

A LENS OF UNFINISHEDNESS: THE 1857 HARRISON ALBUM QUILT

Emily Whitted



Fig 1. Appliqued quilt squares. circa 1857. Winterthur Museum accession no. 1969.1115.001-5. (Courtesy Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library).

On October 20th, 1925, New York antique dealer Mary Lent wrote Henry Francis du Pont to offer him “an unusual single applique quilt.”¹ Upon its arrival he discovered the package contained not only a complete 30 block quilt, but an additional 19 individual unquilted blocks. He kept only 5 and returned the remaining 14. He purchased the quilt and its “5 assorted applique blocks to match” for \$225, likely intending to take them to Chestertown, his home on Long Island.² It is difficult not to begrudge his decision for rejecting those 14 squares because it broke the chain of custody, remarkably intact from their initial creation until their sale. However, the presence of 5 unquilted blocks is enough to fundamentally alter the quilts’ interpretation (Fig. 1).

The completed applique quilt, a handsewn New York sample album quilt made by at least 14 identifiable women, contains 30 unique block patterns and 14 signatures as well as the date 1857 and the location Harrison, New York (Fig. 2).³ Red and green cotton fabrics are the primary applique colors on the Harrison Album Quilt, in patterns ranging in difficulty and popularity, but echoing many common folk art motifs, particularly that of Pennsylvania Germans.⁴ There are at least four family groups represented among the signatures; the Meads, the Mekeels, the Pecks, and the Wilcoxes, each with different sewing and signing techniques for their respective family blocks. Of the 5 unquilted blocks, three contain signatures, including one by Annie Peck back stitched in the familial style of the Pecks’ signed squares, strengthening their linkage to the finished quilt in addition to shared fabric types, style, and color schemes.

The unifying link between this group of female quilters is not known, nor is the exact reasoning behind the quilts’ creation. Without those two crucial pieces of information, the story could stop there. Visually, an album quilt invites an interpretation of measurable female relationships; each woman’s block is identical in size, reducing each women’s connection to an identical space that is geometrically additive into a finished quilt. But examining this album quilt in relation to its 5 unquilted companion blocks invites the opportunity for richer, more

nanced understanding of quilt creation, female communities and their domestic spaces. We catch a rare glimpse of a creative process preserved through time; of female communality not so neatly packaged. By applying a lens of unfinishedness to the Harrison Album Quilt, it is easier to understand how album quilts convey the entropy of female relationships and transmit the individual complexities of each female maker within their respective blocks, despite a quilt’s overall unity.



Fig. 2. Applique Quilt. 1857. Winterthur Museum accession. no. 1969.0585. (Courtesy, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library).



Fig. 3. Baltimore album quilt. 1849. Winterthur Museum, accession no. 2013.0010. (Courtesy of Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library)

The signature quilt craze burned brightest in the United States between 1840-1860, snuffing out on the eve of the American Civil War. Thought to have been inspired by a common early nineteenth-century practice of collecting signatures in small album booklets, signature quilts, also referred to as friendship or album quilts depending on the nature of its inscriptions and block patterns, were a collaborative quilting activity with multiple makers.⁵ Regional distinctions in their patterns, materials, and usage formed within this 20-year period. For example: a chintz appliqued album quilt made in Baltimore has more differences than similarities with a red and green applique New York album quilt (Fig. 3). The Harrison Album Quilt reflects a popular red and green applique album quilt tradition that was common in the upper Mid-Atlantic and New England regions, but with distinctive block patterns most congruent with the 1861 Cross River Album Quilt, also made in Westchester County lines (Fig. 4).⁶ Applique techniques in particular demonstrate the sewer's skill in manipulating curved fabric edges into flat motifs as they tuck the raw edges under and sew them down with invisible or decorative stitches.⁷ When the Civil War began in April 1861, the women behind album quilts turned their needles to war-related sewing activities, effectively halting album quilts' popularity.⁸

Album quilts were opportunities to demonstrate and display close female relationships and occasional creative competitiveness. Each contributing woman expressed her design and needle skill within the limits of a fabric block. Similar to challenges of large community art murals, album quilt makers had to balance each block's individual style with a harmonious, cohesive appearance; as a result, the piecing and quilting of the final quilt was usually done by one individual, as it appears to be in the Harrison Album Quilt. To achieve controlled album quilt designs, the patterns could be assigned to the block makers in advance.⁹



Fig. 4. Cross River Album Quilt. 1861. American Folk Art Museum, accession no. 1980.8.1. (Image courtesy of Gavin Ashworth)

The reasons behind an album quilts' creation ranged—from honoring a major life event such as a wedding or child's birth, gifting it to an emigrating community member, documenting female family members at large group meetings such as family reunions, or raising money for various social reform causes, such as abolition, sanitation, or temperance.¹⁰ As such, album quilt creation tended to have hard deadlines, a possible reason why unfinished squares were left over. Fabrics could be store bought or contributed by the community. In February 1857 Ellen Lindsay in her circulating essay "Patchwork" discussed fabric for a patchwork quilt in honor of an upcoming birth, noting that "the pieces were given by all who had any interest in the baby; there was nothing bought or given by strangers"; sketching an emotional scene of the newest member of their community welcomed into the world with the fabric of friends.¹¹ In the case of this quilt, the common red and green cotton fabric which showcased the colorfastness of new dyes was likely store bought, while

the small sections of printed accent fabric could have been from personal stashes.¹²

Apart from a quilt's function as bedding, an album quilt had several performative aspects.¹³ At its most economical it displayed the makers' means, skill, and in some instances eligibility for matrimony; at its most romantic it reminded the owner of friendships that would endure regardless of distance or life's circumstances. Both instances were worth showing off. The making of an album quilt was considered a public-facing activity even inside the home, as seen in a September 1850 issue of the widely-circulating *Godey's Lady's Book*, when a daughter and mother of the fictional short story, "Mrs. Eookly's Question Party," featured "showing your album quilt" in a list of possible party activities.¹⁴



Fig. 5. Artist Unknown. *The Quilting Party*. Wood engraving. 1849. From *Godey's Lady's Magazine* (Courtesy of Accessible Archives).

NINETEENTH CENTURY NEEDLEWORK: UNIFIED FEMALE DOMESTICITY

The Harrison Album Quilt makers created their quilt during a crucial shift in America's view on female community, needlework, and domesticity. For many white women in eighteenth-century America, needlework not only functioned as a crucial aspect of unpaid household maintenance, but also as a paid craft that could range from

plain-sewing for other families to profitable businesses such as millinery and dressmaking.¹⁵ But the status of nineteenth century needlework experienced a gendered, romanticized shift as femininity, domesticity, and unpaid needlework competed with paid needle trades in a divided nation desperately looking for signs of stability and unity. Paid commercial needlework represented "degradation, depravity, and chronic poverty," but unpaid needlework invoked "images of early American women gathered around a quilt frame, or nestled by the hearth, constructing clothing for loved ones, reaffirm[ing] notions of women's role in creating the home as haven."¹⁶ White women of a lower to middle classes walked a delicate path between economic reality and domestic authority in a nation experiencing a series of changes in manufacturing, consumption, transportation, migration, and social and labor relations.¹⁷ And as political turmoil, slavery, and sectional interest threatened civil war, stable female communities were a sign of unity. I would argue that Americans viewed nineteenth-century textile-centric female communality as patriotic. Album quilts reflected an ideal if not the reality of shared domestic tranquility associated with nurturing femininity.

COMMUNAL QUILTING: ROMANCED AND RIDICULED

Quilting was captured in nineteenth-century American imagination as a social activity, in which women came together to sew and gossip, forming female groups that popular culture romanticized and ridiculed. The album quilt fad mixed with a contentious political climate and rapid societal change to encourage in popular culture, perhaps predictably, sentimental and satirized depictions of quilting and female communities. Serial fiction that narrated stories of quilting parties as romanticized social gatherings that included quilt making, courtship, food and dancing with younger members of the community, were tied into the album quilt-making traditions.¹⁸ The 1849 print "The Quilting Party" illustrates a rural courtship scene, where quilting in this instance is the least-important activity (Fig 5). Cardui's Song Books, that circulated popular nineteenth century tunes alongside testimonials from women using their Wine of Cardui tonic, published in their no.3 issue a song "The Quilting Party" with memorable lines "Twas down to Major Parson's house / The gals they had a quiltin' / Just for show their handsome looks / And have a little jiltin'." In the song, the guests at the party catch a young couple kissing behind a doorway, but when caught in the act, the woman claims she fainted because of toothache pain, and the song's writers leave the young women these words of advice: "When you go to a quiltmake / Don't let the fellers kiss and hug / Unless you have a toothache."¹⁹ Hosting a quilting party could be a signal that a woman (or at least, her family) was ready to

consider adult roles. T.S. Arthur's 1849 publication, "The Quilting Party," traced the trials and tribulations of courtship from nostalgic memory, highlighting his access to his beloved after her eligibility was socially proclaimed.²⁰ Romantic views like these could represent nostalgic cravings for simple times and distinguishable, coded gender roles that loaned distractions to an unraveling nation.

While women did organize around a myriad of social reform issues, antebellum sewing circles in particular served as popular social quilting spaces in album quilts' peak, providing an important space for political ideas to develop and supplying philanthropic causes with fundraising opportunities.²¹ Organized by spatial proximity or around reform movements, sewing circles produced quilts to be sold for fundraisers or anti-slavery bazaars.²² They were productive: in some cases these circles completed and sold quilts within a day.²³ Perhaps because these areas added the weight of women's political voices to reform politics, they were more commonly ridiculed. *Ames' Series of Standard and Modern Drama no. 138* published "A Sewing Circle of the Period: an Original Farce in One Act" in 1884, which satirized female community within a neighborhood's sewing circle. Listing the setting as "Anywhere—And Perhaps Everywhere," the play lampooned a community of women as nothing more than gossiping, competitive, two-faced neighbors.²⁴



Fig. 6. Diagram of the quilted Harrison Album Quilt, the 5 individual unquilted blocks, and the missing 14 blocks that likely belonged in this quilt group but were separated by H.F. du Pont in 1925 (Photos by the author)

THE HARRISON ALBUM QUILT

In the case of the Harrison Album Quilt, the circumstances of its unfinished blocks suggested their creation was a more solitary project than the communal one celebrated in popular culture. When comparing the finished quilt to the unfinished blocks, there is a general cohesiveness to them all, although some outliers in applique design, such as the 5-pronged candle block, stray from more traditional designs (Fig. 6). The smaller size of the completed quilt and the documented number of 19 unquilted blocks before du Pont separated them suggests it was once intended to be a larger quilt, logically a 7 by 7 block quilt. Album quilts often noted the recipient or cause that motivated the quilt's creation by situating their dedication block in the center; a 49 block quilt could have guaranteed that layout.²⁵

The fabrics chosen for the printed sashing and the backing of the quilt are slightly crisper and off-color compared to the white cotton front, which suggests a possible scenario in which one or more women could have assembled the quilt slightly after its original appliqued blocks' date of 1857. It is easy to imagine that these quilt squares didn't make the quilting deadline and were thusly not included, ruling out a single creation instance like a sewing circle or a quilting party. Even in 1857, travel was expensive, and the women positively identified on the album quilt were not true neighbors with the freedom and convenience of easy companionship.²⁶ The quality of craftsmanship and the cohesiveness in the designs of the quilt is more noticeable in those that were quilted than with the addition of those that were unquilted; perhaps their omission hinged upon the design's overall harmony rather than a missed deadline. But within the family groups, there are clear parallels in pattern choices, accent fabric pieces, and level of skilled needlework techniques. These observations would suggest that the women were most likely making these squares in isolation rather than together, and if with other female company, only within their own homes.

Quilting alone or with immediate family was common in this period, but it was more visible in oral histories and diaries than among nineteenth-century popular culture and fiction. Maria Fifield, born and raised in New York but transplanted to New Hampshire in 1855, documents in her diary far more solo sewing or intimate quilting with her two sisters-in-law than in large groups or sewing circles.²⁷ *In Quilters: Women and Domestic Art, An Oral History* Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Buford record American female quilters' memories from around 1900, and poignantly articulate feelings of loneliness while quilting with the rare comfort of companionship, usually only with immediate family.²⁸ When considering the domestic and album quilts, the space a woman occupied behind her needle is as important a space as the one she occupies at a quilting or a sewing circle. Within the

confines of an 11 inch block of fabric, perhaps alone or with immediate family, the female makers of the Harrison Album Quilt were mostly operating within a private space, thinking their own thoughts and exercising their own creative liberties.

These quilt squares served as channels for engaged creativity, allowing their female creators private space and time to think deeply about the reason for their textile's creation. An 1857 letter published in the abolitionist newspaper *The Liberator* from Margaret Brachen, a woman who had pieced a quilt and sent it for an anti-slavery bazaar, writes "whilst sitting at my work, I thought there must be as many stitches in my quilt as you have slaves in America... there are about twenty times as many slaves in America as there are stitches in my quilt; and when I thought of the helpless misery endured by every individual slave...I cannot express the appalling sensation which comes over me." She explains the creative choice behind her fabric colors; the light and dark fabric contrasts are meant to represent harmony among races, and then apologizes for her letter's length with a note that say "when an old woman has patched a quilt, she longs to tell some of the thoughts which occupied her mind."²⁹ The quilt Mrs. Brachen pieced is infused with her deep engagement with the morality of slavery; when her quilt was purchased for 6 guineas, the recipient received a quilt made with abolition in mind at every stage of its creation. This deep creative engagement, a nineteenth century form of "craftivism," has an activist slant.³⁰ But the same principle of imbuing a textile with the deep thoughts of its makers could also apply to album quilts meant to symbolize a certain female relationship or an important occasion. Were these quilts squares sewn with thoughts of that specific makers relationship with the recipient (to be clear, that relationship could inspire a range of feelings and thoughts, and not only ones of affection or closeness)? In the case of the Harrison Album Quilt, we are not privy to individual thoughts, but looking at the quilt through a lens of unfinishedness reminds us that women had the space to think them.

THE FEMALE MAKERS: HARRISON ALBUM QUILT

The struggle to tell the story of early American women in the absence of archival records is not new. Laurel Thatcher Ulrich was one of many scholars to explore the history of women's lives even when the public record falls short, calling for a search "between pens and needles" and keeping in mind the limitations of both mediums.³¹ In lieu of formal writings from the makers of the Harrison Album Quilt, I turned to those stitched with a needle on their blocks in hopes of telling their story—supplemented by what I could discover from the sparse genealogical resources uncovered so far. Each family group had distinctive hand sewing techniques and decorative

stitches that connect their respective squares together (Fig. 7).

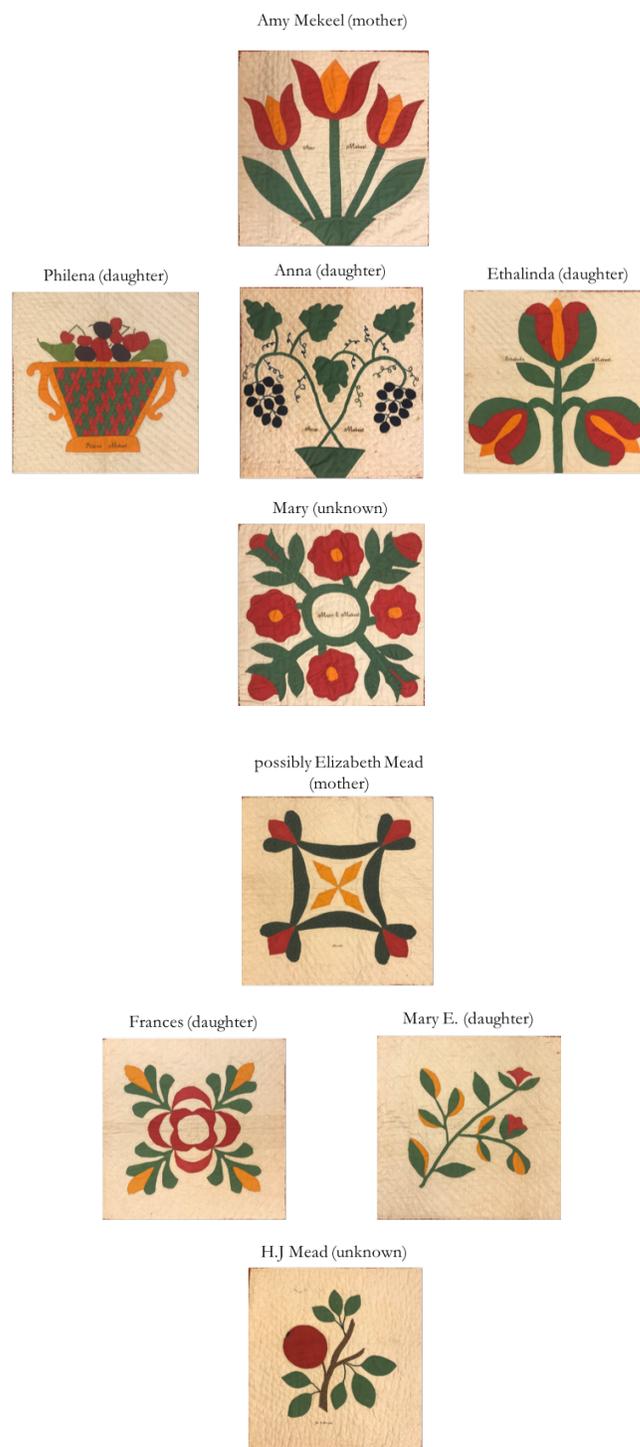


Fig. 7. Diagram of the quilted Harrison Album Quilt, the 5 individual unquilted blocks, and the missing 14 blocks that likely belonged in this quilt group but were separated by H.F. du Pont in 1925 (Photos by the author).

The Mekeels' family signatures were back stitched in black-thread, the Pecks' were back stitched in bright red-thread, the Wilcoxes' were back stitched in a rustier shade of red thread, and the Meads' signatures were either inked or a marked by a stencil plate (a faster way to distribute blocks, but a more expensive tool).³² These design choices in signatures were likely intentionally chosen to visually signify familial relationships, but further artistic choices and techniques in the applique patterns betray common sewing education from mothers to daughters. With this quilt as an example, perhaps a truer patriarchal lineage of domestic education, rather than female communality. Authors like Catherine Beecher and Lydia Maria Child balanced calls for women's education with the domestic realities of everyday American women. Childs in *The Frugal Housewife* stated that "in tracing evils of any kind, which exist in society, we must, after all, be brought up against the great cause of all mischief—*mismanagement in education*."³³ And Beecher in her 1841 work *A Treatise on Domestic Economy for the Use of Young Ladies at Home and at School* wrote candidly of the particular plights of American women, especially that of mothers raising daughters.³⁴ To them, proper women's education was an American duty, and American mothers were crucial teachers.³⁵ Needlework and other domestic skills were part of that education.

Of the Harrison Album Quilt's fourteen female signers, many escaped documentation. But slim records of the Mekeels and the Meads do substantiate a few particulars of their lives. Amy Mekeel of Philipstown, NY, responsible for a relatively simple but well-stitched patterned block depicting a cluster of 3 yellow and red tulips, was 46 at the time of her quilting and a mother of 6, including her daughters Philena (24), Ethalinda (13), and Anna (birthdate unknown) who arguably made three of the finest squares in the finished quilt (Figure 8).³⁶ Amy's daughters would all marry, give birth, and die in Philipstown, never living more than a few miles from each other. When Amy's husband, Peter, died in 1885, Amy moved in with Ethalinda and her husband and passed away in 1900.³⁷ Her daughter Anna married a Union soldier who survived the Civil War.³⁸

The Meads lived a day's journey from the Mekeels, although several of the Meads' extended family did live in Philipstown. The majority of the Meads' squares are stenciled with only their last name, but 24 year old Frances E. Mead's Rose of Sharon square and 13 year old Mary Mead's appliqued roses in mid-bloom signed their full names, and Francis included the location Harrison, NY on her block. Their mother, Elizabeth Mead, may have made one as well but only stenciled her last name to save time. At the time of this quilt's making, she was busy acting as sole head of household. Her husband Abner Mead had departed with other "49ers" seeking gold during the

California Gold Rush, leaving Elizabeth to raise their remaining children alone in Rye, NY.³⁹ She would never see her husband and son again; both Abner and Aaron died in California in 1870. The Meads and the Mekeels were likely related; Elizabeth Mead and Amy Mekeel both had maiden names of Ferris, although the exact nature of their familial connection is unconfirmed. Frances E. Mead would soon marry Nathaniel Hopper and move to Harrison, NY by 1860: the quilt may be intended to celebrate her marriage but this supposition is difficult to confirm without further information about the other makers. Not enough information about the other makers is known to make confident genealogical connections.

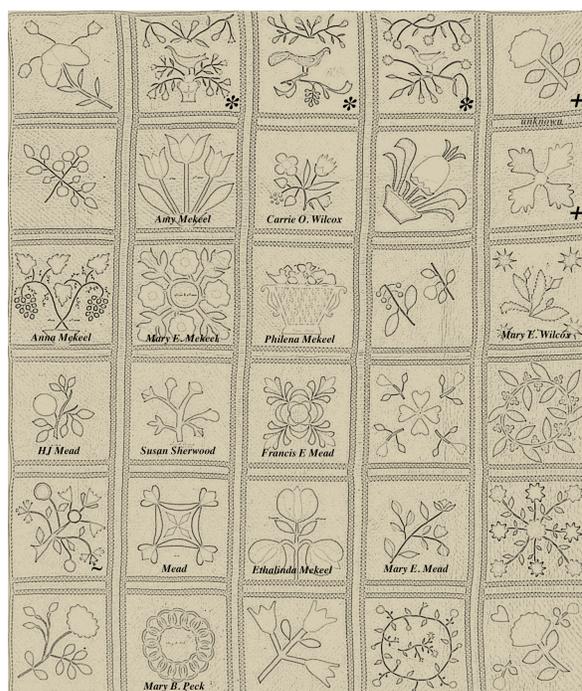


Fig. 7. Digitized sketch of Harrison Album Quilt, identifiable quilt block makers designated. Squares marked with * likely share a common but unidentifiable maker, as do squares marked with +. (Photo courtesy of author)

Westchester County, New York, the likely home of all the female makers of the Harrison Album Quilt, was a geographic region wrapped in nineteenth-century romanticism and steeped in colonial-revival interests. Just 20 miles outside of Manhattan, Westchester County was caught in a shrinking rural and urban divide by the 1850s. American writer Washington Irving describes it as an area fixed in time;

"I mention the peaceful spot with all possible laud: for it is such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there, embosomed in the great state of New York, that population, manners, and customs remained fixed, while the great torrent of migration and

improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved.”⁴⁰

But that nostalgic observation was not a full picture. The October 13, 1855 issue of *The Westchester County Journal* contained a serial story of fictional escapades from the Revolutionary War, as well as a poem titled “The Wife’s Appeal” which describes a domestic, “home as haven” scene of a wife dreaming of her ideal—sewing by the fire while her husband keeps her company.⁴¹ But amid these sentiments, urban encroachment and the sounds of manufacturing were very much present. Railroad timetables and ticket fares frame the newspaper’s literature; in the Harrison Album Quilt makers’ time, railroad companies would rise and fall, connecting their “sleepy” towns with the bustle of Manhattan and each other by 1860.⁴² Perhaps Westchester County was slow to shake off nostalgic sentiment and rural stereotypes, but the fog was certainly lifting.

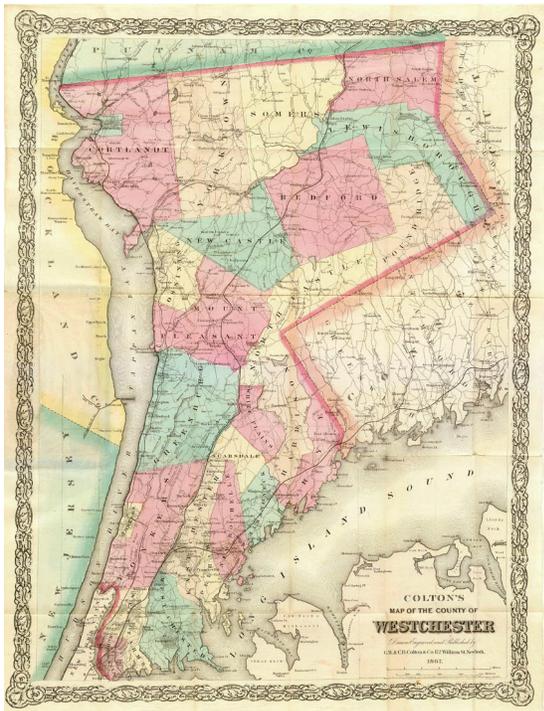


Fig. 5. Colton’s map of the county of Westchester. Wood engraving. 1877. From New York Public Library Digital Collections, catalog no.b20645872 (Courtesy of New York Public Library)

Westchester County was also a far cry from a unified North over the issue of slavery. Abolition was certainly a popular viewpoint: a letter to the editor titled “Southern Morality and Mormon Morality” equates polygamy with slavery (which is another issue entirely), but writes as if the morality of slavery is an issue long settled.⁴³ Heavily steeped in abolitionist sentiment, the Civil War

would still bring violence and tense race relations to New York; the Draft Riots of 1862 in Manhattan, which brought about numerous deaths of black men and women in response to the growing opposition to the draft, were echoed in Westchester County when the government offices in Morrisania were ransacked, telegraph equipment destroyed, and railroad tracks torn up.⁴⁴ This ongoing political and moral upheaval paired with rapid manufacturing advancements. For all the abolitionist sentiment, Northern manufacturing still received the overwhelming majority of their raw material from cotton plantations managed with enslaved labor. Whatever the Harrison Quilt Makers felt about slavery, it is almost a guarantee that the cotton fabric used in their quilt squares was grown with enslaved labor, making them complicit in a system their geographic region heavily disavowed.⁴⁵ In the lifetimes of these women, many of their male relatives would fight in the Civil War, their families could have dissenting opinions on slavery, and their economic choices in the textiles they consumed or created were also political acts. Despite the “Sleepy Hollow” stereotype, Westchester County women had a lot to think about behind their needles.

CONCLUSION

Marla Miller concludes her work *The Needle’s Eye: Women and Work in the Age of Revolution* with some thoughts on (previously under-researched) quilts by noting “Quilting can remain an effective metaphor for interconnectedness among women, if we can overcome the implication that it comes on even footing.”⁴⁶ Human relationships are entangled, unequal, and constantly evolving. In the case of the Harrison Album Quilt, is it tempting to look past that complexity in favor of unity, to equate female relationships with the sentiments their album quilt blocks express and assume their relationships were similar and measurable because their blocks fit so neatly into a mathematically-divisible shape. But the 5 unquilted blocks left detached from this material representation of female community reinforce the entropy of relationships. They encompass ties between mothers and daughters, extended family and neighbors, and even connect the large number of enslaved Africans in mid-nineteenth century America with female quilters who worked for abolition even as they used cotton picked with that labor. The perspectives behind these personal, economic, and political relationships reflected the individual humans behind their needles. The Harrison Album Quilt makers are the only people privy to their thoughts, and perhaps that is the point. It is only fitting that we recognize them, and their quilt, as works in progress.

1 Henry F Du Pont to Mary Lent. November 2, 1925. Correspondence folder in Registrar Office, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

2 Chestertown Album. *Winterthur Archives*. J-Drive Archives Folder Chestertown Albums. Accessed August 28, 2018.

3 Although Winterthur Museum's catalog has this quilt titled as a Friendship Applique Quilt, I felt the category of friendship quilt is not truly applicable and will for the interests of this paper refer to it as the Harrison Album Quilt because of its signed location of Harrison, NY.

4 Sandi Fox, *For Purpose and Pleasure: Quilting Together in Nineteenth-Century America* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1995), 117.

5 For the purposes of this paper, the term album quilt refers to a type of signature quilt with signed, unique blocks, as opposed to quilts that are signed but contain identically patterned blocks. Elizabeth V. Warren, *Quilts: Masterworks from the American Folk Art Museum*. (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2010), 64.

6 Lynne Z. Bassett, and Jack Larkin. *Northern Comfort: New England's Early Quilts 1780-1850*. (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 87.

7 Susan Burrows Swan, *Plain and Fancy: American Women and Their Needlework*. (Austin: Curious Works Press, 1995), 229.

8 Women used their needles in many ways during the Civil War, including bandage making, sewing gunpowder bags, tents, shirts and uniforms. Cokie Roberts, *Capital Dames: The Civil War and the Women of Washington, 1848-1868*. (Harper Perennial, 2016), xxii.

9 Warren, *Quilts*, 64.

10 Jane Bentley Kolter, *Forget Me Not: A Gallery of Friendship and Album Quilts* (Pittstown, NJ: Main Street Press, 1965), 60. The Smithsonian Museum of American History has several quilts created through guidelines published by the U.S. Sanitary Commission for Civil War-related philanthropic causes, specifically accession no. 138338 and no. 272176.

11 Ellen Lindsay, "Patchwork." *Godey's Lady's Book*. February 1857, Accessible Archives.

12 Celia Eddy, "The History of Turkey Red." *The Quilter's Guild*. Published August 12, 2012. Accessed December 4, 2018.

13 Quilts were used in a myriad of ways, including bedding, but the Harrison Album Quilt was likely not a primary top-cover for a bed. A comprehensive study of American quilt and bedstead measurements by Madeleine Roberg between 1790-1939 calculated trends in quilt sizes in proportion to bedstead sizes and noted a sharp decrease in quilt sizes between 1840-1860 while average bedstead sizes continued to grow. Roberg attributes this partially to cotton fabric's growing inexpensiveness as American textile manufacturing expanded after 1830, making quilts slightly less precious commodities than before and more often found on second-best beds. There was also a brief fad of proper bed-making etiquette within the time period that recommended tucking quilts under a white top cover, obscuring them from view but using them as an extra layer of warmth. The Harrison Album Quilt proportions were smaller than common in the period — 66 inches by 79 inches, barely entering the time period's range of 70-107 inches in width and 78-112 inches in length — suggesting it would have been a tight fit for a family's bed. And if it had been used for bedding within the time period, it would have been obscured, which runs counter to an album quilt's origins of ownership. Madeleine Roberg, *Tucked In: American Quilts and the Beds They Cover, 1790-1939* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2011), 111.

14 Hickory Broom, "Mrs. Eooklyn's Question Party," *Godey's Lady's Book*. September, 1850, Accessible Archives.

15 Marla Miller, *The Needle's Eye: Women and Work in the Age of Revolution*. (Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006).

16 *Ibid.*, 229.

17 Catherine Kelly, *In The New England Fashion: Reshaping Women's Lives in the Nineteenth Century*. (Ithica and London: Cornell University Press, 1999), 47-49.

18 Sandi Fox, *For Purpose and Pleasure: Quilting Together in Nineteenth-Century America*. (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1995), 8.

19 *The Cardui Song Book, no 3*. (Chattanooga, Tenn.: The Chattanooga Medicone Co, 1908).

20 T.S. Arthur, "The Quilting Party." *Godey's Lady's Book*, September 1849. Accessible Archives.

21 Carolyn J. Lawes, *Women and Reform in a New England Community, 1815-1860* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000.) 45-82.

22 E. Robinson, "The Ohio Anti-Slavery Fair," *The Liberator*. January 28, 1853. Accessible Archives.

23 Fox, *For Purpose and Pleasure*, 4-7.

24 Ida M. Buxton, *A Sewing Circle Of the Period, An Original Farce*. (Clyde, Ohio: A.D. Ames, 1884).

25 Conversation with Linda Eaton, August 10, 2018. It is also possible that there were more unquilted blocks that did not make it to the antique dealer who sold this quilt to H.F. du Pont, so it could easily have been a larger quilt than 49 squares.

26 *Rates of Travel, 1857* [map]. *Atlas of the Historical Geography of the United States*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 1932).

27 Maria Fifield. *Diaries, 1857 January 1 – 1862 December 31*. Doc. 389. The The Joseph Downs Collection of Manuscripts and Printed Ephemera, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library.

28 Patricia Cooper and Norma Bradley Buford. *The Quilters: Women and Domestic Art An Oral History*. (Garden City: Anchor Press/DoubleDay, 1978.)

29 Margaret Brachen, "Report: Twenty-Fourth National Anti-Slavery Bazaar-Festival." *The Liberator*. February 12, 1858. Accessible Archives.

30 Betsy Greer, "Craftivism Definition." Craftivism: craft + activism = craftivism. <http://craftivism.com/definition/>. Accessed October 23, 2018.

31 Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, "Of Pens and Needles: Sources in Early American Women's History." *The Journal of American History*, Vol 77, No. 1 (June 1990): 200-207. In her essay, Ulrich identifies pros and cons behind women's writing as a source and women's needlework as a source, noting that there are major gaps in coverage with both approaches.

32 Kolter, *Forget Me Not*, 66.

33 Lydia Maria Childs, *The Frugal Housewife* (Boston: Carter and Hendee, 1832), 91-93.

34 Catharine Beecher, *A Treatise on Domestic Economy* (Boston: T.H. Webb, & Co., 1842), 47.

35 The idea of mothers properly educating their children for the good of the nation was a strong patriotic sentiment, as both Beecher and Child make clear, but is also complicated by women's suffrage movements and harsh realities of being a woman. Beecher in particular writes at length about the unique challenges of being an American woman, including a sentiment that mothers are exhausted by doing it all, which is still a timeless challenge for modern day American women. They advocate for proper education both inside and outside the home, and more practical views on domestic economy.

36 The New York Genealogical and Biographical Record (quarterly-1926) – Extracts (New York: New York Genealogical and Biographical Society), Ancestry.com accessed August 28, 2018, 190.

37 Year: 1900; Census Place: Phillipstown, Putnam, New York; Page: 19; Enumeration District: 0051; FHL microfilm: 1241146. Source: Ancestry.com.

38 Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. *Historical Summary of Grand Army Of the Republic Posts by State- New York*. (National GAR Records Program, 2013.)

39 Year 1852; Census Place: Sacramento, California. California State Library; Roll #3; Repository Collection #: C1443; Page 260; Line 5. Source: Ancestry.com.

40 Washington Irving, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. (Philadelphia: David McKay Co., n.d.), 4

41 *Westchester County Journal*. October 13, 1855. The New York Historical Society. Main Collection. Accessed October 20, 2018.

42 J Thomas Scharf, *History of Westchester County, New York: including Morrisania, Kings Bridge, and West Farms, which have been annexed to New York City* (Philadelphia: L.E. Preston & Co., 1886), 642-643.

43 *Westchester County Journal*. April 17, 1857. The New York Historical Society. Main Collection. Accessed October 20, 2018.

44 Westchester County Historical Society. "The Blue and the Grey." *The Quarterly Bulletin of the Westchester County Historical Society*, Vol. 3, No. 2. (1927): 48-49.

45 Beckert, Sven. "Cotton and the US South: A Short History." *Plantation Kingdom: The American South and its Global Commodities*. (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016), 40-41.

⁴⁶ Miller, *The Needle's Eye*, 229.