



# **Quilting**

***Art of the United States of America***

**Rebecca Hinson**

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Dedicated to my beloved friend, Lorelea Carrera  
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**ARTISTS** 11, Harriet Powers; 12, Ed Hamilton; 15, Henry Mosler; 21, Ella Wikham.



Women brought quilting traditions when they migrated to the American colonies. By the early 19th century, those styles had evolved into the American block quilt, a uniquely American art form.



Quilting is the sewing together of a top, an inner lining, and a backing. The top design is made by sewing quilt blocks together. Quilt blocks are made of pieces of cloth sewn together to make a pattern.





The Star of Bethlehem was the first pattern to incorporate an entire quilt top made of quilt blocks.



Quilts provided warmth, but they also allowed quilters to express themselves artistically by experimenting with color and pattern.



Often quilts were made to commemorate a special event such as a marriage, birth, leaving a community, freedom, or even death.



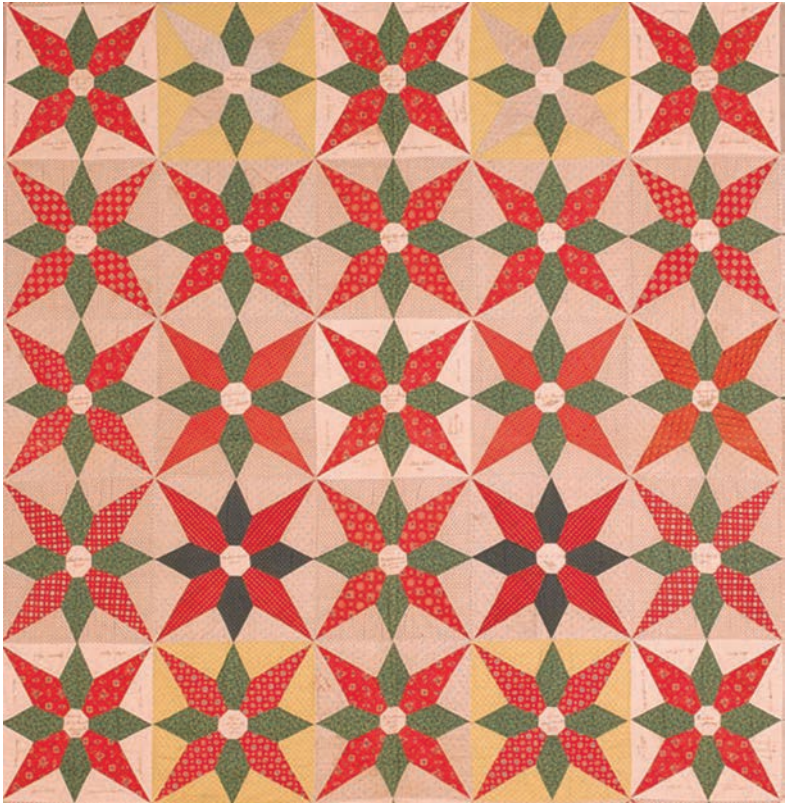


To cherish memories of a beloved person who had died, fabrics from their clothing were often used to make a mourning quilt.

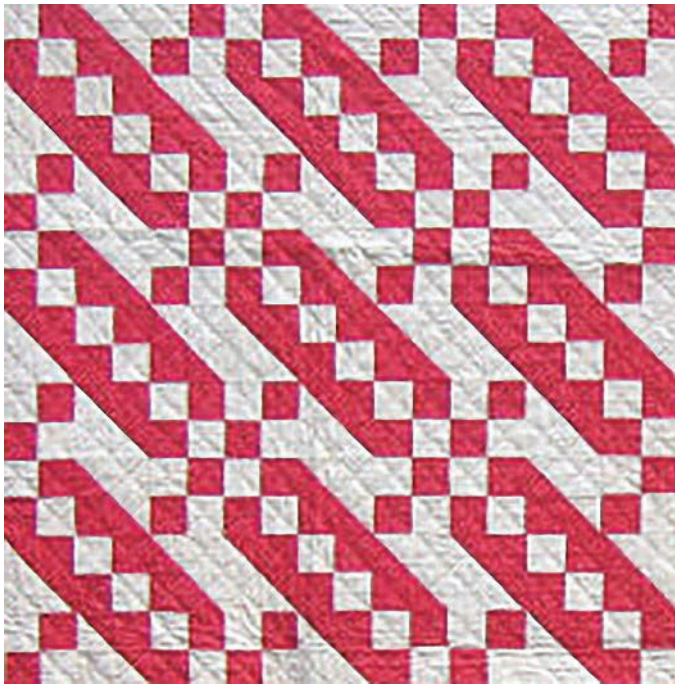




Sometimes quilts were made by a group. Each quilter supplied a quilt block that they sometimes signed in ink.

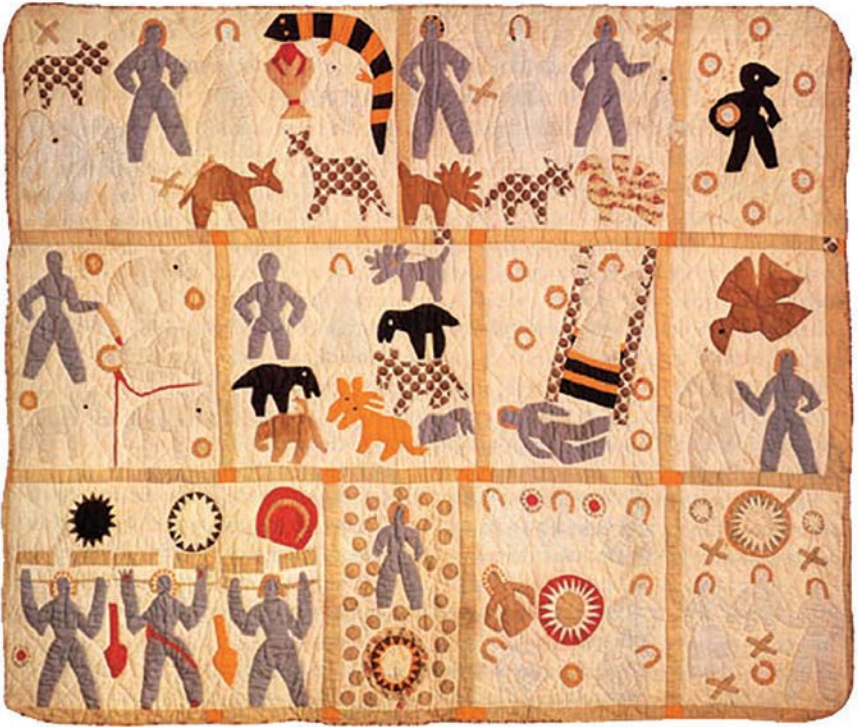


Women could not own personal property in any states until 1839, but they raised money for worthy causes by selling quilts and other hand-made goods at fairs, festivals, and bazaars.



Even though women were not allowed to vote at the time of the Civil War, they supported abolition of slavery through their Underground Railroad (above), Slave Chain, and North Star quilts.





Harriet Powers, an African-American slave from Georgia, recorded Bible stories, local legends, and astronomical events on her quilts.



**Certain events demanded the creation of more quilts. As soldiers went to war or families settled the Western frontier, additional bedding was needed.**