

Quilt Made by a Slave



An unknown slave made this quilt with cotton in Mississippi about 1855 to 1858. According to oral tradition, it belonged to the family of Leona Norman who came from Mississippi to Michigan in the 1950s. In 1968, Ms. Norman gave the quilt to a friend currently living in Michigan. The quilt has an orange peel appliqué pattern on a white background with pink gating (strips that go in the square) and little blue appliqué petals. The quilt was featured in an exhibition titled *African-American Quilt-Making Traditions* held at the Michigan State University Museum in 1991, and it traveled the state to other museums.

The photograph of the quilt, taken by Mark Eifert, is courtesy of the Michigan State University Museum, Michigan Traditional Arts Program. The photograph appears in *African American Quilting in Michigan*,

a Michigan State University Press book based on the 1991 exhibit. The book is edited by Marsha MacDowell, Michigan State University Museum curator of folk arts.