

FLOOR
STENCILS
OF
NEW ENGLAND
CIRCA 1740 - 1840

*Including
The Esther Stevens Brazer Collection
at the Museum of American Folk Art*

ILLUSTRATIONS OF
38 AUTHENTIC FLOORS

MB HISTORIC DÉCOR CATALOGUE NO. 3 \$4.00

Polly Forcier • Member HSEAD

FLOOR STENCILING CIRCA 1740-1840

Floors predated walls as the first surface in a house to be decorated. The practice is thought to have been widespread but subsequently lost through wear, repainting and fire. In the earliest years they were hand painted.

Over the span of 100 years, this fashion, which began in only the most affluent of seaport mansions and inns, spread into surrounding rural homes.

Colonists suffering their daily hardships, remembered fondly the beauty and comforts of their European homelands and were well aware of fashions abroad. A 1739 booklet published in England exhibited geometric and floral floor patterns popular there at that time. Enterprising young artisans were prepared to embellish many grand homes in the New World by this means. They also grained and sponged, painted overmantels, fireboards, tavern signs and walls.

Stenciling of floors was a way to simulate woven carpet, floorcloths and parquet floors without that expense. The whole was protected with varnish which, over time, mellowed to a rich yellow/brown causing the black, red, green and white paints to appear as the finest inlay of variegated woods set in background colors of yellow ochre, grey, "Indian red", and green. We can create this look today by antiquing. The combination most often used, and no doubt most economical, was black on pumpkin pine, either natural or painted yellow ochre. During the Clipper Ship era, circa 1810-1870, the canvases from ripped sails were stenciled and used on floors for ornamentation, warmth and cleanliness.

Today in addition to traditional wood floors and canvas, stencils are being used on plywood, tiles, low loop industrial carpet, sisal, cement and the backside of vinyl floor coverings.

As with the border wall stencils, the patterns have been tried only to assure proper alignment. Their irregularities create the charm we seek. Although many patterns were stenciled in black alone, I have offered them as one, two or three color patterns for today's preferences. Please note that the patterns are not size-related to each other. Know their sizes by the dimensions given.

Polly Frazier

ESTHER STEVENS BRAZER

Until her death in 1945, Esther Stevens Brazer was an avid researcher, chronicler and teacher of what otherwise might have been "forgotten arts". She recorded many decorative designs of the 19th century and their methods of reproduction. "The Brazer Guild" founded in her memory by students of her work, is known today as the Historical Society of Early American Decoration.

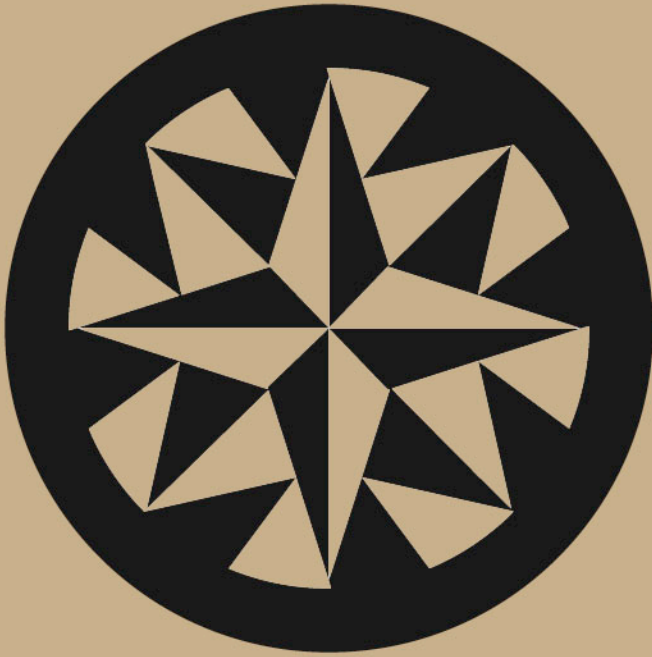
Floors are but one of the disciplines of which she left an invaluable record. Her collection, now at the Museum of American Folk Art, and other authentic floor patterns are presented here. In her 1940 volume *Early American Decoration*, Brazer foretold that "Colonial interior decoration will come into its own as a delightful background for daily living."

**PAINTED FLOOR FROM
NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS**

House built circa 1695.

Center adapted to stencils. Squares are laid out with a chalk line.

Original Colors: Yellow ochre and brown.



FS27 F5

The inside of the circle is 5' in diameter.

The outside of circle is 6' in diameter.

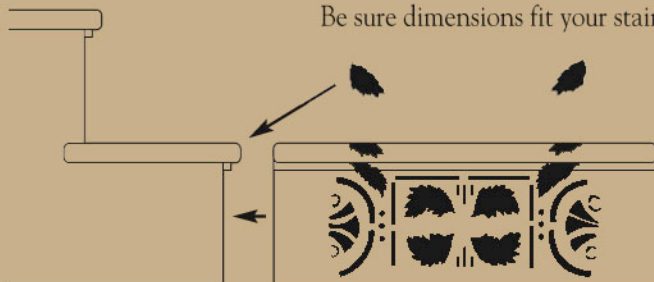
Made to resemble inlaid wood.

Makes a handsome pattern in a foyer, or under a table.

STAIR PATTERNS FROM DR. DYER'S PLACE WHITMAN, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Motifs are dark green in the center
and dark brown at the ends on a light tan background.

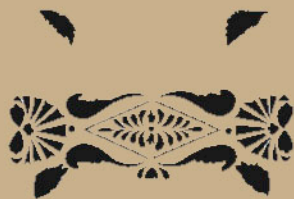
Be sure dimensions fit your stairs.



*These leaves wrap over
the nosing of the stair*

FS23 SR1
7" High x 18 3/4" Wide

*Same placement on the
stairs and risers as
shown above.*



*These leaves wrap over
the nosing of the stair*

FS24 SR1
6 1/8" High x 19 3/4" Wide

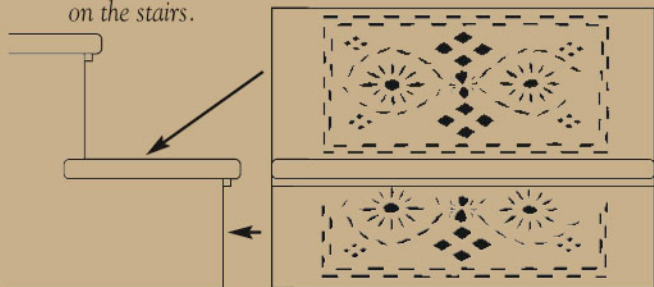
STAIR RISER AND STAIR PATTERN FROM WHITAKER CLARY HOUSE NEW SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

Stenciled circa 1810.

This pattern was also seen in the parlor as a border
around the room without the vertical "bricks".

*The two may be used
separately or together
to simulate a runner
on the stairs.*

Be sure dimensions fit your stairs.



FS25 S1
9 7/8" High x 19 5/8" Wide

FS25 SR1
6 3/8" High x 19 3/4" Wide

BUMP TAVERN AT THE FARMERS MUSEUM COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK

One of two stencil patterns offered from outside New England.

Original Colors: Red and blue on pumpkin pine.
Blue centers of motifs and blue border.



FS14 F2
12 1/2" x 16 1/2"
13" x 17 1/2"

FS14 B1
12 5/8" Wide
18 3/4" Repeat

STRATTON TAVERN NORTHFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Black on yellow ochre pine boards.



FS13 B1
9" Wide,
22 3/8" Repeat

FS13 BC1
16" x 16"
Corner Stencil

FS13 F1
6" x 9 3/4"
Diamond Stencils

HARRIS HOMESTEAD PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

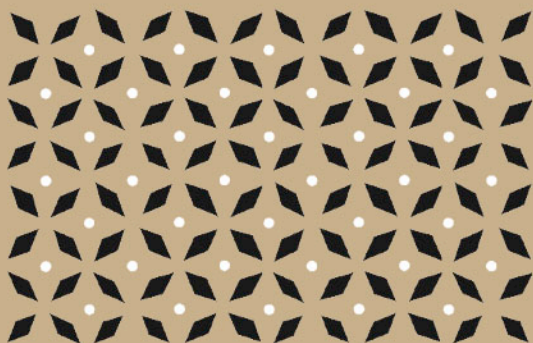
Original Colors: Center of the floor dark blue/grey may have been marbled.
Under the border light green/grey.



FS22 B1 6 7/8" Wide, 26" Repeat

FLOOR FROM
WESTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Black and white on yellow ochre.



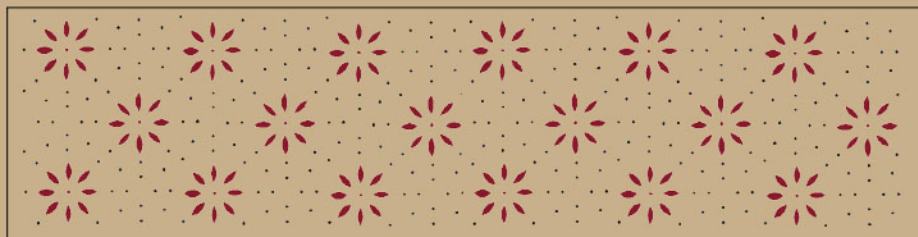
FS8 F1

12 1/8" x 18 5/8"

One stencil, two colors.

GARRISON HOUSE
EXETER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Original Colors: Red flowers with grey dots on yellow ochre.



FS9 B1

15" Wide, 20" Repeat

One stencil, two colors.

GARDNER HOUSE
WRENTHAN, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Black and white on pumpkin pine.



FS10 B1
4 1/2" Wide
17 1/4" Repeat

FS10 F1
17" Wide x 18 1/2" Wide
Stencil is 2 diamonds

WAYSIDE TAVERN
SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Stenciled circa 1790.

Original Colors: Black on pumpkin pine.



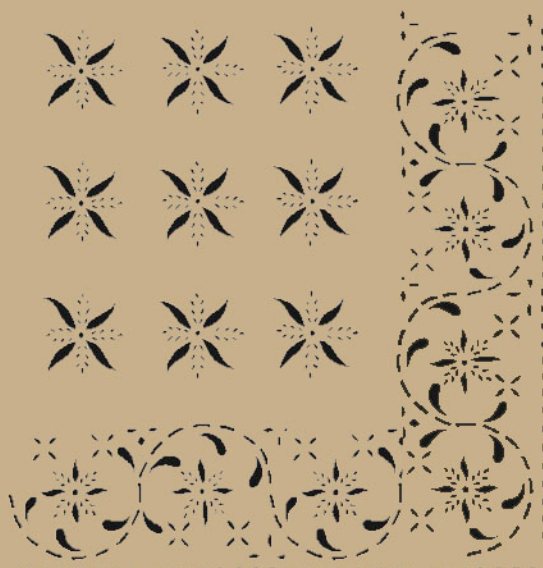
FS1 B1 One Color.
7 1/4" Wide
23 1/4" Repeat



FS1 B2 Two Colors.
7 1/4" Wide
23 1/4" Repeat

MAY HOUSE
WOODSTOCK, CONNECTICUT

Original Colors: Black on pumpkin pine.



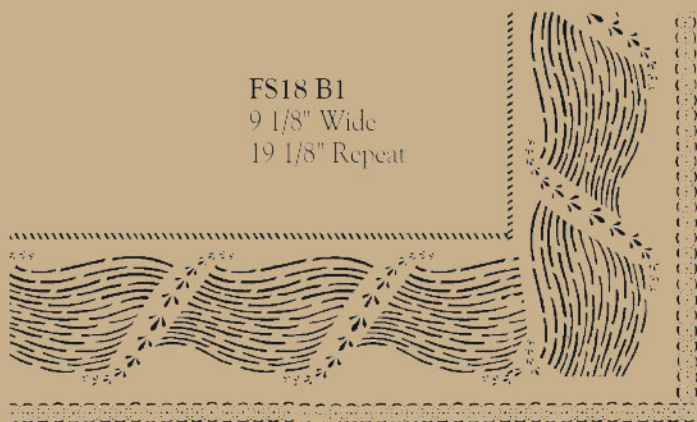
FS6 F1
6 1/8" Wide
24 1/8" Repeat
Three figures.

FS6 B1
11 1/4" Wide
18" Repeat

SHELDON HOUSE
DEERFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Stenciled circa 1780.

Original Colors: Black on pumpkin pine.



FS18 B1
9 1/8" Wide
19 1/8" Repeat

EDWARD DURANT HOUSE
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

House built circa 1734; stenciled circa 1780.

Original Colors: Indian red, black and white on pumpkin pine.



FS2 F1 One Color.
12 1/8" x 12 1/8"

FS2 B1 One Color.
FS2 B2 Two Colors.
6 3/4" Wide
26 1/2" Repeat



FS2 F3
Three Stencils,
Three Colors.
12 1/8" x 12 1/8"

FS26 B1 One Color.
FS26 B2 Two Colors.
12" Wide
22 1/2" Repeat

EDWARD DURANT HOUSE
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

House built circa 1734; stenciled circa 1780.

Original Colors: Green, white and black on pumpkin pine.



FS17 F1
16" x 16" Diamond

FS17 B2 Two Colors.
10" Wide
12 1/2" Repeat



FS26 F1
21" x 21" Diamond

FS26 B1 One Color.
FS26 B2 Two Colors.
12" Wide, 22 1/2" Repeat

WAYSIDE INN
SUDBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Stenciled circa 1780.

Original Colors: Black, red, dull blue on pumpkin pine.



FS16 B2
4 1/2" Wide
25 1/2" Repeat

FS16 F3 Three Colors.
12" x 15 1/2" Diamonds
2 - 2 Diamond Stencils

VALENTINE VAN DOREN HOUSE NESHANIC, NEW JERSEY

One of two stencil patterns offered from outside New England.
This pattern offers the additional challenge of graining
the two outer borders, if so desired.

Original Colors: Black, red, green and yellow.

The center creates a very dramatic effect.

Size can vary. 8' x 10' works well. (Note size of stencil.)

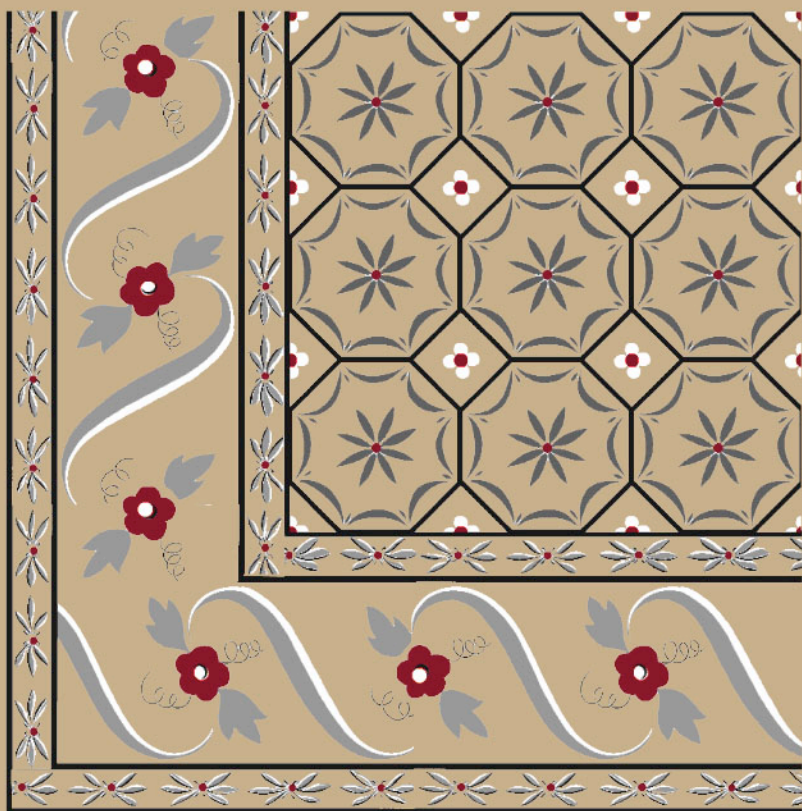


FS15 B1 10 1/4" Wide 30 3/8" Repeat

MEDFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

House built circa 1795.

Original Colors: White, brown, green and red on pumpkin pine.



FS7 B4
Four stencils,
four colors.
19 5/8" Wide
31" Repeat

FS7 F6
Six stencils, four colors.
12 3/4" x 12 3/4"

ALAN KIRK ROBERTS HOUSE MOODUS, CONNECTICUT

Stenciled circa 1816.

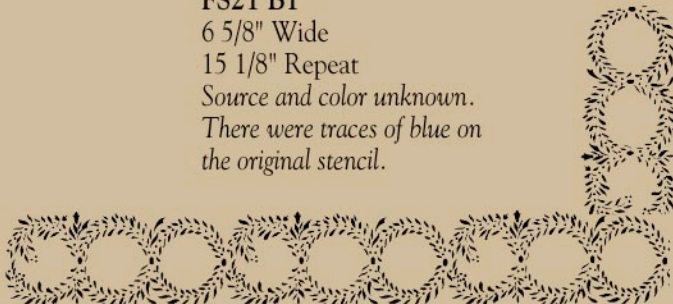
Original Colors: Dark green on pumpkin pine.
"Hit or miss" layout, your choice of placement.



FS5 F6
2 1/8" to 14 1/2" Diameter
Six stencils, one color.
Random placement.

FS5 B1
6 3/8" Wide
15 3/4" Repeat

FS21 B1
6 5/8" Wide
15 1/8" Repeat
*Source and color unknown.
There were traces of blue on
the original stencil.*



ARCHIBALD COX HOUSE WINDSOR, VERMONT

Original Colors: Black border, yellow ochre diamonds on pumpkin pine.



FS12 B1
9 3/8" Wide
25 1/8" Repeat

FS12 F1
4 1/4" x 5 5/8" Diamonds
Four diamond stencil.

HUMPHRIES HOUSE DORCHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

Made to simulate a woven carpet.

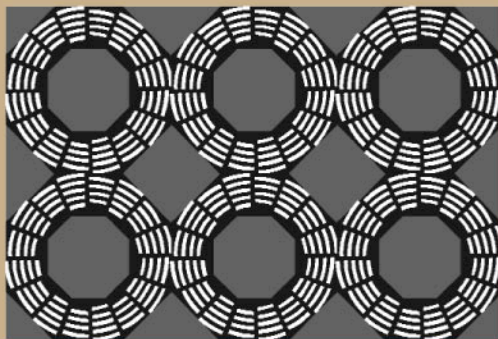
Original Colors may be Indian red and yellow ochre on a yellow ochre background.



FS20 F3
Three stencils, two colors.
11 1/2" Diameter

FLOOR FROM
MARBLEHEAD, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Black and grey on dark green background.
Made to resemble inlaid wood.



FS19 F2

16" x 16"

or

FS19 FA2

12" x 12"

Cover Design

EDWARD CUTLER HOUSE
WARREN, RHODE ISLAND

Original Colors: Black on white band, dust brown center.



FS11 B1 One Color 6" Wide, 30 1/2" Repeat



FS11 B2 Two Colors 6" Wide, 30 1/2" Repeat

THE "ORDINARY" HINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: White pattern on green band.

*We discovered after our initial printing of this catalogue
that this pattern was found on the wall.*



FS4 B1 One stencil, one color. 4 3/4" Wide, 27 1/8" Repeat



FS4 B2 Two stencils, two colors. 4 3/4" Wide, 27 1/8" Repeat

FLOOR FROM LUNENBURG, MASSACHUSETTS

House destroyed by fire.

Original Colors: Vermillion red, black and white on a medium green background.



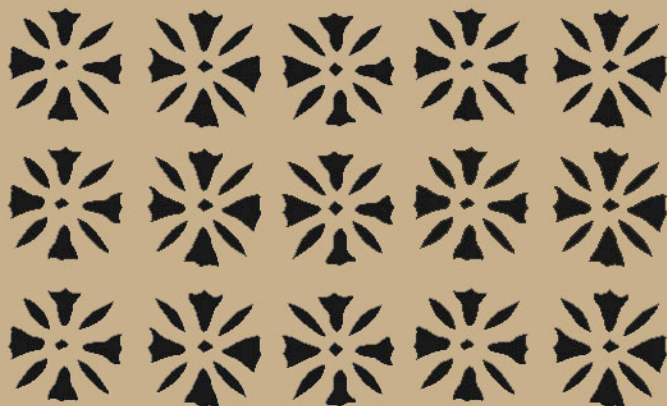
FS3 B2
One color
2 1/4" Wide
16 1/8" Repeat

FS3 F3
Three stencils, three colors.
10 1/4" Diameter (two figures)

EBENEZER WATERS HOUSE
WEST SUTTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Bedchamber

Original Colors: Black on yellow ochre.



FS28 F1 8" Wide, 30" Repeat, 3 Motifs.

JOSEPH LYNDE HOUSE
MELROSE, MASSACHUSETTS

Original Colors: Yellow/green and brown on yellow ochre.

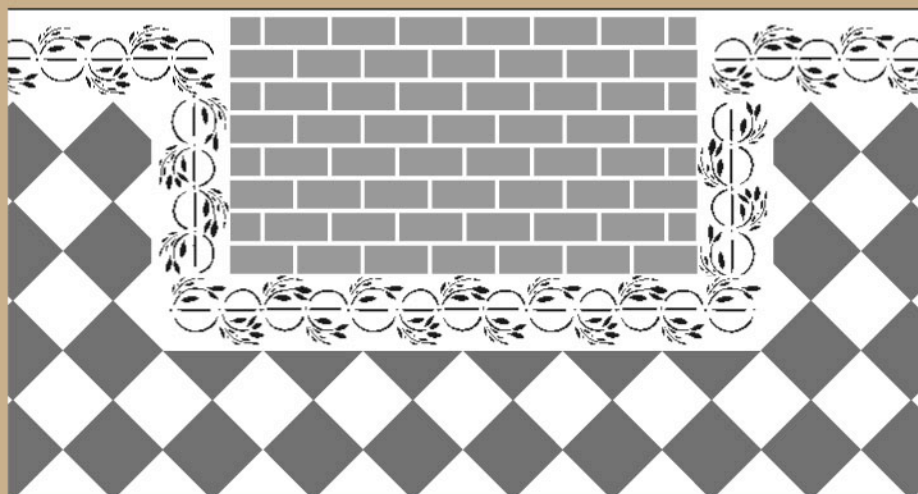


FS29 F1 12 1/4" Diameter wreath, 29 1/2" Repeat

THE BENJAMIN RICHARDSON TAVERN STERLING, MASSACHUSETTS

Bedchamber

Original colors: Black and grey on grey floors.

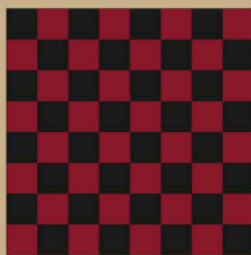


FS34 B1 8" Wide, 20" Repeat. (4 motifs)

FS34 F1 8" square shown (11 1/3" as a diamond)

FS34 F1A 12" square (17" as a diamond)

CHECKERBOARD OR DOLLHOUSE FLOOR



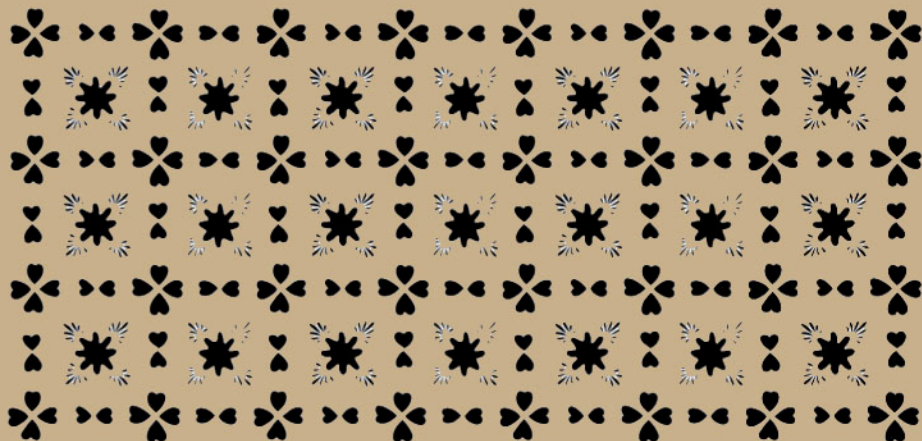
X1-A4 14" Square. Each square 1 1/2".

X1-4 8" square. Each square 1".

ISAAC BUCK HOUSE
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

Bedchamber

Original Colors: Black on pumpkin pine



FS32 F1 9 3/4" Wide, 19 1/2" Repeat. (2 motifs)

NELLIE SPARRALL HOUSE
NORWELL, MASSACHUSETTS

Bedchamber

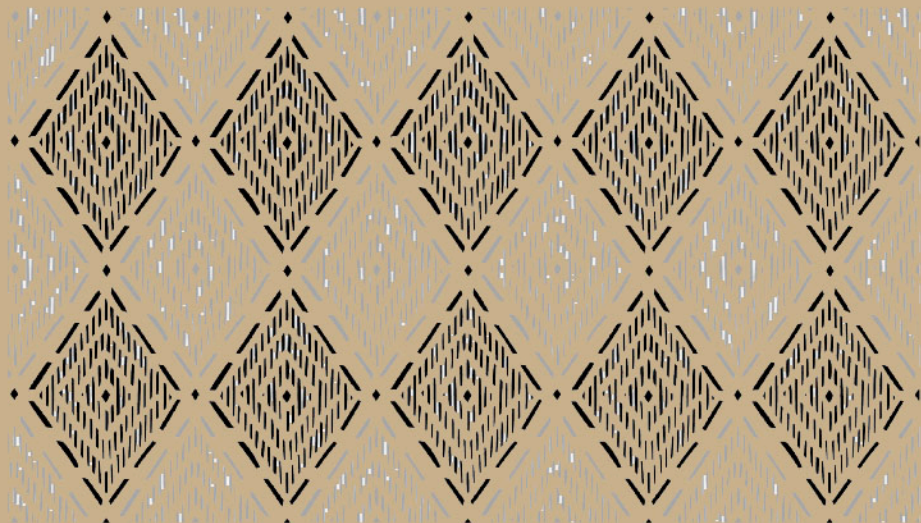
Original Colors: Dark green and yellow on a sage green background



FS30 F2 9 1/4" Wide, 18" High.

ISAAC BUCK HOUSE
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

Parlor



FS33 F1 14 1/2" Wide, 20" Repeat, 2 Motifs.
Each diamond approximately 8" wide by 12" high.

GREEK KEY STENCIL



FS36 B1 4" Wide, 19" Repeat, 4 Motifs.



FS37 B1 6" Wide, 15" Repeat, 2 Motifs.

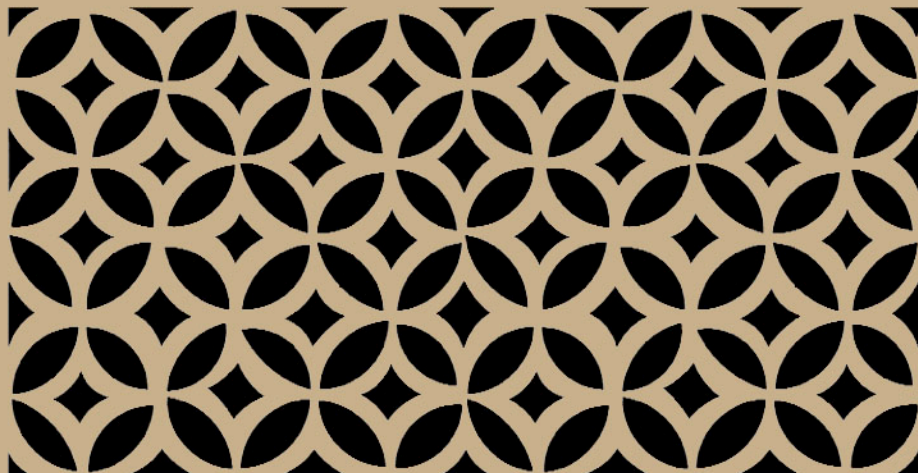


FS38 B1 8" Wide, 18 7/8" Repeat, 2 Motifs.

ISAAC BUCK HOUSE
HANOVER, MASSACHUSETTS

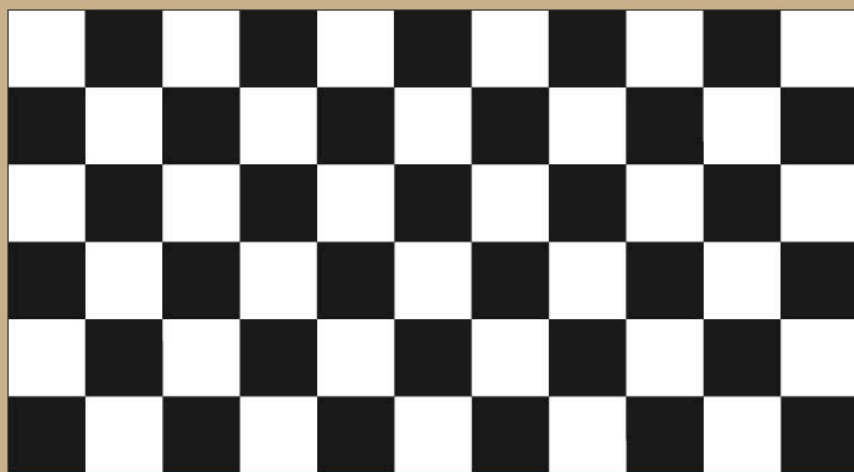
Bedchamber

Original Colors: Black on pumpkin pine



FS31 F1 15 3/8" Wide, 14 11/16" Repeat
Each circle approximately 4 1/2" diameter.

SQUARE STENCIL



FS35 F1A 8" Square FS35 F1 12" Square

"Our floorcloth is great for the kids – it wipes right up; we would never go back to a rug again. The antique white background keeps the house bright and in the painting of it we were able to accentuate other colors in the room."

– Debbie and Greg Peters

"We painted our mismatched floor boards in the summer kitchen and in one day, two of us produced a great looking floor for our daughter's wedding. We used FS5, the Alan Kirk Roberts House. Easy!"

– Alison Dennison

"I have no rug on the floor because it is so warm and inviting as it is. Bill and I love the combination of paint and wood. My painted floor makes the room!"

– Judy Breed

"We found that our painted floor solved the problem of rugs versus wheelchair."

– Dr. Chris Coughlin

"Our house guest, who had never stenciled in her life, did half our kitchen floor and loved every minute of it. The stencil under the table visually divides that space from the sitting area."



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