

Quilt History Tidbits -- Old & Newly Discovered

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Miss Margaret Techy



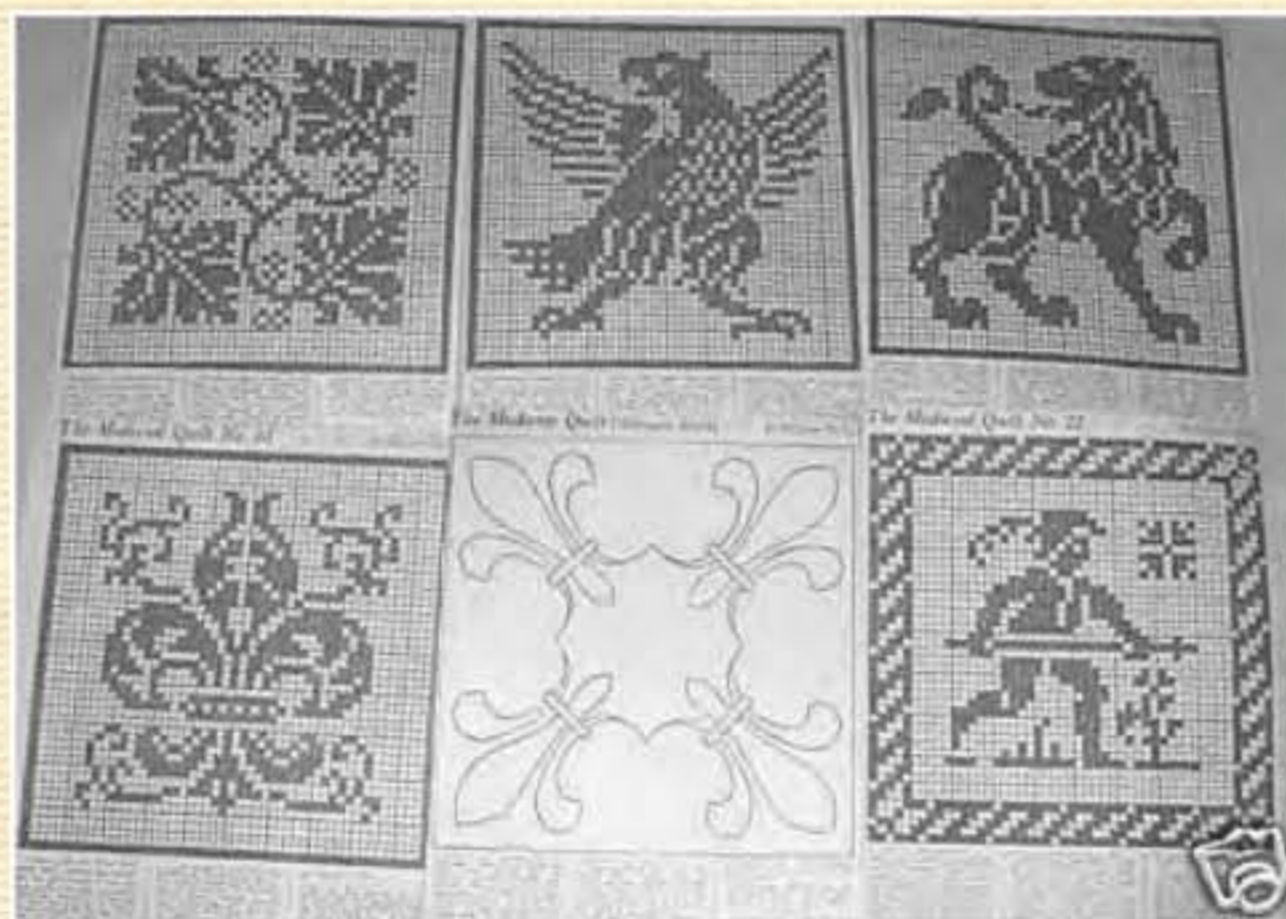
(photograph from a clipping, date and publication unknown)

Margaret Techy was born in Romania (Hungary-Transylvania), January 21, 1896, came to the United States in or about 1921, and became a U.S. citizen, October 5, 1928.

Needlework columns syndicated by Central Press Association, 1435 East 12th Street, Cleveland, Ohio. She was sometimes heralded as the "*Central Press Sewing Expert.*"

Series quilts include Old English, Ohio Flower, Fruit Quilt, Medieval Quilt, and All-Sports.

Medieval Quilt for cross-stitch by Margaret Techy, six clippings from my collection.



From the *Massillon (OH) Evening Independent*, November 14, 1930: Modern American women love to sew, states Miss Margaret Techy of Cleveland, who makes the work of teaching old world embroideries to women of the new world her life work. She finds eager pupils for the various forms of embroidery, rug making, quilting, knitting and crocheting, also the history of the various arts which she learned as a child in her former home in Transylvania, and the making of original designs. Miss Techy came to the United States nine years ago after the war which financially ruined her family. (NewspaperArchive.com) Article also in *Olean (NY) Evening Herald*, November 17, 1930, *Hagerstown (MD) Morning Herald*, November 22, 1930, and probably others. This article with Miss Techy's photograph appears to coincide with the beginning of her syndicated column.

From the *Hamilton (OH) Evening Journal*, November 17, 1930: With the Women of Today, by Mrs. Lilian Campbell:

Do women still sew? Or is it a lost art? Miss Margaret Techy, Cleveland, says decidedly they do. She even has figures to show that out of every 24 women, eight are intensely interested in sewing as a fine art as well as a useful accomplishment

Miss Techy 'earns her living teaching sewing, so she knows whereof she speaks. She had taught private classes in her own studio, in the Cleveland School of Art, the Y. W. C. A., in settlement houses, department stores and clubs. Which shows that a fondness for the ancient art of sewing is not confined to any one class of women. Miss Techy also writes articles giving instruction in sewing for newspapers.

Born in Hungary-Transylvania, Miss Techy first learned to sew at her mother's knee. Later she studied it as a regular subject in elementary, high and normal schools, and with private instructions. She has been in America nine years.

Initiated At Five

"At the age of five I was initiated into the secrets of sewing at my mother's knee," she said. "There was an old castle in ruins less than two miles from our home, and I used to beg my mother and father to tell me stories about it. I was especially interested in the large room where the women of the household used to gather to spin, weave, sew and embroider under the leadership of their lady, while their men were fighting in the crusades. Quilted garments were worn under the armor, and it was a noble lady's occupation then to make richly embroidered garments for herself and to decorate her knight's vestments with silver and gold, also to find time for church embroidery and to make garments for the poor. My interest in these stories and in needlework never ceased.

"Then the war broke out. My time was divided between Red Cross work, writing and reading letters for illiterate men, especially gypsies. Later on I made my home in a city, Kolozseur--now Cluj. I visited prisons where some of our friends were held for political reasons--taking food, clean clothes and encouraging words."

Comes to U. S.

After the war, the family fortunes broken, Miss Techy accepted the invitation of an uncle to come to the United States. After a few hectic months she got her passport and sailed, passports not being easy things to get in those troubled days.

She teaches the making of hooked rugs, tapestries, quilting, crewel embroidery, Italian or Roman cutwork, samplers cross stitch embroidery, knitting, crocheting and embroidery of all kinds. She makes her own designs and also teaches design making, taking her pupils to the Cleveland Museum of Art to study textiles and choose their own patterns from the many exhibited there, many of them made in the old world. (NewspaperArchive.com)

Margaret Techy and Mrs. August N. Farmer were co-founders of the National Needlecraft Guild, November 9, 1938. From the article, "Needlecraft Guild Exhibit on Friday Is Open to Public," *Elyria (OH) Chronicle-Telegram*, April 12, 1967. (NewspaperArchive.com)

Author of *Filet Crochet Lace, How to Make It* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943).

From the *Elyria (OH) Chronicle Telegram*, March 20, 1951: Embroidery Exhibit

Rare Egyptian and Persian embroideries of the 13th century will be displayed at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Friday, March 30 at 2 p.m., according to word from Helene Doran of the National Needlecraft Guild. These embroideries have been loaned by Dr. Phyllis Ackerman of the Asia Institute of New York and by Cooper Union Museum of New York.

Miss Margaret Techy, author, lecturer and well known European authority on embroidery will be guest speaker. Miss Techy, a teacher at Hunter College in New York has studied in Hungarian convents, the Royal School of Needlework in London, Cleveland School of Art and the Royal Hungarian School of Arts.

The meeting is open to the public and is free of charge. (NewspaperArchive.com)

Margaret Techy died in December 1979 in either New York City or in Cleveland, Ohio.

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