

# Counterpane pincushion inspired by history

This pincushion pattern is inspired by a white cotton counterpane crib blanket in the collection of the Huron County Museum and Historic Gaol located in Goderich, Ontario.

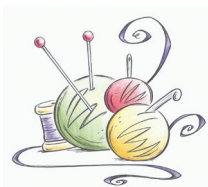
White cotton counterpanes (or coverlets) were common in the 19th Century due to the preference at the time for white bed coverings and the ready availability of cotton yarn.

Counterpanes were traditionally made up of smaller units (squares or octagons, for example) that are worked separately and then joined together to create an overall design or effect. They were traditionally knitted or crocheted in white or cream-colored cotton yarn or rug warp. Patterns were numerous and could be quite intricate.

Knitted about 1812, the heirloom crib-sized counterpane in the museum's collection is of a simple and lovely design. The blanket was constructed of 3-inch (7.6-cm) square units joined together, forming an overall On Point pattern: the eyelet spaces create the optical illusion of nested diamonds.

Each unit is worked from one corner to the opposite corner, with garter stitch in the lower half of the unit, a row of eyelets through the middle, and alternating stockinette-stitch and reverse-stockinette-stitch ribbing above. The garter-stitch rows feature a yarn-over increase at the beginning of each row.

The front of the pincushion features the same overall layout as the museum's crib blanket. On the reverse of the pincushion, the units are placed so that the yarn-over edges connect to highlight the lovely lace-like effect created when the yarn-overs are joined by a simple whip stitch. The knitted lace edging is a recreation of the original edging on the museum's crib counterpane.



## Stitch Revival Studio

inspired by vintage needlework



### About the designer

Sharlene Bolen is a Blyth-based freelancer & needlework designer with a love & appreciation for all things vintage & hand-made. For pattern support please contact [sbolen@stitchrevivalstudio.ca](mailto:sbolen@stitchrevivalstudio.ca). Visit [www.stitchrevivalstudio.ca](http://www.stitchrevivalstudio.ca) for more information.

# Counterpane Pincushion

a pattern to knit by Sharlene Bolen



*A knit counterpane pincushion inspired by the pattern of an heirloom counterpane crib blanket in the collection of the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol located in Goderich, Ontario.*

**FINISHED SIZE** 6 inches (15.2 cm) square, excluding edging.

**YARN** DMC Baroque, 100% cotton thread, bedspread weight, 416 yards (380.4 m)/75 gram (2.6 oz) skein, 3 skeins of White.

**NEEDLES** Size 0 (2 mm) or size needed to obtain gauge.

**GAUGE** 36 sts and 72 rows = 4 inches (10.2 cm) in garter st; one unit = 3 inches (7.6 cm) square.

### NOTIONS

Tapestry needle

Warm and Natural Felted batting, 6 x 12 inches (15.2 x 30.5 cm)

Warm & Natural Needled Cotton, the Warm Company

Small amount of fiberfill stuffing.



# Counterpane Pincushion

## INSTRUCTIONS

Pincushion Units, make 8

CO 2 sts.

Next Row: Yo, k to end—1 st inc'd.

Rep last row 33 more times—36 sts.

P 1 row.

Eyelet Row (RS): K1, [yo, k2tog] 17 times, k1.

P 1 row.

K 1 row.

\*Next Row (WS): K2tog, k to end—1 st dec'd.

Next Row (RS): P2tog, p to end—1 st dec'd.

Rep last 2 rows once more—2 sts dec'd.

Next Row (WS): P2tog, p to end—1 st dec'd.

Next Row (RS): K2tog, k to end—1 st dec'd.

Rep last 2 rows once more—2 sts dec'd.

Rep from \* 3 more times—4 sts rem.

Next Row (WS): K2tog, k to end—3 sts rem.

Next Row (RS): P2tog, p to end—2 sts rem.

Next Row: K2tog—1 st rem. Fasten off.

## EDGING

CO 13 sts

Row 1: K2, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k1 [yo, k2] 2 times—15 sts.

Row 2: K8, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k1.

Row 3: K2, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k7.



*A portion of the original heirloom crib blanket folded to show both front and back as well as the edging. Photo courtesy of the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol.*



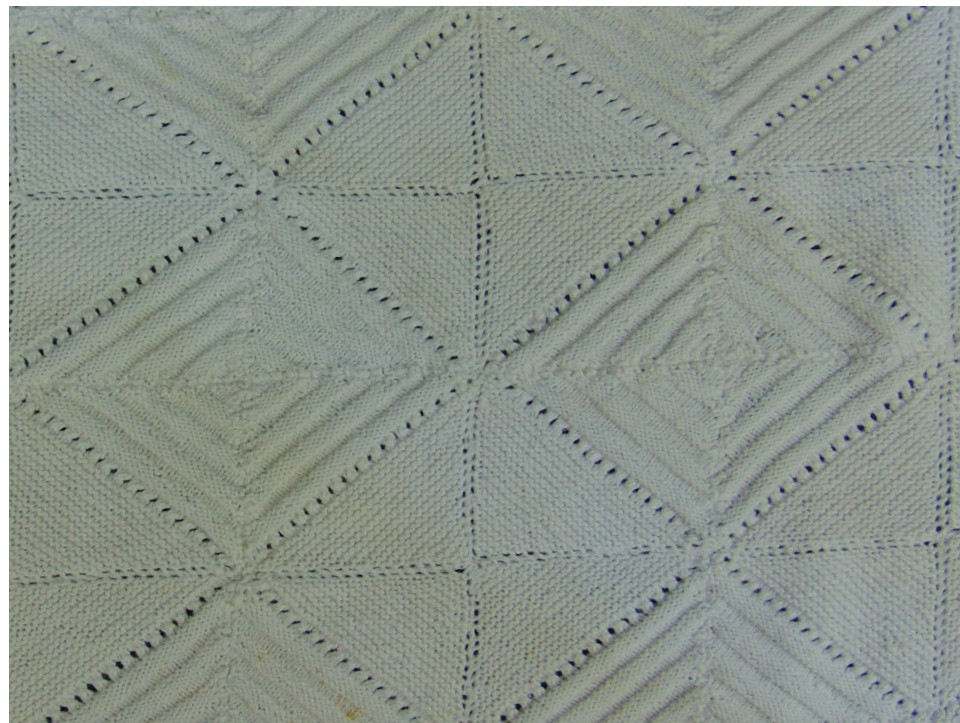
*The top left corner of the crib blanket. The edging was knit separately and then sewn to the assembled blocks. Photo courtesy of the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol.*

Row 4: K8, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k1.

Row 5: K2, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k3 [yo, k2] 2 times—17 sts.

Row 6: K10, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k1.

Row 7: K2, [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k9.



*Above: A close-up of the museum's heirloom counterpane crib blanket showing the alignment of the squares. Photo courtesy of the Huron County Museum & Historic Gaol.*

Row 8: BO 4 sts, k6 (including st rem on right needle after BO), [yo, k2tog] 3 times, k1—13 sts rem.

Rep Rows 1–8 until piece measures 25 inches (63.5 cm), ending with Row 8. BO all sts.

## FINISHING

Wash all pieces and dry flat to block. For the front of the pin cushion, arrange four units so the ribbing sections align (as in the image above), and sew together using whip stitch. For the back, arrange four units so the yarn-over sides align (see image above), and sew together using whip stitch. Weave in ends. Sew front and back pieces together, leaving one side

open for stuffing. Fold felted batting in half, fill to desired thickness with fiberfill stuffing, put into pincushion, and sew last side closed. Sew on edging using whip stitch. Sew ends of edging together.

## ABBREVIATIONS

**BO** bind off

**CO** cast on

**DEC** decrease

**K** knit

**K2tog** knit two stitches together

**P** purl

**P2tog** purl two stitches together

**RS** right side

**WS** wrong side

**YO** yarn over