

MRS KATE HUNNIBEE'S DIARY

The following article was contributed by Carol Crabbe of Columbia, Missouri, who has done extensive research on early farm magazines. Ms Crabbe writes, "This is an excellent article because it gives descriptions of a quilting frame and a template and mentions brand names such as "Coats' Six Cord".

"Quoting the three ladies was a vehicle used by several regular columnists of that period to give differing opinions."

May 23d. Sewing-circle this afternoon at the Parsonage. The parlor, the library, and the dining-room were full, and the ladies all busy with fingers and tongues. It would be difficult to tell whether more talking or sewing were done. One of the young ladies sat at the sewing-machine in the dining-room, and kept it running -- now stitching the hem of a skirt, or hemming a ruffle for a nightwrap or a pillow slip. But the centre of attraction was in the parlor, where-the old ladies, who used to go to quilting bees when they were girls, sat around the big quilting frame which belongs to the Society, with every now and then a young lady sandwiched in between them, to thread their needles, as they left tracery in shell-work of delicate stitches in "Coats' six cord" behind the glancing, shiny points. This quilting-frame is made very much like that of a cot or an X bed with listing nailed on to the sides and ends, to which the lining of the quilt may be firmly sewed, and with hickory pegs to fit the holes at the four corners where it is fastened together. Having legs of its own -- in other works, being self-supporting -- the nuisance of chairs at the four corners is dispensed with, and a larger number of quilters can gather around it. As it belongs to the society, the various members have the use of it whenever they wish, and we have found it a great convenience every fall in preparing our annual barrel for the home missionary, to whom we always send a quilt and a comfort or two. But the big piece of needle-work in the frame this afternoon is designed for Mrs. Blake, and every square bears in indelible ink a different name.

At one of our Sewing Circles several weeks ago, Jessie Pride buried herself in cutting out patches for making the square A, and distributing them among the members. The best calico and most durable white muslin compose them, and they are set together with great taste, so as to form both harmony and contrast in coloring when viewed as a whole. After some discussion as to the pattern to be followed

in quilting, Mrs. Lester's suggestion was adopted, and a half dozen circular pieces of pasteboard prepared, each about two inches in diameter, and with notches in the edge dividing the circumference into four equal parts. A delicate pencil, Faber's No. 3, was used to mark the shell pattern from these pieces of pasteboard, and they were quilted in rows running round the quilt, and meeting each other at the four corners. As the quilt is square, of course they will all come out even at the centre of it. After "rolling up," the old ladies took their spectacles off and wiped them, or twirled them in their fingers while the young ones marked out the pattern for the next turn. They were here all the morning, putting it in and making ready, and by dark -- which doesn't come till seven o'clock -- the quilt was considerably more than half done, and we set it away upstairs to be finished tomorrow by those who may find a leisure hour during the day to spend at the Parsonage. Supper was handed round, and as many kinds of cake almost as there were ladies present. "What shall be done to Mrs. Blake," said Julia Knox, "for breaking the rules? We are allowed only two kinds of cake; and look here!" and she held up the silver cake basket. "Here's chocolate-cake and fruitcake, and sponge, and almond, and currant, and jelly, and pound, and macaroons, and cocoanut. It's a bad example -- in a minister's wife too!" "I think they that got her into it oughter pay it," said Aunt Betsey. "These wimmen that brought so many kinds o' sich stuff oughter put their hands in their pockets and make up the fine." "What kind o' cake did you bring, Aunt Betsey?" said Billy Pride. "Didn't bring no kind. I brought biscuits and cheese, 'n none o' sich trash as cake and sich indigestible stuff." "I think the gallant knights should come to the rescue of the fair sex" said Billy; and moving about among his acquaintances, he very soon picked up more than twice the amount of the fine, which he placed in Mrs. Blake's hands with a very graceful little speech, requesting her to retain for her own personal use what remained after the fine was paid.

The library was the chosen resort of the more quiet and retiring members; but even here, in the presence of the old English divines, Stillingfleet, Jeremy Taylor, and their compeers, with the faces of Luther and Calvin and Edwards and Wesley looking down from the walls, the quiet jest and the hum of household talk went on, even as,

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FOR SALE: Antique blue and white string star quilt. Handmade circa 1900. \$160. 415/389-0149.

INTERNATIONAL QUILT EXHIBIT - Feb. 12-15, 1982. Del Mar, CA \$7,000 prizes. Classes. For info: 2 stamps Ruth Briggs, PO Box 403, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067.

STAINED GLASS - spool of thread 4" x 3", color choice \$7.50 ppd; mini spool on cord 1" x 2" \$6.50 ppd. Wholesale welcome. Patchwork Glass, 5020 Underwood, Santa Rosa CA 95405.

THE GARDEN applique quilt pattern and directions by Pine Eisfeller originally published by WOMAN'S DAY Mar 1943. \$4.00 plus 75¢ handling charges to Gross, Box 270, Mill Valley CA 94942

PINE EISFELLER - an expanded and updated biography (10 pages) with more pictures and information than the JOURNAL article (Winter '81). List of Hawaiian quilts and picture of her Poinsettia quilt. \$2.00 plus 50¢ postage. QUILTER'S JOURNAL, Box 270, Mill Valley CA 94942.

QUILT CATALOG - Quilts from the Collection of the Oklahoma Historical Society \$8.00 incl. postage. 25 colored plates all full size quilts and some details. Little description but good photos. Write Oklahoma Historical Society, Historical Bldg. Oklahoma City OK 73105.

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MRS HUNNIBEE'S DIARY *cont from pg 5*
under the mighty cope of heaven and in the presence of the blazing stars moving in their measureless orbits, man reefs the sails, or turns the sod, or digs the grave.

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There was quite a discussion among the ladies in the library about patching quilts.

Mrs. Knox - I think it is as good a way to teach little girls how to sew as we can find. They may thus learn to arrange colors with taste, and cut out by patterns with exactness. Let them make doll-baby quilts first and then piece a big quilt for themselves. I have one now that I began to piece almost as long ago as I can remember, made up with biys of nearly every calico dress and apron I had in my childhood, and I wouldn't take any money for that quilt. My mother - dear old lady - takes my calico pieces and scraps of muslin as they accumulate, and busies herself in putting them into blocks or stars or fancy patterns for me.

Mrs. Lester - But it always seemed a great piece of folly to me to buy calico for the express purpose of cutting it in pieces that it may be sewed together again. For my fancy, white marseilles spreads and rose blankets are more tasteful, less burdensome as a covering, and more agreeable than quilts and comforts; though in very cold nights a comfort is not objectionable.

Mrs. Blake - But if one has pieces enough in the house - and most every one has - it is certainly a

good plan, in hours of leisure, to put them in so enduring and useful a form as a quilt. I have a box in which every thing of this kind is kept, and from which I make the little girls that come to see me presents for their dolls' toilettes and bedding.

May 24th. I went in for an hour or two this morning to help on the quilt, and who should be there but Mrs. Doolittle, working away as fast as she could, making her name a mockery.

The article continues with a description of how to make a traveling bag and doesn't mention the quilt again.

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HELP WANTED

This column is open to subscribers who wish to exchange information. Please mention that you saw the item in the JOURNAL.

I am interested in sources and dates prior to 1882 that refer specifically to the term "Broderie Perse". I would also appreciate any early description of this technique that includes this term. Helen Kelley 2215 Stinson Blvd, Minneapolis, MN 55418

I am doing research on quilts that were entered in either Chicago World's Fair. If anyone knows the whereabouts of one or more, I would like to hear from her/him. Barbara Brackman, 500 Louisiana St. Lawrence, KS 66044