

Underground Railroad - June 2025

The Bow Tie Block

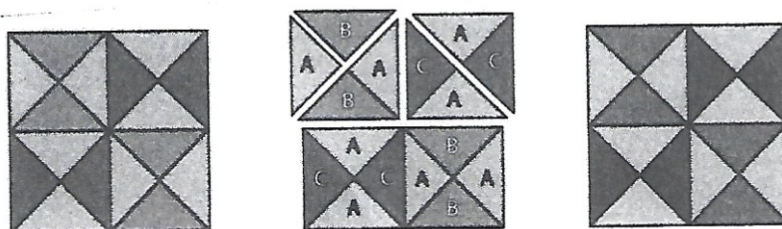
The bow tie quilt was a signal for the slaves to dress in a formal manner. When slaves first escaped, they wore garments that eventually became worn and tattered along their journey. Free blacks would meet them in a safe place such as a church and give them fresh clothing. In "satin bow ties", runaways wouldn't stand out among the city folks. On the final leg of their journey, slaves could walk freely through town undetected among the city folk. The triangular quadrants on the Bow Tie Block indicated morning, midday, evening, and night. It is also known as broken dishes. Broken dishes arranged on a grave site is a superstition among Southern African Americans. When the pattern is turned on its side, an hourglass is created, who is a symbol of time well managed. To the African Secret Society, the hour glass implies you are among friends.

Flying Geese Block

With the appearance of this block, slaves learned they were to take their direction, timing and behavior from migrating geese. Since geese fly north in the spring, it was the best time for slaves to escape. Geese have to stop at waterways along their journey in order to rest and eat.

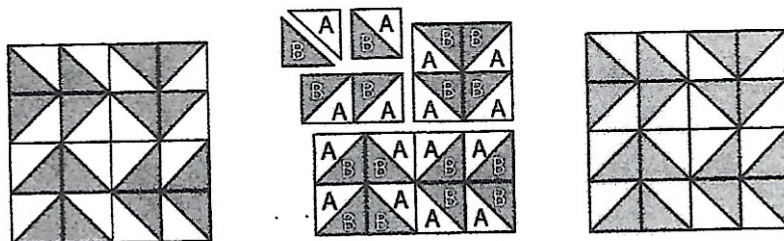
Especially because geese make loud honking noises, it was easy for slaves to follow their flight pattern.

The Bow Tie Quilt Block



FOR	CUT	NEED	6"	8"	10"	12"	36"
A	2	8	4 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/4	7 1/4	19 1/4
B	1	4	4 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/4	7 1/4	19 1/4
C	1	4	4 1/4	5 1/4	6 1/4	7 1/4	19 1/4

The Flying Geese Quilt Block



FOR	CUT	NEED	6"	8"	10"	12"	36"
A	8	16	2 3/8	2 7/8	3 3/8	3 7/8	9 7/8
B	8	16	2 3/8	2 7/8	3 3/8	3 7/8	9 7/8