

With this Ring I Thee Wed

A **Double Wedding Ring** in mint condition; what a find! This one came from West Virginia. The quilter used old gold and blue in Four Patch units to link the rings and provide a clue to the quilt's pedigree; those are West Virginia state colors. The bits and pieces that form the rings appear to be clothing fabric; certainly not all of it was 100 percent cotton. This is a quilt I would not have made myself, love it yes, but it does look tedious. It was hand and machine pieced and already marked in the large beige areas; it was ready for quilting. My preference was to have it machine quilted. However after consultation with several long-arm quilters, it was unrealistic to expect perfection in following the marked pattern.

I didn't give up; I soaked the top in OxiClean® for three days, changing the water each day in an attempt to remove or lighten the markings. Better, but not fully removed. The quilt top was rinsed in the washer with cold water and air dried flat on the floor on top of cotton batting. I ironed it lightly then stepped back and marveled at the variety and brightness of the fabric and the workmanship of the stitching. This one was going to be hand quilted. Yes it was daunting, but I got help. Two very generous quilters, Jeanne Foster and Joan Hopkins, stitched with me and in one full calendar year, almost to the date, it was done. Whew! It's beautiful.

