Uncoverings 1986

Volume 7 of
the Research Papers of
the American Quilt Study Group

Edited by Sally Garoutte

Quilt Cottage Industries: A Chronicle

Cuesta Benberry

In addition to the provision of a practical solution for the making of necessary bedcoverings, and the provision of aesthetic satisfaction to the quiltmaker, a third factor as to why some quilts were made can be explored: the economic factor. Quilt lore is replete with stories of quilters who made and sold quilts individually, or who made quilts "on shares" with another person, or who made quilts to be sold in a variety of formal and informal arrangements.

Primarily in twentieth century America, there came into being an *organized group method* of making and selling quilts—the quilt cottage industry. Cottage industries were so named because much of the work was done in the small homes or cottages of the workers. The antecedents of the quilt cottage industry can be traced to a centuries-old tradition—the old world needlework cottage industries. In fact, to push the ancestry of this phenomenon back further in time, the needlework cottage industries can be shown to have more than a tenuous relationship to the medieval craft guilds of Europe. Over the years changes and adaptations occurred so that by the eighteenth century needlework cottage industries had their own configuration. The medieval craft guilds' rigid hierarchic classifications of apprentices, journeyman, and masters were not adhered to in the later, more informal needlework cottage industries. In 1782 in Edinburgh, Luigi Ruffini, an Italian, set up a professional shop for making tambour embroidery with twenty little girls and three boys as apprentices. His male apprentices were trained to draw out the designs. Ruffini opened another tambour shop in Dalkeith in 1790.[1] In 1814 Mrs. Jamieson, wife of an Ayr cotton agent, organized a needlework cottage industry of Ayrshire embroidery. She taught

the outworkers (a British term for cottage industry workers). No poor work was tolerated and it had to be finished on time. Designs were drawn by professional male draftsmen.[2] In 1878, the New York Exchange for Women's Work was founded by Candace Wheeler. A variety of needlework items, including quilts, were among the handicrafts marketed by the organization. The N.Y. Exchange was not merely a marketing vehicle. Standards were set as to the quality of the items and supervision was supplied.

In the United States a tracing of the specific historical chronology of quilt cottage industries reveals that the concept was mainly a twentieth century one, with perhaps a few examples from the late nineteenth century. The most historically significant early needlework cottage industry did not focus the bulk of its work on the making of quilts. Yet it was so outstanding, I am using it as the prototype with which ensuing needlework and quilt cottage industries, reported in this paper, can be compared. That paragon of a needlework cottage industry was the Massachusetts organization, the Society of Blue and White Needlework of Deerfield. Two artists, Margaret Whiting and Ellen Miller, became very interested in the old Connecticut Valley blue and white crewel embroideries for their beauty and historic value. The majority of these lovely needlecraft pieces belonged to old families in the area. Some of the items were in fragile condition; the wool embroideries were often moth-eaten and were in advanced stages of deterioration. Whiting and Miller wanted to preserve this unique body of designs and to foster a revival of interest in what they considered to be an indigenous American art form. So they established in 1896 the Society of Blue and White Needlework of Deerfield. An added objective was to help relieve poverty in the area by hiring a number of local women to do the actual embroidering. To that end they decided to get a return which should make the effort profitable, to produce the best possible work and to keep it up to that standard. They worked out their costs so that the full price of each piece was divided into ten parts: five parts to go to the embroiderer (who would be paid twenty cents an hour), two parts to the "fund" which was used to pay the running expenses of the Society and the one remaining part to cover the cost of the materials used. Miller and Whiting decided to work with flax rather than wool thread to prevent moth damage.[3]

Deerfield blue and white needlework was used to form small mats and larger items including embroidered coverlets, curtains, dresses and table linens identified by their coloring, generally blue on white, and also signed with a capital D surrounded by a spinning wheel.

The Society of Blue and White Needlework was very successful. The designs were a mixture of traditional patterns and original, traditional-influenced yet simplified designs. The Society assiduously maintained strict quality control over workmanship and the materials used. Soon women from all over the United States were coming to buy the embroideries of the Society of Blue and White Needlework of Deerfield. Except for an interruption of services during the First World War, the organization continued to flourish until 1926 when it was disbanded. By 1926 Miss Whiting's eyesight began to fail, and she and Miss Miller both believed they had accomplished their original objectives. For its time the Society of Blue and White Needlework was a highly sophisticated operation.

Concurrent with the existence of the Society of Blue and White Needlework, there was developing in the Southern Highlands region a strong handicraft revival movement. Schools and cottage industries were established that fostered handicrafts such as spinning, weaving, furniture making, woodcarving, and patchwork quiltmaking. Within this handicraft movement the weaving of coverlets held a more prominent place than the making of patchwork quilts. One can find records of a number of cottage industries in the handicraft movement in the Southern Highlands devoted solely to weaving. There were few cottage industries in the movement solely devoted to quiltmaking. A cottage industry that included quilts in a diversified setting of offerings was Rosemont Industries organized by Laura Copenhaver.

> In 1920, the Farm Bureau at Marion, Smyth County, Virginia at the suggestion of Mrs. Laura Copenhaver, who at the time was a member of the Bureau, organized an industry to utilize the surplus wool resulting from a depressed market following the World War. The wool was bought for cash from the farmers, and... was woven into coverlets from old patterns that had been preserved as precious possessions. These coverlets were sold through women's clubs and parent-teacher associations.

> The Farm Bureau was later moved from Marion but the coverlet weaving was left there in charge of Mrs. Copenhaver . . . By this time many women were urging Mrs. Copenhaver to give them work, offering to weave, to hand-tie, to hook, to quilt. She responded by assuming personal responsibility for the undertaking and became deeply interested in reviving the old handcrafts for the women of the mountains.[5]

The cottage industry was described thus in a periodical: "The Rosemont Workers, a group of women organized by Laura S. Copenhaver and whose work has its center at Rosemont, Mrs. Copenhaver's home, are busy all year 'round hooking rugs, knitting, crocheting, and weaving coverlets; hand-tying fringes and canopies for four poster beds; quilting, and weaving luncheon sets."[6] In an interview, Mrs. Copenhaver stated, "At Rosemont we are trying to develop the crafts which are native, and yet in the mood of today, crafts that are concerned with useful household furnishings and that have the simplicity and beauty of our mountains."[7] Thus from a beginning in weaving coverlets to consume unsold wool, the endeavor became a double service enterprise in discovering and nurturing almost forgotten household handicrafts and turning them into lucrative and pleasurable employment for a group of mountain women workers.

An early undated Rosemont catalog (circa late 1930s) lists double bed quilt prices as only a quarter of their cost forty years later.

	1930	*1971*	*1973*
Wild Rose Quilt	$40.00	$150.00	$200.00
Virginia Beauty Quilt	$40.00	$150.00	$200.00
Forget-Me-Not Quilt	$40.00		
Grandmother's Flower Garden	$25.00		
Feathers Quilt (not listed in '30s)		$150.00	$200.00
All-white or Solid Color Whole Cloth Quilt (not listed in '30s)		$120.00	$155.00

A 1974 letter from Laura Copenhaver, Inc. to a California customer stated, "Workers now charge the same for twin bed-size as double bed-size." Prior to this twin bed size quilts were usually $30.00 less than double bed size quilts.[8]

An example of a Southern Highlands handicraft movement cottage industry devoted solely to quilts was the Mountain Cabin Quilters. "The Mountain Cabin Quilters, organized at Wooten, Leslie County, Kentucky in 1931 comprises a group of women who are banded together under the leadership of Mrs. J.K. Stoddard, wife of the community doctor, for the purposes of reproducing old mountain and colonial quilt patterns. The work is done entirely in the homes, some of the quilters often having to walk or ride 10 miles to get the order and instructions for a quilt." The group included both women who could sew quilts, as well as women who could "card the wool or cotton and make the batts that go into the quilt for padding.... During the summer of 1935 the business office for Mountain Cabin Quilters was moved to Cashiers, Jackson County, North Carolina."[9]

At the time the handicraft movement in the Southern Highlands was launched and was growing, in other parts of the country a quilt revival was occurring. A change in architectural and home furnishings styles from the gingerbread houses and fussy, crowded, overdecorated furnishings of the late Victorian period to a preference for the Cape Cod and Colonial styled homes in the early twentieth century can be considered a factor in the revival of interest in quilts. Just as today the popularity of the Country style of home furnishings has increased the demand for patchwork quilts, so in the early twentieth century did the Colonial style stimulate a desire for patchwork quilts. The Southern Highlands region's contribution to the quilt revival was not inconsiderable. Quilt scholars and researchers went into the Southern Highlands and found old and often unique quilt patterns and a veritable treasure trove of colorful, orally handed down quilt lore.[10] Their reports also indicated that a characteristic much admired by Americans, conscientious craftsmanship, was endemic to the Southern Highlands. This information was often published in periodicals of national circulation, and helped to create an aura for quilts. Frequently when a person bought a handmade quilt, she believed she was purchasing more than an attractive bedcover. She was acquiring history, folklore and legend. So cottage industries solely devoted to quilts began to flourish.

An early 20th century quilt cottage industry was the organization that came to be known as the Wilkinson Sisters of Ligonier,

Indiana. Two sisters, Rosalie and Ona Wilkinson, headed a cottage industry that eventually was nationally famous for its expensive silk, satin, or sateen quilts called by them "Art Quilts." Most of the full-sized quilts in their catalog were whole-cloth quilts with perhaps a large personalized monogram in the center. A few applique patchwork quilts, such as the Rose of Sharon were sold by the Wilkinson sisters.

Rosalie Wilkinson started the company after she became dissatisfied with the Ladies Aid Society for whom she worked. The Ladies Aid Society made quilts for sale—"Pretty quilts, well-made and substantial." Rosalie wondered why they didn't make something different and something really artistic. When an order came to the Society for a bridal gift quilt, she was asked to design this "different" quilt. She worked out a pattern that was a creation of soft rose pink satin with hearts quilted in. From that day on, that creation was known as the "Honeymoon Quilt."[11] As more and more orders came in, Rosalie Wilkinson traveled twice a year to places such as Atlantic City, Palm Beach or California's fashionable Coronado Beach to show her "Wonder Quilts." The Wilkinson baby quilts were sateen, filled with lamb's wool from Australia, and designed specifically to appeal to the owner's desire for cultural refinement.[12] A present-day author's assessment of the Wilkinson baby quilts is: "The ultimate effect was more precious than charming, lacking the true artistry of the crib quilts produced by America's non-professionals."[13] What does seem apparent is the Wilkinson Sisters aimed their quilts at the luxury market.

It was in this early twentieth century period that the contemporary Kentucky quiltmaker's sewing prowess became legendary. Cottage industries located inside and outside of Kentucky proudly advertised that their quilts were hand made by the women of Kentucky. This is not meant to imply that the Kentucky quiltmakers' reputations were not well-deserved. It is simply noting the fact that the Kentucky quiltmakers' skill became a strong selling point for cottage industries. The sewing prowess of the Kentucky quiltmakers was highly advertised and commercialized almost to the point of constituting a Kentucky quiltmaker's mystique.

The Nancy Lincoln Guild, 514 Madison Avenue, New York, advertised itself as "A Product of Kentucky." On the cover of its

catalog a specially designed logo read "Exquisite Hand Sewn Things From Kentucky." (It does seem the organization's very name—Nancy Lincoln Guild—had Kentucky connotations: that the company was named for Nancy Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's Kentucky mother.) The company's brochure proclaimed "Quilts may come and quilts may go, but these will always be the most desirable for colonial rooms and for houses in summer." It described "Sweet Home," an appliqued floral quilt, as "one much favored in Kentucky and in the early colonies." A double-bed sized quilt sold for $39.50.[14]

In the January 1932 issue of *Good Housekeeping Magazine* there was an article, "New Quilts With Rugs to Match," by Anne Orr. A section of the page told of the possibilities of having one's quilt made by others. It stated, "There is a woman in Kentucky with sixty mountain women working under her direction, who will do your quilting. This work is exquisite. Write to Anne Orr for prices." An Anne Orr letter to a customer, who evidently had not followed the *Good Housekeeping Magazine's* directions, had bypassed Anne Orr and had written directly to the magazine, was a somewhat miffed reply explaining the correct procedure for getting quilts made by the Kentucky women.[15]

One of the most successful of the Kentucky quilt cottage industries was the Eleanor Beard Hedgelands Studio of Hardinsburg, Kentucky. By 1929 Eleanor Beard had offices and outlets in New York City (across the street from the Nancy Lincoln Guild), Pasadena, Santa Barbara, and Chicago.[16] An account that relates a personal experience with Eleanor Beard's Studio states, "Eleanor Beard's Studio meant the survival of the small town of Hardinsburg, Kentucky." Eleanor Beard's husband, Marvin, was the owner of a general store. He had accepted much raw wool from farmers in payment for merchandise instead of money because it was a time of deep depression, and the farmers were strapped financially. The raw wool was stored in an attic where Eleanor Beard found it. She had the wool cleaned and processed in Louisville and she began a project of making silk quilted comforters, or whole-cloth quilts. She employed the women of Hardinsburg, including one who had professional designing experience. Eleanor Beard's organization grew and she employed more and more of the town's women. Some worked in her studio; others, especially those with small children, worked at home.[17]

As her business expanded, Eleanor Beard advertised in publications of national circulation such as *House Beautiful* and *Good Housekeeping*. Her advertisements were headed "Hand Quilted Things" and the list of items offered included bedspreads, comforters, chaise covers, pillows, travel sets, robes and blanket covers. Some quilts in her 1920s advertisements were: Windblown Tulip, 72" x 90", $22.50; Daisy, 42" x 54", $19.50; and Wild Rose, 66" x 84", $17.50, all made in cotton. The silk and taffeta items were more expensive. An unusual offering was a quilted chaise lounge throw called "French Pouf," taffeta on the topside, satin on the underside. The pouf was rectangular in shape 35" x 54" with a matching oval pillow. There was a pocket on the underside for one's feet—"perfect for those half hour before dinner naps"—the ad promised. The cost of the throw was $40.00 and the matching oval pillow was $20.00.[18]

Other Kentucky-based quilt cottage industries were conducted by Withers at Kirk, the Caden Sisters at Lexington, and Mrs. Dale Combs at Febworth. Withers was best known in the 1920s for their quilted clothing, cushions, and baby things. A knee-length quilted robe in satin was $50.00 and in taffeta was $55.00. One of the Caden Sisters, Margaret Rogers Caden, acquired fame by winning the Grand Prize in the Sears, Roebuck and Company's Century of Progress quilt contest at the Chicago World's Fair in 1933 for her Star of the Bluegrass quilt. The three Caden sisters ran their business from a shop in Lexington. Mrs. Dale Combs got so many orders for quilts after her lovely handwork got exposure at various fairs that she engaged her quilting neighbors to help her fill the orders. A popular quilt with Mrs. Combs' customers was the Beautiful Star of France, a Home Arts Studio, Des Moines, Iowa 1930s pattern—a large, showy pieced medallion.[19]

During the early twentieth century there were a number of quilt cottage industries located at various sites around the country. However no quilt cottage industry elsewhere seems to have acquired the panache of the ones that could state their quilts were made by the women of Kentucky.

In an interview conducted by Dorothy Cozart with Mrs. Ralph E. Foster, we learn of an Oklahoma quilt cottage industry leader, Edna Foster of Perry, Oklahoma. Mrs. Foster made her first quilt in 1929, an embroidered quilt that ended up being too small. Her second

quilt was Turkey Tracks that she quilted by herself. After some experience, Mrs. Foster got an idea for a business venture. She cut and basted applique quilt blocks and sold them ready to finish. When the buyer finished the blocks, they were returned to Mrs. Foster who set them together and did the quilting. Early on in the venture Mrs. Foster realized that she could not do all of the quilting by herself, so she employed a group of Catholic women in St. Genevieve, Missouri. There were eleven of these women who quilted for Mrs. Foster until they were too old to quilt any longer. Several Amish women in Indiana, Iowa and Missouri now do quilting for her, but only in the winter. Summer time is for other Amish chores.[20]

Operating a quilt cottage industry as a component of a full-scale quilt service organization was the idea of Mary McElwain, Walworth, Wisconsin. Available from her Mary McElwain Quilt Shop were completed quilts and comforters, a large inventory of paper patterns, cotton and wool batting, waxed thread, needles, various quilter's notions, percale sheets, pillowcases and a variety of fabrics. Mary McElwain hired a number of women to complete the appliqued and pieced quilts, to prepare some applique quilts by basting only, to stamp the cloth, to cut out the patches, and to send out in kit form. Examples of Mary McElwain's 1936 prices: The elaborate appliqued Indiana Wreath Quilt, finished $85.00, basted, $45.00; a finished crib quilt (A B C Quilt), $12.00, and a finished quilt (Shoo Fly Quilt), $40.00.[21]

Mary McElwain's mail order service that went all over the country made her a well-known figure in the 1930s. If her letter to Betty Harriman in 1938 is any indication, it appears that Mary McElwain's business practices were very personalized. In this letter, she wrote that she did not have a fabric that Berry Harriman had requested, but gave sources where she believed the fabric was available.[22] McElwain's offerings increased over the years. It is believed that she bought out Marie Webster's inventory after Marie Webster retired. The Marie Webster catalog "Quilts & Spreads" was reprinted bearing the names Mary Ann McElwain and D'Ette McElwain, "The Mary A. McElwain Quilt Shop, Walworth, Wisconsin, Near Lake Geneva." No paper patterns were offered in the reprinted Marie Webster catalog by Mary McElwain. She presented the Webster quilts only as boxed kits, basted quilts or finished

quilts. For example, the prices for the Marie Webster quilt Wreath of Roses were: Stamped kit $12.50, Basted top $22.50, and Finished quilt $65.00./[23]

A rare thing happened in Mary McElwain's cottage industry. One of its members became a well-known, one-woman quilt industry, sending out basted tops nationwide, as she did only the applique work on quilts she sold. Lillian Walker, Fairfield, Iowa was a master quiltmaker and quilt designer. She contributed original quilt patterns to the Mary McElwain inventory. Two of the original Lillian Walker patterns in the McElwain collection were Grandmother's Fancy and Garden Symphony with 10 Song Birds. Lillian Walker's trademark was featuring birds on her quilts. A May 1955 cover of *Sports Illustrated Magazine* inspired Lillian Walker to make a spectacular quilt, Bird Watcher's Guide, with various species of birds reproduced down to minute detail. Lillian Walker's quilts were highly valued even then. Today they are collector's items.[24]

In the 1930s Marion Cheever Whiteside (Mrs. Roger Hale Newton) organized a quilt cottage industry called "Story Book Quilts." Although the themes of the quilts were juvenile ones, the quilts were both full-sized and crib-sized. Marion Cheever Whiteside was an artist; her base of operations was New York City where she designed the quilts from her home at 1212 Fifth Avenue. Two artists cut out the patches. Then the work was sent to home sewers all over the country for completion of the quilts. All of the quilt designs were pictorial applique. Whiteside received national publicity for her Story Book Quilts cottage industry when pictures of her quilts appeared in magazines such as *Ladies Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *McCall's Magazine*, and *Today's Woman*. *Ladies Home Journal* ran a whole series of Marion Cheever Whiteside's Story Book Quilts, including Little Women, Peter Pan, Bridal Quilt, Pinocchio, the Fireman Quilt and the Circus Quilt. The quilts appeared in 1940s and 1950s isues of *Ladies Home Journal*.[25] An interesting personal assessment of the Story Book Quilts was written in a letter by the noted quilt authority, Florence Peto, to Emma Andres. Florence Peto disliked the sparse amount of quilting on the Whiteside quilts and the format of using large blank alternating squares with the appliqued blocks.

In the late 1950s, Kay McFarland of Topeka, Kansas had a quilt

cottage industry selling quilts by mail. She included both commercial quilt kits and "made from scratch" quilts in her catalogs. Pattern names of the commercial kits were given but not the name of the company that designed them. Typical prices in Kay McFarland's listing were: (Paragon Kit) Shirred Camellia, double bed size, $135.00; (Scratch quilt) May Basket, $90.00; (Scratch quilt) Grandmother's Pieced Tulip, $90.00; and (Scratch quilt) Double Wedding Ring, $110.00. Most quilts were promised completed to the buyer in six to eight weeks. The majority of the quilters who participated in McFarland's cottage industry lived in Kansas. While conducting her cottage industry, McFarland attended law school. When she became a practicing attorney in 1965, she gave up her quilt business. Now she is a state Supreme Court judge in Kansas.[26]

A development occurred in the 1960s that could be called a variation of the traditional quilt cottage industry. It was the rise of the quilt cooperatives. Many of the quilt cooperatives stemmed from the national anti-poverty programs. A number of the cooperatives were projects of VISTA and the Office of Economic Opportunity and its various agencies. Some of the better known quilt cooperatives were:

1. The Freedom Quilting Bee, Alberta, Alabama, a group of black quiltmakers, formed in 1966;
2. Mountain Artisans, Sod, West Virginia, chartered in 1968;
3. Cabin Creek Quilters, Eskdale, West Virginia, begun in 1970;
4. Dakota Handcrafts, Webster, South Dakota, begun in 1970. Dakota Handcrafts is the name given to the products of the cooperative titled TRACT. TRACT, composed of Sioux Indian women and rural white women, drew participants from the Sisseton Sioux Indian Reservation and three counties in South Dakota;
5. Grass Roots Craftsmen, Jackson, Kentucky is a diverse group, with a quiltmaking component. It was incorporated in 1968. It includes persons who practice other crafts than quilting.

Additional quilt cooperatives were Storm (White Hall, Illinois), Tennessee Craftsman (Columbia, Tennessee), and the Sunflower County Quilters (Sunflower County, Mississippi). The Sunflower County Quilters was a black quilting group.[27]

Dolores Hinson worked with quilt cooperatives overseen by the Tennessee State Arts Commission and the Office of Economic

Opportunity in the early 1970s. Her assignment was to help the groups make their quilts salable. The workmanship was fine but the quilters had been forced to sell their quilts quite cheaply. Fabrics such as used materials, "seconds," and throw-away materials had cheapened their products. With a combination of teaching and practical advice, Dolores Hinson was able to upgrade the work of the Tennessee Craftsman group. Her next step was to take these rural women to Nashville, Tennessee and other urban centers to see what the women called "durnfool" city folk were willing to pay for quilts. The quilters had practically been giving their quilts away for extremely small sums—ten to fifteen dollars. Now they were motivated to do better work. Working closely with the cooperatives and giving advice on marketing strategies and a continual improvement of the product, Dolores Hinson was gratified when the women were finally engaged in a profitable business.[28]

It does seem as though the chapter on quilt cooperatives may be coming to an end. Those cooperatives that have been able to establish a firm commercial base may survive. Other cooperatives still linked to federal and state funding agencies face an uncertain future. In some cooperatives workers are paid by the piece. A U.S. Labor Department study has determined that wages in cooperatives often averaged out at below the minimum hourly wage of $3.35. In labor-intensive crafts such as quilting, if the workers are paid the minimum hourly wage, the cost of the quilts may be boosted so high as to increase the sales of cheaper quilts imported from Haiti and Taiwan. The firm espousal of International Ladies Garment Workers Union of laws against home work is creating additional problems for quilt cooperatives.[29]

Like electronics, steel, shoes, leather goods, textiles and manufactured apparel, the quilt cottage industries now have foreign competition. Some of the American businesses that use foreign women to make quilts do not publicize the fact. However, one very chic New York boutique states quite openly that its quilts are made by the women of Haiti. So Haiti's needlework connection with the U.S. is not confined to the sewing of baseballs for major league teams.

In the early 1970s, two New York women formed a cottage industry using home sewers in Connecticut. Their company was

called Hands All Around. They took antique quilts, had them cut up for pillows that were sold in many big city department stores. Some of the cut up quilts were advertised as dating from 1850 and earlier. At that time Hands All Around believed the antique quilt pillows gave Americans "a share of their history."[30]

Now in the 1980s there are still traditional quilt cottage industries. Tricia Woo, St. Louis, established the first Wool and Woo shop in 1971. Today nearly one hundred women in Missouri and Illinois piece traditional quilt patterns and newer designs for Tricia Woo's three St. Louis stores. Some of the best selling designs are Missouri Waltz, Lone Star, Variable Star, Log Cabin, Double Wedding Ring and an original design of Tricia Woo's, City Blocks.[31]

Bryce and Donna Hamilton, Minneapolis, Minnesota, have a flourishing quilt cottage industry. Their quilts are sold on a consignment basis to twenty-five or thirty shops around the country. Some of the favorite designs requested by their customers are Lone Star, Double Wedding Ring, Irish Chain, Louisiana Star and Trip Around the World. In addition the Bryce and Donna Hamilton Company takes orders for custom work. Although some of their quilters live in close proximity, quilters in the Bryce and Donna Hamilton cottage industry are located in four or five different states.[32]

Preserving the craft of quilting and creating a steady market for their quilts seem to be the major objectives of most quilt cottage industries. Numerous cottage industries in New England, Pennsylvania, in the south and on the west coast appear to be thriving and prosperous.

As I researched the topic of quilt cottage industries, I was able to get a sense of the history of these organizations, their origins, their structure, and their offerings to the public. Their quilts were made to meet a perceived demand. Thus quilt cottage industries almost invariably produced familiar traditional patterned quilts. Original designs from these sources appeared on their quilts to a lesser degree. The Domino Quilt from the Freedom Quilting Bee in its early stages, the ethnic flavored designs from Dakotah Handicrafts, Lillian Walker's Grandmother's Fancy and Little Brown Church in the Vale, and Marion Cheever Whiteside's Story Book Quilts represent examples of original works from quilt cottage industries.

As quilt cottage industries are expected to provide economic betterment for the quilters, I was hoping to form some generalizations about the degree that financial arrangements made an impact on quilters' lives, but generalizations were not possible. Each cottage industry I studied varied widely from unit to unit. Yet as I look at the larger picture of masses of unknown, unheralded quilt cottage industry quiltmakers, whose handwork has beautified countless homes for many years, I know I am looking at one reality of American quilt history.

Notes and References:

1. Margaret Swain, *Ayrshire and Other White Work:* Shire Album 88 (Bucks, UK: Shire Publications, 1982) p. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Mary Taylor Landon and Susan Burrows Swan, *American Crewel* (New York: Macmillan, 1970) p. 87.
4. Margery Burnham Howe, *Deerfield Embroidery: Traditional Patterns from Colonial Massachusetts* (Deerfield, MA: Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association, 1976) p. 35.
5. Allen H. Eaton, *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1937): reprint edition (New York: Dover, 1973) pp. 76–77.
6. Anne Ruffin Sims, "Rosemont Workers," the *Commonwealth* (February 1937) p. 12.
7. Ibid., p. 13.
8. Laura Copenhaver, Marion, VA to Mrs. R.E. King, Napa, CA, June 17, 1974. Author's collection.
9. Eaton, op. cit., pp. 87–88.
10. Elizabeth Daingerfield, "Patch Quilts and Philosophy," the *Craftsman* (August 1908) pp. 523–527.
11. Maude Bass Brown, "Dollar Signs in Quilting," *Modern Priscilla* (October 1920) p. 3.

12. *The Wilkinson Art Quilt* (Ligonier, Indiana: The Wilkinson Sisters, nd) p. 16. (A sales catalogue.)
13. Thomas K. Woodard and Blanche Greenstein, *Crib Quilts and Other Small Wonders* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1981) pp. 15–16.
14. *Nancy Lincoln: A Product of Kentucky* (New York: Nancy Lincoln Guild, nd) p. 4. A sales catalogue.
15. Private collection.
16. "Eleanor Beard, Inc. Hand Quilted Things," *House Beautiful* (July 1929) p. 8.
17. Gladys Dill, "Dill-Lightful Doings: Eleanor Beard's Studio," *National Quilting Association's Patchwork Patter* (February 1977) pp. 3–4.
18. "Window Shopping," *House Beautiful* (October 1927) p. 338.
19. Clara Belle Thompson and Margaret Lukes Wise, "Quilts That Went to the County Fair," *Country Gentleman* (November 1942).
20. Interview (June 19, 1978) Mrs. Ralph Foster, Perry, OK, by Dorothy Cozart. Mrs. Foster was the owner of Quilt Service. Personal files of Dorothy Cozart, Waukomis, OK.
21. Mary McElwain, *Romance of the Village Quilt* (Walworth, WI: Mary A. McElwain Quilt Shop, 1936) p. 22. A sales catalogue.
22. Mary McElwain, Walworth, WI to Betty Harriman, Natural Bridge, VA, February 19, 1938. Collection of author.
23. *Quilts and Spreads: Original Designs by Marie Webster* (Walworth, WI: Mary A. McElwain Quilt Shop, nd); Marie Webster, Princeton, NJ to Bertha Stenge, Chicago, September 24, 1946. Collection of Joyce Gross, Mill Valley, CA.
24. Maxine Teele, "Something Worthwhile," *Nimble Needle Treasures*, vol. 6, no. 2–3 combined (1974) pp. 8–9; Joyce Gross, "Lillian Walker," *Quilters Journal* (Spring 1981) pp. 1–3.
25. Marion Cheever Whiteside, "Story Book Quilts," *Ladies Home Journal:* Bridal Quilt, February 1949; Little Women Quilt, Circus Quilt, October 1950; Lucky Day Quilt, March 1954; Peter Pan Quilt, December 1956; Pinocchio Quilt, January 1958; Fireman's Quilt, November 1961. McCall Needlework and Crafts: The Three Little Kittens Who Lost Their Mittens Quilt, Summer 1947. *Today's Woman:* Hansel and Gretel Quilt, nd. *Woman's Home Companion:* The House That Jack Built Quilt, August 1944.
26. *Quilts From Kay McFarland,* Topeka, KS (Christmas 1964: others with no date). A series of catalogues.
27. "Quilting Co-op Starts with Sewing Scraps," *Capper's Weekly* (February 11, 1972); Barbara Cloud, "Mountain Artisans Create in Patchwork," *Pittsburgh Press* (January 24, 1971); *Cabin Creek Quilt Collection*

(Eskdale, W. VA, nd.) A sales catalogue; Patricia Degner, "Quilts Spread Out from South Dakota," *St. Louis-Dispatch* (February 25, 1976); *Grass Roots Craftsmen of the Appalachian Mountains* (Jackson, KY, nd) A sales catalogue; Thomas Newsom, "A Passion for Patchwork," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* (May 9, 1971); "Handmade Quilts," Sunflower County, MS, *American Teacher* (September 1968).

28. Dolores Hinson, Austin, TX to author, July 29, 1986.
29. Peter Breslow, "The End of Rural Arts and Crafts," *Country Journal* (June 1968) pp. 16–18.
30. Marilyn Hoffman, "Antique Quilts Made Into Pillows," *Flint* (MI) *Journal* (April 17, 1972).
31. *Missouri Quilts by Tricia Woo* (St. Louis, MO, nd). A sales catalogue.
32. Bryce and Donna Hamilton, Minneapolis, MN to author, June 5, 1986.

Bibliography

Adams, Eleanor. "The League Helps Appalachia." *Cincinnati Enquirer,* April 11, 1971.

_____. "Junior Leaguers to Display Crafts from Appalachia," *Cincinnati Enquirer,* April 9, 1972.

Allanstand Cottage Industries: Pioneer Exchange for Mountain Handicraft. Asheville, North Carolina: Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, nd.

Bath, Virginia C., *Needlework in America.* New York: Viking Press, 1979.

Benberry, Cuesta, "The Twentieth Century's First Quilt Revival," Part 2, *Quilter's Newsletter,* September 1979, pp. 25–26.

"Blue and White Needlework Inspired by Deerfield," *McCall's Needlework and Crafts,* February 1987, pp. 72–73.

Bowles, Ella Shannon, *Homespun Handicrafts,* Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott, 1931.

Callahan, Nancy, "Helping the Peoples to Help Themselves," *Quilt Digest 4,* San Francisco: Quilt Digest Press, pp. 20–29.

Cargo, Robert, *Black Belt to Hill Country: Alabama Quilts from the Robert and Helen Cargo Collection,* Birmingham: Birmingham Museum of Art, 1982.

Clabburn, Pamela, *The Needleworker's Dictionary,* New York: William Morrow, 1976.

"Craze for Quilts," *Life,* May 5, 1972, pp. 74–80.

Creighton, Jim, "The Rebirth of Alto Pass," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* November 17, 1974.

"Cynthia's Star," *Quilter's Newsletter*, April 1975, pp. 14–15.

Daingerfield, Elizabeth, "The Kentucky Mountain Quilt," *Ladies Home Journal*, February 1912.

_____, "The Kentucky Mountain Patchwork Quilt," *Ladies Home Journal*, July 1909.

Degener, Patricia, "A Bit of Americana," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, December 1, 1971.

Eaton, Allen H., *Handicrafts of New England*, New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949.

Eberlein, Harold D. and Abbot McClure, *The Practical Book of American Antiques*, New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1927.

"Freedom Quilting Bee," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, October 13, 1968.

Goodrich, Frances, *Mountain Homespun*, New Haven: Yale Press, 1931.

Gostelow, Mary, *Art of Embroidery: Great Needlework Collections of Britain and the United States*, New York: E.P. Dutton, 1979.

_____, *The Complete International Book of Embroidery*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1977.

Haley, Jean, "Sioux Return to Art of Quilting," *Kansas City Times*, April 20, 1972.

Harbeson, Georgianna Brown, *American Needlework*, New York: Coward-McCann, 1938. (Reprint New York: Bonanza Books, nd.)

Hechtlinger, Adelaide, *American Quilts, Quilting and Patchwork*, Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1974.

Hedlund, Catherine, *A Primer of New England Crewel Embroidery*, Sturbridge, MA: Old Sturbridge Village, 1973.

Horngren, Barbara, "Cabin Creek Takes Quilting to the Big Time," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, November 24, 1977.

Lewis, Alfred Allen, *The Mountain Artisans Quilting Book*, New York: MacMillan, 1973.

Lin, Jennifer, "Reaping More from Their Sewing," *Philadelphia Enquirer*, March 13, 1984.

Lord, Priscilla S. and Daniel J. Foley, *Folk Arts and Crafts of New England*, Philadelphia: Chilton Books, 1965.

Orr, Anne, "New Quilts With Rugs to Match," *Good Housekeeping*, January 1932, p. 104.

"Patchwork as American as Blue Jeans," *House Beautiful*, February 1971, p. 69.

"Patchwork Designed to Make Jobs for Mountain Women," *Family Circle*, August 1971, pp. 54–55.

Peterson, Ruth, "Memories of the Mary McElwain Quilt Shop," *Quilters' Journal*, March 1984.

Profiles of the West Virginia Artists and Craftsmen's Guild, Parkersburg, WV: West Virginia Artists and Craftsmen's Guild, 1974.

"Quilting Bees," *New York Press*, July 12, 1914. (Reprint *Quilters' Journal*, January 1985.)

Russell, Linda, "Eleanor Beard Studio Provides Worldwide Showcase for Talents of Breckinridge County Women," *Breckinridge County* (KY) *Herald-News*, March 27, 1980.

"Sewing Circles Around Huntington," *Southern Living*, August 1978, p. 20.

"Sewing Up a Steady Income," *Woman's Day*, March 1969, p. 15.

"Southern Cooperatives," *Tuesday Magazine*, June 1971.

Stearns, Martha Genung, *Homespun and Blue: A Study of Crewel Embroidery*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963.

Stroud, Kim, "WT Quilting—A Cooperative Art," *Oberlin Review*, November 30, 1979.

Swan, Susan Burrows, *A Winterthur Guide to American Needlework*, New York: Crown, 1976.

"Two Routes to a Better Life—Co-ops and Job Training," *Fortune*, August 1968.

"West Virginia Mountain Artisans," *House Beautiful Decorating for Brides*, Spring-Summer 1972.

Williamson, Scott Graham, *The American Craftsman*, New York: Crown, 1940.

Wright, Roxa, "Blue and White Deerfield Embroidery," *Woman's Day*, June 1962, pp. 53–60.