

Gunstock Carving



**The Most Complete
Guide to Carving and
Engraving Gunstocks**

By Bill Janney

Gunstock Carving

by Bill Janney



**Fox
Chapel Publishing Co. Inc.**

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Dedicated

to Glenda, who is always at my side
to Dad, who showed me that whatever you do, do it right
to my children and grandchildren, who brighten my day

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About the Author

In the early 1990s, after becoming tired of falling asleep in front of the television set, Bill Janney of Middletown, Ohio, decided it was time to do something else with his life. After attending an entrepreneur show and buying some carving tools from Paragrave, he started carving on belt buckles. This developed his eye-hand coordination and gave him a chance to experiment using air drills and small chisels. Next, he took a class from Keith Hone in Utah where he began working on his first gunstock.

Because Bill likes to work on hardwood and has always liked the feel and look of a gunstock, it was a perfect match. He especially likes to work with claro, California English, and bostogne, or paradox, walnut stocks because they are so dense.

Finding the proper tool for the job at hand has been the most difficult part of carving for Bill. He uses a combination of power chisels, gouges, checking tools, flex shaft tools and high speed air drills. The 400,000 rpm air drill with a variety of bits is his tool of choice.



Bill Janney

Bill retired in July 1995 so he could spend more time carving. The extra time to carve has made a big difference. He states, "I am really surprised at how practicing improves my skills, as I never thought I would do more than chop on wood."

Not only is there much to learn about carving, but Bill felt he wanted to start a small business. "Woodcarvings by Bill Janney" was started after going to workshops, reading numerous books, talking with qualified individuals, and working with business students at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. He has a Federal Fire Arm License and is a gun dealer, which allows him to buy guns for his customers.

Bill does relief carving on custom and factory-made guns or starts with the raw stock then inlays the barreled action. In addition to carving scenes on the wide parts of the stock, he does scroll, leaf or fish scale designs on the grip and forearm in place of checkering. He also makes gunstock lamps and briefcases. Carving and inlaying ivory into the stocks adds a special look and value to the gun.

Woodworking runs in the family. His great grandfather and grandfather were cabinet makers. Ben Janney, his father, makes beautiful furniture. Bill himself has found the change from being a couch potato to a full-time carver very rewarding. Winning ribbons at woodcarving shows is not unusual for Bill, and he has been invited to give demonstrations and display his guns at a number of locations across the country.

Bill has also traveled several times to Germany and Austria to study the beautiful handmade and hand-engraved gunstocks of the European masters. His visits there inspired him to make every one of his gunstocks into works of art.

Bill lives with his wife, Glenda, in Middletown, Ohio. Their children, Melinda and Steve, are married with children of their own.

A History of Gunstock Carving

Beautifully carved and engraved guns originated in Europe where the sport of hunting is taken very seriously. The European's reverence for the animals showed in the guns they used for the hunt.

In most European countries hunting has traditionally been the province of the land owner—the kings, emperors, ministers of government, lords and princes—who managed the game.

Each land owner hired a manager, a highly respected position, for the game. This person generally knew each animal and its ancestry for many years and generations. No person would consider hunting and killing these animals unless the manager gave his approval.

Because each animal was known and respected, to hunt it was an honor given to the elite that was taken seriously with an almost ritual intensity. The nobles would not consider hunting with anything but a beautiful gun, one with lavish engraving and a wonderful finish, which showed respect for the animal.

Gun makers hired metal engravers and wood-carvers to adorn these fine guns with scenes, scrolls, leaves, checkering, fish scale and basket weave. The fine workmanship in making and adorning the gun was a skill not to be taken lightly in a system where the animal was so respected and hunting was taken so seriously.

Today gun making is still taken seriously. In Austria there is a four-year college dedicated to gun making, and the town has many shops where excellent quality guns are made. Some sell for over a million dollars. Guns look like pieces of art because of the quality of the wood, the finishing, the carving and the engraving.

Following the example of those gun makers, I have studied gunstock carving and would like to pass my knowledge on to you. This book will show you step-by-step how to carve fish scale, basket weave and wildlife scenes on guns. A gallery of carved guns is included to give you inspiration.

—Bill Janney

Gallery

All of the guns in this gallery have been carved by the author. Photos are included here to provide you with inspiration and ideas for carving your own gunstock.



Winchester Model 101, 12 gauge Grand European Ducks

The butt plate of this beautiful gun is rosewood with a carved duck scene. The forearm features a small fish scale pattern and oak leaf scrolls which are repeated on the grip. The grip cap is antique elephant ivory scrimshawed with a duck scene. An inlaid elephant ivory scrimshaw duck is located just above the trigger.



Gallery



Gallery



Classic American Hunter, Mannlicher, Styer, Austria
The sheep featured on this gun represent the four species of sheep present in North America: the rocky mountain big horn, the store sheep, the Dall's sheep, and the desert big horn. When a hunter takes all four, this is called a grand slam—a feat commemorated by this gun.



Gunstock Carving

Gallery

Norsman Arms, Custom Rifle

Four Ram Species

The sheep on the forearm and grip represent the four species of North American wild sheep: Rocky Mountain Big Horn Sheep, Stone Sheep, Dall's Sheep and Desert Big Horn Sheep. Some gun owners will request particular species to commemorate a hunt or several hunts combined.



Custom Stock, Winchester Model 70

Mountain Goat and Grape Leaves

Stippling helps to give the background of a scene texture without overpowering the main subjects of the carved scene. It also provides a break between the smooth surface of the gunstock and the carved leaf or scroll borders.

Gallery



Custom-Stocked Rifle

Four North American Animals
This rifle includes four popular North American big game species: an elk scene carved on the butt stock, a grizzly bear on the grip, a big horn ram on the forearm, and a white-tailed deer (not shown) on the cheek piece.



Ruger, Model 77RSI

Elk Scene
Leaf scrolls help to frame an elk scene carved on this gun.



Merkel Side-by-Side Shotgun

Dogs and Pheasant
Principles of relief carving come into play here to make the dog and the pheasant appear to be moving forward. By having them break the background and carving them in higher relief, they appear to be closer to the viewer. The checkering is the original factory detailing.

Gallery

Ruger No. 1 Single Shot Rifle Pronghorn

Antelope
Stippling and the addition of leaves can be used to frame a profile of an animal. I avoid carving on the cheek piece of a gun that is meant to be used because it can be distracting to the shooter.



Merkel Side-by-Side Shotgun

Dogs and Quail
Not every gunstock needs to be elaborately carved. Leaves and simple lines can be used to create a powerful frame for a scene. The checkering on this gun was done at the factory; I added the German-style oak leaves.



Charles Daly Side-by-Side Shotgun

Dogs and Quail
The illusion of depth plays a great role in a successful scene. Here one dog looks like it's moving forward while the other dog looks like it's going to take off in the opposite direction. A subtle difference in depth is the secret to creating the illusion of greater depth.

Gallery



Ruger No. One, Single Shot Rifle

Cape Buffalo and Lions

Research is just as important in gunstock carving as it is in any other type of carving. Study photographs of your subject to understand the body structure and hair flow of the animals you choose to carve.

Custom-Stocked Sako Rifle

Leaves and Fish scale

Not every gun needs to have an animal scene. Scales and leaves are just as attractive. This is one of the first gunstocks I carved.



Custom-Stocked Sako Rifle

Big Horn and Fish scale

Many areas of the gun can be carved, including the butt stock, the grip and the forearm. I like to incorporate animal heads as part of the borders, as seen here.

Gallery



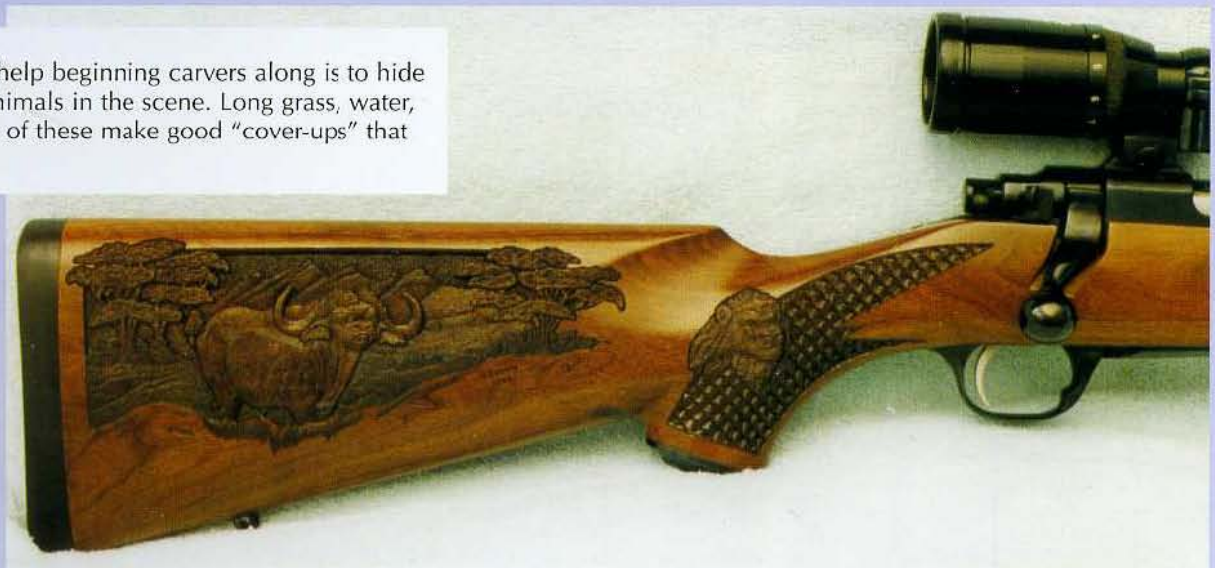
Ruger, Model 77RS1
*Elk Scene with Scrolls,
Basketweave Grip*
The basketweave on this gun was carved as part of the demonstration in this book. The basketweave pattern covers an entire sheet of self-adhesive paper that can be applied to any part of a gun.



Browning A-Bolt
Deer and Ram
Profiles of animals can liven up a simple fish scale and give you an attractive option if you aren't confident enough in your skills or don't have enough time to carve an entire scene.

Cape Buffalo

Another trick to help beginning carvers along is to hide the legs of the animals in the scene. Long grass, water, felled trees... All of these make good "cover-ups" that still look great.



Gallery



Ivory inlays give a special decorative quality to a gunstock. The ivory can be carved with an engraving tool as well.

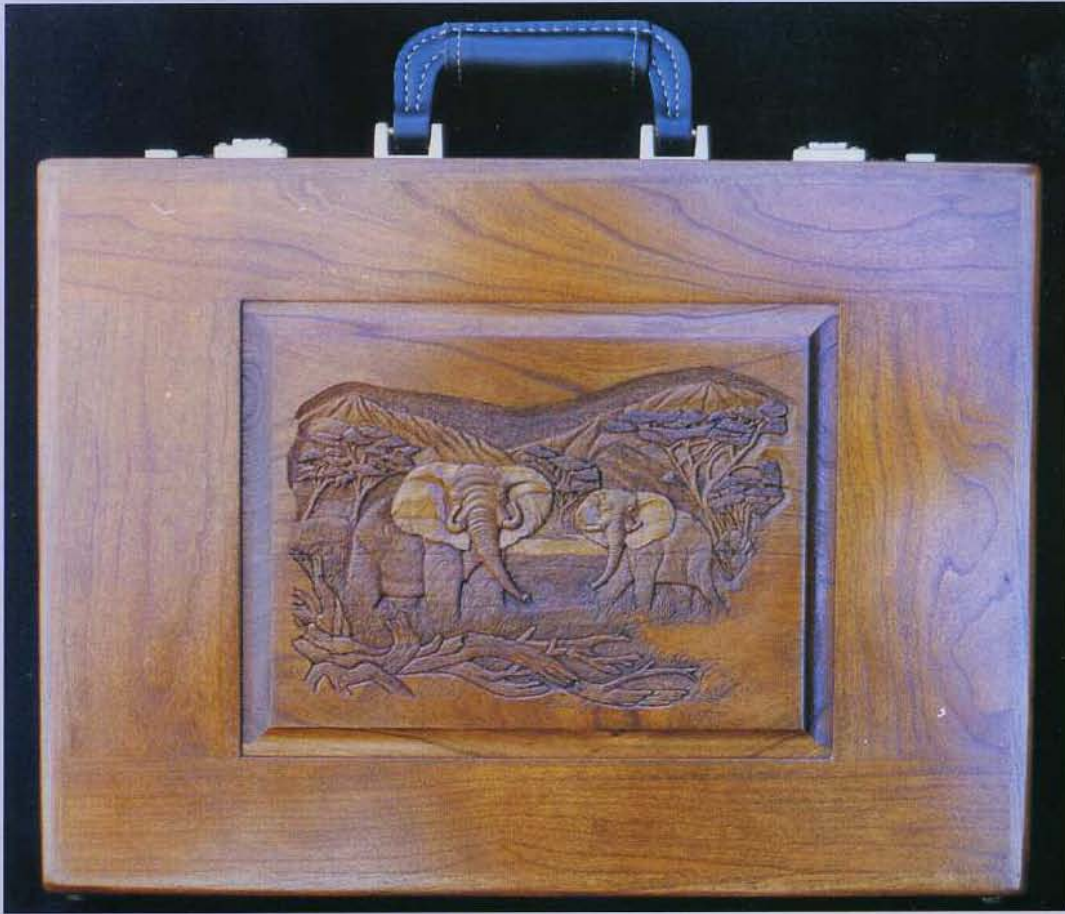


Custom Briefcase

Gunstock

I created this briefcase and carry it with me whenever I'm out and about at seminars or shows. Its functions are three-fold: it is a conversation piece, it showcases my abilities as a gunstock carver, and it carries all my paperwork.

Gallery



Gerstner Briefcase

Elephants

Try different versions of a scene to get the perfect look. The smaller elephant seems to be farther back in the picture because of its size. The trees and the mountains were specially placed to show off and not overshadow the elephants. The placement of the logs in the foreground helps to pull the entire design together.

Briefcase

African Animals

This briefcase was carved using the same tools that are used to carve a gunstock. I positioned head shots of the animals separately until I came up with an arrangement I liked.



Gunstock Carving

Gallery



SKB Over/Under 12 Gauge Shotgun

Scrolls and Fish Scale

The scroll work on this shotgun is a replica of the scroll work on the metal side plate. The stippling sets a border to let the fish scale and scroll work stand out from the rest of the gunstock.



Winchester Over/Under Shotgun

Ducks

The gun in the foreground recently won first place at the 2002 Miami Valley Woodcarvers Show. The duck on the grip is carving in ivory. The scroll was duplicated from the side plate, enlarged and designed to flow with the ducks.

Tools and Materials

Carving gunstocks is a rewarding hobby and an even better occupation. Few tools are needed and materials are easy to find. The expenses involved in gunstock carving can be greater than other wood-carving hobbies due to the power tools involved. As always, review your options before buying.

Tools

The European masters—past and present—carve gunstocks with a variety of hand tools. These tools include some that are specially designed for gunstock carving. Checkering tools (the tools used to create the diamond pattern commonly seen on factory-made guns today), gouges and knives were originally used to create a checkered pattern.



A limited number of tools are needed to carve gunstocks. I use a power engraver with a set of bits, plus the other items shown in this photograph. You can also carve beautiful guns with motorized tools and hand tools.

I started with hand tools, but quickly moved to power motorized tools, such as a Foredom and a Dremel, as my love of gunstock carving and my confidence in my abilities grew. I moved beyond checkering to try fish scale and basket weave patterns. I found that these motorized tools provided the speed and the burs that I needed to help me carve faster and better.

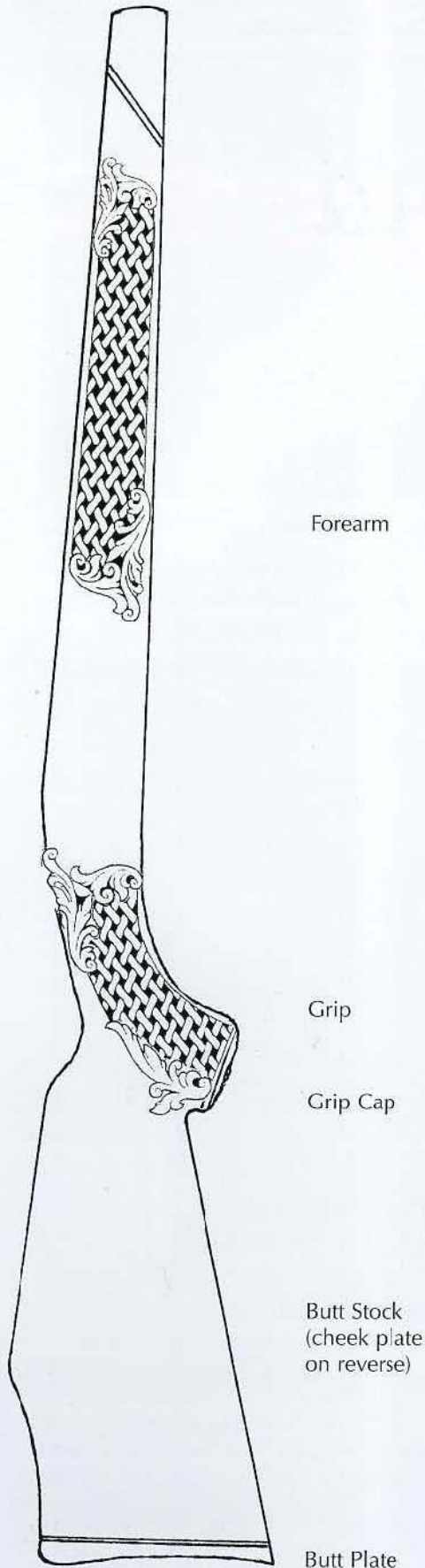
As I added more variety to my carving—animal portraits, habitat scenes, stippling and more—I found that I needed an even faster tool. That's when I decided to try power engraving tools.

A power engraving tool, also referred to as an air drill, is currently my tool of choice for gunstock carving. The Shofu tool that I am using in the following demonstrations is actually a dental restoration tool. It runs at 360,000 rpm, which is fast enough to carve not only wood, but also to engrave metal, ivory, bone and horn—all of which can be used in adorning gunstocks. Almost all power engravers are amazingly quiet, very light and comfortable to grip.

Hundreds of burs are available for engraving tools. They are the same style of bur that is used in the motorized tools. I find that I use only a few repeatedly: a 1/8 inch round carbide bur, several sizes of pointed diamond burs and several sizes of pointed carbide burs.

In addition to a good engraver, you'll need a sharp knife for lifting the pattern from the wood and a v-shaped checkering tool to emboss lines.

List of Suppliers



Forearm

Grip

Grip Cap

Butt Stock
(cheek plate
on reverse)

Butt Plate

Graphic Transfer
4011 Tropicaire Dr.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406
1-866-453-2652
www.graphictransfer.net

Wood Carvers Supply, Inc.
P.O. Box 7500
Englewood, FL 34295
1-800-281-6229
www.woodcarverssupply.com

Woodcraft
P.O. Box 1686
Parkersburg, WV 26102
1-800-225-1153
www.woodcraft.com

Smoky Mountain Woodcarvers
Supply
P.O. Box 82
Townsend, TN 37882
1-800-541-5994
www.woodcarvers.com

Koval Knives
P.O. Box 492
New Albany, OH 43054
1-800-556-4837
www.kovalknives.com

Rio Grande
P.O. Box 12277
Albuquerque, NM 87195
1-800-545-6566
www.riogrande.com

Brownells
200 S. Front St.
Montezuma, IA 50171
1-641-623-4000
www.brownells.com

Craft Woods
P.O. Box 439
Hanover, MD 21076
1-800-468-7070
www.craftwoods.com

Treeline
1305 East 1120 South
Provo, UT 84606
1-800-598-2743
www.treeline.com

GRS Tools
900 Overlander Rd.
Emporia, KS 66801
1-800-835-3519
www.glendo.com

Rockler
4365 Willow Dr.
Medina, MN 55340
1-800-260-963
www.rockler.com

Profitable Hobbies
517 Commerce Rd.
Orem, UT 84508
1-800-624-7415
www.paragraphics.com

Ultra-Speed Products, Inc.
18550 East Aschoff Rd.
Zigzag, OR 97049
1-800-373-0707
www.turbocarver.com

SCM
N64 W19760 Mill Rd.
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051
1-800-755-0261
www.scmsystems.com

Boys Gunstock Industries
25376 403rd Ave.
Michell, SD 57301
1-605-996-5011
www.boydboys.com

Wood

I recommend a dense hardwood like walnut. A softer wood will not hold the fine detail required in gunstock carving.

Most guns are made of very dense, very beautiful hardwood. You can purchase a gun at any sporting goods store. Make sure to check on the type of wood that was used in making the gun.

A gun that is adorned with factory detailing is not a problem. Many times, I will carve away the factory detailing to get to the wood beneath.



Choose a gun made with a dense hardwood; softer woods will not hold fine details well. Most guns today are made from walnut, which is a perfect wood for gunstock carving.

Practice Blocks

If this is your first time working with a power engraver, I would suggest that you practice and refine your skills on a practice block. I teach the basics of gunstock carving on blocks like those pictured in this chapter. These blocks are also a good way for experienced carvers to refresh their skills after a long break from carving.



Practice blocks are a great way to develop your skills. I also use them to refresh my skills after I've been away from carving for a few days.

You can also practice using a power engraver on other more practical items, which can then be sold or given away. I made a number of belt buckles before I felt confident enough to carve my first gunstock.

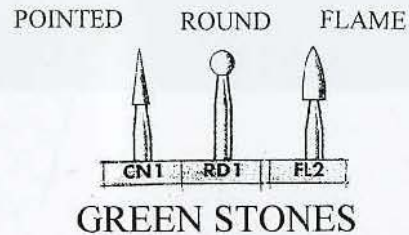
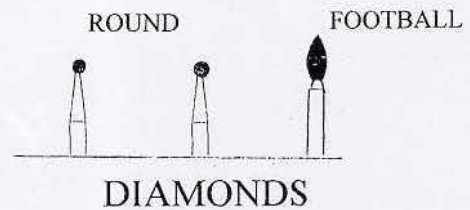
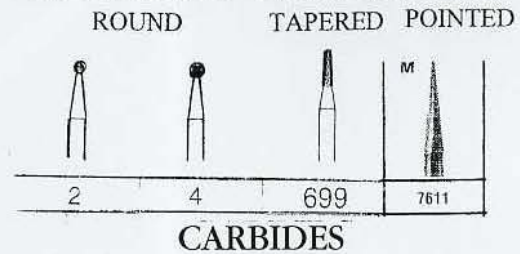
Fixing mistakes in gunstock carving can be time-consuming and costly, especially if you are working on a commission piece. Work slowly and carefully so you only have to carve a gun once.

Safety

As with any woodcarving project, safety needs to be foremost in your mind as you carve. Common sense should dictate many of the standard safety rules, like length of carving time, lighting, seating, etc. The user manuals from the manufacturers of your tools will dictate the rest.

I make a point to use safety goggles and a dust mask. I also rest the gunstock between two sandbags as I work. This keeps the gun up off the surface of the table and makes it easier to grip. Some non-slip rubber matting between the sandbags and the table ensures that the gun will remain still.

HIGH SPEED CARVING BURS



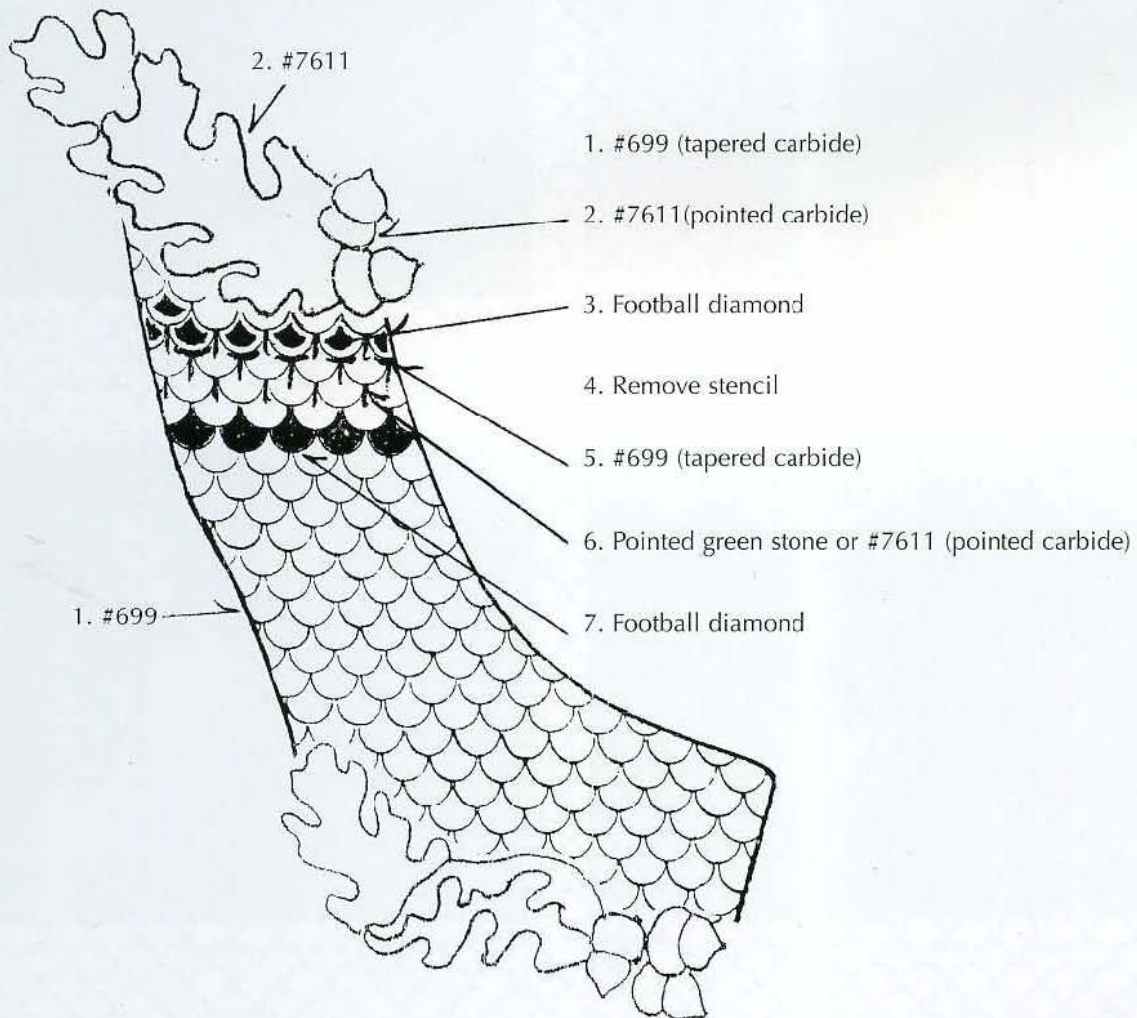
Pictured here are the high speed carving burs used in this book. Burs are enlarged to show shape.

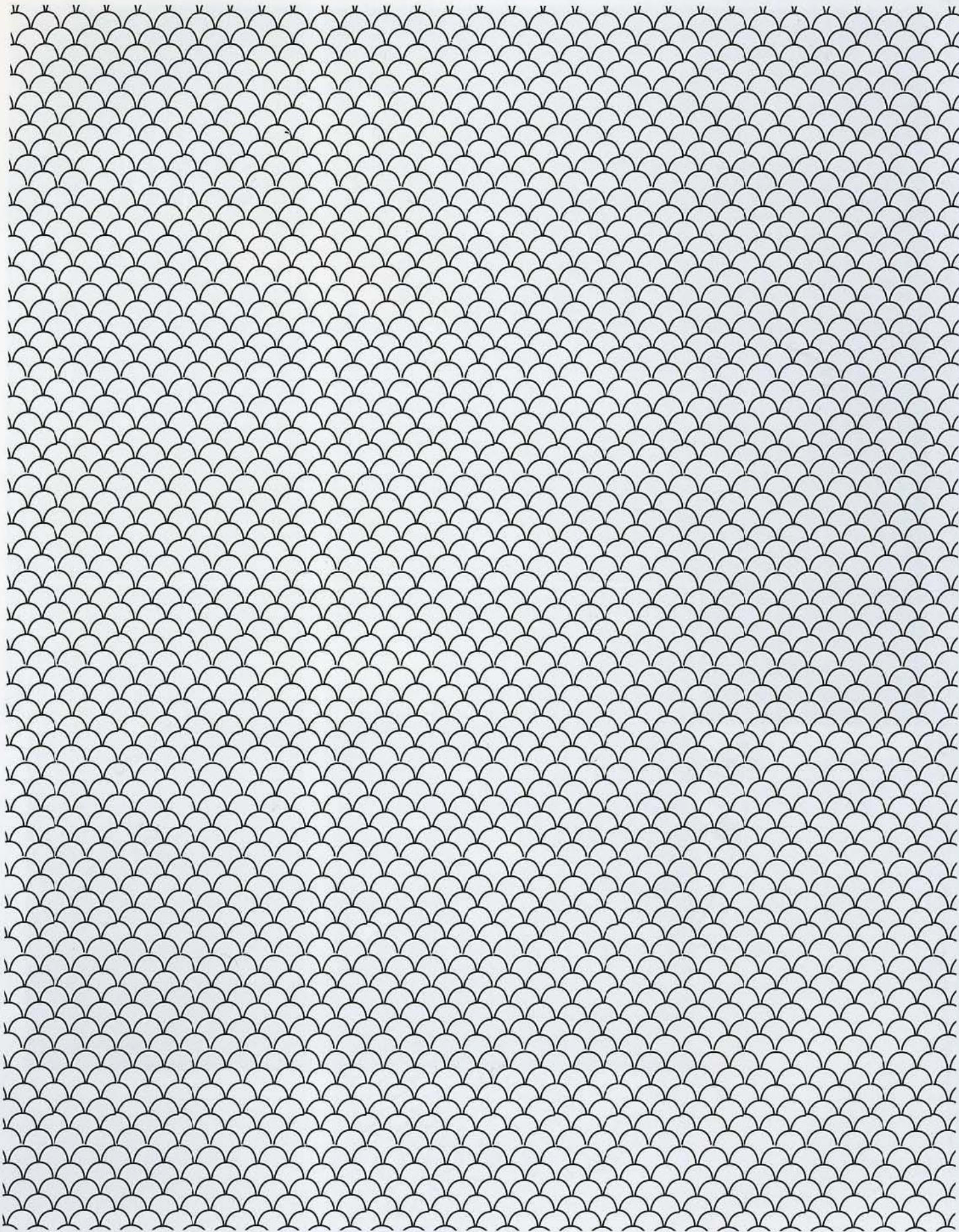


Remove factory checkering and replace it with a fish scale pattern and oak leaves.

Carving Fish Scales and Oak Leaves

1. Cut border with #699 bur held on a 45 degree angle to cut a V groove
2. Cut border of leaves with #7611 to 1/16" depth
3. Cut out with football bur
4. Remove stencil
5. Cut across back of scale with #699
6. Cut centers with pointed green stone or #7611 bur
7. Cut with football to deepen and shape each scale





Gunstock Carving

Outline the Pattern



1 Photocopy the oak leaves from page 73 onto self-adhesive transparency paper and position them at the edges of the factory-detailed grip.



2 Using the engraver and a pointed carbide bur, begin to outline the oak leaf design. I am starting at the uppermost edge of the design with the engraver running at 400,000 rpm. Make this first cut about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch deep.



3 Continue to outline the oak leaf design. Be careful to cut straight into the wood; do not angle the engraver or undercut the area.



4 As you reach the bottom of the design, it will be necessary to flip the gun to outline the bottom of the leaf design.



5 Complete the outline; then engrave the lines that separate the leaves.



6 The oak leaf design has been completely outlined with the engraver.



7 Outline the second set of oak leaves in the same manner.



8 Continue outlining.



9 Turn the gun to engrave the bottom of the oak leaf design.



10 Complete the outline.



11 Engrave the inside lines that separate the leaves.



12 Both sets of oak leaves are now completely outlined.

Prepare the Surface



13 Remove the pattern from the engraved oak leaves.



14 Fit the engraver with a large football diamond bur. Tilting the engraver slightly so the point reaches the pattern outline, remove the factory checkering done by the gun manufacturer.



15 Hold the engraver parallel to the surface and continue to remove the factory checkering. Use a back-and-forth motion to remove about an inch or two of surface area at a time.



16 Tilt the engraver at a slight angle to reach the point of the bur into the corners and the edges of the factory-detailed area. Carve deep enough to remove all traces of the factory checkering.



17 Turn the gun and remove the factory checkering surrounding the oak leaf design on the opposite edge.



18 All of the factory checkering has been removed from the grip.

Relieve the Design



19 Still using the large football diamond bur, remove a small amount of wood from the outer edge of the oak leaf design to make the design stand above the surrounding surface.



20 Angle the bur slightly so the point of the bur reaches the outline of the design.



21 Turn the gun and continue to relieve the design.



22 With the gun still turned upside-down, relieve the oak leaf design on the opposite side of the grip.



23 Turn the gun again to continue relieving the design.



24 Both oak leaf designs have been relieved.

Define the Leaves



25 Still using the large football diamond bur, begin to define the detail lines that separate the leaves.



26 Hold the engraver at an angle so that you are working with the tip of the bur. Separate the oak leaves from the acorns.



27 Move to the second oak leaf design and carve the lines that separate the leaves.



28 Separate the oak leaves from the acorns.



29 It may be necessary to turn the gun to comfortably reach some of the detail lines in the center of the design.



30 The center lines of both oak leaf designs have been detailed.

Detail the Leaves



31 Switch to a #2 or #4 round diamond bur. Beginning in the point of the bottom-most leaf, remove the wood from the center of the leaf.



32 Continue to remove wood from the center of the leaf. Be sure to leave the edge of the leaf raised.



33 Move to other areas of the leaf and continue to remove wood from the center of the leaf.



34 As wood is removed, you will notice the leaf taking on a concave shape. The center of the leaf will dip in, leaving the edges raised.



35 Remove all of the wood from one leaf before moving on to the next.



36 This leaf is almost complete. I need to deepen the center just a bit more before moving on to the next leaf.



37 Begin to remove wood from the center of the next leaf.



38 Continue to remove wood, working your way slowly down the leaf.



39 As you work your way down the large leaf in the center of the design, you may want to leave a small ridge of wood in the center of the leaf to indicate the vein of the leaf.



40 Remove additional wood from the lobes of the leaf to make the vein stand out more.



41 When you finish removing wood, go back over the leaf and do some clean-up work. Do the leaves dip enough? Does the vein on the large leaf stand out?



42 The oak leaves have been detailed.



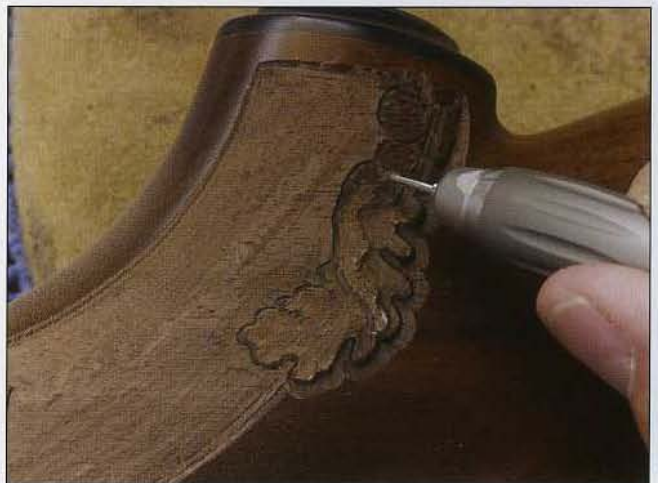
43 Turn the gun and begin to remove wood from the bottom-most oak leaf.



44 Remove the wood from the center of this leaf. As before, strive to make the leaf concave. The center of the leaf should dip in while the edges of the leaf remain raised.



45 Remove wood from half of the lower leaf. Leave some extra wood in the center of this leaf to create the vein that runs the length of the leaf.



46 Finish the other half of the leaf.

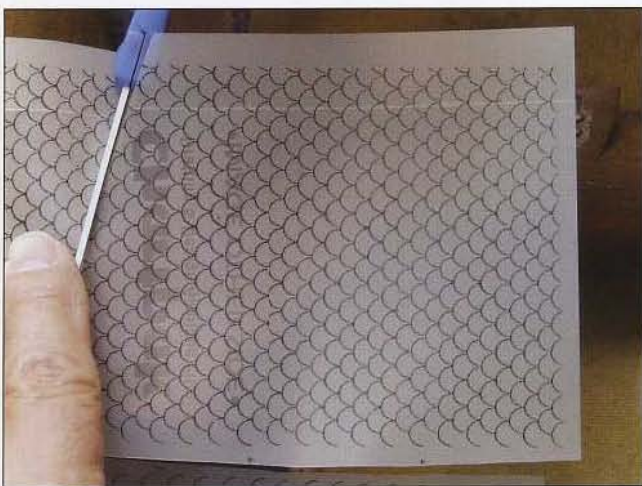


47 When both leaves are finished, go back over the carving and do some clean-up work.



48 The leaves on both sides of the grip have been detailed. (Note that the acorns will be left until later.)

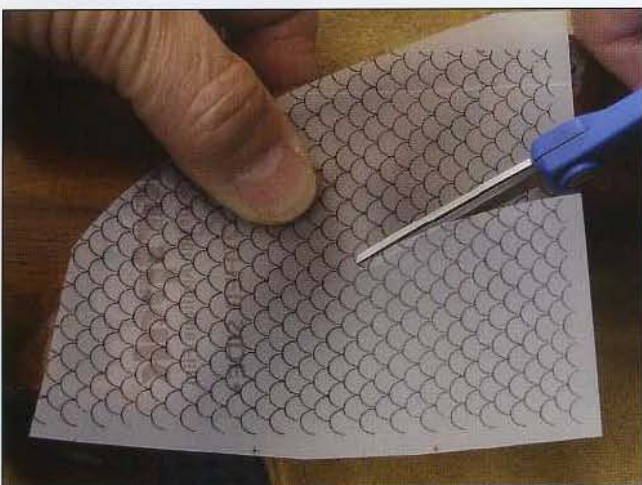
Position the Fish Scale Pattern



49 Copy the fish scale pattern from page 18 onto a sheet of self-adhesive transparency paper. Before removing the backing, fit the pattern to the grip.



50 Using a scissors, cut the fish scale pattern down to about a quarter to a half of an inch larger than the actual area.



51 Follow the same shape of the area to detail, but be sure to leave some excess outside the area.



52 Remove the backing and stick the pattern to the gunstock. Cut small slits in the overhanging pattern. This will help you to fit the pattern to the curve of the gunstock.



53 Use an X-Acto knife to trim the fish scale pattern to the exact dimensions of the work area. Peel away the excess pattern as you go.



54 The fish scale pattern is in place.

Create the Fish Scales

Creating one fish scale is a three-step process. Use a large football diamond bur and hold the engraver at a 45-degree angle for all three steps. Your goal is to create a fish scale that is deep at the point and shallow at the base. Work within the pattern. A ridge of untouched wood should surround each fish scale.



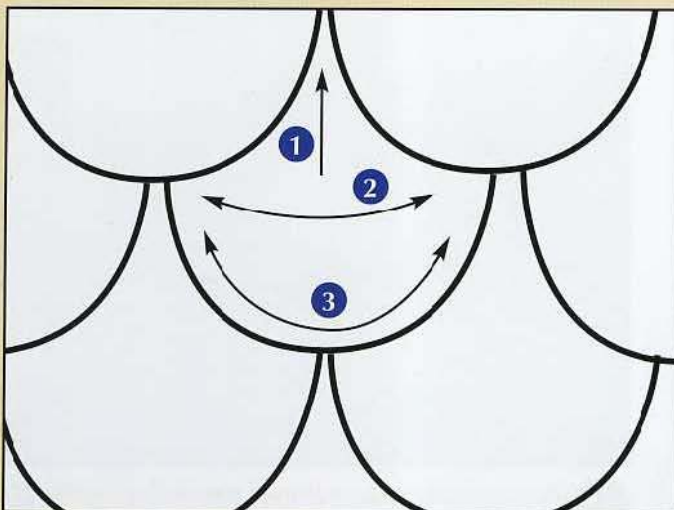
Step One Starting at the point of the fish scale, place the tip of the bur just below the point. Press down approximately $\frac{1}{16}$ inch at a 45-degree angle. The bur will create the correct shape to start the process.



Step Two Place the bur in the Step One position. It is very important to hold the bur at a 45-degree angle. Sweep right and left several times to scoop out wood to form a concave area.



Step Three Finally, sweep across the back of the scale to create the shallow curve at the base of the scale.



Step One:
Cut into the point.

Step Two:
Sweep across the middle of the scale.

Step Three:
Sweep across the back of the scale.



55 Position the gun so the point of the fish scale is away from you. Start at the narrowest point of the design. Remember to work inside the scale. A ridge of untouched wood should surround each scale.



56 Continue making fish scales following the pattern. Note how the deeper point gives the fish scales the illusion that they overlap one another.



57 Half fish scales are called for along the edges of the design. Work these in carefully. Work slowly to avoid marring the stained surface of the gun.



58 Continue making fish scales. This is a very repetitive process and can be quite time-consuming. Take breaks as necessary to rest your hand. A tired hand may lead to uneven fish scales.



59 The fish scales have been completed.



60 Carefully remove the fish scale pattern. If you have followed the pattern correctly, the pattern should come off in one piece.

Round the Scales



61 The completed fish scales to this point.



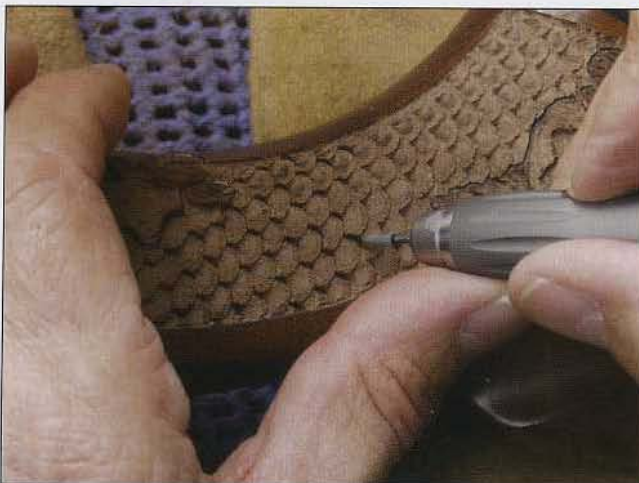
62 Switch to a carbide bur. With the gun right-side-up, round the curved edge of each scale.



63 When all of the scales are rounded, the grip will look like this.



64 Next, turn the gun upside-down and separate each scale using the pointed green stone. Start in the bottom point of the design.



65 Develop a rhythm or a system to ensure that you do not miss separating any scales. I usually work my way across each row from left to right.



66 Half-separations are called for at the edge of the design. Work carefully as you engrave the lines in this area so you don't mar the oak leaf design.

Burnish the Scales



67 The fish scales are separated.



68 The final step to engraving the fish scale pattern is to burnish each scale. Switch to the large football diamond and carefully smooth the inside of each scale.



69 Continue to work your way across the fish scale pattern, burnishing each scale.



70 Take time to inspect your work. Look for any scales that need to be cleaned up.



71 Clean up the scales as needed before moving on to the next step.



72 Clean up can be a tedious process, but it is well worth the time and effort.



73 The burnished scales are ready to be sanded.



74 Sand the engraved fish scales lightly with 220-grit sandpaper. A light sanding will help to even out the fish scales.

Staining the Scales



75 Apply a liberal coat of oil-based walnut stain to the fish scaled area with a flat brush. Choose a good quality 1/4-inch to 1/2-inch soft bristle brush.



76 Allow the stain to soak in for several minutes, then remove any excess stain with a soft, dry cloth.



77 The fish scales are now complete.



78 Using a carbide tip in the engraving tool, sharpen the bottom edge of the grip area.



79 Turn the gun and sharpen the top edge of the grip area. This will remove any marks made while carving the fish scales.



80 Switch to the large football bur and relieve the outside of the leaves at a 45-degree angle.

Stipple the Background



81 Do all the leaves in this manner.



82 Using the #2 round carbide bur, stipple the area that was relieved around the outer edge of the oak leaf. To stipple, simply push the tip of the engraver quickly into the wood and remove it, leaving a small indent.



83 Continue stippling around the outer edge of the oak leaf design.



84 Turn the gun and stipple around the corner, up to the fish scale. Stipple all around the leaves as well.



85 The oak leaf design now looks like this. Note how the stippling technique helps to make the leaves stand out even more against the smooth background of the gunstock.



86 Begin to stipple around the outer edge of the oak leaf design on the opposite end of the grip.



87 Continue stippling around the outer edge of the oak leaf design.



88 Stipple around the corner of the oak leaf design.



89 Stipple the area between the oak leaf design and the fish scales. Cover any half fish scales with the stippling pattern.



90 Continue stippling until the entire oak leaf design is encircled with a ring of stippling.

Detail the Acorns



91 Stippling has been completed around both oak leaf designs.



92 Using a small round diamond, round the acorn.



93 Remove a small amount of surface wood from the bottom half of the acorn.



94 Remove a small amount of surface wood from the cap of the acorn.



95 Surface wood has been removed from both parts of the acorn



96 Repeat these same steps on the remaining acorns.



97 Switch to a pointed green stone. Define the line between the bottom of the acorn and the acorn cap. The bottom of the acorn should curve in slightly as it meets the cap.



98 Use the point of the pointed green stone to stipple the cap of the acorn. This will give it some texture and set it off from the smooth bottom half of the acorn.



99 Continue stippling each acorn cap until all are finished.



100 The acorns are completed.

Add Final Details to the Leaves



101 Using the small round diamond bur, add the veins to the leaf.



102 Continue work on the veins. Make the lobes of the leaves a bit more concave for a more dramatic effect.



103 Continue working down the leaf, adding in vein details and defining the centers as you go.



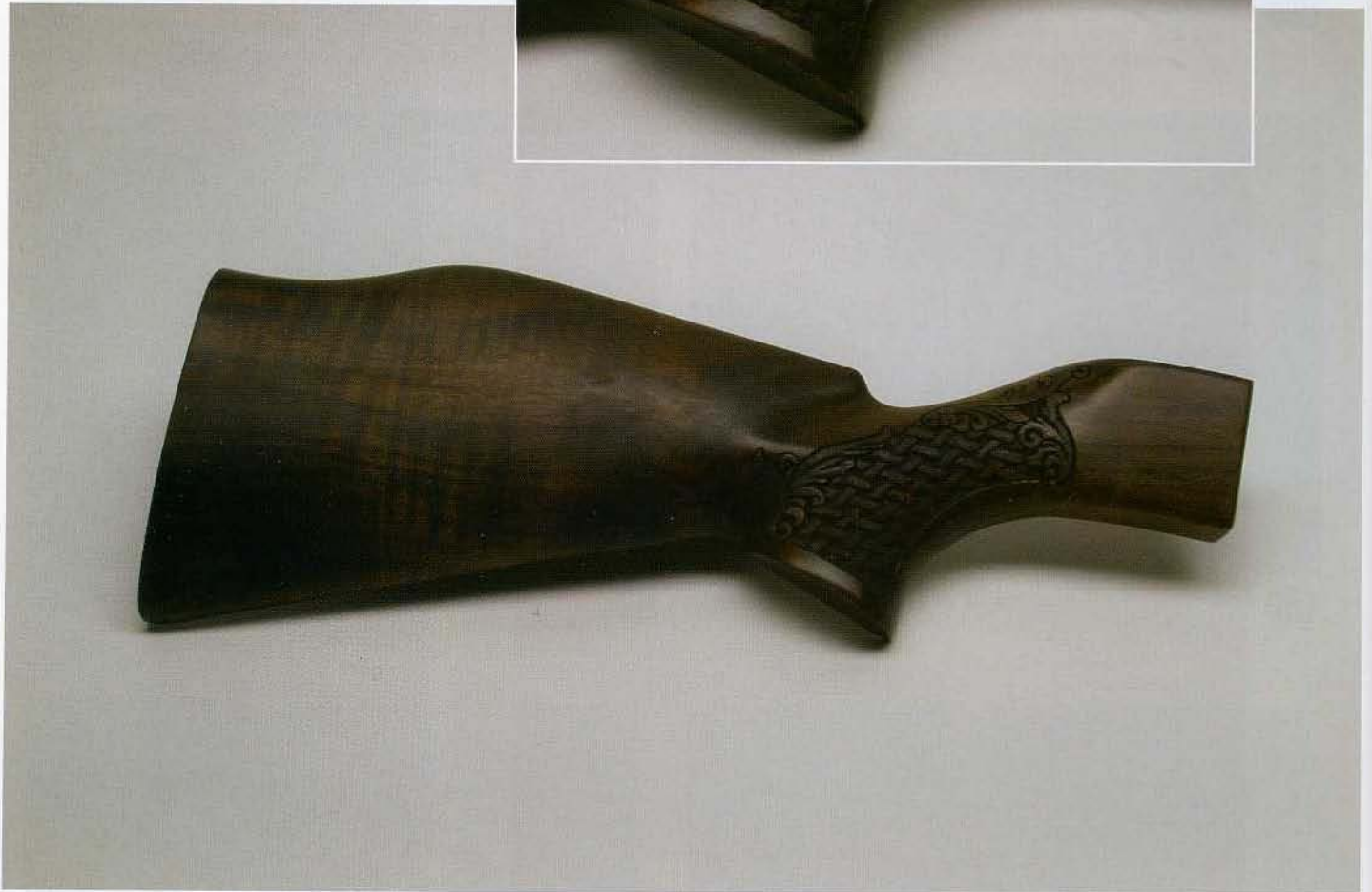
104 Finish the basic detailing on the last of the lobes.



105 Add in any final touches.



106 The finished, engraved grip is ready to be stained. Follow the staining directions on page 60.



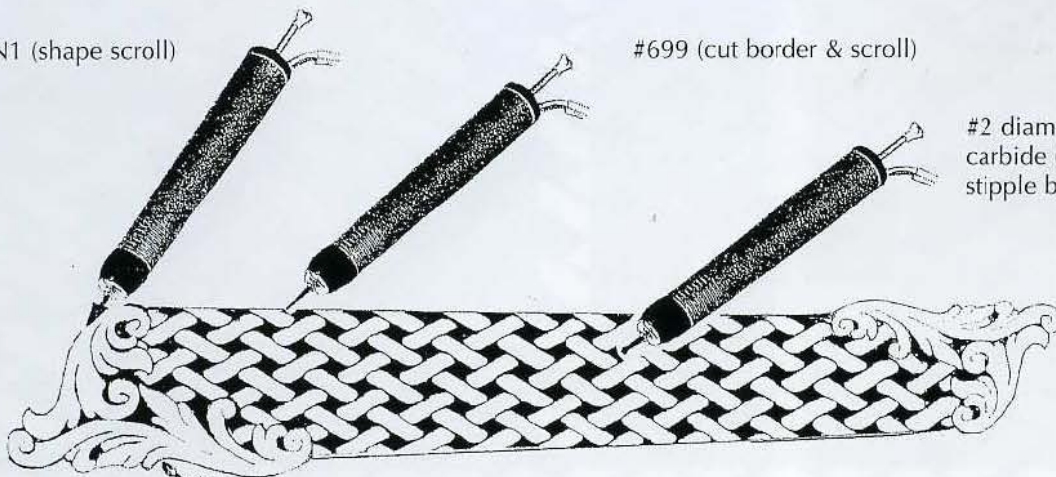
Carve acanthus leaves and a basketweave pattern on an unmarked gunstock.

Carving Basket Weave and Acanthus Leaves

#CN1 (shape scroll)

#699 (cut border & scroll)

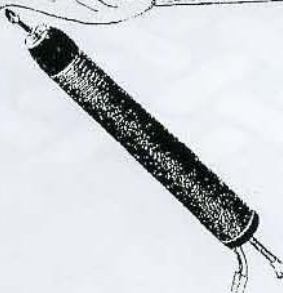
#2 diamond or
carbide (cutout and
stipple bottom area)



#368 football (cut
around scroll)

Burs and tools used to carve basket weave

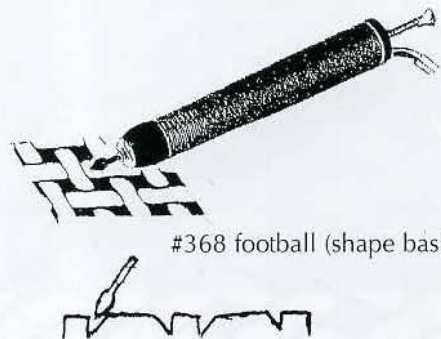
1. #699 carbide
2. #2 diamond
3. #2 carbide
4. #368 diamond football
5. #CN1 pointed green stone
6. Checkering tool



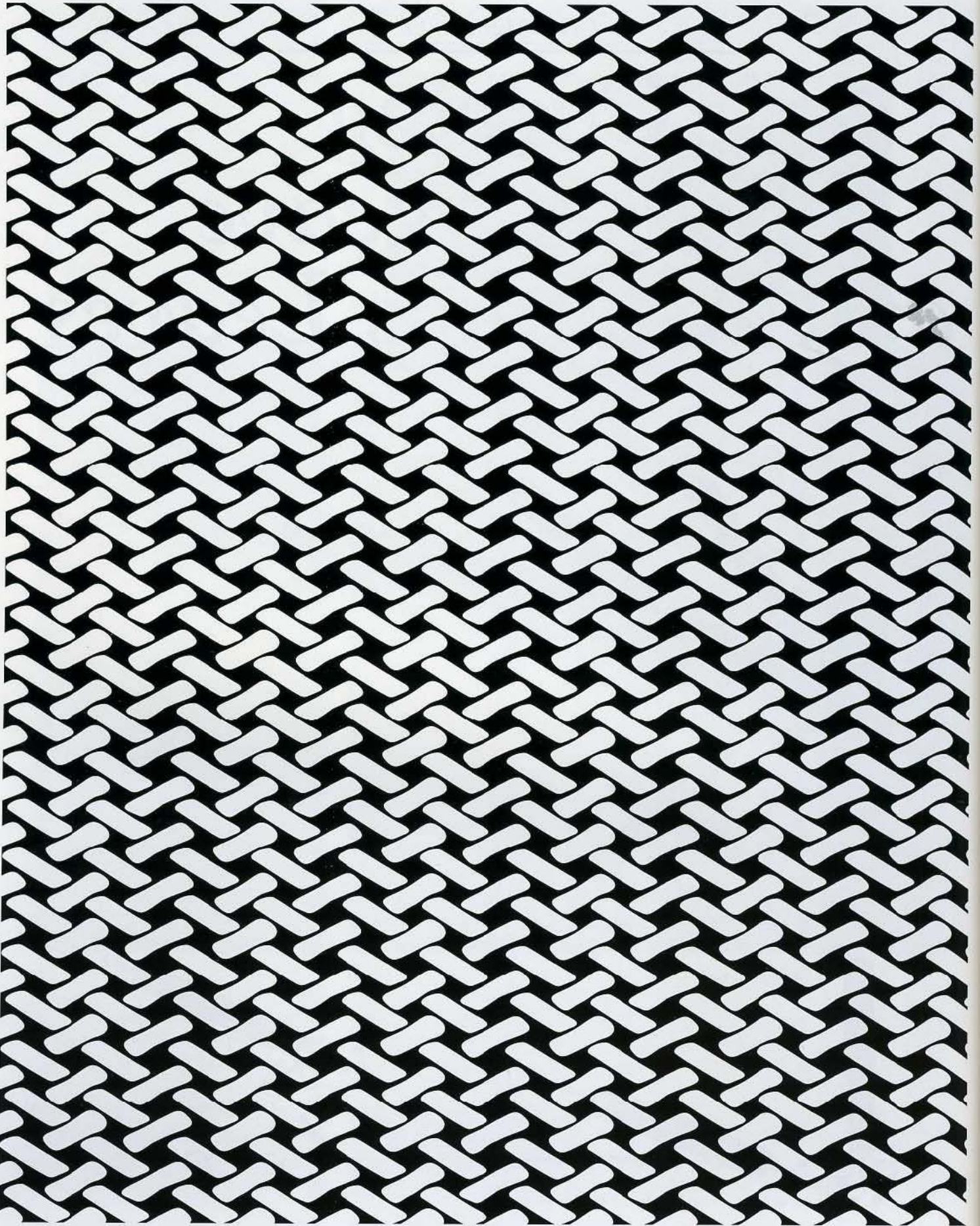
#699 (cut border & scroll)



#CN1 (undercut basket weave)



#368 football (shape basket weave)



Gunstock Carving

Position the Pattern



1 Photocopy the acanthus leaves onto self-adhesive transparent paper. Position the pattern temporarily by removing only a small portion of the backing.



2 Once you are happy with the position of the leaf pattern, place clear tape along the remaining edges of the design.



3 Clip the tape in 1/8-inch fringes so that the tape will lay flat against the gunstock.



4 Remove the backing from the basket weave pattern and apply the pattern firmly to the gunstock.



5 Clip the leaf pattern as needed so that it will lay flat against the gunstock.



6 Using a French curve, trace the bottom curve on the gunstock. This will be the bottom edge of the basket weave design.



7 Using a flexible straight edge, add the left edge of the design.



8 A French curve is used again to add the curve at the top of the design between the two leaf patterns.

Outline the Leaf



9 The pattern has been positioned and marked on the gunstock. You are now ready to begin carving.



10 Fit the engraving tool with a carbide pointed bur. Begin outlining the first leaf.



11 Continue outlining the leaf. Be sure to hold the tool perpendicular to the gunstock. The resulting cut should be about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch deep.



12 Cut the detail lines in the first leaf.



13 The first leaf is outlined.



14 Begin outlining the second leaf.



15 Continue outlining the leaf. Walnut is very hard and sometimes will burn if carved too fast.



16 The outline of the leaf is close to being completed. Be sure to hold the tool perpendicular to the wood.



17 Cut the details in the second leaf. The detail lines are about $\frac{1}{32}$ inch deep.



18 Be sure to cut all of the detail lines at this time.



19 The outlines and details of both leaves are complete.



20 Switch to a carbide burr. Beginning at the lower left corner, start to cut in the line that forms the bottom boundary of the design.



21 Hold the engraving tool at a 45-degree angle to the wood to make a v-shaped groove. This cut should be about $\frac{1}{32}$ inch deep.



22 Next cut in the line that forms the boundary on the left side of the design.



23 End this line where it meets the line at the bottom of the design. Be careful not to extend the line beyond the bottom line.



24 Cut in the short line at the top that connects the two acanthus leaf designs. This is the same type of v-shaped groove that was cut previously.



25 Carefully remove the pattern. An X-Acto knife or a fingernail may be needed to pry up the sticky-backed pattern.



26 Because the engraving tool cut through the pattern, the pattern will not lift off the gunstock in one piece.



27 Work carefully to remove all of the pattern pieces. **TIP:** The slower you pull, the more likely a large piece of pattern will come off.



28 Using a regular paint brush, lightly dust the surface of the gunstock to remove any bits of pattern or fine sawdust left on the surface of the wood.



29 All of the pattern lines have been cut into the wood.



30 Make the lines that form the boundary of the design area more prominent by retracing them with the engraving tool.



31 Trace only the bottom, side and short top line. Making these lines more prominent will help them to act as stop cuts when you start cutting the basket weave design.



32 Using a checkering tool, make the lines even more prominent. This tool has a v-shaped cutting edge that will widen the lines.



33 Apply a light pressure and carefully work the tool back and forth along the line.



34 Do not change the amount of pressure as you work your way along the lines. All three lines—top, side and bottom—should be of equal depth.



35 The lines that form the boundaries of the design are now much more prominent.

Position the Basketweave Pattern



36 Photocopy the basket weave pattern onto adhesive-backed paper. Cut a section of the basket weave down to the rough proportions of the design area.



37 Remove the backing and run your finger over the center of the design to attach the pattern to the wood. Only the center of the pattern should stick to the gunstock.



38 Make slits in the bottom of the pattern so that the pattern will adhere to the gunstock without buckling.



39 Using a scissors, trim the excess pattern at the top of the design.



40 Note that the pattern has been trimmed so that the basket weave covers the entire design area. Be careful not to cut away so much of the pattern that some of the design area is uncovered.



41 Using an X-Acto knife, start at the bottom boundary line and trim the pattern down to the exact dimensions of the design area. Continue trimming along the left boundary line.



42 Carefully trim around the leaves in the upper left corner of the design.



43 Using the X-Acto knife or your fingernail, gently lift the excess pattern and pull it away from the gunstock.



44 Carefully trim around the leaves in the bottom right corner of the design. Continue trimming around the remaining leaves.



45 Remove the excess pattern. Be very careful not to pull so hard that you dislodge the pattern from the center of the design.



46 The point of the X-Acto knife or a fingernail can be used to remove the remaining bits of the excess pattern from the surface of the leaves.



47 The pattern is trimmed and in place. Be sure to press the pattern securely to the gunstock before moving on to the next step.

Begin the Basket Weave Design



48 Fit the engraving tool with a carbide bur. Working from left to right and from bottom to top, begin cutting the horizontal lines of the basket weave pattern. Hold the tool at a 45-degree angle.



49 Continue to cut the horizontal lines. Make sure you are holding the tool at a consistent 45-degree angle.



50 Turn the gun one-quarter turn counter-clockwise to make the next step easier. Working from left to right and from top to bottom, begin cutting the vertical lines of the basket weave design.



51 Make sure you are holding the engraving tool at a consistent 45-degree angle.



52 The horizontal and vertical lines of the basket weave design are complete.



53 Change to a #2 small round carbide bur. Remove the wood from the small squares that are formed by the weaves.



54 These holes should be about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch deep. Take care to make them as uniform as possible.



55 Brush the gunstock gently to remove any sawdust from the surface.



56 The initial cuts of the basket weave design are complete.

Define the Weave



57 Switch to a large football diamond bur. Starting at the top, remove a small amount of wood from the area where the horizontal weave overlaps the vertical weave. See the illustration. This is the first pass.



58 Work in a consistent fashion—I usually work from left to right, top to bottom—so that you are sure to make all the cuts.



59 Turn the gun 180 degrees and remove a small amount of wood on the opposite side of the horizontal weave. See the illustration. This is the second pass.



60 Again, be sure to work in a consistent fashion so that every cut is made.



61 For the third pass, turn the gun and begin removing a small amount of wood where the vertical weave overlaps the horizontal weave.



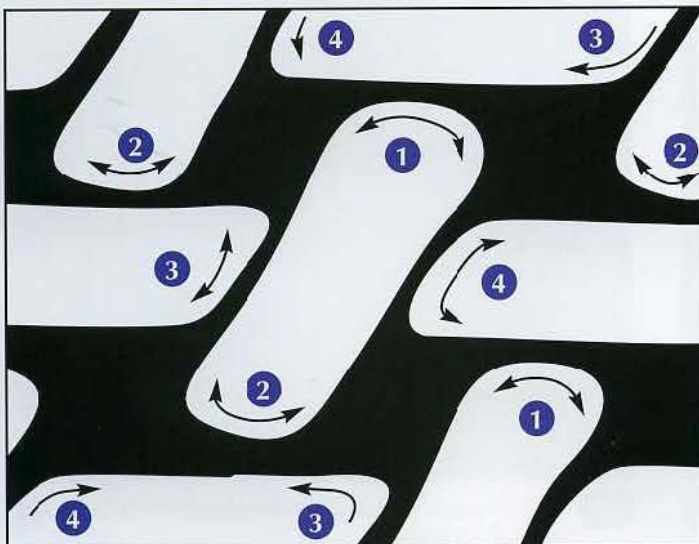
62 Turn the gun 180 degrees and make a fourth pass to remove wood on the opposite side of the horizontal weave.



63 Use a paint brush to gently dust away and sawdust left on the surface and in the cuts.



64 Used carefully, a scraper is an ideal tool to remove any remaining bits of the pattern that are still stuck to the surface of the wood.



Carve the basket weave in four passes.

First pass:

Horizontal weave overlaps vertical.

Second pass:

Turn gun. Horizontal overlaps vertical.

Third pass:

Turn gun. Vertical overlaps horizontal.

Fourth pass:

Turn gun. Horizontal overlaps vertical.

Texture the Weave



65 The basic definition of the weaves is now complete.



66 Using the small round diamond bur, begin to texture the weaves. Your goal is to remove a small amount of surface wood to reveal the unstained wood below.



67 Use a back and forth motion and do each weave separately. I usually work from left to right and find myself getting into a rhythm as I go.



68 Pay special attention to the half-weaves at the end of a row. Work carefully, with the tool under control at all times, so you do not mar the surface of the gunstock beyond the boundaries of the design.



69 Brush the sawdust from the surface of the gunstock and check to make sure that all of the horizontal weaves are completely textured.



70 Turn the gun 180 degrees and begin to texture the vertical weaves.



71 The goal here is the same: Remove a small amount of surface wood to reveal the unstained wood beneath. Be sure to follow the curved contour of the weave.



72 The final half-weaves are completed last. Notice how the illusion of overlapping weaves is beginning to appear.



73 Using a #2 round carbide bur make sure the cut-out centers are the same depth.



74 Change to a small round diamond and texture the weave.

Define the Weaves



75 All of the weaves are textured.



76 Using a pointed green stone, redefine the slope of the weaves. This step will help to ensure the illusion of overlapping weaves.



77 Slope the top of the vertical weaves in the first pass.



78 Turn the gun 180 degrees and refine the slope on the opposite side of the vertical weave.



79 Continue across the gunstock in a methodical manner so no weaves are missed



80 Turn the gun so the butt end is up and redefine the slope of the horizontal weaves.



81 Turn the gun so the barrel of the rifle is up and redefine the slope of the opposite side of the horizontal weave.



82 The weaves are defined, and the carving of the basket weave pattern is finished. Let's move on to the acanthus leaves.

Carve the Leaves



83 Fit the engraving tool with a pointed carbide bur. Begin carving the leaves by removing wood from between the leaves.



84 Remove wood to a depth of $\frac{1}{16}$ " between the leaves.



85 It is important to remove all the wood from these areas now before starting to detail the leaves themselves.



86 Switch to a football bur. Begin with the outline of each leaf, working from the center out.



87 Work around the entire design until this first step is established for each leaf.



88 All of the leaves are outlined.



89 Change to a round green stone. Return to the center swirl of the first leaf. Beginning here, carefully remove a small amount from the surface of the leaf to expose the unstained wood beneath.



90 Continue to work in small back and forth strokes to remove wood from the surface of the leaf.



91 Notice that you should be using the side of the round green stone, not the tip for these steps.



92 Add a slight contour to the edges of the leaves as you carve by angling the bur down into the outline of the leaf.



93 When the first leaf has been carved, move on to the next leaf. Start working from the center of the small swirl.



94 Continue removing wood in the same fashion until you reach the swirl at the opposite end of the leaf.



95 Move to the third and final leaf. Again, begin working at the center of a swirl; then move outward to the larger parts of the leaf.



96 The leaves are rough carved.



97 When all the surface wood has been removed from the leaves, switch to a pointed green stone and define the edges of the leaves.



98 The leaves are carved.

Detail the Leaves



99 Fit the engraving tool with a carbide bur. Begin to add detail to the leaves.



100 Hold the tool at a 45-degree angle to add a v-shaped groove to the leaf.



101 Make sure the angle of the tool is consistent as you create this groove.



102 Using a carbide bur, very lightly trim all of the outside areas of the carving. Hold the tool at a consistent 45-degree angle.



103 Continue around the area.



104 The leaves are now defined.

Stipple the Background



105 Clean up the spaces between the leaves with a #2 round carbide bur; then stipple those areas to create the illusion of a background.



106 Stipple all the areas where the background shows through the leaf design.



107 Don't forget to stipple the several areas where the basketweave meets the leaf design.



108 The entire design is finished.

Sanding and Staining



109 A close-up of the finished design clearly shows the detail work and the stippling.



110 Rub the surface of the carving gently with a green Scotch Brite pad to remove any fuzz.



111 Follow the green sanding pad with a white Scotch Brite pad. The finer grit will help to further refine the surface of the carving.



112 The sanded carving is ready for stain. Be sure to brush away any sawdust before beginning the next steps.



113 Apply a liberal coat of dark walnut oil stain to the carved surface. Getting stain on the uncarved surface of the gun is not a problem, as it will wipe right off.



114 Use a paint brush to work the stain into the design. Be sure that the entire surface and all of the crevices are covered.



115 Using a clean, soft rag, rub off the excess stain.



116 A toothbrush is the perfect tool to remove excess stain from the crevices of the design.



117 Use the air hose of the engraving tool to blow air into the crevices of the design. This will remove an amazing amount of stain that has settled down into the crevices.



118 Using a small v-tool, redefine the outer lines of the design. Lightly carve only the bottom and side boundary lines plus the short boundary line at the top of the carving.



119 Allow the stain to dry 24 hours, then apply a finish to the carved surface with a paint brush. I use Tru Oil Gunstock Finish.



120 Work the finish into the crevices with the paint brush. Again, any finish beyond the boundaries is easy to remove and will not sink into the uncarved surface.



121 Wipe the excess finish off with a soft, clean rag.



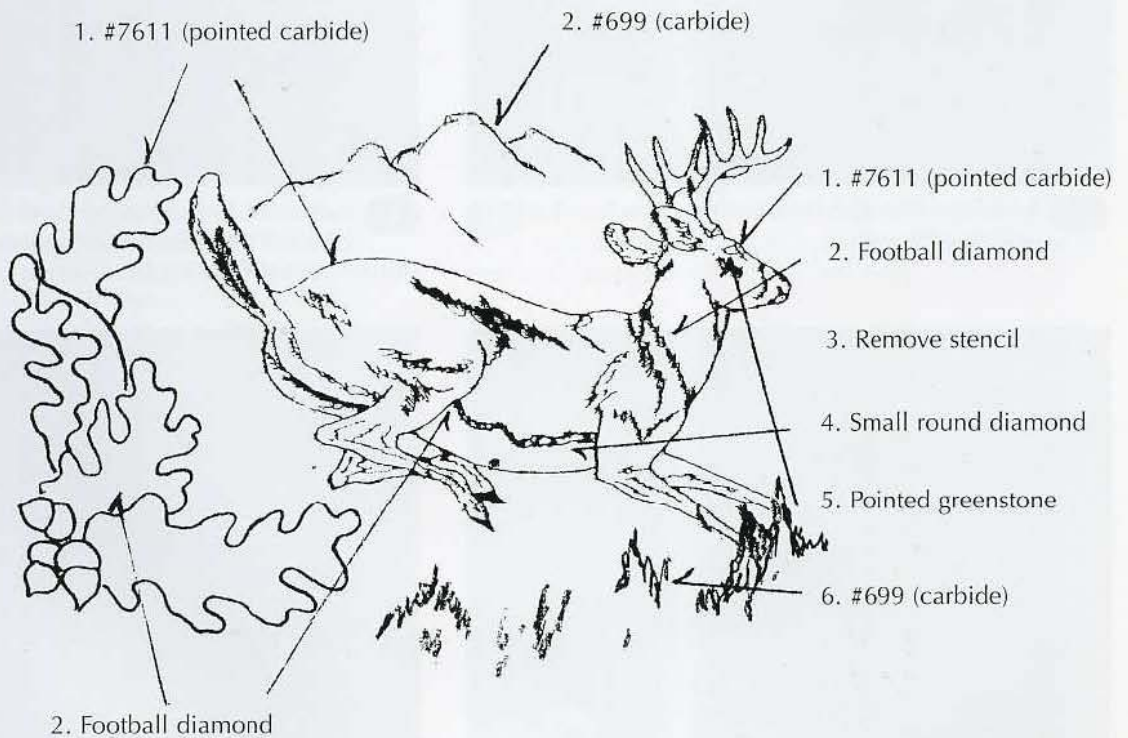
122 The carved gunstock is now finished.



Carve a simple white-tail deer scene on the buttstock.

Carving a Scene

1. Cut border of leaf and outline of deer with #7611
2. Cut contour of leaf and deer with football diamond
3. Remove stencil
4. Use small round diamond
5. Cut fine details of deer with pointed greenstone
6. Cut with #699





1 Photocopy the deer and oak leaf patterns on page 63 to self-adhesive transparent paper and position the pattern on the wood. Remove the backing and press the patterns in place.



2 Using the pointed carbide bur, carefully outline the deer. The depth of this cut should be about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch.



3 Take extra care to follow the lines exactly when outlining the antlers.



4 Gently remove the excess pattern from the outer edges of the deer. Leave the pattern inside the outlines of the deer in place.



5 Following the detail lines on the pattern, use the large football diamond bur to carve in the details on the deer's face, neck and body.



6 Remove the remaining pattern. The outline and all of the details are now visible.



7 Beginning at the tip of the tail, carve away enough wood to remove only the surface of the gun, exposing the unstained wood beneath. Use the side of the bur, not the tip.



8 Following the contours of the deer, continue to remove the surface wood from the deer's body. Use the side of the football bur to remove the wood. Save the antlers until last.



9 Using the tip of the large football diamond bur, carve the antlers. Again, these are not deep cuts. Your goal is simply to remove enough wood from the sides of the antlers to make them rounded.



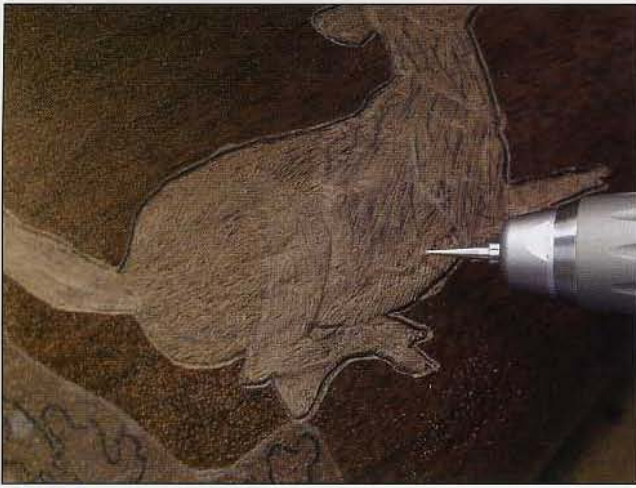
10 All of the surface wood is removed from the deer. Notice how you can still see the details that help to define the muscles of the neck and body.



11 With a pencil mark in lines to represent the flow of the hair on the deer. These lines should follow the contours of the deer's body, but they should be random enough to avoid a fake-looking hair flow.



12 Switch to a small round diamond bur. Using a light pressure, follow the pencil marks with the engraving tool. These marks should be visible, but not as deep as the contour details you added in Step 5.



13 The hair flow on the back half of the deer is complete. Here, you can clearly see how the hair switches directions from the tail to the rump and from the rump to the legs.



14 The hair flow on the deer is complete.



15 Using the same bur, begin to detail the antlers. Strive to make the antlers round. Keep your strokes very light.



16 Switch to a pointed green stone. Add some extra details to define the eye, mouth, ears and neck. Don't make heavy marks on the first pass. Make several light marks, then make those marks deeper on additional passes.



17 Switch back to the small round diamond bur. Some additional work around the belly and the legs will help to shape the deer and make it more realistic.



18 The deer is complete. Notice how the definition of the muscles and the care taken while adding the hair all add to the realistic appearance of the animal.



19 Using a pen, freehand the mountains in the background and the grass at the deer's feet. (If you make a mistake, erase the pen from the uncarved surface of the gunstock with a damp cloth.)



20 Carve in the grass using a carbide bur and light downward strokes. Carve in the mountains. This line is slightly deeper than the lines that show the grass.



21 Sign your name with a pointed carbide bur. Write your name with a pen first if you are nervous about carving your name directly onto the gunstock without a "pattern" to follow.



22 Coat the deer with dark walnut stain. Remove any excess with a clean, dry cloth. Wait at least 24 hours before applying Tru Oil Gunstock Finish. (Follow the steps on page 60.)



23 Fill the mountains and the grass with stain also. Note how the outline of the mountains and the grass add just a hint of habitat. They do not overshadow the deer.



24 The deer is complete. You can now move on to carving the oak leaves as described in Chapter Two.

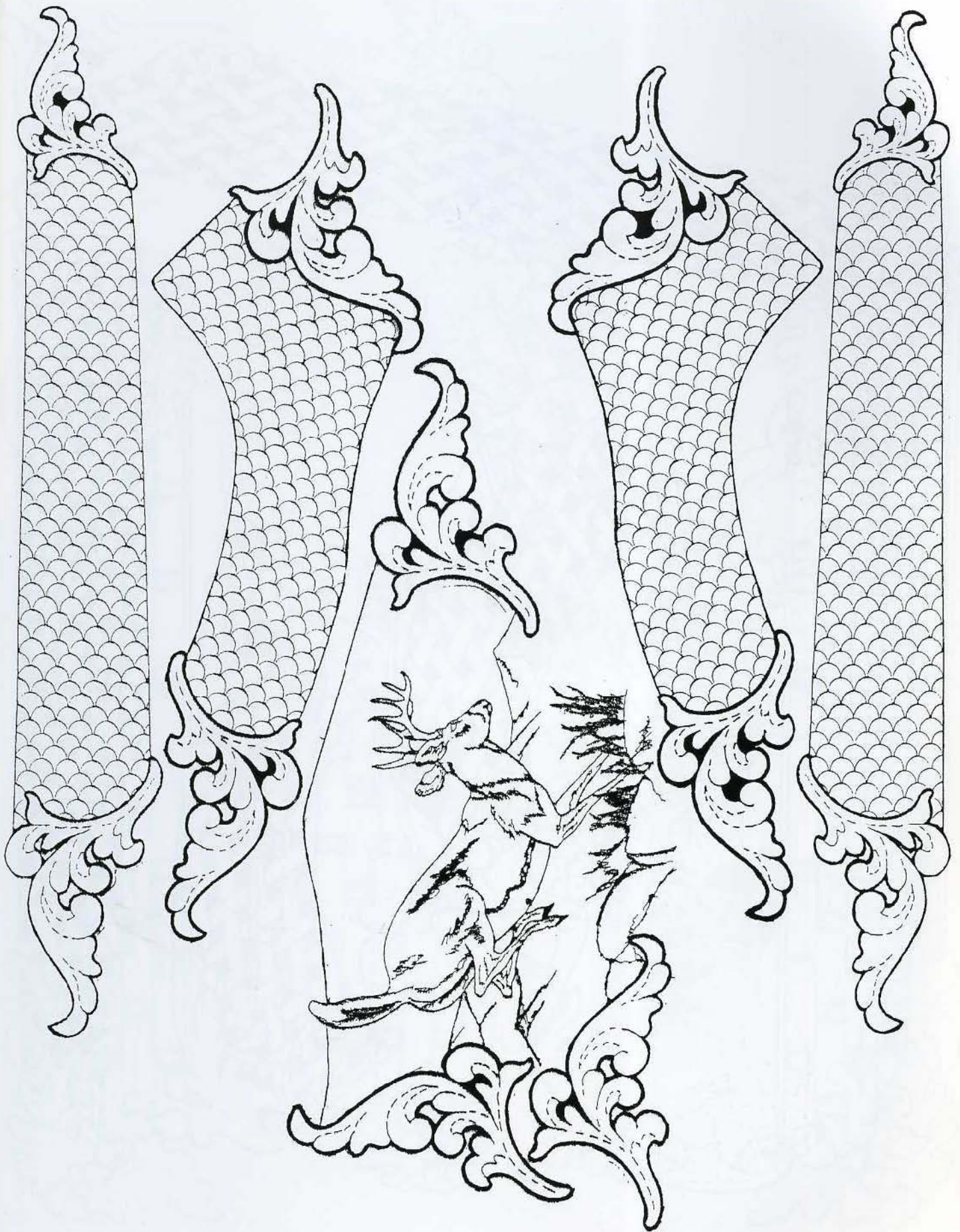
Patterns

The patterns provided in this chapter are meant as a starting point for your gunstock carving sessions. Of course, these patterns can also be used on half gunstocks, walnut blocks, briefcases or belt buckles.

If you can't draw, don't despair. Many designs for gunstock carving are readily available for little or no cost. Look for books, software and internet sites that include copyright and/or royalty free illustrations.

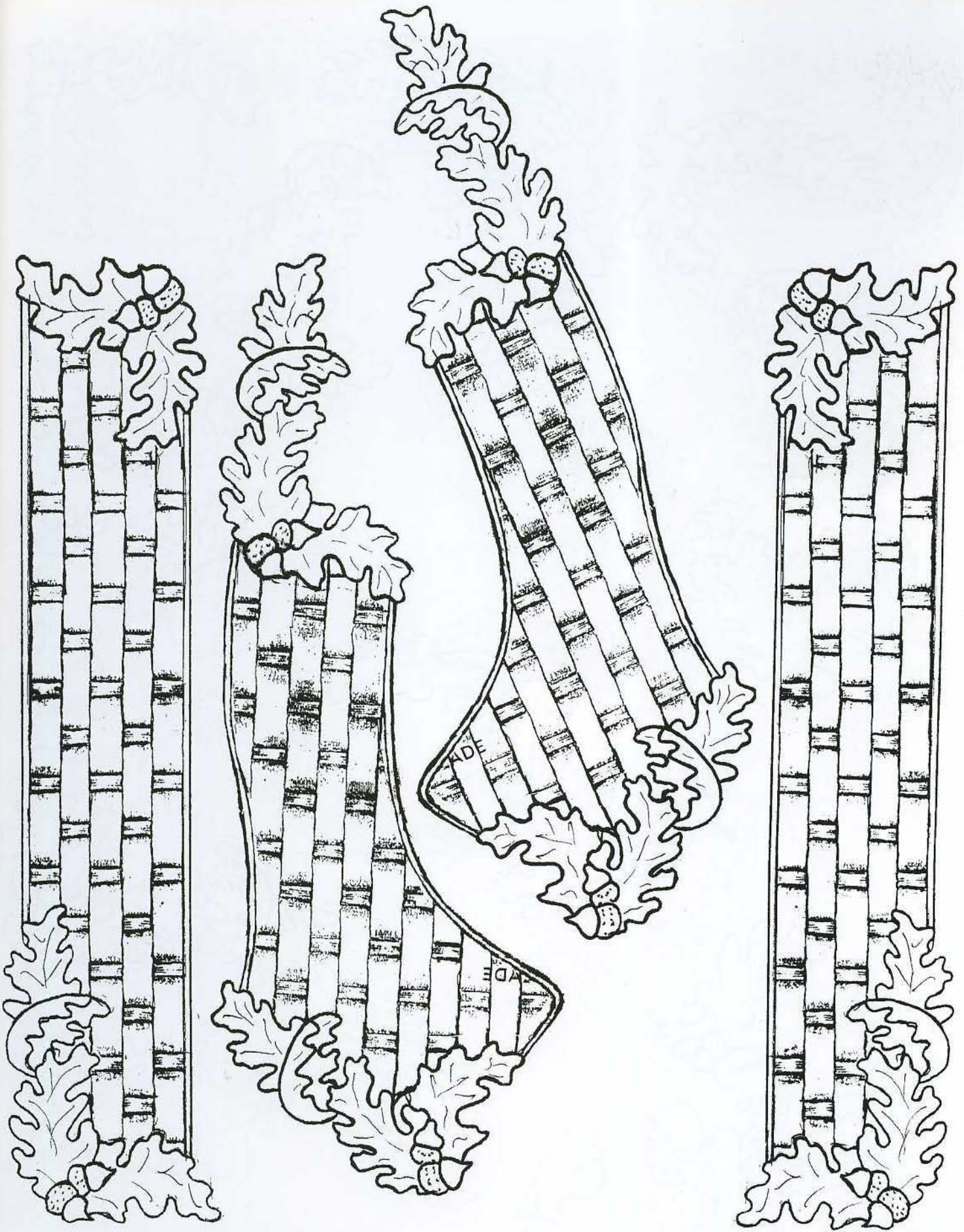
Don't discount photos. Photographs taken by you or your clients can be of great use when planning a design for a gunstock carving. Pictures of trophies, hunting trips and hunting dogs are just a few examples.

When you find a design that you like, trace around the outline of the gun you are planning to carve. Make photocopies of the illustrations you would like to use and position them on the paper layout. You'll be amazed at how different a design will look—good or bad—when it is laid out. Take this layout to a photocopier store and ask for their assistance to copy the layout to adhesive-backed transparent mylar or a similar material. Use this method to create scenes that are unique and meaningful for you or your client.

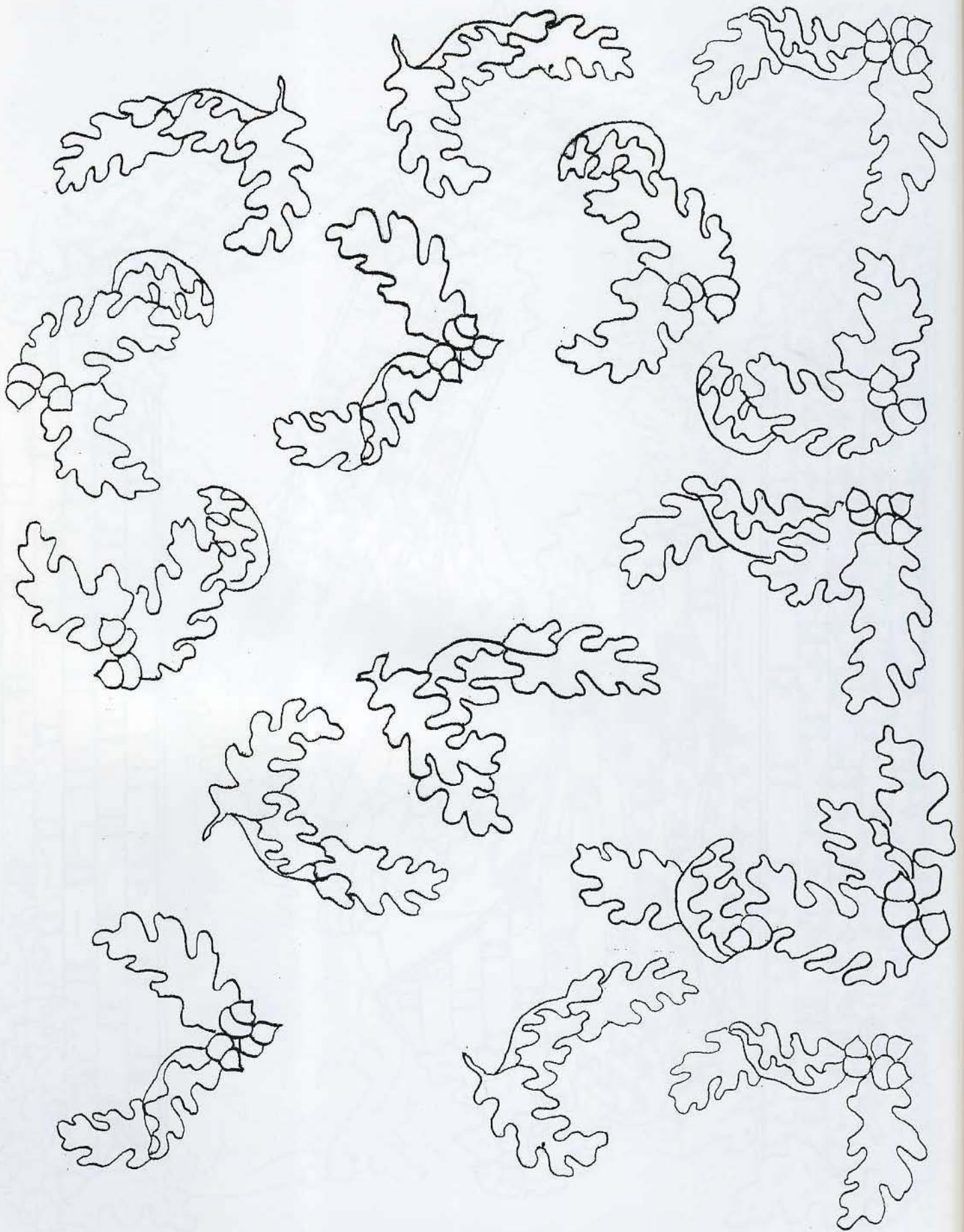


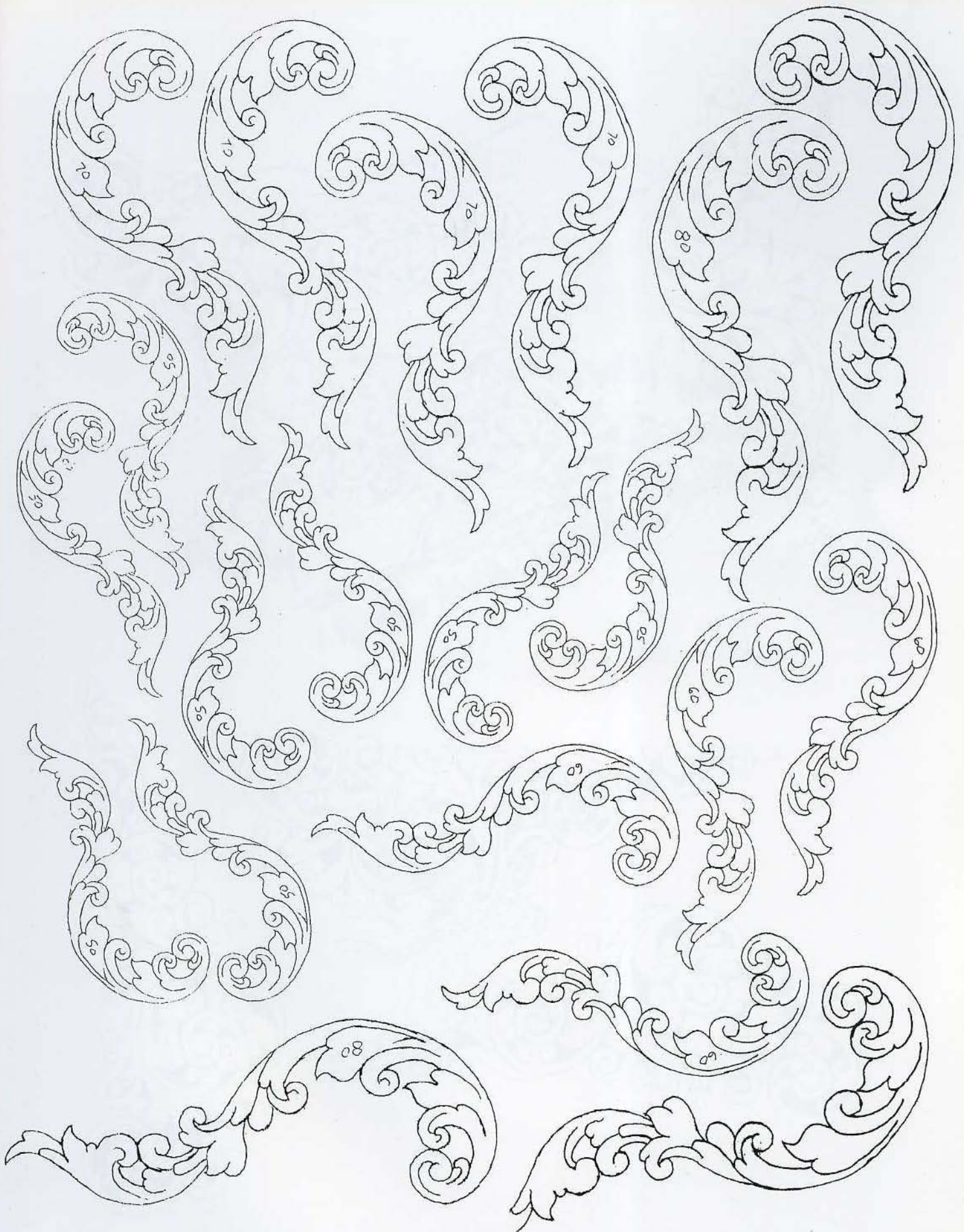
Gunstock Carving

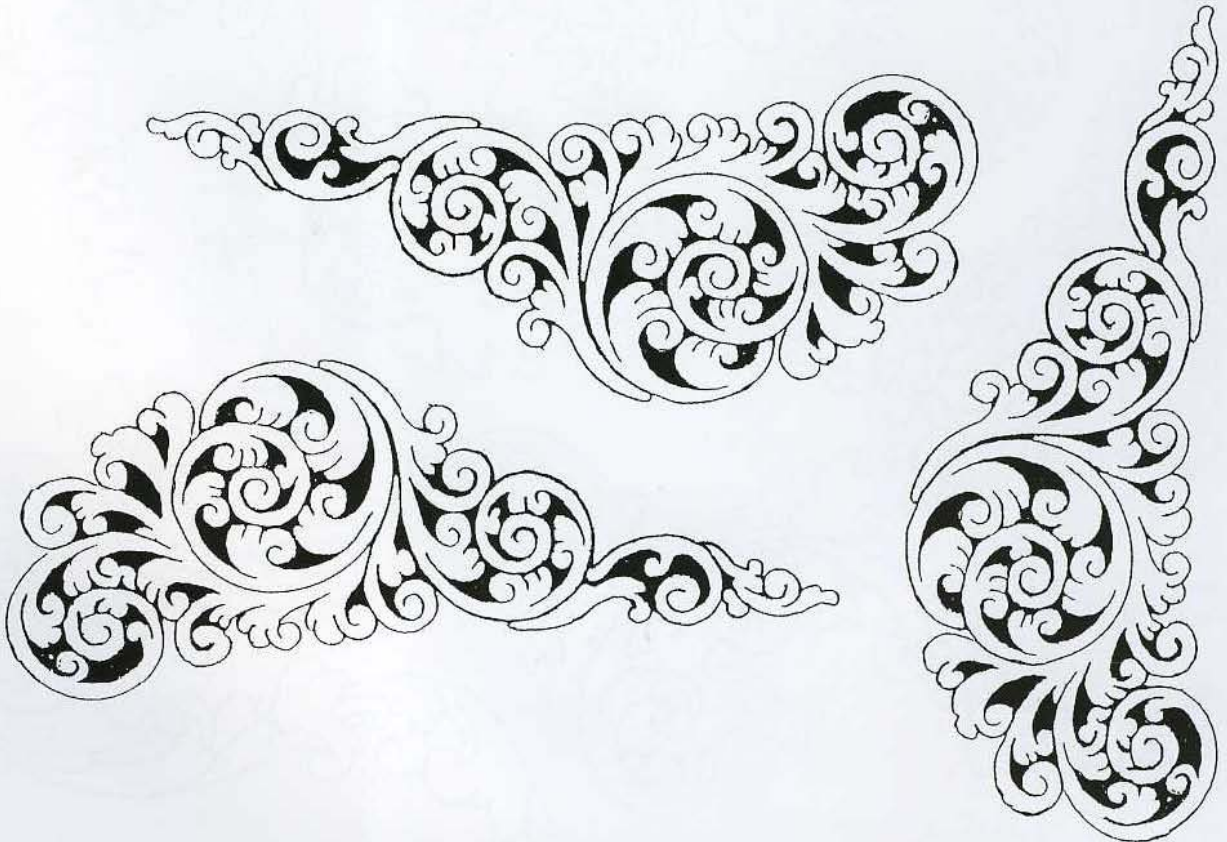
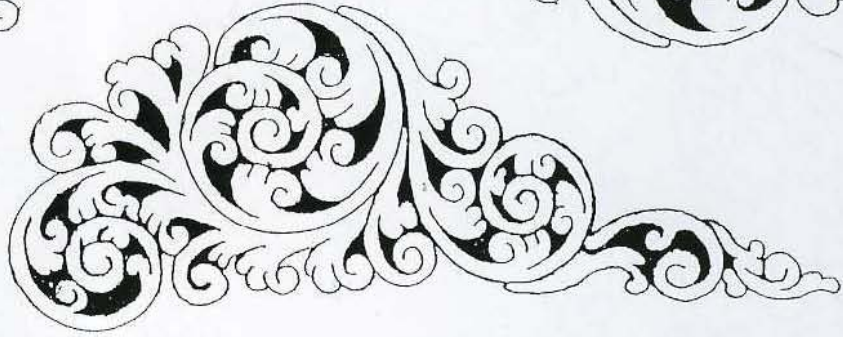
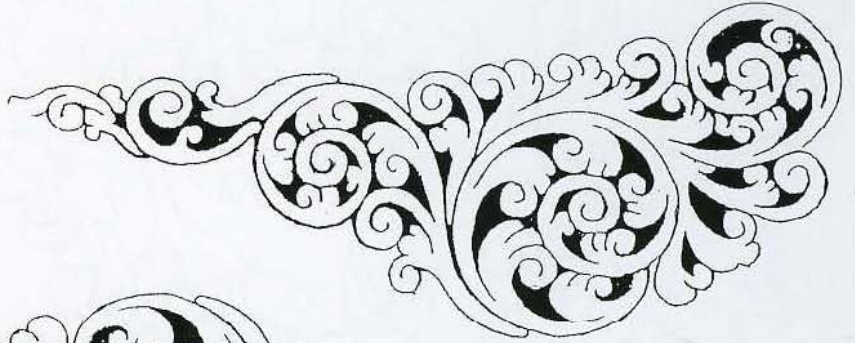
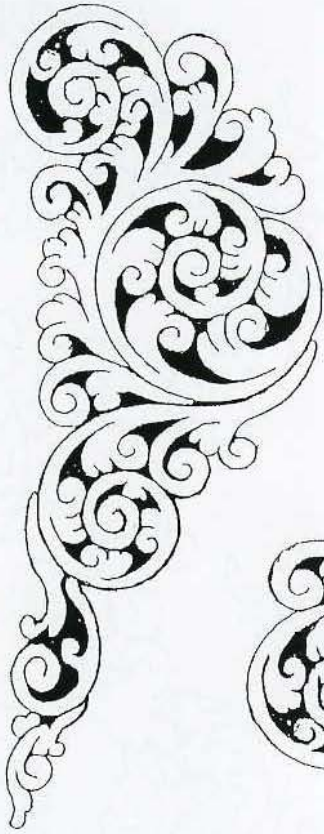




Gunstock Carving







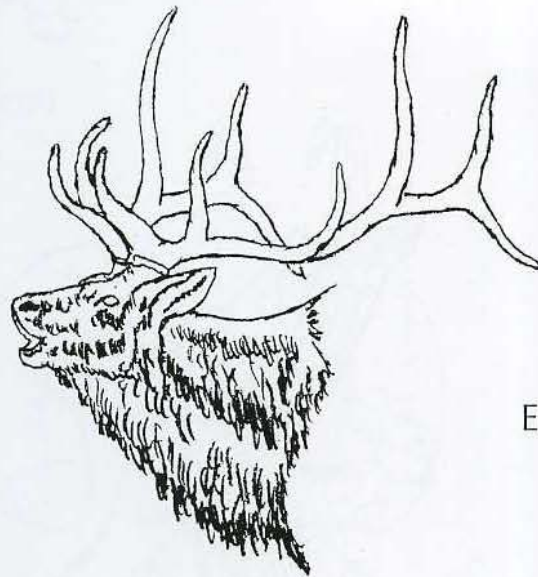
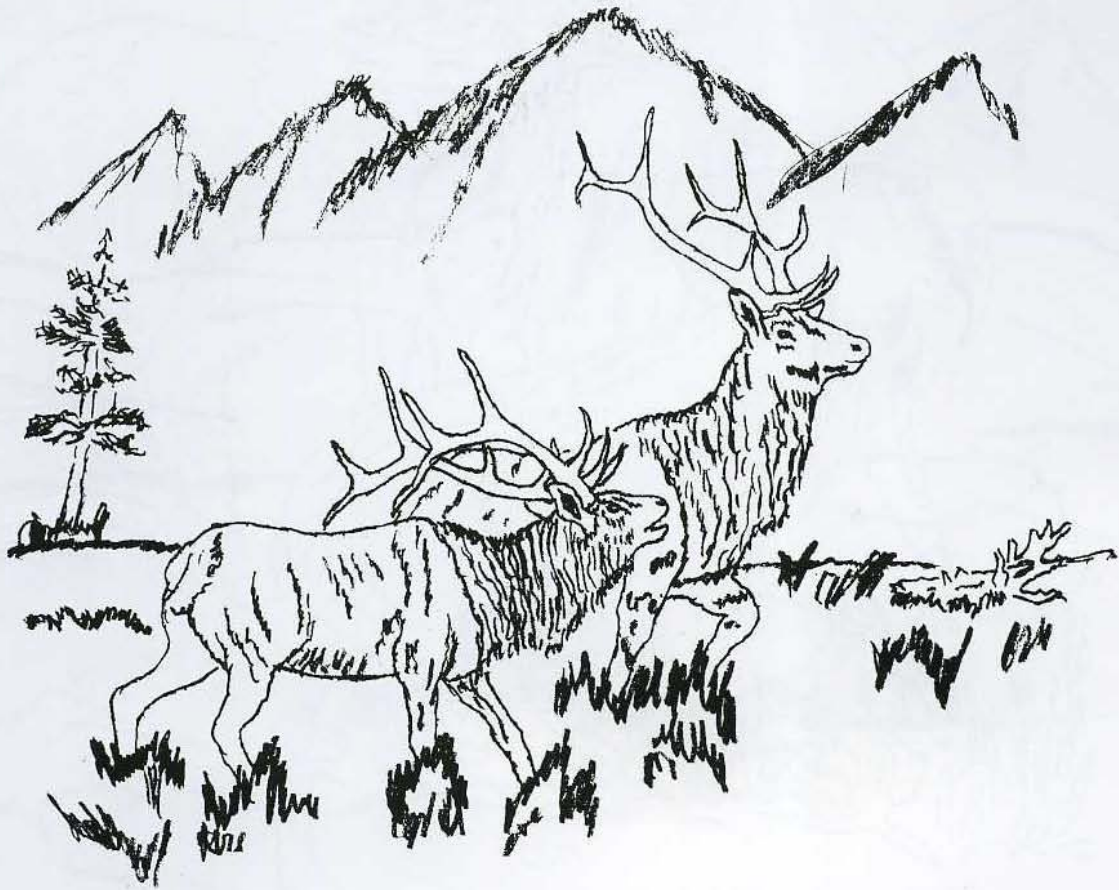


White-tailed Deer





Mule Deer



Elk



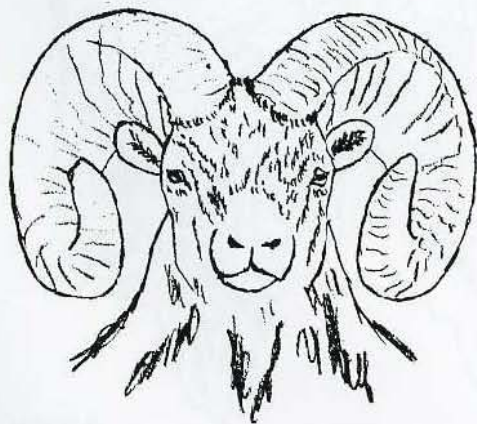
Pronghorn



Gunstock Carving



Big Horn Sheep



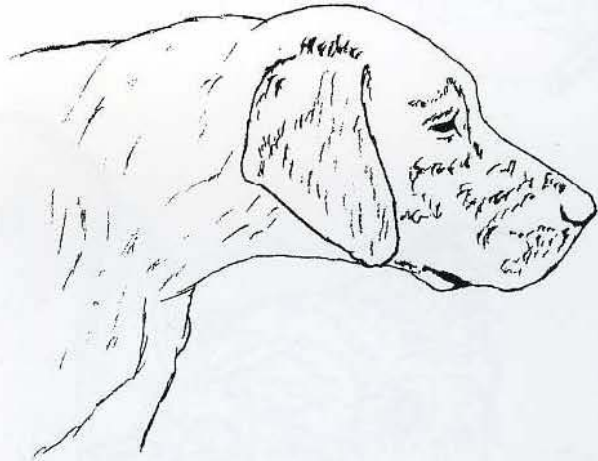
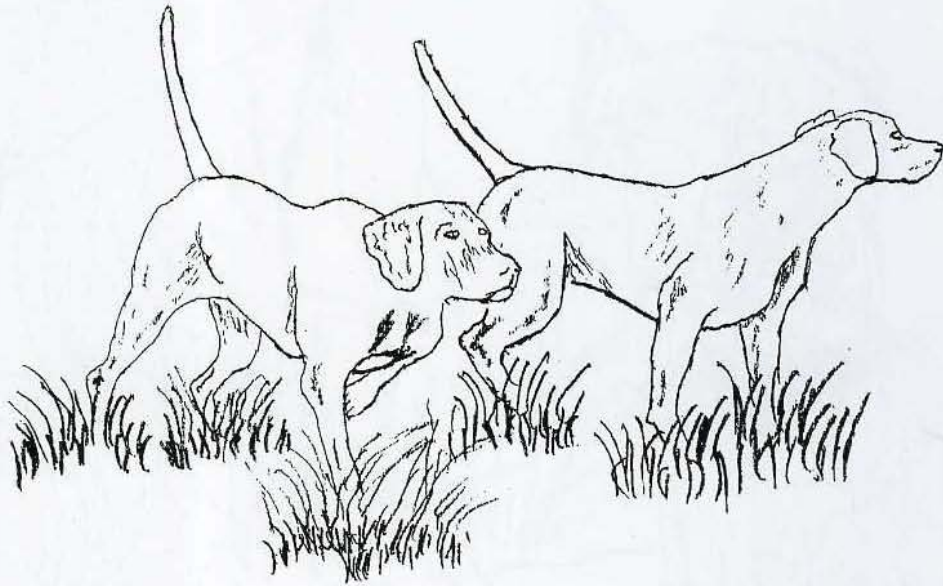


American Bison

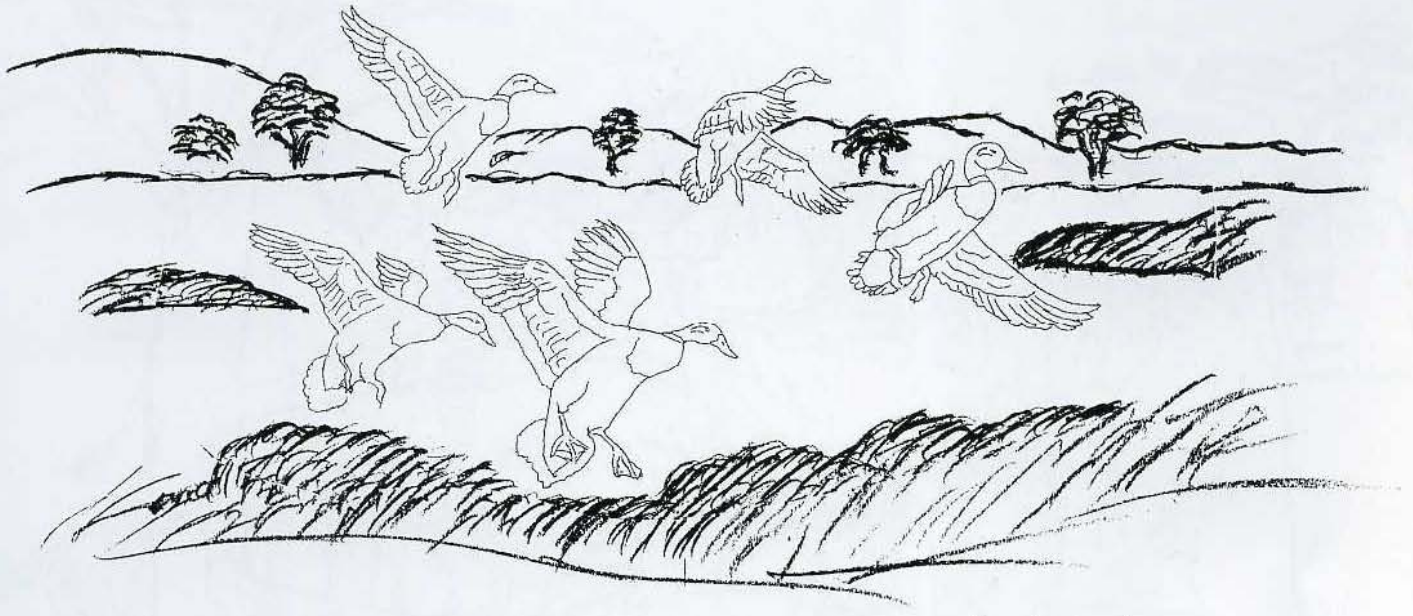


Grizzly

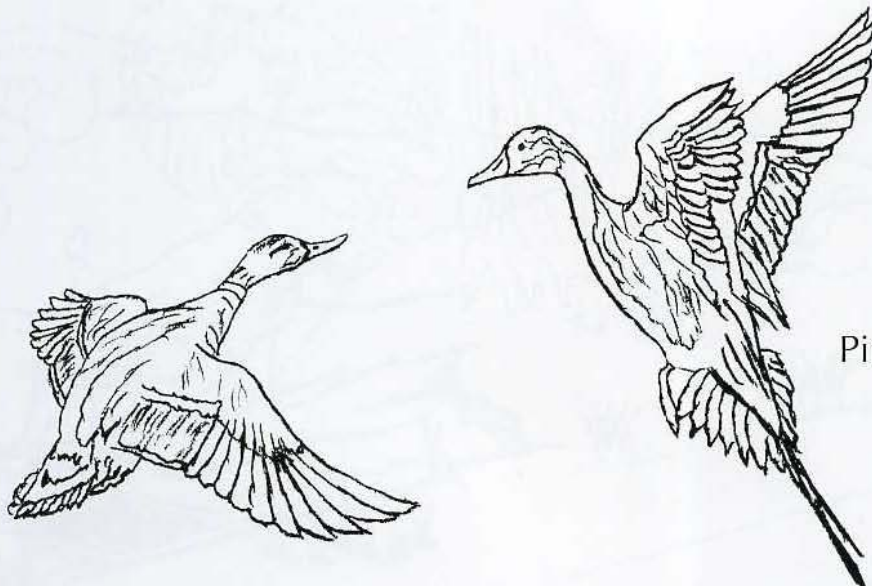




Hunting Dogs



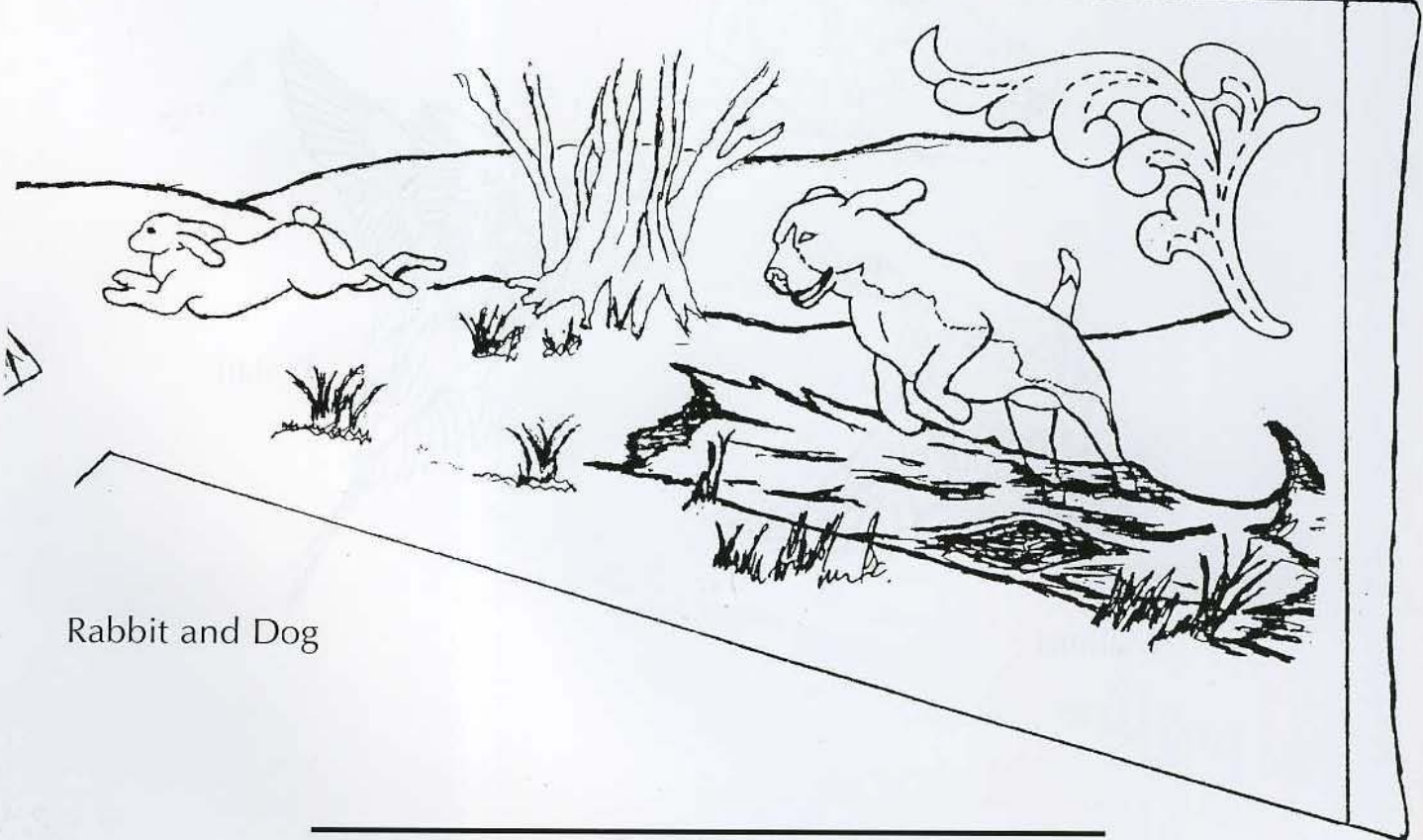
Mallard Ducks



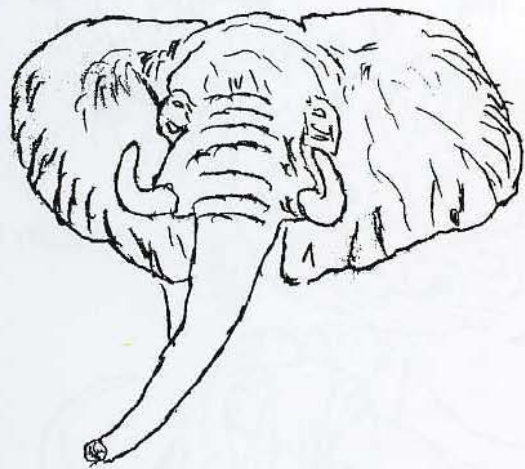
Mallard

Pintail

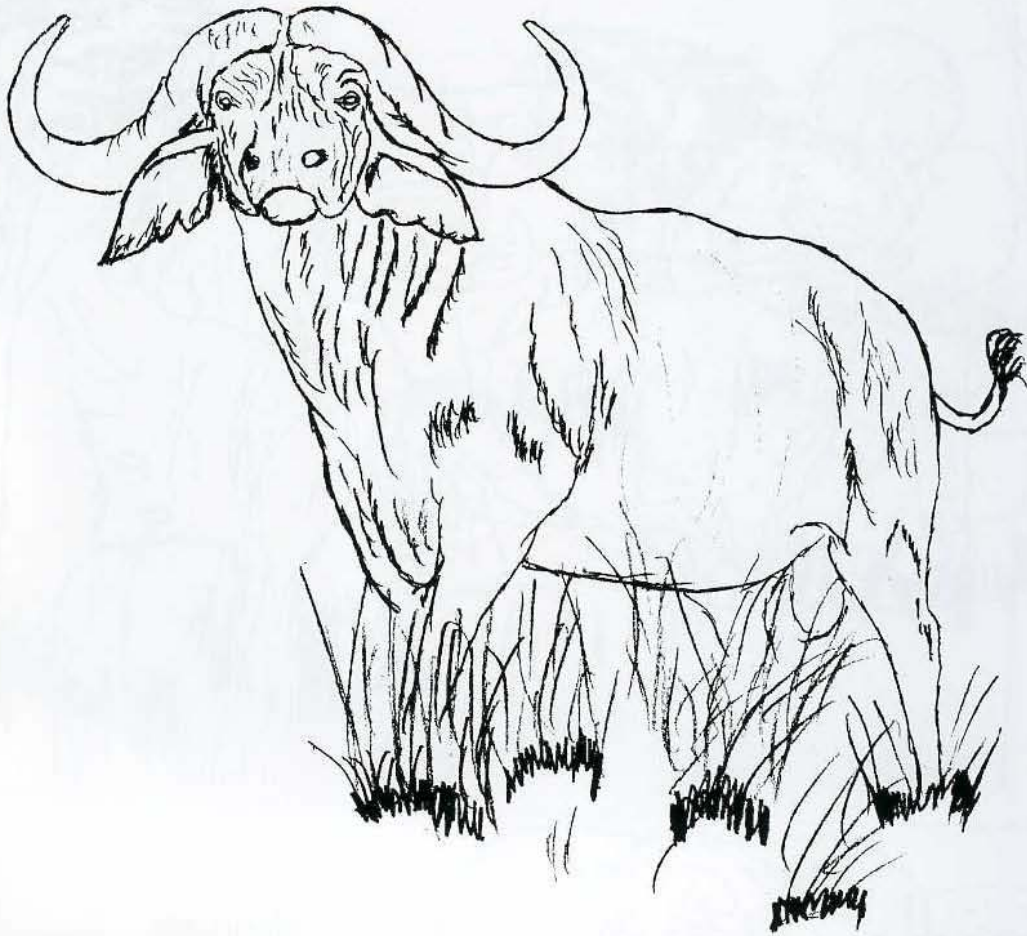
Squirrels



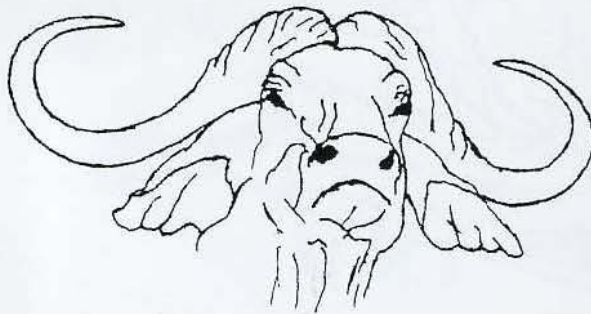
Rabbit and Dog

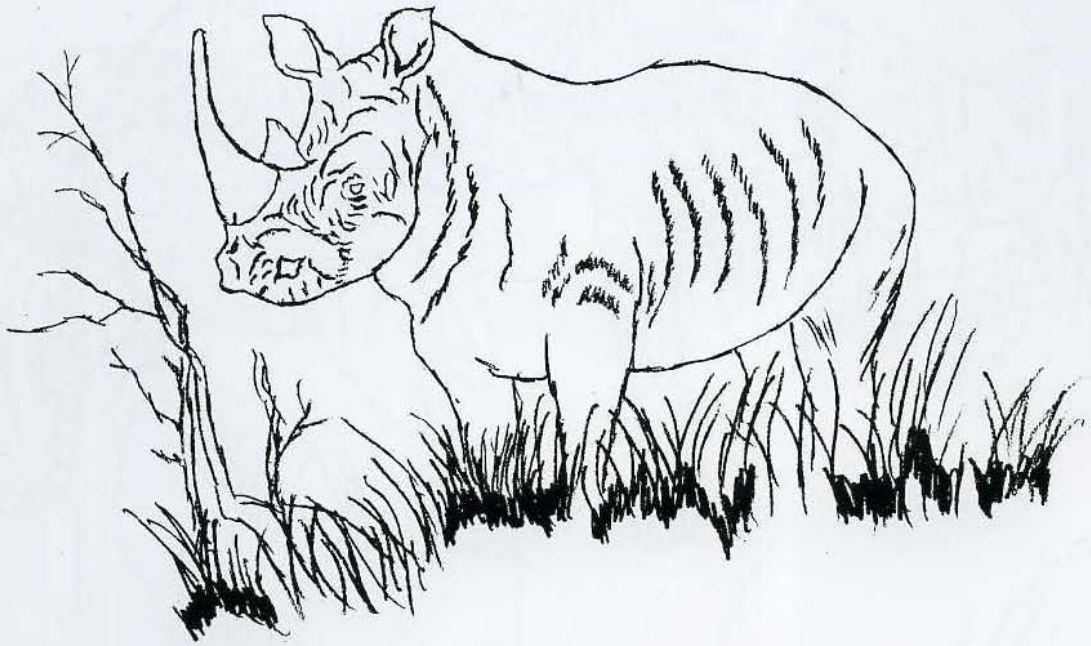


Elephants



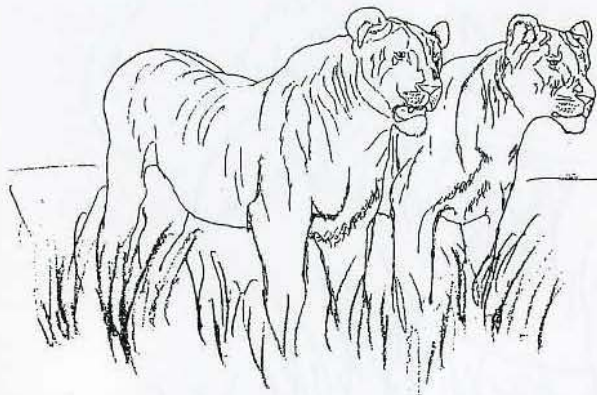
African Cape Buffalo





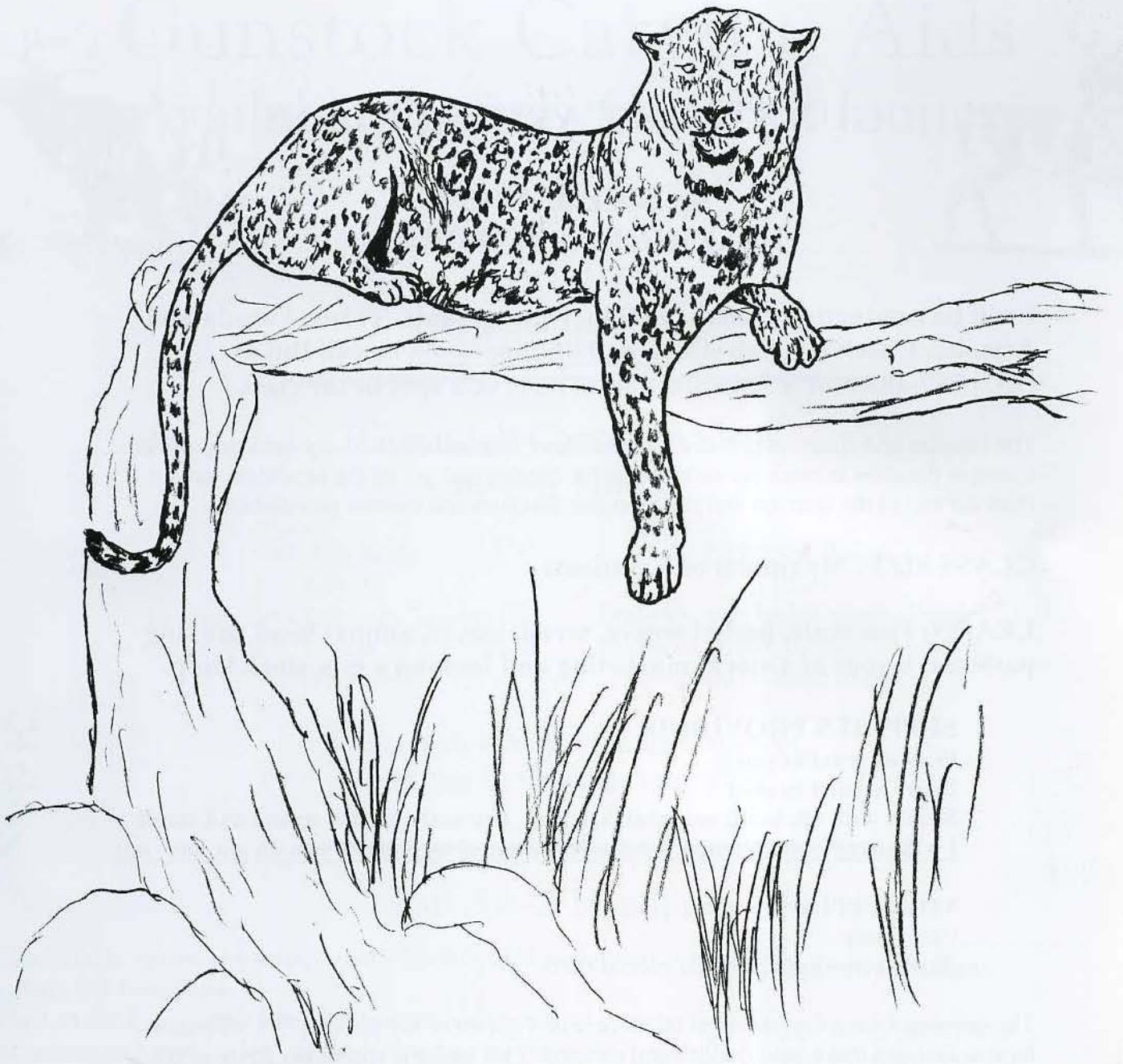
Rhinoceros





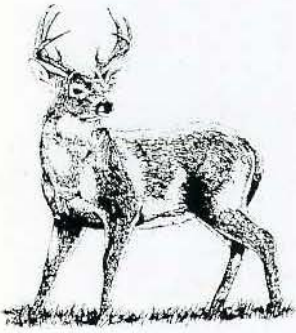
Lions





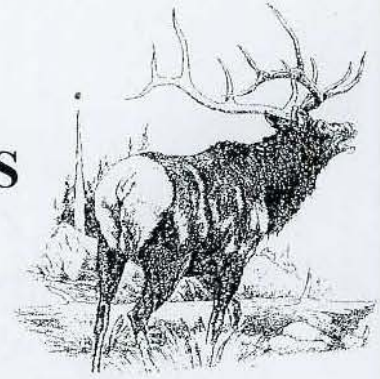
Leopard





GUN STOCK CARVING CLASS

By **BILL JANNEY**
Using **HIGH SPEED DRILL**



I will be conducting classes in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Florida and Arizona. Check my web site www.billjanney.com or call Bill at (937) 787-4836 for a schedule and to reserve a spot in the class.

The German and Austrian gun stock carvers have inspired much of my work and designs. Come to the class to catch the enthusiasm for carving and get all the new ideas gained from my trip to the German and Austrian gun factories and custom gun makers.

CLASS SIZE: Maximum of 8 students

LEARN: Fish scale, basket weave, scroll, leaves, animal head, making patterns, layout of a stock, marketing and making a gun stock lamp.

SUPPLIES PROVIDED:

Walnut practice piece

Burrs needed in class

Stencil with elk head, mountains, leaves, fish scale, basket weave and scroll

I will supply a high speed hand piece to use in the class if you do not have one

YOU SUPPLY:

Opto Visor

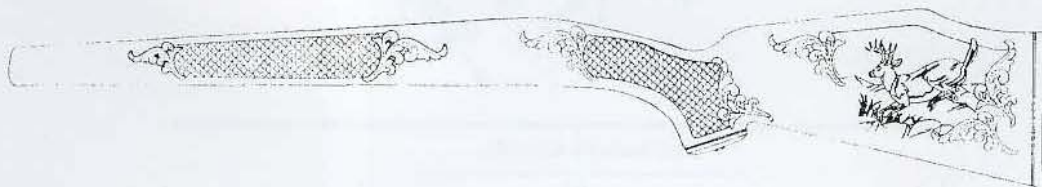
Handpiece – Regulator and special burrs

The question I am asked the most is, "Where do I get all of my patterns?". I will show how to find and make your designs and patterns. **This alone is worth the price of the class!!!**

Call Bill to discuss details and reserve your spot in a class at (937) 787-4836 or write to Bill Janney, 7962 Preblewood Dr., Middletown, OH 45042.

My web site is always updated with new pictures and class schedules.

www.billjanney.com



Gunstock Carving Aids

Available directly from Bill Janney

7962 Preblewood Dr.
Middletown, OH 45042
(937) 787-4836
www.billjanney.com

Gunstock Carving Videos by Bill Janney

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#2 Basket Weave
\$24.95

Learn to carve basket weave. Teaches layout of pattern through all carving and finishing steps.

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\$45 plus \$4 shipping & handling

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The Lab Air-Z handpiece has a lightweight, well-balanced construction for maximum hand comfort. uniquely designed for exceptional smoothness and whisper-quiet running, this slim, quiet model is extremely powerful. The Lab Air-Z delivers dependable high speeds to 360,000 rpm for effortless carving of porcelain and gold... and all this at only 32-34 psi air pressure.

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Chuck Tool
Air Cap
15 ml Turbine Oil
Foot Aircontroller
Air Filter/Pressure
Regulator with
Mounting Bracket
Bill Janney's 2 Gunstock
Carving Videos
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Tool Box and Instructions

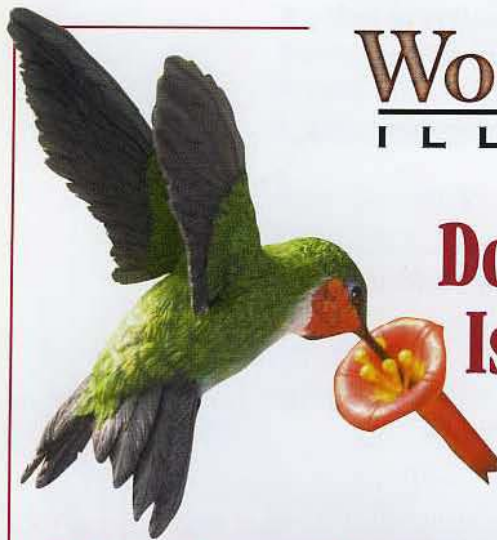
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