



THE MOSES EATON
&
MOSES EATON, JR.
NEW ENGLAND
COLLECTION

CIRCA 1800 - 1840

*Including
Illustrations of 10 Original Walls From
Historic Maine & New Hampshire Homes*

ILLUSTRATIONS OF
68 AUTHENTIC
STENCIL PATTERNS

MB HISTORIC DÉCOR CATALOGUE NO. 2 \$4.00

Polly Forcier ❁ Member HSEAD

MOSES EATON & MOSES EATON, JR.

Moses Eaton was one of the best documented stencilers of New England. He moved to Hancock, New Hampshire in 1792 from Needham, Massachusetts, near the port of Boston where European fashion first arrived. One of these fashions was imported wallpaper which many affluent families there could afford to buy. For those who could not, wall stenciling of the Moses Eaton type was already in evidence nearby as early as 1778.

It seems safe to assume that because Moses Eaton was forty years old at the time of this relocation to New Hampshire, his work there could have begun as soon as he was settled, circa 1800. In the Hancock, Dublin, Peterboro area there are many examples of walls decorated with the same patterns found years later in the original kit of wall stencils retrieved from his attic.

Family history avers both father and son, Moses Eaton, Jr., born in 1796, were stencilers. Without a doubt young Moses apprenticed to his father before striking out on his own. It is a matter of record that “two young men” stenciled together at the Joshua Eaton house in Bradford, New Hampshire circa 1824. One is believed to have been Moses Eaton Jr. His travels took him north and into Maine. Patterns “Down East” exhibit not only the old favorites found in his kit but also new ones, some characteristic of that state alone.

It is known that many men shared this profession and that exchanging patterns was commonplace. Although all of the patterns presented here have been attributed to the Moses Eatons, they might more accurately be ascribed “to them and their followers.” Moses Eaton’s patterns themselves, although influenced in placement of design by wallpapers, could not, in their simplicity, hope to reproduce the same hand-painted or machine produced overlay of colors which inspired them. That is why New England wall stenciling became an art form in its own right. Symbolism abounds in the various motifs. The swag and pendant, known as the liberty bell, was a patriotic emblem of post-Revolutionary America. Of those derived from nature, the flower baskets represented friendship; the oak leaf, strength and loyalty; the willow, everlasting life; and the pineapple, hospitality. Hearts, then, as today, stood for love and happiness, and were part of the “redding up” of a homestead for a new bride.

These stencils brought color and artistry to rural people eager for their plain walls to be transformed by red and green on backgrounds of salmon and raspberry pink, dove grey, sunny yellow and yellow ochre. Some stenciling appears on natural plaster or whitewashed walls or wood paneling; less expensive backgrounds, but still a way to afford the desired decoration.

Wallpaper was being produced in America throughout this time period and by 1840 our Industrial Revolution had arrived. This meant real wallpaper was affordable and a must for the fashionable housewife to “cover up that old stenciling!” Nevertheless, on serendipitous occasions, we are still peeling back the many layers of old wallpaper and discovering that Moses Eaton once was here!

WHY CHOOSE A MOSES EATON PATTERN?

We associate Moses Eaton's patterns with Cape Cod Style houses, early American furniture, wide pine floorboards, hooked and braided rugs and pottery with good reason. Their simplicity and boldness lend an atmosphere of gaiety and informality to such a setting.

Moses Eaton's bright patterns on warm backgrounds speak of family, friends and an industrious home life spent close to the hearth. Memoirs of 19th century children recount happy hours spent in bed comparing patterns and positioning of the red and green images on their walls.

The symbolism of the various motifs is a character lesson and a history lesson all in one. We see that the values and desires of our forefathers two hundred years ago are the same for us today.

We can appreciate the beauty of nature inside as well as out when we usher in trees, birds, leaves and bouquets of flowers to adorn our walls.

Moses Eaton patterns were recut many times as they wore out or were shared. It is not possible to offer more than one variation of the same unit here. In those cases I have made a discretionary choice. For instance, the swag in the Joshua Eaton House in its true form has a tassel and the oak leaf has many variations. Exceptions are the flower sprays and pineapples offered twice because one is typical of Maine and the other is usually seen elsewhere.



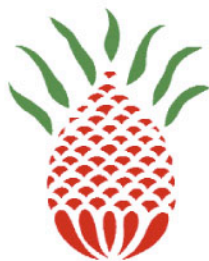
544 M2
Typically found
in Maine



537 M2
Usually seen
outside of Maine



548 M4 3 colors
Typically found
in Maine



542 M2
Usually seen
outside of Maine



Chair rail



Above

**THE OVERMANTLE IN THE JOSHUA EATON HOUSE
BRADFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Stenciled by "Two Young Men" circa 1824.

Original Colors: Green and red on canary yellow.

Left Wall

**THE HALE-FONTAINE HOUSE
EAST SWANZEY, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

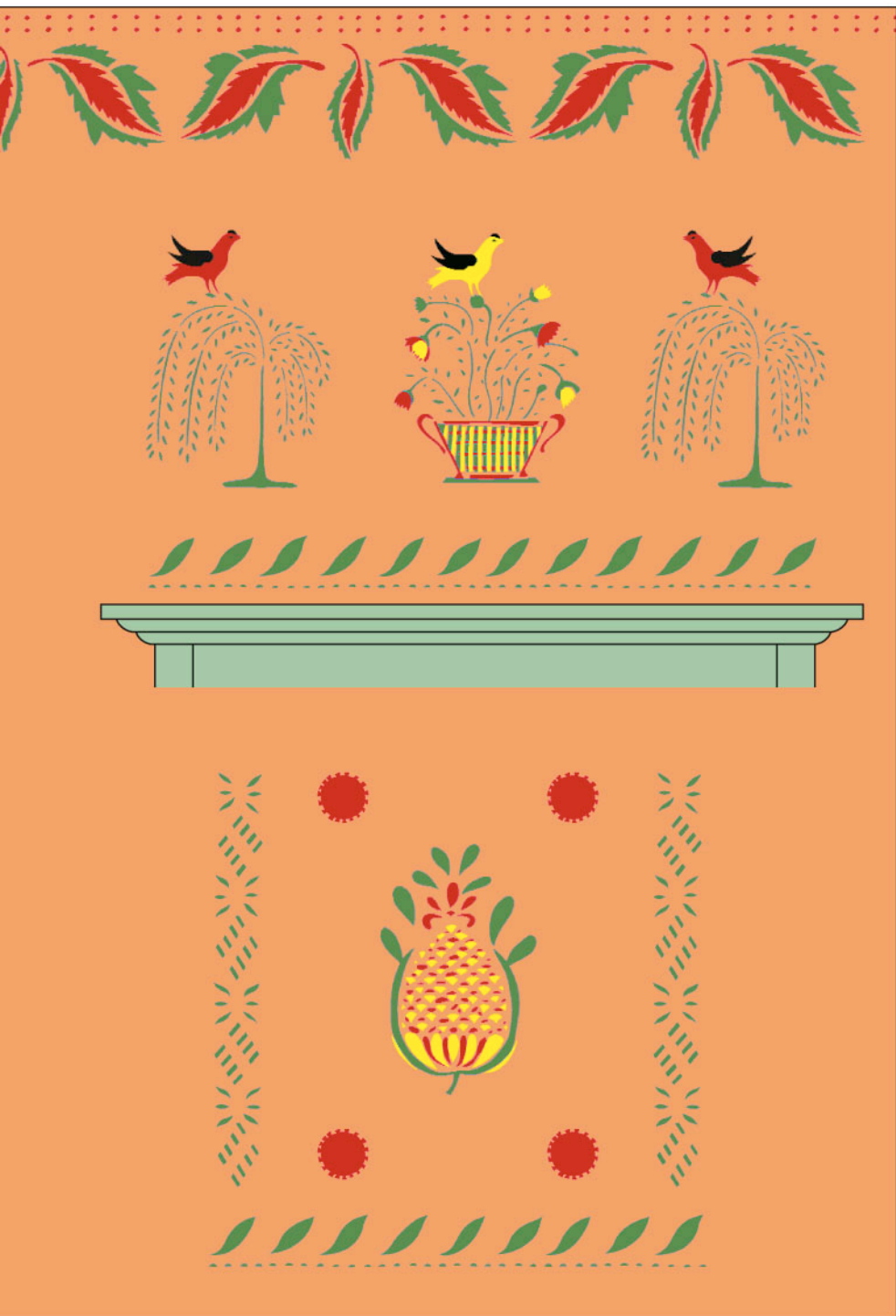
Original Colors: Green and red on yellow plaster.

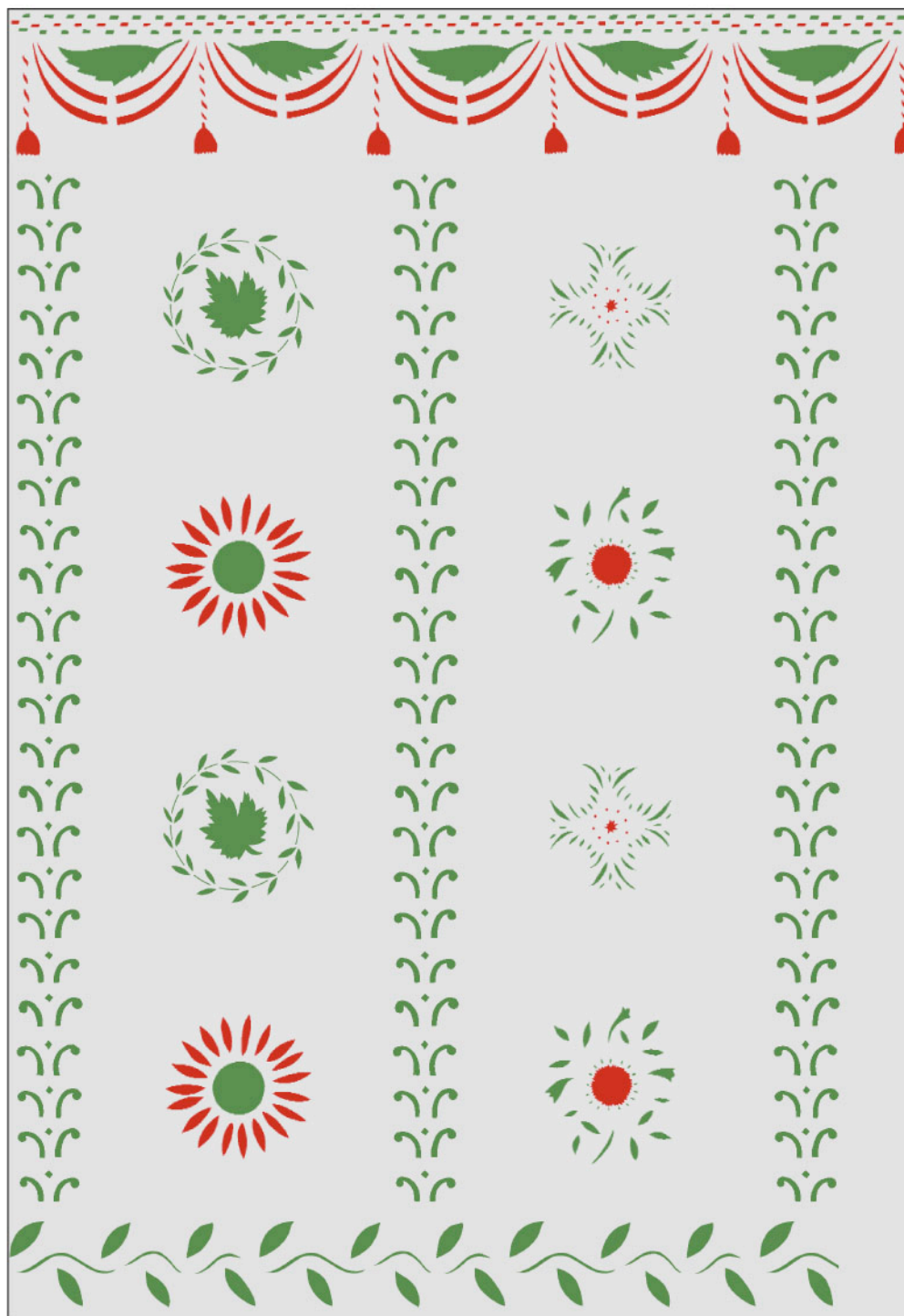


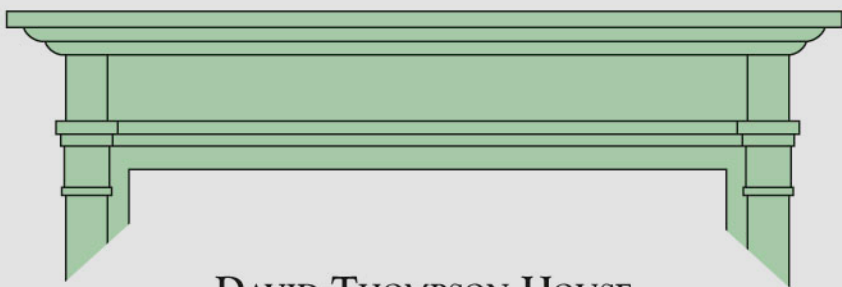
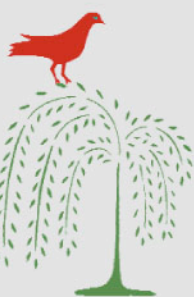
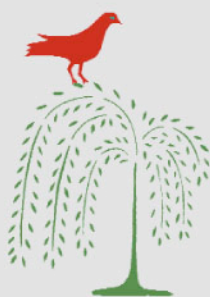
**LEACH-OVERLOCK HOUSE
EAST VASSALBORO, MAINE**

Wall above; overmantel layout upper right; motif between windows lower right.

Original Colors: Green, red and yellow on a salmon-vermillion background.







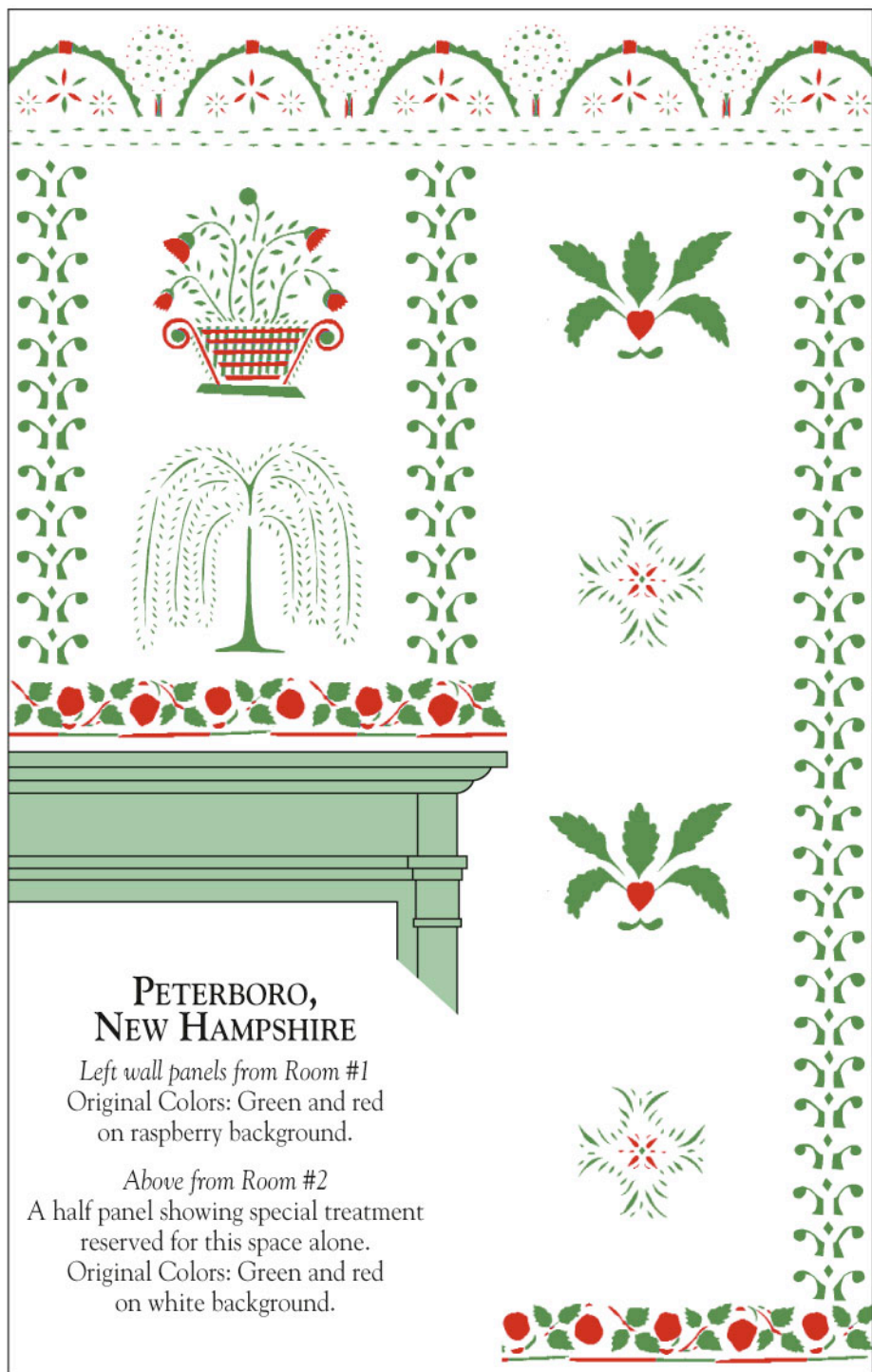
**DAVID THOMPSON HOUSE
ALEWIVE, MAINE**

Now at the Brick Store Museum, Kennebunk, Maine.

Wall and overmantle treatment.

Original Colors: Green and red on grey background.

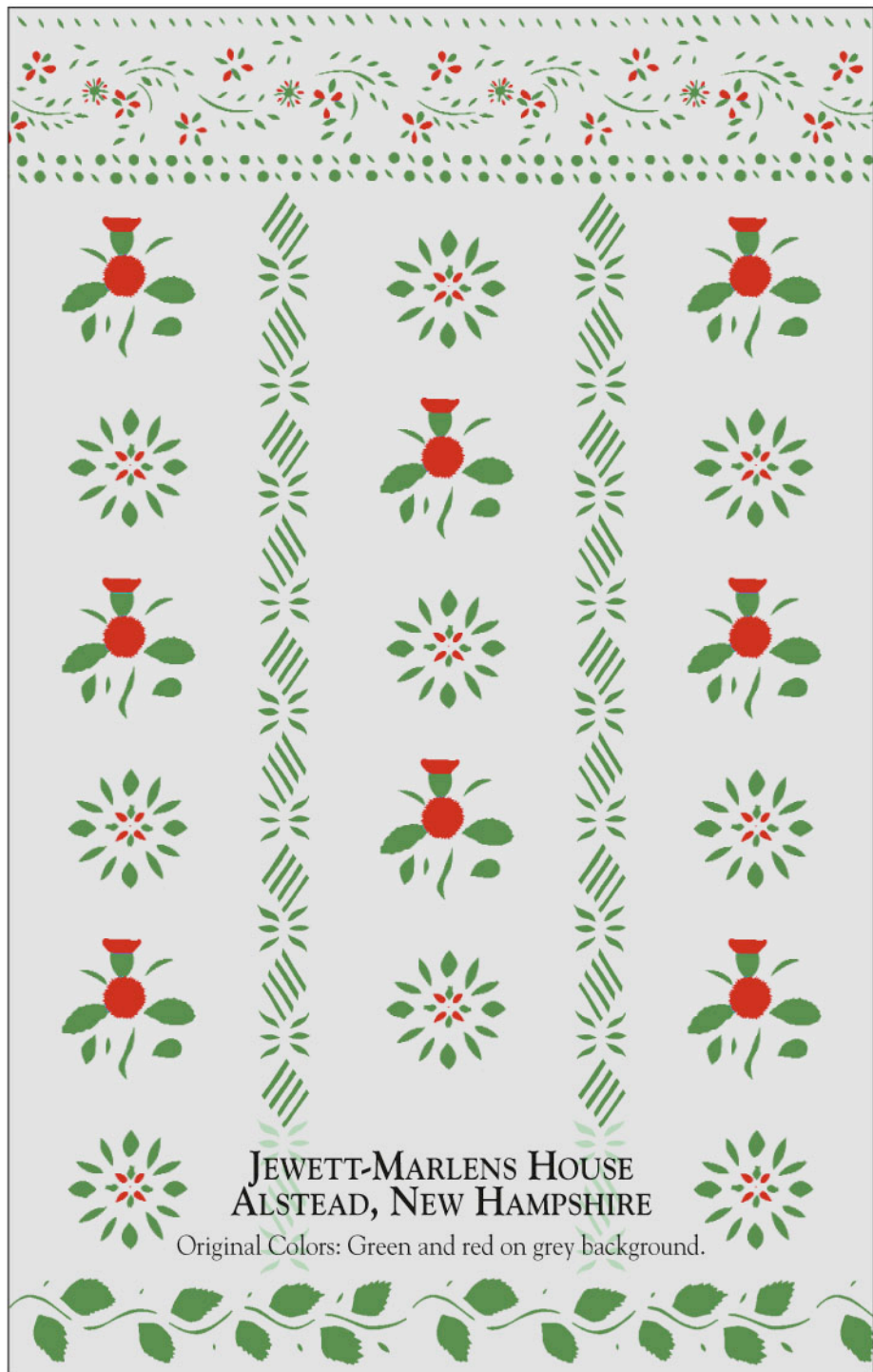




PETERBORO, NEW HAMPSHIRE

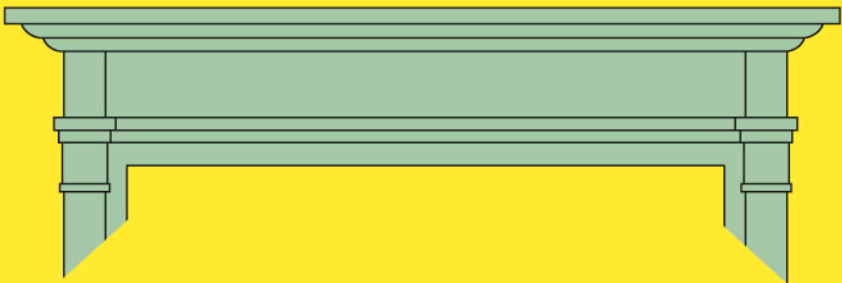
Left wall panels from Room #1
Original Colors: Green and red
on raspberry background.

Above from Room #2
A half panel showing special treatment
reserved for this space alone.
Original Colors: Green and red
on white background.



**JEWETT-MARLENS HOUSE
ALSTEAD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Original Colors: Green and red on grey background.



AMHERST, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Original Colors: Green and red on a yellow background.



500 F2
5 1/2" High
19 7/8" Repeat



501 F2
6" High
18 1/4" Repeat



502 F2
6 3/4" High
17 7/8" Repeat



503 F2
6 1/8" High
17 5/8" Repeat



504 F2
7 1/8" High
17 5/8" Repeat



505 F2
8 1/4" High
19 5/8" Repeat



506 F1
7 3/8" High
24 3/8" Repeat
*(Only half of actual
stencil is shown here.)*



506 FA2
(Heart only)



506 FB2
(Seal only)



507 F2
7 3/8" High
24 3/8" Repeat



507 FA2
7 3/8" High
24 3/8" Repeat



508 F1
4 5/8" High
14 1/4" Repeat



509 F2
6 1/8" High
18 3/4" Repeat



511 VH1
2 2/1" Wide
21 1/2" Repeat



512 VH1
2 3/8" Wide
21 1/4" Repeat



513 VH1
2 1/8" Wide
19 7/8" Repeat



514 V1
2 1/2" Wide
14" Repeat



516 V1
3 3/8" Wide
16 5/8" Repeat



517 V1
2 3/8" Wide
15 1/4" Repeat



523 V1
3 1/8" Wide
20 1/2" Repeat



515 H1
4 3/8" Wide
12 3/4" Repeat



525 H2
5 3/8" High
17 7/8" Repeat



519 H1
2 5/8" High
17 1/8" Repeat



521 H1
4 1/2" High
20 3/8" Repeat



518 H1
2 3/8" High
18" Repeat



520 H2
2 7/8" High
14 1/4" Repeat



522 VHI
3 5/8" Wide
18" Repeat



524 VH1
3" Wide
19 5/8" Repeat



526 H1
3 3/8" High
18 3/4" Repeat



531 M1
10 1/8" High
11 1/4" Wide



533 MA2
7" High
6 1/2" Wide



533 MB2
7" High
6 1/2" Wide



534 MA2
6 1/2" High
6 1/8" Wide



534 MB2
6 1/2" High
6 1/8" Wide



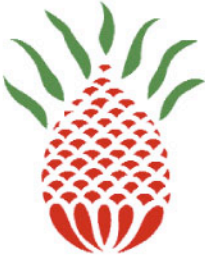
555 M2
6" Diameter



536 M2
10 1/8" High
9 1/2" Wide



536 MA2
(Bird only)



542 M2
11 5/8" High
9 1/4" Wide



535 M2
10 5/8" High
9 1/4" Wide



535 M3
10 5/8" High
9 1/2" Wide



544 M2
7 7/8" High
6 3/4" Wide



544 MA2
7 7/8" High
6 3/4" Wide



544 MB2
7 7/8" High
6 3/4" Wide



545 M2
7 3/8" Diameter



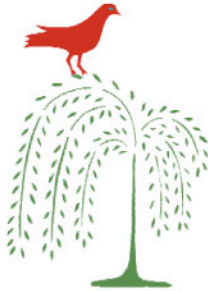
546 M1
7 3/4" Diameter



546 M2
10 1/2" Diameter



538 M1
10" High
9 1/4" Wide



558 M2
3 1/2" High
4 1/2" Wide
(bird only)



559 M2
3 1/4" High
4 1/4" Wide
(bird only)



552 M1
7 1/2" High
7 1/4" Wide



539 M2
6 3/4" Diameter



540 M1
8" Diameter



541 M1
6 1/4" High
8 7/8" Wide



541 MA1
1 3/8" High
1 1/2" Wide
(heart only)



541 MB1
2 1/2" Diameter
(heart only)



547 M1
7 7/8" Diameter



548 M4 3 colors
12 3/8" High
7 7/8" Wide



549 M2
10 1/2" High
9 7/8" Wide



551 M2
8" Diameter



554 M4
3 colors
10" High
9 1/2" Wide



559 M2
(Bird only)



537 M2
7 1/2" High
7 1/4" Wide



537 MA2
7 1/2" High
7 1/4" Wide



556 M1
1 5/8" High
1 3/4" Wide



553 M1
2 5/8"
Diameter



532 M1
8" Diameter



543 M1
7 1/8" Diameter



557 M1
4 5/8" High
5 3/8" Wide



550 M2
9 5/8" High
8 3/4" Wide



561 M1
8" High
10 3/8" Wide



560 M2
9 5/8" High
9 1/8" Wide

OF PATTERNS & PLACEMENT

I have shown 10 authentic walls to enable you to familiarize yourself with the placement of patterns before planning your own room. Moses Eaton's layout was very carefree. He treated each wall as a separate space, not carrying the frieze around, but adding a portion of the design to end it on that wall. The verticals were determined by door and window construction so that the panels were all different widths. The motifs were applied more often by eye than by careful measurement.

The patterns were cut from brown opaque paper stiffened with oil. Today's translucent stencils with register marks for alignment of overlaid colors assure us of ease and success.

Some books for your further study of wall stenciling are: *Early American Stencils on Walls and Furniture* by Janet Waring; *American Decorative Wall Painting 1700-1850* by Nina Fletcher Little. There are a few pages in *Techniques in American Folk Decoration* by Lipman and Meulendyke. good tips for wall and floor stenciling are presented in *The Art and Craft of Wall Stenciling* by Richard M. Bacon. Included with my patterns will be complete directions and, if called for, some specific to your pattern.

Polly Frazier

"When Ed and I bought our house, half the rooms were stenciled. We felt it was a distinct addition to the house and brought a unifying element to the furnishings."

– Alice Kintner

"We loved the look of stenciling in our greenhouse from the inside but an unexpected surprise has been how dramatic it is looking through the wrap around glass from the outside. People comment on it all the time."

– Holly Sateia

"It's unique and different. It was a huge selling point in our New Jersey home. The people who bought our house still send us a post card once a year. After eight years they still have it and love it as much as we did."

– Lynn Porter

"Lynn couldn't wait to stencil again in our new home. It's the first thing people notice when they come in. Her sister and friend were just incredulous that she'd already done it again!"

– Tim Porter

Stenciling is something I can do... it's putting something of myself, my handiwork, into my own house. It can involve the whole family. Mistakes are part of the handmade look. It's fun to look back and see that your child painted this – or that – when he or she was younger. To think that something so beautiful can be created so inexpensively!"

– Marty James



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