



A first ladies' sampler : an honors thesis (HONRS 499)

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Abstract:

After enrolling in an Honors colloquium in the fall of 2005, covering the First Ladies of the United States, I was intrigued by the history of the families in the White House in connection with the topic. When I was going home one weekend, I discovered in my mother's quilt book collection patterns for blocks by several First Ladies. To combine my love of history and of quilting, the following is a compilation of biographical information on five First Ladies and the history of quilting and fabrics during their individual time in the White House. The First Ladies covered are: Martha Washington, Frances Cleveland, Grace Coolidge, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Laura Bush. Those five were chosen for this project because the dates of which they were in the White House are well-spread throughout the history of America. Those five were also chosen because each had been assigned to them in a series of quilt books. In addition to the written portion of the Thesis, I pieced together the blocks assigned to the First Ladies into a sampler. The sampler would be a nice size for a wall-hanging with only five pieced blocks. Documentation of that progress is included. I find it important to combine the topics of First Ladies and quilting to make a connection between females in power and a typically female hobby. Not only should Americans be aware of past Presidents, but they should also be aware of the women who stood at our leaders' side. Quilting is also an important topic in American history and is often considered a women's movement.

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