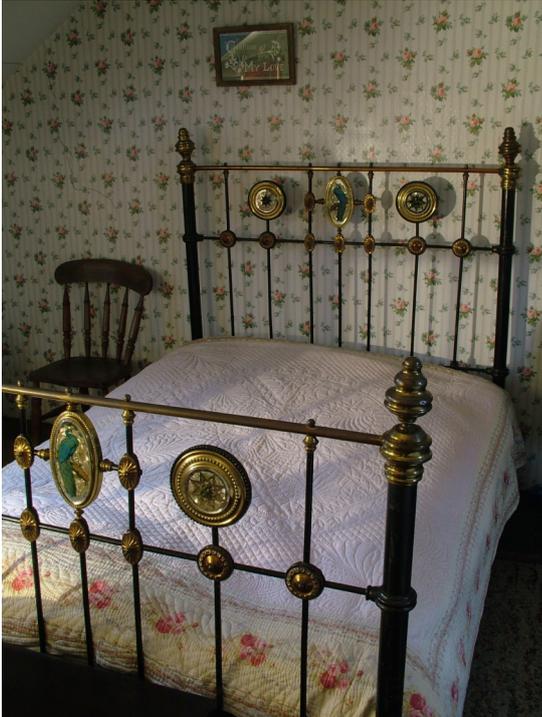




QUILT

Quilts Past and Present



What is a Quilt?

A quilt is made up of three layers:

1. The top is either a single sheet of fabric or a layer of patchwork, made by joining together pieces of cloth.
2. The filling is called 'wadding' or 'batting' and provides a warmth-giving layer.
3. The backing is usually a single piece of fabric.

What is Quilting?

Quilting is the lines of hand-sewn or machine-sewn stitches that hold the three layers together. In a simple 'tied' quilt, knots hold the layers together instead of quilting stitches.

The pattern appears on a quilt when the quilting stitches flatten the wadding and the unstitched areas puff up. Studying the quilting patterns is useful in identifying where a quilt comes from, especially due to the popularity of certain patterns in specific parts of Britain.



From top:

Mrs Stewart's quilt on display, courtesy of Beamish Open Air Museum

1718 Silk Patchwork Coverlet, courtesy of Quilters' Guild of the British Isles

What is a Coverlet?

A coverlet is made of two layers with no wadding and usually has a patchwork top. The coverlet shown on the left is the earliest known example that bears a date. The 1718 Silk Patchwork Coverlet contains 182 patchwork blocks, featuring people, animals, geometric shapes and flowers.

Text provided by Bridget Long, Quilters' Guild of the British Isles.

www.quiltmuseum.org.uk

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