

The Chronicle Quilts — Farm Life (1932), Wild Flower (1933), Native Bird (1934), Three Little Pigs (1937), and International (1938)

by Bridget Jolly

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Known to many readers as 'Our leader'—Elizabeth George guided the *Chronicle* quilt competitions to 1937, and also conducted 'The Woman's World' in the *Advertiser*. Advertiser Newspapers Ltd produced the *Chronicle* newspaper (*Chronicle*, 22 April 1937, p.52).

THE *Adelaide Chronicle* newspaper (*Chronicle*) was issued from 1858 to 1975. During the 1930s, priced at six pence and directed to country readers, its 'City to Country' section had pages on Practical Home Advice, Of Interest to Women, What Outback Women are Thinking, Cheerful Letters from Pen Friends, Messsages from Near and Far, and Mutual Help Among Women Readers. In conjunction with these, the paper ran important quilt competitions. The first appeared in the year the *Australian Women's Weekly* was first published, in June 1932, when the Great Depression had deepened over Australia. In addition to the hardships of the Depression, poliomyelitis ('infantile paralysis') emerged as another challenge first with the Victorian epidemic in 1937-1938, and Australia's involvement in a European war threatened.

It is highly likely that the Great Depression coupled with concern over European political developments turned the newspaper's choice of quilt motifs to a national focus (the wildflower and native bird patterns), and soon after to an outward-looking international theme.

The Great Depression first affected Australia's agriculture, and its effects were worsened by the State's drought of 1931, for which the Outback Relief Appeal was instituted. In the same year South Australia's Back to the Land Movement provided a greater sympathy and

understanding of rural hardships, and proposed intensive primary production through settlement by the unemployed on small holdings.

‘Making ends meet’

When the Farm Life quilt was published in 1932, the *Chronicle* offered a total of £12 in competition prizes: for an open section and one for girls under 18 years (for a single bed quilt). The first prize was £3, second prize £2, and five shillings were awarded for four very highly commended exhibits in each section. The *Chronicle* offered these prizes throughout the 1930s.

From August 1931 the government declared the weekly wage for South Australian male wage-earners with a wife and three children to be £3.3.0, for females, £1.11.6. A full-time work week could be 46 hours, a nine-hour day. The basic wage of the 1930s was reduced by some 10 per cent; in 1932, the male wage was a reduction by some £2 from the rate of five or so years earlier.¹ The *Chronicle* did not exaggerate in saying its prizes were very valuable.

‘Something out of nothing’.

The Women’s Pages of the *Chronicle* were an eagerly awaited communication. Readers wrote letters about their lives on the land, were grateful to receive recipes, sympathy, and useful advice about how to relieve chilblains or transfer the quilt patterns.

After the loan books were read, correspondence lessons completed, the crosswords finished, and arithmetic exercises in school text books accomplished, the quilt competitions presented a welcome challenge during the Depression decade, especially for rural folk. Some women could not afford the library subscription to continue their reading, and one *Chronicle* reader saved the Wildflower patterns to work a pair of curtains when she could afford the material: ‘I am all impatient to begin them now’, she wrote, ‘but when one has to carry a couple of nails in one’s purse to make a jingle, new curtains are out of the question.’ Another reader remembered the time when ‘Sunday dinner [was] a pudding made of flour and milk’, and my children ‘wondered why mummy had tears in her eyes.’

When pattern no. 16, the sweet-scented boronia, was published, a letter lamented that ‘there would be many more quilts worked if the farm women did not have to help with the cows, wash the separator, and make butter. I should love to work a quilt, but time will not allow, as I do all my own dairy work, bake bread ... and also grow most of our own vegetables.’ Had she the time, she mused, she ‘would choose white linen, and work the flowers in their natural colours’.² The published quilt patterns were also suitable to be worked as wall hangings, for cushions, and curtains.

Much helpful advice arose from the year 1932: suggestions for making hand-hooked rugs; plaiting hay-bale binder twine to make door mats; a variety of ways to cook the often staple meat of kangaroo and euro cutlets and undercut; skin treatment for the rash attending the mice plague; decorations for ‘dumpy cushions’ (poufs); soap-making hints; and how to

¹ Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, *Official Year Book of the Commonwealth of Australia*, no. 25, 1932, Canberra, p.789. The weekly wage was liable to fluctuation. By June 1932, Australia’s recorded unemployment was 28 per cent; SA.....

² “‘Chronicle’ Reader for Thirty Years’, *Chronicle*, 20 April 1933, p.61.

fashion kitchen utensils from tin and wire, and the myriad uses for 'bagging', hessian, jute or cotton sugar and flour bags. A reader from Murray Town—like many country women, made sugar bags into towels, curtains for her bathroom door that were trimmed with cretonne, cushions for the kitchen chairs, a pad to kneel on while washing the floor, and a bag towel for oven use. 'There is always another towel down in the cow yard, and when we wash our hands between each cow, we use the sugar bag.' 'I cut scraps of material, one inch wide and two inches long, and sew on a sugar bag, which has been already bound around with cretonne, and they make nice mats for the floor.'³

In winter 1934, a country woman wrote that she had dyed sugar bags in Condys crystals, 'very good for rough wear. On some we worked the animals from the Farm Life Quilt,' but not for competition. A different kind of stitching was by Mrs P.J. Scholz from Buchanan, Eudunda, who by 1942 had collected all the *Chronicle* Women's Pages and sewed them into books which of course contained all the quilt patterns.⁴

The Royal Show home industries and crafts display in 1934 was recommended to women to lighten household tasks: 'Women with an economical turn of mind' found interest in dresses made for less than 7/6d, rugs made from wool scraps, stencilled curtains, and a tea cosy fashioned from 'petals of silk oddments'.⁵

In 1934, a reader described her home, a 'Government shed', enclosed with iron, with no lining, partitioned with iron, that was almost unbearable in summer, 'as one must cook bread and meals', and in winter so cold that she needed to cover all sorts of things to make thick rugs. She asked, 'Could someone send me odds and ends for coverings?'⁶ With her family she probably lived on government-subsidised poultry farm under the Employment Promotion Council's social service scheme instituted in 1932.

One very lonely *Chronicle* voice asked if some readers and writers could please send some recipes that don't require 'much butter, eggs and milk, as I have to buy all these ... Could some readers write again about making things not to cost more than 1/6 from a sugar bag?' She hoped she was 'not asking too much.'⁷

The 'Curiosity Quilt'—the Farm Life Quilt (1932)

The first instructions were published in March 1932. Because of the many enquiries, from Queensland, West Australia, and South Australia's country districts about the Farm Life quilt the *Chronicle* office name for this first quilt was the 'curiosity quilt', its popularity causing the Royal Show to make quilts entered for competition a special feature in the home industries section in September.⁸ The Home Industries Hall was completed at the showgrounds in September 1928

The Farm Life patterns were introduced in the *Chronicle*, 10 March 1932 (on sale on Thursday). Or, Farm Life first in *Chronicle* of 31 March 1932? The images were those of the syndicated American quilt designer, Ruby Short McKim (1891-1976), whose name was at

³ 'Sugar Bag Uses', *Chronicle*, 12 January 1933, p.59.

⁴ 'New Writer's Novel Scrapbooks', *Chronicle*, 10 September 1942, p.27.

⁵ 'Housewives Interested in Exhibits', *Mail*, 6 October 1934, p.10.

⁶ 'Dream House', *Chronicle*, 24 May 1934, p.58.

⁷ 'Mr. Catastrophe's Wife', *Chronicle*, 14 July 1938, p.57.

⁸ Elizabeth George, 'The Woman's World', *Advertiser*, 5 April 1932, p.14.

the bottom of the full quilt design but who otherwise was not credited. The dotted lines of the alternate squares outlined a horn of plenty.⁹ McKim first published quilt patterns for the *Kansas City Star* in 1916, and designed many patterns for American newspapers.¹⁰ Her Farm Life quilt patterns were originally published as a series in 1930 and 1931 in the *American Omaha World-Herald*.¹¹

Each of the twenty-six square patterns (one the conventional filler) was printed full size in the newspaper, and use of carbon copying paper was advised to transfer it on to the square of material to be worked. If carbon paper was unavailable, the pattern could be transferred by rubbing the back of the newspaper with blue pencil and tracing it onto the material with a blunt point or hard pencil. The patterns could be worked in any material preferred by the needleworker, and could be appliqued, painted, or embroidered in 'wool, embroidery thread, or silk.' The entries, for which some freedom of visual interpretation was encouraged, were for under-18 years and all others, with a prize total of £12.

A reader from Ashville who was working the donkey square hoped to catch up with the published patterns in a fortnight's time. She worked her square in 'outline stitch on linene' but as she was nineteen years, too old for the junior section and 'wouldn't stand a show among all the older people', decided not to enter her quilt in the Show.¹² A needleworker from the Flinders Ranges offered her recipe for a pigment and binder for transferring the pattern to material: one teaspoon of blue (probably Reckitt's washing blue), one teaspoon of sugar, and one teaspoon of water, mixed well and marked over the pattern with a pen, dried well, then transferred with a warm iron to the material.¹³ In that same issue of the *Chronicle*, a cheerful reader from Moonta Bay described how she 'put patterns on everything' to lighten her days: 'For my kitchen I dyed hessian and sugar bags brown, and stencilled very gay patterns on them, and I made really nice Knock-about cushions of dyed sugar bags, and worked designs in wool and raffia. My shopping bag was much admired, but nobody suspected it was a flour bag dyed and worked with raffia!'¹⁴

Four women sent Farm Life patterns to a reader in West Leederville, Perth. The *Chronicle's* quilt competitions were soon taken up by interstate newspapers.

⁹ Margaret Rolfe, *Patchwork Quilts in Australia*, Vic., Greenhouse Publications, 1987, p.109. Rolfe wrote that as quilting was not 'a well-known craft', the *Chronicle* suggested embroidery to Australians. This seems unlikely ...

¹⁰ <http://www.britannica.com/RubyMcKim>

¹¹ www.onlinequilter.com/Galleries/RubyMcKim/FarmLifeQuilt/tabid/263/Default.aspx.

¹² 'Making Farm Life Quilt', *Chronicle*, 30 June 1932, p.56. Linene was a plain weave cotton fabric finished to imitate linen.

¹³ 'Farm Quilt and Other Hints', *Chronicle*, 30 June 1932, p.56.

¹⁴ 'Gay Patterns Everywhere', *Chronicle*, 30 June 1932, p.56.

Dear Elizabeth George—

After thinking many times that I would like to write you, I am at last doing so. Like most others, who take an interest in your pages, and live in the bush or outback, I have received much help and pleasure from them, and wish to thank all for the cheery, helpful letters,

I am looking forward with great interest to the quilt patterns, and hope to be able to make one, as I am very fond of needlework and do all our sewing and the mending! It's mend, mend, mend, these times, until there is little of the original article left; yet somehow I always feel rather proud of a well-mended garment—there is something in making it last twice as long, equal to making "two blades of grass grow in place of one," don't you think?

Just an idea re mending. One gets a collection of small traycloths, runners, &c., that are past "their first youth" at any rate. I use these up by sewing them on to pillow cases when they are beginning to wear. The children love them, and it doubles the life of the slip, and uses up the other article as well.

to have a garden; I think a garden makes the poorest home look "homely," don't you? I think you are an admirer of the black and white magpie, aren't you? He is my favorite bird. Parrots and cockatoos may have gayer plumage, but the magpie is such a neat well-groomed looking fellow, and his carolling on moonlight nights just carries me away to some pleasant place where the elves do the dish-washing and breadsetting after tea.

Somebody is asking, "Who it outback?" I am, I think. No wireless, no telephone, P.O. 5 miles away, school 8 miles, and church about 20 miles. Mail twice a week.

Now could any one tell me how to make date jam, it has a packet of jelly crystals in it I think, but I cannot remember the other quantities.—Yours sincerely,

"Zanzibar."

Part of two letters from Elizabeth George's readers (left, 'Lots of Mending', *Chronicle*, 21 April 1932, p.55; right, 'Thrilled with the Farm Quilt', *Chronicle*, 21 April 1932, p.56)

The Awards

The twenty quilts entered in the Farm Life competition at the Show came from Caltowie, Bordertown, Elliston, Terowie, Naracoorte, Quorn, Milang and Narridy, among others places. Mrs J.M. Laragy from Narridy, Mid North of South Australia, won first prize and Mrs Huppatz from Eurelia won second. The quilts of Misses M. Sandow, A.C. Nitschke, and D. Hassam and Mrs A.J. Stevens were very highly commended.¹⁵ Minetta Huppatz (1915-1987) won the junior section (illustrated in the *Chronicle*, 31 August 1932, p.20). The *Chronicle* of the week of 14 September 1932 illustrated the quilts that won first and second honours.

Mrs Laragy used alternating blue and orange squares and silk for embroidery, achieving a 'deftness in shading and sheen on the animals.' Mrs Huppatz introduced 'exceptionally good quilting' in the conventional design squares, and generally a freedom for imagination and use of both outline stitchery and bolder satin stitch made the winning quilts special; 'imagination ran riot with the gay embroidery silks for the scarecrow and a garden of stitchery blooms.'¹⁶ Can't mean flowers in the garden??

¹⁵ 'Show Judging. Farm Life Quilt Awards. Mother and Daughter Win Prizes', *Advertiser*, 8 Sep 1932, p.6.

¹⁶ 'Show Judging. Farm Life Quilt Awards. Mother and Daughter Win Prizes', *Advertiser*, 8 Sep 1932, p.6.

Several quilts were sent in for the under 18 years section from Knight's Well, Buccleuch, Eurelia, Wentworth in NSW, Loxton, Alawoona, but unfortunately, only three quilts arrived in time for the judging. There were teething problems, and the time needed to complete this first quilt was somewhat experimental.

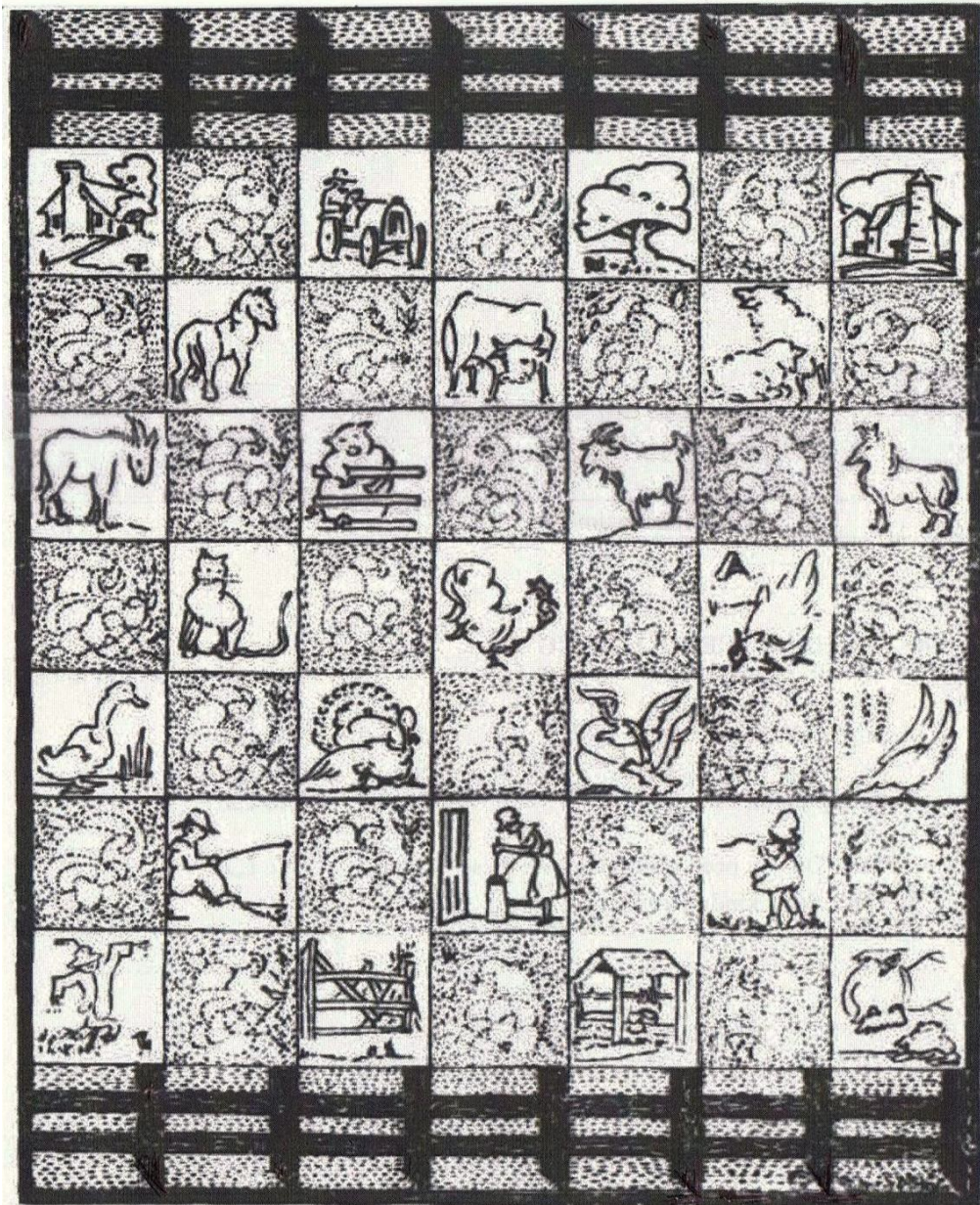
Minnie Huppatz, under 16 years, from Eurelia gained first prize for her quilt worked in darning stitch. A 'correspondence' quilt indeed, letters, stamps, and relied on others to buy her thread and post all to her. Second prize went to I. Williams of Wentworth, NSW, who worked the designs in outline stitchery and the alternate squares in blue and white Indian head.

Minnie Huppatz was a dedicated needleworker throughout her life. After her win, she became the sewing mistress at the Euralia school.¹⁷ Together with many of her show certificates, the National Museum of Australia holds her scrapbook or sewing workbook titled 'Correspondence School 1932' that contains sewing samples and illustration cuttings, and teachers' comments on her well-ordered collection (NMA: object no. 2000.0009.0027). Over many years she won prize and commendation certificates from numerous shows: at Clare, Wilmington, Orroroo, Enfield Progress Association, Royal Agricultural & Horticultural Shows, Adelaide, Laura, Agricultural Bureau of SA, Cradock and Quorn CWAs, Hawker, and many more.

The Farm Life patterns

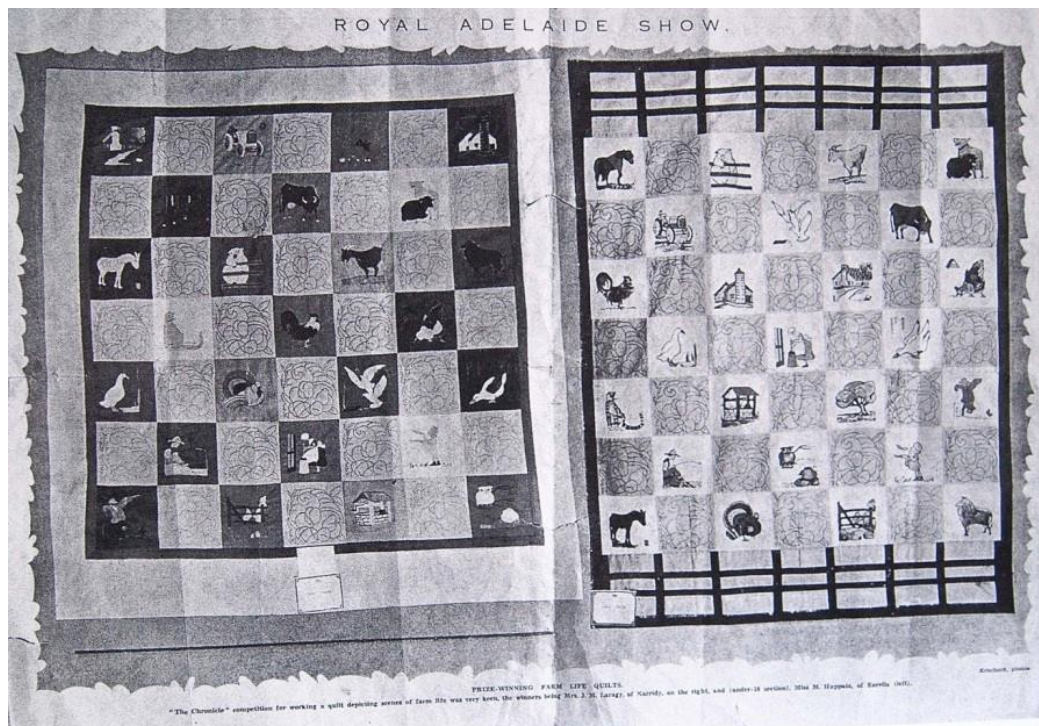
1. The Homestead (31 March 1932)
2. Tractor and farmer (7 April)
3. The Old Apple Tree
4. The Well Filled Barn
5. Dear Faithful Dobbin
- The Horn of Plenty Pattern for the alternate squares was published
6. The Friendly Cow
7. Sheep for Wool
8. Donkey
9. Pig
10. Billy the Goat
11. Loyal Shep, the Dog
12. The Family Cat
13. The Rooster
14. Busy Biddy Hen
15. Goose in the Pond
16. What a Turkey
17. Barn Pigeons
18. The Greedy Duck
19. Real Fishing
20. Butter from the Churn
21. Farm Flowers
22. The Scarecrow
23. [Mice viewing harvest stooks in the field]
24. Old Oaken Bucket
25. Farm Music [owl and frog]

¹⁷ Noris Iannou, *The Barossa Folk. Germanic Furniture and Craft Traditions in Australia*, Craftsman House, [Roseville East, NSW, 1995, p.284.



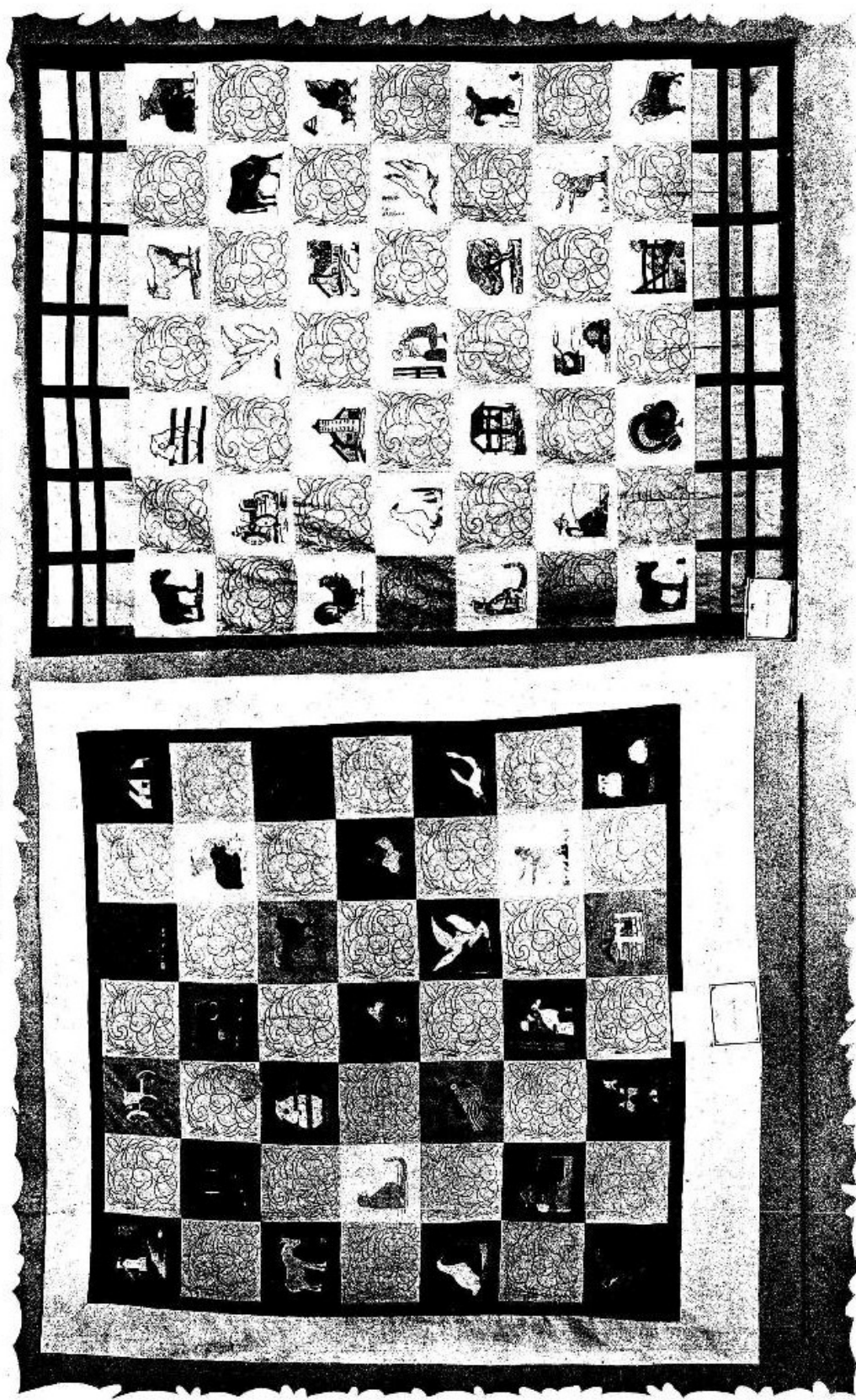
The full quilt pattern (*Advertiser*, 23 March 1932, p.8). Designer, Ruby Short McKim. By mid June the *Chronicle* allowed the top and bottom fence border to be optional.¹⁸

¹⁸ Rolfe, 1987, p.109.



Farm Life quilt by Minetta (Nettie) Huppertz of Eurelia (left), that won the under-18 section, now in the Nettie McColive Collection, National Museum of Australia (object no. 2000.0009.0001). It is backed with fine gingham in brown and bone colours. The winning quilt in the open section (right) was by Mrs Laragy of Narridy. 1932 (Gero p.181). Both were illustrated in the *Chronicle*, 15 September 1932, p.32. Second prize was won by I. Williams, Wentworth, NSW, with alternating squares of blue and white Indian head and worked designs in outline stitchery.

ROYAL ADELAIDE SHOW.



Grassland, 1930s

FRIZE-WINNING FARM LIFE QUILTS.
 "The Chronicle," competition for making a quilt depicting scenes of farm life was very keen the winners being Mrs. J. N. Lenz, of Naraco, on the right, and (under-13 section), Miss N. Huggins, of Burra (left).

Chronicle, 15 September 1932, p.32.



Nettie McColive (Minetta Huppatz, 1915-1987, married William McColive of Peterborough in May 1945. In 1946 she went to live in Prospect.¹⁹ (1986 *Prospect Community Exhibition*, exhibition booklet, November 1986, City of Prospect, n.p.)



Show judges inspecting the Farm Life quilt entered by Mrs. J.M. Laragy that won first prize (*Advertiser*, 8 September 1932, p.20).

¹⁹ 'Nettie McColive. Patch Work', 1986 *Prospect Community Exhibition*, exhibition 5 November–30 November 1986, City of Prospect.



Nettie Huppatz's Farm Life quilt that won first prize in the junior section. 1932. Alternate quilted and embroidered squares, the patterns on differently coloured headcloth. The conventional squares, the horn of plenty, were 'quilted in a back stitch onto padding ... the stitching does not go through all the layers of the quilt.'²⁰ The back of the quilt is made from a fine gingham material in brown and bone colours (National Museum of Australia: object no. 2000.0009.0001).

²⁰ Rolfe, *Patchwork Quilts in Australia*, p.110.

Nettie Huppatz at home with her Farm Life quilt (National Museum of Australia:
(<http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/highlights/farm-life-quilt>)



Nettie Huppatz. The Rooster. Detail of Farm Life Quilt
(<http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/highlights/farm-life-quilt>). Photo Matt Kelso



The necessarily repeated twenty-five transfers of the conventional pattern produced a problem that the *Queenslander* sought to solve. Because the one pattern traced several times became worn out, the newspaper printed it once more, suggesting that three or four tracings be made of it, and warning that it 'cannot be published again'; and because the plates of the printed designs had not been kept, they could not be re-printed for tardy entrants. In fact, the paper haughtily admonished, 'readers who missed them have only themselves to blame' and possibly tracings from more careful friends could be obtained.²¹

Australian Wild Flower Quilt (1933)

The pattern offer and competition that promised to be more unusual than the farm life quilt was first announced in late 1932 in the 'Christmas Chronicle', but which started on 12 January 1933. This was the all-Australian Wild Flower quilt of 25 images in nine inch (23cm) squares, and 24 conventional patterns, 49 squares in total, with a border of plain material. Royal Show in 1933 provided a special sub-section for the Chronicle wildflower quilt entries.

In her column 'The Woman's World', Elizabeth George promoted the *Chronicle's* initiative for all women but particularly those living on 'the edge of beyond'.²²

A *Chronicle* reader who grew up in saltbush country and by the 1930s lived in the Lower North, needed to use much imagination to choose the colours for her wildflowers, strange as they were to her. Without a car, music, electric light, or telephone, she nonetheless found time for her love of fancywork and knitting. Often, when 'stitching away at the quilt', she wondered how many others, 'perhaps hundreds of miles away from each other', were working away at the same pattern.²³

²¹ 'Quilt Competition', *Queenslander*, 6 April 1933, p.34.

²² *Advertiser*, 6 December 1932, p.8.

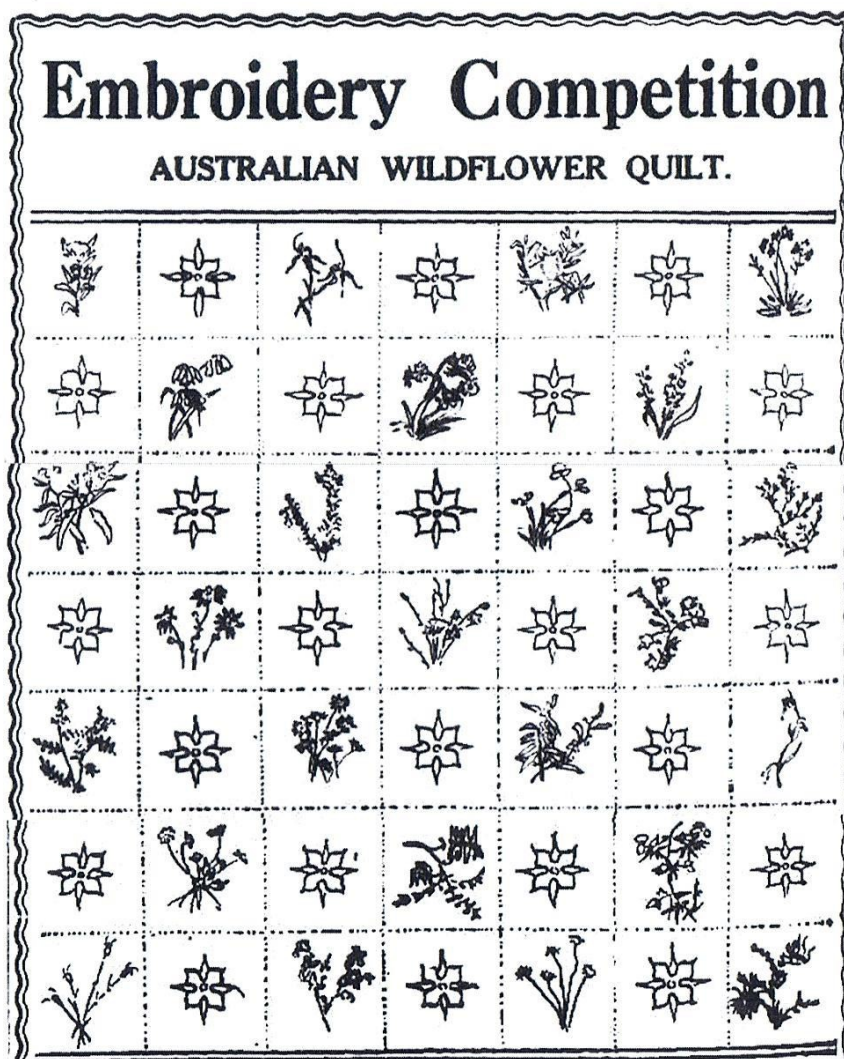
²³ 'Interest in Quilt', *Chronicle*, 2 March 1933, p.60.



Eighteen-year old Gwen Holder's (1915-1934) Wild flower quilt was awarded an honourable mention at the 1933 Royal Adelaide Show. Gwen Holder lived on the property Cortlinye, north of Kimba, Eyre Peninsula, SA. Cotton and embroidery, hand-pieced and embroidered. Backed but not padded or quilted. 184cm x 184cm (From A. Gero, 2008 p.182)

'What Is Women's Work?' asked the *Advertiser* in autumn 1933. Drive the teams during harvest, mend fences and machinery, and a girl on the Coorong who mends her father's fishing nets; recipes for cooking the yabbies living in the dam walls, to pickle olives and mutton, and they make remedial ointments. Now, the wildflower quilt will be given attention in the Women's Pages and in the country homes.²⁴

²⁴ Elizabeth George, 'The Woman's World. What is Woman's Work?', *Advertiser* 12 April, 1933, p.10.



The *Chronicle* Australian Wild Flower Quilt full pattern in a suggested arrangement (*Argus*, 19 Jan 1933, p.4; 'Design for Completed Quilt', *Chronicle*, 6 July 1933, p.61).

Quilters were advised that a single bed coverlet will use 18 squares plus the conventional squares in between, and 'a charming cot cover could be made of any six of the designs with plain squares in between.' The squares could be arranged however makers wished, so long as the conventional square divided each flower.

The 14 July was the last day to enter the quilt in the Show.

At the 1933 Royal Show, fifty-one Wild Flower quilts, that came from 'women from all over Australia',²⁵ were displayed on the north and east walls of the Hall. They came from Wentworth and Medindie, NSW, Koolunga, Peebinga, Milang, Lipson, Eudunda, Edithburgh, Broken Hill, Pinnaroo, and from more rural areas, as well as from suburban Prospect, Goodwood, and Forestville, South Australia. Only one person set the squares in a diamond design. Miss D. Hassam won first prize with a quilt of biscuit-toned tussore silk, which was outstanding for her use of many needlecraft stitches: button-hole lace filling, 'cable stitch, satin stitch, wallachian stitch',²⁶ and a fascinating use of double buttonholing for the stems of many of the flowers'. Although she was not named in the paper, Miss Ida Summers's quilt

²⁵ 'Wild Flowers in Needlework', *Advertiser*, 6 Sep 1933, p.12.

²⁶ A simple stitch like button-hole is the keynote and the primary feature that characterises Wallachian embroidery.

was described as being of white book muslin lined with buttercup yellow muslin. The conventional pattern was 'lace buttonholed' in white, and spoke-stitching defined the squares.

When Ida Summers's wildflower quilt was exhibited in 1988, it was described as demonstrating 'techniques far beyond the basic instructions issued by the Chronicle ... [and] in the finesse and subtlety of the shading, the use of shadow work and coral knots for the interpreted designs and the employment of random straight stitch for every other flower, it was a 'most extraordinary achievement.'²⁷ Another praised quilt was a green and biscuit 'wool-a-down', the wool prepared from sheep on the home farm.²⁸

A reader in Manitoba, Canada, having made the Farm Life quilt and sent it to England, wrote for the complete set of Wild Flower patterns.²⁹

Ida Summers worked her un-padded wholecloth quilt in white cotton voile with alternating designs of Australian wildflowers in multi coloured cottons and shadow work. The wild flowers are in simple straight stitches; the flower motif is in shadow work.³⁰



Ida Summers. Wild Flower Quilt. 201cm x 191cm. Embroiderers' Guild of SA Museum: 1987-039. Detail (right)

²⁷ Elizabeth Beck, *Needles and pins. South Australian embroidery and needlework, 1864-1988*, exhibition catalogue, Carrick Hill, 1988, cat. No. 59. Coll. Embroiderers' Guild. The catalogue describes the quilt as stranded cotton thread on organdie, the sections joined by spoke stitching and backed with buttercup yellow fine linen; dimensions: 200cm x 163cm.

²⁸ *Advertiser*, 5 September 1933, p.11; also in *Chronicle*, 7 September 1933.

²⁹ *Advertiser*, 12 April 1933, p.10.

³⁰ Rolfe and Moore, 1993, p.40.

Ida Mavis Summers (born in August 1908) studied at the School of Arts and Crafts in about 1924-1927: she took Object Drawing, Antique Drawing and Painting, Lettering and Showcard Writing. She later taught dressmaking and needlework at Thebarton Girls' Technical High School, and became a judge of Adelaide Royal Show needlework.³¹

Miss Ida Summers worked for Jean Mattie of Terowie S.A. in the 1930s on a sheep station. Among her duties she helped the children with their correspondence lessons. During the war she joined the Air Force. She learnt painting/pencil and wash from Ruth Tuck.³²

Ida Summers's Service number was 107547, RAAF, NCO and other ranks. She was a member of a war-time Comforts Fund unit.

Some quilters embroidered the names of the flower on the squares; others scattered petals around the sides with a floral spray at the top and bottom.³³

The judging must have been difficult. Miss D. Hassam won first in the Wildflower quilt open section; Miss E.M. Brown, won second; and Miss E.V. Wilkin, Miss N. Angas, Mrs J.M. Laragy, Miss I.M. Summers, were very highly commended; Miss E. Justin, was highly commended; and Miss L.A. Klitcher, Miss Holder, and Miss S.D. McQuold were commended.

For the under-18 section for a quilt made from any 18 of the wild flower designs, Miss H. Dempsey and Miss G. Palmer and Miss J. Marvell won the top awards; Misses E. Newell, M. Huppatz, and N. McLeod were very highly commended.³⁴

³¹ See 'Judges for Industries at Show', *Advertiser*, 16 August 1952, p.12. In 1952, for example, Ida Summers judged with Miss Delma Spencer, Mrs J.E. Auricht, and Miss Joyce Larner ('Judges for Industries at Show', *Advertiser*, 16 August 1952, p.12).

³² The Curator, Embroiderers' Guild of SA Inc., 19/1/99.

³³ *Advertiser*, 5 Sep 1933, p.11 (also in *Chronicle*, 7 September 1933).

³⁴ 'Needlework of School Girls ...', *Advertiser*, 5 September 1933, p.11.

Interstate quilt competitions

In addition to announcements in Adelaide's *Advertiser*, and the patterns published regularly in the *Adelaide Chronicle*, the *Western Mail* of Perth, and the *Queenslander*, which announced the competition on 26 January 1933 and gave pattern no. 1, advising that for the quilt satin stitch will give a charming effect', 'The Woman's Realm' of the *Australasian* published a small complete design, and Melbourne's *Argus* also published the designs in 1933. The quilts in Brisbane were shown in the Women's Industries section, Royal National Association's exhibition in August 1933. The *Chronicle's* numbering of patterns was modified in some interstate publications of what became a modest national project, although quilt exhibitions were state-specific.



(*Argus*, 14 January 1933, p.8).

Competition details were published in the weekly *Queenslander*, in January 1933. Later in that month the materials required for a full size quilt were given: 2 yards for picture blocks, 4 yards for coloured fabric for alternate squares and border, 2 yards for bindings, and 15 skeins of embroidery thread in all the colours used. The last comment of the article was, 'Cut with economy. A thrifty worker has few scraps left.'³⁵ The Wild Flower Quilt was to reach the Brisbane office of the *Queenslander* by late July for judging in August 1933 by arrangement with the Royal National Association. The judges were to be those of the Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland. There were six entries in August 1933 of the 'Queenslander' Wild Life Quilt in the Home Industries area.

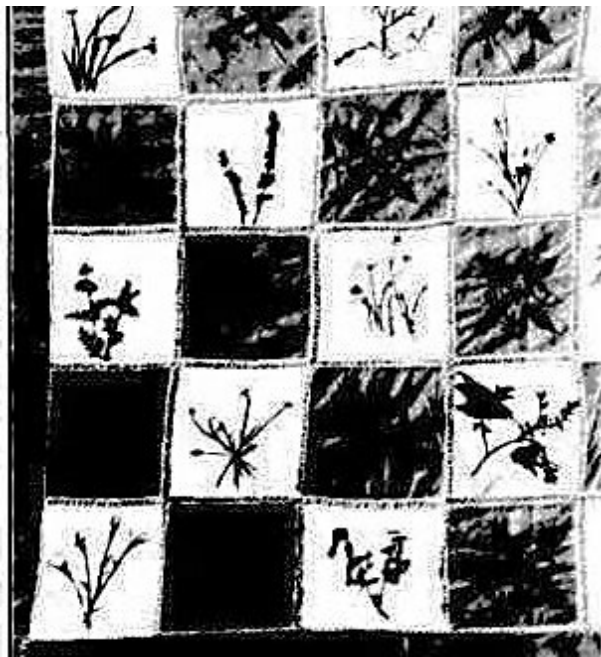
Queensland's Royal National Agricultural and Industrial Association

The National Agricultural and Industrial Association of Queensland was formed in 1875 and became 'Royal' from the early 1920s. The Association always aimed to promote the agricultural, pastoral and industrial resources of Queensland by holding an annual exhibition and trade shows, and primary industry competitions at the time of the annual event and at other times through the year.

³⁵ *Queenslander*, 26 January 1933, p.35.

In Queensland, intending competition entrants were from Brisbane, Gympie, Collinsville (Bowen District), Muckadilla, Dulacca, Booyal, Greenmount, and Wallaville among other widely separated locations.

No entries were received for the under 18 class in the Wild Flower Quilt competition. Mrs W.R. Crowley of Cleveland, won first prize (with designs on biscuit-coloured linen), Miss C. E. Buzacott of Brisbane won second prize (with alternate squares of green and biscuit ground); and the four 5 shilling prizes originally announced were combined as two 10 shilling prizes for the third and fourth winners: Miss Emily Buckley of Charters Towers and Miss M.P. Bell of Maryborough. Other notable quilts were one entirely in white linen, and one produced with alternate blue and white squares 'faggotted together with blue thread.'³⁶



Part of the third prize Wildflower competition quilt worked by Mrs Emily Buckley of Charters Towers, Queensland (*Queenslander*, 14 September 1933, p.28).

THE WILDFLOWER DESIGNS

Unlike the Farm Life quilt, the patterns for the subsequent two quilts appear to have been home-grown. To the interest in Australian flora and fauna engendered from the 1880s by Federation, the 1930s added much national natural scientific study and discovery. In Sydney, the artist Eirene Mort (1879-1977), who returned to Australia in 1906 from six years' study in London from 1899, 'designed extensively for embroidery'.³⁶ For three of those years in London she studied at the Royal School of Needlework, South Kensington. 'Through the Royal School of Art Needlework's employment service she gained a number of design jobs, the most important of which resulted in designs for textiles featuring Australian floral motifs

³⁶ 'Wildflowers', *Queenslander*, 17 August 1933, p.35.

³⁷ C. Menz, *Australian Decorative Arts 1820s-1990s: Art Gallery of South Australia*, p. 64.

for Liberty & Co. of London.³⁸ Although Margaret Rolfe says the Sturt pea and grevillea ‘were obviously copied from wildflower designs by Eirene Mort’, it is equally likely that the numerous renditions of the pea by Mort’s contemporary, Margaret Preston (1875-1963), provided the design. Likely also are the illustrations of a former School of Arts and Crafts student, later teacher, the artist Rosa Fiveash (1854-1938), who painted and exhibited her works of Australian flora from the 1880s.³⁹ Esmond George, husband of Elizabeth George (died 1953), was a painter of light, late impressionistic subjects and a ‘conservative art critic’.⁴⁰ His style equates comfortably with the flower drawings. Yet ‘Wild Flowers from the Mount Lofty Ranges South Australia’ of c.1900 to 1910, fourteen watercolour paintings (17.8 x 12.8 cm), in a similar style to the *Chronicle* drawings, might have been the model, perhaps more appropriately than other sources.⁴¹ The collection, now in the National Library of Australia, was formerly owned by a State Governor’s family, but who was the painter? We do not know with certainty who was the designer of the *Chronicle* patterns.



Wood and Metal Work in School of Design annual exhibition, October 1907, with metal repoussé tools in the foreground, and a Sturt Pea panel centre background (School of Design Art Club Magazine, 1907, UniSA Research Archive).

³⁸ Caroline Ambrus, compiler, *The Ladies' picture show. Sources on a century of Australian women artists*, Sydney, Hale & Iremonger, 1984.p.185.

³⁹ Rosa Fiveash illustrated *The Forest Flora of South Australia* (1882-1890) by John Ednie Brown (1848-1899) and Richard Sanders Rogers, *An Introduction to the Study of South Australian Orchids* (1911). Fiveash is credited with introducing china painting to Adelaide c. 1894, which she taught under H.P. Gill at the School of Design. An obituary is in the *Victorian Naturalist*, vol. 54, 1938.

⁴⁰ Paula Furby, 'Resurrecting a War Memorial', *Journal of the Australian War Memorial* (online at <<http://www.awm.gov.au/journal/j35/furby.asp>>).

⁴¹ Sketchbook 'Wild flowers from the Mount Lofty Ranges South Australia', ca. 1900-1914 (<<http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an6235075>>).

In January 1933 the *Chronicle* stirred women's interest to embroider the wildflower patterns in wool or silk, advising that satin stitch was better than a simple outline stitch, and encouraged them in their 'leisure moments' to tackle the first design, the 'Pentecostal tongue of flame', the waratah from the NSW bush.⁴²



Pattern No. 1--Waratah

No. 1. Waratah (*Telopea speciosissima*). The waratah flower could be worked in red, orange, or pale yellow, and the foliage in grey. The *Chronicle* advised that the 'small people of the household' will like to colour the pattern in crayon or paint for their own work.

The twenty-five patterns, of nine inch (23cm) squares could be embroidered, painted, or be in appliqué. The quilt materials could be Fuji silk, muslin, the rugged and firm fabric crash linen (usually of plain weave, sometimes twill), linene, woollen fabrics, or Britway, or indeed any other material. The alternate blocks could be quilted with self colours.⁴³ A pretty colour scheme, the newspaper suggested, would be deep cream or pale beige for the flower squares, pale green linen for the repeat design of plain squares set in draught board fashion, and for the border. A border could be added or omitted; but a deep band at head and foot was necessary. Material was best cut to size in cardboard; squares must be cut with the weave, and quilters were advised to 'Draw a thread to straighten cloth when necessary and cut very carefully'.

In April 1933 a reader from Tatiara asked if she could use different stitches for her patterns: she was assured that any fancy stitches were allowed by the judges.⁴⁴ Another reader that same month, from Nangkita, noted that eight of the twelve patterns already printed were 'wild flowers that we gather in our own scrub'. She painted the designs on unbleached calico, as she had little time for fancywork, and could complete two squares in an afternoon.⁴⁵

⁴² 'Novel Craft for Country Women', *Chronicle*, 12 January 1933, p.57.

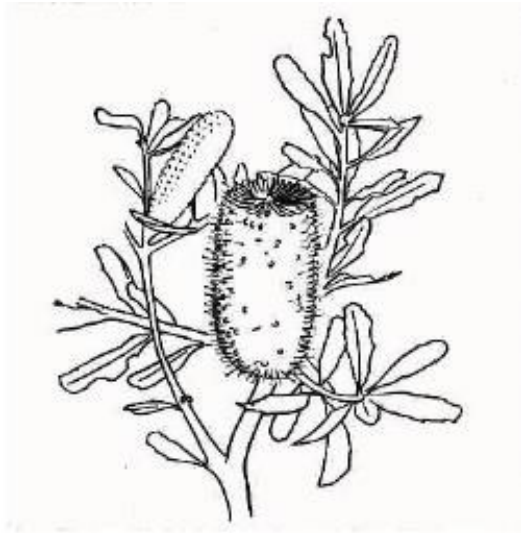
⁴³ 'From Here, There and Everywhere', *Adelaide Chronicle*, 5 January 1933. Britway cotton cloth, the no-fade, 'Wonder Wash Fabric', appeared on the Australian market in the 1920s. Britway cambric, lightweight and of plain weave, was known by its French name, *batiste*, especially when used for embroidery.

⁴⁴ 'White Ants in the Garden', *Chronicle*, 27 April 1933, p.63.

⁴⁵ 'Painted Quilt', *Chronicle*, 13 April 1933, p.64.



No. 2. Spider Orchid ('Crafts and Hobbies for Busy Women', *Adelaide Chronicle*, 19 January 1933, p.60). This was pattern no. 3 in the *Queenslander*.



No. 3. Bottle Brush ('Australian Wild Flower Quilt Pattern', *Chronicle*, 26 January 1933, p.61). The Bottle Brush genus *Callistemon*, is of 34 species.



No. 4. Trigger Plant ('Crafts and Hobbies for Busy Women', *Chronicle*, 2 February 1933, p.60). The Trigger plant is of the genus *Stylidium* (from the Greek for column or pillar)



No. 5. Christmas Bell (*Western Mail* (Perth), 18 May 1933, p.6). This is *Blandfordia nobilis*.



No. 6. Mountain daisy



No. 7. Blue Orchid



No. 8. Gum Blossom



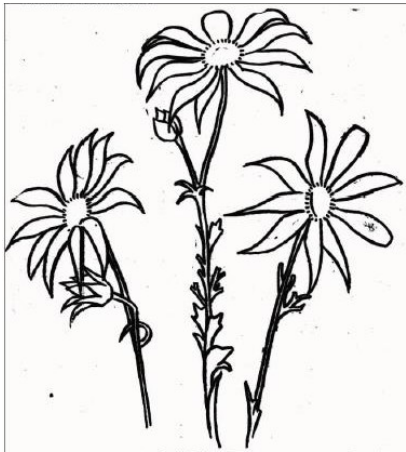
No. 9. Tetratheca (Native Heath)



No. 10. Short Purple Flag. Possible genus *Patersonia*. There are about 20 species of native iris or flag in Australia.



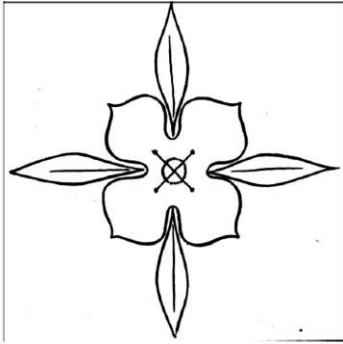
No. 11. Tea Tree



No. 12. Flannel Flower (*Actinotus helianthi*)



No. 13. Bluebell. (*Western Mail* (Perth),
13 July 1933, p.22).



No. 14. The Australian Wild Flower Quilt 'conventional' design for alternate squares was based on the passion flower (*Chronicle*, 2 Feb 1933, p.6). It was to be worked in outline only, and to relieve the flower designs in a draught board style with the pattern squares, and worked in same colour, although preferably deeper, than the base material.



No. 15. Golden Pea Bush.



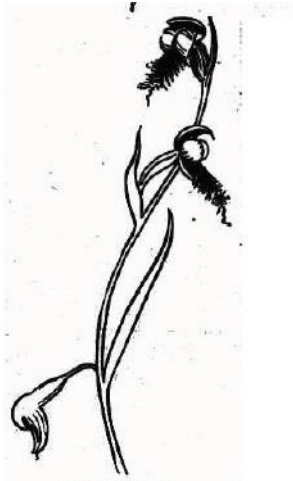
No. 16. Boronia (*Western Mail*, 3 August 1933)



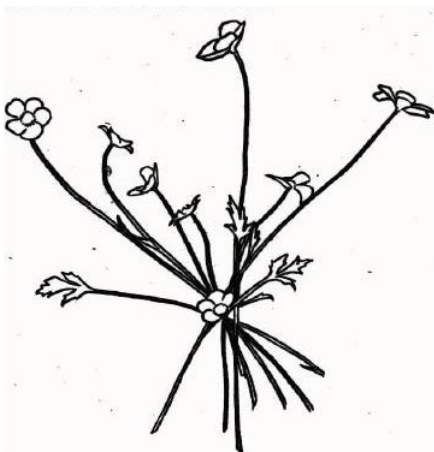
No. 17. Everlasting (*Western Mail* (Perth), 10 August 1933, p.24)



No. 18. Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*). (*Chronicle*, 4 May 1933, p.61).



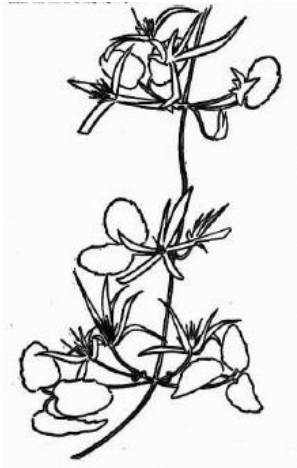
No. 19. Bearded Orchid (*Chronicle*, 11 May 1933).
A reader advised that to remove the black transfer mark from the material it should be soaked for a day in water with some 'hyperox'. This was possibly a shortened brand name for a surface disinfectant similar to hydrogen peroxide.



No. 20. Buttercup (*Ranunculus*). *Chronicle*, 18 May 1933)



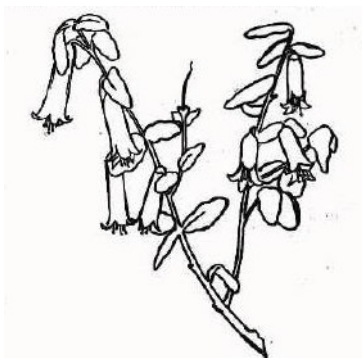
No. 21. Sturt's Desert Pea (*Chronicle*, 25 May 1933, p.61).



No. 22. Clematis. Australia has about 300 species within the buttercup family (*Chronicle*, 1 June 1933, p.62).



No. 23. Greenhood Orchid (*Western Mail* (Perth), 21 September 1933, p.26. The genus, *Pterostylis*, derives from the Greek for 'winged column'. (*Chronicle*, 8 June 1933, p.61).



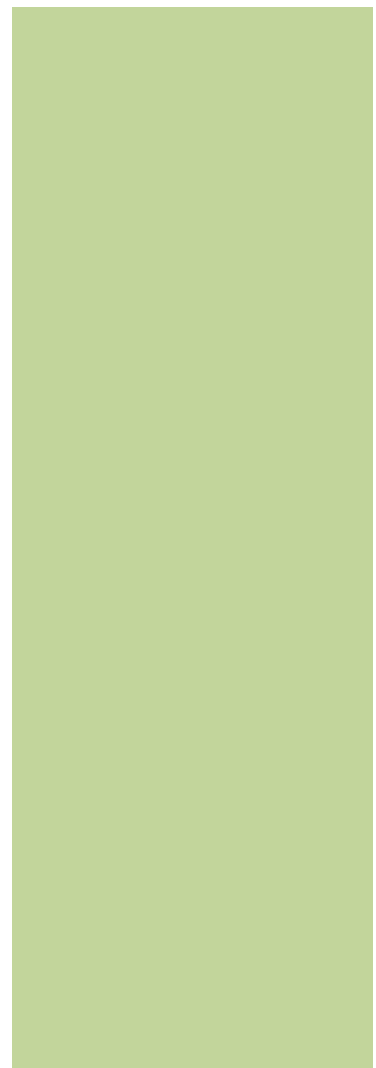
No. 24. Native Fuchsia. This is probably *Correa reflexa*. (*Chronicle*, 15 June 1933, p.61).



No. 25. Native Pincushion (*Chronicle*, 22 June 1933, p.61).



No. 26. Grevillea, the last of the patterns. Possibly *Grevillea banksii* (*Chronicle*, 29 June 1933, p.61).





Australian Wildflower Quilt by Minetta Huppatz, Eurelia. 1933. 168cm x 168cm. (Rolfe, 1987, plate 29). Collection: National Museum of Australia, Nettie McColive Collection, 2000.0009. 0032.

This *Chronicle* wildflower quilt has alternating squares of green and fawn headcloth embroidered with Australian wildflowers on the fawn squares and stylised floral motifs on the green squares. It is bordered and backed with the same green material. It is padded. Size: 235cm x 153cm.

The prizewinning *Chronicle* quilts from the previous Spring Royal Show were to be exhibited at a handicrafts exhibition at Shell House, North Terrace, in autumn 1933 that included craft work from disabled English soldiers and from local lads at Keswick Hospital.⁴⁶

In 1936, for sale at the Women's Work Depot 'Among attractive individual gifts ... was a bedspread, worked with Australian wildflowers in wool embroidery on a buff ground.'⁴⁷



Quilt worked by Miss Elsie Blake (1885-1967) of Rocky Farm, Bull's Creek, SA, from Australian wildflower patterns published in the *Adelaide Chronicle*, 1933. The 153cm x 235cm quilt was later owned by Margaret Rolfe, Canberra, and is now in the collection of the Embroiderers' Guild of SA Museum: 1988.016.

What Bird is That?—the Native Bird quilt (1934)

There was some small recovery from the early Depression years by 1934, but making do, enduring the makeshift, and making the most of things persisted for many people

in day-to-day living, and the mutual help among women readers of the *Chronicle* and other papers continued and strengthened. For example, women gave clues to others on making hooked rugs from old woollen garments, and on how to make a needle of fencing wire with a niche filed one end like a crochet hook, the other end on a piece of round wood for a handle.

Several *Chronicle* readers suggested the bird quilt to follow the flower quilt, and women readers enthusiastically voted for it. The twenty-five Native Bird quilt designs were published weekly on Thursdays from 8 February 1934. The full bird pattern with the artist's suggested placement for light and bold balance was in the *Chronicle*, 5 April 1934. Again, the designs were best cut to size by means of a cardboard template.

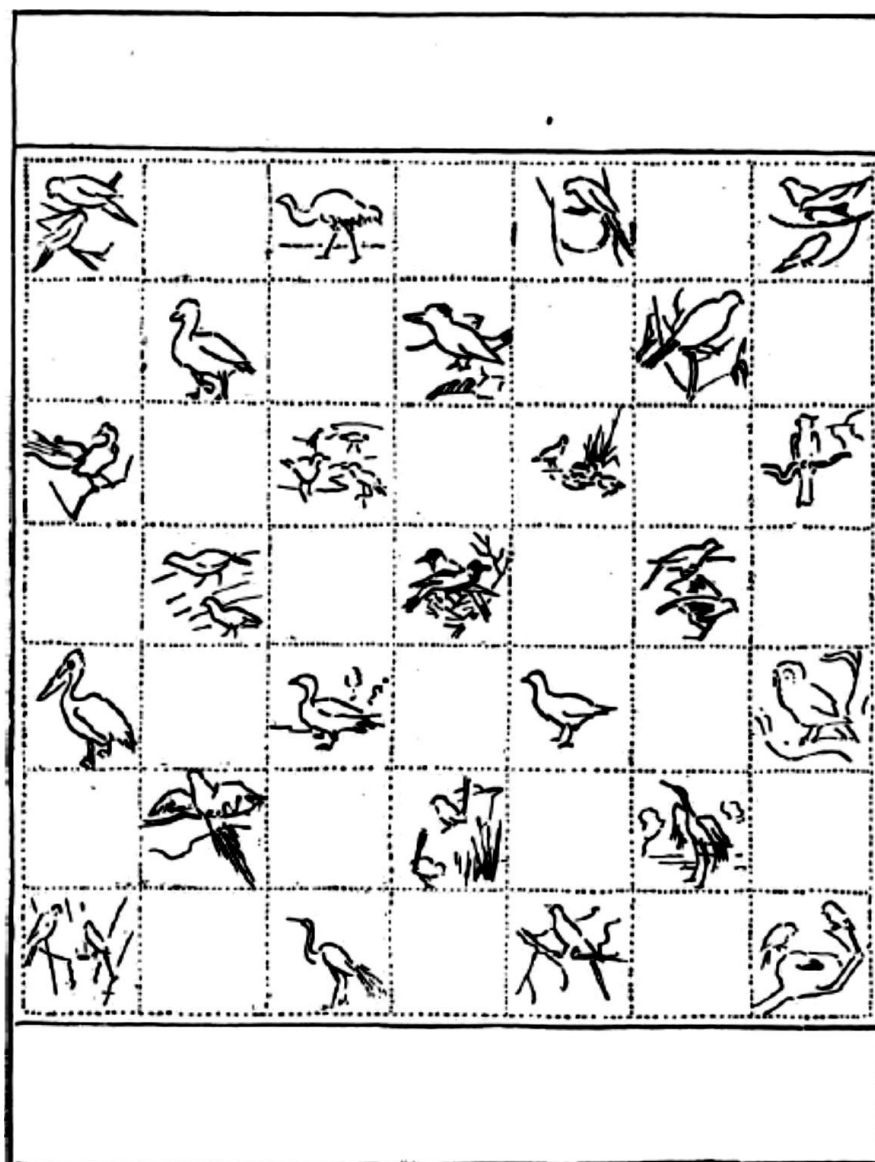
Twenty-nine bird quilts were exhibited at the 1934 Show, three of which were painted. Mrs B.O. (Emily) McKay's green linen quilt with paler alternating squares with a drawn-thread

⁴⁶ 'Handicraft Show Attractions', *Advertiser*, 26 April 1933, p.8.

⁴⁷ 'Up-to-date ideas in Shopping for Overseas Christmas Gifts', *Advertiser*, 21 Oct 1936, p.8.

design was judged to be outstanding, having even, closely-worked stitches and careful shading of the bird plumage. She won first prize. Emily McKay's quilt is in the collections of the Embroiderers' Guild of SA. Mrs W. Stafford's cream linen quilt was a close second prize winner. She used cream linen with 'vandyke edging' joining the squares. Although most quilters used satin and outline stitch, the birds of one quilt, in jade silk, were embroidered 'in a combination of all the simple stitches known to needlecraft—fish scale, chain, leather, herringbone, darning and lace' in the finest silk thread, and thousands of 'extra stitches buttonholed the deep scalloped border'. Among further materials, other competitors applied cotton broderie and very fine wools. Other prize and Very Highly Commended entries were from of Mrs S.H. Dempsey, and Misses E.V. Wilkins, G.F. Hancock, and F. Bell.

Miss N. McLeod's single bed cover won the under 18 years section, and Miss J. Marvell won second prize.⁴⁸



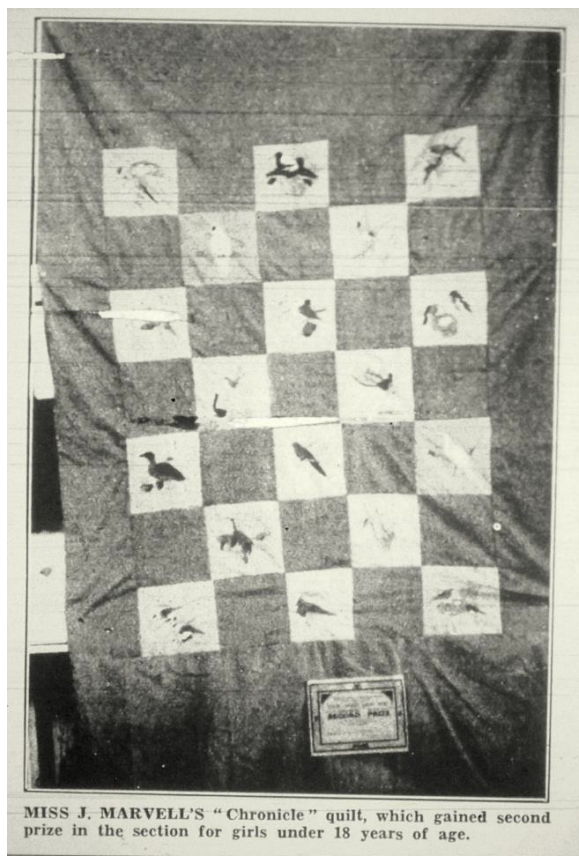
⁴⁸ 'Women's Work at Royal Show', *Advertiser*, 28 September 1934, p.18; *Chronicle*, 11 October 1934, p.46.

A suggested arrangement for the Native Bird Quilt in the balanced placement of light and bold designs (*Chronicle*, 5 April 1934, p.55)

The 1934 bird quilt patterns were of magpies, plover, pelican, Rosella parrots, Princess Alexandra Parrot [the Princess Parrot or Queen Alexandra parrot], Black Ducks, Blue Wrens, Rainbow or Gouldian Finches, White Cockatoo, Mallee Fowl, Scarlet Breasted Robin, Budgerigar (Shell Parrot), Garrulous Honey Eater, Kookaburra, Spotted Bower Bird, King Parrot, White Egret, Native Companion, Spotted Ground Thrush, Bronzewing, Lyre Bird, Reed Warbler, and Cape Barren Goose.



First prize in the Australian Bird Quilt competition was won by Mrs. B.O. (Emily) McKay of Semaphore Park, South Australia. 165cm x 204cm. 1934. (Embroiderers' Guild Museum: M2013.003)



Miss J. Marvel's second prize quilt, girls under 18 section ("The Chronicle" Quilts at the Royal Show', *Chronicle*, 11 October 1934, p.46).

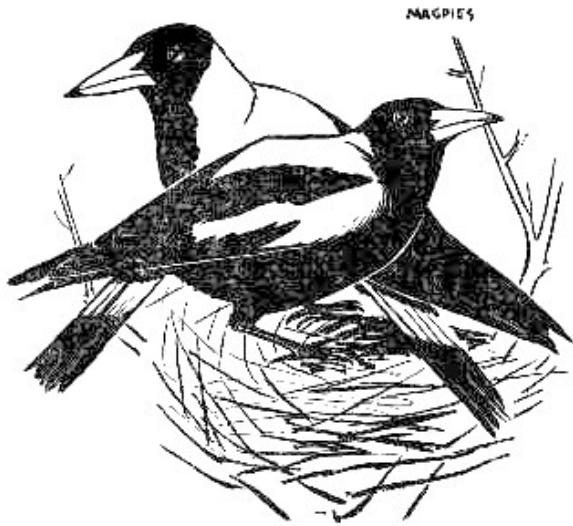
There were some problems

Some quilters' expressions were reined in by the newspaper. 'If colored appliqued designs are worked on the squares between the birds for the Native Bird Quilt, would it be eligible for competition in the Adelaide Show?' The answer was a decided no, only plain or quilted squares were to be used in between.⁴⁹

'One competitor disobeyed instructions by working a flower design in between the bird patterns. The majority ... left the alternate squares quite plain, while others added a small quilting design, in self colors ... and another placed squares of rucked and tucked pink silk in between. Three quilts were hand painted ... two others had a heavy silk fringe all round, another was worked in fine cotton thread, and another one in fine wool ... [The] first prize [quilt] was in two shades of green/?grey linen, the lighter tone forming the alternate squares and carrying a drawn-thread design and ... most exquisitely worked in tiny, even and closely stitched satin stitch, in colors that were as near to life as possible. Mrs. B.O. McKay was the winner.'⁵⁰

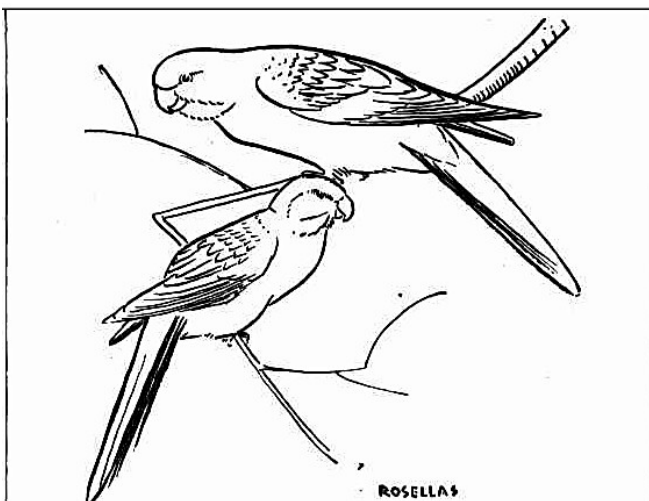
⁴⁹ 'Bird Quilt Query', *Advertiser*, 28 March 1934, p.10.

⁵⁰ 'Of Interest to Women', *Chronicle*, 4 October 1934, p.52.



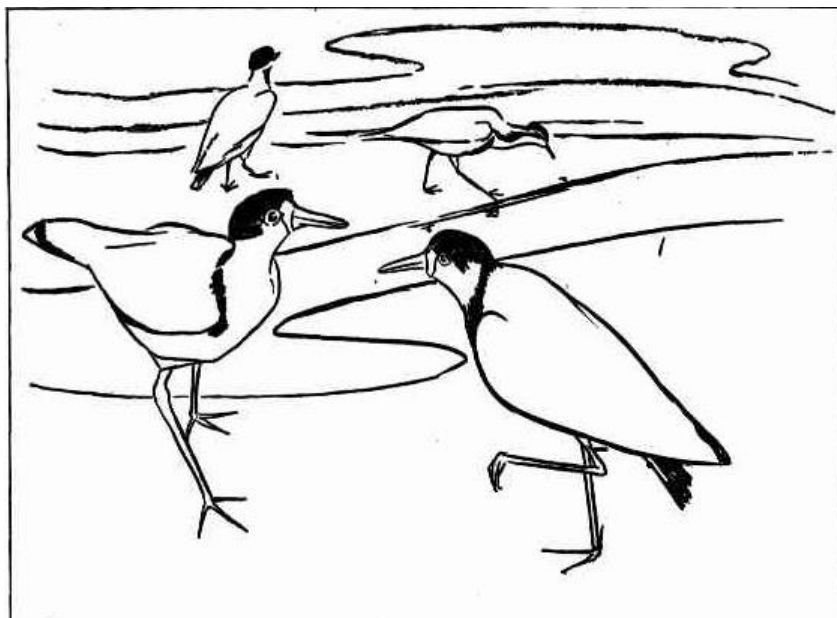
No.1. Magpies (*Chronicle*, 8 February 1934, p.53).

The first pattern was the emblematic Australian Magpie, two birds with their nest, which could be embroidered in wool or silk with outline or the preferred satin stitch.

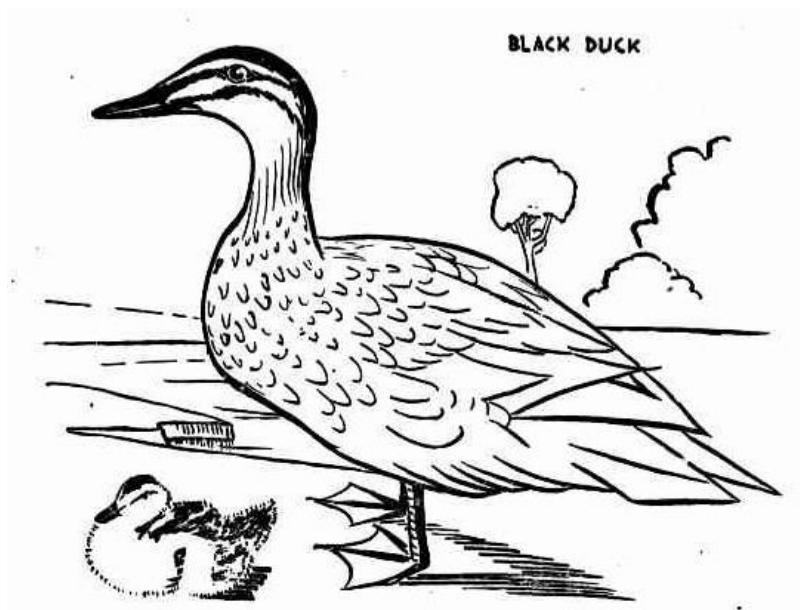




No. 2. Scarlet Rosella Parrots (15 February 1934, p.53)



No. 3. Plover (21 February 1934)

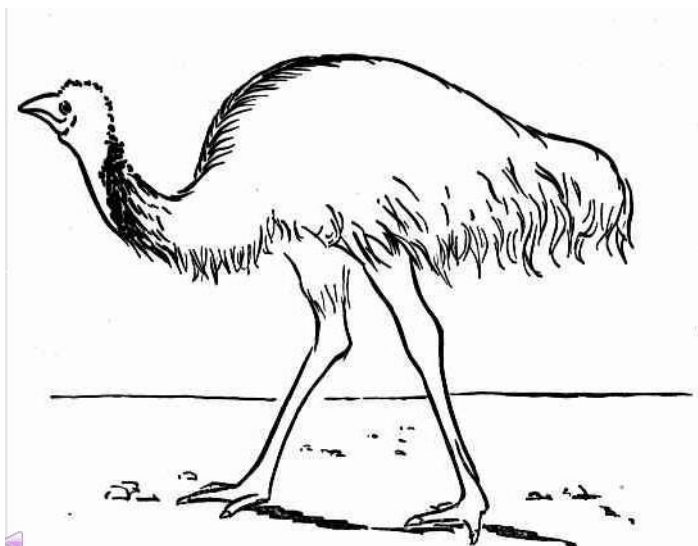


No. 4. Black Duck with duckling (1 March 1934, p.53).

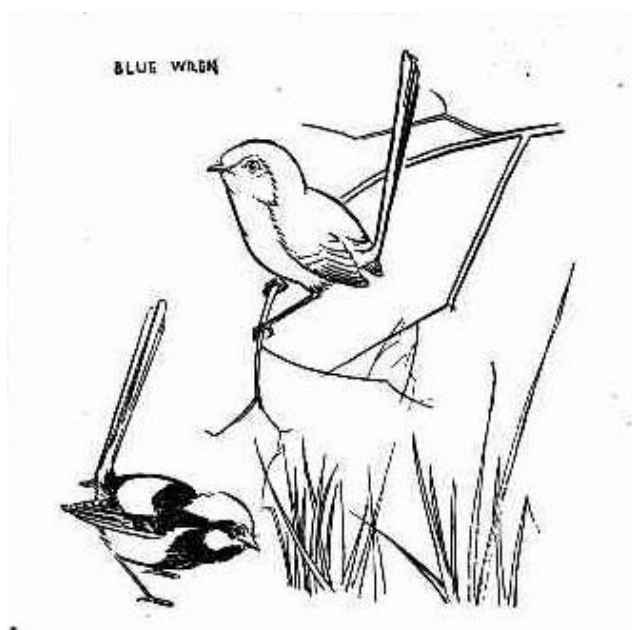


No. 5. Princess Alexandra Parrot (8 March 1934, p.53).

'Like Joseph's coat . . . This gay parrot has a blue-green head, an orange eye, with a black centre, and an orange beak. Beneath the pink throat is a grey breast. The first section of the underwing is bright green, and the quills are grey merging to black tips, but the lower corner of the wing is white. The feathers of the body bear the legs are bright red. The legs are grey. The tail feathers are pink, with black edges. The two longest tail feathers are black.'

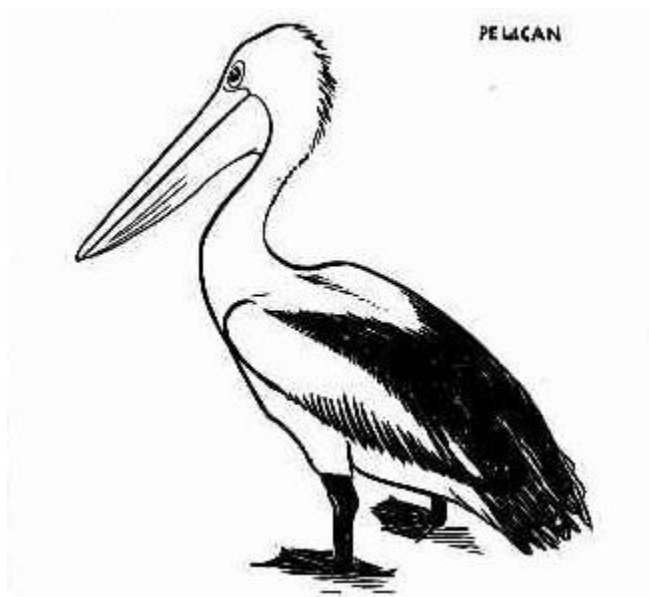


No. 6. Emu (15 March 1934, p.53). The emu is 'not noted for its good looks, but a little ingenious blending of colours by clever fingers will work wonders with even such an "ugly duckling."



No. 7. Mr. and Mrs. Blue Wren (22 March 1934, p.53)

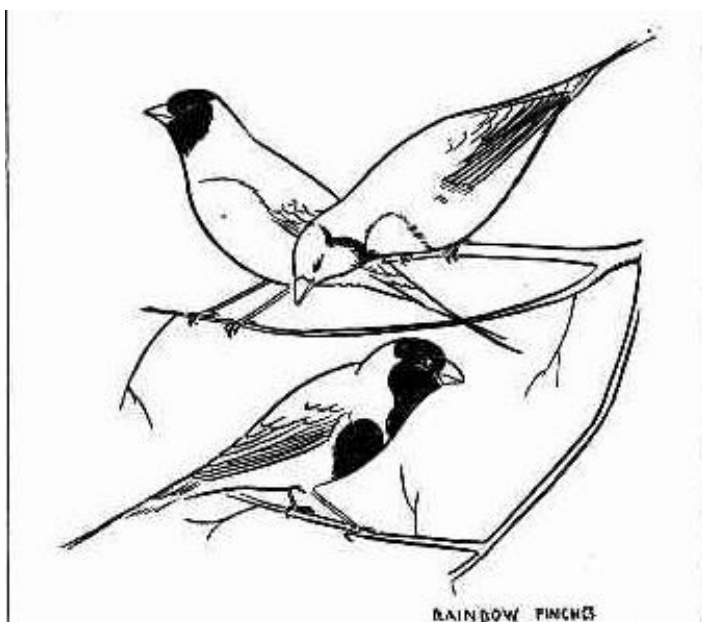
'Blue, orange, and black are the chief color points of popular Mr. and Mrs. Blue Wren . . . The male bird has a blue head and back; the rest of the head is black. Wing tips are white, the eye is orange with a black centre and a black spot underneath the eye. His bill and feet are orange. Mrs. Blue Wren is light brown on top of the body and white underneath.'



No. 8. Pelican (29 March 1934, p.53).

The pelican has white plumage with the exception of the black markings. The back of the neck and head is a grey smudge, the top of the beak is yellow, and lower jaw is slate blue. The eyes and eye rings are black and so are the feet.





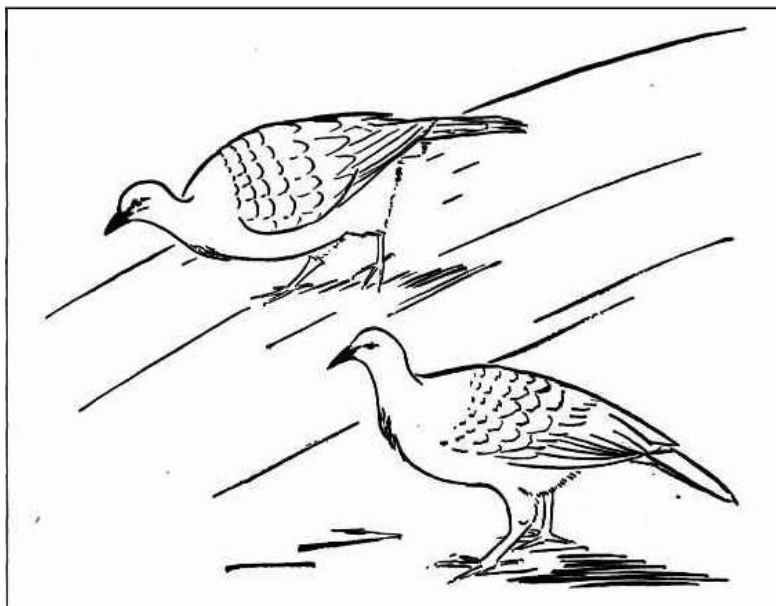
No. 9. Rainbow or Gouldian Finches (5 April 1934, p.54).

Beetee, standing in for the journalist Elizabeth George while she was abroad, warned competitors that she had noticed judges at the Show 'always ... take as much interest in the back of the work and the finishing off and joins, as they do of the front', so if the quilt is lined, leave the lining tacked on.



No. 10. White Cockatoo
(12 April 1934, p.53).

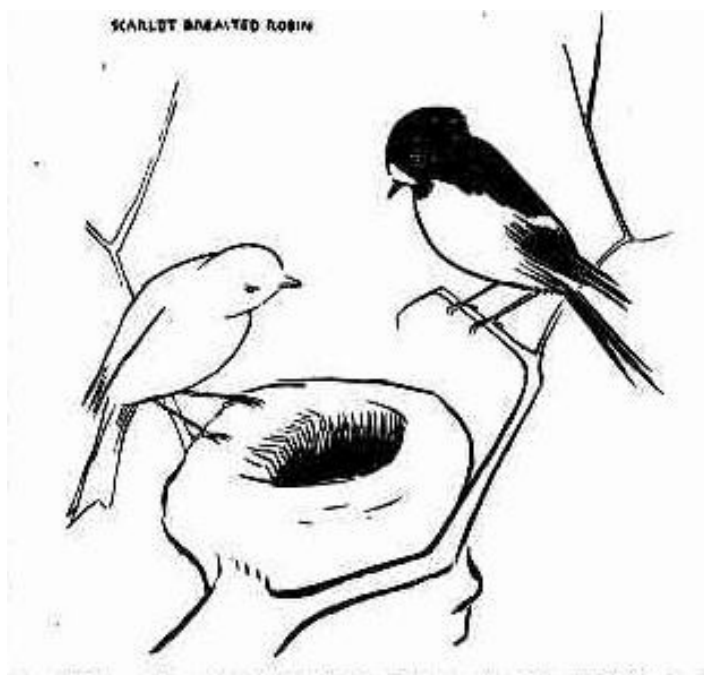
'The spoilt darling of many homes' is all white except for its black beak and claws, and yellow crest. There is a tinge of yellow behind the eyes, which are black, and the eyelids smoke blue.



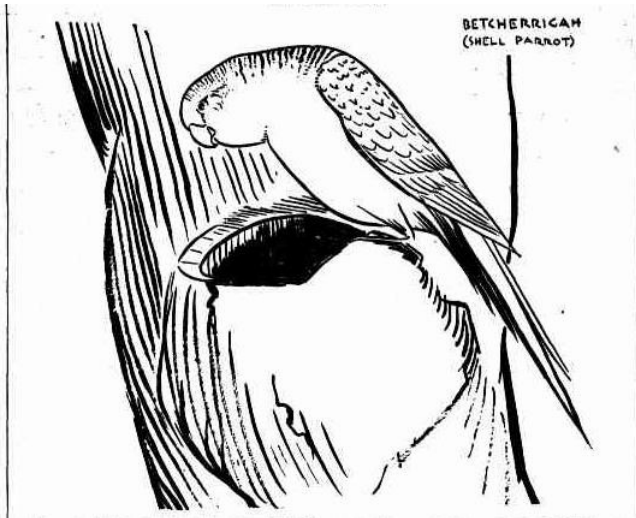
No. 11. Mallee Fowl (19 April 1934, p.53).



No. 12. Barn Owl (26 April 1934, p.53).



No. 13. Scarlet Breasted Robin (3 May 1934, p.53).



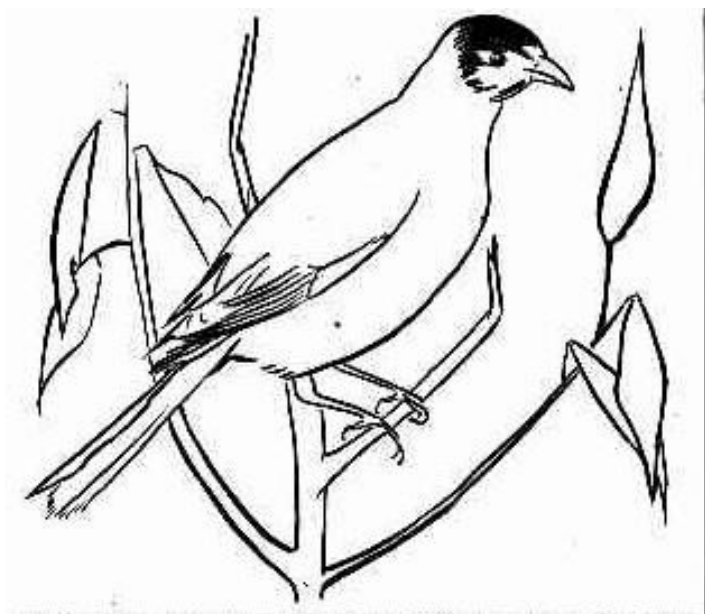
No. 14. Betcherrigah (Budgerygah or Shell Parrot) (10 May 1934, p.53).



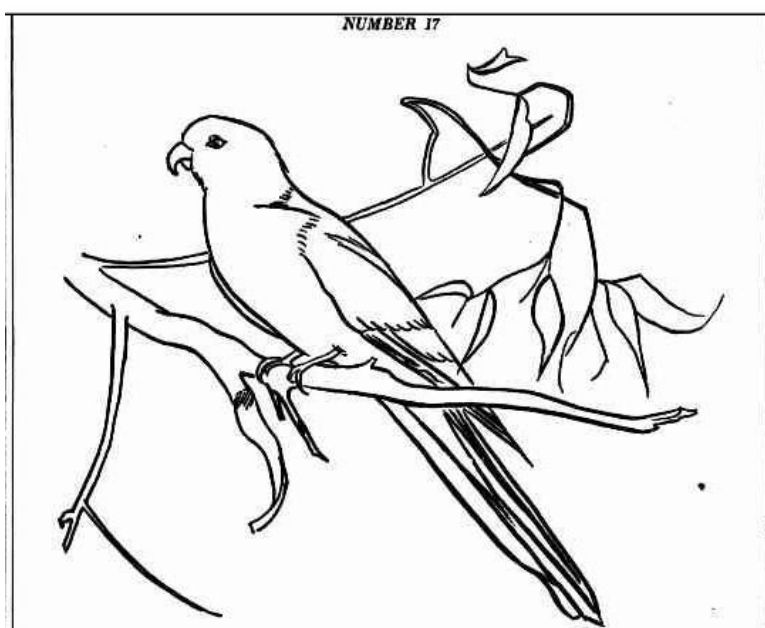
**No. 15. Kookaburra
(Laughing Jackass) (17 May
1934, p.53).**

The jolly old Kookaburra or Laughing Jackass was to be worked in cream with light brown wings flecked with pale blue, the feet and edge of the beak in dark grey and the bottom jaw in cream.



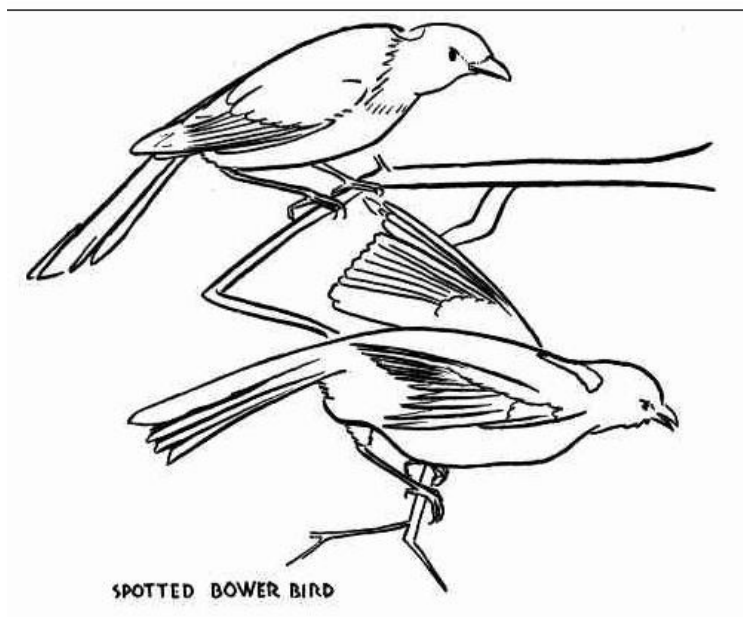


No. 16. Garrulous Honey Eater (24 May 1934, p.53).

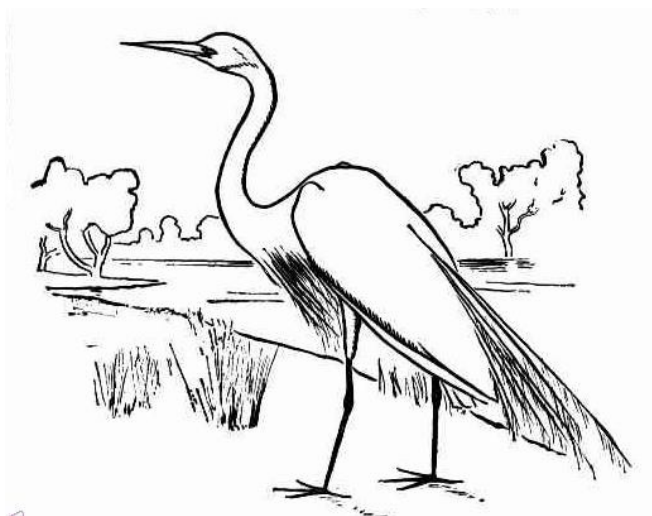


No. 17. King Parrot (31 May 1934, p.53).

Of 'flamboyant colors', the King Parrot's head and breast are scarlet, its back to just above the wings is purple, the wings are a rich green shot with a pale green streak, and the red on the underside of the body merges to black on the tail. The eyes and feet are black.

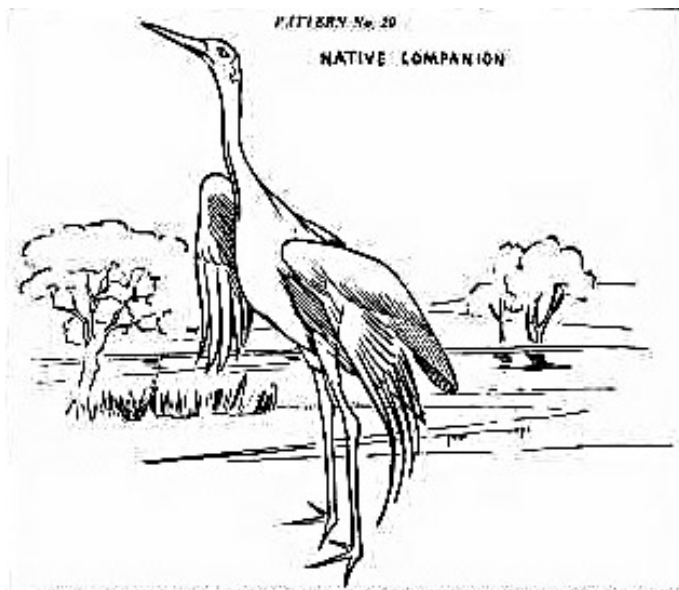


No. 18. Spotted Bower Bird (7 June 1934, p.53).

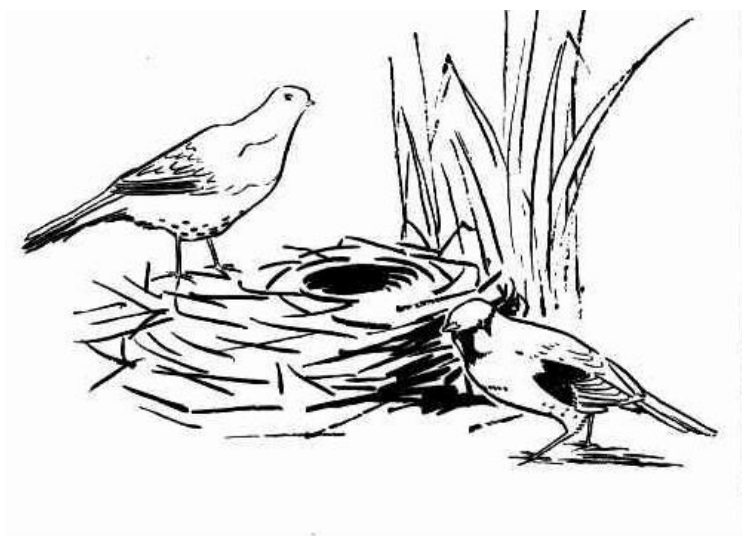


No. 19. White Egret (14 June 1934, p.57).

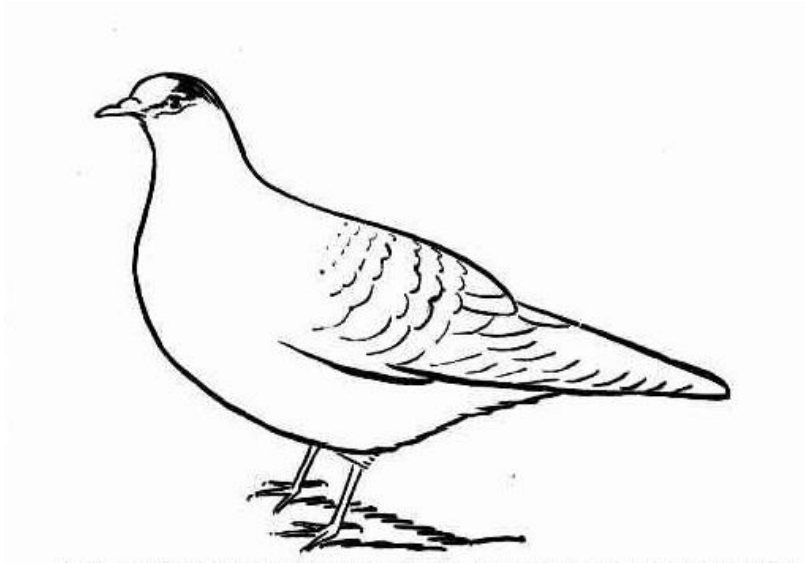
The white egret is 'snowy whiteness all over, except for a yellow bill and black legs. The pure white plumage of the tail feathers is outstandingly beautiful.'



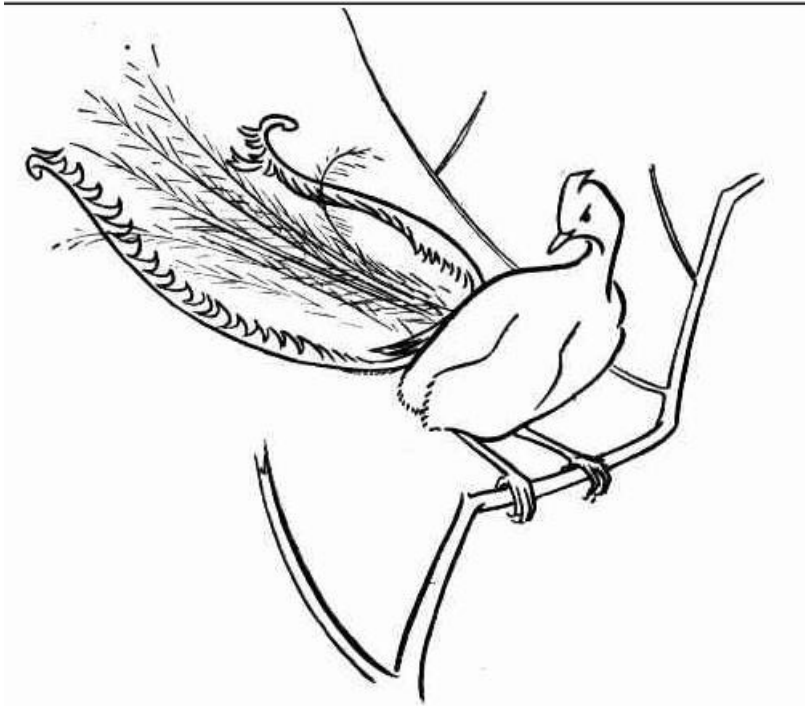
No. 20. Native Companion (21 June 1934, p.55).



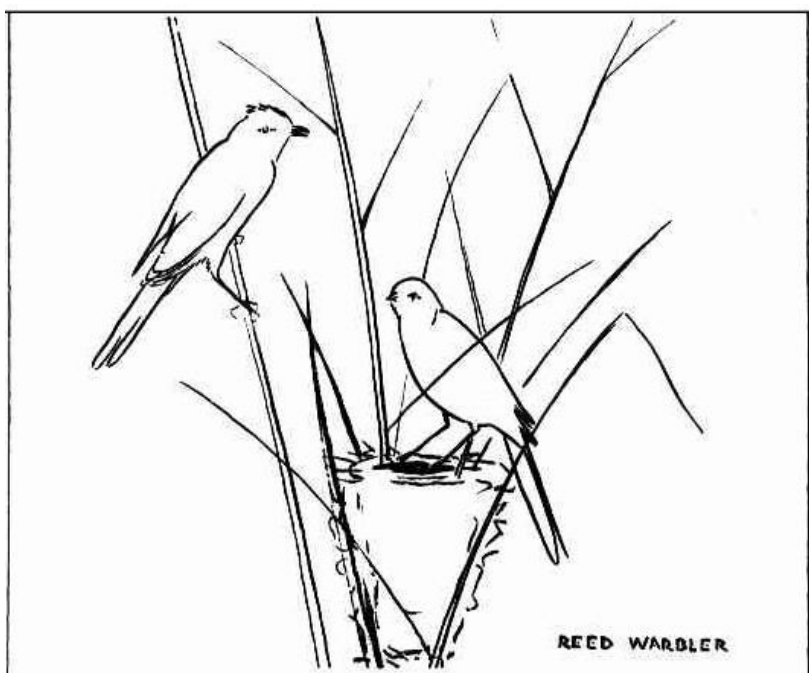
No. 21. Spotted Ground Thrush (28 June 1934, p.55).



No. 22. Bronzewing (5 July 1934, p.55).



No. 23. Lyre Bird (12 July 1934, p.55).



No. 24. Reed Warbler (19 July 1934, p.55).



No.25. Cape Barren Goose with a gosling

This was the final pattern.

The plumage is silver-grey, the beak is light green, the point being black; legs are orange darkening to black feet, and eyes and tail are black. The gosling is deep brown on the head, back and wings, and light brown under the body (*Chronicle*, 26 July 1934, p.55)



Nine bird squares by Gwen Holder (1915-1934), from north of Kimba, Eyre Peninsula. Cotton and embroidery, hand-pieced and embroidered. 92cm x 92cm. This was finished as a cot quilt after Gwen's death by her sister, Estelle Holder, c. 1934 (Annette Gero, *The Fabric of Society*, p.183).

During a very hot March month when temperatures reached 110° F (44°C), a reader from Glencoe in the lower South-East of South Australia sent in her method of working the bird quilt on linen Forfar, six yards of which she found in her township's small shop, although the colour was too light for her purpose. A strong tea mixed with just enough water to rinse the material proved ideal. She transferred the birds 'with a mixture of sugar, a wee bit of blue [no doubt Reckitt's washing blue, the whitening agent used in the laundry rinse], and just a drop of water', stamped on when dry as with any other transfer. Her next problem was the wool, yet with one plait each of fine darning wool of grey, brown, and fawn, she achieved her variety of tones. To others she suggested small skeins of two-ply wool for the bright colours. She had made 'both of our other two quilts', the flower quilt on linene, for which she worked

in its centre a 'big transfer of Miss Australia, holding a jackass in one hand, and an armful of Australian wildflowers in the other.'⁵¹ This sense of ownership in the quilts and pride in creating personal meaning around the given model was frequently expressed.

As a child Beryl Watkins used this combined Farm Life and Australian Wildflower quilt (below) made by her mother at Brinkworth (Courtesy of Beryl Watkins).



Three Little Pigs Quilt (1937)

The Three Little Pigs quilt was simple enough, the *Chronicle* said, for a young needlewoman, while an expert could adorn the cover with elaborate stitchery. McKim Studios published this nursery rhyme pattern in the US in 1934. The *Chronicle*'s sketch of the quilt was for five kinds of material of different colours:

⁵¹ 'Bird Quilt Hints', *Chronicle*, 8 March 1934, p.55. Forfar was named for the Scottish town with a major textile industry, especially jute preparation.

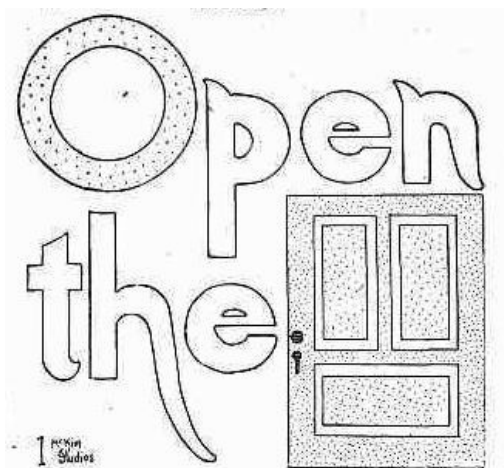
The six pigs and house blocks and the border corners are flesh pink, the wolf black and certain appliques are brown, and the conversation blocks and border are of unbleached or natural shade.

Crimson and blue appliques with white completed the colour scheme. The pigs could be in outline and the background blocks could be white or any desired colour.⁵² Again, initiative and skill determined the choices of the worker to bring alive this moral tale of ruse, deception, and common sense that had been told to children for more than a century.

This had the most elaborate of all the quilt instructions, possibly because The Three Pigs was a copyright design that required exact following.

Fifteen 9 inch blocks will complete the centre 27 x 45 inches, less seams. Border from the patterns will bring this up to about 40 x 58 inches, which is correct size for the larger size cot.

... machine stitch all around every scallop, including the first stitching of your bias tape for the edge binding. Trim to an even seam width, about 3-16 inch, and whip back the bias by hand on the reverse side. Six yards of bias tape will bind the quilt in 40 x 60 inch size.



Pattern no. 1

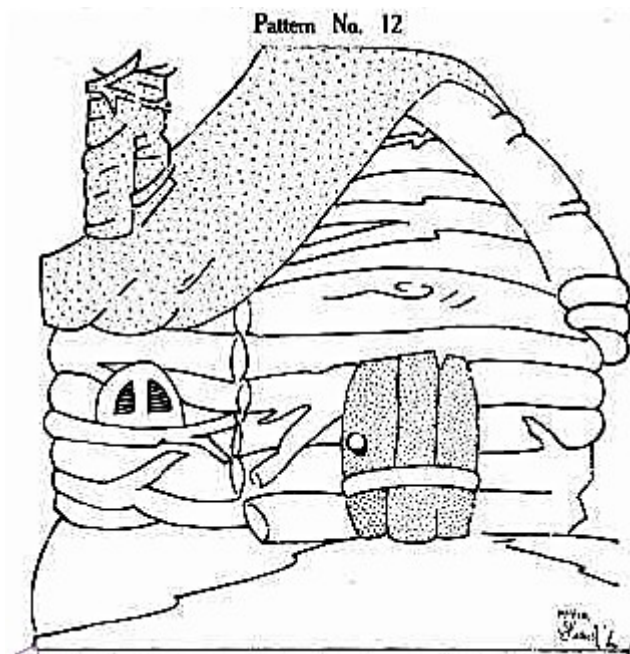
The first pattern was the Big Bad Wolf's command to 'Open the Door'. It 'may be crayoned and outlined in running stitches, or bits of applique may be added.' Quilters were told that the original colour scheme was of a blue 'O', blue outline stitch for the other letters, and a brown door (*Chronicle*, 4 March 1937, p.55)

The 15 nine inch blocks for the centre could be 'embroidered, crayoned, appliqued or painted' and would complete the centre, 27 x 45 inches, less seams. An interlining of heavy flannel or an old blanket, with a backing of any material preferred, could finish the quilt without hand-quilting. The three were to be basted together, every scallop was to be machine-stitched around, including the first stitching of the bias tape for the edge binding. Six yards of bias tape would bind the quilt of 40 x 60 inch size. The quilt could be

⁵² 'Make a Nursery Cot Quilt', *Chronicle*, 25 February 1937, p.55.

inconspicuously tacked with thread at all block corners, or stretched and check quilted in the old-fashioned way.

'Sour Grapes' recounted discovery of the *Chronicle* by her friend in Queensland; she made the Little Pigs quilt and was sorry the war put an end to the quilt competitions. She asked for the patterns previous to the Little Pigs, assuring any lender she would take the greatest care of them.⁵³ 'Knitter' of the Mid North sent another reader the Farm Life Quilt patterns, that she had made a quilt from, and offered the wildflower and bird quilt patterns to others as she no longer had a use for them.⁵⁴ In 1942 a reader asked if any person could supply her with the Little Pigs nursery quilt patterns. At the time it was published she did not take the *Chronicle*, and didn't know the 'joy' she was missing.⁵⁵



Pattern no. 12. The House of Sticks

(*Chronicle*, 20 May 1937, p.53).

The 'house of sticks' seems to be reversed in the full pattern published in the *Chronicle*.

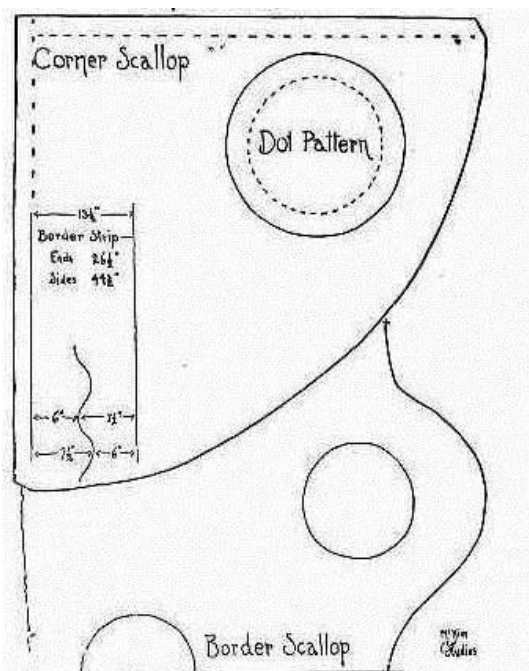
⁵³ 'Has Anyone the Farmyard Quilt Pattern?', *Chronicle*, 20 August 1942

⁵⁴ 'Note from a Quilt Maker', *Chronicle*, 10 September 1942, p.27.

⁵⁵ 'Battle of the Tobacco Buyer', *Chronicle*, 10 September 1942, p.27.



McKim Studios. Three Little Pigs quilt with the Big, Bad Wolf in the centre. The recommended quilt size of nine inch squares with border was 40 inches (101.6 cm) wide by 58 inches (147 cm) long, suitable for a larger size cot (*Chronicle*, 24 June 1937, p.53).



The scallop border pattern for the Three Little Pigs Quilt (*Chronicle*, 17 June 1937, p.53).

Patterns for the Three Little Pigs quilt, published March to May 1937

1. Open the Door
2. A Little Pig
3. And Let Me in
4. A violin-playing Little Pig
5. Top of the Big Bad Wolf
6. The bottom part of the villain, the Big Bad Wolf
7. The 'wise and careful' pig who built in brick
8. No! by the hair
9. Of My Chin; the words of defiance hurled at the Wolf
10. House of Straw
11. Then I'll Huff
12. House of Sticks
13. And I'll Puff
14. 'the sturdy little home of bricks and stone'
15. I'll blow your [house] in!

(Link to <<http://baltimorealbumquilts.com/Quilts%20Vintage/Three-Little-Pigs/pigs.htm>>)

'Round the World with a Needle'—the International Quilt (1938)

The International Quilt was announced on 6 January 1938, and 25 scenes were published weekly, at a time in Europe when the international unity the *Chronicle* believed its quilt espoused was in delicate if not precarious political imbalance.

My 'menfolk tell me I couldn't possibly win a prize,' wrote 'Territory Tilly' from Tennant Creek, who was about the 'world's worst needle woman'. But, as she had a lot of skeins of coloured stranded cotton and a few yards of fine white linen, she was undaunted that trouser and shirt buttons were her limit, and took the opportunity to make a start on the International Quilt, and possibly improve by the 25th square! But she dearly wished for someone near to show her the correct stitches to use.⁵⁶ A writer to Eleanor Barbour's *Chronicle* exchange letter column asked, 'Would any reader like the quilt patterns? I will save them and exchange for stamps. There isn't much time for fancywork when one has four little ones to sew for.'⁵⁷

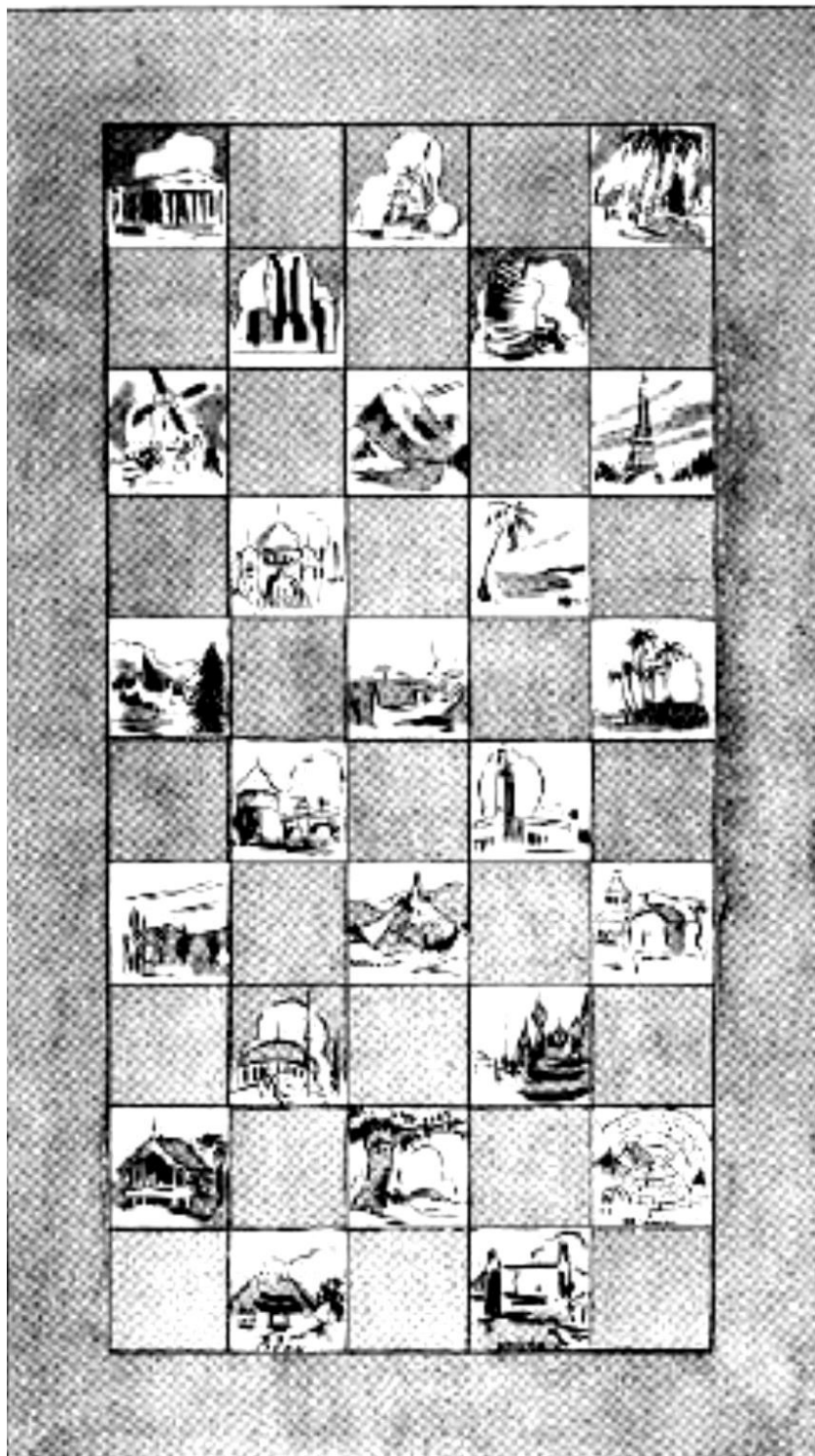
The 'world in pictures' was worked by women as far apart as the River Darling, Eyre Peninsula, the South-east and the Far North. One Port Augusta quilter was visited by the State Governor, Sir Winston Dugan. Her family of eight children, one under two months, lived on the 'lonely road to the race-course' in a one-room house of iron and flattened petrol drums and three tents made of wheat bags and with wheat-bag bedding. She showed the Governor some of the International Quilt patterns. He requested that her house be lined with asbestos at his expense.⁵⁸ While fingers and imaginations ventured thousands of kilometres away, one woman with young children, who lived a stone's throw from the Alice Springs railway siding, was unable to 'journey 10 miles to listen-in to the Test'.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ 'Housekeeping in Northern Territory', *Chronicle*, 24 March 1938, p.57.

⁵⁷ 'Lantana', *Chronicle*, 10 February 1938, p.53.

⁵⁸ 'S.A.' Governor Sympathetic', *Barrier Miner*, 7 July 1938, p.6.

⁵⁹ *Chronicle*, 8 Sep 1938, p.57. The winning quilt is illustrated here, but not well.



The first pattern of twenty-five was published on 20 January. Cottons, silks of strong weave, Fuji silk (with a matte surface), or spun silk were suggested materials. The conventional square was to be outlined or quilted in a self-colour. There were to be £12 in prizes: three awards and four merit prizes.

The quilt could be worked in mercerised cotton as well as more traditional threads.

A suggestion for the International Quilt (*Chronicle* 11 August 1938, p.57).

The first prize of £5 was awarded to Mrs B. McKay of Glanville Blocks (Woodville district), for outstanding needlecraft. 'The pictures were worked on pale blue ... the conventional design was outlined in pale blue on a beige background', and the filling stitches were such as to give a realism to certain of the more difficult subjects, e.g., the Taj Mahal. Miss M. Newell of Goolwa won the £3 second prize; and Miss N. Huppatz of Eurelia, the third. The ten shilling

merit prizes were awarded to Mrs C. Clark of Orroroo, Mrs R. Owen of Lock, Eyre Peninsula, Miss R. McCarthy of Millicent, and Miss A. Higgins of Louth Bay, Eyre Peninsula. The judges were Mrs Park and Misses C. Clayton and D. Lewis.⁶⁰ They were the judges for all the works in the Women's Industries Section.

Mrs McKay decided only in March to enter the International Quilt competition. She had experience working in watercolour and oil paint, although without formal training, and possibly her expert effects in embroidered reflections and shadows were gained partly from this.⁶¹

Working Men's Blocks of the Homestead League for Land Settlement

The South Australian Homestead League system of land leasing that originated in the 1880s so influenced land policy that it was the beginning in Australia of the closer settlement movement.⁶² George W. Cotton (1821-1892) introduced The Working Men's Holding Bill to parliament on 15 October 1884, the year of receipt of a petition to government for land blocks for working men, particularly farm labourers. The Bill was enacted the following year. The scheme shared with the Province's settlement philosophy the belief that a labourer could take opportunities to work to become an independent land-holder. The Homestead League proposed the individual's leasehold of a maximum 20 acres (not considered to be a small farm); the need for employment outside the block (but support from it if employment failed); and development of the holding when seasonal employment stopped. Eligible blockers were to be at least 18 years of age and already to have employment outside their holding.

The Homestead League's rallying-cry was 'One family, one homestead'. The League's objective for the settler was 'a home of his own ... a stake in the welfare of the country' and 'healthy and robust' children. The other side to this coin was the ideological belief (and objective for closer settlement) that 'once a tenant or an owner a man was upon the side of law and order': the blocker should be the 'poorest member of our community', and be considered first before the State used land competitively to supply the markets of the world.⁶³ The League's period of greatest success with this project for social amelioration was from 1886 to 1902.⁶⁴

Glanville Blocks, that became a light-industrial region, was land later leased under the Homestead League initiative. Military Road ran through the area bound on one side by the river swamps.

Eleanor Barbour, the pen-name of Mrs C.E. Dolling, with some forty years' Country Women's' Association (CWA) experience, who succeeded Elizabeth George in 1937 when she went to Western Australia, congratulated all the entrants, saying how proud she was of

⁶⁰ 'Awards for "The Chronicle" International Quilt Contest', *Advertiser*, 6 September 1938, p.8. (A detail of Mrs McKay's first prize quilt is illustrated).

⁶¹ Eleanor Barbour, 'Of Interest to Women From City to Country', *Chronicle*, Sep 1938, p.68.

⁶² Julie-Ann Ellis, *Public Land and the Public Mind: origins of public land policy in South Australia 1834-1929*, PhD thesis, School of Social Sciences, Flinders University, May 1995.

⁶³ Eusebius Wilson, *SA Parliamentary Papers*, no.107, 1896.

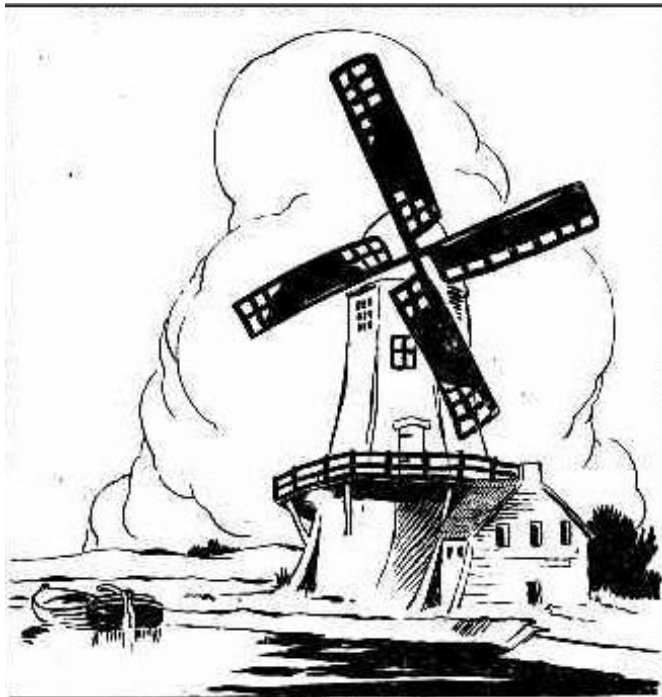
⁶⁴ John B. Hirst, *G.W. Cotton and the workingmen's blocks*, thesis, 1963, p.55.

the Show display, and no doubt increased the embroiderers' pleasure by mentioning that the artist wondered how such 'beautiful results could have been gained from his outlines' and colour suggestions.⁶⁵

Award points were based on 'neatness of stitchery, and of finish, blending of color, and general effect.' Squares could be joined together as quilters wished, machine or hand sewn, and could have a herring-bone or similar type of stitch over the seams, or even be joined by crocheting between each two squares—which, the *Chronicle* warned, would take more time. If quilts were lined, 24 inches was to be left open at one end, preferably the bottom so it can more easily be pinned afterwards, for inspection of the back.

The quilt was to have a nine-inch border; and by late April, it became mandatory to attach rings to the top of the quilt for its hanging.

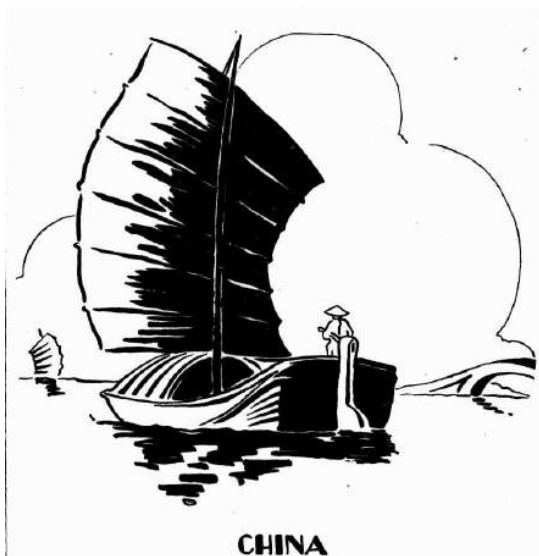
Colour suggestions were not fauvist or expressionist but from a realism imbued with the good taste of current interior furnishings, yet highly individual choices were encouraged.



No. 1. Holland. 'Land of windmills first picture in International Quilt' (*Chronicle*, 20 January 1938, p.53).

Colour suggestions: clouds, outlined in pale blue, water, light blue, reflections on water, dark blue, sails and railing of windmill, light brown, house, buff, boat, dark brown on sides, yellow rudder and red stern.

⁶⁵ Eleanor Barbour, 'Of Interest to Women From City to Country', *Chronicle*, Sep 1938, p.68.



No. 2. China (27 January 1938 p.53).

The sketches are sufficiently bold in line to make use of the short and long filling stitch, which can be combined with satin stitch and ordinary outline stitch. The colour scheme suggested was of light and dark blue water, clouds, bridge and far away junk; the nearer junk's sail red, brown and buff, its mast and rudder bright yellow and its cabin green; and the 'Chinaman' in a bright blue coat, yellow hat, and black pigtails.

SKYSCRAPERS THIRD PICTURE IN INTERNATIONAL QUILT

Cash Prizes For Needleworkers

PATTERN No. 3



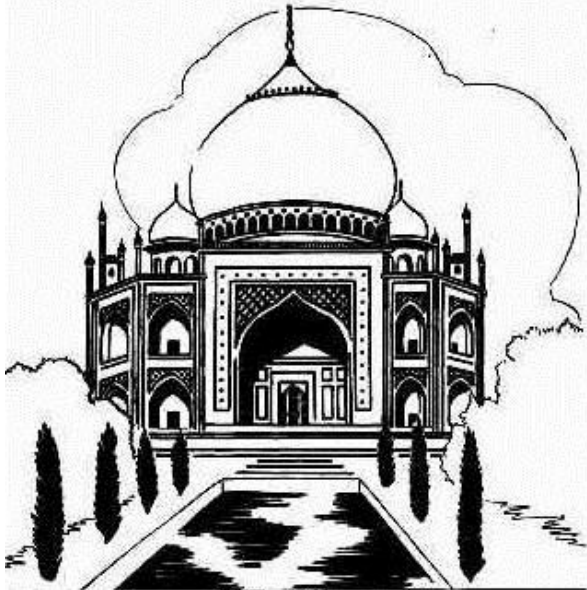
No. 3. USA (*Chronicle*, 3 February 1938, p.53).

The windows in dark blue, buildings in vermillion, gradually fading to yellow at the top, clouds outlined in light blue, and dark blue for the line along the bottom of the picture.

TAJ MAHAL REPRESENTS INDIA IN INTERNATIONAL QUILT

Free Patterns And Cash Prizes
For Needleworkers

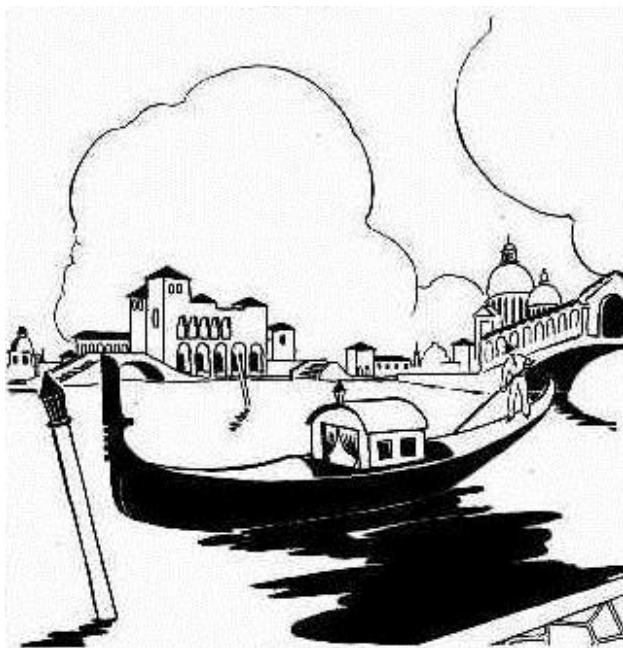
PATTERN No. 4



No. 4. India.

The front view of the Taj Mahal, Agra, was a contrast of roundness to the skyscraper pattern of the week before.

Building outlined in gold, small spires bright red, the building's lattice work and decorations in bright varied colours.

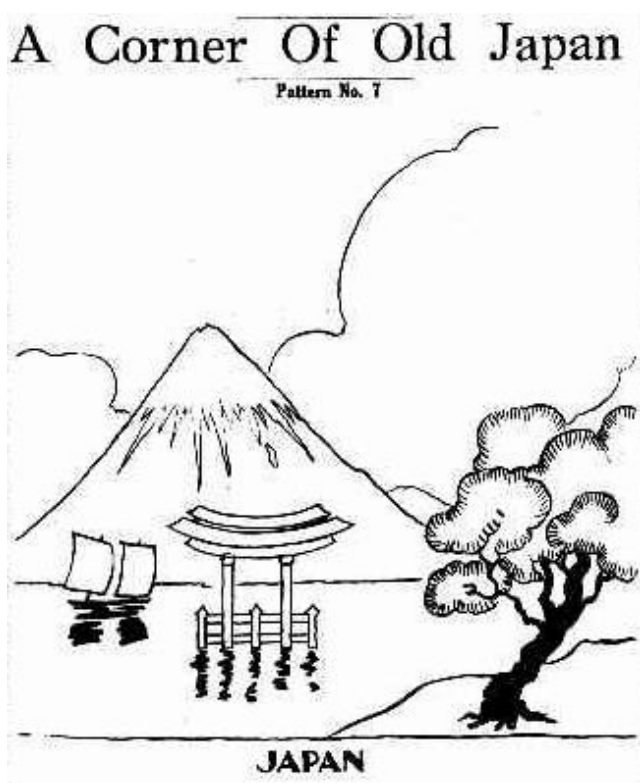


No. 5. Italy (Venice) (17 Feb 1938, p.53).

Bright yellow, light blue, salmon pink, red, deep blue, and the gondolier in bright green with a bright red hat and his pole in black.



No. 6. Canada. A mountain forest that could be worked in greens, browns, mauve, buff, and red brown (24 Feb 1938, p.57).



No. 7. Japan (3 Mar 1938, p.57). Mount Fujiyama is in the centre; the foliage could be in green and gold.

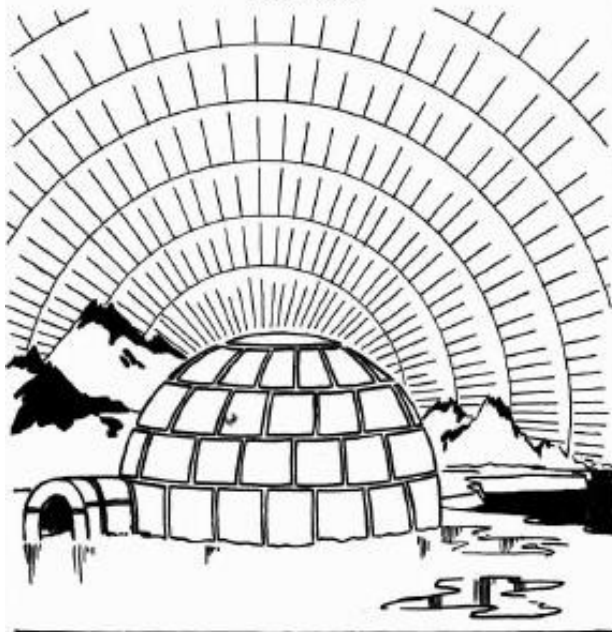
Quilters were advised that placement of the squares was another aspect of the needle-worker's artistry. Work could be in one or several stitches, and that if partial filling with

embroidery or outline only was considered by the quilter as effective, that choice could be made.

GREENLAND'S ICY MOUNTAINS IN INTERNATIONAL QUILT PATTERN

Free Patterns And Cash Prizes

Pattern No. 8



GREENLAND

No. 8. Greenland (10 March 1938, p.57).

The first sun rays after a sunless winter are appearing.

Colour instructions: from the inside of the bow of light just above the igloo, the colours are in order, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. The reflections in the pools will also show patches of these colours; ice blue, mauve, and light and dark blue.



No. 9. Australia (17 Mar 1938, p.57).

"There is a land where summer skies—." This week we have a country known to all of us in our international quilt pattern. Whether it is the country of our birth or that of our adoption, to all of us it is our own country, Australia. It would not have been complete without its gum tree, and the view of the wheat field in the foreground, and the background of undulating hills is typically that seen by many of you from the windows of your home.

Perhaps it may seem superfluous to suggest colors for a scene with which you are so familiar, but some of you may be glad to have the artist's guide.

Black foliage—light green.

White foliage—dark green.

Black on tree trunk—dark brown.



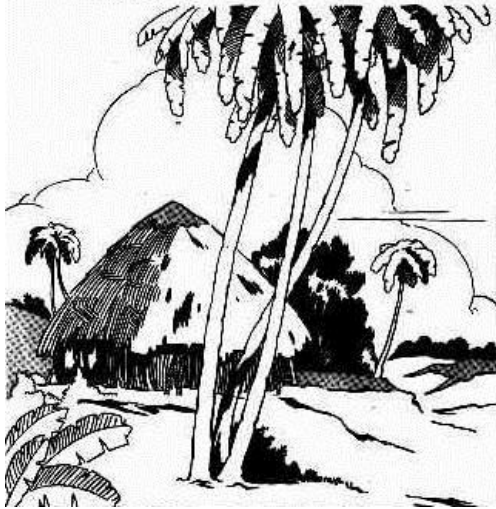
Lines on tree trunk—light red
 brown.
 White on tree trunk—buff.
 Black on hills—Mauve.
 White on hills—buff.
 Shade on hills—medium green
 Shadow at base of tree—dark
 blue.
 Rest of foreground—light
 green.
 Stooks and wheat field—golden
 yellow.

No. 10. Hawaii (24 March 1938, p.57).



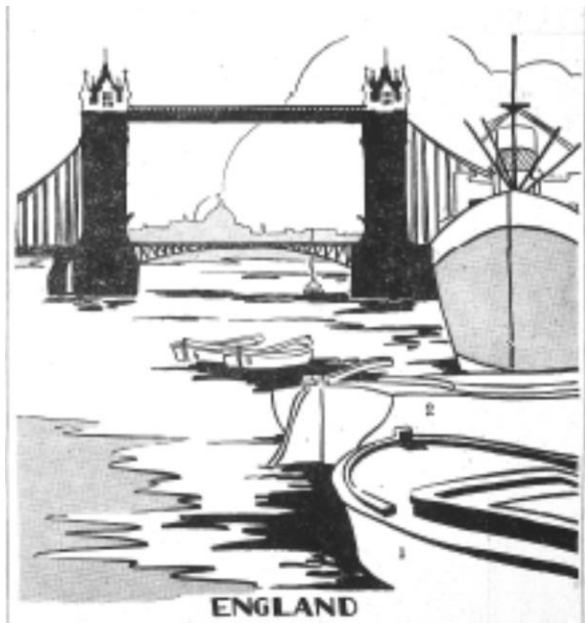
No. 11. Finland (31 March 1938, p.57).

SCENE FROM NATIVE LIFE OF AFRICA FOR
INTERNATIONAL QUILT
Readers May Win Handsome Cash Prizes
Pattern No. 12



No. 12. Africa (7 April 1938, p.58).

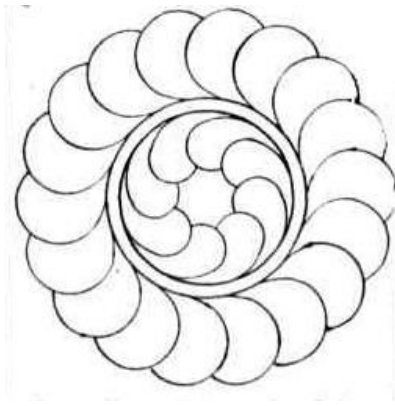
A kraal. The colour suggestion was of dark and light green with touches of yellow, light brown and straw colour, and leaves light green in shade and buff in sunlight. Stippled portions of the drawing could be dark green, mauve, and sand colour.



No. 13. England (14 April 1938, p.60).

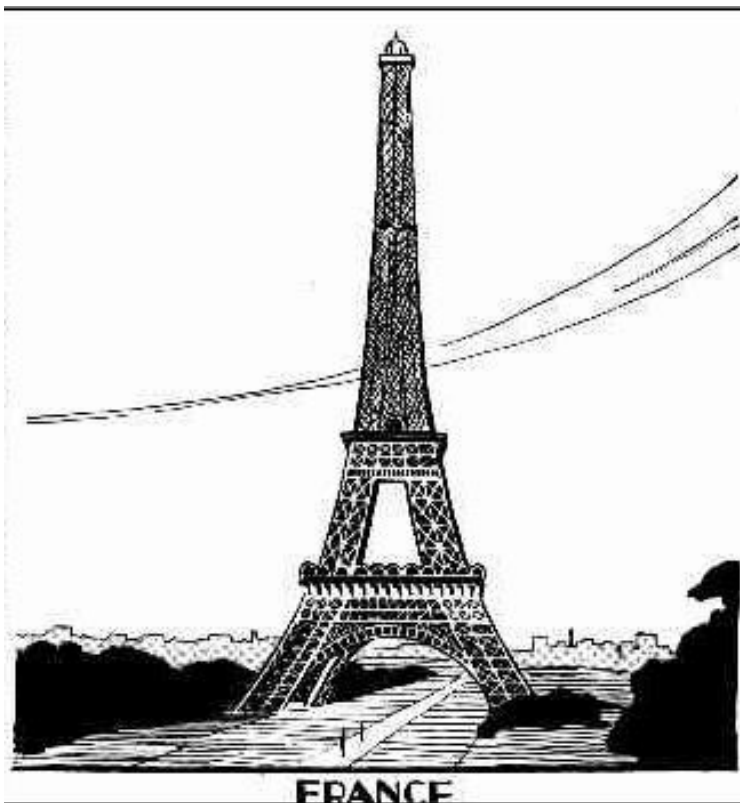
Tower Bridge and Thames River shipping, barges and tramp steamer.

As 'you stitch the Tower Bridge, you must let your imagination conjure up the ghosts of kings and knights crossing the bridge, often on their way to imprisonment and execution. For the colors, the artist suggests the following:—The bridge : — White portions light grey, and black portions, dark grey. Water: — White portion light blue, black portion dark blue, stipple portion, grey. The stipple portion in background should be mauve, and the small tug under bridge light red. Barges: — No. 1, hull, dark green; deck, buff, hatchway shadows, dark blue. No. 2, back of rudder, buff; side of rudder, light red ; deck, buff ; back of boat, light green; side of boat, dark green. No. 3, side, light red; deck, buff, hole in deck, dark blue. No. 4, same as No. 3. Ship, stipple, grey; funnel, top portion, yellow; stipple, black; masts and rigging, light red; bridge, light blue; You may please yourself whether you include all the barges in you pattern; some may prefer to leave out either the first or the second boat, and the resultant extra expanse of water could be merged, similarly, to the other portions of the river.'



Conventional pattern (21 April 1938, p.57).

The design was used in some of the 'exquisite' quilting samples in the exhibit of the country women of Warwickshire which was shown in Adelaide at the CWA Centenary Handicraft Exhibition in 1936. Quilters were advised that the conventional square, however, did not need to be worked in English quilting, but could be outlined in 'one of the many simple effective stitches, back stitch, chain stitch, stem stitch or a fine herring-bone stitch,' and indeed, quilted as desired.



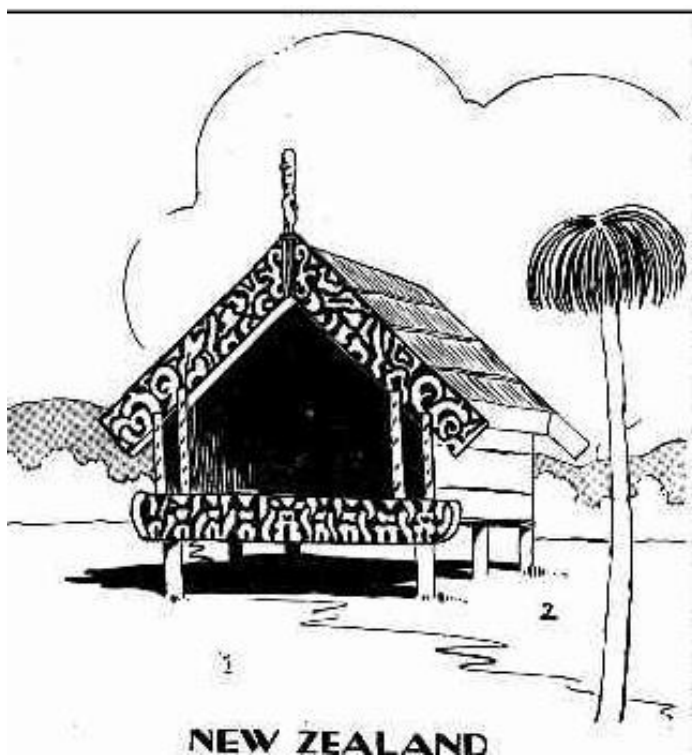
No. 14. France (28 Apr 1938, p.57).

THE ALPS OF SWITZERLAND IN THE
INTERNATIONAL QUILT
Cash Prizes For Seven Best Handicraft Workers
Pattern No. 15



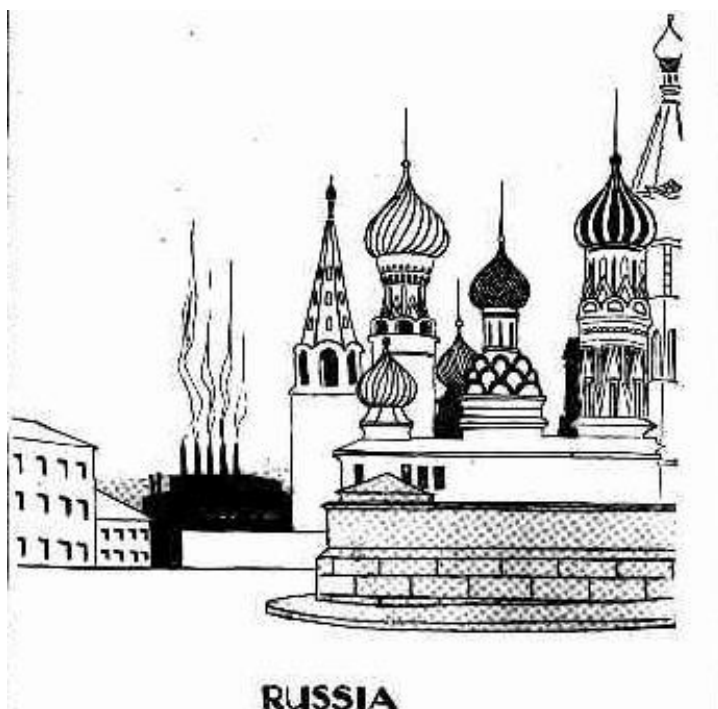
No. 15. Switzerland (5 May 1938, p.57).

Colour suggestions: darkest part of mountains in light blue, lighter parts in mauve. Whites in white. A: light brown, B: medium green, C: sand colour. Shaded areas in dark green. Lake light and dark blue. House in dark brown with a red roof and dark blue windows. The pathway in light brown.



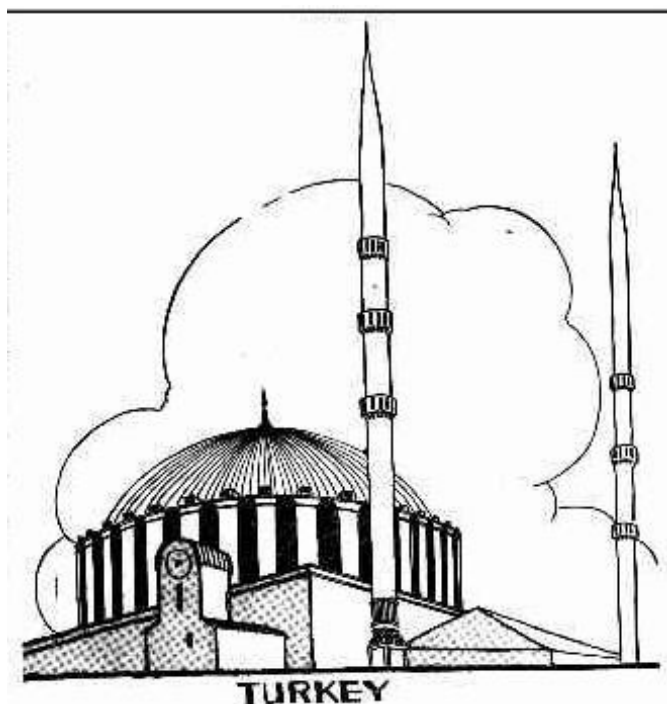
No. 16. New Zealand (12 May 1938, p.57).

A Whare (a Maori dwelling hut; the *wharenuī*, the 'meeting house' or 'carved house')



No. 17. Russia (19 May 1938, p.57).

The 16th-century St Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow, with contrasting industrial smokestacks in the background.



For a color scheme the artist suggests.—

Spire on dome, gold.

Dome, light red.

Shadows and lattice work, dark blue.

Outline of cloud, light blue.

Minarets, buff.

Designs on minarets, dark blue.

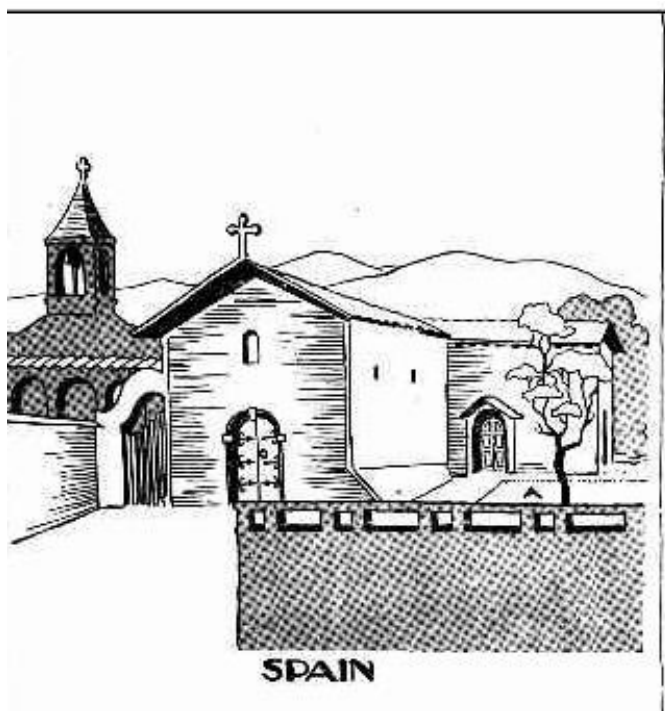
Roof of building in foreground, light red.

Walls, buff (stipple portion in slightly darker buff).

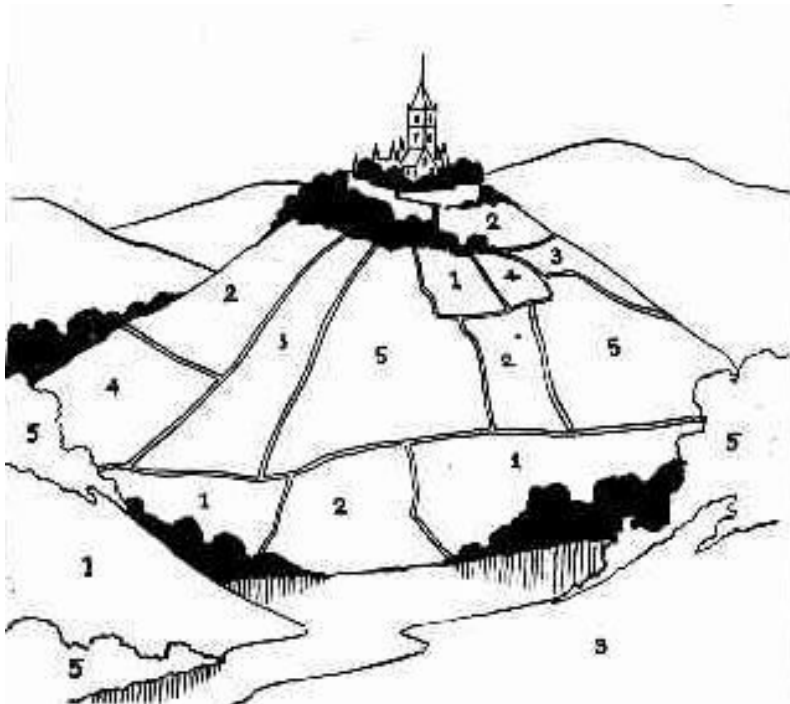
Windows and designs, dark blue.

Building on lower right: roof, light red (stipple portion in grey); walls, buff (stipple portion in slightly darker buff).

No. 18. Turkey

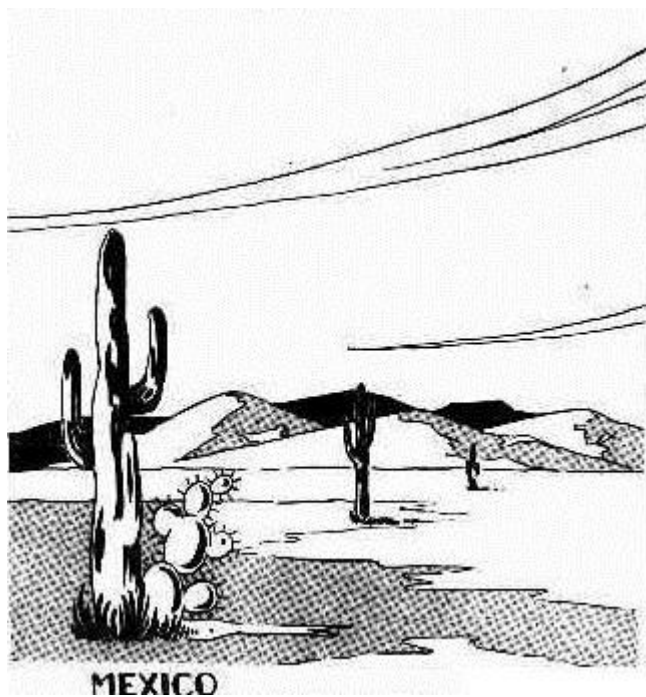


No. 19. Spain (2 June 1938, p.57).



No. 20. Germany (9 June 1938, p.57). Castle and agricultural fields

The numbered fields of fallow, grass, crop, and vineyard were to guide those who wished to embroider the whole hillside; otherwise, the dividing walls could be outlined in brown.



No. 21. Mexico (16 June 1938, p.57).

Spiked cactus, light green, and dark green where filled in. Spikes brown.

Tall cactus, mid-green, with light green patches; black where filled in. Foliage at base of cactus, light brown.

Cacti in distance, light green, with yellow patches; black where filled in.

Shaded foreground, buff.

Rest of foreground, sand color.

Hills, black to be filled in in mauve; other hills, buff with light brown shading.

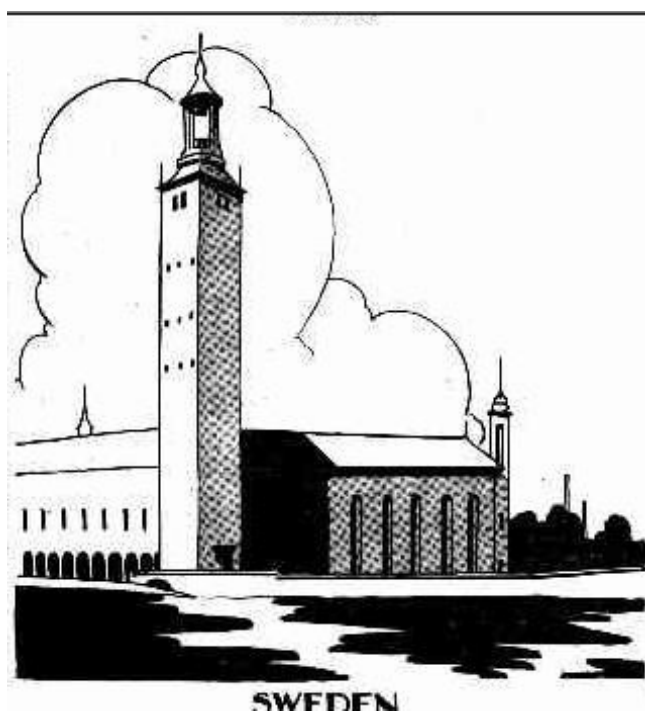
Strips across sky, light blue.

This is the 21st pattern for the international quilt. Twenty-five

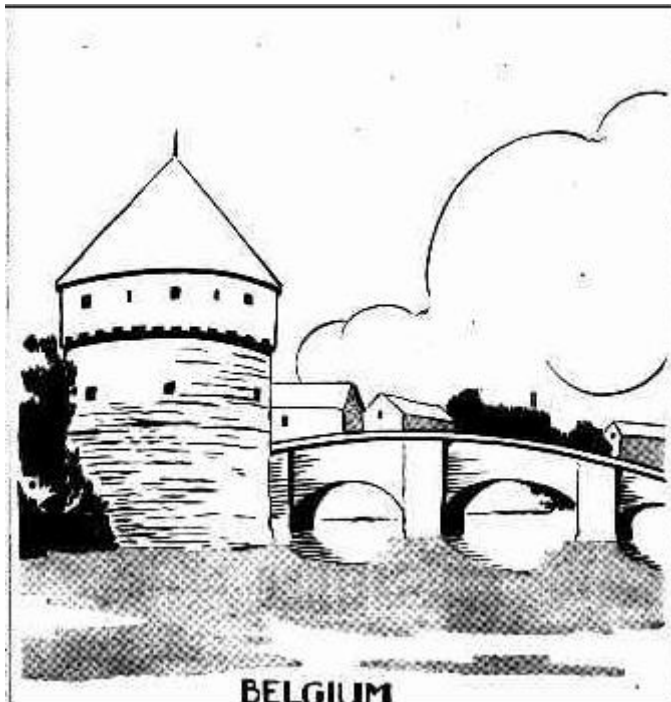


No. 22. Greece (23 Jun 1938, p.57). The Parthenon

'The artist's choice for the colourings are:-
Outline of cloud. Light blue.
Black shadows. Dark blue.
Column flutings. Buff in the front, and dark blue in the shadow.
Stippled areas on building. Salmon pink.
Stippled area in left foreground. Light brown.
Area marker "A", and broken stone-work in foreground. Light red.
Hill marked "B." Mauve.'



No. 23. Sweden (30 June 1938, p.57). The architect Ragnar Östberg's Stockholm Town Hall, built 1911-1923, the venue of the Nobel banquets, by the waterside.

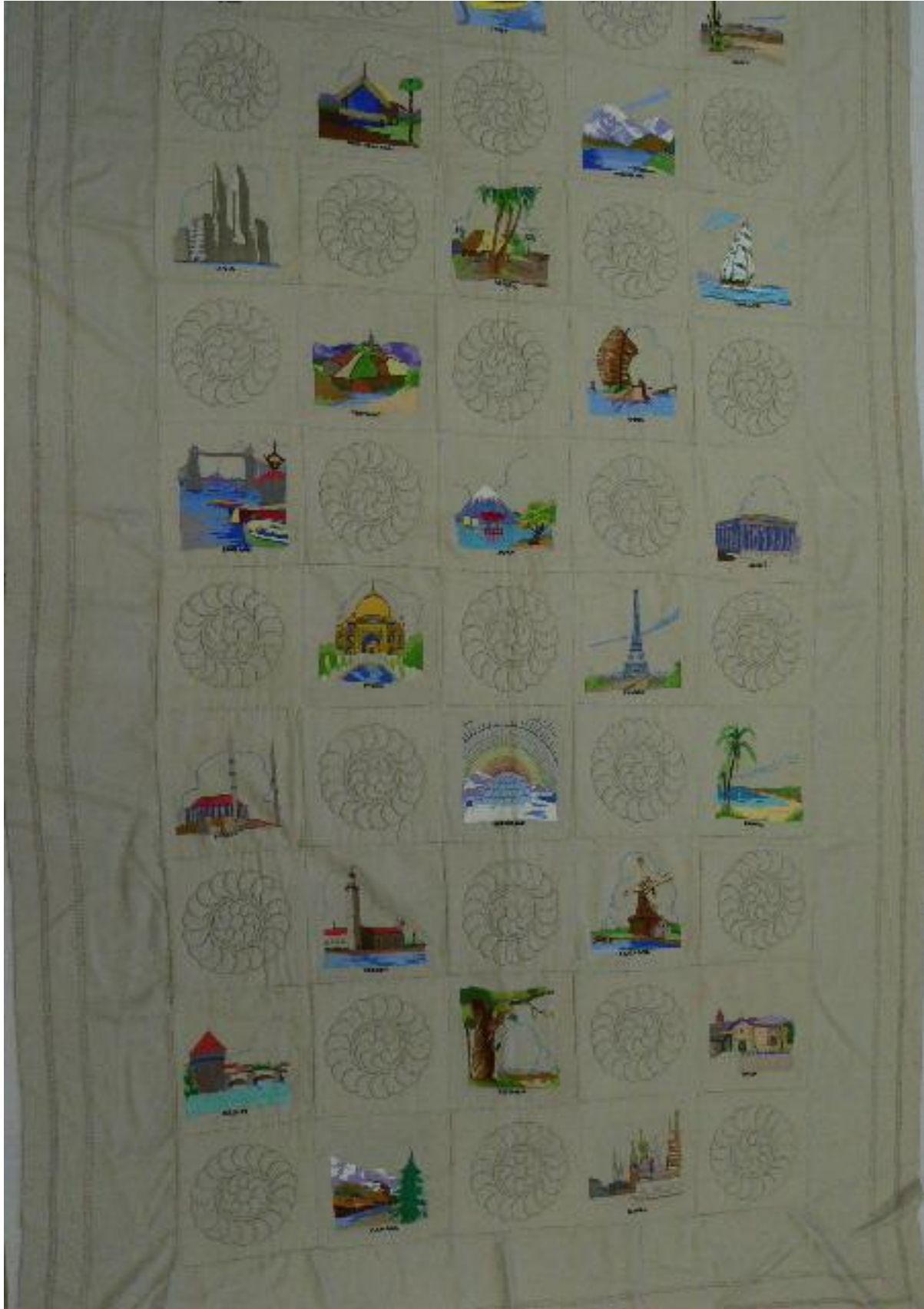


No. 24. Belgium (7 July 1938, p.57).



No. 25. Arabia

This, the last of the patterns, was very linear; it was suggested that the tent by a desert oasis have bright red and black stripes, and the shadows at the bottom corner of the tent be dark blue.



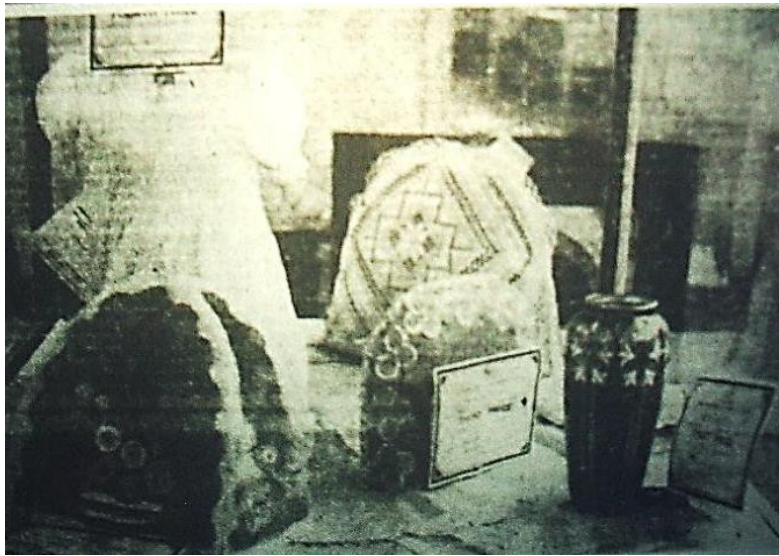
Minetta Huppatz. International Quilt. 1938. 243cm x 144cm. Cotton; predominantly satin and stem stitch. The name of the country is embroidered in black thread below each scene. The alternate squares have a pattern of feathered circle and this is back stitched in beige

embroidery thread. The backing is turquoise cotton blend attached to the quilt with pale blue herringbone stitch. The quilt is padded. (Nettie McColive Collection. National Museum of Australia: object no. 2000.0009.0004).

The Port Augusta mother of eight children who had been visited by the Governor, Sir Winston Dugan, was too ill to attend the Royal Show. Self-effacingly, the mother had told Sir Winston that 'with only one room to look after, she had plenty of time to do needlework, and she intended' entering her quilt in the competition.⁶⁶ She had completed her quilt in just over seven months.

In response to Eleanor Barbour asking for suggestions for the following year's competition, one writer said 'the old patch work quilt is quite a revival ... I do admire the hooked rag rugs [on hessian] and I think a competition of that kind would meet the approval of many country women ... one must keep their hands very nice and smooth to be able to do the fine stitchery, and that is hard when there are cows to milk and 101 other jobs on a farm that make the hands rough.' She finished with, 'I don't think there will be any wheat here this year. All we get are duststorms and grasshoppers.'⁶⁷





Work in the Needlework section, Royal Adelaide Show, 1938. The cosy in the foreground of daffodil linen and appliqued mixed colour flowers won first prize. The silk frock was made by a 15-year old girl. The green and gold vase was hand-painted (*Chronicle*, 15 Sep 1938, p.71).

⁶⁶ 'Awards for "The Chronicle" International Quilt Contest', *Chronicle*, 8 September 1938, p.57; 'S.A. Governor Sympathetic. Will Pay to Have Shack Lined', *Barrier Miner*, 7 July 1938, p.6.

⁶⁷ 'Old Mug', *Chronicle*, 20 Oct 1938, p.56.

The Chronicle Empire Flower Hooked Rag Rug (1939)

In 1939 the *Chronicle* returned to an international theme: eighteen floral emblems of the British Empire to be worked as a 63 x 45 inch (160cm x 114cm) hooked rag rug. This was not an all-over pattern. There were 35 nine-inch squares, 18 depicting the flowers, with plain alternating squares. The winning rug, judged at the Royal Show, was by Miss S. Scottney Turbill.⁶⁸



The first pattern for the hooked rag rug was the English rose (*Chronicle*, 2 March 1939, p.53)

The hand-made rag rug had its own section at the Royal Show, with door mats, hearth rugs, and floor rugs, for which rag or wool could be used, in some classes with wool loops unclipped, or clipped to show the pile.⁶⁹

An embroidered bowl of flowers (1949)



Roses, tulips, hibiscus, blue bell, and iris (*Chronicle*, 8 September 1949. Detail)

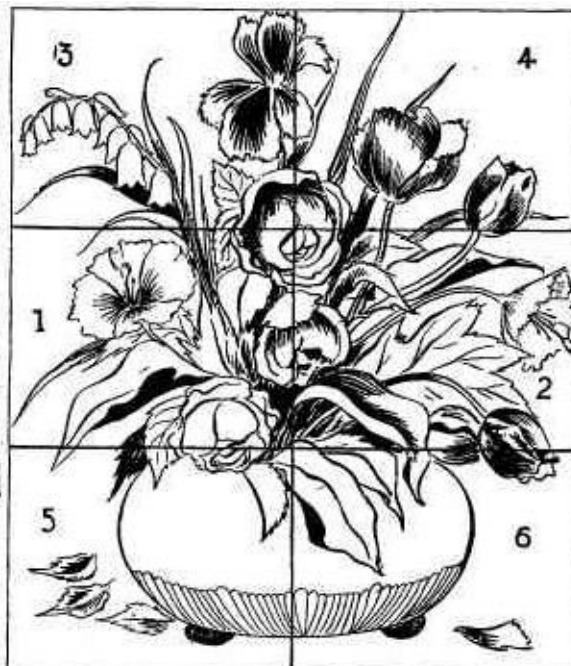
⁶⁸ *Advertiser*, 5 September, 1939, p.6, where it is illustrated.

⁶⁹ 'Many New Features for Women at Royal Show', *Advertiser*, 9 May 1939, p.6.

For more than a decade the *Chronicle* had published Needlework Hints, and Needlework Notes. It continued its campaign after the 1939-1945 War, and in April 1949 announced another embroidery competition, the Embroidered Bowl of Flowers, of the national flowers of all countries, attracting cash prizes and exhibition at the Royal Show in September.⁷⁰

This first post-War handicraft competition run by the *Chronicle* for the Spring Royal Show was modest. It was more difficult to obtain suitable materials to work designs; yet even though newsprint was very scarce the paper intended to publish the six patterns life-size. The completed image of six different parts was to be 16 inches (40.6 cm) by 14 inches (35.4 cm), suitable for the centre of a cushion, quilt, firescreen, or any application the craft worker wished to make. The prescription was that colour and two types of stitch only were to be used. Notification of entry was to be sent to the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society by 24 June and work forwarded to the Show grounds before the end of August.

The first pattern was published on 21 April 1949 and the last section on 30 June. The judges at the Show were Misses H.M. Berndt and J. Larner.



Full pattern for the Embroidered Bowl of Flowers (*Chronicle*, 19 May 1949, p.25)

One nostalgic reader of 1949 remembered the beautiful pre-war quilt patterns, and although she did not work the complete set for a quilt, she 'worked several of them on saddlecloths, cushions, and so on', and had kept the bird and wildflower patterns. Her eyesight was not quite as good as it once was—'one needs good eyes for fancywork'—but she intended to work some of the bowl of flowers, even though it was an 'all or nothing' pattern.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Advertiser*, 6 April 1949, p.10.

⁷¹ 'Blue Butterfly', 'Interest in the Competition', *Chronicle*, 5 May 1949, p.28.

