

THE FABRIC STORY

Very little has been written about the everyday patterned fabrics women wore and used between 1820 and 1900.

Very often museums have only the best garments of a woman's life. When the cotton garments are found, they are a great help to those who study fabrics. We can date the style of the garment by studying fashion magazines. Looking at the inside of the old garments often reveals an extra bonus such as a print lining or facing. But, the fact remain that quilts are the next best source of the lovely cottons of a woman's ever day life.

One thesis done at Iowa State University in the last few years was on the subject "Styles of Printed Cotton Fabrics in Mail Order Catalogs, 1875-1919(Wards) and 1897-1919(Sears)" This is only a beginning...there are other things important to the record. When were fabrics first available in your area? How did the fabrics get there? What was their mode of transportation?

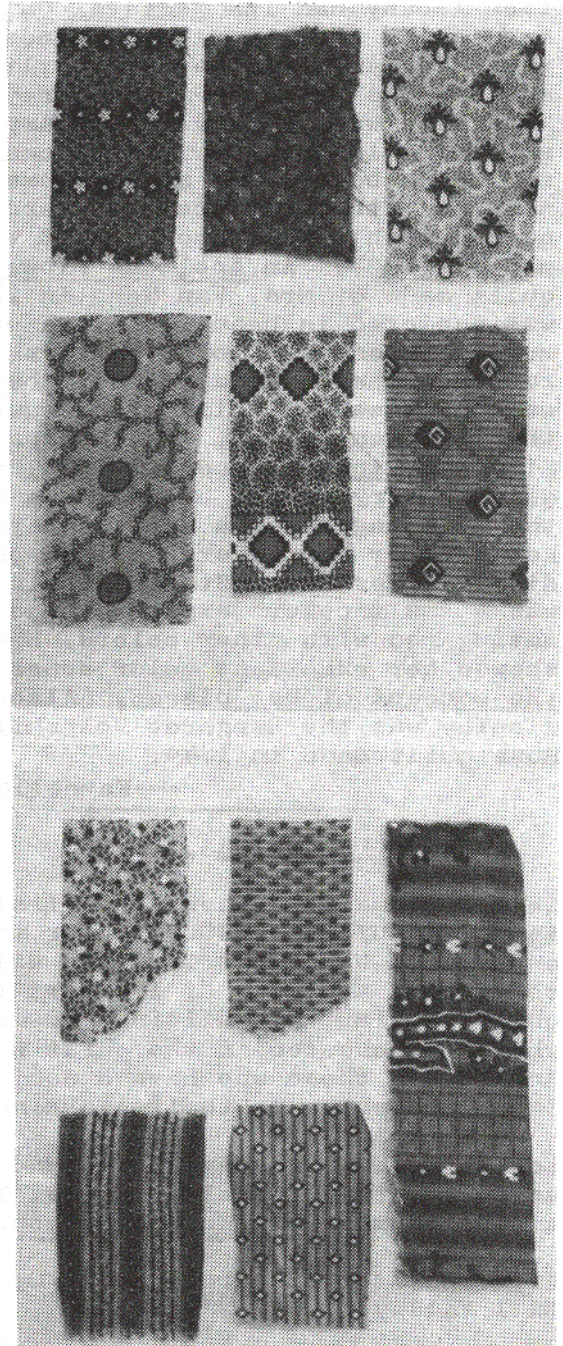
For instance, Iowa had its first real settlement in 1833, had stage lines running from river towns by 18140, became a state in 1846 and was just starting to get railroads in 1855. Boats were moving supplies up and down the Mississippi and Missouri. About forty years ago Carlic Sexton wrote that we were getting French fabrics from these boats.

By the time Iowa had much fabric, the early fashionable colors and prints had changed. We can sometimes look at a quilt then and say it had to have been made in another state before arriving in Iowa. By checking print designs in different areas of the country we will be able to learn more of the fascinating fabric story.

The Time-Life book on Spanish West mentions colorful American calicoes as part of the merchandise of 1824 being taken from Missouri to Santa Fe. This would lead one to believe older fabrics would be found in quilts of that area than in Iowa. A paper is now being written on fabrics recovered from the Bertrand, which sank in the Missouri in the 1860's with a full load of merchandise.

This merchandise was recovered a few years ago and has been cleaned up. It is hoped it will remain in Iowa on permanent display.

---Mary Barton
Ames, Iowa



NORTHBRAE COMMUNITY CHURCH
5th ANNUAL QUILT EXHIBITION

May 8th through 22, the Northbrae Community Church held its annual quilt show. Over fifty quilts were on exhibition, some hung, out many draped on tables and rather hard to see in detail.

Roberta Horton's Adult Education class from Albany had its Medieval Quilt on display which depicted scenes from the "King Arthur" era, with tilting and dragons intact. Pat Humphrey's Medallion was an excellent example of monochromatic colors with its beautiful beige background and a floral pattern with light brown centers surrounded with darker browns. It was made in 1937. An Applique Flower quilt made by Mrs. Van Horn in 1876 was depicted in beautiful reds with a most interesting floral pattern in the leaves. The material for the backing was purchased in Philadelphia during the 1876 centennial. The Martha Simmonds Pinwheel made in 1850, was done in very subtle brown tones with the quilting done in small squares. Kate Walker had several quilts on display. Her Jewel Star, made in 1977, was a "multi-color" experience, alternating red with other colors. She showed her excellent color sense in the concept of her pieces. Also on display was the Margaret Wolfskill Rose quilt made in 1849.

---Faydelle

FROM YOUR EDITORS..

We are proud to present the first full issue of QUILTER'S JOURNAL for your enjoyment. We have tried, and will try to present articles of interest to the quilt scholar, the quilting homemaker who is interested in the quilt world, and to all those who have a desire to learn and share in their learning.

Let us know your suggestions and send us your informational articles. This is a publication for you, about you.

Write: Quilter's Journal, Box 270, Mill Valley.. Ca., 94941.

What is happening in your area? What would you like to know to help you in this exciting quilting world?

MARY BARTON
contributor of "The Fabric Story"
this issue....

Mary Barton, Ames, Iowa, is a quilter. (See: Warren, Michigan, National Bicentennial Quilt Exposition & Contest catalog, 1976 #14, Heritage Quilt). She became interested in textiles and their importance to quilts when she purchased three boxes of fabric at an auction. The boxes contained antique textiles, many of them the indigo blues. She is a quilt collector and has given many to the Museum of Living History in Des Moines. She feels they will preserve, protect, and share them. Pictured are purple prints in which the purple is turning to brown with exposure to air and light.. Some are from the collection of the late Maxine Teale and some are from the Gross collection.

---Photo: Ed Gross



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