

EXPLORERS' CORNER

Color a Quilt Square by Pat Purnell, Education Associate

A quilt is a type of blanket made of three layers: a top piece of cloth or squares of cloth sewn together, a layer of padding in the middle for warmth, and a bottom piece for backing.

Making quilts was very important to American women in the 19th century. Quilts provided more than a warm covering for a bed. Quilts were often made to mark a special event, like a wedding or new baby. Friendship quilts, with signatures or messages from the quilters, were given to people moving away. Quilt-making allowed women to be creative and artistic, and "quilting bees" provided an opportunity to gather with friends.

The top layer of the quilt was often made by sewing together square blocks of cloth, with each block containing designs made up of many different pieces of fabric. The design patterns had names.

This quilt pattern is called "Log Cabin." The Log Cabin pattern began around the time of the Civil War, and was very popular.

See an actual 19th century Log Cabin quilt and many others in the exhibit *Stitched Traditions: Quilts from the Collection*.

