

March - Mrs. Cleveland's Choice



Frances Clara Folsom was born 1864 in Buffalo, New York. Her father had a law partnership with Grover Cleveland, who was 27 years old at the time. Grover purchased her first baby carriage as a gift. Frances was able to attend some of the best schools in Buffalo. When not in school, she spent time with her "Uncle Cleve". When Frances was 11, her father passed away and Grover Cleveland became the executor of her father's estate, providing for the well-being of Frances and her mother. She attended Wells College and continued her correspondence with Cleveland, who was governor of New York at the time. He began his 1st term as President in March 1885. Frances visited him at the White House during her Spring Break. She graduated from college a month later. Grover proposed marriage by letter in August. Frances accepted and was eager to wed. However, her mother and Grover encouraged her to take a year-long tour of Europe. As a bachelor and having publicly recognized his illegitimate son born 10 years earlier, Cleveland was a popular target of the press. Rumors suggested that Frances' mother was the bride-to-be, especially after finding Frances & her mother shopping for wedding dresses. Rumors grew further when Frances and her mother were met at the ship by presidential staff upon their return from Europe. The next day, Frances and Grover announced their engagement and media attention turned Frances into a celebrity. They were married in June 1886 at the White House with only 31 guests in attendance. The press was not allowed. Frances was 21 and Grover was 49.

Fun Facts about Frances

- * As a child, she went by Frank and was christened under this name as a teenager. Obviously a problem when assigned boys' activities at school.
- * Was briefly engaged in high school, and received 2 proposals on the same day in college, only accepting one. All this before settling on Grover.
- * Was the youngest First Lady, the only one to marry at the White House, and the only one to give birth to a child in the White House.
- * Was a very popular First Lady and held 2 receptions each week, one being held on Saturday afternoons so women with jobs could attend.
- * Stalked by the press, who created a story that Frances had stopped wearing a bustle, so everyone stopped wearing one. (Yeah!)
- * Helped to strengthen the Secret Service and promoted free a Kindergarten education for all.

This block, LAC #144, was named by The Ladies Art Company in their 1895 catalogue. I know it looks challenging but there is an easy way to construct this block without foundation paper-piecing. SO many color options here!



* * * * *Some notes before we start* * * * *

1. Please read through the directions first. There are many pieces in this block, so I'm giving cutting directions section by section.

2. Measuring and 1/4 inch seams will matter. We will be trimming to specific sizes as the block is assembled. Where possible, I've started with slightly larger pieces so you can trim down.

3. This block **looks** more complicated than it is. We will NOT be cutting lots of triangles. Only the 4 for the center Square in a Square.

4. I will be using 2 red prints (a medium and a dark) 2 backgrounds (a cream print and a cream tonal) and a blue print.

Here we go !

Section 1 - Center Square in a Square with border/frame

Cut the following:

1 blue square 1 & 7/8 inches
(be precise here)

2 cream print squares 2.5 inches.

Cut on diagonal to make 4 triangles

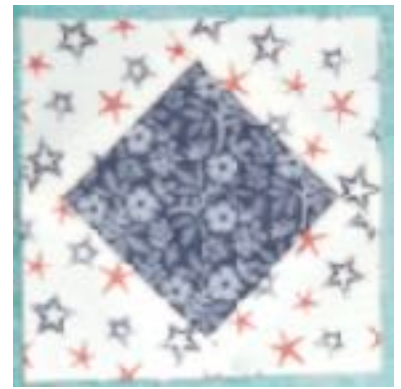
2 med. red rectangles 2 x 2.5"

2 med. red rectangles 2 x 5.5"



Center & sew a triangle on one side of the square. Repeat on opposite side. Press toward triangles. Repeat for 2 remaining sides.

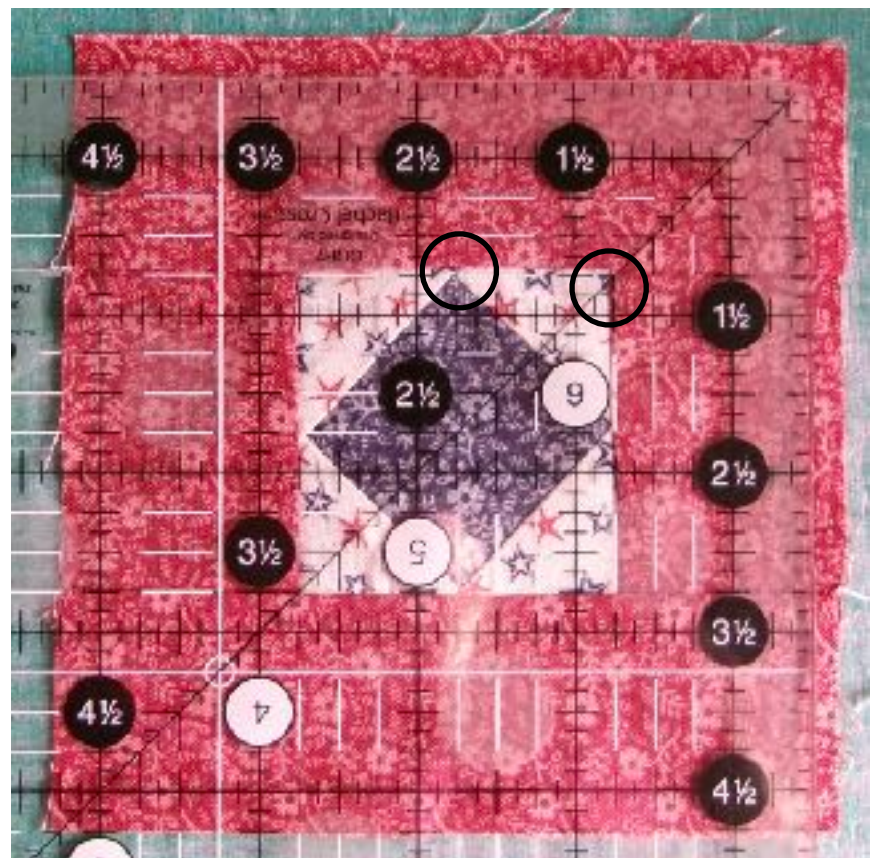
Press flat and trim unit to 2.5 inches. You should have 1/4 inch of cream fabric at each of the blue square points.



Lay out the red border/framing rectangles as shown. Sew top and bottom 2.5" rectangles on, pressing towards red. Sew 5.5" rectangles on the sides, again pressing towards red.

Trim Section 1 unit to 4.5" square.

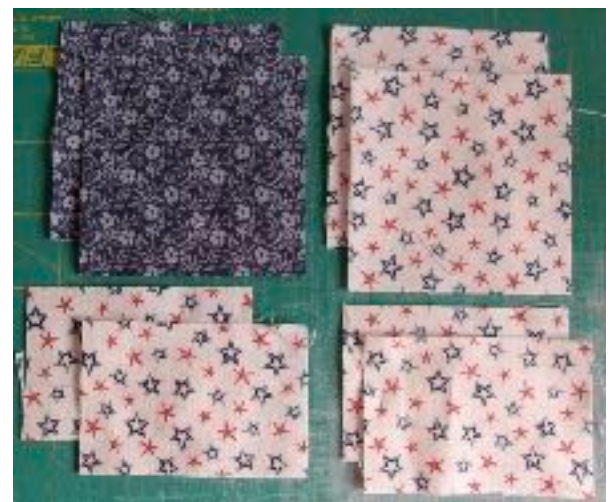
Note that the north and south blue corners are lined up on the 2.25" mark. The diagonal line is going through the cream corners. The red frame will be about 1.25 inches wide.



Section 2 - Inside Triangle Corners

Cut the following:

- 2 blue 3" squares
- 2 cream print 3" squares
- 4 cream print 2 x 3.5" rectangles



Draw a diagonal line on the back of the cream print 3" squares. Put RST with blue square and sew 1/4" on both sides of the diagonal line. Cut on the line and press to blue. Make 4 half square triangles (HST). Trim to 2".



Pair a HST with a 2 x 3.5 rectangle and sew together as shown. Make sure your HST is going the right direction.

Make 4 and press towards rectangle.

Sew 2 of these units together as shown at the right. Don't press yet.

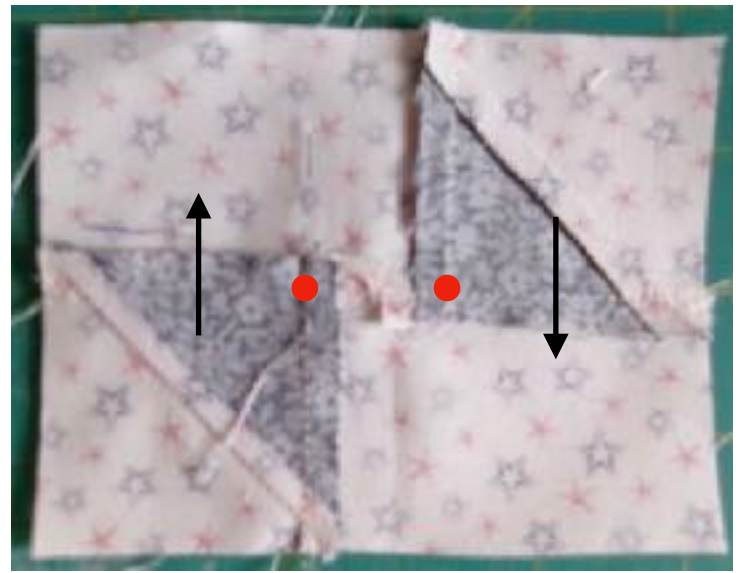
Keeping RST, fold in half along long seam and mark the half-way point. Clip seam allowance here. It's ok if you catch the seam in your cut. I apologize for the blurry picture below.



Now open it up and press each side towards rectangle.

You will be able to easily see the blue corners of the HST. (Marked with red dot)

Line the 1/4 ruler line on the dot and the diagonal ruler line along one side of the unit and cut. Repeat with other side of the piece.



Repeat these steps to make 4 triangle corner units.



Lay out Section 1 and Section 2 pieces as shown.

Assemble the same way as the Square in a Square. Center corner triangle to red rectangle. Sew with triangle on the top so you can see the point of the blue triangle when sewing.

Press toward the red frame and trim to 6.25 inches.



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* * * This block is called Jack-in-the-Pulpit. * * *
* * * A cute block that is perfect for scraps ! * * *

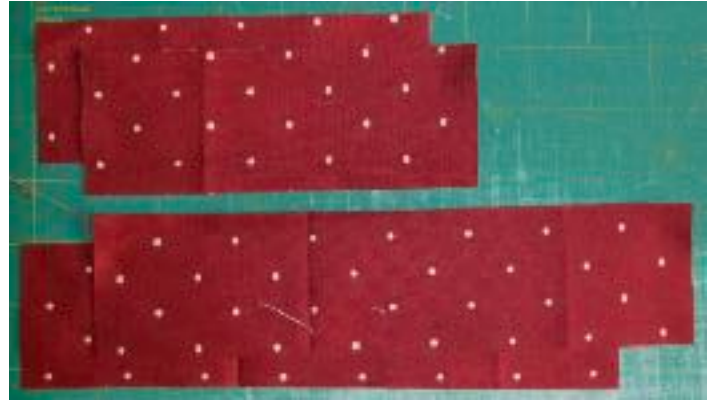
Section 3 - Large Frame

Cut the following

2 dark red rectangles 2.25 x 6.25 "

2 dark red rectangles 2.25 x 9.75 "

Lay out pieces as shown.



Sew top & bottom rectangles onto pieced unit. Press to red.

Sew long rectangles onto sides. Again, press to red. Trim to 9.25 "

Center will measure
5.75 inches across.

The red frame will be about
1.75 inches wide.

Almost done. Only 1 more
section to go !



Section 4 - Outside Triangle Corners

This section works as Section 2, just with an extra row.

Cut the following:

- 2 Blue 3.25" squares
- 4 Medium Red 3.25" squares
- 6 Cream Tonal 3.25" squares
- 6 Cream Tonal rectangles 2.5 x 4"



As we did in Section 2, make 4 blue/cream HST and 8 red/cream HST.

Press towards dark color and trim to 2.5"

Layout 4 red HST, 2 blue HST and 3 cream rectangles as shown.

Pay attention to triangle directions.

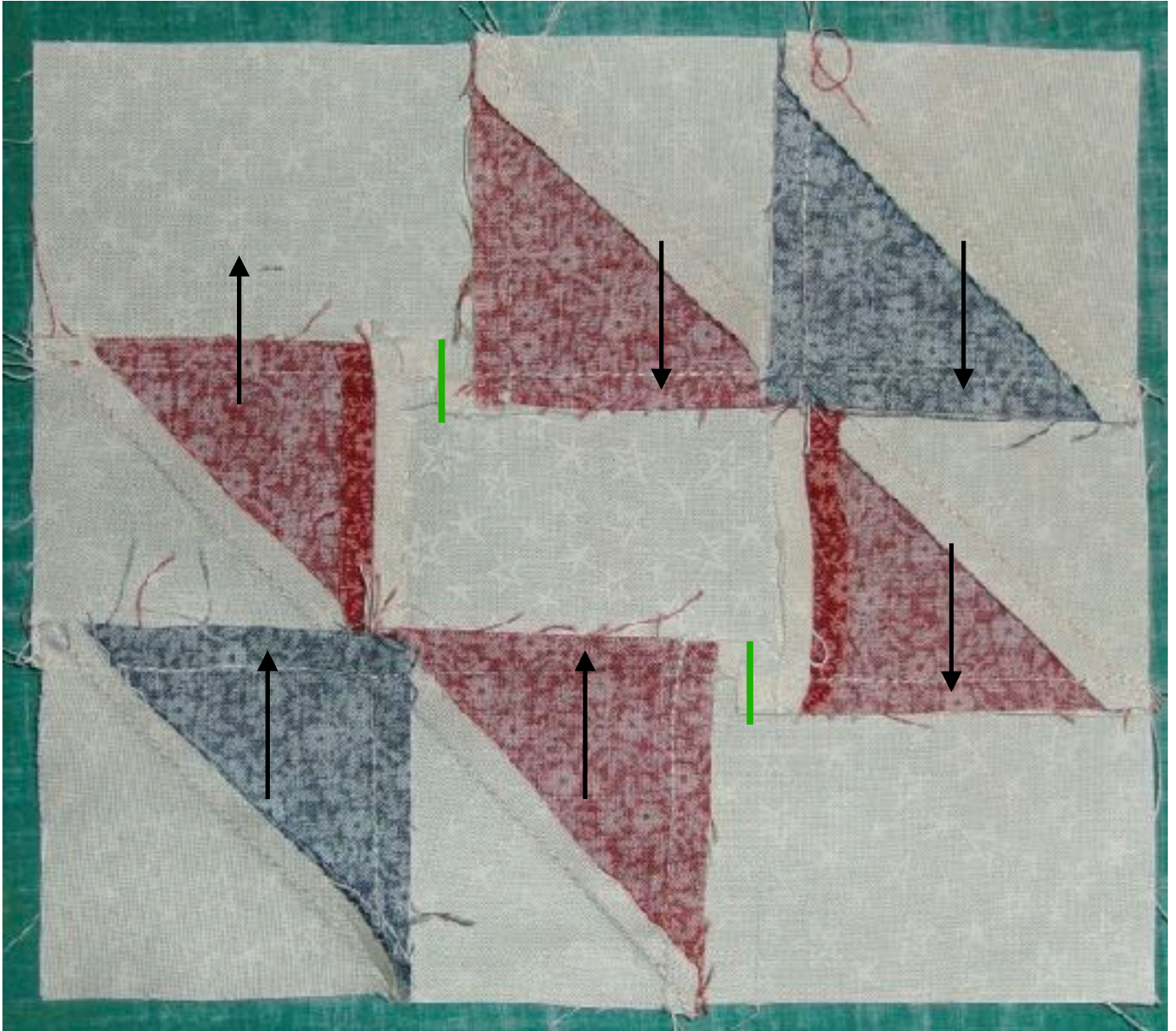
Sew pieces together in strips. Press **AWAY** from red HST.



Sew strips together. Don't press yet.

As before, we will make a small clip in the seam allowance / seam. I've marked where to cut with a green line. It is midway between the two red triangle points.

Press lower left seams up and upper right seams down. (I know. My picture shows pressing some seams open. It did not work as well as pressing away from all red triangles.)



Now we cut to make 2 corner triangle pieces. I tried cutting from the front side this time and it worked just fine so use what works best for you.



Line up the 1/4 inch line of your ruler right on the points of the red triangles.

Cut along this line.

Flip remaining fabric piece, line the points of the red triangles along the 1/4 inch line and cut.

Repeat the Section 4 process with the remaining red and blue HST and cream rectangles.

You now have 4 corner units.



One last Square in a Square step and we're finished !

Layout as shown. Center Triangle corner along one side of red frame. Sew together with triangle corners on top so you can see the points as you sew. Press towards red frame, and repeat with remaining sides. Trim (if needed) to 12.5 inches.



I know that this block looks challenging but you can do it ! Not having to cut out all those little triangles makes it much easier. Please contact me if you have trouble or something isn't clear and I will help you.