

'Knitting being so often sought as an evening amusement...'

Frances Lambert, 1846-1847

Frances Lambert was a textile worker and businesswoman. In the 1840s she worked as an embroideress to Queen Victoria and ran a needlework shop in central London. Between 1840 and 1860 she wrote many popular needlework books; 42,000 copies of volume one of *My Knitting Book* were printed.

Most of her works include patterns she called 'Shetland' and a few are well-known in Shetland lace knitting. Lambert did not use the Shetland names for patterns, which are often more descriptive of natural objects. Her work in the royal court may have given her access to the finest Shetland knitted lace from which she could study authentic details. The young Queen Victoria was an admirer of the craft and was gifted fine knitted stockings from Shetland as early as 1837 by Arthur Anderson of Gremista.

The 'Twelve Patterns for Shetland Shawls, etc.' were knit from Lambert's *Hand-Book of Needlework*, published in 1846. She recommended different needle sizes for each pattern, indicating she did not expect more than one pattern to be used in a single shawl, as was common in lace shawls knit by Shetlanders.

'1. Zigzag Stripe Pattern'

The zigzag stripe is a common vertical element in Shetland lace knitting, where it is used in combination with other patterns (see Pattern 5).

Knit by Teresa MacLeod on 3.25mm needles with 4-ply cotton.

'2. Leaf Pattern'

Although tree shapes are commonly represented in Shetland lace knitting, this leaf shape is not, probably because it has little lace effect.

Knit by Charlotte McEleney on 3.75mm needles with double knitting yarn.

'3. Open Diamond Pattern'

Diamonds abound in Shetland lace but they usually function as large frames enclosing other pattern elements. This pretty pattern has not been found in historical Shetland lace.

Knit by Geraldine Warner on 1.5mm needles with lace-weight cotton.

'4. Shell Pattern'

This pattern is usually called 'Feather and Fan' in Shetland lace and openwork knitting. It is used in hap borders and plain fine shawls.

Knit by Shazia Ahmed on 3.25mm needles with Rowan wool/cotton 4-ply.

'5. Leaf and Trellis Pattern'

One of the classic Shetland lace patterns, known as 'Da Print O' Da Wave', it is a common centre pattern for shawls and stoles.

Knit by Mhairi MacKenzie on 2.75 needles with alpaca lace yarn.

'6. Rocket Pattern'

In the 19th century a rocket was a child's frock; Lambert may have copied this pattern from such a garment. It is similar to 'Auld Shell' and 'Feather and Fan' stitches used in Shetland lace.

Knit by Genevieve LeMoine on 2.75mm needles with Jagerspun Zephyr wool-silk.

'7. Ladder Pattern'

The raised stitches and faint openwork of this stitch makes it unsuitable for Shetland lace and it is not represented in known historical garments.

Knit by Alexandra Richards on 2.5mm needles with 2-ply handspun Shetland made from super-fine combed top from Jamieson and Smith.

'8. Oeillet Pattern'

Lambert's 'eyelet' is similar to the often-used Shetland 'Cat's Eye' pattern.

Knit by Susan Freeman on 3.0mm needles with Shetland Supreme yarn from Jamieson and Smith.

'9. Fan Pattern'

Similar to the 'Feather and Fan' pattern used in Shetland lace knitting.

Knit by Tuuli Lõhmus on 4.5mm needles with North Ronaldsay double knitting yarn.

'10. Spider Web Pattern'

The small pattern is used to fill larger diamond shapes in Shetland lace knitting, although the name 'Spider Web' is applied to a different motif in Shetland.

Knit by Maggie Mockeridge on 2.5mm needles with Jamieson's Cobweb yarn.

'11. Star Pattern'

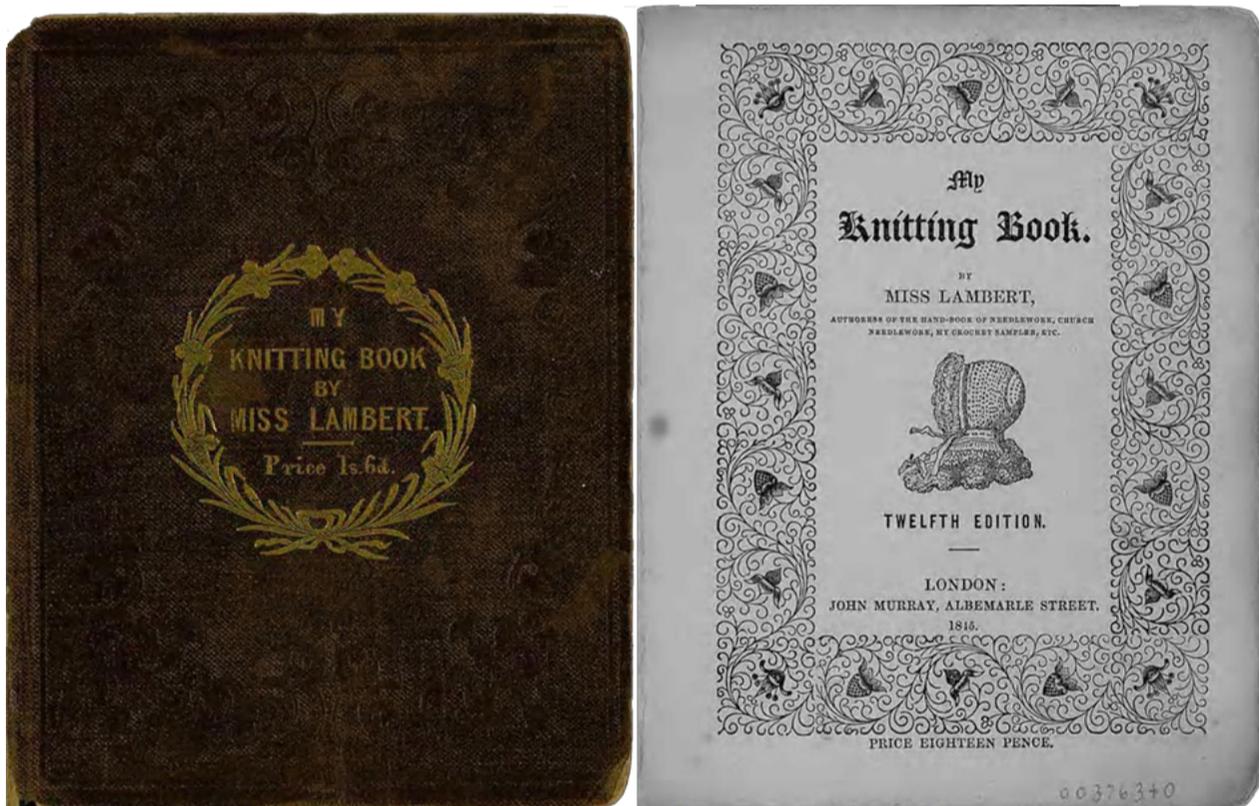
This pattern is the same as the 'Bird's Eye' pattern commonly used in Shetland lace.

Knit by Suzanne da Rosa on 3.0mm needles with Jamieson and Smith 2-ply lace weight.

'12. Scallop Pattern'

Shetland lace knitters call this pattern 'Horseshoe'.

Knit by Michael Harrigan on 3.5mm needles with 2-ply Merino-silk.



Frances Lambert published two additional patterns she called 'Shetland'.

'Herringbone, or Shetland Stitch for a Purse'

This pattern is not known in traditional Shetland knitting and Lambert's reason for identifying it with Shetland is unknown.

Knit by Mhairi Lavender on 2.25mm needles with Rowan Cotton-Wool 4-ply.

'Another Pretty Shetland Pattern'

Openwork diamond patterns of different types and sizes figure prominently in Shetland lace knitting.

Knit by Catherine Paul on 4.0mm needles with Swan's Island 2-ply wool.