

# MARIE WEBSTER



A ground breaking quilt designer of the early 1900's, Marie Webster was the first person to write a history of quilts, and was also an astute businesswoman. Her floral appliqué designs, created at the height of the Arts and Crafts Movement, are still widely appreciated and imitated today.

Marie was born in Wabash and graduated from high school there in 1878. In 1884 she married George Webster, Jr. of Marion, Indiana. On April 21st, 1902 George and Marie Webster moved into their new home at 926 South Washington Street in Marion. Marie began making appliqué quilts in 1905. Unable to find a pattern that she liked, she decided to design one of her own. She sent the quilt to Ladies' Home Journal, the leading women's magazine of the day. There her quilt caught the eye of editor, Edward Bok. He invited her to submit more designs for a full color page. She created the Iris, Snowflake, and Wind Blown Tulip quilts. They appeared in the January 1, 1911 edition of the Ladies Home Journal and were viewed by one and a half million women. Marie became a national celebrity.

The demand for her patterns was so great that soon she was filling orders from her home in Marion. While creating new designs Marie was also busy researching and writing her book "Quilts: Their Story and How to Make Them" which was published in October 1915.

As the quilt revival gained momentum after World War I, Marie decided to sell kits, basted quilts and finished quilts in addition to the patterns. In 1921 her cottage business became the Practical Patchwork Company. She remained active in the business until her retirement in 1942.

Today, Marie Webster's legacy is one of Marion's great assets. The Webster home serves as the International Quilters Hall of Fame. Traveling quilt exhibits of national significance are on display there from March through December. Quilt enthusiasts and historians gather in Marion each July for the hall of fame inductions, workshops and seminars.