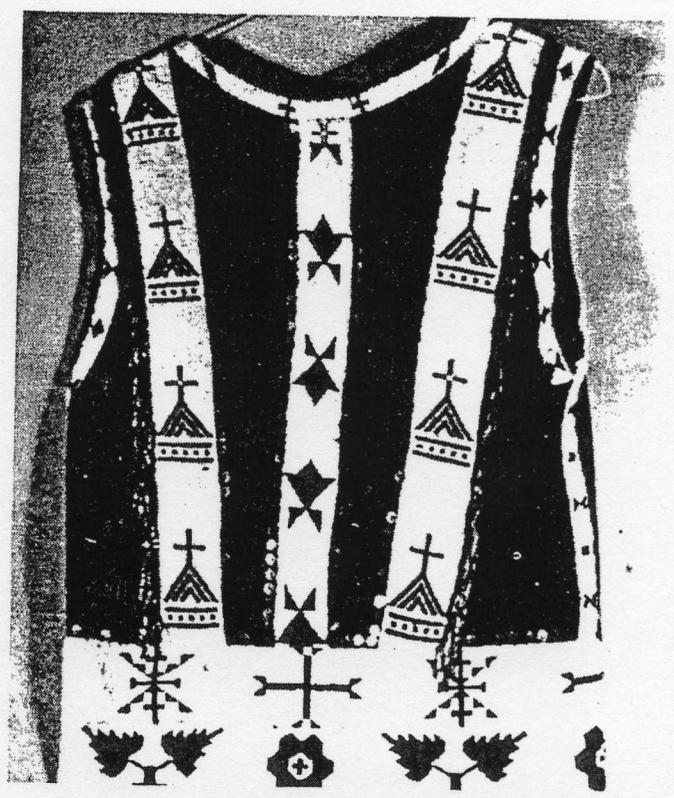


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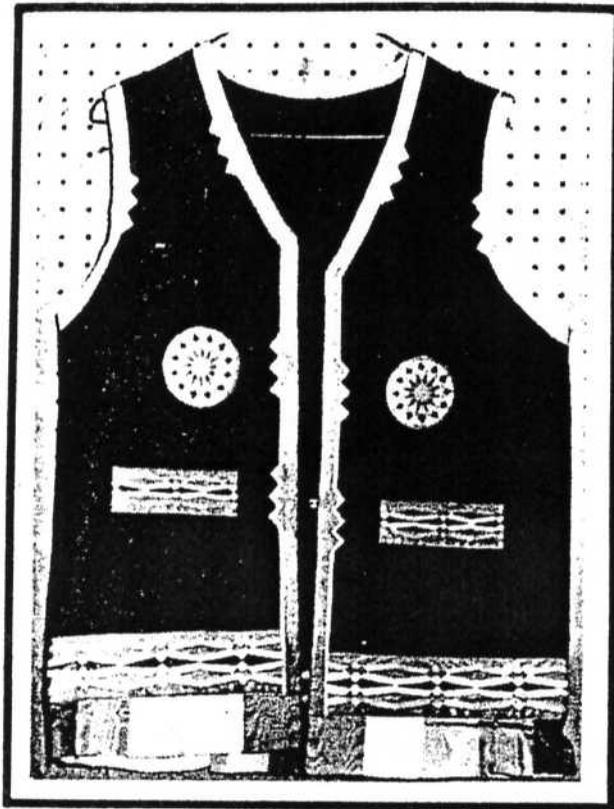


10

7-8. Boy's vest from the Oklahoma Historical Society, Extra long bead strips overlap to front of vest. The plan may have been to put beadwork on another vest as the boy grew. Metallic fringe borders the two back strips.

9-10. Another fine vest from the Oklahoma Historical Society. A double bottom loom strip is quite unusual

though the designs are excellent standard examples. The false pocket in front is created by rows of sequins, ribbons and metallic fringe. Narrow strips around arm holes, neck, front and sides are loom beaded and pucker slightly as they meet the curves. Note that center back strip is narrower than other two. Metallic fringe and sequins border the strips in back. Ty Stewart photos.



Ribbon-work Vests

The excellent ribbon-work vest of moiré ribbon in photos 19 & 20 was made by Rex Reddick of Texas. Its dimensions appear in Fig. 1. Broadcloth, red or blue, always matches the color used in the straight dance suit. These vests are not as tailored as some of the early vests. They are somewhat roomy and hang to mid-hip. A paper pattern is suggested to insure proper fit. Lay out the 3-piece pattern on the cloth so that the selvage edge is at the bottom of each piece, fig. 1. Not only is this tradition, but the bottom of each piece need not be bound or hemmed. Vests can also be made from a one piece pattern.

Construction

Side seams are sewn first while the shoulder seams are sewn up later. The $2\frac{1}{4}$ " ribbon pieces that hang from the bottom of the vest take the place of the leather or metallic fringe. These pieces could be left off as the leather fringe is optional; however, the "ribbon fringe" gives the vest that "finished" look. Cut off 3" lengths of the 2 or 3" wide ribbon used in making the ribbon-work panels. Arrange the colors alternately about the base of the vest and sew in place. The ends are then evened with the pinking shears.

The two back panels of ribbon-work are sewn down next so that they form a slight "V". See photo 20. Of course this assumes that the ribbon-work, the primary decorative unit and the tedious work, has already been completed. Any ribbon pattern can be used, 2, 4 or multiple but it matches the ribbon-work found on the rest of the suit. For ribbon-work details please refer to TRACKS Feb. '78, May '78, June '78, Sept. '78 and the ribbon-work craft hint in this issue.

Why two back panels? Three could be used, but the otter dragger would cover it up. Also, the dragger's weight would push it against the sweaty back and it would continually get soaked. However, with a middle strip, one would not necessarily have to wear an otter dragger. It would be in keeping with tradition to alter the ribbon pattern or rearrange the color pattern for the middle panel.

After the back ribbon-work panels are straight stitched in place, the small shoulder seams can be taken. In this way, the ends of the ribbon-work are tucked away in the seam and will not ravel.

The waist ribbon-work strip is sewn in position next. This piece about 40" in length represents a lot of work. To complete the vest, the armholes and the front and neck openings are bound with a single folded 1" ribbon or as with Mr. Reddick's vest, a typical two-ribbon binding. Following the curves while matching points is tricky business. See Moccasin Tracks Craft Series 1006 for additional comments on two-ribbon bindings.

Finally the front can be further decorated with one or more of the following, false pockets, medallions, ties, sequins, metallic fringe, chainette fringe, or even appliqued beadwork in curvilinear design or other patterns.

Wearing the Vest

Most often on a hot Oklahoma day or evening, the vest is worn without a shirt; yet, as in the earlier days it can be worn with a shirt. Note that the bandolier bead strings are not worn. Wide wrist bands of German silver are usually worn with the vest since this area would be void of any decorative item.

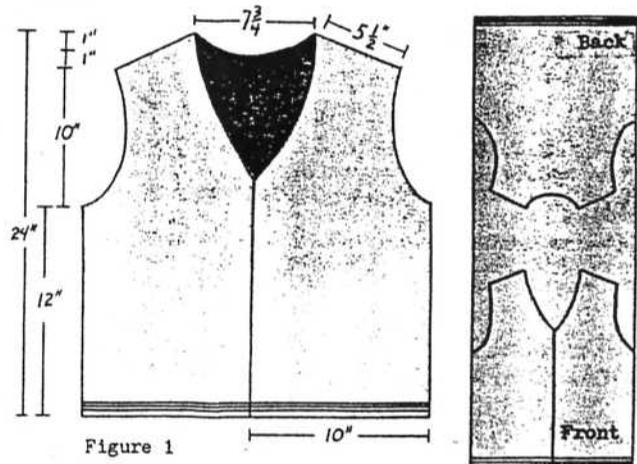


Figure 1





11-12. The loom bead strips of this vest run from front to back. Bottom front of each strip is fashioned into a pair of tabs and the strips are edge beaded. The waist strip has a blue background. The arm openings are lazy stitched. Metallic fringe is sewn to the bottom and outside the back bead strips. Brass beads strung on thongs then applied in place border the bead strips in back and at bottom. The vest is lined. Photos 7-12 courtesy of Ty Stewart.

15. M. Lookout and son, Hominy, Oklahoma 1972. Applique beaded vest in curvilinear design with a red cloth bottom strip and sequin border. The back, photo



16, is of an entirely different design.

17. Archie Mason, Osage Tail Dancer for Greyhorse District at Pawhuska 1972. Front opening and armholes lined with sequins, as well as false loom beaded (flag design) pocket and bottom loom strip. Several front ties and beaded medallions are also present.

18. One piece broadcloth vest at Pawnee 1978 with 2-color leaf patterns of ribbon. Nickel spots added at leaf points. Distinctive selvage border at bottom acts as decoration. Note armhole binding and fluff-ringed medallions with ribbon drops. K. Tsuji Photo.

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18



COMANCHE TAB LEGGINGS

JOE SAMUEL HAYS

INTRODUCTION

In the following study of Comanche tab leggings we will primarily focus on four pair housed in the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum (PPHM) at Canyon, Texas. All of these leggings were made after 1900 and when contrasted to each other reflect a good variety of construction and decoration techniques. The degree of detail given here depends on the availability of the leggings for close examination. When supported with old photographs and leggings from other museums, a reasonably representative sample of legging traits is acquired for comparison.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Hide leggings are the traditional leg covering of the plains tribes. In the old days they were worn to protect the legs against brush and boulders while on horseback. Also, to protect and insulate one's self from the cold and to intensify the beauty of their clothes (Mails 1972). A description of Comanche leggings in 1852 by Alex B. Hasson, post surgeon at Fort Phantom Hill stated:

"The dress of these Indians varied, but the men commonly wore moccasins of buckskin, and leggings which extended from the upper portion of the thigh to the foot. The seam of these leggings ran close in so that the garment was close-fitting. The border of the material

beyond the seam was left loose, presenting a wide margin of flapping buckskin. A breechclout of cloth or skin was worn, and if the weather was cold, a buffalo robe or blanket was thrown over the shoulders." (Richardson 1933)

Wallace and Hoebel (1952) go on to say they are distinguished by their long fringes and were sometimes beaded, but were usually ornamented with bits of silver, or other metal, beads, shells, elk's teeth or anything that appealed to the wearer's fancy attached to the fringes.

It is possible that this description applies to what we call tab leggings, however, this description better fits the type of "flap and fringe" leggings discussed by Jerry Smith in *Moccasin Tracks*, November 1980, April 1981, May 1981, September 1983, and October 1983. The origin of the tab legging among the Comanches and other southern plains tribes was possibly from various prairie and eastern tribes who wore a similar legging with the seam in front. With the advance of these leggings to the plains tribes the seam was worn on the side as a convenience to the horseback riders (Koch 1977).

LEGGING DESCRIPTIONS

The first pair of leggings to be examined are catalog #1510/11. The card on file at PPHM says, "Kiowa man's leggings made in the



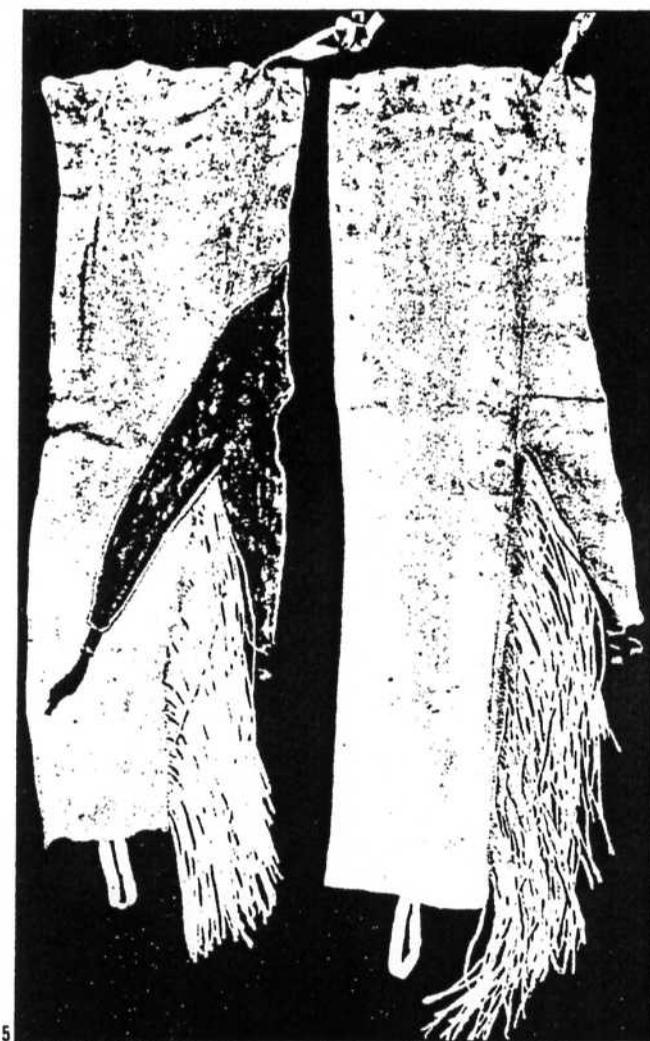
Comanche style and pattern." They were acquired by the museum in 1959 from Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hampton. These leggings appear to be made of brain-tanned deer hide and are somewhat stiff. The hair side of the leather is the exterior of the leggings, as is the case with most southern plains clothing. The scraping marks from the tanning process are still visible through the mineral pigment used to color the leggings a chalk white color. The 1510/11 leggings have the following dimensions and are shown in figure 1. Inseam is 34 inches; top width folded flat, not including tabs is 9.6 inches; bottom width of legging folded flat, excluding fringe is 5.7 inches; the foot loop or stirrup when folded flat is 2.5 inches with an additional .40 of an inch sewn to the inside of the legging on each side of the ankle; the two tie straps at the top of the leggings are each 27 inches long by .60 inch wide and are sewn to the legging with cotton thread. The tabs of these leggings are 1.8 inches wide at the top of the leggings. The tabs at

Photo 1 Titled, "Comanche Indians Performing their War Dance, Lawton Oklahoma". Some of their leggings appear to be made of a light colored cloth as evidenced by the lack of fringe and the way they wrinkle when worn. Catalog #2120/39.

Photo 2 Catalog #2120/32. Hoy Koy Bitty, Comanche.

Photo 3 Catalog #1277/2. Quanah Parker. Note sash tassel, flicker feathers, and blanket seam, in addition to his tab leggings.

Photo 4 Catalog #1978-77/9. Belo Cerad, Comanche.



their widest point are 3.5 inches from legging tube to edge beadwork. The tabs are one inch wide where cut square at their bottoms. The measurement from end of tab to knee of legging is 8 inches. Tabs join the legging at 16.5 inches from the top of the legging.

Referring now to the construction of the 1510/11 leggings; the few holes in the hide were patched with semi-round patches slightly larger than the holes, sewn on the outside of the leggings. All knots are tied off on the outside of the leggings. (This surely done so knots won't irritate leg) The legging pattern is somewhat unusual in that it entailed more sewing than if the tabs had been cut out as a part of the legging. First of all, a tapered tube of buckskin was cut for each legging, then additional pieces the full inseam length were cut which consisted of a tab and a 1/4 inch wide strip extending from knee to ankle. Two of these tab pieces were then sewn to the margins of the legging tube. Next the legging was folded, wrong-side-out and sewn again from the bottom to the top of the legging. Next the legging was inverted (right-side-out) and folded flat and the fringe strung through holes punched in each of the 1/4 inch wide "flaps" sewn below the knee and twisted (see Fig. 2-A & B). The end effect was that no stitches are visible on the exterior of the legging and the legging below the knee was sewn and fringed. This construction method would not require as large a hide as if an entire legging were cut from a single piece of leather.

The twisted fringe for leggings is made by cutting a strip of buckskin one-eighth inch

FIGURE 1

DIMENSIONS OF #1510/11

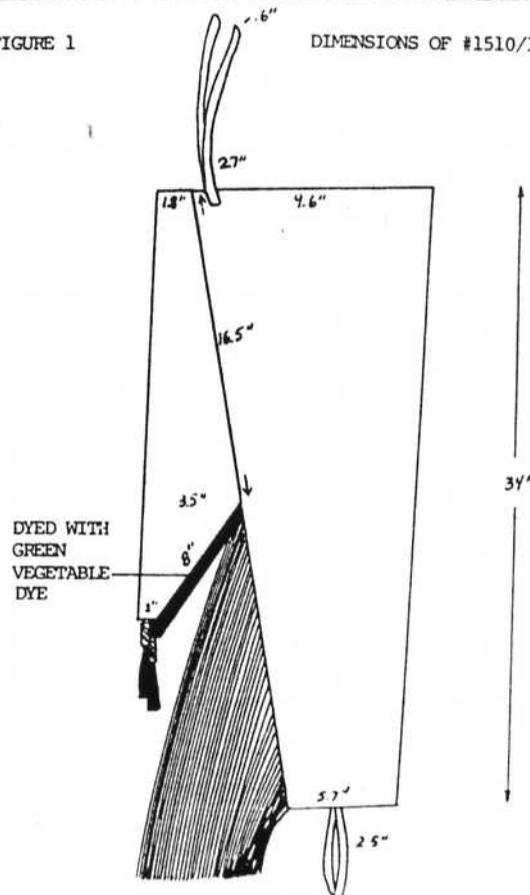




FIGURE 2
CONSTRUCTION OF #1510/11

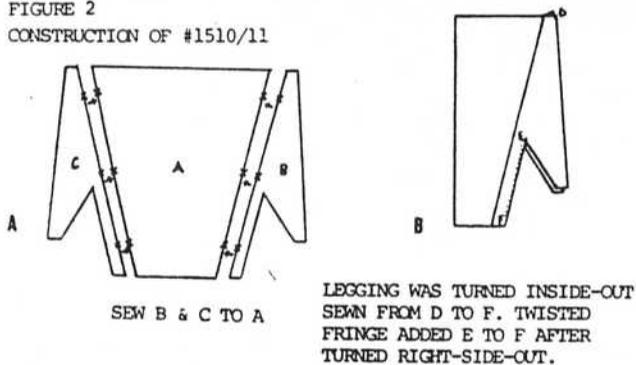
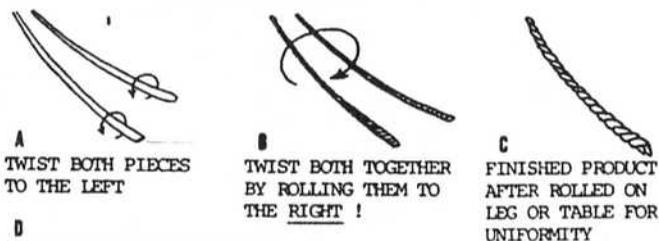
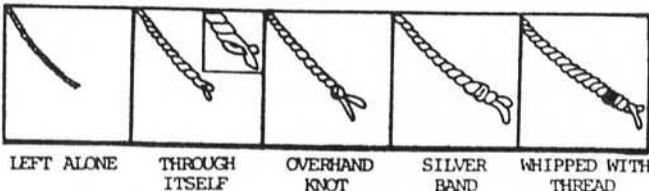


FIGURE 3 MAKING TWISTED FRINGE



D TWISTED FRINGE ENDINGS



wide or less, by at least twice the length of the desired fringe length. Then the buckskin thong is wet moderately with water, passed through the holes in the narrow flap and the ends evened up. Twist both thongs to the left equally until they "almost kink up", finally put the two ends together and twist back to the right (see Fig. 3). The fringe is spaced one-eighth inch apart. The fringes have been painted a white color and are somewhat stiff. The construction was completed with the addition of the tie straps and stirrups. Edge beadwork on all tabs was done using a one down, one up pattern with no fill-in bead. The 12/0 white bead is next to the leather and the single translucent red bead is up. A noticeable gap appears between the beads. The edge beadwork is not that great but neither are the beads. They are very irregular, probably "leftovers" or "rejects" from work requiring more uniform beads. Furthermore, a few opaque red beads have been mixed in. All beadwork is done with cotton thread. The tassels below the characteristically Comanche "squared-off tabs" are of fine, black horsehair; doubled, wrapped with cotton thread, covered with buckskin and finally beaded. Horsehair is 2.3 inches long

Photo 5 Tab Leggings #1510/11.

Photo 6 Tassel detail of the 1510/11 leggings.

Photo 7 Tab interior of 1510/11 leggings. Absence of green dye at edges showing that coloring was done after beadwork and sewing.

Photo 8 Stirrup at the bottom of the 1510/11 leggings.

out of the beadwork and is trimmed even on the ends. Diameter of the hair bundle is .40 of an inch. The tassel beadwork is very irregular due to nonuniformity and differences in the bead sizes. The 3-drop gourd stitched tassels are just over one inch long and their diameter is one-half inch. A kind of flaring "skirt" is formed at the base of each tassel using edge beadwork in a one down, one up sequence with a fill-in bead. 12/0 clear faceted beads were used on 12/0 opaque red. The tassel design is done in spiraling bands (barber pole) of green, translucent navy blue, pink, translucent red, and translucent medium blue in size 12/0 and 13/0 beads. Decoration was completed with the inside of the tabs being dyed green. The dye looks as if it were applied after the leggings were finished because of the unpainted line next to the edge beadwork on the flaps and stitches between the flaps. This is apparent in photo 7.

The second pair of Comanche tab leggings described here are the ones hanging in the Baldwin Parker tipi display. They have been assigned the catalog number 1510/48. These leggings belonged to Andrew Perdassoasby, of Faxon, Oklahoma, and were made for him by his wife. The museum acquired them from Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hampton in 1961. These leggings were viewed from about fifteen feet away, therefore notes are brief. The 1510/48 leggings are made of white hide, and also have a stirrup or foot loop at the bottom of the leggings. The fringe on this pair is made of twisted cotton string, not of leather. This twisted string is probably chalk line as is available at hardware stores. The chalk line is simply cut twice the length of the fringt, untwisted, one strand pulled through the legging, the ends matched and retwisted. The insides of the tabs are fully lined with purple satin or taffeta material. It has faded some. The edge beadwork was done with medium blue beads. These leggings show the typical Comanche stype "squared-off" tabs ending in horsehair tassels. The black horsehair tassels are beaded in red, white, and medium blue beads. Small red fluffs extend out of the bottom of the tassel beadwork. A single lane of red, white and medium blue lazy stitch was done just above the inch long fringe at the legging bottoms. Photo 9 shows these leggings as they are on display.

The third pair are numbered 1510/85, they belong to Oscar Yellowwolf, Comanche and were obtained by Mr. and Mrs. Howard Hampton from Mr. Yellowwolf's daughter, Mrs. Codopan. The museum acquired them from the Hamptons in 1962. These leggings are very representative of the style and show the finest craftsmanship of any Comanche leggings I have ever observed. The Yellowwolf leggings show a natural white color as do their fine twisted buckskin fringe which drags several inches on the floor. Only the fringe holds the leggings together below the knee, no sewing was done under the fringe. Narrow tie straps and stirrups are present on each legging. Each Yellowwolf legging was made out from one piece of hide, no splicing on of the tabs was done. It appears from photo 11 and manikin observation that a blind stitch was used to sew up the leggings above the knee so that no threads would be visible on the outside of the legging. The insides of the front tabs are lined with pinkish-red taffeta, the back ones are lined with dark blue taffeta. The edges of the tabs were than beaded with 13/0 beads with one light red bead down, then a white bead down and a single white bead up. A navy blue fill-in bead was then added. The tassels are beaded in 16/0 beads, with a very nice gourd stitched design. The colors used were translucent royal blue (pony trader blue), a translucent turquoise blue, navy blue, greasy yellow, white, orange, and pink. Like



the 1510/11 leggings, these tassels have been edge beaded just below the gourd stitch. The edge beaded "skirt" on these tassels consists of a three down pattern in 13/0 beads. At one time red fluffs or hackles protruded out from under this edge beaded "skirt". A narrow lazy stitched lane of red, white, and light blue 13/0 seed beads are around the bottom of the leggings above the inch long fringe at the legging cuffs.

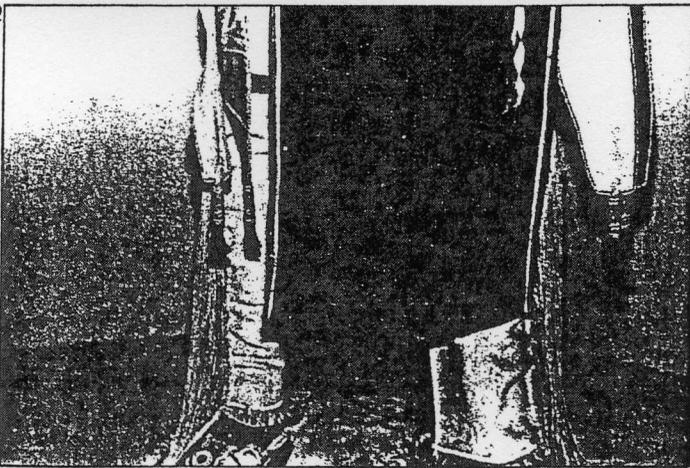
The fourth and final pair of Comanche tab leggings available for study at PPHM are numbered 1510/10 in their records. They are identified as Comanche boy's leggings and were donated to the museum by the Hampton's in 1959. Presently the leggings are exhibited on a boy manikin. These leggings appear to be of much earlier construction than the previous three pair described. They are of brain-tanned hide (deer?), colored yellow with ochre paint. The twisted fringe has been left its natural color and is relatively coarse. This fringe drags several inches when worn. The tabs have been added to these leggings by passing the closing thongs through the legging tube, the tabs then tying them off. The tabs are fairly wide, ending in a one inch wide flap at the legging top. These six closing thongs are spaced about two inches apart, with the two or three inch tails left hanging as decoration. The tabs are fully lined with a dark green wool cloth (trade cloth?). The twisted fringe is not finished in any way and has unraveled a few inches at the ends of some strands. The legging bottoms have been finished by a scalloped cutting design (see Fig. 4-A). Edge beadwork is two down, one up in 14/0 white. Tassels are beaded in 16/0 white, navy blue, translucent red, and translucent green. Red trimmed fluffs extend from under the gourd stitched tassels. The tassels are of fine, light brown hair, presumably horse.



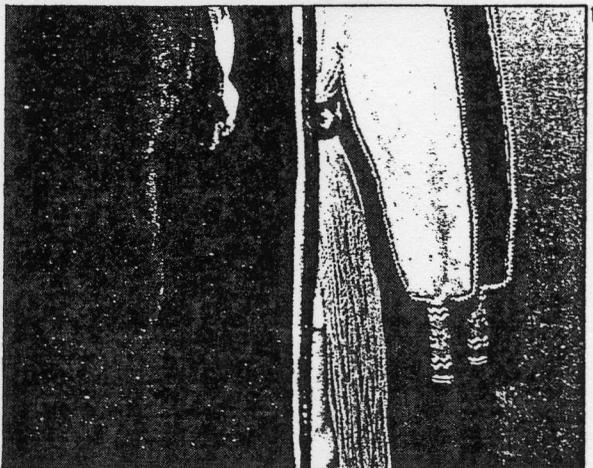
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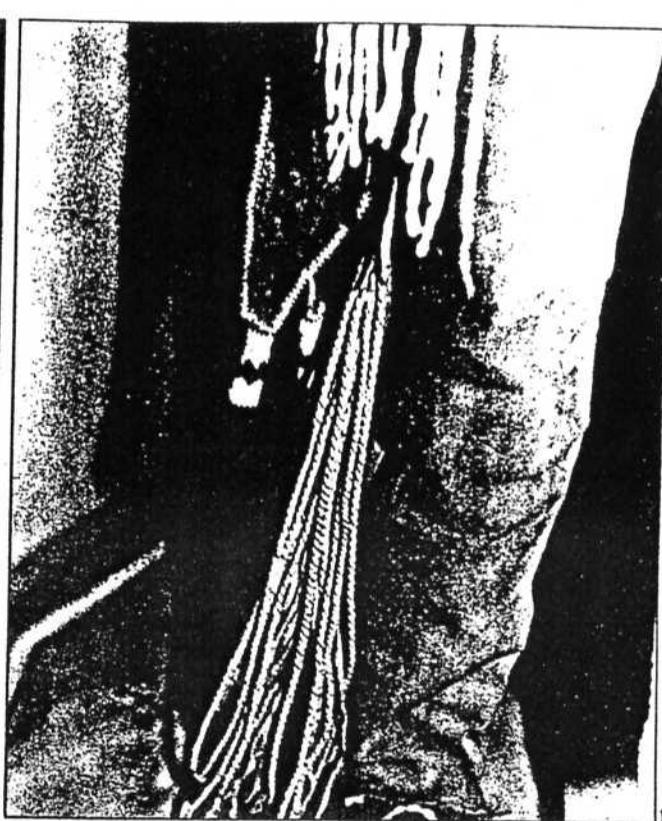
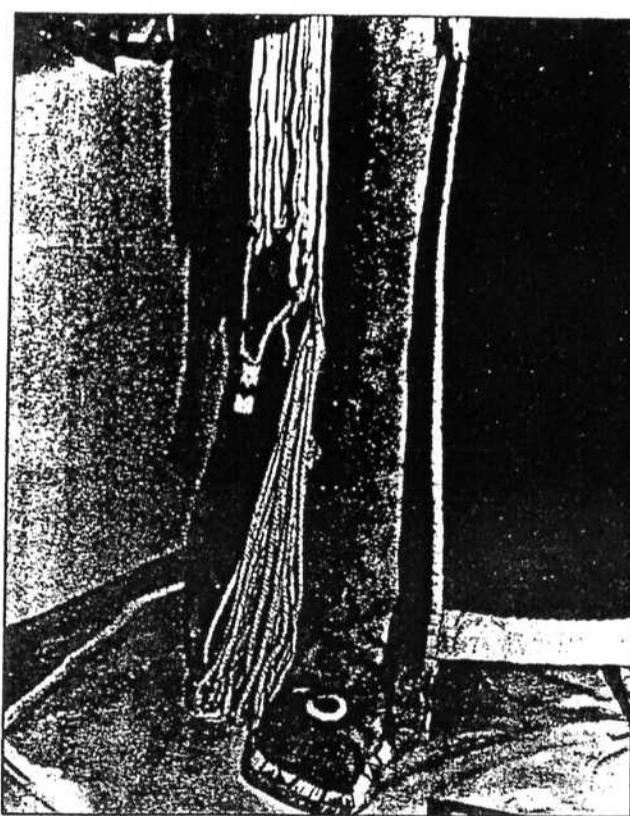
CONSTRUCTION AND DECORATION VARIATIONS

Presented here is a summary of the traits of Comanche tab leggings as I have seen them. It is not my intention to present the limits of what is Comanche as defined by their legging makers, but only to offer these legging attributes as some of what is acceptable based on the sample of leggings available to me. I shall list first what the most desired methods are, lesser ones thereafter.

Legging material- Brain-tanned deer or elk hide, also commercially tanned deer, elk, or cow. Buffalo hide would be ideal, but is difficult to obtain these days.

Legging color-It appears that before about 1900 the ochre yellow or the natural smoked

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- Photo 9 #1510/48 leggings in the Baldwin Parker tipi exhibit at PPHM.
 - Photo 10 Oscar Yellowwolf manikin at PPHM in Canyon, Texas.
 - Photo 11 Museum catalog #1510/85 for this photo, the Yellowwolf leggings.
 - Photo 12 The Yellowwolf leggings. Note breechleek in relation to the leggings.
 - Photo 13 Tab and tassel detail of the Yellowwolf leggings.



colors were most popular (perhaps that was all that was available). In later times as today the white color is common. If you want white leggings you should start with white leather, not a tan color or smoked hide. Smoked, tan and white colored leathers should dye easily. Always make a cloth or paper pattern of your leggings before cutting the leather and always experiment with your paint or dye on a scrap piece first.

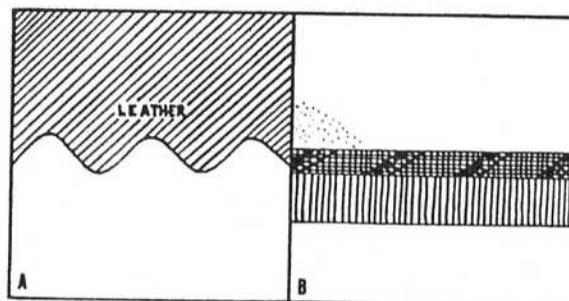
Tab-Most important is the squared-off end of the tab above the tassel. Comanche leggins can often be distinguished from Kiowa based on this. Kiowa tabs most often come to a point where the tassel begins and often have a single lane of lazy stitch around the outside of the exterior of the tabs. Some of the early reservation period southern plains tab leggins show a very long, narrow tab, heavily decorated with beads and silver buttons, and hanging almost to the ground. A part of this narrow tab, at the top of the legging is a shaped flap of buckskin. This early style is shown in photo 16, a manikin from the Southern Plains Indian Museum in Anadarko, Oklahoma.

Edge beadwork-This is restricted to the tabs and sometimes the bottoms of the leggings when cut straight or scalloped. A common pattern is the two down, one up with a contrasting fill-in bead. Commonly done in 12/0 or 13/0 uncut beads (see Fig. 4-C & D).

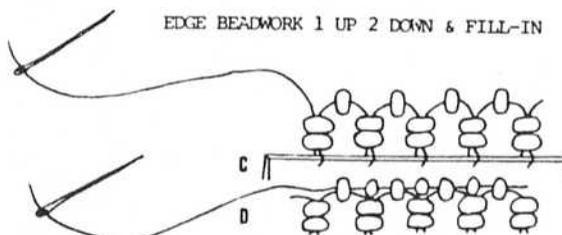
Twisted fringe-The finest is made from very thin deerskin cut into long strips 1/8" wide or less. Less expensive and less time consuming is the use of cotton chalk line. Part of the beauty of these leggings is the way the fringe is longest at the knee, shortest at the ankle, all ending about the same position below the legging bottom. Whether you choose to trim your legging fringes a couple of inches longer than the legging bottoms or let them drag four to eight inches on the ground is up to the maker. The super-long fringe is an older attribute and much prettier, but has the disadvantages

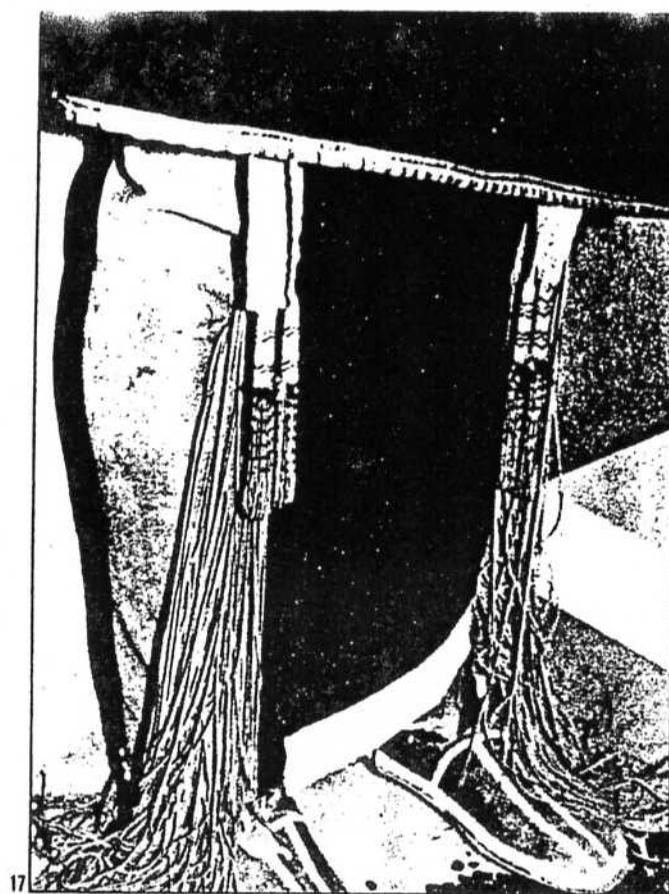
of getting dirty quickly and stepped on at dances. I'm sure in the old days when Comanches spent a great deal of time on horse back, very long legging and moccasin fringe didn't get in the way all that much. Although not done so on any of the PPHM leggings, twisted fringe can be decorated and the ends secured from unraveling in a variety of ways. An occasional mescal bean slid up to the top of the fringe looks good as do narrow silver bands crimped around the fringe at regular intervals. Ways to finish twisted fringe include whipping it with thread, punching a hole in one strand and running the other through it, tying an overhand knot in it or crimping with a silver band an inch or so from the end (see Fig. 3-D). Raveling is not that critical, as only two or three inches ever untwist if the fringe is twisted properly to begin with.

FIGURE 4 DECORATIONS #1510/10



EDGE BEADWORK 1 UP 2 DOWN & FILL-IN



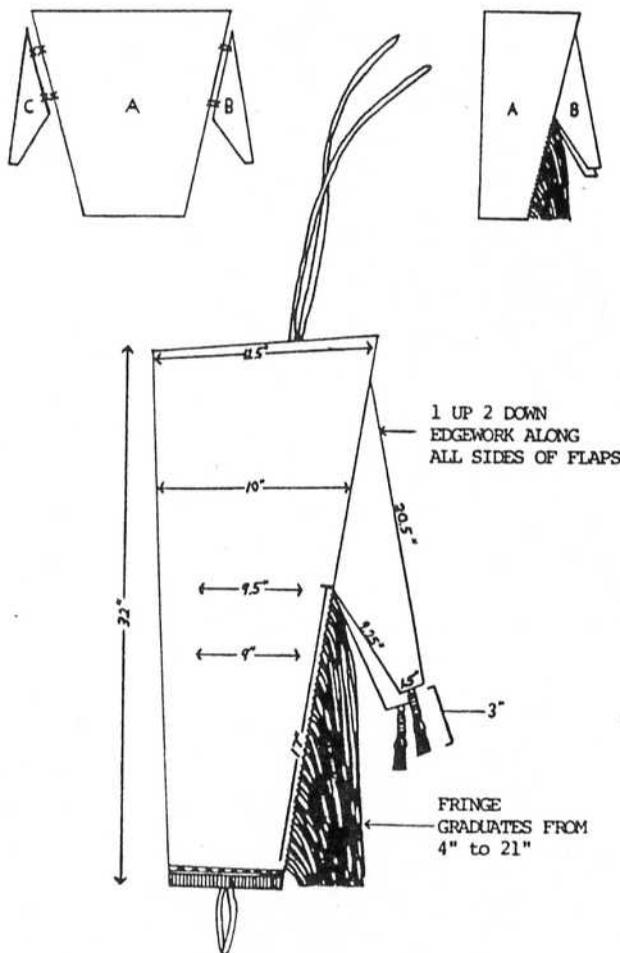


17



16

FIGURE 5



Tassels-Many Comanche leggings have tassels of dark horsehair and very fine (16/0) gourd stitched beadwork. The addition of a row of clipped fluffs out from under the tassel beadwork. A variation of the horsehair tassel is the twisted fringe tassel such as shown in photo 17, the Quanah Parker leggings at the Fort Sill Museum, Lawton, Oklahoma. Here again note the extremely fine twisted bands on the fringe. The leggings and their extremely long fringe are colored ochre yellow.

Tab linings-The two choices here are painting the insides of the tabs or lining them with cloth. I have seen taffeta, satin, trade cloth and velvet used in a wide range of colors. The traditional paint colors for southern plains clothing are ochre yellow, ochre red, green, and blue. All these colors give good contrast to either white or yellow leggings. The subject of leather painting will not be detailed here except to say that

- Photo 14 Comanche boy's tab leggings at PPHM. Catalog #1510/10. The untwisted fringe above tab is a part of the manikin shirt.
- Photo 15 Detail of the 1510/10 boy's leggings. Note tuft of red fluffs extending from bottom of tassel beadwork.
- Photo 16 Comanche leggings in the Southern Plains Indian Museum, Anadarko, Oklahoma, showing the early style of long, narrow tab.
- Photo 17 Quanah Parker manikin leggings at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. These are not the same leggings as he is wearing in photo 3, it is obvious those have hair tassels. Edge beadwork on these is all white, tassels are beaded in 16/0 beads on a pony trader blue background. Other colors are navy blue, white, and red.

for green, oxidized copper and vegetable dyes were common, red and yellow were acquired from various iron oxide ochre minerals. Today many commercial dyes, leather dyes, and acrylic paints can be used.

Bottom decoration-Figure 4-A & B shows scalloping without edge beadwork, also the short, straight fringe. This scalloping may be edge beaded if desired. The short fringe is usually accompanied by a narrow lane of beadwork five to ten beads wide above it. Legging bottoms can also be out straight and edge beaded.

Other decoration-Small, domed silver buttons were used on some older styles of leggings. The background and history section of the article suggests other fringe attachments used in the 19th century.

Making your leggings-If you are interested in making a pair of Comanche tab leggings for your straight dance, southern traditional, or Comanche dance clothes, any combination of the above mentioned variations are attractive and highly authentic. The bead colors I have given here are based on standard sample card colors from Crazy Crow Trading Post in Denison, Texas. Keep in mind that old bead colors vary from new ones and bead colors today may vary between batches. If you can acquire hides large enough to cut out the complete legging, do it. It is a lot of work splicing those tabs on. Make your leggings snug fitting as they will stretch some with use. Always make a pattern first, try it on and make sure you have enough leather. The twisted fringe takes a surprising amount of leather, for my pair an entire small, thin deer hide, cut into 1/8 inch strips was used. 100 fringes are on each legging, spaced 1/8 inch apart. With some careful folding and basting the cloth lining and edge beadwork can be sewn with the same thread. Try it!

aring your leggings-The only thing more important than making your leggings correctly is wearing them correctly. Position the seam to the side of your leg or slightly forward of this. A good way to check your legging is to place the seam in that notch on the outside of your kneecap. A long, narrow broadcloth breechclout and a black waist shawl will add to your Comanche clothes. Old photographs show several Comanche men wearing their leggings with beaded or yarn garters. By far most tabs are worn on the outside of the bells, hanging freely to sway, but it is not unheard of for the tabs to be tucked inside your dance bells by folding them against your leg then buckling on your bells.

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LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1 #1510/11 legging dimensions
- Figure 2 Construction of the #1510/11 leggings. A Sew B and C together along lines marked with "x". B Turn Legging inside-out and sew together from D to F. Turn legging right-side-out and punch holes from E to F.
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Author would like to thank the Plains Panhandle Historical Museum for their kind permission to print photos #1, 2, 3, 4 & 11 and also for their permission to photograph the leggings on display. He wishes to extend his gratitude to Mr. Mark Hinman of Memphis, Tenn. for his assistance with the article. Additional thanks to Dr. Bobby Weaver of the museum for his invaluable assistance in gathering needed information. He also wishes to thank Dallas Gimple for his fine sketches of the leggings.



2

A PAIR OF **KIOWA TAB LEGGINGS**



2

Upon any "dress-up" occasion for the Kiowa and Comanche men in the first few decades of the reservation period in Oklahoma, the attire was buckskin shirts with long clouts, braid wraps and broad cloth blankets. Family gatherings, parades, dances, visits and Native church meetings constituted such occasions. For some, this was daily wear.

The most prominent style of skin legging was the tab legging which featured long rolled fringe and a pair of upper extension that were simply decorated. The decoration was most often a white peyote bead edging finished with a gourd stitched (peyote beaded) tassel.

With the number of leggings being produced by several artisans, the construction details varied greatly though the general appearance was the same. A common fit and a common method of wearing these leggings lead to this similar appearance. Most leggings were tailored for a snug fit. When worn, the top loops of each legging were strung or tied to the clout belt or sash. The bottom was fitted with a stirrup that ran across the

arch of the foot and the legging ends were tucked in the moccasins, see Figure 1. The stirrup had a practical use in that kept the legging from "hiking up" the leg when mounting a horse or walking up stairs.

Fortunately leggings of this type are not a thing of the past to be kept in trunks, closets and museum drawers. Many dancers at gourd dances and war dances are donning the traditional leather both of old and recent manufacture. Such a resurgence to the traditional clothes is applauded by many. At the annual Kiowa Gourd Dance at Carnegie in 1981, I was told by more than one clan member not to miss the Saturday dance as there would be a lot more dancers, many in skin clothing.

Since those that wish to reproduce a traditional pair of front tab leggings may not have an old pair in grandfather's trunk to go by, the details of one handsome pair of this legging type are presented here. These leggings pictured in Figure 1 are from the Thomas Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Labeled

JERRY SMITH

Figure 2 above is courtesy of Joe Suxwell of FRONTIER ORIGINALS. Pictured are Chief Quanah Parker (left) and "two medicine men".

as "Kiowa Tab Leggings: Boy's", a note was added to the effect that the cross in the beadwork indicated they were to be worn at peyote meetings, meetings of the Native American Church.

The dimensions for the leggings which are given in Figure 2 indicate that this "boy" was a young man about 5'6". It appears that a goodly portion of one buckskin hide was used for each legging as the top ties extended into the leg portion of the hide. These leggings were dyed or colored yellow typical of the Southern Plains.

Once the leggings were cut out, they were folded in half and sewn together by machine, see Figure 3. Rolled fringe was then added to the edges of the seam up to the tab extension. As Figure 4 indicates, rolled fringe was added to both edges of the seam. This treatment required twice the amount of fringe compared to many pairs examined by the author which incorporate a single set of fringes to seam up the front of the legging. Each fringe was $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch from the next and all in all there were about 360 fringes.

Now, 360 rolled fringes is quite a number of fringes. It undoubtedly took much time to roll and it required another hide or so. However, the effort was worthwhile as the renown of the leggings must have been based on the abundance and quality of fringe. Quality fringe is always uniform in thickness and tightly rolled. Under this criterion these leggings match up with the best.

The end of each fringe was finished in a slip knot, see Figure 5. One might think that "good quality" fringe will not untwist so why the slip knot. Since some of the fringe ends are stepped on and dragged on the ground, and since they are not attached to something solid like the butt of a fan handle, many of the lower fringes will unroll with use. Therefore, if some fringes need special treatment, treat them all the same. Figure 6 shows another common way to keep fringe from unrolling and Figure 7 shows the finished ends for the rolled fringe of the peyote beaded tassels on this pair of leggings. Regular cotton thread holds these ends together as several knots would be too large of a scale for the tassel diameter. The longest fringe was 8" and shortest 7". One inch at base was not fringed so they could be tucked in moccasins.

With the fringes in place, the remaining task is to decorate the tabs. As a rule the inside of the tabs were lined with cloth or at best dyed another color. These tabs were lined with red cotton, possibly a curtain cloth. The lining was held in place with the single bead pekoe edging, see Figure 11.

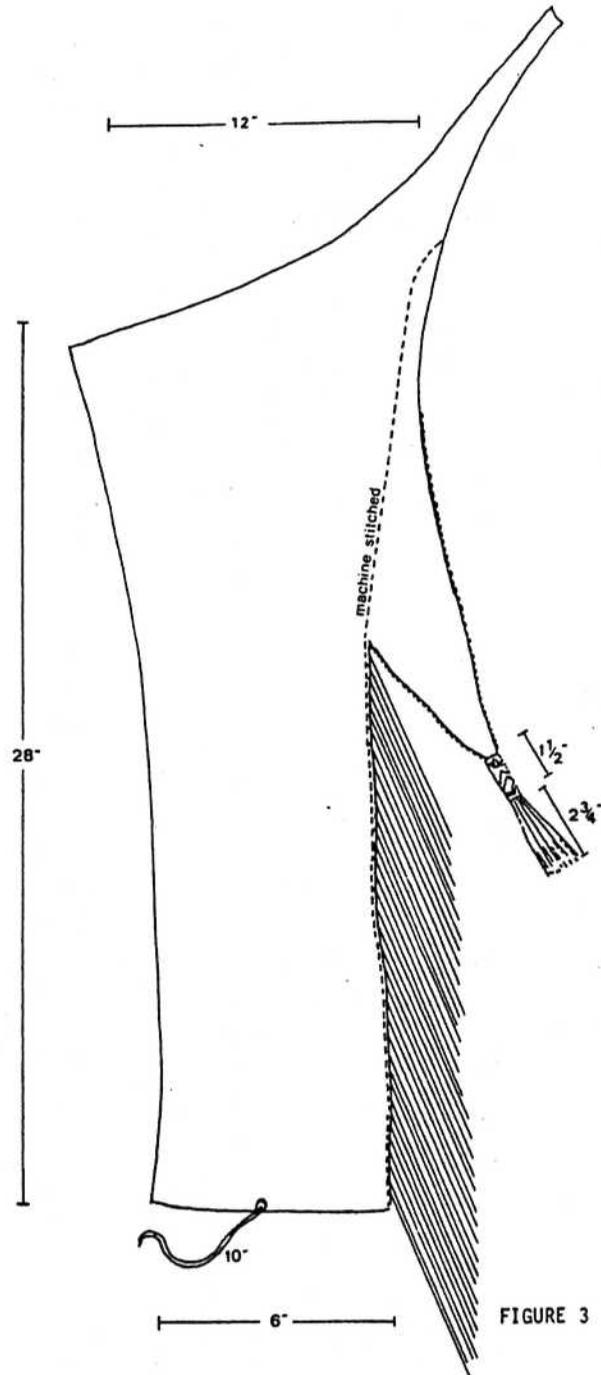


FIGURE 3

FIGURE 5

FIGURE 6

FIGURE 7

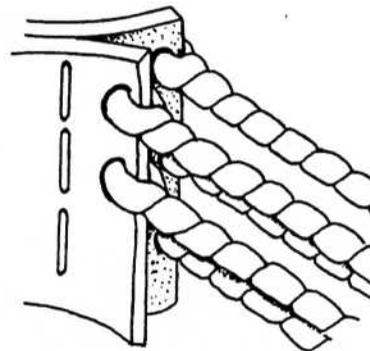
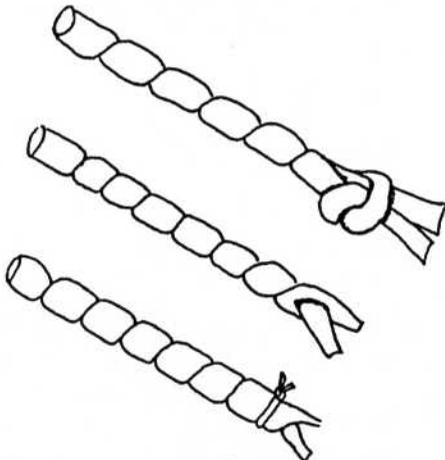


FIGURE 4

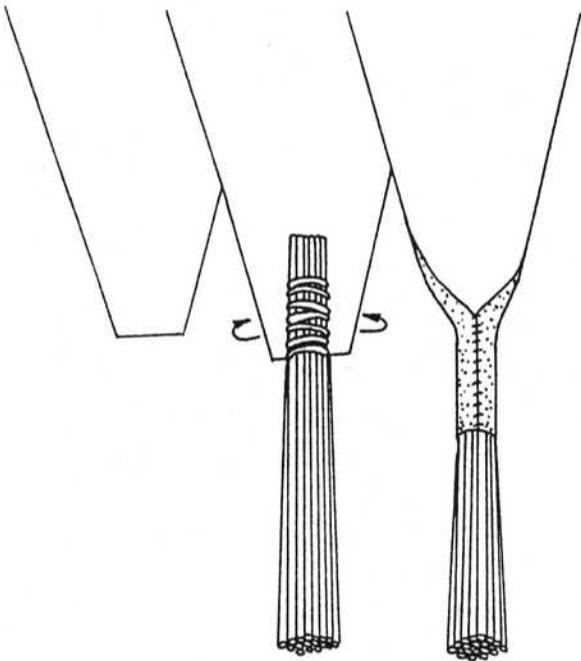


FIGURE 8

FIGURE 9

FIGURE 10

The illustrations in Figures 8-10 suggest a way in which the peyote beaded tassels were added for this legging sample. The only way to really know is to take apart a tassel and that was out of the question. Tassels were attached in several different ways. Some tassels were made apart from the legging and just sewn on. The beadwork on the tassels is the 3-bead drop gourd stitch with pony trader blue as a background



11

color see figure 11. Edge beading and lining was probably added after tassels were in place.

Though many of the important facts of a comprehensive nature concerning the use and variety of these leggings are lost when concentrating on a single pair of leggings, but the details considered here will serve to help in construction and aide as a specific reference.





KIOWA TAB LEGGINGS

A SECOND PAIR

To dispel the notion of all tab leggings being cut and manufactured in the same way, a second pair of Kiowa leggings are presented with construction details and dimensions. This pair of leggings, also among those collected by the Gilcrease Museum of Tulsa, Oklahoma, contrasts with the pair of Kiowa front tab leggings presented in the February '83 issue in its fringe treatment, cut and tab decorations; however, the general appearance of a snug fitting legging with a decorated pair of front tassels remains.

The dimensions of this pair of leggings pictured in Figure 1 are sketched out in Figure 2. The length dimension of 32" is virtually an inseam dimension which indicates the leggings were designed for a person about 5'10" in height though the file description for these leggings read "boys".

Again there was evidence to indicate the leggings were colored with yellow "paint" but much of it had worn off in time and with use. A six inch stirrup buckskin strap was sewn to the bottom of each legging to hold the legging in place about the ankle. A 24" buckskin tie fixed to each side of the legging at the top, provided the loops through which the clout belt would pass thus holding the leggings up. Thin buckskin thongs laced these ties in place.

Finely rolled buckskin fringe attached to the front of the legging acts to seam the legging together. The fringes which start out 1" from the bottom of the legging are placed 1/8" apart and span the distance to a point where the tab extensions jut out. The longest fringe at the top is 13" while the shortest is 7". The majority of the fringes are finished in a slip knot, see Figure 3, while some were tied off with thread. The upper portion of the legging from the fringe to the top was seamed with a running blind stitch.

A bright, very bright, deep pink and plushy velvet lined the tabs. Affixing this lining was a simple matter of cutting the velvet to the approximate shape of each tab then tucking the edges of the velvet under as it was edge beaded to the buckskin with a 3-bead edging. The entire tab was edged with white beads in this manner until a point about 8" from the top where the pair of tabs were seamed together with one 3-bead edging continued from the other tab. The point of the tab was slightly rounded rather than to come to a distinct point, see Figure 4.

Black horsehair tassels decorated with pink fluffs and peyote beadwork completed the trim for the leggings. These four tassels were made separately and then sewn to the velvet side of each tab. The author's supposition as to the construction sequence for a tassel is as follows:

1. Horsehair cut to approximate length of 4"
2. Top inch is wrapped tightly with heavy thread
3. Pink fluffs trimmed then glued and wrapped in place
4. Buckskin cut and fitted around horsehair, 1/2" extra buckskin at top
5. Sew buckskin to horsehair even 1/2" extra
6. Add peyote beadwork
7. Trim off bottom of horsehair

The very simple design of the peyote beadwork section is done in 13/0 transparent seed beads. There are five bands of alternating blue and red beads and white beads worked into the red sections. This created a complimentary hue to match with the velvet and pink fluffs.

FIGURE 2

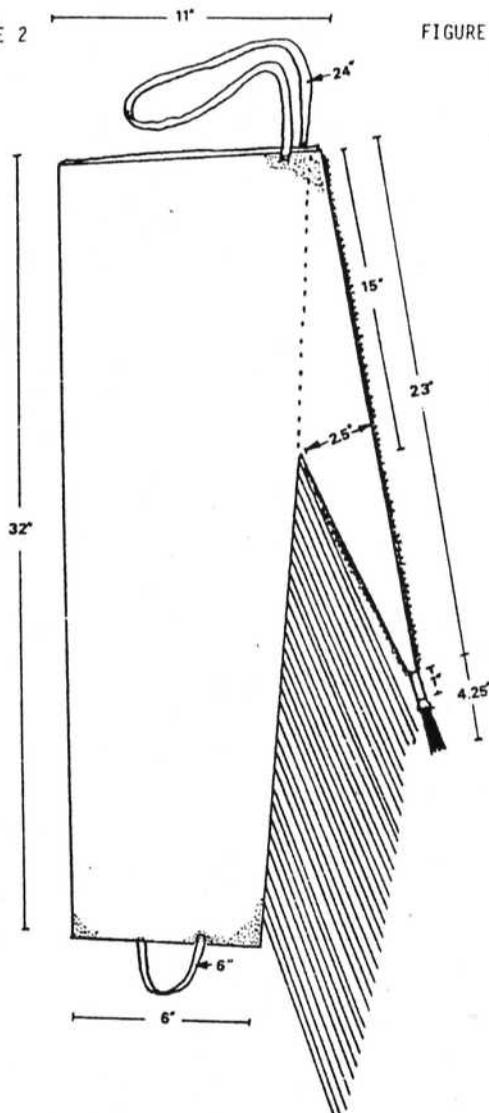
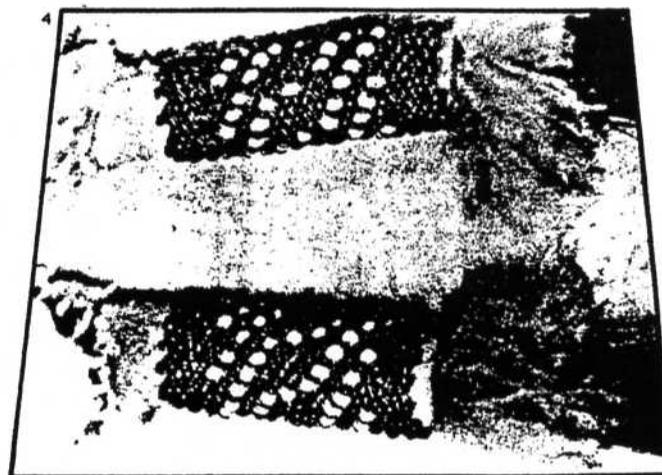


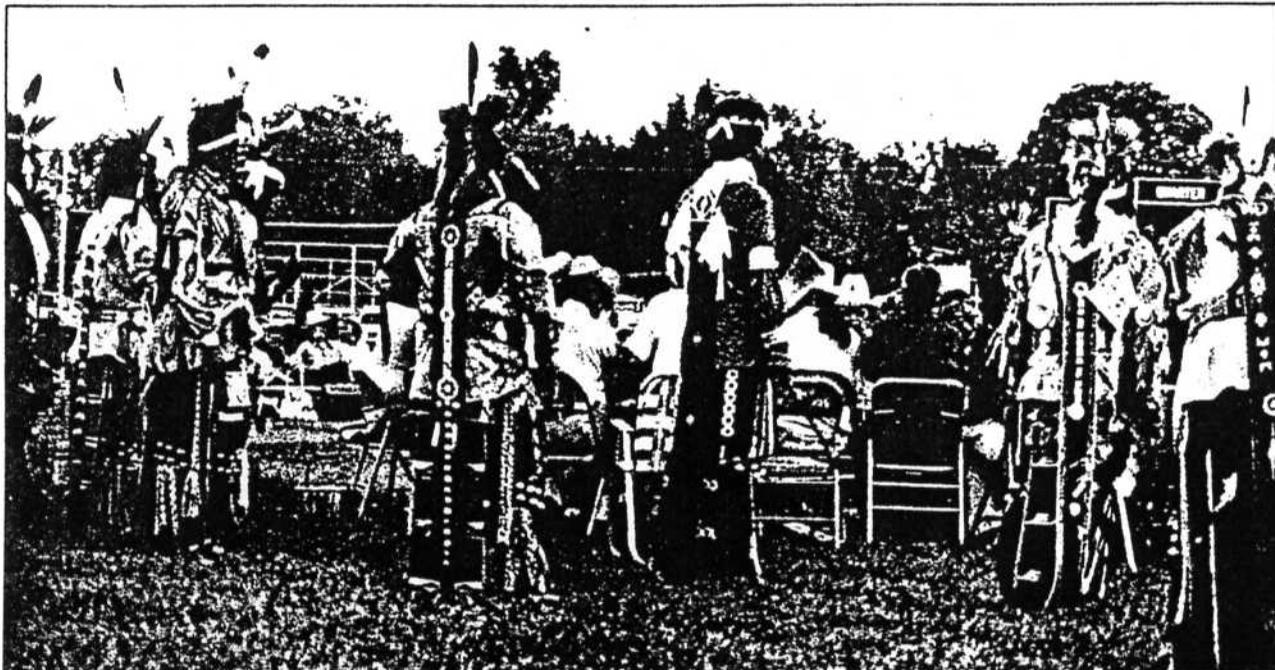
FIGURE 3



Other tab leggings of this type are just as handsome and just as unique in comparison to the two presented in these two articles. It is hoped that other tab leggings will be presented in the future to expand our knowledge and appreciation.

JERRY SMITH

OTTER DRAGGER



One of the more spectacular articles worn by the Oklahoma straight dancer is the otter drop/otter trailer or dragger. This trailer is tied to the neck and hangs to the ground. The ribbon trim applied to the otter backing and ornaments attached to the trailer make it a focal point when viewing the dancer from the back. Though the ornaments have varied through the decades, the size and shape of the otter trailer has remained the same. The following description presents the otter trailer as seen today in Oklahoma.

OTTER PELT

Basic to this costume article is the otter pelt or otter fur. Pelts are available from traders and furriers and, up to three trailers may be cut from a large otter pelt. To insure maximum use of the pelt, wet the tanned side, stretch the pelt out (tanned side up) on a large board by tacking the edges down and then letting it dry. Since the otter strip must extend from the neck to the ground, the majority of the otter drops must be pieced by sewing two or three pieces together.

The width of the fur piece varies from 3 1/2" to 4 1/2". A choice drop is a 4" strip cut out of the center of the pelt, from between the ears to the

tip of the tail. Additional drops are cut from either side of the center section. Since the tail tapers to a point, the last 18" to 20" of the drop often tapers to a point as shown in Fig. 2: When cutting the pelt, use a pencil and yardstick to outline the section to be cut, then use a razor blade to cut down the line drawn. Never cut on the fur side.

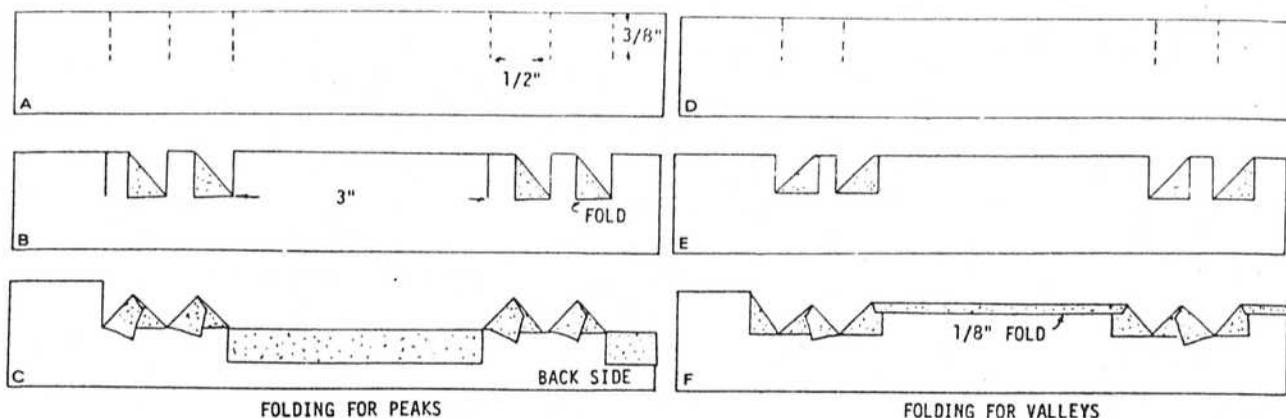
OTTER BACKING

The backing is cut from a piece of red or blue broadcloth (rainbow selvage). A good heavy grade of red or blue wool substitutes since it is not seen. The width of the backing is about 1-3/4" wider than the otter fur strip or wide enough to provide for a 1/2" or 3/4" strip of ribbonwork trim to show on either side of the fur. The backing length is two inches longer than the otter strip. This allows for a two inch turn over at the top, creating a loop so that a tie passing through the loop and tied to the neck attaches the otter trailer to the dancer. (See Fig. 2)

RIBBONWORK TRIM

A 1/2" to 3/4" strip of ribbonwork is applied to each side of the backing and may hang 1 1/2" past the

FIGURE 1 (A - F)



FOLDING FOR PEAKS

FOLDING FOR VALLEYS



bottom of the trailer (see Fig. 2). Ideally the colors used in the ribbon strips match those used in other ribbonwork on the costume. A two-ribbon, two-color design is most common. Though other patterns are used, see Fig. 6, too many ribbons produces an increase in the width of the ribbon strips, detracting from the otter strip and its ornaments.

The ribbon used is Swiss rayon taffeta ribbon (or taffeta yardage) cut into strips. Each strip is cut at precise points and folded to form a design. (See Fig. 1) The folded edge is then basted in place by hand and then sewn down by machine using a straight stitch.

The following steps outline the process of making a two-ribbon edge pattern shown in Figure 1A,B,C.

1. Cut two ribbons to an inchwidth. If taffeta yardage is used, piece ribbons together to form ribbons 1 1/2" longer than the backing. Use a darker color for the outside ribbon; a light color inside.
2. Cut each ribbon precisely as follows: every five inches make three 1/2" apart 3/8" deep incisions. Fig. 1A.
3. Fold using iron or fingernails each ribbon

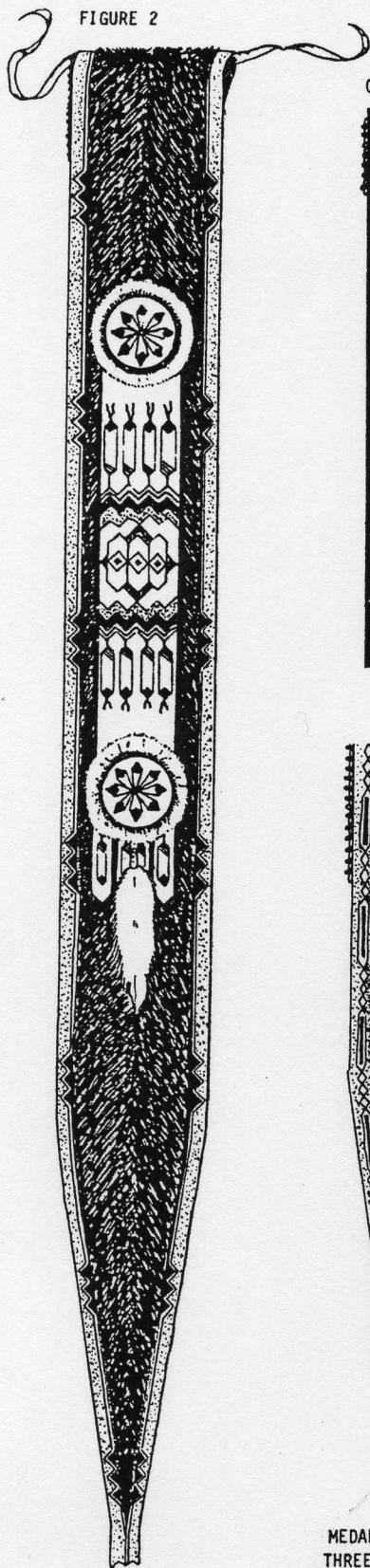
as shown. Fig. 1B.

4. Baste folded ribbon in place, 5/8" from the backing edge.
5. Sew down folded edge using straight stitch, raising foot of machine several times as the stitch often changes direction.
6. Take out basting stitches.
7. Repeat steps 1 - 6 with second ribbon.
8. Fold second ribbon edge to under side of backing to form a binding. Sew down with a 3/16" seam. Fig. 4.

Other shapes for ends of trailer are shown in Figure 3.

To complete the ribbon trim a two-bead or three bead pekoe edging is sewn to both edges of the trailer. White beads (11/0) are always used for this purpose.

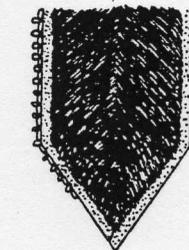
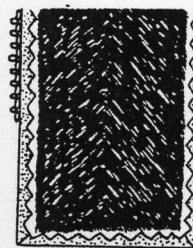
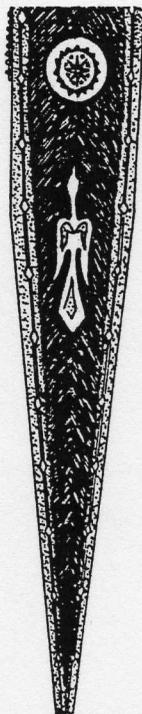
After completing the ribbon trim and edge beading, pin the otter in place two inches from the top of the backing and between the two ribbon strips. Next, blind stitch both sides of the otter fur strip to the backing. Gluing is definitely not recommended. It results in an extremely stiff otter that usually comes apart.



ONLY PORTIONS OF EDGE BEADING SHOWN



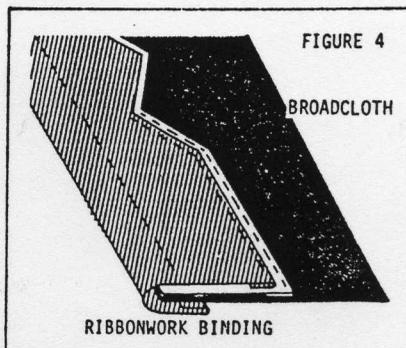
MEDALLION

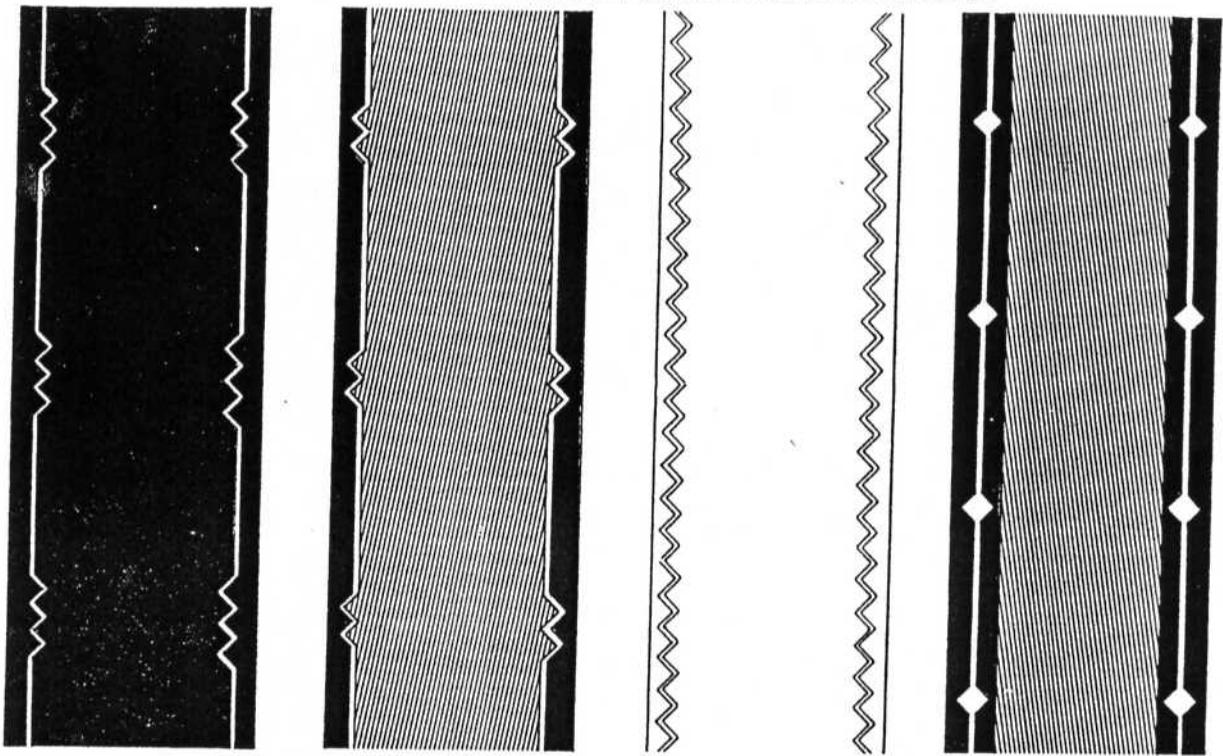


SINGLE RIBBON BINDING

MEDALLION & MIRRORS
THREE-RIBBON PATTERN
TWO COLORS OF FLUFF BACKING

GERMAN SILVER
WATERBIRD PIN
&
BEADED
MEDALLION





DESIGNS COULD BE ALTERED TO TWO OR THREE PEAKS AND VALLEYS OR DIAMONDS

OTTER ORNAMENTS

Once the pelt is in place beaded medallions, beaded strips and feather ornaments are added to complete the otter. There is such a variety of ornaments and arrangement of these ornaments that each otter is truly unique. Yet, these are a few standard arrangements that can be outlined.

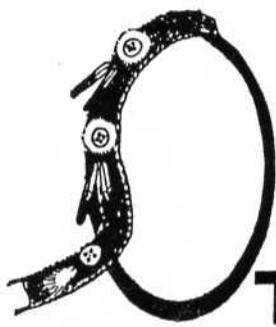
1. Very standard is three medallions - two large and one small at bottom - with a pair of trimmed eagle feathers attached to the upper two and an eagle plume attached to the lower medallion, see Figure Y. without bead strip.
2. The arrangement in Figure 1 - the bead strip on some otters matches the belt design of the dancer; however, this is exception rather than a rule.
3. Bead strip could extend to third medallion. Obviously the width of the beadwork varies and a small width would be appropriate here.
4. A set of 15-18 German silver conchos (hair-plates) of graduated diameter attached to the otter.

Sometimes mirrors, shells or conchos are used in place of beaded medallions but beaded medallions are definitely the most common. Also, other furs such as mink, horse hide, sheered steer, lion, kangaroo and imitation fur are used as substitutes for otter - but otter is most definitely preferred.

Medallions are tied on to the otter via the leather ties attached to the medallions. Holes are punched through both the otter hide and the backing. The medallion ties are threaded through the holes and tied at the back.

Since the shapes and border designs are somewhat limited, the uniqueness of each otter and its real beauty is found in its ornaments. Often there is much more work and time in the ornaments than in the otter itself. No matter how simple the ornaments may be, the otter is not worn undecorated as it would then cease to be the focal point of the back view of the straight dancer.





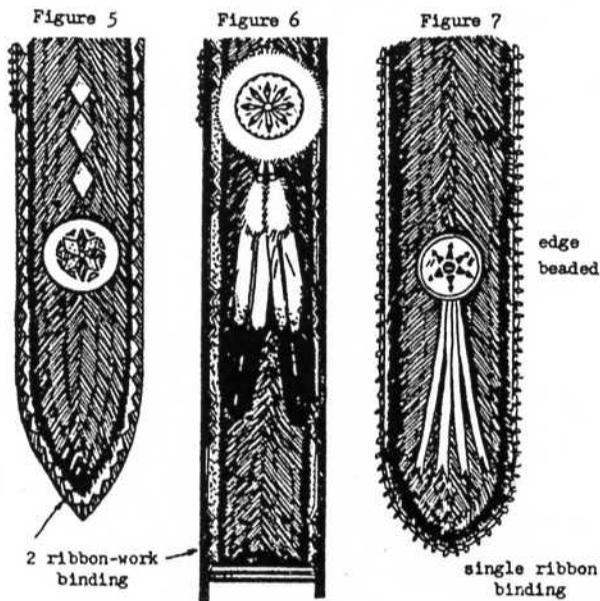
OTTER DRAGGERS

by Jerry Smith

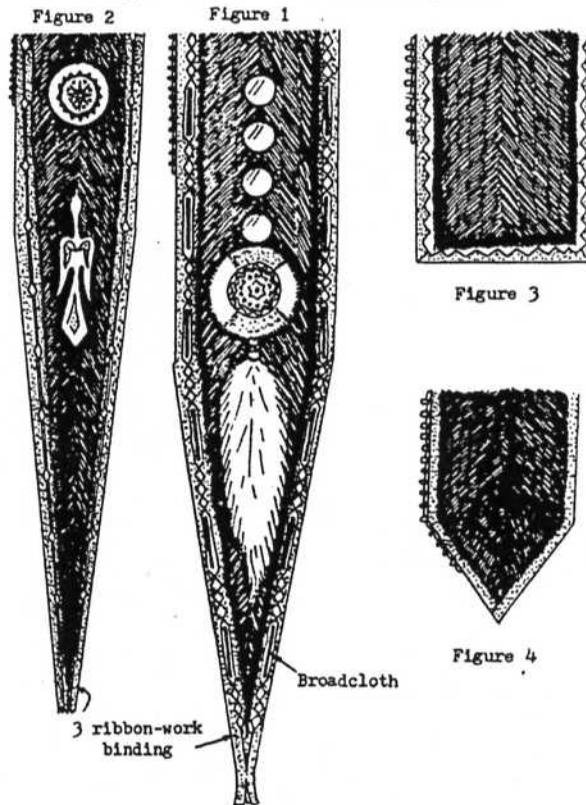
Once in awhile we seem to stereotype Indian items and it appears that we are somewhat guilty of this when it comes to dragger shapes. The standard is the version shown in Fig. 1. which tapers to a point the last 27" or 18". Perhaps many otter draggers taper to a point like this because the maker used the tail of the otter hide. However, when other hides are used or the tail of the otter is not used the end of the dragger may be shaped as those shown in the following diagrams and photos. The squared off end in Fig. 2 is seen quite frequently. The width of fur strips will vary from $3\frac{1}{2}$ " - 5" not counting the ribbon trim. Some ribbon trim patterns are indicated in Fig. 1-7 also see Jan. '75 issue of TRACKS details on "Two Ribbon Bindings."

Variety also exists in the fur used to fashion these otter draggers. Of course, otter or at times plucked otter are the traditional, standard and most desired material, but there are several good substitutes. Black and brown horse hide, mink and other furs that approximate the color of otter fur are used. Mr. Abe Conklin, Ponca, wears a dragger of Kangaroo hide and the late Mr. Jonas Steel, Ponca, owned a dragger cut from a lion skin. A fantastic brown and white pinto horse hide otter dragger was among the items for sale at Mohunk Lodge, Clinton, Oklahoma back in 1967. Also, there are many great new synthetic fake furs available at yardage shops that make good substitutes for otter.

Reference: "OTTER DROP", THE SINGING WIRE, April 1968.

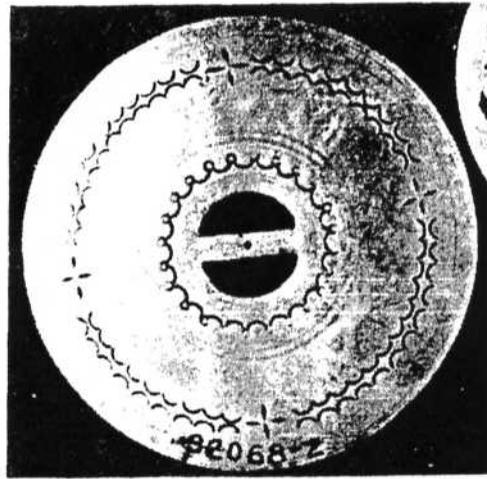


Orange County Indian Center Powwow, Calif



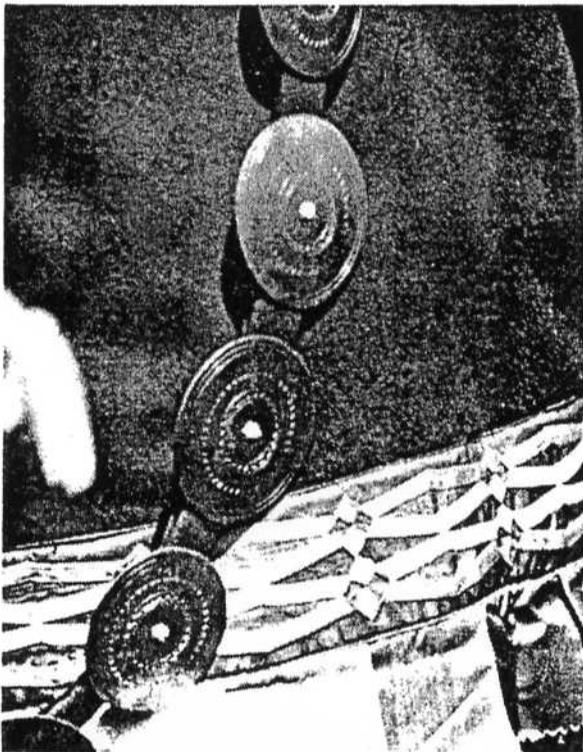
Pawnee Powwow, Pawnee, Oklahoma





MODERN Hairplates TECHNIQUES & PATTERNS

by Jerry Smith



Norman Feder records in exacting detail the history and distribution of hairplates on the Plains from 1805 to the 1960's in his article, "Plains Indian Metalworking with emphasis on hairplates," in 1962 for *American Indian Tradition*. After initial accounts of hairplates, Mr. Feder documents the florescence of metalwork and hairplates from 1865-1880 with the number of photographs available and with personal accounts of observers. He then describes the gradual decline in the use of metal ornaments after 1880 to the point of commenting, "...metal ornaments were no longer popular on the Plains." To conclude his discussion of hairplates, "which have been slow to disappear completely," he cites only a few accounts of dancers wearing hairplates at Kiowa gourd dances in the 60's and at powwows as observed by James Howard in the 50's.

One of the two dancers observed by Howard was a straight dancer at a Quapaw powwow in 1954. Since that time the incident of straight dancers wearing hairplates has increased very little, certainly there is no significant revival. Most dancers wear the otter trailer whose "probable" ancestor was a set of hairplates (Feder, p.62). In 1967 only one dancer at Grayhorse wore a set of hairplates mounted on black leather. A frequent straight dance contest winner Johnny Hughes, Otoe, had a set made about 1969, (Photo 2). Since the publication of the article in *Tradition*, several "Hobs" have manufactured hairplate sets (based on museum examples) for trade, as gifts and for sale. Possibly 3 - 4 sets are seen at any one session of the Osage Elonska. About five members of the Comanche War Dance Society wear hairplates on occasion; one a fine brass set.

Based on the relative ease with which a set of hairplates can be made and the nominal cost, it is surprising there are not more hairplate sets worn. Even if a set of hairplates is purchased it amounts to less than the dollars spent on materials for a normal otter dragger: otter pelt, broadcloth, ribbon-work and beads for decoration.

CONSTRUCTION & PATTERNS

Each set of hairplates consists of 15-18 discs of German silver all of the same diameter or of graduated diameters. The amount of German silver needed is about 2/3 of a square foot which costs about \$5.00. These sets are usually made of 22 gauge metal because it pierces nicely and a set of plates is not too heavy when hung from the neck.

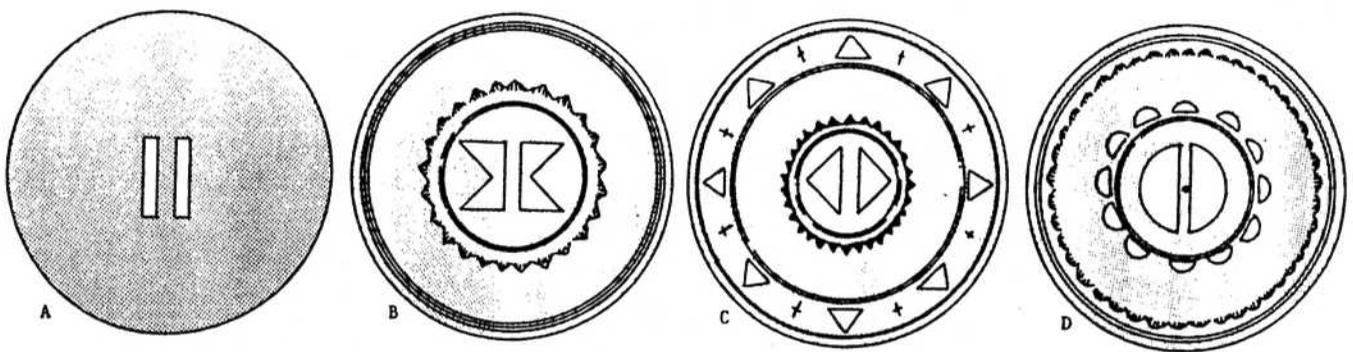
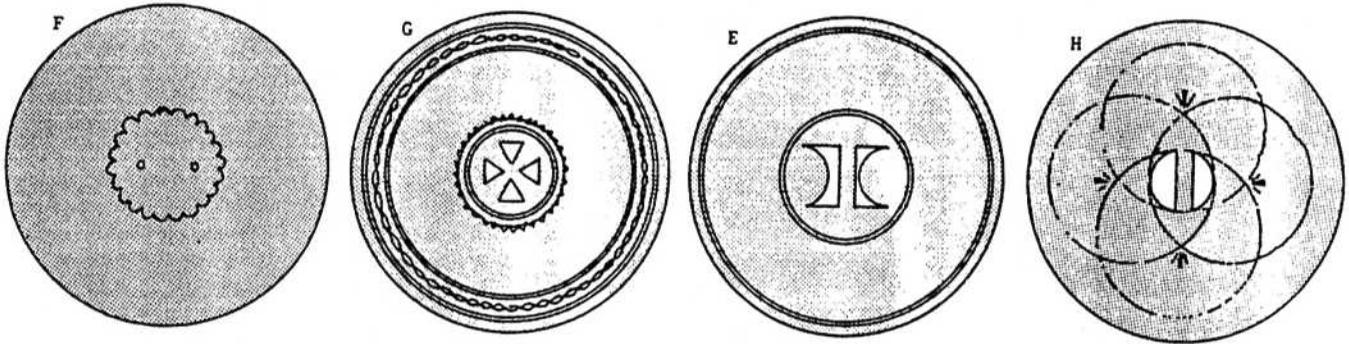


FIGURE 1



As with earlier hairplates, all the hairplates are round; although, it's possible to make stars, bear paws, etc. but then they would not be "plates". Each disc can be cut out by hand with a pair of tin snips once a ring has been drawn on the metal with a compass. The edges are then filed to a final shape. Certainly these discs could be punched out at a machine shop on a press.

Possible Diameters for hairplate sets are:

Set 1	Set 2		
3 @ 2½" dia.	5 @ 2½" dia.		
3 @ 2¼"	5 @ 2¼"		
3 @ 2"	5 @ 2"		
3 @ 1 ¾"	3 @ 1 ¾"		
3 @ 1½"			
3 @ 1¼"			
Set 3	Set 4	Set 5	
3 @ 2 ¾" dia.	All @ 2½" dia.	All @ 2¼" dia.	
5 @ 2½"			
5 @ 2¼"			
3 @ 2"			

The early hairplates and therefore those made today are fairly simple in design. An intricate set of designs is too difficult and tedious to repeat 18 times and proportionately graduated the dimensions of the design. Many early hairplates were plain while others featured concentric rings and stamped elements in circle formations. Portions of the center were cut out to form a bar by which the plates could be attached to the cloth or leather with a pair of buckskin ties; see sketches A - E in Figure 1. The hairplate in sketches F and G can be attached with a single tie. Sketch F shows a pair of holes drilled in the center and sketch G has 4 equilateral triangles pierced out of the center.

In fashioning a hairplate, the following sequence of steps is a reasonable working order. (Metalworking techniques are discussed in TRACKS, SEPT.'79 and MARCH '76.) Cut out the center portions with a jeweler's saw and file the edges to the exact shape desired. These center cut-outs are too big an area to be pierced. Next, do any piercing required and then back hammer. The plate will begin to take a slight "dish" shape. Next,

complete the stamped design elements and back hammer as needed. Even strokes over the entire surface while back hammering on a polished anvil will create the slight concave shape needed.

The last step before shining, is to use a pair of trammel points to incise the series of concentric rings required by the design. Stanley manufactures a pair of trammel points (Fig. 2) that work well if one point is ground to a fine point and the other is filed to a reverse cutting point as indicated. The points are clamped to a metal bar or a piece of hardwood and used like a compass. Pressure is needed and the point must be pulled counterclockwise around more than once to get a good groove. The pressure applied may bend the center bar. If this is the case, the center pieces may be cut out as a last step and not the first. Concentric rings made with trammel points sometimes represent the sole design and some of the rings are quite close together. A small pock will be left in the center by one trammel point. No effort was made to erase this mark on the example from the Chicago Field Museum in photo 1, so, this need not be a concern. Use very fine emery paper and rouge to put a finish shine on the hairplates or use an electric buffing wheel and buffing compound.

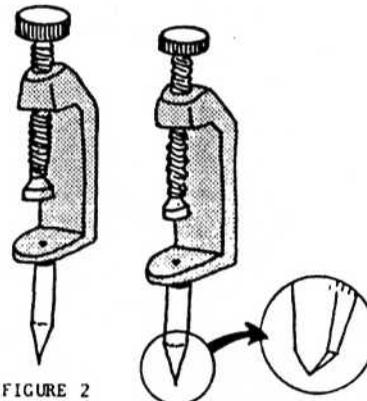


FIGURE 2

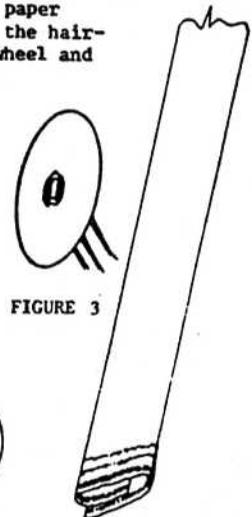


FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4

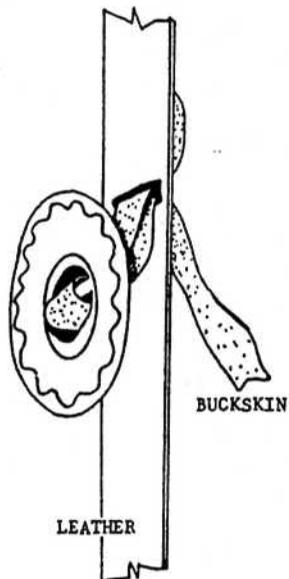
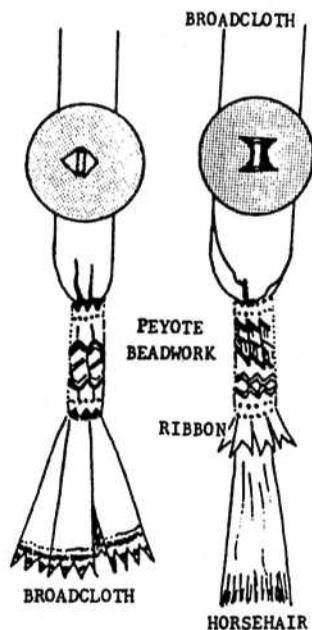


FIGURE 5



Hairplates are usually mounted on a narrow folded piece of red broadcloth (Fig. 4), or on red broadcloth whose sides are bound with a ribbon (Photo 4). As with museum sets, hairplates can also be mounted on a narrow piece of strap leather where each plate is tied on or via a continuous wider piece of buckskin as in Fig. 5. A 2 inch wide otter strip (tapered at the end) is another suitable backing. Loop the broadcloth over at the top to accommodate a tie string. Figure 6 indicates some additional decoration that can be added to the bottom of the broadcloth.

Though the traditional hairplates are an eye catcher, they are not worn by many straight dancers and are worn as an alternate to the otter dragger by most dancers that own a set today.

Norman Feder. "Plains Indian Metalworking with Emphasis on Hair Plates," American Indian Tradition, Vol.VII, No.2, 1962.

"Plains Indian Metalwork Part II," American Indian Tradition, Vol. VIII, No.3, 1962.

Jerry Smith. "Metalworking Techniques -Piercing" Moccasin Tracks, March 1976.

"Plains Metalwork Techniques - Waterbird Pins of German Silver," Moccasin Tracks, Sept. 1979.

Straight Dance Bandoliers

By Jerry Smith

Like the classic Mexican bandit with two ammunition belts slung crosswise over his chest, the straight dancer wears a bandolier over each shoulder and across his chest. A bandolier consists of one, two or three stands of beads, usually in combination with bone hair pipes. The strands are held together at the hip and the bandolier ends hang to the edge of the straight dance shirt. Over 50% of the dancers wear a matched pair of bandoliers. Other dancers vary the second bandolier using fewer strings or different bead combinations.

Beads and Hair Pipe

The most common and preferred beads are aurora borealis beads. All colors are used; however, they vary in size; a 9 mm or 10 mm seems to be the average. Brass beads (old style or new) and "silver" (nickle plated) beads are also quite common and popular. Brass or silver beads are sometimes used together with aurora borealis beads. When a dancer cannot afford aurora borealis beads (faceted crystal), he may purchase imitation beads of plastic.

Aurora borealis beads are almost without exception strung in combination with either long or short bone hair pipe. Imitation bone hair pipes are used if real bone cannot be obtained. If a bandolier consists of more than one string, each string is strung identically. See possible bead combinations enumerated later in the article to get an idea of the endless variety of bandoliers.

Spacers

When the bandolier consists of two or more strands, several heavy leather "spacers" must be used to keep the strands from tangling. All strands of the bandolier must pass through each spacer. Therefore, the spacer length will vary according to the number of strands and size of beads being used. To determine the spacer length, multiply the bead width by the number of strands, then add $1/4"$ to $3/8"$ to provide a little space between the beads. Spacer width also varies according to bead size from about $5/16"$ to $3/8"$. Leather thickness should not exceed $1/8"$.

Spacers are incorporated into the bandolier in two ways:

1. The strands pass through the entire spacer width via holes punched with an awl. See Fig. I.
2. The strands pass through the entire spacer via holes drilled using a very small bit. See Fig. II.

Method 1. shown in Fig. III is very common today, while method 2. shown in Fig. V is older but possibly more elegant. The leather used for the spacers is usually left natural, but some dye it black.

Straight Dance Bandoliers

Fig I

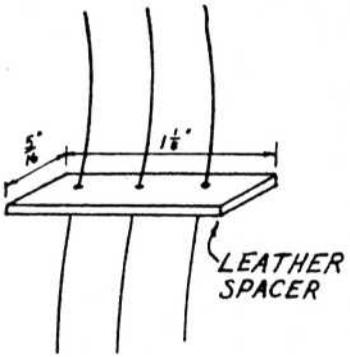


Fig III

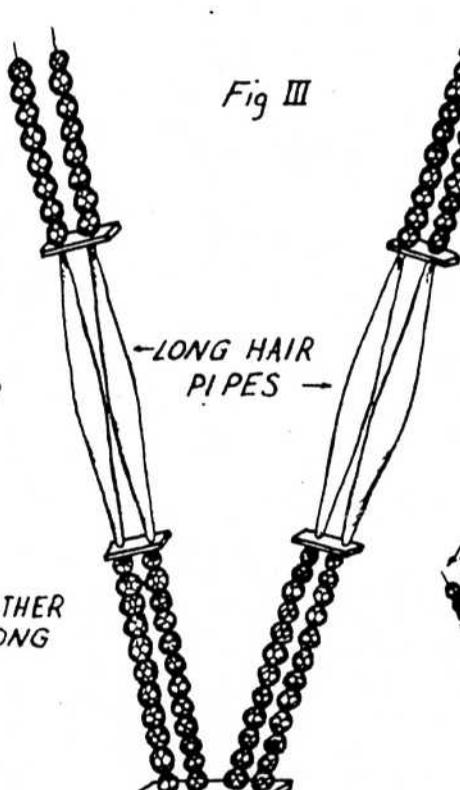


Fig II

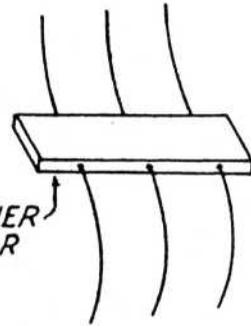


Fig IV

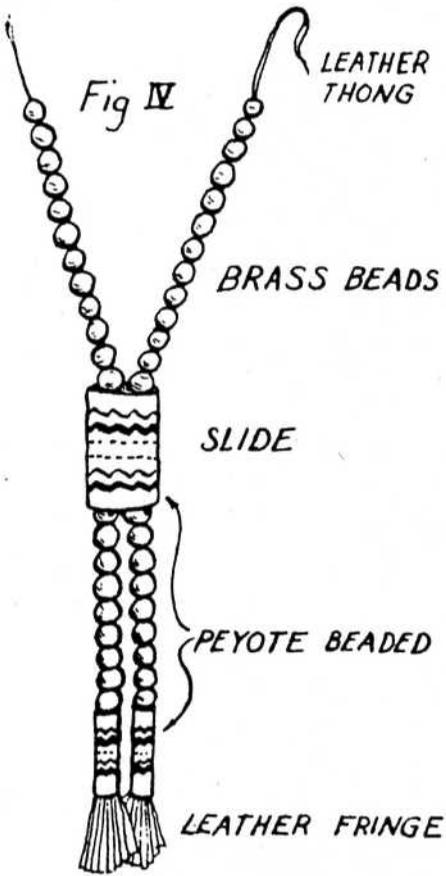
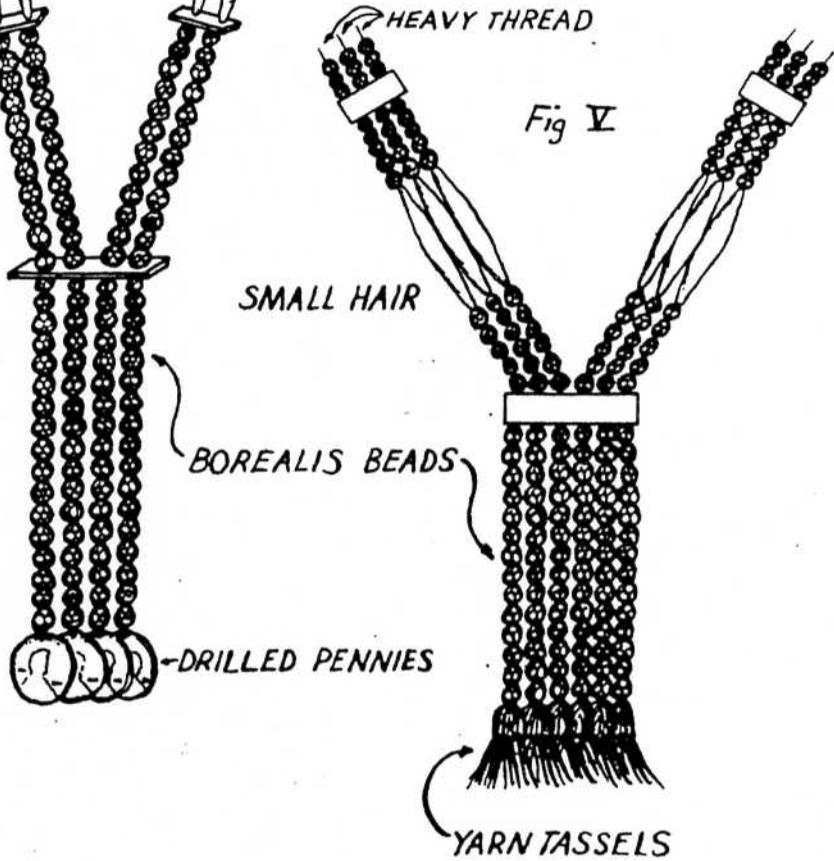


Fig V



Joining the Bandoliers

Each bandolier is joined at the hip by a single spacer (Fig. III) or by a peyote beaded slide. If a single spacer is used, it is twice as long as the regular spacer and each strand must pass through it twice. See Fig. IV and V for details. Fig. IV shows the beaded slide which is a strip of leather sewn end to end snugly around the beaded strands and covered with peyote beadwork. The leather used for the slide should be heavy enough to allow it to slide up and down the beads. The slide method is not recommended when using more than two strands.

Bandolier Ends

After joining the bandolier at the hip, its ends hang to the edge of the shirt. However, the bandolier will not end by just tying a knot to hold the beads on the string. This unsightly knot is usually hidden by one of the three methods shown in Figs. III, IV and V. Attention to details of this type tend to separate a standard outfit from a good one.

Chart of Bead Combinations

<u>No. of Strands</u>	<u>"/" indicates a spacer. "//" using a spacer as in Fig. V. Beads are borealis unless otherwise designated</u>
1	All brass beads.
1	All "silver" beads.
1	24 brass, hair pipe, 24 brass, hair pipe.
2	18 brass/ small hairpipe / 18 brass / small hairpipe.
2	12 red / hairpipe / 12 blue / hairpipe / 12 red / hairpipe.
3	/ hairpipe / 2 red, 5 clear, 2 red / 2 red, 5 clear, 2 red / hairpipe /.
3	// 8 purple / hairpipe // 8 purple // hairpipe // 8 purple.
3	/ 1 silver, 5 blue, 1 silver, 5 blue, 1 silver / hairpipe /.
3	/ 12 brass / hairpipe / 12 brass / hairpipe.
3	// 1 brass, 8 red, 1 brass // short hairpipe // 1 brass, 8 red, 1 brass //.
3	/ 2 clear, 5 green, 2 clear / hairpipe / 2 clear, 5 green, 2 clear /.
3	// 12 black // hairpipe // 12 black // hairpipe.

It is possible to wear only one bandolier, but today this is a rare sight. One or two dancers out of 50 may wear bandoliers of 4 strands; therefore, this is the exception.

When selecting material to string the beads on, pick very strong and substantial string. Nylon, flax and fishing line are possibilities. Leather may be used for stringing brass or silver beads, but it is too thick for aurora borealis beads.

Remember, in constructing bandoliers, simplicity is important. Do not try to put everything in a simple pair of bandoliers.

Feathers for Bead-strings

by Tom Risdon

At any given dance where there are several straight dancers in attendance, one or more will be wearing what appear to be very small loose fans attached to each bandolier rather than the more common scarfs. These feathered ornaments are shown in the adjacent photos. Small feathers bunched together and worn on clothing is not a recent invention. Old photos indicate that similar feather bunches were attached to skin shirts, to otter caps and to the hair in addition to bead strings. These early types were simply several feathers attached to a single tie and then the tie was in turn tied to the fringe of a shirt or lock of hair. The highly refined version seen today features decorated feathers attached to a peyote beaded dowel held on with the ties of a matching beaded medallion. It is easy to speculate that a talented fanmaker was given a set of small feathers to "fix" for a bead string decoration and - a miniature loose fan resulted. One slight difference occurs in that the feathers are set to have more freedom of movement. The feathers flit about as the dancer moves. Occasionally one such ornament is made and tied on the left side bead string and worn in the front. If the dancer wears only a single bandolier, naturally only one ornament is made. The traditional aspects, movement and decorative nature of the feathers and beadwork make these ornaments a desirable item. Of the dancers pictured in the article on the Inlonchka, Moccasin Tracks Feb. 1980, 3 dancers can be detected wearing feathers on their bead strings.

TYPES OF FEATHERS

Several types of small feathers are needed for these ornaments. Those in the photos are: Eastern

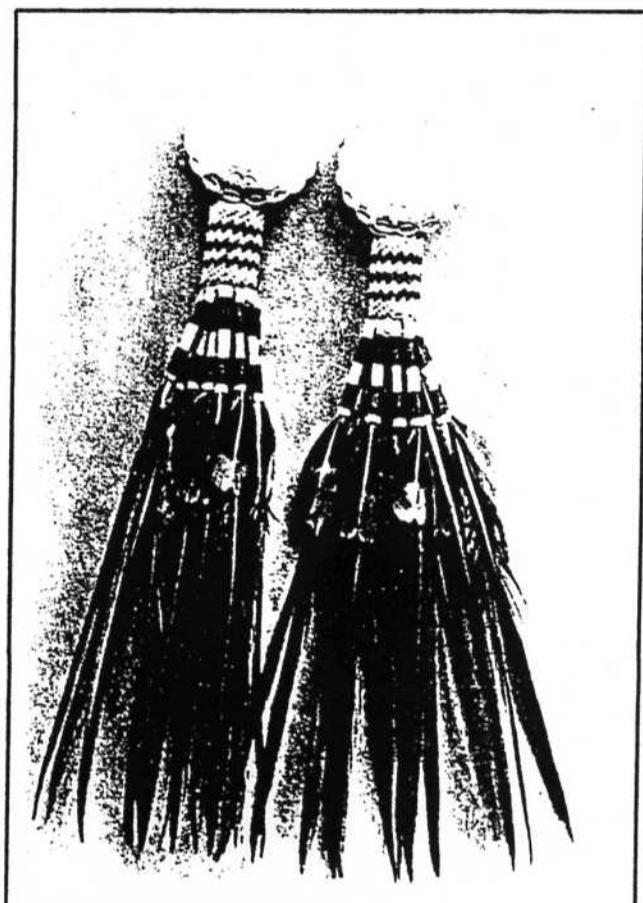
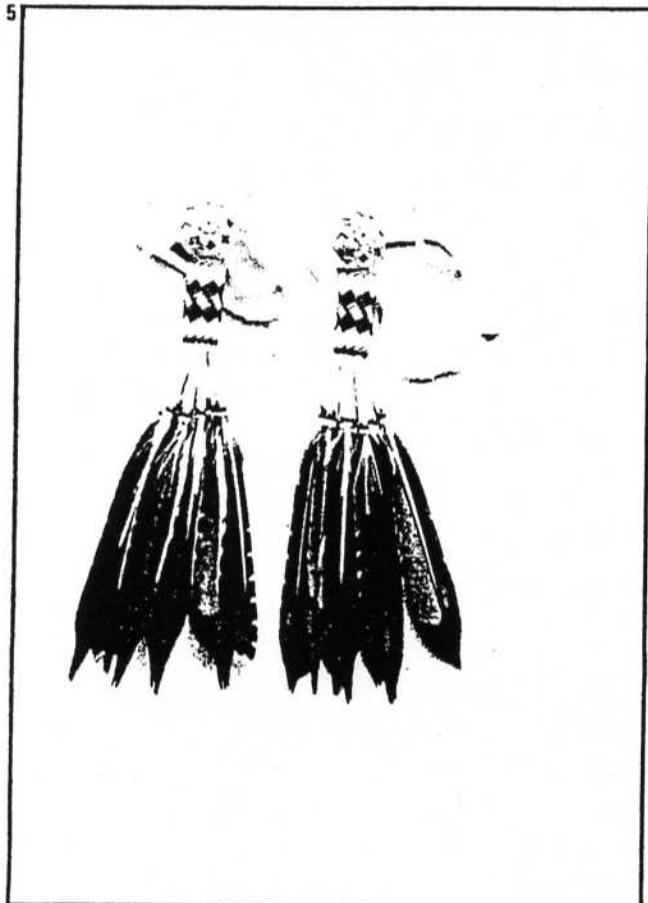
Blue Jay tail feathers (photo 1 & 2), 15 female Sparrow Hawk and 2 Magpie (photo 3), 12 male Sparrow Hawk (photo 4) and 12 Red-Shafted Flicker (photo 5). Magpie, small hawk tail feathers or trimmed down hawk feathers and Yellow-Shafted Flicker represent other feathers used in these decorations. Today, one might resort to using Golden Pheasant red tips as in the handsome set in photo 6 or even to Lady Amherst orange tips. One set the author recalls was made from small white goose feathers in which the tips were dyed or painted black to represent eagle tail feathers.

FEATHER PREPARATION

A set of these feathers consists of 7-20 feathers. Feather length should be about 6". Usually the tips are left plain with simple or no base decoration for each feather. The preparation and construction steps are much the same as preparing feathers for a loose fan. See the June 1979 issue of Moccasin Tracks for the construction of a loose fan.

All the feathers should be of the same length. An exception would be the incorporation of a pair of "fancy" feathers; a rare occurrence. The feathers that need to be longer can be extended with a toothpick glued into the end of the cut off feather quill. If a feather needs to be shortened, cut the quill to the correct length and pull off the excess veins.

Next glue on the small body feathers and/or finest of hackles that will decorate the feather base. Glue to both front and back if desired. Make each hackle the same length and glue it on each feather



in exactly the same spot.

Cut thin white buckskin into strips to dimensions 3/8" longer than the quill length and wide enough to generously wrap around the thickest quill. Cut one for each feather. Glue leather about each quill using white glue, but do not let the glue reach the last 3/8". Pinch the leather tightly together with pliers or fingers. When dry, trim off the excess leather with scissors, see Fig. 1. Thread-work as in photo 7, can be added at this point.

Photo 8 exposes an alternate means of fixing the feathers. A very narrow 1/8" piece of leather is glued to the top of each quill from the point at which the veins start to 1/2" beyond the end of the quill. The entire quill is then wrapped with thread-work leaving the 1/2" leather tab; Fig. 3.

THE DOWEL BASE & FINAL STEPS

After each feather is fixed, they are wrapped in position about the carved end of a 3/8" dowel whose dimensions are shown in Fig. 2. Use thread to wrap the feathers in place the first time making adjustments of placement then unwrap and use glue the second time. The diameter of the carved end should accommodate 8-12 feathers set side by side. Create a second row if more feathers are used. Tape around the wrapped segment of the dowel to bring it to a full 3/8" diameter if needed; Fig. 4.

Glue buckskin about the dowel base with about 1 1/2" overhang; pinch together, let dry and trim off the excess. Punch a hole in the extra leather as shown in photo 8 to accommodate the medallion ties.

The final step is to bead the 1 1/2" dowel piece using a net beadwork technique, either peyote style or Comanche style. The small diameter of the dowel almost demands the use of 13/0 or 13/0 cut beads. A 1 1/2" diameter medallion beaded in the same colors completes a set of bead string feathers, see photos 1, 2 and 3. A German silver concho may also be used in place of the medallion.

In wearing these feathers, they are decorative enough to stand alone on the bead strings and need not be worn with scarfs.

FIGURE 3 BUCKSKIN

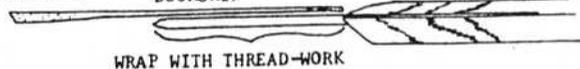
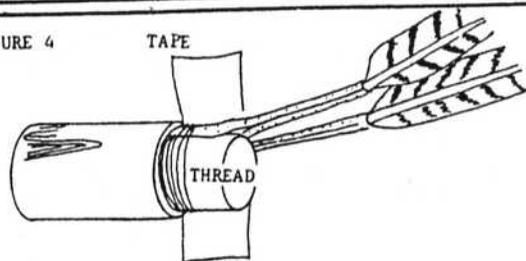


FIGURE 4 TAPE

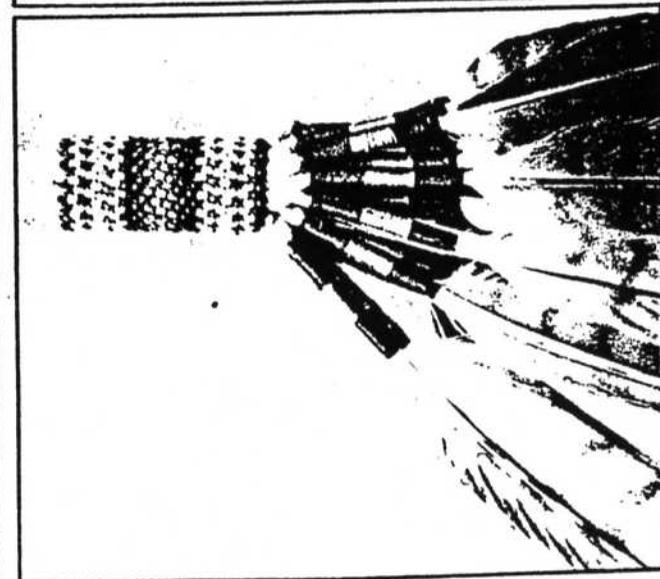
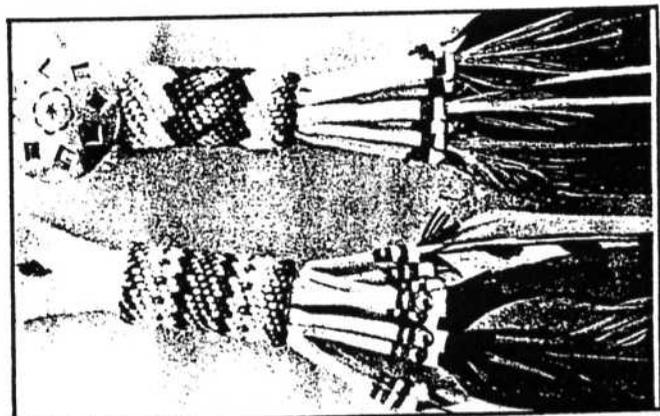
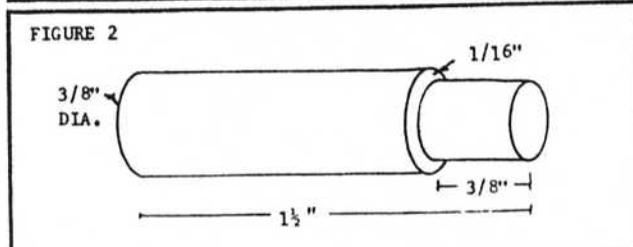
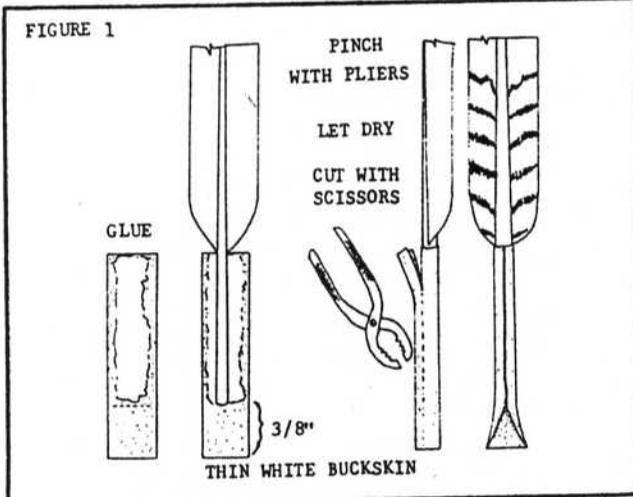


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- Risdon, Tom; "Pheasant Feather Loose Fans", Moccasin Tracks June, 1979.
 Smith, Jerry; "Peyote Beadwork", Moccasin Tracks, March, 1979.
 "Comanche Style Net Beadwork", Moccasin Tracks, April, 1980.
 Stewart, Tyrone; "peyote Beadwork Part I," Singing Wire Jan. 1969.
 "Peyote Beadwork Part II", American Indian Crafts & Culture, Nov. 1969.

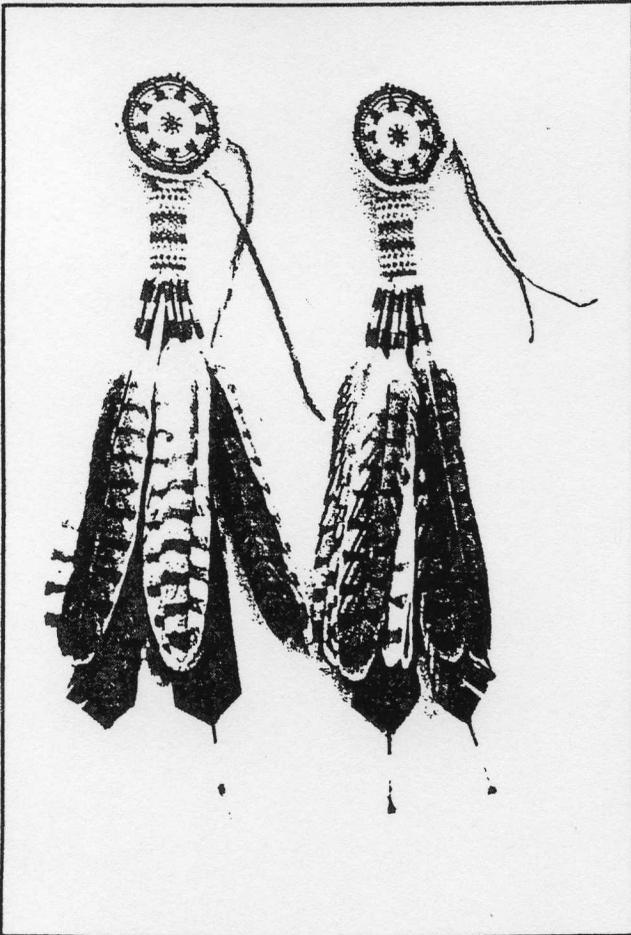
Photo credits:

- #1 & #2 Straight dancers at Pawhuska, Oklahoma 1967 by Sandy Rhoades.
 #3 Made by Hans Duddenhaus from the editors collection.
 #4 & #5 Ornaments made by the author from the collections of J. Smith and B. Wantz.
 #6 Made by Paul Sheppard.





3



6

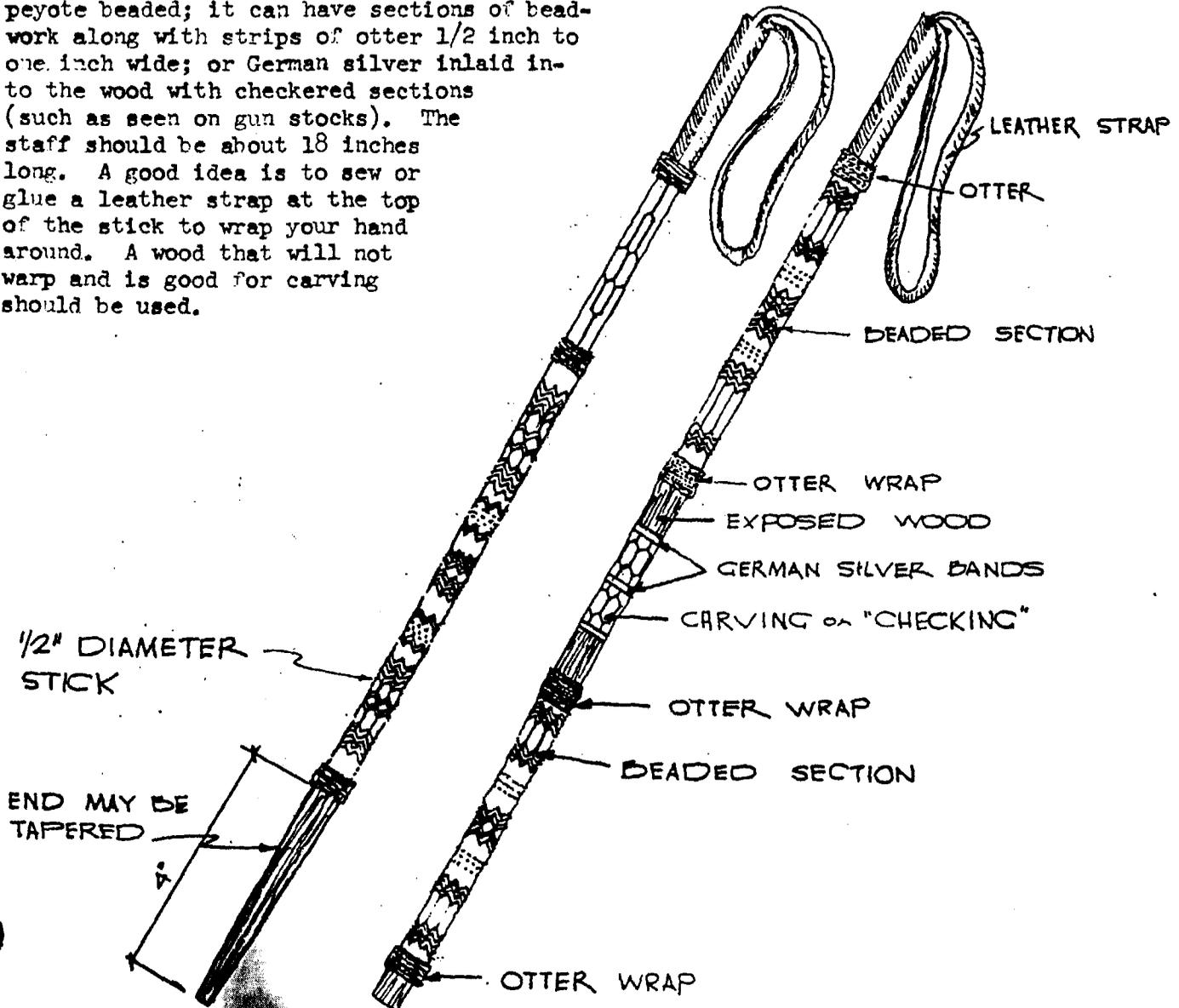
"TAIL STICK"

2ND IN A SERIES ABOUT STRAIGHT DANCE

BY TY STEWART

Among the straight dancers today one will many times observe the dancer with a fan and mirror board or a "tail stick". Normally the tail stick is carried in the right hand and "points" the way as the dancer honors the drum. It is apparent that with the Pan-Indian era the tail stick is fast losing its old meaning. One informant tells me that it has a significant meaning and should be carried only by tail dancers in a warrior society. It seems the tail stick has evolved (no date was mentioned) from the Plains coup stick as a badge of honor. It is my contention that only hobbyists who have achieved competence in their dancing should carry the tail stick when dancing.

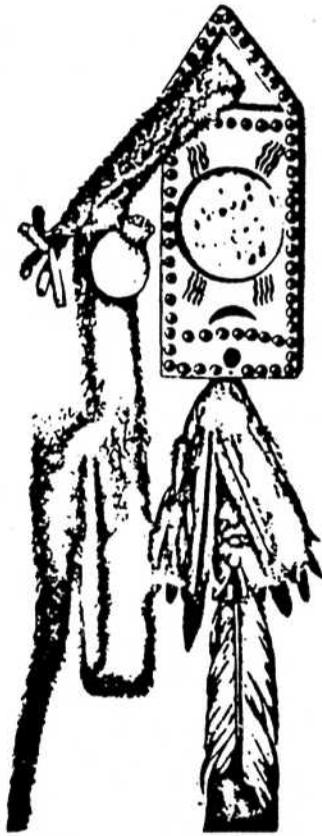
The stick can be decorated with several variations. It can be fully peyote beaded; it can have sections of beadwork along with strips of otter 1/2 inch to one inch wide; or German silver inlaid into the wood with checkered sections (such as seen on gun stocks). The staff should be about 18 inches long. A good idea is to sew or glue a leather strap at the top of the stick to wrap your hand around. A wood that will not warp and is good for carving should be used.



MIRROR

BOARDS



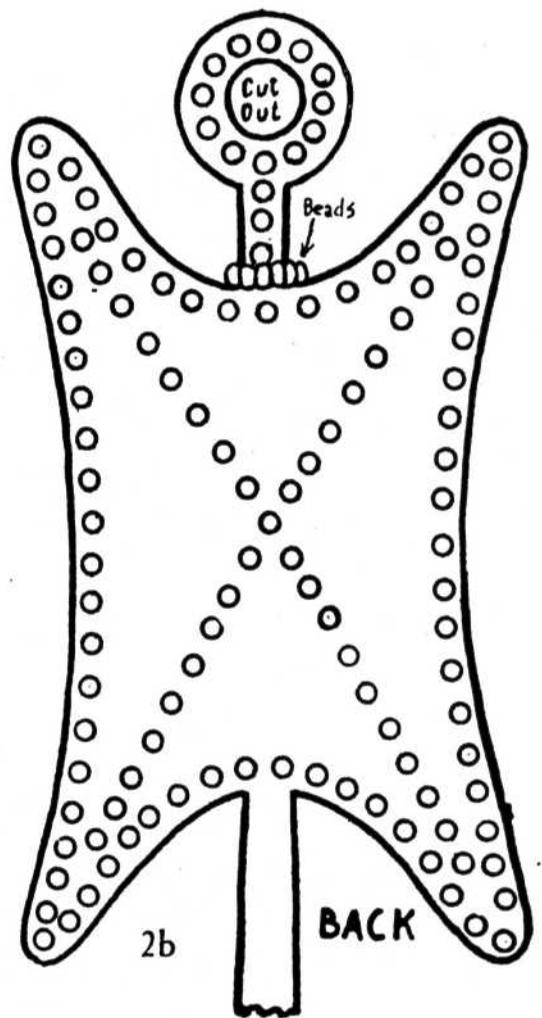
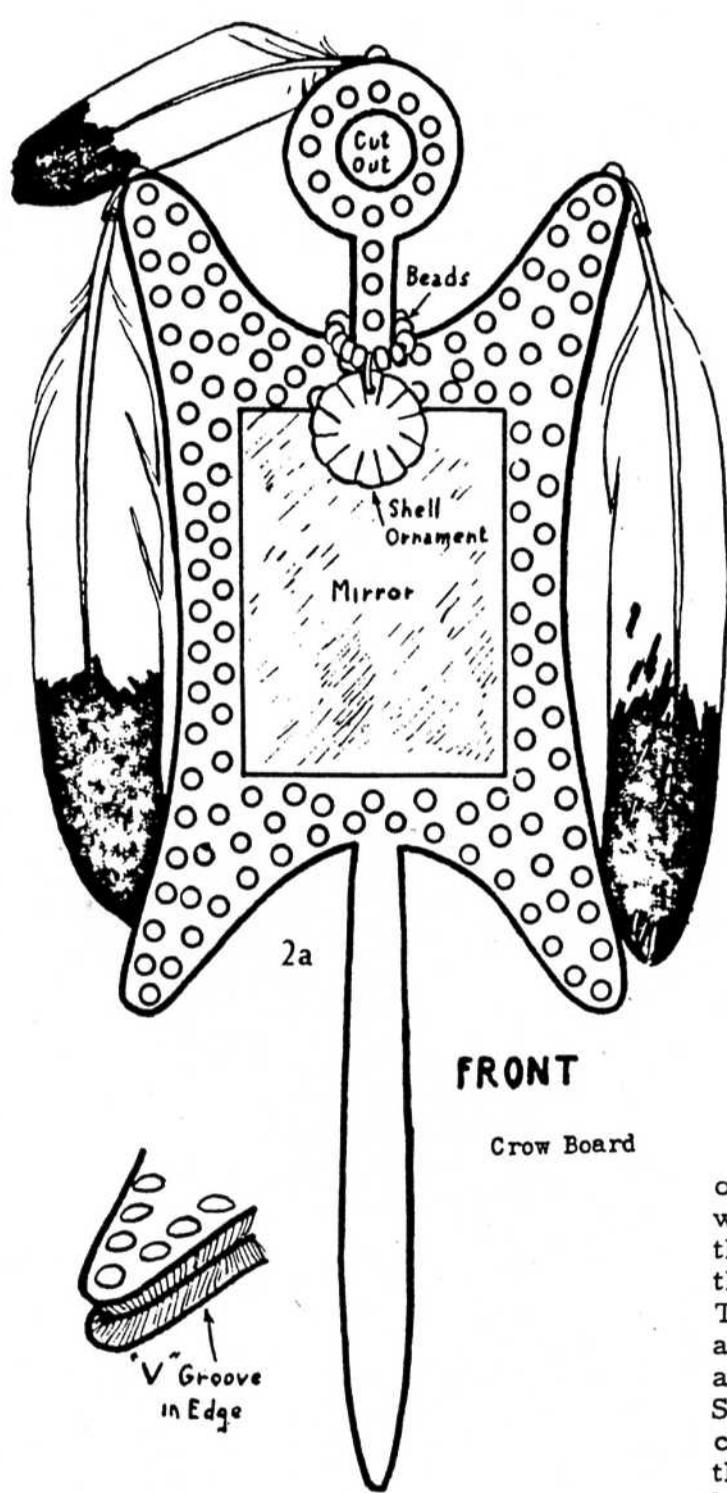


1

The Arapaho mirror board shown in Fig 1, is described in an article by William Wildshut in the Museum of the American Indian, "Indian Notes", Vol 4, No 3: "At one time there were several such mirrors in the tribe, some painted black with yellow edges, others yellow with red edges, and still others in different designs. In early days these mirrors were used in war expeditions for the purpose of bringing good fortune to the owner in all his undertakings. This is symbolized by the light reflected by a moving mirror. As it is impossible to catch the light, so it was impossible for the enemy to capture or to injure the wearer of the medicine mirror. The same power applied to sickness and to all other misfortune, for no evil could overcome the owner of a bundle, provided proper care was taken of it. Thus happiness and longevity was insured to its owner.

Glass mirrors set in elaborately decorated wooden frames were once a common article throughout most of the Plains. Some were used mainly as an aid in make-up, some strictly as a dance ornament, and some were used because of their supposed magical significance. They may also have been used as a signal device, but not much is known about their use as such. At any rate, glass mirrors have been available to the Indians from a very early date and probably due to the fact that they break easily, they were usually mounted in a wooden frame. The frames for the common toilet mirrors were usually quite simple. Sometimes a plain rectangle with a carved recess for the mirror, or with a simple handle added. But many dance mirrors were further decorated with brass tacks, paint, carving and danglers, and it is this type that will be described in this article.

The frame of the mirror, which measured 9-1/2" by 3-1/2", is painted yellow on its front and back, and red on all of the edges, and is further embellished with brass headed tacks. Yellow and red paint is smeared on the face of the mirror. The four-times four wavy lines carved and partially filled with yellow paint signify boring-worms which work their way through the hardest wood, and hence, although soft of body, possess great power of penetration. The carved crescent moon near the bottom of the frame is painted bright blue and is represented because the moon watches over the world at night." The other ornaments include a band of otter skin and a bag of red paint. The feathers are woodpecker and eagle. This same mirror was also used in the Sun Dance in later years. Photos of old time Ponca Sun Dancers (see Dorsey, G.A., The Ponca Sun Dance, "Field Museum Anthropological Series", Vol 7, 1905) also show the use of decorated mirrors, but the Kiowa evidently had a taboo on the use of mirrors in this ceremony.



There are several early mentions of mirror frames carved in the form of an alligator. One such mention is in the Edwin James account of the S. H. Long Expedition and refers to the Kaskaias of 1820. The frame shown in Figs 2, a & b, may have been of the type seen by James in 1820. This particular board was being used by a Crow Indian in 1959 at the Sheridan All-American Indian Days. It should be pointed out that although mirror boards at one time were fairly common dance ornaments, as shown by

old photos (Figs 3, 4, 5), that in 1959 when this article was first published, the author found only two examples of the use of mirror boards in dances. The Crow example referred to above, and an Osage example (Fig 6) used by a straight dancer at Grey Horse. Since the publication of the 1959 article there has been a slight revival of the use of mirror boards, mainly among hobbyists, but also among Osage straight dancers.

Another interesting early reference to the use of mirror boards can be found in Gregg's Commerce on the Prairies. In talking of the time a male Indian will spend on his make-up, Gregg says: "A mirror is his idol. No warrior is equipped without this indispensable toilet companion, which he very frequently consults. He usually takes it from its original case and sets it in a large fancifully carved frame of wood, which is always carried about him."



3

Pawnee, Circa 1867
 Denver Public Library,
 Western Collection, photo by
 J. J. Hamilton, Omaha, Neb.



4

Straight Dancer
 Circa 1940
 Probably Osage

THIS MAN
 IS JOE WARE
 OSAGE TRIBE

FATHER OF
 MRS HOWARD
 (JUANITA) WEST

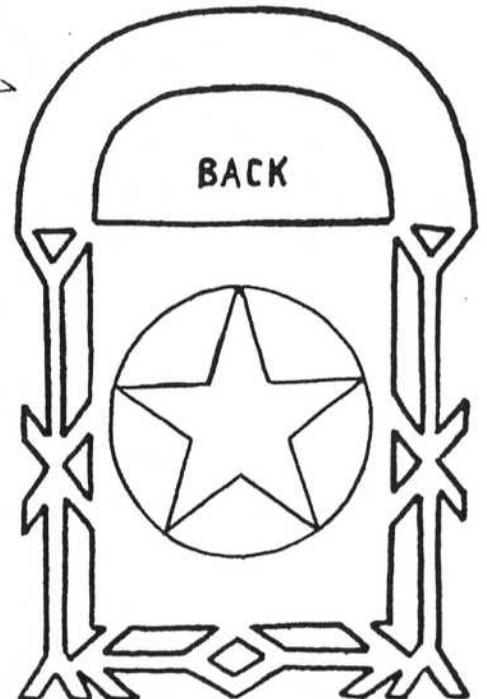
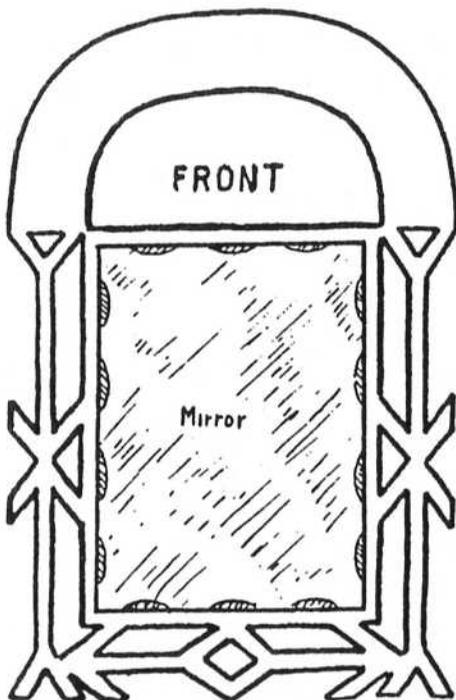
Osage Board 5" X 7½"
 About 1" thick.
 Arrows painted red
 Handle natural wood)
 (pine)

Backside. Yellow star
 in red circle.

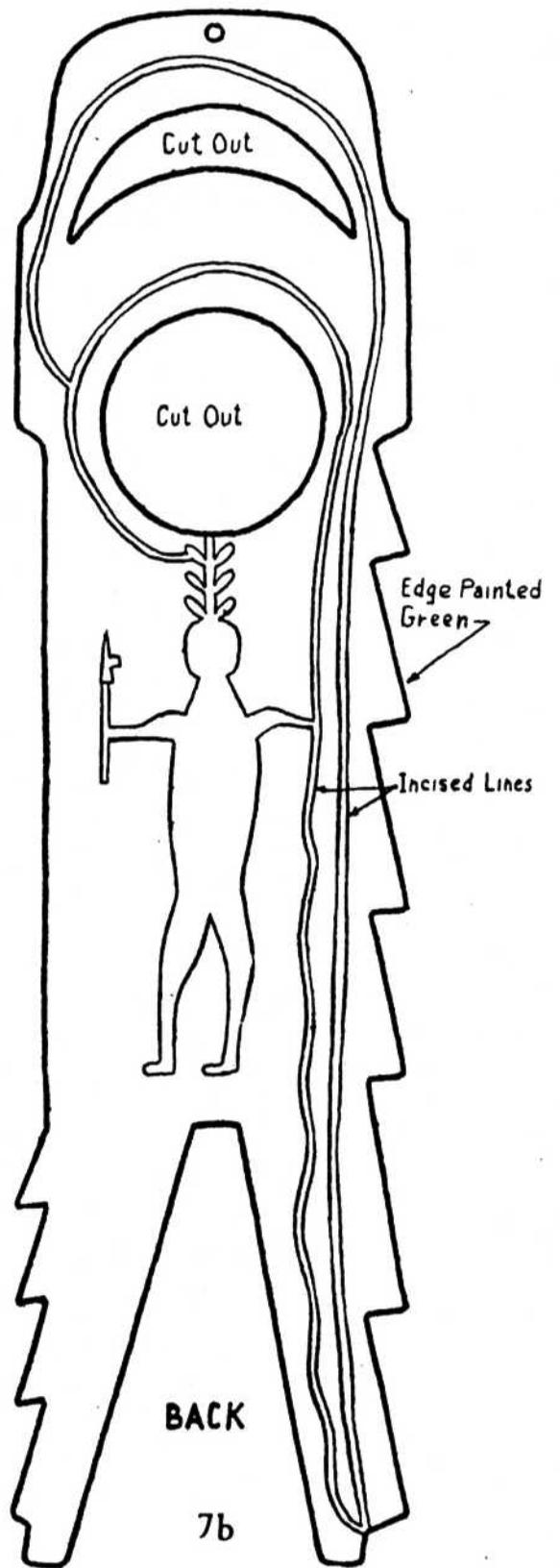
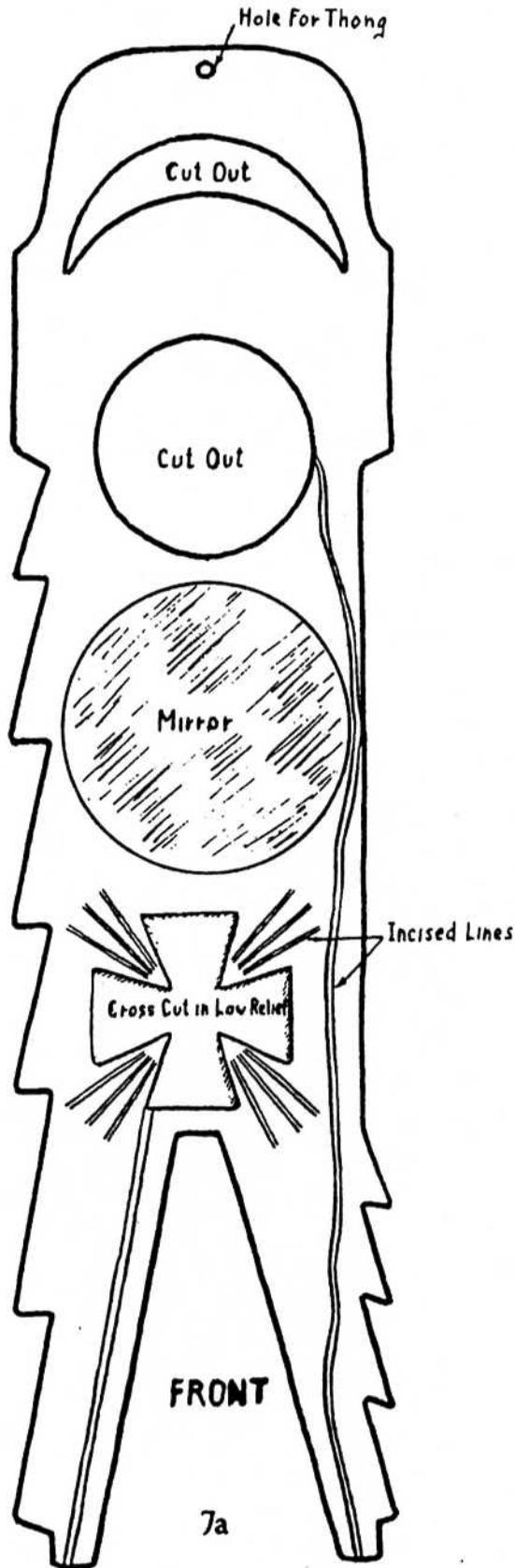


5

Osage Dance, Circa 1924
 Hominy Creek, Oklahoma
 Denver Art Museum photo



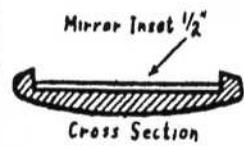
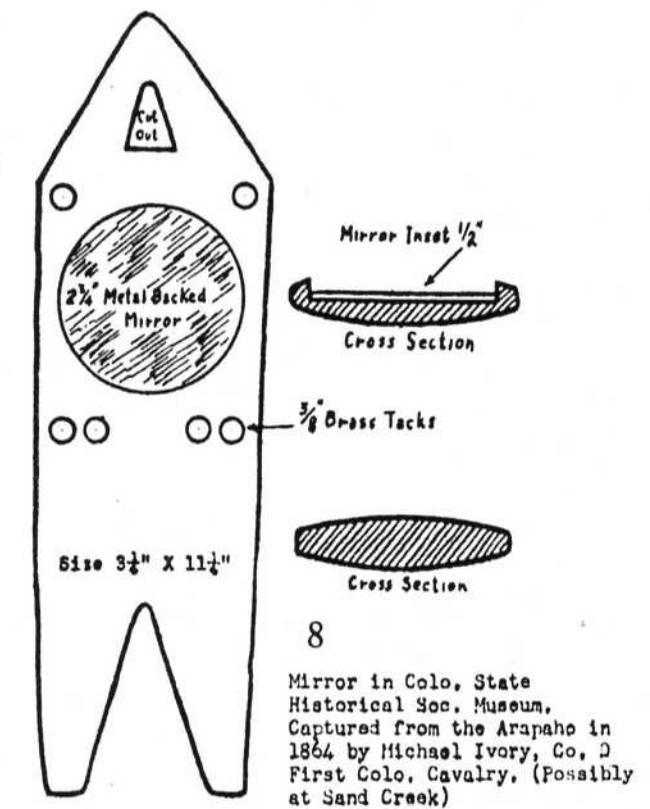
6



The mirror shown in Figs 7, a & b, is fully described in *The Arapahoby* by Kroeber, page 356: "Hand mirrors, usually mounted in carved wooden frames, are used by the Arapaho, as by the Assiniboine and by other Plains

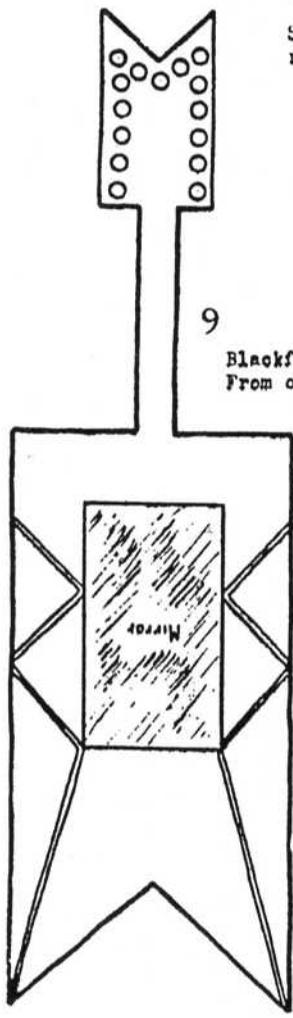
tribes, in connection with the ceremonials that have originated in recent times from or as the Omaha, Crow or Grass Dance, and which also received new impetus at the time of the Ghost Dance. The wooden frame

has much the same shape as a bootjack". This reference to a bootjack is interesting because so many early examples have much the same shape and may indicate that abandoned Army bootjacks were at one time used for this purpose (see title illustration, Figs 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, and the sketch by Bodmer on page 338 in Maximilian's Journals).



8
 Mirror in Colo. State Historical Soc. Museum, Captured from the Arapaho in 1864 by Michael Ivory, Co. D First Colo. Cavalry. (Possibly at Sand Creek)

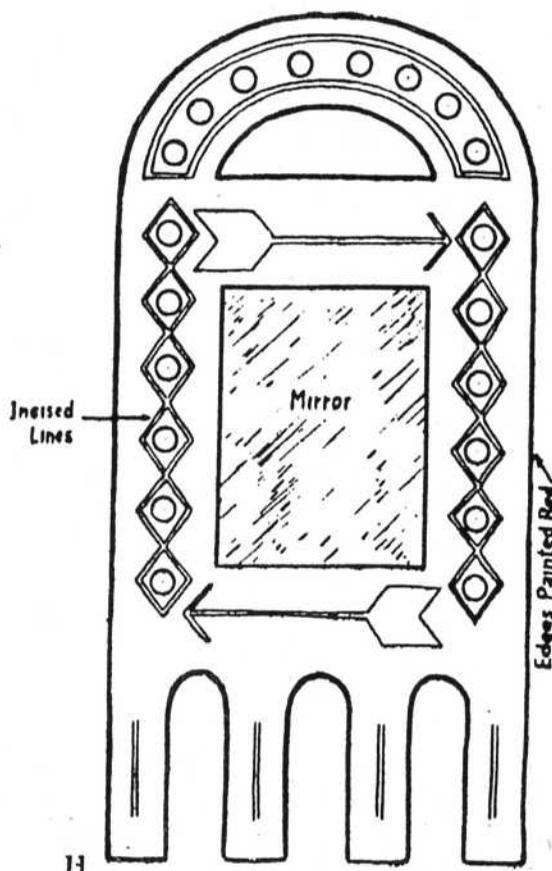
Soft wood, probably pine with a red stain all over.



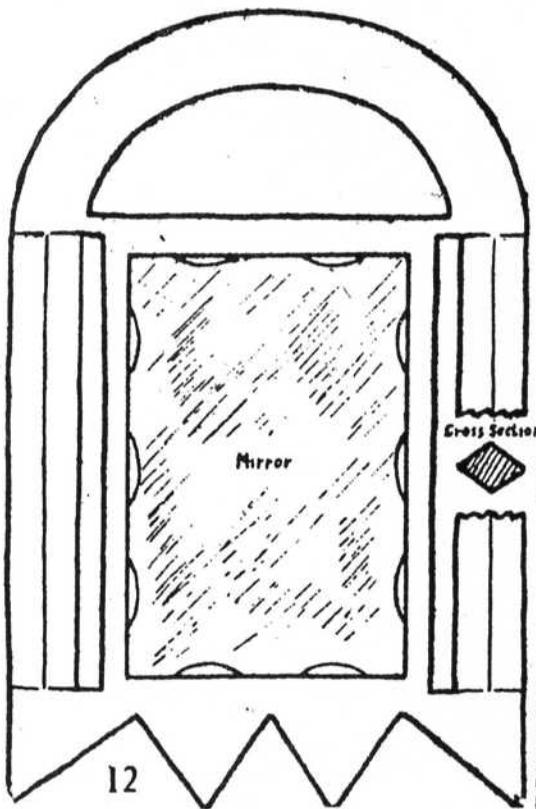
9
 Blackfoot Mirror Board From old photo.

10
 Photo - Denver Art Museum



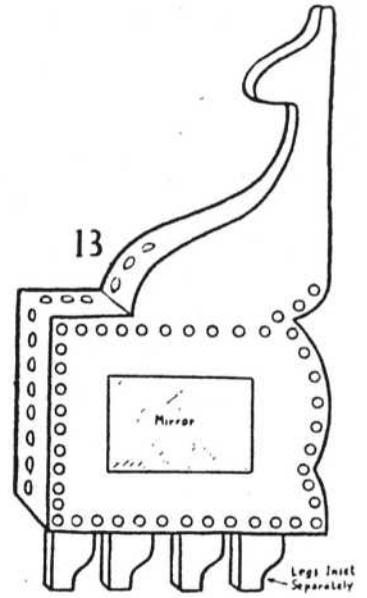


11 Background painted white with red lines. Board about 6" x 12". Osage Museum, Pawhuska, Oklahoma.



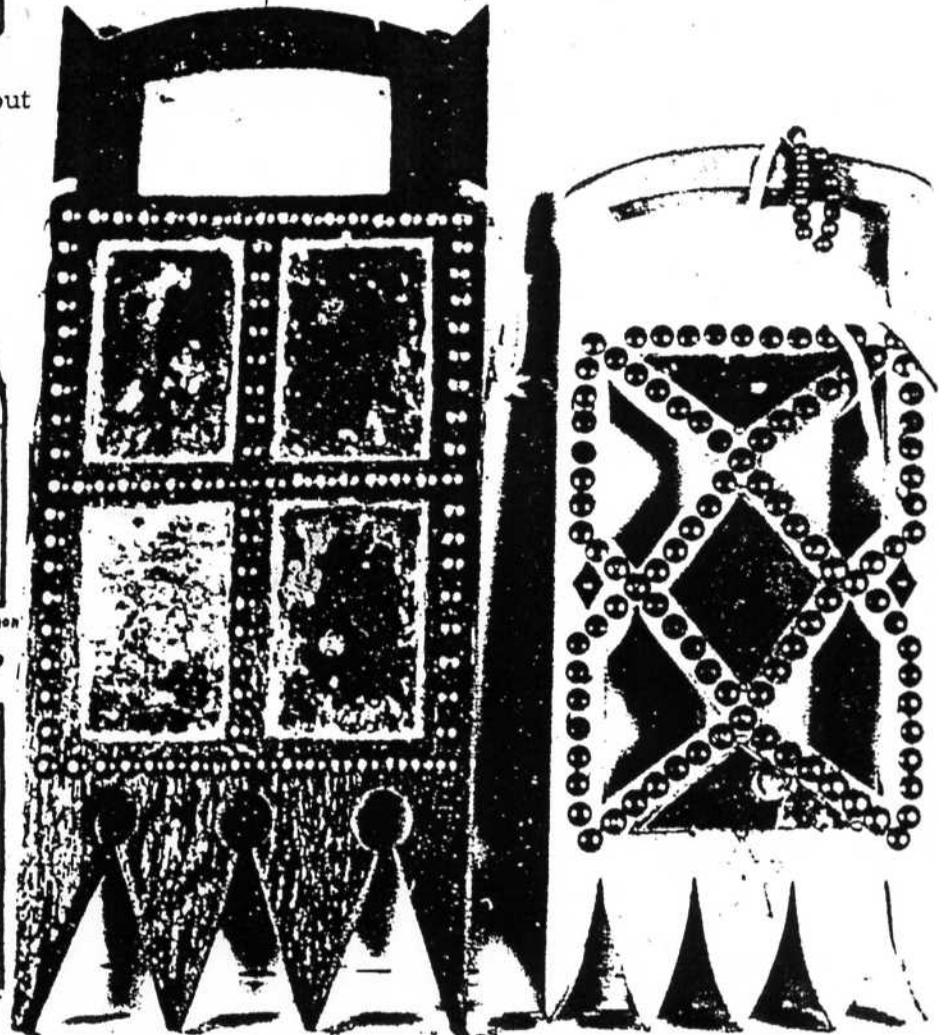
12 Osage board, of natural wood, 1" thick, 8" x 11". Osage Museum, Pawhuska, Okla.

The examples shown in Figs 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13 and 14, are all Osage and are typical of a type carried by participants in the Osage War Dance. The horse head type, shown in Fig 15, was at one time fairly common among Omaha, Oto, Pawnee, Kaw and Osage. Ted White, an Omaha of Macey, Nebraska (now deceased) was a prolific carver of this specific type - always carved of thick mahogany and often with lead inlay.

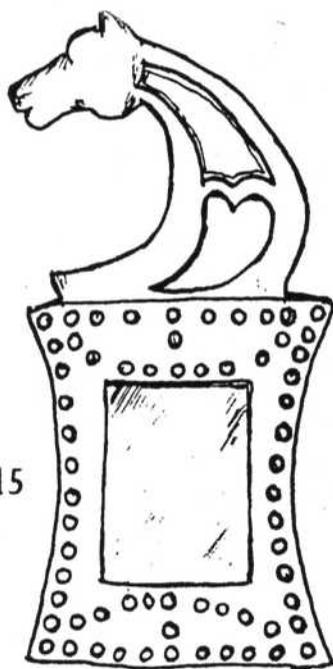


Osage Board. Carved from 1" Mahogany. Okla. Hist. Soc. Museum.

14



Osage boards from the collection of the author.



Speciman 57.154 at right.
 Kansas State Historical
 Soc., Topeka, Kansas.
 Conated to the museum
 by Frank Haucke of
 Council Grove, Kansas.
 Haucke received the mir-
 ror in 1920 when he was
 made an honorary Kaw
 chief.

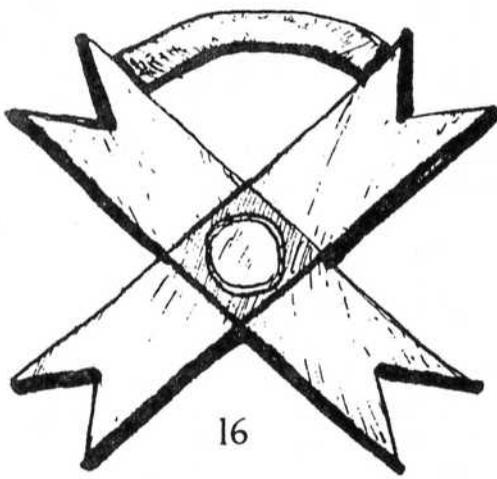


When in use, these mirrors are simply carried in the hand, usually hanging straight down; but Crow like to hold them up as though looking into the mirror while dancing. On sunny days, with many dancers all carrying these boards, a nice effect of glancing light is achieved. In between songs the dancer will usually use the mirror to adjust parts of their costumes. In Notes on the Dakota Grass Dance, by James H. Howard, in the "Southwest Journal of Anthropology, Vol 7, No 1, Dr. Howard mentions: "The informant stated that formerly older dancers would sometimes carry in the dance a peculiar type of mirror which represented a hoe, and would lean over in the dance, pressing holes in the ground with the ends of the mirror frame, and that this action represented the planting of corn. This step and the accompanying action, now a part of the Grass Dance, was once a part of a separate Corn Dance, according to the informant." Regardless of whether the Sioux ever had a Corn Dance or not, the action is certainly a common one.

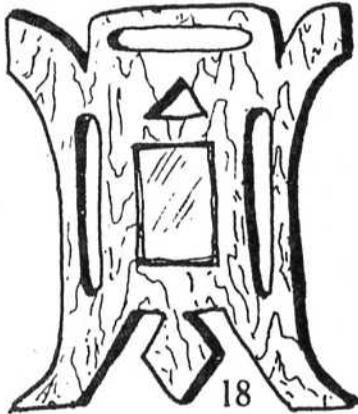
As previously mentioned, the use of mirror boards was certainly not common in 1959; however, many Crow use a modern variation of the old style wood frame in their dances today. This consists of a beaded bag with a hole cut through in one side to receive the mirror. This hole usually takes the form of a heart, diamond, club or spade as on a deck of playing cards.

Most any kind of wood can be used to make one of these boards. The example shown range through soft pine, to maple and mahogany. If you have a nice grained wood you will probably use little paint and likewise, if the wood is crude, you can completely cover it with a coat of paint. The most common form of decoration consists of applying brass tacks to outline or form a design. Carved lines are often used and filled with a paint that will contrast with the body of the frame. Of course, the main element is the mirror itself and almost any type and size can be used. The example in Fig 7 has a round metal-backed mirror still in the metal backing. A trip through your local dime store will suggest other types. Dangles of beads, feathers, fur, or even clock gears are common on some boards, but are not always used. A look at the photos and sketches used in this article will suggest the many forms these boards can take, and you are certainly free to design your own within limits.

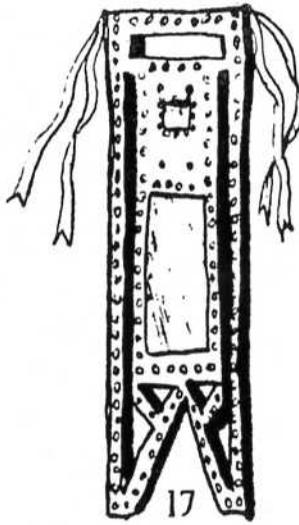
If a band saw is available, this will simplify the work, but if not a coping saw will come in handy. This and a pocket knife are all that is needed. Do a nice job and finish all surfaces to an even smoothness. All the examples I've seen were beautifully finished; that is, no knife marks were visible.



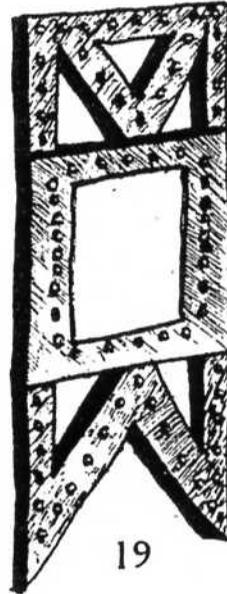
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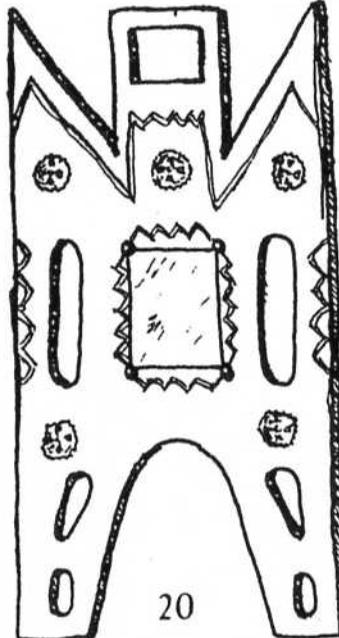
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17



19



20



Sandy Rhoades Craig Thomson

Fig 16: Mirror board made by Jim Shafer for Dr. James Howard

Fig 17: Blackfoot board sketched by Bob Brewer from photo of 3 Blackfeet dancers

Fig 18: Assiniboine board at Amer Museum of Natural History

Fig 19: Mirror carried by Dan Sleeping Bear, Gros Ventre of Ft. Belknap, Mont. Photo copyright 1960 by Detroit Publ. Museum of the American Indian photo #4470.

Fig 20: Assiniboine board at Americ Museum of Nat Hist.

Good luck with your board if you decide to make one. It is an item that was once very popular but is now almost a thing of the past. The only word of warning is to pick an example that is representative of the tribe you are following. Do not use an Osage style board with a Sioux costume.

**WITAYAPI
is coming!
Pass it on!**

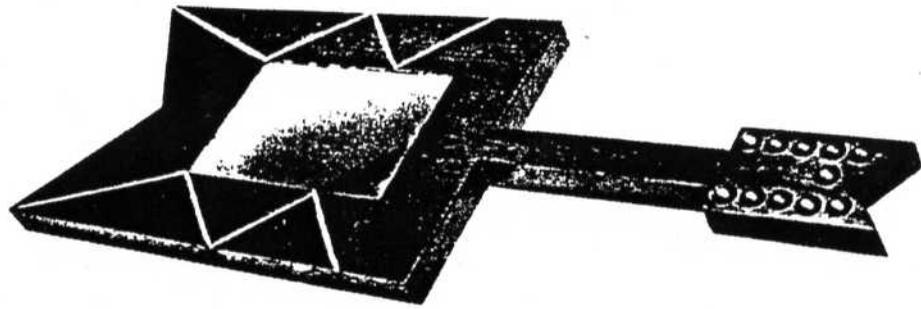


Probably Ponca, or Pawnee straight dancers. Photo donated by Norm Feder.



joe kazumura

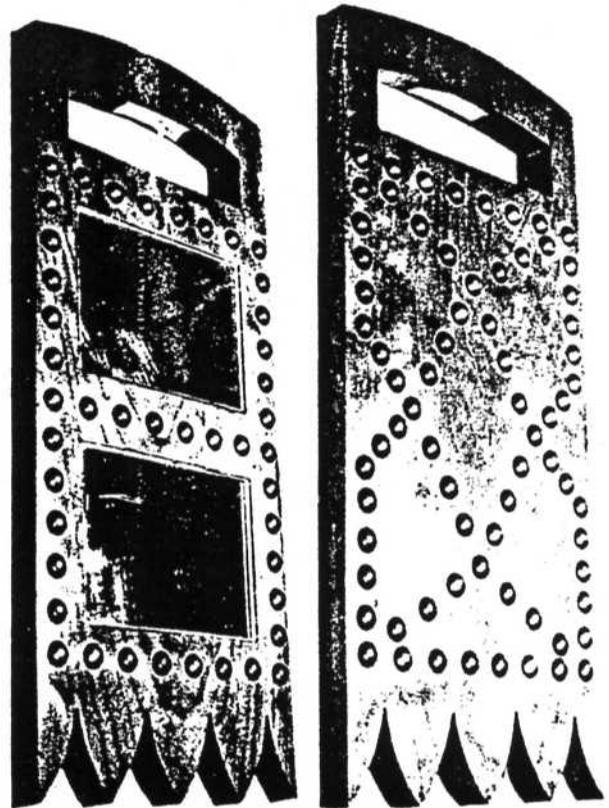
photo by



ROR ARDS

Constructed by
Mark Bilich, Sr.

Photos by **Tom Kelly**



PAGE 8

- Top Left - OSAGE
- 2nd Left - OSAGE (yellow trim)
- 3rd Left - OSAGE
- Lower Left- OSAGE 8"X 11", 1" thick
- Lower Rt. - OSAGE 5"X 7½", 1" thick
natural wood; arrow red
Star on back-yellow on
red background.

PAGE 9

- Top - BLACKFOOT
- Bottom - OSAGE

More On

Imitation Bear Claw Necklace

BY NORMAN FEDER

In February, 1971 we published an article on how to make an imitation bear claw necklace by Mr. Gordon Collins. The following information was kindly sent to us by Norm Feder shortly after the article appeared.

"As far as I know Indians never used deer antler, but always preferred elk. It is usually not the tine that is used, but rather a section cut from below the tine (see sketch)."

It is important to obtain a fresh (unweathered) antler, because even one season's exposure in the woods will cause small cracks and a weathered finish on the antler surface.

Roughly shape the claws before forming - a smaller shaped piece will bend a lot easier than a larger unshaped piece. And a piece below the tine will form more easily than a tine section. Cut your claw pieces as indicated in the sketch. Leave an extension to indicate the bone for a more realistic finished claw.

For a final finishing use a buffing wheel, but buff lightly - this

Cut to this shape before bending.

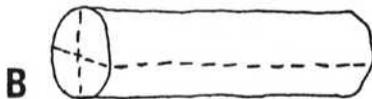
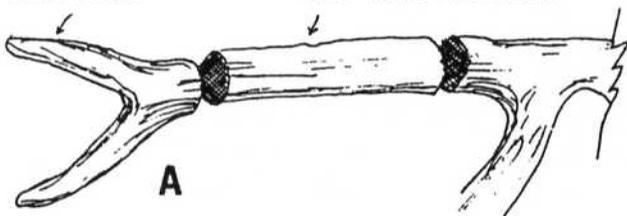


after sanding as indicated. Natural claws do have a polished appearance.

Indians always preferred pure white claws (which turn a yellowish color with age) - so don't darken too much. The extended base can be painted red.

For good examples of old Indian made elk antler claw necklaces, see examples on the Pawnee manikin at the Field Museum in Chicago, and a fine Plains example in the Remington Collection at the Buffalo Bill Museum in Cody, Wyoming. (below)

Not this Use this section



Split into four sections.
Each section can make a claw.

