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The Elliott Family
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and Their Quilts, Early 1850s-1962
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THE ELLIOTT FAMILY
OF SAC BAY, MICHIGAN AND THEIR QUILTS,
EARLY 1850S-1962

By
Jane Frerer McIntosh

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ABSTRACT

THE ELLIOTT FAMILY OF SAC BAY, MICHIGAN AND THEIR QUILTS, EARLY 1850s-1962

By

Jane Frerer McIntosh

The purpose of the research was to study the Elliott family and their quilts in the context of the nineteenth and twentieth century in order to better understand how they lived.

The quilts were analyzed using an artifact study model. They were identified, evaluated for aesthetic qualities and workmanship, and analyzed for function. It was concluded that thirteen of the fifteen quilts were made by Martha Edwards Elliott. They were scrap quilts with utility quilting, not fine examples of the quiltmaker's art.

A content analysis of the account books of the Elliott family revealed information about quilting in the family, as well as other aspects of their life.

A history of the family was written using family papers, newspapers, account books, and interviews with former neighbors. The history reveals a pioneer family of two generations who were involved in the economic and social life of their community.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Little research has been done involving the lives of women as quiltmakers. The lack of research may be due to the fact that there is still much work to be done in the classification and description of the physical properties of the quilts. Classification and description involves the compilation of information on the fabrics used, patterns and their evolution, pattern names, and the construction details of the quilt.

Rationale

The purpose of the research was to study the quilts of the Elliott family in the context of their lives and times. The study included a classification and description of the quilts and a history of the family as far as the extant records would allow.

Within the family it has most often been the woman's role and responsibility to provide or produce the basic necessities of food, clothing, and bedding. Included within the category of bedding is the creation of quilts for warmth. Quilts are intimately related to women's role as provider of these necessities to the family and are important items of study for that reason.

Yet with few exceptions, researchers have not studied the lives of quiltmakers. The attitudes of some scholars have to be considered. Some, such as "...Edith Halpert.. one of the principal instruments in the creation of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (Folk Art) collection, was actually opposed to recording associated information on philosophical grounds. She desired to comprehend each piece through its intrinsic qualities, her intent was totally aesthetic" (MacDowell, MacDowell, and Dewhurst (1979), p. xii). This philosophy is at best shortsighted, and at the worst, negligent of the duties of a scholar. The act of experiencing a quilt as an object of aesthetic value is in no way compromised by preserving sources of information about the quilt or quiltmaker that might be available in museum and family records, archives, and libraries. The duty of a scholar to assemble, analyze, and interpret all data relevant to the subject is seriously compromised by a philosophy so limited in its scope and attitudes.

There is too little information available about the lives of quiltmakers and their quilts to ignore the historical data that does exist. It is necessary to learn about all segments or groups in a society in order to have a clearer understanding of the society as a whole. To ignore a large portion of the population and their concerns and products, in this case quiltmakers and quilts, is to have an unbalanced view of that society.

Few quilts in museums and private collections have the names of the makers of the quilts, their ages, the age of the quilt or the geographical location where the quilt was made or any information whatsoever in their records. The information is often not considered

important by donors, museums, or collectors. In fact, only within the last ten to fifteen years has there been a real appreciation of the aesthetic and design capabilities of the creators of the quilts. Too often the quilts have been regarded condescendingly as the quaint products of our hardy colonial forebears. The appreciation of the artistic abilities of the women who made the quilts has sparked an interest in the lives of these women. The interest extends not only to modern quilters, but to those quilters able to speak only through their quilts, letters, diaries. and occasionally, the memories of those who knew them. To understand the quilts it is necessary to know not only how they were made but by whom and the context in which they were produced.

Just as a building, a work of art, or a pottery shard reflects the culture within which it was created, so do quilts reflect the society in which they were made. How they lived, the influences at work in their lives, the choices they were given and the choices they made, and the roles they played within their families and communities are important areas of consideration and study.

The Elliott Family

The Elliott family lived in Sac Bay, Delta County, Michigan (Figures 1, 2, and 3). The Elliotts were important participants in the history of the settlement of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. They participated fully in the economic, social, religious, and cultural life of their community.

The last member of the family died in 1962. An estate valued at \$180,000 remained. No wills had been filed and the estate was divided

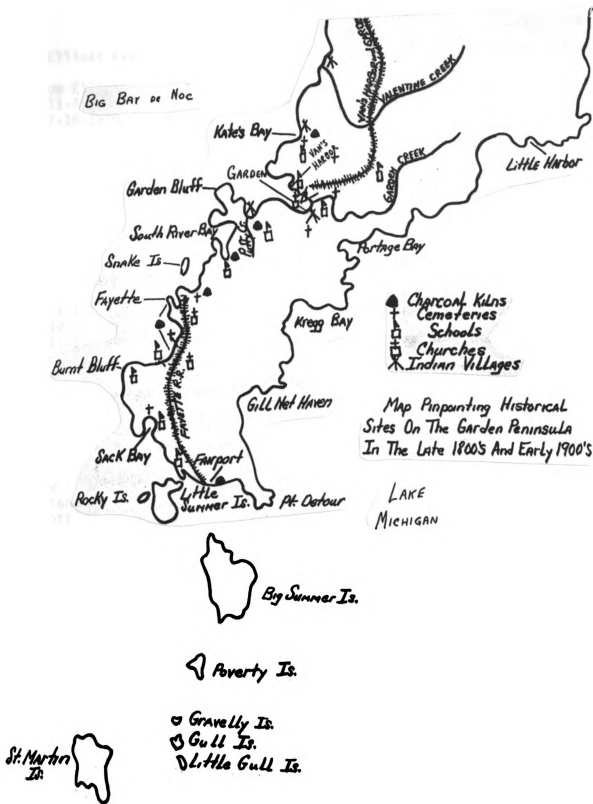


Figure 1. The Garden Peninsula.
From Our Heritage, The Garden Peninsula Historical Society,
1982.

The Elliott Family

George Elliott

b. 11-7-1793 in Sussex Co., England
d. 7-18-1870 in LaMoille, Illinois

- m. 1. Charlotte (?)
b. 11-17-1795
d. 5-16-1822
2. Lucy Tansit
b. 1-1-1797
or 12-31-1796
d. 3-18-1863

Eleven Children

Samuel Elliott

b. 12-21-1826 in Sussex Co., England
d. 11-29-1889 in Sac Bay, Michigan

- m. Martha Edwards
b. 12-26-1843
d. 9-12-1932
in Sac Bay,
Michigan

Henry
Shulton
Elliott

b. 1-7-1868
d. 8-17-1876

Lucy
Ann
Elliott

b. 12-17-1869
d. 2-20-1960

Samuel
Tilden
Elliott

b. 6-8-1876
d. 7-29-1912

Martha
Ellen
Elliott

b. 8-14-1878
d. 4-12-1962

Adelle
Elliott

b. 9-1-1882
d. 1-27-1962

Figure 2. The Elliott Family.
From Samuel Elliott Family.



Figure 3. The Elliott family in front of their house in Sac Bay, Michigan in the mid to late 1890s. From the right: Samuel Tilden Elliott, Martha Edwards Elliott, Adelle (Babe) Elliott, Lucy Elliott, Martha (Mattie) Elliott. (Elliott Family Photograph Collection, Michigan State Archives, Department of State).

among six cousins. The State of Michigan, through the Department of Natural Resources, purchased the household furnishings and most of the family papers. The papers are in the Michigan State Archives. There are other family papers in the collections of the Delta County Historical Society. The household furnishings are in the collections of the Michigan Historical Museum. Among those household furnishings were fifteen quilts. There is no information in the records of the Museum or in the records of the Department of Natural Resources of who made the quilts. The quilts are dated in the museum's catalog, from circa mid-nineteenth century through the late 1930s. Few quilters have left so large a body of work that can be identified as their own as have these quilts from the Elliott family. The researcher had a unique opportunity in the study of the Elliott family and their quilts. It is unusual to find so large a number of quilts associated with one family or quilter. It is equally unusual to find archival materials and the memories of acquaintances of the quilter or quilters available about the same family.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The first section of this chapter reviews popular and scholarly literature about the lives of quiltmakers. In the second part of the chapter selected literature on rural women's lives is reviewed. In the past twenty years there has been an explosion in literature addressing the subject of quilts. The major expansion has been in the popular literature that was created on a base of a few earlier works that appear in most bibliographies. The explosion, however, has not been apparent in scholarly literature dealing with quilts. Notable exceptions are the works of McKinney (1979), Roach (1982), and James (1984). Most studies are concerned with the classification of the physical properties of the quilts. Meloy (1973) who studied the quilts of the Willamette Valley of Oregon and Spotts (1970) who classified quilt patterns of the 1930s, are examples of this type of study. Because of this the researcher believes it is necessary to review popular literature where it deals with quiltmakers rather than the quilts themselves.

Popular Literature About Quiltmakers

The vast majority of popular books on quilts are picture books and how-to books. The picture books, as do many books dealing with quilts, tend to be illustrations of all types of quilts, and cover all time

periods (Pottinger (1983); Safford and Bishop (1972); Bishop (1975). The illustrations serve the purpose of educating, and often dazzling the eye, to the visual and design facets of quilts. The most amazing aspect of the illustrations is that there is so little duplication of the quilts cited as examples. Some of the more unusual are repeated, such as the Kentucky Coffin quilt made by Elizabeth Roseberry Mitchell in 1839 (Orlofsky and Orlofsky (1974). The how-to books usually consist of pattern illustrations, pattern templates, construction information, and occasionally, an extremely brief exploration of the historical antecedents or lore related to quilts (Hinson (1966) and Osler (1980).

Several works published earlier in the century have continued to be cited as sources in other publications. One of the earliest to deal with the subject of quilts in a systematic way and to include information on quilters was Webster (1915). She provided a good general, international, historical quilt background. However her work lacked documentation and a detailed bibliography. She relates the lives of American quilters in the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries to the social and economic setting in which they lived. She concentrated on women of the Appalachian Mountains as relics of an earlier age. Rather than dealing with specific women, she deals with quilters in a general way.

Old Patchwork Quilts by Finley (1929) is one of the more widely consulted texts. She deals with the physical aspects of quilts, such as pattern, quilting designs, fabrics used, and pattern names. Interlaced are undocumented anecdotes used to occasionally illustrate a particular quilt or quilt pattern. The anecdotes quote from wills, advertisements,

and letters but the excerpts are not documented. It is a fairly informative retrospective presentation of examples of American quilts, the folklore associated with them, and the social customs of several periods of American history. The author stresses that:

"All books on antiques aim to be replete in example. But not always do they concern themselves with the conditions of life, the physical setting that brought the given craft product into being. Yet there is a living reason for all that human fingers create" (Finley, p. 7).

Peto (1939) concentrates on illustrating quilts that have a documented history. "It seems a pity a women's work should survive her identity, surely the quiltmaker is as important as her quilt " (Peto (1939), p. xiii). The book illustrated and described the quilts. It used wills, letters, diaries, family histories, and public records to illuminate the lives of quiltmakers and provide individual biographies. Her interest was historical and biographical. There is no attempt to link these lives in terms of general social patterns and the importance of quilting in the lives of the women. The information is undocumented but appears to be well researched. Her work was unusual in its emphasis on the lives of individual quilters using the quilts as a vehicle to express that interest.

One of the more unusual treatments of quilts was by Fitzrandolph (1954). The author writes about traditional British quilting as practiced in Wales and the Northern Counties of England. It differed from American quilting in that it was primarily of the whole cloth type with the emphasis on the quilting design itself. Fitzrandolph offered clear basic instructions on quilting designs and needlework.

The text discussed professional quilters as opposed to home quilters, according to the different types (eg. itinerant, village, club, etc.). Her main emphasis was on the documentation of the remaining quilters as expressions of traditional British regional culture. She concluded that traditional quilting would die out unless the British government intervened and set up programs to teach the art of traditional quilting and provide viable economic support and wages for quilters.

In the last ten years there have been a number of popular publications that deal with the quilter as the main focus of interest rather than the quilt. In the hundreds of books and articles dealing with quilts published during this period they form a small grouping, but they are a real attempt to record the lives of these predominately anonymous women.

The newer publications tend to be more specific in their orientation. Lipsett (1985) made a compilation of historical and biographical information on the makers of seven friendship quilts. Friendship quilts were particularly popular between the years 1840 to 1875. They were quilts inscribed with popular verses, the names, and often signatures of friends and relatives. They were a reflection of the popularity of the autograph album as reflected in popular Periodicals. Lipsett (1985) notes:

"...but now for the first time, with the help of magazines, young women could copy sophisticated, supposedly newly composed verses...It was by this time that women began writing these verses...on to cloth pages the pieced and appliqued blocks of their quilts" (Lipsett (1985), p. 19)

The signatures were embroidered in silk or cotton or written or stamped

in ink. The quilts and quiltmakers in the book were chosen for the amount of information available about them. In too many cases only the names on the quilts remain. "Today their quilts are still important for that reason (inscriptions), but not as cloth autograph albums. Now they are living records, evidence that the women existed" (Lipsett (1986), p. 28). One of the quilts discussed was made by Lucy Blowers Tolford, as a remembrance of the friends and relatives she would leave behind in Pompeii, New York when her family moved to Hudson, Michigan in 1850 (Lipsett (1986), pp. 47-87).

The author used letters, diaries, wills, census information, and histories compiled by local and state historical societies. The important aspect of these quilts to the author is the biographical information they may impart. Lipsett also includes a brief history of the friendship quilt relating it to a specific time period, the methods used to sign the quilt, and the impact of the increased availability of contemporary periodicals on the nineteenth century popular culture.

The Holstien/Kentucky Quilt Project (1982) draws on information available about nineteenth century Kentucky quilts and their makers. The book's purpose is to illustrate and document the quilts. They are treated as individual and unrelated entities which illustrate an aspect of nineteenth century Kentucky. No attempt is made to analyze the information to discover similarities and differences. To be fair, the sample is small and the lack of previous documentation renders that task the most important to the project. The authors conclude that:

"...another important lesson of the project was not just that valuable heirlooms can be lost, worn out, or sold away, but that important elements of family history can vanish within a generation. Because quilt making is largely an anonymous art, the identity of the quiltmaker usually could not be determined most often, there simply was no information that would cast any light on her life and times" (Kentucky Quilt Project, 1982, p. 20).

Ferrero, Hedges, and Silber (1987) relate quiltmakers and the quilts they made to the major social, political, and economic issues of the nineteenth century. These include industrialization, slavery and abolition, changes in technology, the Civil War, the movement west, the vote for women, and temperance. Women were involved in all these issues and events and often chose to express their feelings about them in the quilts they made. One example of this, is the changes in the names of some quilt patterns. "Patterns that for years had biblical and domestic references were given new, more relevant names...Jacob's Ladder came to be called by many women, Underground Railroad" (Ferrero, Hedges, and Silber (1987), p. 69). Quilts were also used to raise funds for such groups as the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. They were often directly contributed to the Sanitary Commission for distribution to soldiers in the Union Army during the Civil War. Women's skills with needlework were also used to sew banners and quilts that promoted group solidarity. Quilts made by and for the W.C.T.U. by its members often had the group's symbols and insignias and those of its chapters and chapter member's names. Quilts were used as symbols of the home which the W.C.T.U. was fighting to protect from the ravages of alcohol.

Patchwork and other forms of sewing were regarded in the nineteenth century as imparting those domestic virtues defined as feminine. These virtues were patience, neatness, acceptance of repetition, the attitude of selflessness, and service to family and church. The expression of domestic virtues through quilting and other forms of sewing also developed ties between women, "...deep ties of friendship and solidarity with each other and a sense of themselves as a distinct and distinctive,

group" (Ferrero, Hedges, and Silber (1987), p. 27). These ties and feelings of solidarity were important to reform issues such as temperance, which were founded and led by women. Women were both affected by these events and were able to have a real and lasting effect on them.

The Elliott family quilts are a part of the Michigan Quilt Project but are not included in the project's publication by MacDowell and Fitzgerald (1987). The purpose of the project was to document quilts, quiltmakers, and the process of quilting in Michigan. Some of the trends in quilting in Michigan which have been identified so far are: quilts as documents of history, the influence of technology and communications on the transmission and types of quilting traditions that continue to be practiced, the predominance of women in quilting, and the use and meaning of quilts to the community. The type of quilting frame used in Michigan is identified. "It consists of four wooden boards temporarily secured to the tops of chair backs" (MacDowell and Fitzgerald (1987), p. 5). Quilts made as a method of raising funds for church or community have been and still are an ongoing tradition in the state. "Making quilts for the church was an accepted form of involvement by women in church affairs" (MacDowell and Fitzgerald (1987), p. 8). They were also made for members of the community who might be in need. Quilts were made in certain seasons and even at certain times of the day:

"The quilts lost (to a fire)...were replaced in the next day or two by neighbors. Everyone tried to keep a spare quilt or comforter in case of need. All made tops in the winter and saved at least one or two for a spring quilting party when wagons could move on the roads and frames could be set outside. Some were completed in family quilting bees in the evening after supper and chores" (MacDowell and Fitzgerald (1987), p. 122).

The type of quilt made by a quiltmaker could often reflect her values.

For instance,

"...Most folks lived rather simply and without waste. It was also a way of life for housewives to make do and do for their families and making quilts fell into that natural order of things. Rarely was new material purchased for the sole purpose of making a quilt top. Most usually scraps and leftovers from other sewing projects were used in this way, therefore what might have been wasted was turned into something beautiful..." (MacDowell and Fitzgerald (1987), p. 72).

One of the purposes of the Michigan Quilt Project was to illustrate the variety of quilts made in Michigan and collect related biographical information about the overwhelming number of female makers of quilts where it was available.

One of the most interesting publications reviewed was the autobiography of Grace Synder (1986). This reference is of importance because it is one of the few instances where a woman tells of her own life and her interest of quilting. She grew up on the Nebraska plains in the late nineteenth century. As a little girl, she had three dreams: to marry a cowboy and live on a ranch, to fly above the clouds, and to make the finest quilts, finer even than her mothers. She realized all of her dreams. Her mother was initially reluctant to allow her to learn to quilt. But Grace begged hard and promised to be ever so careful. Grace recalls how her mother finally said she could try a little Four Patch. "But you'll have to do neat work and fasten the ends of your thread good," she said, "for I can't afford to waste thread and pieces if you don't" (Snyder (1986), p. 50).

Through her youth and early married life she continued to quilt and occasionally mentions the fact, but does not describe the quilts. She belonged to a church organized needlework club that met monthly when

possible. It was a major social outlet for the women on isolated ranches. Their needlework was primarily quilting. In the 1930s, she began to make very complex appliqued quilts and quilts of many small pieces, as many as 87,000 or more pieces. She was well known locally, but also exhibited her quilts nationally to great acclaim. She was considered an exceptional quiltmaker and it was the very complexity of her quilts on which her reputation was founded. It was her fame as a quiltmaker, as well as her pioneer childhood, that prompted her to write her autobiography. Few women have thought their lives worth recording in detail unless they have produced something special. Few women, as did Grace Snyder, would have thought their everyday or scrap quilts worthy of mention or description. Snyder's exceptional quilts and her consciousness of self set her apart.

Several of the most recent popular publications address the lives of twentieth century quilters. They concentrate on specific regions. Cooper and Buford (1977) interviewed Texas and New Mexico quilters. The mostly elderly women speak for themselves, but are not named. " ..We hope to convey what became the predominant insight for us, that the quilts are an artistic expression of their selves and their whole experience" (Cooper and Buford, p. 15). It is an attempt to show the part quilts and their making played in the lives of the women using their own voices.

Irvin (1984) specifically documents Southern Appalachian quilts as they relate to the lives of the people who made and used them. He records information dealing with individual quilts and their makers, both from the nineteenth and twentieth century. Of particular interest

and value are interviews with individual quilters. It details how they learned to quilt and how the quilting fits in and relates to their lives.

Both Cooper and Buferd, and Irvin attempt to document and record the lives of these women in the hope that they speak for other women who are quiltmakers. They believe in the importance of the information and that the presentation of the information is sufficient.

Scholarly Studies of Quiltmakers

There are a number of scholarly studies of quilts that concentrate on the documentation and classification of quilts, quilt patterns, materials, and construction techniques. They are not interested in the quiltmaker as a subject of investigation either historically or sociologically. They desire to create frameworks and systems to classify the patterns used in quilting, construction details as a useful tool to date quilts, and to record and to document the quilts themselves. The following researchers were more concerned with the quiltmaker as a subject of study.

Roach (1982) deals with a sample of quilters from northern Louisiana who quilt by themselves rather than in the group manner thought usual, that is the quilting bee. She divides quilters lives into cycles. Each cycle has a different impulse or rhythm. "This rhythm becomes evident when the life histories of these women are examined to determine how quilting expertise is developed and used through their lives" (Roach (1982), p. 3). They followed the seasonal rhythms of quilting "...Gardening in the spring and canning in the

summer, and in winter you quilted and pieced scraps" (Roach (1982), p. 2). Roach concluded that the rhythm of quilting as it relates to the lives of the women falls into four stages. From four to fifteen is the learning stage that takes place usually in the family. The second stage is learning by oneself which usually takes place after marriage. It consists of fine tuning skills already mastered. The third stage is the middle years of 30 to 50 when fewer quilts are likely to be made. The fourth stage is from age 50 until physical difficulties interfere. This is often the most productive period of quilting.

McKinney (1978) in her thesis addresses all aspects of quilts in order to "...examine twentieth century Appalachian Virginia quilts and to record information from quilters and their relatives as a means of documenting the history and culture of the Appalachian people" (McKinney (1978), p. 3). McKinney used interviews and examinations of the quilts in terms of fabrics, color, pattern and pattern names to determine the social aspects of quilting and to document data from an orally based subculture often ridiculed and misunderstood by the dominant culture. McKinney emphasizes the value of the nonverbal artifact, the quilt, in studying an oral culture. The quilt, it is concluded, while having similarities to other quilts invariably expresses the individuality of the quilter. Quilting also has had an important social function as an expression of friendship, cooperation, and fun in Appalachia. McKinney concludes that it is necessary "...to conduct similar studies in other geographic locations and to compare studies between the various cultures" (McKinney (1978), p. 103).

James (1984) used the study of quilts as a method to approach and document, as well as gain a clearer understanding of the lives of

Colonial and pioneering women from the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth centuries, and through the various quilt revival periods to the present. James concentrates on the value and importance of quilts and quilting in these women's lives and the lives of their families. She used primary sources such as letters, diaries, and journals to illustrate this importance. Her viewpoint is that of a social historian interested in the lives of ordinary people as they relate to the shifting social, domestic, and economic patterns as well as the development of social institutions and movements. She concludes, as she began, that women's history is intertwined with that of quilts. "Something this closely tied to survival has to have been a very important element in virtually all women's lives" (James (1984), p. 10).

In contrast to Roach, Yabsley (1984) concentrates her study on aspects of group that quilt together. She begins by tracing the history of quilts in the state of Texas from the settling of Texas by Anglos to the present. The history is interspersed with individual histories of Texas women, such as, Jane Wilkinson Long, the first Anglo settler in the Spanish Territory of Texas in 1819. She was the first woman who knew how to quilt in the state of Texas. Yabsley documents the different types of quilting groups, how they developed, how they differ in composition and purpose, contemporary influences on quilting groups, and what interests of the quilters the groups serve. Yabsley notes that,

"The difference in the purpose between guilds and clubs is a usually implied by the names of such groups, as in quilt or quilter's guild versus quilting club, which underscores the respective emphasis on broad study by the former and a particular activity by the latter" (Yabsley (1984), p. 64).

The author concludes that the two different types of organizations will continue as two parallel groups whose interests and aims will seldom overlap.

Rural and Farm Life

The Elliott family lived, for the two generations studied, in a rural setting and they were primarily involved in agricultural production for most of the time period. Because of this fact, a brief review of some literature that deals with women's involvement with agriculture and rural life has been included. It is a far from exhaustive review of the literature, but those books chosen were felt to most reflect or have most in common with the Elliott family's experience.

Juster (1979) has compiled a group of writings that illustrate women's experience and that relate to rural life in the nineteenth century. He discussed the practical knowledge needed, the concerns of women's everyday lives, and the place that farm women held in their society. Their lives were seldom easy,

"...a life tied to home and children, lacking opportunity for outside contacts, stimulation or variety of experience, constant adaption to the terms of life established by someone else, endless unacknowledged work" (Juster (1979), p. 8).

The reality of rural women's lives is set against a backdrop of our romantic notions of the nineteenth century and rural life in those days. Women's concerns, in many ways, more directly affected the lives of their family and their community than did the activities of their husbands. A depressing statistic from 1882 does not make the life of

a rural farm women appear attractive. "The statistics from the chief lunatic asylums of this country show that from farmer's wives are found the largest percentage of those whose light of reason has been quenched" (Juster (1979), p. 210). What most frequently comes through in the writings is the almost endless nature of her work and some of the qualities necessary to survive. These are energy, patience, a sense of humor, and above all, stamina.

Riley (1980) contends that census figures do not reflect the economic value or the necessary nature of the work that farm women contributed to their families and the country in frontier Iowa. Indeed, they were listed as "not gainfully employed". Women's fields of labor were many: the production and processing of food, manufacturing products such as soap from food byproducts, the production, processing, and care of the family's clothing and textiles, the care of her family's health, the training of her children, and helping out by performing "men's" work when necessary. The variety and volume of the work women did was not considered employment because she was not paid for it. Even when their work did produce cash, it was not considered as employment despite the vital nature of it to her family's survival.

A primary example is the production of butter which was done primarily by farm women. Riley (1980) notes " ..that butter was a primary cash product on the farmer's frontier, its income often keeping farms financially afloat during the rocky years" (p. 263). Another source of cash produced by farm women was that of taking in boarders to live with the family. It seems astounding that the value and economic significance of women's work would be ignored.

Jensen (1981) has documented the lives of women who worked the land. The text deals with all segments of women including Native American women and southern women, white and black. The land was controlled by men and while women had little power over its disposition and use, her work was essential to the survival of the family. Men were primarily concerned with the outside agricultural work. Jensen (1981) notes that:

"Women increasingly confined themselves to household tasks which included tending poultry, making butter and cheese, working in vegetable gardens, manufacturing clothing, and caring for the children" (Jensen (1981), p. 32).

The making and sale of butter allowed women and their families to purchase those items that she could not grow or make for her family.

Sachs (1983) is concerned with women as the unacknowledged member of the farm community. She presents a history of women and their work on the farm from the seventeenth century, an analysis of farm women's position today and interviews with farm women. Women's role in the nineteenth century was increasingly confined to the domestic sphere. The sexual division of labor on the farm mirrored the sexual division of labor in the city.

Increasing industrialization eventually removed the production of butter from farm women's control. It removed a major contribution of women to the economic well being of the farm,

"Many farm women relied on the sale of butter as a source of cash income. Braverman (1974) notes that in 1879 almost all of the butter was produced on farms, in 1899 the proportion was under three-fourths, and by 1939 only one-fifth of butter was made on farms" (Sachs (1983), p. 21).

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Summary

The literature of quilts has not often concerned itself with quiltmakers. When the literature has dealt specifically with the quiltmaker it has usually discussed quiltmakers in an anecdotal fashion, as interesting illustrations of old time customs, as examples of our country's early history, or as an attempt to create interest in the subject in order that the skills and cultural heritage not be lost. The researchers in both the popular and scholarly studies used primary sources, both public and personal documents, as the major source of information in their studies of quiltmakers. In the studies that concentrate on the lives of twentieth century quiltmakers, the interview is used as the major form of data collection. There are those that write of the lives of specific quilters, but they are few. The majority that do so often concentrate on the exceptional women who, through their menfolks's accomplishments or their value as exemplars of womanly virtues, were thought worthy of having their work and names preserved. Their quilting would be extolled only if it was an exceptional example of quilting. Little work has been done in researching individual quiltmakers' lives with more than an anecdote or two. Few women have thought their lives spent in ordinary tasks attending to their family's needs worthy of recording. Most publications concentrate on the makers of specific types of quilts or quilters in a specific geographical location.

The most studied area has been the southern United States, particularly the Appalachian Mountain area. The isolation and rural nature of these areas has made them a fertile area to study the survival

of old skills. There have been few studies of quilting and fewer concentrating on the lives of quilters in the state of Michigan (Lipsett p. 47-57).

The constant revivals of interest in the skills of quilting and quilts testify to the importance of this activity in women's lives, even when not necessary to create bed covers for warmth. Quilting met not only a utilitarian need, it met the need for a creative activity in the ceaseless round of daily chores.

The lives of rural women were filled with continual work, isolation, and little respect for the contribution she made to the survival of her family as an economic unit. The sexual division of labor on the farm and the cult of domesticity limited the type of work society considered proper for women to perform and determined the status of women and their work as being secondary to the more obviously economically productive work of men.

In all of the literature reviewed certain themes re-occur. The intimate way in which quilts are involved with the lives of so many women, the lack of respect for the work of women and the products of their labor, and the overwhelming anonymity of most quilters.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual model used for the research is that of the Human Ecosystem postulated by Bubolz, Eicher, and Sontag (1979). An ecological model views mankind or humans interacting with their environment. In the model, the central unit is called the Human Environed Unit. The unit may be a single person or a group of people "who have some feelings of unity; share some common resources, goals, values, and interests; and have some sense of common unity " (Bubolz, Eicher, and Sontag (1979), p. 29). In the case of this research, that unit was the women of the Elliott family.

The Human Environed Unit acts within three environments: the Natural Environment, the Human Constructed Environment, and Human Behavioral Environment. The Natural Environment is "...formed by nature with space-time, physical, and biological components" (Bubolz et al., (1979), p. 29). For the purpose of the research, the Natural Environment was the Upper Peninsula of Michigan with the physical setting of Sac Bay, facing west onto Big Bay de Noc in Lake Michigan, the mixed pine and hardwood forests, the rocky soil, the minerals, the fauna, and the often harsh climate. The above formed the physical and biological components. The space-time components were the

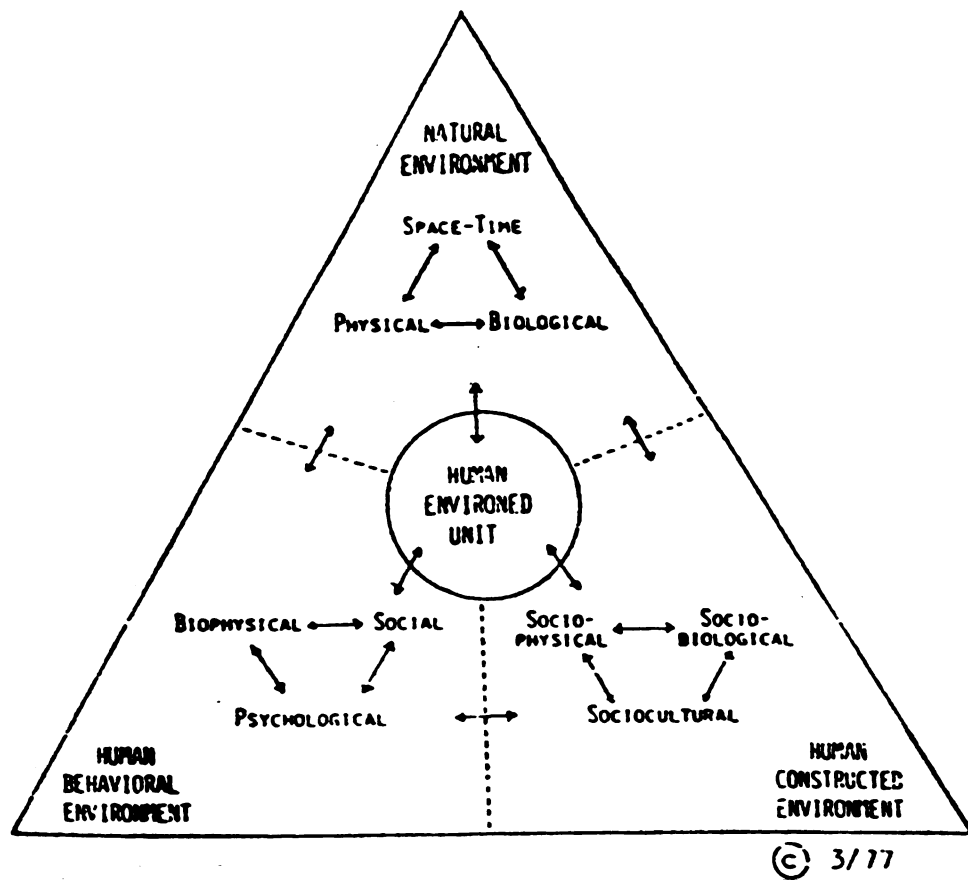


Figure 4. The Human Ecosystem.

years from the early 1860s to the death of Martha (Mattie) Elliott in the spring of 1962.

The Human Environed Unit also acts with the Human Constructed Environment, defined as an environment altered or created by human beings. It includes modifications made by humans of the natural environment's physical and biological components and other social and cultural constructions" (Bubolz et al., p. 29). The town of Sac Bay, the Elliott's dairy farm and sawmill, the lumbering, fishing, and charcoal production for the iron smelting at Fayette, as well as the quilts made by the women of the Elliott family were part of the Human Constructed Environment. Included are "...Cultural patterns, such as technology, language, laws, values, and aesthetic standards which provide the basis for communications, order, and coordination of human activities" (Bubolz et al., p. 30). An aspect of technology is represented by the introduction of mail order and the Elliott family's use of mail order. Culture is a human construction and it influences even our perceptions of the physical world around us. The cultural patterns of the Elliott family were those of an Anglo-saxon, mid-western American nature. The patterns of this background stressed the value of needlework skills and textile production by women for their families.

The Human Behavioral Environment consists of the presence, posture, and social behaviors of others. "The Human Behavioral Environment is essential for meeting biological and physical needs and the social and psychological needs for love, relationships, communications, knowledge, and self-fulfillment. These are necessary for existence beyond

survival" (Bubolz et al., p. 30). The Behavioral Environment most important to the research consisted of the friends, neighbors, and acquaintances of the Elliott family in the area of the Garden Peninsula and Delta County.

Inherent in the conceptual model is the concept of interaction. All the environments act on the Human Environed Unit, and the Human Environed Unit in turn interacts with all the environments. As the environment is acted upon it in turn changes and causes changes in other environments as well as in the Human Environed Unit. "Humans are dependent on all components of their environment to satisfy needs and desires. They affect their environment which in turn affects them " (Bubolz et al., p. 30). The main focus in terms of the conceptual model, was that of the Human Environed Unit and its interaction with the Natural Environment and the Human Constructed Environment.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the research was to study the quilts from the Elliott estate which are in the possession of the Michigan Historical Museum in the context of the nineteenth and twentieth century Upper Peninsula, Michigan environment and to help us better understand how they lived their lives. Through an analysis of the quilts, an analysis of the account books of the Elliott family, and a history of the family members it was hoped that questions as to the identity of the quiltmaker or quiltmakers in the Elliott family could be answered. It was also hoped that the analyses and history would reveal the relationship of the quilts to the lives of the Elliotts, their involvement with their

community, and the events and patterns of their days. There has been little published research that the researcher is aware of that deals with the lives of quilters in Michigan. The Elliotts have left behind not only quilts identified as their own but comprehensive personal records available in archives and from historical societies sources. The extant records will make possible the study of this group of women. Valuable data can be gained by the study of individuals as opposed to large groups, when records do exist. It was hoped that the study of these documents and recollections of friends and neighbors would provide the information sought by the researcher.

Assumptions

1. The information available in archives and historical societies will reveal the desired information on the quilts and the members of the Elliott family.
2. Enough information exists to write a history of the lives of the members of the Elliott family.

Research Questions

Since there is little research on the lives of quiltmakers, there was not enough information to formulate hypotheses. Research questions were considered to be more appropriate and the following questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the physical attributes of the quilts, pattern, material, construction, condition? Are the aesthetic qualities and quality of workmanship of construction at a high level?
2. Did a member of the family make the quilts?
3. What relationship did the quilts have to the lives of the members of the Elliott family? Why did they make the quilts?
4. How were they involved in the life of their community?
5. What were the events and patterns of their lives?

Definitions

1. Quilt - Two cloths, with or without a bat or filling, held together by running stitches made by hand or machine or tied with thread or yarn. A quilt may also be joined only at the edges as are many Log Cabin and Crazy quilts.
2. Quilt top - The upper layer of the quilt; the part of the quilt meant to be in view; where the pieced or appliqued pattern shows. If the quilt is of the whole cloth or one piece type, where the quilting will be seen; the right side.
3. Batt- Filling, or interlining ; the inner layer of the quilt, it may be cotton that has been carded, cotton flannel, old wool blankets, old quilts, carded wool, etc.
4. Back or backing - The bottom or back layer of the quilt, it can be pieced in patterns, randomly pieced to make it the proper size to fit the quilt, or one piece.
5. Piecework or patchwork - The joining together of pieces of cloth by sewing seams to create a pattern or a larger piece of cloth.

6. Applique - The application of a piece of fabric to a ground fabric and securing it by turning under the edges and sewing it to the ground with buttonhole stitches or invisible stitching.
7. Edging - The finishing of the edges of the quilt. If applied of a separate fabric it may be bias or straight cut. It is sewn to the edge on one side, turned over the raw edge of the quilt, and stitched to the other side of the quilt. Often the raw edges of the quilt top and back are turned to the inside and whipstitched together. Another method is to cut the back larger than the top and to bring the back over the raw edges of the quilt, fold the edges of the back under and to sew this edging on the front or top of the quilt.
8. Quilting - Stitches that hold together the two or three layers of cloth. In America, the running stitch is more commonly used. In Europe, the buttonhole stitch is more commonly used. It stabilizes the filling and adds strength to the quilt.
9. Tying - The use of yarn or thread to join the layers of the quilt by stitching through the layers of the quilt and then bringing the yarn back to the top of the quilt and tying the ends in knots or bows.
10. Pattern block - The individual design motif that makes up one unit of the repeated pattern.
11. Lattices or sashes - Strips of fabric that divide the pattern blocks or motifs horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.
12. Borders - Strips of fabric that frame the inner body of the quilt. The borders can repeat the motifs and colors of the from the body of the quilt or may introduce new colors or patterns.
13. Primary sources - Sources that are first hand accounts of events, original documents, or artifacts.
14. Secondary sources - Sources that are reporting what others have seen or are interpretations of what others have seen.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The research project was divided into three sections: analysis of the quilts using the Artifact Study Model, content analysis of the account books of the Elliott farm, and research into the lives of the members of the Elliott family. The methodology used in each section is discussed separately.

Analysis of the Quilts

For the study of the quilts themselves, a modified form of the Artifact Study Model proposed by E. McClung Fleming (1974) was used as a basis for dealing with the information gathered about the quilts. The Artifact Study Model presents a procedure to use in analyzing material culture. The artifact has too often been overlooked as a primary source for use in historical research. Historians can read and understand documents with ease, but without a structure, a procedure, or a means of translation, the artifact has too often remained mute.

The model is a classification system that divides the properties of the artifact into five categories (Figure 5). The categories include history, materials, construction, design, and function. In the writer's view, the history of an artifact is not an inherent property of that artifact. It is a separate aspect of the artifact that can not be

Artifact Properties:	Operations to Be Applied to the Artifact:	Operations Used In This Study:
A. History	1. Identification (Factual Description) ¹	Uses B, C, D.
B. Materials	2. Evaluation (Judgement)	Uses B, C, D.
C. Construction	3. Cultural Analysis (Relationship of the Artifact to Its Culture)	Uses A and E.
D. Function	4. Interpretation (What Artifact Means to Present) ²	

¹ It is taken from records where they exist, not taken directly from the artifact. It was not used in the analysis of the quilts. Material, construction, design, and function are taken directly from the artifact.

² Not used in this study.

Figure 5. Diagram of Fleming's Artifact Study Model.

determined by an examination of the physical properties of the artifact. The history of the quilts is a part of the history of the Elliott family and will be presented in Chapter 7.

In the model, four operations are to be performed on the remaining four properties of the artifact. They are: identification, evaluation, cultural analysis, and interpretation. The first three operations are used in this study. According to Fleming (1974), the fourth operation, interpretation, relates the meaning of the artifact to our own time and culture. This operation does not fall within the boundaries of the study.

"The chief objective of identification is to provide accurate information about the five properties of the artifact" (Fleming (1974), p. 156). Identification includes the physical description of the artifact. For this study, identification involved gathering information (Form A, Appendix A) about materials, construction, design, aesthetic quality, and workmanship. The quilts were studied in the storage area of the Michigan Historical Museum Collections warehouse. The dates assigned to the quilts were taken from the catalog records of the Michigan Historical Museum. They were photographed using 35mm color film. Available light was used and explains the yellowed tones of most of the photographed details. The quilts were determined to be part of the Elliott estate by their original Department of Natural Resources catalog numbers, beginning 63-1 or 63-2. The Elliott estate was cataloged by the Department of Natural Resources at the State Park at Fayette under these two series of numbers. The artifacts were moved to the Museum collections warehouse in Lansing. A number of the original

catalog records of the quilts are missing. The DNR catalog numbers that were found attached to some of the quilts in question when they were recataloged, were used in their identification as being from the Elliott family estate. Queries to the Department of Natural Resources and the Michigan Historical Museum as to any other remaining documents of the sale of the estate to the State of Michigan were unproductive.

Evaluation, the second step or operation in the model, was based on workmanship and the aesthetic quality of the properties of the quilts. The data in this section is taken from the information in the preceding identification section, as aesthetic qualities and workmanship are judged by the physical properties described in the identification. Workmanship was judged by the precision of construction details (number of stitches per inch in the quilting, the seams lining up, difficulty of pattern, type of quilting, etc). The stitch length of the quilting was counted by visually dividing the quilt into four parts and taking three measurements in each quadrant. The totals were then averaged. After using this method on five quilts, it was found that if measurements were taken from opposite corners of the quilt, essentially the same number of stitches per inch could be obtained as when measuring in all four corners. The remaining ten quilts were measured for stitch length in opposite corners taking three measurements in each corner. The seams lining up was determined by a visual check of the overall quilt.

The second part of evaluation was concerned with the aesthetic quality of the quilts. It is necessarily a subjective assessment. Workmanship can affect the aesthetic qualities of a quilt, but aesthetic evaluation was primarily concerned with the manipulation of color and pattern and the overall visual impact of the elements of design.

Questions dealing with workmanship and aesthetic quality are found on Form A, Appendix A.

The next operation is that of cultural analysis. There are a number of different types of analysis applicable, such as product, content, or functional analysis. For the purposes of this study, functional analysis offered the most value. "Discussion of the utility function will necessarily involve discussion of the human behavior associated with the artifact..." (Fleming (1974), p. 157). The human behavior associated with quilt making was searched for in the Elliott family papers in both the Michigan State Archives, the Delta County Historical Society, and in the interviews conducted with former neighbors and friends of the Elliott family. The information was analyzed for mention of the functions and uses of quilts and quilting in the case of the Elliotts in particular, and in general, for the Garden Peninsula during this era.

Content Analysis of the Account Books of the Elliott Farm

The Monthly Account Books of the Elliott Farm extend from 1903 to 1910, 1917 to 1920, 1934 to 1942; animal and hired service rolls 1911 to 1919; and produce ledgers 1927 to 1934. The store account books of Donald A. Wells, Sac Bay storekeeper, from 1869, 1870, 1873 to 1879, 1892 to 1894 were also surveyed. The account books of daily expenditures for the 1920s and early 1930s are unfortunately not available. A qualitative content analysis was used to deal with quilts, textiles, and textile related items, as well as usage of mail order and ready-to-wear clothing, books, magazines, and newspapers, and social

life expenditures by the Elliott family for the years available. The information in the account books was used to document the changes in the above stated areas of the lives of the members of the Elliott family. A qualitative content analysis is based on inferences drawn from the frequency of the occurrence (Borg and Gall (1967), p. 253). A data collection form was proposed, but when tested was found to be cumbersome and unnecessary. The entries that related to purchases of items relevant to the above stated areas and any entry that would shed light on the concerns of the Elliott family were recorded by year and month chronologically and summarized in tables.

Research Into the Lives of the Members of the Elliott Family

According to McBreen (1974), the requirements of historic methodology concentrate on "...1. The location of all available data or evidence. 2. The criticism of that evidence. 3. The relating of that evidence" (p. 541). The historic method was used in this section.

Papers from the Elliott family were located in the Michigan State Archives. They were purchased by the Department of Natural Resources along with most of the contents of the house and barns. The contents of the Elliott farm were removed to Fayette State Park north of Sac Bay. They were cataloged and displayed at the park. The artifacts of the park were transferred to the jurisdiction of the History Bureau, Department of State and moved to the collection storage of the History Museum in Lansing, Michigan. The cataloged artifacts were reviewed by the researcher for information that they would yield about the Elliott family. The papers were transferred to the Michigan State Archives

where they were sorted and cataloged. Data were also found in the Delta County Historical Society. The papers had been given to the society by the Elliott sisters. Both groups of papers included, besides the account books, primarily letters, both personal and business to and from the Elliotts. All of the material found in both locations that related to the Elliotts and the Garden Peninsula were reviewed. The Sack Bay District School Records and oral history tapes made by three residents of the Garden Peninsula in 1976 were also reviewed by the researcher. Letters from the Elliott family to their relatives may still exist in the possession of the cousins who inherited the Elliott estate and their descendants. The difficulty of finding these relatives after a lapse of twenty-five years was considered too expensive and time consuming for the scope of this study. Escanaba newspapers (Escanaba Tribune, Iron Port, Escanaba Morning Press, Escanaba Daily Press, and the Escanaba Daily Mirror) were reviewed using every issue available in the Library of Michigan from 1869 until 1932. After 1932, only certain years were read, for example, the years of the deaths of the remaining members of the family.

Where necessary to fill out the information found in the archival sources, secondary sources were used. Certain sources that might be classified as secondary sources were used as primary sources. In particular, a geneology of the Samuel Elliott family was used as a primary source for this research. It included information on the birth dates of Samuel and Martha Elliott that were not available in Delta county records. The birth and death dates of their children were taken from a number of sources including the records of Delta County, family

tombstones, and cemetery records. In addition to the archival records, the memories of friends and neighbors of the Elliott family were mined for information about the quilts, the members of the Elliott family, and life in the Garden Peninsula. Interview questions were formulated for this purpose (Appendix B). It was not a rigid form and did not preclude the asking of further questions as they occurred during the course of the interviews. The names of those in the Garden Peninsula who would remember the members of the Elliott family were obtained from a past president of the Garden Historical Society. Her status as a resident of the area, as well as her past presidency of the local historical society, made her an excellent source of information.

An introductory letter from the researcher, along with letters of introduction from Dr. Ann Slocum, thesis advisor and Maria Quinlan Leiby, Curator of Collections, Michigan Historical Museum, were sent to the seven proposed subjects to be interviewed. Self-addressed, stamped postcards were included that indicated willingness to be interviewed. Five cards were returned. The five that were willing to be interviewed were contacted by telephone and arrangements were made for the time of the interviews. A request for approval of the interviews was submitted to the Michigan State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects. Approval was granted. A release form was formulated that included permission to be interviewed along with a section dealing with the final disposition of the transcripts and the tapes of the interviews in the Michigan State Archives (Appendix B). The interviews took place in the interviewee's homes who were interviewed in the Garden Peninsula in March of 1987. The interviews lasted from one hour to four hours.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF THE QUILTS

The quilts of the Elliott family are part of the Human Constructed Environment. They represent a cultural pattern in which the needlework skills of women and the physical results of these skills were valued for their practical value and aesthetic quality. For the women, the exercise of creativity that the needlework brought to their lives would have been important to them. The making of at least one of the quilts involved a part of the community in the form of a church group (Human Behavioral Environment) formed for social purposes as well as for the purpose of creating good works for the community.

The quilts were analyzed within the framework of the Artifact Study Model as described in a previous chapter (Figure 5). This chapter is divided into sections that follow the steps of the model. The first step in the model was identification. Under this step the quilts were observed and their physical attributes were recorded. The analysis of the quilts attempted to answer questions about their physical attributes.

Evaluation is the next step in the model. Evaluation of the quilts revealed information as to the identity of the quilt maker or quilt makers habits and skills. Similarities and differences in the construction and design elements of a quilt can indicate one or more

makers. Workmanship and aesthetic quality can be determined by analysis of certain of the physical properties of the quilts, such as, stitch regularity, the number of quilting stitches per inch, execution of the design and color placement. The individual factors that relate to workmanship and aesthetic quality are analyzed in the evaluation section of this chapter but their description is included in Identification since they are physical attributes. The dates of the quilts are those in the catalog records of the artifacts. They appear to be reasonable assessments of the probable dates of the quilts.

The next step of cultural analysis dealt with the questions of how quilting was carried out in the Garden Peninsula, of how quilts function within the family, and who made the quilts.

Identification and Description of the Quilts

The Log Cabin Quilts

One of the two most popular patterns in the group of fifteen quilts is the Log Cabin pattern. It has long been a popular pattern because of the use of many small strips of fabric it requires, the almost endless variation provided by the manipulation of the light and dark areas of the pattern blocks, and its association with the American pioneers.

The first Log Cabin quilt (FD-244-77) is set in the Barn Raising pattern or set, creating a series of concentric squares. It is dated c. 1900-10 (Figures 6 and 7). It is constructed of a number of solid colored woolen flannels, cotton and wool woven plaids, woven and printed cotton stripes, brocaded cottons, and printed florals and dots.

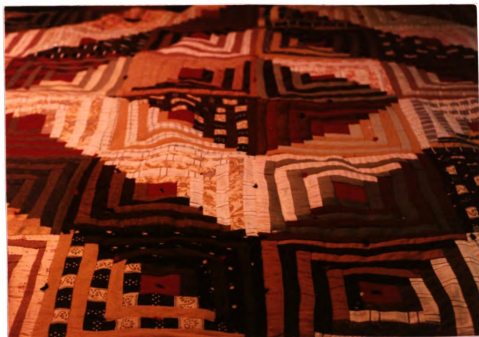


Figure 6. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-244-77



Figure 7. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-244-77



Figure 8. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-244-77.



Figure 9. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-244-77.

No. 18K5527
Teddy Bears,
 the latest idea in
 sofa pillows, made
 of good quality
 crash and navy
 lined in denim as
 shown in illustration.
 The entire
 front and back are
 bound and stuffed
 with mercerized
 bonaz, making this
 a finished article
 and ready for use. Size, 22x22 inches. **23c**
 Pipe, for front and back.
 If by mail, postage extra, each, 4 cents.



**The Very Latest, Real Teddy
 Bear Pillow Cushion.**
No. 18K5559
 This is the
 newest and
 most popular
 pillow top on
 the market
 today. The
 front and back
 are made of the
 well known
 teddy bear
 fur with one
 corner folded
 over, and a
 real Teddy's
 bear head
 peering be-
 tween his two
 front paws in a very attract-
 ive manner. This is already
 made for putting in the inside
 pillow. Size, 21x21 inches. Front and back
 are made of the same material, and it is bound
 with a mercerized pillow cord with tassels
 in color to match pillow. The pillow can be
 ordered in white only. This pillow top is
 sold everywhere for \$1.50 each.
 Our price complete, ready to insert **\$2.75**
 pillow only.
 If by mail, postage extra, 24 cents.



Make Your Own Teddy Bear.
25c
No. 18K5561 The new **Teddy Bear Pat-
 tern** made on good substantial material.
 The different parts are plainly illustrated
 and named, making it a very simple process
 in joining same. Size when completed, **25c**
 about 12 inches. Price
 If by mail, postage extra, 6 cents.




Figure 10. Printed Teddy bear pillows and fabric printed for constructing your own bear. Sears, Roebuck, and Co. Catalog, 1908.

The colors are primarily browns, tans, rusts, reds, dark blues, purple, pink, black, and white. The back is made of two different fabrics in five pieces. One section is made of a cotton printed with naturalistic rose sprays. The second and larger section of the back is made of a fabric printed with Teddy Roosevelt bears (Figures 8 and 9). One of the bears wears a monocle and displays a striking resemblance to Mr. Roosevelt. Other bears are playing football, doing gymnastics (on the rings), and still another climbs a tree. These are just the sort of vigorous activities Mr. Roosevelt would probably have participated in and enjoyed. The bear motif is a well designed and humorously presented comment on the president. In the Sears, Roebuck, and Co. catalog for the year 1908 a pillow is offered for sale with Teddy bears that resemble the smaller bears on the quilt back. (See Figure 10 for the bears in the Sears catalog. See Figures 8 and 9 for the small bears on the quilt back.) The quilt is hand sewn. It is edged separately with straight cut strips of the rose-sprayed cotton. The batt or filling is of wool. It is either a blanket or a specially made felted pad approximately one half inch thick. The quilt is tied with strands of red wool yarn in the squares or chimney blocks of each pattern block. It is tied randomly throughout the rest of the quilt. Tying is a common finish for Log Cabin quilts and for comforters. Tying is quick and was often used with wool batts or old blankets because they wouldn't shift as cotton batts often did. When Log Cabin quilts were quilted the stitches were usually placed in the seam lines of the pattern blocks and would not show from the top. The pattern consists of only straight lines which are seldom exactly straight. The seam lines match only some

of the time. The use of the light and dark areas of the pattern blocks in the Barn Raising set and the red center squares in the blocks give a unified and strongly graphic quality to a quilt made of many different and contrasting fabrics.

The Courthouse Steps quilt (FD-15-84) is a variation of the basic Log Cabin block. It is an unusual treatment of the pattern, the pattern blocks are placed on the diagonal (Figure 11). It is dated c. 1920's-1940's. The blocks are constructed using the pressed piecing method (Figure 12). This method uses a square of fabric as a base on which the pattern pieces are sewn. It gives extra stability to each pattern block. It is possible that all the Log Cabin quilts were constructed in this manner. The top is pieced of cottons and woolens in solid colors, woven checks and stripes, floral prints, and printed horseshoes. The primary colors are red, tan, grey, white, black, and brown. The straight cut edging is of the red and white horseshoe printed cotton in the top. The blocks are sewn by hand, as is the edging, but the individual blocks are sewn together by machine. The back and batt or filling of the quilt appear to have been cut or torn off of the quilt. Small fragments of the back fabric remain (Figure 13). It is a cotton printed with floral sprays and dots on light and dark grey and tan stripes. The quilt was not quilted and may have been tied but no stitch marks remain from quilting or tying. The pattern is made of straight lines that are straight and seam lines that match most of the time. The quilt appears, as a whole, to be very disjointed in its arrangement of light and dark colors, in particular in those blocks where the colors are too close in value.



Figure 11. Detail of Courthouse Steps, FD-15-84.

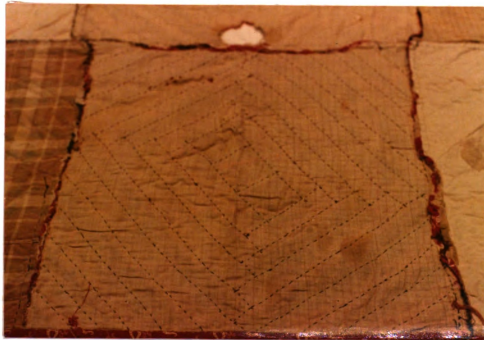


Figure 12. Detail of Courthouse Steps, FD-15-84.

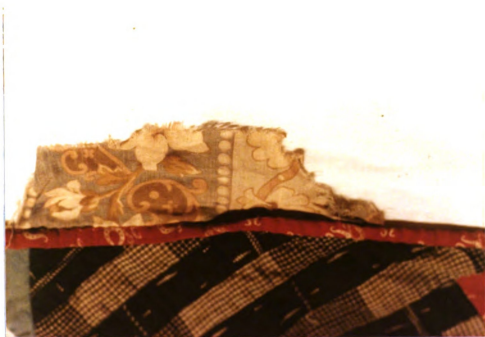


Figure 13. Detail of Courthouse Steps, Fd-15-84.

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The third Log Cabin quilt (FD-20-84) is in the Sunshine and Shadows set. It is dated c. 1900-1940. It is pieced primarily in cotton fabrics with some fabrics that appear to be made of some unidentified synthetic fibers (Figure 14). It is of solid colored pieces, woven stripes and checks, printed florals, stripes, dots, geometric, and eccentrics. The primary colors are blues, purple, black, brown, pink, lavender, yellow, tan, white, red, and green. It has no batt or filling. The back is of a pale green satin weave cotton ground printed with naturalistic rose sprays in red, pink, rose, yellow, and green (Figure 15). It has been pieced from three pieces. The straight cut edging is of the same fabric as the back. The quilt is probably constructed using the pressed piecing method and is sewn entirely by machine. The quilt is tied with dark red wool yarn in the centers of the blue chimney blocks and tied around the edges of the pattern blocks. Tying, as a finishing technique, is very common with Log Cabin quilts. The straight lines are not always exactly straight, but the seam lines match up most of the time. The Sunshine and Shadow set is a very striking arrangement of the pattern blocks and this quilt is no exception. The light and dark colors have been used to advantage and the whole possesses a great deal of energy.

The last Log Cabin quilt is also in the Sunshine and Shadow set (FD-21-84). It is pieced of solid colored fabrics, woven plaids, checks, and stripes, printed dots, florals, paisleys, lozenges and eccentrics of wools, silks, and possibly some unidentified synthetic fibers (Figure 16). The colors are tan, brown, red, blues, greens, black, purple, pink, and white. The back is made of three pieces of a



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Figure 14. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-20-84.



Figure 15. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-20-84.

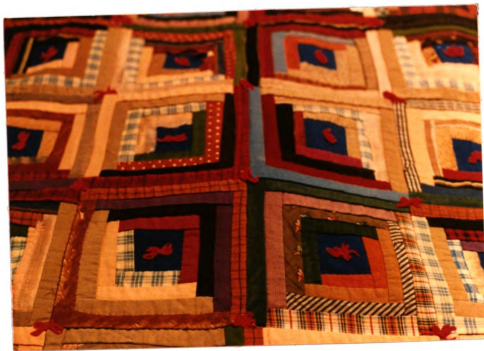


Figure 16. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-21-84.



Figure 17. Detail of Log Cabin, FD-21-84.

large scaled paisley print of cotton in red, black, blue, green, white, brown, and pale orange (Figure 17). The quilt is completely sewn by hand. The straight cut edging is of a brown cotton. There is no batt or filling. The quilt is tied in the centers of the blue chimney blocks and at the corners of the pattern blocks where they are joined with red wool yarn. The straight lines are straight and the seams match most of the time. The energy of the Sunshine and Shadow set and the warm colors of the quilt are very appealing.

Flower Basket Quilts

The next largest group of quilts are in the Flower Basket pattern. This pattern combines piecing and applique techniques and has long been a popular pattern.

The first Flower Basket quilt (FD-144-76) is pieced and appliqued of white cotton and printed florals, stripes, plaids, and solid colored cottons in green, gold, brown, pink, and white (Figures 18 and 19). The quilt is dated c. 1870-1900. The baskets are pieced and the handle of the basket is appliqued. The blocks are separated by a lattice or sash of a sprigged pink cotton print with white cotton corner blocks. The back and straight cut edging are made of white cotton and the back is pieced in five pieces. There is a single border. The quilt is sewn completely by hand and there is no batt. The quilting consists of diagonal lines in the lattice and border. The pattern blocks are quilted with diamonds from the basket top down. The basket handle is outlined and the curve is echoed from the basket top up. It is quilted with white cotton thread. There are seven quilting stitches per inch.



Figure 18. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-144-76.



Figure 19. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-144-76.

The patterns are simple but varied according to the different areas. The straight and curved lines are well done. Seam lines match most of the time. The lattice is a useful tool to balance and unite pattern blocks of different fabrics, colors , and motifs. The colors and arrangement of the blocks are pleasing to the eye.

The next Flower Basket quilt (FD-246-77) is dated c. 1900. The top is pieced of solid colors, woven plaids, stripes, and checks, printed florals and stripes of cotton (Figures 20 and 21). In the blocks the colors are blues, greens, reds, white, and brown. The colors in the lattice and single border are green, white, and brown. The basket is pieced and the handle is appliqued. The top and edging are sewn by hand. The back is sewn of five pieces by machine. The back is made of a white cotton ground printed with sprays of daisies and cherries in pink and black (Figure 21). The straight cut edging is of the same fabric as the back. The batt is of cotton. It is quilted in an overall pattern of diagonal lines with white cotton thread. The quilting stitches average five per inch. Curved and straight lines are curved and straight. The seam lines match. The lattice is again used as a unifying element. The badly faded fabrics in the pattern blocks give a very unbalanced look to the quilt.

The next Flower Basket quilt (FD-17-84) is dated c. 1892. It is pieced and appliqued of cotton fabrics in woven checks and plaids, and printed florals of tan, brown, green, gold, blue, and white (Figure 22). The baskets are pieced and the handles are appliqued. The lattice and one remaining border are of a cotton printed in pink and white to resemble white lace overlaying a pink ground. The top and the straight

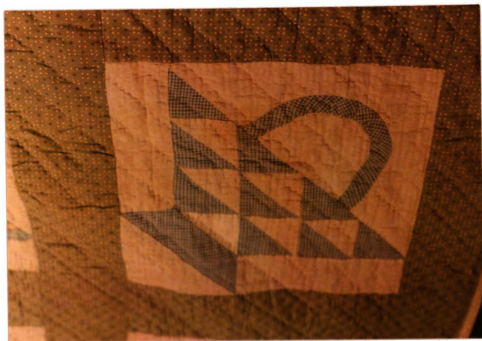


Figure 20. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-246-77.



Figure 21. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-246-77.



Figure 22. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-17-84.



Figure 23. Detail of Flower Basket, FD-17-84.

cut edging are sewn by hand. The edging is made of a blue and white woven striped cotton fabric and is probably not original, as its condition is better than that of the body of the quilt. The edging is that portion of the quilt that received the most wear and is the most often replaced area of a quilt. The back is made of a light brown satin weave cotton in three pieces (Figure 23). The back is sewn by machine. The date "1892" is embroidered in one corner of the back with white silk thread. The batt is made of cotton. The quilting pattern consists of overall diamonds in the pattern blocks and diagonal lines in the lattice and border. There are an average of five quilting stitches per inch and they are unevenly executed. The quilt has been cut down from its original size at one time. The lattice is used as a unifying element. The overall aspect of the quilt is very pleasing to the eye and the colors are well used and attractive.

The last quilt in the group is of the type often referred to as a comfort or comforter (FD-19-84). It is a whole cloth type of quilt in a fabric printed to resemble a pieced Flower Basket quilt top (Figure 24). The baskets are printed in blue and white. The flowers are made of multicolored triangles, printed above the basket. The back is pieced from two pieces of a fabric with a white cotton ground printed with sprays of naturalistic cabbage roses separated by sprays of wild or single roses (Figure 25). The edges are finished by turning the raw edges of the top and back to the inside of the quilt and are then sewn by machine. The quilt is sewn completely by machine. The quilt or comforter is tied in rows five inches apart with yellow wool yarn. It has a batt of an unknown fiber. A comfort or comforter is a very fast and easy method of making a warm bedcover, but the fabric used still



Figure 24. Detail of printed Flower Basket, FD-19-84.



Figure 25. Detail of printed Flower Basket, FD-19-84.

shows a preference for pieced quilts in the choosing of a design printed to resemble a pieced top. The fabric is well designed and attractive.

Tumbling Blocks Quilts

The next two quilts are made in a mosaic style, not made in blocks. The Tumbling Blocks quilt (FD-126-76) is dated c. 1880-1900. It is pieced of cotton fabrics in woven plaids, checks, and stripes, solid colors, and printed dots, florals, paisleys, and striped florals. The primary colors are dark, medium, and light blues, purple, pinks, greens, brown, black, and red (Figure 26). The quilt is sewn entirely by hand. The back and the straight cut edging are made of the same white satin weave cotton printed with a wide spaced ribbon-like lattice and naturalistic rose sprays of pink, red, and green (Figure 27). The back is made of two pieces. The edges on the long sides of the quilt follow the shapes of the blocks and leave a sawtoothed edge. The batt is of cotton. The quilting is executed in an overall pattern of rectangles sewn with white cotton thread. There are an average of five quilting stitches per inch and they are uneven and irregular. The straight lines are exactly straight and the seam lines match. The overall arrangement of the quilt is well done with an effective scattering of pink and red prints to enliven the darker colors.

The other Tumbling Blocks quilt (FD-128-76) is dated c. 1880-1900. The Mosaic style pattern is pieced of solid colors, woven plaids and stripes, printed stripes, florals, dots, and dotted stripes. The primary colors are pale blue, black, grey, purple, brown, and yellow (Figure 28). It is made of cotton. The quilt is sewn entirely by hand.

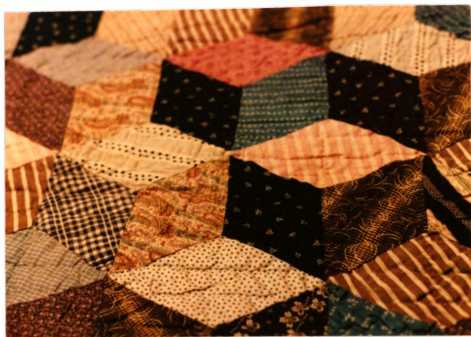


Figure 26. Detail of Tumbling Blocks, FD-126-76.



Figure 27. Detail of Tumbling Blocks, FD-126-76.



Figure 28. Detail of Tumbling Blocks, FD-128-76.



Figure 29. Detail of Tumbling Blocks, FD-128-76.

The back is made of two pieces of a glazed white cotton fabric printed with single yellow roses and foliage in yellow and green (Figure 29). The straight cut edging is of the same fabric as the back. The two long edges follow the shape of the blocks and are sawtoothed in shape. The straight cut edging is made of the same fabric as the back. The batt is cotton. The quilting is patterned with overall diagonal lines stitched with white cotton thread. There are an average of five quilting stitches per inch and they are uneven and irregular. The straight lines are straight and the seam lines match. The arrangement of the quilt is thrown out of balance by the randomly placed reds and yellows which are visually stronger than the soft blues and greys.

Star of Bethlehem Quilt

The pattern name of this quilt is Star of Bethlehem (FD-143-76). It is dated c. 1880-1900. It is pieced of woven plaids, stripes, and checks, printed stripes, florals, and eccentrics in various shades of blue, white, black, brown, yellow, and rust cottons (Figure 30). The lattice is made of a geometric print of cotton in blue, rust, and white. The top and straight cut edging are sewn by hand. The back and edging are made of a pale blue satin weave cotton (Figure 31). The back is constructed of three pieces sewn by machine. The batt is of cotton. The quilting pattern is of overall chevrons using white cotton thread. The quilting stitches average five per inch, but the stitches are very uneven in length. The stitches vary in length from three to seven stitches per inch. The straight lines are exactly straight and the seam lines match. The lattice is again used to unify the various elements. The colors are pleasing to the eye.



Figure 30. Detail of Star of Bethlehem, FD-143-76.



Figure 31. Detail of Star of Bethlehem, FD-143-76.

Nine Patch Quilt

The Nine Patch pattern quilt (FD-18-84) is dated c. 1900-1940. It is pieced from cotton fabrics with woven stripes and plaids, solid colors, and printed florals, stripes and dots (Figure 32). The primary colors are yellow, orange, red, white, tan, brown, purple, blue, rust, and black. The Sawtooth border is made of half Nine Patch blocks cut diagonally to form triangles and unpieced white triangles (Figure 32). The top and the straight cut edging are sewn by hand. The edging and the back are made of the same white cotton fabric printed with tulips against a lattice (Figure 33). The colors are white, red, green, pink, yellow, and brown. The back is machine sewn from two pieces. The batt is cotton. The quilting pattern is of overall diamonds with white cotton thread. There are an average of five stitches per inch that are uneven and irregular. Straight lines are straight and seam lines match. Nine Patch is not a complex pattern, but this quilt is a visually pleasing quilt and the pieced border adds considerable interest.

Split Rail Fence Quilt

The Split Rail Fence quilt (FD-125-76) is dated c. 1880-1900. It is pieced from cotton fabrics in woven plaids, printed stripes, florals, lozenges, and eccentrics. The primary colors are blues, red, white, browns, grey, yellow, orange, and black (Figure 34). The lattice is of a striped blue and white cotton. The quilt is sewn entirely by hand. The back and straight cut edging are made of a yellow cotton satin weave fabric (Figure 35). The back is constructed from five pieces of fabric.



Figure 32. Detail of Nine Patch, FD-18-84.



Figure 33. Detail of Nine Patch, FD-18-84.

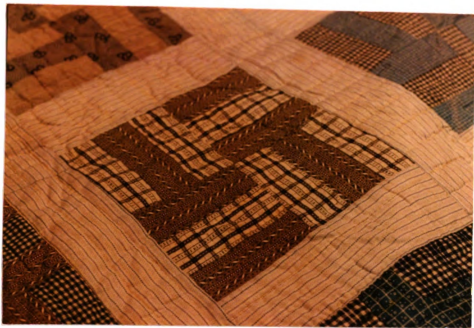


Figure 34. Detail of Split Rail Fence, FD-125-76.



Figure 35. Detail of Split Rail Fence, FD-125-76.

The batt is cotton. The quilting pattern is of overall chevrons quilted with yellow cotton thread. There are an average of five stitches per inch and they are even and regular. The straight lines are straight and the seam lines match most of the time. The quilts arrangement of blocks is pleasing to the eye with the exception of one block with red pieces which attracts the eye more than do the more muted colors in the other blocks. The lattice is used as a unifying element. It is the only lattice among the quilts to be placed on the diagonal.

Maple Leaf Quilt

The Maple Leaf quilt (FD-22-84) is dated c. Late 1920's. It is pieced of green and white cotton (Figure 36). The leaf is pieced and the stem is appliqued. The pattern blocks alternate with unpieced white blocks. The quilt has two borders. The inner border is pieced from green and white cotton to form a sawtooth border (Figure 37). The outer border is made of unpieced strips of white. The back and straight cut edging are of the white cotton used in the top. The back is of a single piece of fabric. The quilting pattern in the blocks consists of outlines of the leaf form, stitching around the pattern pieces, and outline quilting around the leaf stem. The unpieced blocks that alternate with the pattern blocks are quilted to resemble the pattern blocks (Figures 36 and 37). The inner border is outline quilted and the outer border is quilted in a rope pattern (Figure 37). The quilting is executed in green cotton thread to emphasize and highlight the quilting. It is not unusual to quilt with one color of thread regardless of the color of the area to be quilted. There are an average of six stitches

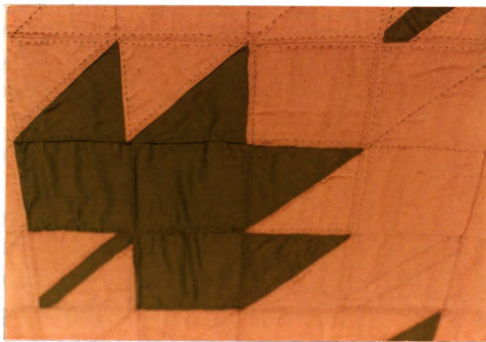


Figure 36. Detail of Maple Leaf, FD-22-84.



Figure 37. Detail of Maple Leaf, FD-22-84.

per inch and they are uneven and irregular. The straight lines are straight and seam lines match. The quilt is visually pleasing in its arrangement of pattern and color. The quilt has been identified as being made by the Ladies' Aid of Fayette (Delta) Congregational Church in the late 1920s.

Broken Dishes Quilt

The Broken Dishes quilt (FD-23-84) is dated c. late 19th century to early 20th century. It is pieced of woven stripes and plaids, printed dots, stripes, florals, eccentrics, and geometrics (Figure 38). The fabrics are cotton. The primary colors are white, red, blue, green, brown, purple, black, tan, and pink. The lattice and border are made of a cotton fabric with a white ground printed with pink and tan in a paisley pattern. The straight cut edging and the back are constructed of a pink cotton satin weave fabric (Figure 39). The back is pieced of two sections. The quilt is sewn entirely by hand. The quilting pattern is of overall chevrons stitched with white cotton thread. There are an average of six quilting stitches per inch. The straight lines are straight and the seam lines match most of the time. The lattice is used as an unifying element. The somewhat complex pattern (thirty-two pieces per pattern block) is pleasing to the eye and the colors are well balanced.

Evaluation

To evaluate the quilts, it is necessary to discuss their similarities and differences as well as their level of workmanship and

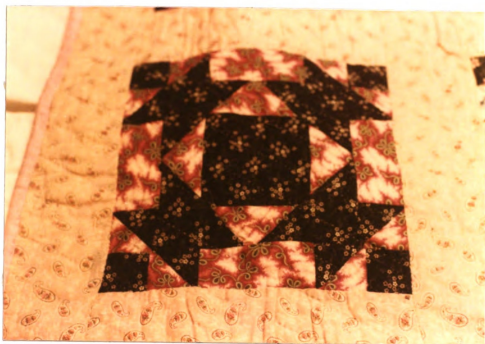


Figure 38. Detail of Broken Dishes, FD-23-84.



Figure 39. Detail of Broken Dishes, FD-23-84.

Table 1. Summary of Quilt Data.

<u>DATA</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
<u>CONSTRUCTION:</u>	
PIECED:	14
APPLIQUED:	0
COMBINATION:	4
SCRAP QUILT (MANY FABRICS):	13
TWO OR THREE FABRICS:	2
<u>QUILTING:</u>	
TIED:	4
QUILTED:	10
OVERALL PATTERNS:	7
INDIVIDUALIZED PATTERNS:	3
FIVE QUILTING STITCHES PER INCH:	7
SIX QUILTING STITCHES PER INCH:	2
SEVEN QUILTING STITCHES PER INCH:	1
<u>LINES:</u>	
STRAIGHT LINES:	14
CURVED LINES:	3
<u>BATTS:</u>	
HAVE A BATT:	12
<u>FIBERS:</u>	
COTTON:	15
WOOL:	1
SILK:	1
SYNTHETIC:	2
<u>EDGING:</u>	
STRAIGHT CUT:	14
BIAS:	0
EDGES TURNED IN:	1
<u>BACK:</u>	
OF SAME FABRIC:	14
MORE THAN ONE FABRIC:	1
SOLID COLORED:	6
PRINTED:	9
<u>DIVIDING THE BLOCKS:</u>	
LATTICES:	6
BORDERS:	5
<u>SEWN:</u>	
HAND SEWN:	7
MACHINE SEWN:	2
COMBINATION:	6

aesthetic quality. (See Table 1 for Summary of Quilt Data). If similarities exist among the various elements (back, edging, fabrics, quilt stitches) they may indicate creation by the same hand or hands. Elements such as, the number of quilting stitches per inch, regularity of stitches, seam lines matching, use of color and fabric, overall impression, back, edging, quilting patterns, etc., are used to judge workmanship and the aesthetic quality of the quilts.

Thirteen of the fifteen quilts are made of many fabrics. Of the remaining two quilts, one is a whole cloth type. The thirteen quilts made of many fabrics have at least twelve different fabrics in each quilt. The use of many fabrics indicates a scrap quilt made from the bits and pieces of dresses, shirts, and other leftover fabrics from various sewing projects. It would be expensive to buy large amounts of fabric for the top. The use of scraps was a thrifty alternative.

The quilting patterns of seven of the ten quilts that are quilted are of an overall nature that do not relate to the pattern of the pieced quilt top. This is often referred to as utility quilting. They are quilted with diamonds (1), rectangles (1), chevrons (3), and diagonal lines (2). Two of the remaining three have the lattices and borders quilted in diagonal lines. The quilt with the most complex quilting is the Maple Leaf (FD-22-84). The Maple Leaf quilt was identified as a Ladies' Aid project from the late 1920's (Interview C, March 25, 1987). The quilting enhances the pattern and adds interest to the unpieced areas. Overall quilting patterns are easier to do as they often require less time for marking.

The average number of quilt stitches per inch are very similar. Of the ten quilts that were quilted, seven have an average number of five

quilting stitches per inch (Table 1). Five of these quilts (Tumbling Blocks FD-126-74 and FD-128-74, Nine Patch FD-18-84, Split Rail Fence FD-125-74, and Flower Basket FD-17-84) are very consistent in the six measurements taken from the quilts. Five stitches per inch indicates average or slightly above average skill. Ten to twelve stitches per inch is often considered as making a quilt of museum quality or one indicating exceptional skill. The five stitches per inch are more than sufficient to hold together the three layers of the quilt. Utility or everyday quilts would consume too much valuable time if very great care was taken to insure small stitches. Star of Bethlehem (FD-143-76) averages five stitches per inch but the number of stitches per inch vary from three to seven stitches per inch. This could indicate quilting by more than one hand, inexperience, or the lack of time to be consistent. Consistency of stitch length is often an indication of experience in quilting.

Two of the quilts have an average number of stitches of six stitches per inch (Broken Dishes FD-23-84, Maple leaf FD-22-84). The quilts are also very consistent in the six measurements taken in the quilt with one stitch variations in the measurements. Again this can indicate quilting by one hand or by those of equal levels of skill.

One quilt (Flower Basket FD-144-76) has an average number of stitches of seven stitches per inch with a one stitch variation in the measurements. It may indicate quilting by one hand.

The ten quilts that were quilted for the most part have uneven and irregular stitches. The irregularity is found throughout the quilts, not just in individual sections of the quilt, which indicates quilting

by one person. Only two quilts (Flower Basket FD-144-76 and Split Rail Fence FD-125-76) have even and regular stitches. The regularity of stitches is an indicator of skill and workmanship. Irregular stitches may indicate the need to produce warm bed covers quickly. The consistent irregularity of the quilting stitches may indicate manufacture by one person.

Four of the quilts are tied: Log Cabin (FD-22-84), (FD-20-84), (FD-21-84), and printed Flower Basket (FD-19-84). One is tied randomly and three are tied in patterns.

Fourteen of the quilts are pieced, of these seven have seam lines that match, six have seam lines that match most of the time, and one has seam lines that match only some of the time. This indicates that the majority of the quilts were pieced with care and attention to that detail.

The backs of fourteen of the quilts are made of a single fabric, the single exception being Log Cabin (FD-244-77) which has two different fabrics. Eight of the fifteen quilts have printed fabric backs and of these, five have backs printed with sprays of naturalistic roses, one with tulips, one with daisies and cherries, one paisley, and one with bears and a section of naturalistic roses. Seven of the backs are made of a solid colored cloth. The use of a single fabric in the backs show that poverty was not the reason why scrap quilts were made. If the one fabric for the back could have been purchased by the quilter, it was not economically necessary for the top to be made of scraps. It was a personal preference.

Twelve of the quilts have the same fabric used for both the back and for the edging. The prints are used for the quilt edging regardless of the fabrics used in the top or of the quilt pattern. The material in the back was probably used because the maker liked it not because it was related to the design of the quilt as a whole. Two quilts have an edging that is used in the quilt top (Maple Leaf, FD-22-84 and Courthouse Steps, FD-15-84). Three quilts have different fabrics for the edging and for the back. One quilt (Printed Flower Basket, FD-19-84) has no separately applied edging. Flower Basket quilt (FD-17-84) does not appear to have its original edging. The six quilts that have solid colored backs and edgings do appear to relate to the colors used in the top. It is again most likely that the fabrics were chosen because of the makers preference.

Six of the quilts have the blocks divided by a lattice or sash as a unifying element. Five of the quilts have borders. The combination of lattices and borders is common.

Six of the quilts are sewn completely by hand. They are Tumbling Blocks FD-126-76 and FD-128-76, Log Cabin FD-244-77, Split Rail Fence FD-125-76, Flower Basket FD-144-76, and Broken Dishes FD-23-84. They are dated from 1880 to the early twentieth century. The sewing machine was introduced in the 1840's and was in many homes by the 1870's. It is surprising to find quilts with the backs sewn by hand. Many quiltmakers who did every other operation by hand would still save themselves the tedium of the long seams of the backs by using a sewing machine. Perhaps the maker of these quilts liked plain hand sewing. The Elliott family bought a sewing machine at the estate sale of the

Kynaston family in Sac Bay in September of 1905 and may have had one before (September, 1905, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6). Four of the quilts have the tops sewn by hand and the back by machine (Star of Bethlehem FD-143-76, Flower basket FD-17-84 and FD-246-77, Nine Patch FD-18-84). Three quilts are sewn completely by machine (Log Cabin FD-20-84, printed Flower Basket FD-19-84, Maple Leaf FD-22-84). These three quilts are dated within the twentieth century.

Straight lines are straight and curved lines curved in twelve of the fourteen quilts to which the criteria are relevant. In the quilt where the lines are not straight the seam lines do not match. In the fourteen quilts that are pieced eight have seams that line up or match, five that match most of the time, and one that matches only some of the time.

The quilts, in terms of workmanship, are not finely made examples of the quilters art. The number of quilting stitches per inch show average skill and the stitches are uneven and irregular. Quilting done by hand is valued more than is machine quilting and all of the quilts that are quilted are hand done. The majority of seams lines do match at least most of the time and do show some attention to detail. Little consideration was paid to the fabric in the back enhancing the fabrics used in the top. Fine stitching and attention to detail are measurable. The fifteen quilts do not show these aspects of workmanship in great abundance.

The visual impact of a quilt and whether or not it pleases the eye are subjective judgments. The strong abstract visual quality of quilt

patterns is very pleasing to late twentieth century eyes and may not have been as well thought of in their own time periods. There are only four of the fifteen quilts that seem to be visually unbalanced and the effect is caused primarily by the colors used in individual blocks. Of these, in one of the quilts, the problem seems to be the almost total fading of some of the dyes used on the fabric. The quilt may have been more visually balanced in its original appearance. The other three quilts appear unbalanced due to colors of more visual power being used with muted colors or colors too close in value being used in a pattern that elsewhere uses strong contrast.

The quilts, are not quilted with complex patterns or even, for the most part, patterns that reflect and enhance the pattern of the quilt top as a whole. The stitching is uneven and irregular, but more than sufficient, in terms of number of stitches per inch, for utility. The time necessary to make the quilt becomes an element that can affect stitch length and regularity. There were a great many other tasks waiting to be completed and too much time could not be expended on this task.

Cultural Analysis

Museums and collectors have for many years collected quilts for their aesthetic value and fine workmanship. So called Linsey-woolsey quilts with their fine quilting, chintz appliqued quilts, appliques of all sorts, stuffed whitework quilts, and finely made pieced quilts are in many museum collections. The quilts that are most often not represented are the quilts that "ordinary" women made for everyday use

by their families. They were valued for their utility and not primarily for their beauty. They would be used until worn beyond repair, put to other uses, and eventually discarded. They would not usually be carefully stored and preserved, brought out only for company and other special occasions. Their value lies in this very quality of ordinariness and utility. They reflect the lives of their maker. The value of thrift is reflected in the use of many fabrics. Scraps of fabric used for other projects would be carefully saved and put to use in a quilt top. Even when the thrifty use of scraps was not an economic necessity, it was a value important to the quiltmaker. The quilt backs were constructed of fabrics that were apparently purchased for that purpose and indicate that poverty was not the reason for using the scraps. The amount and variety of the different fabrics used in the quilts indicate a society where cloth was cheap and the textile industry mechanized. The maker or makers of the quilts may have been someone who learned to sew at an early age, as did most women in the nineteenth century, and who saw the creation of clothing, quilts, and other domestic items as their major contribution to their families well-being. The quiltmaker probably enjoyed sewing and continued to make them long after purchased blankets were generally available.

The functional analysis of the quilts will deal with how they were used, what function making the quilts may have served the maker, and for what purposes they were made. Quilts in the area of the Garden Peninsula have been used primarily as spreads or bedspreads in the twentieth century. They were probably used for warmth in the

nineteenth century, particularly in the first half of the century, even when pretty blankets were available (Interview A, March 25, 1987). They are seldom used as a blanket for warmth. A spread is an object whose function is display and decoration. It is not a strictly utilitarian object. When pretty blankets became cheap and readily available, they often replaced quilts as warm covers. Spreads receive little hard wear and would be seldom need washing. Washing could often be quite damaging to a quilt. Hot water and soap used with a wash board or one of the earlier washing machine could fade the fastest of dyes and abrade the fabrics. It may explain the very good condition of some of the later cotton quilts. Quilts with silks in their tops would probably not be washed and the quilts with primarily woolen fabrics in the tops appear to have never been washed. There is another possible explanation for their very good condition. I believe that Martha Edwards Elliott made the quilts with the exception of two quilts, the Maple Leaf quilt (FD-22-84) and the Star of Bethlehem quilt (FD-143-76). Possible exceptions to this conclusion are Flower Basket (FD-144-76) and Split Rail Fence (FD-125-76). The early dates of these quilts (1870-1900, 1880-1900), however, might indicate that they were made by Mrs. Elliott. At this time she would have been forty or fifty years old and not yet suffering from the physical infirmities of age. It may indicate that she took extra care in there construction, particularly in the quilting of Flower Basket and the regularity of the stitches in Split Rail Fence. All the evidence for this belief is indirect and will be discussed in the following chapter. However, her daughters Lucy, Mattie, and Adelle were well known in the area as wanting to keep, as much as possible, their

surroundings exactly as they were when all the family was together before their brother Sam and their mother died. The quilts would, in sense, would serve as a memorial to their mother and her life on the farm when they were all together as a family.

The making of the quilts could also function in a number of different ways to the quiltmaker. The Elliotts were a family with values that stressed hard work and thrift. The scrap quilt was a symbol of a woman's thrifty ways and her ability to make do with bits and pieces and without waste. There would be satisfaction and pleasure in using the leftover bits and pieces of cloth to create a warm and attractive quilt. The pressed piecing method used in the construction of the Log Cabin quilts and the Courthouse Steps Log Cabin variation are a practical method to use small scraps of fabric in spite of the need for a backing and are fast and simple to make.

Mrs. Elliott would have learned to sew at an early age as did almost all girls in the nineteenth and preceding centuries. It was one of her most important survival skills and highly valued by her family. Ten of the quilts have relative dates that place them in the twentieth century when the need to make warm covers for beds was past. The Elliott family may have experienced financial difficulties during the illness and after the death of Mr. Elliott in 1889. The making of the quilts may have been part of Mrs. Elliotts attempts to cut the family's cost of living. Even with the cost of the fabric for the back of the quilt, there would be a feeling of accomplishment in the ability to live without waste.

In the Garden Peninsula, and in particular the Fayette (Delta) Congregational Church, quilts were occasionally made to raise money for

a church project or for any number of worthy causes. The Maple Leaf quilt was made by the Ladies' Aid society of the Fayette Church in the late 1920s. The quilts for the Ladies' Aid were made in two different ways (Interview A, March 25, 1987). The tops could be made by one individual and quilted by those of the group that were skilled and interested in quilting or the entire quilt could be pieced and quilted by a single individual and given to the group to be raffled or auctioned to benefit the church or needy members of the church or community. Quilts made by a church member are still auctioned at the church today. Quilts were also raffled by individuals and towns or villages to raise money for whatever the need may have been (Chapter V).

Quilts were quilted most often in the winter.

"We quilted mostly in the winter months. We did gardening and outdoor chores in the summer. It gets kind of hot with a quilt on your lap...usually you did your quilting in the daylight (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

Piecing may have been done in the summer months due to its lightweight nature. Frames were used for the quilting, but there were no quilting frames in the artifacts from the Elliott estate. The type of quilt frame used most commonly in Michigan, may explain this lack. The frame most often was of four boards fastened to chair backs would be easily disposable and perhaps not recognized by many for what they were.

Summary

The quilts from the Elliott family estate in the collections of the Michigan Historical Museum were analyzed and evaluated using the Artifact Study Model. Similarities exist among the quilts in certain

construction elements. The elements are the back and edging treatment, the unevenness and irregularity of the quilt stitches, the choice of overall or utility quilting patterns, the use of many fabrics in the tops rather than a few, and a preference for printed cloth backs or solid colored backs as opposed to backs of different fabrics. The quilts have functioned in the twentieth century on the Garden Peninsula primarily as spreads rather than for their warmth. The quilts may have functioned as a physical symbol of the values of thrift and hard work within the family. They were used as a method of fund raising for towns or villages, individuals, or church groups. They could be auctioned or raffled. They continue to be made for the Fayette Congregational Church as a source of funds.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE ACCOUNT BOOKS OF THE ELLIOTT FARM

The information gathered from the account books of the Elliott farm, relates to the interaction of the Human Environed Unit (The Elliott Family) with the Human Constructed Environment. Of particular interest was the environment of consumer goods and services made possible by American technology and methods of distribution of finished consumer goods. The data also reveals the family's interaction with the Human Behavioral Environment in terms of their social and economic relations with the community and the world at large. The account books helped to provide an answer as to the identity of the quiltmaker in the family. The Human Constructed Environment is also represented by the interaction of the Elliott family with the world of ideas through the newspapers, books, and magazines that they subscribed to and read. All the environments overlap and have an impact on the Elliott's reactions and relations to each other.

Quilts

The account books reveal, with one exception, the only evidence of quilting and quilting materials found in the papers of the family

(Table 2). In February, 1905 batting was purchased. In March of that year, two batts and six yards of quilt lining were purchased (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1903-1905, Box 1, Folder 6). In February, 1908, batting was purchased (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, Box 1, Folder 1). The purchase of these items indicate that someone in the family did indeed make quilts. The purchases occur in the early twentieth century and do not occur again in the surviving account books. The Elliott family listed in their account books all of their expenses and income by the month. Unfortunately, the account books from the 1920s and early 1930s were not among the papers of the family. They would provide a clearer and more balanced level of information and allow a more definite statement of the identity of the maker of the quilts.

A number of the remaining references to quilts refer to tickets purchased for raffles where the quilt would be the prize (Table 2). In one instance the quilt is referred to as the Isabella quilt, (August, 1910). Four tickets at \$.25 were purchased (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, Box 1, Folder 6). Isabella is a town north and west of Sac Bay where Lucy taught school in the late 1890s. The purpose of the raffle is not mentioned, but it was probably for a community fundraising project suchd as raising funds for school related needs. For the Elliott family and other members of the area, purchasing the tickets was a way of helping to support their community and the needy members of it in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There are also two entries that refer to tickets bought on an individual woman's quilt, Mrs. McPhee (July, 1936) and Mrs. Eggert (October, 1938).

Table 2. Quilts or quilting mentioned in the Elliott Account Books.

Year Books Available:	Items Purchased:
1904:	
1905:	FEB.-BATTING; MARCH-2 BATTS, SIX YARDS QUILT LINING ¹
1906:	
1907:	
1908:	FEB.-BATTING ²
1909:	
1910:	AUG.-4 TICKETS ON ISABELLA QUILT ²
1917:	
1918:	
1919:	
1920:	
1934:	NOV.-POSTAGE ON STAR OF BETHLEHEM ³
1935:	
1936:	APRIL-DONATION TO MARTHA C.'S QUILT ; JULY-3 QUILT TICKETS, MRS. MCPHEE ³
1937:	
1938:	OCT.-4 TICKETS ON MRS. EGGERT'S QUILT ³
1939:	
1940:	MAY-TICKET ON QUILT; JUNE-EXPENSES AT LADIES' AID, QUILT ⁴
1941:	
1942:	APRIL-TICKETS ON LADIES' AID QUILT; MAY-BRING (ILLEGIBLE) QUILT PARTY, LADIES' AID ⁴

¹ Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6. Michigan State Archives, Department of State.

² Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131. Box 1, Folder 1. Michigan State Archives, Department of State.

³ Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Accounts 1934-1938, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 4. Michigan State Archives, Department of State.

⁴ Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Accounts 1939-1942, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 5. Michigan State Archives, Department of State.

(Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1934-1938, Box 1, Folder 4). The purpose of the raffle is not mentioned. The quilts may have been made for a Ladies' Aid project. Both Mrs. McPhee and Mrs. Eggert are mentioned elsewhere in the account books as being members of this group. The making of a quilt as a fundraising project has a long history in the Garden Peninsula and Michigan, as indicated by the account books and the interviews. It is still used today by the women of the area as a means of raising money for worthy causes.

In one instance, there is an entry of a donation made to a quilt raffle, Martha C.'s quilt (April, 1936). (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account, Box 1, folder 5) (See Table 2) Again the purpose of the quilt is not mentioned and can only be speculated about.

Three entries refer specifically to Ladies' Aid quilt projects. They occur in the early 1940s and may be World War Two related fundraising projects. One entry refers to a quilt party (May, 1942, (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1939-1942, Box 1, Folder 5). It is one of two references to group quilting found in the family's papers. The other occurs in a letter written by Samuel Elliott in 1864 to his wife-to-be, Martha Edwards. "...And I am glad that Ruth and Sally Weaver was so good as to help you quilt" (Letter From Samuel Elliott to Martha Edwards, September 22, 1864, Elliott Family Papers). It is the only definite statement that a member of the family knew how to quilt. It can be assumed that one of the earliest sewing projects that Mrs. Elliott and her daughters learned was simple patchwork.

The other two references about Ladies' Aid quilts refers to tickets bought on a quilt (April, 1942) and expenses for a quilt (June, 1942)

(Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1939-1942, Box 1, Folder 5).

A member of the group states,

"The Ladies' Aid didn't do much quilting, and I am not sure that they (The Elliott family) were involved with that. They (Ladies' Aid) did make a quilt now and then that they raffled when funds got low. They were concerned about people in the community, our church and Ladies' Aid would supply money. We had several widow ladies that had large families and there was little help in those days and our church did try to do what they could do for those people. The meetings were mostly social, sewing was done at home" (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

Quilts for the Ladies' Aid fundraising projects were made either as totally individual projects or one of the women on the group would make the top and interested members of the group would do the quilting. The Maple Leaf quilt (FD-22-84) which was made for or by the Ladies' Aid may have been an individual project because of the consistency of the number of quilting stitches per inch and the consistent irregularity of the stitches.

The final quilt related entry in the account books refers to postage paid on Star of Bethlehem, (November, 1934) (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1934-1938, Box 1, Folder 4). Neither the amount of postage paid nor the weight of the object is mentioned. One of the quilts from the Elliott estate is made in the pattern named Star of Bethlehem (FD-143-76). A number of interpretations regarding this entry are possible. It is possible that it was an Elliott or Edwards family quilt, perhaps made by a sister of Mrs. Elliott or by Mrs. Elliott herself and returned to her daughters after her death in 1932 or the death of the maker. It could also be possible that the top

made by Mrs. Elliott, and after her death it was made up and quilted by a friend, a professional quilter or a member of the Edwards or Elliott family. Another possibility is that the entry refers to a purchased quilt pattern.

Yard Goods, Thread, Needlework Materials,
Needlework Tools

Indirect references to quilting in the Elliott family can be found in their purchases of yard goods and thread (Table 3). The number of purchases of thread and yard goods declines steadily from 1903 to 1920, and even more after 1934. The purchase of thread is particularly important to determining the identity of the quiltmaker in the family as it can require more than several thousand yards to complete the stitching, both the piecing and the quilting, of a quilt. The low amounts of thread and yard goods purchased in the later years would support the dates of the quilts as being made before 1934 by Mrs. Elliott. It also reflects the changes in the amount of ready-to-wear clothing purchases in the account books. The entries for needlework materials and tools (crochet, knitting, embroidery, etc.) stop after 1920. "As I understand it, they (Lucy, Mattie, and Adelle) worked hard and they were very tired when they came in and they never had the time to do any sewing" (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

No information could be located that would indicate how the women of the Elliott family felt about or regarded quilts and quilting. No direct information could be found that pertained to their manner of quilting.

Table 3. Frequency of Purchases of Cloth, Thread, Yard Goods, Needlework Materials, Needlework Tools from the Elliott Account Books.

	YARD ¹ GOODS	THREAD	NEEDLEWORK MATERIALS	NEEDLEWORK TOOLS
1903	18	10	0	1
1904	10	10	1	1
1905	4	5	0	0
1906	4	10	2	2
1907	8	4	0	0
1908	4	6	1	1
1909	3	8	1	1
1910	2	8	0	0
1917	9	2	0	1
1918	6	1	1	3
1919	5	3	3	1
1920	4	4	1	1
1934	0	0	0	0
1935	3	1	0	0
1936	3	2	0	0
1937	0	0	0	0
1938	2	2	0	2
1939	0	2	0	2
1940	2	1	0	0
1941	3	2	0	0
1942	5	1	0	0

¹These numbers indicate how many times yard goods, thread, needlework materials, and needlework tools were mentioned in a year. Most entries did not indicate yardage or amount.

The fact that there was no record of purchases of quilting materials after 1908 and in particular the small amount of thread purchased after 1920, the dates of the quilts, the letter from 1864, and the information from the interviews gives weight to the conclusion that Martha Edwards Elliott made the majority of the quilts, with the two exceptions mentioned above.

The account books for the 1920s and the early years of the 1930s are not available. They would provide a clearer picture of the changes in purchases of thread, yard goods, and materials directly related to quilting. The daughters may have helped in the construction of the quilts, but the regularity of the number of quilting stitches per inch, and the consistent irregularity of the stitches indicate that the majority of the quilts were planned and made by one individual. The sewing by hand of the pieces of the quilt backs and the edging is unusual at a time when sewing machines were generally available and the Elliotts owned one. Quilters who prided themselves on the hand construction of their quilts frequently sewed the long, tedious seams of the back and the edging by machine. It also indicates that the quiltmaker was Mrs. Elliott. She grew up and learned to sew at a time when sewing machines were not available and she must have enjoyed plain hand sewing.

Mail Order and Ready-To-Wear Clothing

The use of mail order to purchase goods in the years recorded in the account books was consistently high (Table 4). Mail order for a wide range of consumer goods was first attempted by Aaron Montgomery

Table 4. Frequency of mail order from the Elliott Account Books.

	MONTGOMERY WARD ¹	SEARS, ROEBUCK, AND CO.	NATIONAL CLOAK AND SUIT CO.	MISCELLANEOUS
1903	8			
1904	11			
1905	14			
1906	7		1	
1907	15		1	
1908	15			1
1909	16		2	1
1910	11	1	2	1
1917	6	5	1	1
1918	12	7	1	1
1919	4	7		1
1920	3	3		
1934	3			
1935	8	7		
1936	10	4		
1937	14	8		1
1938	16	6		
1939	12	5		
1940	13	3		1
1941	10	4		2
1942	10	4		1

¹ The contents of the orders were seldom mentioned and so were not included where they did occur.

Ward in 1872 (Latham (1972), p. 2). Others followed, such as the National Cloak and Suit Company in 1888 and Sear, Roebuck, and Company in 1886 (Emmet and Jeucks (1950), p. 22).

The isolation of many families and small communities made them dependent on their local general store. This usually meant high prices and a limited range of choice of goods, with the purchasers dependent on the taste of the store owner (Emmet and Jeucks (1950), p. 15). The Elliott family's purchases from the store of Donald A. Wells in Sac Bay consisted primarily of groceries, men's ready-to-wear clothing, including collars, trousers, and underwear, shoes, yard goods, and tools (Store Accounts of Donald A. Wells, Papers of the Kynaston Family, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 13). Other purchases would have been made in Escanaba, the county seat of Delta County, several times a year. Mr. Elliott would often travel to Escanaba on county and personal business, but Mrs. Elliott would seldom have had a chance to accompany him due to her responsibilities as a mother and housewife. The selections would most often be those of her husband.

The system of Rural Free Delivery was first proposed in 1891, but did not actually commence until 1896. It cut the cost of ordering goods by mail and was a considerable aid to the mail order companies and consumers (Emmet and Jeucks (1950), p. 13-14). A further aid to the consumers and the mail order companies was the establishment of Parcel Post in 1913 which further lowered the cost of buying by mail and made it more convenient for the customer (Latham (1972), p. 58). Purchases could now be delivered directly to the customer's door. The advantages of a large selection of goods, lower prices, and the convenience of

direct delivery made mail order very attractive, particularly to the rural population of the country.

One of the most popular and biggest selling mail order items was the cream separator (Emmet and Jeucks, (1950), p. 100). The Elliotts kept cows and the separator was a major time and work saver. The Elliott family purchased a separator in 1893,

"...Last spring we purchased one of the DeLaval "Baby" cream separator and we now make creamery butter. We like the machine ever so much...It cost \$125.00 a pretty big price, but Ma says she would not be without one as long as we keep cows" (Letter from Lucy to cousin J. D. Bonham, January 14, 1894, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5).

It was a large purchase but some of the sources of monthly income for the family were their sales of milk, cream, and butter. The machine allowed them to save time and labor and to improve the quality of their product.

The cream separator was an item of practical value, but two of the other most popular items of mail order merchandise were organs and pianos (Latham (1972), p. 20). They were symbols of gentility and culture. The Elliott family had an organ in their parlor or living room (Figures 40 and 41). They also purchased other items of merchandise from the mail order companies; such as kitchen equipment (nutmeg graters, forks, bread mixers, molds, cookie cutters, rolling pins, etc.), ready-to-wear clothing, lamps, lounges, headboards, and a telephone. (Artifacts in the collections of the Michigan Historical Museum). The availability of cultured and labor saving types of consumer goods to the majority of Americans made possible a life less isolated and less physically arduous as well as helping to produce a



Figure 40. Possibly Mattie Elliott, c. 1900-15. In the living room of the Elliott house. Note the organ in the right rear background.



Figure 41. Organ offered for mail order sale by Montgomery Ward. (Latham, p. 56.)

more uniform culture and level of taste. In particular, it made life easier for the members of the Elliott family. The available goods both influenced the choices and were influenced by the choices the buyers made.

The daughters, as well as Mrs. Elliott, knew how to sew and made at least some of their clothing. "I've made Ma's linen dress a shirt waist and skirt with folds...Today I made a shirt waist out of what was left, for me" Letter from Lucy to Mattie, February 17, 1904, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). Adelle also sewed some of her clothing. "Babe (Adelle) is making her chambray" (Letter from Lucy to Mattie, February 17, 1904, RG-76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). Mattie also knew how to sew and made or trimmed hats and twice attempted to sell her creations (Chapter VII).

Ready-made clothing was begun in the nineteenth century and the development was spurred by the needs of the large armies during the Civil War. The first items of ready-to-wear clothing available were men's clothing, such as suits, trousers, and collars. By the 1890s ready-mades were generally available in women's clothing. At first quality was poor but through the development of improved sizing, the improved quality of the fabrics, and new machinery developed for the industry it became increasingly attractive to the consumer (Kidwell and Christman (1974), p. 17) Low prices, increased quality, and the removal of an often tedious and time consuming task for women increased ready-made clothing's popularity. The account books of the Elliott family indicate that they purchased ready-to-wear clothing from the National Cloak and Suit Company in the years from 1906 to 1918. (See Table 4)

The clothing items purchased were primarily suits and coats for the women of the family. Wrappers and everyday dresses appear to have been made by them at home. One can assume that a great deal of the calicoes, gingham, cottons, and muslins were purchased for the making of dresses for the summer and house, wrappers, nightgowns and underwear, and shirt waists. However, an increasing amount of ready-to-wear clothing was purchased and worn by the Elliott family (Table 5). This was especially true after 1910. The increase would reflect the increased use and availability of ready-to-wear clothing in mail order catalogs and also increased availability in local stores. The lack of specificity in the entries as to the eventual use of most of the fabric purchased by the family makes it difficult to gauge accurately the changes in the Elliott family's consumption of clothing.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Books

The Elliott family was not isolated or unaware of the world outside the Garden Peninsula or Delta County. Its members were reasonably well educated for the time and place and all were literate. The two eldest daughters were school teachers in rural schools and Adelle completed a commercial course at Ferris Institute in Big Rapids, Michigan. The family was sufficiently literate to have possessed and read books that would have been read and owned by those with any claims to culture in the nineteenth century. These included the novels of William Thackeray, Charles Dickens, Walter Scott, and George Elliott, the plays of William Shakespeare and the poems of Longfellow and Tennyson. They had as well, an 1874 edition of the Origin of Species by Charles Darwin, which

Table 5. Frequency of purchases of yard goods for clothing and ready-made clothing from the Elliott Account Books.

	YARD GOODS ¹	READY-MADE CLOTHING
1903:	0	1
1904:	4	1
1905:	0	0
1906:	0	0
1907:	1	0
1908:	2	0
1909:	1	2
1910:	0	4
1917:	0	0
1918:	0	2
1919:	2	5
1920: (4 MOS.)	0	1
1934:	0	1
1935:	0	4
1936:	1	4
1937:	0	2
1938:	0	5
1939:	0	3
1940:	0	10
1941:	0	9
1942:	4	5

¹These numbers include only those entries listed specifically as being clothing. All of the yards of gingham, calico, and various cottons were probably meant for clothing, but without their being mentioned as specifically for that purpose they could not be included and are not included in this table.

probably belonged to Samuel Elliott. It was not a book one would expect to find in a house in the woods of Michigan in a religious household. Lucy and Mattie also owned books that were written about the latest teaching methods and subjects after 1890. They were not unaware or ignorant of the events and cultural and intellectual currents of their times.

They subscribed to newspapers from Escanaba and Chicago, Illinois (Table 6). Mr. Elliott had done business in Chicago for many years and the family continued to market their maple syrup products to customers in the Chicago area as long as they produced them. They also had subscriptions to popular, general interest magazines such as the Delineator, Ladies' Home Journal, Saturday Evening Post, and Country Gentleman. They also periodically subscribed to magazines of special interest to farmers and keepers of livestock, such as Turkey World, Drover's Journal, Wisconsin Agriculturalist, and Farmer's Wife. The subscriptions to the magazines and their books exposed them to changes in technology, agriculture, world and local events, and cultural life during the time periods covered by the account books.

Social Life

The Elliott family took part in the social life of their community of Sac Bay and the Garden Peninsula (Table 7). The social life of the area was not very active in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The costs of social life that are not visible in the account books make a reliable analysis difficult. The never ceasing hard work required of farmers and the long distances made longer by the slowness

Table 6. Frequency of purchases of newspaper and magazine subscriptions and books from the Elliott Account Books.

	NEWSPAPERS:	MAGAZINES:	BOOKS:
1903:	2	3	1
1904:	2	2	1
1905:	1	0	1
1906:	1	5	2
1907:	1	3	1
1908:	2	3	2
1909:	1	2	1
1910:	1	5	0
1917:	1	4	0
1918:	3	3	0
1919:	3	0	0
1920:	0	3	0
1934:	0	1	0
1935:	2	1	0
1936:	2	1	0
1937:	2	5	0
1938:	2	2	0
1939:	2	3	0
1940:	2	5	0
1941:	1	2	0
1942:	2	3	0

Table 7. Frequency of social activity expenditures as recorded in the Elliott Account Books.

	LADIES AID	SUPPERS, SOCIALS, EXCURSIONS, FAIRS, ETC. ¹	DINNERS OUT
1903:	0	2	2
1904:	0	2	0
1905:	0	1	0
1906:	0	0	0
1907:	0	4	0
1908:	0	2	0
1909:	2	3	0
1910:	5	0	0
1917:	3	4	0
1918:	5	0	0
1919:	10	1	0
1920:	0	0	0
1934:	8	1	2
1935:	9	2	6
1936:	12	3	7
1937:	15	4	16
1938:	16	1	10
1939:	14	4	15
1940:	17	2	12
1941:	13	0	15
1942:	17	1	14

¹Also includes baseball games, parties, circuses, trips, and benefits.

of local transportation made a large number and variety of activities unavailable. In the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries the decline in Sac Bay and the declining population of the area had made the isolation greater than it had been in the mid nineteenth century.

Basket socials and spelling bees were popular social activities. Girls and women would prepare meals to be put in baskets, often the meals were for two. The men would bid for the baskets they wanted. A dance might follow with a fiddler providing the music. Excursions to the islands south of the peninsula for picnics and berry picking could be arranged with the captains of one of the fishing boats berthed in Sac Bay.

(September 1906, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). Baseball was a popular sport and diversion. Teams from the various towns in the area would compete with each other. The Delta and Manistique county fairs were often attended and the family most probably would have exhibited some of their livestock or creations. There is no record of there having done so in the account books. The Fourth of July was celebrated with picnics, races, and fireworks. In March, 1940, they attended the only movie listed in the account books, Gone with the Wind (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1939-1942, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 5).

Another social outlet for the Elliott family and other female members of their church was the Ladies' Aid society of the Fayette (Delta) Congregational church. As stated earlier, it was primarily a social group that raised funds for the church or community as they were needed. The group met at the homes of different members and the number of meetings varied during the year. The meetings became increasingly

more frequent through the years from 1934 to 1942. Toward the end of the years covered by the account books, probably due to the changes and decline of the population of Sac Bay and the infirmities of advancing age, it became their most frequent social activity, although they did not all attend all meetings.

Dining at restaurants was not noted until after 1934 (Account books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Accounts 1934-1938, 1939-1942, 68-131, Box 1, Folders 4 and 5). There was a hotel with a dining room at Fayette, where there was an iron smelting operation until 1890, but dining in restaurants in the nineteenth century, was possibly not usually done as a social activity. After 1934, meals were eaten locally in Garden and at cafes in Escanaba and Manistique. One of the restaurants in Manistique opened in the 1930s and is still in business (November, 1940, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Accounts 1939-1942, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 5). Trips to town were primarily for business or shopping (Interview A, March 25, 1987). Mattie would invariably go as she alone of the sisters drove the car (Interview C, March 24, 1987). Their social life became increasingly centered around the Ladies' Aid and meals in restaurants as the sisters grew older.

Summary

Direct and indirect evidence leads to the conclusion that Martha Edwards Elliott made the majority of the quilts from the Elliott estate. The account books show an increasing use of mail order products and ready-to-wear clothing from 1903 until 1942. Changing technology and a reliable and inexpensive postal system made possible the increased

availability of consumer goods, such as cream separators and organs. The family's use of newspapers, books, and magazines show that they were educated and aware of the events and intellectual currents of their time.

Their social life was varied but of little frequency in the earlier years of the account books. If a social event, such as visitors did not have a visible cost it would not show up in the account books. It became increasingly concentrated on two events as they grew older, the Ladies' Aid of their church and dining in restaurants.

CHAPTER VII

THE ELLIOTT FAMILY

The purpose of this chapter is to give a history of the lives of the members of the Elliott family and to place their lives in the context of their time and place. The members of the family lived in a small community of lumbermen, fishermen, and farmers. The concept of interaction, in the conceptual model, is inherent in any written history of individuals or groups of individuals. In this chapter, the public and to some extent the private, lives of the Elliott family will be explored.

Samuel Elliott

Samuel Elliott was born in Peasmarsh, Sussex County, England on December 21, 1826 (See Figure 2). His parents, George and Lucy Tansit Elliott, emigrated to the United States in 1831. They entered the United States at Philadelphia, and then moved to Augusta, Oneida County, New York. In 1837, following so many others they moved west. They settled near Sussex, Wisconsin in Waukesha County and may have had a hand in naming the town after their birthplace in England. George Elliott was a farmer. He was involved in the building of the first sawmill in the area in 1842 (The Samuel Elliott family, pp. 1-3).

Samuel Elliott, as a young man, travelled north to Oshkosh County. He eventually moved further north to Brown County on the Green Bay of Lake Michigan. He travelled to the Door County islands and from there it was a short trip north to the islands south of the Garden Peninsula, St. Martin, Poverty, Summer, and Little Summer (The Samuel Elliott Family, p. 2). The Garden Peninsula had been surveyed by 1848 and been settled in late 1840 (Coppess (1976), p. 1). The official spelling of the bay today is Sac Bay. However, in all the Elliott family papers it was spelled Sack Bay. "On March 19, 1872...the petition ...that a part of Delton township should be organized into a new township to be called Sac Bay...and as the local spelling was and continued to be S-a-c-k we contend that the form in the petition was incorrect" (Elliott, p. 8). Their preferred spelling will be used throughout this chapter. Samuel reached the islands south of the Garden Peninsula sometime in the early to mid 1850s. According to an Account book of Samuel and his brother Stephen, "Rent was paid to Philomen Thompson on Summer Island on May 27, 1854 for use of house, boat, and shed" (Elliott, p.2). Samuel and his brother were not listed in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census as being settled in the area (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, 1850, Mackinac County). In the 1860 census, Samuel is listed as a fisherman with a personal estate valued at \$1,000 (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, 1860, Delta County). In 1861, Stephen Elliott purchased the property on which was located the village of Sack Bay from the widow of a man who had received it for service in the war of 1812. (Garden Historical Society, p. 21) On June 20, 1862 Stephen sold Samuel the

land for a price of \$150.00 (Bill of sale, June 20, 1862, Elliott Family Papers).

The Garden Peninsula extends south into Lake Michigan. The waters of the lake moderate the temperatures of the peninsula and the climate is slightly milder than the rest of the Upper Peninsula. It was and still is forested with cedar, birch, and other hardwoods and pines. The major occupations, in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have been fishing, lumbering, and when the land was cleared, farming (Coppess, p. 18). The soil is fertile but rocky as can be seen by the wide walls of rocks that border the edges of some fields. Travel in the early and mid nineteenth century was far easier by boat than land. The forests were dense and there would have been few roads. The snows of winter and the freezing of Big Bay De Noc and the lake would have brought most travel and exchange of news, local and national, to a halt, although the hardy could travel by ice to Escanaba or Fayette.

Marriage to Martha

On November 9, 1864, Samuel Elliott was married to Martha Edwards in Sussex, Wisconsin. She was born December 26, 1843 in St. Sylvester, Quebec, Canada to Henry and Ellen Edwards. At some point, her family moved to Sussex, Wisconsin where Samuel's family had settled (The Samuel Elliott Family, p. 2). Samuel and Martha's courtship was carried on primarily through the mails. "I suppose that you have been aware that I have been in correspondence with your daughter Martha for almost a year, and during that time I have paid her two visits" (Letter

from Samuel Elliott to Mr. and Mrs. Edwards, July 10, 1864. Elliott Family Correspondence, RG76-135, Box 1, Folder 8). In the above quoted letter, Samuel asked her parent's permission to marry Martha. By September, he had not yet recieved a reply. Samuel had a clear idea of what he wanted in a wife. "...I know that you love cleanliness as well as I do. I want and will have a housekeeper, and that person I want to be my wife to take an interest in trying to get along...I know that you have a mind of your own but that I love you all the better for it" (Letter from Samuel Elliott to Martha Edwards, September 22, 1864, Elliott Family Papers). Martha was approaching her twenty-first birthday when they married.

Samuel did not serve as a soldier in the Civil War. His brother served in the Union army (The Samuel Elliott Family, p.2). Samuel Elliott's political affiliation with the Democratic Party may have influenced his decision (Letter from Samuel Elliott to Martha Edwards, September 22, 1864, Elliott Family Papers). His age may have played a part as he was 35 years old at the beginning of the war and was almost 38 years old when he married in 1864. He received a draft notice in February of 1864 to report to Grand Rapids, but did not go (Samuel Elliott Family, p. 2). He probably paid a substitute to go in his place as this was not an uncommon practice and was done by several men in the area (Elliott, p. 2).

Political Activities of Samuel Elliott

Sack Bay is located in Delta County. The county was organized in 1861. Until then the Upper Peninsula was primarily one county, Mackinac

county. Delta county was organized with only two townships, Escanaba in the western portion of the county and Nahma in the eastern section. Samuel Elliott was active in local and county politics. In 1862 he was a Justice of the Peace. He was involved with the subdivision of Nahma Township which added Garden Township in 1863 (Garden Historical Society, pp. 82-83). He was a member of the first board of Supervisors for the county from the township (Jacques, p. 17). The position required regular trips to the county seat of Escanaba for meetings with other supervisors. In 1865 Garden Township was further subdivided and Delton Township was formed from a portion of it. Samuel was a supervisor of the township in 1869 and 1871. In 1873, Sack Bay Township was formed. Samuel Elliott served as supervisor for this township for the years 1875 to 1877, 1879, 1881, and 1888 (Elliott, p. 10). He served on various committees as part of his duties as a supervisor, including finance and hospital committees (Escanaba Iron Port, October 10, 1882, p. 1; June 30, 1883, p. 1). During the years 1883 to 1884 and 1887 to 1889, he was elected a director of the Sack Bay School District (Sack Bay School District Records, Department of State. RG 81-29, Box 1, Series 3).

Samuel Elliott's Business

According to county birth records which list the occupation of the father, Samuel Elliott was a lumberman by 1868 (D.A.R., Vital Records, 1869). The Federal Census still listed Samuel's occupation as lumberman in 1870 (Population Schedule, U. S. Federal Census, 1870, Delta County). He shipped cords of firewood, telegraph poles, railroad ties,

and fence posts to Chicago and Cleveland (Advertisement of Samuel Elliott, undated, Elliott Family Papers). As the forests were cleared for lumber for the above uses and for use in the charcoal kilns that fueled the iron smelters at Fayette, north of Sack Bay, roads and fields were created. Samuel Elliott built a three masted schooner for Eli P. Royce of Escanaba, Samuel's business associate and friend, in 1872. The schooner was named the E.P. Royce (Elliott, p. 5). "Her history is as follows: official number 8912. 249 gross, 236 net tons. 124.0 feet long by 29.1 feet wide by 8 feet deep, capacity about 400 tons" (Elliott, p. 5). In 1878 Samuel built a sawmill on the shore at Sack Bay. It ran for ten summers until 1887. It burned down in the 1920s when a nearby dock caught fire (Garden Historical Society, p. 21).

In 1880 Samuel was the census taker for Delta County. In that Federal Census he was listed as a farmer (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, Delta County, 1880). One of his crops was wheat. "Sam Elliott, 400 bushels of wheat this year" (Escanaba Iron Port, September 20, 1879, p. 1). He also experimented with crops "...chufa or almond grass, a tuber with grass like leaves as hog feed. Its taste resembles in "sweetness and richness of flavor a coconut or almond" (Escanaba Iron Port, October 29, 1881, p. 1). Samuel also raised sheep as evidenced by a letter from A. Piering in 1889 relating to yarn spun and flannel woven of fleece from the Elliott farm sent to the woolen mill (Letter from A. Piering to Samuel Elliott, October 1, 1889, Correspondence, Business 1876-1905, RG76-135, Box 1, Folder 1).

On December 14, 1887, Samuel Elliott was stricken at the age of sixty-two with what probably was a stroke resulting in paralysis. He

lingered for two years. He was mentally and physically impaired before he died on November 29, 1889 (Escanaba Iron Port, December 14, 1889, p. 1). "He has often been styled the Father of Sack Bay in as much as he has been its principal organizer and adviser in all municipal transactions" (Escanaba Iron Port, December 14, 1889, p. 14).

Martha Edwards Elliott and Her Children

In the years following their marriage, Martha Elliott gave birth to five children. Henry Shulton Elliott was born on January 2, 1868 and Lucy was born on December 17, 1869. The birth records may not be entirely trustworthy, as Samuel and Martha's first born son Henry Shulton was listed in the Delta County birth records for that year as George C. Elliott (D.A.R. (1933), 1868). It is possible that this entry refers to an earlier child's birth and that for some personal reason of Samuel and Martha the birth was not entered into the public record. This seems unlikely, and the dates for the birth of George fit those of Henry's birth taken from other sources. There is some confusion about his middle name as well. In a copy of the New Testament, given as a gift, is an inscription written by his Aunt Ann. His name is inscribed "Henry C. Elliott" and the inscription is dated August 11, 1874. (New Testament, New York: American Bible Society, 1871. Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State, Fd-32-76) This middle initial is not the one carved on his tombstone. His aunt may have misunderstood his middle name, but this seems unlikely as he would have received the book when he was six years old. His parents may have changed his middle name to reflect animosity toward the

holder of his first middle initial or to express friendship for the holder of the middle initial carved on his tombstone.

Lucy's birth date in the county records is correct as compared to other sources (tombstone, cemetery records, genealogy). Samuel Tilden Elliott was born on June 8, 1876 (Delta County, Birth Records). Two months later Henry died at the age of nine. The cause of his death has been listed variously as a brain fever, a foot injury, or a head injury (D.A.R. (1933), 1876; Samuel Elliott Family, p. 2). Martha (Mattie) was born on August 14, 1878. Adelle (Babe) was born on September 1, 1882 (Delta County, Birth Records). The birth and death dates were also transcribed from the tombstones of the family. They match, in every case but Henry's, the official county birth records. The forms of names and the correctness of dates taken from their tombstone is given validity by the nature of the family. The Elliott family was willing to pay for work done for them, but would not be likely to accept an error in the transcription of the dates or names and would not have been willing to let it remain without correction. Therefore, I place strong credence in the dates taken from the family's tombstone as they match the official records except as noted.

Martha raised her children and kept house. One assumes, her life would out of necessity have been more physically restricted than her husband's due to the demands and responsibilities of her household and children. She would have cooked, done laundry, sewn, quilted, grown a vegetable garden, done general housework, taken care of the poultry, processed milk to make butter and cream, made and cared for her family's clothing, and helped with field work when necessary. She most likely

doctored her family as they possessed a book of homeopathic remedies and doctors would not have been readily available (Lendham, Thomas.

Homeopathy as Applied to the Diseases of Females and the Most Important Diseases of Early Childhood, 1851, Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State, FD-46-78). There would have been few amenities and little chance for travel and a social life outside of the home and small community.

The children of Samuel and Martha Elliott would have had time to play, but would have been expected to perform their chores and early learned to work hard. "I have got seventeen trees tapped and we have made about one pint of syrup" (Lucy to Miss Mattie, April 9, 1881, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 1). They were not deprived of toys. In the same letter cited above are listed their (Lucy, Mattie, Sam) Christmas presents for the year of 1880. They received a kaleidoscope, a jack-in-the-box, a toy white poodle dog, an autograph album, a story book, and a box of tools. Aside from toys, they also had each other and other children in Sack Bay as playmates, and the shore and the woods for their kingdom. They attended school in the log building that was the earliest school building in Delta county (Elliott, p.3). (See Figures 42 and 43)

Travel was difficult or slow, particularly in the winter, so the majority of amusements were homemade. Spelling bees were held in fish sheds on the shore in Sack Bay (Elliott, p. 8). "They were often spirited affairs, the contestants being largely from "outside". We were told that spelling books were exhausted in an effort to "spell down" the last survivor in such contests" (Elliott, p. 8). The Fourth of July was



Figure 42. Martha Edwards Elliott, c. 1900-1910. Note painting of Sack Bay Schoolhouse at the right. (Elliott Photograph Collection, Michigan State Archives, Department of State) (Painting, FD-42-75, Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State)



Figure 43. From left rear row: Mattie with dog, Adelle, Samuel Tilden; in front, seated, Mrs. Elliott and Lucy. (Elliott Photograph Collection, Michigan State Archives, Department of State)



Figure 44. From the left: Mattie, Mrs. Hughes (a neighbor and fellow Ladies' Aid member), Adelle, Lucy, an unidentified relative, c. late 1950s. (Courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. William Thill)

celebrated with picnics, races, and fireworks (Minutes of Committee Meeting to Plan Fourth of July Festivities, June 9, 1899, Elliott Family Papers). Card games and dancing were also popular forms of entertainment (Elliott, p. 8). "Socially, there wasn't much to do in those days. There were basket socials. There were dances...and there were pie socials and you would bid on the pies" (Interview D, March 27, 1987).

In 1890 Martha was elected Director of the Sack Bay school (Sack Bay School District Records, Department of State. RG 81-29, Box 1, series 3). It was her only public service. The ideology of domesticity and the sexual division of labor placed her role as domestic, in the home, not in the public arena (Sachs (1983), p. 45). The election may have been an expression of respect for her and her family at the loss of her husband in 1889.

No letters of Martha Edwards Elliott were found in the sources checked and few written to her. The neighbors who were interviewed remembered little about her. "Mrs. Elliott was a little old lady" (Interview A, March 25, 1987). "Mrs. Elliott did not get out that much" (Interview B, March 24, 1987).

Her few direct words were found in two of the account books, 1911-1920 and 1927-1934 (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1911-1920, Ledger 1927-1934, 68-131, Box 1, Folders 2,3). Both of the account books consisted primarily of lists of farm animals, produce, such as butter sold to customers, the names and tasks of hired men working on the farm, and other farm products grown on their farm and sold from it. She was proud of the products of her family's hard work.

"Mrs. Asker complains her last butter was old and wants no more till we can send some good. It will be some time" (Account Book of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1927-1934, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 3).

She was regarded with respect and affection by her husband's family. After her father-in-law's death, she was presented with his suitably inscribed bible by the brothers and sisters of Samuel on September 24, 1870. She had grown up as a neighbor of the family when George Elliott lived in Sussex, Wisconsin (George Elliott family Bible, Michigan Historical Museum, Department of State, FD-159-77).

She had courage, stamina, and strength of character. It is evidenced by the manner in which she, after her husband's death in 1889 faced possible financial difficulties, and dealt with her problems. She rallied her children around her. From 1903 until at least 1910, Martha Elliott took in boarders. It was a not uncommon way for rural women to generate income for their family. She took in as many as three boarders at a time and for all seven of those years the name of S.M. Danielson occurs (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, Box 1, Folders 1, 6). Young Sam farmed the family's land. Lucy became a schoolteacher in 1890 (Sack Bay School Records, Department of State. RG 81-29, Box 1, Series 3). At some time between 1895 and 1903, Mattie also became a teacher. Adelle stayed at home until she attended Ferris Institute. The daughters sent their wages home to Mrs. Elliott and she would pay their expenses such as room and board when they taught far enough away from home to require that they room near the school where they were teaching (November and

December 1903, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, 68-131, Box 1, folder 6).

Mrs. Elliott was enough in charge of their finances and her family to decide how money was spent and her children recognized this in their lives so that even small sums of money would be turned over to her.

"Found by Sam at Fairport \$.10" (March 1906, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). Sam was thirty years old at the time.

Martha Elliott's primary responsibility was to her farm and family. She had to deal with the vagaries of nature as a farmer, but far more aggravating were the vagaries of hired men. "Knut again left us without notice.(December 15, 1915)...He left us today giving as a reason that Mr. Colby's office has misrepresented the place to him saying it was four miles from town when it was 16. (April 8, 1915)...Alphonse quit us this time going home at night and failing to come back in the morning." (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1911-1920, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 2). There were a few hired men on whom she could depend. "Edward Grouland has done more than any man we have had since we have been alone. He is a gentleman and his work has been satisfactory in every way" (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1911-1920, January-March 1915, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 2). That they are alone, refers to the death of Mrs. Elliott's son Sam in 1912. It is obvious that the death of her second son hit her hard as she was not really alone, her daughters were all living at home at this time.

The life of a hired man can not have been an easy one. Wages were low and the labor was hard. "Edward Grouland 40 days labor, \$40.00"

(March 31, 1917, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1911-1920, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 2). Wages for cutting wood were higher. "A. Carter hauling wood 9 1/2 days, \$19.00" (February, 1917, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 2). Wages for farm laborers have usually been low, and would provide little incentive for the man to stay on as a hired man. The Elliott family have been noted as being precise in payment for labor and more than fair in their treatment of those men they hired (Interview C, March 24, 1987).

Martha Elliott created a home so attractive and created such strong bonds based on affection and blood, that her children do not appear to have wanted to leave it. There is no hint in their papers that they were any less than glad to be at home. There is no trace that Mrs. Elliott may have used guilt to hold her children. "He (E.H. Smith, a visitor) asked Ma last night if he couldn't have one of her girls_and Ma_I don't know what possessed her_she seemed so deeply flattered and bound to do the handsome anyway_said_"Yes, you can have them all if you want to" (Letter from Lucy to Mattie, February 17, 1904, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). It is surely unusual to have so many unmarried children who do not appear to have ever seriously contemplated marriage. In none of the surviving letters are there indications that any of the daughters ever had serious suitors.

Martha Edwards Elliott died on September 12, 1931 in Sack Bay. "...I went to her funeral when she died on September 12, 1932. It was a beautiful fall day and they had the funeral out in the yard at the house. I remember so well singing Nearer My God to Thee" (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

Employment: Lucy and Mattie

Lucy, Mattie, Sam, and Adelle all attended school in Sack Bay. The log building that they attended is still standing. It is the oldest schoolhouse in Delta county (Interview C, March 24, 1987). Lucy last attended in 1887 (Interview A, March 25, 1987). She was twenty-one years old when she began to teach in the Sack Bay schoolhouse (Sack Bay School District Records, Department of State, 81-29, Box 1, Series 3). Country school classes, at the time, were taught up to the eighth grade. In a letter of introduction from W.W. Ferris for Adelle, he states that Adelle "...Elliott of Sack Bay, Michigan...has had something more than an eighth grade English education..." (To whom it may concern from W.W. Ferris, August 10, 1910, Elliott Family Papers, Delta County Historical Society).

Lucy taught at the Sack Bay school from 1890 until at least 1895 (Sack Bay School District Records, Department of State, 81-29, Box 1, Series 3). One year at Sack Bay, she and the children made an American flag. She taught in her various schools classes ranging in size from twelve to thirty-three pupils (Letter from Lucy to D.J. Bonham, January 14, 1894; Letter from Lucy to Mattie, October 6, 1903, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). She taught in Isabella in at least part of the year in 1896 (Letter from Lucy to Family, Isabella, July 5, 1896, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). The school terms were usually six months in length rather than the nine or so months in use today, which is probably why Mattie was still attending school in 1896-1897 when she was nineteen years old (Sack Bay School District Records, Department of State, RG 81-29,

Box 1, Series 3). She may also have been studying in preparation for the test she would have to take and pass in order to teach. Lucy taught at the Fairport School in 1897. The school was south of Sack Bay in the same township (Souvenir of Fairport School, District #2, Sack Bay Township, 1897, Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State).

Both Lucy and Mattie attended the Teacher's Institute in Escanaba for six week courses. They would then have taken the certification tests in order to teach (November 1903, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6). The certificate was good for two years and then the test would have to be retaken (Interview B, March 24, 1987). They both apparently had second class certificates that allowed them to teach in country schools with only eight grades.

Other sources (genealogy, interviews) have indicated that Lucy and Mattie had graduated from Ferris Institute and that Mattie may have attended Northern Michigan University. Neither institution has any records of Mattie attending their schools, but the records are incomplete for that time period. She did attend a summer term or session at Ferris Institute. "Mattie's expenses at Big Rapids" (July, 1908, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6). Mattie received lists of Books For Morning Reading from Ferris Institute (October 26, 1903, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 7).

Information about Lucy's connection with Ferris Institute comes from two sources. "Finally when I got to my 7 o'clock arithmetic

class..." (Letter from Lucy to My Dear Friends from Big Rapids, Michigan. August 4, 1897, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 1). "My bike is mighty handy when I have four blocks to go to school in about three minutes time so as to be in time for the 7 o'clock class" (Letter from Lucy to friends, July 21, 1897, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 1). Lucy is also listed in the 1897-1898 Bulletin of the Ferris Industrial School (Letter to the author from Ferris State College Registrar, March 11, 1987). She was in Big Rapids until August 14, 1897. She took a train south to Manistee and the following day returned to Escanaba (Letter from Lucy to Family, August 14, 1897, Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5).

Sam did not attend school as long as his sisters did. By 1894, "...Sam is kept busy almost all the time with getting wood and doing chores. His chief ambition now is to have a steam engine" (Lucy to D.J. Bonham, January 14, 1894, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). He was 18 years old in 1894 and a farmer was not considered to need as much education as a teacher required. He would have been more valuable to his family working full time as a farmer. It may also have been his own preference as he liked machinery and he took a correspondence course in marine engineering (Lesson on Marine Engine, undated, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 2, Folder 4).

Lucy and Mattie may have begun teaching school as a way to help their family financially after the two years Samuel Elliott was ill. In the 1900 Federal census, (1890 Federal census was burned in 1921) the Elliotts were listed as renting their farm (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, 1900, Delta County). There is no indication in their

papers that the farm was sold. In the 1880 census Samuel Elliott was listed as a farmer with no mention as to the ownership of his land (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, 1880, Delta County). In a letter from Eli P. Royce, a friend of the family and Mr. Elliott's business associate, to Lucy, he wrote "...I am glad to hear that you are getting along nicely with your school and hope the sun of prosperity will disperse(?) the clouds that have for so long hung over you" (Eli P. Royce to Lucy, November 25, 1890, Elliott Family Papers). It is possible that Mr. Royce was speaking figuratively and referred to Samuel Elliott's death as the cloud. A search of property tax records and records of deeds may have the data that would prove or disprove their ownership of the farm and the correctness of the census records.

Lucy's and Mattie's wages were excellent sources of ready cash for their family and farm. Mattie in 1903 earned \$35 a month. Her wages for three months were \$140.00 and her expenses for the same month were only \$52.88, leaving a four month excess or profit of \$87.72 (December 1903, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1912, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6). Lucy in 1904 earned \$40.00 a month and her expenses were \$10.00 a month, leaving a profit of \$120.00 for four months. (July, 1904, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-12, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6).

During the years 1892 to 1897, Lucy was also the Superintendent of the Delta Congregational (Fayette) Church Sunday school (Jacques, p. 95). Classes were held in the Sack Bay schoolhouse (Interview A, March 25, 1987). "One Christmas time they had Lucy and my grandmother get big walnuts. They pried them open, took the walnut meats out, and

than they had little dolls in them that Lucy gave to the children. The walnut shells were glued back together with the dolls inside" (Interview A, March 25, 1987). Lucy was interested in photography. "I came back and took my Kodak and got four snapshots..." (Letter from Lucy to family, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). "I hope you'll be pleased with your pictures..I took one of Babe's cattle and some of L.P. Peterson's baby" Lucy to Mattie, February 17, 1904, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). She earned some money developing photographs (September 1903, January 1908, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folders 1,6).

It was not possible to locate information as to where and when Mattie first taught school, and exactly where Lucy taught between 1897 and 1903. Envelopes from letters addressed to Lucy for the years 1897, 1898, 1899, and 1900 have as their destination the Elliott's local post office at Fayette (Envelopes from letters to Lucy for the years 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, Elliott Family Correspondence, Rg 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). They indicate that she was living at home and may have taught at either the Sack Bay school or the Fairport school or another local school that would allow her to live at home.

Mattie taught school at Ensign, west of Isabella, from 1902 through 1905. Lucy taught school in South River, north of Fayette, from 1902 at least through 1905. Lucy again taught in Sack Bay from 1906 until the school closed permanently in 1910. She does not appear to have taught school after this (Account books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, Receipts and Disbursements 1917-1920, Box 1, Folders 6 and 7).

Mattie continued to teach until at least 1917. She taught at Garth from 1906 to 1908. She taught at Mud Lake school, near Fayette, in 1909 to 1910. She also taught part of the year of 1910 in the summer at Nadeau, Menominee County, Michigan for five and a half months or for a summer term. She was teaching at Mud Lake in 1917 and may have taught there continuously from 1910 (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, Inventory of Property 1903-1905, Receipts and Disbursements 1917-1920, 68-131, Box 1, Folders 1,6,7). Mattie was highly regarded by her pupils. "Mattie was a good teacher and the children liked her" (Interview B, March 24, 1987). "...Mattie was the sharper person and she taught school for many years, and anybody that went to school to her knew what kind of teacher she was, you really learned from her" (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

Mattie also attempted to earn extra money by doing millinery work. In 1902, she tried to display her work in a store, E. Shelley's in Gladstone, Michigan. The reply was discouraging. "I must say however in my experience with selling expensive home made work (it) has not been satisfactory" (Letter from J.E. Shelley to Miss Elliott, October 28, 1902, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 7). In October of 1905, Mattie travelled to Chicago. "Earned in Chicago at millinery work, Mattie \$25.00" (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6). It was not profitable as her expenses were \$250.00 (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6).

Adelle Goes to FerrisInstitute

Adelle attended Ferris Institute in Big Rapids Michigan from September 1909 until August 13, 1910 (September, 1910, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). She was enrolled in the Commercial Department. She took courses, such as English, spelling, shorthand commercial law, and commercial arithmetic (Certificates of Completion or report cards, Ferris Institute, 1901-1910, Elliott Family Papers). She enjoyed her time in Big Rapids and even participated in a prank. "We girls from the house took the others home and when we took Miss Allison to Mr. Ferris', she went in and got each of us a small piece of soap and on our way back we thoroughly decorated the windows of two of the girls who have too attentive beaus...and to think that we got soap from Mr. Ferris' own house to break some of his own rules with" (Adelle to Family, October 3, 1909, Elliott Family Papers). She did miss her home and family, but her homesickness was tempered with a clear-eyed knowledge of the hard work involved in the life of farmers. "I can hardly make myself think that you are getting things ready for winter at home; seems so strange to think that you are putting things in the cellar and picking the apples and all_it sounds so thoroughly romantic and lovely that I am mighty glad that I know something of the attendant difficulties else I should be real sorry and homesick_as it is I take time to be glad that I can hear so many nice things right along" (Adelle to Family, October 30, 1909, Elliott Family Papers). Adelle belonged to the Upper Peninsula Club and was listed on both the Commercial and Shorthand Rolls in the

1910 Ferris Institute yearbook (Crimson and Gold, 1910, Ferris Institute, Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State, FD-222-77).

She displayed her thrifty instincts, her training, and her delight in a small economy. "I must tell you of an economy I practiced on my hat. I was going to get some new quills when I found I didn't have enough money, and the ones on the hat were all broken apart and so dirty...So I put them in the wash... and washed and scrubbed them...I sat down and fanned them through the air after the manner in which a goose flops its wings...they look as good as new ones would" (Adelle to Family, September 12, 1909, Elliott Family Papers).

Commencement Exercises were held on June 29, 1910 (Invitation to Commencement Exercises, June 29, 1910, Elliott Family Papers). Adelle remained in Big Rapids over the summer. She worked in W.W. Ferris' office for ten weeks of practice in stenography and typewriting. Mr. Ferris wrote a letter of recommendation for Adelle. "Miss Elliott is a young woman of exemplary habits and character. She is always trying to improve herself and is entirely free from frivolities. She always attends strictly to business" (W.W. Ferris to Whom It May Concern, August 5, 1910, Elliott Family Papers). He helped her find a job in Iron River, Michigan at the head of Big Bay De Noc in Delta county (Letter to W.W. Ferris from E. S. Coe, September 8, 1910, Elliott Family Papers). She worked as a stenographer in the First National Bank. Her wages were \$45.00 per month, which she sent to her mother (December 10, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1,

Folder 1). She continued to work in the bank until her brother Sam's death in 1912 when she returned to Sack Bay.

Adelle was also inventive. She, along with the family's boarder, S.M. Danielson, agreed "...to split interest in a patent on a clasp for butter jars" (Contract dated September 16, 1905, Michigan Historical Museum, History Bureau, Department of State, FD-159-77). No other references about the clasp were found and the idea probably was never pursued.

Samuel Tilden Elliott

Samuel Tilden Elliott remained at home and farmed the family's land. If there were actually financial difficulties for the family, his work on the farm and his sister's wages, restored the farm to the family. The family is listed in the 1910 census as owning their own farm (Population Schedule, U.S. Federal Census, 1910, Delta County). "He was very inventive. In the creamery, he created a system of pulleys, etc., that ran the cream separator, a washing machine very large in size, and a machine in the barn that fanned the grain. He moved a building, now standing across the road from the Elliott's house, from the shore with a horse and a winch" (Interview C, March 24, 1987).

He was interested in engineering and probably was the family member who subscribed to an engineering periodical, Technical World, (February, 1910, Account books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). "The bean thresher is nearing completion_Now when Sam gets some wood ahead and things in place he will try his

machine" (Lucy to Mattie, February 17, 1904, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5).

Sam was involved in local politics (Elliott, p. 10). He was supervisor for the township for the years 1903 to 1905. He was treasurer of the Sack Bay School Committee for the years 1909 to 1910 (Receipt from First National Bank, Sack Bay School Treasurer, Sam Elliott, Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 2, Folder 1). He did not spend all his time at home. He attended a World's Fair in St. Louis, Missouri in 1904 (November 1904, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Inventory of Property 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 6).

Sam was said to have built the family's second house in Sack Bay in 1896 (Figure 3). Their first house was burned. The kitchen was the first part built and they lived there until the rest of the house was completed (Interview C, March 24, 1987). The ornamental bargeboard trim and the balusters of the porch were probably commercially produced. The star trimmed bargeboard is not uncommon in Michigan, and similar balusters were commercially available after the Civil War and in catalogs at least by 1892 (Winkler (1987), p. 87). He did build the trellises on the porch of the house (Interview D, March 26, 1987) (Figure 44).

He participated in the social activities of Sack Bay. He was on a committee to organize the Fourth of July festivities for the town (Minutes of Committee Meeting to Plan fourth of July Festivities, June 9, 1899, Elliott Family Papers). There are only two hints of romance for Sam found in the family's papers. "One night last week when Paddy and Sam were at Olmstead's and just coming away. Sam had started out

the door and Paddy stopped in the kitchen to talk to Eunice a minute. Mabel (Olmstead Lang) followed Sam out and stood talking a few minutes outside when she said to Sam_ she was sure Paddy was holding the door on her. She started in and found Paddy not near it. Looking at Paddy but speaking to Sam behind her_ she said "He didn't, he didn't'. Paddy looked at her and said_"Well, I'm sorry, I did all I could.'" (Lucy to Mattie, March 9, 1904, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5). "...my mother (Mabel Olmstead Lang) used to tell that he would like to have been friendly with her but, she just liked him as a friend. Sam Elliott was just somebody that they went bicycling with and so on. Sam had the first bicycle" (Interview A, March 25, 1987). This is the only hint of romance for the children of Martha and Samuel Elliott found in their papers and the interviews.

Sam died at the age of 36 on July 29, 1912 in the hospital in Escanaba from complications of appendicitis (Escanaba Morning Press, July 31, 1912, p. 1). He made a will on the day he died. He was too weak to sign his name and made an "X" as his mark. He left everything to his mother after a debt of \$448.00 was paid. Lucy was appointed executrix of his estate (Will of Samuel T. Elliott, July 29, 1912, Elliott Family Papers). "Mr. Elliott held the esteem and confidence of all the people...He was a progressive farmer and one of the county's most exemplary young men" (Escanaba Morning Press, July 31, 1912, p. 1).

Alone

After Adelle's return to the farm from Iron River following Sam's death, Mrs. Elliott, Lucy, Mattie, and Adelle continued to run the farm

as the daughters would do after Mrs. Elliott's death. They continued to plant barley, hay, oats, alfalfa, buckwheat, beans, and potatoes. They continued to make and sell their butter, make and sell their maple syrup, and raise and sell their turkeys and turkey feathers (Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1927-1934, Ledger 1911-1920, 68-131, Box 1, Folders 2, 3). The four women provided themselves with a good income and still maintained their status as women and ladies by the type of work that they did. They used hired men to plow, plant, and harvest their fields. They dealt with the tasks considered suitable to them as females and ladies in the nineteenth century. Lucy was in charge of the housekeeping and did most of the cooking. Adelle was in charge of the creamery, the maple syrup production, the turkeys, and bringing wood into the house from the lot across the road (Interviews A, C, D, March 1987). "Mattie was the boss outdoors" (Interview D, March 26, 1987). She was the one who hired the help. She was also in charge of their automobiles. They had the first automobile in the area in 1914. Mattie would do the driving and was the one who polished the car after every use (Interview C, March 24, 1987).

The sisters had very clear views on vices such as smoking and saloons. "...the man that sold the automobile to them told us that when he showed them the automobile...this automobile had an ashtray in it and that they insisted that it be taken out. They didn't want it" (Interview A, March 25, 1987). They also did not approve of saloons. Mattie and Lucy donated money to or joined the Anti-Saloon League in 1909 and 1910 (November 1909, February, 1910, Ledger 1906-1910, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). They also took

pride in the fact that "...No tavern ever found a foothold in the village (Sack Bay)" (Elliott, p. 6).

The sisters developed an egalitarian manner of dealing with their roles on the farm and in the family. They divided the work on the farm, one supposes, by their preferences or skills. They worked out a manner of living that was satisfactory for them all and maintained their distinction as women. "They were very united, what one did the others did also. In all decisions, business or whatever, if one didn't want to do something, none of them did. Decisions were unanimous or nothing was done" (Interview C, March 24, 1987). It is a united and thoughtful way of dealing with potentially divisive decisions. They thought out and developed a way of living that suited their situation and provided them with a smoothly running satisfying system. It provided that all decisions were entered into without rancor or hard feelings. They became almost one unit with three separate parts. Mattie gave a recipe to a neighbor and she forgot to mention an ingredient. The neighbors were sent a note telling of the missing ingredient. Mattie instigated the letter, Lucy dictated the letter, and Adelle typed it (Interview C, March 24, 1987). They were precise, methodical, organized, and fair. If a hired man was a few minutes late, he would be docked for those minutes, but if he worked late he was paid for the extra minutes (Interview C, March 24, 1987). "When you worked for them you came there in the morning and they would tell you what they wanted done and you did your day's work. When noon came you went in and had dinner" (Interview D, March 26, 1987).

Theirs was an affectionate and, at times, a teasing relationship. "Our folks gave me a nice Bible with my name on it. Baby (Adelle) says I would do well to follow some of its teachings" (Lucy to D.J. Bonham, January 14, 1894, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 1). Lucy appreciated a joke even if it was on her. "When she boarded as a teacher...The people where she boarded put a dummy in her bed, sort of to tease her because she was single. She laughed as hard as anyone" (Interview C, March 24, 1987). Lucy was considered the most friendly of the sisters and the best looking. "She was very delicate looking with a pretty pointed chin" (Interview C, March 24, 1987). Her humor seems to have been often directed at herself. "This morning I happened to remark while putting on my barn togs_Sam's coat and Ma's shawl and mitts, that if I were sold out, there would be precious little that really belonged to me" (Lucy to Mattie, March 9, 1904, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 5).

They were very attached to their home and wanted to keep it as it was when they were together as a whole family (Interview D, March 26, 1987). That included Sam's trellises, the furniture in the house, and their mother's quilts. There was a story or memory that was associated with every piece of furniture or object in the house. "There were beautiful figurines on Mrs. Elliott's dresser in her bedroom, that I thought were so pretty. She told me her father had taken a load of telegraph poles to Chicago and he brought them as a gift for his wife" (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

They were not eccentric and had no hesitation in purchasing or using modern equipment and tools that they thought worthwhile. Some

items of modern convenience just did not interest them. They appreciated the hard labor saved by machines. Their automobiles provided them with needed transportation to Escanaba and Manistique when the trains and ferries stopped service to the Garden Peninsula. They never did, however, install indoor plumbing and continued to use an imposing "convenience" behind the house (Interview A, March 25, 1987). They had purchased a telephone in 1909 and may have used it as long as there was service in the area during the early part of the century (January 1909, Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Ledger 1906-1910, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 1). There are no entries for phone bills in the account books for the years covered. Electrical service was proposed for the area in 1939, but was not installed until 1942 (Letter to Lucy from Wisconsin-Michigan Power Co., October 7, 1939, Elliott Family Correspondence, RG 76-135, Box 1, Folder 1; Account Books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1939-1942, 68-131, Box 1, Folder 5).

Adelle enjoyed entertaining and particularly enjoyed games. The majority of their entertaining was done at Ladies' Aid meetings. At one such party at their house, there was a large watermelon. Each guest counted the number of seeds in their piece. Whoever had the most seeds would win a prize (Interview A, March 25, 1987). She had the rules for another called a what-you-will party (Directions for a What-you-will Party, undated, Elliott Family Papers). Each guest would write down their favorite party games on slips of paper. The slips would be drawn and the games played. At the end of the party the games most enjoyed by the party goers would be selected. The guest that selected the game would win the prize. She kept daily records of local

temperatures for the U. S. Weather Bureau for many years (Interview A, March 25, 1987). She was a founding member and a director of the Delta County Historical Society. As a member of this society she wrote a history of Point Detour (the Garden Peninsula area) (Escanaba Daily Press, April 13, 1962, p. 3).

Mattie experimented with growing very early tomatoes. She would save the seeds from the earliest ripening tomatoes and set them aside and use them to grow tomatoes the next year and to eventually develop an early tomato. She continued the experiments for 34 years (Escanaba Daily Press, April 13, 1962, p. 3).

Sack Bay had changed a great deal since the mid and late nineteenth century. With the closing of the iron smelting at Fayette in the 1890s, the area began to decline in population. By 1906, the township of Sack Bay was voided and the area joined to Fairbanks Township (Garden Historical Society, p. 84). In 1910 the school closed (Garden Historical Society, p. 27). The fishing diminished, and eventually the boats moved south to Fairport. The docks in Sack Bay rotted and the sheds and sawmill burned. The railroad and soon the ferry from Escanaba and Fayette no longer came to Sack Bay (Letter from Elliotts to Mr. Cleaver Buckbee, December 27, 1917, Elliott Family Papers). Roads were improved and the automobile shortened distances, but the population continued to decline in the Sack Bay area in numbers and buildings were moved, torn down, or burnt. Soon all the stores were gone (Interview A, March 25, 1987).

Lucy, Mattie, and Adelle continued to run their farm. They continued to sell their butter, cream, milk, turkeys, and eggs. By

1936, they sold more eggs, cream, and milk than butter. They appear to have stopped selling butter in 1942. In 1940, they made 174 1/4 pounds of butter. They sold only four pounds of that butter, the rest was for home use. In 1941, they made only 150 1/2 pounds of butter and sold none of it. The amounts of butter made, if any was made in 1942, were not mentioned. It is possible that they continued to make butter for their own use (Account books of the Elliott Farm, Daily Account 1934-1938, Daily Account 1939-1942, 68-131, box 1, Folders 4 and 5). The change in butter production of the Elliott family is close to the changes found in its production in the rest of the country. Farm production of butter declined to one-fifth in 1939.

Adelle invested their surplus income in stocks and bonds (Personal Property Subject to Appraisal, Probate Records, Martha Elliott, 1962, Delta County). Life for them continued as it always had with household and farm chores. (See Figure 44) Eventually caring for their stock became too difficult for them. "She (Mrs. Groll) told me they (the Elliott's) had been ill, but they would not go to a hospital. She told me how hard they worked and how the authorities, or someone, had asked them to give up some of their livestock so they would not have so much work to do, and that with 40 head of cattle on hand, they sold one (Affidavit of Jesse Wirthal, Probate records, Martha Elliott, 1962, Delta County).

Lucy died in the hospital in Manistique on February 20, 1960 (Escanaba Daily Press, February 22, 1960, p. 3). She was 91 years old. Adelle died at home on February 27, 1962. She was 80 years old (Escanaba Daily Press, January 29, 1962, p. 2). "When Lucy died,

Mattie and Adelle made the arrangements for the funeral. When Adelle died, Mattie insisted on exactly the same coffin, flowers, and music" (Interview C, March 24, 1987). Mattie lived alone for almost 10 months after Adelle died. Her loneliness must have been devastating after a life spent seldom having been separated from her sisters. Mattie died in the hospital in Manistique on April 12, 1962 of bone cancer (Escanaba Daily Press, April 13, 1962, p. 3).

Adelle had invested wisely in General Motors, General Electric, Ford Motor, and various public utilities stocks. The stocks were valued by the appraiser of the estate at \$128,891.78. Their household furnishings and furniture, including the quilts, were valued at \$75.00 (Personal Property Subject to Appraisal, Probate Records, Martha Elliott, Delta County). No one in the family left a will except for Sam and that does not appear to have been probated. The proceeds from the sale of their stocks, bonds, savings, and property including the house and barns was divided among their Edwards and Elliott cousins (Probate Records, Martha Elliott, Delta County). The bulk of the contents of the house and barns were sold to the Department of Natural Resources of the State of Michigan for use at the state park at Fayette. The farm and house were sold to a neighbor (Interview C, March 24, 1987).

The members of the Elliott family left little remaining physical mark on the area, except for their house and the monument in the Sack Bay cemetery. The sisters left no descendants, but they are remembered with respect and affection by their friends and neighbors.

"...the three were really nice folks. I couldn't say nothing against them at all" (Interview D, March 26, 1987). They were not only pioneers of the area but were active and concerned members of their community as long as they lived. The members of the family rest in the Sack Bay cemetery on a hill overlooking the bay, sheltered by large shade trees where the trillium blooms in the spring.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Studies of quilts deal primarily with the physical attributes of the quilts and the classification of those attributes. Often the lives of the quiltmakers are considered irrelevant. Quilting is women's work and, as has so much of women's work, been considered unimportant by the women who made them as well as the society in which they lived. When individual quiltmakers are studied they will yield information applicable to other larger groups of quiltmakers. There are often few or no documents that survive that would illuminate the life of the quiltmaker and her quilting activities. Few women are sufficiently conscious of self to ascribe importance or merit to their daily and private lives.

Purpose and Method

The purpose of this study was to analyze the quilts of the Elliott family, make a qualitative content analysis of the account books of the Elliott family, and create a history of the family from the information about the lives of the members of the Elliott family. This study focused on the lives of a particular family, the Elliott family of Sac Bay, Delta County, Michigan and their quilts.

The Human Ecosystem model was used as the conceptual framework of the study as it provided a theoretical basis and a connecting thread

between the three different analyses used: artifact study, content analysis, and a history of the family as surviving documents permitted.

The quilts themselves were analyzed using an Artifact Study model proposed by Fleming (1974). The model began with the inherent properties of the artifacts, such as, materials, construction, design, and function. The properties were then identified and discussed. Evaluation of the aesthetic quality and workmanship qualities of the quilts inherent in the construction was the next step. Cultural analysis, particularly of how quilts were made and for what purpose, was the final step.

The Artifact Study model was found to be cumbersome when applied to a large and internally diverse sample of artifacts. The quilts are primarily pieced but in a number of different patterns, fabrics, quilting patterns, etc., and had to be individually discussed. Fleming places the history of an object as an inherent property of the artifact. It, in fact, is not a part of the object, but a separate and distinct record. Another difficulty of the model is its assumption that all the steps are to be carried out on all the properties. In this instance it did not seem appropriate.

The account books of the Elliott family were analyzed for content in relation to the quilts, the use of mail order and ready-made clothing, purchases of cloth and needlework tools and equipment, purchases of books, magazines, and newspapers, and their social life within their community.

Using family papers in the Michigan State Archives and the Delta County Historical Society, newspapers, public documents, and interviews

of former neighbors and friends a history of the two generations of the Elliott family in Sac Bay was compiled.

Research Questions

The inappropriateness of quantitative analysis made research questions more appropriate than hypotheses in guiding the study. The findings will be summarized using the research questions as a guide.

1. What are the physical attributes of the quilts, the patterns, materials, and construction? Are the aesthetic qualities and workmanship of construction at a high level?

Fourteen of the quilts are pieced. The only applique was used in the handles of the baskets in three of the Flower Basket quilts. Thirteen of the quilts are pieced of more than twelve different fabric pulled from the scrap basket.

Ten of the quilts are quilted. The average number of stitches per inch varies from five to seven stitches per inch with five stitches per inch occurring in half of the quilts. The number of stitches per inch display an average level of skill and are more than sufficient to hold the layers of the quilts together. The stitches are mostly uneven and irregular indicating that the quilts may have been quilted by the same hand. Four of the quilts are tied. Tying is the typical method of finishing Log Cabin quilts.

The quilting patterns of seven of the ten quilts are of an overall type. Primarily diagonal lines, chevrons, rectangles, and diamonds are used. Two of the quilts use combinations of the above in different areas of the quilt. Only one quilt, the Maple Leaf, has individualized areas of quilting. Overall quilting is often referred to as utility quilting, due to the time saved in marking and the ease of this type of quilting.

The backs were made, with one exception, of a single fabric and may have been purchased just for the quilt. Eight backs are made of printed fabric and seven are made of a solid colored fabric. Twelve of the quilts have the back and edging of the same fabric. The edging is not related to the colors used for the top.

Six of the quilts were sewn completely by hand, three by sewing machine, and four in combination.

Straight lines appear straight and curved lines are smoothly curved in twelve of the fourteen quilts to which this criteria applies. Seven of the quilts have exactly matching seam lines, six have seam lines that match most of the time, three have seams that match only some of the time. This indicates attention to detail in the piecing.

In terms of workmanship, the quilts were not exceptional examples of the quiltmakers art. Quilting stitches were irregular; quilting patterns were not complex or designed to enhance the piecing in the individual blocks or areas. The edging and the backs were not chosen to enhance the impact of the top. Four of the quilts are not well balanced as to the arrangement of colors in the individual blocks and their placement in the top. Most of the seam lines match and lines are

straight or curved lines as appropriate. The quilts were primarily utility quilts. There were no virtuoso examples of subtle and fine piecing, the patterns were not unusual, color combinations were not particularly striking but were pleasant to the eye. The quilting was not of an even or finely executed display of the needlework skills of the maker, such as can be found in the embroidery of crazy quilts and the detail and complexity found in stuffed-work quilts.

2. Did a member of the family make the quilts?

Martha Edwards Elliott is believed by to have made thirteen of the fifteen quilts from their estate. The Maple Leaf quilt was made by or for the Ladies' Aid Society of the Fayette Congregational Church. The Star of Bethlehem quilt is entered in the account books as having postage paid on it, indicating that it was made either by a member of the family or a relative or it may even be a quilt pattern. It is impossible to say if the entry refers to the quilt from the Elliott estate. The quilting stitches per inch vary from three stitches per inch to seven stitches per inch. This indicates that the quilting was done by more than one hand or by the maker at various times in her life, for instance by eyes dimmed by age or hands stiffened by arthritis. When the quilting is done by a single person, unless they are very unskilled, the stitches per inch tend not to vary widely. All the female members of the family did know how to sew and during the nineteenth and early twentieth century made their own clothing. They all possessed the necessary skills and the daughters may have assisted

their mother. They may have made the printed basket coverlet or comfort. The consistency of the construction elements (quilting stitch length, type of quilting, number pieced, edging treatment, many fabrics) indicate construction of most of the quilts by one person's preferences and quilting habits.

It was not possible to discover how the members of the family quilted. No definite information was found in the sources reviewed, but some idea can be found in the quilting habits of other women in the Garden Peninsula. Quilting in this century was done primarily as a solo project or effort. When quilts were made for a project, such as a Ladies' Aid quilt, they were made in two ways. A member would piece the top and interested members would help in the quilting. A member would make the quilt entirely by herself and donate it for a selected purpose. In this context, quilts would have a social meaning. Both applique and pieced quilts are made and are tied or quilted according to the individual's preference.

3. What relationship did the quilts have to the lives of the Elliott family? Why did they make the quilts?

In the sources reviewed no member of the Elliott family discussed or mentioned what quilting meant to them and why they made quilts. The neighbors interviewed did not recall anyone in the family who were quiltmakers. The few mentions of quilts and quilting were found in the account books of the family. The entries refer to purchases of batts and quilt backs or linings. This indicates, that a member

of the family did indeed make quilts. The remaining entries refer to tickets purchased for quilt raffles. The only other reference to quilting occurs in a letter from Samuel Elliott to Martha Edwards. He refers to help that she received in quilting. It is the only direct reference that indicates a member of the family actually did know how to quilt. The excellent condition of the majority of the quilts can be explained by Martha Elliott's daughters devotion to a time when all the members of the family were together. The quilts would have been saved as a memorial expressing the daughter's love for their mother. They appear to have been seldom washed and show little wear which has lead to their survival.

The utility nature of the quilts reflects the attitude of Mrs. Elliott toward thrift and waste. She apparently did not have to save the small scraps of fabric from other sewing projects for economic reasons. Her value system stressed the need for wasting not and as a result wanting not.

4. How were the Elliott's involved in the life of their community?

The members of the Elliott family were involved in the political and social life of their community. Samuel Elliott and his son, Sam served in the political life of their township and county. Samuel served as a supervisor for the township to the county board. He was a justice of the peace and a federal census taker. He also served as Director of the Sac Bay schools. Sam also served as a township

supervisor and a director of the school. Martha Elliott served as director for the school for the year of 1890. Lucy served as the Superintendent of the Fayette Congregational Church Sunday School. Adelle was a founding member and a Director of the Delta County Historical Society.

They were involved with the social life of their community. They participated, when younger, in the various socials, basket suppers, excursions, picnics, and Fourth of July celebrations that took place. They attended baseball games and the circus when it was in the area. The women of the family were active members of the Ladies' Aid society attending meetings in other members houses and entertaining the group in their own house. In their later years it was their major social activity. Dinners in restaurants in Manistique and Escanaba became more frequent in the 1930s and 1940s. Those social activities that were free would not be entered in the account books and influences the findings.

They were aware of the world outside of their community. They subscribed to newspapers in Escanaba and Chicago. They sold farm products in Chicago and their father had done business in the city. They subscribed to popular magazines of the day (Delineator, Ladies' Home Journal, Saturday Evening Post, etc.). They also subscribed to periodicals of interest specifically to farmers (Turkey World, Farmer's Wife, Wisconsin Agriculturalist, etc.).

They participated in a major trend and change in rural life, the use of mail order. The rise of mail order houses removed rural residents from dependency on their local stores and provided a large selection of goods at low prices and the convenience of direct delivery

of the goods to the customer's door. It allowed rural residents access to consumer goods that their location would have denied them. It insured their access to the goods made possible by advances in manufacturing and changes in the postal laws. It allowed them to participate in the fashions and changing tastes of the country as a whole.

5. What were the events and patterns of their lives?

There was sufficient information to write a history of the two generations of the Elliott family. Samuel Elliott and his son Sam were involved in the business, agricultural, and political life of the Garden Peninsula. Samuel married Martha Edwards in 1864. She bore five children, four of whom survived childhood. The two elder daughters, Lucy and Mattie, became school teachers in country schools. Adelle, the youngest daughter, completed a commercial course at Ferris Institute. She worked as a stenographer in a bank until the death of her brother in 1912. Mattie continued to teach until at least 1917. Mrs. Elliott and her daughters ran their farm successfully until 1932, when Mrs. Elliott died. Lucy, Mattie, and Adelle continued to run the farm successfully. They continued the social patterns of the nineteenth century in their acceptance of the sexual division of labor in the tasks considered appropriate to women even when they had no practical reason to maintain this division. They were involved with butter making, cream, and milk production, as well as the turkeys, chickens, and maple products production. The raising of small livestock and particularly the making

of butter were considered appropriate activities for farm women of the nineteenth century. The patterns of their days were determined by the ceaseless round of chores demanded by the operation of a farm and the needs of their farm, livestock, and household duties. They divided the tasks for which they each took responsibility, one assumes by personal preference. Lucy cared for the house. Adelle was in charge of the maple syrup, turkeys, and bringing wood into the house. Mattie drove their automobile, was in charge of hiring the men, and in charge of their supervision. They continued to live in Sac Bay until their deaths in 1960 and 1962.

There was the least information about the most important member of the family for this study. Martha Edwards Elliott left no letters that were found. No diaries and few papers of any sort that directly related to her or spoke with her voice were found. It is possible that the letters she must have written to her friends and family still exist. Locating the cousins who had inherited the Elliott estate would have been difficult after the lapse of twenty-five years. It is also possible that the letters were discarded long ago. The lack of letters to or from Martha Elliott reflects her life. She travelled seldom, remaining at home to care for her family in her private world of the home. The lack of letters addressed to her may indicate that they were deliberately destroyed or discarded over time. The Elliotts were described as independent, hardworking, reticent, and very private. A neighbor, when interviewed, wondered how the Elliotts would have felt could they have known their private papers would some day be available to the public.

To many people, history consists solely of public events and the lives of the actors in these events. Only the lives of princes, prime ministers, and presidents are considered worthy of study. The majority of women's lives have been spent outside the public arena in what is considered the private area of the home. Their lives and the products of their lives have been viewed as unimportant both by the culture and often by the women themselves. The importance of the lives of those outside the spheres of power and the public arena is now acknowledged. The study of such families as the Elliotts will allow a deeper understanding of how the majority of human beings have lived.

Limitations of the Study

The dependence of the researcher on the documents left behind by the people who are studied, determines the results. The survival of documents is most often a matter of chance unless the person studied is a head of state or considered important by their society. This can and does leave large gaps in the records. For example, the account books of the Elliott farm listing daily expenses from the 1920s and early 1930s were not among their papers. These would be important for the information they could yield about the purchase of quilting materials. If there were no more purchases of quilting materials after Mrs. Elliott's death in 1932, it would indicate that she was indeed the quilter. It makes the answering of questions formulated after the death of an individual difficult if not impossible to answer. Clothing from the Elliott family survives in the collections of the Michigan Historical Museum, but has not yet been cataloged. It would be useful

to compare the fabrics used in the quilts to the fabrics of the remaining clothing. The style of the clothes, if they match any of the fabrics in the quilts, may make possible the formulation of more absolute dates for the quilts.

The small size of the sample studied makes it difficult to generalize about other quilters from the information gathered. Only when other individual quiltermakers are studied can generalizations be made about quilting and quilting in individual regions.

Recommendations For Further Study

A large number of the quilts in museums and private collections are silent as to the names of their makers. However, sufficient numbers of quilts exist with attached information about the quiltmaker for attempts at in depth research to be made into the lives of these women. Searches of diaries, letters, and public records can reveal information about the individual quiltmakers may eventually provide enough data to speak with confidence about the individual quilters. With accurate information available about quilters, it would be possible to generalize about quilting related questions from a basis of actual data rather than suppositions. Museums seldom contain much information about the women who quilted the quilts in their collections. Archives are the more usual repository for such papers or information. The increased emphasis on the lives of private individuals makes more likely the preservation of this type of information. In further studies, researchers may be able to learn more about the quilting of a family or individual than was possible in this study. In depth studies of quilting in specific

local and regional areas of the country would provide information as to how quilting is differently or similarly accomplished in different regions of the country.

APPENDIX A
DATA COLLECTION FORM A

Data Collection Form A.

1. Catalog number: _____
2. Overall measurements of quilt: _____ inches X _____ inches
3. Date of quilt: _____
4. Top:

Type:

Whole cloth or one piece _____ applique _____ pieced _____

Style:

Blocks: pieced _____ applique _____

Specially printed or colored fabric: _____

Mosaic: _____

Standard Log Cabin block: _____

Set of Log Cabin blocks:

Courthouse Steps : _____

Barn Raising: _____

Windmill Blades: _____

Straight Furrows: _____

Sunshine and Shadow: _____

Streak of Lightening: _____

Pattern name: _____ Others: _____

Are pattern blocks sewn together? _____

Seperated by a lattice? _____

Is lattice all of the same fabric? _____

Is lattice fabric used in the blocks? _____ borders? _____

edging? _____

Are there borders? _____ How many borders? _____

Describe borders: _____

Is the top sewn by hand? ____ Sewn by machine? ____

Describe the fabrics most used in the top: _____

Colors:

In blocks: _____

In lattices: _____

In borders: _____

In edging: _____

Fibers used in the top:

Wool: ____ Cotton: ____ Linen: ____ Silk: ____

Synthetic: ____ Other: ____

5. Edging:

Color: _____

Describe fabric: _____

Fibers used in edging:

Wool: ____ Cotton: ____ Linen: ____ Silk: ____

Synthetic: ____ Other: ____

How are the edges finished? Purchased tape or bias? ____

Homemade bias? ____

Homemade straight cut? ____

If edging is not separate: ____

Edges folded in? ____

Edges folded over? ____

Sewn by hand: ____ Sewn by machine: ____

6. Back:

Color: _____

Describe fabric: _____

Fibers in back:

Wool: ____ Cotton: ____ Linen: ____ Silk: ____

Synthetic: ____ Other: ____

Pieced? ____ Pieced in same fabric? ____

Different fabrics? ____ Describe fabric: _____

Is fabric used in top? ____ Edging? ____

Sewn by hand? ____ Sewn by machine? ____

7. Bat or filling:

Wool: ____ Cotton: ____ Synthetic: ____ Other: ____

None: ____ Can'tell: ____

Thick: ____ Average: ____ Thin: ____

8. Quilting:

Quilted: ____ Tied: ____ Other: ____

By hand: ____ By machine: ____

Describe quilting designs:

Blocks: _____

Lattices: _____

Borders: _____

If overall: _____

Color of thread: _____

Number of quilting stitches per inch: _____

9. Condition:

Excellent: ____ Very Good: ____ Good: ____ Fair: ____

Poor: ____

Describe condition: _____

10. Workmanship:

Has the pattern straight lines? Yes ____ No? ____

Are straight lines straight? Yes ____? No ? ____

Has the pattern curved lines? Yes? ____ No? ____

Are curved lines rounded? Yes? ____ No? ____

Do seam lines line up? Yes? ____ No? ____

Most of the time? ____

Some of the time? ____

Are quilting stitches even and regular? Yes? ____ No? ____

Are quilting patterns complex? Yes? ____ No? ____

Simple? Yes? ____ No? ____

Is the quilting done in an overall manner, regardless
of the quilt top pattern? Yes? ____ No? ____

Different within the blocks? Yes? ____ No? ____

borders? Yes? ____ No? ____

lattices? Yes? ____ No? ____

Does the overall pattern and arrangement of the blocks please
the eye? Yes? ____ No? ____

Do the colors and their arrangement please the eye? Yes? ____
No? ____

Made of many fabrics? Yes? ____ No? ____

Made of a few fabrics? Yes? ____ No? ____

APPENDIX B
FORMS USED FOR THE INTERVIEWS

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824-1030

February 22, 1987

Dear

I am a graduate student in Historic Costume and Textiles, Department of Human Environment and Design, College of Human Ecology, Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan. I am currently working on my Master's thesis. The topic of my thesis is the Elliott family of Sac Bay, Michigan and the quilts from the household furnishings of the Elliott estate, purchased by the Department of Natural Resources for the State of Michigan in 1962-63. I have been involved with the Michigan Historical Museum as a curatorial assistant and summer intern working with the Museum's costume and textile collections. My thesis topic developed out of my experience with the quilts from the Elliott family and my interest in the Elliott family.

A number of different people have suggested your name as someone who knew the Elliotts, the area, and, possibly, their quilts. Would you be willing to talk with me in a thirty minute interview? Your assistance in this research will enable the filling of the gaps in the paper records I have surveyed in the Michigan State Archives and the Delta County Historical Society. I wish to present the most accurate and clear picture of the lives and personalities of the Elliotts, as well as an accurate portrayal of life in Sac Bay and the surrounding area. Unfortunately some of the written records which the state has are incomplete, that is why your knowledge will be of great value to my research.

Enclosed is a stamped, self-addressed, and numbered postcard with places to indicate if you will be able to participate in the interview. Please respond as soon as possible. I will contact you by phone in one week to schedule a time for the interview, which will take place in late March if you are willing to talk with me.

Enclosed are two copies of letters of introduction: from my major professor, Dr. Ann Slocum and from Maria Quinlan Leiby, Curator of Collections of the Michigan Historical Museum.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jane McIntosh

JM/dlp

RELEASE FORM RELATING TO THE STUDY OF THE
ELLIOTT FAMILY OF SAC BAY, MICHIGAN
EARLY 1850s-1962

I hereby authorize Jane F. McIntosh to record on tape or otherwise any information that I may provide that relates to the Elliott family of Sac Bay, Michigan, life in the Garden Peninsula, quilts from the Elliott family, and quilting in the Garden Peninsula area of the Upper Peninsula of the state of Michigan. I also give her permission to publish summaries of quotations from the above information in her Master's thesis being written through the Department of Human Environment and Design, College of Human Ecology, Michigan State University at East Lansing, Michigan. In addition I understand that the information may be used in future journals, newspaper articles, or in educational materials.

I understand that my answers will be kept strictly confidential and used only for the purposes described above and that I have the right to withdraw from this project at any time. I reserve the right to review an edited transcript of this conversation before future use. Yes___ No___. I agree that the tape of this conversation can be released to the Michigan State Archives. Yes___ No___. I agree that an edited transcript can be released to the Michigan State Archives. Yes___ No___.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Witness: _____

Interview Data Collection Form:

1. Your name?
2. How old are you? (If acceptable).
3. How long have you lived in the Garden Peninsula area?
4. How well did you know the Elliott family?
5. How often did you see the Elliotts? Did you share any activities with them? Social? Church? Business?
6. Can you identify these photographs of the Elliotts? (Photographs will be shown of the Elliott family).
7. What do you remember of their personalities? What were they like as individuals? Mrs. Elliott, Lucy, Mattie, Adelle (Babe)? Do you remember Sam Elliott, the son?
8. Do you recall any particular interests that they had? Did they divide up the farm and family or house responsibilities in any particular way? Who did what?
9. How did they involve themselves with the surrounding community? Were they members of any clubs or societies?
10. Do you remember if they were involved with quilting in any way? All of them? One of them?
11. What other sorts of needlework did they make? Tatting? Crocheting? Knitting? Embroidery? Sewing of any kind?
12. What sort of activities were involved with the Ladies' aid in Sac Bay? What did they do at meetings? What church was it affiliated with? Where is the church?
13. Do you recognize any of these quilts from the Elliott family estate?

(Photographs of the quilts will be shown.) Do you ever remember seeing a member of the family making a quilt? Did they sew their own clothes?

14. Did anyone in your own family make quilts? What do you remember of quilting in the area?
15. How were the quilts made in the area? Individual efforts? Group projects? Family groups? Alone or together? A particular season of the year? A particular time of the day? Were they ever made for fundraising by church groups? Towns? Individuals? Were they made as social activity? Were they viewed as a necessity? How were they used? As blankets, bedspreads? Did their use change over time? Did their manufacture change over time?
16. What was life like in the Garden Peninsula from your earliest memories? How has it changed, remained the same? Social activities? Economic conditions and opportunities? Political activities? (Local, county, state?) Church? School?

APPENDIX C
FULL LENGTH PHOTOGRAPHS
OF THE QUILTS



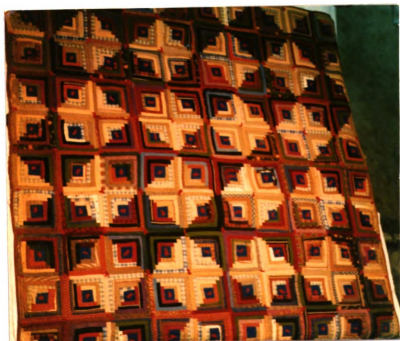
Log Cabin, Barn Raising Set, FD-244-77.



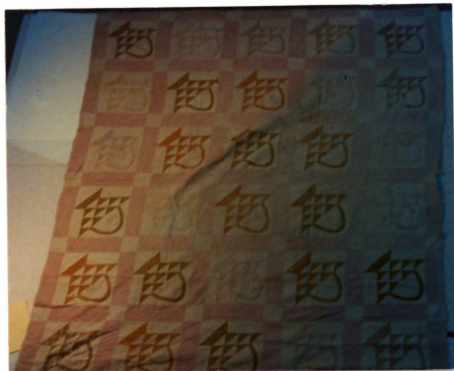
Log Cabin, Courthouse Steps, FD-15-84.



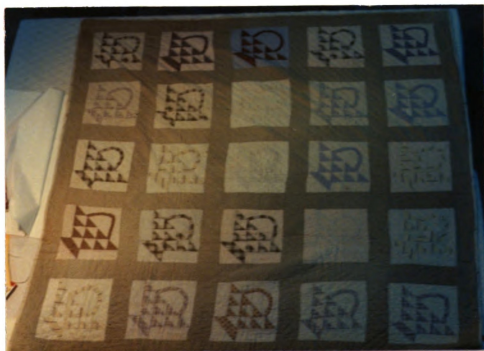
Log Cabin, Sunshine and Shadow, Fd-20-84.



Log Cabin, Sunshine and Shadow, Fd-21-84.



Flower Basket, Fd-144-76.



Flower Basket, FD-246-77.



Flower Basket, FD-17-84.



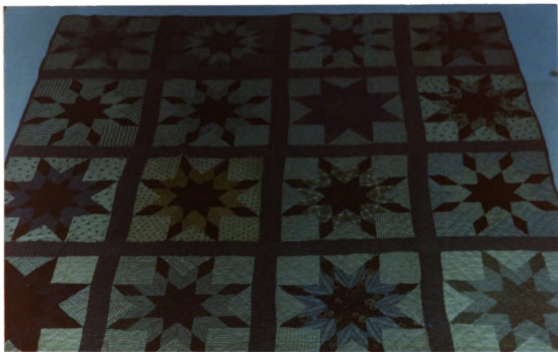
Flower Basket, Fd-19-84.



Tumbling Blocks, Fd-126-76.



Tumbling Blocks, Fd-128-76.



Star of Bethlehem, Fd-143-76.



Nine Patch, Fd-18-84.



Split Rail Fence, Fd-125-76.



Maple Leaf, Fd-22-84.



Broken Dishes, FD-23-84.

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