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LILLIAN WALKER

FOUND: MISSING STEARNS & FOSTER

by Cuesta Benberry Cuesta Benberry is a well-known quilt historian and researcher. She is a frequent contributor to the leading quilt magazines, including the JOURNAL. Ms. Benberry will be lecturing at the Santa Clara Quilt Symposium in July 1981 off "Afro-American Women and Quilts."

For many years quilt pattern collectors have discussed with great interest "missing" quilt patterns from the Mountain Mist catalogs. We believed that Stearns and Foster originally had offered patterns for #C and for #E, although those letters were omitted in most of the later Mountain Mist catalogs. We searched diligently, to no avail, to locate even one clue as to the names of those elusive quilt patterns. About 1968 or '69, the late Lena Moses of Roanoke, Va. supplied us with an original 1930 Mountain Mist batting cover, which contained the pattern #E "Cornucopia". We were unable to determine why Mountain Mist deleted the pattern from its pattern offerings. A later pattern #87 "Horn of Plenty" is similar, but is not identical.

We then concentrated our efforts on locating a pattern for #C, but we were unsuccessful. So much so, that we even began to doubt that there was ever a pattern published for #C. Recently, Annette Amann of St. Louis acquired an old 1928 original Mountain Mist batting cover. This cover is much different from later batting covers of Mountain Mist. On the outside of the cover, the patterns are arranged in alphabetical sequence - A, B, C, - yes C! Eureka! We found it! The pattern is not named, but in the corner of the block picture is the circled letter C. The quilt

pattern is an all green applied floral one, reminiscent of a clover or a shamrock blossom. There is not-another pattern in the Mountain Mist catalog like it. So again, we are puzzled as to why Mountain Mist deleted it so quickly. We know that it was published in 1928, but this pattern does not appear in their 1931 listing. Half of our job is done; the pattern picture has been located. All that remains for us to do is to find K's name. Does anyone know that?



Missing Stearns & Foster Pattern C

EVEN SILK IS ADULTERATED

Barbara Brackman of Lawrence Kansas, quilt historian and frequent contributor to QUILTER'S NEWSLETTER and QUILTERS' JOURNAL sent us this article from the MAINE FARMER 1896.

Some improvements in the treatment of silks are announced. Ordinarily silk is "weighted" by depositing tannate of tin in the fiber; the material receives a bath of tannic acid and then another of perchloride of tin, a repetition of this being made until an increase of the weight amounts to from 15-20% beyond which it is not considered safe to go in the case of silk intended to be dyed light shades or to be bleached.

Recently a German inventor has brought forward a process in which silica is the weighting agent... First the silk, raw or in any stage of manufacture, and either before or after dyeing, is worked for an hour in a warm solution of water glass or soluble silicate of soda for about an hour followed by washing, having also been previously passed through a solution of phosphate of soda. The operation may be repeated again and again with no harmful effect on the fiber or subsequent dyeing. In five operations the silk may be increased in weight some 100-120%. The silk is now soaped and if already dyed is cleared in an emulsion of olive oil and acid.