

WOODWORKER'S JOURNAL

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Classic Project

In this plan you'll find:

- Step-by-step construction instruction.
- A complete bill of materials.
- Construction drawings and related photos.
- Tips to help you complete the project and become a better woodworker.

Victorian Wall Shelf

Perhaps you've already imagined what you'd place on this little Victorian Wall Shelf. But if you haven't got a use in mind, no matter. The shelf makes a great gift, and only requires minimal stock. The scroll brackets look complex, but they are easily cut, either by hand with a coping saw or with a scroll saw. All three scroll brackets are identical, and they're simple to duplicate using the full-size pattern that's provided. We used walnut for our wall shelf.

This is a great one-board project. A single length of stock, $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick by 7 in. wide by 42 in. long will yield all the parts. Note that while the top (A) is $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick, the scroll brackets (B) and the cleats (C, D, E) are all $\frac{1}{8}$ in. thick. Cut a $13\frac{1}{2}$ in. length of board for the top, then reduce the remaining stock to $\frac{1}{8}$ in. thick. If you don't have a power jointer

or planer, a hand plane will quickly remove the extra $\frac{1}{8}$ in. of material.

Use a compass to lay out the $6\frac{1}{8}$ in. radius for the top, cut very carefully to the line with the band saw, and then use the router with a $\frac{1}{8}$ in. radius beading bit to establish the molded edge. Just be sure that your band saw cut is smooth before using the router.

Any raggedness in the cut will be translated into unevenness in the molded edge.

Using a piece of carbon paper, trace our full-size scroll pattern directly onto


the bracket stock. But take note of the grain direction. The scrolls should be laid out so the grain runs as shown to give the brackets maximum strength. Also note that the scrolls have small flats where they contact the cleats. These flats provide some glue surface later on during assembly. You may find it easier to drill the various dowel holes in the brackets before cutting the scrolls.

Use as fine a blade as possible to cut the scroll brackets. A fine blade and careful cutting will mean less sanding or filing, which is difficult given the narrow open area within the scrolls. We used small flat and half-round files to smooth the interior curves.

The center cleat (C) joins the three scroll brackets, while the cross cleat (D) and back cleat (E) mount the scroll bracket assembly to the shelf. As shown in the exploded view, the cleats employ

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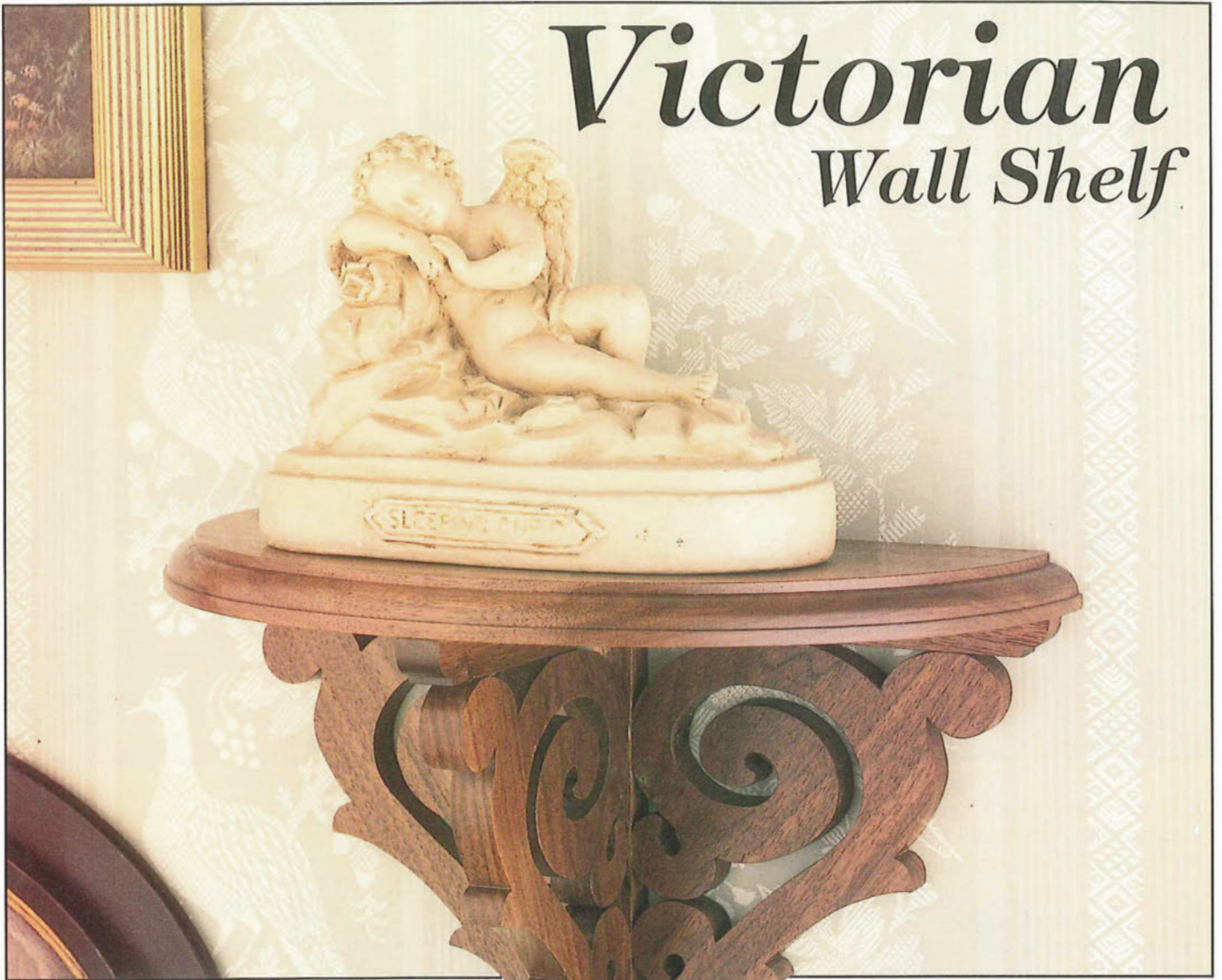
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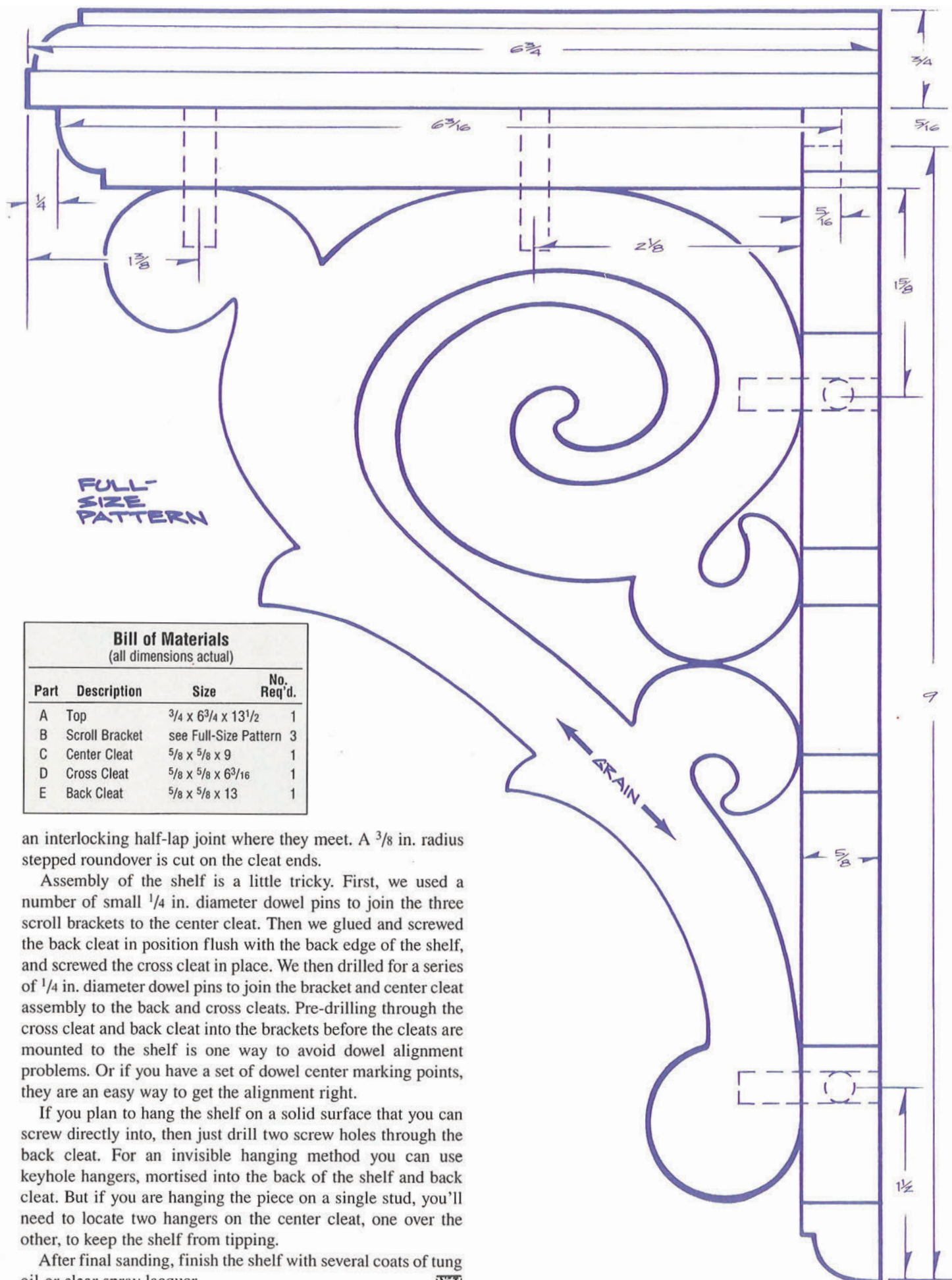
Use a compass to lay out the $6\frac{3}{4}$ in. radius for the top, cut very carefully to the line with the band saw, and then use the router with a $\frac{3}{8}$ in. radius beading bit to establish the molded edge. Just be sure that your band saw cut is smooth before using the router. Any raggedness in the cut will be translated into unevenness in the molded edge.

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Use as fine a blade as possible to cut the scroll brackets. A fine blade and careful cutting will mean less sanding or filing, which is difficult given the narrow open area within the scrolls. We used small flat and half-round files to smooth the interior curves.

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FULL-SIZE PATTERN

Bill of Materials (all dimensions actual)			
Part	Description	Size	No. Req'd.
A	Top	3/4 x 6 3/4 x 13 1/2	1
B	Scroll Bracket	see Full-Size Pattern	3
C	Center Cleat	5/8 x 5/8 x 9	1
D	Cross Cleat	5/8 x 5/8 x 6 3/16	1
E	Back Cleat	5/8 x 5/8 x 13	1

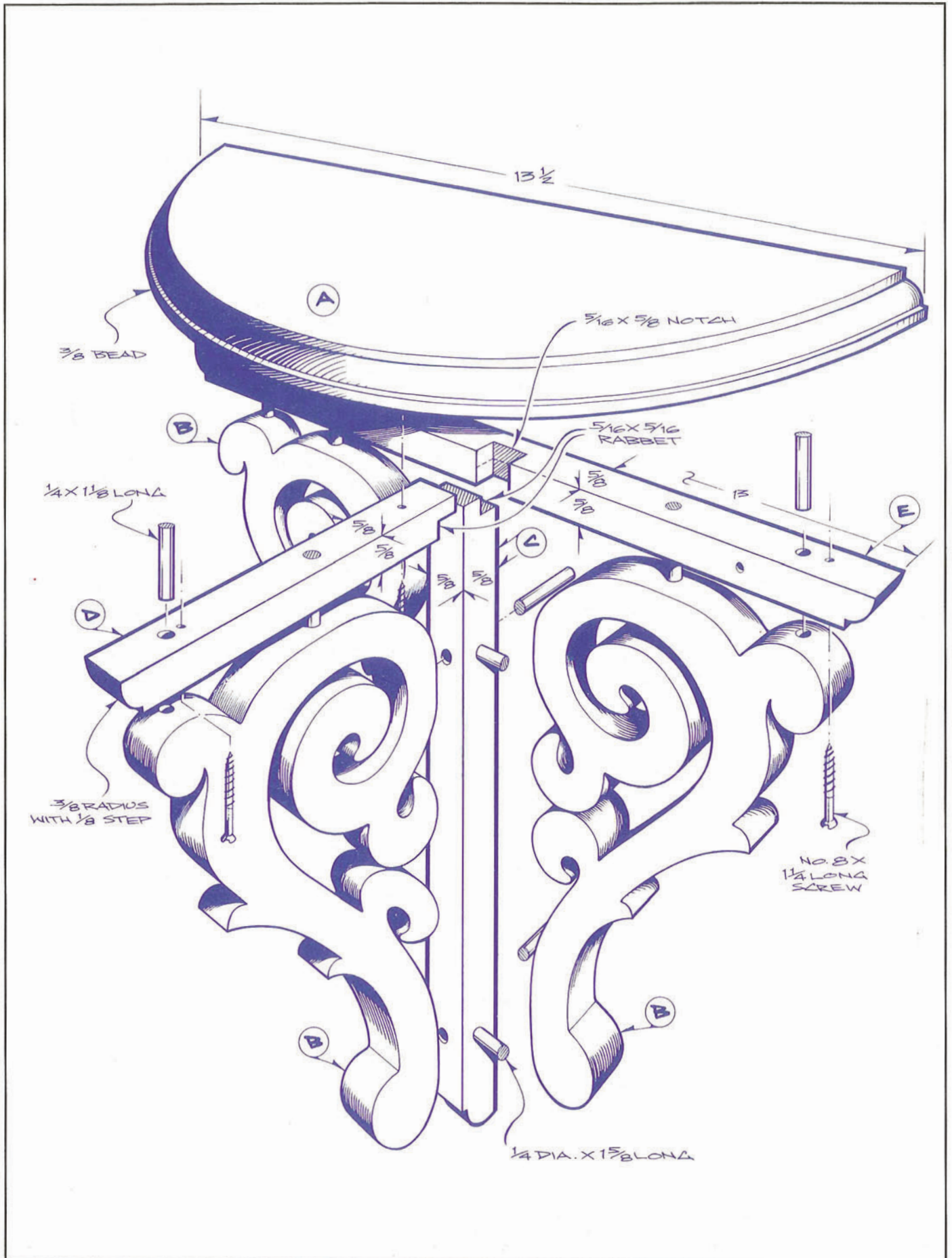
an interlocking half-lap joint where they meet. A 3/8 in. radius stepped roundover is cut on the cleat ends.

Assembly of the shelf is a little tricky. First, we used a number of small 1/4 in. diameter dowel pins to join the three scroll brackets to the center cleat. Then we glued and screwed the back cleat in position flush with the back edge of the shelf, and screwed the cross cleat in place. We then drilled for a series of 1/4 in. diameter dowel pins to join the bracket and center cleat assembly to the back and cross cleats. Pre-drilling through the cross cleat and back cleat into the brackets before the cleats are mounted to the shelf is one way to avoid dowel alignment problems. Or if you have a set of dowel center marking points, they are an easy way to get the alignment right.

If you plan to hang the shelf on a solid surface that you can screw directly into, then just drill two screw holes through the back cleat. For an invisible hanging method you can use keyhole hangers, mortised into the back of the shelf and back cleat. But if you are hanging the piece on a single stud, you'll need to locate two hangers on the center cleat, one over the other, to keep the shelf from tipping.

After final sanding, finish the shelf with several coats of tung oil or clear spray lacquer.





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Matt Becker
Internet Production Coordinator