon] ...All the young people would have a party that night. [They would] have music and dancing---old fashioned parties. [They would play] little old games to the musci--just party games they called them then."<sup>36</sup> While the women quilted, they might exchange ideas for a new quilt, discuss Effie's latest youn'un, Elzada's forthcoming marriage or prospects for that year's crop. For many women, this was their only chance to see and visit with friends and they often quilted at walnut crackin's corn shuckin's or wood gettin's as well.

As time passed and these activities were no longer necessary, quilting became a daytime activity involving women only. One woman recalled that when she was a child, "there would be eight or ten people coming over. Sometimes there'd be more than could get around the quilt and they'd go in and get dinner. Sometimes they just sat around and talked. They'd change around and they'd quilt awhile and then say 'now I'm going to rest, you can quilt awhile'---if there would be more than enough...Four, five or six would

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<sup>36</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

be about all that could quilt. They kept them spread out then on the big roomy [quilts]. They could get all the way around them".<sup>37</sup> When young girls were to be married, they sometimes announced their engagement at a quilting party and then called a quilting party to quilt the wedding quilts.<sup>38</sup>

Today many women would rather do their own quilting than to call friends over to help. Since quilts are used less as cover and more as show pieces, the quilters set higher standards and are more particular about the end product. As one woman said, "There's no one to help me who would quilt like I do. When you have a half dozen people working on a quilt, you are almost sure to come up with some poor work."<sup>39</sup> Another said she thinks that uniform quilting, even if its not absolutely perfect, is still better than to have several different types in one quilt.<sup>40</sup> Some women have just one or two friends whose work they know to help them. Still the quilting party has not died out entirely. Church groups often quilt regularly to make

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<sup>37</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

<sup>38</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 21.

<sup>39</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>40</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 21.



money for charity and other groups may make quilts to be sold at raffles or bazaars.

If there's word of a quiltin' in the wind, it's an event to be looked forward to with great anticipation. For women will always want to gather with other women to share hopes and fears, dreams and discoveries and to do the thing that they love best---quilt.

## CHAPTER 5

### SOURCE OF INSPIRATION

Most people possess an inner creative drive to somehow express their own personal sense of beauty. It may take such form as whittling a stick, picking a banjo, baking a cake or planting a garden. A creative person is one who is able to take a known object and use it in a unique way---transforming a common stick into a thing of beauty or function, producing an original musical sound, combining ingredients to form a different taste, or planting vegetables in a new arrangement. In this way, Floyd County women have taken known quilt patterns, handed down for generations, and through the use of fabrics and colors, formed quilts uniquely their own.

Koberg and Bagnell have said that "people become more creative simply by becoming more conscious of what it is they do and how what they do relates to what is in their environment...Creativity and consciousness of procedures and methods go hand in hand." The quilters of Floyd County show a complete awareness and understanding of the limitations and possibilities for their craft, both as the

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<sup>1</sup> Don Koberg and Jim Bagnall. The Universal Traveler. (Los Angeles, Cal.: William Kaufmann Inc., 1976), p. 10.

functional bedcovers of the past and as the present art form. Whether recognized or not, it was this understanding of process and method that led to the development of quilting as it is known today.

Because the early quilters of Floyd County were concerned primarily with survival, they did not have time to pursue purely aesthetic interests. A woman's life was not an easy one. A man wanted a woman who could work in a cornfield without getting tired, and be so rested when the day was done that she'd get the meals, tend the children, do the chores while he ate, have a "whole passel of young'uns" in her spare time and milk the cows "'cus it's womanish for a man to milk".<sup>2</sup> This description doesn't even mention making the family's clothing and bedding which included weaving, spinning and knitting<sup>3</sup>---all this for

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<sup>2</sup> Davids, 1970, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Statements by women (Subjects 15, 20, and 22) who were several of 22 quilters interviewed by the researcher during the months September through December, 1979. These interviews were tape-recorded and form the foundation of the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project, Floyd County, Virginia, Virginia Tech, Department of Clothing, Textiles and Related Art, Tape Collection (Hereinafter cited as Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County).

mere existence. One woman recollected, "Back at that time, most people...around here were concerned with quilting for comfort, in other words warmth, and not for the sake of beauty. Of course they appreciated a pretty quilt if you had one, but they were more concerned with cover for warmth."<sup>4</sup> Another woman recalled that back then everybody was making quilts. "They had to because they didn't have electric heat and had to have some cover".<sup>5</sup> Regardless of the reason for their construction, these women were able to combine the pleasures of creating something beautiful with the practical function of making warm bedcovers. In this way, there were created, in fabric, some of the most striking graphic designs in America's folk heritage (Appendix C, PLATES IX-XVI).

The source of inspiration for a quilt, the design and the name given it are all closely interrelated. In fact, which came first is often as perplexing as the age old question about the chicken or the egg. What the three have in common, however, is that they seem to derive most

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<sup>4</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

<sup>5</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 10.

often from those things with which the quilt designer was most familiar---those everyday observations and the feelings which they evoked. It is these quilt patterns that today's quilters recall their mothers making as well as the ones that occur most frequently as their own favorites (Appendix A, ITEMS 9 and 10).

The wedding ring, an object which often occupies the major part of a young girl's mind, served as a source of inspiration for one of the most popular quilt patterns. One quilter even confessed that she didn't really do much quilting until she began to think she might get married.<sup>6</sup> Another said that just "everybody had to have a Wedding Ring [Quilt]".<sup>7</sup> Just as there are many different wedding rings, there are also several quilt patterns by this name (Appendix C, PLATES VIII, IX, X, XII and XIII). Even the more common Wedding Ring Pattern varies greatly in scale and application (Appendix C, PLATES XI-XVI). This pattern provides for a personal touch in the quilting design chosen for the central ring area (Appendix C, PLATES VIII,

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<sup>6</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 13.

<sup>7</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

XIII, XIV, and XVI). One woman recalled that she had traced a rose from a spring seed catalog and enlarged it to fit the center of her Double Wedding Ring quilt.<sup>8</sup>

Another popular quilt of both yesterday and today is known as Grandmother's Flower Garden. One Floyd County woman had heard that this quilt design was originally known as the English Mosaic and that it was the American women who changed the name.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps as that early pioneer designer surveyed the dense undergrowth from the step of her log cabin, she thought of the neatly tended flower gardens she had left behind and longed for the day she would once again have a garden of her own. In order to hurry that day along, she might have planted one in fabric to lie across her bed and mingle with the dreams of her new home (Appendix C, PLATES XVII.-XXI). One designer saw not only the flowers, but a neat white picket fence and little patches of grass between the flowers (Appendix C, PLATE XIX). This delightful design could be created in a small scale using the tiniest of scraps leftover from

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Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 8.

<sup>9</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

dressmaking (Appendix C, PLATE XVII). When a solid color lining is used, the quilting stitches create the same flower effect on the lining (Appendix C, PLATE XXI).

A design of wide appeal is the Log Cabin Quilt. As the name implies, it is constructed much as a log cabin is, the narrow strips representing logs (Appendix B, FIGURE 7). When the central square is made of a red fabric, this represents a warm hearth and happy home.<sup>10</sup> The name Log Cabin is a kind of generic name, perhaps named for the type of construction. Each Log Cabin pattern also has another name depending on the way the light and dark areas are arranged. This name too, reflects a source of inspiration. If the light and dark areas form concentric squares or diamonds, the quilt is called Barn Raising (Appendix C, PLATES XXII-XXV). Some Log Cabin quilts bring to mind freshly turned rows of soil and are called Straight Furrows (Appendix C, PLATES XXVI-XXVII). There are innumerable ways that the Log Cabin quilt can be pieced and occasionally a new way of combining the light and dark areas is found (Appendix C, PLATE XXVIII).

Quilters were inspired not only by objects, but by

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<sup>10</sup> McKendry, 1979, p. 215.

abstract thoughts and philosophies as well. The mountain people were a very religious lot, although perhaps not by today's standards. Many Primitive Baptists were scattered throughout the county<sup>11</sup> who had nothing against a little drinking before services and sometimes spouted doctrines they were willing to defend to the death. They did know their Bible and although most could not read it, the stories served as inspiration for quilts such as Joseph's Coat (Appendix C, PLATES XXIX and XXX).

Dreams or memories also inspired many delightful quilts. Trip Around the World is a popular pattern that uses many gaily colored blocks. These blocks form circles or squares of color which radiate from a central point and are faintly reminiscent of the world's many countries and peoples (Appendix C, PLATES XXXI-XXXIV).

Throughout history, political events and figures have served to inspire quilters. Lincoln's Platform is one such quilt (Appendix B, FIGURE 8). In recent years, our country's 200th birthday inspired more than one woman to design a quilt. The Floyd County women who claimed to have designed such quilts have since given them to

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<sup>11</sup> Davids, 1970.



children as keepsakes, reminding them of both their country and their mother's skill.

Some quilts are known by more than one name. In some cases, this may stem from the different locations where the quilt was made. For instance, Rob Peter to Pay Paul, is also called Crazy Man's Puzzle and Drunkard's Path (Appendix C, PLATES XXXV and XXXVI). It is not unusual in an area reknowned for its bootleg liquor,<sup>12</sup> that Drunkard's Path should be the name most commonly used. The name Rob Peter to Pay Paul comes from using two colors so that it appears as if what is taken from one square should be able to fill an adjacent square in the reverse color scheme. Several other designs are called by this name as well (Appendix C, PLATES XXXVII and XXXVIII). Sometimes calling a quilt by different names is a reflection of those things with which a quilter could best identify. Such is the case with Monkey Wrench, also called Churn Dash (Appendix C, PLATES XXXIX-XLII).

The quilt pattern most often mentioned was the Nine Patch or Nine Diamond (Appendix C, PLATES I-IV). It is for good reason that this design is best known. In an era

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

when time was in short supply, a quilt pattern that was "easy pieced" and yet could be made from relatively small dress-making scraps was a valued commodity. For these reasons, the Nine Patch was most often the quilt on which young girls learned and practiced. Likewise, for those same reasons, it also becomes the least seen today--they were meant for using and wearing out. The Nine Patch was not one of the favored patterns chosen for a "special quilt", those quilts saved for company use or given as wedding gifts. The Wedding Ring (Appendix C, PLATE XII), Flower Garden (Appendix C, PLATE XVII), Log Cabin (Appendix C, PLATE XXII), or Lone Star (Appendix C, PLATES XLIII-XLVI) were more likely to receive that honor.<sup>13</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth and early in the twentieth century, the new and fashionable quilts appearing in periodicals were the ones which became "special quilts". Although as yet, there were few needlecraft or quilt magazines, Hearth and Home, Comfort, Progressive Farmer, Southern Planter and Farm Journal occasionally featured quilt patterns. The majority of these quilt patterns appeared in the mid to late 1920's influenced by the

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<sup>13</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

women's liberation movement and the rise of columns and articles written for women. Some of these included the Basket (Appendix B, FIGURE 9) and Shooting Star (Appendix B, FIGURE 10)<sup>14</sup> and Tulip (Appendix B, FIGURE 11), Whirl Wind, also called Wild Goose Chase (Appendix C, PLATE XLVII) and Eight Pointed Star (Appendix B, FIGURE 12 and Appendix C, PLATE XLVIII).<sup>15</sup>

It was traditional patterns with the old familiar names that had been passed from generation to generation that were used for everyday. They had names like Shoo Fly (Appendix B, FIGURE 13), Churn Dash (Appendix C, PLATE XXXIX), Variable Star (Appendix C, PLATE XLIX), or Nine Patch (Appendix C, PLATE I). Often these patterns could be made by folding a block of paper and cutting it while folded.<sup>16</sup>

The Quilter's Newsletter and various popular quilt magazines provide the most inspiration for the modern

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<sup>14</sup> Helen Kaufman. "Popular Patterns for Old-Time Patchwork Quilts," The Southern Planter, 89 (July 15, 1928), 14.

<sup>15</sup> Helen Kaufman. "Patterns of Old-Time Patchwork Quilts," The Southern Planter, 90 (October 15, 1929), 11.

<sup>16</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

quilter. In this way, patterns popular in other localities have found their way to Virginia. New York Beauty (Appendix C, PLATES L and LI), Kansas Dugout (Appendix C, PLATE LII), Lancaster Rose (Appendix C, PLATES LIII and LIV), or Philadelphia Patch (Appendix B, FIGURE 8) are examples of such quilts found in Floyd County.

Most quilts which were observed or referred to in Floyd County are designs that are known elsewhere and oftentimes published in quilt books.<sup>17</sup> Apparently, few actual quilt designs have originated in the county. The quilts that were made prior to the appearance of quilt patterns in periodicals during the 1920's, were those brought to the county with the settlers and passed from generation to generation. Present originality in the county seems to be in the form of variations on already established designs and in the way colors and fabrics have been combined. Most quilters felt that they were really not enough of an artist to design original quilt patterns. Several quilters remembered that their mothers had designed

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<sup>17</sup> All quilts observed by the researcher in the county are known elsewhere. References were made to certain Bicentennial Quilts as mentioned earlier, however the researcher was unable to examine these because the quilters were no longer in possession of them.

some of their own quilts: "Some of the designs [mother] used in quilting she just drew herself...That's where some of your most beautiful designs come from...where you design them yourself".<sup>18</sup> However, the researcher saw none of these quilts. More than once there was confusion about the word original. Often the quilters interpreted this to mean cutting one's own pattern from a quilt they had seen.

Of the quilts examined by the researcher, the most prevalent design originality seems to have been present in the quilt known as the Crazy Quilt (Appendix C, PLATES LV) LXIV). These quilts were made entirely of scrap materials which were not recut, eliminating waste and giving the blocks the varied shapes. Although earlier Crazy Quilts did not have elaborate embroidery (Appendix C, PLATES LV and LVI), most of those from the turn of the century did and this provided an outlet for the quilter's creativity. Flowers were popular motifs, but often such things as animals and scenes were embroidered on the quilts as well. This practice seems to have died out for the most part, as none of the quilters interviewed had made a Crazy Quilt.

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<sup>18</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

## CHAPTER 6

### FABRICS, FILLINGS AND CARE

The earliest quilts in Floyd County were made from worn but usable clothing. Adult garments were recut to make children's clothes. "When the boys were little, mama would take daddy's old clothes and cut them up and make the boys some out of it. She used more for that than anything else."<sup>1</sup> But when children grew too large, the salvaged pieces went into quilts. "[Mother] would cut the best part out of the backs of coats or backs of even the pant legs... They'd use up all those scraps by piecing it on an old cloth [block]--cut like they wanted it and then piecing this on that and filling [the block] out. The scraps were pretty well used up...If they weren't used there, they were used for making the scatter rugs for the floor..."<sup>2</sup>

Much of the nineteenth century fabric was homespun,

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by a woman (Subject 18) one of twenty-two quilters interviewed by the researcher during the months September through December, 1979. These interviews were tape recorded and form the foundation of the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project, Floyd County, Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Department of Clothing, Textiles and Related Art, Tape Collection (Hereinafter cited as Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County).

<sup>2</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

homewoven cloth called linsey or linsey-woolsey. This cloth originally had a linen warp and woolen weft, but in later years when cotton "chain"<sup>3</sup> was substituted for the linen warp, the name remained. One quilter could remember her mother and grandmother weaving. "People thought [their children] would freeze if they didn't have a linsey dress to wear to school..."<sup>4</sup> Some linsey was joined by a center seam and used as quilt lining as well.

The Crazy Quilt was the best pattern for the linsey material because "that was the easiest way not to waste anything...They made what they called 'practical quilts' out of [the best parts of worn woolen clothes]...Some of them they called Tangled Britches...They usually put right much [batting] in them to make them warm and tacked them--you couldn't quilt through that much. The batting sometimes...was carded wool which made them light and warm."<sup>5</sup> (Appendix C, PLATES LV and LVI).

But quilts made out of worn clothing did not wear as well as those made of new material scraps saved from

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<sup>3</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 22. A name given to cotton warp yarn.

<sup>4</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

<sup>5</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

dressmaking. These were preferred for the obvious reasons that they were strong and unworn. Once factory produced textiles, particularly the cottons, became available at a relatively low cost, the only worn fabrics that were used in quilts became those with sentimental appeal--a wedding suit or dress or a baby's christening gown. These Crazy Quilts were lavishly decorated with wool embroidery yarn called "Zepher"<sup>6</sup> (Appendix C, PLATES LVII-LXIII). They generally had no filling so the quilters were able to work the delicate embroidery stitches. A quilt similar to the Crazy Quilt was the Save All. It also used scrap material, but was mostly new, unused cotton. The scraps were smaller than those in the Crazy Quilt, forming more of a building block effect (Appendix C, PLATE LXIV). This quilt top, was pieced on old cloth or even paper which was removed after the block was sewn together.<sup>7</sup>

By 1850, a number of stores were in existence throughout Floyd County. These stores sold general merchandise--everything from tools, nails and fabric to foodstuffs. An

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<sup>6</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 22.  
A worsted wool yarn.

<sup>7</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 1.



auction bill of sale for the A & L Slusher Greasy Creek Store in the Indian Valley section of the county, showed that in 1852, a variety of fabrics were available to residents. These fabrics ranged from 7¢ a yard for curtain calico to casimere<sup>8</sup>, a closely woven twilled woolen suiting, which sold for \$1.50 per yard (Appendix A, ITEM 11). As one ninety-two year old woman recalled, "Course there was plenty of material you could buy, but we didn't have anything to buy with was the trouble."<sup>9</sup> It has been said that it was a land of make it do, make it yourself, or do without.<sup>10</sup> People bought what cotton fabrics they could--calicos for every dresses, cotton checks, a heavier, longer lasting fabric used for men's shirts<sup>11</sup> (Appendix C, PLATES LXV - LXVIII)-- and continued to weave the linsey woolens used for men's suits and women's winter dresses on into the twentieth century.

Since scraps were used for quilt tops, getting enough took a long time. Like the quilt patterns, they were

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<sup>8</sup> Zelma Bendure and Gladys Pfeiffer. American Fabrics, Origin and History, Manufacture, Characteristics and Uses. (New York: McMillan Co., 1946) p. 616.

<sup>9</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 16's mother.

<sup>10</sup> Davids, 1970.

<sup>11</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

traded among neighbors and friends. "Back then if anyone got a new dress, they saved every scrap no matter how small and they would divide it out and give all the family some. They would make quilts and they could tell you every piece that belonged to that family."<sup>12</sup> "We didn't have a lot of material back in those days and we didn't have a lot of clothes. You had a new dress in the fall for winter and one or two for the summer and that was it. You didn't accumulate a lot of quilt pieces like you do these days."<sup>13</sup>

Another common source of material was the cloth bags in which products such as sugar, flour, tobacco and animal feed were packaged. The stitches holding them together would be carefully undone and then "you'd have to bleach the letters out. You'd have to soak them...They always had the letters put on that sugar, usually in blue. You could soak it and it would come out pretty good."<sup>14</sup> The five pound sugar sack was about the size of a square for the Dutch Doll or other applique quilt blocks (Appendix C, PLATES LXIX-LXXI). Daisy Hog Feed and chicken feed came in large one hundred pound sacks and four of those joined

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<sup>12</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

<sup>13</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 7.

<sup>14</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 3.

together would make a lining. "They would sew the four together and sometimes they would dye them if they didn't want white. Some would dye them for joinings."<sup>15</sup> One woman remembered a quilt that her grandmother had made from the small tobacco bags. "Years ago they had a tobacco named White Horse and RJR...They came in little cloth bags and I can remember her saving those...She dyed them in two different colors and pieced a quilt...I remember it was yellow and green."<sup>16</sup> Another woman remembered a Log Cabin Quilt made from the tobacco bag strips<sup>17</sup> and another recalled towels made from salt bags.<sup>18</sup> Few quilters could remember anything about natural dyes, but one woman recalled her mother using a tree bark. "She got some kind of bark and made a dark pretty yellow from that, but I don't remember what she put in it."<sup>19</sup> By the turn of the century, Putnam and Diamond dyes were available in the county stores.

The 1930's witnessed perhaps the biggest boon to quilting--the advent of printed cotton feed sacks. They

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<sup>15</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

<sup>16</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 1.

<sup>17</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

<sup>18</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 7.

<sup>19</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 10.

were available in a variety of different prints, mostly in low intensity blues, reds, greens and yellows. These were most often used for lining (Appendix C, PLATE XLVI) and joinings (Appendix C, PLATE XLII), but were sometimes used as the quilt pieces themselves (Appendix C, PLATES LXXII, LXXIII, and VIII). The feed sacks were often traded around to get enough of the same pattern and as one woman recalled, "They would sort and grab for quilt linings to get enough to match."<sup>20</sup> For the thirty or so years that they were on the market, they were by far the most common linings for practical or everyday quilts. For "special quilts, usually the lining was purchased, often a fabric called outing flannel. Print feed sacks were not only used for quilts, but for other articles such as dish towels and children's clothes. Several quilters remarked about having grown up wearing feed bags.

About the same time that printed feed sacks appeared, Sears, Roebuck and Company, a mail order dealer in general merchandise, began offering bags of quilt scraps in their catalog. In 1934, a twelve ounce bag sold for 25¢ and

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Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 15.

some Floyd quilters recalled orering these.<sup>21</sup> As the garment industries were established in the county, this became a source of scrap fabric also. Out of the twenty-two women interviewed, nine indicated that they had at one time worked in a garment factory. In the early days, the women were allowed to have the scraps or "cuffs left over or odd or... bad on one end or something...and a few of the collars that were bad..."<sup>22</sup> Today's factories no longer permit this, preferring to take the fabric waste to the landfill and have it bulldozed under, to the extreme irritation of quilters.

In recent years, some Floyd County women have begun using polyester doubleknits for quilts. Many people do not care for quilts of this material, in fact one quilter remarked, "You can't hardly give them away."<sup>23</sup> Those quilters who do not use and like the doubleknit, do so because the fabrics come in such nice, bright, pretty colors, are extremely durable, wash well and are a very warm cover. The polyester doubleknit quilts seem to have taken the

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<sup>21</sup> Sears, Roebuck, and Company Catalog. (Chicago: fall/winter, 1934/35).

<sup>22</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

<sup>23</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 10.

place of those which were at one time constructed of wool. Doubleknit is the most popular dress fabric in Floyd County. Like the early woolen quilts, the polyester doubleknit quilts are made from clothing scraps as well. None of the women interviewed, purchased polyester knits with which to piece quilts. Again, as in the wool quilts, the doubleknit's provide warmth without an excess of weight. Often they do not require any kind of filling if a doubleknit lining is used as well. Nevertheless, it is rather bulky for quilting. Thus, as in the early wool quilts, they are often tied (Appendix C, PLATES IV and XLIX) or quilted in very simple patterns (Appendix C, PLATES XXXIII and XXXV). It is interesting to note that the majority of women using polyester doubleknit, like the women who did not, indicated a preference for cotton fabrics. Apparently, using the doubleknits is another example of the reluctance of these people to waste usable goods.

When asked to compare today's fabrics with those of thirty years ago, the quilters noted the colors, ease of quilting and washability as the primary characteristics for consideration. As stated previously, the majority

preferred to use 100% cotton fabrics. The women felt that cotton was easiest to quilt and most durable, but almost all agreed that the polyester/cotton blends were satisfactory due to the unavailability of all cotton fabrics. They particularly noted it's non-wrinkle characteristics after laundering and the bright, gay colors. A number of quilters mentioned that the colors and prints had changed, but had some difficulty pinpointing what the exact changes were. One woman said she used to see "only just pink... blue...green...yellow and red...just the real old time colors,"<sup>24</sup> but now there are many different colors. Today's colors are the same as they have always been, but perhaps what this woman was trying to say, is that now there are many new shades and tints of colors. Due to new dyeing procedures, the fabrics can be of greater intensity than previously possible. Several interviewees mentioned that the fabrics of the early twentieth century had such lovely little prints and they were glad to see the current trend back to using those kind of fabrics.

These statements are supported by the responses to Part III, Color Preference and Part IV, Pattern Color

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<sup>24</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 18.

Combination, of the research instrument. The most popular colors were a bright sun yellow, a bright yellow-green, yellow orange, hot pink and fire engine red. All, but four fabric choices were small scale floral prints. The quilters agreed that in weighing all factors, they would choose today's fabrics over what was available thirty years ago. One woman seemed to sum things up when she said that old 100% cotton fabrics weren't any better than those today, "it was just a different look."<sup>25</sup>

The quilt filling is another thing that has changed considerably over the last thirty years and like the fabrics, was a subject on which quilters expressed a variety of opinions. During the nineteenth century, quilt filling was a make-do and use-what-you-can affair, as was the rest of the quilt. The earliest quilts were filled with wool batting because it was most readily available and could be raised by the settlers themselves. The growing season in Floyd County is really too short for the growing of cotton, although one woman did mention that her mother grew cotton for her quilts during up through the late 1940's. "They'd

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<sup>25</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 3.



have two or three rows across the garden, enough to do a couple of quilts during the winter. After you picked it, you had to lay it down in front of the fireplace and let that stuff sort of get warm and then at night we picked the seed out of it."<sup>26</sup> Wool was actually the best filling used in quilts. It was lightweight, warm, did not knot up in washing like the cotton and was much easier quilted. The mother of one quilter recalled, "We'd put it between cheese cloth and quilt it so it would hold it's place and then put the top and the bottom and tack it [in the wool quilts]."<sup>27</sup> Because the wool fibers would not mat up like the cotton, the batting could be reused. "[My mother-in-law] would give me quilts with wool in them. When these tops and bottoms gave out, we'd wash them. We'd take the wool and fluff it up and with some cards and put that back in the quilts. They were the nicest quilts you've ever seen."<sup>28</sup> Most of the wool was prepared in the home, hand washed and carded. However, in the 1920's, a woolen mill was established near Willis and the wool could be taken

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<sup>26</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 9.

<sup>27</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 16's mother.

<sup>28</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 10.

there to be made into batting "half the size of a quilt and then you used two strips."<sup>29</sup> Once cotton batting became available in county stores, more people began to use it due to the lengthy preparation process required for wool.

The first cotton fillings were quite poor quality with many seeds and other debris unremoved. "It had lumps in it that you couldn't stick a needle through."<sup>30</sup> McKendry states, "There is a rule of thumb in the U.S. that the more seeds to be found in cotton stuffing, the earlier the quilt...Some quilts are made with very little stuffing, particularly the elaborately quilted ones since the thinner filling is easier to penetrate with a needle."<sup>31</sup> The more quilting, the less the chance of mat up in the laundering process. "If you quilted right close together, it stayed in place for lots of washings."<sup>32</sup> In the 1930's, Mountain Mist cotton batting came on the market, and quickly became a top-of-the-line, better quality cotton batting. At this time also, Sears, Roebuck and Company

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<sup>29</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

<sup>30</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 6.

<sup>31</sup> McKendry, 1979, p. 96.

<sup>32</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

began carrying cotton batting in their catalog that was stitched and covered with cheese cloth.<sup>33</sup> One quilter said that the batting that was "stitched to kind of hold it together...was much easier to work with" than the regular foot wide rolls of cotton sold in many county stores.<sup>34</sup> The cotton battings could be purchased in rolls of varying weights from one to three pounds. "Most of the [quilts] they were making for warmth, they would put two pounds of cotton in...They didn't do fancy quilting on that. You couldn't make such small stitches. Of course someone that wanted to make a fancy quilt just put a pound in it so they could quilt it."<sup>35</sup>

Other materials served as filling also. Often worn out blankets or quilts were used, but owing to the thickness, these needed to be tacked rather than quilted. "We called it covering when the outside began to wear thin and needed replacing. Oft times they put another cover over it and left the whole quilt in there just like it was.

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<sup>33</sup> Sears, Roebuck, and Company Catalog (Chicago: fall/winter, 1934/35.

<sup>34</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 6.

<sup>35</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 3.

Then you could tack it."<sup>36</sup> One quilt that was examined had been filled with threads ravelled from old clothes and fabrics a tedious job that produced a striking quilt of the Toad in a Puddle Pattern (Appendix C, PLATES LXXIV and LXXV).

Nearly all quilters today show a preference for the polyester batting which came into widespread use about 1960. Most prefer this batting because it doesn't ball up in washing like the cotton tends to do. "Seems like it fluffs up better and looks prettier."<sup>37</sup> One woman found that if the polyester batting is used in quilts that are washed often, it tends to wash out or work its way through the quilt top. "I have found out that it is not as serviceable as...the Mountain Mist cotton."<sup>38</sup> Another quilter prefers to use cotton blanket sheets as batting. These thin sheets allow the quilter to take tiny stitches and achieve intricate quilting designs.

The washing of quilts was a prime consideration even before they were made. When cotton batting was being used,

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<sup>36</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

<sup>37</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 12.

<sup>38</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 18.

it was found that the closer together the quilting was, the less chance there was for slippage and mat up. The fan pattern was found to work best for this. Once finished, care was taken so that quilts would not have to be washed so often. Muslin covers were made for the quilt ends near the face. As one woman said, "It's better to have your sheet good and long and fold it back over the end and not have to wash your quilts so often."<sup>39</sup>

Like most other conveniences, the washing machine was late in reaching Floyd County. The mothers of all those interviewed washed clothes using a large tub and washboard, as did several of the interviewees themselves. Quilts were washed much as other clothes, however some women remembered treating the "special quilts with more kindness---using a milder soap and not scrubbing so hard. "She just swished them up and down and around and didn't scrub on the washboard with them. She would usually hold them and wash them up and down, up and down or around and around in the tub. Not in hot water. She did a lot of rinsing. She sort of pressed the water out and stretched

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<sup>39</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

them before she hung them on the line and pulled them into shape for them to dry. [She] washed them on a breezy day [so] the wind [would] blow the water out to dry."<sup>40</sup>

Several women remembered that the wool quilts were treated differently also. "You had to be real careful with those wool quilts, especially not to put them in too hot of water. If you did it would shrink that wool and you came out with a terrible looking quilt. They didn't launder them too often..."<sup>41</sup> Another remembered that "they used to switch them...That would knock the dust and stuff out of them and I guess it cleaned them."<sup>42</sup>

The everyday quilts were the ones that took a beating. They were scrubbed none too lightly on the board and rinsed and scrubbed some more. "[It] took two to manage them, because they couldn't wring them or get them to the line with just one person."<sup>43</sup> Wringing the quilts was difficult and they sometimes took days to dry. Because of this, they couldn't be washed just any time. "We wash ours...just once a year because in the summers we have thin ones and we take them off in the fall and wash them. The ones we'd

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<sup>40</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>41</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 1.

<sup>42</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

<sup>43</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 20.

used all winter, we'd take them off and wash them up in the summer when the days are long so they'll dry. Some people don't wash them more than every four or five years. They get pretty soiled then."<sup>44</sup>

Later on, women began washing the quilts in wringer washers, the first of which were powered by gasoline engines.<sup>45</sup> Now most wash quilts in an automatic washer on gentle or delicate setting. Line drying still seems to be preferred over the automatic dryer. However, some like to put the quilt "in the dryer for just a little bit to kind of fluff it up...and then finish it on the line."<sup>46</sup> One woman was very particular about this process. "I use the old fashioned curtain stretchers to stretch my quilts and that pulls all the puckers out. They look practically new when you stretch them out on that. I can't get it all on the curtain stretcher at one time, but I roll part of it up and wrap it in a sheet and keep it from drying. When the part dries that's on the stretcher, I take it off and put the rest of it on. It makes a nice finished job."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 2.

<sup>45</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 13.

<sup>46</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 22.

<sup>47</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

## CHAPTER 7

### QUALITY, CRAFTSMANSHIP AND AESTHETICS

The women interviewed in Floyd County dearly love to quilt. One woman said "I love to quilt more than anything---anything at all."<sup>1</sup> Most people like to think that quilting has always served as an outlet for pent up artistic cravings as it has for those interviewed, but this was not true in all cases. Some women made quilts simply to keep warm. They took no pride in their work, nor did they particularly enjoy it. For them quilting meant days and months of mindless, thankless tedium.

One might assume that women who did not enjoy quilting, would produce quilts of a lesser quality, however, on closer examination this does not seem to be the case. Although the majority of the quilts remaining today are "Special quilts" and not the common everyday variety, it must be remembered that quilts served a purpose. If the

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<sup>1</sup> Statement by a woman (Subject 8) one of twenty-two quilters interviewed by the researcher during the months September through December, 1979. These interviews were tape-recorded and form the foundation of the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project, Floyd County, Virginia, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Department of Clothing, Textiles and Related Art, Tape Collection (Hereinafter cited as Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County).



quality was such that they fell apart in use or laundering, that purpose was not served. Therefore, if a difference does exist in quilts constructed by those enjoying the work and those not, it would appear to lie in the aesthetic beauty of the quilt and not in the quality of workmanship.

It is logical to assume that the early quilters would have been primarily concerned with the quality of materials that went into a quilt and the workmanship. It was necessary for a quilt to be durable and warm and of sturdy construction. Even though the reason for quilting has changed over the years and today has become much more of an art form, these same priorities are reflected by present Floyd County Quilters.

The overriding factor in judging a "good" quilt was considered to be workmanship, primarily if the pieces were joined so the corners came together properly. As one woman said, "I can glance and see that everything is matched up in every seam like it should be".<sup>2</sup> The women placed quilting or the stitches themselves, second in importance. Few said that tiny stitches were as important

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<sup>2</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 6.

as regularity and evenness. If you have long stitches, make them all long, not one long and one short one, but have all your stitches even. I think neatness and workmanship have much to do with the quality of the quilt."<sup>3</sup>

The third most important factor was material. One woman said, "If you're going to put a lot of work on the quilt, by all means you need to have good material, depending on what you're going to use the quilt for. Of course your fancy type quilts that you're going to use mostly as spreads, you couldn't have to use quite such a wearable type thing".<sup>4</sup>

The qualities least mentioned were those dealing most with aesthetic appeal, that of color and pattern. Again, this stems from the time when quilts were made for necessity, when fabrics were used just as they came from the rag bag, often with little thought to their placement.

The craftsmanship ratings given to those interviewed reflect the priority given to workmanship. All that could be rated, were uniformly high, ranging between 3 and 4.7 on

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<sup>3</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 4.

<sup>4</sup> Appalachian Quilt Project, Floyd County, Subject 17.

the five point scale. It is unusual then, that with admittedly little attention paid to quilt design and color, the panel scored the quilters so high on fabric combination choices, an indication of design ability. Of the twenty-one quilters that could be rated, seventeen scored between 3 and 4.58 on the five point scale. (One quilter did not make definite choices, saying only any print fabric could be used.) The following is a listing of panel design ratings and the craftsmanship ratings assigned by the researcher.

TABLE 10

## Subject's Design and Craftsmanship Ratings

Subject Number	Design Rating by Panel	Craftsmanship Rating by Researcher
1	3.4	3.4
2	4.3	4.0
3	2.5	3.0
4	4.0	4.7
5	2.0	4.3
6	3.7	3.8
7	***	4.3
8	1.7	3.2
9	4.3	***
10	3.7	3.9
11	4.3	***
12	4.1	***
13	4.3	3.4
14	2.7	3.7
15	4.5	2.7
16	3.8	4.6
17	3.2	4.3
18	4.0	3.5
19	3.4	2.4
20	3.7	4.4
21	3.9	4.1
22	4.6	3.4

Correlation of Design and Craftsmanship Ratings:

$$r = .021.$$

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\*\* Subject's choices are not sufficient for a rating.

\*\*\* Researcher saw no quilts made by this subject.

Although both the Craftsmanship and Design Ability Ratings are high overall, no repeated individual correlations exist. If positive individual correlations between the two do exist, they may not be apparent in this study for several reasons. Fabric choices made by those interviewed were often hard for the panel to judge because they referred to only one block of the quilt. It was difficult for the panel to perceive what the overall effect of the quilt would be. In addition, Craftsmanship Ratings were based on the quilts constructed by those interviewed and shown to the researcher. These quilts varied in number from one to eight, often spanned a number of years and varied in the quality of workmanship. It was not known if the quilts which were examined were truly representative of the individual's work. Finally, most of those interviewed were elderly. More than once, mention was made of the fact that they were no longer able to quilt as well as they had in the past. Many of the women's early quilts had been used and worn out or passed on to family members and were not available for examination.

## CHAPTER 8

### A COMPARISON OF WASHINGTON COUNTY AND FLOYD COUNTY QUILTS

A comparison of quilt history in Washington County, Virginia<sup>1</sup> and Floyd County, Virginia, reveals that the practice of quilting developed along similar lines, even though certain geographic and economic conditions were quite different. Those settling Washington County, as in Floyd County, were primarily of Scotch-Irish descent.<sup>2</sup> However, Washington County became a well established and prosperous county in the latter eighteenth century due to its location in the western valley of Virginia, contrasting greatly with the isolated mountain terrain of Floyd County (Appendix B, FIGURE 3). The valley was heavily traveled, leading settlers to the new lands of Tennessee and areas further west. Floyd County, on the other hand, had a minimum of roads that were even passable and did not lie along any well traveled routes, trade or otherwise.

Although Washington County lies eighty miles southwest of Floyd County, the social aspect of quilting and materials used in early days were identical. Quilting provided

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<sup>1</sup> McKinney, 1979.

<sup>2</sup> Leyburn, 1962.

an opportunity for women to get together at a time when travel was difficult. Quilt gatherings or "quiltin's" were combinations of work and pleasure, and often included another activity such as shucking corn. Quilts in both counties were constructed primarily of scrap fabrics or whatever else was on hand. Woven cloth containers, particularly the printed feed bags of the 1930's through 1950's were important quilt fabric sources in both Floyd and Washington County.

Even quilt patterns showed a decided similarity. Nine Diamond was the one most people learned on and the Crazy Quilt, Flower Garden and Trip Around the World were popular as well (TABLE 11).

However, at an early date differences in the quilts of Washington and Floyd County began to appear. As early as 1870, Washington County showed quilts having elaborate and intricate stitching patterns.<sup>3</sup> Early Floyd County quilts showed no such stitching until over three-quarters of a century later. This can be attributed to the greater prosperity of Washington County during those years,<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> McKinney, 1979, pp. 165, 167, 168.

<sup>4</sup> Summers, 1903.

TABLE 11

Quilts Photographed in Both Washington and Floyd County<sup>4</sup>

Designs	Number Photographed in Washington County*	Number Photographed in Floyd County**
Nine Diamond	6	3
Crazy Quilt	11	8
Flower Garden	6	7
Trip Around the World	6	6
Double Wedding Ring	3	4
Dresden Plate	4	2
Log Cabin	1	5
Friendship (Odd Feller)	1	4
Drunkard's Path (Fool's Puzzle)	1	4
Eight Pointed Star	4	3
Irish Chain	2	3
Churn Dash (Monkey Wrench)	1	3
Basket	2	2
Butterfly	1	2
String Quilt	3	2
Double Bow (Bow Tie)	2	2
Four Patch	1	2
Sampler	3	1
Tumbling Block (Baby Blocks)	1	1
Joseph's Coat	1	1
Philadelphia Patch (Pineapple, Lincoln's Platform)	1	1

\* McKinney, 1979, p. 113.

\*\* Appendix A, ITEM 10.

<sup>4</sup> In twenty-two interviews in Washington County, Virginia, forty-nine quilts were photographed. During the same number of interviews in Floyd County, Virginia, sixty-one quilts were photographed.



allowing women more time for their quilting. Not only was there a large influx of travelers and ideas from outside Washington County, but the women were able to travel more themselves. For these reasons, new ideas caught on quickly. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the fad was to make Crazy Quilts from exotic fabrics such as satin, silk and velvet. This was more pronounced in Washington County<sup>5</sup> than in Floyd County, where Crazy Quilts were primarily of woolen fabric because it was what most people wore (Appendix C, PLATES LV-LXIII).

The numbers of designs photographed seem to show a greater variety of patterns in Floyd County than in Washington County. McKinney photographed forty-nine different Washington County quilt patterns during twenty-two interviews<sup>6</sup> and sixty-one different patterns were photographed in Floyd County during the same number of interviews.<sup>7</sup> This is unusual because Washington County has not in the past nor to this day experienced the isolated conditions prevalent in Floyd County. One would assume that greater outside influence would increase the number of

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<sup>5</sup> McKinney, 1979, pp. 144, 145, 156, 148.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 1979, p. 113.

<sup>7</sup> Appendix A, ITEM 10.

quilt designs, but this does not appear to be the case. Twenty-two of those quilts photographed, were pattern repeats between the two counties. In this study, no clear pattern of the differing designs of each county can be seen (TABLE 11).

Floyd County also shows a greater design flexibility. The quilters have frequently altered traditional designs to fit their own aesthetic values (Appendix C, PLATES LXXVI and LXXVII). Owing to a close association with nature and their environment, Floyd County quilters have been able to achieve an understanding of process and method, prerequisites for creative activity, which had not been observed in most Washington County quilts. Many Floyd County quilts use more daring color combinations (Appendix C, PLATES LXXVIII and LXXIX), more contrasting values and in general have a more graphic appearance than the Washington County quilts (Appendix C, LXXX-LXXXVII).

Overall, Floyd County appears to exhibit a better design ability than Washington County. An understanding of color and space relationships is evident even in those quilts used for everyday (Appendix C, PLATES LXXXIII-LXXXVI). This understanding may well stem from economic

conditions. As Washington County grew in prosperity, women's minds were filled with thoughts of social and civic engagements, travel and fashion. Often domestic help could be hired to perform mundane household tasks. The Floyd, County women, however, while they hoed the fields or gardens, cleaned house, washed clothes or worked in factories, were allowed considerable time for contemplation, a situation whereby quilts could be planned in the mind prior to actual construction.

Judging from the Washington County quilts available for study, it appears that Floyd County quilters prefer brighter, more intense colors than the women of Washington County. Again, this can probably be attributed to the Floyd County quilter's close association with natural surroundings from early spring to late summer when these colors are most apparent.

## CHAPTER 9

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The following is a short summary of points relating to each of the four stated objectives for the study.

- I. To examine the fiber, color and design of the hand-made quilts of Floyd County in relation to the geographic, economic and cultural environment.

The geographic feature which through the years has had the strongest influence on quilts has been isolation due to surface terrain. Floyd County has not in the past nor does it presently lie along a major trade route. In the nineteenth century, few roads existed and those that did exist, were barely more than animal trails. It was not until the late 1930's that any roads were hard surfaced and then only allowed for a minimum of travel.

Quilts in the county were first constructed of wool and linen. Both were fibers that could be locally produced. The growing season for cotton proved too short and its use became widespread only after it was industrially manufactured elsewhere.

Colors in early quilts were limited to those derived from plants indigenous to the locality and dyes which could

be purchased at local stores. Prior to the twentieth century, these were primarily confined to indigo, logwood, madder, turkey red and spanish brown (Appendix A, ITEM 11). Due to difficulty in dyeing, linen was most often bleached or left in the natural gray state. By the turn of the century, packaged annaline dyes were sold throughout the county. Plant dyes were then seldom used and colors in quilts followed those available on the commercial market. The first cotton cloths appeared in a variety of colors, but in muted, low intensity shades.

Quilt designs in early days were limited to those brought to the area with the settlers, sent by relatives living elsewhere or observed in periodicals. All quilt patterns in Floyd County that were examined or referred to, are known in other parts of the country. Due to the geographical isolation and limited travel, and were transmitted to other areas.

The primary economic factor to have influenced Floyd County quilts is the lack of industrial concerns. Because the economy was agriculturally based, food was abundant, but the money with which to buy commercial goods was not. This is most evident in the fabrics from which quilts were

constructed. In the past, materials were salvaged from whatever happened to be on hand. Prior to the twentieth century, this included the better parts of old woolen clothes and the cloth bags in which products such as sugar, flour and animal feed were packaged. The latter continued to be used through the first half of the twentieth century. The prints and colors of the printed feed sacks during the 1930's influenced the color schemes of quilts in that period. In the past and yet today, scraps from clothing construction are widely used in quilts. It is an inherent trait of the Scotch-Irish people, from which many Floyd natives are descended, to make use of what is at hand, with a minimum of waste. As Leyburn states, the Scotch-Irish "like other Calvinists believed in self reliance, improving their own condition in life, thrift and hard work..."<sup>1</sup> A good many quilters still have boxes of even the smallest remnants saved from twenty years or more.

The major cultural influence on quilts has been the close family and community ties among county residents. This included giving and trading fabric scraps and quilt patterns as well as sharing in the actual quilting itself.

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<sup>1</sup> Leyburn, 1962, p. 323.

Until recent years, quilts were seldom the handwork of one individual, but joint ventures from design to construction.

The influence of these geographic, economic and cultural factors have helped Floyd County quilters to make a quilt unlike any others, a unique expression of their being.

II. To Study the development of the homemade quilts of Floyd County in an attempt to define area aesthetics.

Leyburn, the sociologist, believes that the Scotch-Irish were representative of Americans in general during the nineteenth century--primarily interested in economic activities and virtually "deaf, dumb and blind" in the realm of aesthetics.<sup>2</sup> He asserts that their architecture was purely functional and that their art was essentially non-existent as was what might be called folk art if that term "implies work that has the extra touch of originality and verve that transforms a useful object into a pleasant bit of handicraft."<sup>3</sup> By this definition, quilts would fall under the heading of folk art. Truly then, Leyburn cannot have taken quilts into consideration in making such statements. For even if such an artistic deficiency did exist early in the nineteenth century, it is extraordinary how such perfection of composition was achieved by the fourth quarter of that century (Appendix C, PLATES LXXX and LXXXI), without prior experience.

It is rather harsh to say that the Scotch-Irish had

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



nothing of aesthetic value, for that is a term vague and difficult to define rather like prejudice. Because one does not exhibit prejudice openly, does not mean that it does not exist. So it is with Appalachian or Scotch-Irish aesthetics. Because it is not evident to a sociologist or of a value commonly accepted, does not mean that the aesthetic value does not exist.

Judging from the quilts examined, Floyd County aesthetics are defined as being closely related to nature and function. Colors are generally pure in the primary and secondary range. Emphasis is placed on those colors found in plantlife such as red, yellow, orange and green. Blue is used, but most often as a background color, i.e. the sky. Design lines are moderately complex, leaning more toward the complex, with function as an overriding factor.

III. To determine if those quilters exhibiting the best craftsmanship also exhibit the best design ability.

In this study, quilt craftsmanship was not shown to relate to design ability. The primary reason for this was the functional use of quilts. All needed to be of high quality craftsmanship to fulfill the function of warm, usable bedcovers. Therefore, the women who found quilting merely a tedious but necessary job and received no pleasure from the task, still constructed a quilt of high quality craftsmanship. The difference then between the enjoyment levels of quilters should be more evident in the design quality--Women who experienced no enjoyment, giving little thought to placement of colors or overall composition.

In recent years, now that quilts are no longer recognized as objects to receive hard use, the craftsmanship appears to correlate more closely with design ability, but this cannot be shown from the available data in this study (Chapter 7, p. 97).

IV. To examine the handmade quilts of Floyd County in relation to those of Washington County, another county in Appalachian Virginia.

Quilting in two of Virginia's Appalachian Counties, Floyd and Washington, historically developed along similar lines. Those settling both areas were primarily of Scotch-Irish origin as well as some of English and German descent. The social aspect of quilting and early fabrics were the same. However, Washington County, being located in Virginia's well-traveled western valley, was able to achieve an early prosperity far beyond that of the more inaccessible Floyd County.

The increased leisure time of Washington County home-makers is evident in the elaborate and intricate stitching patterns of quilts as early as 1870. Such designs were not seen in Floyd County until after the mid twentieth century. The lesser prosperity of Floyd County is also evident in quilt fabrics, particularly those in the Crazy Quilt. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the fashion was to make this quilt of exotic materials such as silk, satin or velvet. These were commonly constructed in Washington County, however, Crazy Quilts observed in Floyd

County were primarily constructed of various woolen fabrics.

In recent years, Floyd County has shown greater variety of quilt designs constructed and a greater degree of flexibility in altering established quilt patterns to form modern aesthetic compositions. Floyd County quilters show an understanding of color and space relationships, process and method, lacking in most quilts of Washington County.

## CHAPTER 10

### CONCLUSIONS

For generations, women in all walks of life have used quilting as an outlet for creative activity. Perhaps one reason for the continued interest in this art form is its use of a familiar medium. There seems to be something comforting about working with fabric--what it will do and what it will not is so well known. This relationship with fabric begins in childhood and as women turn to use fabric for creative expression, it beckons as an old friend, helping to interpret personal visions of shape and color harmony.

Just as women's personal visions have changed over the years, so has the appearance of quilts. "Before quilts", meaning not only before quilts were made to sell,<sup>1</sup> but before fabrics were plentiful, before dyes were fast and before leisure time, look understandably different from those of more recent origin. Passing years have mellowed prints and colors, blending them in ways that make quilts with ragged edges look regal and all the more appealing for their wear. These "before quilts" were most often

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<sup>1</sup> McKendry, 1979.

geometric patterns that could be made quickly by folding a block of paper. Many were constructed in blocks with joinings, allowing the quilter to use somewhat unrelated scraps of fabric and yet achieve a sense of unity.

Although these simple geometric blocks still appear in the work of many contemporary quilters, synthetic fabrics, clear, bright colors and puffy batts have given quilts a new look: one not always associated with the old patterns (Appendix C, PLATES LXXVI, LXXXVI, and LXXXVII). Fabrics are now available in a variety of fibers and in myriads of colors that do not crock or fade. Battings no longer pack down into hard lumps that resist needles, but instead retain loft through numerous washings. But while these new developments in fabrics and fillings have influenced the appearance of modern quilts, other factors have contributed to the "new look" as well.

Women in Floyd County today quilt for pleasure and for the sheer enjoyment of artistic creation. They now have idle hours to fill where none existed before. It is only natural that they should turn to the familiar to look for such leisure activity. These women have found that quilting, like anything else no longer a necessity, offers more

enjoyment now that it has ceased to be a "forced" endeavor. Floyd County quilts today are usually carefully planned and executed. Fabrics are skillfully coordinated, often with days or weeks passing before decisions are made.

The one unchanging characteristic of Floyd County quilters over the years, is their consciousness and complete understanding of the relation of what they do to the environment. This awareness of process and method has formed a common bond through the years.

Although Floyd County quilters apparently do not consciously consider the composition, design and color of their quilts to be of primary importance, unconsciously they do. Perttu Mentula, one of Finland's leading furniture designers, has paraphrased the saying "You can tell a man by the company he keeps" to "You can judge a man by the environment he frequents".<sup>2</sup> He believes that design which begins as a reflection of the environment, develops naturally into one of grace and beauty. For many years,

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<sup>2</sup> Perttu Mentula. "National and International Design", Address to Finland Study Abroad Students from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, at the University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland, July 17, 1979.

Finland has been isolated by her language and by her geographic location along the Russian border. Nonetheless, Finland is widely recognized as a leader in the world of design. Like the geographically isolated Finns, the Floyd County quilters have absorbed a well developed sense of balance, proportion and color, from close association with nature in scenic surroundings.

A profound sadness prevades our consideration of the remnants of a tradition that is no longer in full flavor. Although the practice of quilting endures, the end of an era has been reached. Quilts will never regain their former stature and importance. In studying the history of quilts, one tastes the bitter and the sweet--the bitterness of a collection to which there will be no additions and the sweetness of knowing that quilts live on. Although the look has changed, they will continue to be reflections and expressions of women, their families and the society in which they live.



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APPENDIX A

ITEM 1  
Interview Questions

1. Where were you born?
2. When were you born?
3. When did you move to Floyd County?
4. Were your parents born in Floyd County? Grandparents?
5. If so, do you know even they first came to Floyd County?
6. Do you know what country in Europe your family came from?
7. Do you have a family Bible?
8. What do you and/or your husband do for a living?
9. What did your parents and grandparents do for a living?
10. When did you first begin making quilts?
11. How did you learn to make quilts? Who taught you?
12. Why did you make quilts? then and now.
13. Do you remember your first quilt? What did it look like? What was it called? What year would that have been?
14. Can you remember any quilts your grandmother or mother made? What were they called and what did they look like?
15. Did they always make the same quilts or like to make different ones?
16. Do you know where they got their designs?
17. Did your mother and grandmother have "special quilts" in addition to their everyday quilts?

ITEM 1 (Continued):  
Interview Questions

18. What are your quilts used for?
19. Was there a certain size quilt always made?
20. Where did the fabrics come from in your grandmother's or mother's day?
21. What kinds of fabrics were used for the backing?
22. Are the fabrics you use now in your quilts different from those used 30 years ago? How are they different? Why did you change? Which do you like best?
23. What did your grandmother or mother use for filling?
24. What do you use now? Did you ever raise your own cotton or sheep?
25. Were there certain stitching patterns used by your grandmother or mother? What determined these?
26. Did your grandmother or mother use a frame or a hoop for quilting? What do you use now?
27. When you see what you would call a really good quilt, what makes it good?
28. Did your grandmother or mother have a set of certain things they expected from their quilts? Do you?
29. Do you recall your grandmother or mother using a sewing machine to piece quilts? Do you?
30. How did your grandmother or mother wash their quilts? How do you?
31. Do you know how long it would have taken your grandmother or mother to make a quilt? How many would she have made in a year? Did she quilt year 'round?

ITEM 1 (Continued):  
Interview Questions

32. How would your mother have copied the stitching designs onto the quilt? How do you?
33. What can you tell me about quiltin's?
34. Do you know any quilting rhymes or superstitions?
35. When you decide to make a quilt, how do you decide which design to make?
36. Have you ever done a design that you had never seen before---something you must made up?



ITEM 2

Release Form

APPALACHIAN ORAL HISTORY QUILT PROJECT

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Project Director:

RELEASE

Dr. Joan Boles  
Assistant Professor  
Clothing, Textiles  
and Related Art

Advisory Council:

Dean Laura Jane  
Harper  
Dean, Home Economics

Dr. Mary Helen  
Marshall  
Extension Specialist  
Clothing, Textiles,  
and Related Art

Susan Davis  
Cathering McKinney  
Graduate Teaching  
Assistants  
Clothing, Textiles,  
and Related Art

WITNESS:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, being of legal age, hereby consent and authorize the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project, its successors, legal representatives and assigns, to use and reproduce photographs of my quilts and/or to use all or any part of statements I made during my conversations with the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project or its assigned production personnel, and to circulate the same for any and all purposes, including publication and advertising related to any such publication. No representations have been made of me, and I accept that full payment for my services will be in the form of a copy of those materials produced by the Appalachian Oral History Quilt Project that involve the use of me as one of their contacts. No further claim of whatsoever nature will be made by me. I understand that anonymity will be maintained in all publications, but that a record of participants will be kept by the "project" for use in return interviews.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

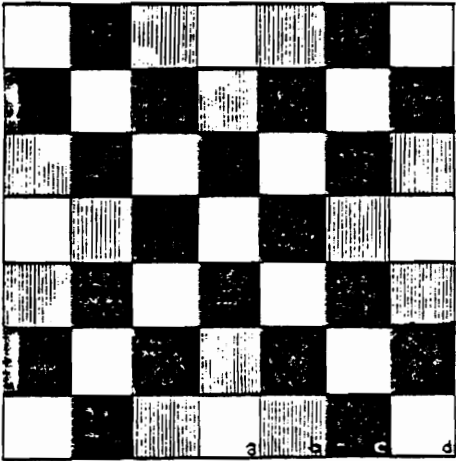
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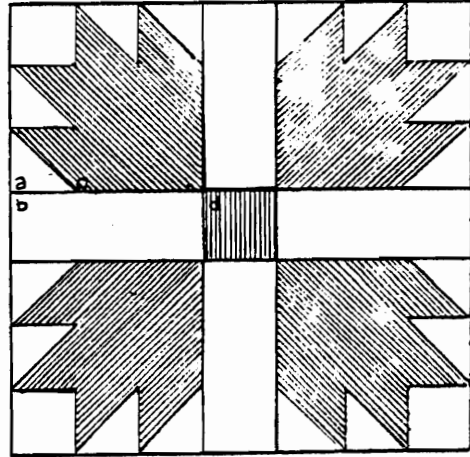
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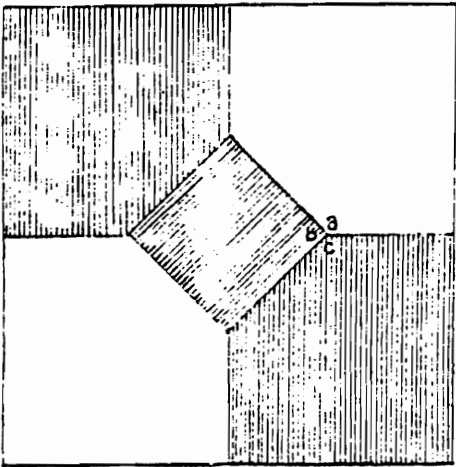
QUILT BLOCKS



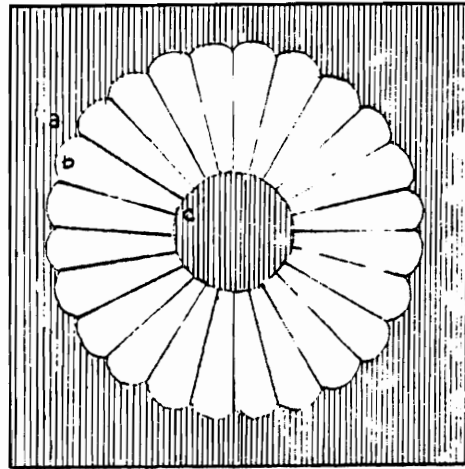
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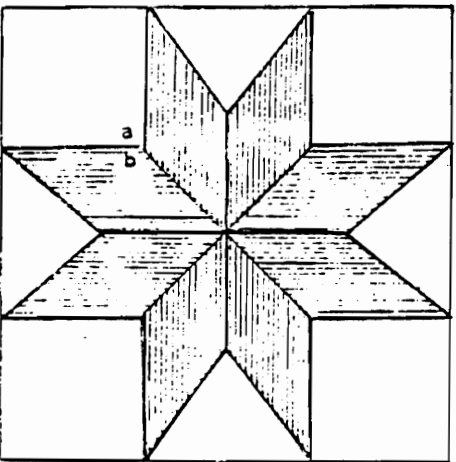
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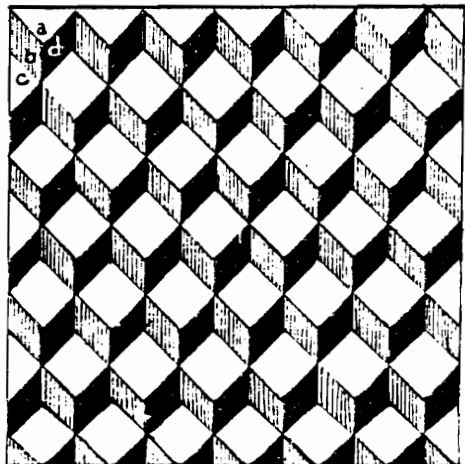
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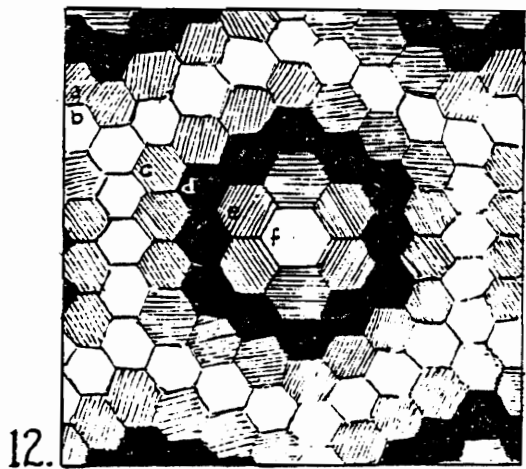
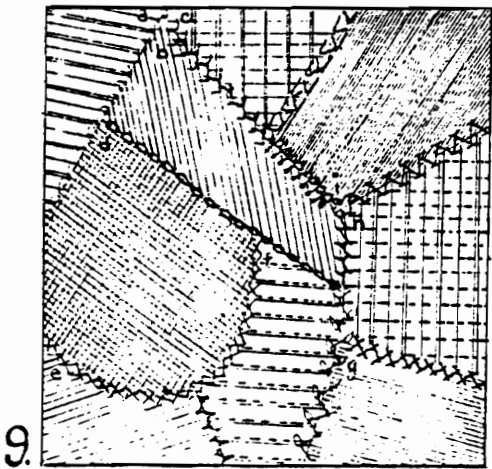
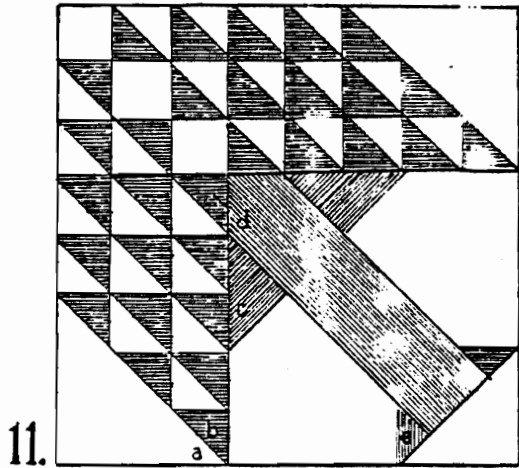
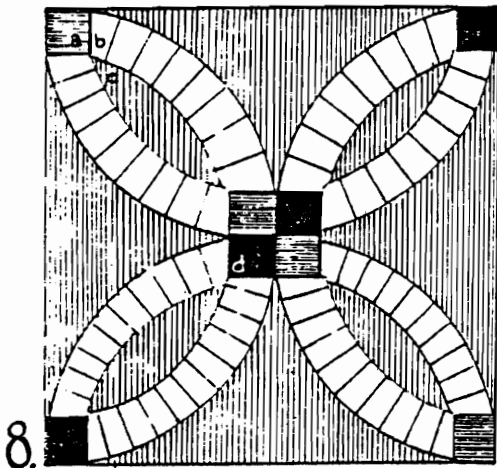
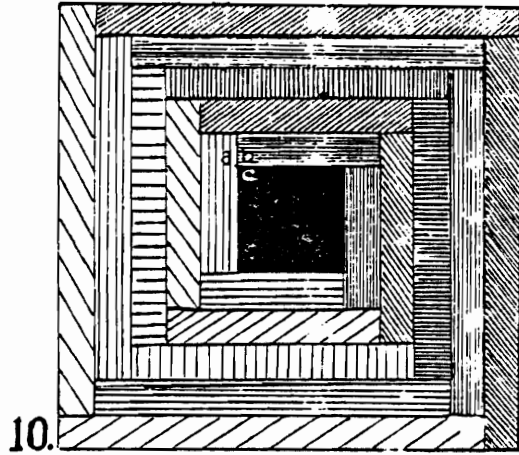
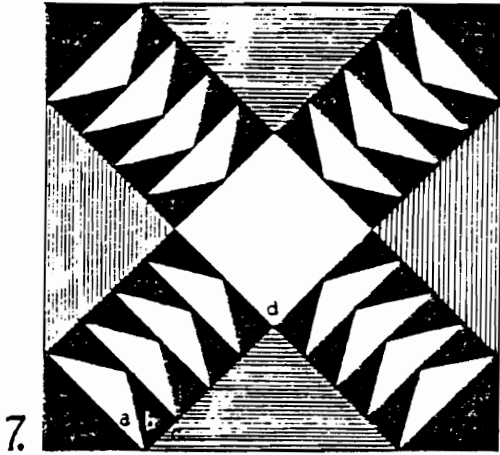
3.



6.

ITEM 3 (Continued)

Quilt Blocks



## ITEM 4

## Desing/Fabric Preference Sheet

Name of interviewee \_\_\_\_\_

Quilt block chosen \_\_\_\_\_

Fiber sample chosen \_\_\_\_\_

Color scheme chosen \_\_\_\_\_

Fabric combinations chosen \_\_\_\_\_

Scale

Excellent	5
Good	4
Fair	3
Poor	2
Very Poor	1

1. Are the chosen fabrics harmonious in color? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Are the chosen fabrics pleasing in intensity? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Are the prints chosen harmonious in motif? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Are the chosen fabrics appropriate to the designated quilt block? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Are the chosen fabrics arranged in a pleasing manner within the designated quilt block? \_\_\_\_\_

Overall average rating \_\_\_\_\_

## ITEM 5

## \*Craftsmanship Rating

Scale

Excellent	5
Good	4
Fair	3
Poor	2
Very Poor	1

1. Stitches per inch \_\_\_\_\_
2. Piece joinings \_\_\_\_\_
3. Color combinations \_\_\_\_\_
4. Pattern combinations \_\_\_\_\_
5. Overall neatness \_\_\_\_\_

Overall average rating \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM 6

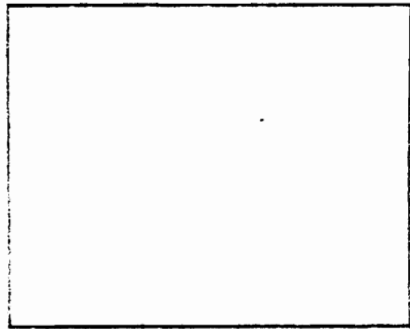
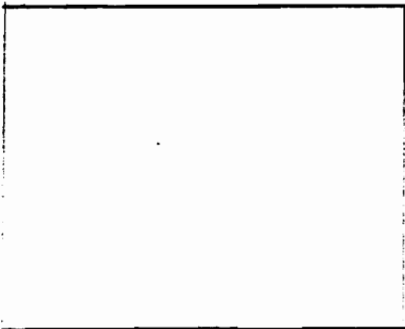
Quilt Record Sheet

Roll# \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Picture \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name of interviewee \_\_\_\_\_
2. Name of quilt maker (relation) \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name of quilt design \_\_\_\_\_
4. Approximate age of quilt \_\_\_\_\_
5. Size of quilt \_\_\_\_\_
6. Size of quilt block \_\_\_\_\_
7. Quilting design \_\_\_\_\_
8. Approximate stitches per inch \_\_\_\_\_
9. Craftsmanship rating\* \_\_\_\_\_
10. Type of material used (fiber) for:  
    Quilt top \_\_\_\_\_  
    Filling \_\_\_\_\_  
    Backing \_\_\_\_\_



## ITEM 7

## Bibliographic sort card key

- \*1. European background of App. people
- \*2. Character traits of American pioneers
- \*3. Hardships and exploitation
- 4.
- 5. County history (general)
- \*6. towns in county
- \*7. demographic data
- \*8. transportation and roads
- \*9. economic conditions
- \*10. social activities besides quilting
- \*11. household duties includes other textile related duties such as weaving, knitting, etc.
- \*12. farm duties
- \*13. European ancestry of interviewees
- 14. Occupations
- \*15. Quilt names and designs
- 16. Birthplace
- \*17. Religious or symbolic sig.
- \*18. Significant for materials used
- \*19. Significant for technical skills
- \*20. First quilts
- \*21. Name and design relationship
- \*22. Source of inspiration (pattern)
- \*23. Purpose includes p. of making and p. of use
- \*24. Original designs
- \*25. Materials for quilt tops
- \*26. Findings (thread, needles, thimbles, etc.)
- \*27. Polyester knits
- \*28. materials for filling
- 29. "Special quilts"
- 30. Color
- \*31. materials for lining & joinings
- \*32. finishing
- 33. old quilt materials & difference from today
- \*34. Materials influence on design
- \*35. Materials influence on size
- \*36. Places materials obtained

---

\* items used by McKinney, 1979.

## ITEM 7 (Continued):

## Bibliographic sort card key

- \*37. Purpose of borders
- \*38. economic conditions influence on materials
- 39. Uses
- \*40. Significance of materials used resourcefulness
- \*41. Ingenuity and imagination
- \*42. Indicator of purpose
- \*43. Record of Clothing
- \*44. Reflection of times
- \*45. Number quilts made a year
- \*46. Time of year made
- \*47. Learning to quilt & sew
- 48. "good" quilt
- 49. Transferring designs
- \*50. Quilting patterns
- \*51. Reasons for using patterns
- \*52. Tacking vs. quilting
- \*53. Embroidery stitches (esp. on crazy quilts)
- 54.
- \*55. Laying on designs
- \*56. Standards
- \*57. Use of sewing machine
- 58.
- 59.
- \*60. washing quilts/clothing
- \*62. Where set up
- 63.
- 64.
- \*65. Quiltin's
- 66. Superstitions or rhymes
- 67. Deciding to make a quilt
- 68. Quilting steps
- 69. Quilting tips
- 70.
- 71.
- 72.
- 73.
- 74.
- \*75. Quilts as gifts

---

\* items used by McKinney, 1979.



## ITEM 7 (Continued):

## Bibliographic sort card key

- \*76. Quilts in times of need
- \*77. friendly gesture
- \*78. Money raiser
- \*79. Heirlooms
- \*80. Company
- \*81. Pride and enjoyment
- \*82. Dowry
- \*83. Groups in which people quilt
- \*84. Quilts in fairs
- \*85. Men and quilts
- 86.
- \*87. Blankets, feather beds, and other covers (not pieced)  
or bed surfaces
- 88. Dunn's woolen mill
- 89. Early U.S. quilting
- 90.
- 91.

---

\* items used by McKinney, 1979.

## ITEM 8

Declaration by the Freemen of Fincastle County  
January 20, 1775

"To the Honourable Peyton Randolph, Esquire, Richard Henry Lee, George Washington, Patrick Henry, Junior, Richard Bland, Benjamin Harrison and Edmund Pendleton, Esquires, the delegates from this colony who attended the Continental Congress held at Philadelphia: Gentlemen: Had it not been for our remote situation, and the Indian war which we were lately engaged in, to chastise these cruel and savage people to the many murders and depredations they have committed amongst us, now happily terminated under the auspices of our present worthy Governor...we should have before this time made known to you our thankfulness for the very important services you have rendered to your country...Your noble efforts for reconciling the mother country and the colonies, on rational and constitutional principles, and your passifick, steady and uniform conduct in that arduous work, immortalize you in the annals of your country. We heartily concur in your resolutions and shall, in every instance, strictly and invariable adhere thereto.

We assure you, gentlemen, and all our countrymen, that we are a people whose hearts overflow with love and duty to our lawful Sovereign, George the Third...that we are willing to risk our lives in the service of his Majesty for the support of the Protestant Religion, and the rights and liberties of his subjects, as they have been established by compact, Law and Ancient Charters. We are heartily grieved at the differences between the parent state and the colonies, and most urgently wish to see harmony restored on an equitable basis and by the most lenient measures that can be devised by the heart of men. Many of us and our forefathers left our native land, considering it as a Kingdom subjected to inordinate power; we crossed the Atlantic and explored this then wilderness, bordering on many Natives or Savages and surrounded by mountains almost inaccessible to any but those various Savages, who have insistantly been committing depredations on us since our first settling the Country. These fatigues and dangers were patiently encountered, supported by the pleasing hope of enjoying these rights and liberties which had been granted to Virginians, and denied to our posterity; but even to this remote region the hand

## ITEM 8 (Continued):

Declaration by the Freemen of Fincastle County  
January 20, 1775

of enmity and unconstitutional power hath proceeded us to strip of that liberty and property with which God, Nature, and the Rights of Humanity have visited us. We are ready and willing to contribute all in our power for the support of his Majesty's Government if applied to considerately, and when grants are made by our own Representatives, but cannot think of submitting our liberty or property to the power of a venal British Parliament, or the will of a greedy ministry.

We by no means desire to shake off our duty or allegiance to our lawful Sovereign, but on the contrary shall ever glory in being the royal subjects of the Protestant Prince, descended from such illustrious progenitors, so long as we can enjoy the free exercise of our religion as Protestants, and of our liberties and properties as British subjects. But if no pacific measures shall be proposed or adopted by Great Britain, and our enemies will attempt to dragoon us out of these inestimable privileges which we are entitled to as subjects, and to reduce us to a state of clavery, we declare that we are deliberately determined never to surrender them to any power upon earth but at the expense of our lives.

These are real though unpolished sentiments of liberty, and in them we are resolved to live or die."

From the American Archives, 4th Series, 1st Volume, p. 1166.

## ITEM 9

## Quilts Subjects Remembered Their Mothers Making

<u>Design</u>	<u>Times Mentioned</u>
Nine Diamond	13
Double Wedding Ring	7
Log Cabin	6
Crazy Quilt	6
Flower Garden	5
Friendship	4
Block Album	3
Lone Star	3
Maple Leaf	3
Fan	3
Basket	3
Turkey Tracks	3
Drunkard's Path	3
Churn Dash	2
Dutch Girl	2
Save All	2
Lincoln's Platform	2
Trip Around the World	2
Wild Goose Chase	2
Bow Tie	2
Sunflower	1
Shoo Fly	1
Double Rose	1
Spool Quilt	1
Sugar Loaf	1
Missouri Rose	1
Broken Star	1
Zig-Zag	1
Windmill	1
Variable Star	1
Eight-Cornered Star	1
Tennessee Troubles	1
Flying Geese	1
Tulip	1
Double Irish Chain	1

## ITEM 10

## Floyd County Quilts Photographed

Design	Number Photographed	Design	Number Photographed
Crazy Quilt	8	Save All	1
Flower Garden	7	Sunflower	1
Trip Around the World	6	Turn About	1
Log Cabin	5	Tumbling Block	1
Double Wedding Ring	4	Homespun	1
Lone Star	5	Rebel Patch	1
Friendship	4	New York Beauty	1
Drunkard's Path	4	May Basket	1
Eight Pointed Star	3	Walls of Troy	1
Maple Leaf	3	Six Pointed Star	1
Irish Chain	3	Windmill	1
Curn Dash	3	Wild Goose Chase	1
Nine Diamond	3	Tile Wedding Ring	1
Dutch Girl	3	Starry Path	1
Basket	2	Brick Quilt	1
Spool Quilt	2	Joseph's Coat	1
Butterfly	2	Pinwheel	1
String Quilt	2	Tree of Paradise	1
Flower Basket	2	Rail Fence	1
Fan	2	Philadelphia Patch	1
Double Bow	2	Block Album	1
Bear Paw	2	Granny Star	1
Four Patch	2	Plain Thinking	1
Dresden Plate	2	Ladies Fancy	1
Dahlia	2	Tree of Life	1
State Birds	1	White Dove	1
Sampler	1	Waves on the Ocean	1
Lancaster Rose	1	Whirlygig	1
Kansas Dugout	1	Mosaic	1
Texas Star	1	Wedding Ring	1
Goose Tracks	1		

## ITEM 11

Auction Listing for  
A & L Slusher Greasy Creek Store, November 4, 1852

	<u>Goods</u>	<u>Price</u>
	1 Lot Canvas	1.00
	3 Yards Calico @ .12/yd.	.36
	5 Yards Calico @ .07½/yd.	.38
	12 Yards Calico @ .15/yd.	1.80
	7½ Yards Calico @ .19/yd.	1.43
	6½ Yards Calico @ .15/yd.	.97½
	11½ Yards Mulsin Delane @ .20/yd.	2.25
	5½ Yards Calico @ .08/yd.	.44
	11 Yards Alpaca @ .40/yd.	4.40
	29 Yards Aplaca @ .33/yd.	9.57
	8½ Yards Alpaca Black @.30/yd.	2.47½
	11½ Yards Lawn @ .16/yd.	1.84
	10 Yards Flannel @ .25/yd.	2.50
	35½ Yards Curtain Calico @ .07/yd.	3.20
	21 Yards Check Gingham @ .11/yd.	2.31
	10½ Yards Check Gingham @ .15/yd.	1.25
10	¾ Yards Check Gingham @ .15/yd.	1.65
	6 Yards Casimere	9.00
	2 Yards Boradcloth @ 2.45/yd.	4.90
	1 Yard Satin	1.88
	1½ Yards Irish Linen @ .42½/yd.	.64
	5½ Yards Irish Linen @ .37½/yd.	1.92
	3 Yards Irish Linen @ .52½/Yd	1.57
	6 Yards Dotted Muslin @ .20/yd.	1.20
	22 Yards Cambrick @ .15/yd.	3.30
	8½ Yards Cambrick @ .20/yd.	1.08
	13 Yards Plaid Alpaca @ .37½/yd.	4.88
	22½ Yards Bleached @ .13/yd	2.97
	3 Yards Pant Stuff @ .37½/yd.	1.12
	1 Yard Serge	.25
	1½ Yards Drilling	.17
	3 Yards Casimere @ .70/yd.	2.10
	11 ounces Turkey Red @ .09/oz.	.99
	1 pound Logwood extract	.25
	1½ ounce Indigo	.16
	1½ pounds Madder	.25
	2 pounds Spanish Brown	.25

Floyd County Courthouse Records, Floyd, Virginia.

**APPENDIX B**

• GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF INTERVIEWEES

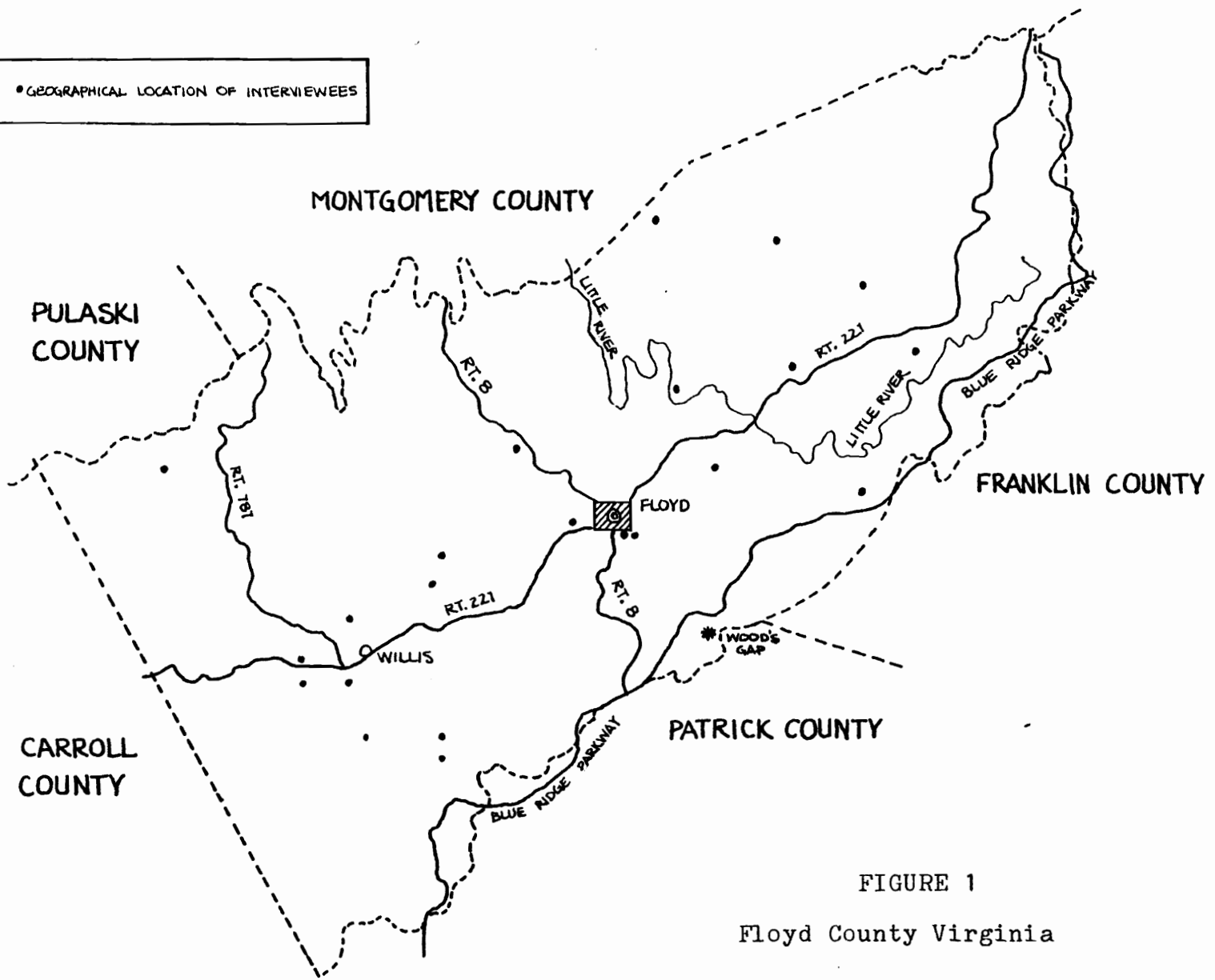


FIGURE 1

Floyd County Virginia



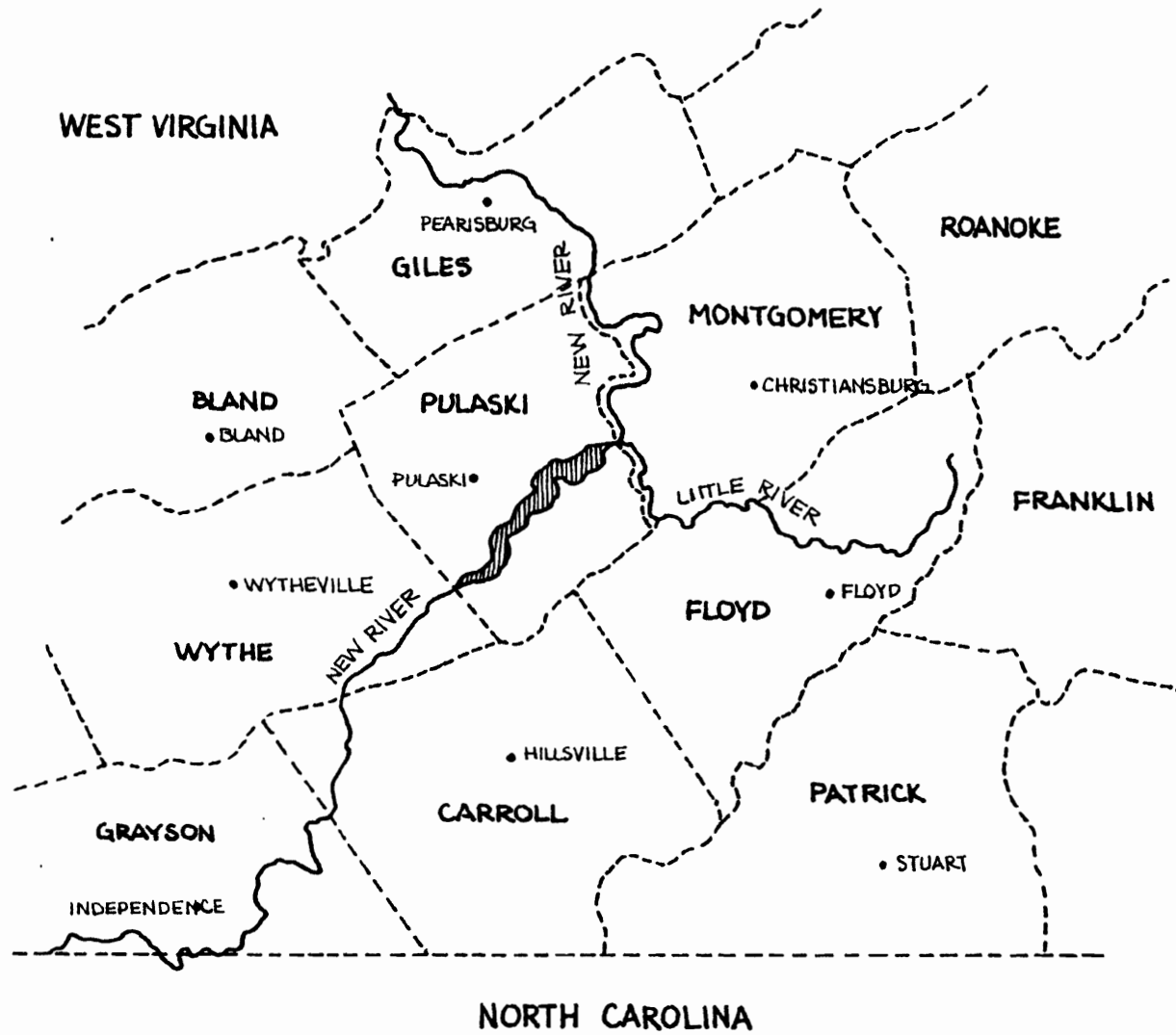


FIGURE 2  
The New River Valley

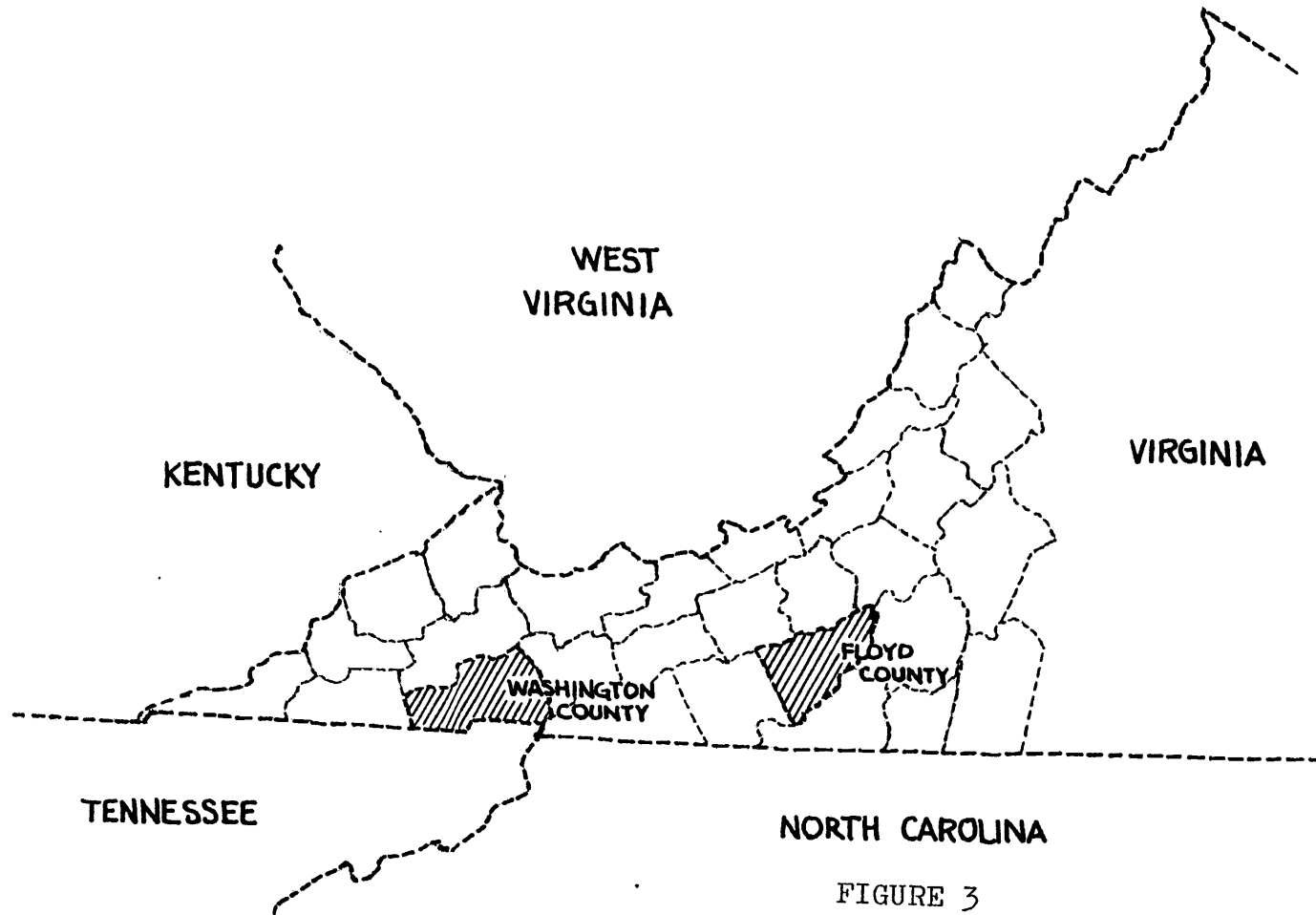


FIGURE 3  
Southwest Virginia

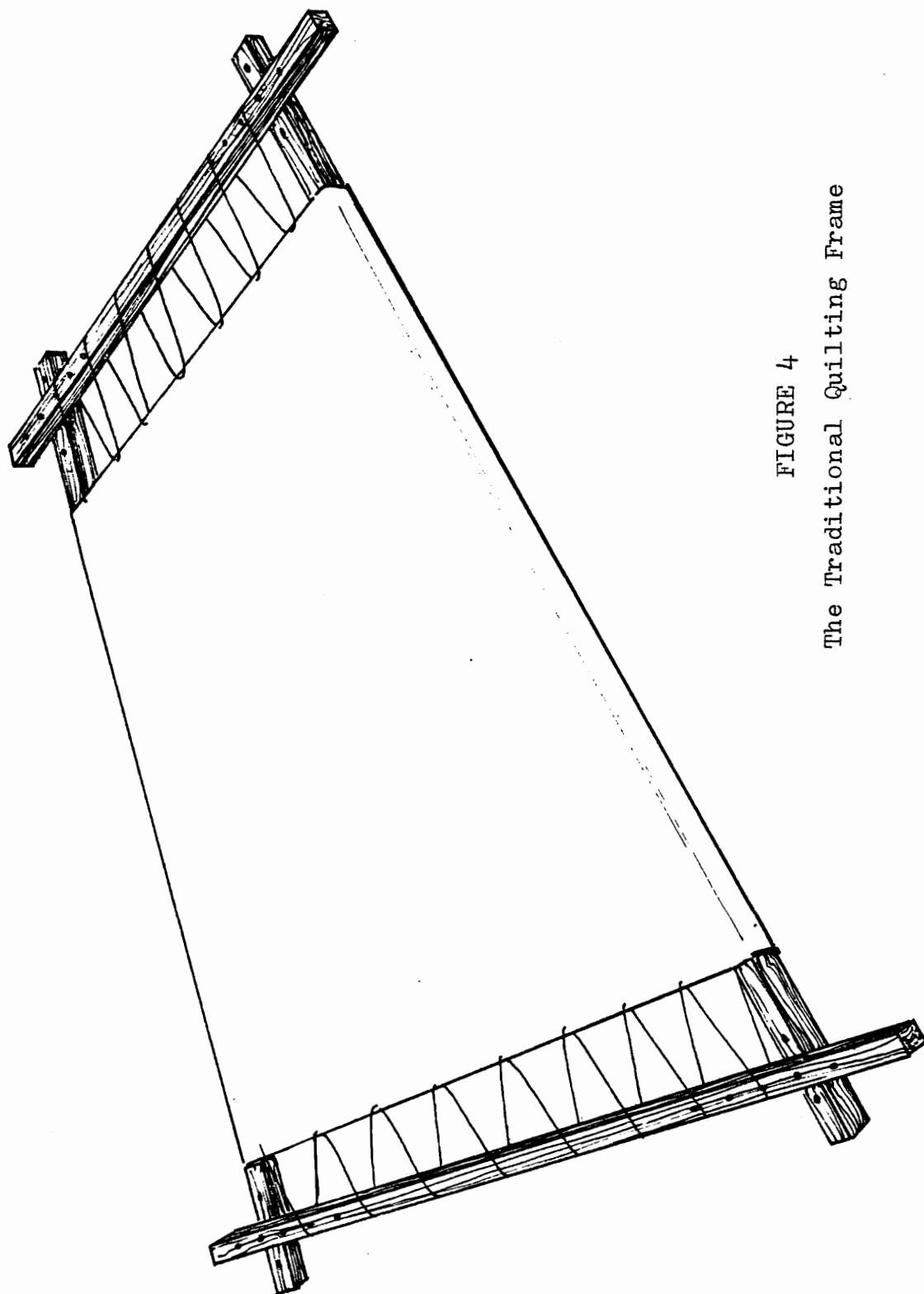


FIGURE 4  
The Traditional Quilting Frame

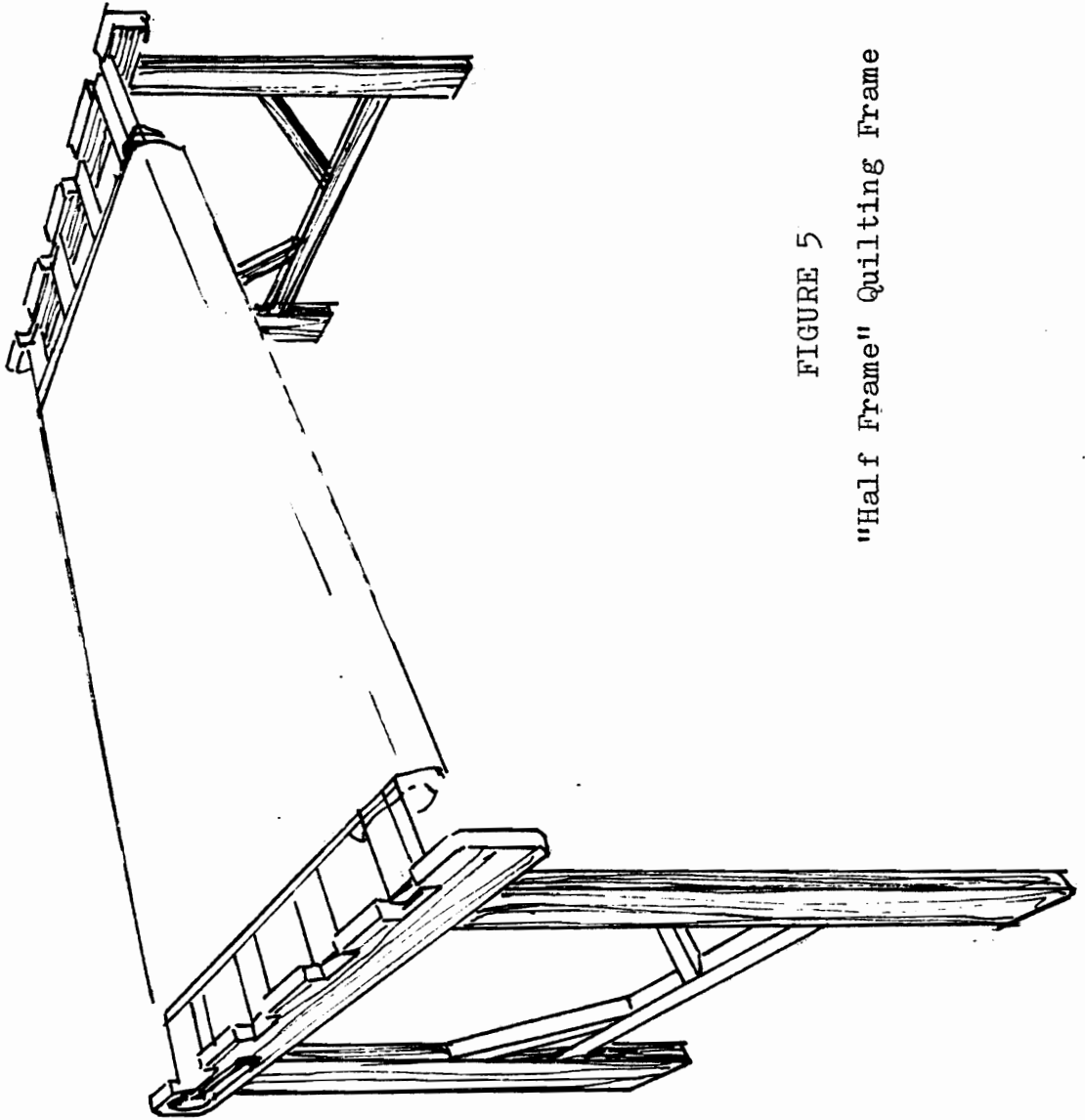
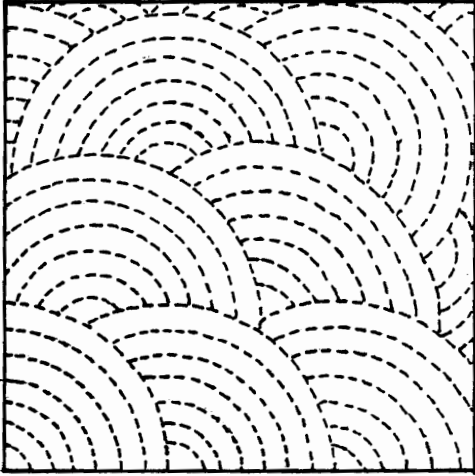
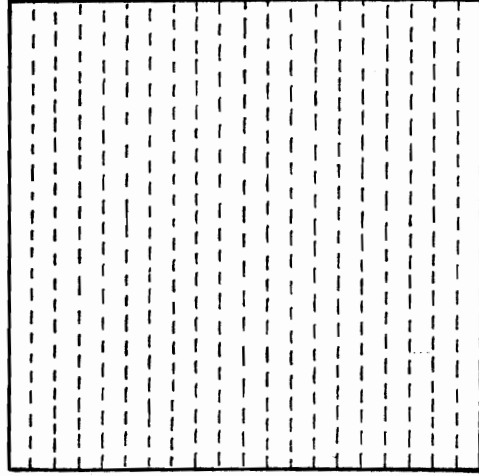


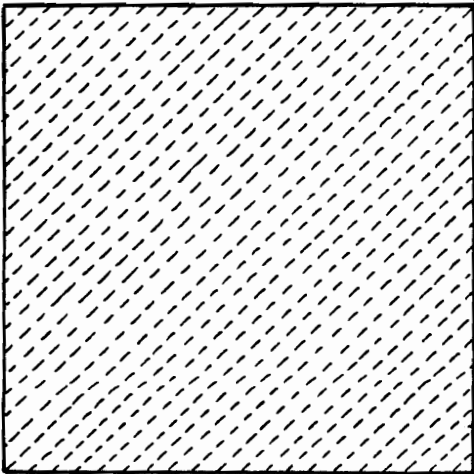
FIGURE 5  
"Half Frame" Quilting Frame



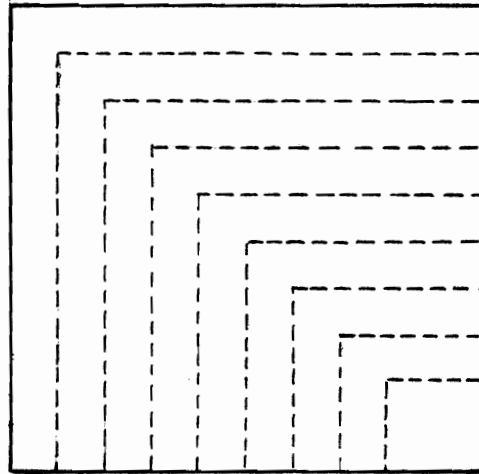
Fan Quilting



Straight Quilting



Diagonal Quilting



Elbow Quilting

FIGURE 6  
Quilting Patterns from Floyd County

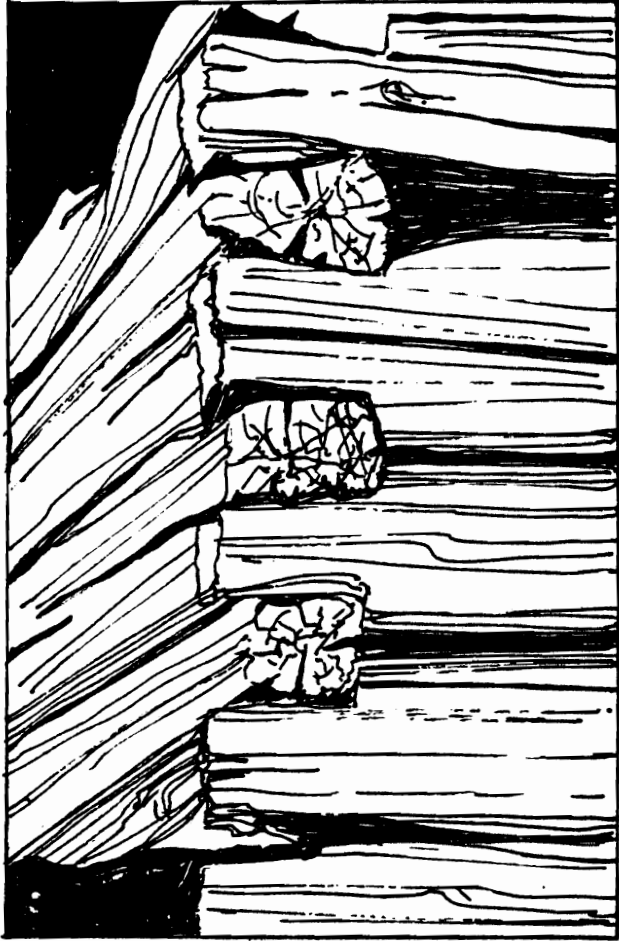


FIGURE 7

Log Cabin Structure

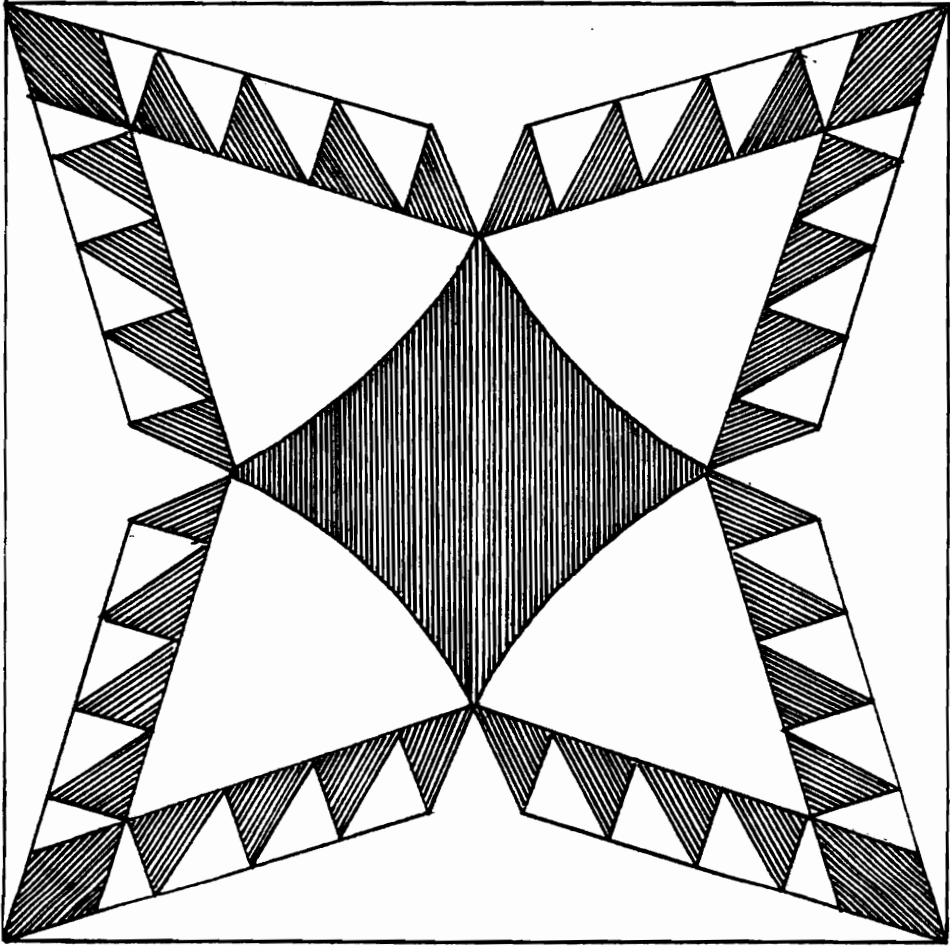


FIGURE 8

Lincoln's Platform and Philadelphia Patch

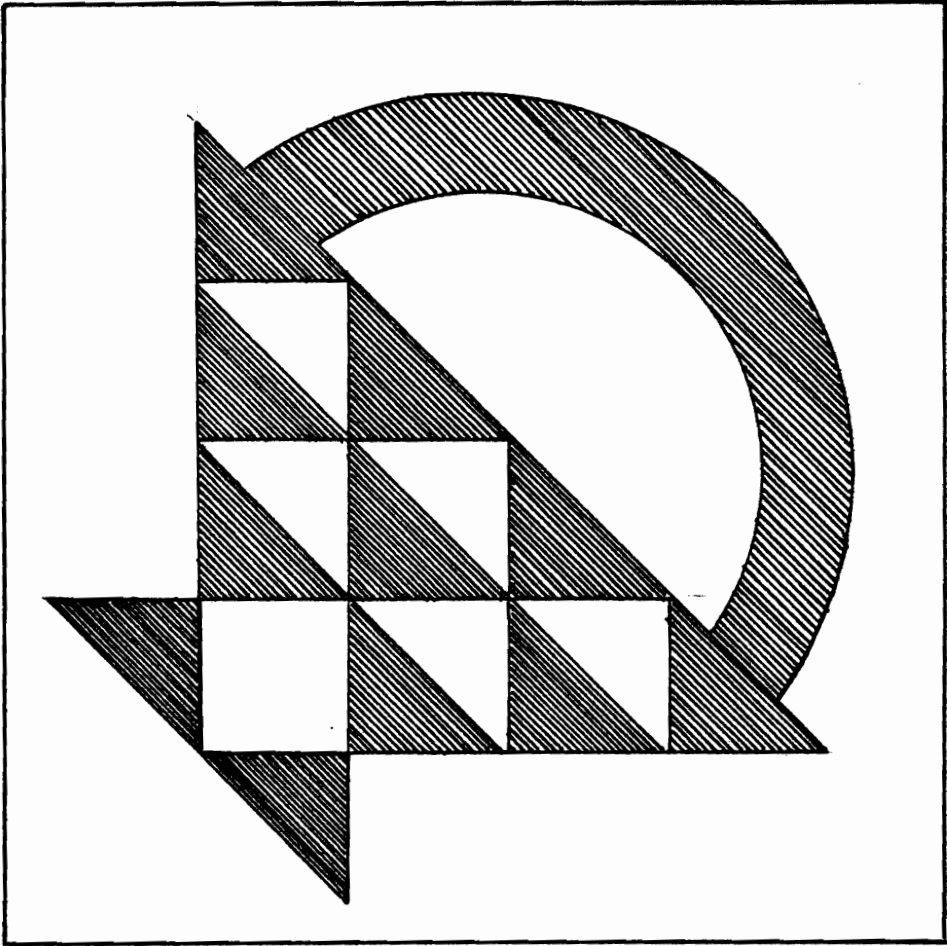


FIGURE 9

Basket



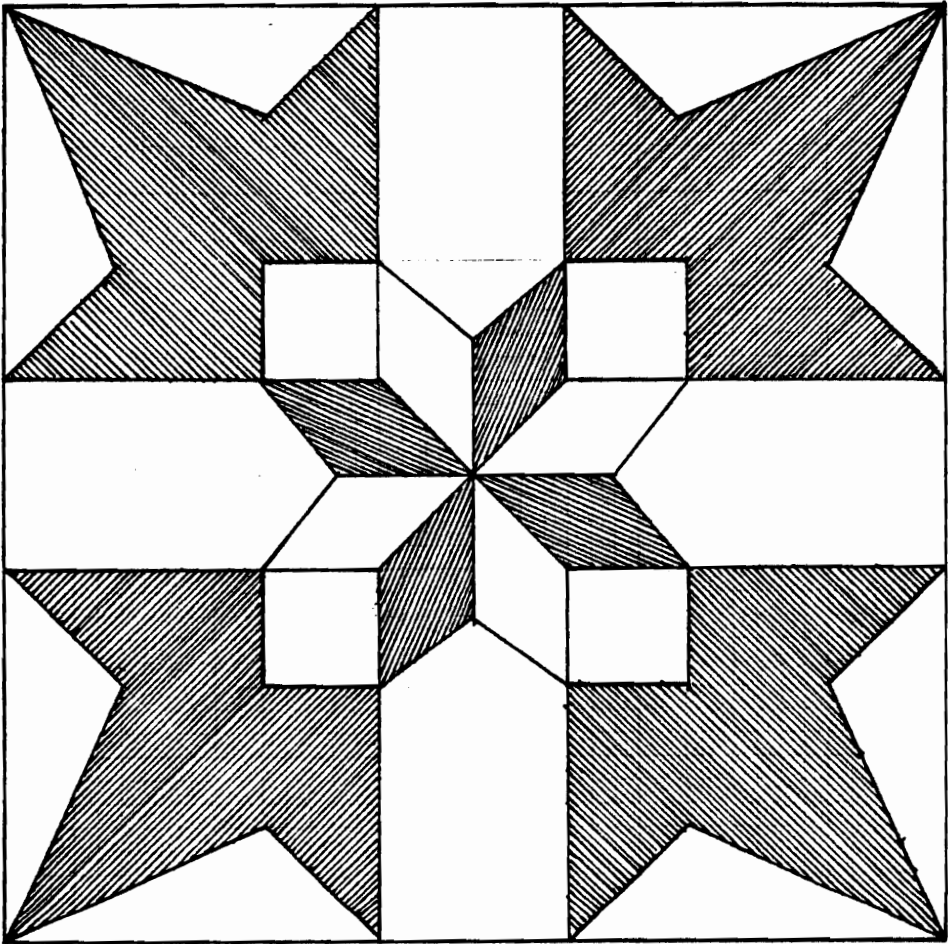


FIGURE 10  
Shooting Star

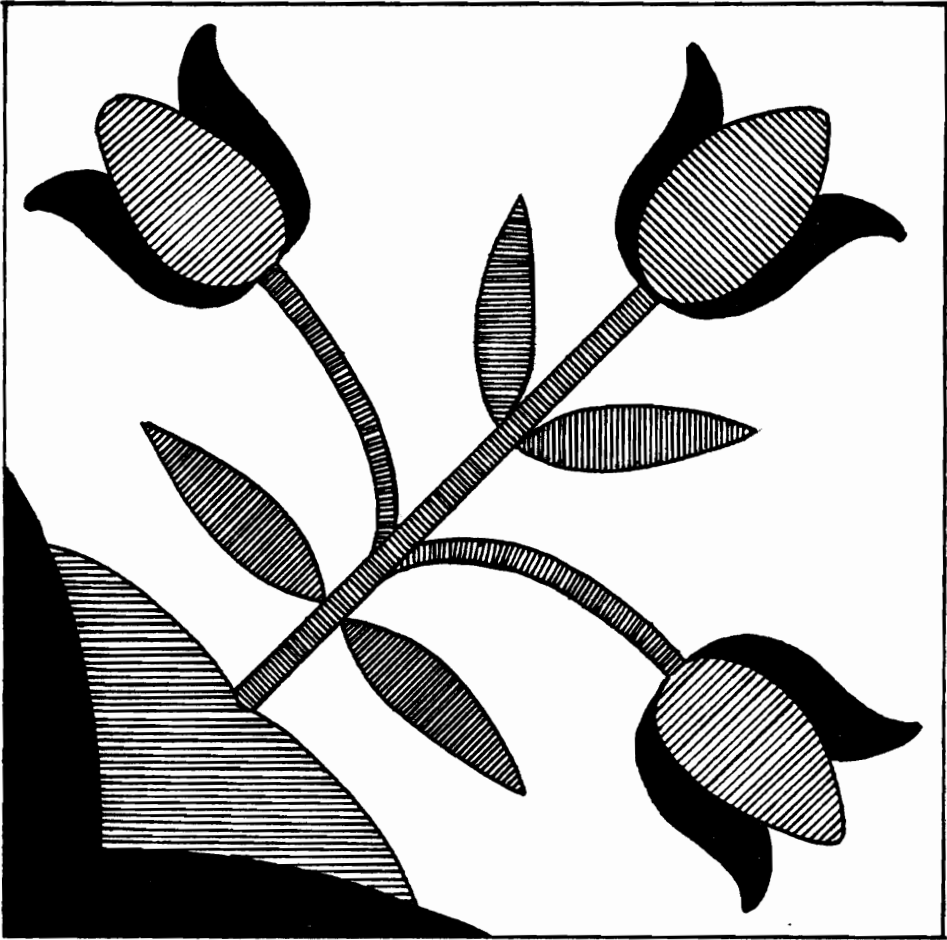


FIGURE 11

Tulip

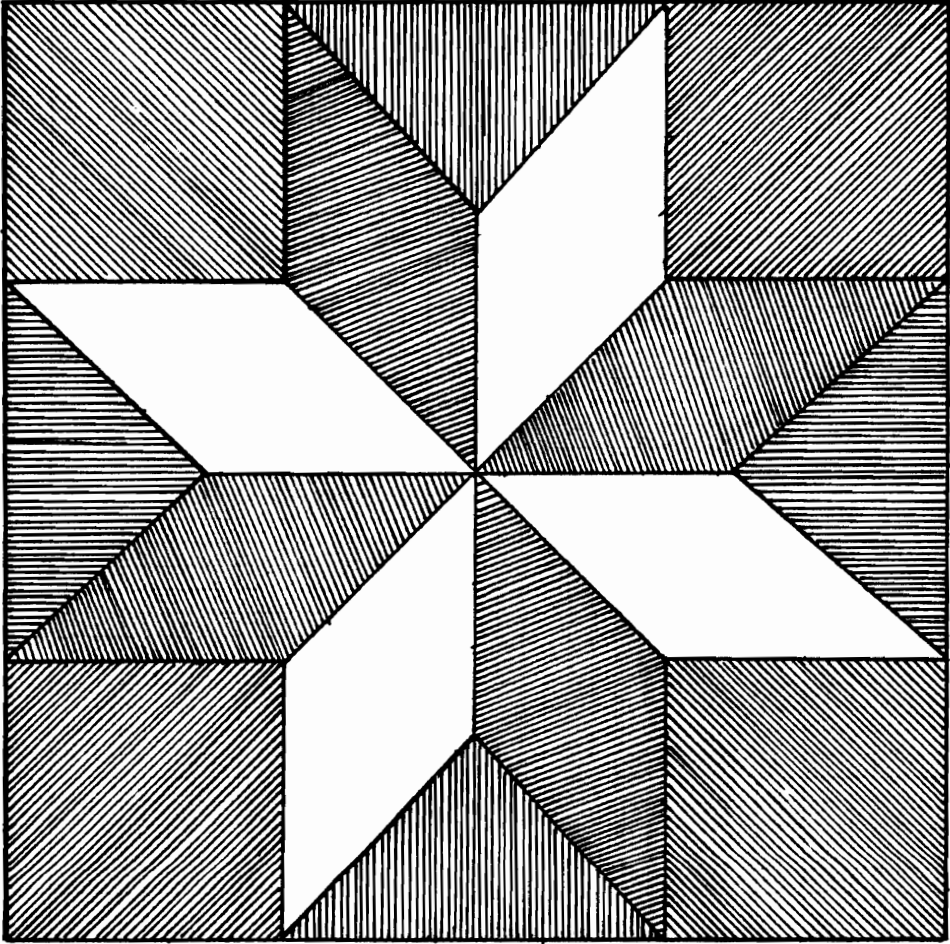


FIGURE 12

Eight Pointed Star

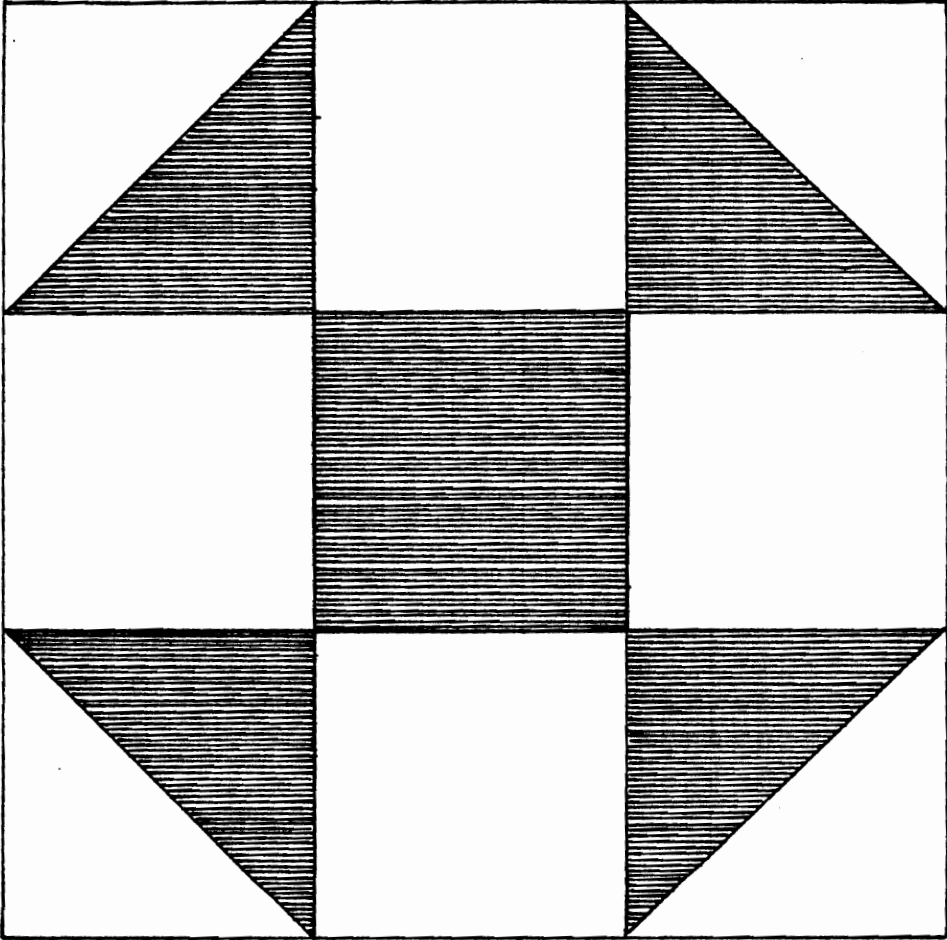


FIGURE 13

Shoo Fly

APPENDIX C



## PLATE I

## NINE PATCH (NINE DIAMOND)

Date of Quilt: 1918  
Quilt Maker: Subject 13  
Quilt Size: 57" x 80"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 45, 69, 71  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 13



## PLATE II

## NINE PATCH (NINE DIAMOND) VARIATION

Date of Quilt: 1900  
Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 9  
Quilt Size: 71" x 83"  
Block Size: 8" x 8"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 45, 69  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 9



## PLATE III

## NINE PATCH (NINE DIAMOND) VARIATION

Date of Quilt: 1900  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 9  
 Quilt Size: 71" x 83"  
 Block Size: 8" x 8"  
 Quilting Design: Fan  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 45, 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 9





## PLATE IV

## NINE PATCH AND PLAID

Date of Quilt: 1978  
Quilt Maker: Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 77" x 97"  
Block Size: 15½ x 15½"  
Quilting Design: Tied  
Fabric:  
    Top - Polyester Doubleknit  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Polyester Doubleknit  
Reference in Text: pp. 45, 69, 82  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 7

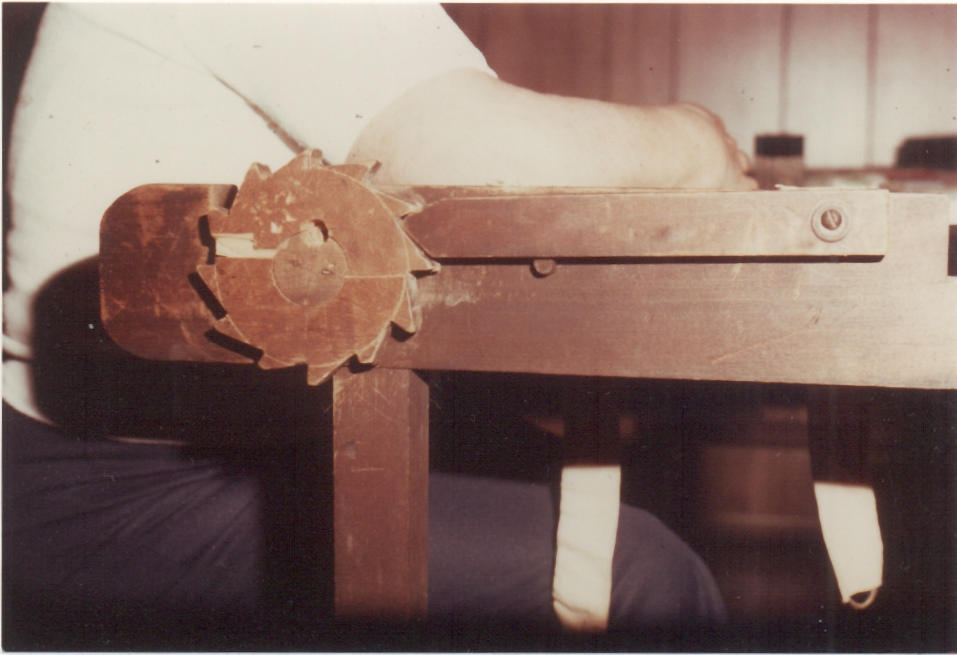


PLATE V

RATCHET ARRANGEMENT  
ON HALF SIZE QUILT FRAME

Reference in Text: p. 51



PLATE VI

CANVAS STRIPS  
ON HALF SIZE QUILT FRAME

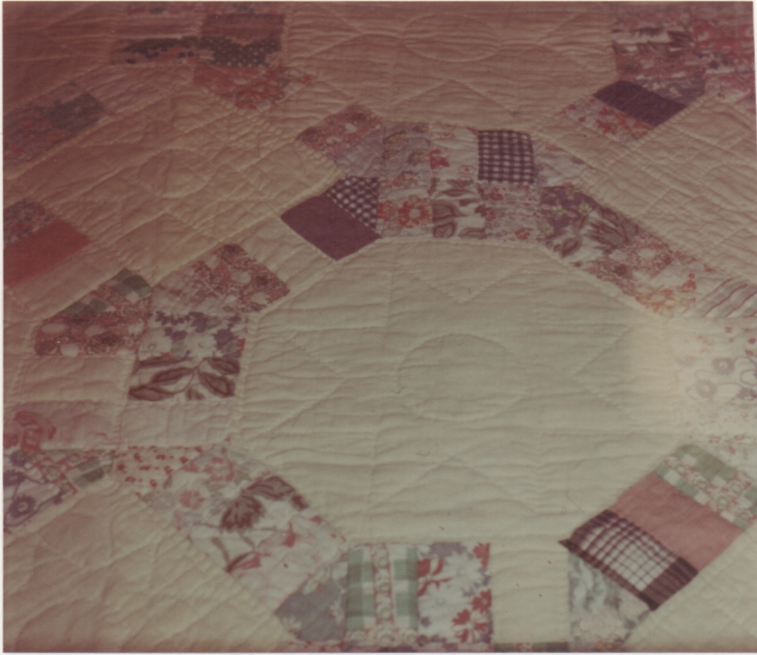
Reference in Text: pp. 51, 53



PLATE VII

HOOP QUILT FRAME

Reference in Text: p. 51

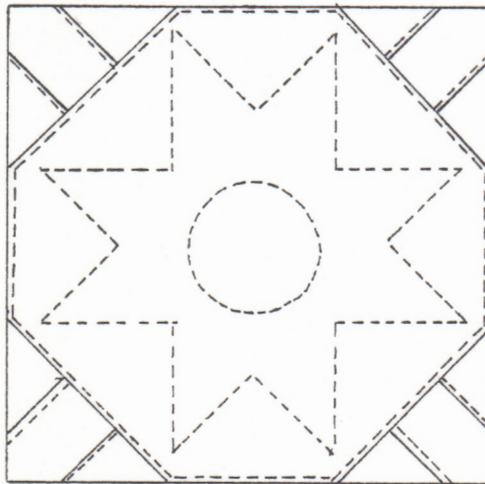


## PLATE VIII

## TILE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt:	1944	Fabric:	
Quilt Maker:	Subject 5	Top -	100% Cotton
Quilt Size:	76" x 97"		(Feed Bags)
Block Size:	None	Filling -	Cotton
Quilting Design:	Follows Pattern	Lining -	100% Cotton
			(Feed Bags)

Reference in Text: pp. 65, 80  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
 Floyd County, Subject 5





## PLATE IX

## WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1938  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
 Quilt Size: 63" x 94"  
 Block Size: 13" x 13"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags, Undyed)  
 Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 22



## PLATE X

## WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1938  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
 Quilt Size 63" x 94"  
 Block Size: 13" x 13"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags, Undyed)  
 Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 22



## PLATE XI

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1959  
Quilt Maker: Sister of Subject 1  
Quilt Size: Unknown  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton Flannel  
Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 1





PLATE XII

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1931	Fabric:
Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 21	Top - 100% Cotton
Quilt Size: 71" x 92"	Filling - Wool
Block Size: None	Lining - 100% Cotton
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern	
Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65, 70	
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project	
Floyd County, Subject 21	

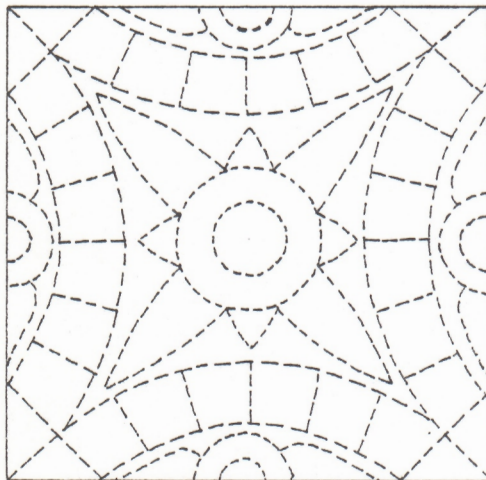




PLATE XIII

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt:	1931	Fabric:	
Quilt Maker:	Mother of Subject 21	Top -	100% Cotton
Quilt Size:	71" x 92"	Filling -	Wool
Block Size:	None	Lining -	100% Cotton
Quilting Design:	Follows Pattern		
	Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65, 66		
	Source: Appalachian Quilt Project		
	Floyd County, Subject 21		

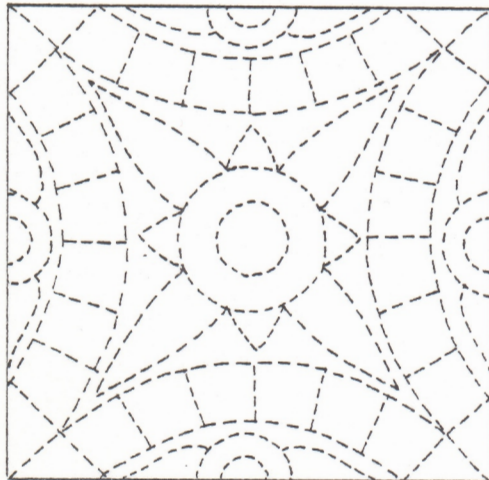




PLATE XIV

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1978  
 Quilt Maker: Friend of Subject 10  
 Quilt Size: 75" x 86"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65, 66  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
 Floyd County, Subject 10

Fabric:  
 Top - Cotton/Polyester  
 Filling - Polyester  
 Lining - Cotton/Polyester

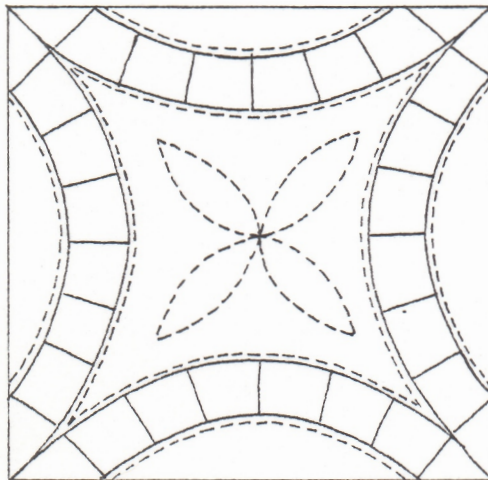




PLATE XV

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt: 1974  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 18  
 Quilt Size: 78" x 88"  
 Block Size: None

Fabric:  
 Top - 100% Cotton and  
 Cotton/Polyester  
 Filling - Polyester  
 Lining - 100% Cotton

Quilting Design: Follows Pattern

Reference in Text: pp. 64, 65

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
 Floyd County, Subject 18

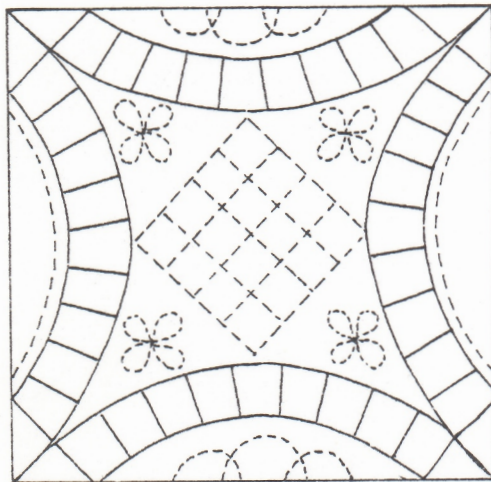




PLATE XVI

## DOUBLE WEDDING RING

Date of Quilt:	1974	Fabric:	
Quilt Maker:	Subject 18	Top -	100% Cotton and Cotton/Polyester
Quilt Size:	78" x 88"	Filling -	Polyester
Block Size:	None	Lining -	100% Cotton
Quilting Design:	Follows Pattern		
Reference in Text:	pp. 64, 65, 66		
Source:	Appalachian Quilt Project Floyd County, Subject 18		

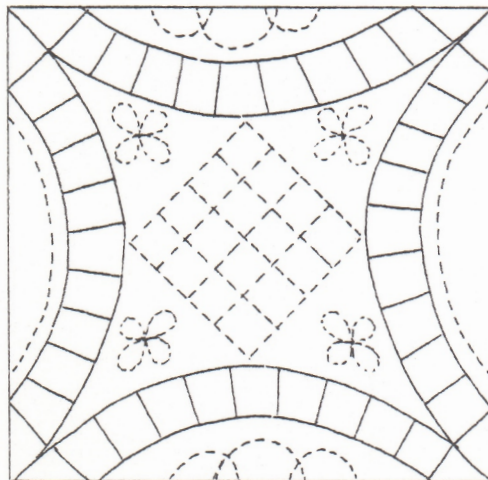




PLATE XVII

GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

Date of Quilt: 1933  
Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
Quilt Size: 76" x 94"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Wool  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 66, 67, 70  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 4



## PLATE XVIII

## GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

Date of Quilt: 1933  
Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
Quilt Size: 76" x 94"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Wool  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 66  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 4



## PLATE XIX

## GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

Date of Quilt: 1968  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
 Quilt Size: 90" x 102"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - 100% Cotton Blanket Sheet  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 66  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 4





## PLATE XX

## GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

Date of Quilt: 1945  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 18  
 Quilt Size: 76" x 89"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Mountain Mist Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 66  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 18



## PLATE XXI

## GRANDMOTHER'S FLOWER GARDEN

Date of Quilt: 1945  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 18  
 Quilt Size: 76" x 89"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Mountain Mist Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 66, 67  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 18



## PLATE XXII

## LOG CABIN (BARN RAISING)

Date of Quilt: 1910  
Quilt Maker: Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 67½" x 84"  
Block Size: 7 ¾" x 7 ¾"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 67, 70  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 7



## PLATE XXIII

## LOG CABIN (BARN RAISING)

Date of Quilt: 1910  
Quilt Maker: Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 67½" x 84"  
Block Size: 7 ¾" x 7 ¾"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 67  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 7



## PLATE XXIV

## LOG CABIN (BARN RAISING)

Date of Quilt: 1930  
Quilt Maker: Sister of Subject 9  
Quilt Size: 66" x 84"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Diagonal  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 67  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 9



## PLATE XXV

## LOG CABIN (BARN RAISING)

Date of Quilt: 1930  
Quilt Maker: Sister of Subject 9  
Quilt Size: 66" x 84"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Diagonal  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 67  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 9



## PLATE XXVI

## LOG CABIN (STRAIGHT FURROW)

Date of Quilt: 1979  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 86"  
 Block Size: Unknown  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton and Cotton/Polyester  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: p. 67  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 4



## PLATE XXVII

## LOG CABIN (STRAIGHT FURROW)

Date of Quilt: 1950-54  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 18  
 Quilt Size: 71" x 85"  
 Block Size: 7½" x 7½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags)  
     Filling - Cotton (2½ lb. batt)  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags)  
 Reference in Text: p. 67  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 18





PLATE XXVIII

LOG CABIN (TOP ONLY)

Date of Quilt: 1979  
Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
Reference in Text: p. 67  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XXIX

## JOSEPH'S COAT

Date of Quilt: 1956  
Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
Quilt Size: 83" x 94"  
Block Size: 11 3/4" x 11 3/4"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 68  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XXX

## JOSEPH'S COAT

Date of Quilt: 1956  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
 Quilt Size: 83" x 94"  
 Block Size: 1 3/4" x 11 3/4"  
 Quilting Design: Fan  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 68  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XXXI

## TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

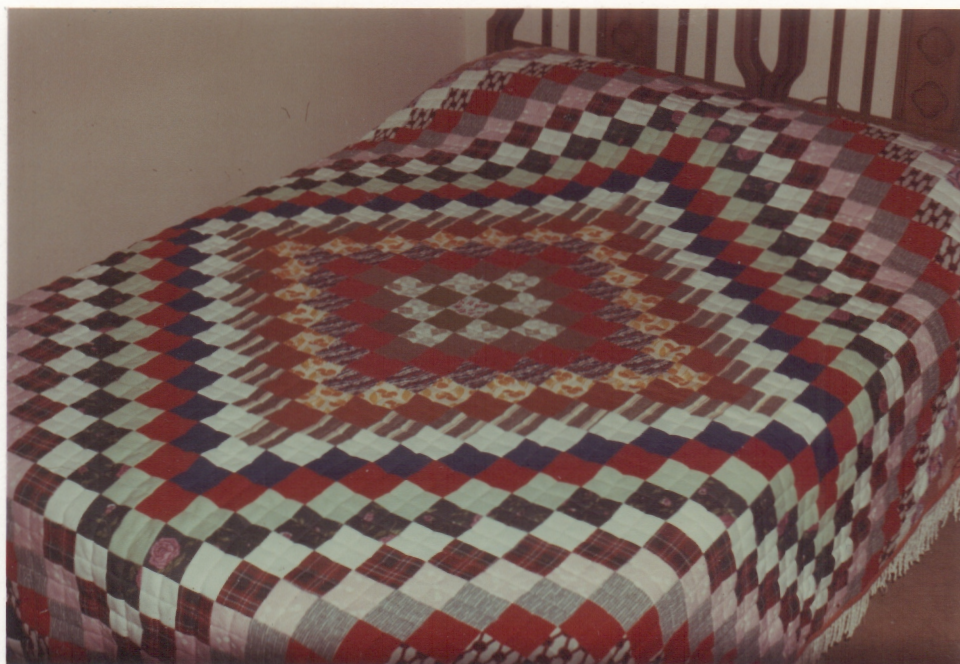
Date of Quilt: 1968  
Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
Quilt Size: 96" x 112"  
Block Size: 2" x 2"  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 68  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XXXII

## TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

Date of Quilt: 1968  
Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
Quilt Size: 94" x 108"  
Block Size: 2" x 2"  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 68  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XXXIII

## TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

Date of Quilt: 1978  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 7  
 Quilt Size: 90" x 93"  
 Block Size: 2½" x 2½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Polyester Doubleknit  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Polyester Doubleknit  
 Reference in Text: pp. 68, 82  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 7



## PLATE XXXIV

## TRIP AROUND THE WORLD

Date of Quilt: 1950  
Quilt Maker: Subject 20  
Quilt Size: 80" x 97"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 68  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 20



## PLATE XXXV

## DRUNKARD'S PATH (CRAZY MAN'S PUZZLE)

Date of Quilt: 1978-79

Quilt Maker: Subject 7

Quilt Size: 83" x 101"

Block Size 6" x 6"

Quilting Design: Follows Pattern

Fabric:

Top - Polyester Doubleknit

Filling - Polyester

Lining - Polyester Doubleknit

Reference in Text: pp. 69, 82

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
Floyd County, Subject 7





## PLATE XXXVI

## DRUNKARD'S PATH (CRAZY MAN'S PUZZLE)

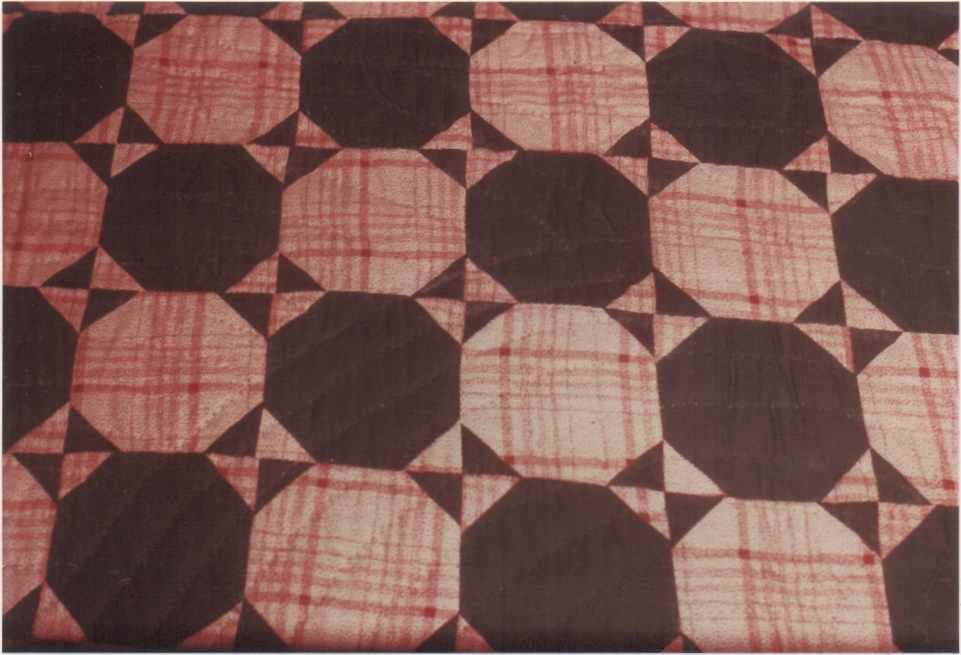
Date of Quilt: 1929  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
 Quilt Size: 72" x 90"  
 Block Size: 2½" x 2½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 4



## PLATE XXXVII

ROB PETER TO PAY PAUL

Date of Quilt: Early 1900's  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 9  
 Quilt Size: 67" x 67½"  
 Block Size: 4¼" x 4¼"  
 Quilting Design: Fan  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 9



## PLATE XXXVIII

## ROB PETER TO PAY PAUL

Date of Quilt: Early 1900's  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 9  
 Quilt Size: 67" x 67½"  
 Block Size: 4¼" x 4¼"  
 Quilting Design: Fan  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject9



## PLATE XXXIX

## MONKEY WRENCH (CHURN DASH)

Date of Quilt: 1900  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 9  
 Quilt Size: 68" x 83"  
 Block Size: 8½" x 8½"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton (Homegrown)  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 69, 71  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 9



PLATE XL

## MONKEY WRENCH (CHURN DASH)

Date of Quilt: 1900  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 9  
 Quilt Size: 68" x 83"  
 Block Size: 8½" x 8½"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
   Top - 100% Cotton  
   Filling - Cotton (Homegrown)  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 9



## PLATE XLI

## MONKEY WRENCH (CHURN DASH)

Date of Quilt: Unknown  
 Quilt Maker: Aunt of Subject 21  
 Quilt Size: 60½" x 77"  
 Block Size: 12½" x 12½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
   Top - 100% Cotton  
   Filling - Cotton  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 69  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE XLII

## MONKEY WRENCH (CHURN DASH)

Date of Quilt: 1915  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 6  
 Quilt Size: 69" x 81"  
 Block Size: 12½" x 12½"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton (Feed Bag Joining)  
     Filling - Mountain Mist Cotton  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: pp. 69, 80  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 6



## PLATE XLIII

## LONE STAR

Date of Quilt: 1958  
 Quilt Maker: A Friend of Subject 18 Pieced,  
 Subject 18 Quilted  
 Quilt Size: 82" x 91"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Mountain Mist Cotton  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: p. 70  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 18





PLATE XLIV

LONE STAR

Date of Quilt: 1961  
Quilt Maker: Subject 17  
Quilt Size: 76" x 89"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabrics:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
Reference in Text: p. 70  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 17



PLATE XLV

LONE STAR

Date of Quilt: 1961  
Quilt Maker: Subject 17  
Quilt Size: 76" x 89"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabrics:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
Reference in Text: p. 70  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 17



## PLATE XLVI

## LONE STAR

Date of Quilt: 1939  
Quilt Maker: Subject 8  
Quilt Size: 82" x 82"  
Block Size: None  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabrics:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags)  
Reference in Text: pp. 70, 80  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 8



## PLATE XLVII

## WILD GOOSE CHASE (WHIRLWIND)

Date of Quilt: 1860-1890  
 Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 4  
 Quilt Size: Unknown  
 Block Size: 15" x 15"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabrics:  
   Top - 100% Cotton  
   Filling - Cotton  
   Lining - 100% Cotton (Handwoven)  
 Reference in Text: p. 71  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 4





## PLATE XLIX

## VARIABLE STAR

Date of Quilt: 1978-79  
Quilt Maker: Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 72" x 92"  
Block Size: 6" x 6" (Small)  
              18" x 18" (Overall)  
Quilting Design: Tied  
Fabrics:  
    Top - Polyester Doubleknit  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Polyester Doubleknit  
Reference in Text: pp. 71, 82  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
          Floyd County, Subject 7



PLATE L

## NEW YORK BEAUTY

Date of Quilt: 1956

Quilt Maker: Subject 4

Quilt Size: 90" x 90"

Block Size: None

Quilting Design: See Illustration

Reference in Text: p.72

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
Floyd County, Subject 4

Fabric:

Top - 100% Cotton

Filling - 100% Cotton

(Blanket Sheet)

Lining - 100% Cotton

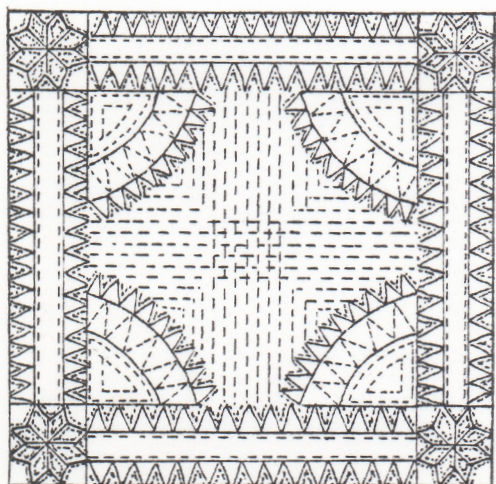




PLATE LI

## NEW YORK BEAUTY

Date of Quilt: 1956

Quilt Maker: Subject 4

Quilt Size: 90" x 90"

Block Size: None

Quilting Design: See Illustration

Reference in Text: p. 72

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project,  
Floyd County, Subject 4

Fabric:

Top - 100% Cotton

Filling - 100% Cotton

(Blanket Sheet)

Lining - 100% Cotton

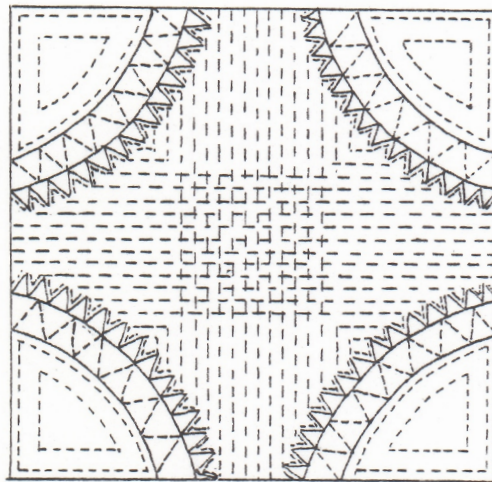






PLATE LII

KANSAS DUGOUT

Date of Quilt: 1950's  
Quilt Maker: Subject 17  
Quilt Size: 76" x 90"  
Block Size: 5" x 5"  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
Top - Polyester Doubleknit  
Filling - Mountain Mist Cotton  
Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 72  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
Floyd County, Subject 17







PLATE LV  
CRAZY QUILT

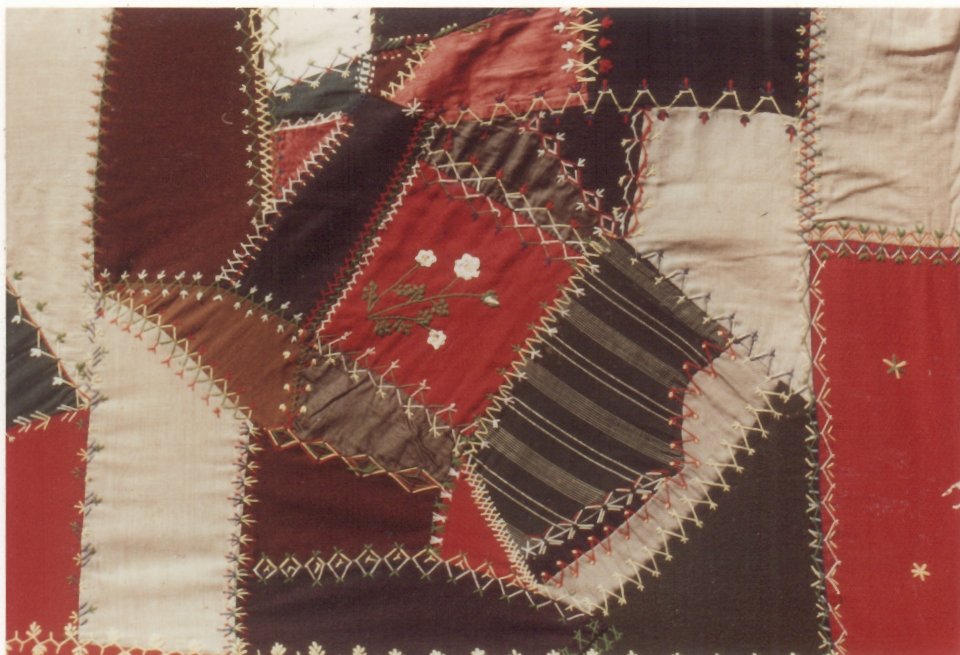
Date of Quilt: 1880  
Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 6  
Quilt Size: 72" x 87"  
Block Size: 14" x 14"  
Quilting Design: Tied  
Fabric:  
    Top - Wool and Cotton (Linsey)  
    Filling - Wool  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 75, 101  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 6



PLATE LVI

CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1880  
Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 6  
Quilt Size: 72" x 87"  
Block Size: 14" x 14"  
Quilting Design: Tied  
Fabric:  
    Top - Wool and Cotton (Linsey)  
    Filling - Wool  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 75, 101  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 6



## PLATE LVII

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1890  
 Quilt Maker: Aunt of Subjects 2 and 3  
 Quilt Size: 54" x 85"  
 Block Size: Irregular  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Wool, Silk, Cotton (Some Linsey)  
     Filling - None  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subjects 2 and 3



## PLATE LVIII

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1894  
Quilt Maker: Relative of Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 61" x 83"  
Block Size: 11½" x 11½"  
Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
Fabric:  
    Top - Wool, Cotton, Linen  
    Filling - None  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 7



## PLATE LIX

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1894  
 Quilt Maker: Relative of Subject 7  
 Quilt Size: 61" x 83"  
 Block Size: 11½" x 11½"  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Wool, Cotton, Linen  
     Filling - None  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 7





## PLATE LX

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1894  
 Quilt Maker: Relative of Subject 7  
 Quilt Size: 61" x 83"  
 Block Size: 11½" x 11½"  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Wool, Cotton, Linen  
     Filling - None  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 7



## PLATE LXI

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: Unknown  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 11  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 86"  
 Block Size: 21" x 21"  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
   Top - Wool, Silk, Linen  
   Filling - None  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 11



## PLATE LXII

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: Unknown  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 11  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 86"  
 Block Size: 21" x 21"  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
   Top - Wool, Silk, Linen  
   Filling - None  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 11



## PLATE LXIII

## CRAZY QUILT

Date of Quilt: Unknown  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 11  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 86"  
 Block Size: 21" x 21"  
 Quilting Design: Various Embroidery Stitches  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Wool, Silk, Linen  
     Filling - None  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 76, 101  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 11



## PLATE LXIV

## SAVE ALL QUILT

Date of Quilt: 1935  
 Quilt Maker: Mother of Subject 1  
 Quilt Size: 61" x 80"  
 Block Size: 8½" x 8½"  
 Quilting Design: Elbow  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Feed Bags)  
 Reference in Text: p. 76  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 1



PLATE LXV

DOUBLE X

Date of Quilt: 1910-1915  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
 Quilt Size: 71" x 83"  
 Block Size: 10" x 10"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Cotton Checks)  
 Reference in Text: p. 77  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 22



## PLATE LXVI

## DOUBLE X

Date of Quilt: 1910-1915  
Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
Quilt Size: 71" x 83"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Diagonal  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton (Cotton Checks)  
Reference in Text: p. 77  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 22

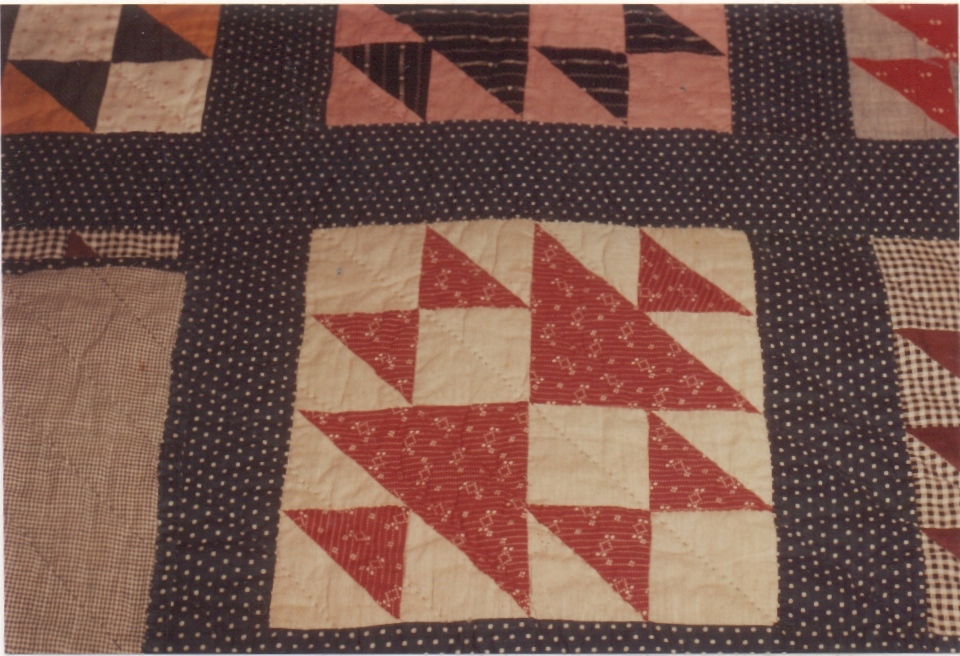


## PLATE LXVII

## DOUBLE X

Date of Quilt: 1910-1915  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
 Quilt Size: 74" x 88"  
 Block Size: 11" x 11"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Cotton Checks)  
 Reference in Text: p. 77  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 22





## PLATE LXVIII

## DOUBLE X

Date of Quilt: 1910-1915  
 Quilt Maker: Mother-in-law of Subject 22  
 Quilt Size: 74" x 88"  
 Block Size: 11" x 11"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton (Cotton Checks)  
 Reference in Text: p. 77  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 22



PLATE LXIX  
FLOWER APPLIQUE

Date of Quilt: 1930-1935  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 8 and Mother  
 Quilt Size: 74" x 86"  
 Block Size: 11" x 11"  
 Quilting Design: None - Top only  
 Fabric:  
   Top - 100% Cotton (White Sugar Sacks)  
   Filling - None  
   Lining - None  
 Reference in Text: p. 78  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 8



## PLATE LXX

## DUTCH DOLL

Date of Quilt: 1976  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 17  
 Quilt Size: 77" x 94"  
 Block Size: 14" x 14"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal (Block)  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Cotton/Polyester  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: p. 78  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 17



PLATE LXXI

## DRESDEN PLATE

Date of Quilt: 1978  
Quilt Maker: Subject 10  
Quilt Size: 78" x 96"  
Block Size: 18" x 18"  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - Cotton/Polyester  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
Reference in Text: p. 78  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 10



## PLATE LXXII

## MODIFIED FRIENDSHIP

Date of Quilt: 1956  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
 Quilt Size: 103" x 96"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton (Feed Bag Prints)  
     Filling - Cotton  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 80  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 21



PLATE LXXIII  
 MODIFIED FRIENDSHIP

Date of Quilt: 1956  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 21  
 Quilt Size: 103" x 96"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
   Top - 100% Cotton (Feed Bag Prints)  
   Filling - Cotton  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 80  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 21



## PLATE LXIV

## TOAD IN A PUDDLE

Date of Quilt: 1900  
 Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 1  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 80"  
 Block Size: 8" x 8"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart)  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - 100% Cotton (Ravellings from material)  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 88, 102  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 1



## PLATE LXV

## TOAD IN A PUDDLE

Date of Quilt: 1900  
 Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 1  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 80"  
 Block Size: 8" x 8"  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " apart)  
 Fabric:  
     Top - 100% Cotton  
     Filling - 100% Cotton (Ravellings from material)  
     Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: p. 88  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 1





## PLATE LXXVI

## IRISH CHAIN

Date of Quilt: 1979  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 19  
 Quilt Size: 81" x 98"  
 Block Size: 10" x 10"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
                           Feather (Border)

## Fabric:

Top - Cotton/Polyester

Filling - Polyester

Lining - Cotton/Polyester

Reference in Text: pp. 102, 114

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 19



## PLATE LXXVII

## IRISH CHAIN

Date of Quilt: 1979  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 19  
 Quilt Size: 81" x 98"  
 Block Size: 10" x 10"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
                                   Feather (Border)  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Cotton/Polyester  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: p. 102  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 19



PLATE LXXVIII

STARRY PATH

Date of Quilt: 1972  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 5  
 Quilt Size: 91" x 96"  
 Block Size: 12" x 12"

Fabric:  
 Top - Cotton/Polyester  
 Filling - Polyester  
 Lining - Cotton/Polyester

Quilting Design: See Illustration

Reference in Text: p. 102

Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
 Floyd County, Subject 5

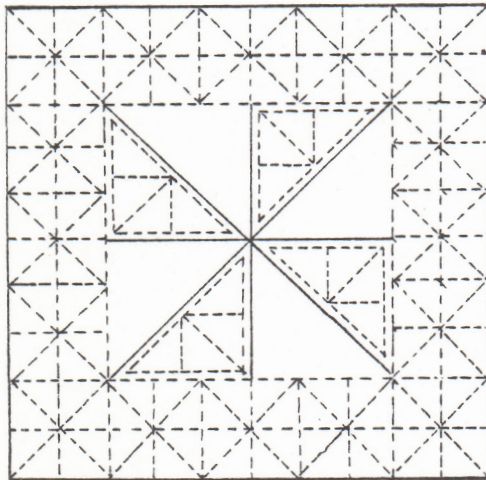




PLATE LXXIX

STARRY PATH

Date of Quilt:	1972	Fabric:	
Quilt Maker:	Subject 5	Top -	Cotton/Polyester
Quilt Size:	91" x 96"	Filling -	Polyester
Block Size:	12" x 12"	Lining -	Cotton/Polyester
Quilting Design:	See Illustration		
	Reference in Text: p. 102		
	Source: Appalachian Quilt Project		
	Floyd County, Subject 5		

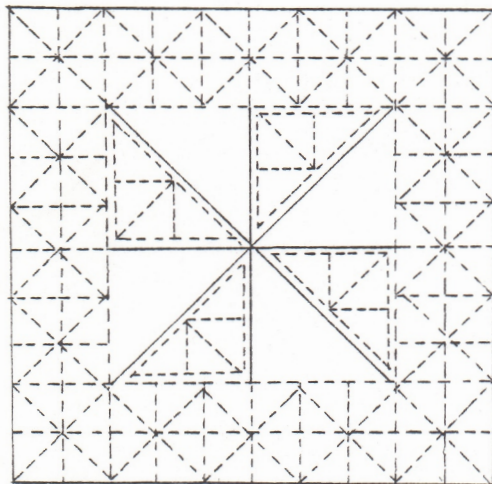




PLATE LXXX  
WALLS OF TROY

Date of Quilt: 1890  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 4  
 Quilt Size: 66" x 86"  
 Block Size: None  
 Quilting Design: Diagonal  
 Fabric:  
   Top - 100% Cotton  
   Filling - Cotton  
   Lining - 100% Cotton  
 Reference in Text: pp. 102, 108  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 4



## PLATE LXXXI

## GOOSE TRACKS

Date of Quilt: 1884  
Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 22  
Quilt Size: 70" x 92"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Diagonal  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton (Mattress Ticking)  
Reference in Text: pp. 102, 108  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 22



## PLATE LXXXII

## GOOSE TRACKS

Date of Quilt: 1884  
Quilt Maker: Grandmother of Subject 22  
Quilt Size: 70" x 92"  
Block Size: 10" x 10"  
Quilting Design: Diagonal  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton (Mattress Ticking)  
Reference in Text: p. 102  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 22



## PLATE LXXXIII

## BLOCK ALBUM

Date of Quilt: 1890  
Quilt Maker: Relative of Subject 7  
Quilt Size: 66" x 85"  
Block Size: 13" x 13"  
Quilting Design: Fan  
Fabric:  
    Top - 100% Cotton  
    Filling - Cotton  
    Lining - 100% Cotton  
Reference in Text: p. 102  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 7





## PLATE LXXXIV

## RAIL FENCE

Date of Quilt: 1963  
Quilt Maker: Subject 6  
Quilt Size: 88" x 95"  
Block Size: 8½" x 8½"  
Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
Fabric:  
    Top - Cotton/Polyester  
    Filling - Polyester  
    Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
Reference in Text: p. 102  
Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
        Floyd County, Subject 6



## PLATE LXXXV

## RAIL FENCE

Date of Quilt: 1963  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 6  
 Quilt Size: 88" x 95"  
 Block Size: 8½" x 8½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Cotton/Polyester  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: p. 102  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
         Floyd County, Subject 6



## PLATE LXXXVI

## STAR DAHLIA

Date of Quilt: 1978  
 Quilt Maker: Subject 10  
 Quilt Size: 73" x 90"  
 Block Size: 12½" x 12½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
   Top - Cotton/Polyester  
   Filling - Polyester  
   Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: pp. 102, 114  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
       Floyd County, Subject 10



## PLATE LXXXVII

## SAMPLER

Date of Quilt: 1979  
 Quilt Maker: Members of Topeco Church  
                   of the Brethern  
 Quilt Size: 79" x96"  
 Block Size: 11½" x 11½"  
 Quilting Design: Follows Pattern  
 Fabric:  
     Top - Cotton/Polyester  
     Filling - Polyester  
     Lining - Cotton/Polyester  
 Reference in Text: pp. 102, 114  
 Source: Appalachian Quilt Project  
           Floyd County, Subject 19

VITA

Susan L. Davis was born in Forest City, Iowa, February 28, 1952 and is the wife of Leland Davis of Willis, Virginia. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Textiles and Clothing from Iowa State University in March of 1974. Her major area of study was Fashion Design, Illustration and Advertising. As a Master's Student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, she held a Graduate Teaching Assistantship. Her responsibilities included laboratory instruction in Textile Design and Introduction to Related Art, a beginning design course.

Susan L. Davis

APPALACHIAN QUILTS OF FLOYD COUNTY, VIRGINIA

by

Susan L. Davis

(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of the research was to study the evolution of quilts in Floyd County, Virginia, as a means of documenting the life and culture of the county natives. Both documents and relics were examined and methods of qualitative and quantitative analysis were utilized. The relics were any existing quilts made in Floyd County, while the documents included not only those in traditionally written form, but those in the unwritten form--in this case, twenty-two oral interviews. A visual instrument was developed to substantiate subject responses to interview questions.

Geographic, economic and cultural factors were shown to have played an important part in determining the characteristics of Floyd County quilts. County aesthetic values were determined to be closely related to nature. Design lines were moderately complex and color preferences fell in the primary and secondary color range. Due to the historic functional use of quilts, no relation was found between the women's craftsmanship and design ability.