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Gadabout Patterns by Miss Theodocia Willman

Little is known about this intriguing short-lived 1930s era pattern source.

Headlines vary from "Gadabout Patterns / By Miss Theodocia Willman" to "Personality Patterns / By The Gadabout." Only two quilt patterns are known at this time.

The feature has been located in the *Decatur (IL) Daily Review*, *Hutchinson (KS) News*, *Zanesville (OH) Signal*, *Zanesville (OH) Times Recorder*, *Indianapolis (IN) News*, *Des Moines (IA) Register*, *Detroit (MI) Free Press*, *Lincoln (NE) Evening Journal*, *Brooklyn (NY) Daily Eagle*, all in 1931. The bylines have not been located before or after 1931.

The mail-order address was Gadabout Patterns, Suite 1021, 326 W. Madison St., Chicago, an office building with a wide variety of tenants. Among these was National Newspaper Service owned by John F. Dille, distributors of the self-contained Jane Alan quilt pattern feature found in newspapers from 1932 to 1935 or 1936 (see separate Jane Alan page).

As an interesting side note, there truly was a Theodocia Willman who lived in Arkansas and Texas. She was Theodocia Stinson, born in Mississippi, June 1860, married William Pickard Willman, an itinerant farm laborer, January 2, 1878, in Hot Spring County, Arkansas, who had two children from his first marriage. They were living in Clark County, Arkansas, in 1880, back in Hot Spring County in 1900, and in Angelina County, Texas, in 1910. She died June 1, 1911, in Greenville, Hunt County, Texas (Footnote.com). In 1910, she was reportedly the mother of nine children, three of whom died young. Was daughter Emma or Bertha, or possibly a granddaughter, the Gadabout lady in 1931? Possibly, but doubtful. Instead, the coincidence of the unusual and uncommon name was probably just that--an ironic coincidence.

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Applique Design for Quilts, No. B1089, from an original *Indianapolis News* clipping, March 31, 1931.



**PERSONALITY PATTERNS
BY THE GADABOUT**

No. B1089.
Applique Design for Quilts.
Quilting has come back. Women are again interested in the needle work pastimes. Here are three charming designs for quilt blocks. Use any one of them and alternate it with a plain block and you'll be delighted with the results. In each case muslin forms the background and colored fabric makes the flowers—green for the leaves and your favorite pastel color for the blossom. Send 15 cents in coin carefully wrapped for the pattern.

Doggy Quilt, No. B1097, from the *Zanesville (OH) Signal*, July 24, 1931.
(NewspaperArchive.com)



Gadabout Patterns
By Theodocia Willman

Child's Doggy Quilt. Pattern No B1097--The "Doggy" Quilt, besides being attractive has a great influence in coaxing a child to bed for an afternoon nap or a night's sleep! It is made of a series of blocks on which are appliqued dogs and dog houses used alternately. A wide plain border provides a neat finish for the quilt. A combination of bright colors in calico appliqued on an unbleached muslin background is effective. Send 15c in coin carefully wrapped for the pattern.

Zanesville (OH) Signal, July 24, 1931