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EMMA ANDRES

by Joyce Gross

Emma Andres owns the Happiness Museum in Prescott, Ariz. She was a "fine" quilter whose quilts show imagination and originality as well as fine technique. To JOURNAL readers she is better known as the generous friend who loaned us scrapbooks she kept, filled with mementos and correspondence from her friends Florence Peto, Bertha Stenge, Carrie Hall, and "Dad" Pratt. (Excerpts) from the letters appeared in the JOURNALS since Winter 1979.)

This article is based on in-person interviews in April 1980 and June 1981 and numerous phone calls over the two year period as well as Miss Andres' scrapbooks.

Emma Mary Martha Andres was born Aug 18, 1902 in Prescott, Ariz which was ten years before Arizona became a state. One can spell "Emma" using the initials of her names.

Her mother, Anna, was born in Central City, Cob. Her father, Matt(hew) was born in Alsace-Lorraine but came to Colorado as a young boy. Her parents were married in Central City and settled down to raise their family. Emma was the middle child with a sister who is now Sister Anna Marcella in the St. Joseph order in Los Angeles and three brothers who are all dead. Emma's sister was more studious as a child than Emma and Emma enjoyed the choir at Sacred Heart Church.

Matt Andres had a small cigar store in the small town of Central City for many years before they moved to Prescott in 1902 (the year Emma was born). Mr. Andres saved 2,000 metal tobacco tags as premiums for a fancy baby carriage for his new baby and Emma still has several of the metal tags in her museum as well as the premium book with a picture of the carriage.

Emma attended catholic school for the first grades and then decided she wanted to attend public school. She is now sorry her parents allowed her to change because she thinks she missed some of the religious education that would have been of benefit to her.

Mr. Andres wanted to get out of the tobacco business so he took the family to Clearadon on the Texas panhandle and spent two years there before moving back to Prescott. Emma went back to public school and the family moved into a small house which is still standing. Her father built a small building in the back of the lot where he made cigars. During this period she learned to strip the tobacco leaves from the stems and became adept at banding the cigars. Emma says she didn't realize how difficult it was to make

In 1919 Matt Andres decided business was sufficiently good so that he could open a cigar store. He rented a small store on North Cortez in downtown Prescott where there was more traffic. "Now," Emma says with her dry humor, "You could shoot off a gun up the street after 3 p.m. and not hit a soul!"

Emma recalls there were often one or two other cigar makers in town but they didn't last long. In the back of the small store there is a large room which is now used for storage but was then the production center.

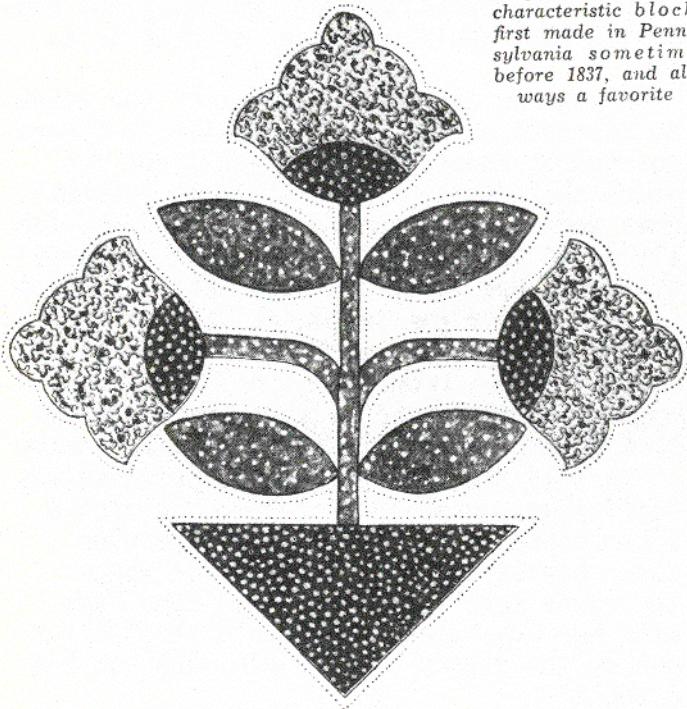
According to Emma, in Mr. Andres' heyday production ran about 7,000 or 8,000 cigars a month. He delivered the cigars every month by horseback or horse and buggy to most of the mines in the area. He even went to Jerome, now a ghost town, but then a thriving mining town perched on the side of a mountain 5100 feet above sea level and 35 miles distant. He stocked cigars and candy in the big display cases which house the thousands of items in Emma's Happiness Museum.

Emma began working full time in the cigar store after graduating from Prescott High in 1921. When her father retired in 1929 because of ill health she tried to keep the business going. She sold papers and magazines and finally turned to selling religious mementoes.

After seeing a quilt at the County Fair in 1931 she began her first quilt. She chose an applique

Tiger Lily kit purchased from an advertisement in Jan 1931 WOMAN'S WORLD. "The blocks and unbleached muslin for entire top of quilt" was advertised for \$3.75. The magazine which was headquartered in Chicago advertised, "72 inch unbleached muslin for the back is available for 45¢ a yard." Emma remembers she later purchased a kit advertised in the May 1932 WOMAN'S WORLD entitled Wild Rose. Her first pieced quilt was The Flower Garden.

Tiger Lily, an adaptation from a characteristic block first made in Pennsylvania sometime before 1837, and always a favorite



She did all of her quilting on her lap until 1933 when she purchased a small quilting hoop from Stearns & Foster. The date is verified by a letter carefully taped in a scrapbook from the company thanking her for her order. The metal hoop with an expandable rim allows the quilt to be held firmly. It has the original label on it and occupies a place of honor on top of one of her quilts in the museum. The first quilt she quilted in it was a stuffed quilt, pink on one side and blue on the other. From her first quilt she was determined to use a lot of quilting – a vow she has diligently kept.

About the time Emma finished her first quilt, she read a newspaper story about a Charles Pratt who pieced picture "quilts" (they were technically not quilts because they had no backs and were not quilted) of tiny silken squares and won many awards. His masterpiece, The Ninety and Nine pictures the Good Shepherd holding the strayed lamb and so

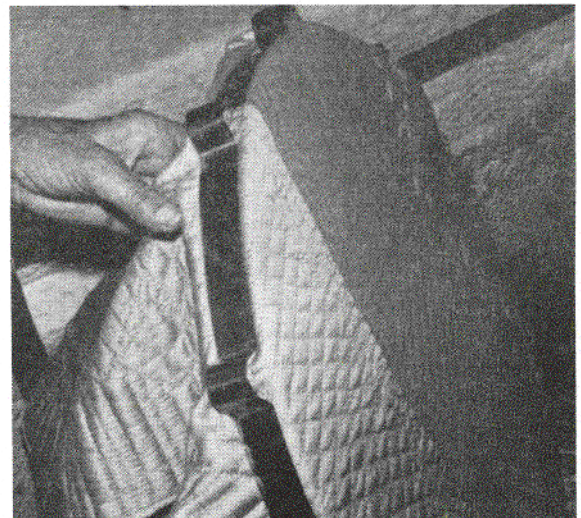
fascinated Emma she wanted to write to him but she had no address.

In 1939 after seeing an announcement in McCALL'S NEEDLECRAFT about Florence Peto, Miss Andres wrote to Mrs. Peto in care of the magazine. The letter was forwarded to Mrs. Peto who answered promptly thereby beginning a fascinating correspondence between the two women which lasted until Mrs. Peto's death in 1970. They met only once when Emma was visiting a sister-in-law in Chester, N. J. and discovered how close she was to her good friend. Emma remembers it to be about 1956. (Excerpts from their letters appear in Winter 1979, Spring 1980, and Summer 1980 JOURNALS)

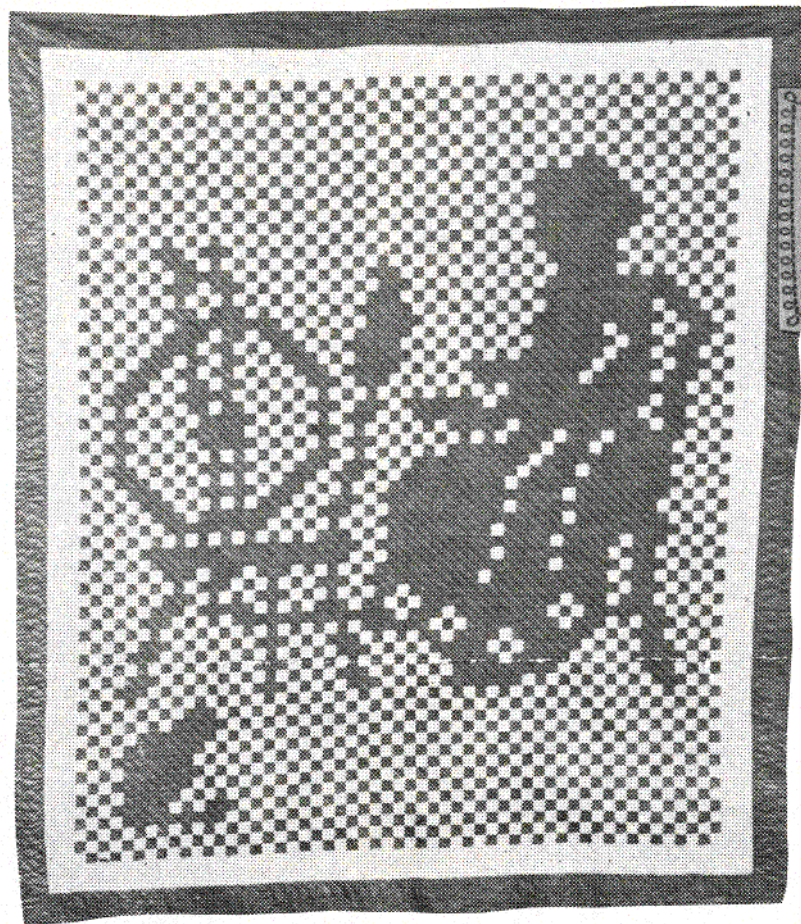
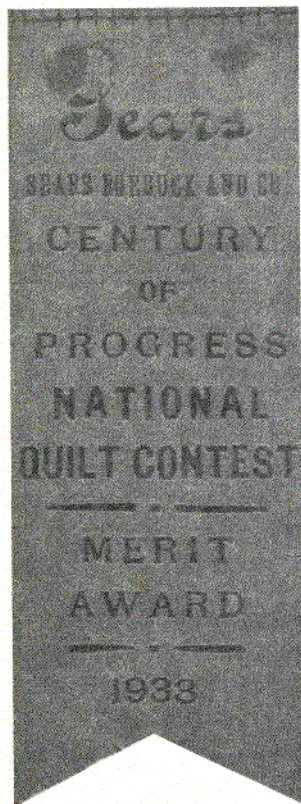
One day Miss Andres was reading one of the out of town papers she sold in the store and there in the July 21, 1940 PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER Rotogravure section was an article about the long-lost Charles Pratt with pictures and his address. She was jubilant and quickly wrote a letter to him. He answered promptly and until his death in April 1941 letters went back and forth. She grew to call him "Dad" and though she knew him only a short time he had a profound influence on Emma Andres' life. She says, "He changed my life."

When Emma found Charles Pratt's address she shared it with her friend Florence Peto who was also looking for him because of her long interest in men quilters. Mrs. Peto wrote on Oct 8, 1940, "What a smart girl you are!... When I was in Pennsylvania looking for him I had nothing to go by except that Mrs. Carrie Hall had said he was a Pennsylvania man who had taken many many prizes."

Mrs. Peto wrote immediately to him and was rewarded with an offer to loan her some



Miss Andres holds her Stearns and Foster quilting hoop with the pink and blue quilt



Left to right: Merit award to Silhouette quilt by Sears, Roebuck & Co, 1933 Chicago World's Fair Century of Progress; Silhouette quilt which was made from a cross-stitch pattern; woven label used by Emma Andres. (author's collection)

of his quilts for her lectures and from that time on she tried to hang his Ninety and Nine quilt whenever she lectured.

When Emma first saw the picture of Mr. Pratt's picture quilt she wanted to try her own version of the technique. The result was her Silhouette or Lady at the Spinning Wheel. She found a cross stitch pattern for the "Lady" and substituted red squares for the "cross stitch" and added a cat. It was made of 3500 red and white squares and won a Sears merit award in 1933 at the Chicago World's Fair.

Mrs. Peto noticed the similarity between Emma's Silhouette and Mr. Pratt's technique and commented on it in a letter dated Oct 8, 1940: "I am much interested in the technique of his (Dad Pratt's) pictured quilt - Penn's Treaty (see JOURNAL Fall 1980). Apparently all made in small squares - silhouette style. It reminds me of your own girl, cat, and spinning wheel. The photo is small but it appears to me to be made like that - in squares. I cannot remember having ever seen an old quilt made that way and I am wondering if such silhouette pictures in patchwork isn't modern."

In April 1942 when Mr. Pratt died at the age of 89, his daughter Mrs. Bertha Burd, gave Emma four of his "quilts". Included was the one on which he was working at the time of his death.

It still has his needle in it. She also gave Florence Peto the two which Mr. Pratt had loaned her. So the Ninety and Nine continued to go with Mrs. Peto to her many lectures and now belongs to a granddaughter. Ruth & Naomi is in a private collection in Kentucky.

Emma's "quilts" are permanent residents of her Museum except for brief excursions to her quilt shows. They have all been exhibited in her windows.

On Dec 17, 1940 Mrs. Peto wrote to Emma, (Mr. Pratt) "has written me he would like to have me put on some kind of a show which could exhibit all of his quilts at once I may try to (get the Red Cross or British War Relief) get up an exhibition of these unusual pieces and charge an admission with the proceeds to go to the organization... I think that is what our old friend has in mind." She wrote twice more about the idea but apparently never carried it out.

A notation in Emma's handwriting on the back of a photograph places the date of her "first quilt show at Sacred Heart Church, Prescott, Arizona, 1941" The quilts were all made by her. On Oct 18, 1941 Mrs. Peto wrote "Watched for your letter to tell me about the Quilt Exhibition and lecture and how it went. Sorry you were disappointed in the attendance but that is the way it goes sometimes ... If you



The first quilt show by Emma Andres held at Sacred Heart Church 1941. Quilts from left to right are Silhouette Out Where the West Begins, Tillman, Seal of Arizona and Tiger Lily. On the table is her mother's Crazy Patch

came out of your venture making some money, you can be satisfied; it is quite an ambitious program for you to swing it all alone without the backing of a club ... Perhaps you will have blazed the trail and prepared the public mind (of Prescott) and the next attempt will be better attended and therefore more successful. It sounds as if you covered a lot of ground in your quilt talk and as I reread your letter your audience certainly got their 50¢ worth."

For her 1942 quilt exhibit, Emma borrowed Charles Pratt's Ninety and Nine from Mrs. Peto. She had always admired it in photographs but she was so thrilled with it when she saw the actual quilt, she took a pattern from it and later reproduced it. Her quilt is made of cotton in 1 1/2" squares while Mr. Pratt's is in 3/4" silk squares. She kept a journal of her progress which was published in the JOURNAL Fall 1980.

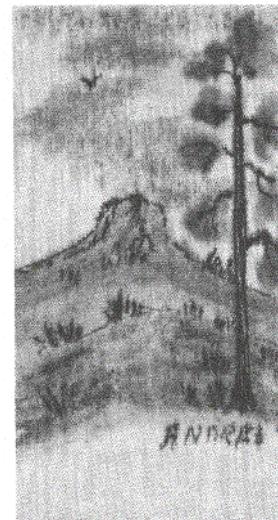
In 1943 to "celebrate" the 2nd anniversary of Mr. Pratt's death, Emma arranged a display of Calvary quilt for an Easter Needlework display and in August of the same year had all of the Pratt quilts she owned were exhibited. On Oct 1, 1943 Mrs. Peto wrote to her friend, "I'm glad you gave another successful party; it often happens that 'voluntary contribution' yields more than a ticket-buying venture."

In the ARIZONA REPUBLIC of April 14, 1946 is an article entitled, "Quilt exhibit due in Prescott". "Miss Emma Andres, nationally known for her needlecraft ability will present her sixth exhibit of quilts tomorrow afternoon in the Sacred Heart Hall. She will lecture concerning the displays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. Each year these needlecraft shows have been a memorial benefit to such organizations as the

American Red Cross, Boys' Town, and the Community Hospital.

Emma's quilt Out Where The West Begins is an original design based on a poem written by Arthur Chapman. The poem in chainstitch script is the medallion surrounded by 14 blocks picturing a desert scene with Ocotillo (pronounced Ok-a-te-yo) a type of cactus. Emma was not pleased with the way the Ocotillo looked and persuaded a water colorist whom she met to make some suggestions and paint one for her. She then practiced painting them until she was satisfied with the results. This led to another artistic endeavor. She began making miniature watercolors which she framed and sold for 50¢. For a short time she took singing lessons as well as painting lessons but gave them both up.

The little miniatures, which Emma called "accidentals" were popular and she netted \$1,000 from their sale. She painted similar scenes on taffeta ribbons. One of her most enthusiastic customers was



Portion of white taffeta ribbon painted by Emma Andres

Florence Peto. She had sent two "accidentals" to Mrs. Peto for a Christmas present the first year of their correspondence and Mrs. Peto wrote to her on Dec 27, 1940 "Those darling miniatures! I don't see how you indicate so much on such a small area. And the precious tiny frames! When you wrote once before about finishing some miniature frames I visualized frames about the size of daguerreotypes - I've never seen such wee things." On April 7, 1941 she again wrote, "Incidentally (a lady) fell in love with your miniatures which stand on my living room mantle. For that matter I cannot tell you how many people have admired the dear little things... The canyon looks... truly lovely." On Oct 18 1940, "The little miniatures have just arrived

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and Marjory (Mrs. Peto's daughter) and I are delighted with them. I don't see how you get all that distance, that perspective in such a tiny space." Mrs. Peto evidently ordered the miniatures as gifts for some friends. Emma says, "I like to work with small things. The miniatures are my favorites."

On Nov 22, 1941 Maude Longwell, a reporter for the ARIZONA FARMER wrote in her column "Fair Glimpses", "As usual Emma Andres newest quilt creation sent down to the Domestic Arts dept. from Prescott led all the rest. She calls it The Tilman Quilt after a negro couple who gave her the bouquet that inspired the motif - an applied flower and vase arrangement with the flowers done yo-yo style. You never saw anything to surpass the beauty of its quilted pattern and supreme delicacy of its stitching."

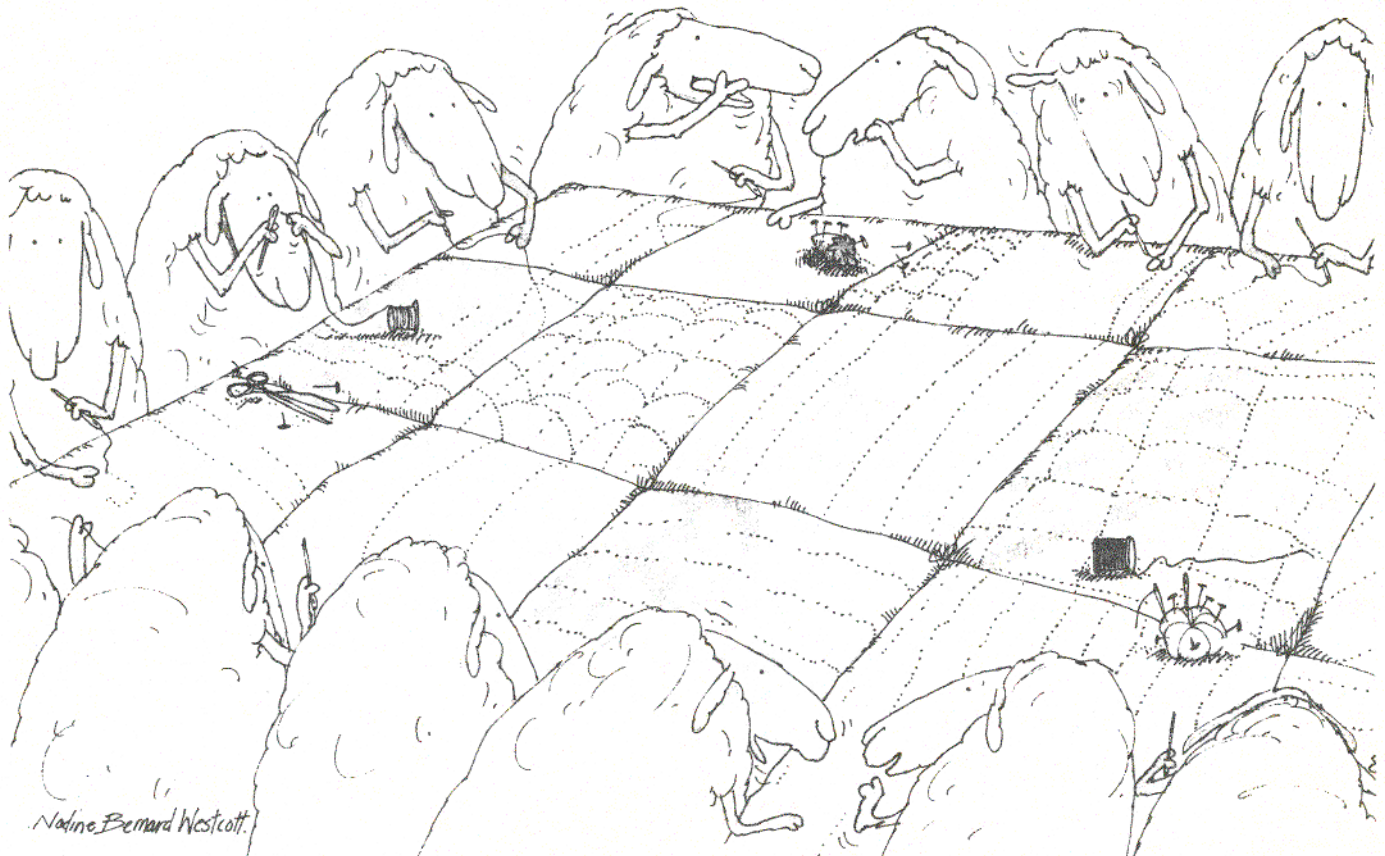
On Nov 22, 1942 the same reporter did a full page story for the EVERY WEEK magazine - a supplement to many Sunday papers. It was entitled, "Masterpieces in Patchwork" and featured "Miss Emma Andres and her quilt hobby". "Emma has made about 15 quilts but is fondest of her four originals -

the Silhouette, Great Seal of Arizona, Out Where the West Begins, and the Tilman quilt. All prize winners. She is convinced that if you piece or applique a quilt, you should quilt it, 'I hired the quilting done on one of my quilts and I never did feel as though it belonged to me. In fact, I gave it away.' Her quilting - those intricate designs worked out with geometric precision and artistic flourish - is accomplished on a round hoop scarcely larger than an embroidery hoop."

Mrs. Peto wrote several times asking for a picture of the Seal of Arizona quilt, mentioning that she would like to include it in an article for some magazine. She approached WOMAN'S DAY with it, but they did not use it. The seal, letters, log cabin and yucca are all in chain stitch. Emma applied the seal first and then attached it to the quilt. It wasn't large enough so she had to put it on a circle one inch larger, cut out the extra material and reapplique it onto the quilt. When she came to the state flags the corners seemed weak so she cut four flags apart to make the corners more important

Emma had a unique method of basting a quilt together. She put paper down to cover

cont



Our thanks to the artist for permission to reproduce this card. @ Nadine Bernard Westcott
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Left: THE CHRISTMAS WINDOW 1976 ... Photo courtesy THE PAPER, DCC 23, 1976. Right: Glass case full of treasures in the Happiness Museum

the floor and then basted diagonally through to the paper. She could hear the needle hit the paper when she went through the three layers.

In 1968 her sister was celebrating her anniversary as a nun. As Emma couldn't get to Los Angeles to be with her, she decided to decorate the store window in honor of the event, using a nun doll as the focal point. She took a picture and sent it to her sister. That was the beginning of the decorated windows which she continues to decorate and change about every six weeks.

In an article in WESTWARD, March 10, 1978 she is quoted, "The windows are a little stage of their own. I feel I am deeply inspired. They don't amount to a darn (a favorite swear word of Emma's) but they have a lot of love in them. I try to keep them simple and child like ... Sometimes I get discouraged and wonder why am I doing this. Then I say, ' Oh that's the devil talking' ...I'm sharing."

Items for the window displays are drawn from the museum. Sometimes she puts in one of "Dad" Pratt's faded and frayed quilts because "he wanted his quilts to be shared and enjoyed". Christmas, Easter and other holidays are always celebrated with special windows

Another of Emma's favorite correspondents was Carrie Hall, co-author of THE ROMANCE OF THE PATCHWORK QUILT IN AMERICA. Her scrapbook begins with a letter dated Jan 5, 1955. During this period "Madame" Hall lived in Northe Platte, Nebraska and sold dolls which she dressed to represent famous people. Emma asked Mrs Hall to dress a doll as a nun to represent her sister. Now she has a glass case full of Mrs Hall's dolls. Mrs Hall died July 8, 1955 - a very sad day for her dear friend!

Both Mrs. Peto and Mrs. Hall remarked many times about Miss Andres' thoughtfulness.

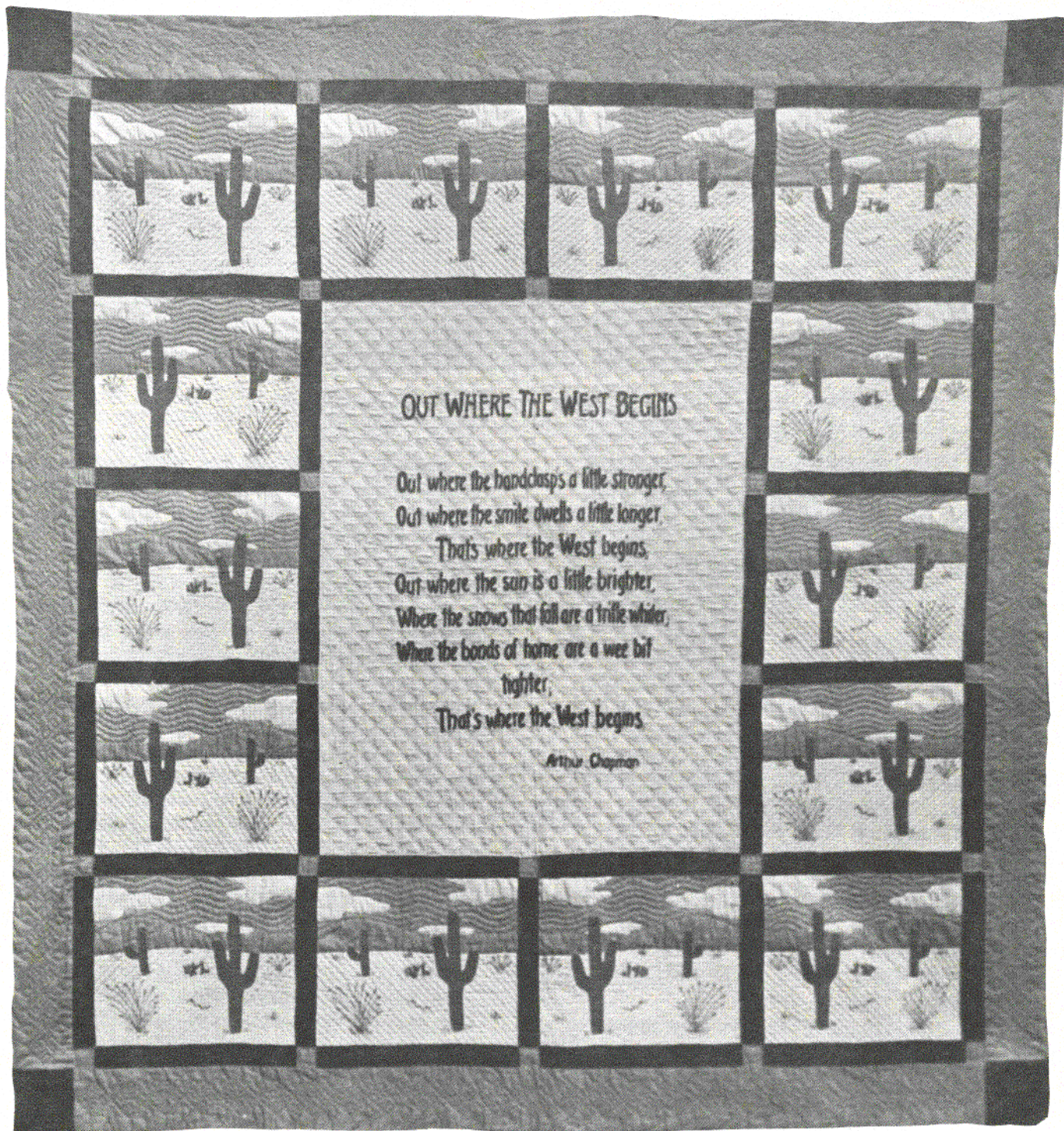
Each correspondent had his/her own special scrapbook with everything taped very carefully in it. Mrs. Peto's is contained in three scrapbooks and Mrs. Hall's in one.

One of her prized possessions is her mother's scrapbook filled with political cartoons, newspaper columns etc. As a child Emma used her crayons to "color" the black and white pictures. She felt they needed something to brighten them up.

She has gradually replaced the items of her father's cigar store where she spent so many years helping him, with her own items that have brought her so much happiness -the dolls made by Carrie Hall, a large thimble collection, the catalog of prizes from the chewing tobacco company, "Dad" Pratt's quilts and her own fine quilts.

Emma doesn't keep regular hours in the museum but goes in almost every day. In some ways it is more home to her than where she sleeps. She welcomes guests, has them sign her register, and gives them little lectures about the treasures the museum holds. Each quilt and artifact has a story. Even if the guests don't always understand the significance or importance of each item, they sense Emma's involvement and how much it all means to her. There is no record of the date she took her last quilting stitch in her Ninety and Nine but she retired her quilting thimble by placing it in her glass case. She hasn't done any quilting since. When we interviewed her in June 1981 she remarked, "quilting is not part of my life now, but most of the wonderful things that have happened to me are somehow connected to quilting." A notation in Emma's handwriting sums it up, "I

cont



am deeply grateful for my thrilling experiences."

Since we last saw Emma we have had several phone conversations and a few letters. We understand that a quilting group in Prescott asked her to speak and thirty quiltmakers turned out for the occasion. She wrote "my little talk for the Hill Top Quilters Guild was fun." She has been rereading her old scrapbooks and has reestablished contact with some of the families of her former friends. Somehow we think maybe quilting will again be part of her life.

All photographs courtesy of Emma Andres unless otherwise noted.

References: Nov 22, 1942 Maude Longwell, "Masterpiece in Patchwork" EVERY WEEK.

May 8, 1972 Billie Jean Lane "Happiness Museum is called 'fairy-tale land' by Youth" COURIER

Dec 23, 1976 Margie Erhart "Emma paints with needle and thread" THE PAPER

March 10 1978 Claudette Simpson, "Emma's Happiness Museum" THE WESTWARD