

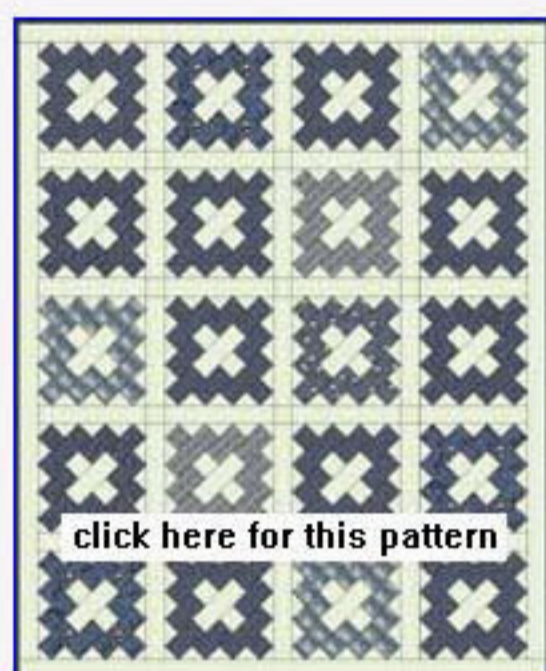
PIONEER FRIENDSHIP ALBUM OR CHIMNEY SWEEP PATTERN

"Oh when thou art gone to Western land,
And dream of friends away,
And visions of thine eastern home
Around these sadly play,
Then fondly look upon these names
That friendships hand may trace
And solaced by their memory niece
To sad regrets give place"

From the Hoagland Quilt 1855 ¹

FRIENDSHIP QUILTS IN PIONEER LIFE

"From 1840 to 1875, friendship quilts were made in staggering numbers by a broad cross section of American women, and it was in the 1840's and 1850's that the style reached it's zenith." ²



These quilts were put together in varied ways. Sometimes the entire quilt was made by one person while with others each friend make a block to be combined into a quilt. In some cases each person signed their quilt blocks but at times all of the signatures were inked by one person with excellent handwriting.

Friendship quilts are a way of connecting with friends and family. In the case of pioneer women these signed quilts were especially precious as they brought sweet memories of dear ones they might never see again.

ALBUM PATCH OR CHIMNEY SWEEP BLOCK

One of the most popular patterns used for friendship quilts was the Chimney Sweep. When this pattern was used for a friendship quilt it was sometimes called the Autograph Patch or Block. This block pattern first appeared in the 1840s and has had many more names. Read the pattern names at the bottom of this page. I am sharing the stories of two pioneer quilts made with this pattern.

A YOUNG GIRL CARRIES MEMORIES WEST IN A QUILT

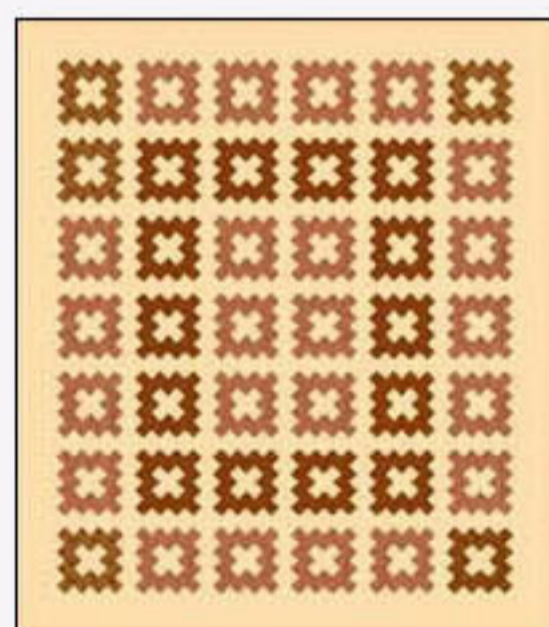
Lucy Blowers was just 16 when her father decided the family would move west from New York to Michigan. Lucy was devastated that she would have to leave her home and friends to go so far away. While her father sold his land and the family prepared for the move Lucy started a very special quilt that would help her remember those she had to leave behind.

Lucy decided on a Chimney Sweep style block pattern for her quilt. Each block was made with a different fabric and a signature of a loved one inked on each block. The blocks were sewn on point leaving triangles around the edge. Lucy finished the quilt with appliqued leaves in most of these triangles. Though with less blocks, the representation shown here gives you an idea of how her quilt looked.



Lucy's quilt was finished in 1849 when the family packed their wagon and began their westward journey. Her quilt would bring memories of happier times through the hardships to come. ³

A QUILT FOR A BRAVE TRAVELING MINISTER



Imagine a minister so devoted to his flock that he was willing to row a boat on two rivers then hike for miles in order to serve his small communities of faithful followers. The Reverend J.H.B Royal, a Circuit Rider, did just this in western Oregon during the mid 1800s.

In appreciation the women along his Cowlitz Circuit made a Chimney Sweep friendship quilt for Reverend Royal and his wife. It was not uncommon for the women of a congregation to make a quilt for their minister but the people in the small communities Royal served must have been particularly grateful that he was willing to travel such a difficult circuit. ⁴

The quilt was made with a few fabrics of different shades but similar in color as shown in the illustration. One can only wonder if the different fabrics perhaps represented different families or even congregations.

The free pattern for the pieced version of this quilt can be found at [Chimney Sweep Friendship Quilt Pattern](#).

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REFERENCES:

¹ p139, ["For Purpose and Pleasure: Quilting Together in Nineteenth-Century America"](#), by Sandi Fox

² p19 ³ pp50-51, ["Remember Me: Women and Their Friendship Quilts"](#), by Linda Otto Lipsett

⁴ p82, ["The Oregon Trail"](#), by Mary Bywater Cross

Barbara Brackman listed the following names for Chimney Sweep variations in her newsletter reminding us that one pattern can have many names:

Railroad Crossing
Paths to Peace
Four Cross
Log Cabin and Album
Puzzle
Basket Weave
Washington Pavement
Roman Cross
Chicago Pavements

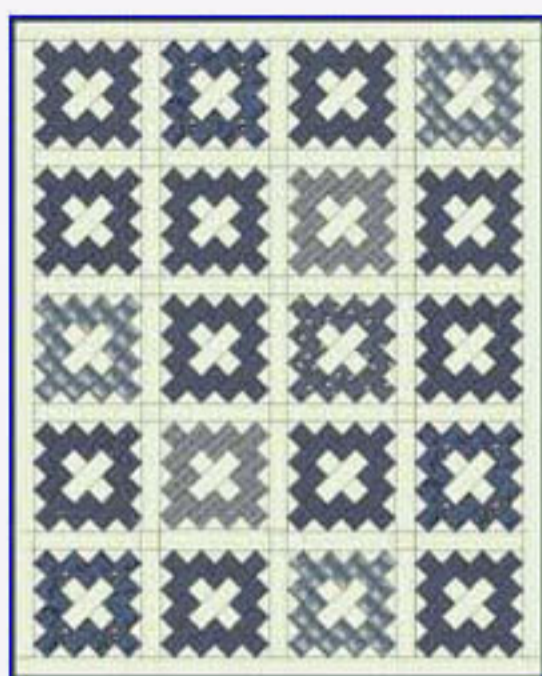
from Barbara Brackman, *The Quilt Detective: Clues in Pattern*, 2007, digital newsletter."

CHIMNEY SWEEP PATTERN: A PIONEER FRIENDSHIP QUILT

"...the blocks of the 'Chimney Sweep', made of brick-shaped patches and squares, have a not unduly far-fetched resemblance to the opening at the top of the oldest type of American house-chimney." *Ruth Finley 1929*¹

A CHIMNEY SWEEP QUILT PATTERN & VARIATIONS

Be sure to look at [The Album or Chimney Sweep Quilt Pattern](#) to learn how this quilt pattern has been used in pioneer days.



The quilt shown to the left is a basic version that can be made with this free Chimney Sweep Pattern. Variations include alternating the pieced blocks with plain ones and/or setting the blocks on point. By changing the number of blocks you can make the quilt any size you wish.

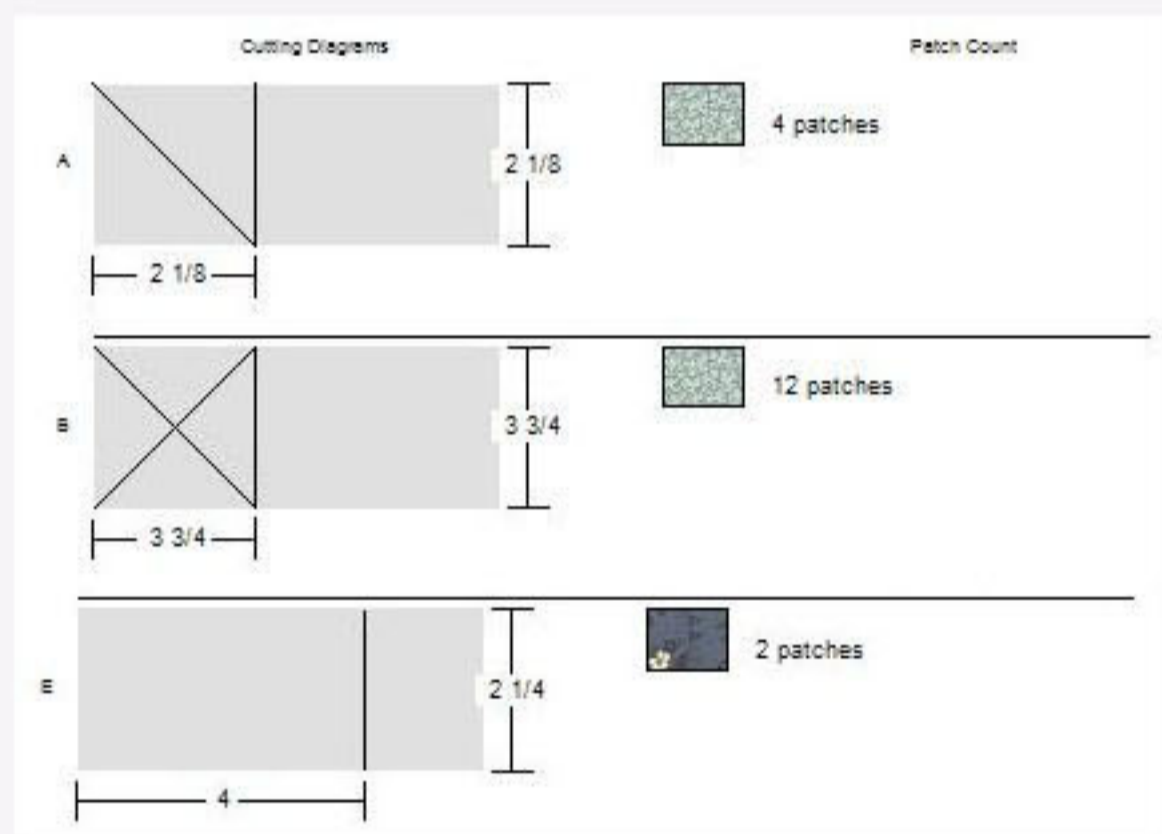
If you are making the quilt with adjoining Chimney Sweep blocks put sashing between them. I have seen this quilt made without the sashing but usually sashing was included with good reason. Take a look at the illustration to the right and just imagine trying to get all those corners matched perfectly!

This pattern for the Chimney Sweep block is easy to make and a quilt completely of these blocks looks great. But if you choose to alternate the blocks with plain blocks you could add some other elements to the quilt. For example you could applique the plain blocks or stitch an interesting quilting design on them.



CUTTING AND ASSEMBLING INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BLOCK PATTERN

Use the cutting instructions below for the 10 inch Chimney Sweep block.



After cutting your fabric sew your block together in the following order.



You will need two of these per block. Sew triangles on each end and then add the smaller corner triangle.



You will need two of these per block. Sew the triangles onto each end.



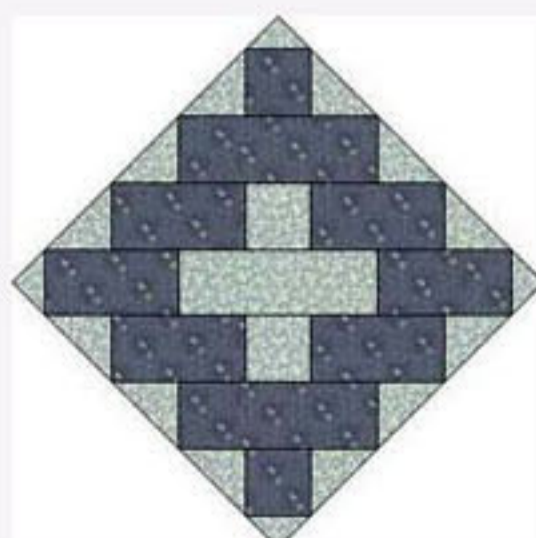
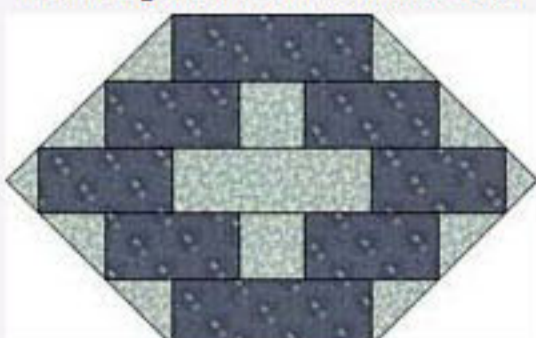
You will need two of these per block. Sew the rectangles to the center square first then add the triangles on each end.



You will only need one of this. Sew the center patches first then add the small corner triangles.



Sew all the rows together working from the center out.



¹ p132, ["Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them"](#), by Ruth Finley