

Uncoverings 2015

Volume 36 of
the Research Papers of
the American Quilt Study Group

Edited by Lynne Zacek Bassett



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2015

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of the American Quilt Study Group

Edited by Lynne Zacek Bassett

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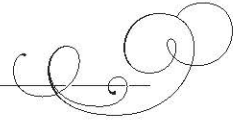
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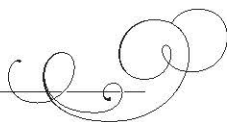
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Foreword



I AM NOT THE FIRST to compare a birds-eye view of the midwestern American landscape to a patchwork quilt, but it serves as an apt introduction for the attendees of the American Quilt Study Group's 2015 Seminar in Indianapolis, as well as for this publication. The four papers appearing in this thirty-sixth volume of *Uncoverings* and presented at the Indianapolis Seminar represent the diversity and tradition of scholarship that AQSG has nurtured since its founding in 1980.

Two of this year's papers are related in that they explore aspects of Quaker quilting history: Linda Baumgarten explores the quilting designs of a group of eighteenth-century Quaker petticoats and bed quilts from Philadelphia, and Terry Terrell provides genealogical and social context for a well-known nineteenth-century Ohio Quaker friendship quilt. Baumgarten's study incorporates an innovative method of studying wholecloth quilting patterns through drawings produced with computer-aided design (CAD). Her analysis has led to the recognition of two groups of petticoats designed with a similar double-handled urn and flowers motif, all made by young Quaker women in the area of Philadelphia. Baumgarten's drawings, documentary research, and comparison with other items of Philadelphia needlework has led her to postulate that the designer of these elegant petticoats and quilts was famed Quaker needlework teacher, Ann Marsh, possibly with her mother, Elizabeth Marsh.

While Baumgarten's essay reveals how quilted artifacts can demonstrate a significant connection between members of a community, Terry Terrell's exploration of the context of the Elizabeth Stanton friendship quilt presents how these artifacts may also reveal the divisions and losses in a community. The Stanton friendship quilt was made several generations after the quilted silk petticoats studied by Baumgarten. In the nine-

teenth century, the Ohio Quaker community was rent by differing theologies, breaking the community of Friends into Hicksite, Wilburite, and Gurneyite factions, sometimes with decidedly un-Quakerish violence. Elizabeth Stanton's life was further traumatized by the loss of family members, and the national grief of the Civil War. Terrell demonstrates how this young woman's friendship quilt is a response to these upheavals within her family and her community.

The other two papers presented in this volume of *Uncoverings* are related by their exploration of connections between the practice of embroidery and that of quilting. Like Baumgarten and Terrell's studies, the two subjects are separated by a century. Gail Bakkom's essay is a new and valuable study of early-nineteenth-century "candlewick" spreads that describes the technique and tracks the style from its neoclassical roots to its rediscovery in the Colonial Revival period. Bakkom relates this white cotton embroidery to other embroidery techniques, including crewelwork and stitched bed rugs, and shows how the designs compare to wholecloth quilts of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. An important companion piece to Laurel Horton's study of Bolton spreads, published in *Uncoverings 2014*, Bakkom's essay offers another contribution to the study of early American bedcovers other than quilts.

Those of us of a certain age will surely remember embroidery icon Erica Wilson's program, *Erica*, which ran in two seasons, 1971–1972 and 1975–1976, on PBS. Amanda Sikarskie examines Wilson's popularity and the impact of her needlework show on future crafts television programming. She also demonstrates how Wilson integrated quilts and quilting into her embroidery instruction, and disseminated the early understanding of American quilt history to her audience during the Bicentennial period. While Wilson is well known for her role in reenergizing interest in the art and craft of embroidery, Sikarskie's essay shows that her influence during the Quilt Revival starting in the 1970s also deserves recognition.

—Lynne Zacek Bassett