

A Quilt and Its Pieces

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IN 1975, the Metropolitan Museum acquired an unusual quilt pieced from many distinctive copperplate- and woodblock-printed cottons (Figure 1).¹ It came to the Museum with only its recent provenance known² and was tentatively designated late eighteenth-century English on the basis of stylistic similarities between some of the printed designs and documented eighteenth-century examples. This article will present technical findings and stylistic analyses that support dating the quilt about 1795–1805 and suggest either an English or an American provenance for it. The second part of the article is a catalogue of the individual designs with information specific to each. Figure 2 is a diagram of the quilt with the textile designs grouped and numbered as in the catalogue and as they are referred to in the text.

In its primary definition, a quilt consists of a bottom layer of fabric, a filler, and a top layer of fabric, which are held together by the quilting, usually running stitches done in a pattern.³ The Metropolitan Museum quilt has a bottom layer of ivory plain-weave

linen pieced in three lengths and several small sections, a thin filler layer of cotton batting, and a colorful top cleverly pieced from about forty printed cottons. Thirty-seven individual printed designs have been identified in the quilt—nine copperplate-printed designs and twenty-eight woodblock-printed designs—plus fragments from five woodblock-printed bird designs (nos. 17a–e) and many woodblock-printed floral designs (gray areas in Figure 2). The fragmentary nature of these bird and floral designs makes it impossible to determine whether they are distinct designs or part of one of the twenty-eight identified woodblock prints. Figure 3 is a detail of the quilt showing both its quilting, which is done in a simple diamond pattern, and the stitches used to sew the pieced sections together; these stitches are done in ivory (originally white) linen thread.

The fundamental design elements of a patchwork quilt top are its patches, the small pieces of cloth that create the quilt top. In pieced work, also called mosaic patchwork, bits of cloth are cut into various shapes,

Lists of frequently cited references and of books of patterns and swatches consulted will be found at the end of the article.

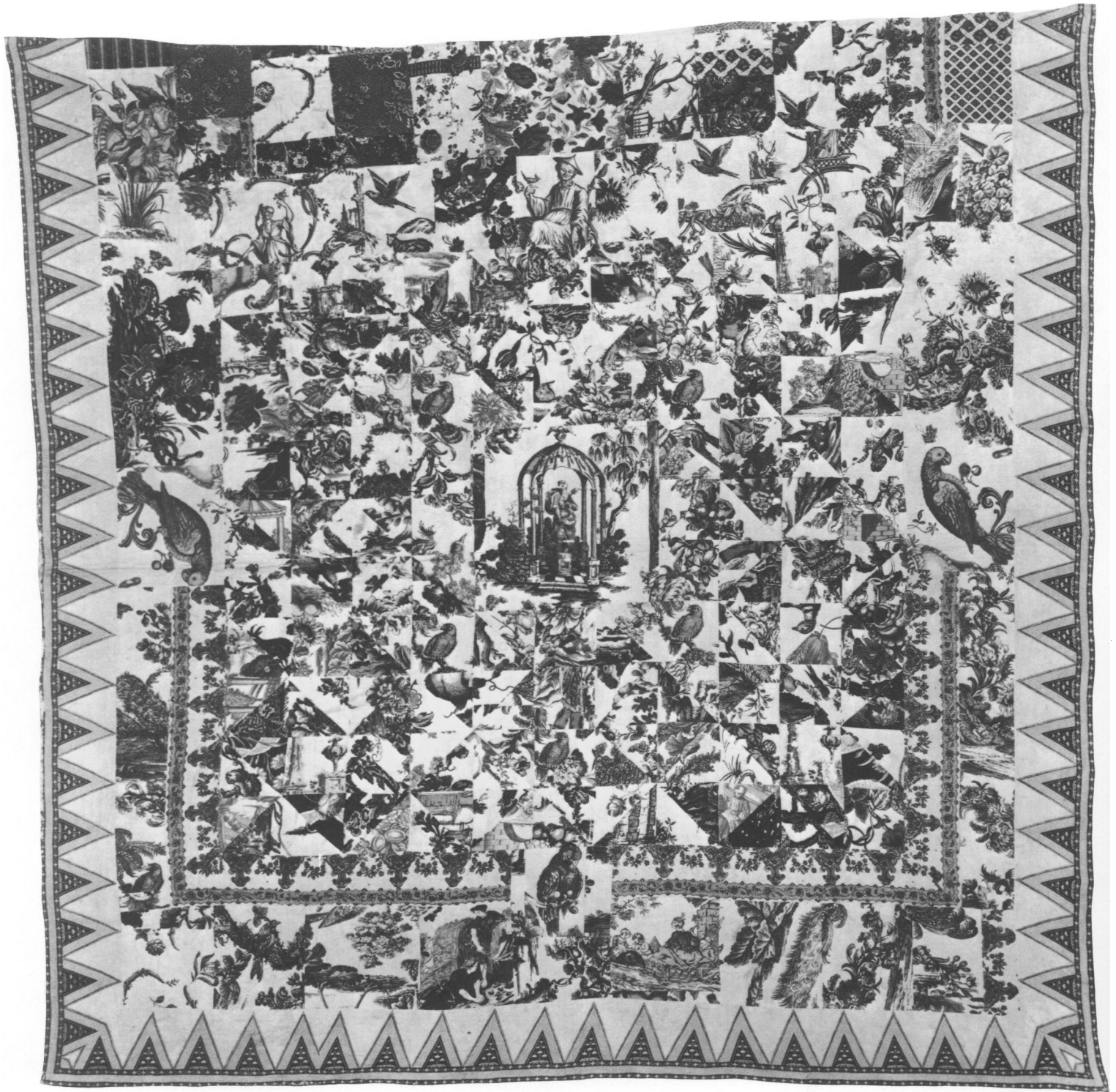
1. Many fabrics in the quilt are not true cottons since they are woven with a linen warp and a cotton weft. However, printed textiles made of linen-cotton cloth are categorized in museum records with those of all-cotton cloth as “printed cottons.”

2. The quilt was bought from an American antiques dealer in the 1960s by Florence Montgomery, the noted American textile authority; no earlier provenance is known. It remained in Mrs. Montgomery’s collection until it was sold to a dealer, from whom it was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum.

Nothing has been published about this quilt except the following short entry by Jean Mailey, Curator of the Textile Study Room, in *MMA Notable Acquisitions 1965–1975* (New York, 1975) p. 298: “Pieced quilts are thought of as an American specialty, but their forerunners survive in small numbers in England, where

the technique was also used for matching bed curtains. This strangely balanced arrangement of small pieces provides a cross section of French and English printed cottons of the eighteenth century, many of them not known elsewhere.”

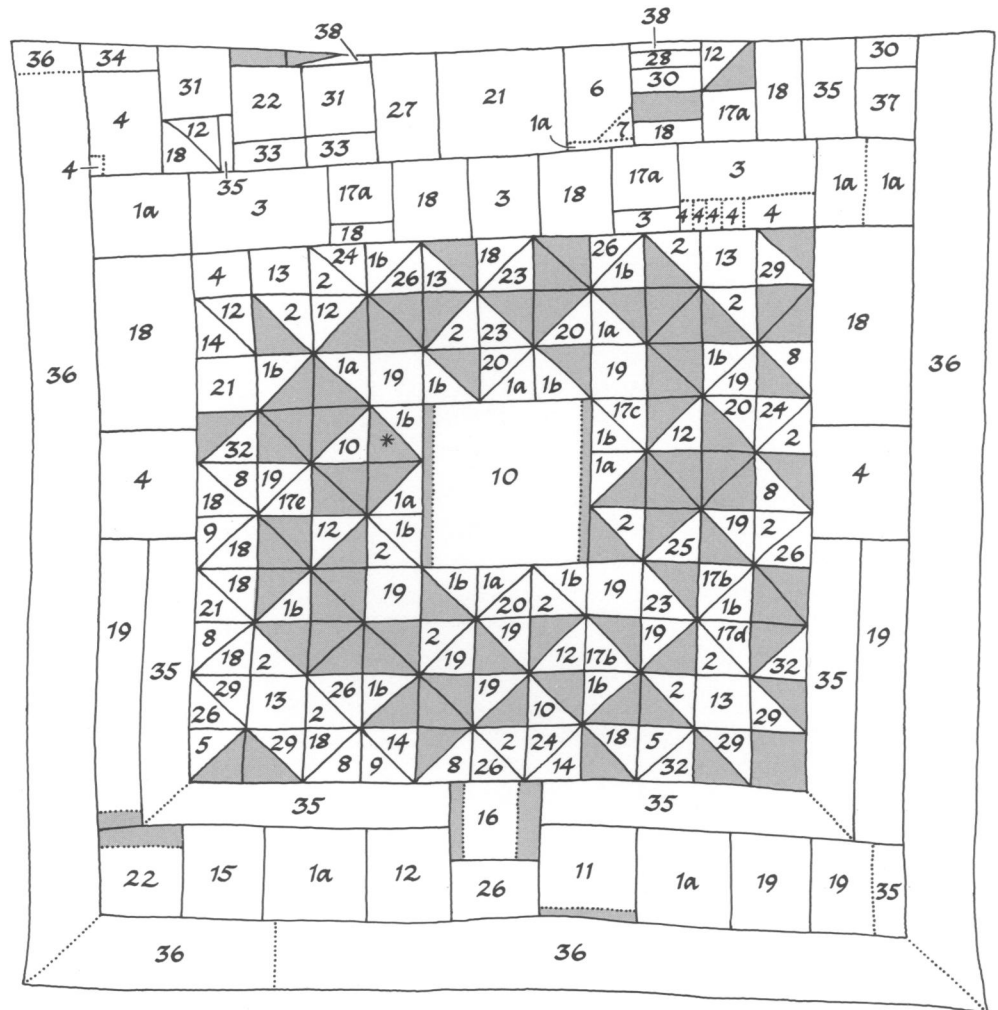
3. Quilts have been used as bed coverings for hundreds of years. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1933 ed., s.v. “quilt,” gives the following early references to quilts as bed coverings: “c. 1290 *S. Eng. Leg.* 188/125 Maketh a bed . . . of quoiltene [quilting] and of materasz. . . . c. 1320 *Sir Beues (MS. A)* 3996 Foure hundred beddes of selk echon, Quiltes of gold bar vpon.” Besides the classic type of quilt described in the text, other bed coverings defined as quilts include two-layer quilted covers without the filler layer and three-layer covers in which tufting holds the layers together. Many unquilted bedcovers with pieced tops are traditionally called “patchwork quilts,” though technically they are not quilts. Unquilted appliqué covers are called “appliqué coverlets.”



1. Pieced quilt, England or United States, ca. 1795–1805. Top pieced from printed cottons with two pieced sections added, cotton-batting filler, ivory linen (plain weave) backing, diamond quilting pattern, linen thread; 94 × 91 in. (238.8 × 231.1 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Purchase, Rogers Fund and Springs Mills, Inc. Gift, 1975.2

2. Diagram of Figure 1

Designs are listed by their catalogue number in this article. The gray areas are woodblock-printed floral designs on plain-weave linen-cotton cloth, and the single gray triangle with an asterisk is a woodblock-printed floral design on plain-weave cotton cloth. Dotted lines represent major supplementary piecings.



COPPERPLATE-PRINTED DESIGNS

1. Birds and Fruit
2. Arborescent Design with Melons
3. Lady and Chinaman
4. Flowers in a Vase and Parrots
5. Chinese Man and Boy
6. Chinoiserie Scene
7. Farmyard
8. Pavilion on Bridge
9. Brown Copperplate Fragments

WOODBLOCK-PRINTED DESIGNS

Figural

10. Classical Statue in a Gazebo
11. Lady Playing a Lute
12. Reapers and Farm Animals
13. Ruined Monuments
14. Archways

Florals with Birds and/or Animals

15. Arborescent Floral with Bird
16. Large Parrot

17. Woodblock Bird Designs

- 17a. Bird in Flight
- 17b. Pheasant
- 17c. Bird in Flight
- 17d. Bird on Branch
- 17e. Bird on Branch
18. Flowering Tree, with Goats and Stork
19. Cat Attacking Peacock, with Parrot
20. Rabbits

Light-Ground Florals

21. Large Blossom Floral
22. Scattered Blossom Floral with Shoots
23. Scattered Blossom Floral
24. Delicate Rose Floral
25. Floral with Basket
26. Floral with Vase and Vines
27. Floral in Stripes
28. Floral Sprigs

Dark-Ground Florals

29. Floral with Lace Band
30. Floral Framed in Lace
31. Floral with Diaper Pattern
32. Floral Spray I
33. Floral Spray II
34. Floral Stripe

Border Prints

35. Rococo Floral with Floral Stripe
36. Sawtooth

Abstract Designs

37. Diamond Print
38. Abstract with Circles

usually geometric, and are seamed together in a specific design to form a new piece of cloth. Appliqué or applied work is another needlework technique that uses patches: floral, figural, or geometric patches are made by cutting motifs out of printed textiles or by sewing small pieces of fabric together. These patches are then arranged in a new design on a background cloth and attached by small stitches. A third technique employing patches, inlaid work, is done by cutting away parts of a fabric and sewing contrasting patches underneath the cutout spaces; it is seen less often than the other two techniques. Though the word “patchwork” is most closely associated with pieced

3. Detail of Figure 1, showing diamond quilting pattern and piecing stitches; the Chinaman is part of a patch toward the top center of the quilt, a piece of design no. 3



designs, it will be used here as a general term to include pieced designs, appliqué designs, and designs combining both techniques.

Usually fabrics with small patterns, intended primarily for clothing, have been chosen for patches in pieced quilts. By contrast, the predominating fabrics in the Metropolitan Museum quilt are large-scale figural and floral designs, originally intended for window and bed curtains or furniture upholstery. Any patchwork design is determined by the fabrics available to the quiltmaker, and this quilt's maker obviously had a sizable collection of printed furnishing fabrics with picturesque designs. Individual motifs cut from such fabrics are often incorporated into applied patchwork designs, but the large scale and the pictorial nature of these prints are not particularly suitable for the small geometric patches of traditional pieced work. One effective use of a figural design in a pieced quilt is as its center panel, the focus of the design. The center panel of the Metropolitan Museum quilt is a woodblock print of a classical statue in a gazebo (no. 10, see Figure 39). Unlike a figural center square framed by a patchwork of small dress prints, the classical statue must compete with many other figural designs, some of which, like the copperplate-printed parrots (no. 4) or the woodblock-printed reapers (no. 12), would have made equally effective center squares. Presumably the quiltmaker did not want to destroy these printed designs by chopping the material into small pieces for typical mosaic patchwork or by cutting out the individual motifs for use in appliqué, and thus devised a unique quilt top which could employ many designs without completely destroying their integrity.

At first glance, the quilt appears to be a kaleidoscope of colorful birds, flowers, and scenes, all randomly arranged. There is, however, a definite plan in the quilt's layout, as can be seen in Figure 2. The center square is surrounded by a patchwork of smaller squares, generally pieced from two triangles of different fabrics. These triangles are larger than most patches used in pieced work, and many show a small scene (no. 5), a complete flower (no. 24), or a bird (no. 17b). A set of four unpieced squares, woodblock-printed parrots (no. 19), stand guard at the corners of the center square. Two squares beyond the parrots, on the same diagonal from the center, there is another set of four identical unpieced squares; these squares show a woodblock print of an obelisk with ruins (no. 13). Three other unpieced squares are in

the outermost row of squares—two at the upper left (nos. 4, 21) and one in the lower right (shaded); there is no apparent reason for this placement.

Surrounding the rows of pieced squares, there is an inner border of variously sized rectangular patches which includes many diverse figural and floral designs. Patches of the same prints (nos. 4, 18, 19, 35) are identically positioned on the two sides of this border. The maker did not repeat this type of balance in the top and bottom rows; instead exceptional figural designs are featured (nos. 1, 3, 11, 12). The balance in these rows is achieved because patches of the same or similar prints are used on either side of a center patch (no. 3 at the top and no. 16 at the bottom) out to the edge of the inner border. The quilt's final border on three sides is a woodblock border print with a dramatic design of double triangles and abstract tree and floral motifs (no. 36). On the fourth side, the top, the final border is made of randomly sized rectangular and triangular patches from a variety of printed cottons, many found nowhere else in the quilt. There was no attempt here at a balanced design, and this section was probably included so that the quilt would be as large as possible. The top edge appears slightly askew; the quilt is actually longer on its right side, so by making the top border deeper on the left, the maker was no doubt attempting to remedy this unevenness. The top border, to be discussed in detail below, also has two applied sections which are not part of the original quilt.

Supplementary piecings are used throughout the quilt to make individual patches the desired size. These additional pieces usually complement a patch's main section—for example, the two narrow strips of a floral woodblock print sewn to the sides of the center panel to make it a square. (Significant supplementary piecings are indicated in Figure 2 by dotted lines; many of the triangular patches also have small supplementary piecings, which are not shown in the diagram.)

Shades of red, blue, and brown predominate in the quilt. There has been a general fading in all of the quilt's colors, though most of the printed images remain very clear. The copperplate designs were printed in monochrome on light grounds; the woodblock designs were printed in two or more colors with both light and dark grounds (the exception is no. 27, a woodblock design printed in blue on white). Though they now appear as an ivory, the light backgrounds would initially have been a clearer white. This is also

true of the linen backing and the linen thread used for the piecing and quilting. Originally, green would have been an important color in the quilt because there is so much foliage in the floral woodblock prints. To achieve green, a yellow dye (weld) was painted over blue (indigo), but the color produced was not permanent; in many prints, the foliage now looks blue or blue-green. While its general condition is good, the quilt has yet to be conserved; it has several holes, some stains, a slight fraying on the outside edges. In some designs, where an iron mordant was used to produce brown tones, the fabric has disintegrated (nos. 10, 13, 20).

Because of its basic layout with a center square surrounded by a series of borders, the Metropolitan Museum quilt can be stylistically categorized as a framed-center quilt. "Framed center," and "framed medallion," are twentieth-century descriptive terms for this style, which does not have a traditional name.⁴ The framed-center style was one of the earliest patchwork quilt styles to develop and was very popular in both England and the United States during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It is not known when patchwork techniques and quilting were first used together in these countries, as no patchwork quilts predate the eighteenth century. European quilts dating before 1700 have tops of whole cloth, lengths of the same fabrics seamed together.⁵ The surface design on some early whole-cloth quilts includes embroidery, and often the quilted designs were elaborately corded or stuffed for added dimension. However, there is no indication either from these early quilts or from written records, which mention quilts with increasing frequency from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries, that pieced or applied patchwork techniques were being used in quilts.⁶

4. Colby, *Patchwork*, p. 60.

5. Six existing European whole-cloth quilts and quilted panels from the 14th through the 17th centuries are illustrated and discussed in Averil Colby, *Quilting* (New York, 1971) pls. 6, 100, 101, 105, 108, 109; chaps. 1, 6, 7.

6. There is one early (12th- or 13th-century) mention of a pieced quilt in a French poem: "The bed was prepared of which the quilt was of a check-board pattern of two sorts of silk cloth, well-made and rich" (quoted in translation by Colby, *Patchwork*, p. 22, from *The Lays of Desiré, Graelent and Melion*, ed. E. Margaret Grimes). As this appears to be the sole explicitly descriptive reference to a pieced quilt until the 18th century, no conclusions can be drawn from it about the early history of pieced quilts.

A pieced technique would certainly have been suitable for constructing the parti-colored garments and heraldic flags of the Middle Ages and Renaissance. In 1529, a man's parti-colored "cote" was described as "checked with patches rede and blewe,"⁷ though no garments survive to show how this was done. There are existing examples of clothing (mostly ecclesiastical garments) and hangings which employ the related technique of applied work.⁸ Applied work was used from an early date in conjunction with and as a cheaper substitute for embroidery. But exactly when the transition was made to using these techniques in quilt-top designs similar to what is now called patchwork remains obscure.

The earliest English example of patchwork and quilting indicates the existence of an established patchwork tradition. The Levens Hall quilt, a quilted pieced bedcover made about 1708,⁹ has patches of seventeenth-century Indian mordant-painted and dyed chintz in different shapes alternated with patches of ivory calico to form a mosaic patchwork; it is backed in red cotton and the quilting was done in a diamond pattern with red thread.¹⁰ A detail of the patchwork design from this quilt's matching unquilted bed curtains is illustrated in Figure 4. The sophistication of the design layout and the finished quality of the needlework in the Levens Hall furnishings suggest that

7. *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1933 ed., s.v. "patch."

8. Examples of extant European applied work from the 11th to the 16th centuries are cited in the Victoria and Albert Museum's pamphlet *Notes on Applied Work and Patchwork* (London, 1949) pp. 6, 7.

9. This dating is based on family evidence which is circumstantial but is considered reliable since the Levens Hall furnishings are made with 17th-century chintz pieces; see Colby, *Patchwork*, p. 96.

10. The Levens Hall quilt is often cited as the earliest English example of patchwork and quilting, but descriptions of its patchwork technique vary. John Irwin and Katharine B. Brett state that applied work is used (*Origins of Chintz* [London, 1970] p. 25); Patsy and Myron Orlofsky state that both applied and pieced work is used (*Quilts in America* [New York, 1974] p. 7); and Averil Colby implies that only pieced work is used (*Patchwork*, p. 96). Information in a letter to me (Aug. 8, 1984) from Mrs. Margaret Lambert, secretary at Levens Hall, suggests that Colby's description is the most accurate. For a detail photograph of this quilt showing the patches pieced by seams, see Colby, *Patchwork*, p. 97.

11. Reliable documentary evidence that patchwork was being produced in 17th-century England has yet to be found. Agnes M. Miall (*Patchwork Old and New* [London, 1937] p. 19) quotes from a letter purportedly written by an old lady, a Miss Hulton, to the *Spectator* in 1700: "For my part I have plyed my needle

they had predecessors, probably dating back into the seventeenth century.¹¹ These furnishings may have been made as a way of using leftover pieces of chintz to produce an alternative to the expensive sets of Indian chintz whole-cloth quilts and bed curtains imported into England during the seventeenth century. In 1701, an act prohibiting the importation, use, and wear of Indian painted or printed calicoes (i.e., chintz) became law in England.¹² Though it was often ignored, the ban did cause the popular Indian chintz fabrics to become less available so that even small chintz pieces would have been valued, and patchwork provided a decorative way of using them. In later eighteenth-century patchwork, widely available English printed cottons became the usual choice, though a mixture of woven fabrics—linens, silks, and wool—is also found in early pieced quilt tops (see Figures 7 and 8).

It is difficult to follow the development of English and American pieced and appliquéd quilts during the eighteenth century because so few remain except from the last quarter of the century; in fact, no extant American quilts can be reliably dated before this time.¹³ It is assumed that the production of patchwork quilts increased steadily during the century but that most of the work is now lost.¹⁴ Equally uncertain is the extent to which English patchwork designs may

these fifty years [i.e., since ca. 1650], and by my goodwill would never have it out of my hands. . . . I have quilted counterpanes and chest covers in fine white linen, in various patterns of my own invention. I have made patchwork beyond calculation." Citing Miall as his source, Jonathan Holstein (*The Pieced Quilt: An American Design Tradition* [Boston, 1973] p. 23) repeats this passage. However, the *Spectator*, written largely by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, did not begin publication until 1711. It contains an unsigned letter dated Oct. 13, 1714, which includes the first sentence quoted by Miall but not the other two.

An early reference to patchwork as a specific needlework technique occurs in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* of 1726: "When my Clothes were finished, . . . they looked like the Patch-Work made by the Ladies in England, only that mine were all of a colour" ("A Voyage to Lilliput," chap. 6). It was not until late in the 18th century that "patchwork" began to be used as a descriptive term in connection with "quilt."

12. 11 & 12, Wm. III, c. 10; see Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade*, p. 132, n. 4.

13. It was once thought that an American unquilted pieced bedcover, the Saltonstall cover, was dated ca. 1704, making it the earliest pieced bedcover. This date is now in question as some of the cover's textiles are thought to be from the mid- to late 19th century. See Jacqueline Beaudoin-Ross, "An Early-Eighteenth-Century Pieced Quilt in Montreal," *Canadian Art Review* 4, no. 1 (1979–80) p. 106, n. 1.

have influenced patchwork in the American colonies, but it does seem that two basic patchwork quilt styles evolved on both sides of the Atlantic: those with an all-over design framed in a final border, as in the Levens Hall furnishings, and those with a center motif framed by a series of borders, as in the Metropolitan Museum quilt.

The stylistic roots of eighteenth-century framed-center patchwork designs can be found in seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century exported Indian bed coverings—quilts and palampores. The quilts were of three layers with whole-cloth tops of mordant-painted and dyed chintz; palampores were unquilted cotton bed coverings (or hangings) with either embroidered or chintz designs (Figures 5, 6). John Irwin and Katharine Brett describe a chintz palampore as “a coverlet composed of a single chintz panel” and state that “the characteristic seventeenth-century

palampore and quilt designs comprised a central medallion and four related corner motifs on a flowery field surrounded by a wide border.”¹⁵

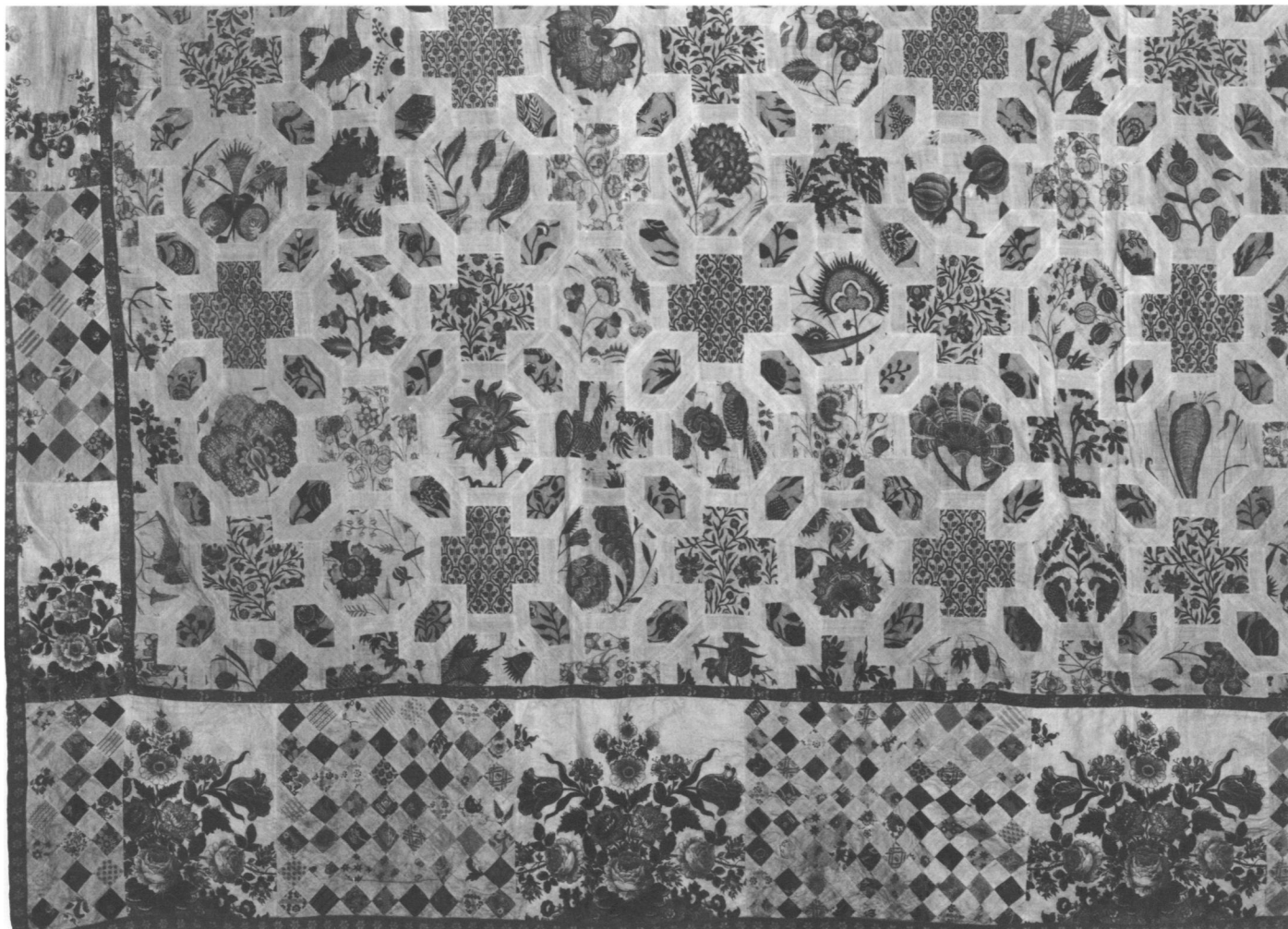
Three dated eighteenth-century framed-center bed coverings illustrate ways in which the basic design of the Indian bedcovers was reinterpreted in later English and American pieced and applied work. The unquilted cover in Figure 7 is dated 1726 and is thought to be English.¹⁶ The Anna Tuels quilt (Figure 8) is American and dated 1785. Both of these are made of mosaic patchwork with a few applied details. The third bedcover (Figure 9) is an American appliqué coverlet with some embroidered detail; it is dated 1782. While Figures 7 and 8 do not look like seventeenth-century Indian palampores, their designs are basically similar: pieced squares are used as the center “medallion,” which is surrounded not by a “flowery field” but by one of geometric patchwork. This

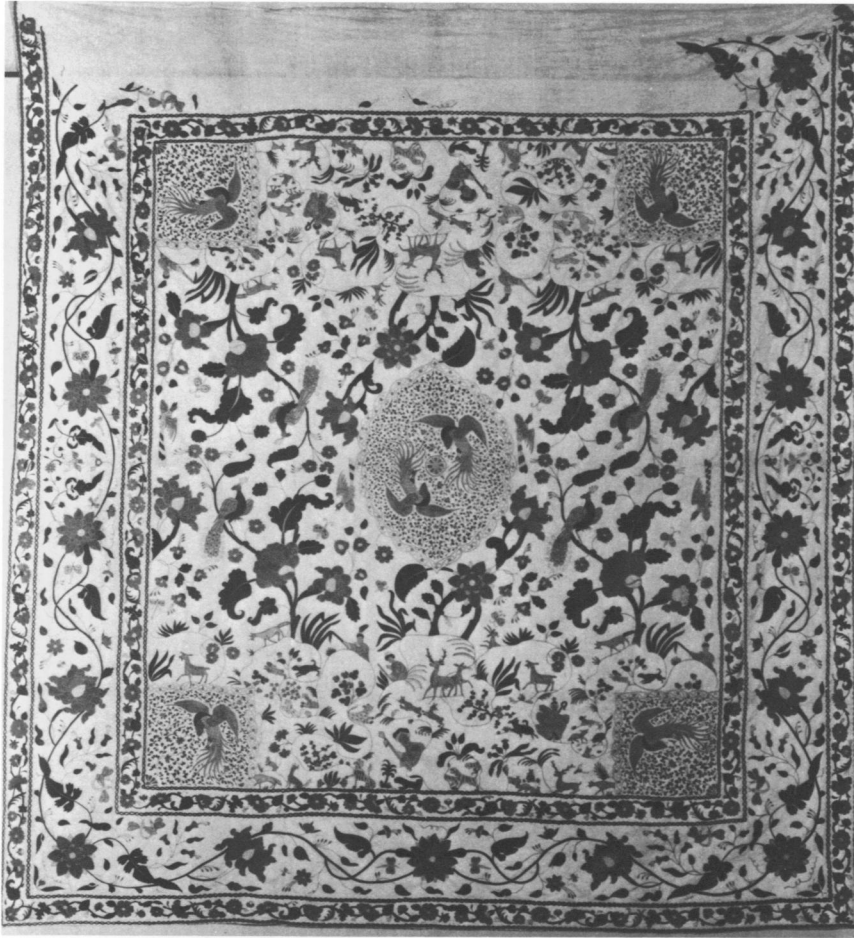
4. Detail of the Levens Hall bed hangings, England, ca. 1708. Pieced from 17th-century Indian mordant-painted and dyed chintz patches and unpainted ivory cotton patches. Levens Hall, Cumbria (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

14. Holstein, *The Pieced Quilt*, p. 23.

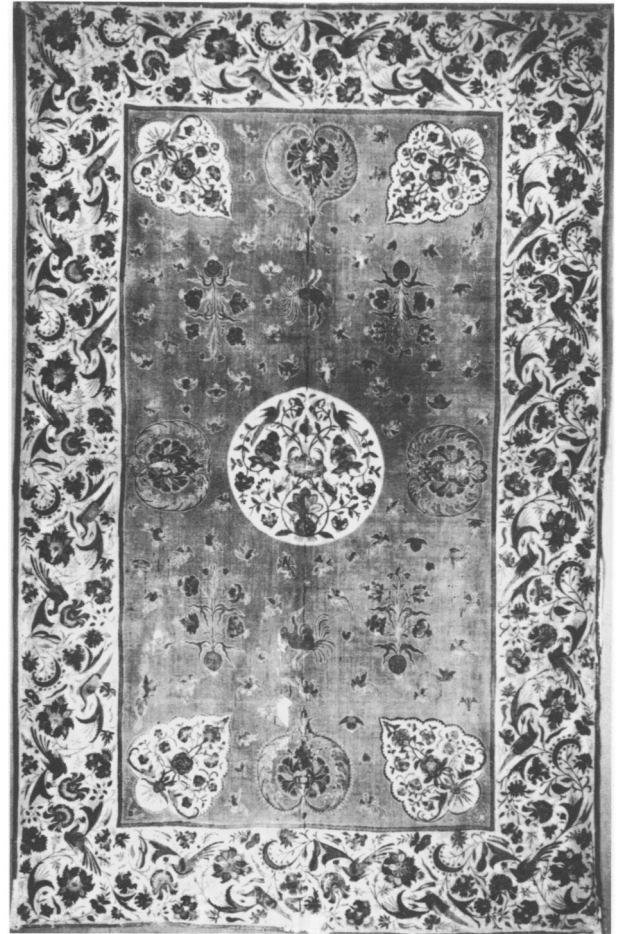
15. Irwin and Brett, *Origins of Chintz*, p. 27.

16. For a full discussion of this bedcover which supports the 1726 date and a probable English origin for it, see Beaudoin-Ross, “An Early-Eighteenth-Century Pieced Quilt,” pp. 106–109.





5. Palampore, western India, late 17th century. Embroidered, silk chain stitch on cotton; 112 × 103 in. (284.5 × 261.6 cm.). New York, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design, 1953-123-2 (photo: Cooper-Hewitt Museum)



6. Palampore, western India, Gujarat, early 18th century. Mordant-painted and dyed chintz, 96 × 86 in. (243.8 × 218.4 cm.). New York, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Design, 1956-51-1 (photo: Cooper-Hewitt Museum)

simple patchwork pattern consists of squares pieced from four triangular patches and is called “Yankee puzzle” or “cotton reel.”¹⁷ The corner motifs in the Indian designs are echoed in the four hearts applied at the corners of the center square in the Anna Tuels quilt. This detail is repeated in the patchwork ground, two squares out from and on the same diagonal as the corners of the center square. The center square of the 1726 cover has four interesting corner motifs, each consisting of small squares pieced from four smaller “Yankee puzzle” squares.¹⁸ A final border of silk brocade frames this cover, while the Anna Tuels quilt has a final border of elaborately quilted glazed wool.

Unlike pieced quilts, appliqué bedcovers often di-

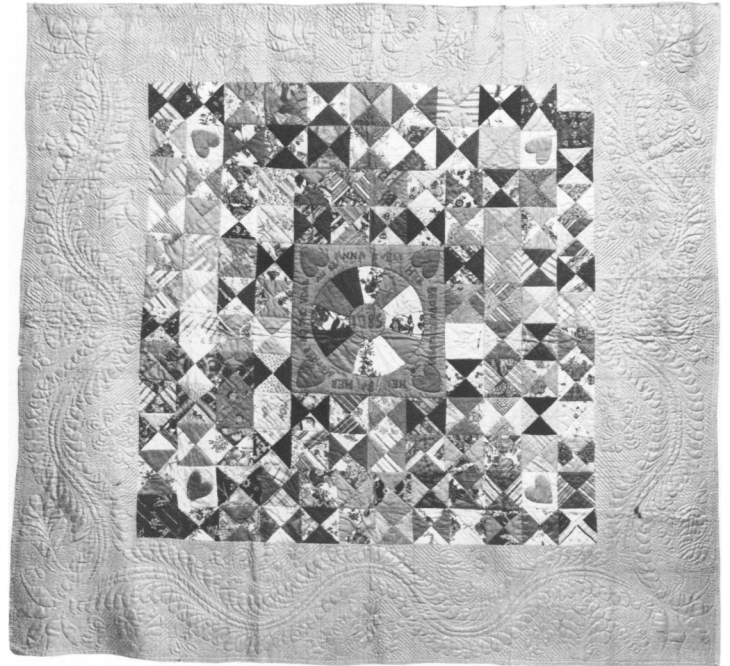
rectly resemble the Indian prototypes in appearance and design. By the early eighteenth century, Indian chintz quilts and palampores also showed a single large

17. Names for most individual patchwork patterns are difficult to trace because they were initially part of an oral tradition, and early written references to patchwork quilts are rarely descriptive. Patchwork patterns began to be recorded and described in the 19th century, but a single pattern often has different names in different places. In the United States, this pattern is one of several known as the “Yankee puzzle,” and in both the United States and England, the pattern is also called “cotton reel.”

18. Another 18th-century unquilted English bedcover (ca. 1760–80) that uses elaborate pieced-corner motifs in a symmetrical framed-center design is illustrated in Averil Colby, *Patchwork Quilts* (New York, 1965) p. 35; it is privately owned.



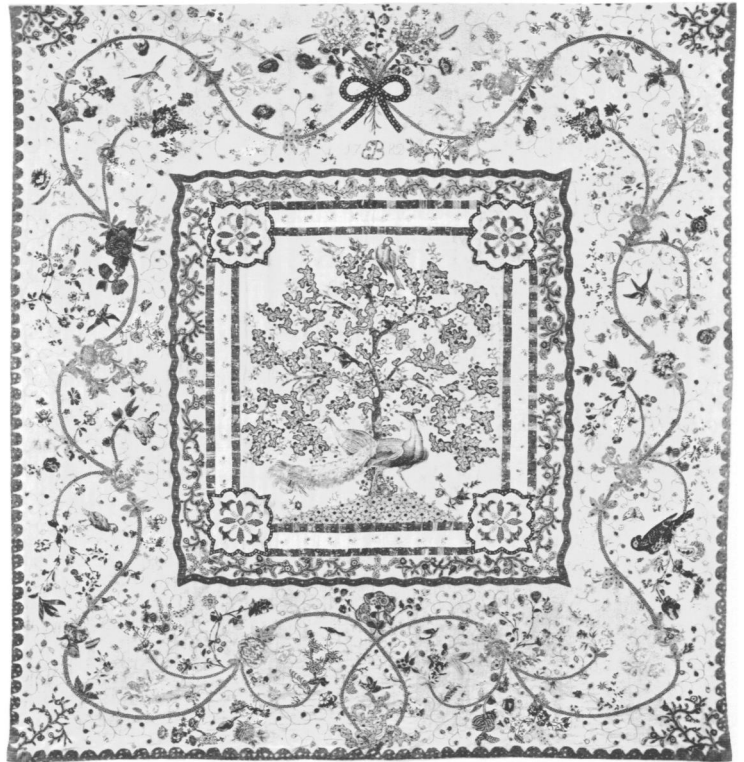
7. Bedcover, England (probable), signed *IN 1726*. Pieced from silks (including brocades and damasks), velvet, linens (plain and printed), cotton, appliquéd detail; $81\frac{1}{2} \times 77\frac{1}{2}$ in. (207×197 cm.). Montreal, McCord Museum of McGill University, M972.3.1 (photo: McCord Museum)

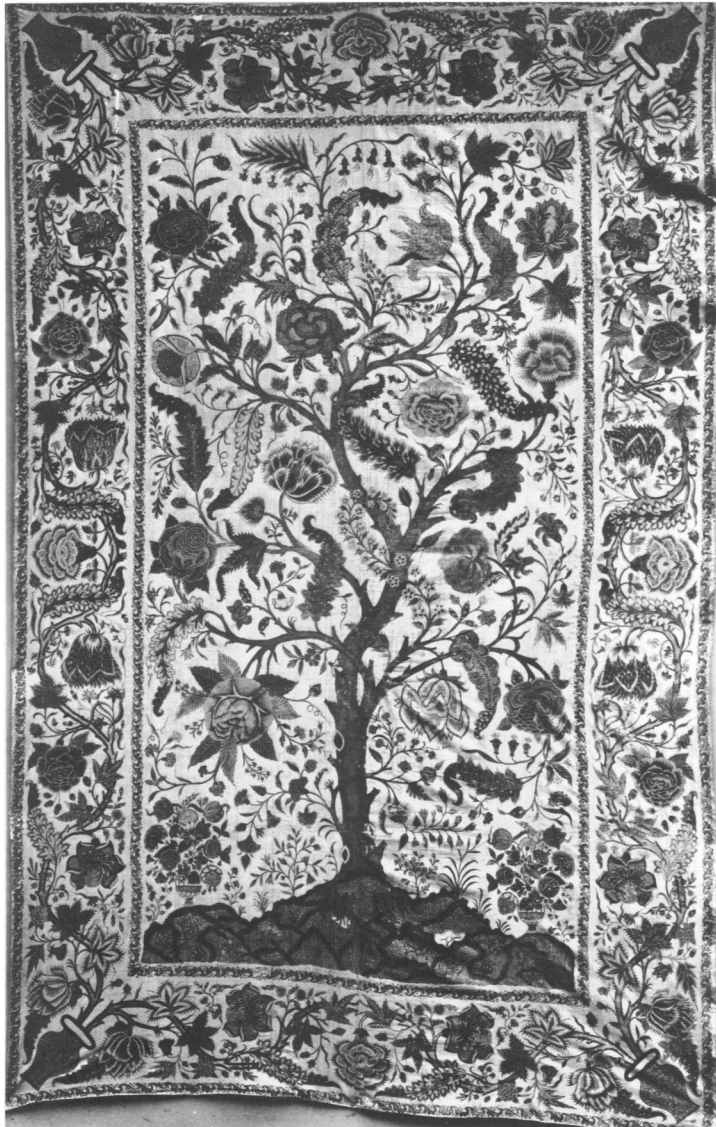


8. Anna Tuels quilt, United States, inscribed *Anna Tuels her bed quilt given to her by her mother in the year Au 23 1785*. Top pieced from plain, striped, printed, and damask-patterned linens, corduroy, silks, printed cottons, final border of glazed wool, quilted in feather pattern, appliquéd detail; 86×81 in. (218.4×205.7 cm.). Hartford, Wadsworth Atheneum, 1967.75 (photo: Wadsworth Atheneum)

9. Bedcover, United States, signed *E.B. 1782*. Appliquéd with printed cottons, embroidered with silk thread on cotton; 94×90 in. (238.8×228.6 cm.). The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 69.568 (photo: Winterthur Museum)

The appliquéd peacocks and the bird at the top of the tree are from a reverse impression of no. 1, an English copperplate design by Nixon & Co., ca. 1765–75.





10. Palampore, India, early 18th century. Mordant-painted and dyed cotton, 122 × 82 in. (309.9 × 208.3 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 17.98

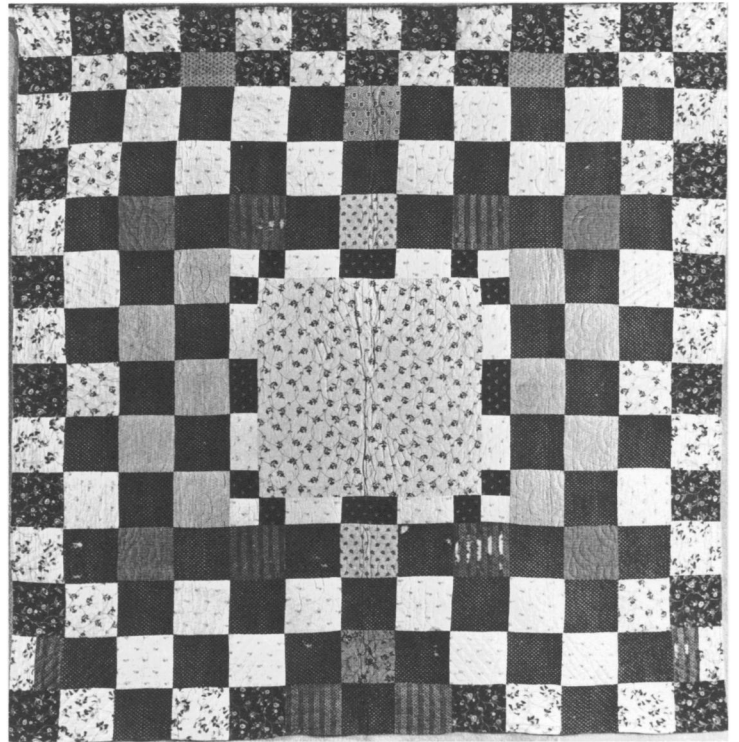
flowering tree framed by a floral border (Figure 10). Many late eighteenth-century appliqué bed coverings combined the flowering-tree designs reminiscent of the later palampores with a framed-center layout, as illustrated in the Winterthur Museum coverlet (Figure 9). This coverlet also has applied motifs cut from large-scale furnishing fabrics: the peacocks at the base of the tree and the bird in the tree were taken from an English copperplate-printed design dated between 1765 and 1775. They are from a reverse impression of a print (no. 1) also found in the Metropolitan Museum quilt.

The two Indian designs illustrated are symmetrical around their center motifs (Figures 5, 6), a convention also seen in most eighteenth-century English and American framed-center designs. The Anna Tuels quilt and the Winterthur Museum coverlet illustrate typical symmetrical layouts in pieced and appliquéd designs (Figures 8, 9). Occasionally, the traditional elements of a patchwork style were freely adapted by an individual maker and the resulting quilt may not fit neatly into a defined stylistic category. For example, the McCord Museum bedcover (Figure 7) does employ a symmetrical framed-center layout—six rows of pieced squares are found on each side of its center motif—but by varying the size of these patchwork rows, the quilt’s maker created an impression of asymmetry in the quilt’s overall pieced design. A late eighteenth-century American pieced and quilted bedcover—the Elizabeth Webster quilt, dated 1796—makes a subtle but definite use of asymmetry in its framed-center layout (Figure 11). This quilt actually combines elements from “hit-or-miss” patchwork and the framed-center style. Hit-or-miss patchwork is a utility style which allows the maker to use bits from many different fabrics. The patches are cut to a uniform size and shape, usually a square or a rectangle, and are pieced in an all-over pattern without any particular arrangement to the fabrics; if light and dark materials are alternated, the resulting design is known as the “brick” pattern.¹⁹ The Elizabeth Webster quilt has a square center patch framed by a small symmetrically pieced border, but it lacks the distinct final border which is characteristic of framed-center designs. Instead, a field of hit-or-miss patchwork in a pattern of light and dark patches extends to the quilt’s edges. Four rows of these square patches frame the center on three sides, and on the fourth side, between the third and fourth rows of square patches, an additional row of small rectangular patches artfully unbalances the layout.

Asymmetry in framed-center layouts is rare, and the Metropolitan Museum quilt is a dramatic example. This quilt is actually semisymmetrical in plan because, as noted, there is a clear attempt at balance between its left and its right sides, except for the top border. The left-right balance and the use of the two sets of unpieced squares in the field of patchwork squares, the parrots (no. 19) and the obelisk with ruins

19. Colby, *Patchwork*, p. 50.

11. Elizabeth Webster quilt, United States, signed on reverse *E.W.* 1796. Top pieced from printed cottons, cotton-batting filler, ivory linen backing (plain weave), quilted floral patterns; 86 × 81¼ in. (218.4 × 207.6 cm.). Winston-Salem, The Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts, M.3271 (photo: Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts)



(no. 13), may indicate that the maker was attempting a more usual framed-center layout. The choice of placement for the sets of square patches is quite similar to the placement of the sets of appliquéd hearts in the symmetrical Anna Tuels quilt. But there must not have been enough of the specific fabrics needed to balance the design of the Metropolitan Museum quilt on all four sides. The result was a decidedly asymmetrical layout in which the center square is framed by four rows of pieced squares at its sides and bottom and just three rows at the top. In addition, in the inner border, a woodblock-printed design (no. 35)



12. Detail of Figure 1, showing the top border with two pieced sections applied onto the border

surrounds the pieced squares on only three sides and only below the red copperplate-printed parrots (no. 4) which visually divide the quilt in half.

The most unusual design feature of the Metropolitan Museum quilt is its top border (Figures 1, 12). Patchwork quilts, even framed-center designs with otherwise balanced layouts, were sometimes made without a top border.²⁰ The main disadvantage of such a quilt is that it cannot be turned from end to end to decrease the effects of wear. This is less of a consideration with a “best” quilt, made for show, occasionally used, and carefully stored. Many “best” quilts were planned with obvious one-directional designs and were sometimes made without a top border, like the Margaret Nichols quilt (Figure 13). Absence of a top border would not have detracted from a quilt’s appear-

ance on a bed if the quilt were used in the way most bedspreads were pictured in eighteenth-century upholstery books—laid flat under a separately covered narrow bolster rather than drawn up over pillows.²¹ Since the Metropolitan Museum quilt has a top border pieced from randomly sized patches arranged with no apparent relationship to the rest of the quilt’s design, it would have been distracting on the bed if drawn over the pillows. A narrow bolster covering the quilt’s top border would still allow the distinctive prints of the top inner border (nos. 1, 3, 17a, 18) to be seen.

20. For examples of American quilts without a top border, see Orlofsky, *Quilts in America*, pl. 41 (18th-century example), pls. 25, 31, 72, 94 (19th-century examples).

21. Thomas Chippendale, *The Gentleman & Cabinet-Maker’s Director*, 3rd ed. (London, 1762) pls. 38–45; [George Hepplewhite], *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer’s Guide*, 3rd ed. (London, 1794) pls. 95–101; Thomas Sheraton, *Appendix to The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer’s Drawing-Book*, 2nd ed. (London, 1793) pl. 9.

Other eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century bedcovers show no evidence of the type of crazy patchwork found in the top border of the Metropolitan Museum quilt.²² Those covers instead support the idea that the earliest known patchwork bedcovers were carefully planned with an ordered layout; even the hit-or-miss pattern has patches of a uniform size and shape. However, because surviving bedcovers tend to be “best” covers, it is also possible that they do not represent all the patterns used in patchwork designs. It has been suggested that, at least in colonial America, randomly pieced utility patchwork quilts may have been made to use every available fabric scrap.²³ While the Metropolitan Museum quilt is not a utility quilt—its top has patches of exceptional printed cottons and its thin filler layer gives dimension to the quilting, not warmth—the choice of the oddly pieced border could have been influenced by some similarly pieced and now lost utility quilts. This border was certainly a definite decision on the maker’s part, since a single length of fabric could just as easily have filled in the space and enlarged the quilt to the ends of the side borders. It is fortunate that the maker decided on this singularly pieced border, because some patches in it are probably the only surviving examples of these printed designs.

The anomaly of the top border is enhanced by the quilt’s only two applied patches (see outlined sections in Figure 12). These are stitched over two patches of a woodblock-printed design, abstract with circles (no. 38), which had been pieced into the border in the usual way. One applied patch is pieced from two woodblock-printed floral designs (nos. 31 and 33), and the other is pieced from three woodblock-printed floral designs (nos. 28, 30, and one unidentified design); patches of nos. 30, 31, and 33 are also found elsewhere in the border. It is evident from the quilting pattern that the applied sections were added after the rest of the quilt was finished. The quilting pattern, showing on the linen backing under the applied sections, has two sets of stitches in some places but only one set is visible on the quilt top. This indicates an attempt to continue the original quilting pattern

22. In the late 19th century a patchwork style called the “crazy quilt” developed in which randomly sized patches were pieced or appliquéd over a whole coverlet. The use of the word “crazy” here is descriptive only; it does not imply any connection with the later style.

23. Orlofsky, *Quilts in America*, pp. 13, 298, 299.

on the applied sections. However, the added quilting stitches are not always sewn through all the layers and they seem less even than the other quilting stitches, suggesting that somebody other than the original maker added the applied sections. Since this person had access to patches of nos. 30, 31, and 33, she was probably associated in some way with the original maker. All patches of nos. 30, 31, and 33 have essentially the same degree of fading and wear, so the applied sections were probably attached soon after the quilt was completed.

Why the applied sections were added is a mystery. Two tiny slivers of design no. 38 show at the edge of each applied section and this print is stylistically different from most of the prints found in the quilt top—it is one of only three designs in which geometric motifs predominate (the others are nos. 36 and 37). The most likely explanation is that no. 38 was simply considered unattractive and was covered with floral prints more in keeping with those in the rest of the quilt top. Since the applied sections are not integral to the original quilt, it is described in the caption to Figure 1 as “pieced from printed cottons with two pieced sections added” rather than “pieced and appliquéd.”

A quilt is dated by family tradition and by its general stylistic and technical characteristics combined with the date of its textiles. The Metropolitan Museum quilt lacks family provenance. Stylistically, it is a framed-center design in the English tradition, though an unconventional example. While framed-center quilts can be found dating after 1830, the style enjoyed its greatest vogue in both England and the United States during the fifty-year period between 1780 and 1830 (the scarcity of pre-1780 examples makes it impossible to determine the prevalence of the style before this time). The dated framed-center bedcovers shown in Figures 7–9 and 11 are examples of the considerable stylistic range of eighteenth-century designs. Nineteenth-century framed-center designs continued to use the same basic layout—a center motif surrounded by a symmetrically arranged series of pieced and/or applied patchwork borders. Four nineteenth-century patchwork designs (Figures 13–16) illustrate the variety of design in later framed-center bedcovers. The style was so popular at the turn of the century that special floral designs began to be printed for use as center panels in framed-center quilts (Figures 14, 16).

Further clues in narrowing a quilt’s date may be

found in its size, the fiber content of its thread and backing fabric, and its patchwork and quilting patterns. It is only possible to indicate general trends within a period based on these factors, however, because a patchwork quilt design reflects the maker's individual artistic sensibilities and practical options in fabric, color, and patchwork design and in considerations such as the size of a cover for a specific bed. Only recently has fiber analysis of a quilt's thread, filler, and backing materials been routinely undertaken to help determine its date.

Patchwork quilts in the 1780–1830 period tend to be about 8 to 9 feet square (2.4 to 2.8 meters).²⁴ The Metropolitan Museum quilt—7 feet, 10 inches by 7 feet, 7 inches (2.388 by 2.311 meters)—is well within the range for slightly smaller quilts, and it is almost identical in size to the 1782 Winterthur appliqué coverlet (Figure 9). From the combination of the linen thread (for the piecing and quilting) and the linen backing, the date for this quilt can be narrowed to about 1780–1810 since linen was more likely to be used for these components in eighteenth- and very early nineteenth-century quilts. Cotton thread and backing fabrics increasingly became the choice for cotton patchwork in the nineteenth century, though cotton batting for filler was commonly used in the eighteenth century. This quilt's only patchwork pattern in the usual sense is the squares pieced from two triangular patches that form the rows framing the center square. While this pattern was certainly used in the 1780–1810 period, it is not distinctive enough to contribute to the quilt's dating, and the same applies to the simple diamond quilting pattern.

The most precise date for an undocumented patchwork bedcover is derived from dating its textiles, since the bedcover must have been finished after the date of its newest textile. It is sometimes necessary to qualify the overall date suggested by the textiles if the piece has been altered, because an added fabric of a later date may obscure the work's original date. The applied sections in the top border of the Metropolitan Museum quilt are its only alterations, but since they are dated within the range of those in the rest of the quilt and appear to have been added soon after the quilt was completed, they do not affect the quilt's dating.

With many pieced quilts, it is hard to figure out which fabric is newest since dating the small-scale dress prints generally favored can be difficult. Large-scale

furnishing fabrics, such as those predominating in the Metropolitan Museum quilt, are easier to date because between 1750 and 1820 there were well-documented stylistic changes in this type of printed cotton design. Pinpointing a date for a fabric is not feasible unless its design corresponds to one in a dated pattern book, but it is possible to estimate the date of first production for some furnishing fabrics within a span of ten years and occasionally less. The period range and provenance assigned to the Metropolitan Museum quilt's textile designs nos. 1–38 (see catalogue of printed designs) were determined through stylistic comparisons with designs in pattern books, museum collections, and published sources,²⁵ and by considering the printing methods and dyes used as well as the technical developments and laws regulating the textile-printing industry of the time. Following is an analysis of the designs most important in determining an overall date and country of origin for the quilt. All dates in this article and the catalogue entries for each design are estimated dates of first production, and it should be remembered that many designs (particularly copperplate designs) were produced as long as they would sell.

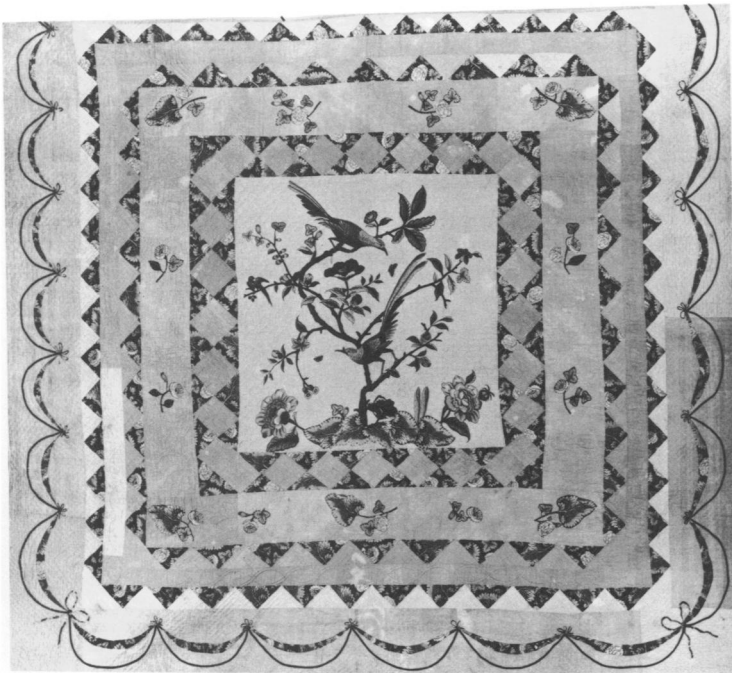
Five of the quilt's copperplate designs (nos. 1–4, 7) are definitely English and range in date from about 1765 to 1785. When engraved copperplates are used in print fabrics, refined monochromatic images similar to engravings on paper are produced; printing copperplate designs in more than one color presented technical difficulties that are known to have been overcome by only one printworks.²⁶ Copperplate designs sometimes had additional color printed in by woodblocks or painted in by hand, but none of the quilt's prints has this characteristic. Colorfast copperplate printing on fabric is a mid-eighteenth-century invention credited to an Irishman, Francis Nixon.²⁷ This process became known in England after Nixon

24. *Ibid.*, p. 296.

25. The period pattern books consulted for this article are listed at the end of the article. It is entirely possible that other designs exist or may yet be discovered which would affect stylistic comparisons.

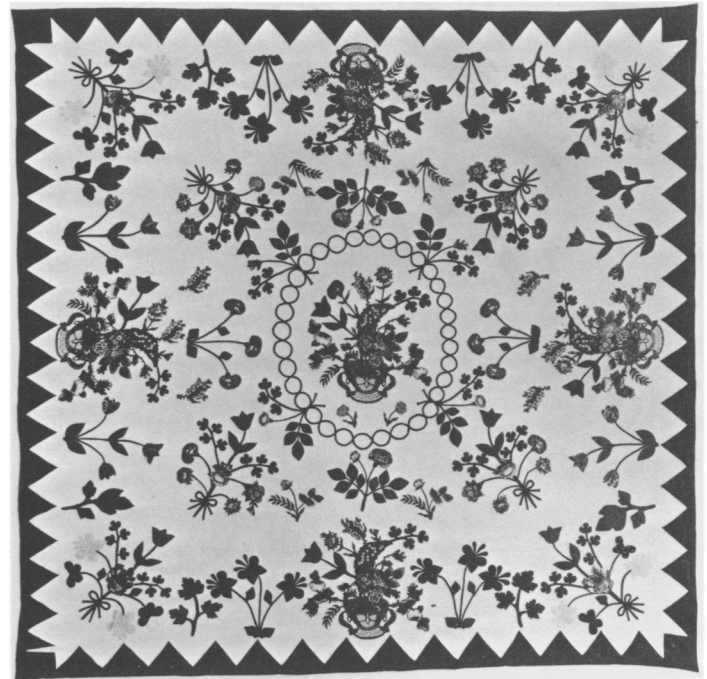
26. J. and M. Ware, Crayford, Kent, in operation from the 1760s to 1781; see *English Chintz*, 1960, p. 26.

27. The writings of Peter C. Floud are well-documented accounts of the history of English woodblock (called "calico printing" in the 18th century) and copperplate printing. See Floud, "The Origins of English Calico Printing," *Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists* 76 (May 1960) pp. 275–281; and *idem*, "The



13. Margaret Nichols quilt, United States, signed *M.N.*, ca. 1813; made by Margaret Nichols for her sister, Hannah, at the time of Hannah's marriage to Jacob Pussey in 1813. Top pieced and appliquéd from printed cottons, cotton backing, quilted geometric and floral patterns; 101 × 91 in. (256.5 × 231.1 cm.). The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 58.108C (photo: Winterthur Museum)

14. Bedcover, United States, ca. 1800; the center square is a woodblock-printed design by John Hewson, printed in Philadelphia, late 18th century; the bedcover is said to have been made by his wife, Zibiah Smallwood Hewson. Top pieced from printed cottons, 103 × 107 in. (261.6 × 271.8 cm.). The Philadelphia Museum of Art, given by Ella Hodgson (great-granddaughter of John Hewson), 34.16.1 (photo: Philadelphia Museum)



15. Bedcover, England, early 19th century. Top appliquéd with dyed and printed cottons, cotton backing; 110 × 110 in. (279.4 × 279.4 cm.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, T.123-1938 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

transferred his printworks from Dublin to a London suburb in the late 1750s. English calico printers had been printing cotton with woodblocks since the late seventeenth century and, with the introduction of this new technique, many printworks also began producing copperplate furnishing and dress prints in a wide range of floral and figural subjects.

The discovery in the 1950s of five pattern books containing over five hundred copperplate paper impressions of designs from English printworks made it possible to establish an English provenance for many printed cottons whose origins were previously unknown or incorrectly labeled as French. To compare the quilt's copperplate-printed patches with the paper impressions, it was first necessary to determine how many different copperplate designs were in the quilt. The copperplate prints were visually singled out from the generally polychromatic and less finely drawn woodblock prints, and their positions were dia-

English Contribution to the Development of Copper-Plate Printing," *Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists* 76 (July 1960) pp. 425-434.

16. Quilt, England, ca. 1810; the oval center panel is a wood-block-printed design celebrating the Golden Jubilee of George III in 1810. Top pieced from printed cottons, appliquéd detail; 100 × 91 in. (254 × 231.1 cm.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, T.181-1941 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)



grammed (Figure 2). Enlarged photocopies were made from detail photographs of the quilt, and the copperplate patches were cut out and grouped, first by color and fiber content,²⁸ then to see which patches could be part of the same designs. The resulting composites were compared to the paper impressions, as were distinctive motifs from prints too fragmentary to piece together (nos. 1b, 2). These comparisons were complicated by differences in proportion and definition between the photocopies and the photographs of the paper impressions. In the end, five designs from the English pattern books have been identified, four of which (nos. 1–4) are from Nixon & Co.’s English printworks, which was in operation until 1789.

None of the paper impressions is dated. After studying them, however, Peter Floud was able “to use the circumstantial evidence (watermarks in the pa-

per, variations in the color of the ink, the handwriting of markings, the sequence of serial numbers, and so on) to divide them [the paper impressions] into different groups.”²⁹ In an important exhibition, “A Loan Exhibition of English Chintz,” which Floud and his colleague Barbara Morris organized for the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1960, many of the paper impressions and/or their corresponding printed fabrics were displayed. These objects were grouped by printworks (when known) or by style, and are listed

28. The mixed-fiber cloth can be distinguished with a textile magnifying glass as the linen warps are shinier than the cotton wefts; under magnification some prints also have a slightly speckled effect because the dye did not penetrate the linen as deeply as it did the cotton.

29. Peter Floud, “English Printed Textiles: I. Copperplate Pictorials,” *Antiques* 71 (Mar. 1957) p. 241.

in the exhibition catalogue in chronological order with approximate dates given for each.³⁰ The dates assigned to the quilt's copperplate designs are based primarily on the pioneering work done by Floud and Morris and the later work of Florence Montgomery.³¹

The provenance of the quilt's other four copperplate designs (nos. 5, 6, 8, 9) is unknown, and these designs were compared with documented Irish and French examples as well as English. There is also evidence that printworks in Switzerland, Germany, and Holland produced copperplate-printed fabrics, but Floud's studies failed to turn up any surviving prints from these countries.³² Printworks in Ireland produced copperplate designs until about 1800, but none of the quilt's remaining copperplate fragments is from any of the few known Irish designs.³³ Floud cited evidence of a single French printworks producing copperplate prints in 1760–61, but after this printworks went out of business, copperplate printing was not practiced in France until after 1770, when it was introduced to the Oberkampf factory at Jouy.³⁴ The French became justly famous for their excellent copperplate designs, but none of the quilt's unidentified copperplate designs shows evidence of French stylistic influences. Though stylistic comparison can only suggest a provenance, the distinctive designs in the English pattern books make it possible to single out definite English style trends. Prints nos. 5 and 6 can be directly related to English sources and the other two (nos. 8, 9) have strong stylistic ties to English designs. The dates assigned to these prints fall into the same range as those of the quilt's known English designs.

The quilt's woodblock designs are considerably more anonymous than its copperplate designs—none of the woodblock prints has a definite provenance. The presence of the English copperplate prints in the quilt suggests that many, possibly all, of its woodblock prints are also English. But singling out national style trends is speculative for many woodblock-printed cottons since both legitimate trade and smuggling allowed an exchange of fabrics and design ideas. This was especially true for woodblock designs because so many were produced over a long period of time in many different countries. Considerably fewer copperplate designs were printed because copperplate printing was a relatively late invention, with printworks in France and England producing the most volume, and the procedure was almost completely supplanted in the

early nineteenth century by increasingly successful roller-printing operations. In contrast, colorfast woodblock printing is documented in England, France, Germany, Holland, and Switzerland in the late seventeenth century and in Ireland, Scotland, and the United States by the eighteenth century.³⁵ The combined volume of woodblock prints from all countries during the eighteenth century was very great, even though restrictions on printing cotton existed in France (and to a certain extent England) during part of this period. Woodblock printing continued on a reasonably commercial basis throughout the nineteenth century, though roller printing was the choice for printing large quantities of fabric.

As with the quilt's copperplate prints, it was necessary to separate the woodblock prints so they could be reconstructed and analyzed. Just by looking at the quilt, it was possible to identify a number of the distinctively colored and patterned floral woodblock prints as part of the same design. The procedure for making composites of the quilt's copperplate designs was useful only for the woodblock prints with clearly defined nonfloral elements, since a black-and-white photograph or photocopy shows little definition among the woodblock floral motifs. Many floral prints used as triangular patches or supplementary piecings proved too indistinct to associate with identified designs and are shaded gray in Figure 2.

The quilt's woodblock designs were compared to documented English, French, and American examples from about 1750–1820. Though the quilt could contain woodblock prints manufactured in other countries (especially Ireland or Scotland), English and French printworks were industry leaders both stylistically

30. In *English Chintz*, 1960, a design labeled "about 1770" indicates "uncertainty limits of about 5 years" on either side of that date (p. 8); in this article the dates are given as ca. 1765–75, spanning the ten-year period.

31. A catalogue of the English and American printed textiles at the Winterthur Museum is presented in Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, pp. 111–359.

32. Floud, "English Contribution to Copper-Plate Printing," p. 428.

33. Ada K. Longfield, "Early Irish Printed Fabric," *Country Life* 152 (1972) pp. 1578–1579.

34. Floud, "English Contribution to Copper-Plate Printing," p. 428.

35. For a time line of important dates in the history of printed textiles, see Florence H. Pettit, *America's Printed & Painted Fabrics, 1600–1900* (New York, 1970) pp. 74–76, 157–160, 239–241.

tically and technically. None of the quilt's designs matched the documented designs exactly, but a probable English origin has been suggested for many of them because of correlations to known designs (see catalogue entries). For other designs, a possible English or French origin is noted because the evidence is too sketchy for a more definite attribution. A patch of a documented French design would not have helped determine the quilt's origins because it could have reached England or the United States as lawful or contraband goods. Though early documented American printed cottons are rare and tend to reflect English designs, they were included in this comparison because the presence of an American print would assure an American provenance for the quilt. In the late eighteenth century the infant United States textile industry did not export fabrics, so an American print would mean the quilt was made in the United States. Though no American designs were found, that does not preclude an American provenance for the quilt. The importation of eighteenth-century English printed cottons into America is well documented,³⁶ and many early American patchwork bedcovers contain only imported English textiles (Figures 9, 13).

One criterion both for determining a printed cotton's origins and for narrowing its date of production is the presence of three blue threads in the selvages. Between 1774 and 1812, English law required that three blue threads be woven into the selvege of new British all-cotton cloth so that the printer could claim a lower excise rate,³⁷ although a print without the blue threads can still be English because imported Indian cotton cloth was also printed in England. Some selvages are probably included in the seam allowances of the quilt's interior patches where they cannot now be seen. The final border on three sides (no. 36) has sections where the linen backing has worn and separated from the quilt top; the selvages are visible but they show no blue threads. Excise stamps, printers' marks, and drapers' (merchants who commissioned and sold the cotton prints) marks are sometimes on the reverse side of a fabric,³⁸ but any such stamps on the quilt's fabrics cannot be seen.

Three of the quilt's copperplate designs and twenty-one of its woodblock designs are printed on cloth with a linen warp and cotton weft called "fustian." This term was used to describe various linen-cotton fabrics, including cloth with a napped twill weave which was often used as a base for embroidery,³⁹ but in the

quilt all the linen-cotton fabrics are plain weave and unnapped. The use of fustian for printing was important in England between 1721 and 1774: during this period, English calico printers were proscribed by law from printing all-cotton cloth for home consumption.⁴⁰ Printers could still print all-cotton cloth imported from India for export, and a vague provision exempted fustians from the home-use ban. This exemption was fully exploited by the printers who printed fustians woven in Lancashire and sold them in England.⁴¹ In the 1730s, the silk and wool weavers sought to ban the printing of fustian, but the Manchester Act of 1736 specifically allowed home consumption of printed fustian.⁴² Printing and selling imported all-linen cloth was also legal, but the English-manufactured fustian was preferred by printers, perhaps because it was exempt from the heavy customs duties on foreign linen or because it more closely resembled Indian all-cotton cloth.⁴³ The printing of all-cotton cloth for the English market became legal again in 1774.⁴⁴ An English design printed on fustian does not necessarily date from before 1774 because fustian continued to be printed in England for some years after 1774,⁴⁵ and an all-cotton English print is not assured a post-1774 date because

36. For a list of books and articles that discuss 18th-century textile imports into the United States, see Susan Prendergast Schuelwer, "Form, Function, and Meaning in the Use of Fabric Furnishings: A Philadelphia Case Study, 1700-1775," *Winterthur Portfolio* 14 (Spring 1979) p. 25, n. 1.

37. *English Printed Textiles 1720-1836*, Large Picture Book no. 13, Victoria and Albert Museum (London, 1960) p. 4.

38. Examples of excise and draper's stamps are illustrated in Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 132.

39. For 18th-century definitions of and references to fustian, see Abbott Lowell Cummings, *Bed Hangings: A Treatise on Fabrics and Styles in the Curtaining of Beds, 1650-1850* (Boston, 1961) p. 25; and Florence Montgomery, *Textiles in America, 1650-1850* (New York, 1984) pp. 244, 245.

40. In 1721, Parliament enacted a law instigated by the silk and wool manufacturers to prohibit the sale, use, and wear of printed calicoes in England. 7 Geo. I, c. 7; see Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade*, p. 134, n. 2.

41. Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade*, p. 140.

42. 9 Geo. II, c. 4; see Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade*, p. 140, n. 2.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 141.

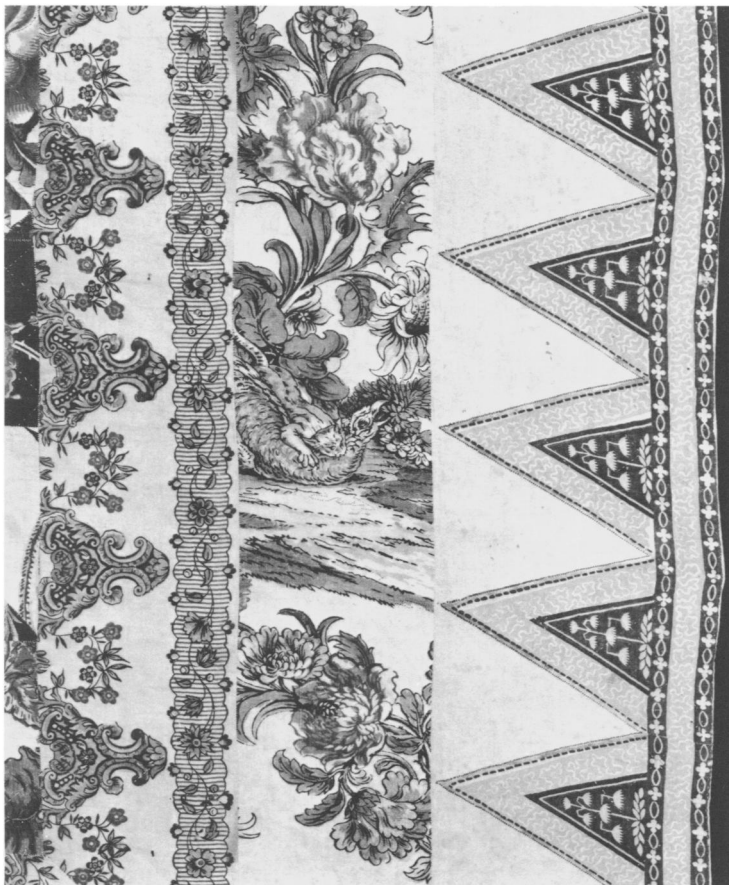
44. 14 Geo. III, c. 72; see *Rococo: Art and Design in Hogarth's England*, exh. cat., Victoria and Albert Museum (London, 1984) p. 326, n. 52.

45. Some printed linen-cotton fabrics with small-scale geometric and floral designs are in a pattern book dated 1783 from [Manchester], England, at the Winterthur Museum (77 x 110).

of the exemption in the 1721 law allowing cotton to be printed for the export market. However, an English design printed on fustian is generally considered to have been printed in the 1770s or earlier.⁴⁶ In France, a linen-warp cotton-weft cloth called *siamoise* was allowed to be manufactured and printed on a limited basis in the 1750s, before the general prohibition on cotton printing there, in effect since 1686, was lifted in 1759.⁴⁷ *Siamoise* was also printed in France after 1759, but its use was not proscribed by law as in England.⁴⁸ The latest date of production for the quilt's designs on fustian has been put at probably 1780. This may seem arbitrary, but it is supported by available stylistic evidence for the designs. Further research may ascertain whether the fiber content of a printed fabric reveals any more specifics of date and origin.

One woodblock print, the quilt's outer border on three sides (Figure 17, no. 36), assumes key importance in dating the quilt because it is the design assigned the latest date, about 1795–1805. Three colors are used in the print of no. 36: a yellowish tan for

17. Detail of Figure 1, lower right, showing designs nos. 35 and 19 (inner borders) and no. 36, used as the final border on three sides of the quilt



the ground in the vermicular design,⁴⁹ a rich brown for the ground in the inner triangles and narrow stripes, and, outlining the outside triangles, a single stroke of blue. These colors indicate that no. 36 may be in the “drab style” of English woodblock-printed furnishing fabrics. Dated designs in pattern books from the Bannister Hall printworks (1799–1840)⁵⁰ prompted Peter Floud to date the drab style to about 1799–1812 and to describe it as a “fashion [which] depended on the use of combinations of browns, buffs, olives, yellows and greys, either alone or with touches of blue and green, but in any case with an entire absence of the reds and purples, which had formed the basis of the rich palette of the 1790’s.”⁵¹ Thirty of the designs in the Rowan pattern book (ca. 1797–99), mostly small-scale floral or geometric patterns, are rendered in only drab colors, indicating that drab-style colors were in favor earlier than 1799. Though the Rowan pattern book is considered to be from the Archibald Rowan printworks in the United States,⁵² its designs would reflect English styles.

The dyes that produced the drab colors were weld or quercitron, with iron or alum solutions as the mordant that is required to achieve a variety of colors in the yellow-brown-olive range. First the mordants are printed onto the fabric in the desired design; the fabric is dried and then bathed in dyestuff. Different shades result from the type and strength of the mordant. The color is not fast in areas where no

46. Peter Floud, “English Printed Textiles. Postscript: New Discoveries,” *Antiques* 73 (Apr. 1958) p. 374. See also “Textiles and Dress: Printed Textiles,” in *Rococo: Art and Design in Hogarth’s England*, p. 221.

47. Wadsworth and Mann, *Cotton Trade*, p. 141, n. 6.

48. Katharine Brett describes French prints from the Oberkampf factory, in operation after 1759, on linen-cotton cloth from the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum in “Some Eighteenth-Century French Woodblock Printed Cottons in the Royal Ontario Museum,” *Studies in Textile History, in Memory of Harold B. Burnham*, ed. Veronika Gervers (Toronto, 1977) p. 18.

49. Vermicular patterns as background motifs are found in printed textiles from the early 18th century into the 19th century. Two of the Alexander swatches (labeled “20” and “28”) dated 1726 use a vermicular pattern; illustrated in Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 8. For a 19th-century example, see *ibid.*, fig. 142.

50. Bannister Hall records, 1799–1840, owned by Messrs. Stead, McAlpin & Co., Cummersdale; see *English Chintz*, 1960, p. 2.

51. Peter Floud, “The Drab Style and the Designs of Daniel Goddard,” *Connoisseur* 139 (June 1957) p. 234.

52. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, pp. 98–101.

mordant was applied, and through a series of washings and bleachings the ground is cleared of excess color. The red to purple color range, which includes browns and black, is produced by this process with madder dye and various iron and alum mordants.⁵³ Indigo, which does not need a mordant, is used for blue and can be painted directly into the design if mixed with thickeners and chemicals to keep it from oxidizing; in eighteenth-century England, the process of applying dyes to the fabric in this way was referred to as penciling rather than painting.⁵⁴ The madder color range is much greater than that of weld/quercitron, and madder colors with blue dominate eighteenth-century woodblock-printed designs. If colors from both the madder and the weld/quercitron ranges were to be used, two separate series of mordant printings and dyeings and clearings were required for a colorfast print. Thus, to avoid the expense of two printings and because the white areas of a design stained by weld were difficult to clear, weld was penciled into many designs, either alone for yellow or over blue for green. Weld applied in this manner, even when mixed with a mordant, is not permanent,⁵⁵ and in the 1770s, the American Dr. Edward Bancroft introduced quercitron, obtained from the American black oak, into England as a substitute for weld.⁵⁶ By 1800, quercitron had generally supplanted weld because of its superiority as a coloring agent, since much less was needed and even when penciled it was relatively colorfast, and because, in Dr. Bancroft's words, quercitron produced "no discoloration to the grounds, or parts intended to remain white."⁵⁷

Cotton prints in the drab style were designed specifically for weld/quercitron colors to the novel exclusion of madder colors. The yellowish tan in no. 36 was probably produced by quercitron rather than weld, as the color is still very clear and the nontan areas of the print are sufficiently white to define the vermicular design.⁵⁸ The brown in no. 36 might have resulted from either madder or quercitron, but it seems unlikely that in a design with such a limited and analogous color range, the complicated mordant-printing and dyeing process would have been done twice when the colors needed could have been realized with a single quercitron dyeing. The indigo blue outline would have been penciled on the edge of the outside triangle after the mordant dyeing was completed.

Though the colors of no. 36 are in keeping with those of prints in the drab style, no direct stylistic relationship has been established between no. 36 and published drab-style designs from pattern books or existing textiles. These examples indicate that abstract or geometric elements in large-scale drab-style designs are generally secondary to large realistic floral patterns.⁵⁹ An exception can be seen in Figure 18, showing a drab-style print which uses only abstract and geometric motifs in its design. However, this print lacks the stark layout of triangles, stripes, and stylized tree and leaf patterns of no. 36. Further comparison of no. 36 with other woodblock prints shows that the use of only abstract and/or geometric motifs was rare in any late eighteenth- or early nineteenth-century large-scale prints, though it was quite common in small-scale patterns; several designs in both drab and madder colors from the Rowan pattern book are small-scale stylized geometric patterns.

English and French border prints of the 1780s and 1790s tend to have an assortment of realistic flowers forming a dense background to any abstract or geometric motifs (Figure 19).⁶⁰ The only woodblock designs found with stylized motifs at all related to no. 36 are in an undated English pattern book, the Dudding pattern book (ca. 1800–14).

Concurrent with the drab style was a vogue in English woodblock-printed furnishing fabrics for designs inspired by classical antiquity, a fashion that peaked about 1804–05 according to dated designs in

53. For an early 19th-century description of this process, see James Cutbush, *The American Artist's Manual, or Dictionary of Practical Knowledge . . .* (Philadelphia, 1814) II, s.v. "Printing"; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 14.

54. For a description of the penciling process, see Smith, *Laboratory*, pp. 52–53.

55. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 156.

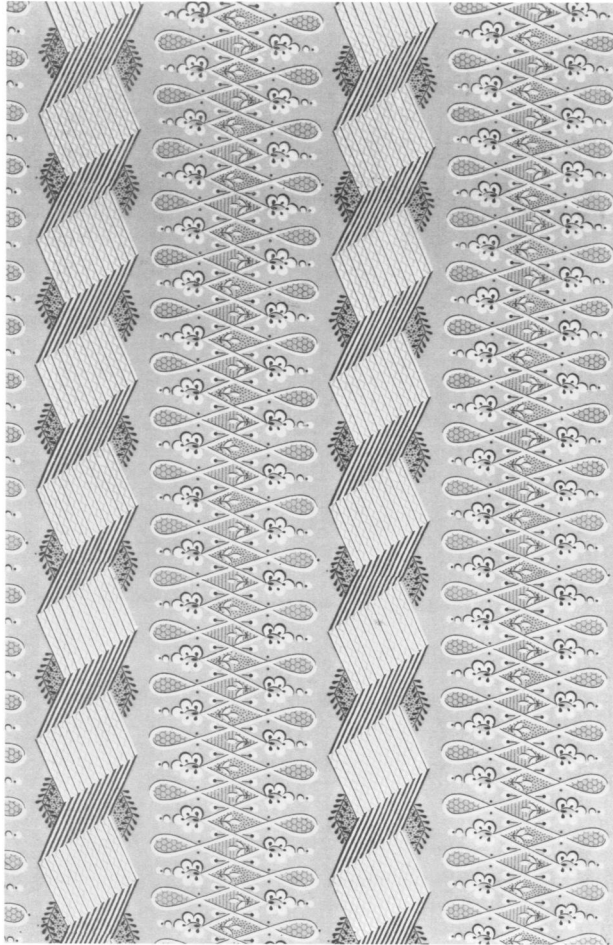
56. In 1775, Dr. Bancroft was granted a patent from the British government for the exclusive sale and importation of quercitron. This patent was renewed in 1785 and extended to 1799; see Sidney M. Edelstein, "The Dual Life of Edward Bancroft," *Historical Notes on the Wet Processing Industry* (Dexter Chemical Corporation, 1972) p. 25.

57. Edward Bancroft, *Experimental Researches Concerning the Philosophy of Permanent Colors* (Philadelphia, 1813) II, p. 138, n. 8.

58. No chemical analysis has been done to determine the dyes used on the quilt's fabrics.

59. Floud, "The Drab Style," figs. 1, 8–10; and Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 128.

60. For similar French border designs, ca. 1780, see Jacqué, *Chefs-d'oeuvre, Mulhouse*, I, pls. 38, 221 (color).



18. Woodblock print on cotton, England, ca. 1800–05. Stylized patterns printed in brown and yellow. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 59.18.2/T330 (photo: Winterthur Museum)

the Bannister Hall pattern books.⁶¹ The Dudding pattern book has designs with classical motifs interspersed among a series of geometric border patterns with opposing triangles and an additional striped border beyond the triangles. In one typical design, labeled “312,” the opposing triangles are dark red and black while the outside border has two narrow dark red and black stripes, a wide dark red stripe with black circles, and a final black stripe. Though such designs and no. 36 have similar basic forms, the soft drab colors and delicate stylized tree motifs of no. 36 are very different from the acute color contrasts and bold geometric patterns of the Dudding designs.

The closest stylistic affinity of no. 36 is not with any

European designs but with the end border traditionally found on the Indonesian tapis (sarong) or hip wrapper (Figure 20). An important feature of the tapis is a border pattern along one edge of long triangle forms, or *tumpal*, combined with a series of stripes. Filling the triangles and stripes are small stylized geometric or floral motifs. While the visual connection between these designs and no. 36 is clear, it will be difficult to document a closer link. The design on the fabric in Figure 20 was created in Java by indigenous batik-dyeing methods, and textiles with similar mordant-painted and dyed patterns were produced in India for the Indonesian market.⁶² In the late sixteenth century, the Dutch East India Company used Indian textiles as barter in the spice trade with the Far East; the English East India Company used similar trading practices in the early seventeenth century. It is certainly conceivable, given the trade and travel among Europe, India, and the Far East in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that an Indian tapis intended for Indonesia ended up in England, where its border design served as an inspiration for no. 36.⁶³

Many patchwork quilts have borders with “sawtooth” designs (Figures 13–15), so no. 36 seems particularly suitable as the final border. The English patchwork authority Averil Colby calls the pyramidlike triangles in a pattern like this the “dog’s tooth” pattern and reserves the term “sawtooth” for a serrated border pattern with the triangles laid on their sides; contemporary American authors make no distinction, calling both patterns “sawtooth.”⁶⁴ Evidence from existing quilts indicates that these patterns developed separately and should be considered distinct designs. The pyramidlike triangles are found as final borders in late eighteenth-century patchwork bedcovers,⁶⁵ while the other pattern seems to be a later

61. Barbara Morris, “The Classical Taste in English Wood-Block Chintzes,” *Connoisseur* 141 (Apr. 1958) p. 93.

62. For related 17th- and 18th-century Indian textiles exported for the Indonesian market, see Mattiebelle Gittinger, *Master Dyers to the World*, exh. cat. (Washington, D.C.: Textile Museum, 1982) pls. 122, 126, 129, 133.

63. Mattiebelle Gittinger, at the Textile Museum, Washington, D.C., pointed out this possible connection.

64. Colby, *Patchwork*, pp. 46, 78; Carleton L. Safford and Robert Bishop, *America’s Quilts and Coverlets* (New York, 1972) pls. 112, 114; Phyllis Haders, *The Warner Collector’s Guide to American Quilts* (New York, 1981) figs. 12-2, 29-3.

65. American appliqué coverlet, late 18th century, Shelburne

development, with the earliest quilts to use it dating after 1800.⁶⁶ It is even possible that no. 36 was designed especially to be used as a border for patchwork quilts in the same way that panels were designed as centers for framed-center quilts (Figures 14, 16). The long and short dashes on the outside edge of the triangles give an effect analogous to hand stitches.⁶⁷

While the other fabrics in the quilt may have been collected over several years, there are indications that the maker acquired no. 36 specifically for its final border. The design in no. 36 is printed along the selvage of the fabric; in an uncut length, this design was probably printed along both selvages with a related filler pattern in the middle. The amount of fabric needed for the quilt's long unpieced lengths of no. 36, cut from a piece with the border printed along both selvages, is almost $4\frac{1}{2}$ yards or about 4 meters—not an amount likely to have been saved in a scrap bag. That lengths of fabric were bought for patchwork in the late eighteenth century is supported by the English diarist Parson Woodforde, who, on November 10, 1789, purchased “1 yrd of different kinds of Cotton for patch-work for my Niece p^d o. 2. 10.”⁶⁸

The only fabrics in the quilt that appear to date after about 1780 are no. 36 and several prints in the top border (nos. 27, 28, 33, 34, 38); all the others date from around 1780 or before. Although a patchwork quilt can be made many years after the date of its newest fabric, for the Metropolitan Museum quilt a date contemporary with no. 36 seems justified, about 1795–1805. One possible scenario for the making of the quilt is that its main body was pieced first, probably in the 1780s; at a later date, a length of no. 36 was acquired which was enough to make the final border on three sides, allowing for an oddly pieced addition at the top—where it would not show on the bed if covered by a narrow bolster—to bring the quilt

Museum, illustrated in Colby, *Patchwork Quilts* (cited in note 18), p. 39; American appliqué coverlet, late 18th century, privately owned, illustrated in Florence Peto, *American Quilts and Coverlets* (New York, 1949) pl. 5.

66. The earliest quilts with serrated patchwork borders appear to date about 1820; see the American pieced quilt, ca. 1820, Philadelphia Museum of Art, illustrated in Safford and Bishop, *America's Quilts*, pl. 153.

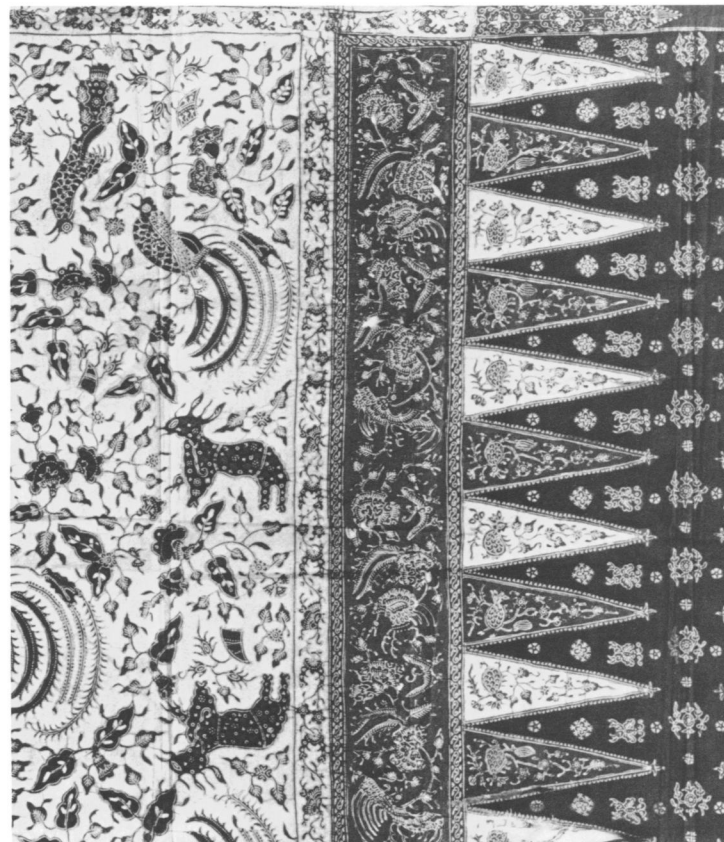
67. I owe this observation to Jean Mailey.

68. James Woodforde, *The Diary of a Country Parson*, ed. John Beresford, 5 vols. (Oxford, 1968) III, p. 150.



19. Design for woodblock-printed cottons, page 70 of the Vivian Kilburn pattern book, England, late 1780s–early 1790s. This design uses the full range of madder colors, plus blue, yellow, and green. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.894-1978 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

20. Sarong (tapis), Java, 18th century. Batik design on white cotton, *tumpal* border, and a filler design of animals, birds, twigs, and vines; $77\frac{1}{4} \times 42\frac{1}{2}$ in. (196.1×108 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 26.27.1



to the desired size. Such a scenario raises the question of whether more than one person was responsible for the quilt. The piecing stitches vary in length and evenness in all parts of the quilt, indicating that more than one person did the sewing, but the basic design was probably worked out by a single individual. If the work was interrupted after the main body was completed and taken up again only when the length of no. 36 came to hand, a second person might then have been involved. The obvious visual differences between the main body of the quilt, with its stylistic relationship to framed-center designs, and the top border, which has no correlation with known patchwork patterns, suggest the work of different designers. The top border, however, is linked to the rest of the quilt through patches of eight pre-1780 prints (nos. 1a, 4, 12, 17a, 18, 21, 22, 35) also found in the main body, so if two people were involved, they must have been closely associated—probably members of the same family.

Eight of the copperplate-printed designs (nos. 1–8) and twelve of the woodblock-printed designs (nos. 10–15, 18, 19, 25, 26, 35, 36) are definitely fragments of large-scale furnishing patterns, and one of the most intriguing questions about the quilt is how the maker acquired such a variety of these designs. Taste in the eighteenth century favored the use of large amounts of one fabric in a room; this was especially true in bedrooms, where ideally the bed hangings, curtains, and upholstery would all be of the same fabric or at least match in color. The English taste in interior design was definitely mirrored in America among the wealthy merchants and landowners. One of the earliest references to copperplate fabrics is found in a letter Benjamin Franklin wrote to his wife

from London in 1758 in which he describes the purchase of “56 Yards of Cotton, printed curiously from Copper Plates, a new Invention, to make Bed & Window Curtains; and 7 yards Chair Bottoms, printed in the same Way, very Neat. These were my Fancy; but Mrs. Stevenson tells me I did wrong not to buy both of the same Colour.”⁶⁹ Surely the Metropolitan Museum quilt’s furnishing fabrics were not left over from decorating rooms in just one house. Even combining remnants with neighbors and friends over a period of years would probably not have resulted in such an unusual assortment of designs. But if the maker, almost certainly a woman,⁷⁰ was associated with a merchant who exported or imported fabrics, a draper who sold them at retail, or an upholsterer who made them up,⁷¹ she would have had access to a wide variety of remnants. An upholsterer is the most likely of these possibilities. The business would have been connected exclusively or mainly with furnishing fabrics; and the fragmentary nature of so many patches in the quilt indicates that they were salvaged from leftovers, the kind that might be expected from an upholsterer skilled in getting the most out of his material. He might also have found himself obliged to discard portions of defective yardage, such as the three fabrics in the quilt (nos. 1a, 1b, and 2) that have obvious flaws in their printed images.

As for the country of origin, the fabrics, many if not all printed in England, could also have been available in the United States as imports, and the framed-center bedcover design to which the main body of the quilt belongs was common to both countries in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Whether the quilt was made on this or that side of the Atlantic is something we may never know.

69. Letter in the collection of the American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 29.

70. Men occasionally made patchwork quilt tops (Colby, *Quilting* [cited in note 5], p. 126), but by the end of the 18th century, patchwork had become both a needlework duty and a form of artistic expression for women.

71. In America, upholsterers often imported fabrics in combination with their upholstery business; see Wendy A. Cooper, *In Praise of America: American Decorative Arts, 1650–1830* (New York, 1980) p. 54 and fig. 69.

Copperplate Prints

1. **Birds and Fruit**

1765–75, England

1a. linen-cotton, monochrome blue

5 rectangles, 6 triangles, 1 supplementary piecing

1b. cotton, monochrome red

15 triangles

Design no. 1 corresponds to a paper impression numbered 87 in the Nixon & Co. pattern book. Two fabrics with prints from this design are found in the quilt: no. 1a is printed in blue on linen-cotton and no. 1b in red on cotton. A full repeat of no. 1 (Figure 21) is from a fabric printed in red on cotton at the Victoria and Albert Museum.⁷³ In the patches of both 1a and 1b used in the quilt, there are slight mars in the printed images: a flaw in no. 1a runs through the peahen's body into the peacock's tail, and no. 1b has a flaw in the leafy island with fruit.

Birds, especially exotic varieties like parrots and peacocks, are important design motifs among the English paper impressions. A source for the pair of peacocks in no. 1 has not been traced, though they and the other birds in the print were probably inspired by bird designs from such published works as Robert Sayer's *A New Book of Birds* (London, 1765).

The blue in no. 1a and the three other monochrome blue prints in the quilt (nos. 6, 7, 27) were produced by the complicated china-blue process, an English invention which allowed indigo to be printed directly onto the cloth.⁷⁴ The name "china-blue" derives from the resemblance of the finished prints to the blue-and-white designs on imported Chinese porcelain. The china-blue process was developed for woodblock printing and was definitely in use in England by 1749.⁷⁵ Because the process could not be used successfully with madder dyeing, china-blue prints are monochromatic. When blue was required in madder-dyed woodblock prints, "pencil blue," the method of painting indigo into the design, had to be used. The advantage of the china-blue process was that the indigo was printed onto the fabric and so produced finer lines and greater definition of design than the painted pencil-blue technique. The finely engraved monochromatic designs of copperplate printing proved ideally suited to china-blue. The process was also

known and used on the Continent, but only a few non-English china-blue prints are documented.⁷⁶ The English were the acknowledged masters of china-blue printing, and many excellent English copperplate prints in blue survive.

No. 1 is well known in additional surviving examples: the Metropolitan Museum has a fragment (just the peacocks) in blue on cotton (26.265.129); the Winterthur Museum, a full repeat in red on linen-cotton (T.1105); Mrs. Galpin (design in reverse); and G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., London.⁷⁷ A curtain at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (1976.232.3) is pieced from several fragments of no. 1 printed in blue on cotton; this curtain also has two lengths of the quilt's design no. 2 in blue on cotton.⁷⁸ Bird and floral motifs from no. 1 are found in two dated American bed-covers, both at the Winterthur Museum. The 1782 appliqué coverlet in Figure 9 has motifs from a reverse impression of the design, and the other bed-cover is an appliqué quilt, made by Mary Johnston and dated 1793 (Winterthur Museum, 68.766).⁷⁹

72. Explanatory notes on the catalogue listings of printed designs: TITLE—Except for the known English designs with names already assigned (nos. 1, 2, 7), all titles are the invention of the author and describe the design as it appears in the quilt. DATE—Estimated date of initial production of design. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN—Unbracketed when certain; bracketed when uncertain. FIBER CONTENT—"Cotton" means plain-weave all-cotton fabric; "linen-cotton" means plain-weave linen-warp cotton-weft fabric.

See Figure 2 for diagram of the quilt and position of the various pieces of each design. The gray areas are woodblock-printed floral designs on plain-weave linen-cotton cloth, and the gray area with an asterisk is a patch of woodblock-printed floral design on plain-weave all-cotton fabric.

73. *English Chintz*, 1960, cat. no. 78; *From East to West: Textiles from G. P. & J. Baker* (Wisbech, 1984) cat. no. 34.

74. For a concise explanation of the china-blue process, see *English Chintz*, 1960, p. 11.

75. Two of the Alexander swatches dated 1749 are printed in china-blue; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 2.

76. Peter C. Floud, "The English Contribution to the Early History of Indigo Printing," *Journal of the Society of Dyers and Colourists* 76 (June 1960) p. 348.

77. *English Chintz*, 1960, cat. no. 78.

78. Susan Anderson Hay, Assistant Curator, Department of Costumes and Textiles, Philadelphia Museum of Art, brought this curtain to my attention.

79. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 416.



21. Repeat of design no. 1, showing sections used as patches in the quilt (the solid line indicates fabric no. 1a and the broken line no. 1b). 54 × 34 in. (137.2 × 86.3 cm.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, Circ.11-1956 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

22. Two patches of no. 1b in the quilt not included in the full repeat shown in Figure 21



The foliage seen on two quilt patches of no. 1b (Figure 22) is not found in the Victoria and Albert Museum's repeat of no. 1 because the fabric used for this printing was not broad enough to accommodate the full width of the design.⁸⁰ The tree branch in the left patch can be seen in the Winterthur Museum example;⁸¹ it is a section of the tree with the standing bird at the design's left edge. A fragment of no. 1 in the Philadelphia Museum curtain shows the leaves in the other patch which are part of the dense foliage above the small birds at the design's right edge.

Concerning the dating of the designs in the Nixon & Co. pattern book, Floud wrote, "Internal evidence shows that some at least cannot be earlier than 1765, and it seems probable that they all date from between about 1765 and 1775."⁸² Three of the quilt's Nixon & Co. designs (nos. 1–3) are dated in accordance with this assessment, and the fourth (no. 4) is given a slightly later date on stylistic grounds.

2. Arborecent Design with Melons

1765–75, England
cotton, monochrome brown
16 triangles

Design no. 2 is from the Nixon printworks and corresponds to a paper impression inscribed "75 @ 10d" in one of the pattern books at Mulhouse.⁸³ Full repeats of this design, printed in blue on cotton, are in the Winterthur Museum (Figure 23)⁸⁴ and the Philadelphia Museum (see nos. 1 and 9). Figure 23 shows the widely scattered parts of the design used in sixteen of the quilt's triangular patches. Many supplementary piecings are found in these patches, so the quilt's maker was evidently intent on using every

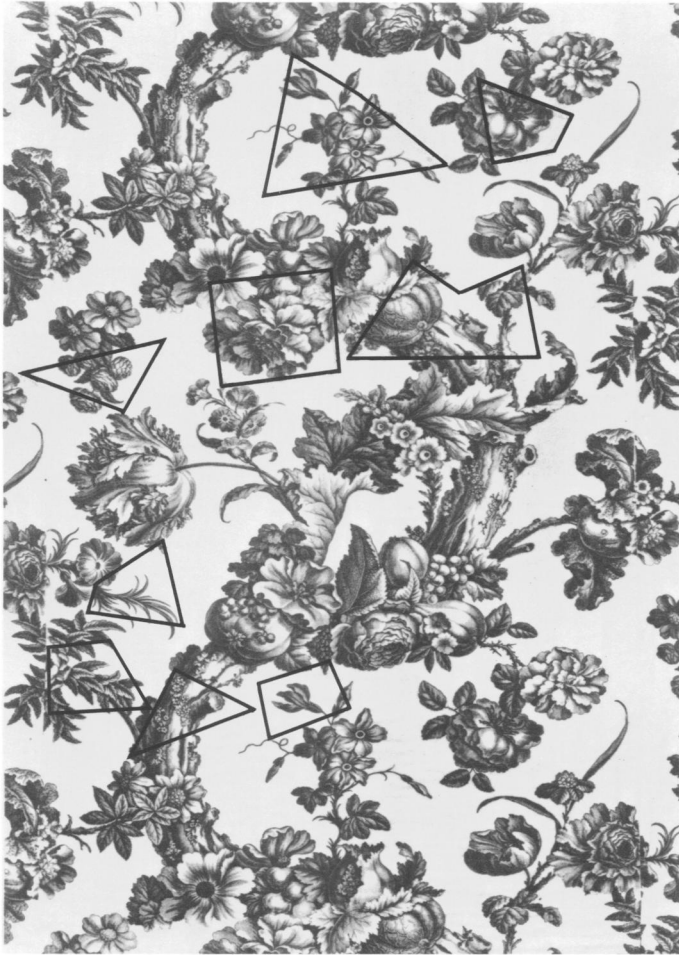
80. Although the size of the plates did vary, most designs were printed from plates about a yard square (91.5 cm.). For an exhibition at the West Surrey College of Art and Design, the size of the plate used for a design (when it could be determined) is listed in the catalogue: Deryn O'Connor and Hero Granger-Taylor, *Colour and the Calico Printer* (Guildford, 1982). The cloth in Figure 21 is just under a yard wide, 34 in. (86.3 cm.).

81. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 217.

82. Floud, "English Contribution to Copper-Plate Printing" (cited in note 27), p. 427.

83. Jacqué, *Chefs-d'oeuvre, Mulhouse*, III, black-and-white pl. 5.

84. *English Chintz*, 1960, cat. no. 79; Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 215, pl. x.



23. Repeat of design no. 2, showing sections used in the quilt. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, T174 (photo: Winterthur Museum)

available bit of this print. A small section of one triangular patch has a flaw in its printed image.

Large-scale arborescent designs with a central gnarled tree from which grows an interesting assortment of full-blown flowers and fruit were popular in both copperplate and woodblock prints. Blossoms like these are similar to those on Indian palampores and on imported Chinese goods such as lacquer ware, embroideries, painted silks, and wallpapers which were among the sources of inspiration for eighteenth-century textile designers.⁸⁵

85. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 120.

3. Lady and Chinaman

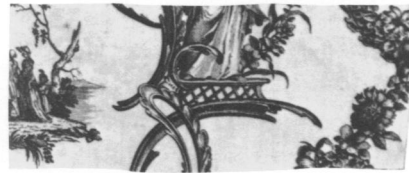
1765–75, England
cotton, monochrome red
4 rectangles

Composites of the quilt's four patches of no. 3 are shown in Figure 24. This design corresponds to the paper impression labeled "158" in the Nixon & Co. pattern book. Only a section of each design appears in the Nixon & Co. book, and "158" has just the standing lady, a small scene below her on the left, and part of another scene beside her on the right. Two of the quilt's patches constitute a fragment similar to the paper impression, showing the lady (though about 2 inches are missing across her legs) and parts of the two vignettes. In the quilt's additional patches of no. 3, a Chinaman is seated on a flower-laden pedestal with a songbird perched on his finger.

No. 3 has an interesting modern history, which is how we know that the Chinaman and the lady belong to the same design.⁸⁶ In 1950, the English textile firm of G. P. & J. Baker printed a modern copy of no. 3 for an American customer (Figure 25). This reproduction was designed from an eighteenth-century print of the full repeat which, besides the standing lady and the two scenes, had another lady seated in the curve of a scrolling arabesque, the seated Chinaman, and two more scenes. Unfortunately, all information about the ownership and location of the original has been lost. Because no examples are known in England, it is thought that the eighteenth-century printed repeat may be in the United States.

While most figural copperplate prints have an obvious overall theme, no. 3 is an eclectic design with no clear connection among its scenic elements. The two large female figures are probably allegorical, but their identifying iconographic details are ambiguous. The standing figure holds aloft a bouquet of flowers, and her counterpart, seated on a garland of grapes and other fruits, squeezes grape juice into a cup. The first could easily represent Spring and the other Autumn, but there are no corresponding figures for Winter and Summer to complete the reference to the

86. Information concerning the modern history of design no. 3 is from *From East to West: Textiles from G. P. & J. Baker*, cat. no. 33a, and letter of Nov. 23, 1984, from Audrey Duck, archivist for G. P. & J. Baker Ltd.



24. Composites of quilt patches of design no. 3



25. Modern reproduction of design no. 3, described as “Blue and White Jouy.” London, G. P. & J. Baker Ltd. (photo: © 1986 G. P. & J. Baker Ltd.)



seasons. The costumes worn by both figures are unusual: at first glance they appear classical, but the well-defined bodices (that of the standing figure even has narrow lapels) and the sleeves with wide hanging cuffs are more indicative of Turkish or Eastern dress than of classical draperies.⁸⁷

The four small scenes appear on little islands floating around the main figures. The full repeat shows these scenes in their entirety: three figures, two of them in classical robes, stand before some ruins and an obelisk (beside standing lady on right); three figures—man, woman, and child—in eighteenth-century dress await the ferry to a medieval structure (below standing lady on left); a sailing ship is unloaded at an Eastern (Turkish) port (above seated lady on right); two eighteenth-century reed cutters pause in their work (between Chinaman and seated lady). Scenes like these were often derived from published engravings in ornament books, such as Robert Sayer’s *The Ladies Amusement* (London, ca. 1759–60). The two birds in

26. Detail of plate 108 from Robert Sayer’s *The Ladies Amusement* (2nd ed., London, 1762; facsimile, Newport, Mon., 1959). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Thomas J. Watson Library



flight below the Chinaman are taken from plate 76 of *The Ladies Amusement*, and although no direct sources for any of the vignettes in no. 3 have been traced, there are parallels between the classical scene and a design from plate 108 (Figure 26). In addition to similarities in the placement of architectural elements, both designs have birds flying in the sky around the obelisk.

87. This observation was made to me by Clare Le Corbeiller, Associate Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts in the Metropolitan Museum.

The only chinoiserie element in no. 3 is the seated Chinaman, and he is a most unusual fellow. Designs in sources such as Jean Pillement's *Livre de chinois* (London, 1758) and Sir William Chambers's *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, and Utensils* (London, 1757; Paris, 1776) show Chinese people with a slanted cast to their eyes but otherwise bland, expressionless features quite unlike this Chinaman's deeply lined face with its lively expression. The textile designers who used these sources ordinarily produced copperplate "Chinese" scenes with figures whose faces are equally devoid of expression (see Figures 30, 33). Chinese character in printed designs is drawn chiefly from clothing and surrounding architectural elements like pagodas. Though the Chinaman of no. 3 is dressed as a simple peasant with the ubiquitous conical hat and loose, belted robe, his mischievous look gives him a personality lacking in other chinoiserie figures.

4. Flowers in a Vase and Parrots

1770–80, England
cotton, monochrome red
4 rectangles, 1 square, 6 supplementary piecings

The composite in Figure 27 has an unexpected combination—a vase with full-blown flowers flanked by one of the charming parrots from the quilt's inner border. Another section of this design, a basket of flowers suspended by a decorative rope, is found in a paper impression labeled "129" in the Nixon & Co.

27. Composite of three quilt patches of design no. 4



28. Quilt showing repeat of design no. 4. London, G. P. & J. Baker Ltd. (photo: © 1986 G. P. & J. Baker Ltd.)

29. Detail of Figure 1, showing fragments of design no. 4, not rearranged in composite



pattern book. The only known full repeat of no. 4 also shows branches laden with cherries spilling from a cornucopia filled with flowers and grapes (Figure 28). Two small birds perch in the cherry branches while another sits on the decorative rope that ties together various motifs of the design. A small section of the decorative rope can be seen in Figure 29, which illustrates the five patches of no. 4 used as a supplementary piecing for a patch of no. 3. Because of their

small size, no attempt was made to include these patches in the composite, and the supplementary piecing is shown as it appears in the quilt.

Vases or baskets filled with flowers were popular motifs in both copperplate- and woodblock-printed fabrics. Design sources for flowers were plentiful, and besides ornament books like *The Ladies Amusement* and Pillement's *Fleurs de fantaisie dans le goût chinois* (London, 1760), more serious works such as William Curtis's *Flora londinensis* (London, 1777–99) were also consulted. No sources have been traced for either the flowers or the birds in no. 4.

An interesting combination of Rococo and Neoclassical motifs is found in no. 4—the general asymmetrical serpentine layout of the design and the scrolling brackets at the base of the vase are derived from the Rococo, while the symmetrically draped bell flowers across the bulb of the vase signal the beginnings of Neoclassical taste. No. 4 has been given a slightly later date than the other Nixon designs because of these Neoclassical motifs.

5. Chinese Man and Boy

1760–70, [England]
 linen-cotton, monochrome red
 2 triangles

Figure 30 is a composite of the quilt's two patches of no. 5, showing part of a scene with two Chinese figures. The positioning of these figures—a man in a conical hat reclining in front of a small boy—is very



30. Composite of quilt patches of design no. 5

31. Copperplate print on cotton, French, ca. 1785. Monochrome red, 42 × 36½ in. (136.7 × 92.7 cm.). London, Victoria and Albert Museum, T.317-1919 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)



like that of figures in a design from Jean Pillement's *Livre de chinois* (London, 1758). A fabric at the Victoria and Albert Museum has six scenes taken from Pillement's work (Figure 31). The scene at the upper left in Figure 31 has the same Chinese figures as no. 5 in a different configuration. In no. 5, there is the addition of the smoking brazier and a wooden fence instead of a brick wall is behind the boy.

From a paper impression in one of the Mulhouse pattern books, labeled "165 @ 10d Nixon & Co.,"⁸⁸ it is clear that at least one definitely English version of Pillement's work was designed for printed furnishing fabrics. But the paper impression shows only one scene and part of another, with many details differing from the same scenes (middle and lowest scenes on the left) in Figure 31. The design in Figure 31 is French from the Obkerkampf printworks at Jouy and dated about 1785.⁸⁹ Since no. 5 is obviously not from the French version, it is possible that no. 5 is part of the Nixon design; unfortunately, no fabrics printed with the Nixon design appear to have survived. A fabric at Colonial Williamsburg, printed in red on cotton (53.218, now 1968.257), is listed in *English Chintz*, 1960, as corresponding to the Nixon paper impression.⁹⁰ However, an attempt to secure a picture of the Colonial Williamsburg fabric for this article resulted in the discovery that the *English Chintz*, 1960, listing is an error—Colonial Williamsburg's print is the same as the one in Figure 31 and so does not correspond to the Nixon paper impression.⁹¹ Until a full printed repeat of the Nixon design is uncovered, it will be impossible to know if no. 5 is part of it or yet another adaptation of Pillement's work. However, the presence in the quilt of four definitely identified Nixon designs lends support to the idea that no. 5 is also from the Nixon printworks.

No. 5 has been dated in accordance with the date given the Nixon paper impression by Barbara Morris, who thought that Nixon produced this version "soon after the publication of the Pillement plates probably in the early 1760's."⁹²

88. Barbara J. Morris, "English Printed Textiles: II. Copperplate Chinoiseries," *Antiques* 71 (Apr. 1957) fig. 7; Jacqué, *Chefs-d'oeuvre, Mulhouse*, III, black-and-white pl. 2.

89. Jacqué, *Chefs-d'oeuvre, Mulhouse*, II, p. xix.

90. *English Chintz*, 1960, cat. no. 75.

91. I would like to thank Linda Baumgarten, Curator of Textiles at Colonial Williamsburg, for her help in making this determination.

92. Morris, "Copperplate Chinoiseries," p. 362.

6. Chinoiserie Scene

1770–80, [England]
cotton, monochrome blue
1 rectangle

A full repeat of no. 6 (Figure 32), showing whimsical chinoiserie scenes, is from a fabric at the Winterthur Museum. The quilt's patch of no. 6 was printed on wider fabric than this repeat and therefore includes additional branches and foliage (Figure 33).

While no. 6 is not in any of the English pattern books, its provenance is almost certainly English because the vignette of the children dancing to the piper is from *The Ladies Amusement*, plate 41, a design originally by Pillement. An English attribution is further underscored because both the Winterthur fabric and the quilt patch are printed in china-blue, which was most widely used in England. Montgomery includes the design among English copperplate-printed chinoiserie designs, and its dating is based on her assessment.⁹³

7. Farmyard

1765–75, England
cotton, monochrome blue
1 supplementary piecing

The paper impression of design no. 7 is in one of the Mulhouse volumes (Figure 34). This design is from the Bromley Hall printworks and is labeled "Farmyard 10d a yard Talwin and Foster." The quilt contains one small patch of no. 7 (see Figure 33). There is a crease running horizontally across the paper impression through the section of the design that includes the quilt patch, making it difficult to be certain from the paper impression that this patch is actually part of design no. 6. However, printed versions of this design, one in blue on cotton at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum (57-32-1) and one in red on cotton at the Metropolitan Museum (59.181.1),⁹⁴ clearly show the pinetree branches, and the quilt's patch is definitely part of them.

Rustic scenes in printed furnishing fabrics are part of a genre that reflects the eighteenth-century interest in the simplicity of pastoral life. Elements from several printed design sources were often combined for scenes like no. 7, though no sources have been

93. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 280.

94. *English Chintz*, 1960, cat. no. 96.



32. Repeat of design no. 6, showing part of the quilt's single patch of this design, located in the top border. Copperplate-printed in blue on linen-cotton. The Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, 55.634/T50.1 (photo: Winterthur Museum)

34. Repeat of design no. 7, copperplate-printed on paper, showing the piece used in the quilt. Mulhouse, Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes (photo: Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes)



33. Detail of Figure 1, showing a rectangular patch in the quilt's top border pieced from nos. 1a, 6, and 7

found for this particular design. Scenes of country life were popular in printed cottons into the early nineteenth century.

8. Pavilion on Bridge

1765–80, [England]
linen-cotton, monochrome red
6 triangles

The quilt's six patches of no. 8 form the composite in Figure 35. The design has a pavilion atop a stone-work bridge with the edge of a flowery field just visible in the foreground; the fragmentary nature of the patches makes it difficult to get a clearer picture. Parts of two repeats of the design are used in the quilt.

Though design no. 8 has not been found among



35. Composite of quilt patches of design no. 8

36. Copperplate print on paper, labeled "Turban," from the English printworks of John Munns (active 1768–84). Mulhouse, Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes (photo: Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes)



the English paper impressions or extant printed fabrics, an English attribution is suggested by its stylistic similarities to known English chinoiserie prints, many of which have small pagodas or pavilions on stonework bridges (Figures 32, 36). Figure 36 illustrates a paper impression from one of the Mulhouse volumes.⁹⁵ Though the complete design cannot be seen, the pavilion in no. 8 has a roof with the fanciful character of Chinese architecture in English printed cottons, and the bases of the columns are similar to those in Figure 36. Most English chinoiserie copperplate prints are dated within the fifteen-year span assigned to no. 8.⁹⁶

9. Brown Copperplate Fragments

1760–80, [England]
cotton, monochrome brown
2 triangles



37. Two patches of design no. 9 in the quilt

Design no. 9 consists of the two patches pictured in Figure 37. Though no. 9's flowering stems are stylistically similar to ones in the quilt's other brown copperplate print (no. 2), they are not found in either of the known full repeats of no. 2. It is unlikely that no. 9 is part of design no. 2 printed on wider fabric because both the Winterthur Museum length of no. 2 (Figure 23) and the length in the Philadelphia Museum curtain show the same design across the width of the fabric. This is probably the complete design, as the Philadelphia Museum curtain is 36¼ inches (92 centimeters) wide, and if plates about a yard wide were used for no. 2, then these lengths do have the full-width repeat of no. 2.

The use of only two patches of no. 9 in the quilt is consistent with the maker's use of just one or two patches of other copperplate designs (nos. 5–7). Several designs among the paper impressions (including no. 4) have similar flowering stems, but none exactly matches these fragments. No. 9 is given a probable English provenance on stylistic grounds and the same date range as the quilt's known English designs.

95. Floud, "English Printed Textiles: Postscript" (cited in note 46), p. 375, fig. 11.

96. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, pp. 265–269.

Woodblock Prints

FIGURAL DESIGNS

The quilt has fragments from five woodblock-printed designs with figural (nos. 10–12) and architectural (nos. 13, 14) scenes; these designs are grouped together because prints with architectural elements often also had human figures in them. Most surviving eighteenth-century cotton prints with detailed figural scenes are copperplate designs because of the subtle effects of line and detail that were possible with engraved copperplates. However, the colors in the quilt's polychromatic figural woodblock prints give them a warmth that is lacking in the monochromatic copperplate designs. Figural woodblock prints, such as the ones in the quilt, may have been designed as competition for the popular copperplate figural designs. If this is so and if the prints are English, they would have to date after the introduction of copperplate printing into England (late 1750s). There is no indication from surviving English woodblock prints that this type of polychromatic figural scene was being produced before 1760.⁹⁷

The possibility exists that any one of these designs might be French, though specific stylistic correlations have been drawn in only one case (no. 11). A French woodblock print from the 1780s (Figure 38) with a

38. Woodblock print on cotton, French, Jouy, ca. 1785. Polychrome, 22 × 20 in. (55.9 × 52.1 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 26.233.16



39. Patch of design no. 10 in the center of the quilt

single peasant girl encircled by foliage illustrates the more usual arrangement of figural elements in woodblock prints. When small scenes are found, they generally do not have the detail seen in the quilt's examples. If any design is French, 1760 would also be the earliest date for it since the French ban on printed cotton was fully lifted only one year before.

The cutoff date for these designs, about 1780, is based primarily on their having been printed on fustian, as no stylistic element points to a more specific date.

10. Classical Statue in a Gazebo

1760–80, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue
1 rectangle, 2 triangles

An arresting design showing a statue of a classically draped woman standing in an ornate gazebo is the quilt's center square (Figure 39). No. 10 is an eclectic combination of motifs: the classical statue is standing on a pedestal and holding a leafless branch; the ga-

⁹⁷ Surviving English woodblock prints dated before 1760 are floral (sometimes with the addition of a bird) or geometric designs. Exceptions are certain figural chinoiserie designs printed in china-blue; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, pp. 194–197.

zebo has decorative fleur-de-lis motifs on its roof as well as a spread eagle perched on a globe at its summit; the gnarled tree in the background is similar to those in chinoiserie designs (Figures 31, 32). The key to interpreting this design should come from the statue but the iconographic clues as to who she is are obscure: with her leafless branch, she cannot be identified with any female personification that carries a branch, and there are no other distinguishing features. The quilt's two additional pieces of no. 10 show more of the distinctive blue-green foliage surrounding the base of the gazebo, but they provide no clues to the design's subject. Much of the detail in the statue's face and drapery has been lost because she is printed in brown and the iron mordant used is causing the surface of the fabric to disintegrate.

11. Woman Playing a Lute

1760–80, [England or France]
 linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
 1 rectangle

A young woman seated with her back to the viewer plays a lute for the entertainment of three children (Figure 40); the quilt's single patch of this design is in the inner border at lower right. A well-known group of copperplate prints (generally dated to the 1780s and 1790s) depict vignettes of children's games and pastimes taken from engravings of paintings by Francis Hayman (1708–76) and the later work of William Hamilton, R.A. (1751–1801).⁹⁸ These designs, however, with their scenes of children actively playing, have little in common with no. 11, where two children sit quietly while the third appears to be almost asleep. No. 11 is related more to the leisurely style of early eighteenth-century French paintings.

12. Reapers and Farm Animals

1760–80, [England]
 linen-cotton, shades of brown, blue
 1 rectangle, 7 triangles

A reaper, his scythe in hand, and a woman holding out her skirt look down as a man catches one of several small birds they have flushed out of the wheat field (Figure 41); this large patch of no. 12 is in the



40. Quilt patch of design no. 11



41. Quilt patch of design no. 12

98. Barbara J. Morris, "English Printed Textiles: V. Sports and Pastimes," *Antiques* 72 (Sept. 1957) pp. 252–255.

inner border at the lower left. There are also seven triangles of no. 12 in the quilt. A composite of all the patches could not be made because the fragments are not from adjacent parts of the design. The triangular patches of no. 12 show a cow, two sheep, more birds, and quite a lot of tree foliage but no other human figures. No. 12, like no. 7, is of the pastoral genre.

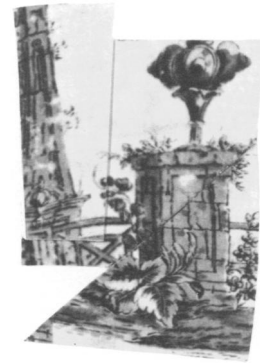
It is easy to single out the patches of no. 12 because of the distinctive printing technique used. The fine lines forming the design are similar to the engraved lines of a copperplate print, although they are not as refined and there is no crosshatching, an effect only possible with engraved copperplates. By the late eighteenth century, copper strips and pins were pounded into woodblocks to produce finer lines and “picotage” (pin dots) in woodblock prints, and this seems a possible explanation for the fine lines and small grains of wheat in no. 12. The dark brown background lines were printed in monochrome first, then the large blocks of color were added—the two shades of brown on the birds, the reaper’s clothes, and the wheat behind him by woodblock, and the blue in the clothing and foliage by painting.

A textile in a sample book of fabrics compiled in the 1880s, now at the Winterthur Museum (73 x 291), has the same quality of line as no. 12; it shows a figural design of a man in eighteenth-century dress playing a lute. The design is printed in monochrome brown on linen-cotton cloth with no additional colors, and the page is inscribed “The Woodside bed curtain thought to be 100 years old.” It is possible that both this print and no. 12 are crude copperplate prints without crosshatched detail.

13. Ruined Monuments

1760–80, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
4 squares, 1 triangle

Though there are five patches of no. 13 in the quilt, four of them show essentially the same scene of ruined sculpture—an obelisk behind another monument with a pedestal base and a fanciful top. The composite made from parts of two of the square patches and the triangular patch shows that the obelisk is in a parklike setting and the other monument is part of an enclosure around it (Figure 42). Since four repeats of no. 13 would have been needed for the four



42. Composite of three quilt patches of design no. 13

square patches, it is odd that only one other fragment of this design is in the quilt.

14. Archways

1760–80, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of pink, brown
3 triangles

Two of the patches of no. 14 show rounded stone arches, and the third has similar stone masonry. Though these prints could not be arranged into a composite, they are probably from the same design, as shades of soft pink and brown colors are used in each and they all have a fluid quality reminiscent of a watercolor painting.

FLORALS WITH BIRDS AND/OR ANIMALS

One of the longest-lasting styles in eighteenth-century printed furnishing fabrics was the arborescent floral design which incorporated thick twisting branches, an assortment of full-blown flowers, and, in some designs, birds perched among the blossoms. The earliest examples of printed arborescent designs can be found in English prints of about 1740–60.⁹⁹ Design no. 2 is a notable copperplate-printed example, about 1765–75, and colorful woodblock versions were printed into the nineteenth century.¹⁰⁰ Though no large flowers are seen in design no. 15 (Figure 43), its bird sitting on a branch is typical; the quilt’s other

99. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, figs. 72, 74.

100. *Ibid.*, figs. 136, 143, 144.

43. Quilt patch of design no. 15



patches with single birds on branches (nos. 16, 17d, 17e) were probably cut from similar designs.

The quilt's floral designs featuring animals as well as birds are not true arborescent florals though they have some of the same elements, such as the twisting branches (no. 18), a bird sitting on a branch (no. 19), or large flowers (nos. 18 and 19). Both nos. 18 and 19 use floating islands as bases for small scenes with the animals; the pheasant (no. 17b) and the little rabbits (no. 20) were also part of designs with floating islands. The woodblock-printed birds in flight of nos. 17a and 17c may have flown between flowering trees in a design like no. 18.

Because French and English arborescent designs closely parallel one another in style, only the presence of blue threads in the selvage can confirm the English provenance of an arborescent design. For this reason, a French or English provenance is suggested for all the designs except no. 19, which may have been produced by a specific English printworks. The 1780s have been cited as the decade when arborescent designs were most fashionable in both England and France,¹⁰¹ but an earlier dating is proposed for those in the quilt because, with the exception of one triangle (no. 17c), they are all printed on fustian.

It is interesting to note that the quilt contains no prints of the floral-trail style in which delicate flowering branches meander across the fabric in much the same way as the tree branches in arborescent florals; floral-trail designs were especially popular for costume use. In the Elizabeth Webster quilt, the center square and four other prints are floral-trail designs (see Figure 11).

101. Florence Montgomery, "Stylistic Change in Printed Textiles," *Technological Innovation and the Decorative Arts*, ed. Ian M. G. Quimby and Polly Ann Earle (Charlottesville, Va., 1974) p. 258.

15. Arborescent Floral with Bird

1760–80, [England or France]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
1 rectangle

16. Large Parrot

1760–80, [England or France]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
1 rectangle

Parrots play featured roles in the quilt's design (others are in nos. 4 and 19), and this admirably detailed bird (Figure 44) is the center patch of the bottom of the inner border.

44. Quilt patch of design no. 16



17. Woodblock Bird Designs

1760–80, [England or France]
17a. Bird in Flight
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue
3 rectangles



45. Quilt patch of design no. 17a

In several instances, more than one repeat of a design has been cut apart and used in the quilt, as is the case with no. 17a, which is represented by three nearly identical patches of a bird in flight. Figure 45 illustrates one of the patches. Because the colors of no. 17a are very similar to those of no. 18, and because parts of three repeats of no. 18 may have been used

in the quilt, it is possible that nos. 17a and 18 may have been cut from the same design.

- 17b. Pheasant
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue
2 triangles
- 17c. Bird in Flight
cotton, shades of brown
1 triangle
- 17d. Bird on Branch
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, green
1 triangle
- 17e. Bird on Branch
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown
1 triangle

18. Flowering Tree, with Goats and Stork

1770–80, [England or France]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
7 rectangles, 8 triangles

Two rectangular patches of no. 18 form the composite in Figure 46. The tree's branches, thick with peonies, roses, and other flowers, are of a type seen in many arborescent designs. True arborescent designs, however, show the flowering branches floating in space, not as part of a tree or a scene.¹⁰² No. 18 is not a true arborescent design since its branches are rooted on a floating island and surrounded by other foliage, two goats, and a stork. Patches from at least two repeats of no. 18 are found throughout the quilt—in the rows of pieced squares, in the two sides and the top legs of the inner border, and in the top border.

46. Composite of two quilt patches of design no. 18



19. Cat Attacking Peacock, with Parrot

1760–70, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
4 rectangles, 4 squares, 7 triangles

The long rectangular patches of no. 19 used in both side legs of the quilt's inner border are combined with a smaller patch to form the composite in Figure 47. This surprising design has a parrot sitting calmly in a fig tree while above, on a floating island, a cat viciously attacks a peacock. One feathery garland of flowers separates the two scenes and another garland emerges from behind the cat and peacock.

The scene of the cat and peacock may illustrate a fablelike story, as at least one English copperplate print is known to have been derived from that type of source (i.e., illustrations for *Aesop's Fables* by Francis Barlow [1626–1702]).¹⁰³ But neither a tale involving a cat and a peacock nor a specific source for the illustration has been found. Period references to printed designs in letters, account books, or newspaper advertisements do occasionally refer to the designs by short titles. No. 19 may be the design called "Cat and Peacock" in the following excerpt from an advertisement for the 1769 bankruptcy sale of Benjamin Asterly and George Gun Munro, calico printers in Wandsworth, Surrey: "The Genuine, large, valuable and great Variety of fine Prints, consisting of fine Chinese Furniture Images, Birds' Nests, the Bridge and Mule, the Horn, ditto Basket, Cat and Peacock, ditto Old Peacock, ditto Blue Bell, ditto Flower Pot, ditto Old Goat, ditto Anderson, ditto Six Colours, and common ditto, with sundry other Patterns."¹⁰⁴ Supporting this possibility is the fact that, while peacocks occur quite often, this was the only cat to be found in any of the designs studied;¹⁰⁵ cats are even absent from farmyard scenes filled with dogs, chickens, cows, etc. (see Figure 34 and Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, figs. 254, 255). No.

102. English example: see Peter Floud, "English Printed Textiles: III. Copperplate Floral Designs," *Antiques* 71 (May 1957) fig. 5; French example: MMA, 26.265.142, see Henri Clouzot and Frances Morris, *Painted and Printed Fabrics* (New York: MMA, 1927) pl. 57, bottom.

103. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 105, n. 29.

104. *Public Advertiser* (London), Sept. 23, 1769. Quoted by Ada K. Longfield, "More Eighteenth-Century Advertisements and English Calico-Printers," *Burlington Magazine* 102 (Mar. 1960) p. 112.

105. One early design (ca. 1740–50) printed in china-blue has a lion; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 184.



47. Composite of three quilt patches of design no. 19

19 is an example of a woodblock design that imitates many copperplate designs in the long repeat with exotic vignettes—two rectangles in the composite are 25 inches (60 centimeters) in length and still do not show the full design.

No. 19 has an important role in the quilt's total design because, besides its prominent use in the inner border, it supplies the four parrots at the corners of the center square. In all, six parrots from no. 19 are found in the quilt, so unless the parrots were repeated across the width of the design, parts of six repeats of no. 19 were used in the quilt.

20. Rabbits

1760–80, [England or France]
 linen-cotton, shades of red, brown
 4 triangles

The little rabbits found in four triangular patches are definitely from the same design and do not appear to be part of any other print in the quilt. No. 20 is printed in brown with faint touches of red, and the fabric has disintegrated to the point where it is difficult to determine the details of the design, though the rabbits do seem to have been grouped together on floating islands.

LIGHT-GROUND AND DARK-GROUND FLORALS

Floral patterns are the largest single category of printed cotton designs. This is reflected by the proportionally large number (fourteen) of woodblock floral prints in the quilt—eight with light (unprinted) backgrounds (nos. 21–28) and six with dark (printed) backgrounds (nos. 29–34). But only one patch with a predominantly floral design (the patch of no. 22 in the inner border at the lower left) has any prominence in the quilt's overall design; all of the other woodblock floral prints are found in the triangular patches or the top border. The featured woodblock prints in this quilt are the unusual designs in the figural or floral categories plus the border prints (nos. 35 and 36); the more ordinary floral prints have a minor role in the quilt's design.

Most eighteenth-century floral woodblock designs were derived from woven silk styles. In its section "Of Callico-Printing," the 1756 edition of *The Laboratory, or School of Arts* states: "With respect to drawing of patterns for the callico-printers, they are for the generality in imitation after the fashions of the flowered silk manufactory";¹⁰⁶ and this continued to be the case with floral prints through the end of the century.

All of the quilt's woodblock designs discussed to this point are furnishing fabrics whose pictorial subjects or large-scale arborescent designs would have made them unsuitable for clothing. But certain floral prints could have been used either for furnishing or for dress; the quilt has several prints of this type (nos.

106. Smith, *Laboratory*, p. 47.

21–24, 27, 32, 33). In other basically floral designs, the addition of nonfloral elements may make a design more appropriate for either furnishing (the basket in no. 25 and the vase in no. 26) or costume (no. 29, lace band).

In the quilt's dark-ground prints, the background is a shade of madder brown and the designs are in madder reds with added pencil blue and yellow. The white areas in these prints were not printed with a mordant and so returned to white after the fabric was dyed in the madder and bleached. Though areas of white are also reserved in this manner for definition and accent within designs on unprinted grounds, patterns of white lace or white flowers are most effective in a dark-ground print. Dark-ground styles were quite popular—four of the English designs among the 1726 Alexander swatches have dark grounds (numbered 10, 21, 26, 27),¹⁰⁷ and the author of *The Laboratory* wrote: "Black, or dark ground chints patterns, are done with the same variety of beautiful colours [as those on an unprinted ground], but differ from the former, in that the ground is more close covered with flowers and leafs, and the white is only preserved in the heightening of them."¹⁰⁸ In the 1790s, a particularly distinctive dark-ground style with a dense scattering of realistically drawn flowers is documented in English printed cottons.¹⁰⁹

Since it is difficult to date floral designs as specifically as the quilt's other designs, some of them are given a more general dating by quarter century. Stylistic evidence supports dating the floral prints on linen-cotton cloth before 1775 and those on cotton after 1775. As with the other woodblock prints, the same problems exist in determining a country of origin for floral designs, but stylistic factors indicate a likely English manufacture for nos. 21–24, 27, and 33.

21. Large Blossom Floral

3rd quarter 18th century, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue
1 square, 1 rectangle, 1 triangle

22. Scattered Blossom Floral with Shoots

3rd quarter 18th century, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, yellow, green,
orange
2 rectangles

23. Scattered Blossom Floral

3rd quarter 18th century, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, yellow, green
3 triangles

24. Delicate Rose Floral

3rd quarter 18th century, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, green
3 triangles

Large realistically drawn flowers spiraling in garlands or scattered in sprays or individual blossoms on a white background are seen in English Spitalfields silks from the late 1730s through the 1740s.¹¹⁰ A woodblock impression on paper from a design by John-Baptist Jackson for a printed fabric, about 1745–55 (Figure 48), shows the influence of these silk patterns. Printed designs of this style are described in *The Laboratory* as having "sprigs and branches carelessly flung, ranged or dispersed in a natural and agreeable manner."¹¹¹ Nos. 21–24 are four different floral patterns related to this description and to designs like Jackson's, so they may date to the early part of the third quarter of the century (ca. 1750–65).

No. 21 has large flowers (Figure 49) as in the Jackson design, but this densely crowded grouping lacks the graceful artistry of Jackson's flowering branches. Though it would seem unlikely that any of the quilt's fabrics would date from before the 1750s, no. 21 most resembles designs considered to be among the earliest surviving English woodblock prints, about 1700–25.¹¹² However, because indigo is used in no. 21, it would have to date after the introduction of pencil blue (1730s), so a dating of 1740–60 might be possible for this design, making it the earliest in the quilt.

An airy arrangement of individual flowers strewn among serpentine shoots is seen in the composite of no. 22 (Figure 50). The fragments of designs nos. 23 and 24 indicate that they also consisted of scattered individual flowers; the roses in no. 24 have a particularly delicate touch in their rendering. The greens in

107. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 8.

108. Smith, *Laboratory*, p. 48.

109. Peter Floud, "The Dark-Ground Floral Chintz Style," *Connoisseur* 139 (May 1957) pp. 174–178.

110. Peter Thornton, *Baroque and Rococo Silks* (New York, 1965) figs. 80a, 80b, 84b, 87a.

111. Smith, *Laboratory*, p. 48.

112. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, figs. 3, 66.



48. Woodblock print on paper, English, designed by John-Baptist Jackson for a printed fabric, ca. 1745–55. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.4538-1920 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)

49. Quilt patch of design no. 21



50. Composite of quilt patches of design no. 22

nos. 22 and 23 are truer than those in the quilt's other prints, and these are the only designs in which yellow can still be distinguished; a shade of red-orange can also be seen in no. 22. Weld, the dye generally used alone for yellow, over indigo for green, and over red for orange before the introduction of quercitron, may have been applied here with a second mordant dyeing (the first being with madder for the reds and browns), producing a more permanent color than the penciled weld that was usually used.

25. Floral with Basket

3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
1 triangle

26. Floral with Vase and Vines

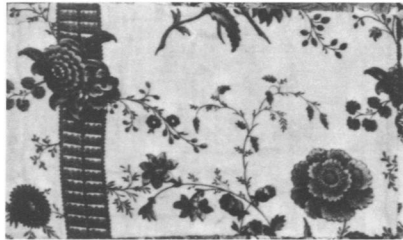
3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown, blue, green
6 triangles, 1 rectangle

The quilt's patches of nos. 25 and 26 afford only small glimpses of these designs. Part of a basket of flowers (no. 25) can be seen in one triangular patch, though other floral sections of this design may be among patches shaded gray. The five patches of no. 26 are identified by distinctive grapevines. In the largest patch of no. 26 (a rectangular piece used with no. 16 in the lower inner border), the vines twist around a footed vase. Baskets and vases with flowers are found in both English and French printed furnishing fabrics.

27. Floral in Stripes

1775–85, [England]
cotton, monochrome blue
1 rectangle

Many eighteenth-century floral prints combine vertical stripes of nonfloral motifs entwined by flowers with a filler of floral sprays between the stripes, as in this design (Figure 51). The earliest documented design of this type is an English woodblock print dating about 1750.¹¹³ The popularity of this style later in the century (1770s–80s) is attested by its many variations among the copperplate paper impressions in the Bromley Hall and Mulhouse pattern books. A typical striped floral labeled “P. 102” from the Bromley Hall pattern book is illustrated in Figure 52. Though no. 27 is a woodblock print, its printing in china-blue (see explanation under no. 1) indicates that it may have



51. Quilt patch of design no. 27

52. Copperplate print on paper, English, Bromley Hall pattern book, ca. 1755–1800. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.458(52.53)-1955 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)



been produced in imitation of the monochrome copperplate versions. Woodblock designs printed in china-blue dating after the invention of copperplate printing are rare because the china-blue method was more suited to copperplate printing. Another woodblock floral design printed in china-blue, about 1770–80, is described in the exhibition catalogue *Colour and the Calico Printer* as having “a shadow effect as if the block has to be printed several times to get the depth of tone.”¹¹⁴ This description also applies to the printed image of no. 27.

28. Floral Sprigs

4th quarter 18th century, [England or France]
cotton, shades of brown, blue
1 rectangle

Small stylized floral sprigs scattered on a light background like no. 28 (Figure 53) were used for dress prints at the end of the eighteenth century.



53. Quilt patch of design no. 28

29. Floral with Lace Band

3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
linen-cotton, dark brown ground, red, beige, green, white
design
5 triangles

54. Composite of four quilt patches of design no. 29



113. The textile is in a folio manuscript by John Holker in the library of the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs, Paris; see Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 11b.

114. O'Connor and Granger-Taylor, *Colour and the Calico Printer*, p. 19.

Patterns combining flowers with meandering bands of lace, woven with colored grounds to offset the white lace fillings, are found in both English and French silk designs during the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The quilt's patches of no. 29 were cut from a printed version of the lace-and-floral silks, in which folds of white lace weave around scattered sprays of realistic roses and daisies on a dark brown ground (Figure 54).

30. Floral Framed in Lace

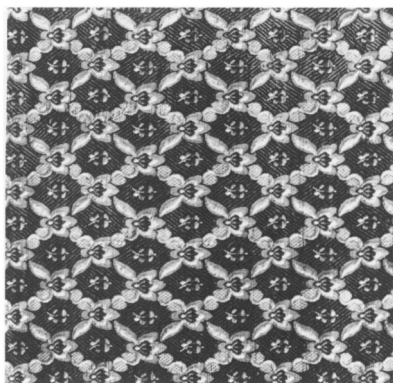
3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
 linen-cotton, dark brown ground, red, brown, blue, white design
 2 rectangles

Lacelike bands frame the small stylized floral motifs in no. 30 (Figure 55). This design is derived from a type of woven silk called *droguet*, in which small motifs are framed by decorative bands in a square or diamond pattern (Figure 56). The narrow dark stripes behind the flowers in no. 30 imitate the textured background in *droguet* weaves.



55. Composite of quilt patches of design no. 30

56. Woven silk fragment, *droguet*, French, 18th century. Purple ground, white design with pink and green details; $7 \times 8\frac{1}{8}$ in. (17.8 \times 20.6 cm.). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 09.50.1964



31. Floral with Diaper Pattern

3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
 linen-cotton, medium brown ground, red, dark brown, blue, white design
 2 rectangles

Many mid-eighteenth-century woven floral silk designs have diaper-pattern fillers between sprays of flowers. In the Holker manuscript there are two printed textiles dating about 1750 that have as backgrounds geometric diaper patterns on light grounds in imitation of the silk designs.¹¹⁵ In no. 31 a diaper pattern combining stylized floral and geometric motifs on a colored ground is the background for the floral sprays (Figure 57).

57. Quilt patch of design no. 31



32. Floral Spray I

3rd quarter 18th century, [England or France]
 linen-cotton, dark brown ground, red, blue, white design
 3 triangles

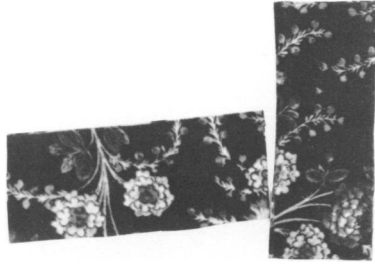
The realistic sprays of roses in no. 32 are very similar to those in no. 29, but the quilt's fragments of no. 32 show no lace or other ornamental band.

33. Floral Spray II

4th quarter 18th century, [England]
 cotton, dark brown ground, red, blue, green, white design
 2 rectangles

The floral sprays in no. 33 (Figure 58) have the same feathery quality in their flowering tendrils as those in dark-ground English floral chintzes of the early 1790s. Floud discussed and illustrated various extant swatches of and original designs for these prints, which he

115. See Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, figs. 9b, 10b.



58. Composite of quilt patches of design no. 33

59. Design for woodblock-printed fabric, English, Vivian Kilburn, 1780s–90s. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.894-1978 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)



called “moss-spray” patterns.¹¹⁶ The name is based on references in Charles O’Brien’s *British Manufacturers Companion and Calico-Printers Assistant* (London, 1791) to “dark or shady patterns (according to the present taste)” and “a late imitation of a dark ground pattern, with a kind of moss or spray hanging down in great quantities.”¹¹⁷ Figure 59 illustrates an original design for fabric in the “moss-spray” style.

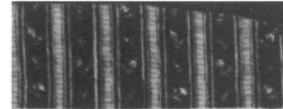
116. Floud, “The Dark-Ground Floral Chintz Style,” figs. 1–3.
117. Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 174.

34. Floral Stripe

4th quarter 18th century, [England or France]
cotton, dark brown (almost black) ground, red, blue, white
design
1 rectangle

Small floral motifs combined with narrow stripes as in this design (Figure 60) are common in dress prints of the late eighteenth century.

60. Quilt patch of design no. 34



BORDER PRINTS

Border prints would have been useful in eighteenth-century interior decoration either as a final border on curtains or bedhangings or as decoration for valances. The quilt contains two very different border prints: no. 35 is used as an interior border in the lower half of the quilt, and no. 36 is the final border on three sides.

35. Rococo Floral with Floral Stripe

1770–80, [England]
cotton, shades of red, brown, tan, blue, green
4 lengths (each has one mitered corner), 3 rectangles

No. 35 is actually a double border print in which a stylized floral vine with a striped background forms a frame for cartouche motifs separated by small floral sprays (Figure 61). A copperplate impression in the Bromley Hall pattern book labeled “P. 75” has a striped border similar to the one in no. 35 (Figure 62). The formal arrangement of Rococo C-scrolls and stylized acanthus leaves in the cartouche motifs of no. 35 indicates a late use of these decorative elements.

61. Quilt patch of design no. 35 (detail)



62. Copperplate print on paper, English, Bromley Hall pattern book, 1755–1800. London, Victoria and Albert Museum, E.458(14)-1955 (photo: Victoria and Albert Museum)



36. Sawtooth

1795–1805, [England]
cotton, shades of brown, tan, blue
3 lengths (each has one mitered corner), 2 supplementary piecings

The absence of madder reds in design no. 36 (Figure 17) indicates that this design is part of the English drab style in printed furnishing fabrics which was popular at the turn of the century. According to the dated Bannister Hall records,¹¹⁸ the drab style was definitely in favor in 1799, but there is no way of knowing whether it became popular quickly or slowly over a period of years in the late 1790s.

The presence of small-scale designs in drab colors in the Rowan pattern book however, suggests a gradual development of popularity. The Rowan pattern book is dated about 1797–99, when Archibald Rowan's printworks was in operation near Wilmington, Delaware,¹¹⁹ and it seems likely that in setting up his new printworks Rowan would have produced designs in the current popular taste. Thus the presence of drab-color designs in this pattern book implies their established use some years before 1799—even earlier in England since English printed cottons were industry leaders. A dating as early as 1795 is therefore suggested for the start of the drab style.

Peter Floud gives 1812 as the cutoff date for the drab style in printed furnishing fabrics, which he calls

“the leading fashion . . . until about 1807.”¹²⁰ Around the turn of the century, colored backgrounds and denser arrangements of the designs became usual, and since no. 36, with its light background and open arrangement of triangles, has more the character of an eighteenth-century print, it has been dated to the earlier years of the drab style.

ABSTRACT DESIGNS

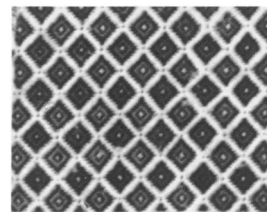
37. Diamond Print

3rd quarter 18th century, [England]
linen-cotton, shades of red, brown
1 rectangle

38. Abstract with Circles

4th quarter 18th century, [England or France]
cotton, shades of brown, blue
2 rectangles

Printed designs with small-scale geometric or stylized abstractions of geometric motifs are found throughout the eighteenth century. The earliest documented English examples are seven prints (numbered 1–7) in the Alexander swatches dated 1726.¹²¹ There are hundreds of variations of geometric-based eighteenth-century prints surviving in pattern books as original designs or fabric swatches. The quilt contains just two designs of this type and both are found in the top border. Design no. 37 (Figure 63) has alternating red



63. Quilt patch of design no. 37

64. Quilt patch of design no. 38



118. Floud, “The Drab Style” (cited in note 51), p. 234.
119. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, p. 99.
120. Floud, “The Drab Style,” p. 234.
121. Montgomery, *Printed Textiles*, fig. 8.

and brown diamond shapes with white centers; the diamonds have a dark sawtoothlike outline and are framed in white bands. This design is printed on fusian and is dated to the third quarter of the century.

No. 38 is the design of the patches underneath the applied sections in the top border (Figure 12). It consists of small blue circles surrounded by brown amoebalike shapes and brown pin dots (Figure 64). The Elizabeth Webster quilt (Figure 11) has four small late eighteenth-century geometric designs with much the same character.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This article began several years ago as a term paper in a class on textile history taught by Jean Mailey, Curator, Textile Study Room, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. I would like to thank Miss Mailey and Jean L. Druesedow, Associate Curator-in-Charge, The Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum, for their support and advice while the paper was being revised and expanded for publication. I would also like to thank the many other people who have contributed generously of their time and knowledge to this project, particularly the staffs of the museum collections that I consulted. A Faculty Development Grant I received from the North Carolina School of the Arts allowed me to make a trip to England for research during the spring of 1984. Audrey Duck, archivist for G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., London, compared photocopies of designs in the Metropolitan Museum quilt with the designs in the Nixon & Co. pattern book. I am grateful for her help and to G. P. & J. Baker Ltd. for kind permission to reproduce designs in their collection.

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PATTERNS AND SWATCHES

English Copperplate-Printed Designs

Bromley Hall pattern book—141 copperplate impressions on paper; book inscribed “Fosters and Co. Bromley Hall Middlesex”; ca. 1755–1800. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, E.458-1955 (photographs of these impressions are in the Textile Study Room, MMA)

Mulhouse pattern books—Several hundred copperplate impressions on paper, 3 volumes; many designs inscribed with pattern names, prices, and printers' names; ca. 1760–1800. Musée de l'Impression sur Etoffes, Société Industrielle de Mulhouse (photographs of these impressions are in the Textile Study Room, MMA)

Nixon & Co. pattern book—22 copperplate impressions on paper, book inscribed “Nixon & Co.,” ca. 1760–89. G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., London

Woodblock-Printed Designs

Alexander swatches (1726)—29 woodblock-printed fabric swatches, English, 1726. The Alexander Papers, Manuscript Collection, The New-York Historical Society

Alexander swatches (1749)—6 woodblock-printed fabric swatches, English, 1749. The Alexander Papers, Manuscript Collection, The New-York Historical Society

Baker pattern book, no. 1—Original designs for woodblock-printed fabrics, English, 2nd half of 18th century; many narrow stripes with stylized floral motifs. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., Loan

Baker pattern book, no. 2—Original designs for woodblock-printed fabrics, English, 2nd half of 18th century; small-scale floral designs, some like woven *droguet* silk patterns. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., Loan

Baker pattern book, no. 8—Original designs for woodblock-printed fabrics, English, late 18th–early 19th century; furniture designs, some with classical subjects. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, G. P. & J. Baker Ltd., Loan

- Dudding pattern book**—Woodblock impressions on paper and printed cotton swatches; inscribed “Duddings’ Furnitures at Reduced Prices”; English, ca. 1800–14; border designs with Neoclassical, Pompeian, and Egyptian subjects. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, T.86-1964
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- Kilburn pattern book**—Original designs for printed textiles by Vivian Kilburn; English, late 1780s–early 1790s; dense floral designs with realistic and stylized flowers, light- and dark-ground designs. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, E.894-1978
- [Manchester] pattern book**—431 swatches, woodblock-printed on cotton and linen-cotton cloth (plain and twill weaves); English, book dated 1783; small-scale stylized floral and geometric patterns. The Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, Winterthur Museum Library, 77 x 110
- Rowan pattern book**—140 woodblock impressions on paper; United States (probable), ca. 1797–99; mostly small stylized floral and geometric patterns, 30 printed in drab colors. The Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, Winterthur Museum Library, 66 x 141
- Sample book (Sarah Johnson)**—Fabric swatches, printed and woven fabrics; compiled in the 1880s by Sarah Johnson(?) of Salem County, N.J., late 18th century–1880s. The Joseph Downs Manuscript and Microfilm Collection, Winterthur Museum Library, 73 x 291
- Sample book (V & A)**—Woodblock-printed cottons; French, late 18th–early 19th century; mostly small prints on colored grounds, some geometrics. Victoria and Albert Museum, London, T.16-1911