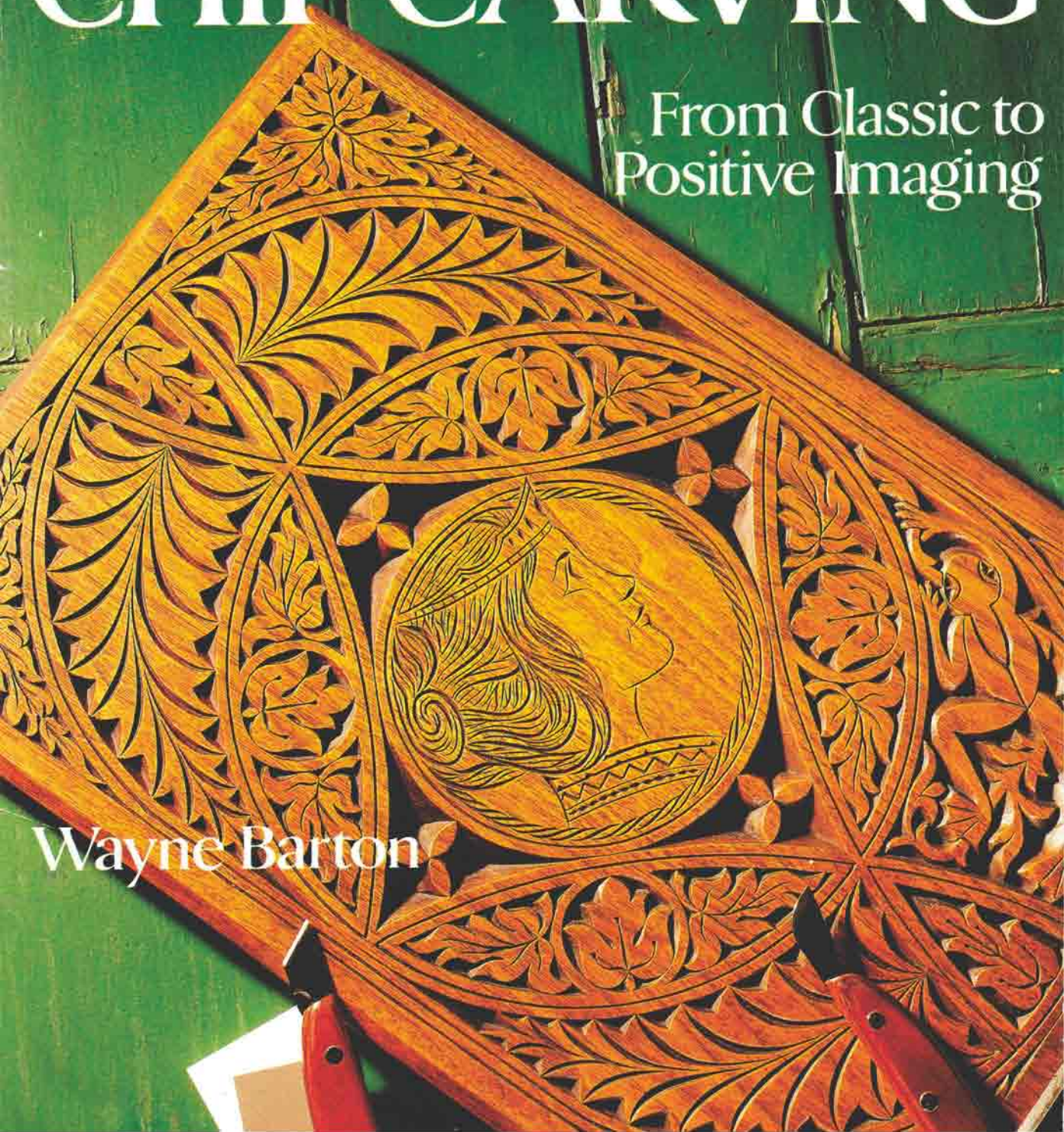


New & Traditional Styles of CHIP CARVING

From Classic to
Positive Imaging

Wayne Barton



New & Traditional Styles of

CHIP CARVING

This book is dedicated with love to my children, Blaise, Teak, Cleve, and Heidi, trusting that they will be ever mindful that all their hopes, wishes, and dreams are possible.

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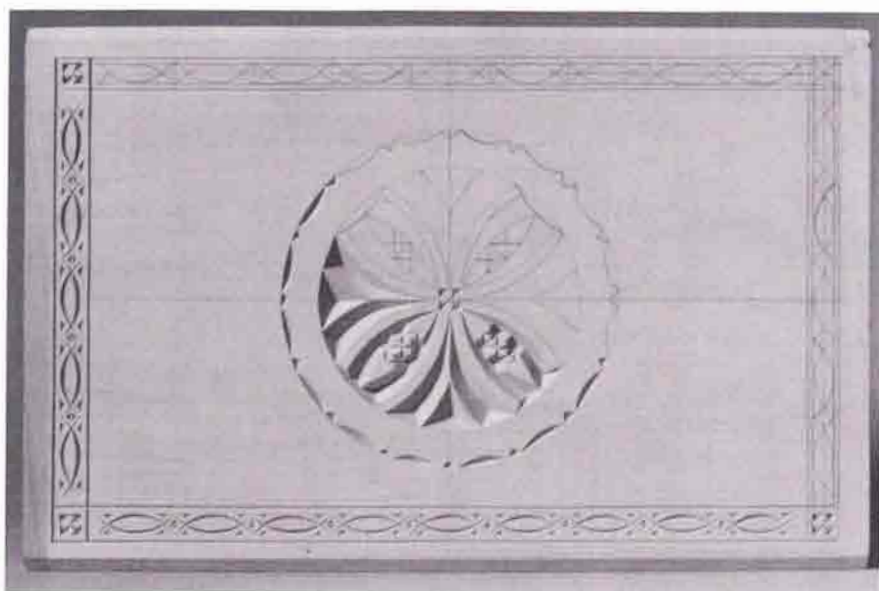
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Color section follows page 64.



Half-drawn, half-carved patterns, showing transition from drawing to finished carving.

INTRODUCTION

With the reemergence and recognition of chip carving over the past few years as the art form it truly is, a growing interest in its design seems natural to follow. That's what this book is about: design for chip carving in both new and traditional styles. Rather than providing long explanations and theories of design, it takes a more visual approach, by presenting the drawings (patterns) and photos of the carvings together, so that you can see how the various components of chip carving can be combined. While I trust that this book will be of value to both beginning and advanced carvers, for anyone desiring more elementary information I recommend my earlier books, *Chip Carving Techniques and Patterns* and *Chip Carving Patterns*, both also published by Sterling.

For those of you unfamiliar with chip carving, it will quickly become apparent that it is a decorative form of carving in which specific configurations of chips are removed, as opposed to a shaving procedure for removing wood employed in most other forms of carving. The charm of chip carving lies in its simplicity. The tools used (only two), the cuts made, and the elements of design are all quite basic in chip carving, yet they combine to produce a broader scope of application than any other carving style. What's more, chip carving can also be successfully combined with other carving styles.

Part of this book is devoted to original patterns following traditional approaches to chip carving. Some are straightforward, whereas others are more intricate. But when they are separated into their geometric components, all are readily understood.

Another part is devoted to an entirely new approach to chip carving called "positive image." Though chip carving always has had positive images, particularly in carving rosettes, the way they

are used here is quite different. Using chip-carving techniques, the background area of a piece is removed, producing a style closer to what is more commonly recognized as relief carving. This style is particularly effective in creating foliage, but it also works well in producing other natural forms.

The development of this new approach to chip carving was inspired by the early Gothic cathedrals of medieval Europe. Possibly like the woodcarvers of that period who struggled to develop their craft and skills as they imitated the more exalted stonemasons, it became obvious that many of the organic designs and motifs, so complementary to geometric designs, could also be executed in a chip-carved fashion with most pleasing results.

The positive-image style, presented in numerous patterns here, extends the parameters of chip carving to dimensions that are evolutionary, expansive, and exciting.

The mechanical skills of chip carving are easily learned, just by carving. The visual skills needed to create designs are acquired through observation and application. By studying the patterns presented in this book and then carving them in wood, you will soon develop the visual skills necessary to develop designs of your own. In addition, this book offers hours of enjoyable participation in a most delightful and personally rewarding craft that can be appreciated by the beginning and advanced carver alike on many different levels.

1

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

In the past, chip carving was performed with quite a variety of cutting implements, including knives, gauges, chisels, and razor blades. However, many have been proven to be ineffective for chip carving if not outright dangerous. In addition, as in other human endeavors, the beginner often will surround himself with more tools than he needs, erroneously assuming that he will make up in numbers what he lacks in skill and confidence.

One of the unexpected pleasures of the Swiss style of chip carving a beginner soon discovers is the limited number of tools and materials needed to do truly fine carving. And, unlike some other forms of carving, acquiring additional tools will not increase your skill nor produce a better finished product.

All of the carvings in this book were executed with only two knives. For many years I worked with the same two knives I used while studying in Switzerland. They are well made and can be used for any chip-carving project. Today I use and highly recommend the Swiss-style chip-carving knives with the “WB” logo on the handle made in the United States.

The two Swiss chip-carving knives are quite different from each other in both use and shape. As you can see in I-1, the cutting knife has a greater downward angle and a more acute angle at its point. This allows the carver to make curved cuts more easily as well as execute tighter corners and niches. The stab knife has a longer blade edge, allowing longer “stabs” to be made, thereby increasing design possibilities.

The blades of both “WB” knives are the most highly polished of

any commercial chip-carving knives on the market today, which ensures that they will glide through their cuts far more easily.

Another significant advantage of these knives has to do with their handles. Ergonomically designed, they are made of domestic wood and highly polished, allowing for a good grip and hours of comfortable, easy, nonfatiguing carving. A more satisfying handle I have yet to find.

I strongly recommend, for chip carving, that you use the best knives available. Since you're only going to use two knives, give yourself every advantage. Cheap, inadequate tools produce only



1-1 The two chip-carving knives used and recommended by the author: (top) cutting knife and (bottom) stab knife.

disappointing results, and often are a waste of time and money.

The cutting knife is used to remove wood chips and the stab knife is used to decorate. The stab knife removes no wood at all; instead it cuts and spreads the wood, making permanent indented impressions of any variety of lengths, combinations, and designs. It enhances and compliments the work of the cutting knife. Though most work is done with the cutting knife, it is a mistake to disregard the capabilities of the stab knife. Students who neglect the stab knife deny themselves the full possibilities of chip carving. Likewise, an instructor who does not educate his students to the use and functions of the stab knife performs a great disservice to his students.

The remainder of the tools needed for chip carving are a pencil (a mechanical one with a 0.05 lead size works well), ruler, eraser, and drafting-type compass (see 1-2). Use a grade "B" lead for both the compass and pencil. This softer-grade lead makes legible lines without impressing the wood, and it is easier to clean off than

harder grades of lead. When it's time to clean excess pencil marks off your carving, you'll find that an ink eraser does it quickly and neatly.

All of the carvings shown in this book are executed in basswood, butternut, eastern white pine, and walnut. These woods, particularly basswood (also known as linden or lime), are exceptionally well suited for chip carving, although they are not the only ones that carve well. Jelutung, calalpa, buckeye, tupelo, cypress, mahogany, and black willow can also be used.

The tools and materials recommended and shown in this book, including the basswood plates and boxes, are generally available from most woodcarving suppliers. Should you have difficulty finding them, however, contact me for some specific suppliers at the Alpine School of Woodcarving, Ltd., 225 Vine Avenue, Park Ridge, IL 60068 (708/692-2822).



1-2 The tools needed for chip carving: ruler, pencil, cutting and stab chip-carving knives, draftsman's compass, eraser, and ceramic sharpening and polishing stones.

2

SHARPENING

There are so many ways of sharpening knives that it has got to be confusing and frustrating to the beginning carver. Indeed, I have known a number of experienced carvers who also are unsure of how to produce a properly sharpened blade. The profusion of materials and devices for sharpening on the market today only adds to the dilemma. I believe that more potential carvers have been discouraged and deprived themselves of the joys of carving because of the lack of a sharp edge or the inability to produce one than any other single factor. Let's take the mystery out of it.

If we examine exactly what we are trying to achieve in the process of sharpening, we'll find that there are only three criteria: sharpening at the correct angle, producing a sharp cutting edge, and producing a blade that is polished.

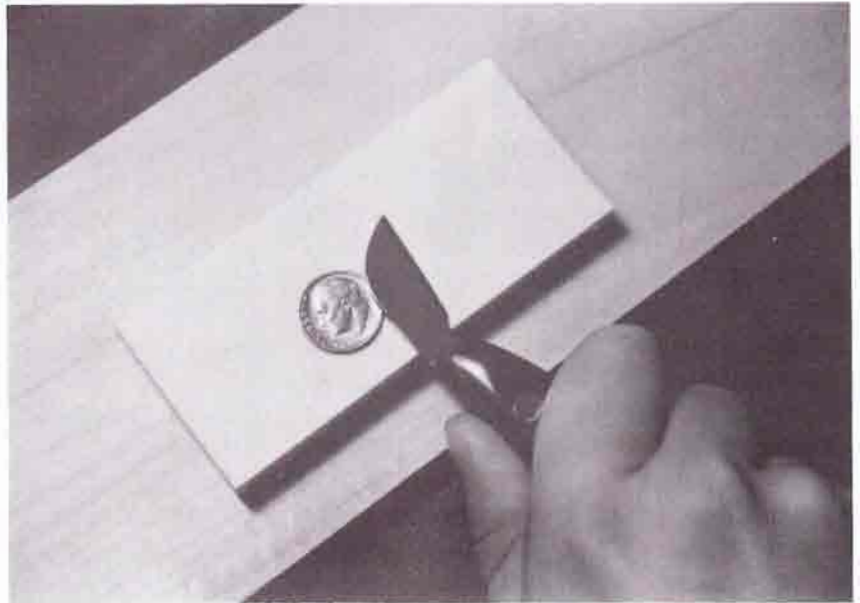
Chip carving, unlike all other forms of carving, which are executed by shaving wood (whether whittling with a knife or sculpting with chisels), calls for the carver to insert the blade into the wood to remove specific shapes, pieces, or chips, however you prefer to call them. As a result, the angle at which the blade is sharpened is more critical, but certainly not impossible to achieve.

I exclusively use and recommend flat ceramic sharpening stones (not rods) for several good reasons. First, they are so hard that no matter how much you use them, they will remain absolutely flat. This is important for keeping the cutting edges of the knives straight. Also, unlike natural stones in which quality will vary from one stone to another, the high quality of flat ceramic sharpening stones remains constant, because they are manufactured. In addition, ceramic stones need no oil or water as a lubricant for the sharpening process, making sharpening much less messy. When they need cleaning, simply scrub them with a Scotchbrite pad and

an abrasive cleanser. Most importantly, flat ceramic stones will sharpen and polish your knives to a mirror finish, which is absolutely essential for clean, smooth carving. The whole blade need not be polished, only behind the cutting edge, though polishing the whole blade is also fine.

You will need only two ceramic sharpening stones and both are necessary. One is a medium-grade, which is used first for shaping and sharpening the blade. The other is an ultrafine and is used for polishing the blade and keeping the edge freshly sharp. Once your blade is sharp and polished, just the ultrafine stone is needed to keep it that way.

Sharpening the two knives at the correct angle is imperative. The cutting knife is sharpened at an angle of approximately 10 degrees or less. You can determine this angle by raising the knife off the stone no more than the space that would accommodate a dime under the back edge of the blade (see 2-1). This angle is a maximum. In many cases, you may have to sharpen the cutting

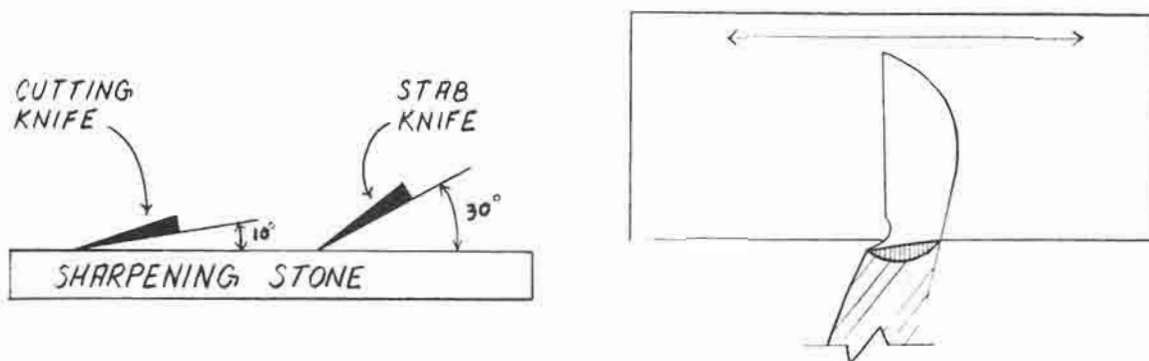


2-1 To check for a maximum 10-degree angle for sharpening your cutting knife, slip a dime under the back edge of the blade.

knife at an even flatter angle. A properly sharpened angle is extremely important to have the blade flow through the wood smoothly and easily. The stab knife is sharpened at an angle of approximately 30 degrees, which is about the factory-established angle on a new blade (2-2).

To sharpen the cutting knife, begin by placing the blade flat on the medium-grade stone and then raise it on its edge approximately 10 degrees. If you sharpen it more than 10 degrees, you will cause a thickness behind the edge, particularly at the tip of the

blade. Your edge may be sharp, but this thickness will cause the knife to drag through the wood. Concentrate on putting equal pressure on the heel and the tip of the blade. This will help prevent rounding the tip. A back-and-forth movement with pressure on one side, and then equally on the other, works well (2-3). This method of sharpening will make the blade sharp without causing a heavy burr. Creating a heavy burr will only remove more metal from the blade than is necessary. It will also make the process of sharpening longer and more laborious.



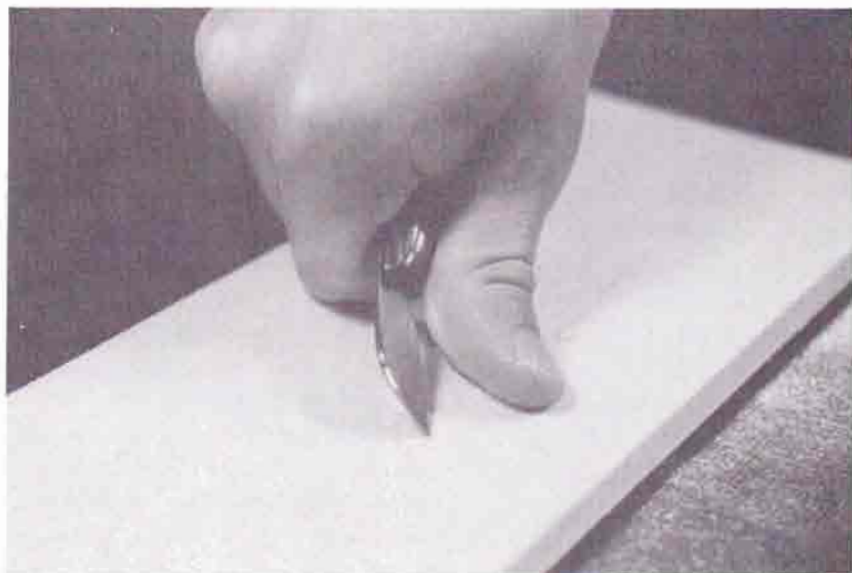
2-2 (left) Angles for sharpening cutting and stab knives. 2-3 (right) Slide the knife blade back and forth on both sides across the stone to sharpen.

Check for a burr by running your finger across the flat part of the blade on either side towards the edge. If you feel a drag or scraping on your finger, you have a burr. This can be eliminated by continuing to sharpen in the same manner, but with less pressure. Work the burr from one side to the other, until it finally disappears or falls off.

You will know that your knife is sharp and ready for polishing when there is no burr and you can see no light reflecting off the edge. Check light reflection by holding the knife under a strong light with your finger on the tip of the blade to cut any glare. Sight the blade from approximately a 45-degree angle, and rock it from side to side. If no light reflects from the edge, you are ready for polishing. The only reason light will ever reflect from the edge, even with the faintest thin line, is that it is still rounded and not as sharp as it can be.

The ultrafine ceramic stone will polish the metal so that the blade will glide easily through the wood rather than drag. Be careful that you hone equally on each side so that you don't create a burr. Your blade can be sharp, but if it has any hint of a burr, it will drag through the wood and can cause crushing or tearing.

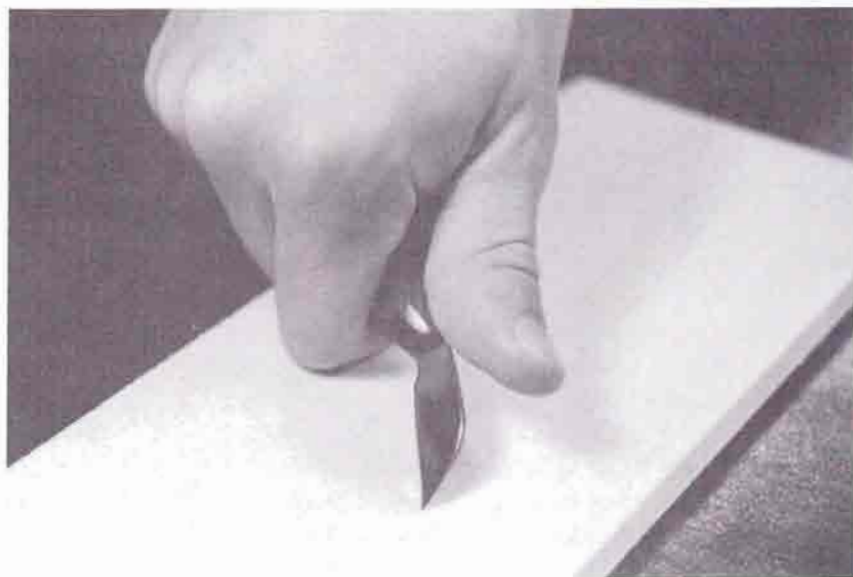
2-4 Correct position for holding the cutting knife in the first position.

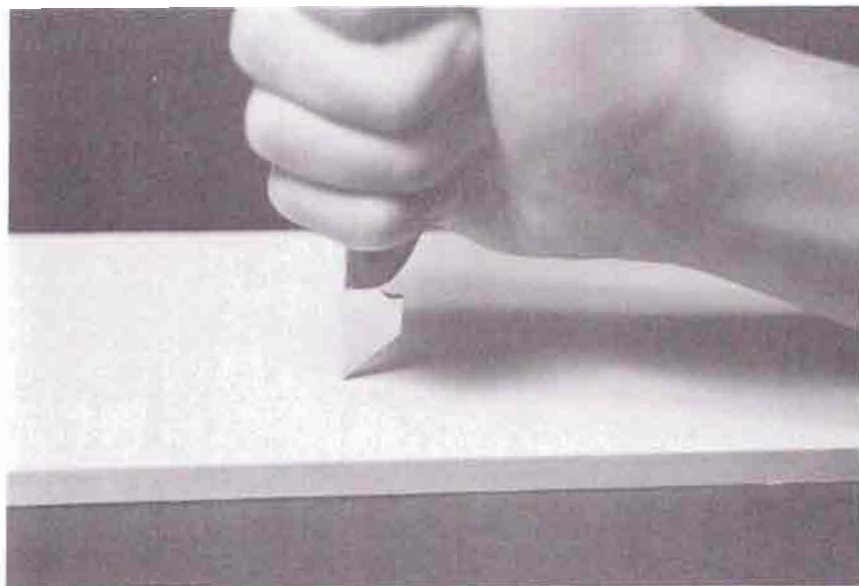


When you feel you've finished sharpening your knife, give it one final check for the reflection of light. You can check for drag, caused by a burr, thickness behind the edge, or incomplete sharpness, by cutting diagonally across the grain of a scrap piece of wood. Your knife should flow smoothly and steadily. If it doesn't, check the three causes of drag just mentioned.

Under normal use, you will need to freshen your edge periodically only on the ultrafine stone. You will know when this is necessary, because you will find yourself using more pressure to

2-5 Correct position for holding the cutting knife in the second position, as when executing a three-corner chip or flip-flop cuts.





2-6 Correct position for holding the stab knife.

get the same results than you did initially. Also, light will reflect from the edge. Frequency of sharpening will depend on the quality of steel in your blade, the variety of wood being used (some are more gritty than others, dulling the blade faster), and the type of cuts being made (deeper and curved cuts wear an edge more quickly).

To sharpen the stab knife, use precisely the same stones and procedure as you did with the cutting knife, with the exception of the sharpening angle. Because the stab knife is used only for impressing or indenting the wood to enhance a design, the angle of the cutting edge is more crucial than its sharpness. With the stab knife, you will want to keep the thickness behind the edge. In order to do this, sharpen the stab knife, as mentioned earlier, at approximately a 30-degree angle. This is the only difference in the sharpening procedure between the two knives.

3

CLEANING, STAINING, AND FINISHING

It is inevitable that you will have some pencil lines or marks from tracing left on your work when you are finished carving. If you use a soft lead such as grade “B” and don’t press hard when making your layout, removing all lines and marks will be much easier. A rubber eraser will remove your pencil marks. To remove the marks left by graphite paper, use an ink eraser. Care should be taken when erasing marks left on carved ridges, because they may be delicate and could break off if handled too roughly.

When all the lines and marks have been removed, lightly sand the finished work with 220-grit sandpaper. This will freshen the entire surface and prepare it for finishing. Always sand in the direction of the grain. When sanding, be careful not to flatten any carved ridges in your work or you will take the crispness out of its appearance.

In making suggestions and recommendations for finishing in this section, I in no way mean to imply that this is an area in which I am an expert. What I know comes mostly from years of trial and error and what I was taught by my father, who *was* an expert. What I offer here has worked well over many years for me, but it is surely not the only way to finish wood.

Regardless of the method you choose, I do recommend that you finish your carvings. It will protect them from fingerprints

and from dirt accumulating over time, and it will give you a surface that can be safely dusted and cleaned without harming the wood.

An excellent natural finish can be achieved with dull polyurethane. I sometimes use satin (rarely gloss) on furniture, such as chairs, tables, and cupboards. However, satin and gloss natural finishes on smaller pieces, such as plates and jewelry boxes, distract from the warmth natural wood exudes and give the wood the hardness of plastic.

Apply finish by spray rather than brush. Because chip carving is incised (whether the images are positive or negative), brushing has a tendency to fill the carved areas, taking away from the smooth, crisp appearance of the piece.

Generally, three thin coats of spray will do nicely. Allow the finish to dry thoroughly, sanding lightly between coats with 220-grit sandpaper. Do not sand after the last coat is applied.

If you choose to stain your carving, you should know that softer woods, such as the ones generally used in chip carving, take more color in exposed end grain, often leaving clean, crisp cuts looking fuzzy or smeared. This is particularly true of basswood, which has a notorious reputation for acquiring a mottled appearance from staining, sometimes to the extent of completely obliterating the carving. An exception to this seems to be some of the pines and other conifers, though I advise you to test—first stain a piece of scrap wood the same as the carving—before staining.

Because oil stains penetrate deeply into soft woods, I prefer to use a gel stain and find Bartley's to be an excellent brand. Before I stain, I give the carving a light sealer coat by spraying (not brushing) evenly with polyurethane. Other types of sealers may be used. This does three things. First, it seals the surface. Second, because a light spray seals the surface more than the cuts, it allows the stain to penetrate the cuts more deeply, accentuating the carving. Third, it will raise any of the fuzzy surface grain, enabling you to sand the surface (not the cuts) with 220-grit sandpaper. This will ensure that your surface will remain smooth for the remaining finishing steps.

Using a gel stain takes a little more effort, but I find it is justified by the results. Begin by working one side of your piece at a time. Brush the gel over the surface, working it thoroughly into the cuts and grooves as you go along. Cover a side completely, but don't apply the gel excessively, because you'll only have to wipe it off.

Once a side is covered, use the clean side of a lint-free cloth and wipe the surface of all excess gel. With a smaller, clean brush, work the excess gel out of the cuts, wiping as you go along. Also keep wiping your cleaning brush as you work.

When one side is finished, repeat the same procedure on the

remaining sides. When the staining is completed, let the piece dry thoroughly before continuing.

The remaining steps are exactly the same as those for a natural finish. Spray approximately three thin, even coats of polyurethane (or any other finish you prefer). If any sanding between coats is necessary, be careful not to sand through the stain. Be sure the surface of your piece is dust-free before spraying, and always spray in a well-ventilated area.

4

TRADITIONAL DESIGNS

In a broad sense, traditional chip carving encompasses many design aspects, including borders, grids, rosettes, free-form motifs, and lettering. For the most part, they are all executed by the carving out of similar chips. For instance, a dozen different borders can be created with a three-cornered chip, and that same chip can be used to make a number of rosettes.

The design aspects of traditional chip carving cut across many cultures and national borders. While certain designs may be recognizable as being indigenous to a particular country or time period or another, the actual components or chips that make up that design are the same. What differentiates each design and identifies it as to its origin or period is the overall pattern—the composition of the design, each design utilizing the same techniques of cut and shapes of chip.

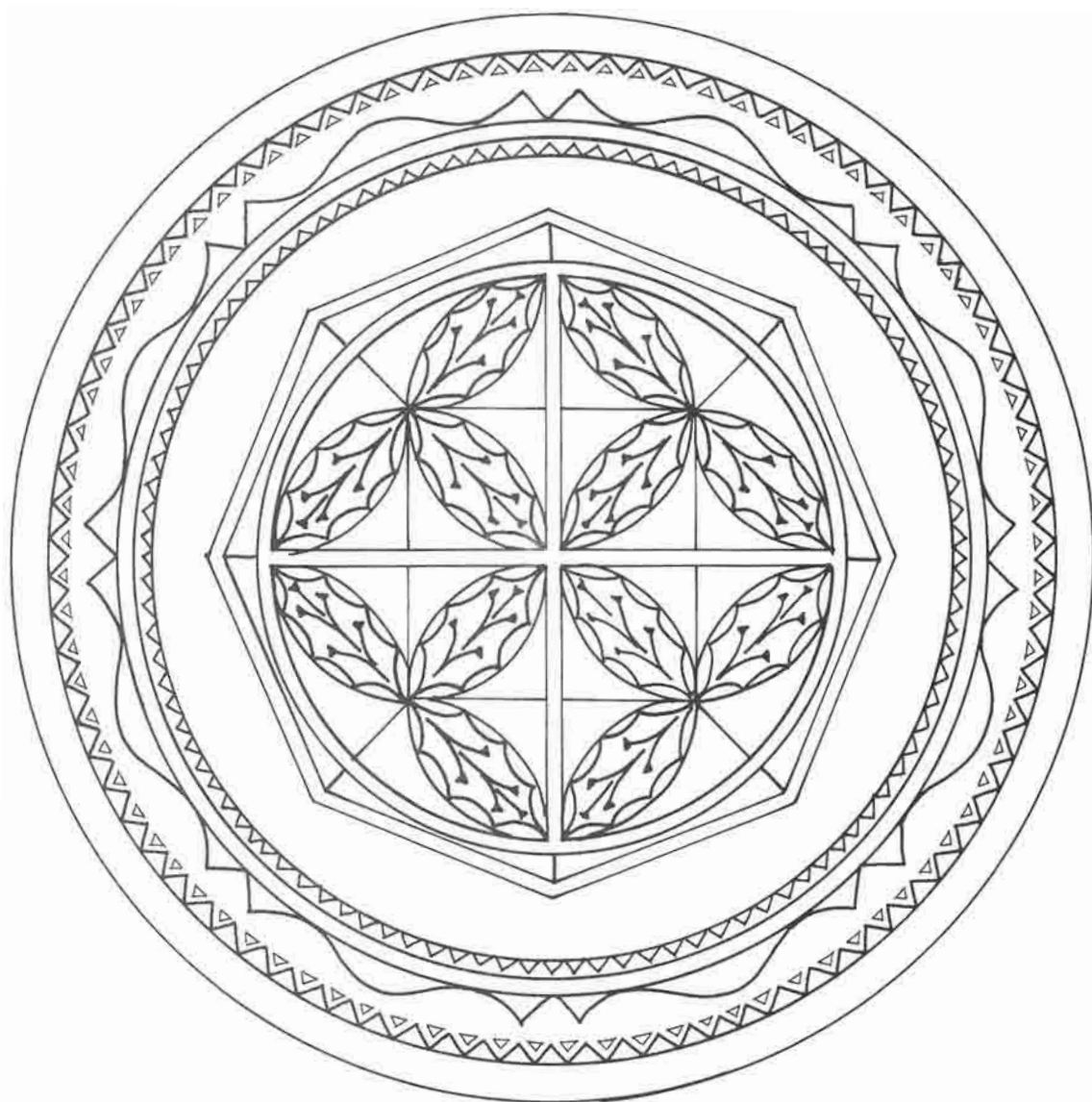
The traditional designs presented in this chapter are primarily made up of a combination of borders and rosettes with some grids. Though free-form motifs and lettering, also used with borders and rosettes, are part of the traditional chip-carving genre, they have been separated into different chapters because of their easily recognizable differences. The purpose here is not to establish precise definitions and delineations within chip carving, but to show how the different designs can be used and combined to create pleasing, interesting pieces.



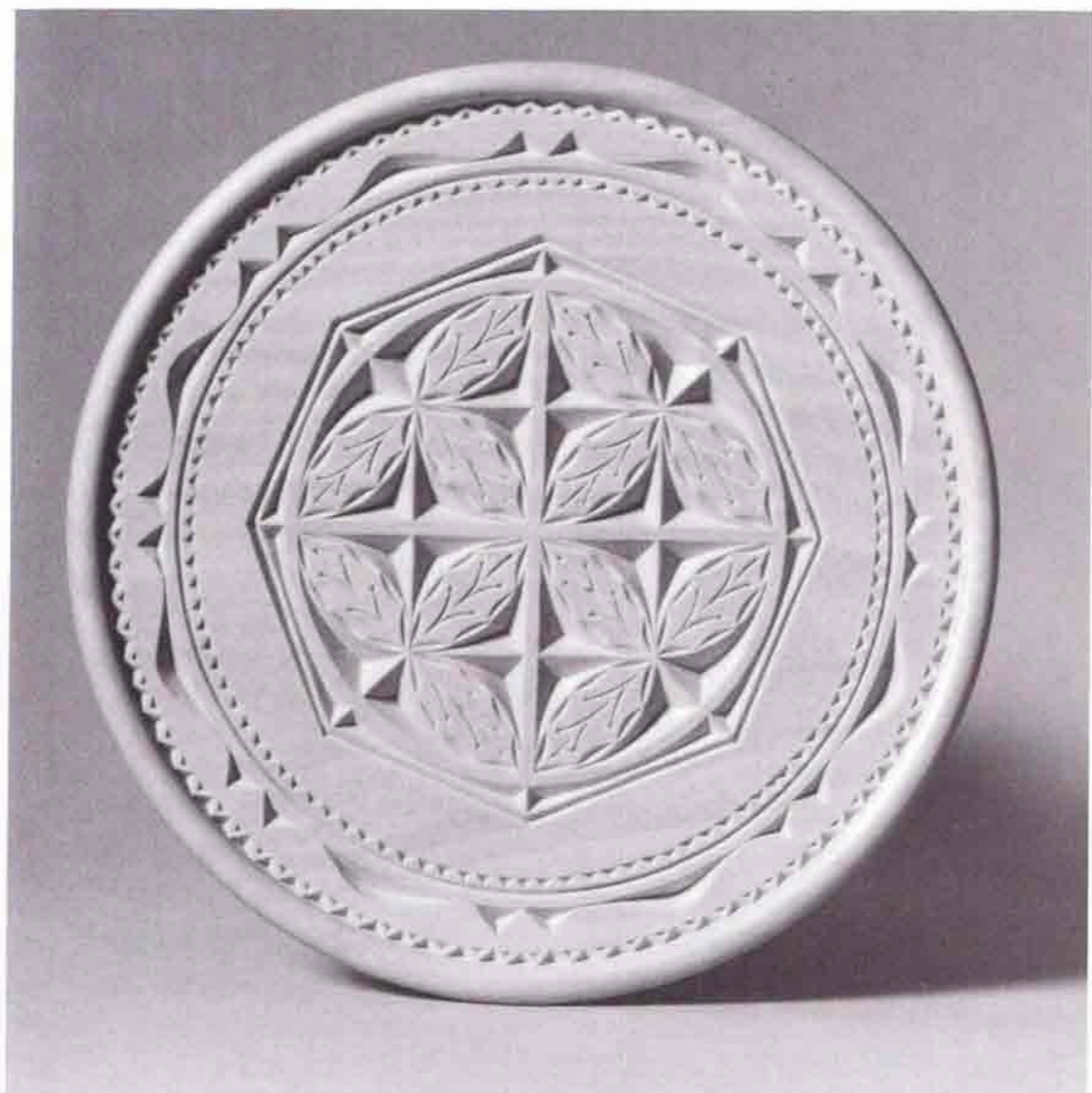
4-1



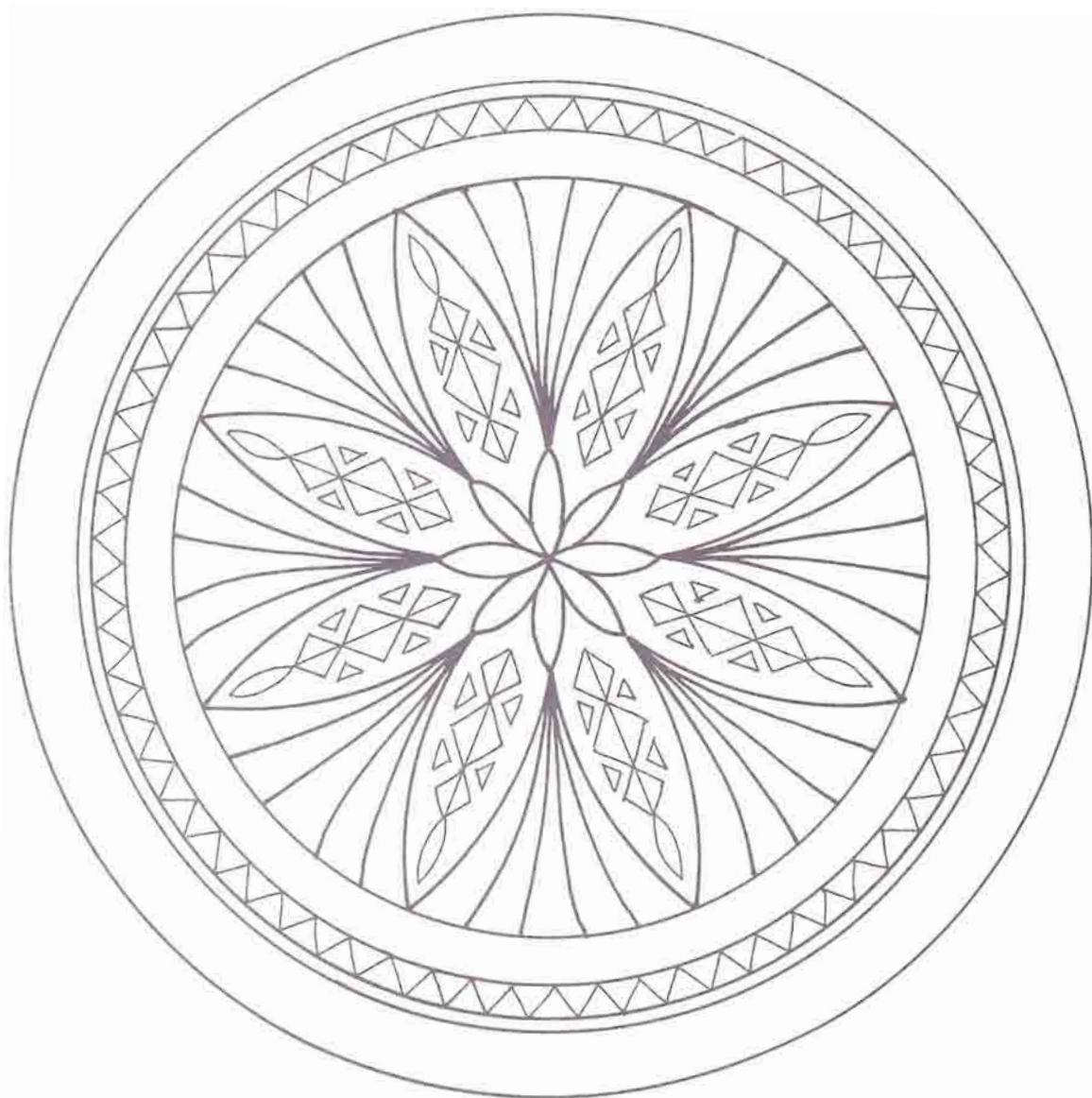
4-2 Basswood 12"-diameter plate with octagonal rosette and multiple border patterns.



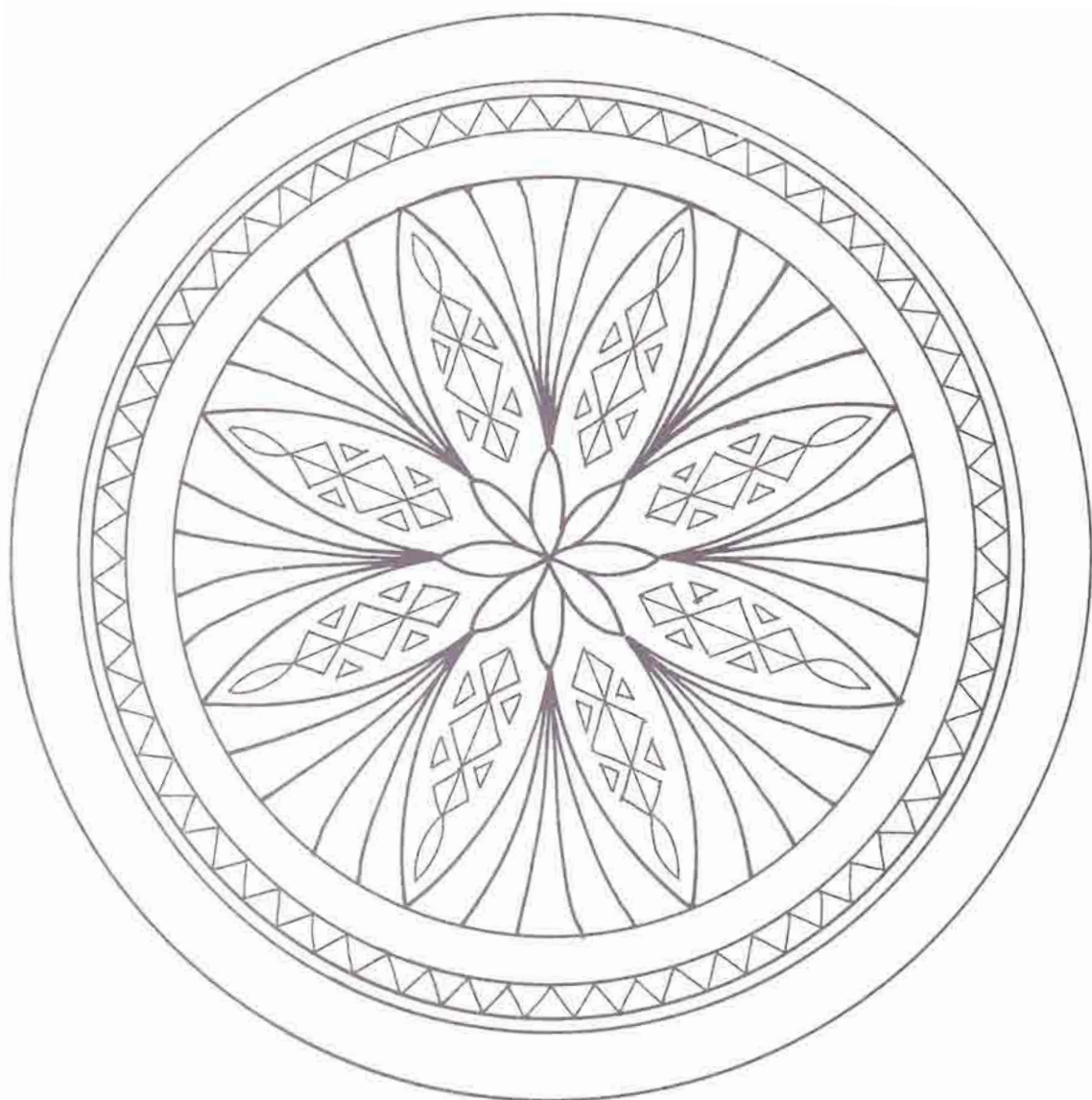
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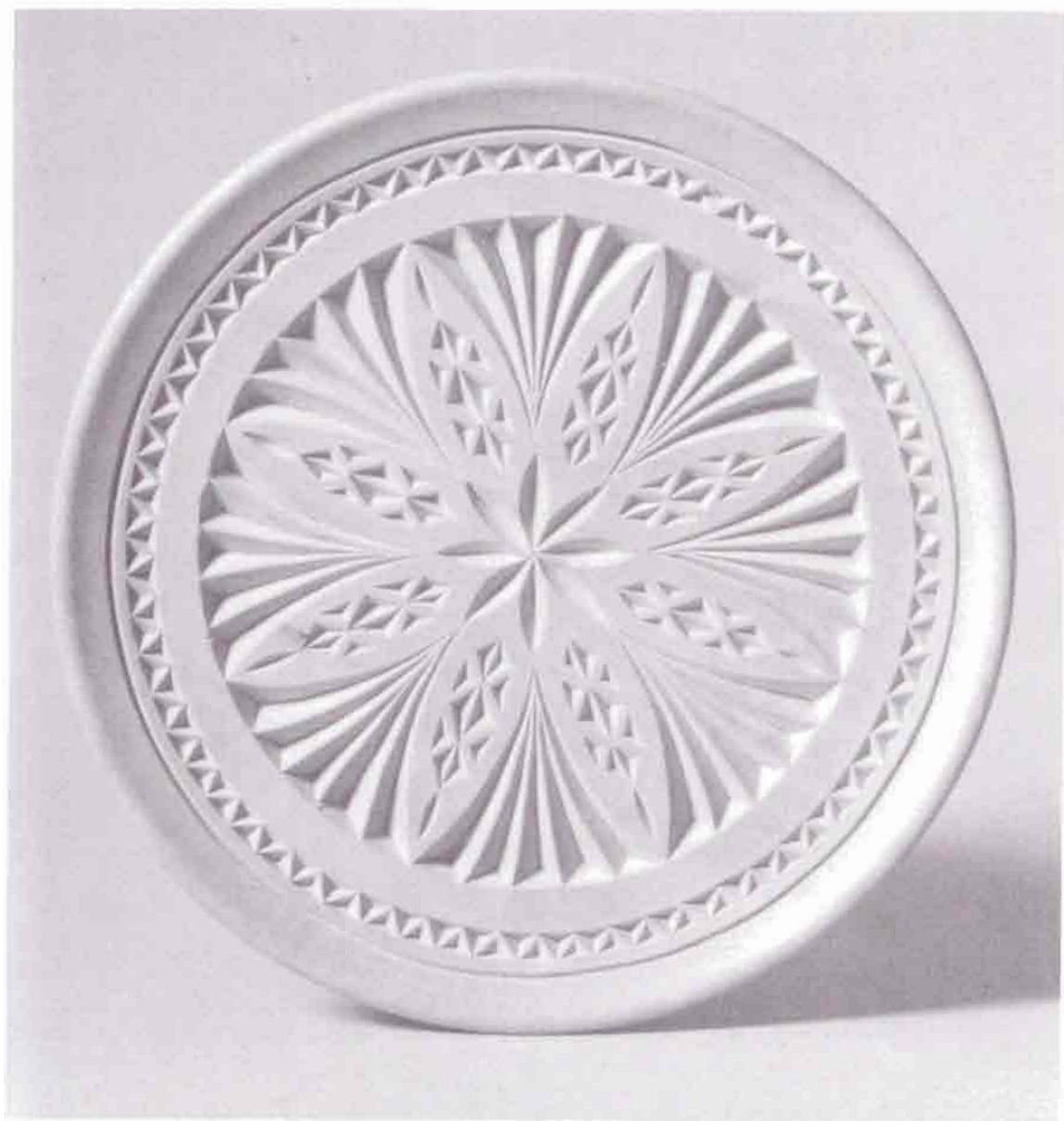
4-4 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with leaves in octagonal grid and multiple border patterns.



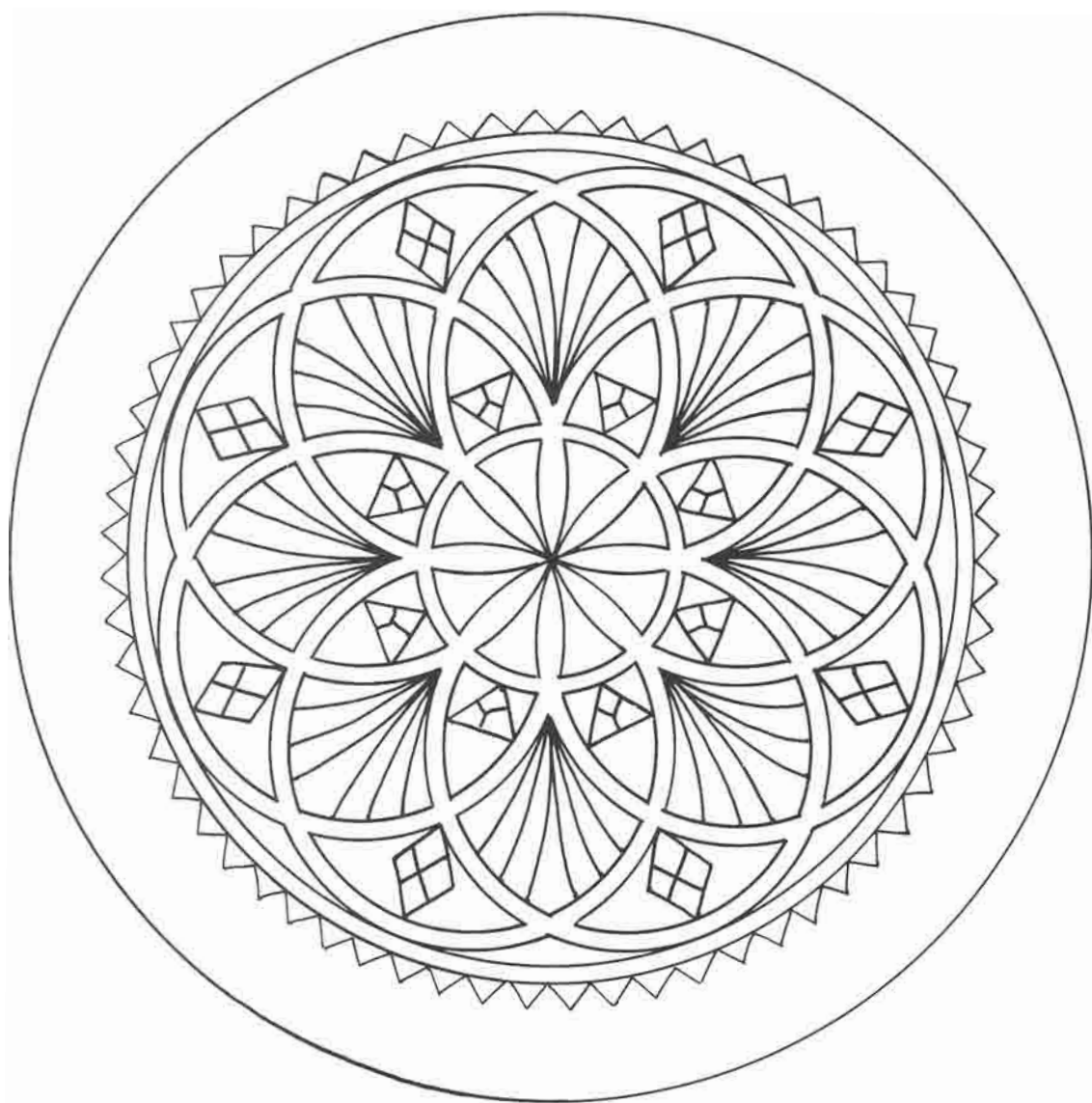
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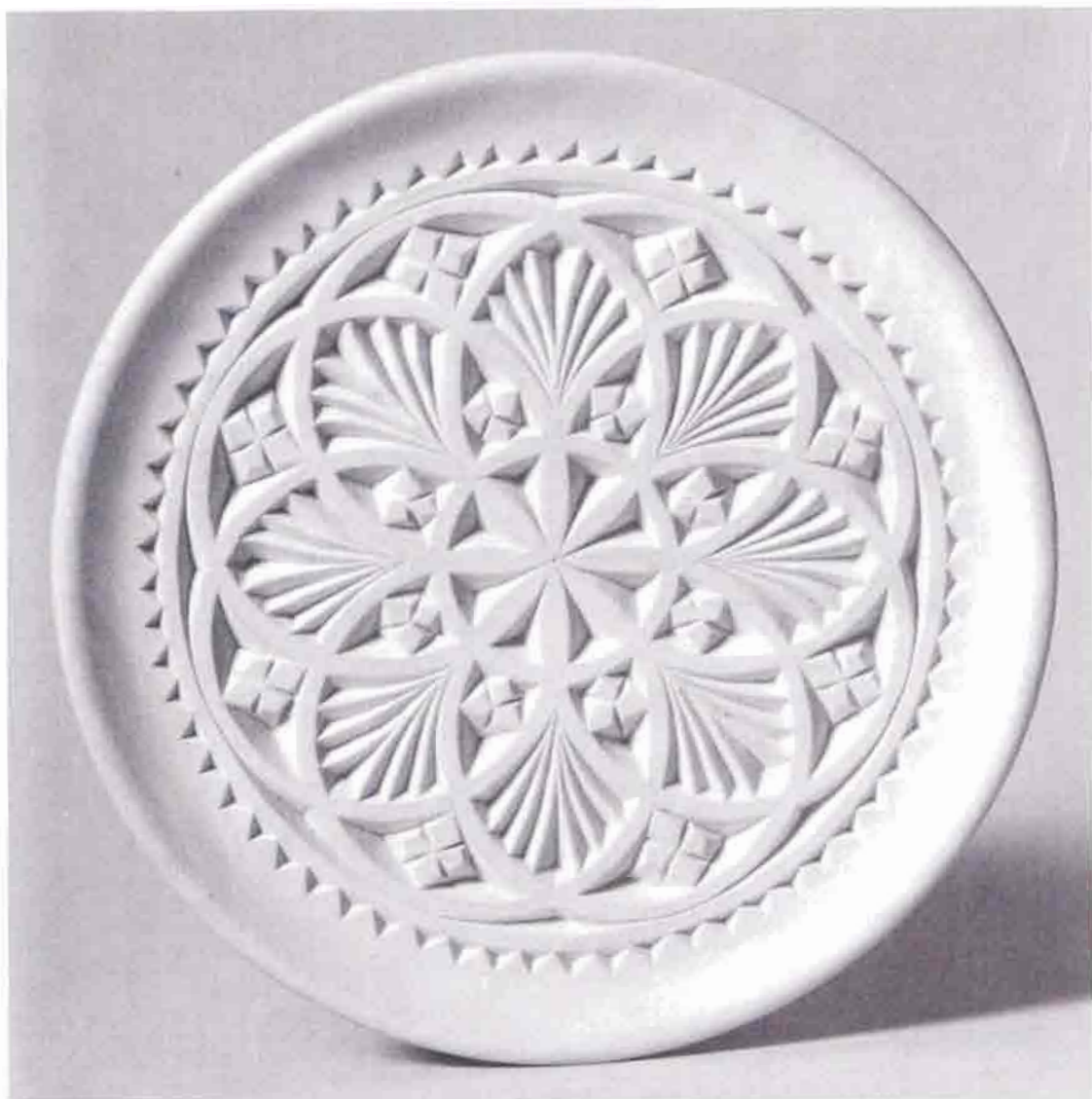
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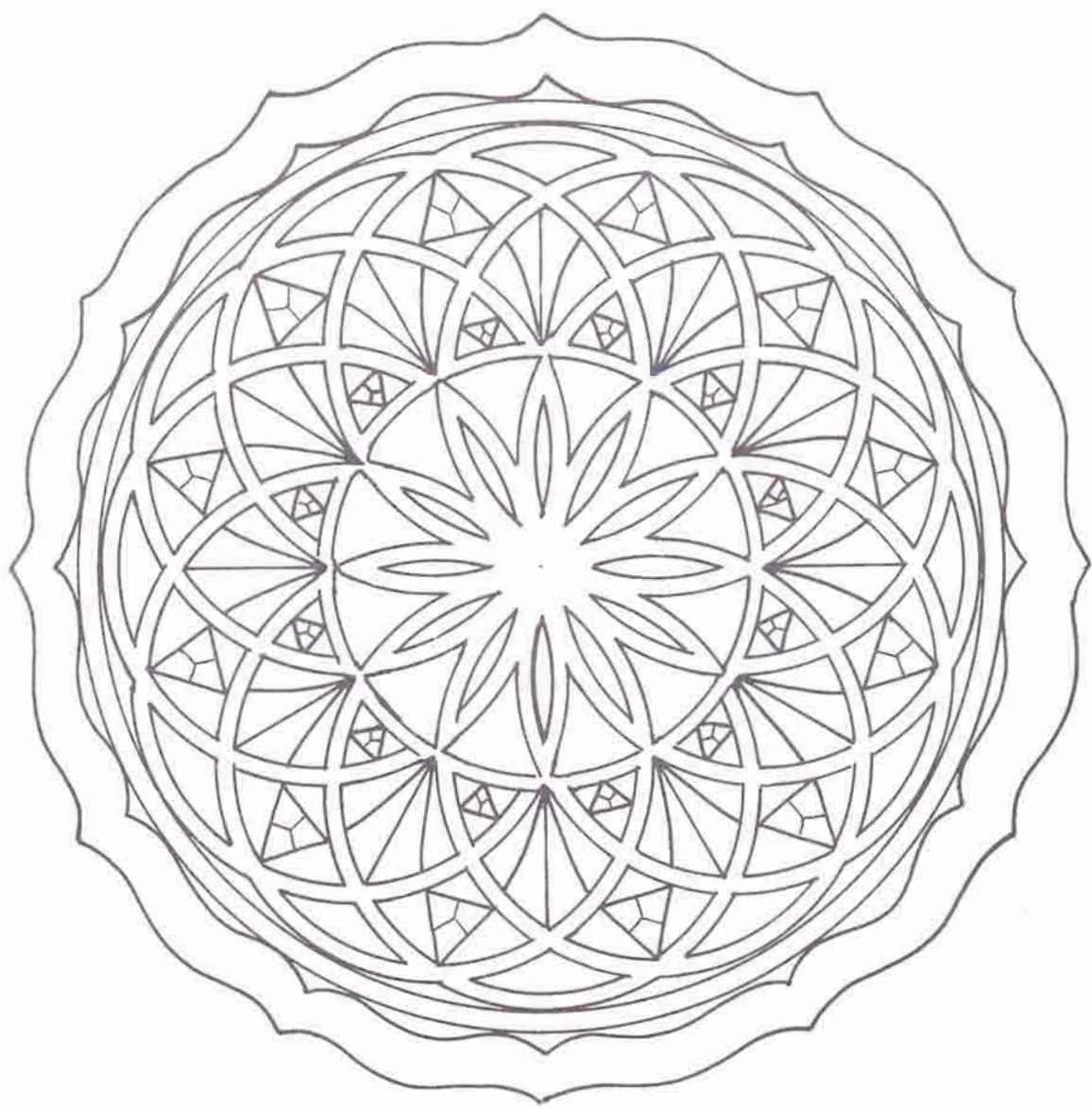
4-6 Basswood 6"-diameter plate with eight-point rosette—predominant use of three-corner chip.



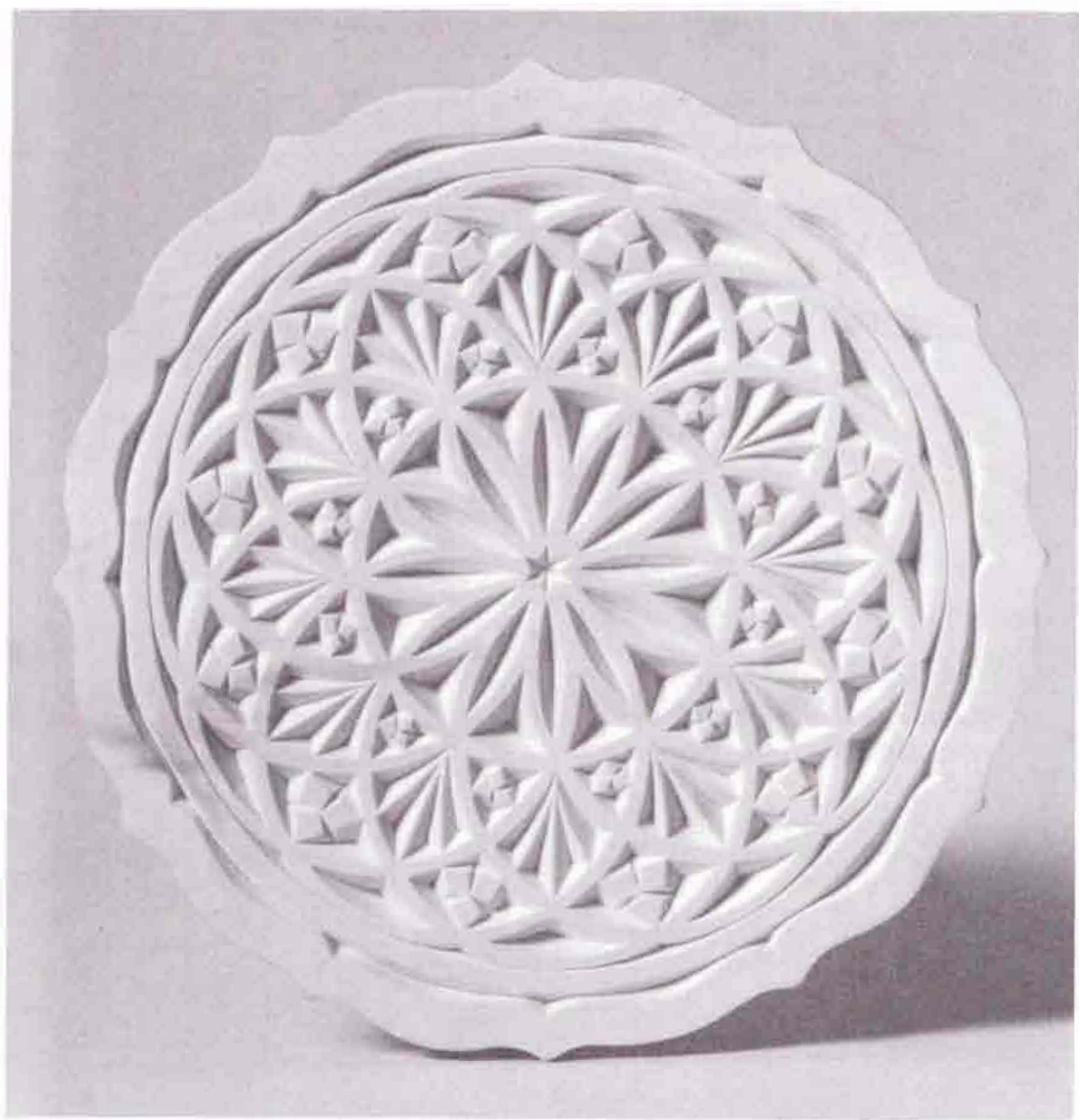
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4-8 Basswood 6"-diameter plate with rosette of eight interlocking circles.



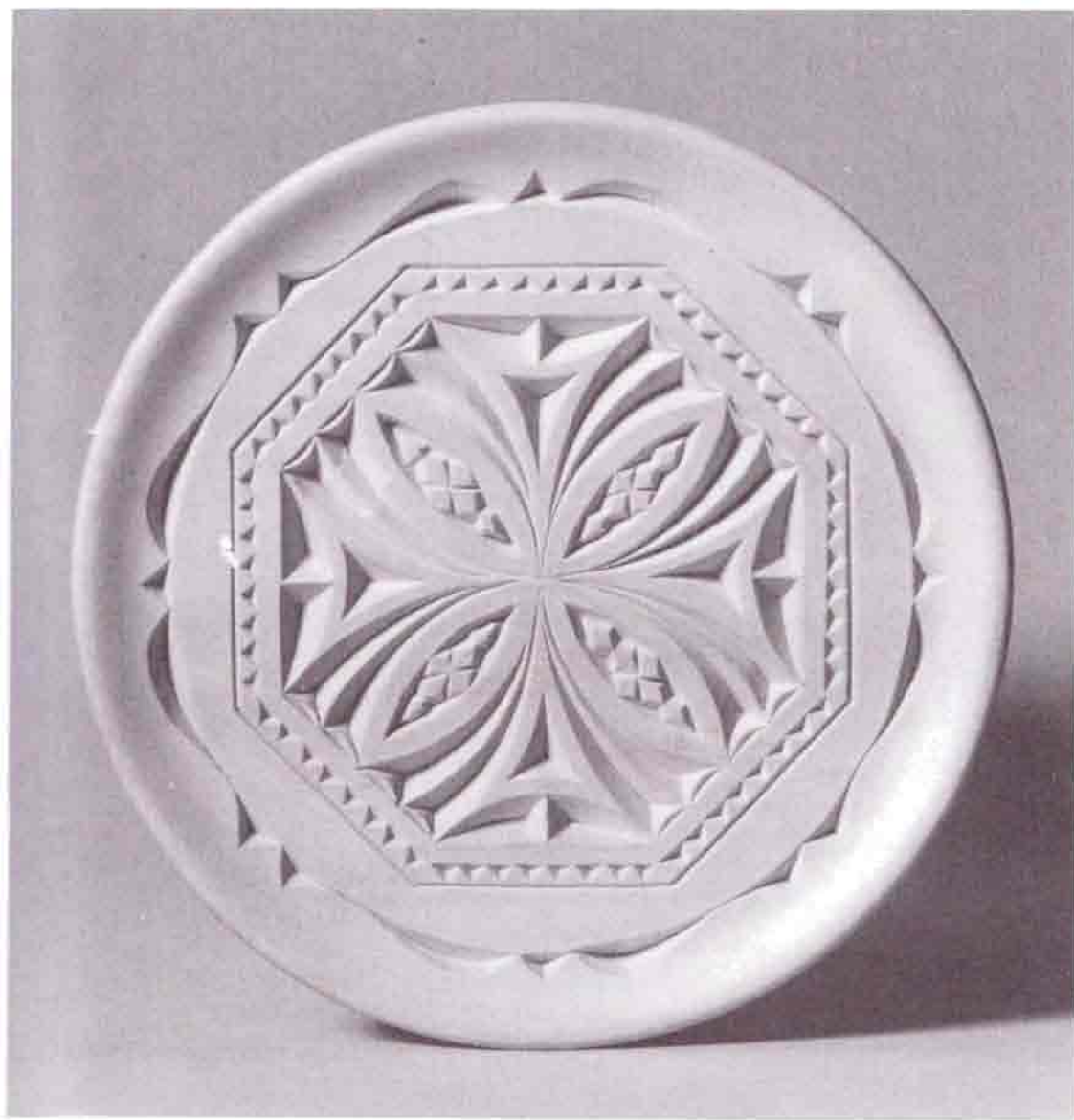
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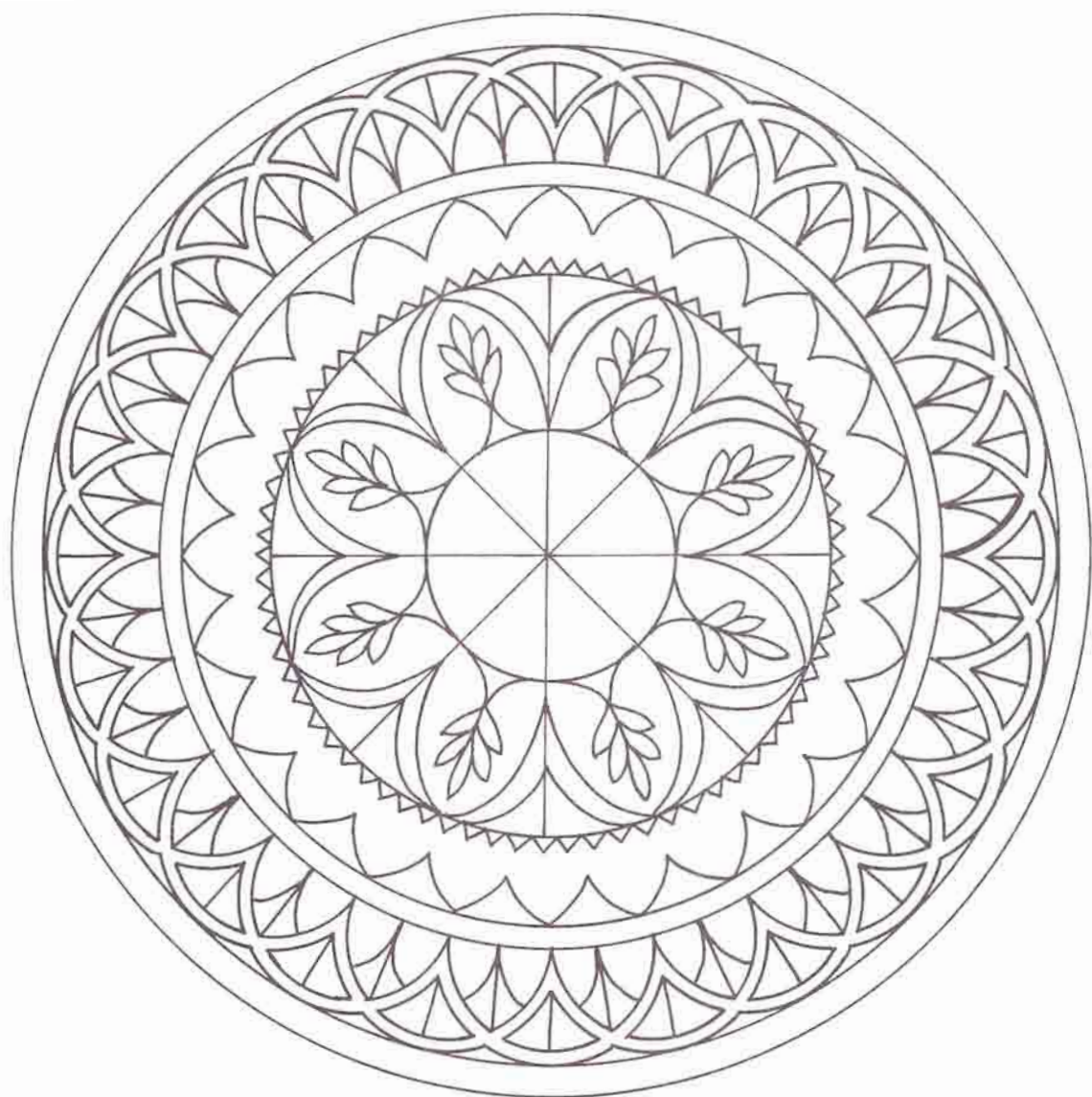
4-10 Scalloped 6"-diameter basswood plate with 12 interlocking circles.



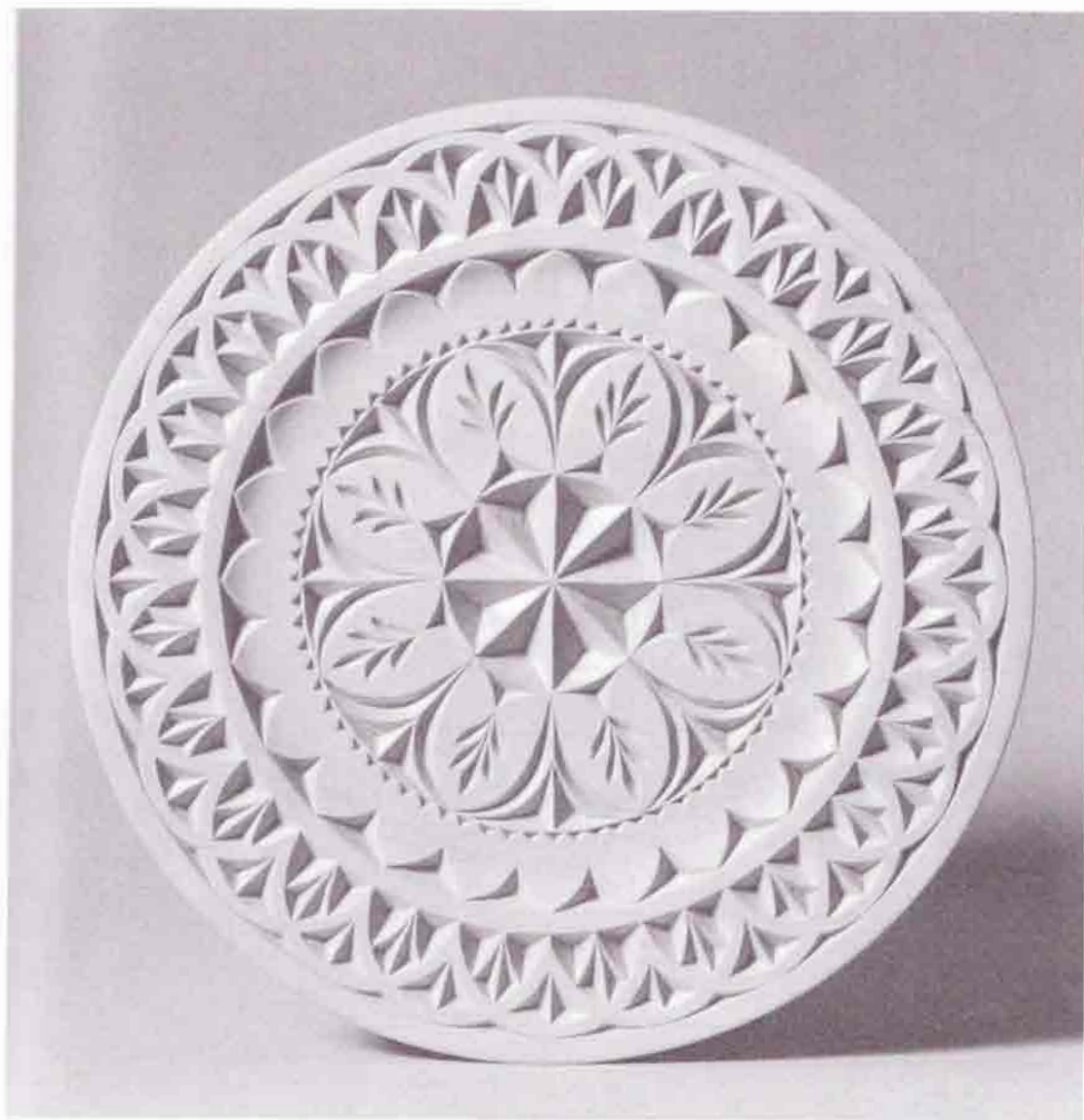
4-11 Squared 10"-diameter basswood plate with rosette of eight interlocking circles and border of alternating rosettes and diamonds.



4-12 Basswood 6"-diameter plate with octagonal rosette and scalloped border.



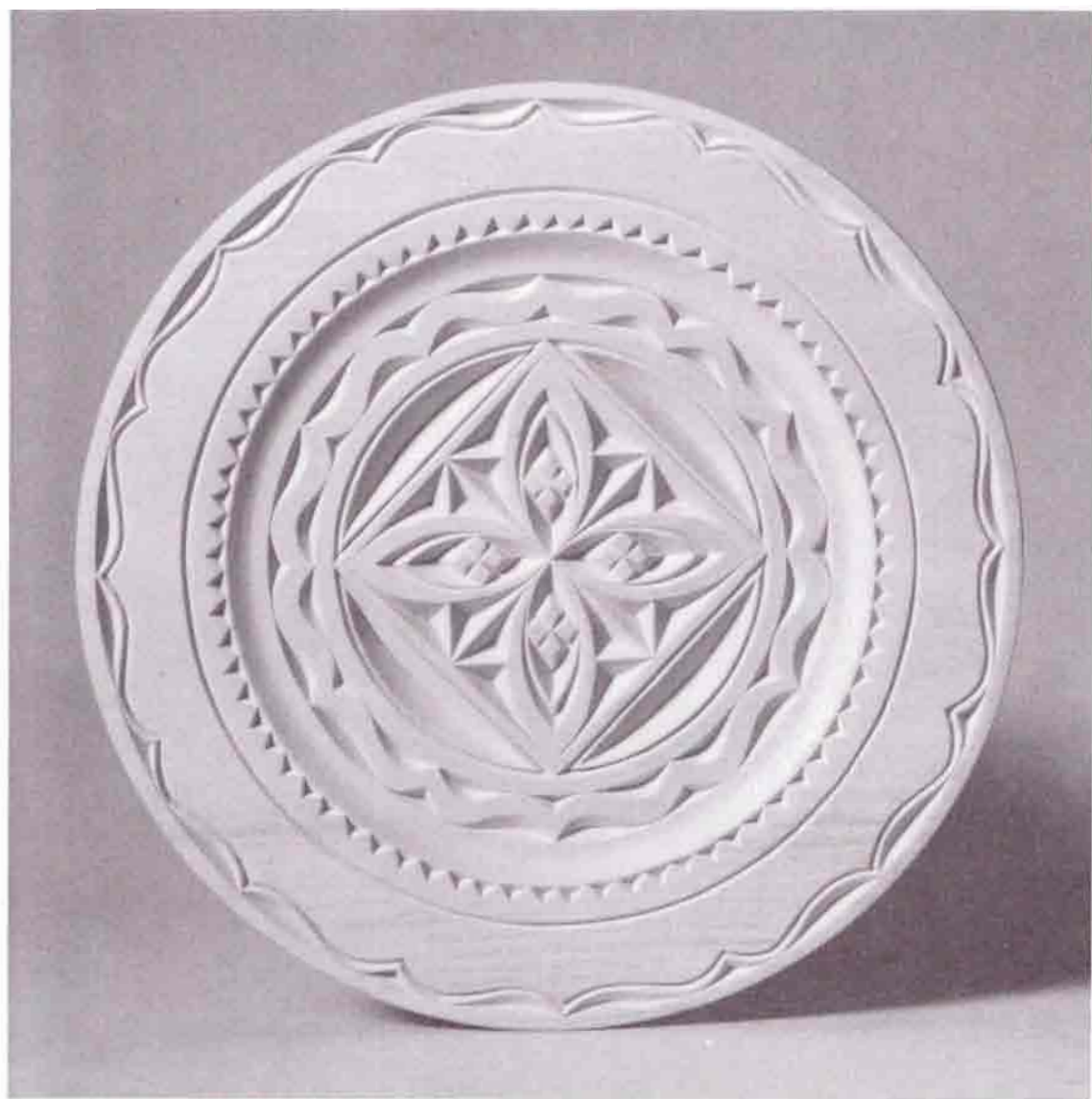
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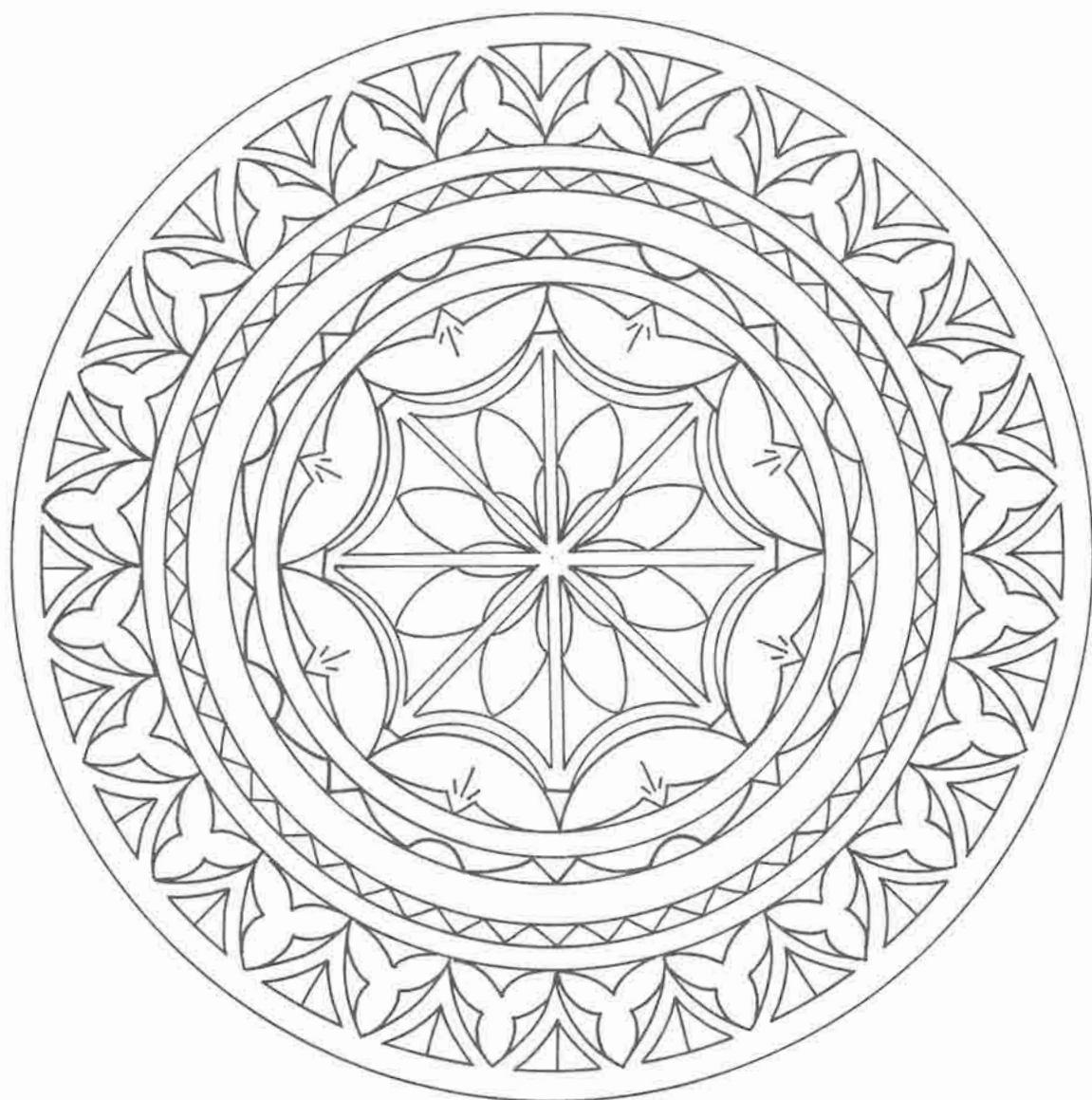
4-14 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with eight-point floral rosette and scalloped-lace border.



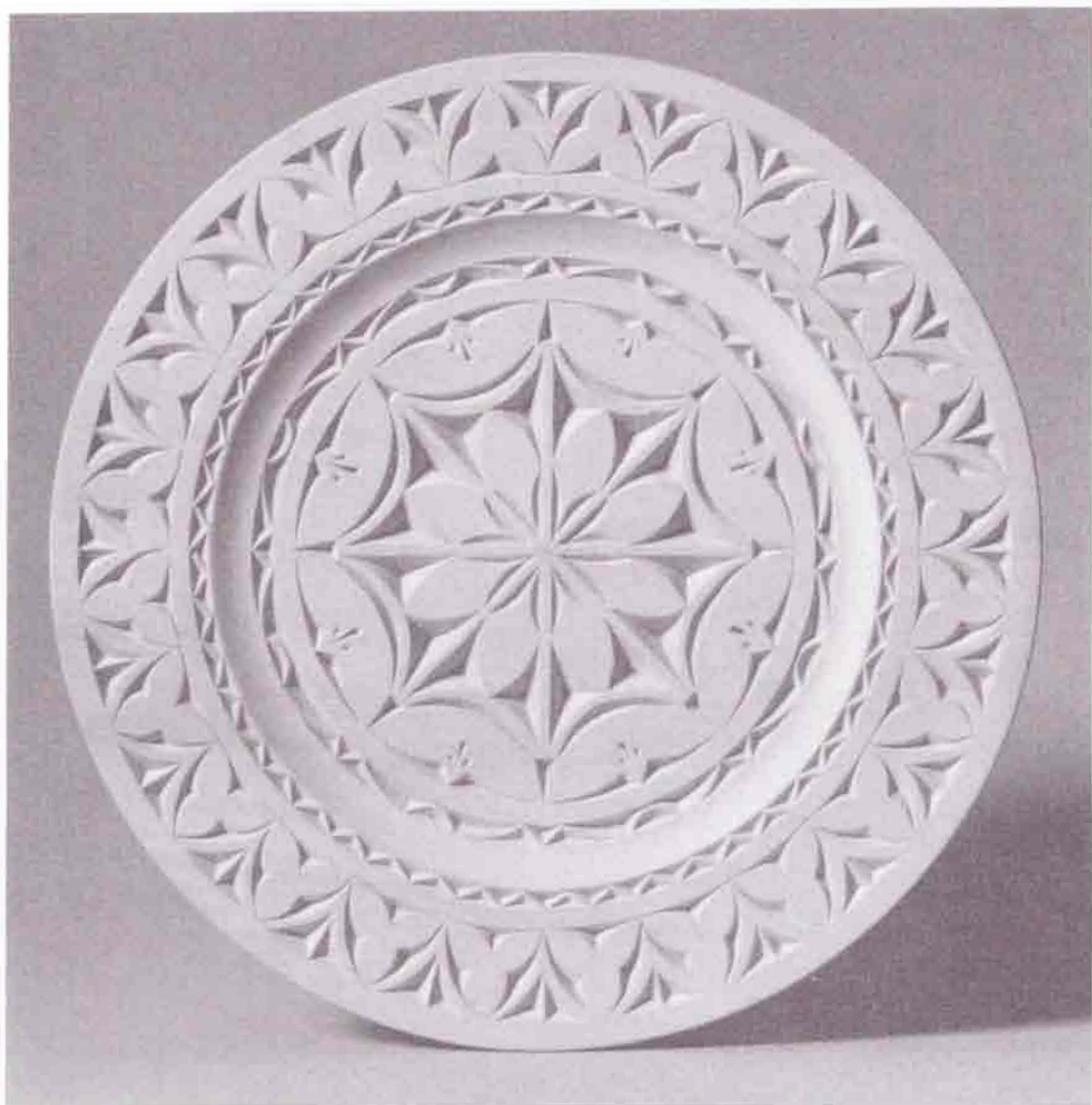
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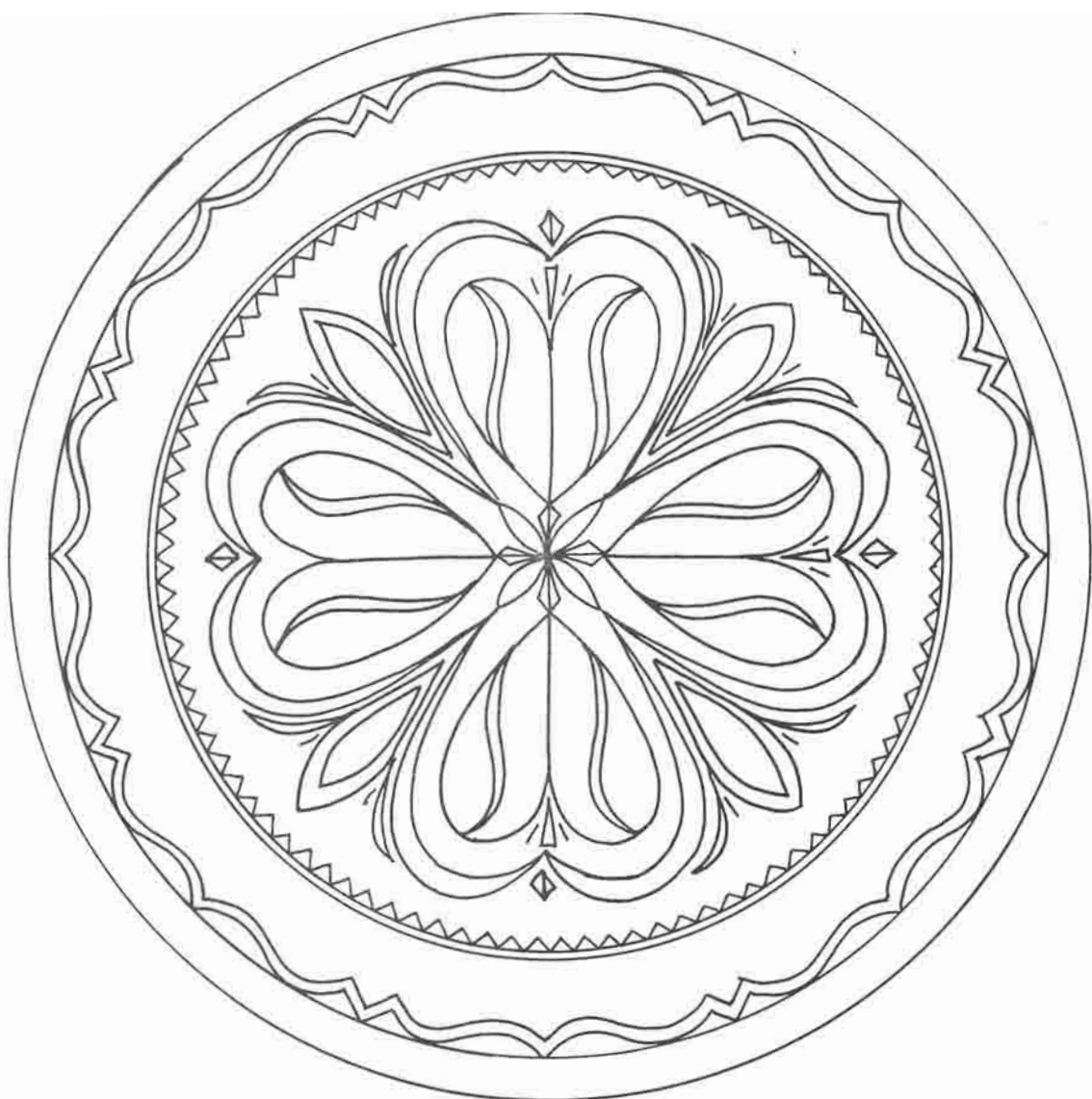
4-16 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with diamond rosette and scalloped borders.



4-17



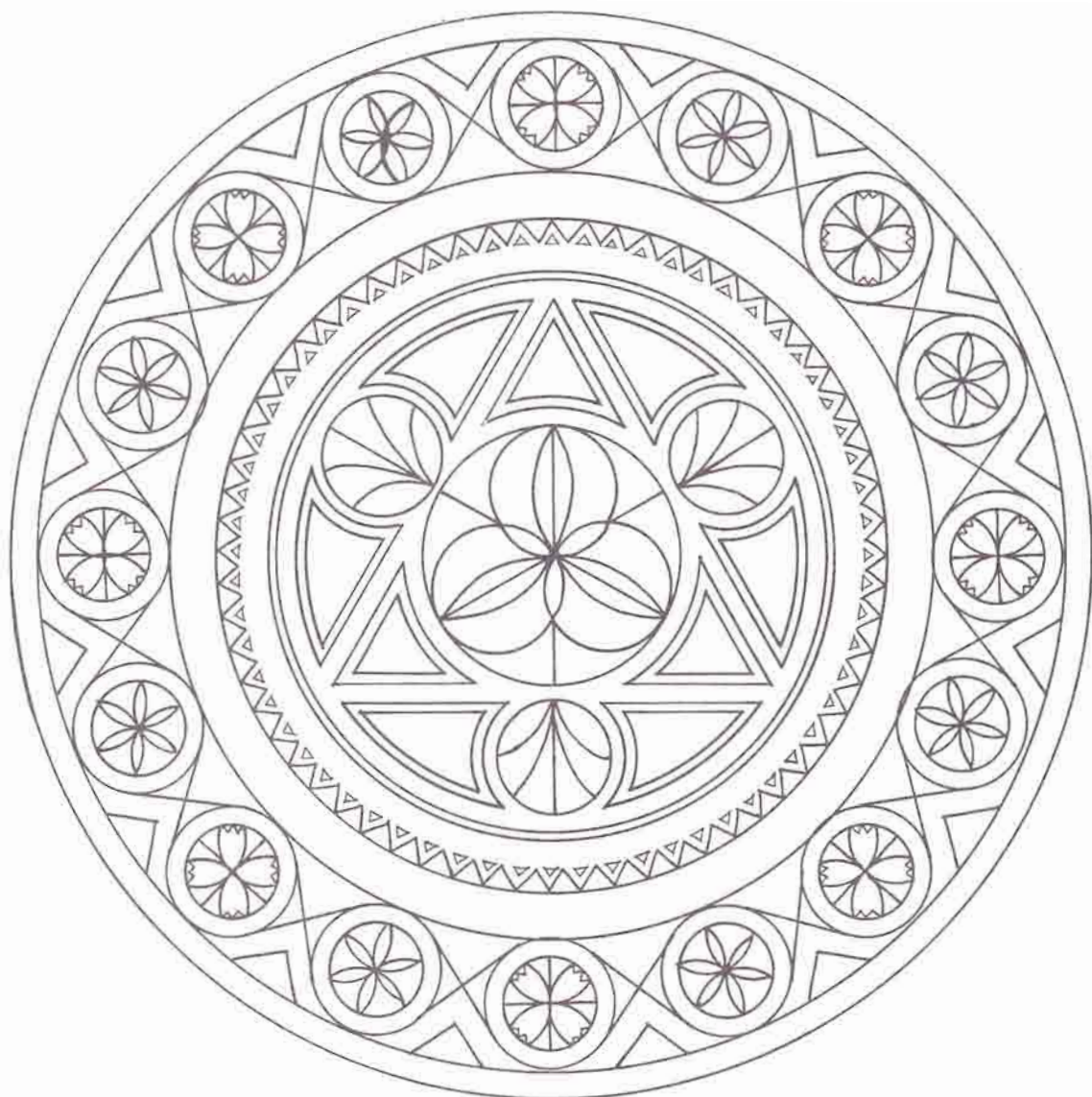
4-18 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with eight-point floral rosette and trefoil border.



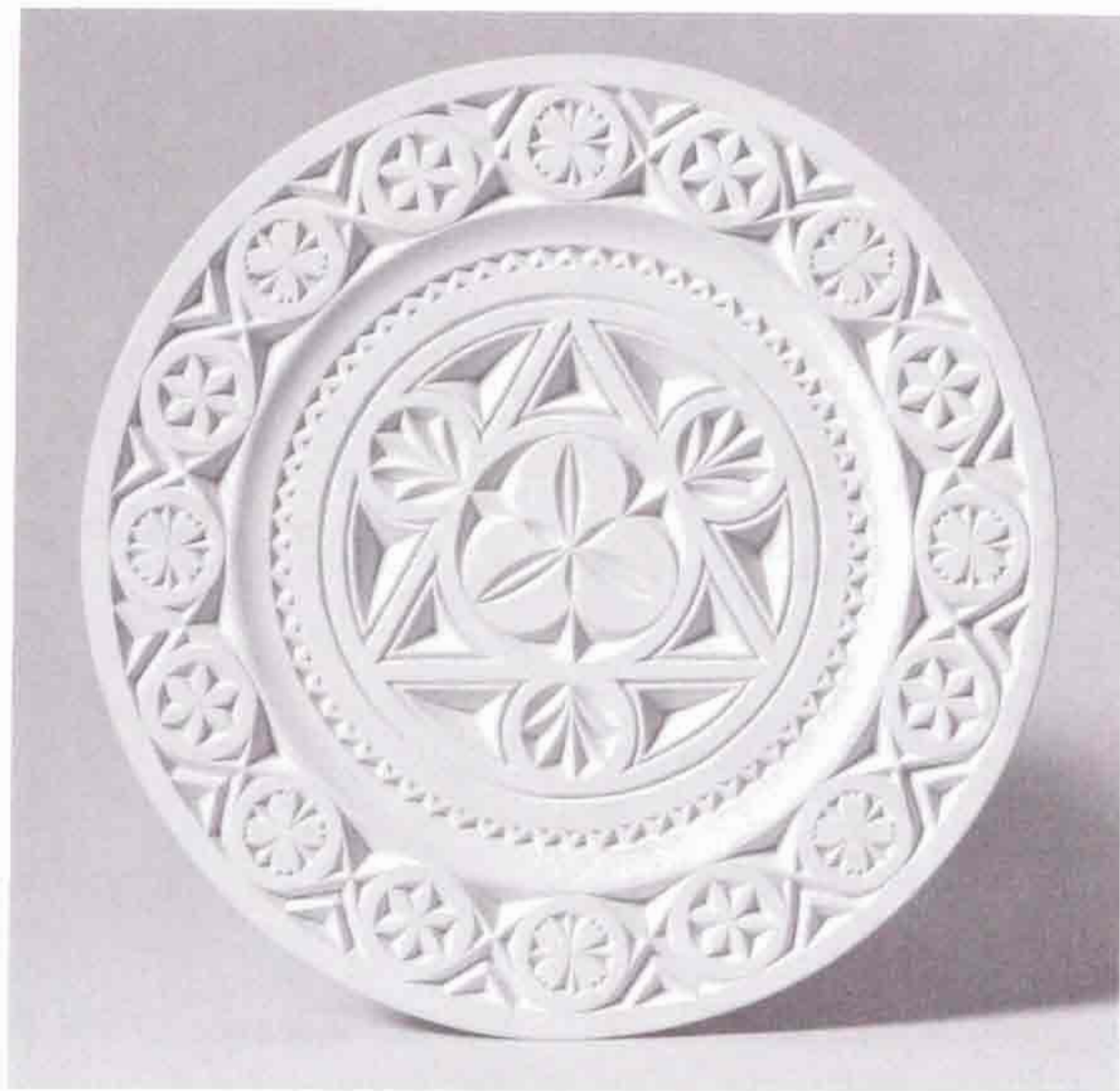
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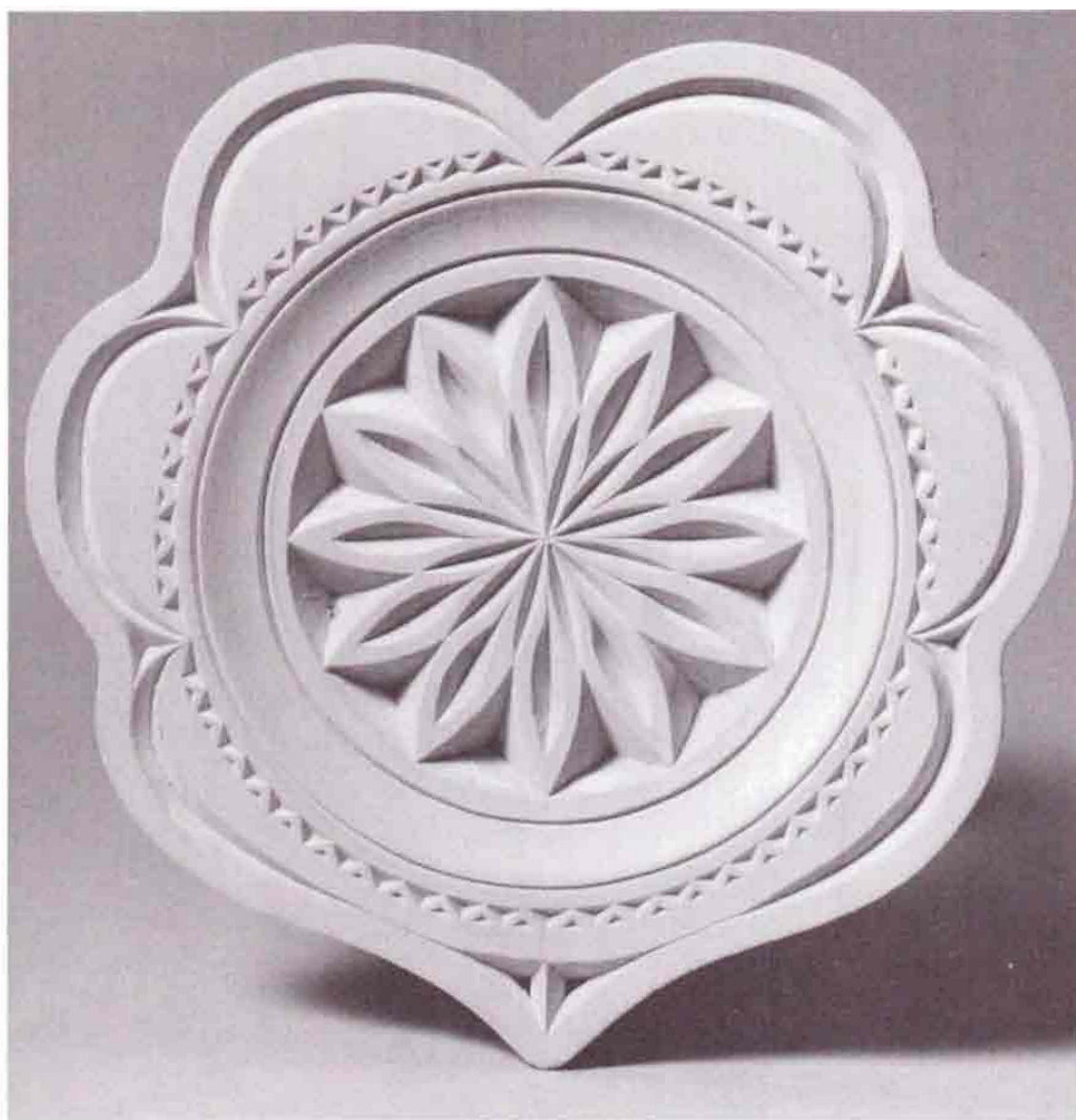
4-20 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with heart-and-floral center and scalloped border.



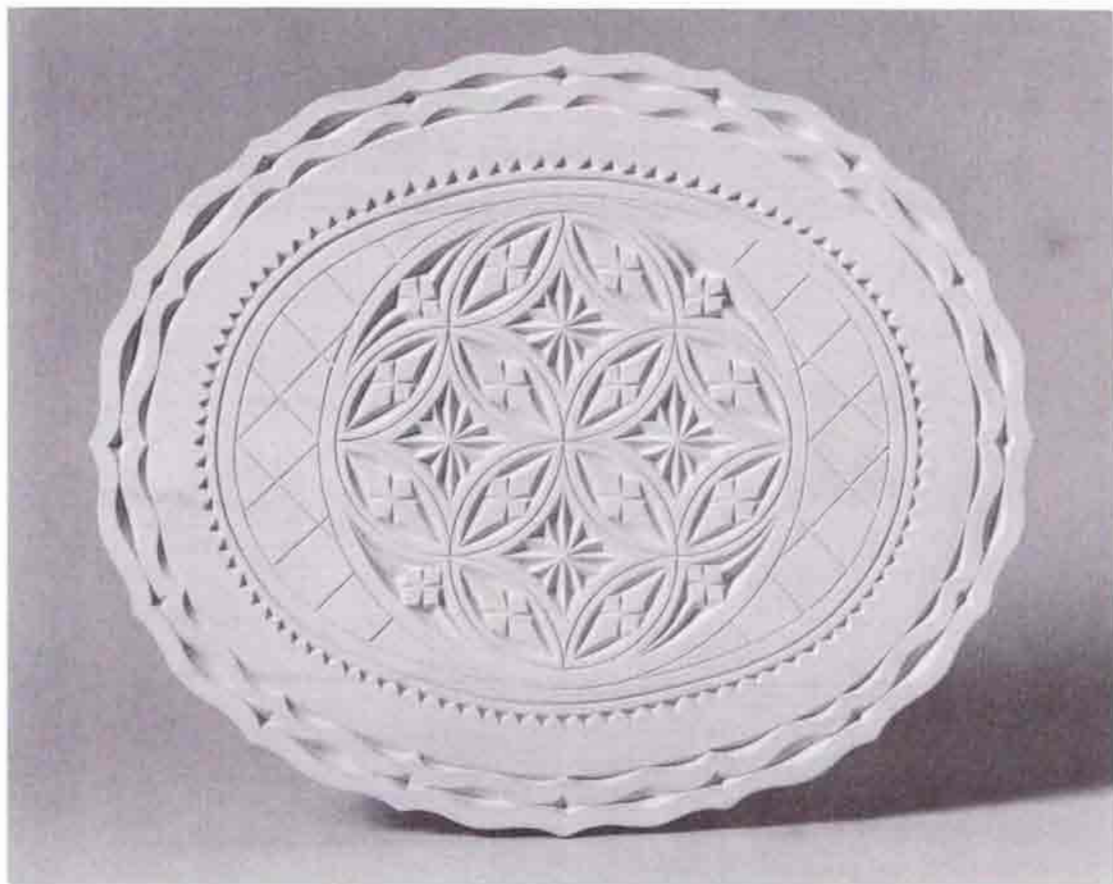
4-21



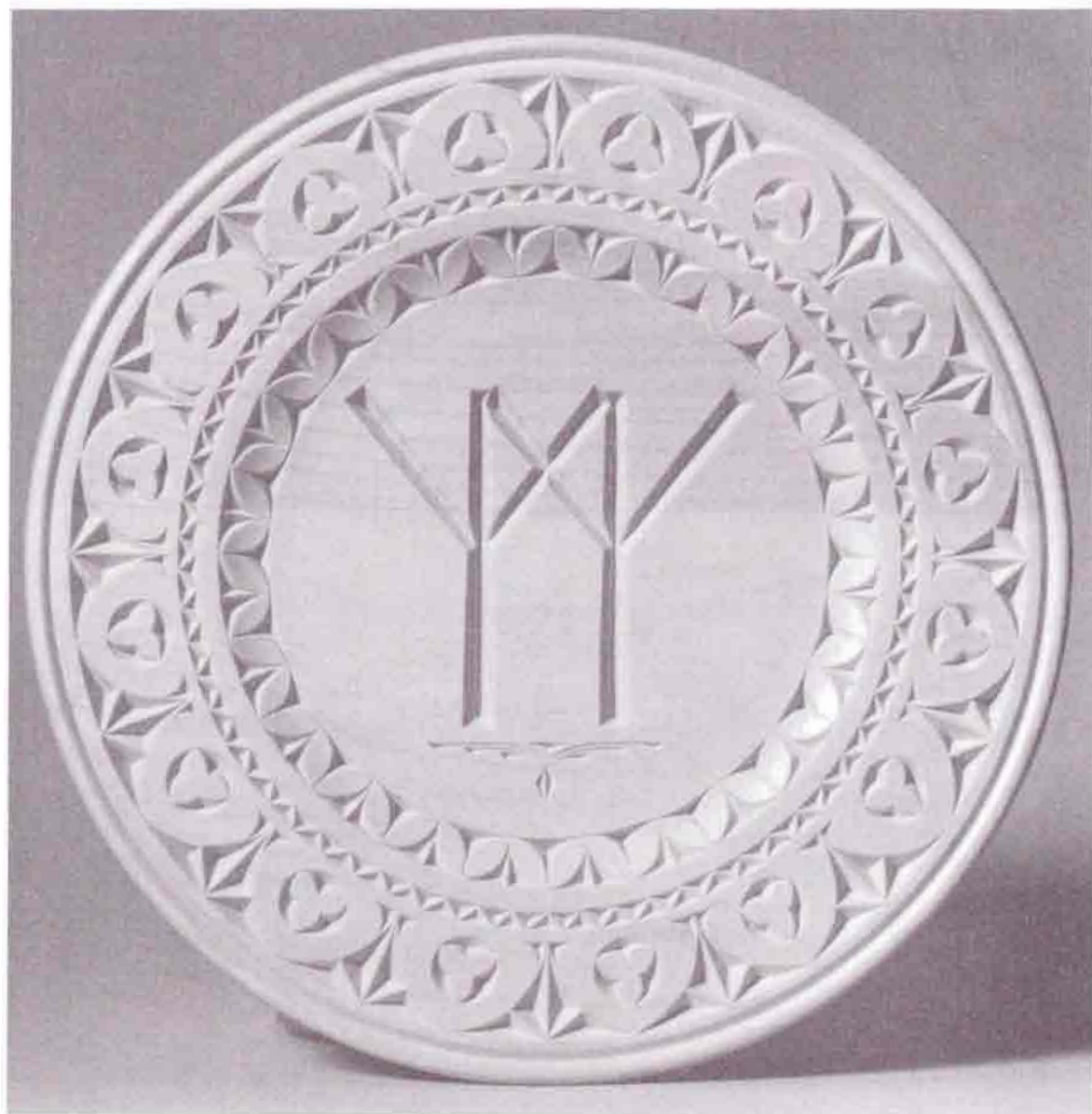
4-22 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with trefoil rosette and border of the smaller rosettes, showing strong use of circles and triangles.



4-23 Heart-shaped 8"-diameter basswood plate with simple 12-point rosette and border.



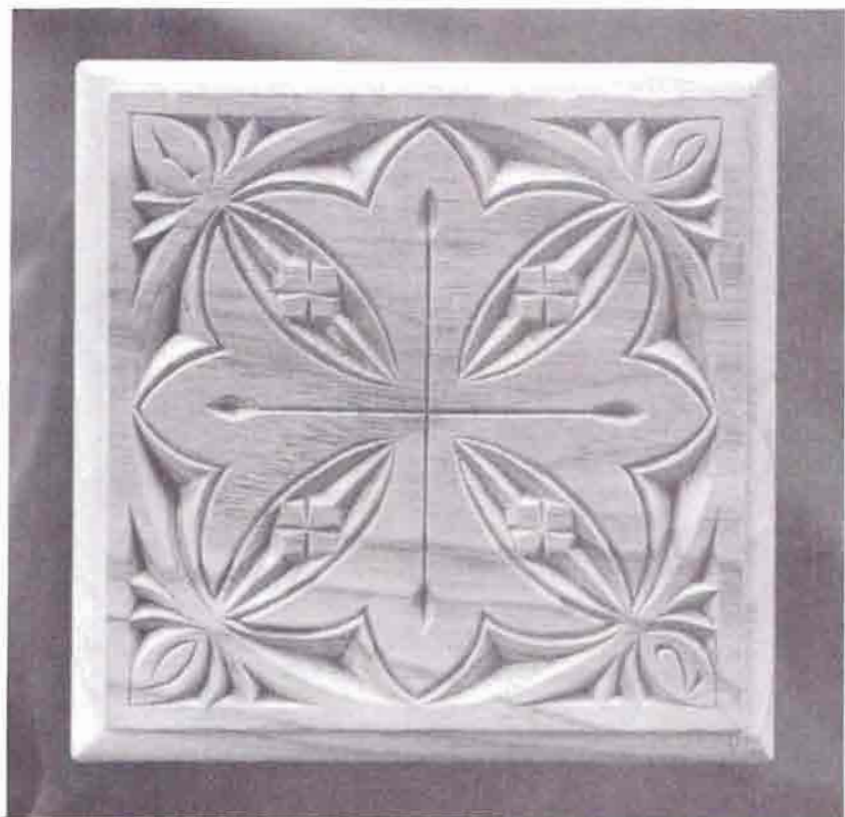
4-24 Oval 12"-diameter basswood plate with rosette of four interlocking circles and double scalloped border.



4-25 Basswood 10"-diameter plate with ancient friendship symbol in center with multiple border patterns including trefoil.



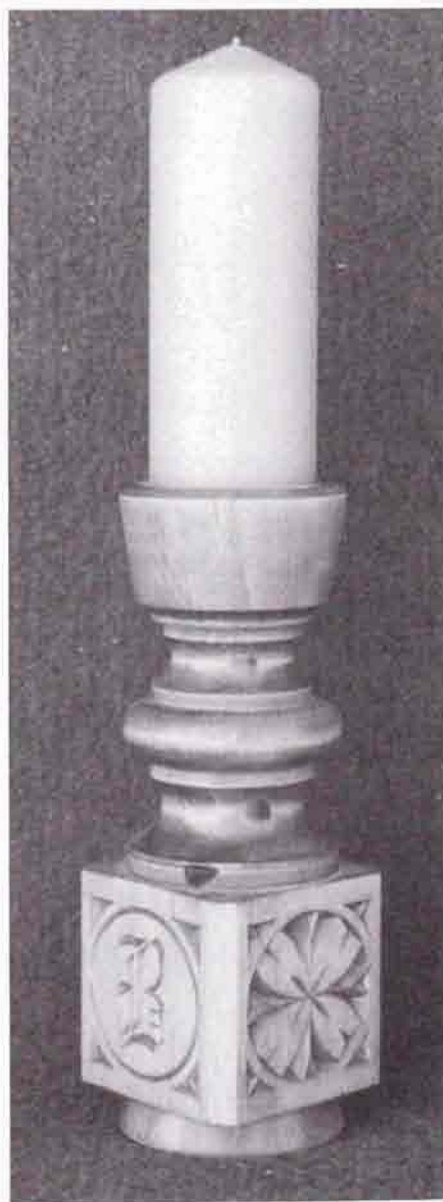
4-26 Butternut 9"-diameter bowl with predominantly garland and scalloped border patterns.



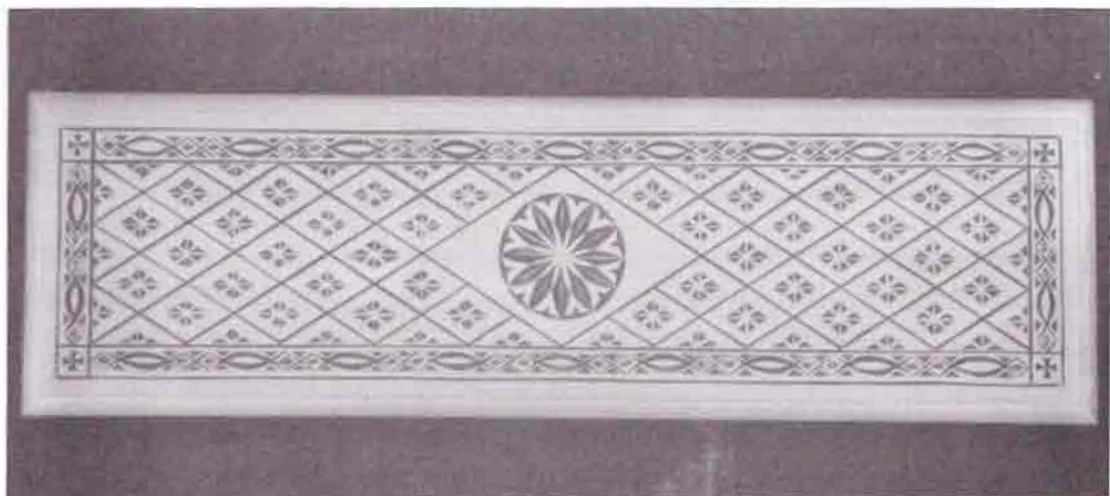
4-27 Butternut 5" × 5" box lid including cross with diamonds, dated 1992.



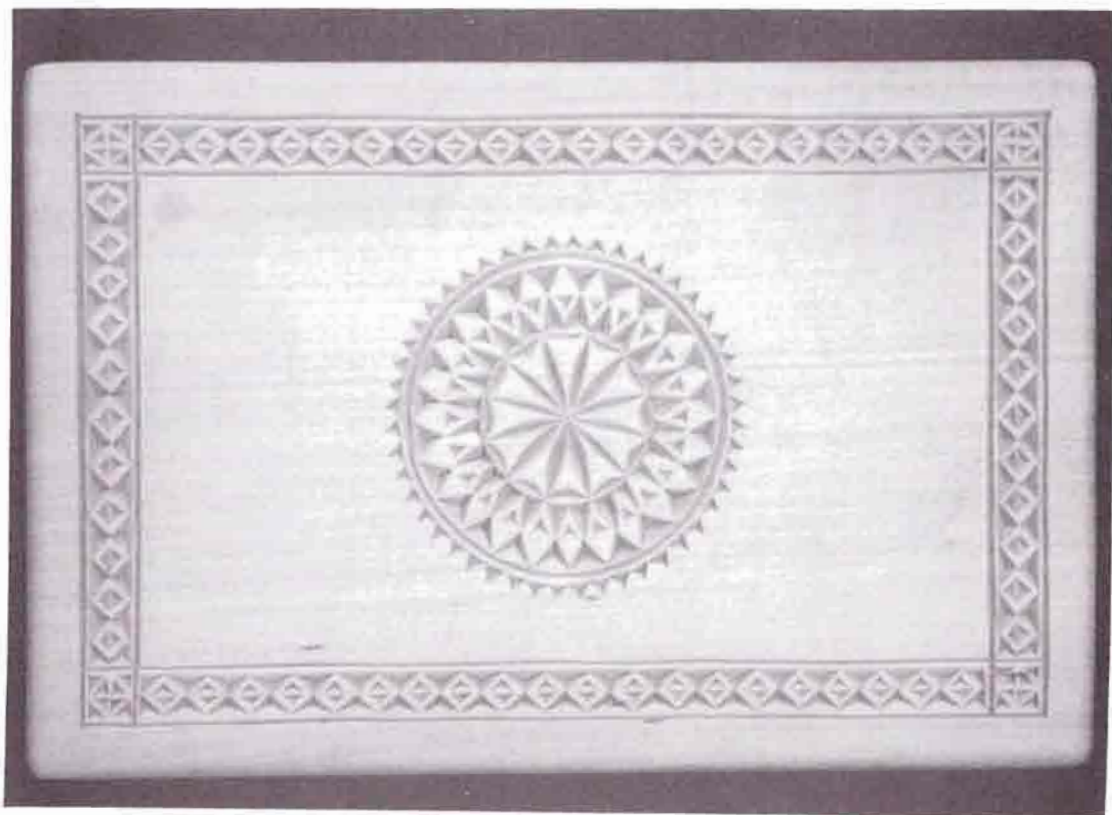
4-28 Basswood candle holder with 6"-diameter base.



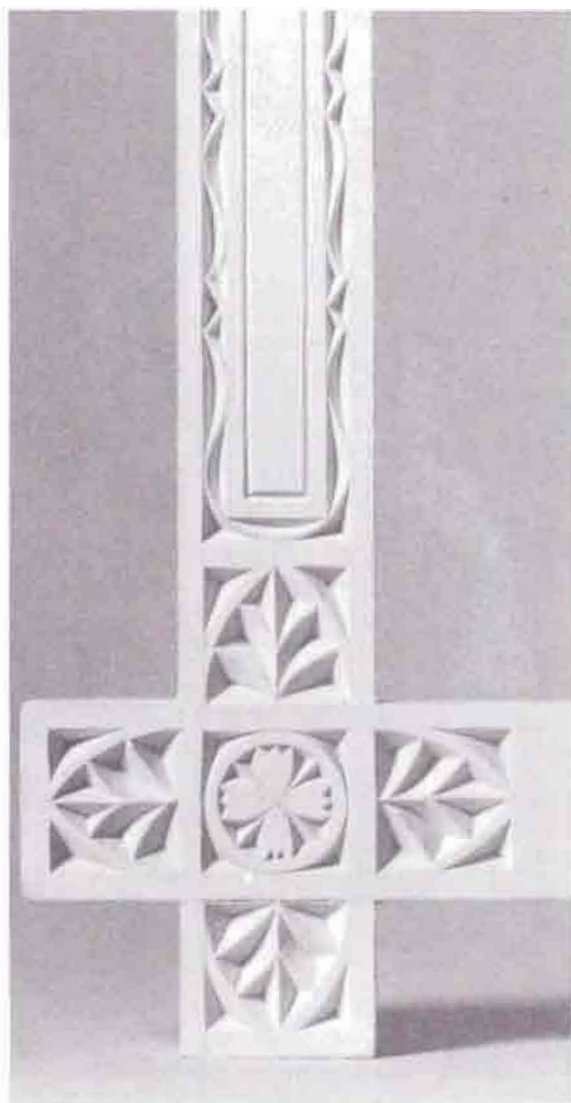
4-29 Basswood 7"-high candle holder, stained.



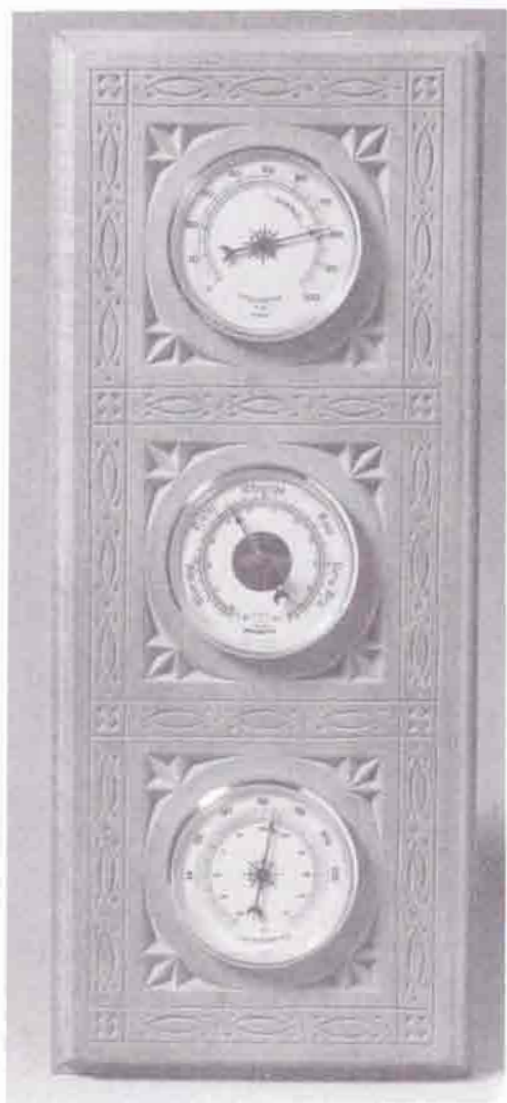
4-30 Basswood 16" × 5" knitting-needle box with 12-point rosette, grid, and Swiss-lace border.



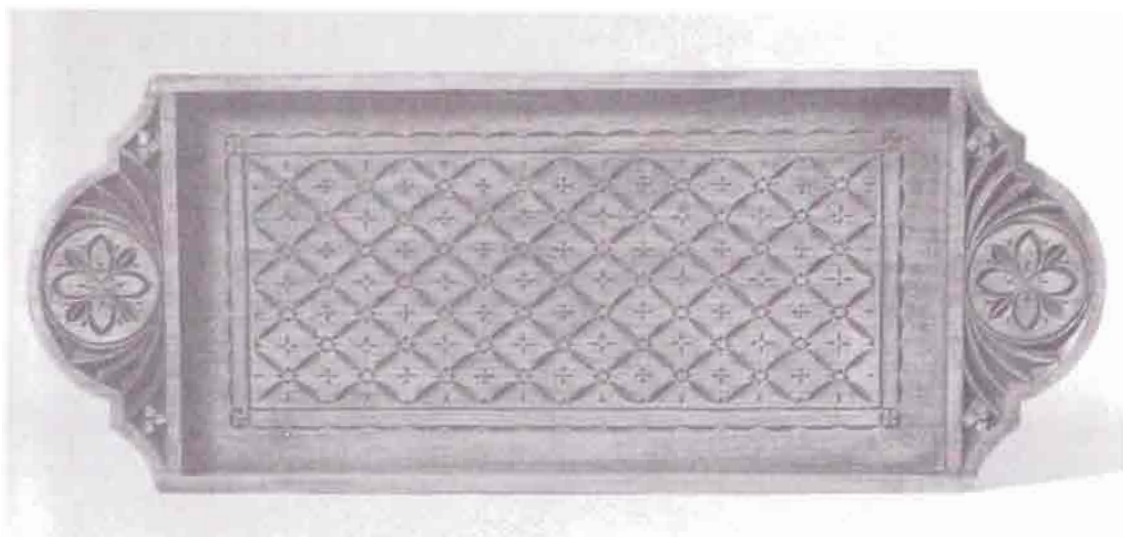
4-31 Basswood 7½" × 5" box with 24-point rosette and double-diamond border.



4-32 Corner of basswood picture frame.



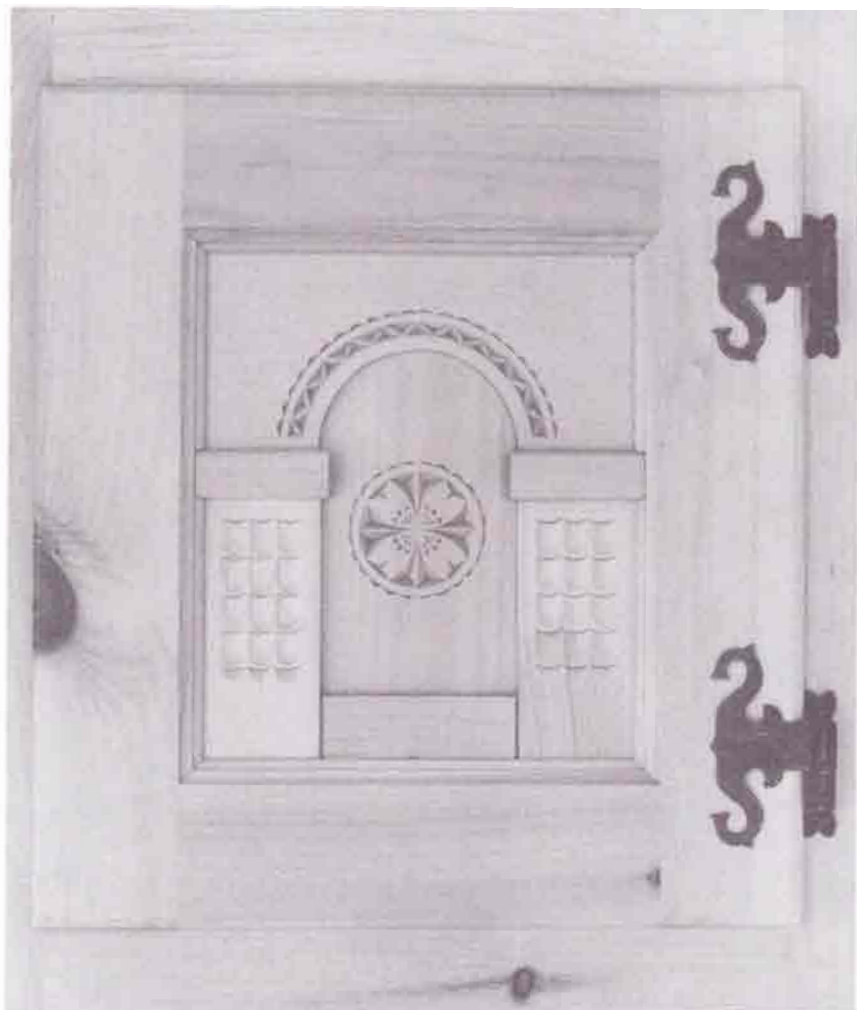
4-33 Weather station— $15\frac{1}{2}'' \times 6\frac{1}{2}''$
with Swiss-lace border, stained.



4-34 Tray—17" × 6½", stained.



4-35 End of 4" × 6" facial tissue box with swirl rosette and ribbon border.



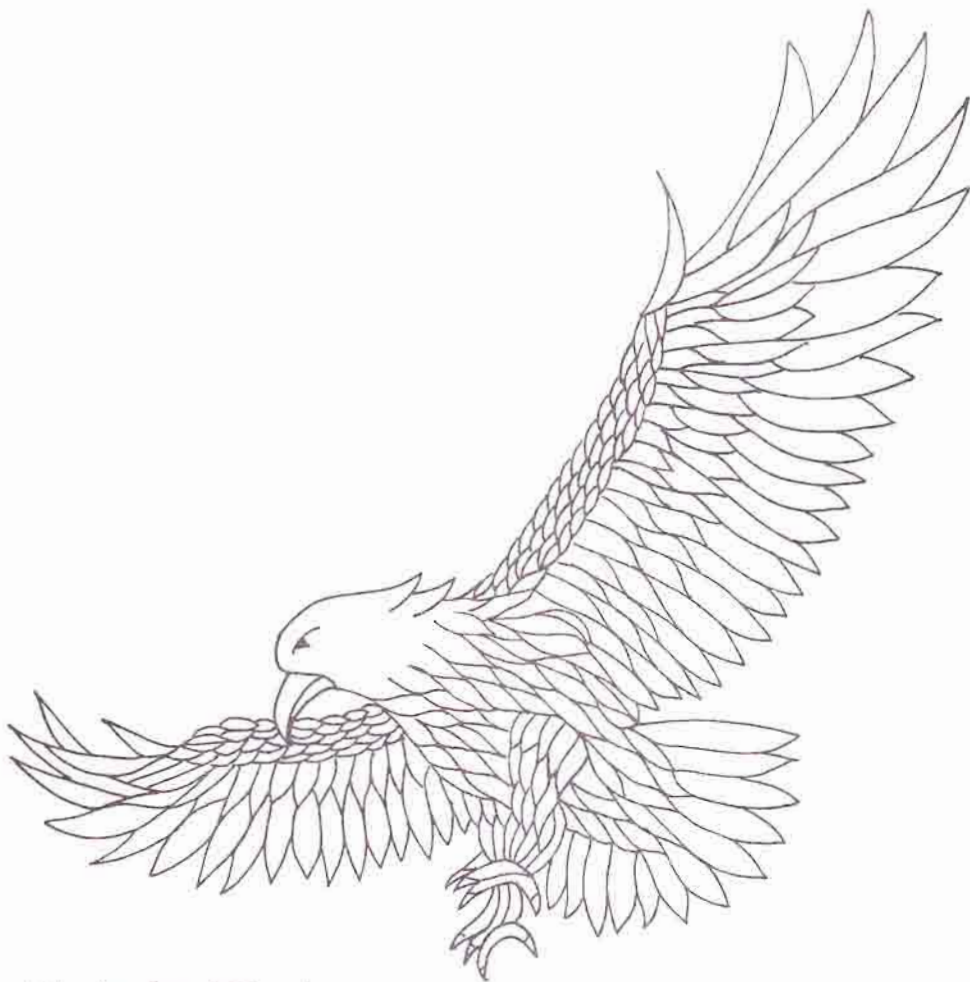
4-36 White-pine door cabinet—traditional Swiss design, combining chip-carved rosette and arch with chisel-carved fish-scale pattern.

5

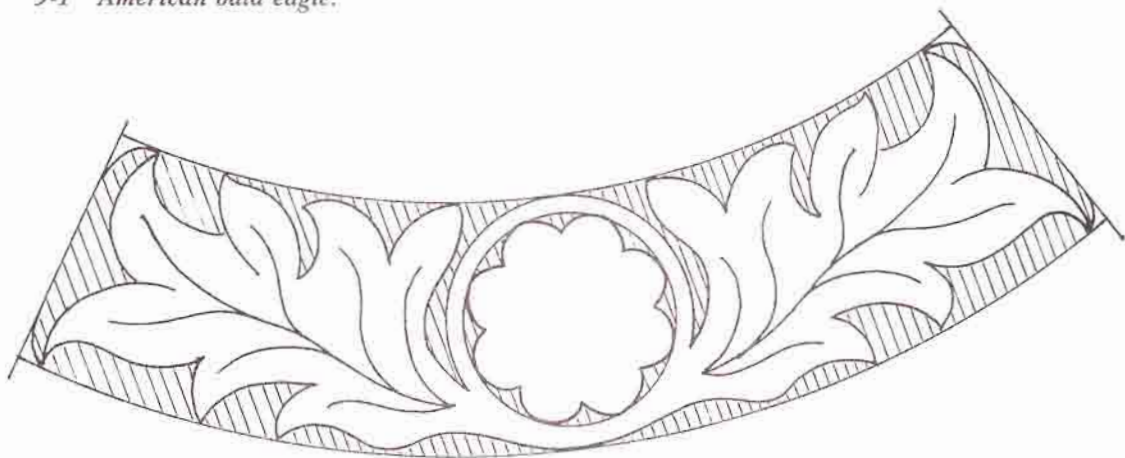
FREE-FORM MOTIFS

Traditional free-form chip carving is a style that generally steers away from the geometrical. It is commonly used to depict natural forms, such as animals, birds, flowers, and foliage. It accomplishes this by incising the design rather than relieving it.

Free-form motifs can be realistic or fanciful, symmetrical or irregular, simple or ornate. As already mentioned, they can also be combined with other design aspects, such as geometrical components and lettering. Because natural forms can be interpreted in so many different ways, free-form motifs offer the carver a wonderful opportunity for self-expression.



5-1 American bald eagle.



5-2 Floral design with shaded area carved.



5-3 Basswood 16"-diameter plate with American bald eagle and scalloped-lace border—outer border of positive-image floral design and Becker lettering, dated 1992. (H. Huggler-Wyss Woodcarving Shop, Brienzi, Switzerland)



5-4



5-5 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with floral design and zigzag scalloped border.



5-6



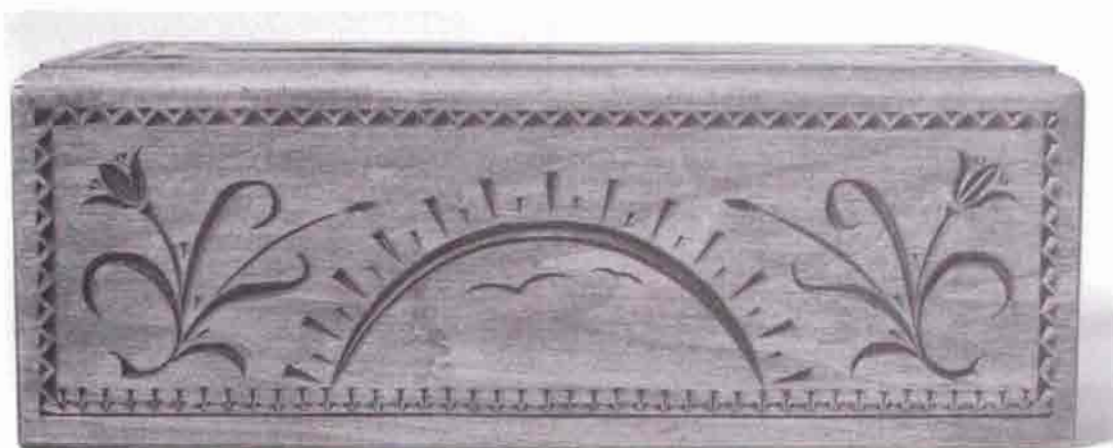
5-7 Basswood 13" $\times$ 8 1/2" box lid with floral bouquet and scalloped border, stained.



5-8 *Carved basswood 72" × 20" lintel.* (Home of Ernie and Susan Conover, Parkman, Ohio)



5-9 Cover for basswood facial tissue box—floral design, stained.



5-10 Side of basswood 11" × 4" facial tissue box—sun, flowers, and birds in the morning, stained.

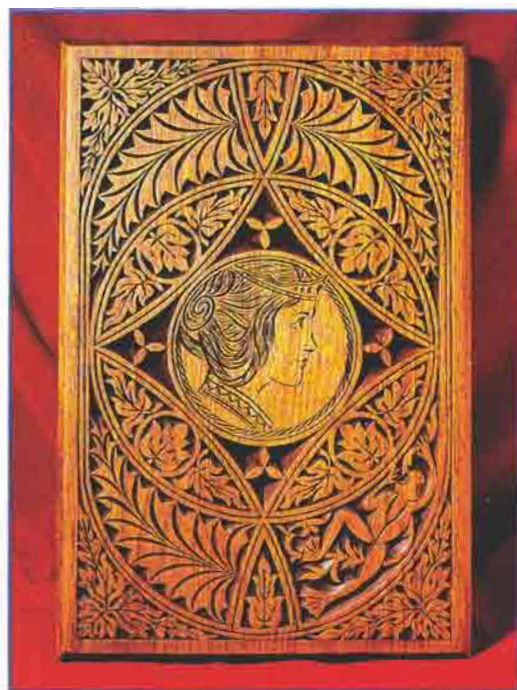


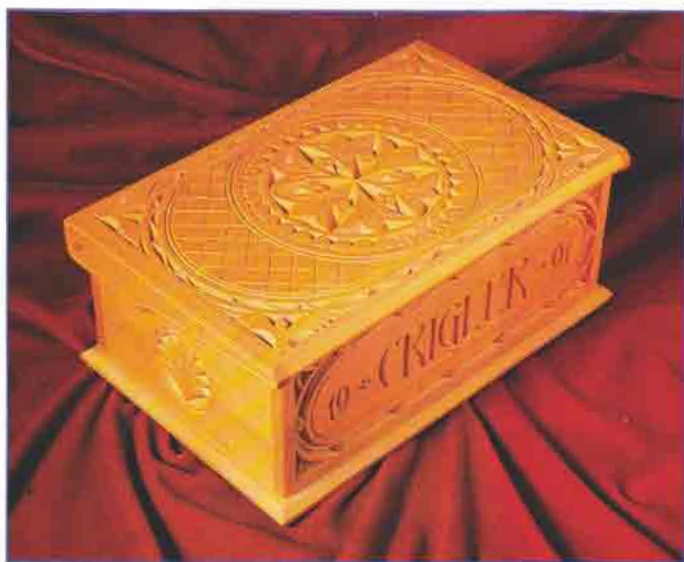
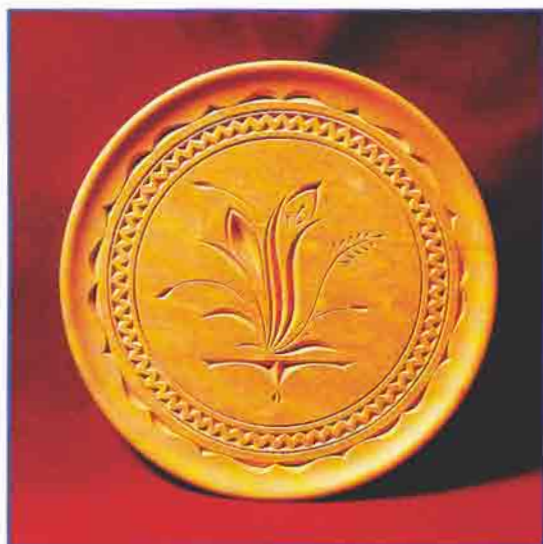
5-11



5-12 Wall holder for dried flowers—basswood, 9½" high, with floral bouquet and rosette.

*Clockwise from upper left: Basswood
10"-diameter plate; Butternut 12 × 18" wall
plaque; Butternut 8½ × 13" jewelry box.*



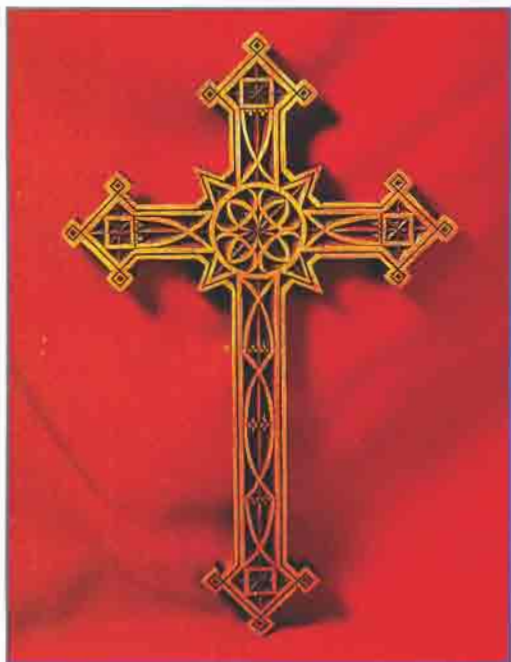
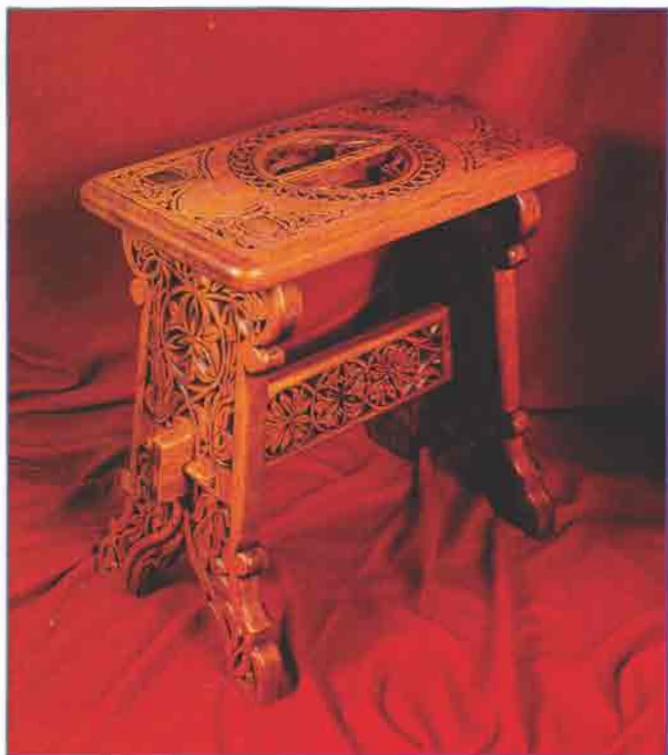


*Clockwise from upper left:
Basswood $2\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ "
peppermill; Basswood
8"-diameter plate; Basswood
 $8\frac{1}{2} \times 13$ " jewelry box.*



Clockwise from upper left: Basswood 8"-diameter plate; Basswood candlestick with 6"-diameter base; White-pine 6 × 14" mantel clock.





Clockwise from upper left: Butternut "fifteenth century Norman Gothic" stool; Butternut 9"-diameter bowl; Basswood 8½ × 14" cross.





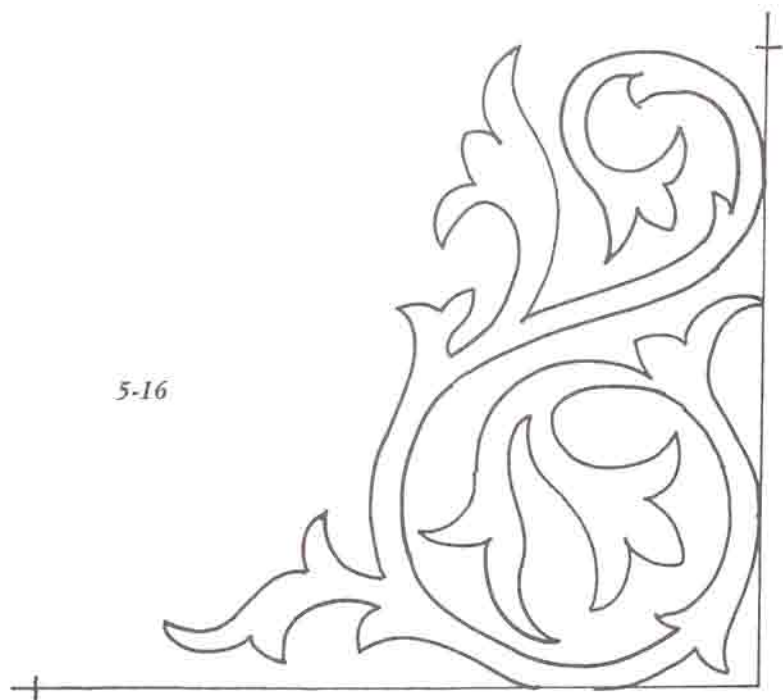
5-13 Basswood 9"-high Christmas tree with rosette ornaments.



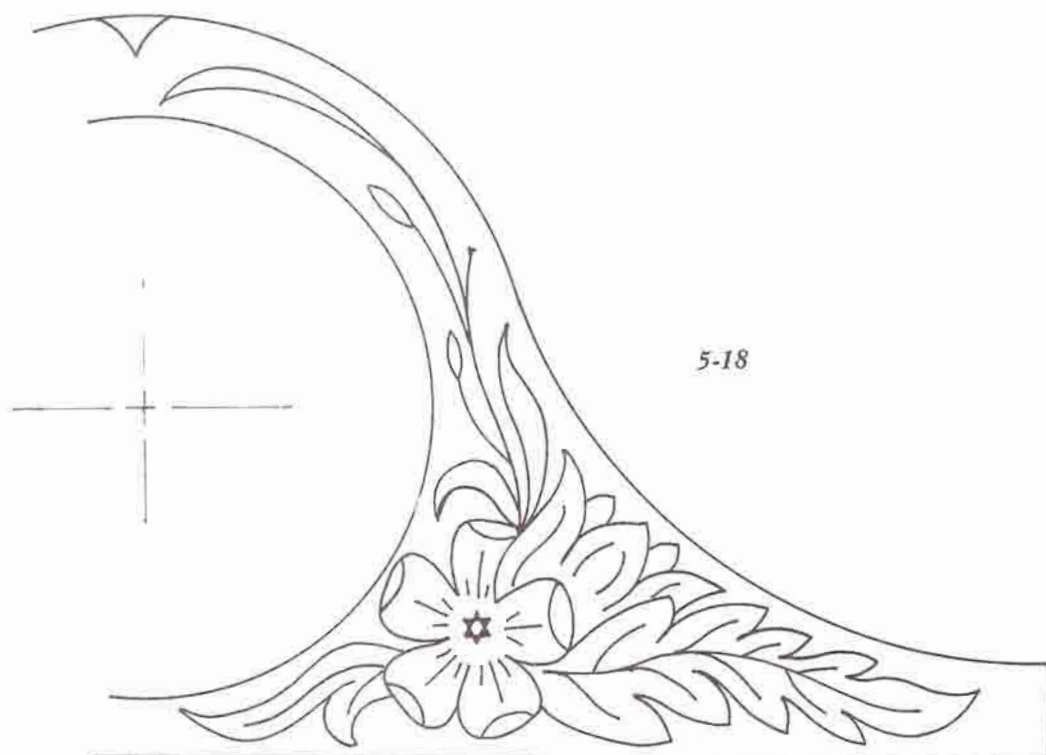
5-14



5-15 Basswood 12"-diameter heart-shaped plate with floral pattern.



5-17 Butternut 13" × 8½" box lid with three-point rosette, garland-and-scalloped border, and fancy incised grillwork, stained.



5-19 White-pine 14" × 6" mantel clock with floral pattern, stained.



5-20



5-21 Butternut 13" x 8 1/2" box lid with dove pattern, stained.



5-22



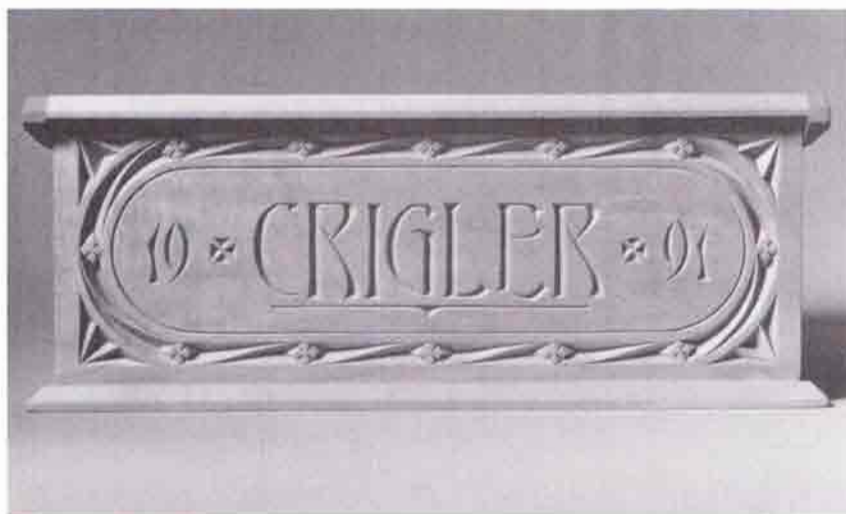
5-23 Basswood 10"-diameter plate with floral cross and border, stained.

6

LETTERING

Using chip-carving techniques is the fastest and easiest way to carve letters. It is also the best way to personalize a carving and make it special. Names, initials, dates, even quotations of every nature are very traditional and can bring out, or provide an interesting complement to, other design aspects in a carving.

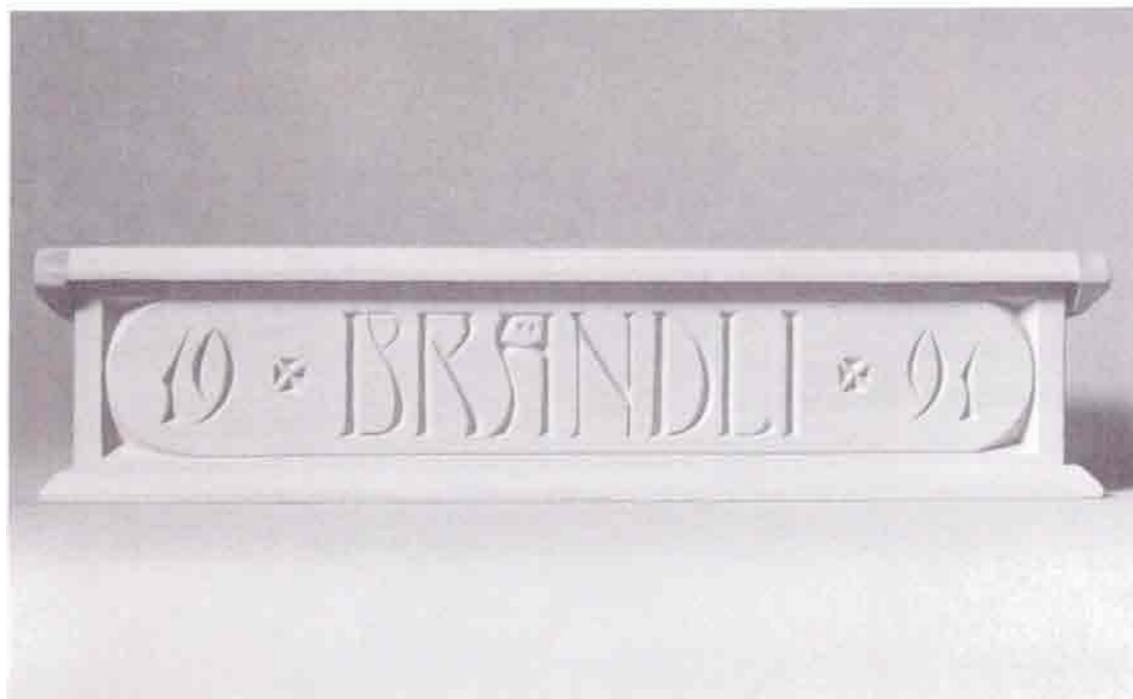
The lettering shown here illustrates some styles and applications. For a more definitive explanation of how to approach the actual carving of letters and several lettering styles artistically suited for carving, I recommend my previous books, *Chip Carving Techniques and Patterns* and *Chip Carving Patterns*.



6-1 Front of basswood jewelry box—Ambrosia lettering with garland border.



6-2 Monogram WB—Becker lettering, butternut, stained.



6-3 Front of basswood jewelry box with Ambrosia lettering.



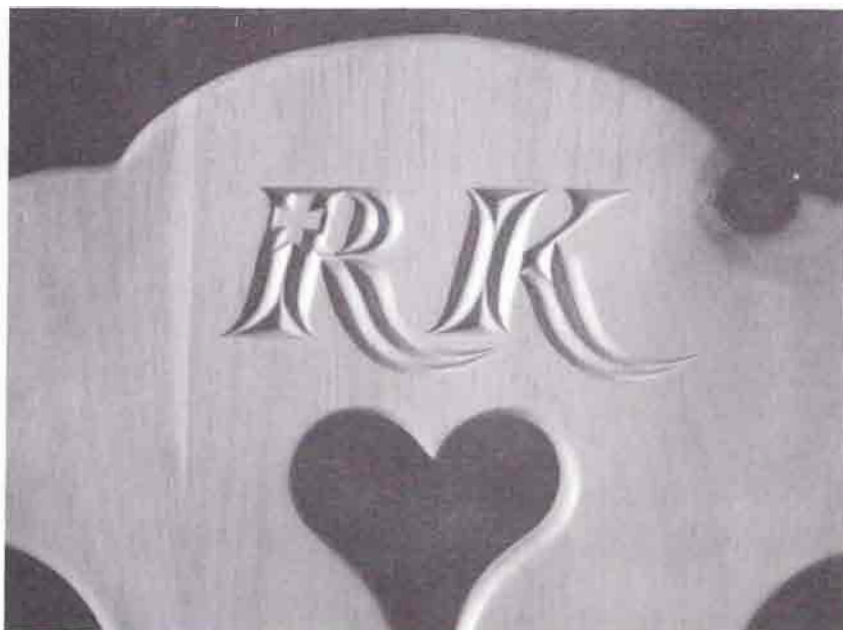
6-4 Back of Swiss-style chair—white pine with Old English lettering and traditional rosette-and-foliage pattern.



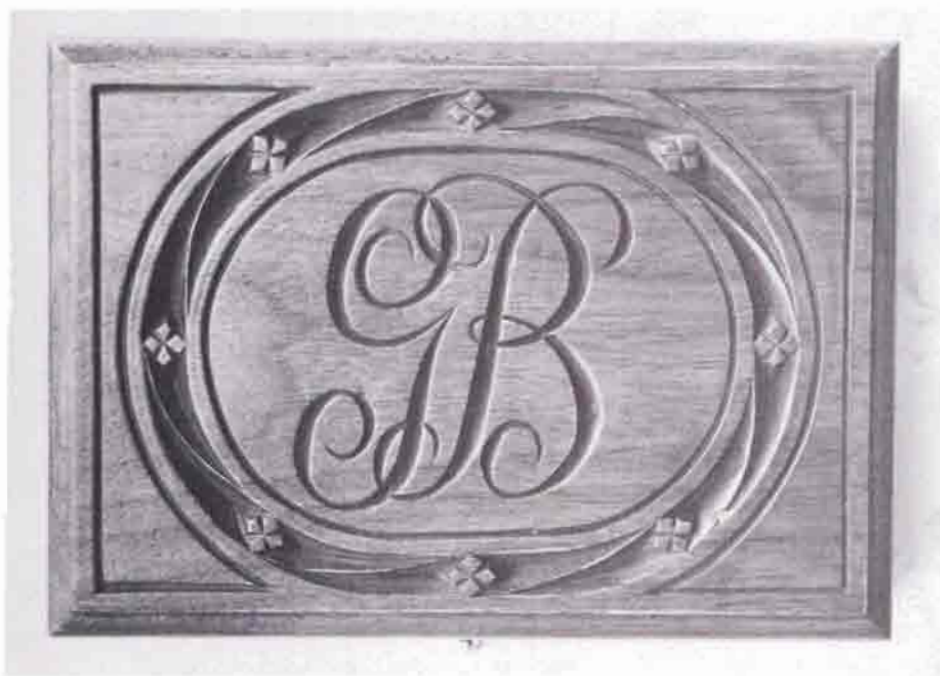
6-5 Walnut 5" × 7" jewelry box—Old English lettering with floral pattern and small rosette, stained.



6-6 Walnut 5" × 7" jewelry box—Script lettering, stained.



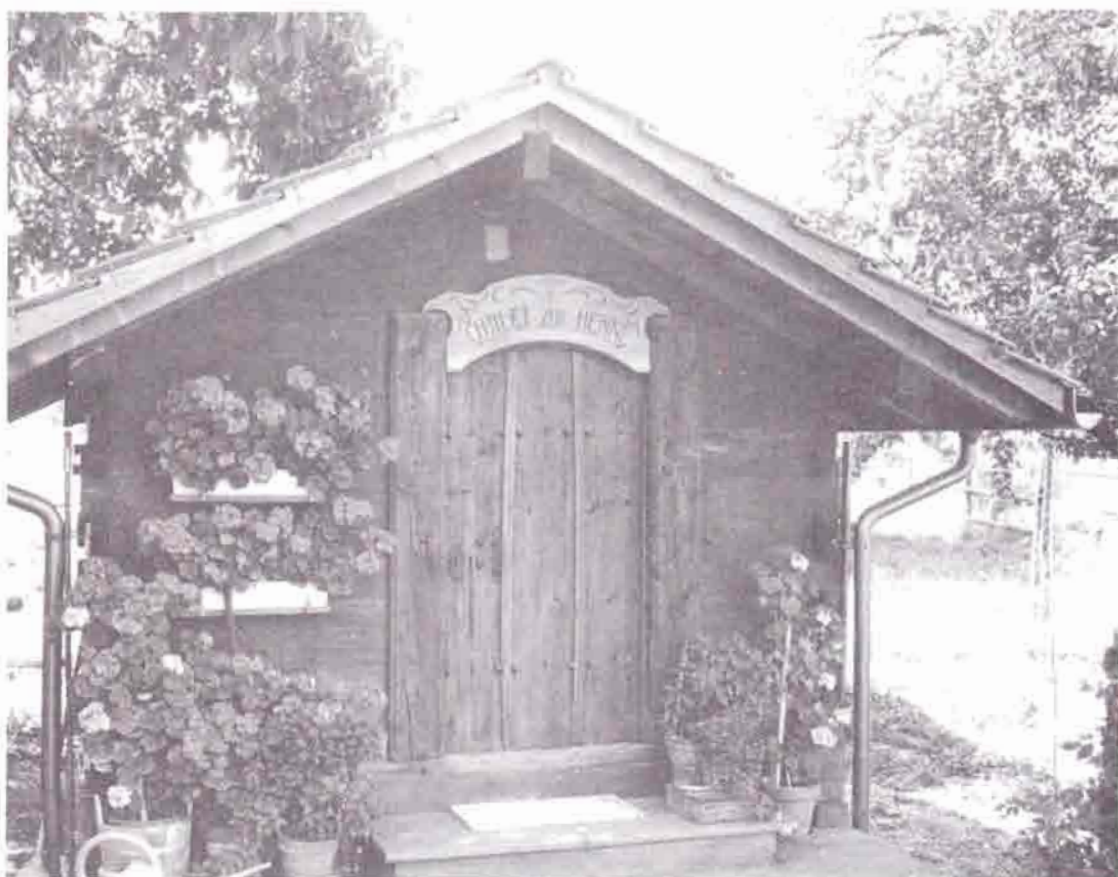
6-7 Logo of cheese company Rot Kase on Swiss-style white-pine chair back.



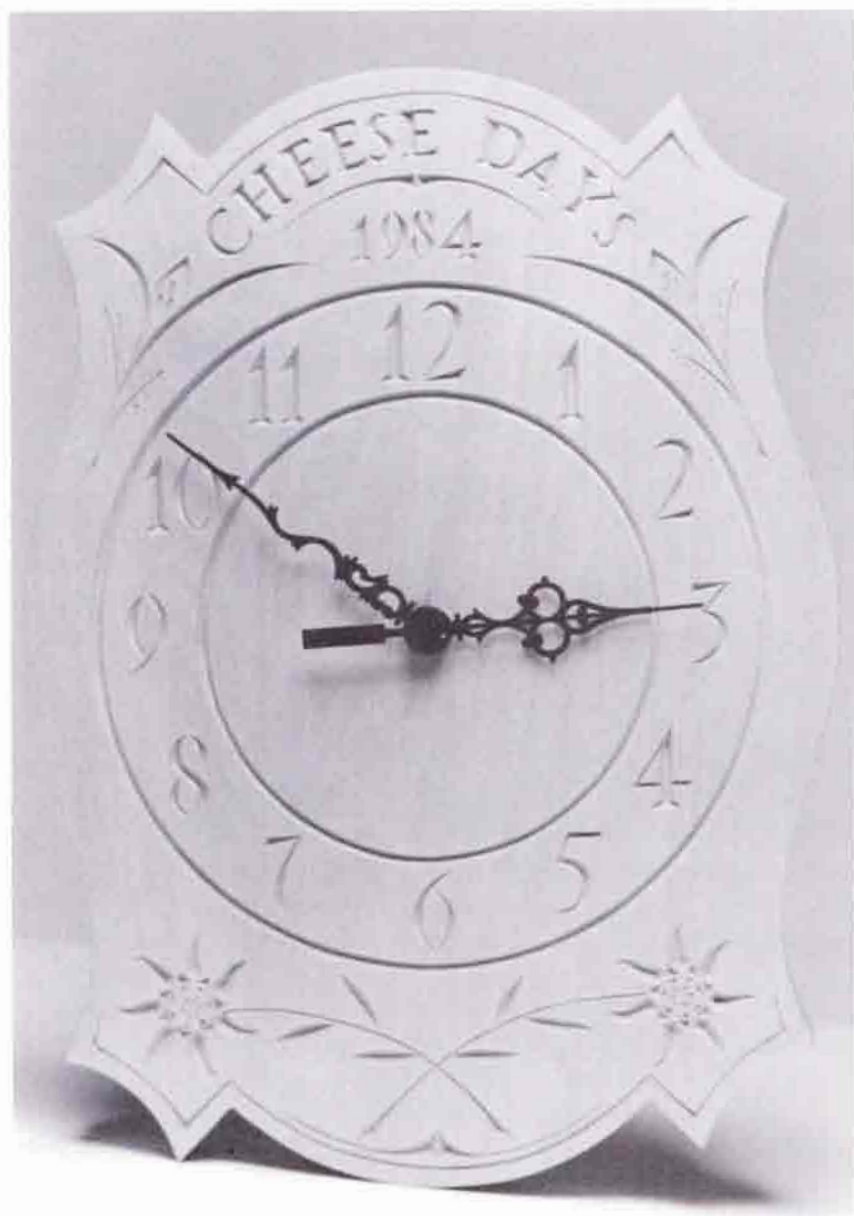
6-8 Butternut 5" × 7" jewelry box with monogram Script lettering and garland border, stained.



6-9 Lintel of Swiss mountain hut with Ambrosia lettering and rooster pattern.



6-10 Swiss mountain hut, three-hundred-years old.



6-11 Basswood clockface with Roman lettering and floral pattern, dated 1984.



6-12 Basswood 5" × 7" jewelry box with Ambrosia lettering and floral pattern.

7

POSITIVE-IMAGE MOTIFS

Generally speaking, any chip carving that produces a recognizable form in a relieved state (not incised), such as a bird, animal, or flower, would be classified as having a positive image. In traditional chip carving, certain executions of rosettes, such as six- or 12-point rosettes, automatically produce a positive image. This, however, is more a result of the geometric characteristics of the rosette than original intention.

The concept of “positive image” offers a whole new dimension for anyone who enjoys chip carving. It can be executed strictly by itself or in combination with geometrical designs, free-form motifs, or lettering. When the carved space is defined by the device of ribbing—narrow, continuous border or design areas left in relief against a lower background, similar to the vaulting found in Gothic architecture—positive imaging can be used to fill that space quite successfully.

Geometric shapes such as triangles and diamonds, as well as circles, act as frames for whatever is designed within them, especially when defined by narrow ribbing. There is a certain formality to this definition, even if the form is irregular. When the space within this framework is filled with foliage, such as a plant or leaf, it creates an excellent contrast to its frame, the one complementing the other.

Designing the foliage to appear as though it is growing out of its frame creates a feeling of energy and organic life. This appearance is accomplished by having the leaves, lobes, and stems bend and curl against the framework, forcing them back and over,

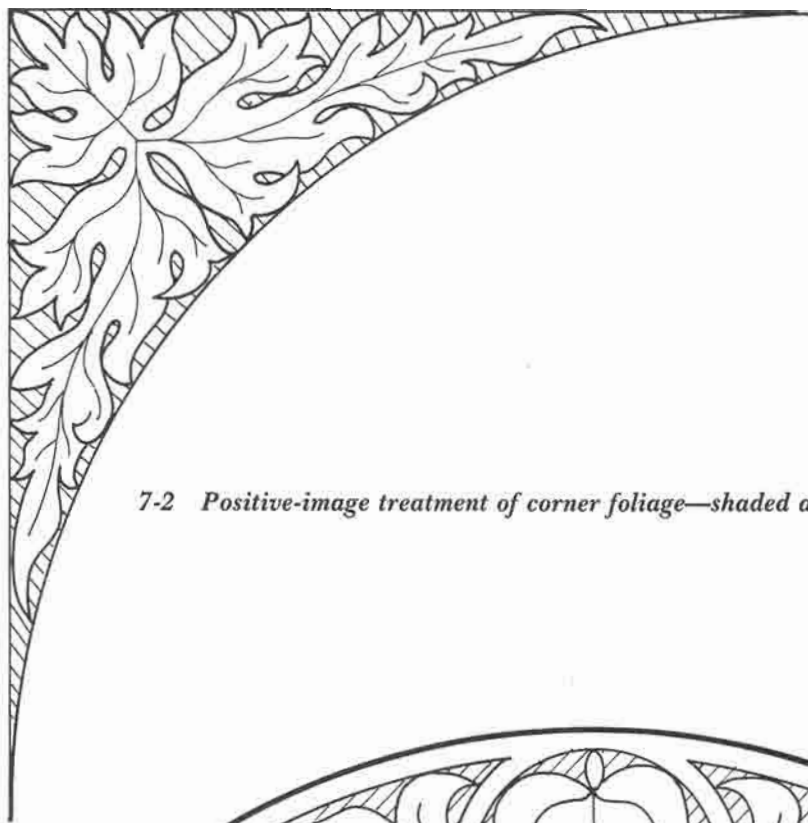
filling the entire space. Depending on the attitude expressed by the leaves or lobes, the design can appear friendly or foreboding. It is usually a good idea to add the veins in any foliage you create, as it imparts a more organic feeling to the carving.

The most important consideration in a positive-image carving is that the chips you design be of a size and shape that can be executed. Though some of the chips will be similar to what is usually found in traditional geometric chip carving, many will be irregular. However, the same chip-carving techniques are used to remove them.

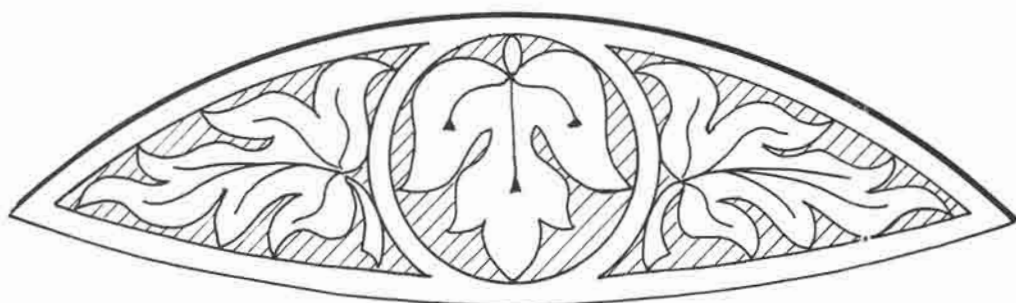
The patterns in this chapter illustrate several ways to design a positive image in chip carving, particularly with foliage. With a little practice, you'll soon discover how easily your chip carving can be expanded to include this innovative style.



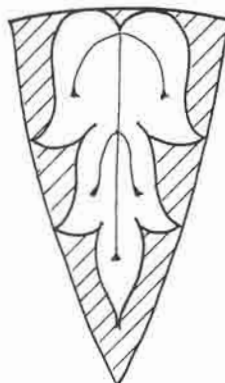
7-1



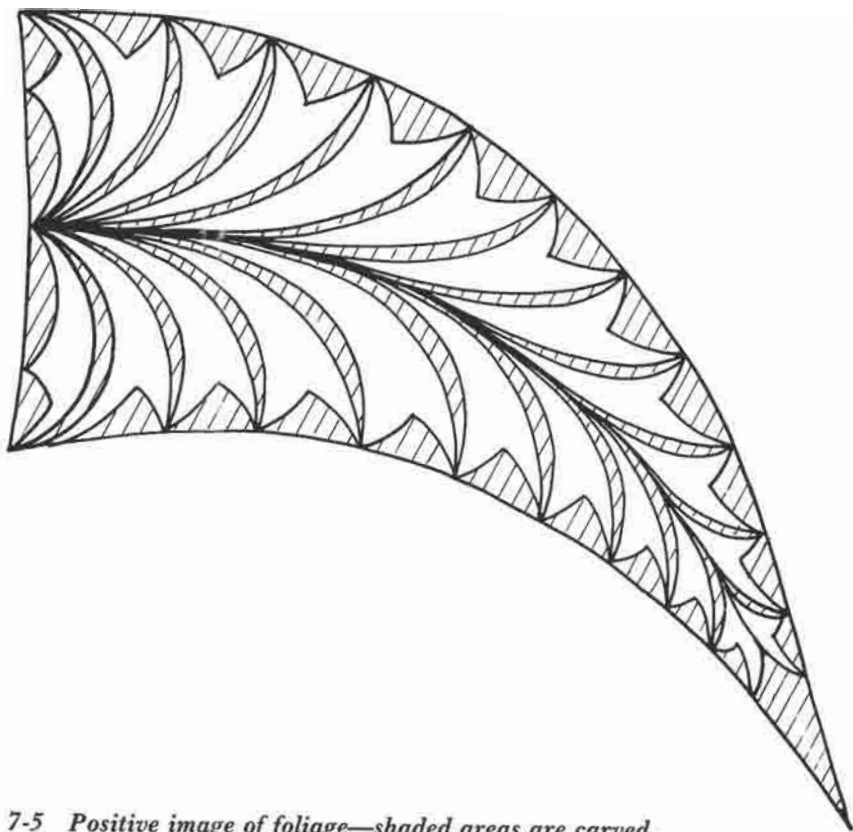
7-2 Positive-image treatment of corner foliage—shaded area is carved.



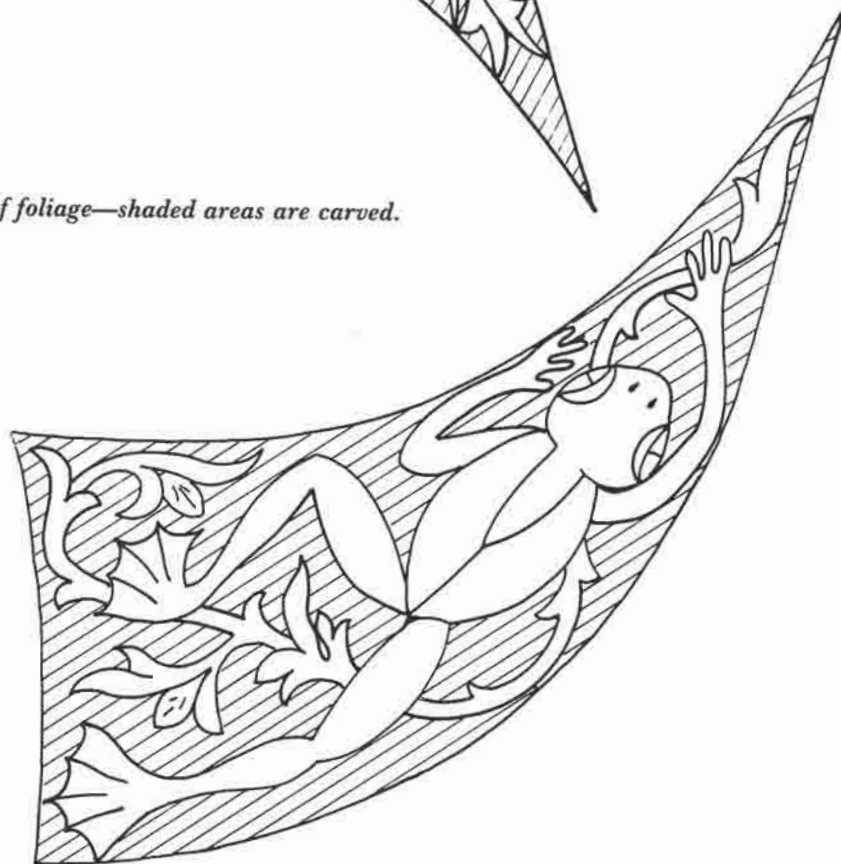
7-3 Positive-image treatment of foliage—shaded areas are carved.



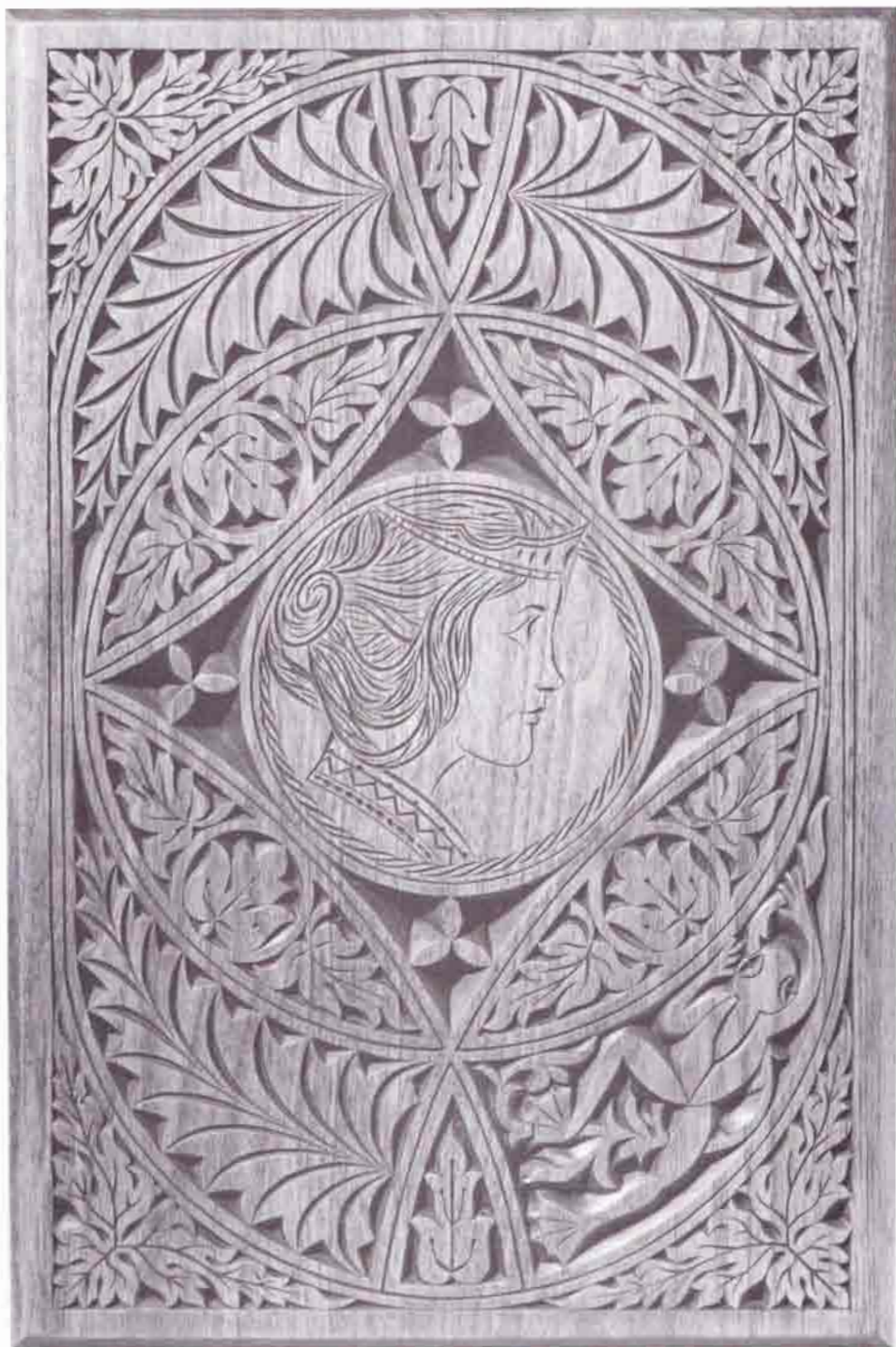
7-4 Positive image of foliage—shaded areas are carved.



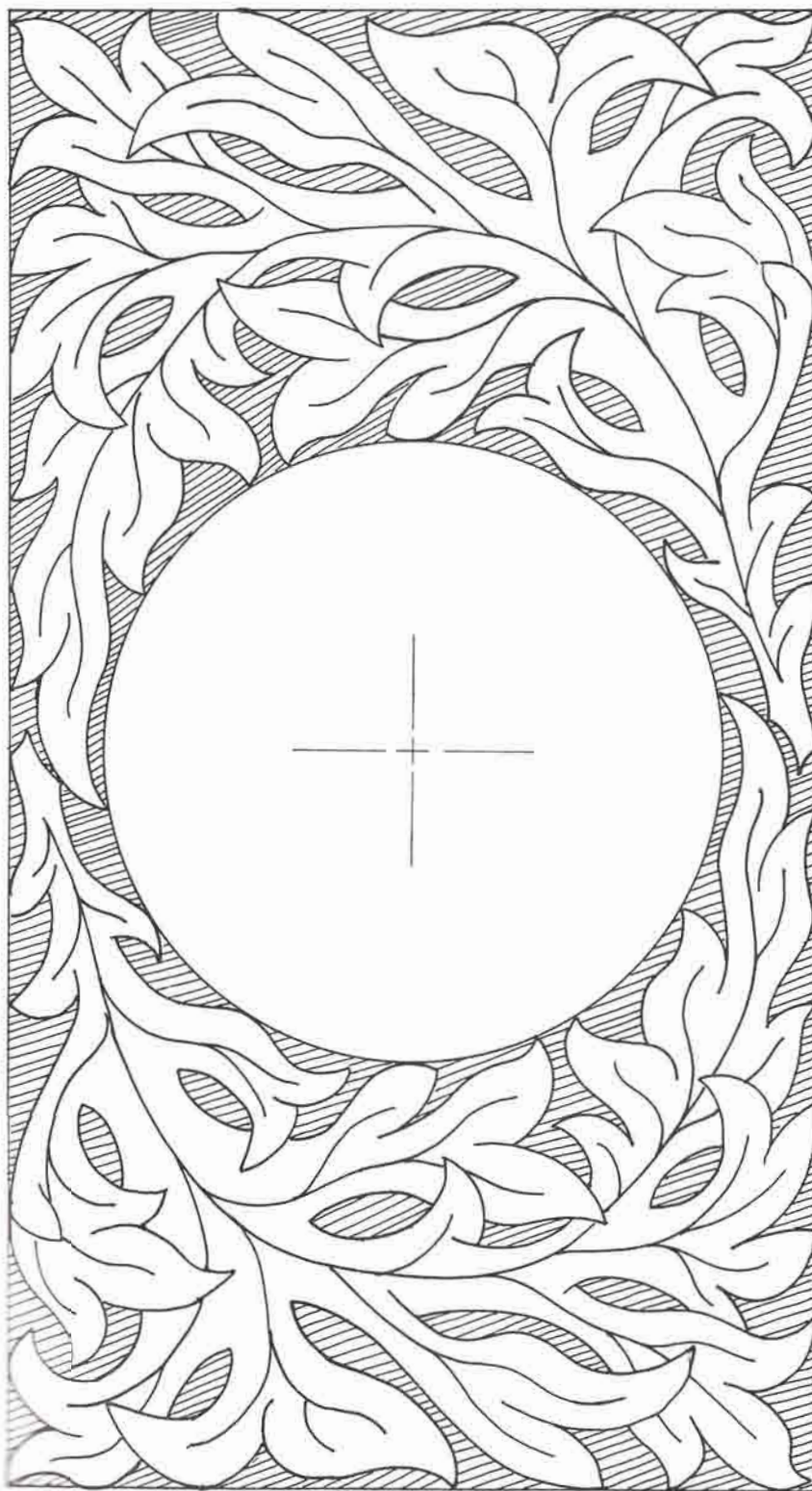
7-5 Positive image of foliage—shaded areas are carved.



7-6 Positive image of frog and foliage—shaded area is carved.



7-7 The Prince, 12" × 18" butternut wall plaque with various forms of foliage and frog in positive image separated geometrically with ribbing (center rosette of girl is incised free-form), stained.



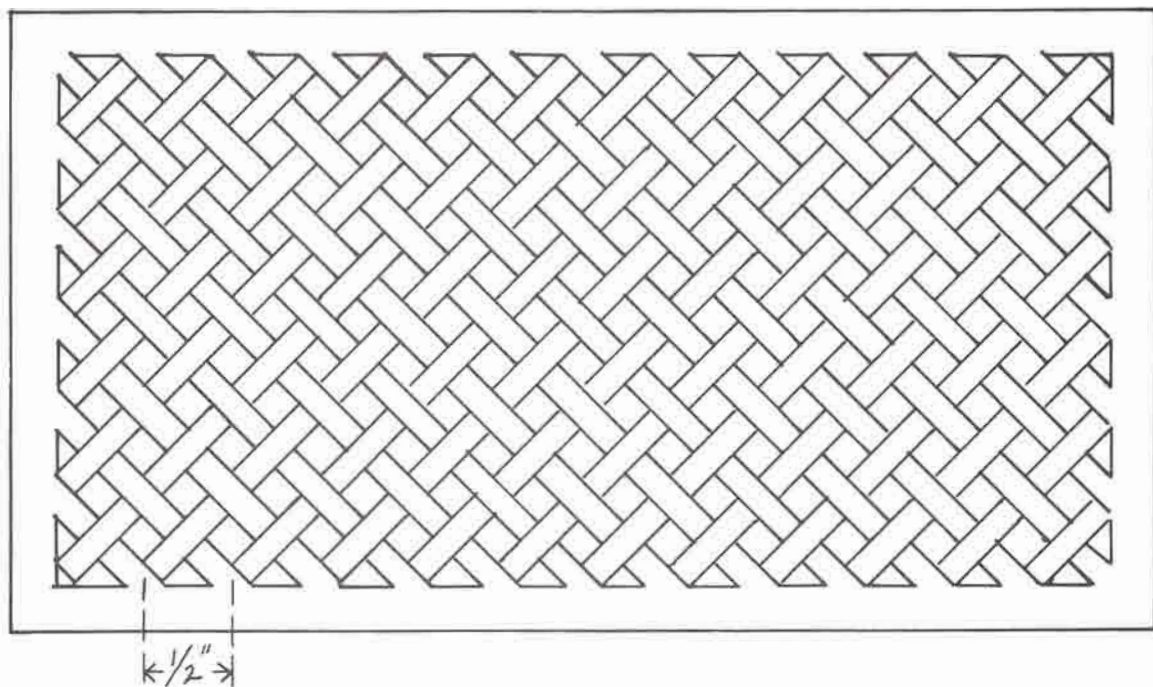
7-8



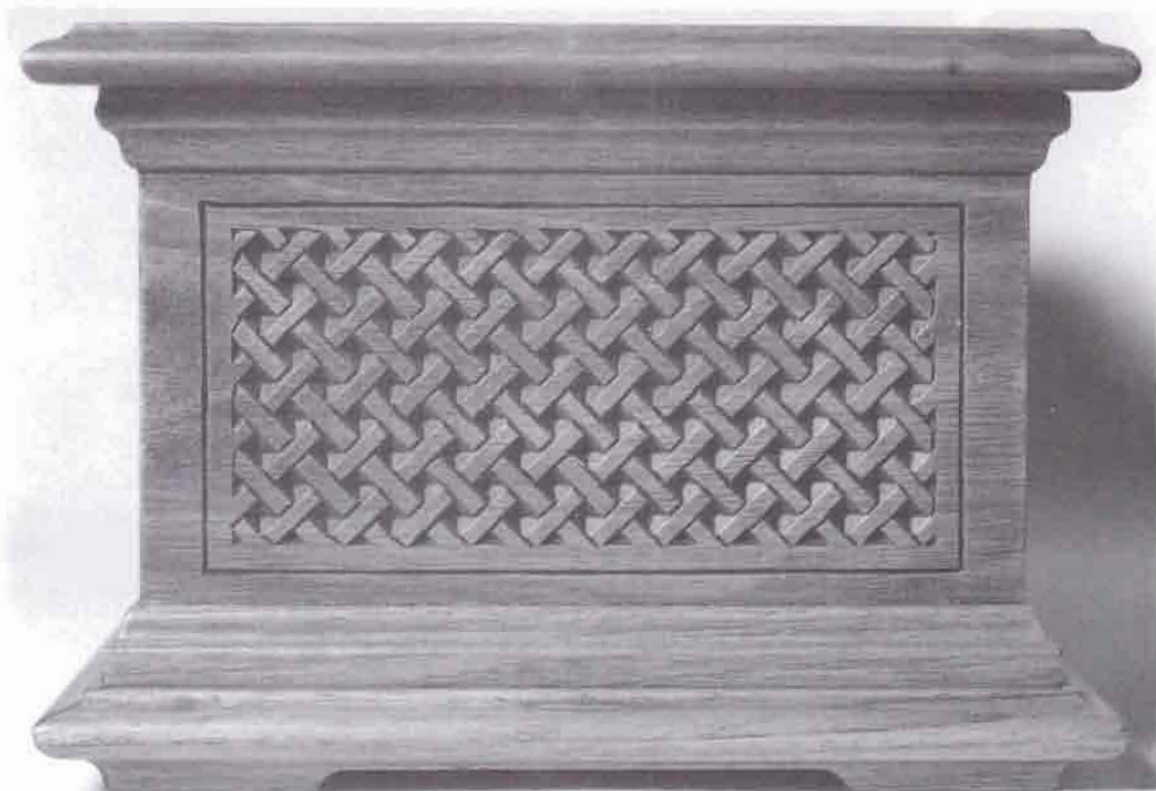
7-9 Leaf rosette, 5 1/4" diameter.



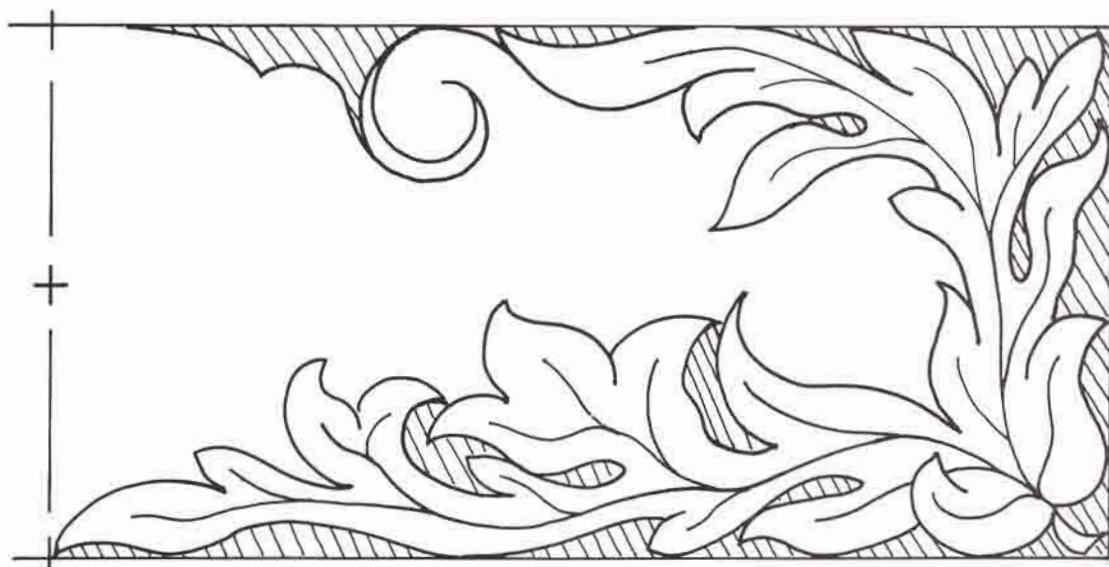
7-10 Butternut 15" × 8" jewelry-box lid with positive image of leaf and foliage patterns, stained.



7-11 Positive-image caning pattern— $6\frac{1}{2}'' \times 3\frac{1}{2}''$.



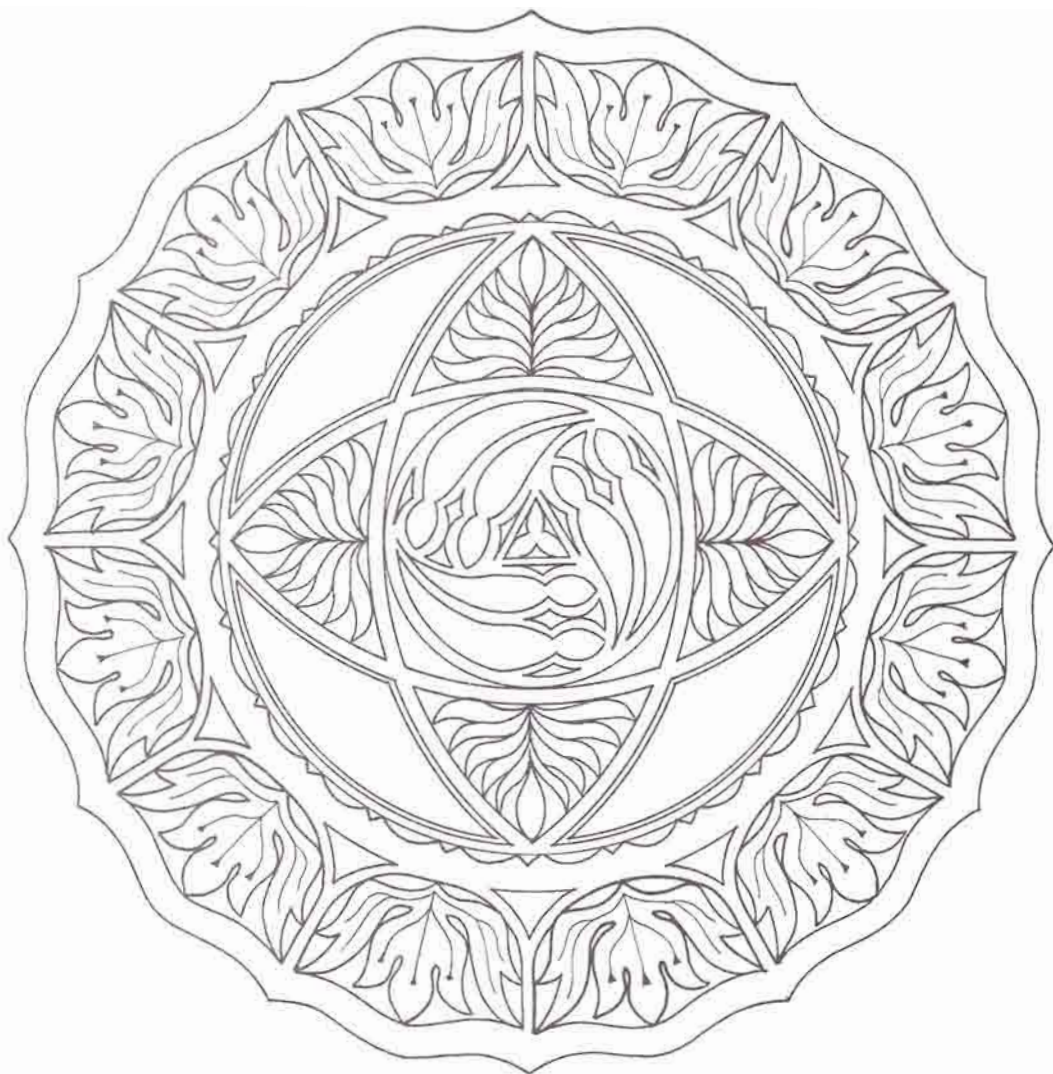
7-12 End of butternut jewelry box with caning pattern, stained.



7-13



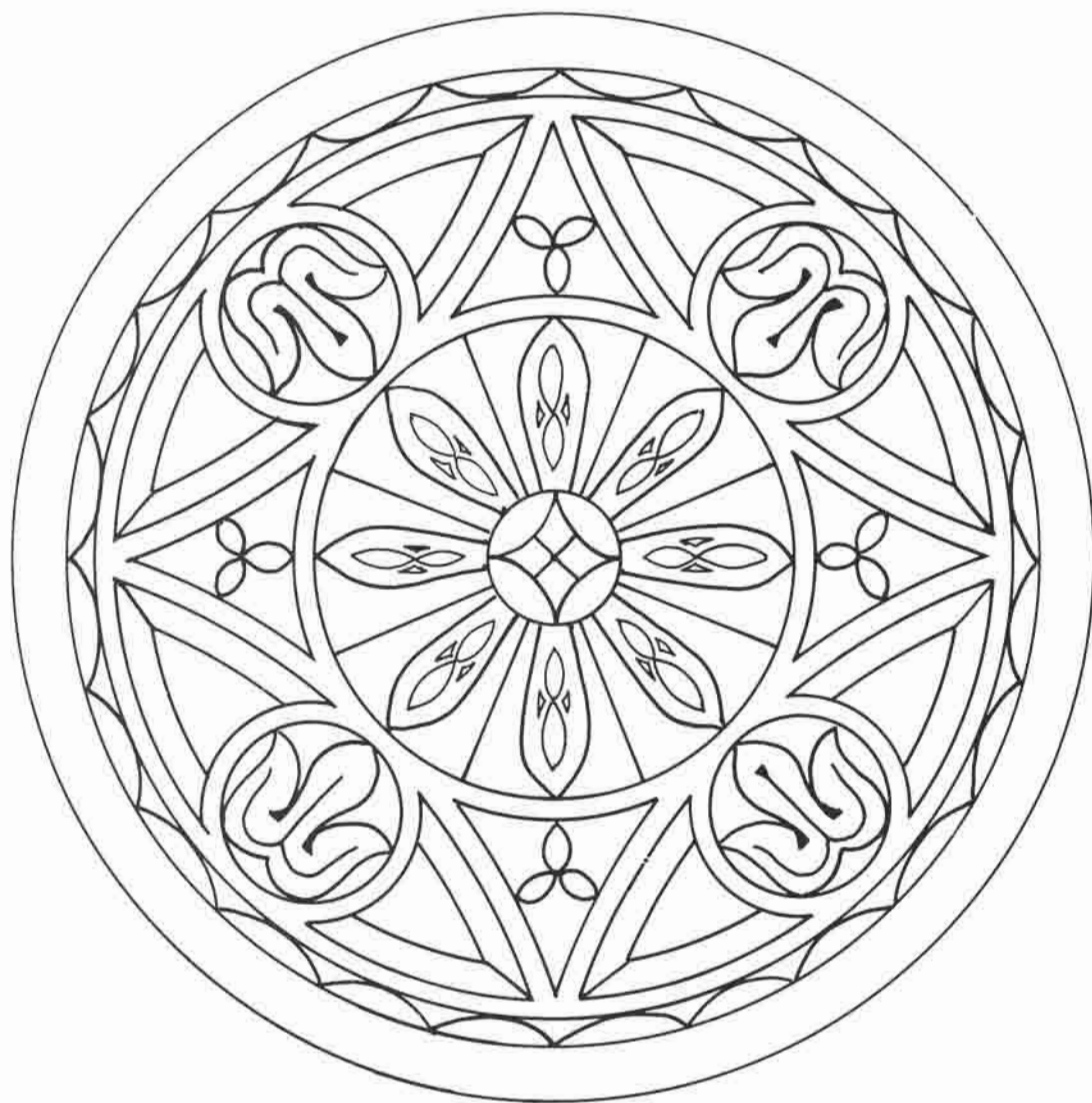
7-14 Front of butternut jewelry box with positive image and incised foliage pattern, dated 1993, with initials CGN in altered Ambrosia style, stained.



7-15



7-16 Butternut 12"-diameter plate with Gothic rosette and positive-image leaf border, stained.



7-17



7-18 Basswood 6"-diameter plate combining traditional rosette and border with positive-image leaf patterns and ribbing, stained.



7-19



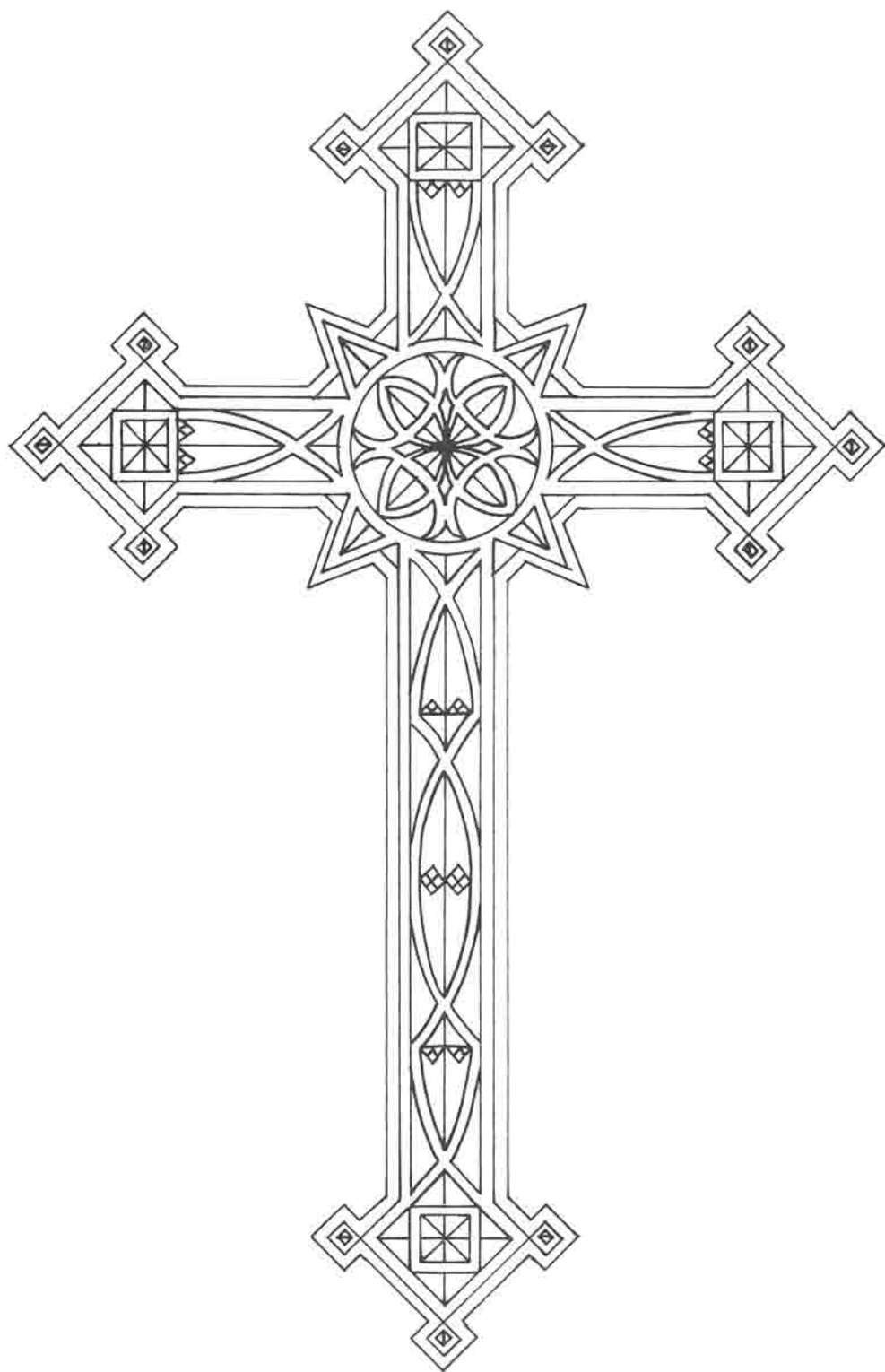
7-20 Basswood 6"-diameter plate combining traditional border with positive-image trefoil-leaf pattern, stained.



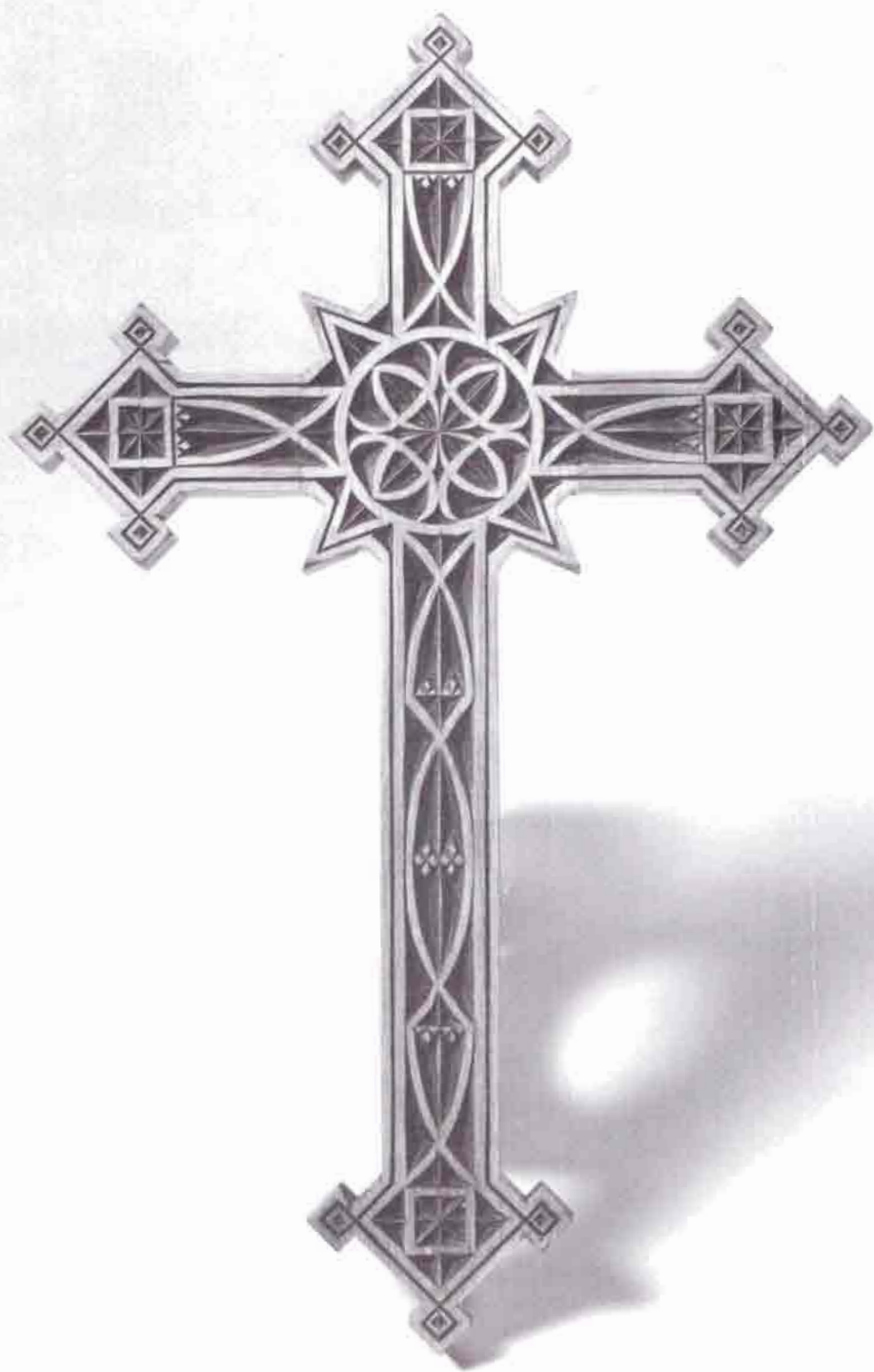
7-21



7-22 Basswood 12"-diameter plate with positive-image floral and foliage patterns, stained.



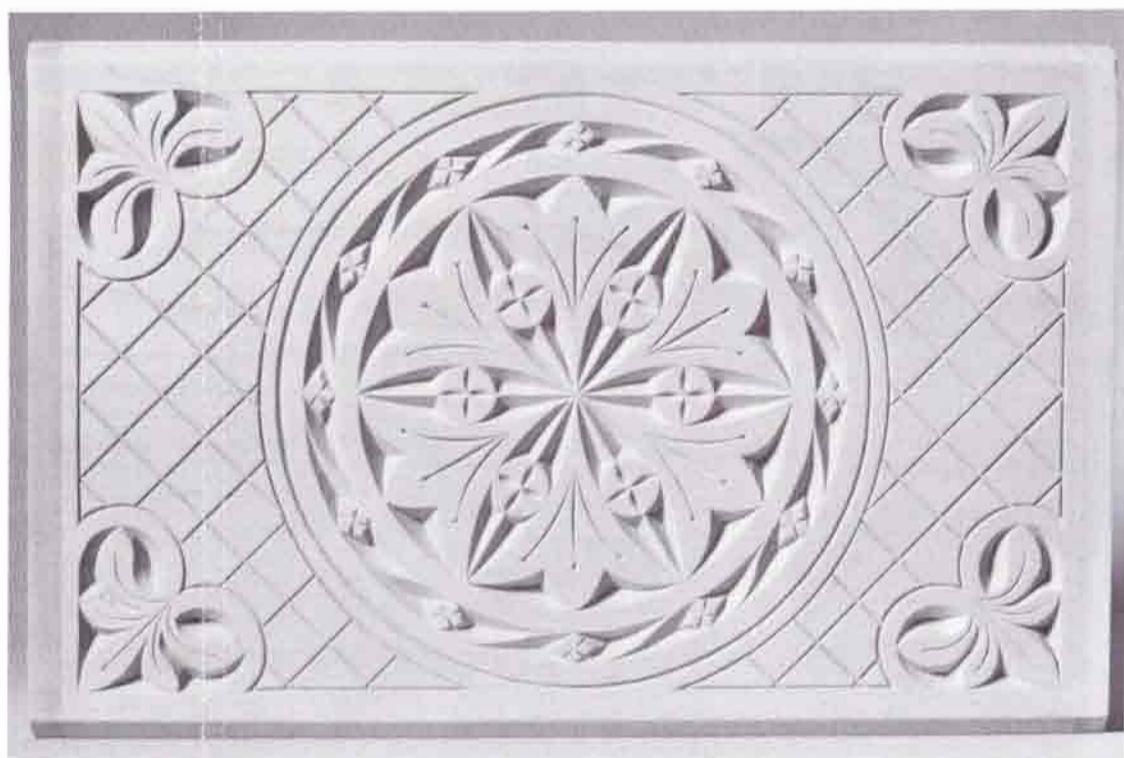
7-23



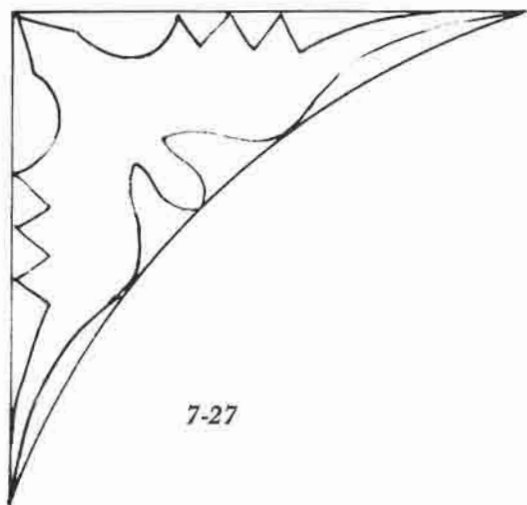
7-24 Basswood 14" × 8½" cross with ribbing, stained.



7-25



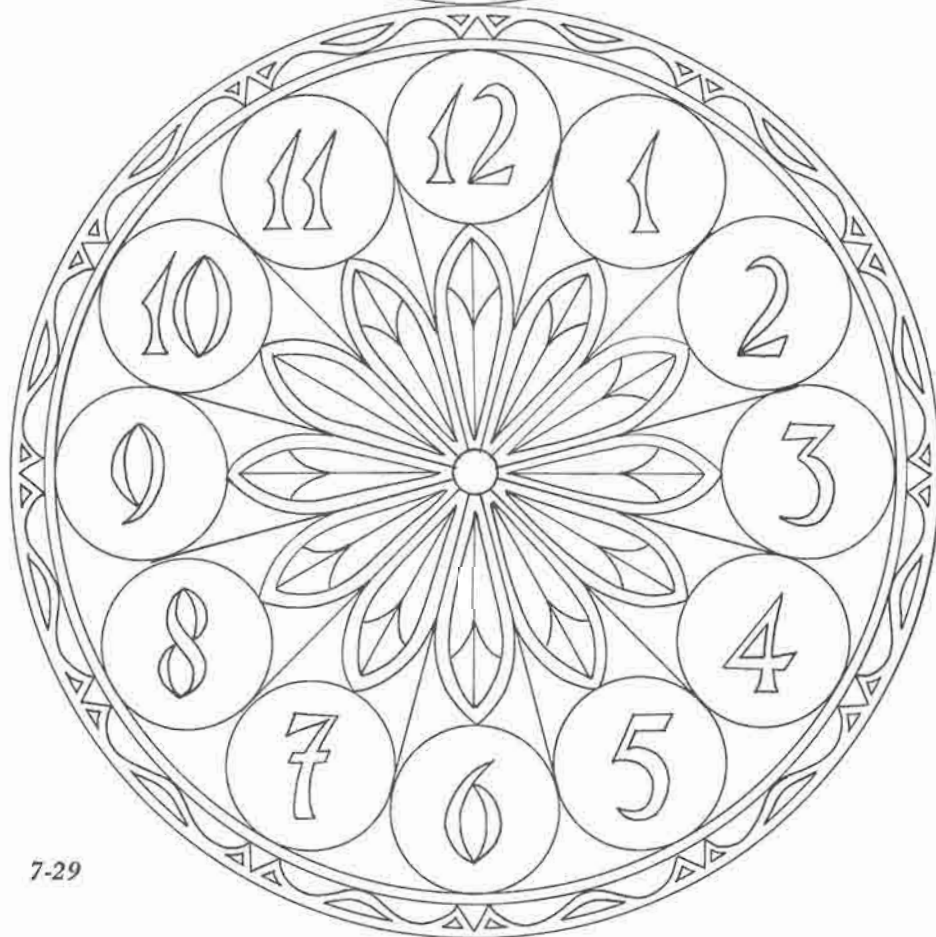
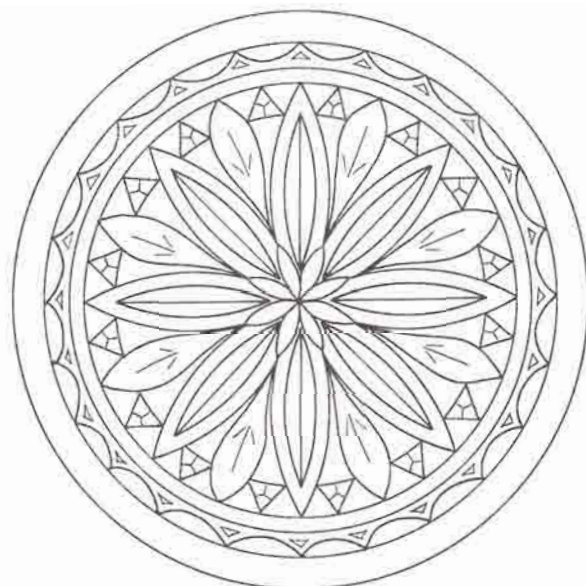
7-26 Basswood 13" $\times$ 8½" jewelry-box lid combining traditional six-point floral rosette with garland and positive-image leaf corners with grid.



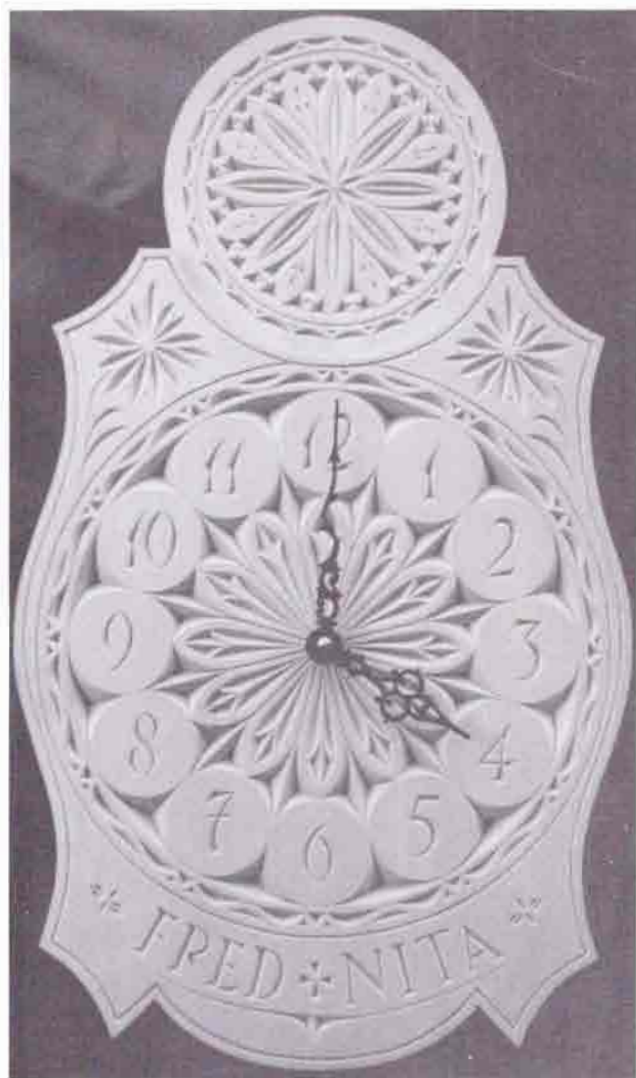
7-27



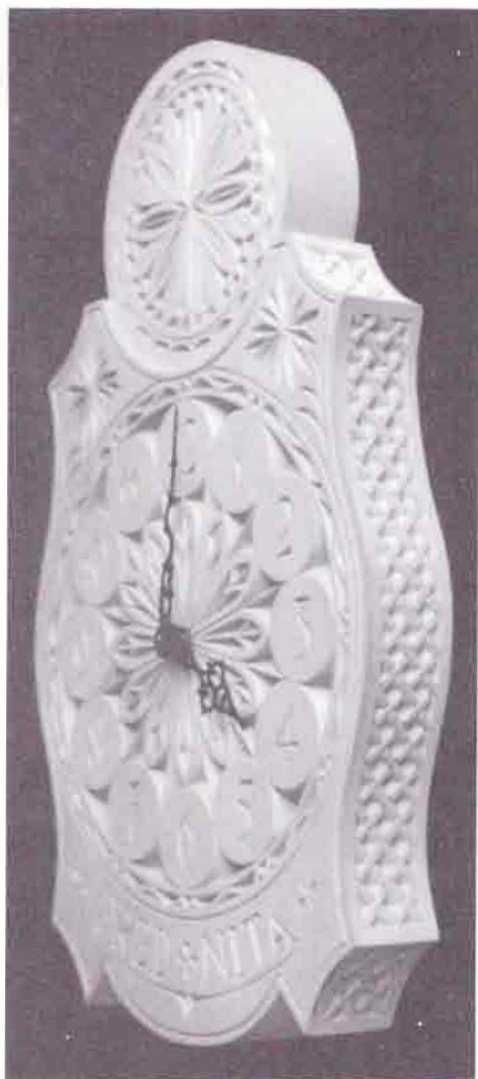
7-28 Basswood 13" $\times$ 8½" jewelry-box lid combining traditional six-point floral rosette, ribbon border, and grid with positive-image heart border and bird-pattern corners.



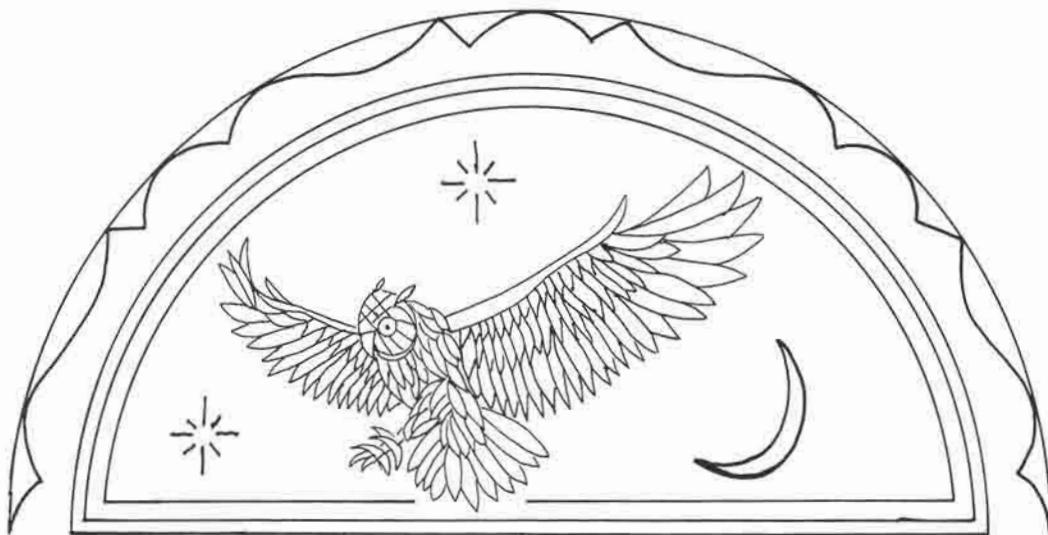
7-29



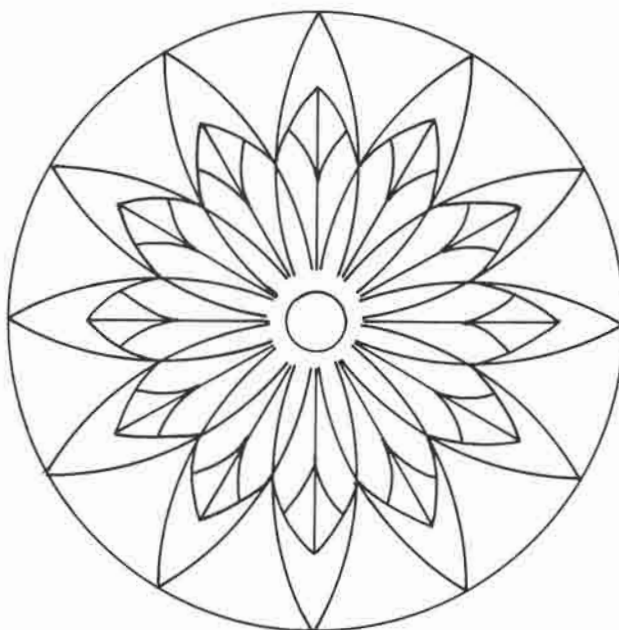
7-30 Basswood 18" $\times$ 10½" clock combining traditional rosette and free-form motifs with positive-image clock dial.



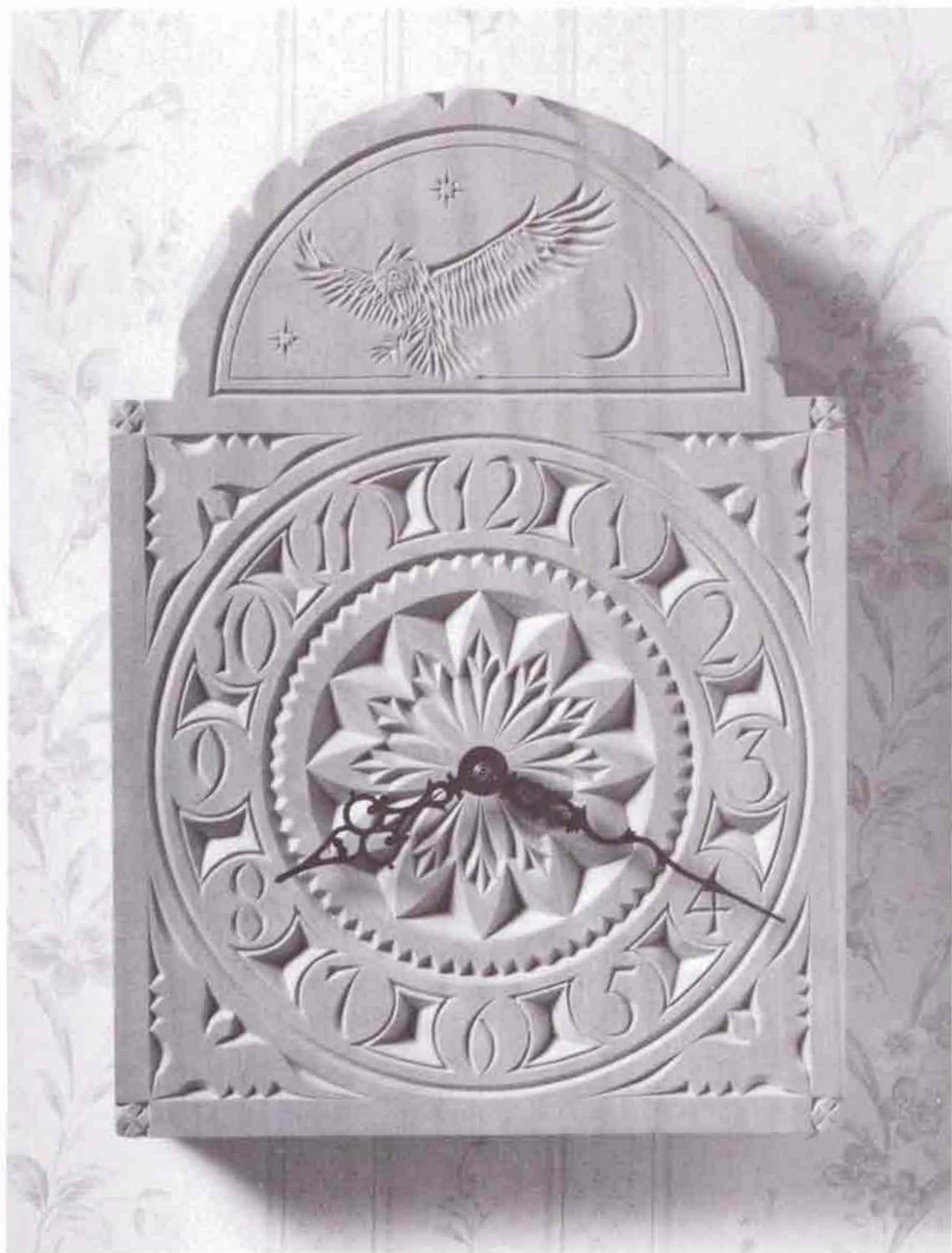
7-31 Basswood clock, showing caning on edge.



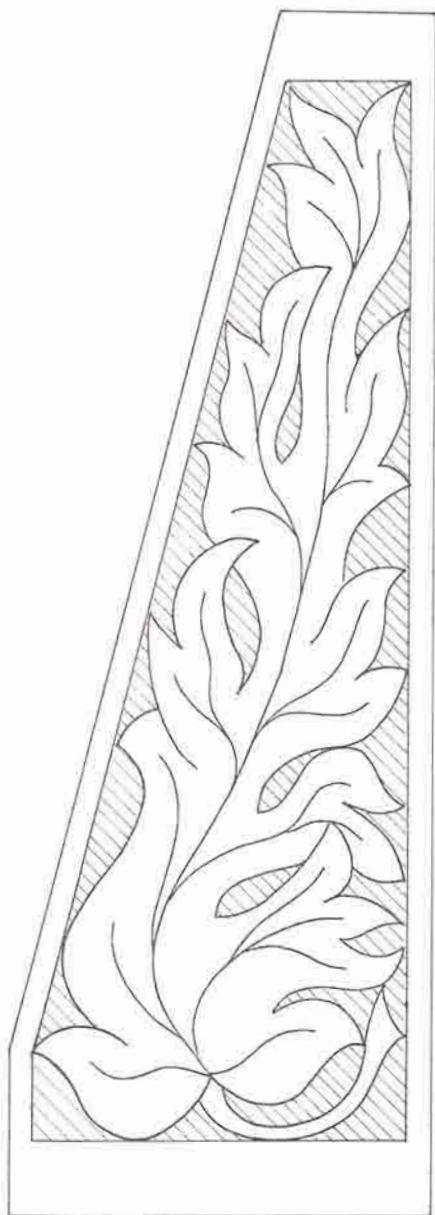
7-32



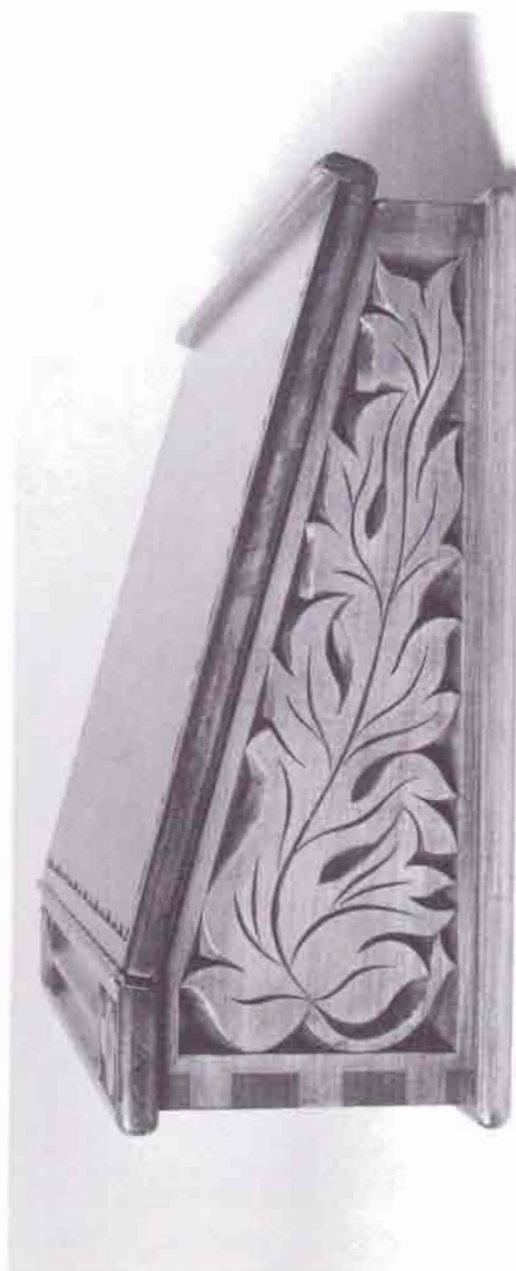
7-33



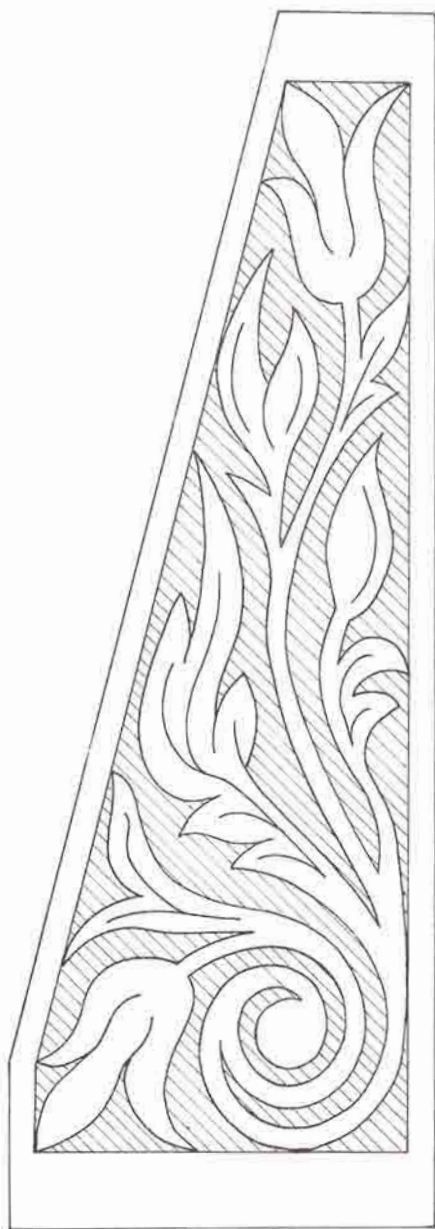
7-34 Basswood 9" × 12³/₄" clock combining free-form incised owl with positive-image doves and clock dial.



7-35 Positive-image leaf pattern for side panel—shaded area is carved.



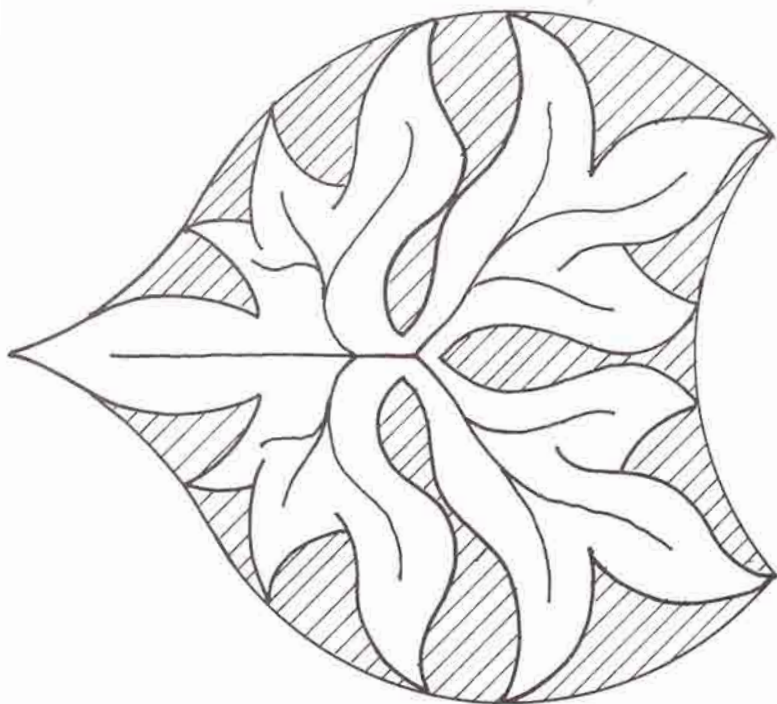
7-36 Side panel of basswood 14" x 5 3/4" lap desk with positive-image leaf pattern, stained.



7-37



7-38 Side panel of basswood 14" x 5 3/4" lap desk with positive-image floral pattern, stained.

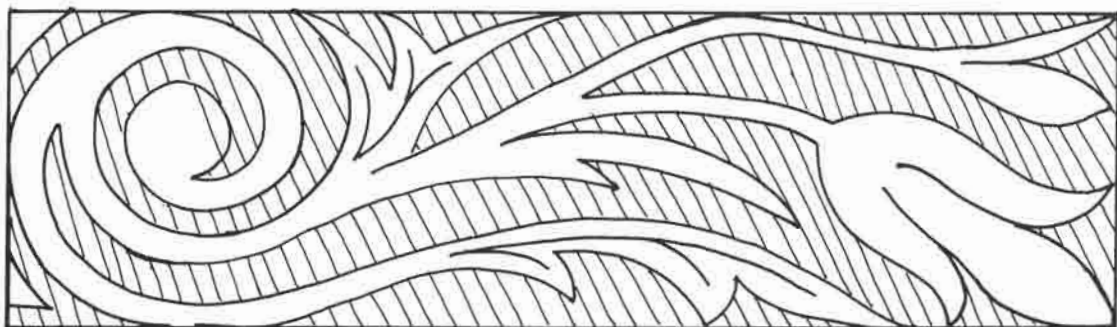


7-39 (left) Positive-image trefoil-leaf pattern—shaded area is carved.
7-40 (right) Positive-image corner-leaf pattern—shaded area is carved.

7-40 (right) Positive-image corner-leaf pattern—shaded area is carved.



7-41 Front of basswood 16 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " lap desk combining traditional six-point rosette with positive-image leaf-and-ribbing pattern, stained.



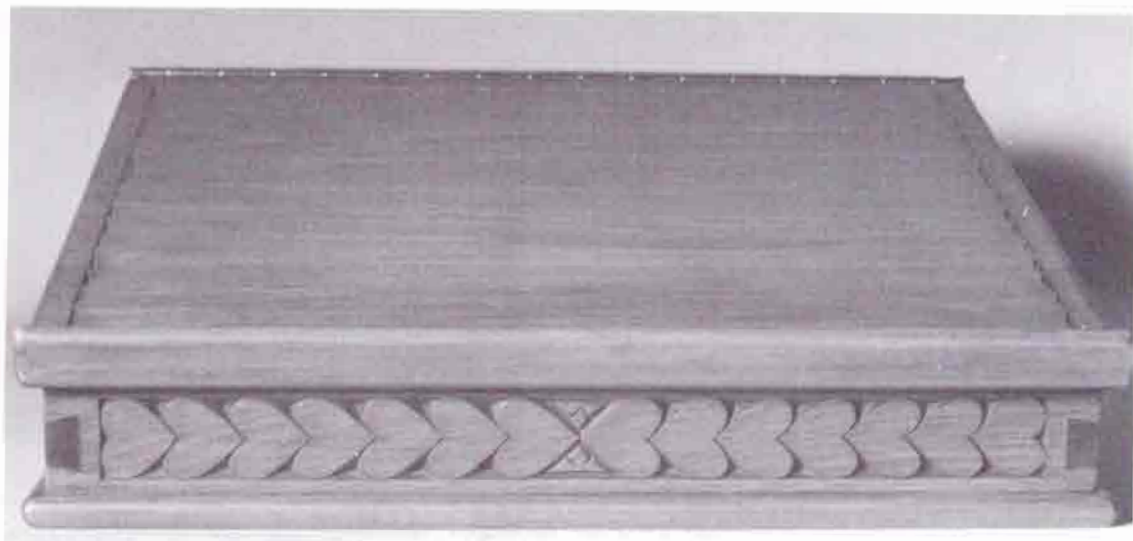
7-42 A quarter of front-panel floral pattern—shaded area is carved.



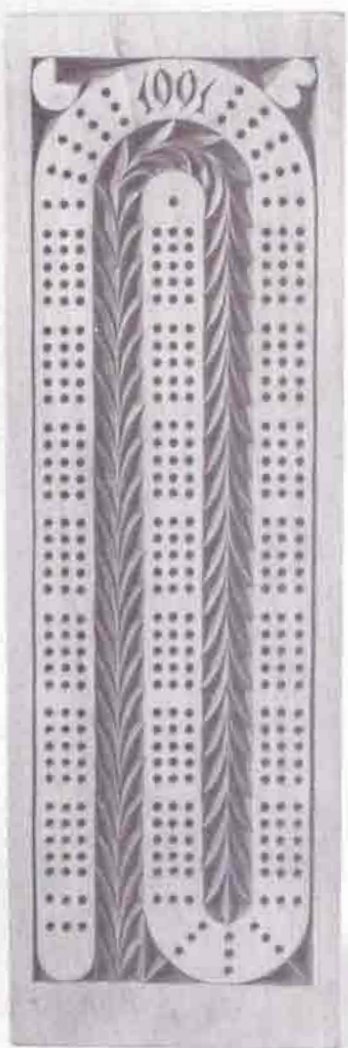
7-43 Front panel of basswood $16\frac{3}{4}'' \times 5\frac{3}{4}''$ lap desk with positive-image floral pattern, stained.



7-44 End of basswood 8½" × 5" jewelry box with positive-image leaf pattern.



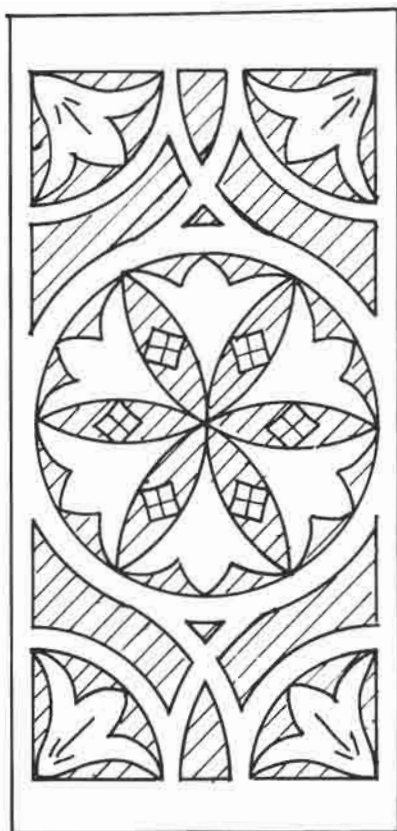
7-45 Rear panel of basswood 16¾" × 2½" lap desk with positive-image heart pattern, stained.



7-46 Basswood $14\frac{1}{2}'' \times 5\frac{3}{4}''$ cribbage board with positive-image vine and block letters, stained.



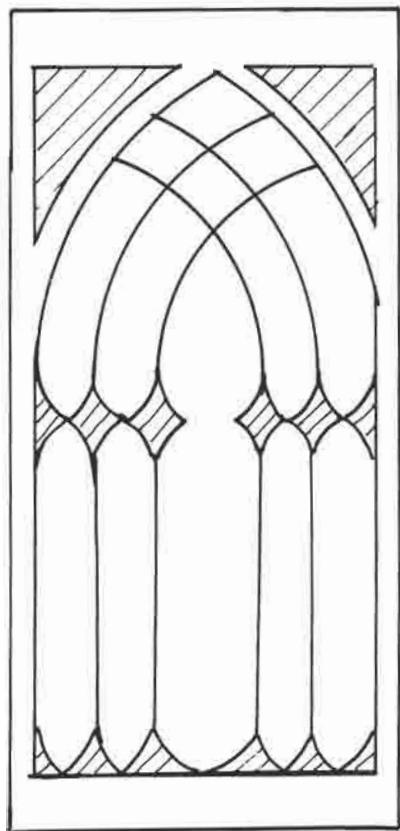
7-47 Side panel of $14\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{8}''$ cribbage board.



7-48



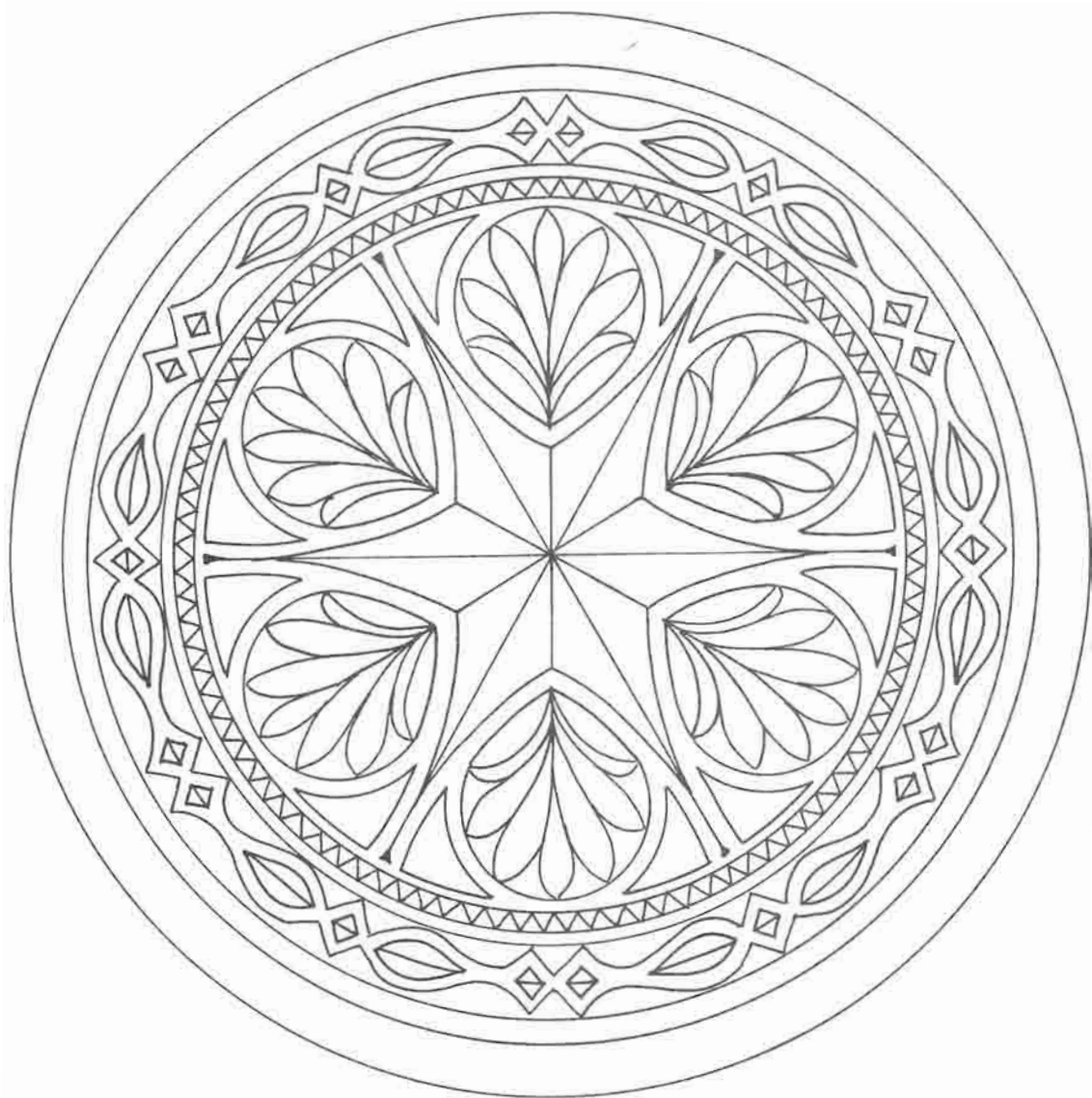
7-49 Peppermill with $4\frac{1}{2}'' \times 2\frac{3}{4}''$ basswood base combining traditional diamond border and positive-image floral-and-leaf pattern with ribbing, stained.



7-50

7-51 Peppermill with 4½" × 2¾" basswood base combining traditional diamond border and positive-image Gothic-window pattern, stained.

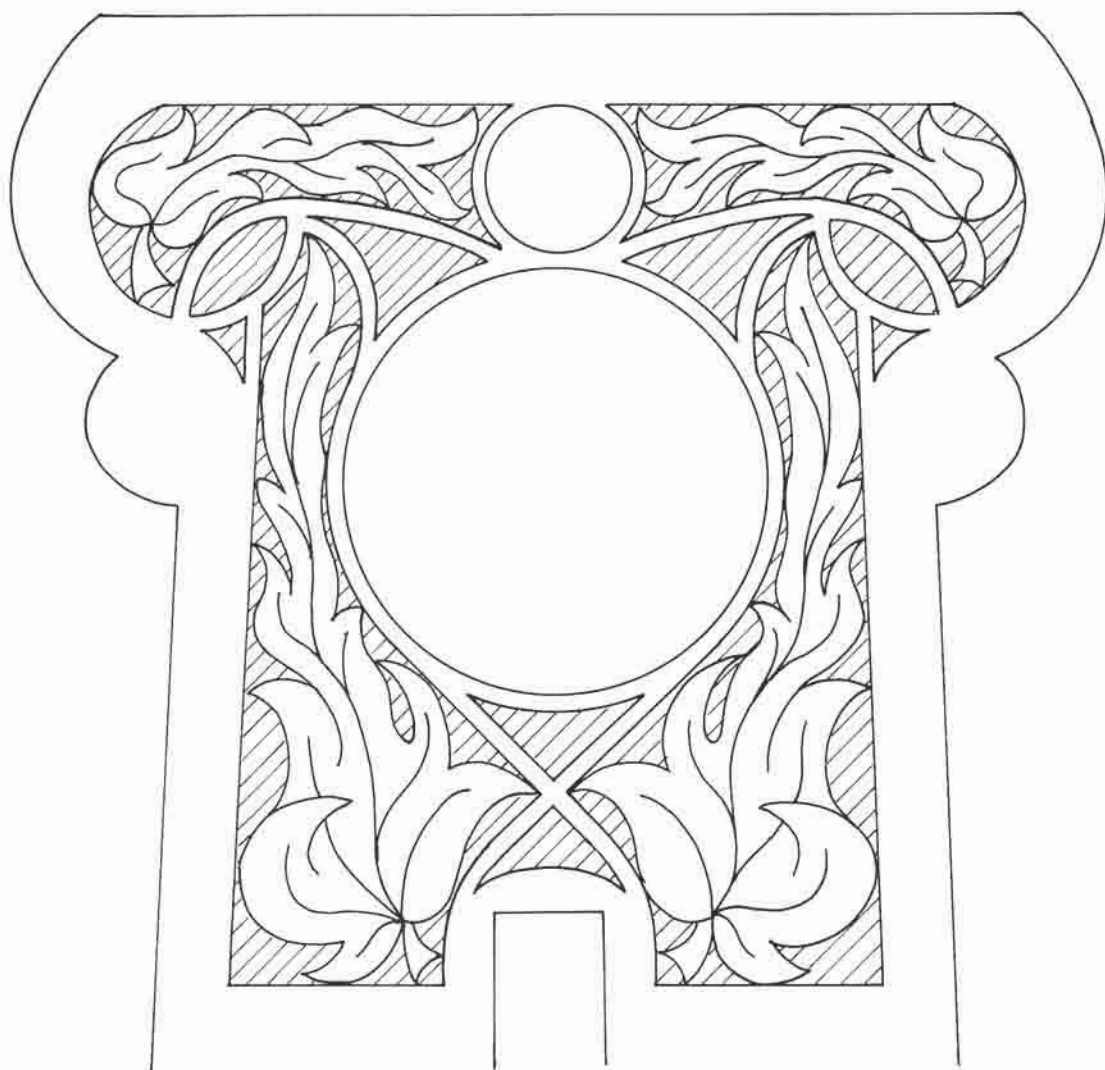




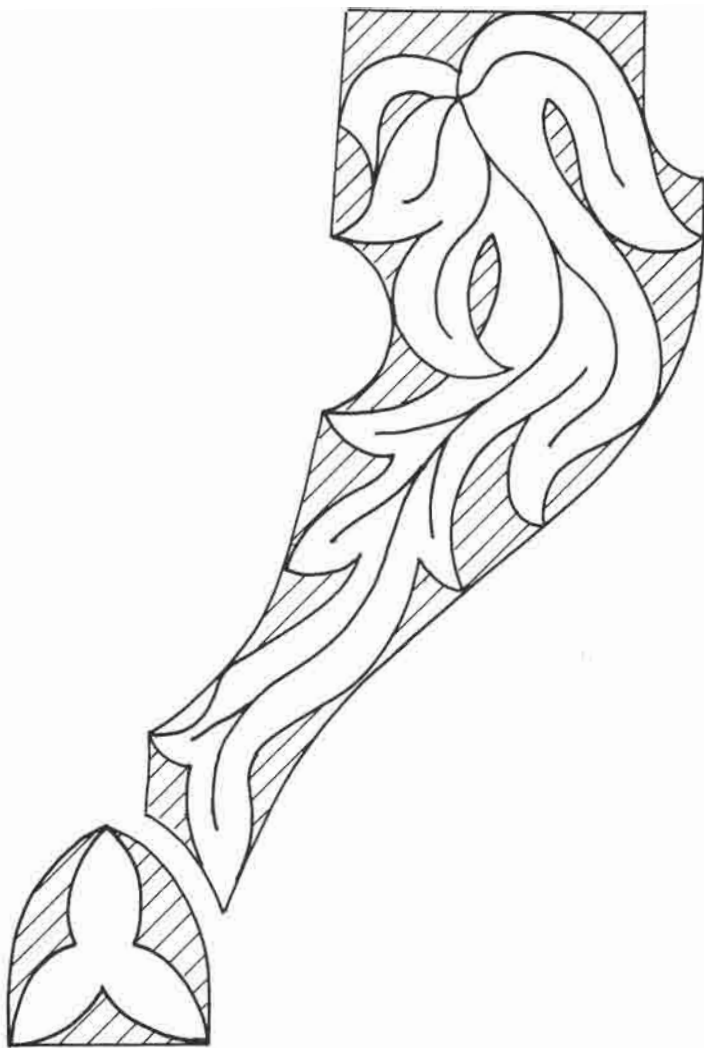
7-52



7-53 Basswood 8"-diameter plate with positive-image border and leaf-pattern center with ribbing.



7-54 *Hearth-stool side panel with leaf pattern—shaded area is carved.*



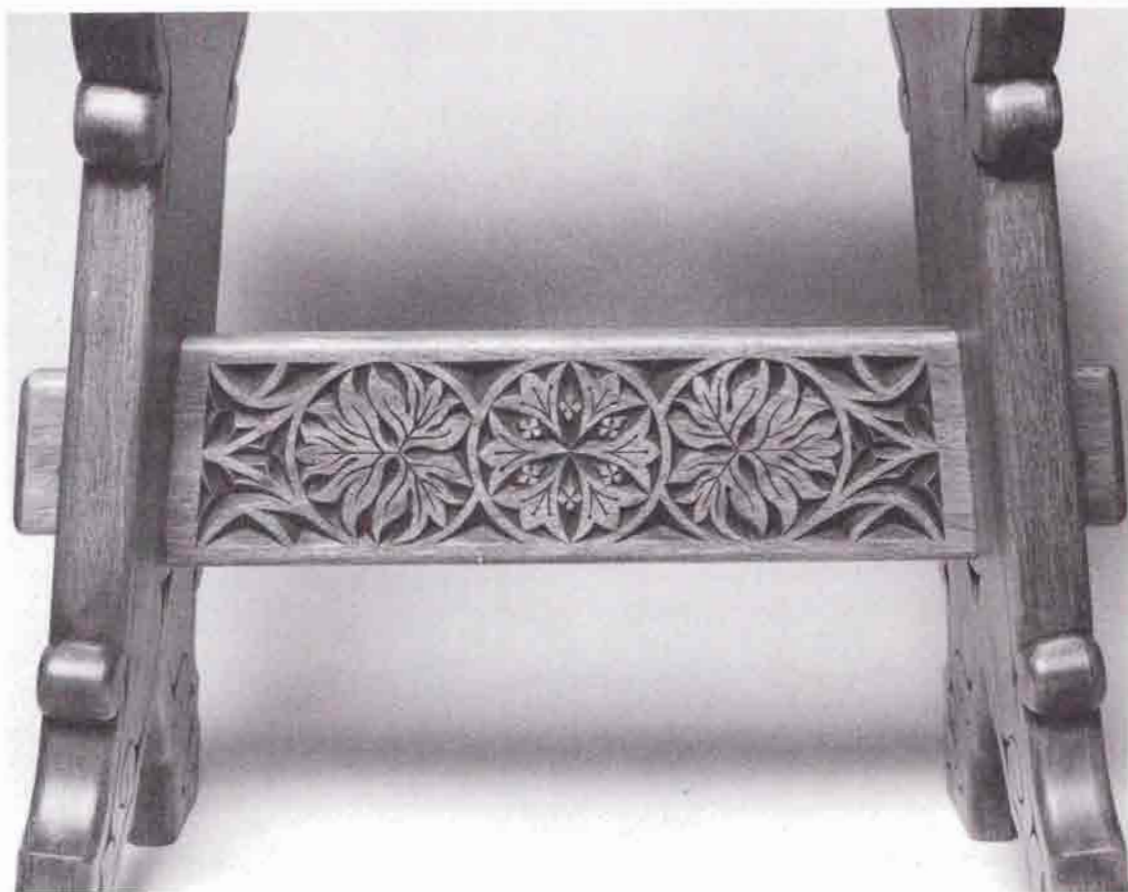
7-55 Positive-image leg of side panel showing leaf and trefoil patterns—shaded areas are carved.



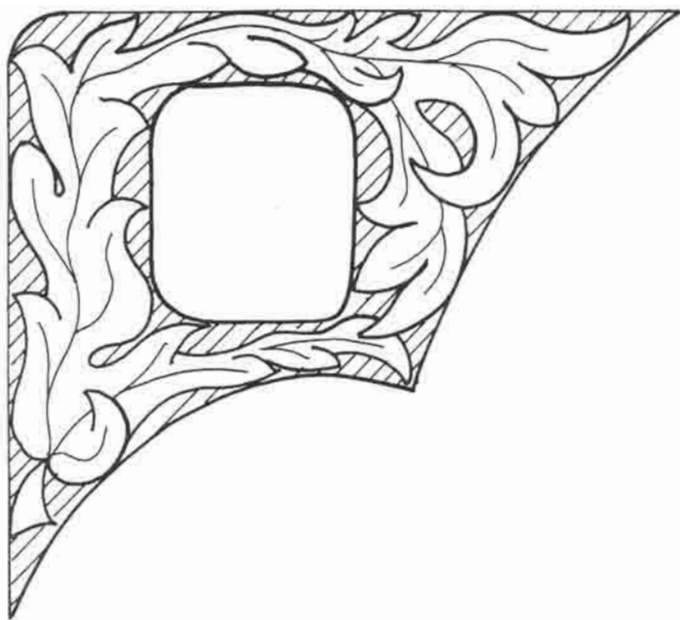
7-56 Side panel of 18" × 11" butternut Norman Gothic hearth stool with positive-image leaf-trefoil-and-ribbing pattern, stained.



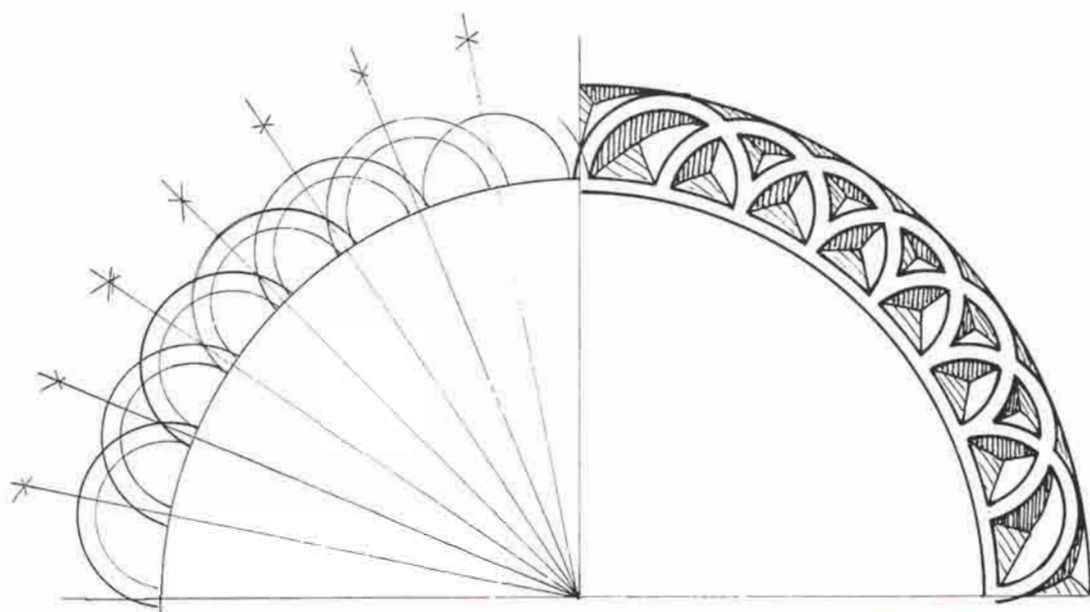
7-57 *Positive-image trefoil-leaf pattern of trestle.*



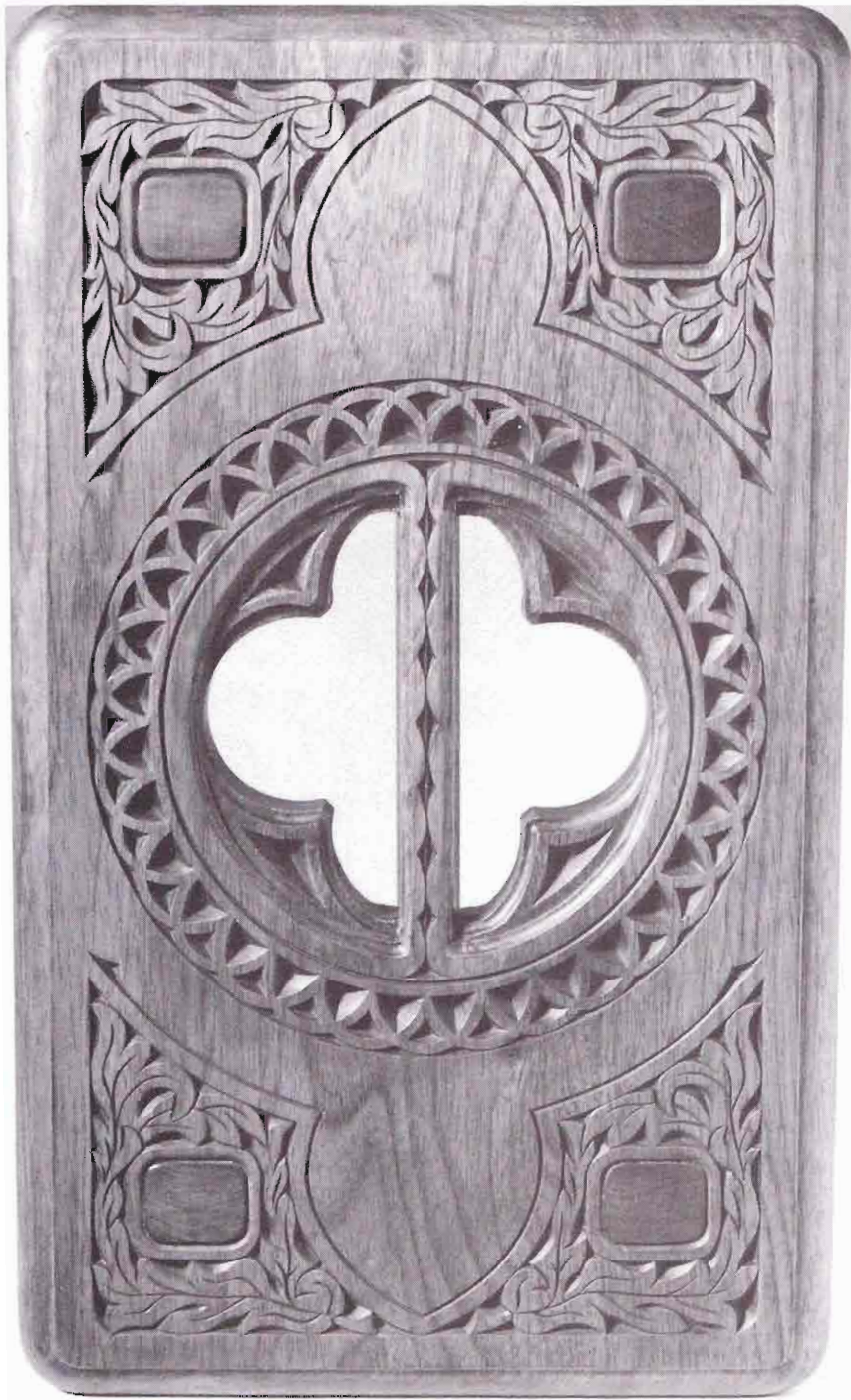
7-58 *Trestle of Norman Gothic stool with positive-image floral-leaf-and-ribbing pattern, stained.*



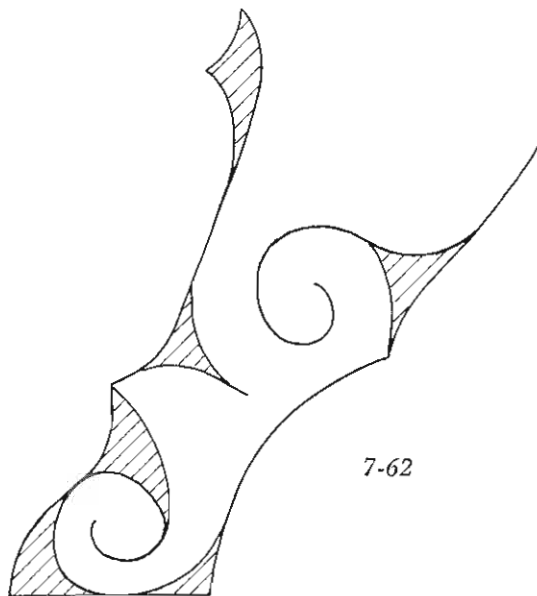
7-59 *Positive-image corner-detail leaf pattern of stool top—shaded area is carved.*



7-60 *Scalloped-lace pattern.*



7-61 Top of 17" × 10" butternut Norman Gothic hearth stool with positive-image leaf and scalloped-lace pattern, stained.



7-62



7-63 *Inside positive-image treatment of legs on butternut Norman Gothic stool, stained.*

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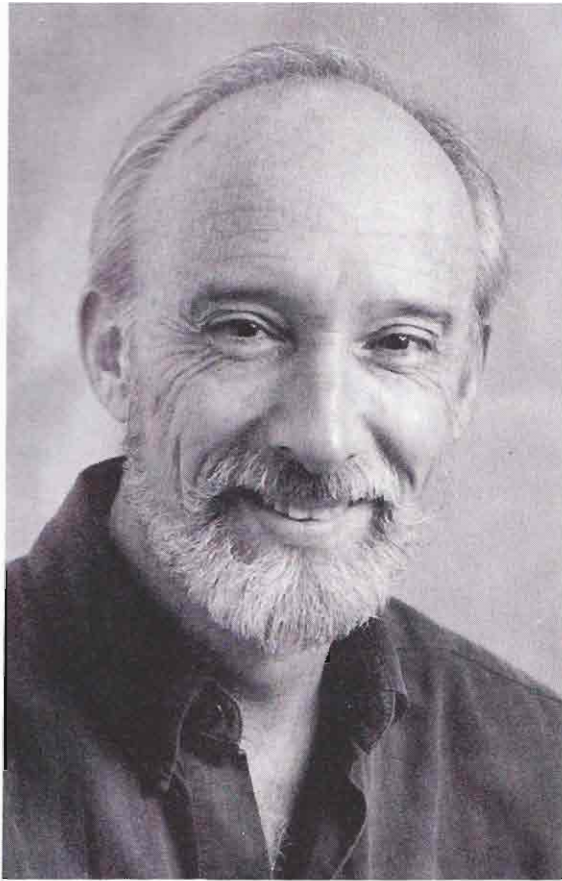
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About the Author

Wayne Barton is an American-born professional woodcarver, who lives in Park Ridge, Illinois, with his Swiss wife, Marlies, and their children. First given an interest in woodcarving at the age of five by his Norwegian grandfather, he has had a serious interest in, and love for, carving all his life.

Mr. Barton took his formal training in Brienz, Switzerland, and his carvings can be found in private collections in Europe and North America. He is the founder and director of the Alpine School of Woodcarving, Ltd., and devotes much of his time to teaching throughout North America and in Switzerland.

Although versed in all disciplines of carving, he specializes in chip carving and has won both national and international awards and recognition for his work.

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