

Uncoverings 1995

Volume 16 of
the Research Papers of
the American Quilt Study Group

Edited by Virginia Gunn



Ruth Finley and the Colonial Revival Era

Ricky Clark

Ruth Finley, pioneering quilt author, lived the first half of her life in Ohio's Western Reserve. This paper investigates the influences of that region on her later life and writing, and on her involvement in the Colonial Revival. Sources for the paper include family letters and documents, Finley's personal notes, public records, interviews with people who knew Finley, and field research conducted in villages where her family lived.

*Finley's well-documented family with its New England roots nourished her interest in history and helped her capitalize on the Colonial Revival movement. Her background shaped the pattern and depth of scholarship that resulted in her classic book, *Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them*, first published in 1929 and still widely quoted today.*

It seems almost inevitable that Ruth Finley would write her still-classic book, *Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them*. Born into a family steeped in history, surrounded by nineteenth-century architecture and townscapes, and fortuitously living during the Colonial Revival period—which she promoted professionally—Ruth Ebright Finley possessed credentials suited to bringing together women, quilts, and history. She could almost have done so without leaving home.¹

Several factors in her formative years established the direction of her later life, and some in particular influenced her books, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, *The Lady of Godey's: Sarah Josepha Hale*, and

Our Unseen Guest. By the time Finley wrote *Old Patchwork Quilts* in 1929, her family, its roots in Connecticut and in Connecticut's Western Reserve in Ohio, and inherited antiques came together as key elements needed to capitalize successfully on the Colonial Revival.

Family Background

Ruth Finley was a complex and independent woman with apparently contradictory qualities. An outspoken feminist, she supported family values.² An Episcopalian, she also became an astrologer and a medium. She championed higher education for women, but left college after only three semesters. As a muck-raking journalist she wrote sympathetically of immigrant working women exploited by their employers and she joined the Daughters of the American Revolution. A staunch Republican all her life, she designed a quilt and named it for a Democratic president.

Born Ruth Ebright on September 25, 1884, in Akron, Ohio, Finley lived exactly half her life in that state (see figure 1). Her physician father, Leonidas Ebright, participated in Republican politics, serving two terms in the Ohio House of Representatives and four years as Surgeon General of the State of Ohio under Governor William McKinley, his personal friend. During McKinley's 1896 presidential campaign, Ebright campaigned throughout several states speaking in both German and English.³ In gratitude, the victorious President McKinley appointed him Postmaster of Akron, a position he held through three administrations. Julia Bissell Ebright, Ruth's mother, was born in a log cabin in Sharon, Ohio, a few miles from Akron, in 1850. Her father, Erastus Bissell, a pioneer settler, had come there in 1836 from Litchfield, Connecticut. Julia Ebright worked in civic and charitable organizations and during McKinley's two terms as Governor, she served as one of his two official hostesses.⁴

Ruth Ebright also participated in McKinley's 1896 presidential campaign, as a member of The Little Misses McKinley Club.

Figure 1.⁴ Ruth Ebright Finley. Photo courtesy William and Margaret Dague.

The day after McKinley's election she and seventeen other young ladies visited the new president at his home in nearby Canton to congratulate him on his election. As "spokesgirl" for the group, twelve-year-old Ruth presented the new president with a bouquet and her hopes "that your life will continue to be as bright and pure as these flowers which were painted by the hand of our heavenly father."⁵ She remained involved in Republican

politics the rest of her life, actively participating in the Women's National Republican Club. In the 1930s, she served on its national council and from 1936 to 1938 edited its new magazine, *Guide*, the first national political review directed to women.⁶

The socially prominent Ebrights lived in a substantial Victorian house on East Market Street in Akron, spending summers and occasional weekends at the Bissell farm in Sharon, fifteen miles away. Ruth graduated from a private high school, Buchtel Academy. She entered Oberlin College in 1902 but left after one semester; then attended Buchtel College, remaining only two semesters. For the next three years she traveled, wrote and published poetry and stories, and in August 1907 began a journalistic career with the *Akron Beacon Journal*.⁷

In 1910 she joined the staff of the *Cleveland Press*. As an investigative reporter, she wrote a series of articles exposing the abysmal conditions of Cleveland women working as shopgirls, waitresses, housemaids, factory workers, and laundresses.⁸ She obtained her information by working briefly in each of these jobs, calling herself "Ann Addams," a *nom de plume* her editor had assigned her when she worked at the *Akron Beacon Journal*. The name, with its unusual spelling, suggests a relationship with the renowned social worker, Jane Addams.

While working on this series she met Emmet Finley, also a reporter at the *Press*, and married him in August 1910. Emmet, who had a law degree, became city editor of the *Cleveland Press* and general manager of the American Press Association, an organization that provided short articles and syndicated columns to small newspapers around the country.⁹

The Finleys lived in Cleveland and during that time Ruth held various editorial positions at the *Cleveland Press*, the Scripps Howard newspaper chain, and for the *Washington Herald*. In 1916 she had her first experience as a medium, receiving messages from "discarnate entities," which Emmet transcribed. Four years later they published an account of these experiences in a book entitled *Our Unseen Guest*, using the pen names "Darby and Joan."¹⁰

It is easy to underestimate the significance of the paranormal

to Finley. Fearing ridicule from their friends and business associates, she and Emmet deliberately kept this important aspect of their lives secret. "At this moment as I write not twenty people can possibly know that Joan the psychic and Ruth E. Finley, listed as 'editor, author' in *Who's Who in America* since 1930 are one and the same," Ruth wrote in an autobiography she began in 1951 at the "command" of "Invisibles."¹¹ Of the fourteen extant pages of this document she had intended to publish, the first ten deal with her paranormal experiences; only then does she mention her family and career.

Finley's parents and younger sister, Mary, had moved back to Sharon in 1910. After her father's death in 1917, Ruth and Emmet moved to a larger apartment in Cleveland so that Julia and Mary could live there with them. When they moved to New York in 1920 the Finleys bought a large early nineteenth-century house in Hempstead, Long Island, "only because we believed a house big enough for the four of us was necessary."¹²

Mary, however, remained in Ohio, and married William I. Dague in 1922. When Emmet discovered that he needed a food editor for his business, now a Scripps-Howard feature service called the Newspaper Enterprise Association, he hired Mary, a renowned cook. For twenty-five years she contributed a regular column, "Sister Mary's Kitchen," while her sister, Ruth, served as women's editor.¹³ Ruth and Emmet spent the rest of their lives in and around New York City, with frequent visits to family in Ohio and Connecticut.

People who knew both Ruth and Mary commented on how different they were. "I don't think you would have known they were sisters," Edson Brown recalled.¹⁴ According to Ross Trump, Mary was "fun loving and spontaneous . . . a charming person . . . interested in you, interested in everything; . . . you couldn't help but like her."¹⁵ People remembered Mary as "outgoing," "animated," and "social."

Lovina Knight, whose mother was a lifelong friend, recalled that Ruth had a sense of fun and was "pleasant, an easy conversationalist."¹⁶ Yet she "took herself seriously" and was "independent and meticulous: systematic was her middle name," accord-

ing to her nephew, William Dague.¹⁷ Her 1920s “House Schedule” confirms this:

Monday–Morning: Vacuum upstairs (use radiator brush); Afternoon: Wash silk lingerie, clean silver.

Tuesday–Morning: Vacuum downstairs (use radiator brush); Afternoon: Take two hours for any special cleaning like mirrors, windows, woodwork, bric-a-brac, books.

Wednesday–Morning: Special bathroom cleaning; Afternoon: Polish pewter and straighten up and dust or wash open shelves and woodwork as needed.

Thursday–Morning: Clean brass.

Friday–Morning: Clean thoroughly downstairs using vacuum and long-handled duster on high woodwork; Afternoon: Mop up kitchen, lavatory and ice room floors.

Saturday: Clean ice room shelves, etc., and scald out refrigerator. Give stove special cleaning and brush out oven. Put bread box outdoors to air for half hour. Boil up coffeepot with soda. Also on Saturday mornings, as soon as you’ve had enough hot water for cleaning ice box drain the hot water tank.¹⁸

Finley had a regal and patrician demeanor. “She was tall and thin; reserved and grand,” Ross Trump recalled. “She looked just like Betty Crocker.”¹⁹

Quilt Research

Finley began working on *Old Patchwork Quilts* in 1915, while still in Cleveland. As a journalist, she particularly enjoyed collecting the stories behind the quilts. “I have always been familiar with quilts and the making of them in my own family,” she recalled, “but [in 1915] I started taking vacations by automobile. I toured widely, and a quilt hanging on a clothesline in a door-yard aroused in me such thirst that I invariably had to ask the lady of the house for a drink of water. The amount of water I’ve drunk in the cause of quilts would float a battleship; but I achieved my purposes. The quilt patterns, names and lore were actually gathered from the women who owned them.”²⁰

Finley's pattern collection consists of forty pages of sketches and descriptive notes, compiled under the title "Unused Diagrams," although she included many of them in *Old Patchwork Quilts* (see figure 2). She began collecting these diagrams in 1915 and notes on some, detailing their placement in *Old Patchwork Quilts*, indicate that she referred to them throughout the 1920s, when she was well along on her book. In most cases she recorded two or more names for each pattern before selecting one. Under one pattern sketch, for example, she wrote "The Pin Wheel" and "The Wind Mill." She crossed off the second name and, when she included the diagram in Chapter VI of *Old Patchwork Quilts*, called it Pin Wheel (see figure 3).²¹

During this period Finley also began acquiring quilts, adding to her family collection. Ross Trump reported that in the spring his mother, Helen Watts Trump, his quilt-collecting aunt Nancy Alderfer, Mary Dague, and Ruth Finley drove through the countryside looking at quilts airing on clotheslines, and buying some (see figure 4). Eventually her collection totaled fifty to sixty quilts. Knowingly or unknowingly, Ruth Finley had become one of the "lady antiquers" who emerged during the Colonial Revival era when collecting antiques became a passion for many Americans.²²

The Colonial Revival

The Colonial Revival—or a continuing series of them, as historian Karal Ann Marling views this nationalistic phenomenon—was one of America's reactions to a series of major social changes following the Civil War.²³ That devastating experience, followed by rapid advances in technology, urbanization, and immigration, overwhelmed many Americans, who felt a compelling need for order and stability. They sought it in America's "colonial" past, which they perceived as a simpler, nobler era. In reviving the "colonial," they applied selective memory to create a "usable past."²⁴ The threatening emergence of the "new woman" in particular inspired a return to the domestic past, symbolized by

Figure 2. Page from Finley's pattern collection. In *Old Patchwork Quilts* she included Figures 1 and 2 as diagrams 89 and 90, changing the name of Figure 89 to Foundation Rose. Although she included two Garden Wreath quilts in the book, Figure 3 was not one of them. "Unused Diagrams," Bissell Family Papers.

the hearth, the “old-tyme” kitchen, and grandmother’s spinning wheel, demonstrated at Victorian fairs by genuine grandmothers.²⁵

Architecture, domestic artifacts, literature, and genealogy served as the main conduits to “colonial” times. Americans built new homes in old styles, collected antiques, wrote and read historical novels, and—hoping that their ancestors had fought in the Revolutionary War—established genealogical societies to prove it. The term “colonial,” never historically accurate, could “be seen as a code word for anti- or non-Victorian, anti- or non-modern,” as one historian noted. It was also profoundly anti-urban.²⁶

Finley became very much involved in the Colonial Revival; she had one foot in America’s urban present, the other in its rural past. She worked in cities and lived in them or their suburbs: Akron and Cleveland, Ohio; New York City and suburban Hempstead, Dobbs Ferry, and Huntington. She spent her childhood summers in rural Sharon, Ohio, and visited family there, and in the villages of Wadsworth, Ohio, and Litchfield, Connecticut, throughout her life.

The Built Environment

During the Colonial Revival era, New England increasingly came to represent “the cradle of all that was best about colonial America.” The citizens of Finley’s ancestral home of Litchfield were the first in America to remodel the entire village landscape, public as well as private buildings, in the “colonial” mode. Litchfield became renowned as the archetype of the New England village, with its Georgian houses, tree-shaded streets, and village green.²⁷

The nomenclature, landscape, and architecture of the Western Reserve reinforced Finley’s awareness of her Connecticut roots. Connecticut had “reserved” this 120-mile wide strip of land in northeastern Ohio when she ceded her claims to other lands in 1786. Western Reserve settlers brought with them their

Figure 3. Finley included Pin Wheel as Diagram 28 in Chapter 6 of *Old Patchwork Quilts*. "Unused Diagrams," Bissell Family Papers.

New England culture and values, which are still visible in grave-stones, town plans, and architecture, particularly in rural areas of the Reserve.

Surveyors laid out the Western Reserve according to an or-

Figure 4. Mary Ebright in front of two family quilts, Bear's Paw and Triple Irish Chain. Photo courtesy William and Margaret Dague.

derly grid plan. Where terrain permitted, they established one-mile-square villages in the geographic centers of the townships: Chatham Center, Litchfield Center, Sharon Center. North-south and east-west roads intersected at the town centers. As in Connecticut since the late-eighteenth century, these central villages surrounded a common. Even today, traveling from Akron to Oberlin, where Finley first attended college, involves driving due west thirty-five miles, then due north eight miles, deviating from the straight and narrow every five miles to detour around a village green.

The green served as an apt symbol of New England culture. Its central location and common ownership bespoke democracy. The earliest architecture situated around the green—town hall, church, and school—reflected its citizens' most cherished values.²⁸

Much of the nineteenth-century domestic architecture in the rural Western Reserve is Greek-Revival, the most popular ver-

nacular architectural style between 1820 and the Civil War. This style conveyed morality, purity, and independence to many mid-nineteenth-century Americans. As Finley noted, Greek-Revival farmhouses have a “wide frieze, beneath eaves turned back at each end to cap flat corner pilasters . . . as an example of the Jeffersonian adaptation of the Greek. Such houses constitute the nearest thing there is to an American national architecture, skyscrapers excepted.”²⁹ Houses like those Finley described, when the gable end faces the road, are so common in northeastern Ohio that residents identify them as examples of a “Western Reserve style.”

Finley became intimately familiar with these older dwellings. The Greek Revival home her great-uncle, James Griffen, built in 1836 still stands. A Federal house half a mile away, built in 1837 for her great-uncle, Peter More, is the only stone house in Sharon. The farmhouse her grandfather, Erastus Bissell, completed in 1850 is still in the family. Today there are ninety-two Greek Revival homes along her most likely route between Akron and Oberlin.

When that style was revived in the 1920s, renamed “American Farmhouse,” Finley welcomed it for its national, historical, and domestic associations:

Hailed now as ‘American farm-house type’ to quote to-day’s renewed appreciation of them, the beauty of their clean simplicity is being reproduced with considerable faithfulness in city, town, and suburb. They lived through the gimcrackery of Victorianism and still live, because their sturdy rooftrees and broad hearths almost from the national beginnings have meant to America—home.³⁰

Finley also admired other revival architectural styles. In 1927, when Ross Trump’s parents built a new home in Wadsworth, they selected a Georgian Revival design, at Finley’s suggestion.³¹

After moving to suburban New York, the Finleys chose to live in genuinely old or revival-style houses. They owned their Hempstead house, built in 1810, for more than twenty years. After Emmet’s death in 1950, Ruth replicated a seventeenth-century New England salt-box in Huntington. When she died

in 1955 she was in the process of moving from that to a circa 1755 farmhouse in Connecticut.³²

An observant woman, Finley referred to the built environment of the Western Reserve in *Old Patchwork Quilts* and in *The Lady of Godey's*. Along with architectural styles, she commented on the Greek fret, half-rope carving, and acanthus leaf motifs that decorated Greek Revival doorways.³³ She noted that Civil War "Soldiers' Monuments were erected in every town larger than a cross-road, all of them alike—the familiar bearded figure arrayed in the accouterments of war, including fatigue cap and musket, that still graces the village green."³⁴ She scathingly rejected the "fussy distortions" of late-Victorian architecture: "cock-eyed public buildings ornamented like 'whatnots,'" "Mansard-Gothic monstrosities," and a cottage reminiscent of "an over-sized cuckoo-clock disconcertingly topped with a hay-stack."³⁵ In rejecting everything Victorian, Finley planted herself firmly in the Colonial Revival.

Her rejection extended to late-Victorian quilts, for she had no use for those made after the "era of decadence" that she dated to 1870. This category included "realistic quilts" like Little Red Schoolhouse; in her notes she called these "freak quilts."³⁶ She apparently did not condemn crazy quilts; in her evolutionary view she believed they were the earliest style.³⁷

Collecting Stories

Finley's genuine interest not only in "old patchwork quilts," but also in "the women who made them" led her to seek out personal stories of the history and traditions associated with quilts. She selected sentimental stories, and she told them well. Her story of an exquisite crib quilt and hand-made baby clothes found in the home of a cantankerous maiden lady after her death allows the reader to create her own romantic scenario.³⁸ Another story tells of Electa Hall Cook, who made a Meadow Lily quilt for her 1845 wedding, only to die three weeks after her wedding day.³⁹

Finley elicited these stories from quilt owners using the interviewing skills she had learned while working for the *Akron Beacon Journal* and the *Cleveland Press*. This approach differed from that of Marie Webster, whose 1915 publication *Quilts: Their Story and How to Make Them* was the first book devoted entirely to quilts. Finley also included family stories and reminiscences in *Old Patchwork Quilts*, most of them from her mother's Bissell ancestors.

The Bissells never threw anything away. Descendants still have more than two hundred family letters dating back to 1798, many of which became the sources of Finley's family stories. Like those elicited from other quilt owners, her family stories are quite romantic: the story of Aunt Thankful's hand-woven linen sheets, made for her dowry but never used, as her soldier-lover died in the Revolutionary War; the story of her grandmother's 1846 trip to New Orleans that inspired the bride's quilt she made two years later; and the story of the quilting template cut from a letter her great-grandfather had sent from Gibraltar in 1808.⁴⁰

This template story seems especially poignant, for, according to Finley, when Great-Grandfather returned from his lengthy voyage he discovered that his wife had died and another family had taken his son "somewhere out West." Finley reported that he "journeyed beyond the Mississippi" and eventually found his son in Pittsburgh.

This story would have been even more appealing to her readers had Finley gotten her facts right. The incidents occurred in Gask, Scotland, not in the United States, and the child's caretakers refused to return him. Great-Grandfather More had to petition the Sheriff of Perthshire to get his little son back. Needless to say, the petition, sent from Perth, November 12, 1800, is still with the family.

That such stories are about her ancestors should be obvious to the reader of *Old Patchwork Quilts*, for Finley identified the major characters as "my Aunt Thankful," "my Western Reserve grandmother," "my great-grandfather." Only one of these eight stories came from her father's side of the family—the story of a game called "Splatter Prints and Daubstick Cottons," that

Leonidas Ebright's mother had learned from *her* grandmother, "who had been a girl during the Revolution."⁴¹ The remaining stories are of Bissell ancestors.

Finley includes Bissell family stories, however, that are less easy to identify. Besides tales Finley personalized with names of specific ancestors, there are many more that she did not identify, but set in context with a date. Because so many of these coincide with significant dates in the lives of Bissell ancestors, it seems plausible that these might also be family stories. "A woman born in Ohio in 1850," for example, is surely her mother, Julia Bissell. "The diarist [who] went out from Connecticut in 1836 and settled in the Western or Connecticut Reserve . . . thirty miles south of what is now the heart of Cleveland" must be her grandfather, Erastus Bissell, and his sweetheart, Mary Ann, "pretty as paint," would be Mary Ann More, who became Finley's maternal grandmother.⁴²

A letter written August 16, 1858, that Finley cited extensively describes the excitement of the citizens of Sandusky, Ohio, at the successful laying of the Atlantic cable. This letter from A. W. Agard to L. More, Esq. begins "Dear Grandfather." Agard was a physician in Sandusky, and More was Finley's great-grandfather, Lawrence More, whose daughter, Mary Ann, had married Erastus Bissell. The letter remains in the family collection.⁴³

My favorite story is the account of "the battered bowl of a pewter spoon and its remaining two inches of handle," whose owner Finley identified only as "a woman married in 1749." This patriotic lady donated the rest of the spoon handle, along with other pieces in her pewter collection, to make bullets for Revolutionary soldiers.⁴⁴ I asked Finley's nephew and his wife about each of these stories when I interviewed them at their condominium in Wadsworth, Ohio. The date of 1749 coincided with the marriage date of Abigail Smith Bissell, Finley's great-great-great grandmother. While I was recounting this story, Peggy went to a shelf and brought back the very spoon that Finley described!

Although I did not find it, an 1841 letter about Mary Scott's quilting is probably from this collection as well, for Finley

reported that its author lived in the Western Reserve and wrote it "to a relative in Connecticut." A search of the 1840 census for counties in the Western Reserve revealed that three Bissell families and two Scott families lived in the same neighborhood in Twinsburg Township, Summit County, about twenty miles from Sharon.⁴⁵

Collecting Antiques

Like many other Americans during the Colonial Revival era, the Finleys collected antiques. Along with quilts, Ruth collected "Stiegel glass and tiny boxes," and Emmet collected "steel engravings of American historical subjects and antique American eagles." These collections, however, merely supplemented their furnishings of "unwanted antiques which they inherited from the attics of their families when they were married."⁴⁶

The Bissell homestead, a veritable house of antiques, harbored numerous treasures, including a map of the Connecticut Western Reserve drawn before 1840; linen sheets made by Finley's great-aunt Thankful and a rocking chair belonging to the same ancestor; a silver spoon engraved with the initials of Finley's great-great-great-great grandmother, Anna Candee, who was born in 1730; and nineteenth-century account books, family diaries, legal documents, and newspapers.

Finley drew heavily on this collection as source material for *Old Patchwork Quilts*. In her discussion of county fairs, for instance, she quoted from the 1846 *Constitution and First Annual Report of the Medina County Agricultural Society*, which she discovered in a "garret," along with magazines, newspapers, and books.⁴⁷ She would have agreed with another Colonial Revival writer who informed her lady readers that "[o]ld garrets are really factories of History, Poetry, and the Drama."⁴⁸ Finley's productive "garret" was undoubtedly at the Bissell farm in Sharon, situated in Medina County.

When she selected illustrations for *Old Patchwork Quilts*, Finley began with family quilts such as Mary Ann Bissell's Peony and

Flying X quilts and Harriet Bissell's Chips and Whetstones and Noonday quilts. She included related materials such as Julia Ebright's collection of quilting templates and the book of dye recipes "that belonged to my Revolutionary grandmother on the distaff side."⁴⁹ The Robbing Peter to Pay Paul quilt probably came from Emmett's family.⁵⁰

Finley's Connecticut relatives helped Finley in her search for quilts to include in her book. Twenty of the illustrated quilts and five used as sources for her pattern diagrams came from Litchfield and nearby Bantam. Of these, at least eight, and probably more, belonged to relatives. Her Litchfield cousin, Julia Bissell Doyle, brought these quilts to Finley to be photographed for her book.⁵¹

This family collection of written and material history is the key to Ruth Finley's successful book. Through these letters and domestic objects, Finley learned history in an extraordinarily vivid way. The remarkable letters from her grandfather, Erastus Bissell, richly describe life in the Western Reserve for the benefit of relatives who had never been there. In 1837, shortly after he finished building the log cabin in which Finley's mother would be born, Bissell wrote to his mother in Connecticut:

[I] suppose that you would like to know how the old cabin is furnished[,] so to begin at the top of my parlor kitchen on one or two hoocks is hung the rifle and between the joists and the floor where the boards are warped are stuc some news papers[. A]round the sides some of my clothes are hung on wooden pegs[. O]n the N side there is a shelf where I lay books & on the shelf over the fire place is my ink bottle and candle in the candlestic which is part of an ear of corn with the pith dug out[. U]p over the hearth is a pole which is a fine thing to hang my mittens and stockens when wet to dry[;] but to come down on to the floor there is the box[,] trunk[,] bedsted and an Ohio table that is a home made one[;] a barrel[;] two bags[,] one with corn meal and the other with flower fin[e,] for I have been five miles to mill to day, in Bath[;] t[w]o borrowed chairs and the fire shovle and poker which are such as are seldome to be seen in Conn being wood ones[.] They are such as are used here perhaps oftener than any other. I know some people who have been here many years and have not had a pair of handirons or

shovle and tongs and a pair bellows . . . I have a pot and some other cooking utensils[,] Dishes are a tin pan[,] bason[,] plaite[,] cup[,] knife and fork and a pewter spoon which were all purchased of Mr. M. The bed I have is a borrowed one.⁵²

Finley's descendants still learn history from their ancestors' letters and antiques. When the history-conscious Dague children, Finley's grand-niece and -nephew, attended the Wadsworth grade school, they brought Elizabeth Keckley's *Lincoln Quilt*, from Ruth Finley's collection, to the classroom Show-and-Tell.⁵³

Colonial Revival Literature

Finley's ancestors also provided noble heroes to a nation that badly needed them. The family had known about these individuals for generations. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, however, stories of the heroic actions of three Bissells during the American Revolution expanded to mythic proportions and appeared in print.

Israel Bissell "outrode Paul Revere in his race to warn the colonists . . . of the goings on at Lexington on April 19, 1775," according to descendant F. Clarence Bissell, who recounted Israel's adventures in 1933.⁵⁴ The second hero, Daniel Bissell, was a counterspy for the Continental Army. For wounds he received during military service George Washington created and awarded him the first Purple Heart in 1782.⁵⁵ The third story concerns the most famous Revolutionary event in Litchfield, one that was particularly "glorified during the Colonial Revival." According to this tale, the Sons of Liberty in New York City removed a statue of King George III and shipped it secretly to Litchfield, where loyal citizens melted it down for bullets. Finley herself published the story of Abigail Smith Bissell, the Revolutionary heroine who turned her pewter spoons into bullets during the same period, in the same village, for the same patriotic purpose.⁵⁶

There is no doubt that these events occurred; truncated spoons and historical documents provide supporting evidence.⁵⁷ As his-

torian Michael Kammen noted, however, "when a particular motif becomes formulaic in a society's impulse for cultural expression, we may assume that it represents an embodiment of national values and mythical archetypes."⁵⁸ The Bissell's patriot hero stories filled this role for many Americans during the 1930s.

Finley also promoted the Colonial Revival in several articles on quilting that she published in *The Country Gentleman*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *House and Garden*.⁵⁹ Two of these articles, "All for the Love of Quilting" (*The Country Gentleman*, March 1931) and "The Roosevelt Rose—A New Historical Quilt Pattern" (*Good Housekeeping*, January 1934), dealt with her favorite theme—the influence of American history on quilt pattern names. Finley designed the Roosevelt Rose quilt, but probably did not make it, as one newspaper reported.⁶⁰ On December 29, 1933, however, the fashion editor of *Good Housekeeping* presented the quilt to Eleanor Roosevelt, who promptly "gave her endorsement . . . to a national movement looking to revival of quilt-making as an American folk-art."⁶¹ Finley participated in this revival as a member of the National Committee on Folk Arts of the United States, whose mission was to "assemble, record and protect the folk arts before they perish at their source, and to make them available for study and use." The Committee also sponsored an exhibit at the New York World's Fair of 1939, situated only a few miles from Finley's Long Island home.⁶²

Genealogy

Like other enthusiasts of the Colonial Revival, Finley pursued genealogical research. She joined the Daughters of the American Revolution and the John Bissell 1628 Association, two of many genealogical organizations established during the Colonial Revival period. Her mother, Julia, had conducted family research in both Ohio and Connecticut, and also belonged to the DAR.⁶³

Eventually Finley became the family genealogist. Her papers include twenty-one pages of hand-written genealogical notes,

several typed compilations, and correspondence with relatives conducting similar research. In this, as in other research projects, Finley maintained meticulous and thorough records.

To qualify for membership in The John Bissell 1628 Association, Finley traced her family ancestry through eight generations, then appended a footnote providing a reference to earlier ancestors in Europe.⁶⁴ This record, *Bissell Family—English Notes—Previous to 1650*, as lovely as an illuminated manuscript, is still among the family papers.

Role Models And Correspondents

While engaged in research for *Old Patchwork Quilts*, Finley discovered “the real *Godey’s Lady’s Book*—something quite distinct as a whole from the quaint fashion prints that now alone recall this old-time periodical.”⁶⁵ The life and accomplishments of Sarah Josepha Hale, the editor of *Godey’s*, influenced Finley profoundly. She discovered that Hale had persuaded President Lincoln to establish “Thanksgiving as a national holiday” in 1863, and remembered a letter her Ohio grandfather wrote to his son in Connecticut ten years later:

I suppose all New England is thinking of a grand Thanksgiving day, some with many thanks for blessings received, troubles spared. . . . Others of a grand dinner the great enjoyment of the loaded table, its fine appearance, the nice taste of every good thing; some of the seeing of new friends having a nice time, merry as can be, etc., etc.⁶⁶

In 1931, two years after *Old Patchwork Quilts* appeared, Finley published *The Lady of Godey’s: Sarah Josepha Hale*. Finley believed Hale to be “the first great woman executive in the magazine field . . . [o]utspoken . . . and fearless in beliefs that were far in advance of her time.”⁶⁷ Hale, like Finley in her Ann Addams persona, fought for better working conditions for women. Finley called Hale “the greatest feminist of her times,” and regretted that no one had named a quilt pattern in her honor.⁶⁸ In her

glowing accolades, Finley might have been describing herself. Her feelings about Hale seemed to go beyond admiration to identification with her subject.

In the course of her research into old newspapers, Finley discovered Alice Morse Earle, another remarkable woman who had cited many of the same sources. The two had much in common. Even though Earle was a generation older than Finley, both were authors, editors, and antiquarians with New England roots. Both wrote about America's past, "drawn into history by [their] interest in antiques and in [their] own ancestors."⁶⁹ Earle collected antique Staffordshire china and wrote about it in *China Collecting in America*; Finley collected quilts and wrote about them in *Old Patchwork Quilts*. As Kenneth Ames noted in his introduction to *The Colonial Revival in America*, "the domestic sphere may well be the major focus of [the Colonial Revival]," and Earle and Finley contributed significantly to that assessment.⁷⁰ Both belonged to the DAR and held offices in their respective chapters, and both championed woman's rights.⁷¹

There is no doubt that Finley was familiar with Earle's writings. Finley's chronology of textile terms as published in newspaper advertisements, which she included in *Old Patchwork Quilts* (1929), is similar to Earle's encyclopedic approach to the same subject in *Costume of Colonial Times* (1894). Finley included Earle's book in her bibliographic notes on textile history. As Trustee and Chair of the Hempstead Public Library's Book Committee since 1922, Finley knew that Earle had given that library many of her books, for Earle's son lived in West Hempstead.⁷²

Along with her role models, Sarah Josepha Hale and Alice Morse Earle, Finley knew other individuals and organizations active in the world of quilts and antiques. She corresponded with Rose Kretsinger, and either wrote or edited a lecture for Mary McElwain, in which she mentioned Carlie Sexton, Marie Webster, and Clementine Paddleford, then affiliated with *Country Home*. She knew Ohio antiquarian and glass collector, Rhea Mansfield Knittle, and quilt dealer Abigail Stevenson.⁷³ She borrowed and had photographed two quilts from Kentucky Cottage Industries, although she did not publish them.⁷⁴

In the 1920s, Finley compiled a directory of individual quilt owners; staff members of art museums, historical societies, and galleries; magazine editors; and antiques dealers. Many of these individuals, including six from Hempstead, provided Finley with quilts that she included in her book. All lived and worked in western Long Island or New York City except for George Francis Dow, then director of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities in Boston.⁷⁵ During this period she was considering various titles for her book. She kept a list of possibilities, all relating to themes popular in the Colonial Revival era: America, antiques, domestic textiles (see figure 5).

Finley continued her quilt activities after publishing *Old Patchwork Quilts*. She exhibited quilts in Hempstead, Brooklyn, and Manhattan, and lectured on her favorite topic—American history as revealed in quilt pattern names. In the 1930s she also wrote articles covering the same theme, often using patterns which appeared in her book and sometimes giving them different names. In “All for the Love of Quilting,” which appeared in the March 1931 *The Country Gentleman*, she included a picture of her Bear’s Paw, but called it The Best Friend, named for an early locomotive. The pattern she had called Caesar’s Crown in *Old Patchwork Quilts* now became Victoria’s Crown, and she renamed the Mosaic pattern Wheel of Life, “the many times removed ancestor of the present motion picture.”⁷⁶ For publications she apparently selected the pattern names she found most useful in telling the story of American history through quilts.

Ruth kept a press scrapbook of reviews and articles about *Old Patchwork Quilts* published between September 2, 1929, and March 7, 1930. It suggests that Emmet Finley deserves credit for some of her literary success, for he was an excellent publi-

Figure 5. The “Original Notes on ‘Old Patchwork Quilts,’” Bissell Family Papers, have some of the titles Finley thought of using for *Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them*. She also considered Old American Bedquilts, Patchwork Quilts, Antique Quilts, and American Patchwork.

cist. Most of the clippings are syndicated articles prepared by The American Press Association, Newspaper Enterprise Association (NEA), and Star Adcraft Service. Emmet Finley was part owner, executive vice president or general manager of all these firms, which provided feature articles to newspapers throughout the United States. Each writer selected a unique slant in describing *Old Patchwork Quilts* and directed her article to a specific audience. The organizations that circulated the articles did so at times calculated to attract readers, and distributed them widely. "Pioneer Woman's Patchwork Quilt was First 'Modernistic' Art," by NEA Service writer Hortense Saunders, relates antique quilts to modern decorating taste, a minor theme in Finley's book, but one that homemakers would surely have found appealing. Thirty-three newspapers published this article. "Christmas Tree Quilt Holds Popularity Through Centuries," appropriately released in December 1929, appeared in sixty-seven newspapers. All these articles included illustrations of quilts and of Ruth Finley.⁷⁷

Finley bought and sold quilts throughout her adult life. Some of the loan forms she developed for quilts she had photographed for *Old Patchwork Quilts* indicate that between the time she borrowed the quilts for photography and the time she was to return them a few days later, she had purchased them. These included the Evening Star in Plate 22 and an unnamed floral appliqué quilt "Signed L. A. G., Lancaster, Pa., 1820," that she did not publish. She apparently returned the Star of Bethlehem to its owner after having it photographed in 1927. By the time she submitted her manuscript, however, Finley owned this quilt, and she used it as the frontispiece.⁷⁸

In a lecture she presented in 1954, a year before her death, she talked about her Star of Bethlehem, President's Wreath, Tide Mill, Harvest Sun, and Lincoln Quilts (see figure 6). In acquiring the Lincoln Quilt, Finley apparently became so captivated by its historical associations that she willingly overlooked its manufacture during the decadent Victorian era. Of this quilt, which is still widely exhibited, Finley reported that its "delicate silks [were] disintegrating with age and pathetically inadequate care" and its "exquisitely wrought flowers and fruits are falling

Figure 6. The Lincoln Quilt made by Elizabeth Keckley, probably in Washington, DC, 1860-1880, was once in Ruth Finley's personal collection. In her 1954 lecture, "Quilts," Finley reported that this quilt was "pieced of Mrs. Lincoln's dresses" and "was a personal gift from Mrs. Keckley to Mrs. Lincoln who used it as a counterpane on her bed at the White House. As such—a personal gift—Mary Lincoln took it with her when she left after her husband's assassination—left with Lizzie Keckley to companion her shattered health and broken life." The white silk gown trimmed with white lace and mauve silk, c. 1861, is said to have been worn at Abraham Lincoln's inaugural ball. Kent State University Museum. Quilt, gift of Ross Trump in memory of his mother, Helen Watts Trump. Gown, gift of the Silverman/Rodgers Collection, 1983.1.83a.c. Photo courtesy Kent State University Museum.

away from their background of fragile China silk.” Concerned about its condition in 1954, she noted that “[a]n attempt has been made to save the embroidery by covering it with chiffon— itself again too fragile. I think perhaps net [might do] the trick; at least I shall try.”⁷⁹

Ruth Finley died September 24, 1955. Her relatives inherited her belongings and still have many of them, including all the family-made quilts. In January 1967, the Dagues held a large tag sale at the farm in Sharon. Ross Trump, who handled the sale, advertised that it would include “quilts from the Ruth Finley coll.” He displayed her Early Rose of Sharon quilt on an Empire bed, and a reporter included a photograph of it in a promotional article in a Medina newspaper. Whether because of the terrible weather that January weekend or because of the disinterest in quilts in the 1960s, few of the quilts sold. The Early Rose of Sharon did not; its asking price was \$25.⁸⁰ Over the years since Finley’s death Mr. Trump purchased several of her quilts, including her Tide Mill and Lincoln Quilts. He sold Tide Mill to the Shelburne Museum in Vermont and recently donated the Lincoln Quilt to the Kent State University Museum in Ohio.⁸¹

Conclusion

Quilt researchers today continue to quote Ruth Finley. A pioneer in the field of quilt research and deeply involved in the Colonial Revival as a writer, a collector, and a genealogist, she capitalized on that era by writing *Old Patchwork Quilts*.

Finley’s strong personal credentials for participation in the Colonial Revival make her almost unique. At a time when many Americans who had never been there revered New England, she could trace her ancestry to early settlers of Litchfield, Connecticut, the village that had come to symbolize “colonial” America. Her relatives still lived there, and Finley visited them in their Litchfield homes.

At the time Finley wrote, nostalgic Americans favored new "American farmhouses" based on mid-nineteenth-century Greek Revival homes. Finley lived half her life in Connecticut's Western Reserve, where New England natives had laid out the villages and constructed the buildings based on New England models. She grew up surrounded by these early homes, her ancestors had lived in them, and she and her sister owned the farmhouse her grandfather had built in the mid-nineteenth century.

Other Colonial Revival writers created novels set in an idealized American past, and probably did most of their research in libraries. By contrast, Finley had life-long access to an enormous collection of authentic family documents, quilts, and other antiques. These became primary sources for her writings.

The past must have been extraordinarily vivid to Finley. She had read the written words of generations of Bissells, several of whom had achieved national renown. Most genealogists are thrilled to discover simply names, dates, and places of family members, but Ruth Finley's long dead ancestors still spoke to her through their letters and domestic objects. This direct and personal contact with people from the past may, in part, explain her involvement in the paranormal.

From 1991 to 1993 archaeologists from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History conducted a dig on the Bissell property in Sharon. They found numerous stone tools from the Paleoindian period and determined that this important site was a communal hunting camp eleven thousand years ago.⁸² I think Ruth Finley would have liked that.

Note

The Bissell Family Papers are privately owned. Researchers will eventually be able to locate them at two Ohio repositories: the University of Akron Archives and the Western Reserve Historical Society Library (Cleveland).

In addition to the individuals acknowledged below, I am grate-

ful to Ruth Enslow and E. W. Dykes for their help. The Thanks Be To Grandmother Winifred Foundation generously provided a research grant for this paper.

Notes and References

1. Ruth E. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1929; reprint, with introduction by Barbara Brackman, McLean, VA: EPM Publications, Inc., 1992). I am grateful to Barbara Brackman for her help in research for this article. Her "Introduction: A Short Bibliography of Ruth Finley" is an excellent overview.
2. "Ruth E. Finley, 71, Author, Feminist," *New York Times*, 25 September 1955; National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, "Questionnaire to the Committee on the 'One Hundred Years of Women's Progress' Celebration," 1939, Bissell Family Papers (hereafter cited as BFP), 4.
3. "Dr. L. S. Ebright is Dead after Illness," *Akron Beacon Journal*, 10 July 1917.
4. "Mrs. Ebright Rites Arranged," *Ibid.*, 7 June 1933.
5. Unidentified article, *Ibid.*, 5 November [?] 1896, Bissell Family Papers.
6. *Who's Who in America* 1950 ed., s.v. "Finley, Ruth Ebright."
7. Student File (Ruth E. Finley), Alumni and Development Records, Oberlin College Archives; telephone conversation with Registrar's Office, University of Akron, 12 October 1994.
8. "The Truth About the Life of the Working Girl," *Cleveland Press*, 26-30 July and 1 August 1910.
9. "Emmet Finley, 69, Long a Newsman," *New York Times*, 14 December 1950.
10. *Our Unseen Guest* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1920; repr. Alhambra, CA: Borden Publishing Company, 1943); Lovina May Knight, "Who Was Joan?" *Spiritual Frontiers*, Spring 1990, 78-83.
11. Ruth E. Finley, autobiography, 1951 (typescript), 1, 10, BFP.
12. Ruth Finley to Mary Dague, 19 September 1933, BFP.
13. Evey Steingass, "Treasures of Late 90's [sic] to be Sold at Historic Landmark," *Medina Gazette Leader Post*, 26 January 1967.
14. Edson Brown, interview by author, 24 May 1994, Medina, Ohio.

15. Ross Trump, interview by author, 24 May 1994, Medina, Ohio.
16. Lovina Knight, interview by author, 19 August 1994, Akron, Ohio..
17. William Dague, interview by author, 28 September 1994, Wadsworth, Ohio.
18. Cited in Mimi Ayars, "Pioneer & Primer: Profession," *Quilt World*, January 1993, 22.
19. Ross Trump, interview.
20. "In the Cause of Quilts," *Dallas News*, 17 November 1929, press scrapbook, BFP.
21. "Unused Diagrams," BFP; Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 74, diagram 28.
22. Ross Trump, interview. Marion Clyde McCarroll, "Owner of Patchwork Quilt Collection Writes Authoritative Book on Subject," *New York Evening Post*, 30 October 1929; "The Patchwork Quilt Gets into a Book," *Kansas City Star*, 8 November 1929; "Old Patchwork Quilt Valued as History Source," Waterloo (IA) *Courier Reporter*, 12 November 1929; in press scrapbook, BFP. For an excellent history of collectors during the Colonial Revival era, see Elizabeth Stillinger, *The Antiquers . . .* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980).
23. Karal Ann Marling, *George Washington Slept Here: Colonial Revivals and American Culture 1876-1986* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988).
24. Warren I. Susman, "History and the American Intellectual: Uses of a Usable Past," *American Quarterly* 16, part 2 (Summer 1964): 243-63; Alfred Haworth Jones, "The Search for a Usable American Past in the New Deal Era," *American Quarterly* 23 (December 1971): 710-24.
25. Celia Betsky, "Inside the Past: The Interior and the Colonial Revival in American Art and Literature, 1860-1914," in *The Colonial Revival in America*, ed. Alan Axelrod (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1985), 262-64; Harvey Green, "Popular Science and Political Thought Converge: Colonial Survival Becomes Colonial Revival, 1830-1910," in *Journal of American Culture* 6 (Winter 1983), 21.
26. *Ibid.*, 251; Marling, *George Washington Slept Here*, 176; Kenneth L. Ames, "Introduction," in Axelrod, *Colonial Revival*, 12; Green, 16.
27. William Butler, "Another City upon a Hill: Litchfield, Connecticut, and the Colonial Revival," in Axelrod, *Colonial Revival*, 15-51; D. W. Meinig, "Symbolic Landscapes: Some Idealizations of American Communities," in D. W. Meinig, ed., *The Interpretation of Ordinary*

- Landscapes: Geographical Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 164–92.
28. William E. Busta, “Challenges of Commerce: Changing Town Patterns in the Western Reserve 1840–1875,” *Western Reserve Studies: A Journal of Regional History and Culture* 3 (1988), 39.
 29. Ruth E. Finley, *The Lady of Godey’s: Sarah Josepha Hale* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1931), 140.
 30. For more information on house types popular during the Colonial Revival era, see David Gebhard, “The American Colonial Revival in the 1930s,” *Winterthur Portfolio* 22 (Summer/Autumn 1987), 120; Finley, *The Lady of Godey’s*, 140.
 31. I am grateful to Ross Trump for providing this information.
 32. William and Margaret Dague, interview by author, 28 September 1994, Wadsworth, Ohio.
 33. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 75, 148, 151.
 34. Finley, *The Lady of Godey’s*, 135.
 35. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 29, 30; *The Lady of Godey’s*, 138.
 36. “Original Notes on Old Patchwork Quilts,” BFP.
 37. Virginia Gunn, “From Myth to Maturity: The Evolution of Quilt Scholarship,” in *Uncoverings 1992*, ed. Laurel Horton (San Francisco, CA: American Quilt Study Group, 1993), 197–98.
 38. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, Plate 74, 138–40. Although Finley sets this story in “upstate New York,” a letter from Florence Peto to Elizabeth Richardson indicates that it actually came from York, Pennsylvania (Florence Peto to Mrs. Richardson, “Tuesday after New Years,” 1940, AQSG Library). Peto was baffled by what she considered Finley’s deliberate change of locale in an effort not to embarrass descendants of the “old maid.” I believe it was more likely accidental on Finley’s part. Her notes state that the quilt was from “Yorktown,” not “York.” As there is a Yorktown Heights a few miles north of New York City, Finley may have assumed the quilt came from that village. I am grateful to Merikay Waldvogel and Bets Ramsey for bringing Mrs. Peto’s letter to my attention.
 39. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, Plates 35 and 36, and 91–92.
 40. *Ibid.*, 24, 30–31, 63–64.
 41. *Ibid.*, 183–84.
 42. *Ibid.*, 148, 97–98.
 43. *Ibid.*, 149–50; “First Cablegram Stirred Sandusky,” unidentified newspaper, Sandusky, Ohio, 5 October 1929, press scrapbook, BFP.
 44. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 110.

45. *Ibid.*, 37; United States Bureau of the Census, 1840 Ohio census, roll 428, pages 322, 324, 325, 327.
46. "Ruth E. Finley," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 7 (1933): 534; *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, s. v. "Finley, [Robert] Emmet."
47. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 34–36.
48. Mrs. M. E. W. Sherwood, *Home Amusements* (1881), n.p., cited in Betsky, 253.
49. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, plates 6, 77, 50, 71, 76, 89; pages 177–80.
50. *Ibid.*, plate 25. This quilt came from Salem, Ohio, Emmet's home town.
51. The Bissell Family Papers contain handwritten loan forms that include names of owners and couriers.
52. E. S. Bissell to mother, 2 March 1837, BFP.
53. I am grateful to Margaret Dague for providing this information.
54. "Israel Bissell Outrode Paul Revere," unidentified newspaper, 4 November 1931, BFP; F. Clarence Bissell, "Connecticut's 'Paul Revere'," *Hartford Courant*, 1933 (typescript), BFP.
55. Rupert Hughes, "The Purple Heart," *Baltimore Sun*, 24 February 1935 (typescript), BFP. Finley's personal papers include three pages of notes on "Daniel the Spy" and the Purple Heart incident, for which she researched a variety of primary sources.
56. Butler, 28; Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 110.
57. Notes on Henry R. Stiles, *The History of Ancient Windsor*, Vol. 1 (Albany, NY: J. Munsell, 1863), 408–16 (typescript), BFP; John H. Scheide, "The Lexington Alarm," *American Antiquarian Society Proceedings* 50 (1940): 63, cited in David Hackett Fischer, *Paul Revere's Ride* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 270–71, 416, notes 40, 41.
58. Michael Kammen, *A Season of Youth: The American Revolution and the Historical Imagination* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1978), 209.
59. "All for the Love of Quilting," *The Country Gentleman*, March 1931, 96; "Old-Time Quilting is In Again," *The Country Gentleman*, July 1932, 30; "The Roosevelt Rose—A New Historical Quilt Pattern," *Good Housekeeping*, January 1934, 54–56; "Patchwork Quilts," *House and Garden*, February 1943, 61–63.
60. "Good Housekeeping Expert Asks Needlecraft Revival," unidentified newspaper, January or February [1934 ?], "REF Quilt Book Related," BFP. Family members believe Finley did not make the quilt, as they never saw her work on a quilt or mention having made one.

- In a letter to Rose Kretsinger (17 December 1929), however, Finley wrote: "I piece quilts to rest myself after hours of writing every day . . . but I have never attempted any but the simple ones." BFP.
61. "Revival of Quilt Making Endorsed by Mrs. Roosevelt," *New York American*, 30 December 1933.
 62. *Who's Who in America*, 1950 ed., s.v. "Finley, Ruth Ebright"; Allen H. Eaton, *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands: A Book on Rural Arts* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1937), 301; "Rhea Luise Mansfield Knittle," in Ruth Neely, ed., *Women of Ohio: A Record of their Achievements in the History of the State* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, [c. 1940]), 907.
 63. In January 1911, a few months after her wedding, Finley was listed, along with her mother as an active member of the Anniversary Social Committee of the Cuyahoga-Portage Chapter No. 335 of the DAR in Akron, although she did not officially join until 1947 ("Program, Cuyahoga-Portage Chapter No. 335, Akron, Ohio, 1910-1911," BFP). I am grateful to Elba Rivera, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, for providing information about Finley's membership. "Bissell Family Commemorates Immigration of First Family," *Waterbury (CT) Republican*, 8 October 1933, BFP; Charles S. Smith, Terryville, CT, to Julia B. Ebright, 9 March 1899, BFP.
 64. "The John Bissell 1628 Association Membership Record of [Ruth Ebright Finley]," BFP.
 65. Finley, *The Lady of Godey's*, 7.
 66. Erastus Bissell to F. Bissell, 10 November 1873, BFP.
 67. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 145.
 68. Finley, *The Lady of Godey's*, 17, 239; *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 146.
 69. *Notable American Women 1607-1950*, vol. 1, s.v. "Earle, Alice Morse," by Wendell D. Garrett, 541-42.
 70. Ames, 12.
 71. Esther C. Averill, "Alice Morse Earle: A Writer who Popularized Old New England," *Old-Time New England* 37 (January 1947), 73-78.
 72. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, 155-58; Earle, *Costume of Colonial Times* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894), 45-264; Finley, "Original Notes," *Who's Who* 1950 edition, s.v. "Finley, Ruth Ebright"; "Harbors Host of Writers," *Hempstead (NY) Sentinel*, 20 November 1930, in Director's Scrapbook, Hempstead Public Library. I am grateful to Carol L. Clarke, Reference Librarian, for bringing this scrapbook to my attention.

73. Kretsinger correspondence, "Quilt Talk," BFP.
74. Quilts numbers 15 and 16 in her photographic loan forms, BFP.
75. "Original Notes on *Old Patchwork Quilts*, BFP.
76. Finley, *Old Patchwork Quilts*, Plates 41, 68, and 15; "All for the Love of Quilting, *The Country Gentleman*, March 1931, 96.
77. "Library Notes," *Hempstead Sentinel*, 29 October 1930, Director's Scrapbook, Hempstead Public Library. "Club Women View Art and Home Exhibits," *Buffalo Courier*, 19 November 1929; "Appears in Annual Wanamakers Book Week Celebration," *Hempstead Sentinel*, 30 November [1930]; in press scrapbook, BFP.
78. Photographic loan forms, numbers 3, 39, and 6.
79. Finley, "Quilts," 11-12.
80. Tag sale notice, collection of Ross Trump; "Treasures of Late 90's To Be Sold . . .;" Ross Trump, interview.
81. I am grateful to Ross Trump, Celia Oliver, and Jean L. Druessedow for providing this information.
82. Barbara Barrish, Archaeology Department, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, telephone interview by author, 18 April 1995.