

Straight Dance by Jan Hackett

Sometimes called the "Southern Traditional" and often referred to as the "Old man's" dance the Straight Dance finds its roots in the warrior societies of the Hetsuka. The outfit is comprised of many pieces and care must be taken to coordinate the various parts. The dance clothes combined with the graceful and stately movements of the dancers come together to create a stunning dance style.

Let us discuss these items as a dancer gets ready to enter the arena. The first item put on by most dancers is a pair of leggings. You will find two distinct styles of leggings, the first style is made of trade cloth with elaborate ribbon work on the inside of the flaps. The ribbon work is exposed by holding the flap open with the garters and bells that are worn just below the knee. This style of leggings are found commonly among the Osage, Fox and the Ponca. The other style of leggings are typically made of white or natural leather and have a tab extending downward from just above the knee. The inside of the tab should be covered with trade cloth and edge beading finishes the tabs nicely. This style of leggings is typical of the Kiowa and Comanche.

The next item will be the trailer and apron set, these are generally made from trade cloth, although you will sometimes find other types of materials being used. When making your apron and trailer keep in mind that the color red is reserved for the oldest son. The better apron and trailer sets will have elaborate Osage style ribbon work. If you wear trade cloth leggings the ribbon work should coordinate with the apron and trailer set.



The next item to be put on is the ribbon shirt, the colors and patterns used in this traditional shirt are endless. The one rule is that the ribbon on the shirt matches the color of the neckerchief and scarf set.

The next item to be put on is the bandoliers, there are two of them one worn over each shoulder. The items used in the construction of bandoliers varies greatly, you will find bone, horn, pony beads, old shell casings, brass beads, silver beads and more. Usually attached to the bandoliers at the shoulder blades is the scarf "set" (note some dancers attach them directly to the ribbon shirt) the important thing to remember here is that the color matches the ribbon on the shirt and neckerchief. The scarves will sometimes have conchos, feathers, plumes or other adornments attached to them. Some dancers will have a ball of sweetgrass tied in the center of the scarves and then attached to the shirt or bandoliers. You must be cautious of this as some will say this is a peyote sign, while others say it is to keep the dance clothes fresh.

The next item to put on is the choker, the materials used in its construction should match the materials used in the bandoliers. There is generally four rows in the choker and a conch shell in the center. Next we add the drag or otter strip, it attaches around the neck and hangs down the back touching the floor. Probably the most common is a full otter skin or a simulated otter strip mounted to broad cloth and decorated with beading, feathers, mirrors, rosettes and more. The other common drop/drag is conchos or silver hair plates mounted to a piece of leather. The ends of the drag or otter will sometimes be adorned with horse hair and peyote beading. Once the drag and choker are in place it is time for your neckerchief and slide. The slide is typically made of German silver and the color of the neckerchief is the same as the ribbon on the shirt and scarves.

The next piece of the outfit to put on is the assumption belt, it is made from yarn using the traditional finger weaving process. The belt should be long enough that the ends hang to your knees. You will see the belt worn in two manners, the ends of the belt hanging at both knees. The other way is with both ends hanging from the right side. On top of the assumption belt will be a heavy leather belt. There are many different ways to decorate this leather belt the most common being conchos or a large piece of loom beadwork. One note of interest here is the belt covers the bandoliers in the back but not in the front.

At this point it is time for your garters, they are worn just below the knee on the outside of the leggings. A simple over hand will hold them in place and the ends should touch the ground. The garters are made in the same fashion as the assumption belt and with the same materials. It is now time to add your "noise" makers. With cloth leggings sleigh bells mounted to heavy leather are worn on top of your garters. If you choose to wear Kiowa or Commanche style leggings it is acceptable to wear deer hoof clackers or bells. Add a pair of plains style moccasins that are partially beaded and you are just about ready for the Grand Entry. Southern Cheyenne style moccasins are popular among dancers but watch out for those dusters.

It is now time to put on your German Silver arm bands, they are worn just above the elbows helping to keep the sleeves of your ribbon shirt in place while dancing. Often you will see ribbons hanging from the arm bands. These ribbons should match the ribbon found on the shirt and hang down to your waist.



The roach is the last item to put on, it is made of porcupine guard hair along with a row of deer hair on the outside and or inside. The shortest hairs are used at the back of the roach and gradually get longer towards the front they should stand upright from the base. A more prized roach is one made of turkey beards and deer hair. You will sometimes see dancers with a white hankie worn as a head band. This is another item that some say is a peyote sign and some say it is just to keep your face dry. The roach is attached with the use of a spreader and roach pin, the spreader is made of German Silver and has one socket for a single eagle feather. The roach pin attaches the roach to the head through the spreader. In days past a small braid of hair would be pulled through the hole in the spreader and the roach pin pushed through the braid keeping the roach in place, and some dancers still use this method today. The scalp feathers attach at the base of the roach and are secured around one of the roach ties and hair. At one time the way these feathers were cut and decorated showed your family or society associations, today most dancers simply wear them. If you are inclined to wear ear rings this is the time to put them on.

The last things you need are hand held items. A fan is always a must and you will see flat and loose feather types. Some dancers carry a pouch of white deerskin, with beaded decoration or other types of bags. You will see some dancers with a tail stick, it originated as the badge of office for Tail Dancers in the Hethuska. The tail stick is the one item you are not aloud to make for yourself. It is the custom that someone else presents it to you. Often times an experienced dancer will present you with your tail stick but family members and close friends have been known to do

this also. If you have not been given a tail stick then a mirror board is what you should carry.

The art of Straight dancing is in the many parts that make up the outfit and the slow majestic movement. Often times the greatness of a dancer is in the little and unnoticed things. A powerful sense of pride combined with a exactness with songs and dance etiquette is the mark of an outstanding Straight dancer.

The Ponca Hethuska

Though the Ponca Tribe was stripped of many of its possessions as they were forced from their home in Nebraska to "Indian Territory" in 1877, they brought with them their songs and dances. Foremost among these dances was the Hethuska, a warrior dance organization whose basis was founded on the "Grass Dance" of the Omaha, when the Ponca and Omaha were one tribe. The songs of this dance organization tell of their deeds as warriors. One says, "Young Sioux, get your shield and prepare to fight." And another tells of a Pawnee who was knocked off his horse and ran away crying." Another songs say of the Hethuska, Wa-Kon-Da, "God gave it to us." Still others who have composed songs for the Hethuska ask if they will be able to uphold the requirements of the dance, while others say the Hethuska has ceased to exist, meaning the old days and old ways are dying. However, they live today in the minds and thoughts of those Ponca men who still dance the Hethuska and remember the tales told to them by their grandfathers as they dance to the songs and in the manners of their forefathers.

Purpose

In the old days, the Hethuska organization was composed of tribal leaders that were considered to be good citizens, as they lived up to the ideals and standards set by the tribe. It was a benevolent society that looked after members of the tribe in time of need. Their purpose is much the same today as they honor their veterans, care for the elders of the tribe, the widowed, and orphans. The organization hosts a feast for members of the tribe that are in mourning. Today, anyone attending the dance is fed and groceries are given to elders of the tribe and guests. This is the "difficult way" of the Hethuska, the giving, giving much of what one has to help others. The financial burdens are great.

Giving

During the depression years, the Ponca could no longer financially uphold the traditions of the organization and stopped dancing the Hethuska. Previous to discontinuing the dance, the Ponca gave the "Drum", meaning the right to perform this dance, to the Gray Horse District of the Osage (1880) and the Kaw Tribe. The Kaw in turn "gave away" the Drum to the other Osage Districts of Hominy and Pauhaska. Economically, the Osage had no problem filling the requirements of the dance as they had oil royalties. The Osage used Ponca singers to sing the Hethuska songs for their version of the dance, the EE-Lon-Ska.

With the songs of the Hethuska still alive, Mr. Sylvester Warrior, whose grandfather, Standing Buffalo, had passed the drum to the Osage, was able to revive the Hethuska among the Poncas in the early 1950's. It took many years of gathering information from the elders who remembered the dance and it's ways, before he could form his committee and dance. The Ponca Hethuska has had three Nudahongas since Sylvester Warrior died. They were Johnny Steele, Abe Conklin and the present leader Damon Roughface.

Since the revival of the Hethuska, the "drum" has been given to the Comanches and to four other organizations. They are the California Hethuska, the Lone Star War Dance Society, The New England War Dance Society and the White Bear Society.

The Ponca Hethuska Committee and Membership

The committee of the Hethuska led by the Nudahonga, consists of "four members" and the following other committee members; a Head Cook, a Whipman, Head Singer, a Crier, a Historian, two Tail Dancers and two Water Boys. Committee members help the Nudahonga in his arrangements for the dance and act as dance officials. The Head Cook, a man is in charge of the meal or feast between dance sessions. Under his direction several women of the tribe prepare and serve the meal, which usually consists of the traditional steam fry or corn soup, fry bread, drink and dessert. The Whipman escorts the dancers to their seats. Members have been given position on the bench they have paid for and sit their each time. The Whipman also initiates each dance. The Tail Dancers are chosen to dance the tail, a short encore, of each song while the other dancers remain seated. The Water Boys are to bring water to the dancers after each set of songs. To bring water, the essence of life, to fellow dancers is indeed an honor.

A dancer that has been accorded the honor of a position in the Hethuska, given a seat, will pay for his position at the dance between sets of songs. A young man that is dancing for the first time asks one of the committee members to tie on his roach, and place the feather in the spreader early in the dance. The committeeman is given a gift, sometimes a blanket and the family will give-away later on in the dance to honor their boy to show their appreciation for the honor by giving to the organization and the singers. They may have one of the members announce this fact, such as the Whip Man and then give-away.

The Dance

It is a grand sight to see all the dancers parade into the arena, all dressed in their finely tailored "straight dance clothes". Only men dance inside the benches. Ladies may dance in place behind the benches. Any one may dance the tail of the song in the arena, but must, excluding the tail dancers, pay for the privilege.

The dance arena is bordered by benches formed into a circular pattern with an opening to the east. The Nudahonga sits on the West Side of the arena facing east, along with his committee. The singers sit in the center of the arena with the Head Singer facing the Nudahonga. All activity in the arena is done in a clockwise direction. Even the water when passed around the drum is passed clockwise.

When everyone is seated, the Nudahonga welcome everyone and prays. Today a memorial song is sung to remember those who have passed since the last dance. When all these preliminary activities are complete, the Nudahonga will direct the head singer to sing the calling song. The song is not danced to but sets the mood of the dance. The dancing begins on the second song. The Whip Man is the first man off the bench and only he moves counter clockwise until he determines that all dancers are off the bench and dancing. He then reverses direction and dances clockwise with everyone else. The Whip Man ensures that everyone dances. When the song ends, all dancers proceed to their assigned seats in a clockwise manner. When everyone is seated, the singers sing the "tail" of the song. The assigned Tail Dancers dance each tail. Anyone may dance the tail, but are required to give-away when the song ends. The Nudahonga will designate which

visiting group will be allowed to tail dance. The Ponca Hethuska does not permit the Tail Dancers to call for everyone to dance the tail by raising their sticks, as is the case in other war dance organizations.

After a set of songs (8-12), the dancers and singers take a water break, and the Waterboys bring water to the dancers usually with a bucket and ladle. Food and drink are not allowed to be given to the dancers from outside the arena. It shows disrespect to the organization and poor judgement on the offender's part. Only water from the Waterboys is permitted.

If, during the dance, an item is dropped only the Whip Man is permitted to pick it up. Do not pick up any dropped items. The Whip Man will return the items during the water break. Payment is expected when the item is returned.

At the Nudahongas direction, the afternoon session will end. All dancers will walk out single file led by the Whip Man. No items or blankets are left on the benches. The meal is very much a part of the Hethuska. Dancers and Singers should be fed first, so they can get ready for the next session. Everyone is fed.

An evening dance session, much like the first, is the last activity of the Hethuska. It also has four sets of 8 to 12 songs. During the evening session committee songs are sung. They include two Committee songs, the first is the Nudahonga's song and the second is for the committee, followed by the Whipman's song, the Cooks song, and the Lady Singers song. The Head Singer may have a song also. These songs can be danced by anyone who wants to honor the person who holds that position in the organization. If you dance the committee song, you should give away, usually to the person being honored. The singers do not stop at the tail for the dancers to be seated as all will automatically dance the tail and give away.

The singers characteristically sing the songs in such a progression that the pitch and tempo increases from song to song and set to set. The high point of the evening are the songs where they "roll the drum" (snake and buffalo songs) and all the young dancers and young at heart dance their best and fastest. These songs are followed by four "trot" songs and maybe a No-stop song just for fun. The dance and Hethuska end with a quitting song, a prayer and the parade out of the dancers. At one time the Ponca danced this dance for four days, but without a permanent dance arbor they only dance for one day, but what a dance it is.

Note: the original author of the paper is unknown. It was updated by George Hoyt in January, 1997.

OKLAHOMA STRAIGHT DANCER



ONE FEATHER

ROACH

HEAD BAND

HELUSKA FEATHERS

SCARF & CHOCKER

SHIRT &

RIBBON TRIM

LOOM

BEADED BELT

BANDOLIERS

GERMAN SILVER
ARM BANDS

RIBBON DROPS

FLAT FAN

CANE

FINGER WOVEN SIDE TABS

BELLS

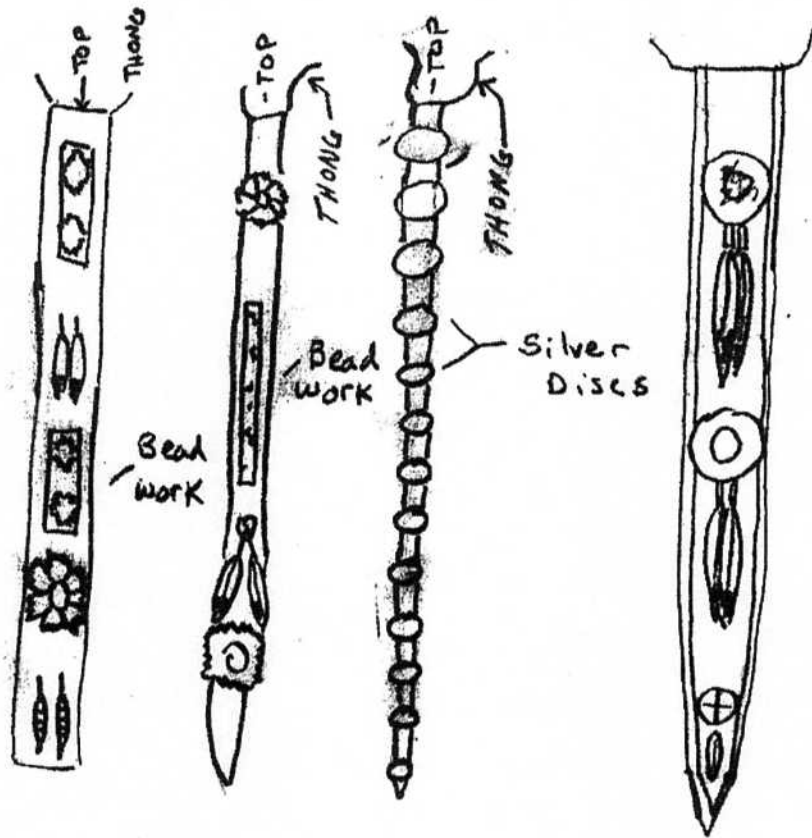
FULL BEADED OR
STRAIGHT DANCE MOCCASINS



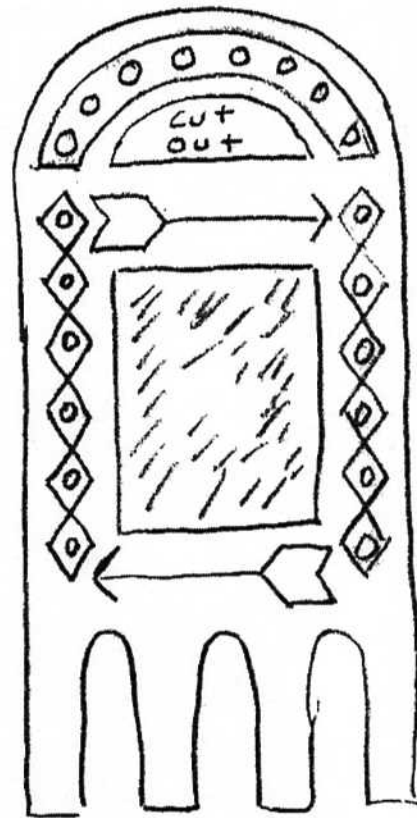
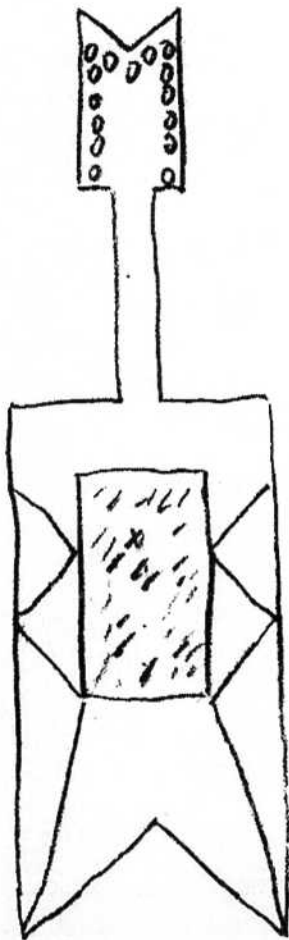
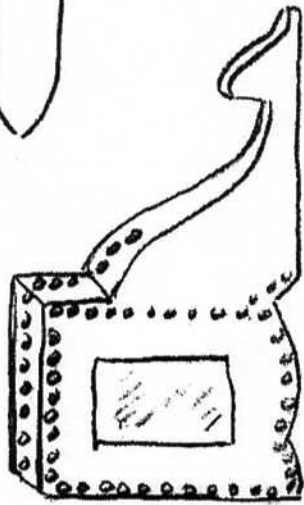
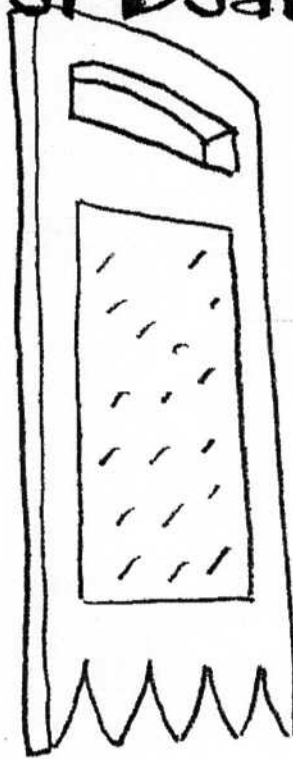
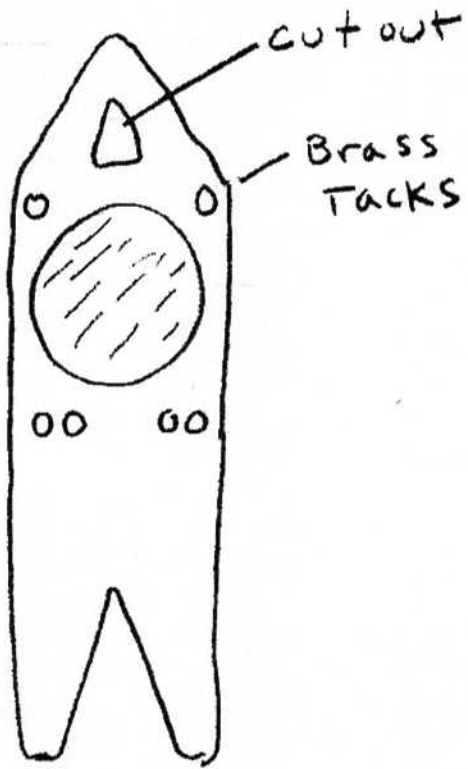
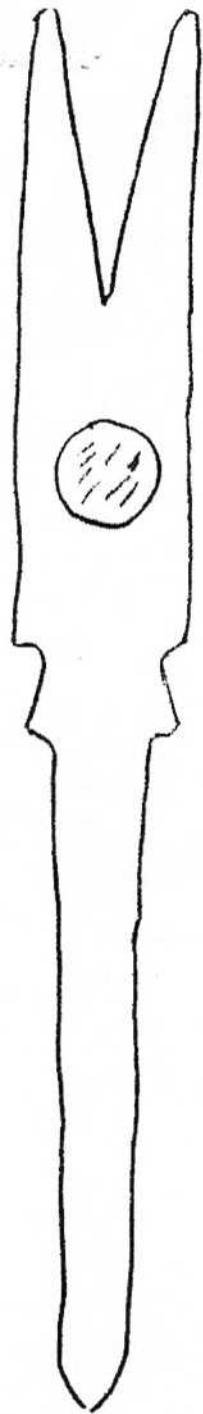
DANCE TRAILER

ROSETTES & SMALL
ROSETTES ON A
OTTER DROP

Various Drops, Draggers or Trailers worn by Straight Dancers




Various Mirror Boards



CUTTING YOUR

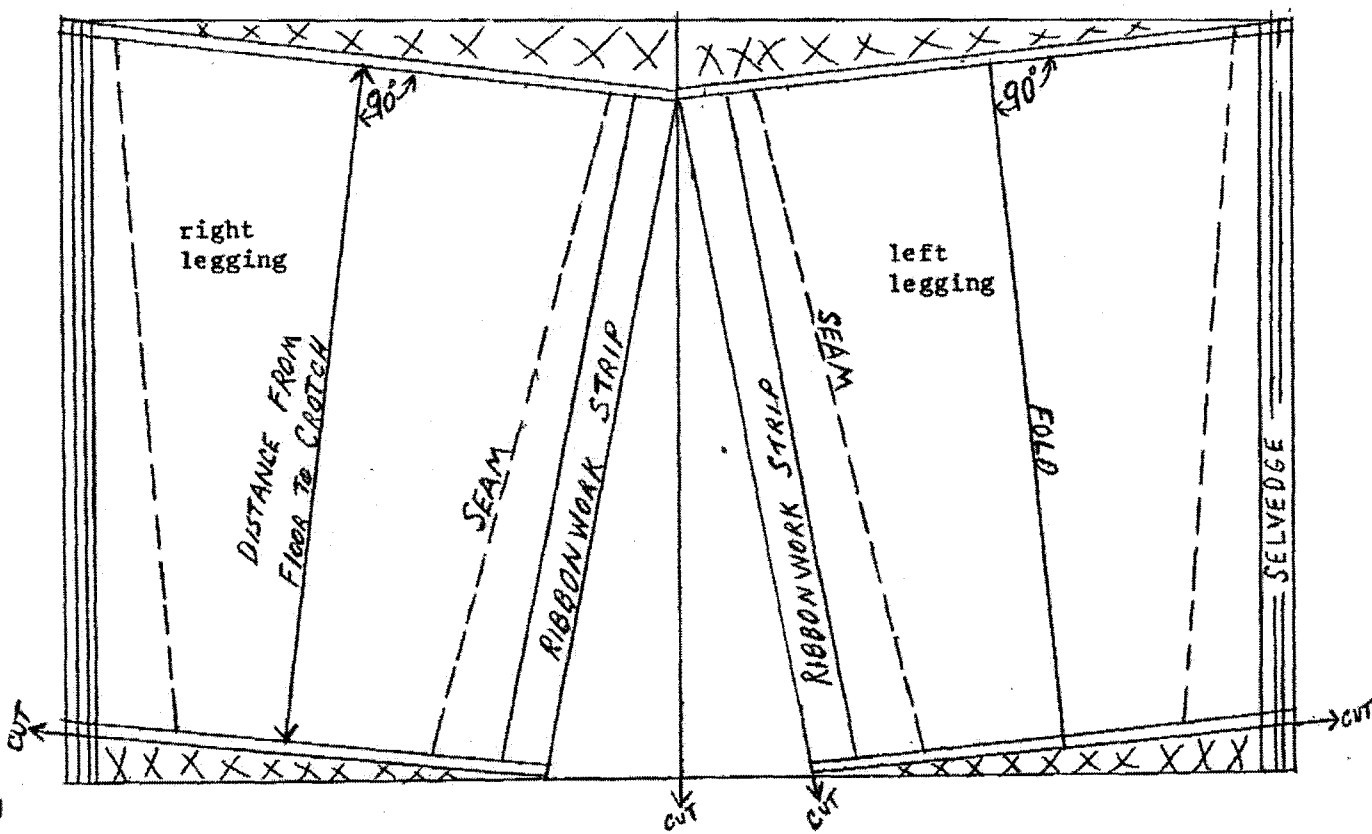
STRAIGHT DANCE CLOTHES

The diagram for cutting your Straight Dance clothes from one piece of broadcloth that was shown in the December, 1972 issue (Vol. VI, No. 3) is incorrect. If this method was followed it would leave you with two left leggings. This is due to the fact that good broadcloth has a "face side" and a "reverse side". This is most noticeable in the selvedge and the grey cast that is peculiar to the reverse side because of the nap in the cloth. This nap should be running the same way on both leggings. The accompanying layout shows the correct method of cutting the broadcloth so as to avoid this pitfall.

Our Special Thanks go to Mr. Kugee Supernaw of Skiatook, Oklahoma for pointing this out to us. 

COMMENT

by Rex Reddick



TO BE A STRAIGHT DANCER

"Even though the Straight dancer is gaining more popularity among Indian and non-Indian alike, I still see it as a prestige dance. While I participate I feel insignificant, because of my short coming as a dancer; but proud at the same time because I am allowed to participate. I don't know how you could feel any other way when you consider the tradition and custom of the dance. By its nature it is a slower dance, with less action and with more time on the dancer's bench. This extra time on the bench allows me time to reflect and to savor the slow fluid movement of the tail dancers."

Issy
Umscheid

Wichita, Kansas

"It makes you feel proud to represent... and the Straight dancer shows this proudness more than others. The Straight dancer who shows what it is all about is becoming few and far between. There are things which are worked done by only certain ones who have a right. There are many things which are hard to put into writing for one to read and truly understand. I enjoy very much to listen to the songs. As the drum has so much to tell us. To understand and enjoy the Indian way of life, one must live it. And I am so glad I have that opportunity."

Robby
Robinson

Midwest City, Oklahoma

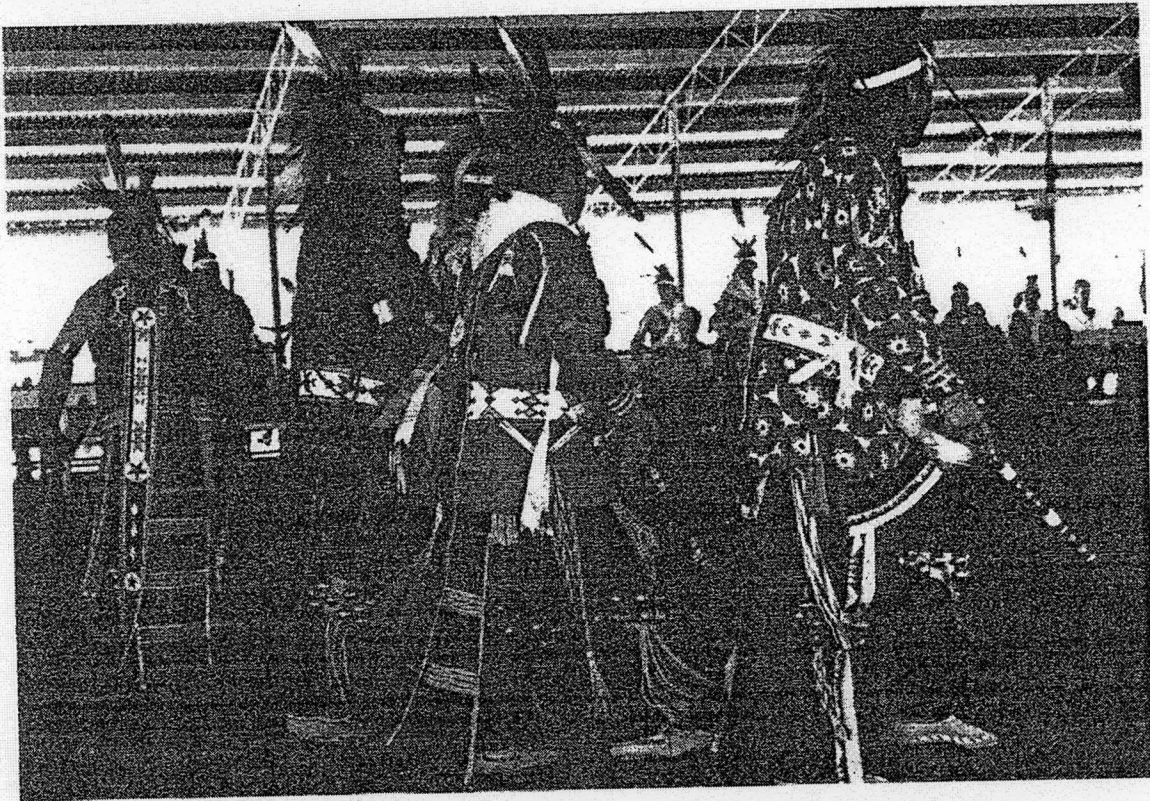
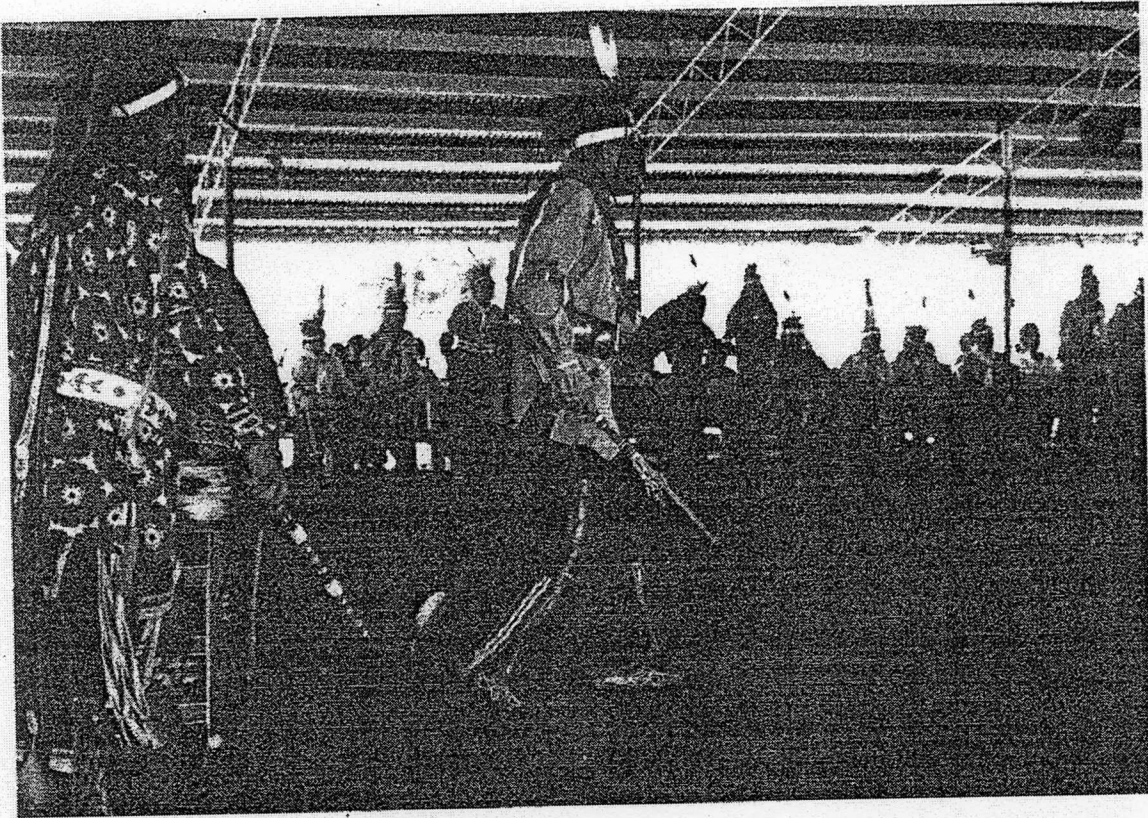
photo by
Joe Kazumura

American

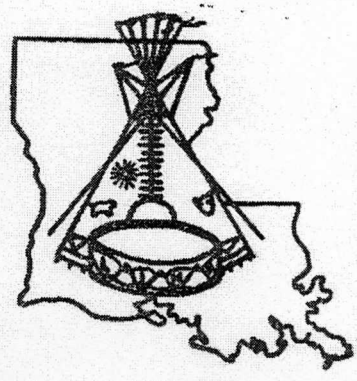
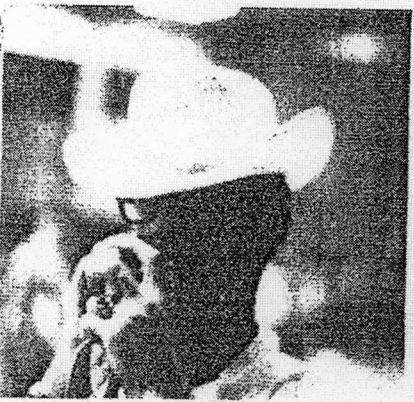
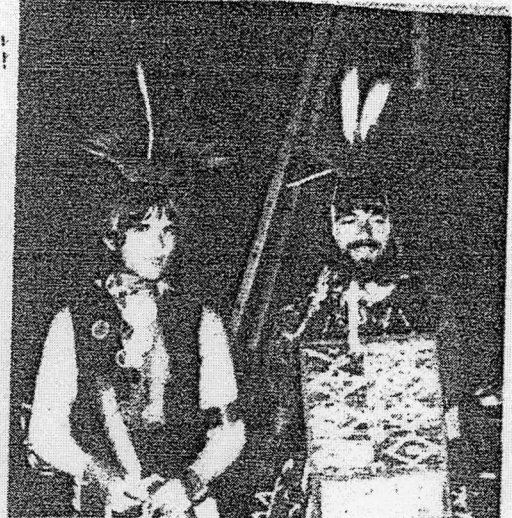
Indian

CRAFTS and CULTURE

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PHOTOS BY DICK MADANS

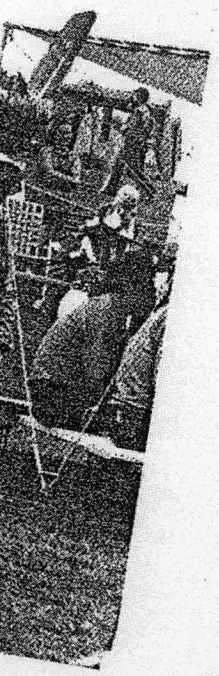
STRAIGHT

DANCERS



photos by
Joe Kazumura

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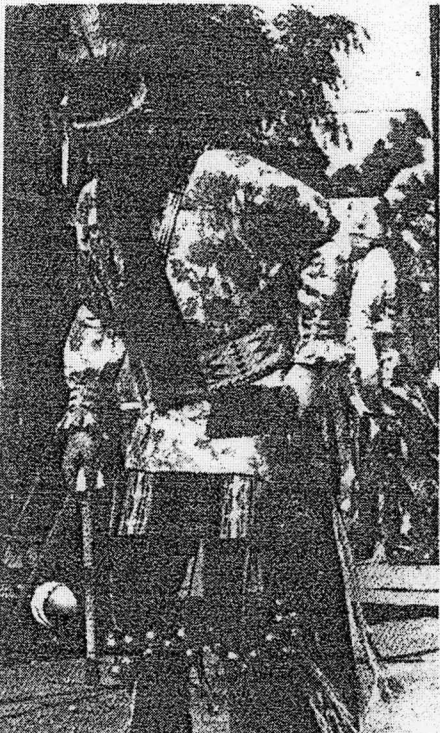


6



7

The dance cane is an item that must be given to the straight dancer. It is the symbol of the tail dancer, an honored position at all War Dances. The dance cane is the mark of honor that someone has bestowed upon its owner.



8

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- 1 - W. J. Scott
- 5 - Abe Conklin & Pat Tearney
- 6 - Gail Gondeck
- 7 - Forrest Kassanavoid
- 8 - Mike Tucker

9



February, 1975/15

MICROBAY 300

116



photo by Dick Madaus

Today, almost all straight dancers and many fancy dancers wear a pair of scalp feathers attached to their roache strings at either the right or left temple. These feathers were originally used to indicate battle honors and family ties, but now scalp feathers are considered a necessary part of straight dance clothing. A straight dancer is often honored with a gift of scalp feathers his first night in costume. In this day of changing Amerindian culture, scalp feathers remain one of the few items of dance clothing that are not worn until given to a dancer as an honor.

CONSTRUCTION

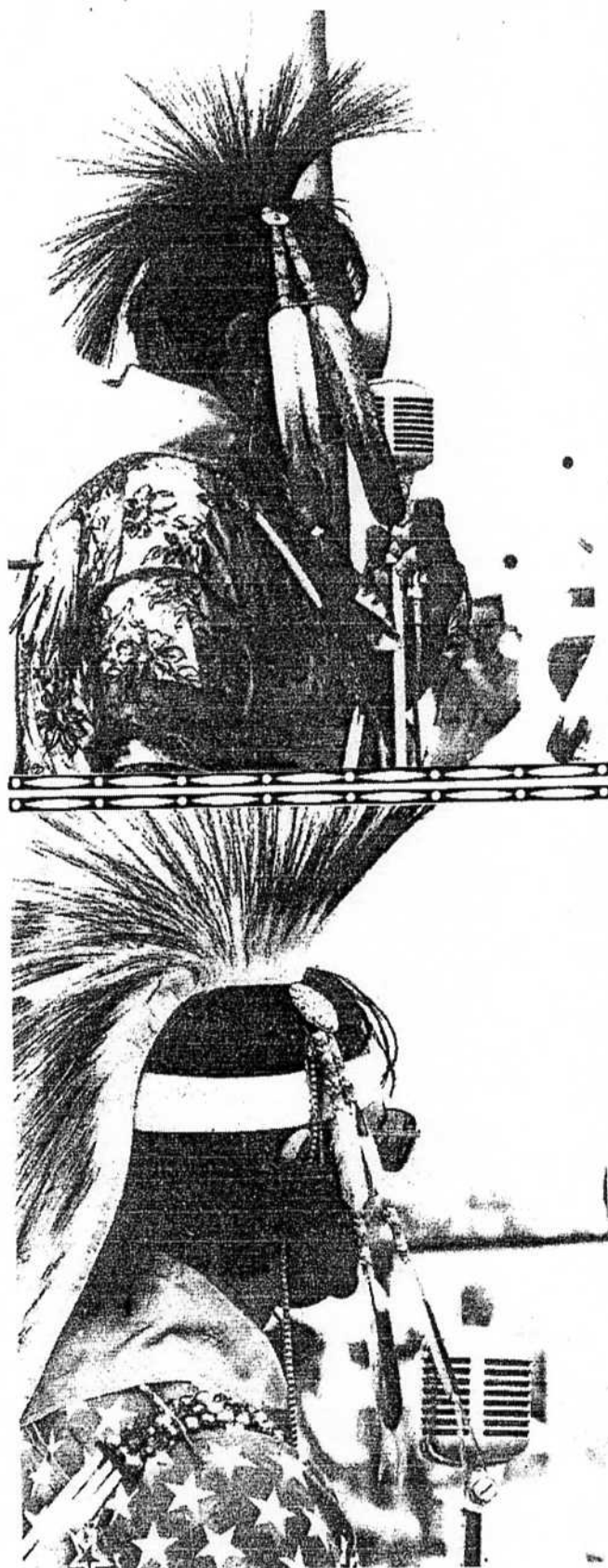
There is an endless choice of feathers and designs, but no scalp feather is very difficult to construct using this outline and taking your time. Many worn, frayed, broken or otherwise seemingly worthless feathers can be trimmed and converted into beautiful scalp ornaments.

1 CHOOSING THE FEATHERS

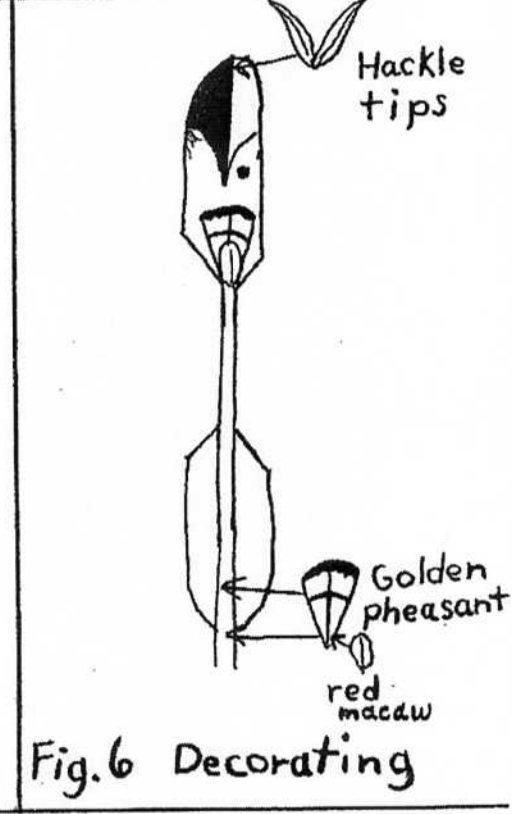
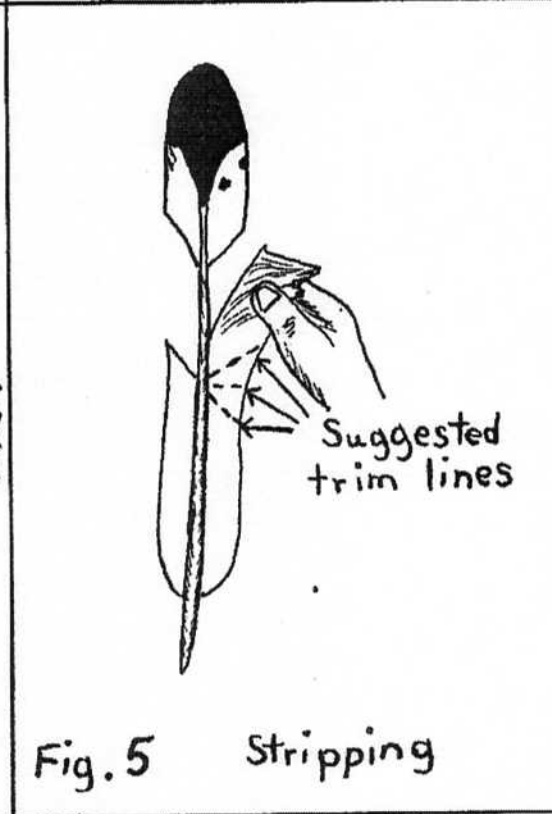
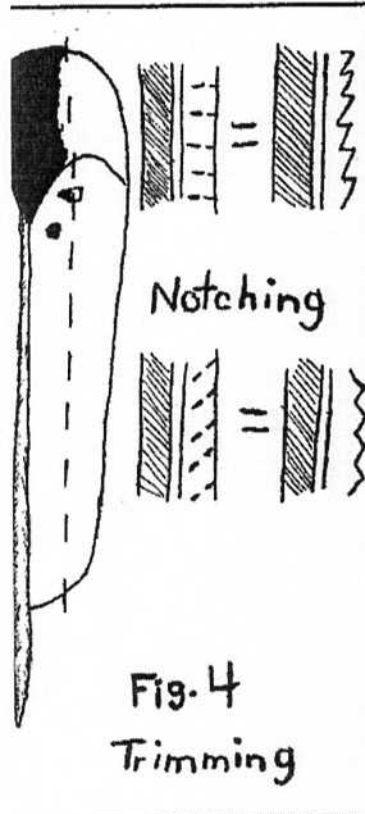
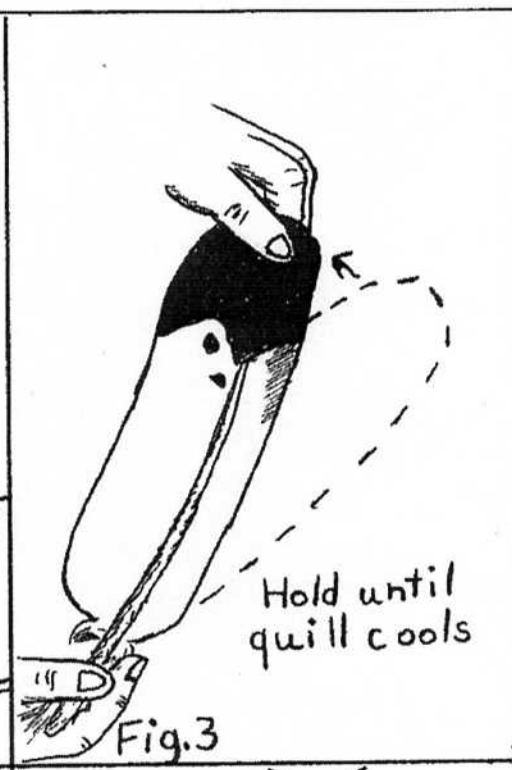
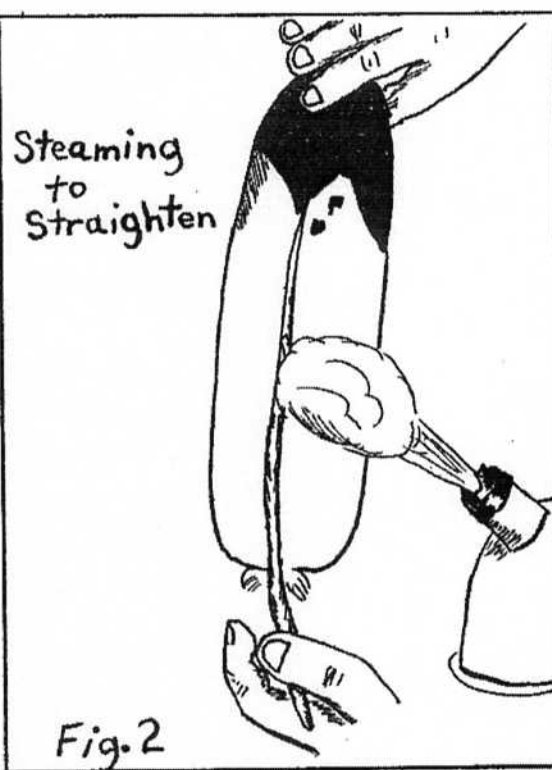
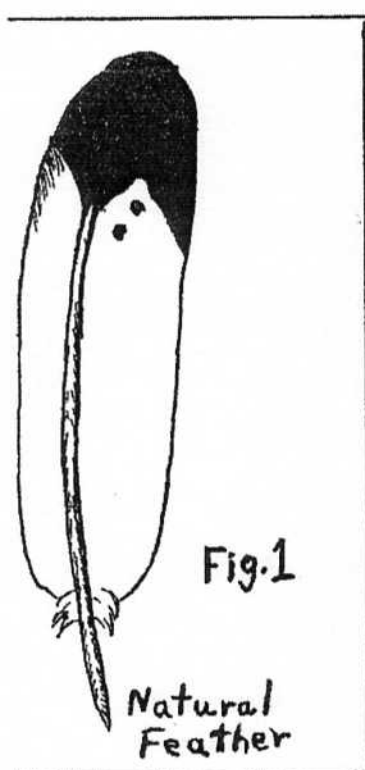
Practically any medium to large tail feathers can be used. Matched right and left pairs are preferred, but not essential. Frayed, worn edges should be trimmed. Many old feathers will be perfect after a good trimming job. Broken feathers can be spliced and extended using stripped quills or small dowels. Eagle, Macaw, and Hawk are preferred, but many new domestic turkey varieties are very attractive. Clusters of small feathers such as Flicker, Blue Jay, and Scissor-tail are occasionally seen and pairs of Road Runner, Pheasant and Magpie are also popular. Wing feathers are seldom used, but can be used if the need arises.

2 FEATHER STRAIGHTENING

I prefer to use a tea kettle and steam the feathers in order to straighten the shaft. The quill base is held in one hand while the other hand holds the quill tip (FIG. 2). The



TOP - Abe Conklin, Osage-Ponca;
photographed by Joe Kazumura.
BOTTOM - Ty Stewart, Tulsa, Oklahoma;



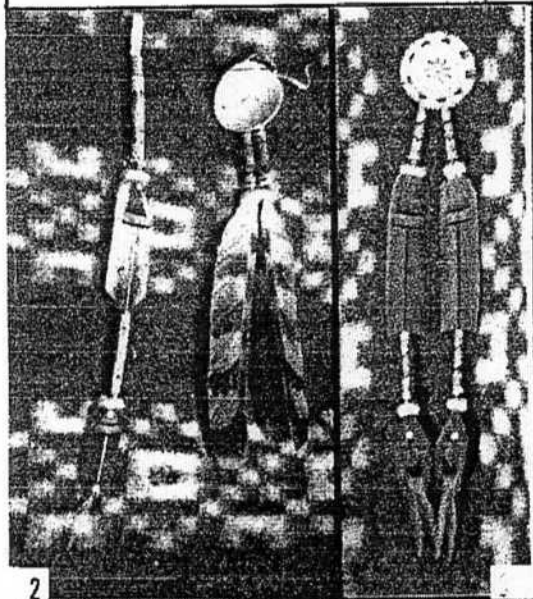
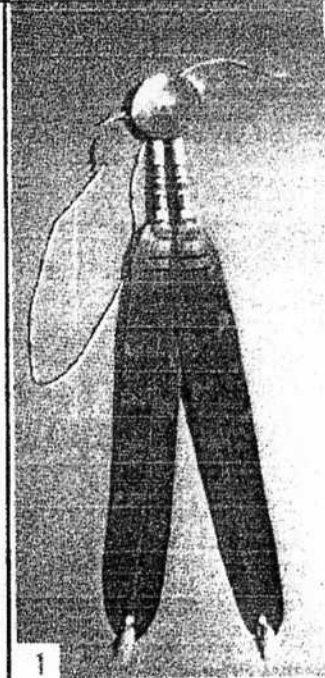
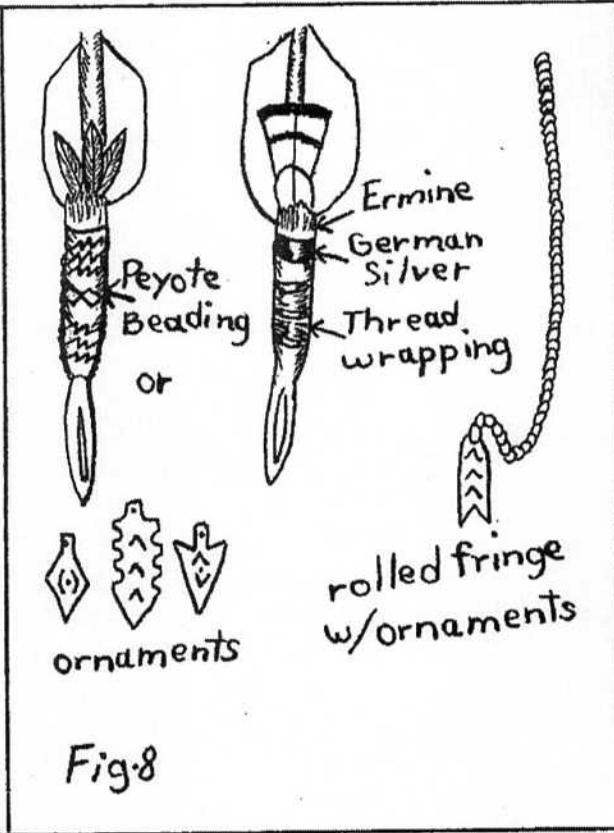
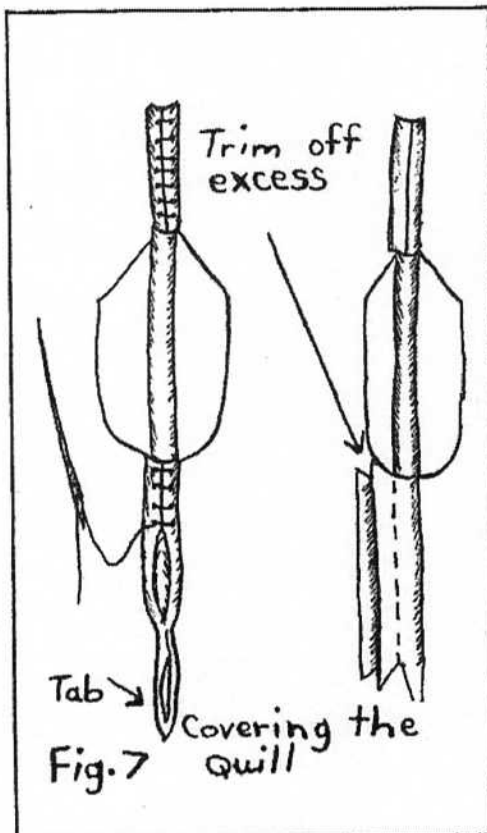


PHOTO 1: Trimmed eagle wing feathers. Constructed by the author. Note Abalone conch, ermine tips, rolled fringe with ferrules and ornament.

PHOTO 2: R- Hawk tail blades. Constructed by the author. Note the use of pink conch.

L- Stripped eagle secondary wing. Constructed by the author

PHOTO 3: Stripped macaw. Note decoration feathers. Constructed by the author.

BOTTOM R & L-Photos by Joe Kazumura



of the bend. When the quill gets hot and relaxes, the feather is removed from the steam and bent slightly against the natural curve of the shaft until the quill is cool again. (FIG. 3). This straightening method usually works well, but stubborn feathers may eventually get back to their original crease; especially in a hot, humid climate.

3 TRIMMING & STRIPPING

Most modern scalp feathers are trimmed and/or stripped. Using sharp scissors, cut against the lay of the feather vein to the desired width (usually one to two inches) with good, clean snips. A nice serrated edge may be obtained by using SHARP pinking shears or notching carefully in the manner illustrated in FIG. 4. If stripping is desired, simply catch the vein and pull downward until the correct length of stripping is reached. (FIG. 5) Cut the stripped vein with a sharp knife and repeat on the opposite side of the quill.

4 DECORATION FEATHERS

The most common decoration feathers are dyed hackle tips. These, if used, are usually applied to the quill tips and occasionally in the center of the feather. Small Parrot feathers, especially Macaw, can also be used at the quill base and at the top of the covered, stripped quill sections. Purchasing a Golden Pheasant, Amherst Pheasant or Reeves Pheasant skin is a good idea as these feathers are good substitutes for the harder to obtain Parrot feathers. "Elmers" glue is the most workable and neat glue I have found. One or two small drops applied to the quill of the decoration feather is all that is necessary. Sometimes a weight will help the glue spread and dry evenly. FIG. 6

5 COVERING THE QUILL


This step is very easily accomplished by applying glue to the quill and allowing it to get tacky. Doeskin is then sewed on using a "baseball" stitch. Be sure to leave a tab for tying to the rosette (FIG. 7)

6 DECORATING THE COVERED QUILL

This is done in one of two methods; thread wrapping or peyote beading. If you choose to thread wrap, take your time and do a good job. The best method is rotating the quill with one hand while holding the thread taut with the other. Peyote beading may be done with 13/0 cut beads or a smaller size, such as 16/0, which is sometimes preferred. (FIG. 8)

7 FINISHING TOUCHES

My favorite finishing touch is attaching an ermine skin collar with a German silver band, if Peyote beading is not used, and at the tip of any stripped sections. This is done by applying a small amount of glue to the base quill near the feather base and sewing a small piece of ermine skin on the tacky glue. A German silver band is then clamped over the ermine skin. Excess hair on the quill base side is then trimmed with scissors. An alternate method is to apply the ermine skin directly to the quill before it is covered with doeskin. Other nice touches are long rolled fringes with German silver ornaments attached, or German silver ferrules clamped to the fringe. Small doeskin spots can be glued to any exposed decoration feather bases to add both accent and a good, finished look. The feathers are then tied behind a beaded rosette, abalone conch, pink conch, or silver conch. (FIG. 9)

Remember, the choice of decoration is up to the maker. Take your time and have a finished product to be proud of. 

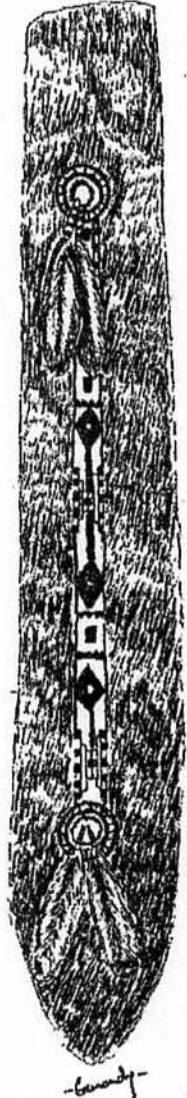


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OTTER DRAGGERS

by Rex Reddick

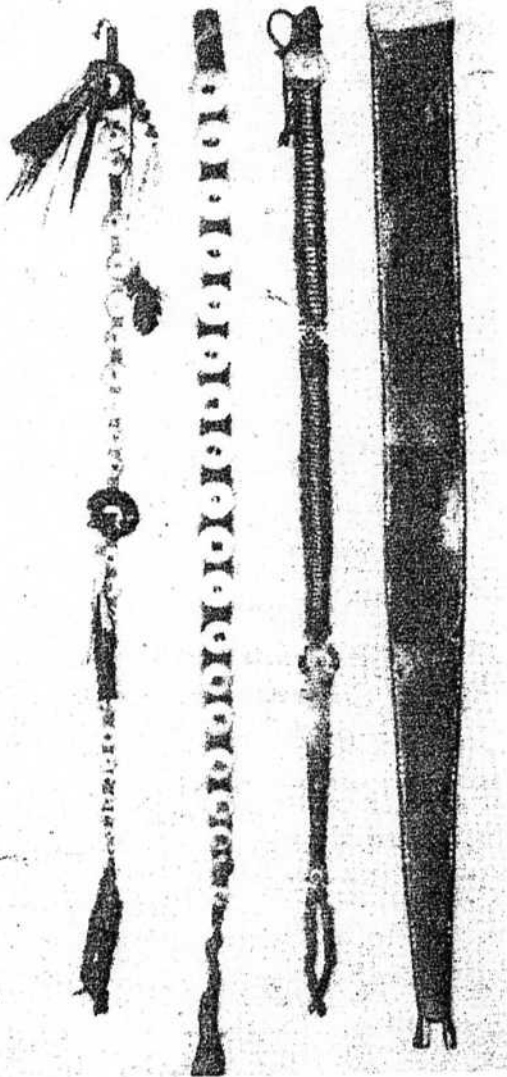
It is the purpose of this article to present what is currently in vogue today, with the greatest emphasis being placed upon the typical and most representative examples. For the sake of completeness, unusual and seldom seen examples will be mentioned only briefly.

Perhaps the most striking accessory of the Oklahoma straight dancer's costume is the long strip of otter fur that hangs down the length of his back from his neck to his heels. With its ribbonwork edging, beadwork, and feathers, it adds a measure of completeness to the outfit. Aside from the straight dancer's ribbonwork suit, this dragger, or drop as it is sometimes called, is usually one of the most expensive articles of the costume. This is why the straight dancer automatically reaches back and pulls his dragger around over one leg before sitting down. To sit on one's otter would be unthinkable.

This present day dragger has evolved from two things: namely the men's old time hair plate sets and the long fur trailers on grizzly claw necklaces. Both of these hang down the wearer's back similar to otter draggers of today with their many refinements and additions that have taken place over the years. An excellent series of photographs from the Museum of the American Indian showing this evolvement appears on page 5.

MATERIALS

Although the preferred material is generally otter, several substitutes are acceptable for the drag. These are mentioned because they are in widespread use due to the scarcity of the otter. Probably the most common variant is simulated otter fur, a good imitation available as a yard good in some of the larger fabric stores and Indian craft suppliers. The cost is usually 50¢ to \$2.00 per square foot. Another substitute is the use of the broadcloth backing without any type of fur, similar to the older sets of hairplates. This is usually red in color. Other substitutes observed occasionally were muskrat, beaver, horsehide with the hair intact, and sections cut from old fur coats.



Probable evolution of the modern straight dance otter dragger. L - R: A set of hair plates on a leather strap; a set of hair plates on an otter fur strip; a straight dancer dragger with two silver brooches; and a modern style straight dance trailer without decoration. Courtesy of the Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation. Photographed by Carmello Guadagno.

personal taste. Most fur averages four inches(4") in width, but can be anywhere from two and one'half(2½") to five inches (5") in width. The top section of the fur is an elongated rectangle, and the last 1/4 to 1/3 of the piece is tapered almost to a point.

CUTTING THE HIDE

Ideally, this strip is cut from the back center of the skin, (Fig.1). This is the darkest and most desirable section of fur and the method utilizes the entire tail of the animal, thus forming this tapered section. It is rare indeed to find an animal of the considerable length necessary for the average size person, so most drags have an added section spliced on at the tip. Usually, this splice can be positioned so that it is under one of the medallions and thus is invisible. It is cut from the leftover section of belly fur of the hide which is a somewhat lighter color than the center portion.

When cutting the hide, it should be stretched slightly and tacked, with the hair side down, to a large piece of plywood. It can then be measured with a yardstick and marked with a ballpoint pen. All cutting is done from the flesh side, starting at the head and cutting towards the tail. Cut very lightly, only deep enough to cut through the skin, and be sure to use a brand new single-edge razor blade. Even slightly used blades are dull and tend to rip the hide instead of cutting it, causing the cut edges to be ragged.



photos right by dick madaus

CONSTRUCTION

The length of the dragger is the distance from the neck of the dancer to one to three inches above the floor. This clearance is necessary in order to prevent its being stepped on, either by the wearer himself or by other dancers. Nothing is more annoying than to be dancing along in a slightly bent over position and become the first person to be "hung" while wearing straight dance clothes, or to look back after a sickening tug at the throat and see a half dozen people dancing on your otter.

The width of the piece of fur itself depends on the individual as well as his

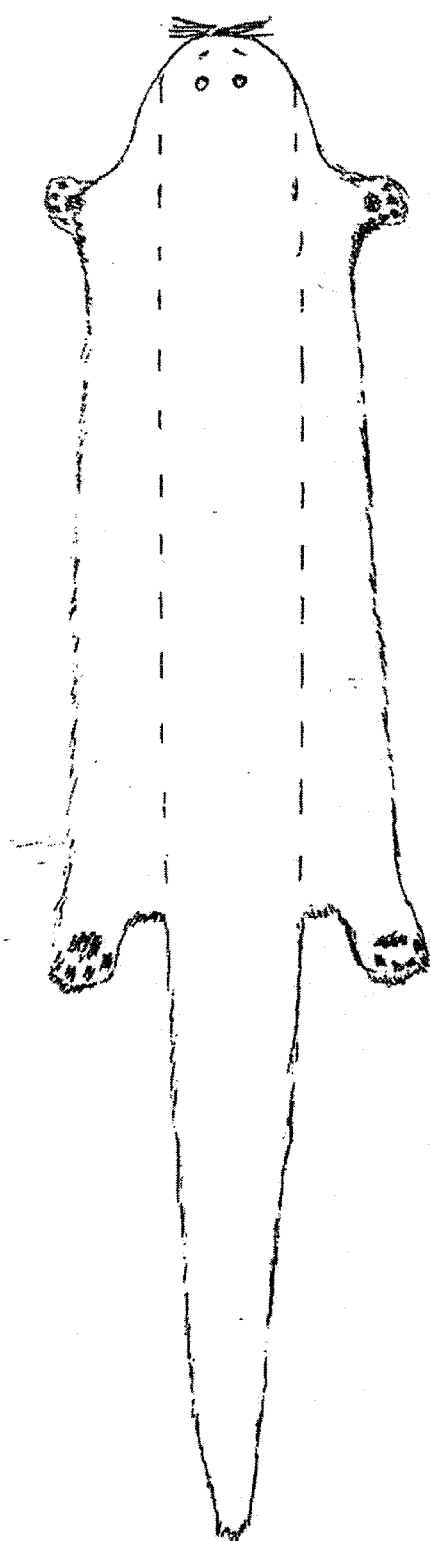


Fig. 1

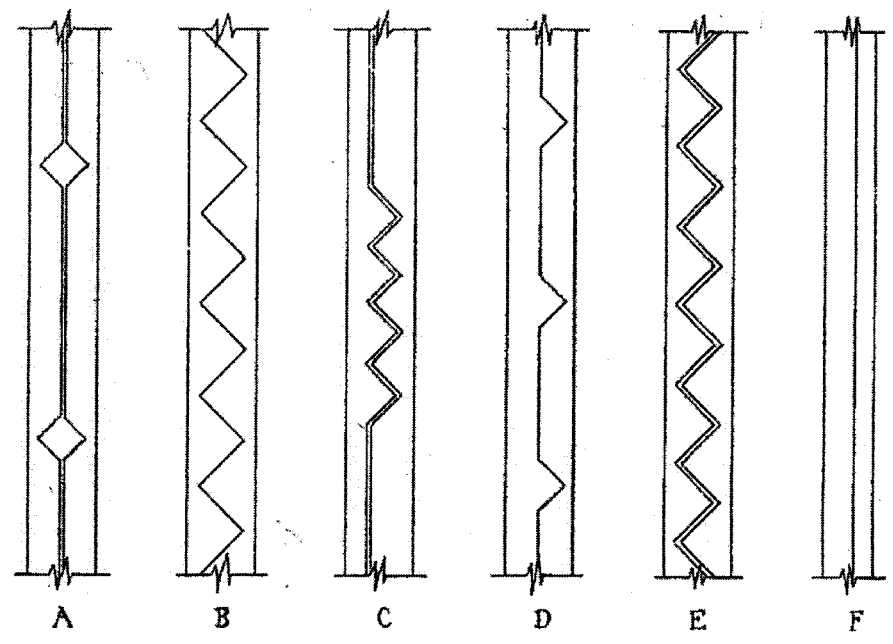
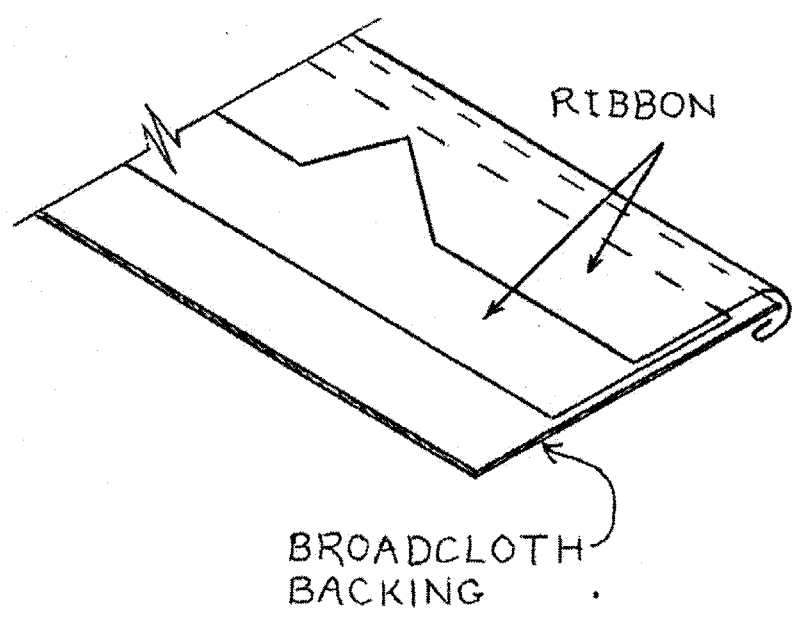


Fig. 2



EDGING DETAIL

Fig. 3

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
 REX
 REDDICK

The next step is splicing the fur. Simply place the two pieces together, fur-to-fur, and whip stitch, taking about one-eighth (1/8) inch stitches from the flesh side. Then unfold the piece and make certain that none of the hair has been caught in the stitching. This will make a joint that is very hard to see, even at a distance of several feet or less.

MOUNTING THE FUR

To mount the fur on the backing, a good thread to use is the new clear nylon monofilament. Its elasticity can be eliminated by stretching it almost to the breaking point before threading the needle. Its clearness renders it virtually invisible after being sewn into place. A whip stitch or blind stitch may be used.

The backing used for the otter should be somewhat wider than the strip of fur and its edges finished with two or three colors of ribbonwork. A good backing material is a strip of broadcloth that matches the leggings and aprons, though it rarely does. If broadcloth is used, it is cut from the cloth so that the selvedge edge runs across the top and bottom of the dragger. This, of course, is the most economical method. (See Dec. 72 & April, 73 issues of WHISPERING WIND Mag.). A good grade of wool cloth or wool felt is often used if broadcloth is not available.

RIBBONWORK DECORATION

The outside edges of this strip of cloth are finished with ribbonwork similar to that used on the leggings and breechcloth, although only two or three ribbons are used. (See Figure 7 for appropriate designs).

Choose a light color for the inside ribbon so as to contrast with the dark fur, and for the outside ribbon, a darker color can be used. This will contrast with the light color ribbon and the white edge beading that goes down both sides of the dragger.

Another method of ribbonwork (other than that of cutting, folding under, and sewing down) that might be used here is the "zig-zag" type. This lends itself particularly well to any two ribbon designs such as those shown in FIG. 2 - B & D.

Still another technique is that of using two ribbons and merely stitching them down without cutting. This is by far the easiest and fastest method, and is illustrated in FIG. 2 - F.



TOP - Forrest Kassanavoid, Comanche;
Dallas, Texas

PHOTOS BY JOE KAZUMURA





photo by joe kazumura

DRAGGER DECORATION

Now the dragger is ready for its decorations, which are as many and varied as there are dancers. Each one is decorated according to the owner's taste, although there are several basic outlines of decoration that are almost universally followed. These are illustrated in FIG'S. 4 - 8. To achieve individuality many of the decorations are mixed according to the particular desires of the individual dancers.

The one item that is always used is some type of medallion. They may be in the form of beaded medallions (by far the most common) german silver brooches, or mirrors. Preferably these match, but it is not uncommon to see two beaded rosettes of different design and color used on the same otter. They may be the same size, or they may be graduated, with the largest at the top. Their diameter is usually a fraction less than the width of the fur, but many can be observed from as small as one-half this width, to as large as an inch or so wider.

The most common number of these medallions used is two or three, and quite often a loom beaded strip (in geometric designs) is placed between the two upper ones.

This strip may either stop at the middle medallion or extend on towards the bottom of the dragger, sometimes ending in tabs as shown in FIG'S. 5 & 6. The width of this strip varies from approximately one inch to almost as wide as the fur itself and its length may range from about 1/6 to about 1/2 the length of the dragger.

As often as not, rosettes of horsehair, deerhair, or clipped fluffs are placed under the medallions, thus adding 1/2 inch to an inch to the overall diameter. These are usually of a contrasting color to the medallion's background. Examples are FIG'S. 5, 7, & 8.

FEATHER DECORATION

The other principal type of decoration used is the highly decorated feather, such as that used in loose fans and for scalp feathers. Customarily, these are used in pairs, with one exception; the large eagle tail plume which is found so often toward the bottom of the otter. This type of decoration occurs in FIG'S. 4, 5, & 7.

The bases of the feathers are frequently beaded with gourd stitch or covered with leather and decorated with threadwork, with decorative feathers such as hackles, small pheasant macaw, or other parrot at their bases. Occasionally the tips of these feathers are decorated, also.

Types of feathers used are tail feathers from the eagle, which are by far the most common; the macaw and any of the numerous varieties of hawks, from red-tail to Harris. When tail feathers are not available, straightened wing feathers are often substituted. (See April 1973 issue, WHISPERING WIND Mag. for methods of feather decoration and straightening).

photo by joe kazumura



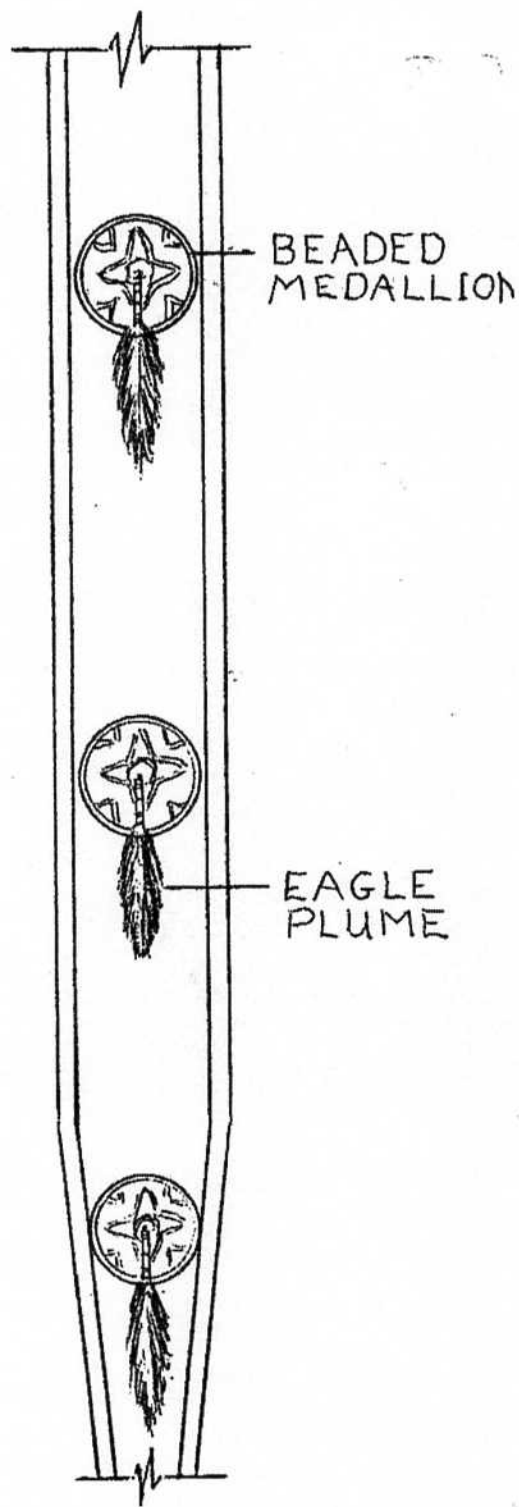


Fig. 4

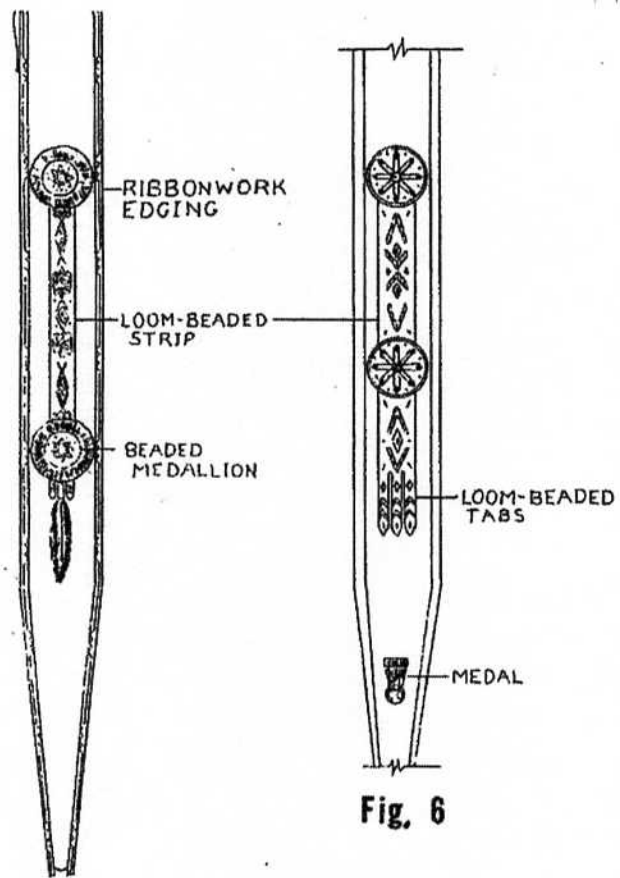


Fig. 5

Fig. 6

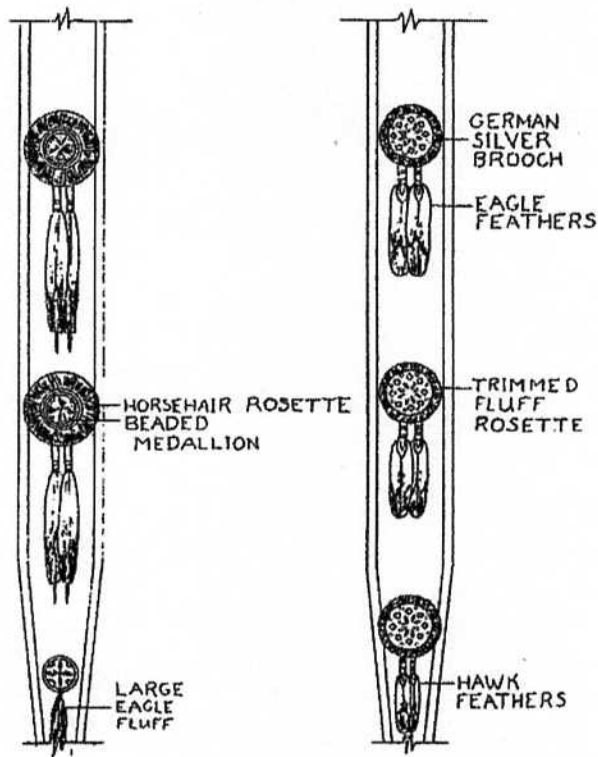



Fig. 7

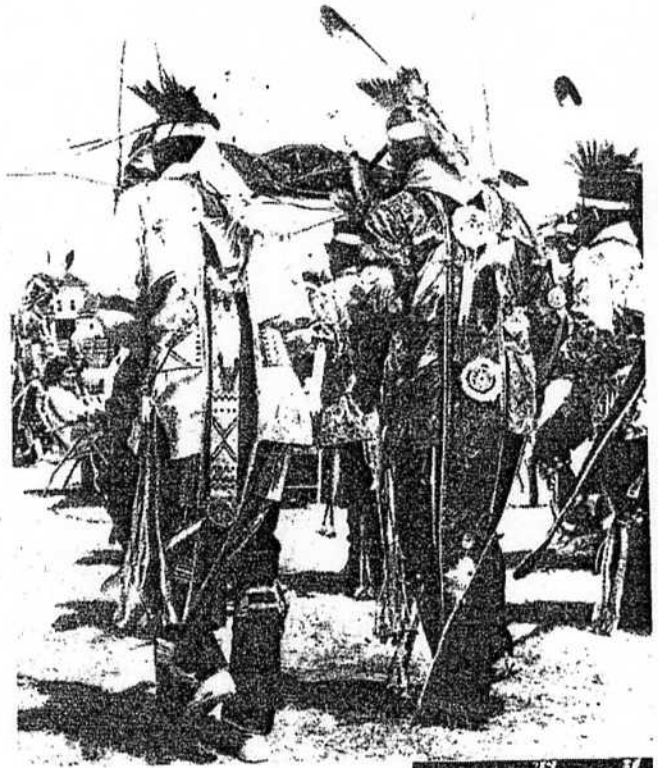
Fig. 8

Usually both types of feathers are straightened before decorating and quite often are trimmed down in width, especially in the case of wing feathers so that they will more closely resemble tail feathers. Another technique used here is that of trimming one or both sides of the feather in a notching cut rather than a straight one. This type of trimming is especially peculiar to eagle feathers, while hawk are seldom trimmed and macaw are almost always left intact.

OTHER DECORATIONS

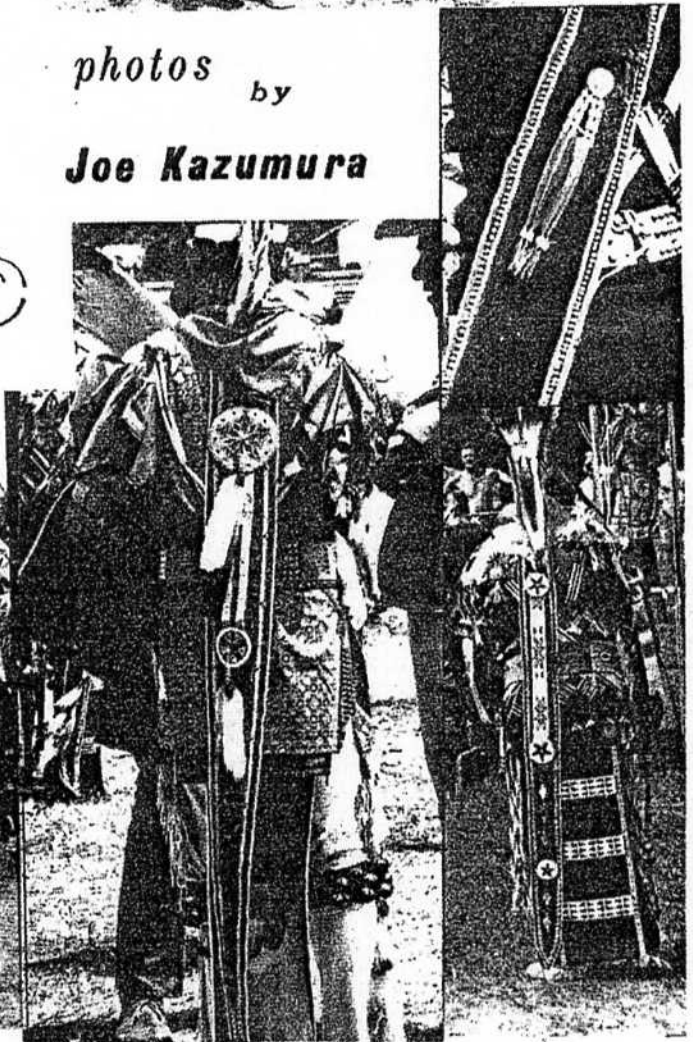
Of course there are numerous other variations in use today. Several of these include such things as a Comanche man with a purple heart pinned toward the bottom of his otter, a rhinestone pin instead of a medallion, white satin ribbon with the end rounded and painted black to simulate eagle feathers, etc.

These variations, added to the rich, tailored look of the otter, provide an outstanding addition to the straight dancer's outfit. Each otter dragger is an identifying mark of the dancer himself and also is the "finishing touch" for his outfit. 



photos by

Joe Kazumura



THE PONCA HETHUSKA SOCIETY

There are as many different versions of the origin of the Ponca Hethuska Society as there are in the ways it is seen in written text. Some of the more popular versions have been Hethuska; Hethushka; Hayoshka; Helushka; Heduska; Haethuska; Helocka and Hecucka, with the most commonly accepted version used today among the Ponca and Omaha spelt Hethuska and pronounced as (neh-THOO-shka). Unfortunately, the exact translation of the word has been lost. Although recently, some linguistic scholars studying the Dhegiha dialect have theorized, after consulting with living Ponca informants, that the term may have gone through a plausible evolutionary process. Jim Duncan, a current member of the Ponca Hethuska Society, addresses the possible evolved meaning of Hethuska in his Masters Thesis completed in 1997 titled, "Hethuska Zani: An Ethnohistory of the War Dance Complex," when he states:

"The best linguistic evidence indicates the word is similar to the Osage term for the War Dance, IN-lon-shka. IN-loN is the archaic term for 'thunder,' and shka is the root word for 'play,' or shka-the. Therefore being, 'a place to enjoy oneself.' One interpretation being, 'those who revel in thunder.' (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911, p. 459) The term Xthe-xe (pronounced hley-hey), is the word referring to the elite tattooed warriors, who pledged to carry the sacred war hawk in battle. In Omaha, this term also refers to the Mark of Honor or tattoos on these warriors. The Omaha warriors were dedicated to War and Thunder. The reconstruction therefore, of the term Xthe-xe-shka would be 'for the enjoyment of the tattooed ones,' or 'the place the honored ones enjoy themselves.' (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911, pp. 219-220; LaFlesche, 1930, p. 531; LaFlesche, 1931, p. 132)" (Duncan, 1997, p. 2)

Some scholars such as James Murie (1914), Clark Wissler (1916) and James Howard (1965) have theorized that, "Hethuska dances probably came to the Ponca from the Pawnee." (Howard, 1965, p. 132) In his work titled "Pawnee Indian Societies," James Murie states that the earliest form of Omaha Dance came from the Pawnee around 1820, who called the dance I-ru-ska or "the fire is in me." (Murie, 1914, p. 608) The Iruska Dance, sometimes referred to as the "Hot Dance", had as it's focal point, the act of drawing meat chunks from a boiling kettle. During the 1820s, Murie believes the Pawnee gave or sold the Iruska to the Omaha tribe, which referred to their version of the dance ritual as the Hethuska. It is further believed by Murie and Wissler that in the early 1840s, the Omaha sold the right to perform the dance and it's songs to the Yanktonai Dakota, who soon after gave performance rights to the Teton Lakota. Both nations called the ceremony "Omaha Dance" in honor of the people from whom they had bought it.

According to Tara Browner in her book titled "Heartbeat of the People: Music and Dance of the Northern Pow-Wow", she gives the following explanation:

"The Pawnee Iruska is, as are most Plains male dances, associated with a warrior society. According to Pawnee oral tradition, the dance was received through a vision by a man named Crow-Feather. While Crow-Feather was in a trance-like state, the spirits gifted him with a porcupine and deer-hair roach and a crow bustle or "belt." A roach is a crest of stiff porcupine guard hairs with a deer-hair center that male dancers wear on their heads; a bustle is the spray of feathers worn on their backs. Crow belts, a specific type of bustle made from the carcass of a crow, wings spread, are the precursors of the more formalized eagle-feather bustles used today."

"In addition to the regalia items, Crow-Feather received special medicines (spiritual powers) enabling him to pull chunks of meat from a boiling kettle without burning himself, a gesture that imitates the act of hunters pulling steaming entrails from the stomachs of newly killed game."

"An important part of any vision is it's uniqueness, and we should assume that the Pawnee had never used the roach and crow belt—at least not in this combination or specific style—that came to them for the first time through Crow-Feather's vision. In addition to goods and medicines, the spirits also granted Crow-Feather forty songs to sing during the Iruska ceremony, and he was to be accompanied by four men playing water drums. Because the Pawnee, a Southern tribe of Caddoan cultural origins, moved to the area of modern-day Nebraska after 1750, it is entirely possible that they were unfamiliar with regalia items more common to the Northern Plains and to prairie people. When the Pawnee gave the right to form this warrior society to the Omaha/Ponca Nation (at that time a single tribe that also claimed to have originated the society), the four water drums were replaced by a single large drum, commonly referred to as the "big drum." Ornamental whips, and in some cases one or two U.S. Army swords, were added to the ceremonial regalia. Based on a study of the spread of these items, the roach, and the crow belt, Wissler concluded that he was tracing the diffusion of the Omaha/Grass Dance as a song/dance ritual entity." (Browner, 2002, pp. 21-23)

Browner's theories as to the Pawnee origin of the Omaha/Ponca Hethuska Society are based on the work of the Curator of Anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History at the time, Dr. Clark Wissler (1916). Wissler's work in part, had relied on the research done on the Pawnee by James Murie (1914) two years earlier. However, Browner's work (2002), provides the reader with a good example of how many subsequent works since 1916 have cited Wissler, such as James Howard (1965), Gloria Young (1981), Josephine Paterek (1994), William Powers (1994), Ann Axtmann (1999) and Nicholas Belle (2004), and generally accept Wissler's conclusions without questioning his analysis, regardless of his self-proclaimed lack of data, to back his conclusions. See Wissler (1916, pp. 858-864).

The Rev. James Owen Dorsey served as an amateur ethnographer among the Ponca in Nebraska from 1871 to 1873 and later went on to publish many important works on the Ponca, Omaha and Osage. In many of Rev. Dorsey's field notes for the period 1872 to 1896, he frequently states that the Hethuska is of Ponca origin.

By 1892, Alice C. Fletcher had already spent 11 years living amongst the Omaha and learning their culture with the help of Francis LaFlesche, a member of the Omaha tribe and son of a former principal Chief of the Omaha. It was her belief that the Omaha/Ponca had the songs and dances of the Hethuska Society before the Pawnee, and stated her views in her work, "Hae-thu-ska Society of the Omaha Tribe,"

"The Hae-thu-ska Society of the Omahas probably originated in that tribe, at least as to it's present form. So ancient are these

people, and during the centuries they have touched and been affected by so many other groups, that it would be unsafe to say that any particular society or any particular custom was exclusively developed and maintained by this or any one tribe. The guesses at the meaning of the name Hae-thu-ska are still only guesses, so that little if any clue can thus be gained as to the origin of the society."
(Fletcher, 1892, p. 136)

By 1911, Alice Fletcher had lived amongst the Omaha for some 30 years when she and Francis LaFlesche collaborated their efforts to produce the detailed and extensive work titled "The Omaha Tribe." In a section on Social Societies within their major work comprising the 27th Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology it states,

"Among the societies of the social class one of the largest and most important was the Hethu'shka. Tradition and song indicate that this society was known when the Omaha, the Ponca, and their close cognates were living together as one tribe."
(Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911, p. 459)

The close cognates of the Omaha and Ponca that Alice Fletcher and Francis LaFlesche refer to in the above passage were the Osage, Kansa and Quapaw. Evidence already presented has shown that the five cognate tribes of the Dhegiha linguistic group, being the Omaha, Ponca, Osage, Kansa, and Quapaw, were believed to have lived together as one tribe circa 1500 AD, just before they began to split up.

In Alanson Skinner's work titled "Ponca Societies and Dances" published in 1915, some 38 years after the Ponca had been removed from their home in Nebraska to the "Indian Territory" in Oklahoma, he quoted a Ponca informant in relation to the "Hel'ocka" Men's Society stating,

"According to Charlie Collins, this society originated among the Ponca, and was founded by a woman who dreamed she went to another world where she saw Indians dancing. There was another form of the dance called Can Helocka which is said to have been borrowed from the Sioux."
(Skinner, 1915, p. 784)

Why these works consistently citing the Omaha/Ponca origins of the Hethuska Society, which preceded Wissler's 1916 work titled "General Discussion of Shamanistic and Dancing Societies," seem to have been ignored by Wissler is still speculative. By 1939, there was ample evidence, provided by the writings of Francis LaFlesche, to place some serious doubts on Wissler's Pawnee origin conclusions. However, LaFlesche's work, though extensive, was ignored by his contemporaries and Wissler's flawed work continues to be cited and compounded in subsequent literature.

In a recent work completed in 1997, Jim Duncan has compiled an impressive set of resource material from archaeological, ethnographic and contemporary oral tradition sources in support of the Ponca Hethuska traditions and the Pawnee Iruska traditions having both derived from a common ancestral form dating back to the prehistoric Southeastern Ceremonial Complex (aka "The Southern Cult" in earlier literature) of the Middle Mississippian Culture between 800 and 1550 AD. Duncan clearly gives evidence that the Omaha, Ponca and others of the Dhegihan linguistic group within the Siouan language family are descendants of the people of the Ohio River Valley area, which in the archaeological literature is referred to as the Ft. Ancient Aspect of the Middle Mississippian Culture. The Pawnee and others of the Caddoan language family are then firmly linked as descendants of the people of southeastern Oklahoma area known in archaeological terms as the Spiro Aspect of the Middle Mississippian Culture.

Once we get past the variations on the origin of the Ponca Hethuska Society, it is then important to know what the historical purpose of the Hethuska Society was within its cultural context, from the earliest known sources through the recent times. Written sources on the subject cover a large time period with many evolutionary changes to the nature of the Society and its dance ceremony. Therefore, in the interest of complete disclosure of the known material on the topic, the author will quote from the main references used in most research on this topic in chronological order, (Fletcher, 1892); (Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911); (Skinner, 1915); (Howard, 1965); and (Duncan, 1997), which give the detailed, documented information, specifically on the Omaha-Ponca Hethuska Society. The reader should keep in mind that when early sources speak of the dance being held inside a lodge, it is in reference to the traditional earthlodge.

From: "Hae-thu-ska Society of the Omaha Tribe", by Alice C. Fletcher, 1892, Journal of American Folk-lore, Vol. 5, No. 17.

"The Hae-thu-ska Society was also composed of warriors, but its membership included chiefs and privates. The rules were democratic in principle, and were carried out in practice. No special honor belonged to the chief; he was rated as an equal with the other members. No man was eligible to the Hae-thu-ska who had not won, through the ceremonies of the Tent of War, the right to proclaim his warlike deeds. Such a man might be invited to meet with the society, and if no one objected to him he became a member. If a member was unable to attend a meeting of the society he was permitted, if he was a man of good standing, to send his son to represent him, but this attendance did not entitle the young man to membership. No matter how high the honors of the father, these could not be credited to his son: nothing but ceremonially approved deeds of valor could give a man place within the Hae-thu-ska."

"The officers comprised a Leader, a Herald, and two Servers of the Feast. The Leader held his office for life, or until he resigned. When the office became vacant the aspirant to the position made a feast, to which all the members of the society were invited, and his desire being made known, if there was no objection, he by general consent became Leader. Such a man, however, must be one whose successful leadership of war parties had made him noted among the people. His seat was at the back of the lodge, opposite the door."

"The society met at irregular intervals, but generally about once a month, and always in the same lodge. Some member honored in the tribe and possessing a commodious dwelling entertained the society, but did not provide the feast except when he specified his desire to do so. The food furnished for each gathering was a voluntary contribution of some member, who obeyed the tribal custom which forbids the giver of a feast to partake of it. The seat assigned to the giver of the feast was near

the entrance of the lodge, on the right as one enters. When the Leader contributed the food he was obliged to leave his official seat, and occupy the place belonging to the feast-giver. Each member of the society had his appointed place in the circle about the lodge. The singers were grouped around the drum, which was placed on the left hand of the Leader."

"The society had its peculiar regalia. The members cut their hair close on each side of their head, and left a tuft a few inches wide, extending from the forehead to back of the crown, where it met the scalp-lock. No clothing was worn except the breech-cloth, and at the back a long bunch of grass was fastened in the belt. Each man painted in accordance with the directions given him when he passed through the ceremonies of receiving his honors at the Tent of War. The Leader, and other men distinguished for their skill and success in war, wore an ornament called Ka-hae, or crow. This was made of two sticks like arrow shafts, painted green, and feathered, like the stems of the fellowship pipes, with feathers of the buzzard; tufts of crow plumage and long pendants reaching nearly to the ground, made of crow feathers, completed this ornament, which was worn at the back fastened to the belt, the two shafts rising to the man's shoulder blades. The men wearing the Ka-hae; painted the front of their bodies and their arms and legs with daubs of black; their faces and backs were completely covered with black paint, but on their backs, white spots were put on the black color. Comparatively few men attained sufficient eminence as warriors to wear the Ka-hae and paint themselves in this manner. The blackened face and dappled limbs and front were emblematic of the thunder clouds and their destructive power as they advance over the heavens, even as the warrior approaches his victim dealing his death-darts. The blackened back with its white spots indicated the dead body of the enemy, which the birds were busy pecking, leaving their droppings as they tore away the fast-decaying flesh. The crow was worn, as it was said to be the first to find a corpse, and later was joined by other birds of prey. The tuft of grass worn by all the members of the Hae-thu-ska bore a twofold signification: it represented the tail of the Me-ka-thu, or wolf, the animal closely allied to the warrior, and it also symbolized the scalp of the vanquished enemy."

"There are two classes of warlike deeds, which are distinguished in according honors:

"1st. Nu ah-tah'-the-sha. Literally the words mean, in the direction of men, signifying that the warrior has gone forth seeking men to fight; one whose warfare has been aggressive, and away from home."

"2nd. Wa-oo ah-tah'-the-sha, or Tee ah-tah'-the-sha. Literally the words mean, in the direction of woman, or in the direction of the tent or home; defensive warfare, as when the camp or village has been attacked and valorously defended. Only men of the first class, those whose aggressive warfare has become noted, and confirmed through the ceremonies of the Tent of War, are eligible to the office of Leader, or permitted to wear the Ka-hae and paint in black as already described."

"Warriors of the second class thrust an arrow through their scalp-lock, or carried a bow and arrow in their hand. Later, when guns were used, these men streaked their faces and bodies with black, to indicate the grime of the gunpowder on their perspiring bodies in the heat of action."

"After the members were gathered the Leader took some box-elder wood and charred it over the fire; with this the body and face were to be painted. While the wood was charring, the following song was sung by all present:"

"Nun-g'thae Thae-tae
He-tha'-ke-un'-tae ah thun-ah' he dae.
The coal which is here,
I am weary waiting to paint myself with it."

"The idea conveyed by the song is not that of literally waiting until one is tired for the wood to char, that the ceremony of painting may take place, but indicates the desire that fills the brave man's breast, even to the taxing of his strength to weariness, for the opportunity to perform feats of daring, to risk his life for valor and for honor, that he may become a bulwark to his kindred, to his tribe, and a terror to their enemies. The music conveys more than the words alone would tell; in its cadences one not only enters into the warrior's eagerness, but is reminded of the strange, portentous stir that fills the air, and affects man and beast, when the mighty storm is seen blackening the horizon. The power and naturalness of this song are noteworthy."

"After the ceremony of painting was completed, the Leader took up the pipe belonging to the society, which the giver of the feast had already filled, and scattered some tobacco on the earth; then he lifted the stem of the pipe upward, paused a moment, and slowly pointed it to the north, east, south and west. During these movements the society sang this prayer:

"Wa-kan-da, tha-ne ga-thae-kae.
Ae-ha tha-ne hin ga wae-tho-hae tho.
Wakanda (God), I give tobacco (in this pipe).
Wilt thou not smoke the tobacco."

"The last four words are musical syllables. The music is a dignified choral. After this prayer and offering, the pipe was passed around, each member in his turn taking a whiff, and the opening ceremonies came to an end."

"Shortly, the singers about the drum struck up one of the songs belonging to the society, a song suitable for dancing, and whoever was so moved rose, and dropping his robe in his seat, stepped forth nude, except his embroidered breech-cloth and decoration of grass or feathers. Bells were sometimes worn about the ankles, or bound below the knee, and added a castanet effect, marking the rhythm of the song and dance, and adding to the scene, so full of color, movement and wild melody."

"As the members danced they exhibited in a conventionalized pantomime their exploits on the warpath. A variety of steps were taken; the foot was placed strongly and flat upon the ground with a thud; the limbs were lifted at a sharp angle to the body, which bent and rose with sudden and diversified movements. There was not a motion of foot, leg, body, arm or head that did not follow in strict time the accent of the song. The throb of the drum started the pulses of the spectator, and held him to the rhythm of the scene, as the eye followed the rapid, tense action of the dancer, and the ear caught the melody which revealed

the intent of the strange drama."

"The intense character of the dance, its violent movements, made it impossible to be sustained for any length of time; the songs and dances are therefore short. Resting songs followed a dance, during which dancers sat muffled in their robes, dripping with perspiration, and panting to regain their breath."

"All this time the food was cooking over the fire, for little if anything was prepared beforehand, and when the viands were nearly ready the two Servers advanced, and performed a peculiar dance to certain songs which belong to this peculiar ceremonial way of announcing to the company that refreshments were about to be served. The two Servers must be men who have broken the necks of an enemy, either in aggressive or defensive warfare."

"It is a custom in the Hae-thu-ska Society to serve the food with two sticks; if these were not provided, then the naked hand must be thrust in the boiling pot to take out the meat. The choice portions were selected and given to the bravest man present. If a dish of dog was among the dainties, the head was presented to one who had broken the neck of an enemy."

"After all the members were served, the Leader rose, and in an address of some length, replete with native eloquence, thanked the host of the evening for the feast he had provided. The Leader discoursed upon the vital need of food for the preservation of the race; how it was sought amid trials, dangers and hardships, so that food represented both a man's valor and industry, and was the greatest of gifts, since without it no man could live."

"Such a gift being provided, no one should partake of it without first thanking the giver, not forgetting to include his wife and children, who have relinquished to strangers, their share in this great necessity of mankind. At the close of this speech each one betakes himself to the food so graciously offered and received."

"When all had finished, the man to whom the dog's head was given held up the bone, now destitute of flesh, and recounted the stories of his battles. The singers struck up a dance song, and the narrator rose and acted out the story he had just recited."

"If the warrior possessed dramatic talent, he was not apt to let the opportunity slip of recording a triumph not only for his skill in war, but for his histrionic powers."

"On entering the tent all members turned to the left, and passed around the lodge to their respective seats. The same order was preserved in going out; he who sat with the door to his left hand passed out first, and so on round the lodge, every one moving to the left. At the close of the evening, the song of dismissal was sung:"

"Ku-tha na-zhe-thae,
Ku-tha ma-the-thae.
Friends arise,
Friends walk forth!"

"All joined in this grand choral, as the members sedately moved out into the night, the last man completing the circle of the tent as the final note was sounded under the stars."
(Fletcher, 1892, pp. 136-142)

From: "The Omaha Tribe", by Alice C. Fletcher and Francis LaFlesche, 1911, Bureau of American Ethnology 27th Annual Report 1905-06, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

"Among the Omaha the ceremonies of the Hethu'shka formerly partook of tribal importance. The Kon'ce, or 'Wind People', were the custodians of the two pipes sacred to the rites observed in the opening ceremonies when the members met together. There were occasions when the Hethu'shka members moved in a procession around the hu'thuga (tribal circle), following their two pipes, borne by their Kon'ce keepers. The office of keeping and filling the two pipes was hereditary in a family of the Kon'ce gens that today is represented by one surviving member. It is said that the object in establishing the Hethu'shka society was to stimulate an heroic spirit among the people and to keep alive the memory of historic and valorous acts. Thunder was the tutelary god of the Hethu'shka. The destructive power of the lightning, with its accompanying thunder and clouds so terrifying to man and beast, was recognized in the ceremonies and songs of this society."

"Among the Osage the Hethu'shka society is spoken of as the Ingthon'ushkon, 'those who partake of the nature of the thunder.' The society is known not only to the close cognates but to the Iowa and Oto tribes as well..."

"...The membership of the Hethu'shka in the Omaha tribe was restricted to warriors; it included chiefs and 'privates' but all were on an equal footing. The one requisite for eligibility was that the man should have received public war honors before the Packs Sacred to War."

"Entrance to the society was by unanimous consent. A desirable candidate was 'picked' by a member and invited to a meeting, where if no one offered objection to his joining the society, he was accepted as a member from that time."

"The officers of the society were the hereditary keepers of the Hethu'shka pipes held as sacred, a leader and a herald. The leader held his office during lifetime or until he chose to resign. When the office became vacant, the aspirant for the position had to be a man high in the respect of the tribe and a successful leader in war. The candidate made known his desire for the vacant office by inviting the members to a feast. At the feast his candidacy was discussed and if no objection to him were raised, he was accepted as leader. The herald had to be a reputable warrior and possessed of a strong, clear voice so that his messages might be distinctly heard. At each meeting the leader appointed two or more young men to act as servants in attending to the fire and assisting in the ceremonies. These servants were sometimes young men who had not yet attained to the distinction requisite for membership and it was considered an honor to be thus chosen and permitted to serve."

"The meetings were held at irregular intervals, usually about once a month, always in the same place – in the commodious dwelling of some member who was respected in the tribe. He did not contribute anything besides shelter to the society, except when he chose to be the host, or feast-giver. Some members always volunteered to act in this capacity for each meeting; it was the duty of the host to furnish the requisite food for the 'feast' and the tobacco for the pipes, though he could not fill these or prepare them for smoking, as that could be done only by the hereditary Kon'ce keeper. The host had also to prepare the black paint, made of charred box-elder wood mixed with water, and put it ready for use into a wooden bowl, the property of the society, kept for this purpose."

"At the meetings of the society each member had his appointed place in the circle within the lodge. The leader, who must always belong to the highest grade of warriors, sat in the middle at the back part of the lodge, opposite the door. The men who were his equals in their grade of war honors sat next to him on his right and left; then came those of the next lower grade and so on, by grades, down to the door."

"The men who were his equals in their grade of war honors sat next to him on his right and left; then came those of the next lower grade and so on, by grades, down to the door. The honors by which the places of the members were graded were those that had been publicly given the warriors at the Wate'gictu."

"(The term Wa-te'-gi-ctu is made from the words 'wa-te', meaning 'things accomplished,' referring to the acts accomplished by warriors; 'gi' meaning 'possession'; and 'ctu' meaning 'to collect or gather together.' Collectively then, the term's implied meaning is, 'the gathering together of acts accomplished.'")

"The term Wate'gictu was the ceremony which took place shortly after the return of warriors from a victorious battle, whereby all the acts or brave war exploits of a warrior were duly authorized and ceremonially awarded, giving the warrior the rites, honors and privileges each graded war honor held.)"

"On each side of the entrance sat the servants appointed by the leader. Near the door on the right as one entered was the place set apart for the host or feast-giver of the meeting."

"Regardless of rank, the leader or anyone else had to leave his appointed seat and occupy this place on the evening when he acted as host."

"The drum was placed at the left of the leader's seat. The men singers, two to four of whom used drumsticks, were grouped around it. Immediately behind the men sat a few women who possessed fine voices. This choir led in the singing of the songs, in which all the members, when not dancing, generally joined."

"No clothing except the breechcloth was worn by the members and a long bunch of grass representing scalps the wearer had taken was fastened to the belt at the back."

"Later, but how long ago it is now impossible to ascertain, the members entitled to wear the scalps, substituted therefor the bunch of long grass. In time this decoration became part of the Hethu'shka dress or regalia and as such was worn by all the members without regard to personal achievements. When the 'dance' became known to the Dakota tribes and the Winnebago, the significance of the bunch of long grass having been forgotten, they gave the name 'Grass dance,' or the 'Omaha dance,' the latter name in recognition of the tribe from which the 'dance' had been obtained."

"Each man painted himself in accordance with the directions given him at the Wate'gictu and wore the decorations conferred on him at that public ceremony when he received his grade of war honors. The leader had to be of sufficient rank to be able to wear 'the Crow', a decoration of the highest order. Sometimes bells were tied about the legs and ankles, adding a sort of clicking, castanet accompaniment to the song and dance. Not only were the members of the Hethu'shka chosen from among the brave men but the rules and influence of the society tended to enforce peace and harmony in the tribe."

"If a member became quarrelsome, a disturber of domestic or tribal affairs, the herald was sent to proclaim him to the people. He would give the man's name and say: 'My friend, the door of the society is closed against you, that you may remain among the common people where such acts {naming his offense} are committed.' This punishment was considered a great public disgrace."

"When a meeting was to be held, all the belongings of the family were removed from the lodge for that evening and the place was left vacant for the society."

"The young men who had been appointed servants brought the necessary wood for the fire and the host sent the food to be cooked, for nothing was prepared beforehand. Just before the hour for assembling, the host placed the bowl of paint and the two pipes, which had been filled and made ready for smoking, before the place belonging to the leader. Everything was then in readiness."

"When all the members were in their places the leader took up the bowl of paint and the following song was sung by all present:" (Note: musical notations omitted from text)

"Nun-xthe the-te hi-tha-ki-un te thun-ahi-de
Nun-xthe the-te hi-tha-ki-un te thun-ahi-de
Nun-xthe the-te hi-tha-ki-un te thun-ahi-de
Nun-xthe the-te hi-tha-ki-un te thun-ahi-de
Nun-xthe the-te hi-tha-ki-un te thun-ahi-de"

"Literal translation: Nun-xthe, charcoal; the-te, this standing before me; hi-tha-ki-un te, to paint or decorate himself with; thun-ahi-de, I wearily wait, or wait until I am weary."

"Free translation

Before me stands, awaiting my touch, coal-black paint,
Heavy black clouds filling all the sky o'er our head.
Upon our faces now we put the black, coal-black cloud.
Honoring war, weary for the fight, warriors' fight,
Waiting to go where the Thunder leads warriors on."

"The words were not intended to convey the idea that the members were literally tired of waiting for the wood to char in order that the ceremony of painting might take place, but rather that the desire for action was so strong within the warrior's breast that he was weary of the restraint, of the lack of opportunity that withheld him from heroic deeds of war."

"The music expresses more than the words alone convey. It not only expresses the warrior's eagerness but the portentous stir that filled the air with flying birds when the black storm clouds arose. The song strikingly suggests both the psychical and natural influence of the symbolic thunderstorm, the visible sign of the warrior god."

"During the singing of the song the leader dipped the fingers of his right hand into the paint and touched his forehead, cheeks and chin, and both sides of his chest. Then the bowl was passed by the servants about the lodge and as the song was repeated each member put on himself the black paint, the insignia of the Thunder god."

"When all had been painted, the leader took the pipes, dropped some tobacco on the earth, lifted the stems upward, paused a moment, and slowly turned and pointed them to the north, east, south and west; he then lighted the pipes and handed them to the servants while this prayer was sung:" (Note: musical notations omitted from text)

"Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Eha tha-ni hin-ga we tho he thoe
Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Wa-kon-da tha-ni ga the ke
Eha tha-ni hin-ga we tho he thoe"

"Literal translation: Wa-kon-da, the power that moves and gives life; tha-ni, modification of ni-ni, tobacco; ga, here; the, this; ke, something long-indirect reference to the pipe; eha, now; hin-ga, modification of inga, to draw with the lips, as in smoking. The indirect reference to the pipe indicates that the article is unimportant, a mere vehicle, the real offering being the tobacco smoke."

"Free translation"

"Wa-kon-da, we offer this smoke,
Wa-kon-da, accept now our prayer,
Let the smoke rise upward to thee,
It bears our prayer, Wa-kon-da, to thee."

"The words and music of this song are in marked contrast to the one that proceeded. The descriptive character and the impatience expressed in the opening song here give place to stately measures in which the thoughts of the members are turned from the objective display of the Thunder gods toward the invisible Wakon'da, the directive life force which permeates nature and all forms of life. The beat of the drum is in 4/8 time while the music is in 6/8 time. The contrasting rhythm and syncopation express the restraining influence of the rite."

"The pipes were passed in the following order: One pipe was started at the door and was smoked by all seated on the half of the circle between the left side of the entrance and the leader. The other was started with the leader and ended with the member at the right side of the door. As the pipes were passed among the members, the ascending smoke carried with it each warrior's appeal, voiced in the prayer to the invisible Wakon'da. With this rite the opening ceremonies of the Hethu'shka came to a close. Shortly after, the choir began a song in fast time and whoever was so inclined arose, dropped his robe in his seat and stepped forth."

"Then is a conventional pantomime he acted out one of his experiences in war from which he had gained a public war honor at the Wate'gictu. A good dancer was light of foot and agile. A variety of steps was taken; the foot was brought down on the ground with a thud, making a synchronous accompaniment to the resonant drum beat and the voices of the singers; the limbs were lifted at a sharp angles; the body, was bent and raised with sudden and diversified movements, as in a charge, or as if dodging arrows or averting blows from weapons. In all this dramatic presentation of an actual scene there was not a motion of foot, leg, body, arm or head that did not follow the song in strict time, yet keeping close to the story that was being acted out. The throb of the drum started the pulses of the spectator, and held him to the rhythm of the scene, as the eye followed the rapid, tense action of the dancer, while the ear caught the melody which revealed the intent of the strange drama so full of color, movement, and wild cadences. The intense character of the dance, made it impossible to sustain it for any considerable time; therefore the dance and song, although the latter was repeated, were always short. Rest songs, slower in time, followed a dance, and during these songs the dancers sat muffled in their robes, often dripping with perspiration and panting to recover their breath."

"When the food was ready, two men, each of whom had broken the neck on an enemy, were designated by the leader to act as servers. Then the choir began the song that was the ceremonial call to the feast, to which the two men danced." (Note: musical notations omitted from text)

"U-hon the-te ni-de tho
U-hon the-te ni-de tho
Inda-ku-tha ni-de tho
U-hon the-te ni-de tho he
Inda-ku-tha ni-de tho he tho"

"Literal translation: U-hon, the food now cooking, the feast; the-te, this; ni-de, it is cooked or ready to eat; in-da-ku-tha, an ancient term meaning friend or comrade; tho, he, tho, vocables.

"Free translation"

"The feast awaits you--come, eat,
The feast is awaiting you,
Members, comrades, come and eat.
The feast awaiting stands before you, come,
Members, comrades, come and eat! He tho."

"Two sticks were used in serving, and the choicest pieces were given the bravest man present. After all had been served except the host, or feast-giver (for he observed the tribal custom of not partaking of the food he had provided for his guests), the leader arose and made an address, in which he thanked the feast-giver and discoursed on the need of food for the preservation of life. He told of the trials, dangers and hardships encountered in securing food, so that the quest represented both a man's valor and his industry; and since no one could live without it, food was a gift of the greatest value. Therefore no one should partake of it without thanking the giver and he should not forget to include the giver's wife and children who relinquish to outsiders their share in this great necessity of the family."

"At the close of this speech each member partook of the food provided. When the repast was over, the member who had received the choicest part of the meal held up the picked bone and acted out in a dramatic dance the story of his exploit. Sometimes this exhibition was of a remarkable histrionic character."

"When the time to disperse came, usually short after this dance, the choir began the song of dismissal. During the singing of the first part the members rose in their places and at the beginning of the second part the member who sat with the door to his right passed around the lodge and fire place and was the first to leave, each one following in his turn, all singing as they walked and passed out under the stars. When all had gone, the choir rose from about the drum and left the lodge in silence. This dismissal song is choral in character and yet has the rhythm of a march." (Note: musical notations omitted from text)

1
"Ko-tha non-zhin the
Ko-tha non-zhin the
Ko-tha non-zhin the
E-ha non-zhin hi-tha-me tho he thoe"

2
"Ko-tha mon-thin the
Ko-tha mon-thin the
Ko-tha mon-thin the
E-ha mon-thin hi-tha-me tho he thoe"

"Literal translation: Ko-tha, an archaic term for friend; non-zhin, arise or stand; the, vocable; e-ha, now; hi-tha-me, they say; tho he, vocables; thoe, close of stanza; ko-tha, friend; mon-thin, walk. The words indicate that the members address one another: 'Friend, we stand; Friend, we will walk.'

"Free translation"

1
"We say, Friend, arise!
Arise, Friend, we say.
Arise, Friend, we stand.
We say, Now arise and stand."

2
"We say, Friend, now walk,
Now walk, Friend, we say.
We say, Friend, now walk.
We say, Friend, now walk we away."
(Fletcher & LaFlesche, 1911, pp. 459-469)

From: "Ponca Societies and Dances", by Alanson Skinner, 1915, Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 11, New York, NY.

"When the young people wish to get up a hel'ocka lodge, four youths get together and choose a man to take care of the drum and the hel'ocka round house in which the dancing is to be done and prepare the feasts. They take a pipe to him, and if he accepts, he is committed to the office. Besides the "drum owner," (nerhexgakogelithere) are the following officers:"

"8 leaders (nodahunga)
2 tails (sinde)
8 drummers (xoka)

4 women singers (hola'ze) to sit behind the men
2 judges (wawethihethun) who sell the horses and other gifts made by individuals to the society as a whole and act as treasurers of the proceeds.

1 date setter for the dance (ohanithighthun) who also tell what food to cook for the feasts.

1 pipe lighter (ninita'ne) No one can light a pipe for himself during this ceremony.

2 starters, or whip bearers (wanacis)

2 waiters (ohan'cigre)

2 heralds, or announcers (wa'gra)"

"Braves only are allowed to wear the feather dance bustles and deer hair roaches during the ceremony. All wore their war honor feathers, etc., while dancing. None wore grass."

"During one particular song, the bravest man present is called up to dance in a circle of other dancers who dance 'in a stationary position' while he dances in a circle round and round. Suddenly, he falls over as though he were shot and all whoop. This is repeated four times. The dance is called ex'gianwatcigahre. The brave wears the feather bustle..."

"...The hel'ocka helps people mourn for their dead, and makes collections of gifts for bereaved people to help dry their tears. When other tribes come to visit these people, they entertain them, and also take up collections for outsiders who ask for help. No matter how poor a man is he is not helped unless he asks for it."
(Skinner, 1915, pp. 784-785)

From: "The Ponca Tribe", by James H. Howard, 1965, Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 195, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

"The last of the three Ponca dances which Peter LeClair considers most important is the Hedu'ska or 'War' dance. In his 'History' (p. 21) he writes: 'The best dance is called Hay-thu-schka, known as the war dance; it is said that anyone that is not well and feeling bad and anyone that is mourning, the sound of the drum will revive them and make them happy.' Skinner (1915c, pp. 784-785), in his discussion of Ponca societies, gives an excellent description of the dance."

"This dance, which was at one time merely one of several 'owned' by Ponca warrior societies, was apparently borrowed from the Pawnee at an early date. It has now been a part of Ponca culture for so long, however, that they consider it their own, and even have an origin legend which explains its introduction. Skinner (ibid., p. 784) writes: 'According to Charlie Collins, this society originated among the Ponca, and was founded by a woman who dreamed she went to another world where she saw Indians dancing.' My own informant, Sylvester Warrior, was quite indignant when I suggested that the Ponca had borrowed the dance from some other tribe, saying: 'There are too many songs in the dance which tell of Ponca being blessed by Wakanda.'"

"As mentioned above, the Hedu'ska was originally a warriors dancing society. Like other societies of this type, it had a roster of officers, including a drumkeeper, eight dance leaders and two whippers who started each dance episode and who whipped reluctant dancers across the legs to make them get up and perform. The characteristic ornaments of the dance were the porcupine and deer-hair roach headdress and the 'crow belt' or feather dance bustle. The latter was emblematic of a battlefield, and its use was restricted to certain officers of the society who were distinguished warriors. Both of these ornaments were ritually fumigated during the ceremony by holding them over a cedar needle smudge."

"About 1880, with the decline of intertribal warfare, the Hedu'ska society began to take on a religious flavor. Instead of the war speeches and coup countings of the earlier dance there were long prayers for the benefit of the group by designated officials. Gift giving, rather than war honors, was the basis of admission. It was also about this time that women were admitted as dancers."

"Students of American Ethnology will recognize the form of the dance as that which diffused from the Dakota tribe to the Central Algonquian groups as the 'Dream dance' or 'Drum religion.' The Hedu'ska persisted in this form, in both Oklahoma and Nebraska, until about 1925, and is still retained by the Osage, who seem to have secured some of their ritual from the Ponca, as their ceremonial War dance or 'Man's dance.'"

"Today the Ponca dance has entered a third phase, which might be termed 'Pan-Indian.' Most of the religious elements (except for song texts) have been lost, and the dance is, for most participants and observers, merely a 'big time'..." "Costumes have become quite baroque, and the symbolism of the roach and crow belt have been forgotten."

"Choreographically speaking, the Hedu'ska consists of individual dancers performing any steps they choose while circling the drum. The traditional progression around the drum was clockwise, but the Southern Ponca, as observed in 1952, 1954, 1959 and 1961 moved in a counterclockwise direction. Peter LeClaire and older Southern Ponca attribute this change to the influence of Southeastern tribes, such as the Creek and Cherokee, whose dances progress in a counterclockwise direction. Many of the Ponca Hedu'ska songs refer to the exploits of Ponca heroes in the wars with the Dakota. A few have been borrowed from other tribes and some are slightly reworked versions of songs formerly used by other Ponca warrior societies, now obsolete."

"Beginning in 1958 there was an attempt to revive the old Hedu'ska organization among the Ponca, and several performances of the dance in the old form have been held. Active in this revival were Sylvester Warrior and Clyde Warrior."

The annual Southern Ponca powwow, which features the Hedu'ska in its secular form, is held each year during the last week of August. It is one of the principal 'Indian' events in Oklahoma, and draws large crowds. As many as three or four hundred dancers, representing a score of tribes, take part. Among the Northern Ponca the Hedu'ska has not been performed since about 1935..."

"...Otto Knudsen and Peter LeClaire (Northern Ponca informants) both mentioned a dance called Oha'dize or 'Reach-in-the-boiling-kettle.' This dance is known to the Dakota and certain other Prairie-Plains tribes as the 'kettle dance.' Dancers circle a

kettle of cooked dog meat four times, then, on a ceremonial cue, the leader dips into the pot with his bare hand and arm and seizes a piece of meat. Usually this is a dog's head. Peter LeClaire said that this dance was originally a part of the full Heduska performance, but later evolved into a separate dance. The dance is still performed by the Teton Dakota and the Winnebago."

(Howard, 1965, pp. 106-108)

Among the Ponca, according to Sylvester Warrior, the Headman of the Ponca Hethuska from the time of its revival in 1958, until his death in 1973, the Hethuska Society was,

"...an organization of men who were braves or warriors of the tribe, and men who were important in the tribe as tribal leaders, as well as being the, perhaps son of a great chief, or even the grandson, or anyone who proved himself to be a good citizen of the tribe, and men who were known for their ability to talk and to live in a good way. To show themselves as good people."
(Warrior, 1967)

As seen through the above quoted sources, the origins and history of the Ponca Hethuska Society are not consistent. There are many versions, from both anthropological sources which are often slightly inaccurate, as the observers may not have fully understood the culture they were studying, and oral tribal history which is only as good as the memory of its keepers. However, we can determine the main emphasis of the Hethuska Society by pulling general themes from all these sources.

We know that the Hethuska Society was once a men's warrior society among the Omaha approximately 300 years ago when the Ponca and the Omaha were part of the same larger Dhegihan linguistic group. In fact Duncan (1997) states, "In 1884, Alice Fletcher believed the Hethuska song which referred to the famous Ponca warrior named Ishe'buzhe was at least one hundred fifty years old, dating the song to circa 1734." (Duncan, 1997, p. 45) This would put the age of that particular song at 271 years old from the date this work was published, and the society structure was already in place. In addition, evidence suggests that the Hethuska's earliest roots may have gone back to the ancestors of the Omaha/Ponca in the Middle Mississippian Culture over 500 years ago.

Later, when the Omaha and Ponca split to form separate tribes sometime in the early 1700s, both tribes continued their versions of the Hethuska Society, which have evolved separately but remain very similar. Because these men of the Hethuska had proven to have above average hunting skills and above average warfare skills, they pledged to look after those in need among the tribe. Especially taking great care of the widows and orphans of warriors killed in battle, who might otherwise starve without their help.

During the time of intertribal warfare in the 1800s, the dance ceremonies held by the Hethuska Society would help to preserve the valorous war exploits and deeds of heroism of its members, both past and present, in the actions of the dance and the words of the songs. In this way, it was thought, younger men and boys would be inspired to follow the examples of bravery in defense of the tribe, which the men of the Hethuska portrayed.

Shortly after the Ponca were forcibly moved from their home near Niobrara, Nebraska to a reservation in north central Oklahoma in 1877 (now referred to as "White Eagle"), it is said that the Ponca Hethuska Society "passed the drum" to their new friends in the area, the Kaw (aka Kansa), in 1881. This "passing of the drum" was considered a gift from the Ponca Hethuska Society to the Kaw tribe. This gift, in effect, was the permission to have the rites and privileges to perform the Ponca Hethuska dance ceremony. The Ponca would make a drum and give it to a man who would be the leader of the society within the tribe that received it. This new Headman would also be given a set of Honor Songs (now known as Committee Songs) and instructions on how to choose leadership positions, as well as core traditions of the dance. Lastly, the new Headman would have been admonished to "make his own way" and create a unique society based on the core of Ponca traditions and songs.
(Conklin, 1985)

In a typical cultural tradition, the Kaw would have responded to this enormously generous gift, by responding with material gifts to the Ponca Hethuska leadership to formally thank them for the gift. This may be how early anthropologists, misunderstanding cultural intricacies, assumed incorrectly that the rites to the dance were being purchased.

It is known that by 1883, the Ponca Hethuska, with Standing Buffalo as its Headman, "passed the drum" to the "Dwellers of the Hilltop" band of Osage living in the Grayhorse District, with John Black Bird, Sr. becoming the first drum keeper of the Osage Inlonshka at Grayhorse. (Callahan, 1990, p. 25) By 1884, the Kaw tribe could not continue the responsibilities of the Hethuska Society and three Kaw men, Little Jim, Barly Delano, and Jim Pepper, "gave away" the Hethuska Drum that the Ponca had given them, including its traditions, to the "Dwellers in the Thorny Thicket" Band of Osages living in the Pawhuska District of north central Oklahoma, with Ben Mashunkashay becoming the first drum keeper of the Osage Inlonshka at Pawhuska. (Cooley, 1985, p. 8) (Callahan, 1990, p. 19) Soon after in 1885, the "Dwellers in the Upland Forest" Band of Osage living in the Hominy District, learned these Hethuska / Inlonshka traditions from the Pawhuska District Osage, having come from the Kaw. (Stewart, 1975, p. 14) All three Osage Bands have made the Hethuska society traditions into a uniquely Osage tradition now referred to in their language as IN'-loN-shka. (Conklin, 1985)

According to Howard (1965), the Southern Cheyenne brought a "little moon" or "half moon" version of the Peyote religion to the Ponca in 1902. (Howard, 1965, p. 122) During this time the Ponca were also trying to follow their "prayer pipe" religion and annual Sun Dance as noted by George Dorsey, Curator of Anthropology at the Field Columbian Museum, in his work titled "The Ponca Sun Dance" published in 1905.

The following year in 1906, Ed Primeaux (aka "Pack Horse") participated in the Ponca Sun Dance. However, after receiving a Peyote "fireplace" from the Comanche Peyote religion leader Quannah Parker, Ed Primeaux had converted to the Peyote religion. (Howard, 1965, p. 74) (Duncan, 1997, p. 86)

The influence of the Peyote religion on the Ponca Sun Dance traditions and Hethuska traditions at this time cannot be underestimated. Although the Ponca continued to distribute their Hethuska traditions to other tribes, it was declining in

popularity amongst themselves as the Peyote religion was becoming the more dominant tradition. In some cases, tribes sought out the Ponca, in order to obtain the Hethuska traditions. The emerging popularity of the Peyote religion had also effected the Osage Inlonshka so that by 1914, the Osage Inlonshka in one of their districts, had just five dancers. (Duncan, 1997, p. 86)

According to Ponca elder Henry Snake, who was a Tail Dancer in the Hethuska at the time, the Poncas "passed the drum," giving a drum and the rights to perform the Hethuska to the Comanche tribe in 1916. (Snake, 1976) In addition, it has been said that, "...the Poncas passed the drum to groups of Sac and Fox as well as Cheyennes." (Stewart, 1975, p. 14)

After the U.S. participation in World War I, the Ponca found new ways of honoring their warriors who had fought on behalf of the U.S. Government, and were now recognized as veterans. In 1918, the first "all Indian" American Legion Post, called "Buffalo Post 38" was formed at White Eagle, Oklahoma on the Ponca Reservation. The Buffalo Post 38 Ladies Auxiliary became a strong organization of women who honored and supported their veterans with Scalp Dances and other culturally based activities.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the popularity of Wild West Shows, such as Pawnee Bill's Historic Wild West Show and the Miller Brother's 101 Ranch Wild West Show, as well as State and County Fairs, provided the Ponca with many opportunities to sing the Hethuska songs and dance in the Hethuska style. These exhibitions also allowed for interaction with dancers from other tribes, and inter-tribal gatherings became more popular.

By 1922, the Ponca warriors/veterans had splintered into at least four groups that were closely associated to women's Scalp Dance organizations and met at various times to sponsor Scalp Dances and Hethuska style dances. The known groups were (1) Nu-doN meaning "war" or "warrior," (2) Pa-tha-taN meaning "drinkers of strong or bitter drink" {coffee is implied}, (3) Pa-thiN- meaning "without heads" or "head takers" {in reference to the old custom of taking an enemy's head as a trophy}, and (4) He-thu-ska. (Shea, 2004)

With the pressures from the popularity of the Peyote religion, the U.S. Government's attempts to "Christianize" and "civilize" Indian children in boarding schools, the loss of land and general poverty, by the time of the Great Depression beginning in 1929, the cultural disorganization had made the Hethuska Society among the Ponca, and the Comanche's version of the Hethuska Society, as dormant cultural entities.

Neither the Ponca nor the Comanche could continue to hold their Hethuska dance ceremonies and perform benevolent tasks for the needy, as basic survival became critical for all tribal members. However, the Hethuska songs were not restricted to the Hethuska membership, and the Ponca singers were singing the Hethuska songs routinely at other Ponca cultural events such as the Annual Ponca Pow-Wow, while Ponca men danced in the Hethuska style (aka the "Tail Dance" style).

Interestingly, due to a variety of reasons, including the monetary benefits of the discovery of oil on their land, the three villages of Osage, being Grayhorse, Hominy and Pawhuska, were able to afford the cost of holding their Inlonshka dance ceremonies. During this time that the Ponca Hethuska lay dormant, the Ponca singers were still called upon to sing the Hethuska songs at the three Osage village Inlonshka ceremonies, which helped to preserve the songs. Ponca singers also sang the Hethuska songs for other War Dance organizations such as the Pawnee Iruska, and the Oto Heloshka. (Howard, 1965, p. 107)

After World War II, the Gives Water Service Club was formed in 1945 at the Bois d'arc settlement of the Ponca Reservation to honor Poncas who had served in the military during World War II. Often dance celebrations sponsored by the Gives Water Service Club and the Buffalo Post 38 Ladies Auxiliary, which was still functioning as an organization since 1918, would incorporate Hethuska dance styles and dance clothes, along with Hethuska songs. However, the dance celebrations would not be considered Hethuska Society events done in the formal manner of years ago, and frequently, new Veteran's Honoring Songs would be composed in the Hethuska style, to honor the new Ponca warrior/veterans.

In the early 1950s, Sylvester Warrior (Ponca) set out to see if the dormant Ponca Hethuska Society could be revived, especially in honor of the recent Ponca Veterans of World War II and the Korean War. In addition to being a World War II Veteran himself, Sylvester Warrior had a deeper personal interest in the Hethuska Society as his grandfather, Standing Buffalo, was a prominent sub-Chief of the Ponca in late 1800s and the Nu-doN'-hoN-ga or Headman of the Ponca Hethuska Society when the society "passed the drum" to the Grayhorse village of Osage in 1883, and his mother, Grace Warrior was "keeper" of the tribal pipe. (Conklin, 1986) After many years of gathering information from Ponca elders and singers, Sylvester Warrior, through a long and very involved process, gained the blessings and permission to revive the Ponca Hethuska Society in 1958 at White Eagle, Oklahoma, becoming it's Headman. (Conklin, 1985)

By 1972, Melvin Kerchee (Comanche) had effectively reorganized the dormant Comanche version of the Hethuska Society which the Poncas had given the Comanche in 1916. The revived Comanche War Dance Organization as it was called, was then attended by and sanctioned by Sylvester Warrior and the Ponca Hethuska. (Kerchee, 1985)

With the death of Sylvester Warrior at the age of 60 in August 1973, the next person elected to be Headman of the Ponca Hethuska was Jonas Steele (Ponca/Winnebago). However, Steele's time in that position was very short as he passed away unexpectedly in February 1976.

In the Fall of 1976, Abe Conklin (Ponca/Osage) was elected to be the new Headman of the Ponca Hethuska. When Abe Conklin passed away in December 1995 at the age of 69, Damon Roughface (Ponca), son of the late Paul Roughface, was elected to become the new Headman or NudoN'hoNga of the Ponca Hethuska Society and to date, holds that position.

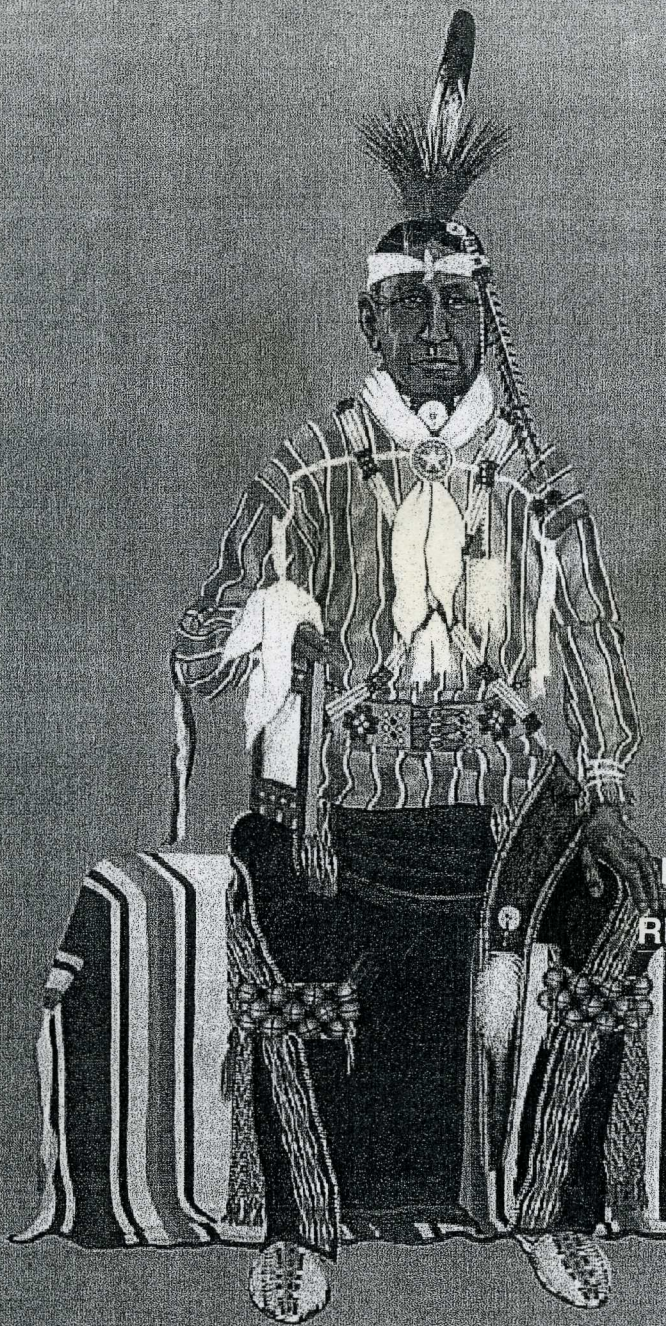
Today, the Ponca Hethuska gathers to have their dance ceremony twice a year, usually in April and October, on or near the Ponca Reservation at White Eagle, in north central Oklahoma. The Hethuska dance ceremony now consists of one afternoon dance session, an evening feast for all dancers, singers and spectators, followed by an evening dance session. Each dance session lasts for about four hours, with periodic water breaks.

The Grayhorse, Pawhuska and Hominy villages of Osage continue to hold their Inlonshka ceremonies once a year in June. Each village has their own dance with separate committees. Each Inlonshka dance ceremony lasts four days, usually from Thursday through Sunday with afternoon and evening dance sessions on each of the first three days and an extended afternoon session on Sunday.

The Comanche War Dance Organization continues to hold their dance ceremony twice a year, usually in April and October, for one day with an afternoon and an evening dance session separated by a feast. There continues to be a great deal of visiting and association between members of the Ponca, Osage and Comanche organizations as many support each others dance.

It should be noted, that there are other "War Dance" organizations with traditions related to the Omaha-Ponca Hethuska among other tribes. However, these organizations do not have a direct association to the Omaha-Ponca Hethuska in the same way as the Osage and Comanche.

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- ROACH FEATHER
- ROACH SPREADER
- ROACH
- SCALP FEATHERS
- HEAD BAND
- CHOKER
- TIE SLIDE
- SCARF
- SHIRT
- BANDOLIERS
- ARMBANDS
- BELT
- OTTER DRAGGER
- YARN DROPS
- RIBBON WORK APRON
- RIBBON WORK CIN-DSE
- RIBBON WORK LEGGINGS
- YARN GARTERS
- BELLS
- MOCCASINS
- MIRROR BOARD
- FAN
- BLANKET

Loren Pahsetopah
19



OSAGE MAN
BY LOREN PAHSETOPAH
OWNED BY ED LAFAVE
LIMITED EDITION PRINT
AVAILABLE

HIS HA-SHDA-HA
AMERICAN OF COURSE.....

WHY STRAIGHT DANCE?

By Ernest P. Stevenson

This last spring I attended a Ponca Formal War Dance in White Eagle, Oklahoma with several other members of Colonneh Lodge. We were invited by Mr. Abe Conklin, the Ponca Tribal Nuda Hunga (Headman) in appreciation of our help to the Ponca Indians. This was a great, great honor because the Ponca actually started the Formal War Dance as it is known today. They then introduced it to the Comanche and the other tribes and Straight Dance has subsequently become the predominant style at a Formal Dance. On the bench at White Eagle, my thoughts went back 25 years. . .

In 1969, while I was a teenager, I was given an outline on how to construct a Straight Dance set of clothes, by a well-meaning friend. Little did I realize that outline would become my passport to the Native American culture; that it would impact, not just my life but hundreds of Arrowmen. No, after two years of doing Blue and Gold Banquets, my first response was, "where's the war bonnet, where's the warshirt?" Surely this couldn't be real Native American attire. I had spent the previous summer putting together an Oklahoma Swing Bustle from the Grey Owl Catalogue. Now that was Indian. However, once that set of clothes was completed and I hit the dance floor, I discovered my stamina didn't match my enthusiasm. In the Texas heat, I only lasted for one contest song. Remembering that, I began to more carefully evaluate the Straight Dance cotton shirt, roach and ribbon work leggings.

Straight Dancing became more appealing. **Someone** had to win in that style--why not me? I could represent my Lodge. It didn't look too difficult; from what I could tell it looked like walking. Surely I had the stamina for that! So I decided to make a trial set of clothes. I started by recycling my Dad's long-outgrown, dark blue Navy bellbottoms for leggings. You Old Navy guys will remember the bellbottom pants with the fourteen button square fly: heavy wool. Added to that a Tandy pair of moccasins, a nice shirt and a beaded belt and I felt downright presentable on the dance floor. It was a start. And it was the start that most people make. Don't let others fool you. Most people have to build their clothes in this manner unless they inherit them or start with a good enough resource that they don't waste hundreds of dollars before they learn to build a set of clothes. A set that won't embarrass them or the Native Americans.

I decided Straight Dance was cool. Certainly cooler than that exhausting Feather Dancing. You dance at the same pace as ladies in shawls and go around the drum in the same direction. Think about this men: **You dance at the same pace as the ladies and go around the drum in the same direction.** You see where I'm going with this? You can actually socialize with the women on the dance floor. Feather Dancers can't say the same. Beyond being social, Straight Dance is rich in tradition. One hundred years ago or more, the styles were the same with minimal changes in Straight Dance or Men's Formal War Dance clothes. If you focus on that, the fact that these clothes are historic and authentic, you will have the right frame of mind for this style of dance. There is a reason for each of the simple articles carried or worn. For instance, medicine bundles are worn to protect your back from an enemy, mescal beans will help you foresee the outcome of a battle, and bead patterns and string shawls (yes worn by men) identify the Society or Family associations of the



Indian Dance Outfit Check list

There's nothing more frustrating than to travel a long distance to a dance only to discover when you arrive that some of your outfit is still at home. Well, now you can eliminate that problem with this handy check list. Just place it in your suitcase, then when you start to pack, go down the list and make sure that all your pieces are ready to go. You can also use this list as a reminder of what you still need to complete your outfit. NOTE: If you are appearing in public, always wear a bathing suit or shorts!

OUTFIT STYLE - Note: "X"= Not used with this outfit!

ITEM	FEATHER DANCE	STRAIGHT DANCE	TRADITIONAL DANCE	GRASS DANCE	CEREMONIAL REGALIA
ROACH(w/tie thongs)					
Roach Pin					
Spreader					
Roach Feathers					
Scalp Feathers					
OTHER HEADDRESS	X	X		X	
HEADBAND - Beaded		X			X
- Cloth	X		X	X	X
EARRINGS (optional)	X				X
NECKLACE (medallion)		X			
CHOKER					
SCARF					X
TIE SLIDE					X
SHIRT - Ribbon					
- Tee					
- War	X	X		X	
VEST - (Optional)				X	
BREASTPLATE					
BANDOLIERS & PINS	X			X	X
SCARVES	X			X	X
LOVE FEATHERS	X			X	X
SHOULDER FEATHERS	X	X		X	X
OTTER DRAGGER	X		X	X	X
FEATHERS	X			X	X
MEDALLIONS	X			X	X
HAIR PLATES	X		X	X	X
OTTER SASH	X	X		X	X
ARMBANDS					
APRONS/CLOUT					
BELT (Hold-it-up)					
BELT - Beaded (concho)					
CUFFS		X			
BRACELETS	X		X	X	X
SIDE DROPS/TABS					X
LEGGINS	X				X
TRAILER (Straight Dance)	X		X	X	X
GARTERS (Knee)	X				X
MOCCASINS					
BELLS - Knee					X
- Ankle	X	X			X
ANKLETS		X			X
HALF LEGGINS		X		X	X
SOCKS					
BENCH BLANKET					
HAND ITEMS:					
FAN					
WHISTLE		X			X
TAIL STICK	X		X	X	X
LANCE	X	X		X	
MIRROR BOARD	X			X	X
HAND SCARVES					X
HANDKERCHIEF					
BATHING SUIT - SHORTS					
MAKE-UP	X	X	X	X	X
CONTEST NUMBER					X
ACE BANDAGES					
SAFETY PINS					

"HAPPY DANCING"

Belt
Straight Dance shirt
German silver armbands
Finger woven sash or side tabs and garters
Clout, leggings and dance trailer all trimmed
with ribbon work
Bells
Flat fan or peyote fan
Moccasins
Sweat band (optional)
Cane, carried only when accorded the honor

How to Get Started

1. Begin by reading the remainder of this article.
 2. A good roach is essential to most any dancing costume, start with this.
 3. Begin learning to straight dance.
 4. Learn to use a sewing machine. This step is a must, otherwise someone else will have to make the ribbon work, straight dance shirt, scarfs, leggings, clout, dance trailer, and otter trailer. Having these items made would be very costly; therefore, it is worth the little time it takes to learn how to use the sewing machine and gain a little skill by making a practice piece of ribbon work.
 5. Purchase the following from various Indian supply stores:
 - a. Moccasins for dancing, or material to make a pair.
 - b. About 1 3/4 -2 yards of navy blue rainbow salvage or an imitation for making leggings, clout and dance trail r.
 - c. 13/0 or 13/o cut beads, needles and thread; enough to bead a belt, fan handle, rosetts and heluska feathers.
 - d. material to make bandoliers and chocker: brass beads and/or aroura borealis crystal beads, hair pipe and heavy leather for spacers.
 - e. heavy leather to back belt and chrome studs to edge belt.
 - f. otter pelt for otter trailer.
 - g. feathers for a flat fan, heluska feathers and otter trailer ornaments.
-

always made of German silver stamped with various designs. Bone, rawhide and wood may also be used. Polished aluminum sometimes substitutes for German silver. A single socket attached to the spreader holds one undecorated tail feather. Outside and center tail feathers are not used as a roach feather. The feather is held in the spreader's socket such a way that it swivels when being worn by the dancer. The Osage "seem to prefer the old style roach of black turkey beards and bright red deertail," Feder, American Indian Hobbyist, Sept. - Oct. 1957.

Heluska Feathers: This pair of feathers is usually a trimmed and straightened pair of tail feathers about 1-1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide. When eagle tail feathers are not available hawk, magpie, or pheasant feathers easily substitute. Heluska feathers are decorated similar to feathers found in a peyote fan. They may be tipped with hackles, ermine, small leather spots and small felt spots or triangles. The base of the feathers both back and front are decorated with one or two colored hackles and/or colorful pheasant or parrot body feathers. The quills of the heluska feathers are covered with a very thin leather and then peyote bead work is applied on top of the leather as decoration. The feathers are tied to the roach strings or scalp with the thongs of a small conch shell and/or small beaded rosette. Heluska feathers may hang either to the right or left side of the temple. Sometimes the feathers are notched on one or both sides giving the side of the feather a saw tooth edge. Many dancers also have a large fluff suspended from a 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ' twisted leather or bead dangle attached to the roach string at the same point the heluska feathers are tied. Peyote beadwork decorates the base of this fluff. For other details see diagrams.

Headband or Sweat Band: A headband or sweat band is optional, a matter of personal taste. The most common sweat band is made of a white handkerchief or small solid colored silk scarf folded into a triangle, then into a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide band. The band is tied

HELUSKA FEATHERS: Key

Straighten feathers to be used (hawk, pheasant, etc.) until they are perfectly straight. Then trim the feathers with siccors as shown. Feathers in diagram are tail feathers which are trimmed to a width of an inch and a quarter.

1. This part of the feather and shaft is left if tips are to be decorated like those in figure F-D.
 2. Very thin leather, glued to quill after base feathers have been glued on. The tab is left so that conch or rosette can be tied to feathers.
 3. Leather or colorer felt spot used to cover base of hackle.
 4. Hackles, tip and base hackles do not have to match. The back base of the feathers are decorated similar to the front; however, not exactly the same nor not quite as elaborate. Do not decorate the back of the tips in F-B and F-C.
 5. Small parrot body feathers.
 6. Beaded rosettes.
 7. Thongs, attached to conch or rosette to hold feathers, and when worn are tied to roach strings.
 8. Conch shell, $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2" in diameter, 2 holes drilled in center.
 9. Aroura borealis bead.
 10. Ermime, glued around bases, tips and center shaft.
 11. Small pheasant body feathers.
 12. Peyote beadwork, done over the thin leather.
 13. Felt triangles, two colors. Three could be used.
 14. Thread work, different colors of thread wound around shaft about $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in length.
-

snug around the wrists. Cuffs must have a $1\frac{1}{2}$ " ruffle around the bottom edge. Top and bottom (sometimes middle too) of the cuffs are trimmed with the same color ribbon used on the yoke; however, it is only $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide.

The Straight Dance shirt should fit loosely and hang to the crotch when standing straight. Side seams of the shirt are split and hemmed for about 4" at the bottom shirt edge to allow for movement.

Material used to make this shirt has changed from solid colors of rayon satin or satin to realistic floral or pasley prints of most any material. Floral brocade or flashy brocade cloth is occasionally seen. Do not use Hawaiian prints. Patterns for this shirt can be made from any long sleeve shirt pattern with cuffs and high yoke.

Bandoliers: Like the Mexican bandit with two ammunition belts crossed over his shoulders, the Straight Dancer wears a bandolier over each shoulder and across his chest. Each bandolier consists of one, two or three strings of brass and/or aroura borealis beads in combination with large or small bone hair pipes. When each bandolier consists of more than one string, the strings are spaced with heavy leather spacers whose length is the combined width of the number of strings being used and whose width is $3/8$ ".

The pair of bandoliers need not match. One bandolier entirely of brass beads or large glass beads and the other of hair pipe and brass beads is one possibility. In fact only one bandolier is permissible. Some dancers substitute large "silver" (nickle plated) beads for brass beads. According to Feder, mescal beans are another possibility when speaking of bandolier materials.

The two ends of the bandoliers are joined at the hip either by a single spacer into which all strands pass or by a peyote beaded slide. Regardless of the method used, the ends of the strands usually do not extend past the bottom of the shirt when worn. Bandoliers are worn over the belt in front and under the belt in back.

...the straight dance... in the American...
...claw designs...
...these...
...would use 1 1/2" out heads...
...beads would be the next choice... 1 1/2" beads are used in belts

...would use 1 1/2" out heads...
...beads would be the next choice... 1 1/2" beads are used in belts

but are not preferred.

Sashes, Side Tabs and Garters: At one time Straight Dancers wore wide finger woven sashes under their shirts at the waist and let the long elaborate fringe of the sash hang out beneath the shirt on each side. Some sashes were only long enough to reach from one side of the waist to the other. If a Straight Dancer has access to a sash of this type will wear it. However today most dancers do not bother to weave this sash which does not show but wears two or four pair of finger woven side tabs of commercial wool yarn. These side tabs take the place of the fringe. They start at the waist and hang to the middle of the calf. These tabs are woven exactly like the larger sashes but are only 1 1/2" wide, the last 4-6" of the tab being unwoven yarn which forms a tassel. Two to four colors are used and the chevron and arrowhead designs are the most popular. Details on weaving technique can be found in the American Indian Hobbyist. The finer sashes and side tabs have large white seed beads or white pony beads woven into the sashes or sewn to the fringe. Side tabs are attached to the waist with a thong or small leather belt.

Garters are duplicates of the side tabs or sash being worn, but they are only about 8-10" long including tassels or fringe. One or two pairs of garters are worn on the outside of each leg tied to a position just below the knee. Bells are tied over the garters.

Bells: Most dancers prefer to wear fifteen to twenty small brass bells which are always worn just below the knee. When brass bells are not available, nickle plated sleigh bells are substituted. The bells are mounted on heavy leather straps

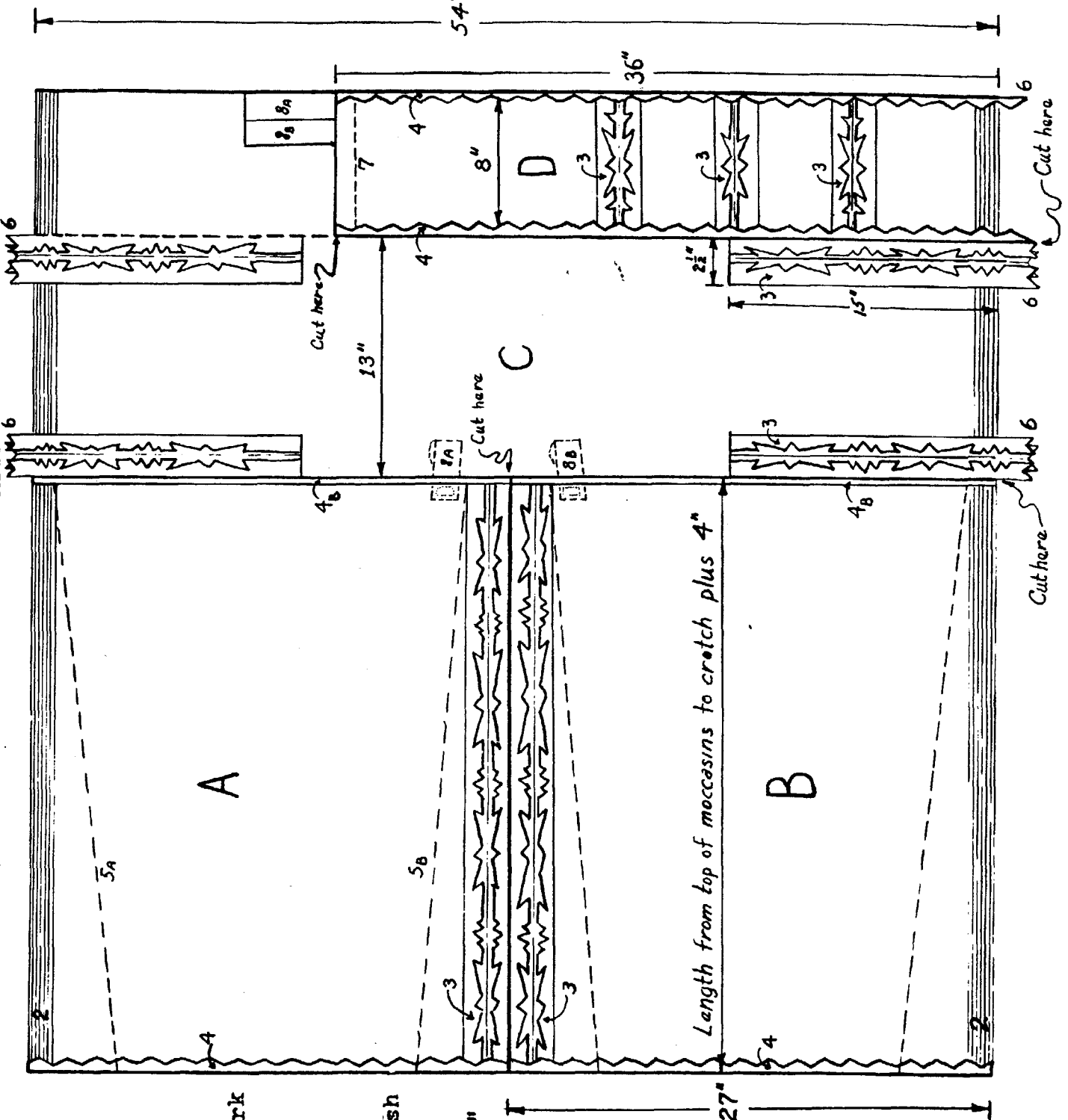
It seemed only natural then since the clout, leggings and dance trailer were all made out of the list cloth that they would all be trimmed with some type of ribbon work. The ribbon work done on these three items always matches in design and color. Most of the Osage today prefer the 13 or 17 ribbon type without a center line, but the four or more center line type is equally as striking. All ribbon work strips found on the leggings, clout, and dance trailer seem to be about $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in width, some may be thinner but never any wider.

Breechclout: Breechclouts are usually 13 or 14" wide. The clout is worn over a belt, under the legs and over the belt in back. The length of the clout is the entire width of the rainbow salvage cloth, usually 54". Equal amounts of the clout hang down in front and back. Only the sides that hang over the belt in front and back are trimmed with ribbon work. No ribbon work is done on the salvage edge. The ribbons at each end of the clout are left to hang loose about two inches below the salvage edge of the clout. (see diagram) To protect the ribbon work, a three bead edging of 11/0 white beads is sewn to all the outside edges of the ribbon work.

Leggings: The length of your leggings is determined by the measurement from your crotch to the top of your moccasins plus four inches. The width of the legging is exactly half of the width of the salvage edge, which is about 27". Thus one 54" width of cloth provides for both leggings. Ribbon work is applied to the entire length of the legging on the cut edge without the salvage. The top and bottom of the leggings are then bound with a single ribbon. Sometimes one, two, or three ribbons in a saw tooth pattern may bind the bottom of each legging.

Once the ribbon work is applied and the tops and bottoms are bound, an 8" by $1\frac{1}{2}$ " strip of salvage edge is folded to make a loop and then sewn just inside the ribbon work. A belt that holds up the clout will pass through this loop and also hold up the leggings. It would be wise to select a sturdy belt. When the loops are attached fold the 27" width in half and sew side seam by starting just inside the ribbon work and sewing on a very slight diagonal from the top to the bottom of the legging. For details see the diagram.

HOW TO CUT RAINBOW SALVAGE EDGE CLOTH TO MAKE OKLAHOMA STRAIGHT DANCE LEGGINGS, BREECHCLOUT AND DANCE TRAILER



- A Right legging
- B Left legging
- C Breechclout
- D Dance trailer
- 2 Rainbow salvage edge
- 3 4 ribbon and 4 color center line ribbon work
- 4 One ribbon saw tooth binding
- 4_B One ribbon binding
- 5 Match dotted line 5_A to 5_B and sew to finish legging
- 6 "Unfinished" ends of ribbon left to hang 2" below salvage edge
- 7 Fold on dotted line and hem to form long belt loop
- 8 Cut out 8_A & 8_B, fold in half then sew in new position shown

Clearly the Indian way is the most efficient use of this expensive cloth.

However, this scheme will not work if the measurement around the top part of the thigh is more than 27".

SCALE: 1/8" = 1"

Fans: Without exception, a straight dancer carries some type of a fan. The type of fan now preferred and highly treasured is a tail flat fan made of 5-7" tail feathers or the entire tail. The handle of the flat fan is covered with peyote beadwork and twisted leather fringe hangs from the butt of the handle. The feathers are fixed to the handle so that they do not move and are kept in their natural order so that the fan looks like the tail of the eagle. Colorful pheasant hackles and body feathers and/or dyed chicken hackles decorate the area between the feathers and the handle.

Many dancers prefer to carry a "peyote" or bunch fan.

See "The

Singing Wire" news letter for the details on construction of this item, April and May 1967 issues.

Beaver State Blankets: Most straight dancers will carry a Beaver State "Serape Robe" by Pendleton folded over his arm that will be left on his seat when dancing to hold his place.

Cane: The cane is a rod about a foot and a half or two feet long and $\frac{1}{2}$ " in diameter which is carried in the right hand or left hand. Canes are decorated with peyote beadwork and two or three small bands of otter fur. Two tail feathers may hang from one end. These feathers are decorated like heluska feathers but are not cut quite so narrow.

Canes are carried only by a few select dancers. Here is a quote from the American Indian Hobbyist; Sept.-Oct. 1957

"You cannot carry a coup stick or cane unless you are an appointed tail dancer. When you have danced satisfactorily for a period of time and demonstrated adequate ability, then you may be appointed a tail dancer by some tribal member, such as a chief or whip man. The coup stick will be presented to you in an appropriate manner and you will value it highly.

STRAIGHT DANCE CLOTHING

How to Dress A Straight Dancer

by Ed LaFave

Modeled by David & Daniel Petrush

Photographed by Joe Kazumura



Straight Dancers waiting for the formal War Dance to begin.

In Oklahoma today, warrior society dances of old still exist among the Osage, Ponca, Pawnee, and other tribes. After moving to Indian Territory, tribes held onto the old ways, preserving many traditions. Economically this was very hard, but the Osage people never stopped dancing. The outfit worn today at the warrior society dances is the same one worn in the powwow arena. This outfit is strikingly refined as to give it a tailored look.

The common elements are the porcupine headdress (just as the traditional dancers — the northern equivalent), ribbonwork, leggings, and

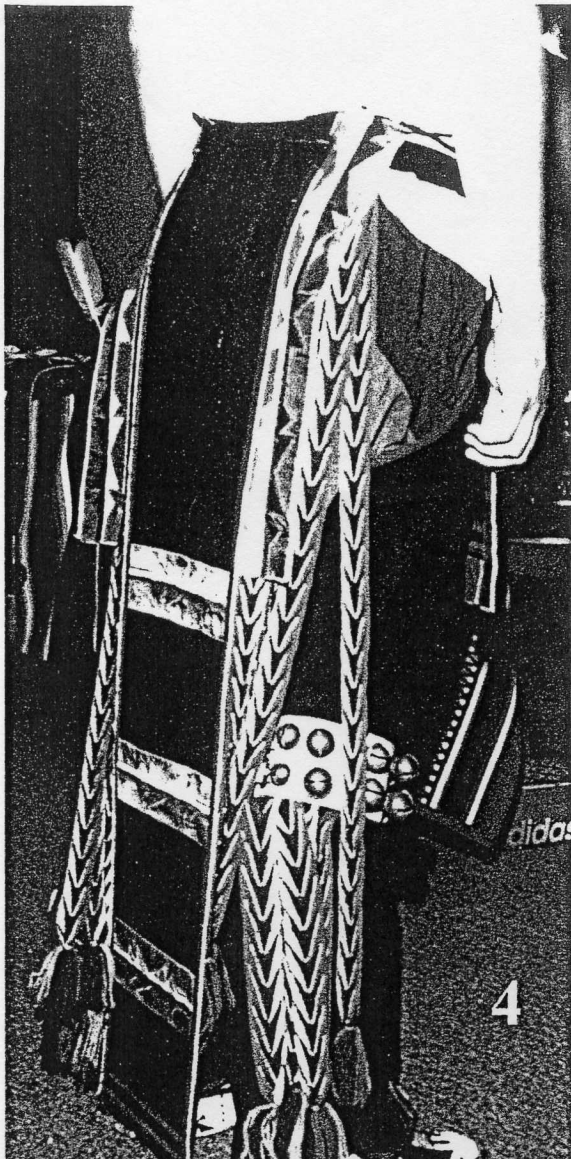
a trailer extending down the back of the dancer. Some dancers do wear turbans, some dancers do not wear turbans, some dancers do not have any ribbonwork, but among all tribes this outfit is easily recognized by the common elements.

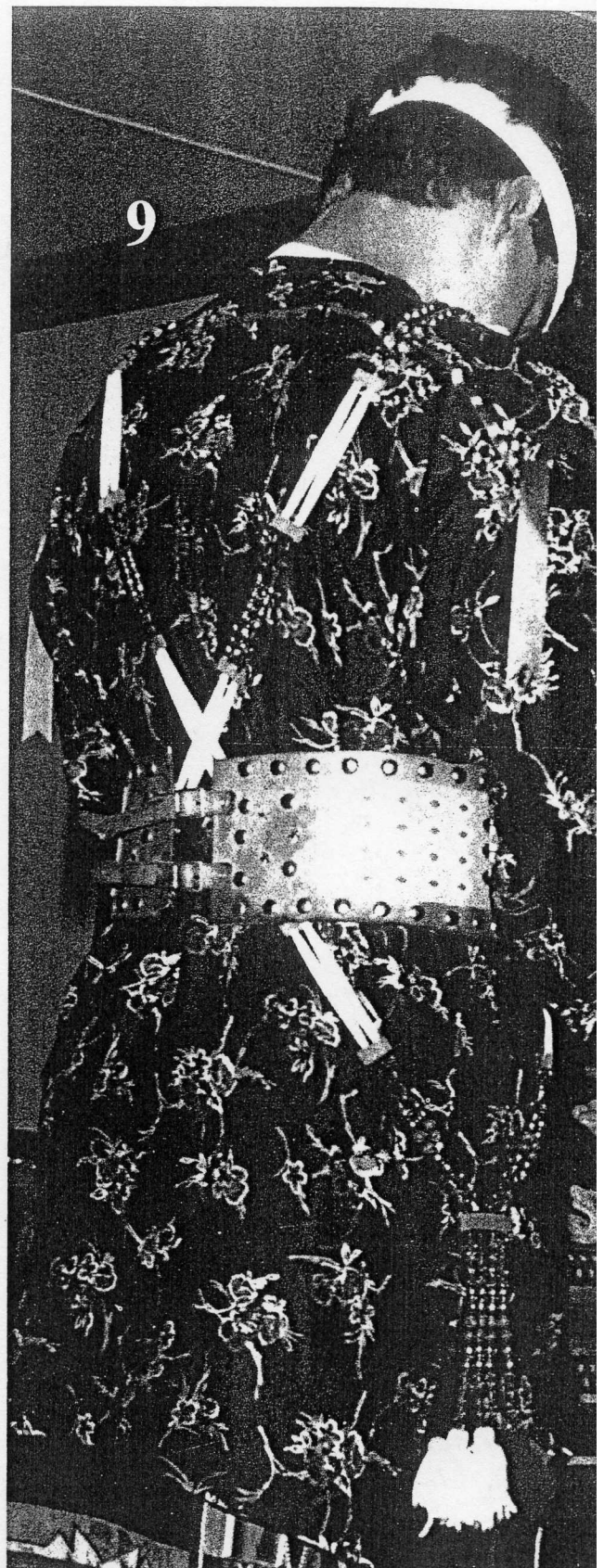
"The Straight Dance is graceful and very dignified. Rhythm, as with all powwow dancing, is extremely important. The warrior society songs typically sung for these men often speak of warrior deeds.

C. Scott Evans

Whispering Wind, 27.6, 1995







Photos 8 and 9: The belt is next. These photos show the belt placed under the bandoliers in front and over the bandoliers in back. Secure the belt. This method helps to “dress up” the front of the outfit and helps to secure the bandoliers in back.



Photo 13: The proper placement of the roach, roach feather, and Hethuska feathers tied in place.

Photo 14: This illustrates a front view of the dancer wearing his scarf and slide, carrying a fan and mirror board.



Some Thoughts on the Care of Your Dance Clothes

The dance clothes that you wear into the Dance Circle represent the combined efforts of you, your family, and your friends. You wear the clothes put together by the efforts of these people to bring honor to yourself and to these people. These things that you wear should be kept in an excellent state and/or condition of repair. You have an obligation to your family and friends. When you wear the clothes you are your family's representative. As their representative, you must feel a need to wear the clothes in their best condition.

It must be realized that your dance clothes represent a significant financial obligation. Your clothes can be very valuable depending on the amount of bead work, finger weaving, ribbon work, and jewelry used in the decorations. Something that is worth so much to your family should be properly cared for and respected.

It is typical to mix colors of the different pieces of your dress to create a vivid, coordinated effect from the many different and contrasting hues. The visual effect of the colors and designs of the ribbon work, bead work, and finger weaving used to decorate your outfit reflect both family and individual experience. The selections of color combinations, decorations and ornaments reflect the personality and individuality of the wearer.

Putting on your clothes should not be a rushed process. You should allow thirty to forty-five minutes for dressing. This helps in assuring that your outfit is put on correctly, and that all items of your dress have been properly secured.

When a person dresses for a dance, a friend should help him dress. They will help him put on everything in proper order. How the dancer looks is a reflection of the depth of respect and devotion he has for himself and what he wears.

A man's dance clothes are usually made by family members who try to acquire the best possible materials. A man who dances in the circle is said to be put there by his family or friends. When a dancer takes his seat in the circle his family or friends sit behind him. This helps to ensure that the dancer maintains his outfit correctly. Those who sit behind him make sure that each time the dancer sits, he does not accidentally sit on delicate parts of the dance clothes. They also may adjust any part of the clothes which may be falling out of place.

Several weeks prior to the dance the dancer should begin to check his outfit. The cloth parts should be hung out to air, be cleaned and pressed so as to not appear soiled or unkempt. At this time it would be important to check and repair any damaged edge beading for example. Check and mend or replace all ties. Moccasins, soles, thongs, bead work, sewing, should be checked. It is a good idea to replace the ties on a yearly basis. Check, clean and repair the bead work. A good idea to help maintain your moccasin shape is to fill them with paper or use shoe trees when your moccasins are not in use.

Your bells should be cleaned and polished. Make sure each bell is mounted securely. If you tie these on make sure the ties are replaced yearly.

Check the belts and ties that you use to secure your leggings,

clout and dragger to your waist. Replace these at least yearly. In my years of dancing I have seen several friends leave the dance arbor embarrassed because their clouts, dragger and leggings were falling off because a belt broke. An idea that I have used successfully is to secure my clouts, dragger and leggings to my waist with bands of cloth webbing. I try to use a cotton material as it tends to be softer and does not bind or chafe the waist. Called carpet binding, this material can be purchased from local carpet supply houses. Try to get the widest binding available. This material can be knotted and the ends tucked away easily. It also reduces the bulk of material around the waist.

You should have a clean, fresh shirt and matching accessories for each dance session. Please make sure they are also cleaned and pressed. They should not show stains. If soiled, they should be retired and new ones made. Your head band, if you wear one, should be a folded new, clean white handkerchief for each dance session. Use the old one to wipe your silver or clean your moccasins.

For those of you who wrap your fan handle, it does no good to put a soiled cloth around your fan handle to protect your bead work from the sweat of your hand. This cloth should be a new clean one for each dance session.

The most common items to come apart during a dance session are the bandoliers. These should be checked often for wearing of the wire strands and broken or chipped beads or pipes. If they need mending, do it early in the process of getting your clothes ready as this activity can take a lot of time. Those of you with beaded belts, check these and replace broken beads. Mend the mounting to the leather and the ties used to secure it to your waist.

One of the areas of your outfit that needs constant attention is your metal work, be it silver or brass. Tarnished metal work, must be kept clean and polished. Slides, armbands, bracelets, earrings, spreader, and drops should be checked and cleaned. It adds the extra sparkle that draws the eye to your fine clothes.

Your roach strings should be replaced often. If you use shoe lacing, make sure it is clean. If you use white, replace it after each dance session. Make sure your roach and spreader fit and the lacing that keeps them together is long enough and is in good condition. I cannot stress enough that all your ties and lacings be long enough to secure the pieces in place properly.

Your hand held items should be checked for damage. If you carry a mirror-board, make sure the mirror is not broken and that it is clean. Your blanket should be a Pendleton or a beaded blanket that is clean.

Always be prepared for the unforeseen problem. It is a good idea to carry in your case a small repair kit. Some of the items in this kit should be safety pins, of varying sizes, small knife, scissors, tape, leather thong, shoe lace, comb, wash cloth, handkerchief, and a few extra dollar bills.

This article was written in the hope that it will stimulate each of us to maintain and/or upgrade the high quality of our individual dance outfits, and to wear them properly.

COSTUME OF THE OKLAHOMA STRAIGHT DANCER

As mentioned in the editorial of this issue, many of the details connected with the costume of the Oklahoma Straight dancer are not clear to the editor and so this article will have to be considered as a preliminary report. We hope to be able to give a more complete report in the near future.

The information presented in this issue was gathered primarily from three sources, thru the research of Glenn White (W), Issy Umscheid (U), and the editor (E). The letters in parenthesis will be used thruout the text to indicate the source where conflicts occur. Each of the three authors obtained their information from a number of Indian informants too numerous to mention here.

It should be well to point out from the start that several of the Indians consulted by the editor warned against using certain items of costume because of their religious nature. The use of some of these items, notably the white headband, they stated would be a form of sacrilege. Other informants, however, denied this or any religious significance. Mr. White in a letter to the editor following a request for information regarding religious items had this to say; "I wanted to be absolutely sure about several things so I asked several other persons here who are also familiar with straight dancers. One of them, an Osage originally from Heniy, Oklahoma, has been a straight dancer for many years and I value his opinions very highly on this subject.

It seems to me that the persons you consulted in your area knew just about what they are talking about. The questions you asked are certainly some of the finer points to the costume. All the information I can give you deals with the costume as worn by the Oklahoma straight dancers as I have had no experience with the other tribes.

You mentioned that local Indians had advised you to stay away entirely from the idea because of the deep religious nature of the clothes. As far as publishing the article, I think it is something you must decide yourself, although you must be extremely careful to avoid wholesale criticism by Indians. I can well understand their view because much of the costume does have special significance which non-Indians tend to regard too lightly. Many of the seemingly minor parts of the costume have been given to the dancers and are recognised by such as personal honors. These things you can not make yourself. They must be given to you. I imagine that thousands of boys have access to your fine magazine in one way or another. Is it right that they should be given the information on how to make such articles? I sincerely hope you do not think that I am trying to tell you what to publish because I am not. I am more than glad to help you as much as I can but I also am uncertain as you how much detail you should include. May I offer the following as a suggestion: write the article to describe the clothes as they would be worn by a non-Peyote Indian. You would still have a complete costume and plenty of material to work with. Under this arrangement you would have to exclude the "Love Charms", and white kerchief." (W)

On the other hand, Mr. Umscheid in summing up his contribution to this article states; "As far as I knew no religious significance new what so ever. Wear anything you want - - - dictated mostly by personal taste." (U) This the editor does not agree with.

The editor decided after weighing all the information at hand to present the article in as complete a form as possible, however, being careful to state very definitely these items which should be avoided because of their religious or other import. We trust the reader wanting to construct his own straight dance outfit will have enough consideration and respect to avoid these items.

It should also be worth mentioning that although the costume is fairly well standardized thruout most of Oklahoma, certain minor variations do occur. This is often due to substitution because of the lack of certain costume materials, or to individual likes and dislikes. It is also well to bear in mind that the costume has undergone constant change in the past and is still in the process of changing, certain items however, have become standard and should be copied. One other word of caution in regard to the straight dance costume is the Indian, generally removed from Oklahoma, who for some reason or other attempts to develop a straight dance costume without understanding all the details involved. We have seen non-Peyote Indians right here in Los Angeles wearing the white headband simply because he had seen other Indians wearing them and without any realization of its significance.

Straight dancing is the name now given to the old original style of war dancing. It does not indicate a straight position of the body as many people are prone to believe, but rather just plain good old style dancing without any of the modern fancy movements so common today.

To quote from the souvenir program booklet of the Pawnee Indian Homecoming pow-wow for 1936: "In war dancing there are two kinds of dancers-- the straight dancer and the fancy dancer. The straight dancer is the original war dancer. There is dignity and poise in straight war dancing. Fancy dancing, as war dancing goes, is quite new. Great dexterity, speed and rhythm make this a special art."

Straight dancing is almost becoming a thing of the past, for in Oklahoma where there are always several straight dancers at any pow-wow very few pow-wows include a contest for the straight dancers. In Sheridan at their pow-wow this year a special straight dance contest was held although it was quite evident that most of the dancers who entered did not realize that this was an old style dance contest and introduced a lot of fancy footwork. Needless to say they did not win with their fancy dancing, but the master of ceremonies had to remind the dancers several times that this was a straight and not a fancy dance contest.

The article in this issue deals with the straight dance costume of the Oklahoma Indians and no other groups. This includes the Osage, Pawnee, Oto-Missouri, Ponca, Kaw, as well as some of the Petawatoni, Kickapoo, Shawnee and Sauk. Occasionally members of other tribes will use the same style of costume also, especially if they are able to obtain one.

Excellent demonstrations of straight dancing can be observed annually at Pawnee (if they start to resume their pow-wows, they did not hold one this year), Pawhuska, Hominy and Anadarko. Straight dancing utilizes a basic toe-heel type step in a basic erect position and with little variation if any. At certain phrases in the song the dancer bends over and to one side for several beats and then resumes his erect position. The dancers appear dignified but not stiff.

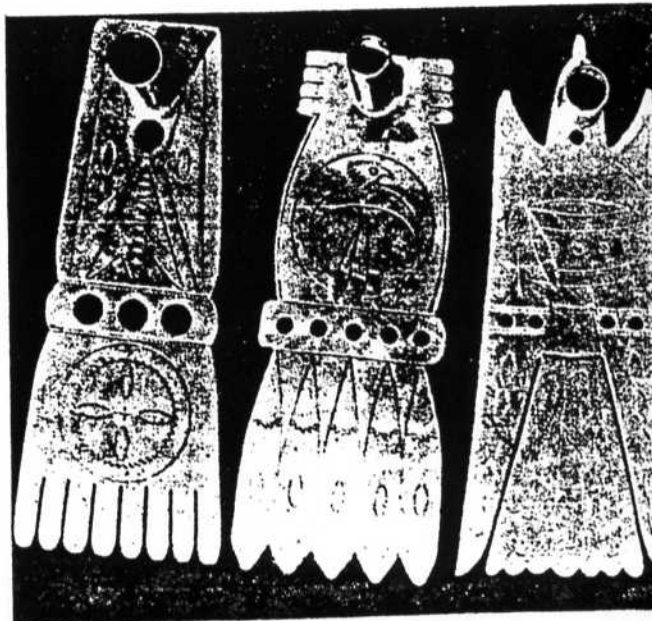
COSTUME

A description of the costume will follow starting from the top and working down. **HEADRESS:** Almost without exception, the hair roach is the universal headpiece among the straight dancers. A few of the chiefs wear war bennets or fur turbans, but they are by far the minority. Any fine hair roach will be suitable. Most dancers prefer the large deer tail and porcupine roaches such as are worn by the Sioux, Cheyenne etc. When porky roaches are used there seems to be no preference as to color, dancers just use whatever is available. The Osage however, seem to prefer the old style roach of jet black turkey beards and bright red deer hair. These are always much smaller than the porcupine roaches, but are preferred when available.

Only one feather is used in the roach as opposed to the two generally found in the North. This is generally a black and white eagle feather attached to a swivel base so that it can pivot around during the dance. This feather is almost always left in its natural state, but occasionally a feather can be seen with some porcupine quill ornament on the shaft. Do not use tip plumes on your roach feather.

The photo at right shows three exceptionally fine roach spreaders from Oklahoma. The one on the left belongs to Kieth Gilbert the other two are the editors. All are made of German silver with stamped designs. All three also show markings of the Peyote cult and as such could only be used by Peyote members. For a complete account of Peyote silver see the Material Culture Note #17 of the Denver Art Museum. A silver spreader is not necessary for your straight dance outfit, any spreader will do, likewise the three spreaders in the photo could be used by a Peyote fancy dancer as well.

German Silver contains no true silver but is an alloy of nickel and copper.



Still another item worn along with the roach are the "Scalp Feathers". These are generally tied to one of the roach strings in such a way that they dangle over the forehead. See the several photos and illustrations for examples of this. Feathers of this type seem to be popular with many tribes from other areas as well as Oklahoma but they are an essential part of the straight dance costume.

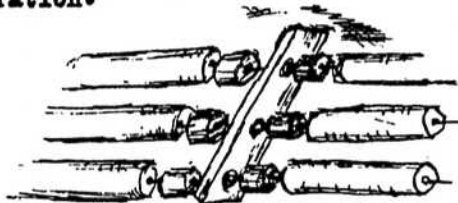
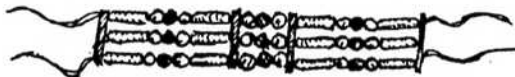
Mr. White says; "These can hang down on either side of the face. Can be made of any stiff out-down feather. Most used are eagle, hawk, pheasant although this is not the limit. The feathers signify your family or clan ties. These are made by someone outside your immediate family and presented to you as an honor. The decoration is left up to the maker although he will know what type of feather and what color of feather to use according to whom the dancer is. There is no special way to decorate the feathers. It is considered quite an honor to "Earn your feathers". (W) This information agrees with the editors findings.

Mr. Umscheid adds; "Feathers on the roach are of course a relatively new innovation as compared to feathers tied to the scalp. These feathers tied to the scalp were the original head apparel of the straight dancer. -- Scalp feathers are used as a means of tribal identification. For example; Pawnees wear two feathers, one worn on each side of the forehead. Supposedly this stemmed from the Pawnees ability as excellent thieves, unexcelled in this respect, resembling the sly fox, consequently the scalp feathers as ears like the fox. These feathers are often attached to a beaded rosette which is in turn attached to the scalp. Any type feather seems to be usable for this. -- I have seen eagle, pheasant, scissortail, and eagle major plumes. The quill end of the feather is decorated similar to a bonnet feather, sometimes wrapped with felt, sometimes with beads." (U) Sometimes these feathers are dyed red or some other color. Base and or tip fluffs can be added. If beads are used to wrap the feather bases this is often done by the Peyote bead method. A pink conch shell is sometimes used in place of a beaded rosette at the point of tying. The editor has also seen flicker tail feathers used for this purpose. Sometimes also bead strings are attached to hang down with these "Scalp feathers".

HEADBAND: Mr. Umscheid says; "Old style straight dancers did not wear the head band at all. The headband now used is generally a silk or silk like handkerchief tied in the middle of the forehead with any type of small knot. The adoption of the headband is credited to the use as a sweat band. White seems to be the most popular color (white because it symbolizes purity), but all colors are used. Have seen a beaded band but only on one instance." (U) We agree with Mr. Umscheid except in regards to the white headband. Mr. White supports our own findings and states; "Yes, it probably would be considered sacrilegious to wear the white headband unless you are a Peyote member. Non-members usually wear a beaded headband with rosette or none at all." (W) I can add that I have also only seen one beaded headband and suggest you either use a silk kerchief of any color other than white or none at all. For emphasis I'd like to repeat, do not use a white headband unless you are a Peyote member.

FACE PAINT: None is needed, nor it is too common, however, some straight dancers use a little paint around the eyes. Usually a small line from the edge of the eye out toward the ear, but other patterns are used also. When used it is always red.

CHOKER: "These are not entirely necessary as the neckerchief covers up most of the neck region. However, they are attractive when viewed from the front. They are of two general types; either solidly beaded or a combination of beads and hair pipes." (W) The small necklace hair pipes about one inch long are preferred, either alone or in combination with brass beads. The sketches below by Mr. White illustrate their method of manufacture. Sometimes a large conch shell is added to the front of the choker for extra decoration.



NECKERCHIEF: This is a very essential part of the costume. It is worn exactly as a Boy Scout might wear one and it is about the same size as a scout kerchief. The material is generally the large silk kerchief of the type sold in variety stores. These are imported from Japan and come in a number of solid colors. This same sort of kerchief in a smaller size is used for the headband and the two little charms tied to the back. All colors have been seen on straight dancers. White is common for both Peyote and non-Peyote members, also red, purple, blue, orange, green etc. Some dancers use kerchiefs of silk or satin with floral prints, but this is not as common as the solid colors.

A slide of some type is generally used to hold the neckerchief together. The most common type is of German silver like the three slides illustrated below. However, silver finger rings can be used or beaded cylinders or rosettes, or the kerchief may even be tied in place of using a slide. Never tie the loose ends, but rather leave them dangle. If a choker is worn the slide is worn low to expose the choker. If a choker is not worn then the slide is pulled up tight to cover the neck.

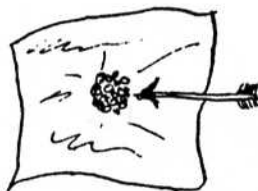


Of the three silver slides illustrated above the middle one is of a type that would be worn only by a Peyote member. The tipi (which in this case is a separate piece of silver soldered in place over the backing) is a definite Peyote symbol. More of this latter. The other two slides could be used with your straight dance outfit. The slide with the star is a very common type and seems to have derived from the old Texas ranger badge. All three are of German silver with the design punched rather than engraved. All three are also in the collection of the editor. I wanted to have photos made of them but could not avoid the glare of the silver surface. German silver is inexpensive and easy to work so you might like to try your hand at some. Check the Material Culture Notes #17 of the Denver Art Museum on the "Metal Jewelry of the Peyote Cult" for additional information.

NECKLACES: "As you will notice in the photographs, bead strings are worn over one or both shoulders. Make them from large beads, or an assortment of beads and hair pipes. If you can obtain some old brass beads use them. Sashes consist of either two, three or four rows of beads and pipes separated by leather spacers. (Like the chokers) Make the strings long enough to hang approximately 3 inches below the waist line."(W) Generally when two are used one is a combination of beads and hair pipes and the other is of plain brass beads. Peyote members often substitute Mescal beans for the brass beads. (See the discussion of Peyote at the end of this article)

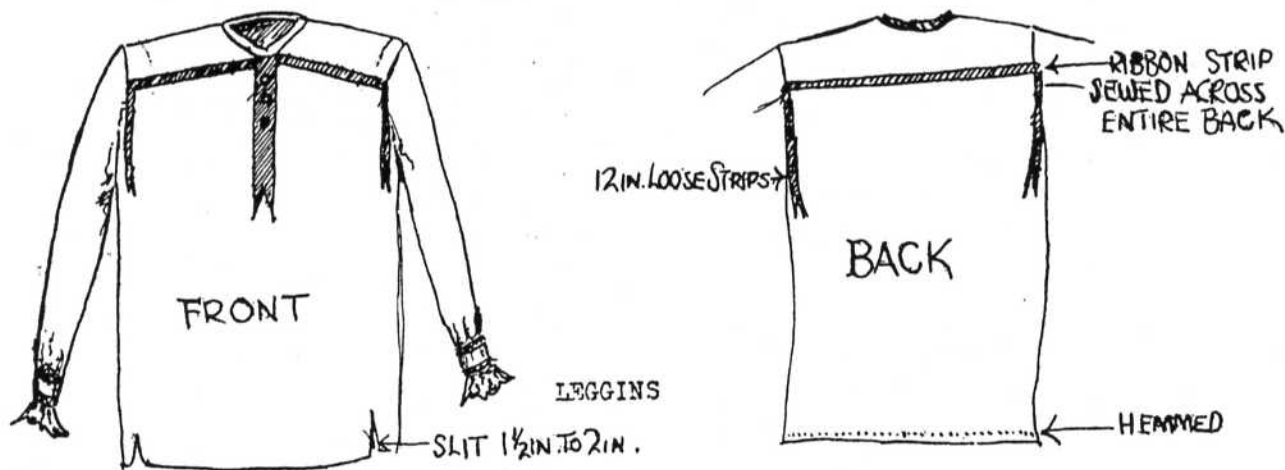
The bead strings can be worn either inside or outside the belt. We suggest you wear them inside as they are rather clumsy when dancing and this helps to hold them in place.

CHARMS: This is another item which is definitely Peyote as far as we can gather. They are made from small silk handkerchiefs of some solid color, filled with Peyote tobacco only, and either tied to the bead strings about 4 or 5" below the shoulder at the back or tied directly to the shirt back of the shoulder blades. Makes no difference if one or two are worn, but if two they should both be the same color.



Here again is an item we suggest you do not wear with your straight dance costume as it is a Peyote emblem and of a religious nature. It may however, be permissible if you do not use tobacco in your charms. Mr. Umscheid did not agree with the Peyote significance to these charms. He stated that they were filled with a sweet plant for use as a deodorant. One of my informants stated the same thing, but the weight of evidence points to a Peyote significance.

SHIRTS: These are generally made of any shiny material, satin, silk or rayon. Usually in a solid color from pink thru blue to purple seem most common, however, any color can be used. Knot dyed shirts or floral prints are also used but are not popular today. You can follow the pattern presented in our Oct. Nov. 1956 issue or make the simpler Osage type shirt shown below in the sketches by Mr. White. There is no beading on the shirt. It is decorated with strips of one-half inch ribbon front, back and cuffs. The shirt should fit very loosely and hang down about 7 or 8 inches below the waist line. Some dancers further decorate the shirt by the addition of small beaded rosettes or clusters of some small feather such as flicker tails at each shoulder. Sometimes both rosette and feathers are used.



ARM BANDS: German silver bands are most common and by far the preferred type. These usually have some simple stamped design such as flags or a floral design. They range in size from about 3/4" to 2" wide, but 1 or 1 1/2" seems most common. These are usually adjustable in size with a hook and a series of holes, a keeper such as is used on a belt holds it in place. They are worn slightly above the elbow rather than high on the arm. Very often they are decorated with dangling ribbons or small silk kerchiefs or even a feather. Sometimes a beaded rosette is used over the silver. Beaded arm bands are seldom worn.

BELTS: Beautiful wide beaded belts are generally used by straight dancers. These are always been beaded in a geometric design. Any good Plains design will do however, they are usually very bright and bold. Four to five inches wide is usual and long enough to go almost around your waist. The beaded strip is mounted on a leather strap with one or more small buckles. The buckles can be worn either front or back, probably better in back as then they will be hidden by the other ornament. Sometimes brass spots are placed on either side of the beaded strip to give added width. The photos illustrate this belt rather well.

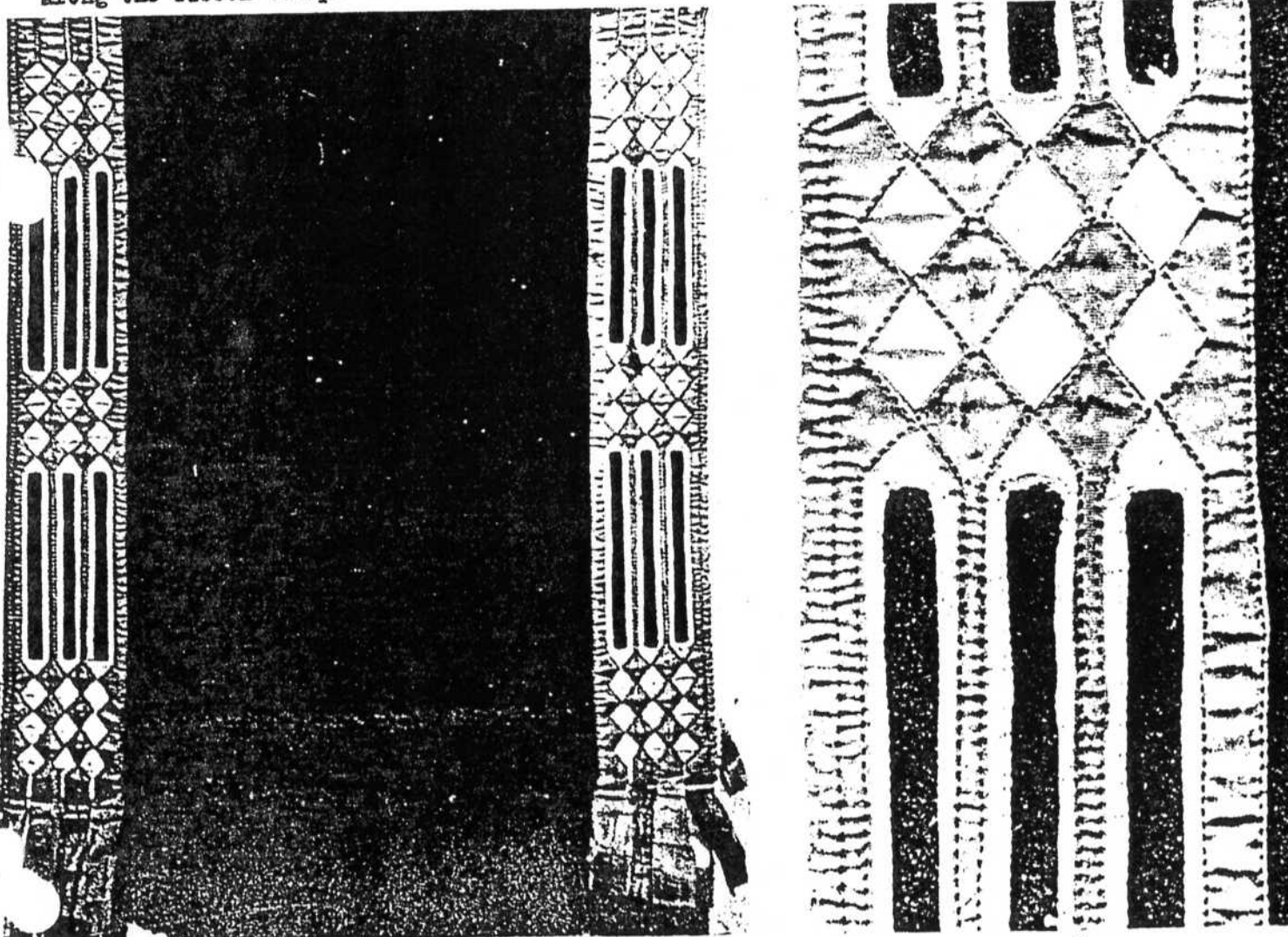
SASH: Most dances wear finger woven sashes of regular commercial wool yarn under the shirt. This finger weaving is quite difficult and if possible we will try to do an article on it in the magazine some time. Sashes of this type are illustrated in the Oct. Nov. 1956 issue on page 17. In Oklahoma these sashes are generally more elaborate than elsewhere (with the exception of the old French Canadian Assumption sashes) in that beads of pony size are usually woven right in with the yarn, and the fringe is usually woven just like the main body of the sash but in smaller sections. Generally the sash is tied on the right side using only the two top strands of fringe and left to hang down the side. Occasionally the sash is tied on the left and sometimes fringe can be seen on both sides. Some clever Indians today do not bother with the body of the sash at all since it does not show anyway, but just make the fringe section and tie it to a regular belt. The photos below show two old Sauk sashes with a plain fringe.



GARTERS: These are mentioned here because they are generally exactly like the sashes just described except that they are smaller. They are worn directly below the knees with the fringe to the outside and hold the legging flap in place. Tie the whole fringe together in one knot instead of just the two top strands. They are now covered by the bells and so serve no useful purpose except for the decorative fringe. Mr. Umscheid states that the garters are carry over from the days when the bells were worn around the ankles.

BELLS: These are worn in only one position, just below the knees. Long straps of bells 30-36 inches are used. If you have brass bells use them as they are much preferred. Fold your leggings over, tie on your leg bands and wrap the bells over them. (W) You will note the dancer in the center page is wearing the large $2\frac{1}{2}$ " steel bell, however all the others illustrated have the small brass straps.

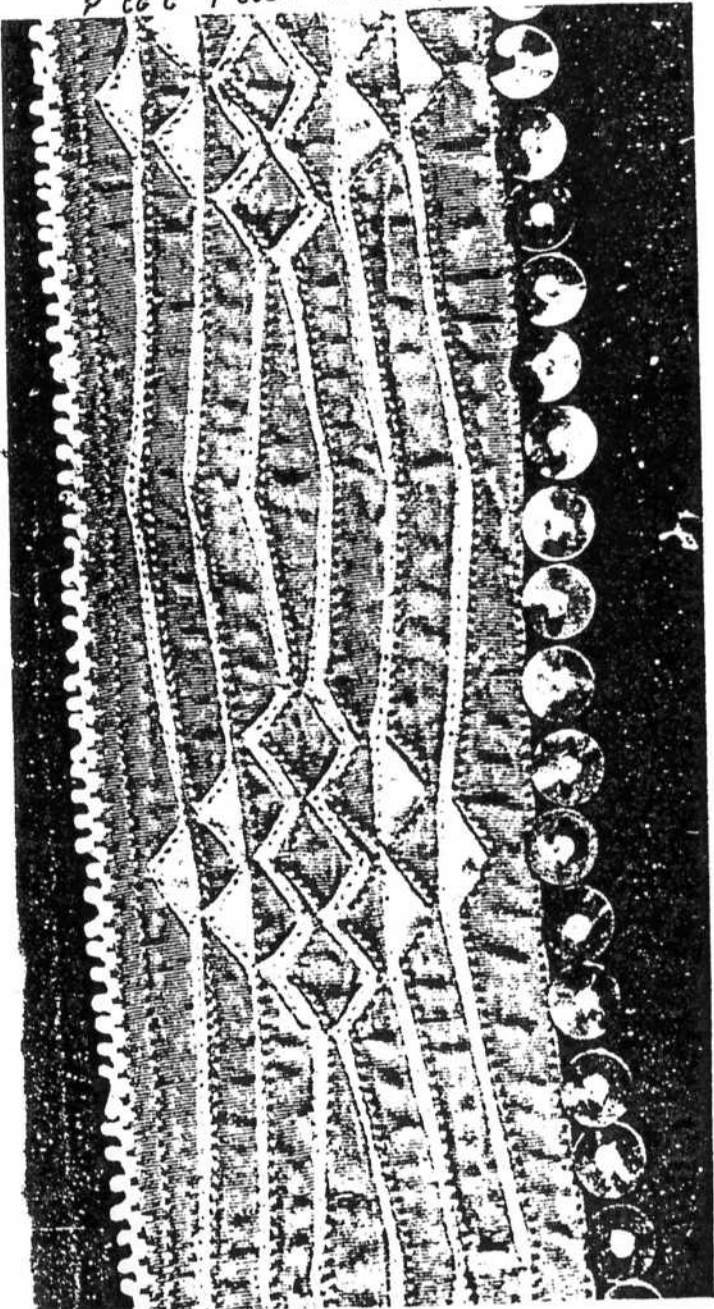
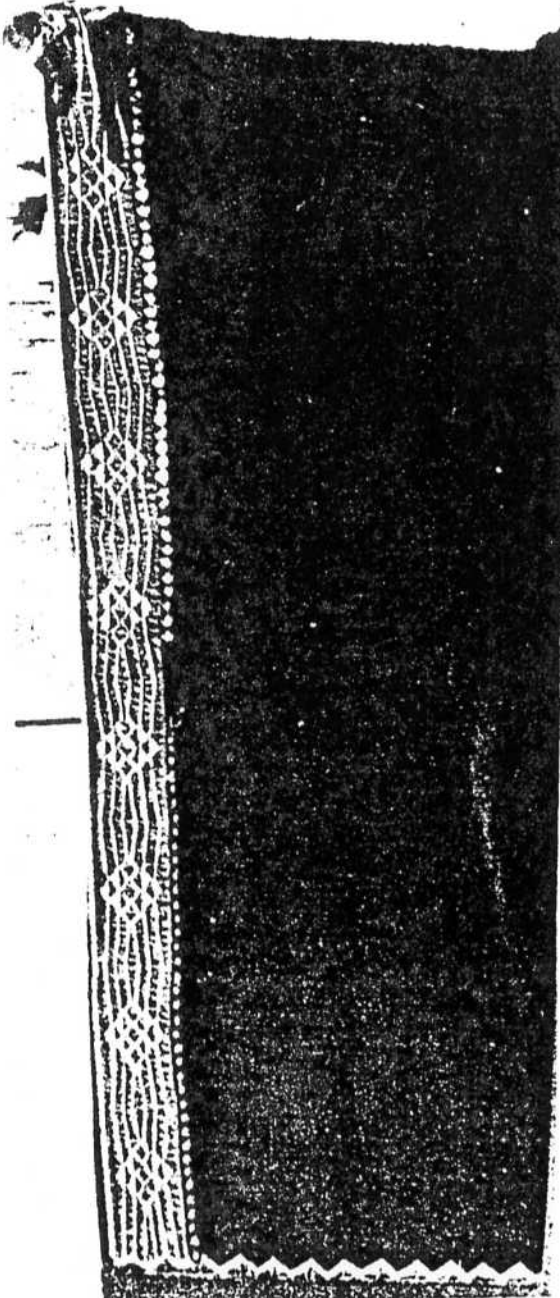
BREECHCLOUT: The clout, leggings and the dance trailer should all hang together in color and design. They are all made of one of the many types of "list cloth" usually with a rainbow type of selvage edge. This is a very fine grade of wool cloth in dark blue or black, with a colored selvage on both edges of the material. They are decorated with ribbon applique of the type shown on pages 21-23 of the Oct. Nov. 1956 issue. The clout shown below was the basis for the method on the top of Page 23 of that issue, although you will note they are somewhat different. The length of the clout is determined by the width of the material, in the example shown below this is 58". The width is generally about 13". An equal amount of the clout hangs both front and back and both front and back are decorated the same way. Notice that the loose ends of ribbon just hang over the bottom. The selvage on this particular clout is marked as follows; strips a little more than $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide in yellow, red, blue, red and yellow. The ribbon design has a white background with magenta boarder, the two inside strips are green to the outside and blue toward the center. White seed beads are used in a standard two bead edging all along the ribbon strip.



FRONT SIDE OF CLOUT IN THE EDITORS COLLECTION & DETAIL OF SAME

LEGGINGS: The leggings should be of the same material as the clout and it should have the same design and colors of ribbons. Notice that the ribbon decoration goes completely up the outside edge of the legging and not inside the seam as on Plains leggings. The ribbons are also sewn directly to the leggings rather than as separate strips. Measure your inseam from crotch to just below your ankles, add about 4" and you will have the right length. The rainbow selvage runs up the full length of the back flap. There is usually a taper also, the leggings illustrated are 11" at the base and 14" across at the top. The sequins on this pair are the regular commercial plastic type with a metallic finish fastened in place with a clear glass seed bead. The bead edging is milk white seed beads in a standard two bead edging. 13 ribbons are used in the strips of the following colors; purple, cream, green, cream, purple, cream, green, cream, purple, cream, green, cream, and purple. The bottom border is of purple and cream. "Straight dancers wear their leggings on the opposite leg as would seem natural. Therefore a legging normally made for the right leg would be worn on the left. Once the legging is put on, the flaps are turned over toward the front of the leg. The ribbon work is now centered down the middle of the leg. The flaps are kept in place by the garters and bells." (W)

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LEGGING AND DETAIL OF RIBBON STRIP FROM EDITORS COLLECTION



The three views of the same dancer shown above will show clearly much of the details we talked about in the previous pages. Notice the small reach, probably turkey beard. The white headband. The two strings of beads worn like bandoleers in an "X" fashion. The two light streaks coming off his back are not a part of the costume but rather flaws in the photo.

Notice also how the belt is buckled in the back; how the ribbon trailer and the otter fur ornament come all the way to the ground. The large leg bells are not common on straight dancers. They prefer a long strap of small brass bells, wrapped about the leg.



THREE VIEWS OF THE SAME DA

This rear view shows detail. This one appears type of ornament showing variation. The little bead strings are of metal shirt all but covers of the cleut is visible trailer. Notice the from the shirt should

This dancer has on both sides of his the fringe are worked



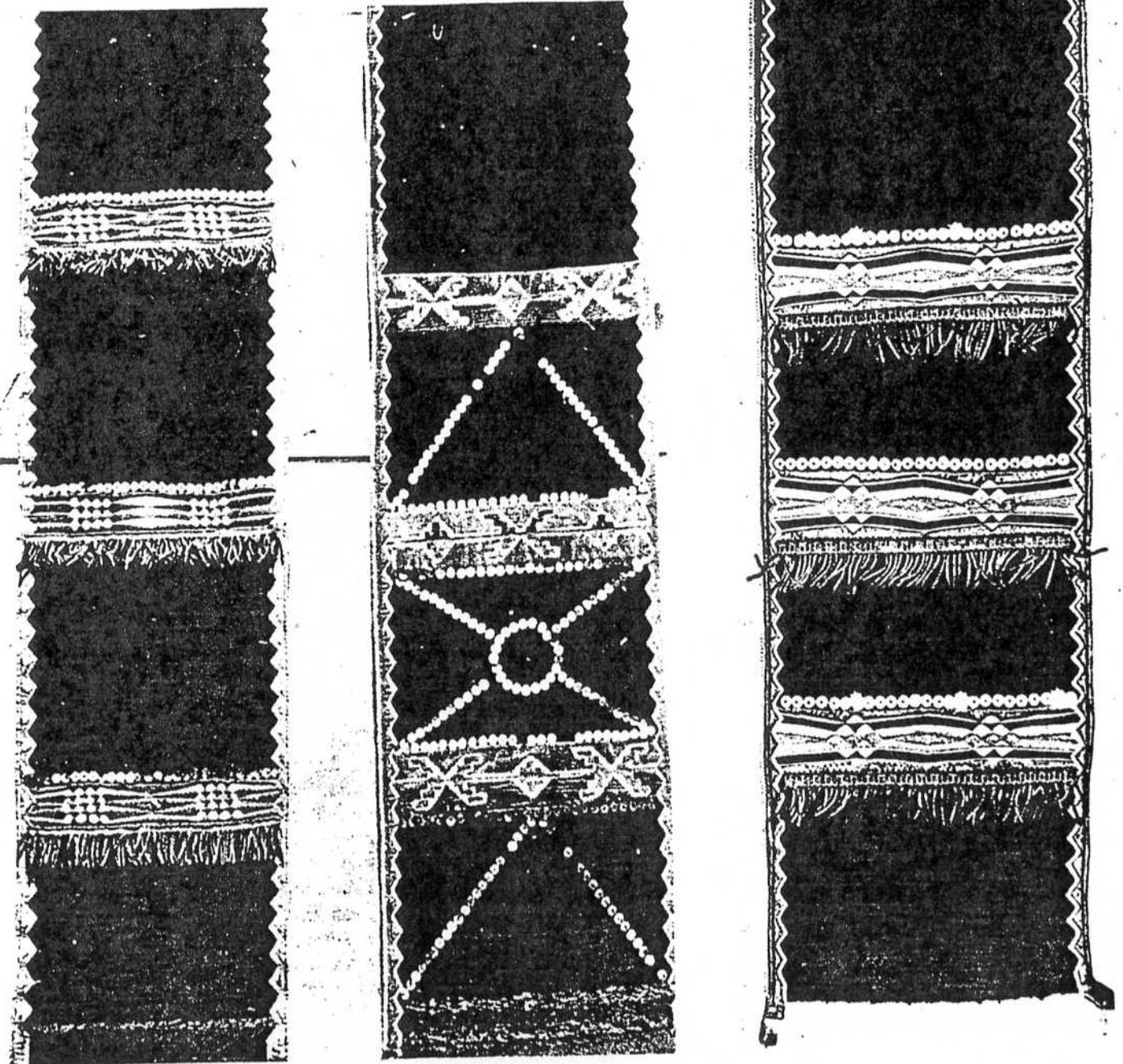
R - PHOTOS BY ISSY UMSCHIED

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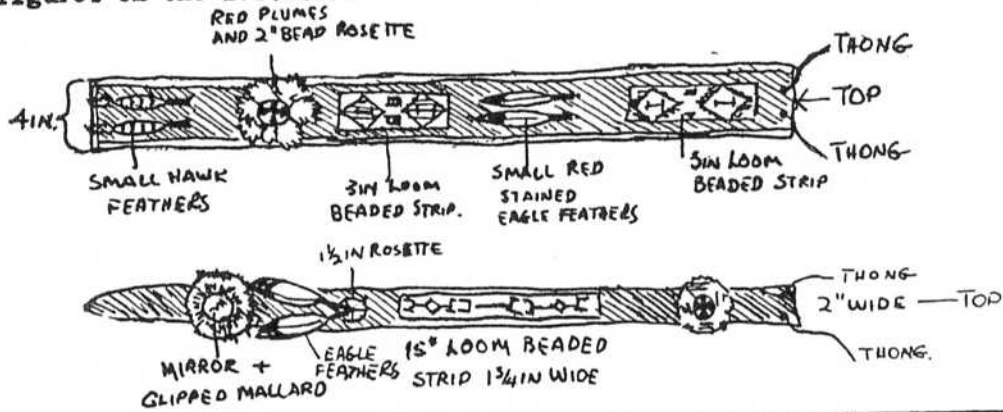
age from his yarn sash
the white "Y's" en
with pony beads.

This front view shows plainly several additional features. Notice the "Scalp feather", this is cut and beaded not only at the base but also half way down the quill. Notice also the bead dangle from the "Scalp feather". He is wearing a typical choker of small hair pipes and beads with a large conch shell. The beaded rosette tie slide is not a common feature, in fact this is the only one of this type I've seen. A few inches of the bottom of the clout are visible under the shirt showing the selvage edge. Notice that the bead strings hang down well below the shirt bottom. He is carrying a Peyote fan and a blanket

DANCE TRAILERS: This is a strip of the same material as the cleut and leggings and again should match in ribbon design and colors. Size varies from about 35"-40" long and about 8"-10" wide. The selvage boarder is at the bottom. This hangs from the belt in back, over the cleut, and reaches to the ground. The three photos below will give you some idea as to their construction. See also the trailer illustrated on Page 14 of the Oct. Nov. 1956 issue. The trailer at left belongs to Kieth Gilbert, the center one is the editors and the one on the right is in the Denver Art Museum. Notice the use of sequins, metallic fringe and edge beading for added trim. Generally if three bands of ribben trim are used the top and bottom strips are the same design and color and the middle strip has the colors reversed or altered somehow. This change in design is evident in the middle photo below.



OTTER TRAILER: This is a necessary part of your straight dance outfit. The essential element is a strip of fur almost always otter, 2-4" wide and long enough to reach from your neck down to the ground. Unless you get a giant otter you will probably have to piece this to get it long enough. The decoration on these varies considerably. The finer older pieces have a beautiful ribbon applique trim down one or both sides. Newer ones have loom beaded strips, beaded rosettes sometimes with fluff, feather pendants etc. One such trailer seen by the editor had only a small piece of fur at the top and bottom with a big piece of loom beadwork in the middle. The sketches below by Mr. White will give you some ideas. See also the photos below on the left. The two figures on the left show front and back of the same person.



Photos by Issy Umscheid

CANES OR COUP STICKS: You will notice that the dancer on the cover as well as several in the photos are carrying decorated sticks approximately 18" long. These are decorated with Peyote beadwork and one or more strips of otter fur. They may or may not have a feather or fluff hanging off the end. Here again is an item you should not make yourself for your straight dance outfit. Mr. White says; "Your informant is correct. You cannot carry a coup stick or cane unless you are an appointed tail dancer. When you have danced satisfactorily for a period of time and demonstrated adequate dancing ability, then you may be appointed a tail dancer by some important tribal members, such as a chief or whip man. The coup stick will be presented to you in an appropriate manner and you would value it highly." (W) To quote from the Pawnee Homecoming booklet again; "When one war dance round has ended, a part of the same song is sung while the dancers retire. A chosen few, picked by the head chiefs, dance to complete the round. Usually the best of the straight dancers have this honor. This is known as the Tail dance." In other words the cane is a mark of honor and indicates excellent dancing ability, if you ever have occasion to dance at an Oklahoma pow-wow don't dance the tails unless asked to do so.



Left to right are the 1,2,3 winners in the straight dance contest at Pawnee, 1956. On the left is Harry Red Eagle Jr. who won the contest. Photo by Den Dalrymple.

FANS: A fan of some type is generally carried by all straight dancers. This is usually some type of Peyote fan. The feathers used can be most anything, eagle, hawk, pheasant, flycatcher water turkey, macaw, magpie, to mention but a few of the common types used in Peyote fans. We are planning an article on this type of fan for a future issue, however, any type of fan will do. Perhaps the best type for a non-Peyote member is the type made from an entire eagle tail, add a beaded handle or just a couple of rosettes and a long fine twisted fringe.

BLANKETS: These are usually carried by straight dancers, especially Peyote members, but they are set down while dancing.

MOCCASINS: Any type of plains moccasin will do, however, there seems to be a preference for the partially beaded type which has one row of beading completely around the bottom and two rows from the toe to the flap. Full beaded moccasins are also quite common, in fact they use anything they can buy.

This about completes the costume. "One final word about the regalia; do not attempt to make a fancy dance costume from it by adding bustles, feather reaches, etc. The clothes described are universal and should be worn with the pride they justly deserve. (W)



You will notice thruout the discription of the straight dance costume frequent reference to Peyete(pay-yè-te), such as the white headband, silk charms on the back etc. It was quite difficult for the authers to get any specific information concerning the exact relation of this religion to the straight ance cestume. The reason is that the Peyete Church has been persecuted by both Indians and whites for many years with the result that members fear ridicule by unsympathetic outsiders. Also the identifying items of costume for peyete members are undergoing constant change with the result that not all peyete members wear the same items and nen-Peyete members often wear peyete symbols without giving it any thought.

The information presented below was gathered mostly from Leaflets 105,106 and Material Culture Notes #17 of the Denver Art Museum.

2. HISTORY OF THE CULT. Peyote was used in religious ceremonies by Mexican Indians long before the coming of the Spaniards with Christianity about 1525-30. Indians of the United States have used peyote widely for only the past fifty years, though it was used earlier by a few tribes, notably the Lipan Apache, the Kiowa and Comanche. From these southern tribes the rite in various forms gradually traveled north and west. As it spread, many pagan forms were dropped and certain characteristics of Christianity were added from both Catholic and Protestant sources. Now it claims to be a Christian religion, and in some sections has been incorporated as "The Native American Church". Its native priests claim the right to administer the sacraments, some even to celebrate the marriage ceremony. However, both Roman Catholics and Protestants have worked against peyotism since it was first encountered. Despite this and other opposition the cult is today very active and continually growing.

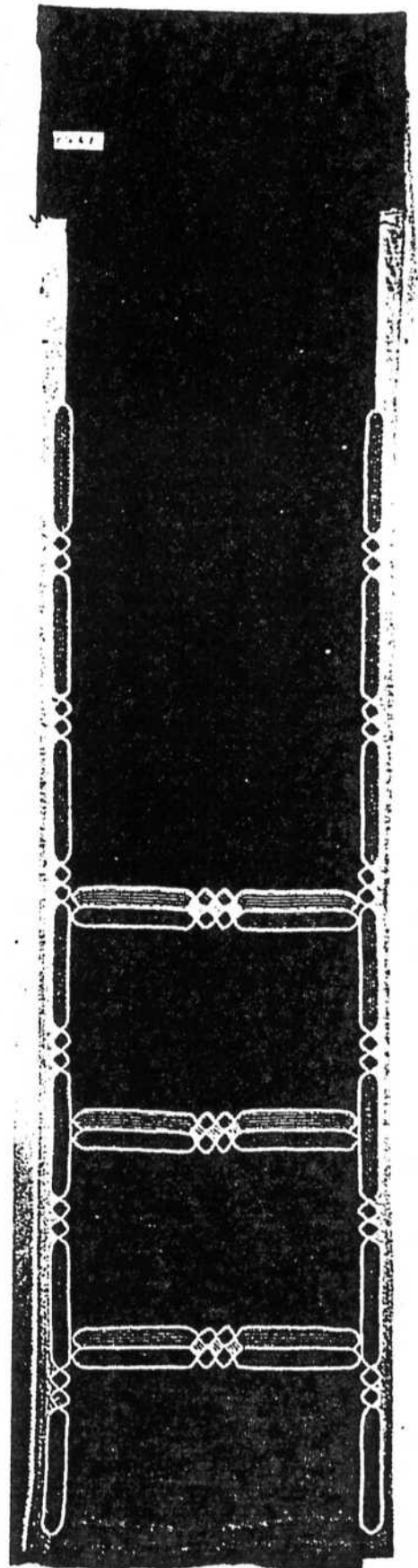
3. BELIEFS OF THE CULT. Only the most general statement can be made because of the wide variation among individuals and various regional divisions. A very high code of moral teaching is presented. There is a strong racial trend stressing the Indian as a being apart from the White man, and serving as a medium uniting all Indians. The cult has a wide appeal because of the sense of well-being and happiness induced by the use of the peyote. To a defeated and broken minority people these qualities offer a welcome relief from the difficulty and poverty of their lives. Their own great past is relived in romantic dreams, and there is a suggestion of promise that through peyotism this past may return. Tales of wild orgies are in absolute contradiction to the facts.

4. CHANGES IN EQUIPMENT. The Peyote Cult is a relatively new and loosely bound informal organization. Therefore the ritual equipment is not definitely standardized. The objects described are now in general use, but new types appear and old ones drop out of use; new designs and methods of applying them appear and disappear. Certain men become highly expert in making the various ritual objects, and their products are sold widely not only in their own tribes but also elsewhere. Well made fans, etc. are in great demand. This tends to standardize equipment.

"The custom of cult members wearing some distinguishing ornament or badge did not become established before 1900. Since 1920 it has become increasingly important. The insignia or badge does not necessarily take the form of a piece of jewelry. It may be a feather in a man's hat-band; the wearing of braids or earrings by men; or the knotting of a silk handkerchief instead of a necktie around the throat by younger men. -- The whole matter of wearing jewelry or other distinctive insignia is an outward and visible manifestation of the idea of "Indianness" as opposed to "Whitemanness" which is so prominent a part of the cult's beliefs."

The above quotes from Alice Marriett and Willena D. Cartwright will help give some insight into the problem.

The dance trailer illustrated at right shows a decided departure from the normal type in that it has bead decoration instead of the ribbon applique. This is certainly more modern but not uncommon. The cleut and leggings should match.



Denver Art Museum photo



photos by rex reddick

“SO, YOU WANT TO BE A STRAIGHT DANCER.”

by Robby Robinson

A few weeks ago there was a week, that a day did not go by that the postman was without a letter from someone wanting to know something about straight dancing. So, instead of trying to answer these questions on an individual basis, I will attempt to put it all in one article. I am glad to see so many persons interested and know there are many others who have not expressed themselves, at least to me.

There are a few things I would like to say first: Avoid wholesale criticism by Indians. Some parts of the costume has special significance which non-Indians tend to regard too lightly. Some minor parts should be given to the dancer and are recognized by such as personal honors. Although the costume is fairly well standardized throughout, most of Oklahoma, certain minor variations do occur. Some is due to the lack of materials and a use of a substitute has been used. Also, likes and dislikes have had their part to play. It must be kept in mind that the costume has undergone constant change in the past and is still in the process of change. Certain items however, have become standard and should be copied.

Straight dancing is the name given to the old original style of War Dancing. It does not indicate a straight position of the body as many are prone to believe, but rather just plain good old style dancing, without any of the modern fancy movements so common today. There are others who believe this, this being the most difficult part of a fancy dancer converting to straight dancing. One cannot fancy dance one minute and straight dance the next, because the dance is one of dignity and poise and not what fancy moves you can make with your feet. Excellent demonstrations of straight dancing can be observed annually at Pawnee, Pawhuska, Hominy and Anadarko, Oklahoma.

will attempt to describe the costume starting from the top and working down:

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headress

Almost without exception, the hair roach is the universal head piece. A few of the Chiefs wear war bonnets or fur turbans; but they are for the minority. One feather is used and attached to a swivel base so that it can pivot around during the dance. Feather is left in it's natural state, but occasionally a porcupine quill ornament on the shaft may be seen. Do not use tip plumes.

Another item worn along with the roach are the "Scalp Feathers". These are generally tied to one of the roach strings in such a way that they dangle over the forehead. There is no side, but most are worn on the right. They may be any stiff cut down feather. Most used are Eagle, hawk, pheasant, etc. The feathers signify your family or clan ties. These are generally made by someone outside your immediate family and presented to you as an honor. The decoration is up to the maker. There is no special way this is done. However, these are attached to a beaded rosette or pine conch shell. Sometimes bead strings hang down with these feathers.

headband

The old style straight dancer did not wear the head band at all. The one now used is a handkerchief folded to about 3/4 to one inch in width and tied in the middle of the forehead with a small square knot. White is the most popular color (symbolized purity). I have heard and read accounts of this being worn by peyote members, but to my knowledge this is not true today, it may have been at one time, I will not say it was not.



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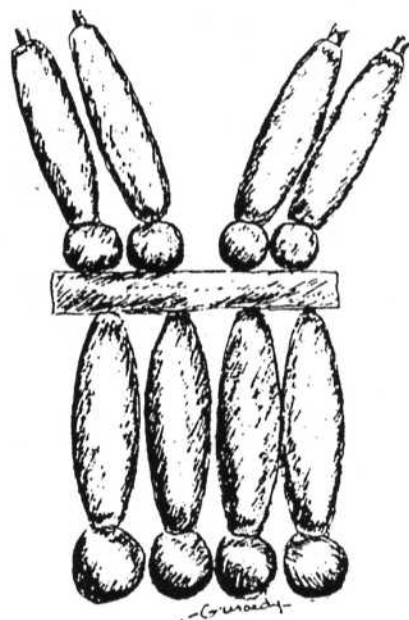
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necklaces

Bead strings are worn over one or both shoulders. Make them from large beads, or an assortment of beads and hair pipes. Old brass beads are good. Sashes consist of either two, three or four rows of beads and pipes separated by leather spacers. Make the strings long enough to hang approximately three inches below the waist line. Sometimes when two are worn, one is beads and hair pipes and the other is of plain brass beads. Mesquite beans are also used in making these sashes. The bead strings may be worn either inside or outside the belt. May I suggest you wear them inside as they are rather clumsy when dancing and this helps to hold them in place. Having slightly round shoulders, I pin mine at the shoulder with small safety pins.



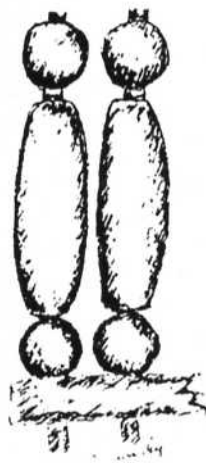
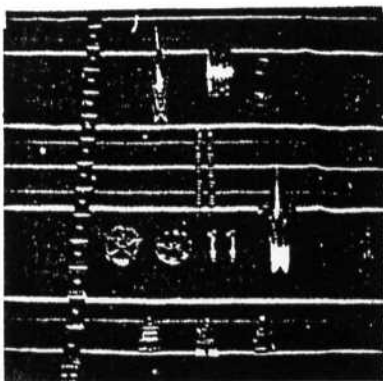
shirts

These are called ribbon shirts. As they are made of material usually in a solid color and trimmed with narrow ribbons at the shoulders and cuffs. The shirt should fit very loosely and hang about 7 or 8 inches below the waist line. Some dancers further decorate the shirt by the addition of small beaded rosettes or clusters of small feathers such as flicker tails at each shoulder, sometimes both are used.



arm bands

German Silver bands are most common and preferred type. They may be stamped or plain. Range in size from 3/4 to 2 inches wide, 1 or 1 1/2 inch seems most common. Worn slightly above the elbow. Very often they are decorated with dangling ribbons or small silk handkerchiefs or even a feather. Sometimes a beaded rosette is used over the silver. Beaded arm bands are seldom worn.



neckerchief

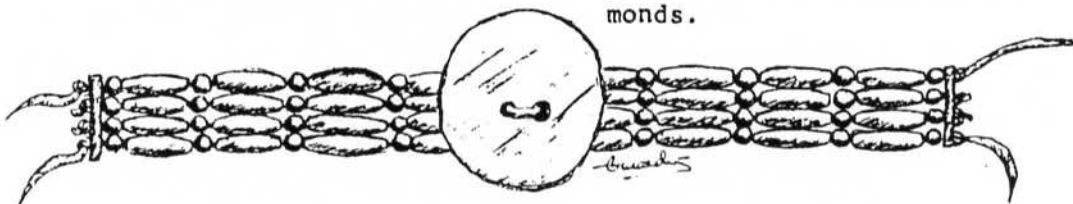
This is a very essential part of the costume. It is worn exactly as a Boy Scout might wear one and also about the same size. Material generally is the large silk kerchie of the type sold in variety stores. These are imported from Japan and come in a number of solid colors, any color may be used. You can still find them, but they are not as plentiful as they once were. A Straight Dancer will accumulate quite a collection of various colors. You may see some satin with floral prints, but this is not as common as the solid color. A slide is worn to hold the neckerchief together. The most common is German Silver. However, silver rings, beaded cylinders, or rosettes may be used. Do not tie the loose ends, let them dangle.

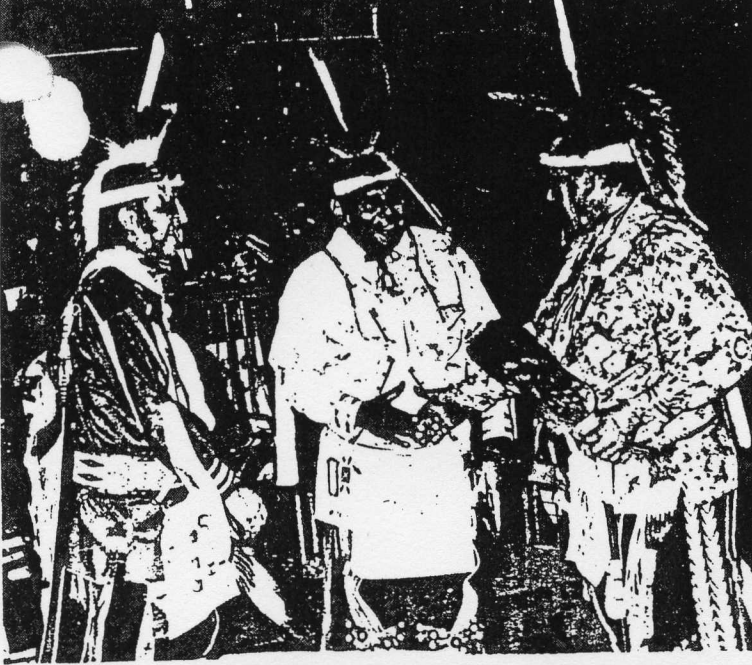
chokers

These are not entirely necessary, as the neckerchief covers most of the neck region. However, they are attractive when viewed from the front. There are two general types used when worn. Either solid beaded or a combination of beads and hair pipes. The small necklace hair pipes about one inch are preferred. Sometimes a large conch shell is added to the front of the choker for extra decoration, as the one I occasionally wear, which was given to me by Br. J. Howard.

charms

They are made of small silk handkerchief which match the color of the neckerchief. They are either tied to the bead strings about 4 or 5 inches below the shoulders or tied directly to the shirt back at the shoulder blades. A peyote member may use a small ball of tobacco to make his charms. Non-members and non-Indians use a small ball of sweetgrass, this also works as a deodorant, watch the girls trail you as you dance. You may desire to just pin or tie them on straight, it has been noted lately that the handkerchief is folded into a small square and pinned to the shoulders like two small diamonds.





(TOP LEFT) Note necklaces (bandoliers), shirt patterns, scalp feathers (l) Don Earhart, Illinois; (c) W.J. Scott, Oklahoma; (r) Ron Wrona, Wisconsin. Photo by Joe Kazumura.

(TOP RIGHT) Shirt pattern, scarf, beaded belt, matching ribbonwork.

Ty Stewart, Oklahoma. Photo by Joe Kazumura
(MIDDLE) Straight Dancers, LIHA Powwow, 1971. Photo by Dick Madaus.

(BOTTOM) Sashes hanging under beaded belt. Photo by Joe Kazumura.



belts

Beautiful wide beaded belts; loom beaded in a geometric design; 4 or 5 inches wide. (This) Beaded strip is mounted on a leather strap with one or more small buckels. The buckles may be worn front or back. Sometimes brass spots are placed on either side of the beaded strip to give added width.

sash

Most dancers wear finger woven sashes of regular commercial wool yarn under the shirt. Some sashes have pony beads woven right in with the yarn. The fringe is usually woven just like the main body of the sash but in narrow sections. Generally the sash is tied on the right side and let the fringe hang down the side. Occasionally tied on the left, fringe may hang down one side or both. Some today do not bother with the body of the sash, it does not show anyway, just using fringe sections tied to a belt under the shirt. Also noted that occasionally narrow loom beaded strips are used to hand down the sides.

garters

These mentioned now as they should be exactly like the sashes, except they are smaller. Worn directly below the knees with the fringe to the outside and hold the leggings flap in place. They are covered by the bells and serve as decorative fringe.

breechclout

The clout, leggings and dance trailer should all hang together in color and design. They are all made of one of the many types of "list cloth", usually with a rainbow type selvage edge. Preferred dark blue. They are decorated with ribbon applique. Width is generally about 13 inches. An equal amount of the clout hangs down front and back. Both panels are decorated the same. Loose ends of the ribbon hangs over the bottom. White seed beads may be used in a standard two bead edging all along the ribbon strip.

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leggings

Should be of the same material and same design and colors of ribbons as used to make the clout. The ribbon decoration goes completely up the outside edge of the legging and not inside the seam as beaded strips on plain leggings. You may measure your inseam from crotch to just below your ankle, and add about 4 inches and you will have the right length. The rainbow selvage runs up the full length on the back flap. There is a slight taper in the flap, usually 11 inches at the bottom and 14 inches at the top will do. Of course, measurements depend on wearer. This will give you an idea of the taper. The edge beading is also used on the outside edge of the ribbonwork. A row of sequins may also be put on the inside strip, fastened in place with a seed bead. The straight dancers wear their leggings on the opposite leg as would seem natural; that is the ribbonwork is in the back when first put on. The flap is folded over to the front. This puts the ribbonwork now down the center in the middle of the leg. This flap is kept in place by garters and bells.

bells

Long straps of small (or should I say) medium size bells 30 to 36 inches long. The preferred is brass. Worn just below the knees, the leggings are folded over. Tie on leg bands then the bells over this. In olden days the bells were worn at the ankles, thus the garters served another purpose. Today bells are worn only one place, (at the knees).

dance trailers

This is a strip of the same material and ribbonwork as for the clout and leggings. This varies in length depending on wearer. It hangs from the waist in back over the clout and reaches to the ground. The width should be so that it fits just inside the ribbonwork on the edge of the back flap of the clout which should be about 8 inches to 10 inches wide. Ribbonwork is placed across the width, two or three rows may be used. Spaced 6 or 8 inches apart. Addition of sequins, metallic fringe and beads may be used for additional trim. If three rows of ribbonwork is used, the middle one can have the colors used in reverse.

otter trailer

This is a necessary part of your straight dance outfit. You should not try to be one (Straight Dancer) without it. The essential element is a strip of otter fur. This may be 2 to 4 inches wide and long enough to reach from your neck down to the ground. This will have to be pieced together to get the required length. The decoration on these varies considerably. May have a ribbon applique trim down one or both sides. Other items of decoration may be used, are, beaded reoseetes sometimes with a fluff, feather pendants, short loom beaded strips, etc. Don't let your thoughts get too wold. They are worn tied around the neck under the neckerchief and let hang free down the back.

canes

A decorated stick approximately 18 inches long. They are decorated with peyote or basket weave beadwork. May have one or more strips of otter fur trim. Also may have one or two feathers or fluffs hanging off the end. This is another item which should be given to you. It is the mark of honor someone has bestowed upon you. In dancing with Indians in Oklahoma, this must not be carried unless you are an appointed tail dancer. Tail dancers are appointed by improtant tribal members, such as a chief or whip man. When one war dance round has ended, a part of the same song is sung while the dancers retire. A chosen few, picked, dance the complete round. Usually the best of the straight dancers have this honor. This is known as the tail dance. So when in Oklahoma do not dance the tails unless asked to do so.

fans

A fan of some type is generally carried by all straight dancers. Feathers can be most anything, one idea can be a full tail with a beaded handle and long fine twisted fringe.

blankets

Are carried in and used to set on and mark your place in the dance circle. Do not set on another persons blanket unless asked to do so. This is considered an insult.

moccasins

Any type of plains moccasin will do. Partially or fully beaded, whichever you have.

"THESE CLOTHES SHOULD BE WORN WITH PRIDE THEY JUSTLY DESERVE."


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COMING...

Various parts of the Straight Dancers clothes will be presented in forth coming issues of WHISPERING WIND Magazine. Many more photos will be presented with illustrations by our staff artists and photographers. Articles that will be presented in the next few issues:

OTTER DROPS	by Rex Reddick
PLAINS MOCCASINS	by Karl Kaup
HAIR ROACHES	by J. Heriard
SCALP FEATHERS	by Jim McLean
THE TROT DANCE	Songs & Trans- lations by Lamont Brown
PHOTOS, PHOTOS, PHOTOS	by Joe Kazumura

STRAIGHT DANCE CLOTHES: GETTING THEM ON

JERRY SMITH

Though many are aware of the items that comprise the "Straight Dance Suit" and may have spent several months making and collecting these items, when it comes down to the moment of getting these clothes on then the quandry begins.

"What's first?"
"Where do you pin this?"
"How is this folded?"

In answer to these questions, here are some of the secrets as to how items are worn, attached, pinned and folded in producing the very "neat, pressed and formal" look of a straight dancer.

Not unlike other sets of Indian attire, how these clothes are worn does make a difference. Many of the wives, mothers, grandmothers and aunts who have either sewn suits of ribbonwork or watch at war dances for years and years make sure their men wear their "clothes" just so. They see to it that their scarfs, shirts and ribbons are cleaned and pressed. Often these women will fuss over their men to make last minute adjustments on head-dresses, scarfs, feathers, etc. They help to tie items on and assist with face paint. If the leggings are hiked up too high or if the clout is not hanging just right, the women suggest the adjustment.



All this attention to detail is necessary as the finest ribbon suit, yarn work and beadwork will look second-class if it is not worn properly. Also, attention to proper attire parallels philosophically the formal protocol of the Inlonshka and Hethuska, the requirements made of the dancer and the meaning of the dance.

Since items worn by various individuals from the many tribes whose men straight dance at war dances or powwows in Oklahoma vary widely, the instructions given in this discussion will be directed towards the set of clothes worn by the majority of the dancers at the Osage Inlonshkas. The sequence of 15 photos presented here should give the reader a fair impression of the order in which items of regalia are placed on the dancer. A few comments about aspects illustrated in each photo now follow.

PHOTO 1: BASICS

A cool toast to wearing this broadcloth suit in the heat of Oklahoma and we are on our way. Trunks, T-shirt and socks are the BASICS. Since the trucks are covered up, some dancers deem them optional and just wear their shorts. Modesty of the magazine prevents illustrating this option; however, if the shorts do show as the dancer bends during the center beats of the song due to short leggings or shirt it is rather tacky. Dark or



red socks are a nice touch as they match the cloth of the suit. The T-shirt helps to soak up the sweat to prevent some of the moisture from getting to the ribbon shirt, otter dragger and other items worn on the upper body.

Moccasins are put on first as it is rather difficult to bend over completely to tie them on after the bells and belt are on.

Another basic, passed on by several veteran straight dancers, is a visit to the restroom somewhere before Photo 2 as it is obviously somewhat troublesome at the stage of Photo 13.

PHOTO 2: BREECHCLOUT

The breechclout is second. Buckle a belt around the waist and then slip the breechclout over the belt, under the legs and over the belt in back. Then straighten the clout. To get the clout to lay perfectly straight, be sure that a portion of the ribbonwork remains folded under the belt both in the front and in the back. The importance of this hint can not be stressed enough.

PHOTOS 3 & 4: LEGGINGS & GARTERS

For dancing, the leggings are worn "backwards" as the legging flaps decorated with ribbonwork are folded forward so that the ribbon design shows when the bells

are strapped on at the knees. Each legging is pulled on and then attached to the breechclout belt via the legging ties provided.

FIGURES 1, 2, & 3 illustrate three common legging tie set-ups. The tie or ties are simply an 8-10" length of broadcloth sewn to the legging on the ribbonwork side just inside the ribbonwork flap. The location is very important to insure proper legging fit. If it is out of place, the ribbon strips of the legging will end up too far to the inside of the leg. The ties of Figure 1 and 2 are knotted about the breechclout belt to hold the leggings up. If the set-up in Figure 3 is used the belt and leggings are put on first and then the breechclout.

Once the leggings are on and tied in place, the ribbon flaps are folded over and positioned to run at a slight diagonal from the front part of the leg at the ankle to the side at the waist. The breechclout ribbonwork should not overlap the legging ribbonwork. This position is maintained by attaching the yarn garters just below the knee and with a safety pin at the top, Photo 4. DO NOT OMIT THIS PIN!

The yarn garters are usually dimensioned to wrap around the leg once; the four tabs hang to the outside of the leg and the 4 ply braided ties that hold the garters up tie on the inside of the leg. Figure 4 illustrates this arrangement. The four tabs should

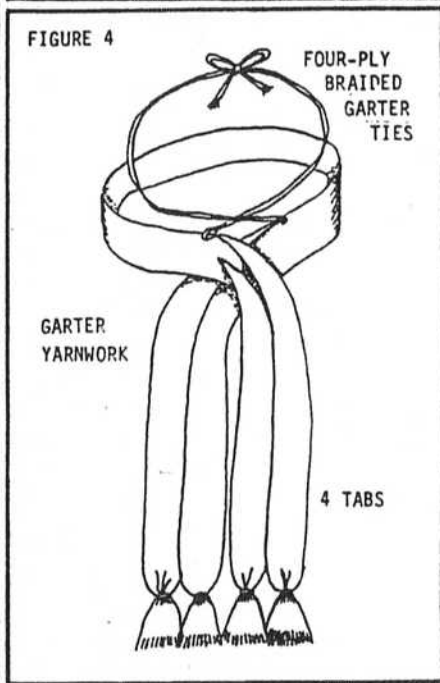
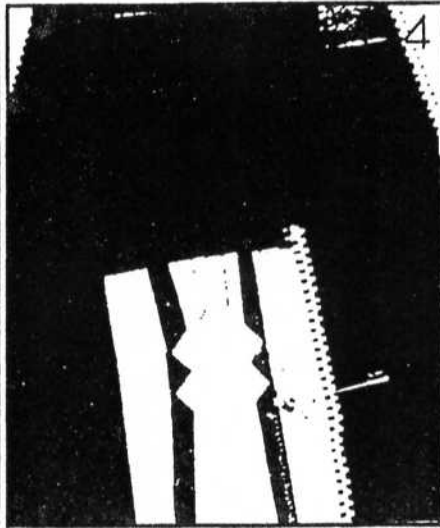


FIGURE 2

FIGURE 1

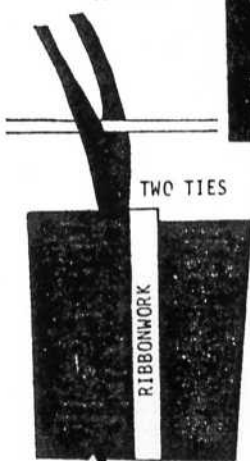
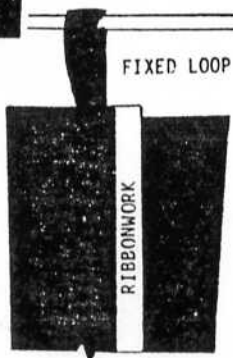


FIGURE 3



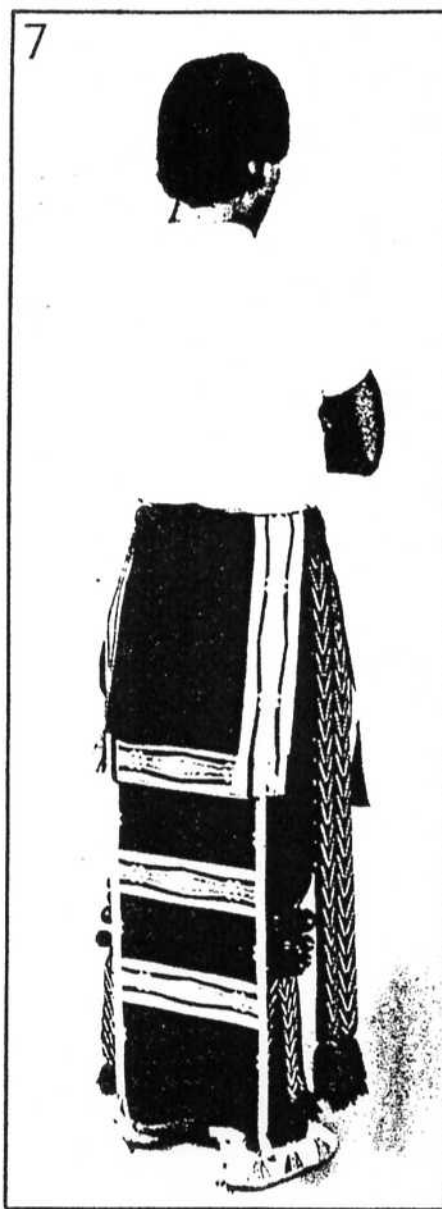
lay flat to the side of the ribbonwork. If they are worn properly, the yarn garters will hang evenly at the bottom. The article "Yarnwork Details" in the Nov. 1978 issue of Moccasin Tracks provides additional details about yarn garters and side tabs.

PHOTO 5: BELLS

Whether the bells worn are brass or the more prevalent 1-1/2" nickle plated steel sleigh bells, they are tied or buckled on after the garters. If the bells are riveted to a narrow piece of strap leather that wraps around the leg about 2-3/4 times, they are positioned so that the leather ties at each end of the long strap wind up on the inside of the leg. If the bells are attached to a rectangular piece of strap leather in a double row, they are also buckled at the inside of the leg.

The yarn garters may have to be straightened again after tying on the bells. After the bells are tied on more than once as if they are too tight, it is total misery and total embarrassment if they fall down because they were tied loosely.

Warning: the yarn garters do not cover all the ribbonwork in the knee area to protect it from the bell straps. To avoid extra wear on this piece of art, use rivet type bells only. To avoid stains use only mineral oil to darken the strap leather for the bells.



PHOTOS 6 & 7: DANCE TRAILER & YARNWORK

The dance trailer and side yarnwork are usually placed on the same belt or heavy shoe lace and secured about the waist. Photo 6 shows the dance trailer worn over the breechclout and Photo 7 shows the trailer worn under the breechclout. Either method is acceptable. Again, the trailer is adjusted to hang straight and centered. The side yarnwork should be positioned more towards the back of the hip than the hip's center. The side view of the dancer in action with slightly bent posture exposes the legging ribbonwork, the garters and the side yarnwork.

PHOTO 8: SHIRT

Though there are several nuances regarding shirt material, construction and ribbons, length is extremely important. Nothing looks worse than a straight dancer with a short shirt. It's like a woman in a black cocktail dress with her slip showing. The shirt should hang an inch to two inches below the crotch! Not much of the clout should show. If more than 7 inches of clout is exposed either the shirt is too short or the clout is too long.

Buttons at the neck and cuffs (or hook & eye and snaps) aid a proper fit and quickness of dressing. Safety pins are used if the buttons are missing. This is usually the case if the shirt was finished two hours before the dance and which will not get put on for the next three

years.

PHOTOS 9 & 10: BANDOLIERS & BELT

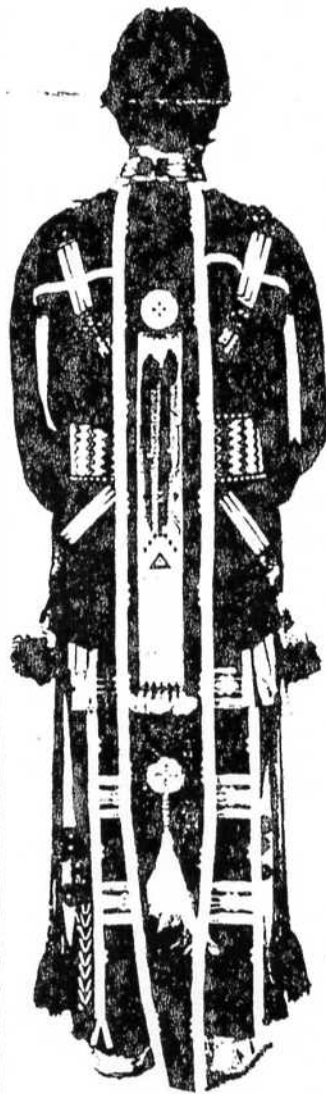
The bead and hairpipe bandoliers are slipped on next and then the belt is buckled in place. Sometimes the bandolier bead strings are worn outside the belt in the front or outside the belt in the back - but never both. The belt is buckled in front and then the belt is slid around so that the buckles appear at the back.

Once the belt is on, the bandoliers are untwisted and adjusted to hang off the shoulder at the same position. They are pinned in place with a medium sized safety pin, see photo 10. Without this pin the bead strings would continually fall off the shoulder and it would be impossible to dance.

PHOTO 11: OTTER DRAGGER

After the bandoliers are in place, the otter dragger or set of hairplates are tied about the neck. Thin leather ties, or small shoe laces are not recommended as otter dragger ties. The weight of the dragger over a several hour period will cause those ties to cut into the neck. A heavier athletic shoe lace or other strip of material will serve the purpose better. The ends of these ties can be tucked inside with the T-shirt. The dragger should not touch the ground when standing erect as it should not drag while in dancing

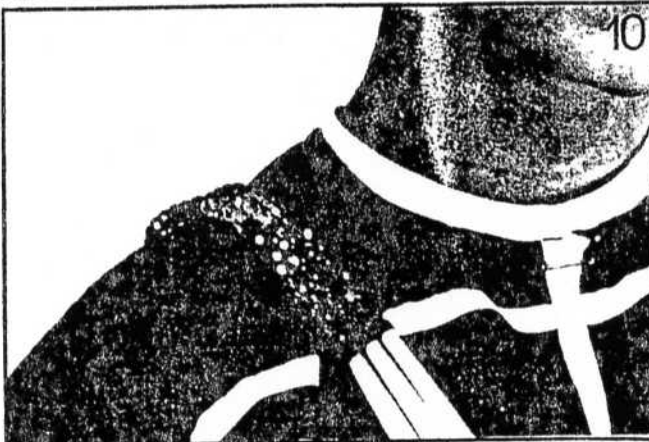
11



12



13



posture (the dragger did not fit our model).

PHOTO 12: CHOKER

In addition to adding a decorative traditional piece to the neck area, the choker does hide the other dragger ties. For these reasons it is not optional.

PHOTOS 13 & 14: SCARFS & ARMBANDS

B. M. 2004. 100% Apr. 05.

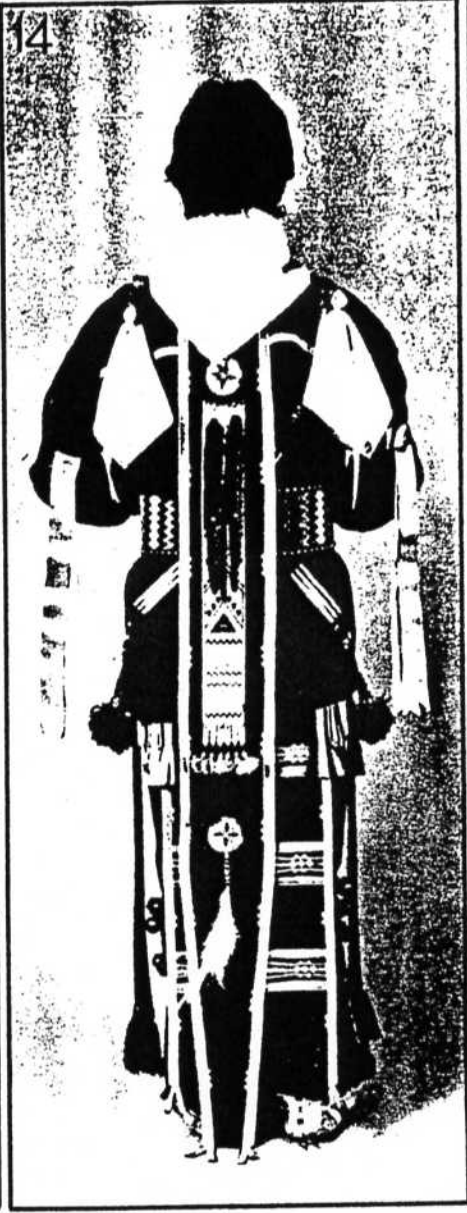
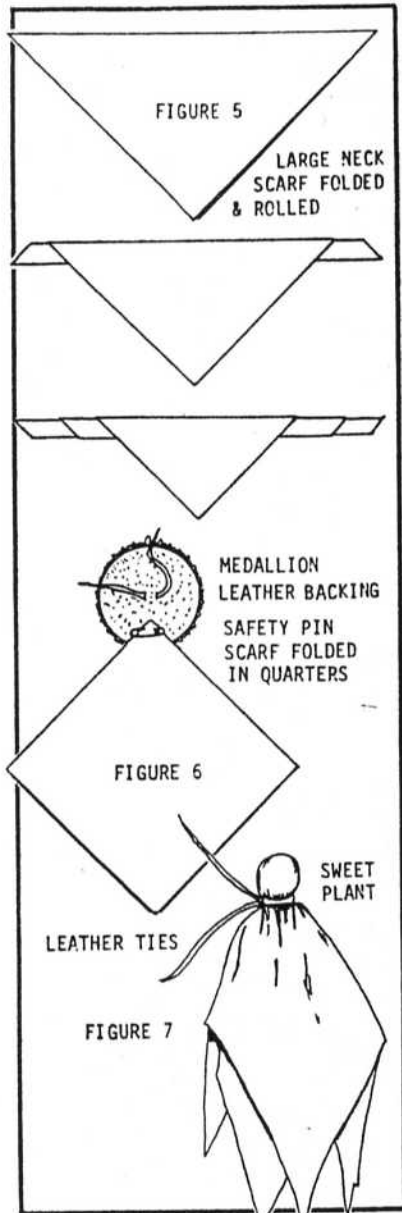
The large square (about 30") scarf is folded into a triangle and then perhaps folded two or three more times as in Figure 5 before it is placed about the neck. Making sure the peaks match and that it is centered in the back is another detail of consideration.

The scarf is held about the neck with a tie slide of German silver. One tendency is to slide this piece up too high on the scarf.

Armbands could be slipped on last especially if they are over an inch and a quarter wide as it is difficult to tie on the headdress with wide armbands on. Armbands are worn below the biceps and above the elbow - not on top of the bicep or above the bicep.

The wide and long piece (1-3/8" wide, 30 inches long) of rayon satin ribbon folded over each armband is worn at the back of the arm. The ribbon is pinned in place with a small safety pin from the back, see Photo 14. The smaller (12-14" square) scarfs are attached to the bandolier bead strings just off the top of the shoulder. These scarfs are tied too low if a fair portion will be covered up by the other dragger.

These are two basic ways of wearing these scarfs: pinned to a medallion Figure 6 or with a bunch of sweet plant knotted in the center Figure 7 and photo 14. If the medallion (or German silver concho) is



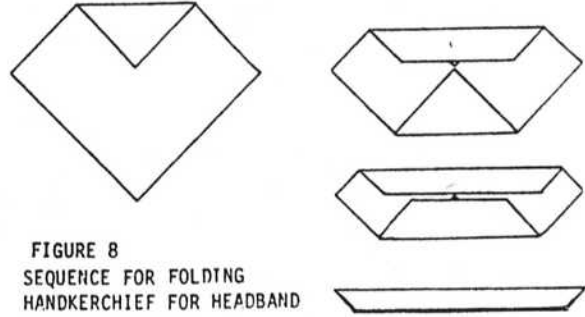
used, the material of the scarf usually has enough body to lie flat and not droop. DO NOT combine both methods. Also, a small bunch of feathers can be worn in place of the scarf; see "Feathers for Bead-Strings" in the June, 1980 issue of Moccasin Tracks for details.

PHOTO 15: LAST ITEMS

The last items are the headband (which is optional), the roach with its feather holder (spreader), a feather and scalp feathers. Prior to donning these items, face paint (witch paint at the eyes) is put on. The headband, usually not worn with long hair worn in traditional style, is a regular white handkerchief. Figure 8 indicates how to appropriately fold a handkerchief to form a headband. This headband is knotted at the forehead with a square knot. It is critical that the headband be worn parallel to the ground.

"Scalp feathers" are usually sewn to a small medallion or knotted to the ties of the medallion and the ties are in turn tied to the front roach string - right or left. This medallion is pushed up on the roach string until it touches the roach. In this way the crown of the head projects the feathers out so that they do not flop in the face of the dancer.

One of the very last things that a dancer does is to tie on his headdress making sure that it is centered



and not too far forward. About 4 fingers back of the hairline is a good guide line. See Moccasin Tracks, March 1982 for a short discussion of the proper placement of the secondary ties in wearing a roach.

The last thing to do is to grab a fan and cane on the way to the dance floor. It is always a good policy to wrap the beaded handle of the fan with a handkerchief to keep the moisture from the beads and fringe.



Oklahoma Straight Dance Shirt

By Jerry Smith

All straight dancers prefer to wear a different straight dance shirt at each session of a pow wow or war dance. Such changes require the dancer to own a number of these loose-fitting shirts. To keep his collection of shirts in top shape, the straight dancer will continually replace old shirts with new ones, especially for a large or important pow wow. Each shirt may be sent to the cleaners or laundered and pressed after each use to help preserve the elegant look of the dancer.

As fine as the straight dance shirt might look, it is a very simple shirt to make. Hence, the following set of instructions will help all future hobbyist straight dancers begin a collection of shirts.

Material

Three yards of 45" wide material is plenty to complete the shirt. Cotton or a shiney solid color material (rayon satin) are the most common materials used. Large or small "realistic" floral or paisley prints are popular in cotton shirts, although solid colors are used. Do not use Hawaiian prints. Almost any color may be used in the print background. Common solid colors are shades of red, blue, yellow or green. Some brocades and stripes are occasionally seen.

Ribbon

Three yards of 1" wide rayon satin ribbon and one yard of 5/16" or 1/4" wide ribbon is needed as trim. The ribbon color should contrast with colors in the shirt.

A hook and eye for the neck, and buttons or snaps for the cuffs complete the list of materials.

Construction Steps

1. Cut out the shirt using dimensions shown in Figure 1.
2. Place the yoke in the center of front-back piece, matching points S with R (Figure I). Fold long side of yoke under 1/4" and place the 1" wide by 40" long yoke ribbons as shown in Figure II.
3. Pin both sleeves in place, matching center of sleeve with center of the yoke width (Figure I). Remember to fold yoke excess ribbons back under so that they will show on finished product. Sew 1/2" shoulder seams as shown in Figure II.
4. Turning the material wrong-side-out, pin sleeve and side seams, folding gusset into triangular shape. Sew 1/2" sleeve seam from point B to C (Figure III) and sew 1/2" side seam from B to A. This means that point E will match up with point B.

5. Hem sleeve opening and side splits as shown in Figure IV.
6. Hem bottom of shirt and ends of sleeves.
7. Finish ends of sleeves and baste (Figure V). Cuffs should fit snug. Place cuff in place, then sew down 1/4" cuff ribbons as shown in Figure V. Complete sleeves with a pair of snaps or buttons.
8. Cut out neck hole and neck opening as shown by dotted line in Figure I
9. Fold back neck opening very slightly and pin 1" ribbon in place as shown in Figure VI. Sew down ribbons.
10. Bind the neck hole and add a hook and eye at the top of the neck opening.

The finished straight dance shirt appears in Figure VII. Addition of extra ribbons or other decorations outside those shown would convert the shirt into something other than a straight dance shirt. Some of the dimensions shown should be changed for those over 5'10" or under 5'6". Remember, the sleeves blouse, the shirt hangs to the crotch and the shirt fits loosely around the waist.

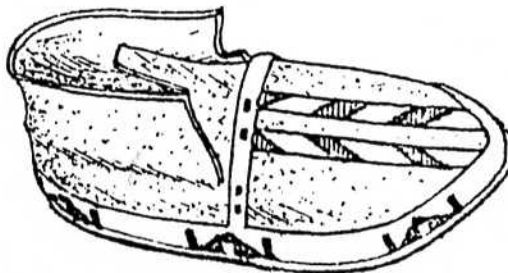
The source of information used for this article is a shirt made by Red Man Store, Pahaska, Oklahoma.

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EAC-1

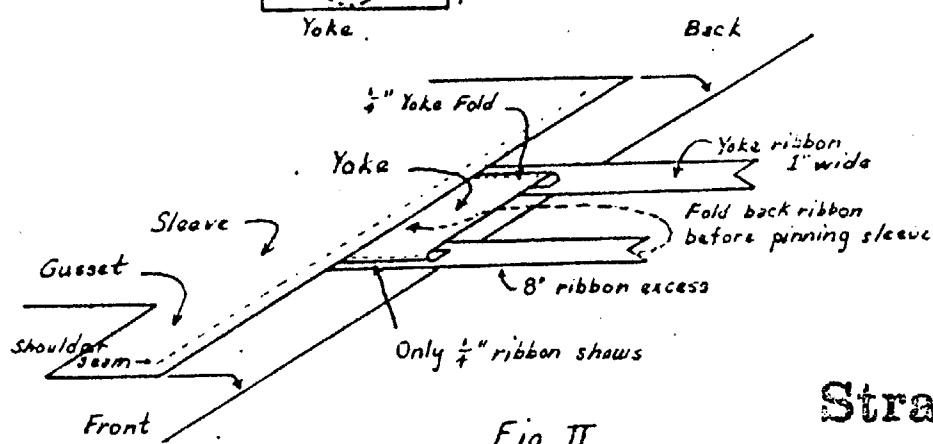
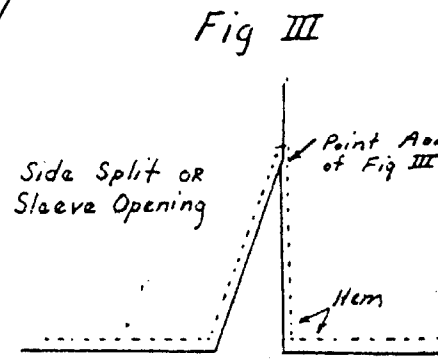
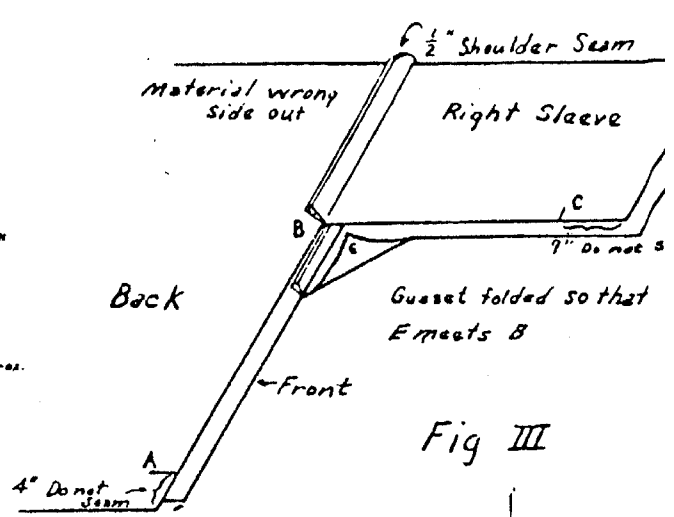
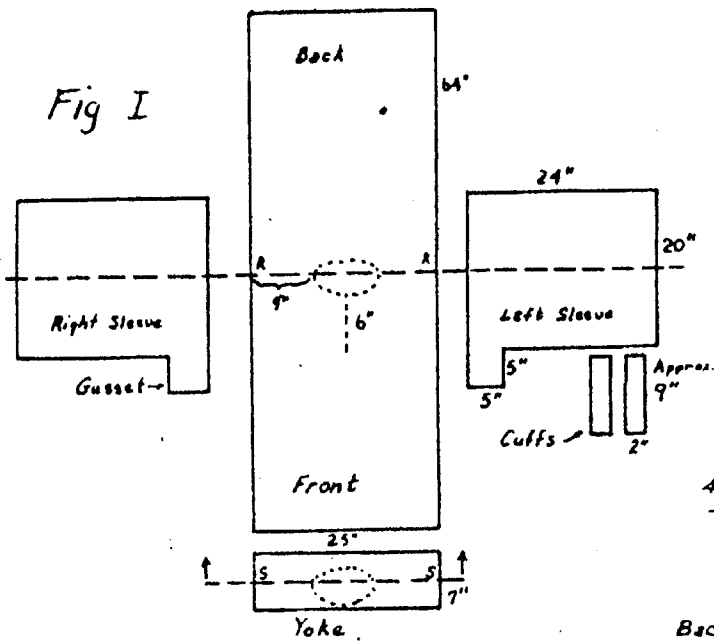


Fig IV

Straight Dance S

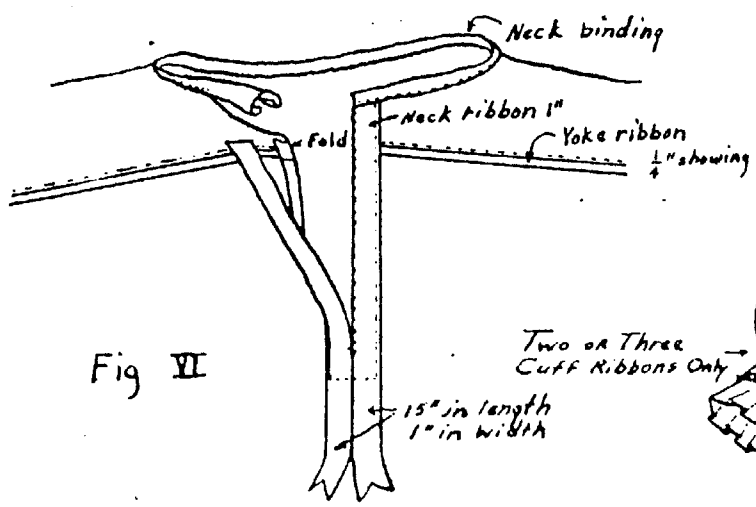
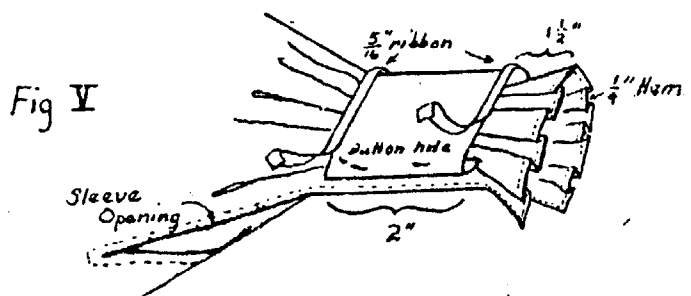
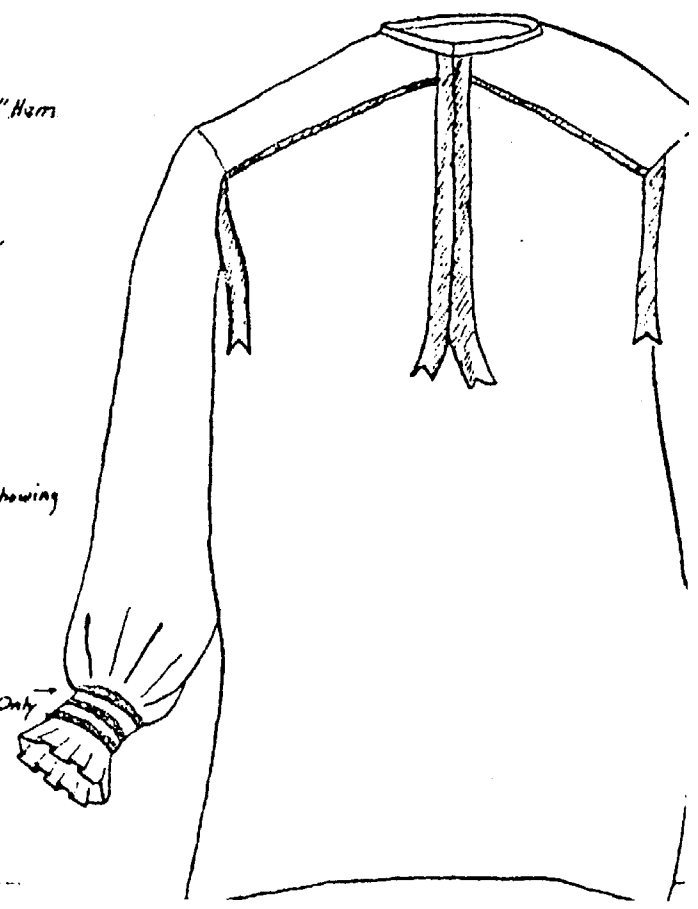
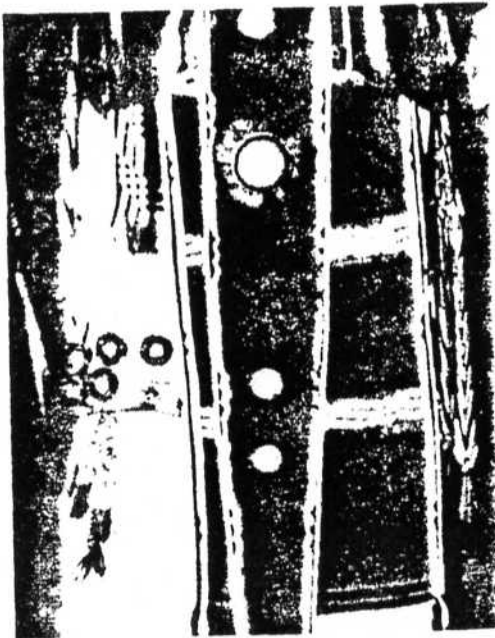


Fig VII





1

To produce the design, cut and fold ribbon strips as in Fig. 1-5. The finished folded ribbon is shown in Fig. 5A. Use fingernails to fold the ribbon; a warm iron may help. Remember, ribbon # 1 is not cut or folded as in Figure 8. The bound edge of ribbon # 1 would be at the top.

Since each ribbon is cut and folded the same, a legitimate question arises, "How can one design element create the pattern illustrated?" It's simple. After basting ribbon # 2 down (Fig. 9), ribbon # 3 is slid $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the right such that the peaks of ribbon # 3 meet with the valleys of # 2 as indicated in Fig. 10 - and so on, and so on, and so on for the next 4 ribbons until each is basted in place after a $\frac{1}{4}$ " shift. See Figures 8-13. Because of this shifting, an inch or more must be added to the original length or shift the cuts in Figure 1 a $\frac{1}{4}$ " to the right for ribbons 3-7. After basting ribbons in place, iron ribbons and then use sewing machine to sew the ribbons in place. Match thread to the color of the ribbon being sewn. Straight stitch very close to the folded edge as shown in photo 2.

Adjacent photo 1 is a dance trailer and clout with ribbon strips of pattern A. Photo by Kaysee Tsuji at a powwow in Quapaw, Oklahoma.



Figure 8
ribbon #1



Figure 9
ribbon #2

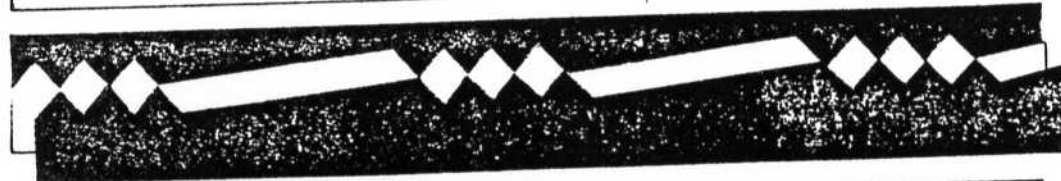


Figure 10
ribbon #3



Figure 11
ribbon #4

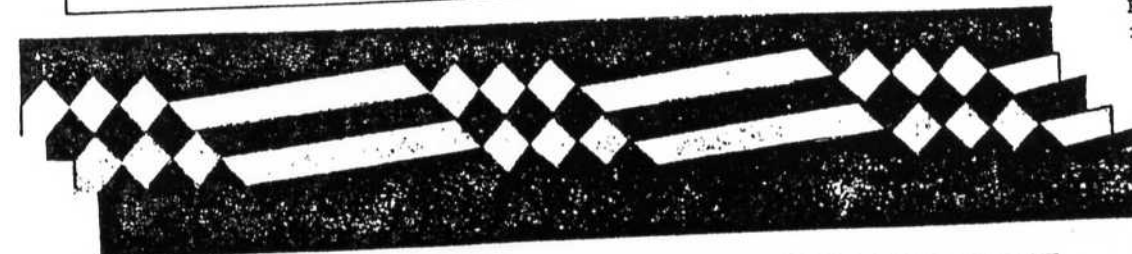


Figure 12
ribbon #5

Pattern A

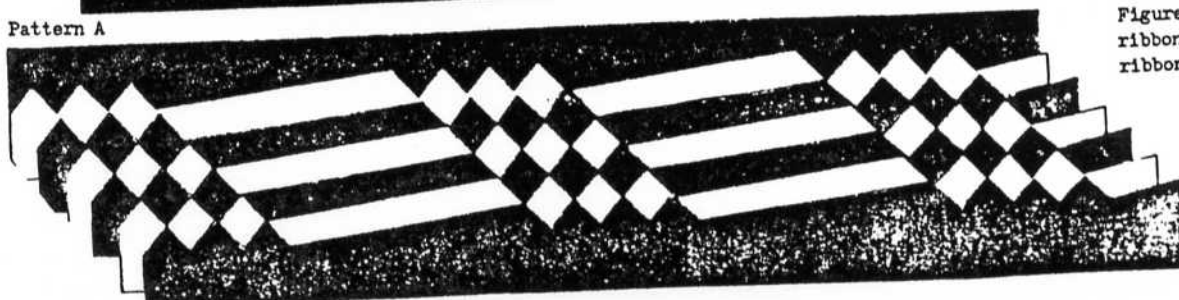


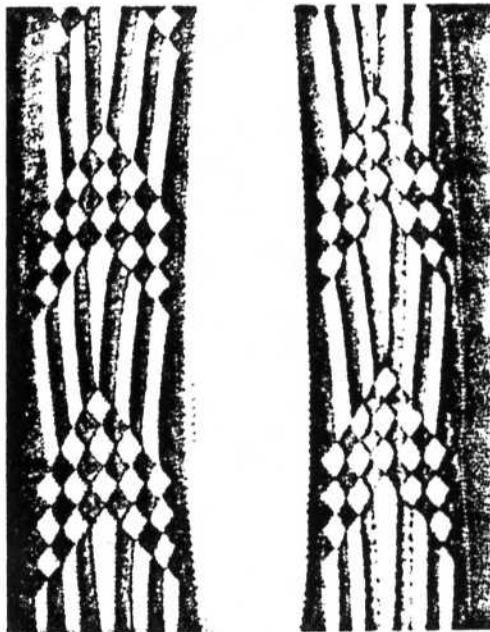
Figure 13
ribbon #6
ribbon #7

A SECOND PATTERN

Figure 13 illustrates a 7-ribbon pattern labeled as "pattern A." A second pattern, labeled as "pattern B," can be fashioned by cutting and folding the first 5 ribbons as before with pattern A. The last 4 ribbons are cut and folded in the manner shown in Figures 1-3, 6 & 7 which results in the design given in Figure 7A. To assemble pattern B, baste ribbons in position according to Fig. 8-12 and then Fig. 14-17. Complete this 9-ribbon pattern by straight stitching with the sewing machine.

Upon first inspection, the finished ribbon strips shown in photos 1 and 2 do seem quite complicated. Such effective and striking creation fashioned from a single simple design element is indeed a credit to the artistry and ability of the Indian craftsman. As indicated, the technique used in ribbon-work is not hard though it takes time and patience.

Photo 2 is a pair of Osage woman's leggings with with ribbon-work in pattern B. Notice the contrast in adjacent ribbons. Photo by Tsuji, with permission of Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma.



2

Figure 14

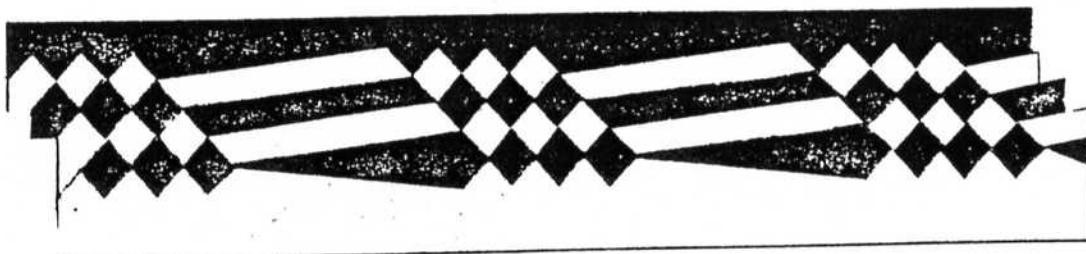


Figure 15

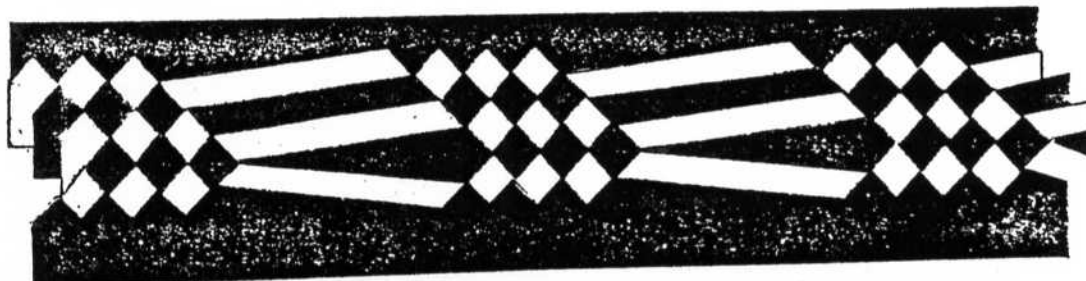


Figure 16

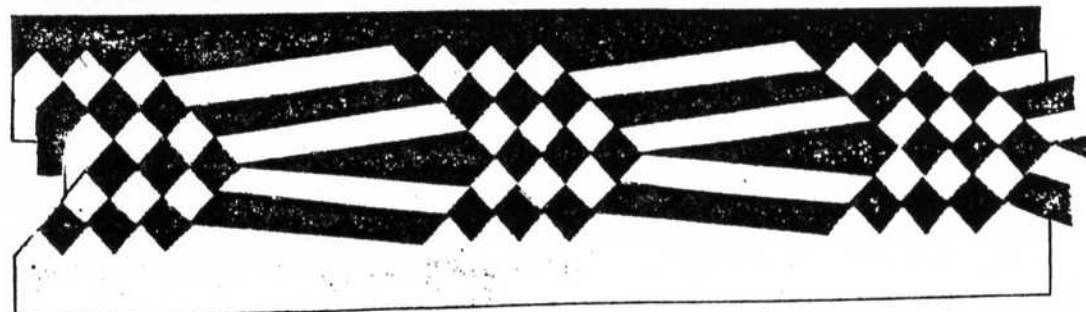
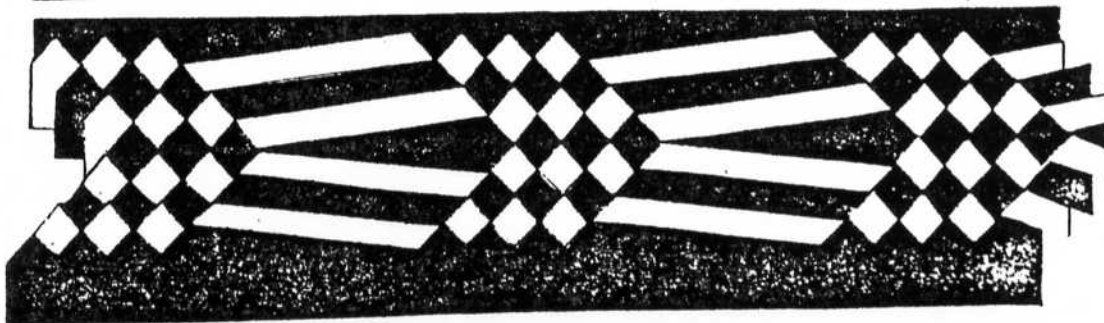


Figure 17

Pattern B



ribbon-work

ANOTHER MULTIPLE PATTERN

By Jerry Smith

Our last ribbon-work pattern article, Sept. '78 purported to illustrate a "very simple" pattern; however, here is a design that is even easier. If you are in a hurry to get a straight dance suit together this is your pattern. It is composed of 10 ribbons, but only five need to be folded into points to produce the design. It is unusual because it requires an even number of ribbons where as other multiple ribbon patterns require an odd number.

In the Feb. '78, May '78, June '78, Sept. '79 and March '79 issues of Moccasin Tracks, we have detailed the techniques and materials used in making ribbon-work of this Osage style. As the articles state, the ribbon used is 100% rayon ribbon from Switzerland.

The dimensions for each ribbon and the length of

each cut are given in the sketches. Figures to indicate how to cut and fold the two basic ribbons that make up the design. Figures to show the placement of each ribbon to create the design. Note that the points of the ribbon meet the edge of the previous ribbon and that the patterned ribbons must be shifted over $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Be sure to hand baste each ribbon in place before machine sewing.

Basically, only two colors should be used in this pattern. The ribbon with the points should be dark in color, i.e. royal blue, burgandy, deep purple, green, etc. The ribbons with a single fold should be of a light contrasting color such as white, cream, light green, light blue, light yellow, etc.

Though the design here is simple, it is striking and very effective when expertly crafted.

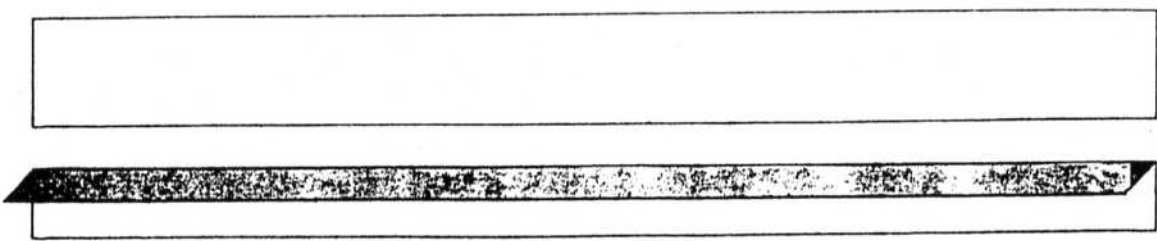


FIGURE 1 1" wide ribbon simply folded over.

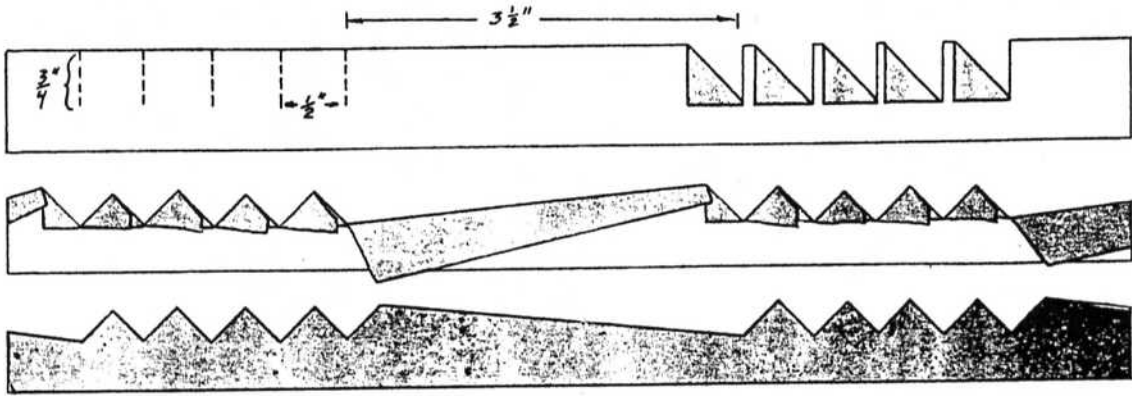


FIGURE 2 Second ribbon cut and folded.

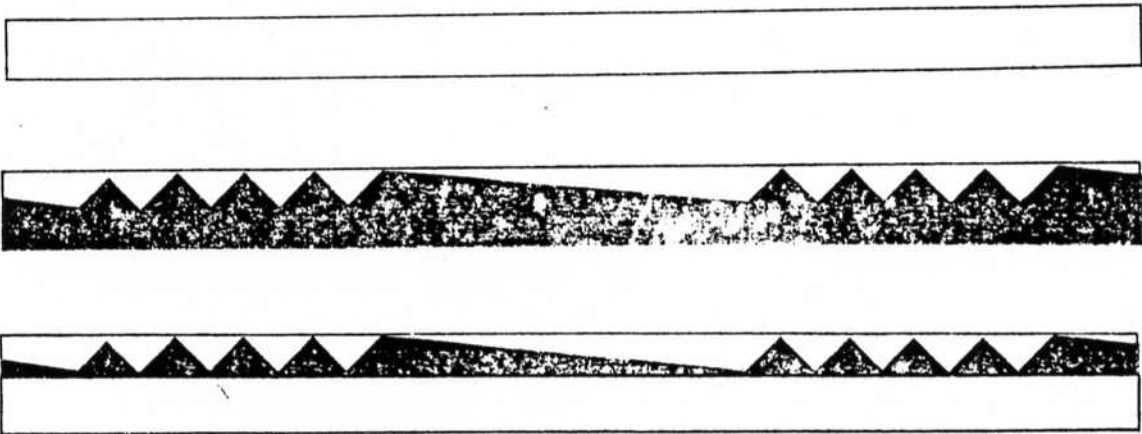


FIGURE 3 Sequence and placement of first four ribbons.

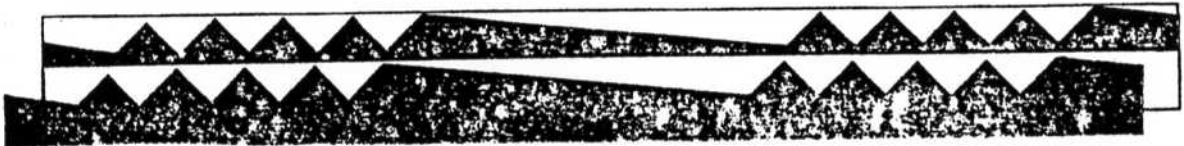
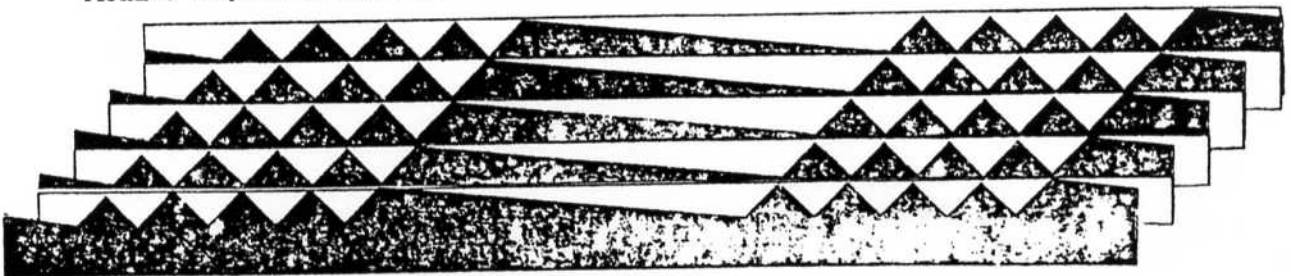


FIGURE 4 Completed pattern of 10 ribbons.



RIBBONWORK

One Pattern

Two Constructions

JERRY SMITH

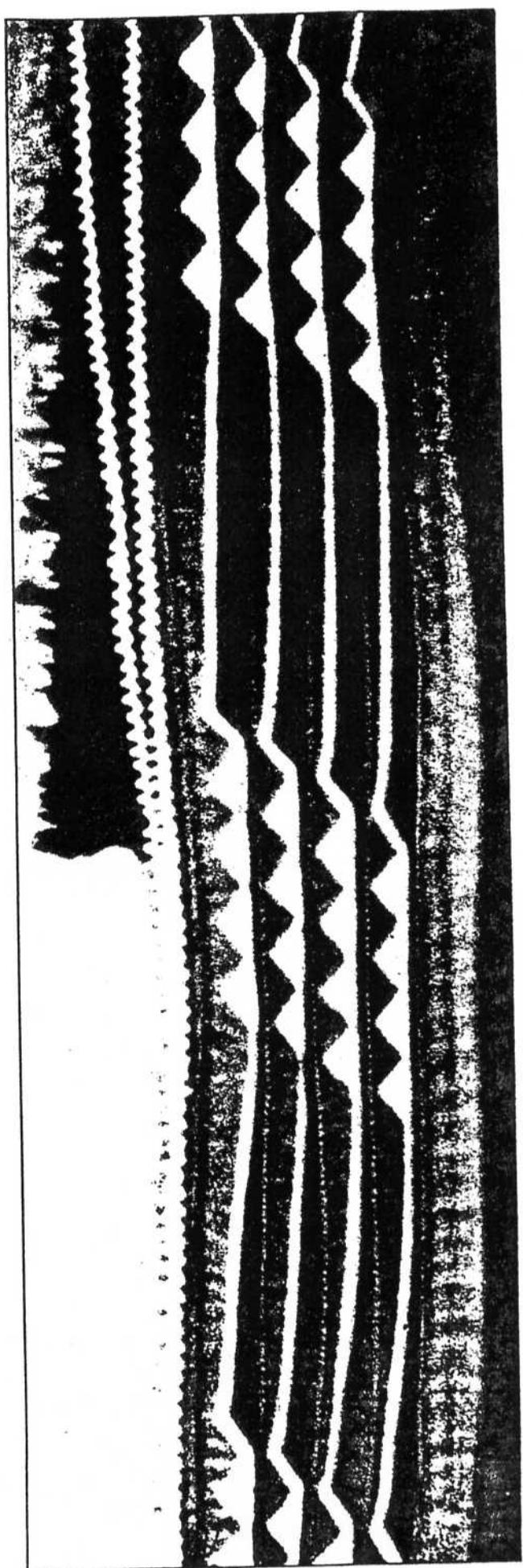
In February of 1978 the first "multiple ribbon" ribbonwork article was presented in *Moccasin Tracks*. Since that time several others have been presented as referenced at the conclusion of this article. Some relatively standard patterns have been presented, but those who have studied ribbonwork know there are enough patterns to fill more than one volume. An exhibition of Native American Art at the Philbrook in 1980 displayed a very interesting set of ribbonwork. It was a classic pattern in typical color scheme but one ribbon was not sewn atop the other in the normal shingled fashion the entire width of the work. Immediately the construction details were sketched down as it was definitely a good example to illustrate in the magazine. No pictures were allowed to be taken, so the notes were filed away until a photo of this pattern could be obtained.

A couple of summers later your author chanced to borrow a set of slides all on ribbonwork from Tyrone Stewart of Oklahoma. Among these slides was a picture of the pattern in question, see photo. Upon having it duplicated and enlarged in black and white, the data from the Philbrook and the visual example were ready for this article. However, when the photo was examined in more detail and compared to the notes, it was discovered much to the surprise of your writer that there were two ways to create the same pattern. Therefore, it is with great pleasure that both methods can be presented. It should not be assumed that one necessarily was the forerunner of the other. Once a patterned was viewed by one seamstress it was duplicated in the most efficient fashion.

The illustrations # 1-8 show the manner in which the piece of ribbonwork was sewn together in the photo. Illustrations # 1A-5A depict the manner in which the example in the 1980 Philbrook display was sewn.

RIBBONWORK IN PHOTO

The method of construction for this piece was the standard Osage style in which one ribbon is sewn to another. One is overlapped onto another as a roofer would shingle a house. Figure A illustrates the two basic patterns and how the ribbons are cut



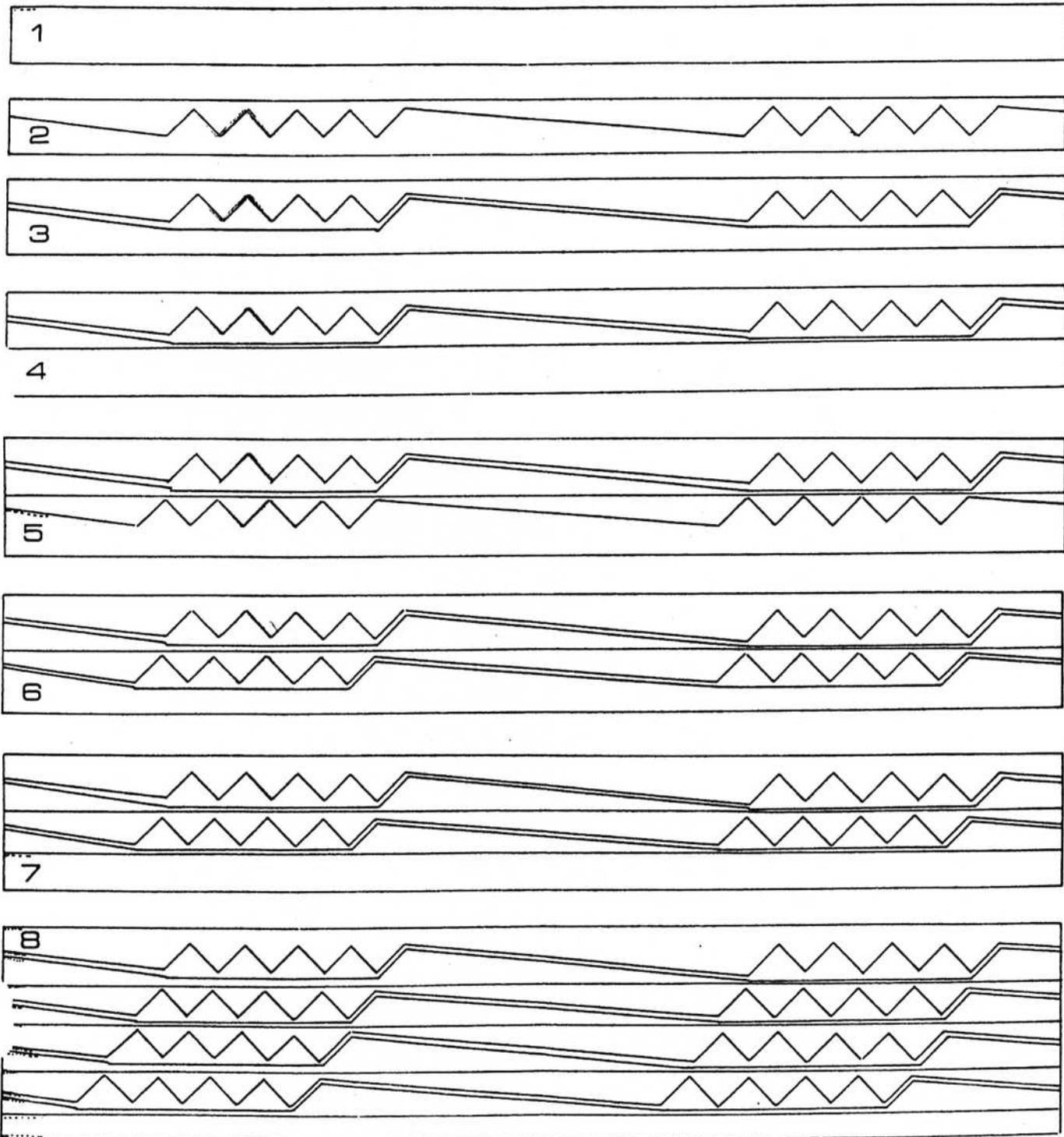
and folded. Other articles in Moccasin Tracks detail this process of cutting and folding these ribbons cut into one inch strips. The illustrations 1-6 indicate the order in which the ribbons are sewn down to create the pattern. After the first base ribbon, Fig. 1, the next 12 ribbons follow in sets of three: one with a series of triangles, one with elongated triangles and one plain ribbon. Each is first cut, folded, basted by hand in place and then machine stitched in place. A small stitch is used and it is sewn very close to the folded edge of each following the outline of the pattern.

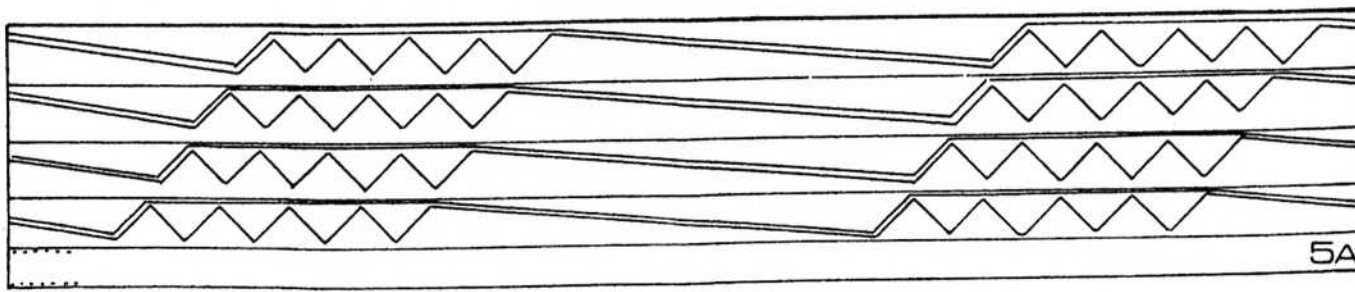
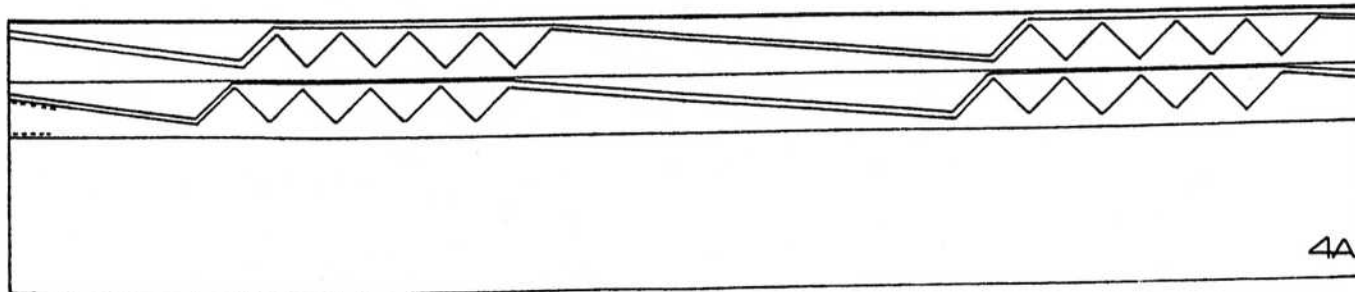
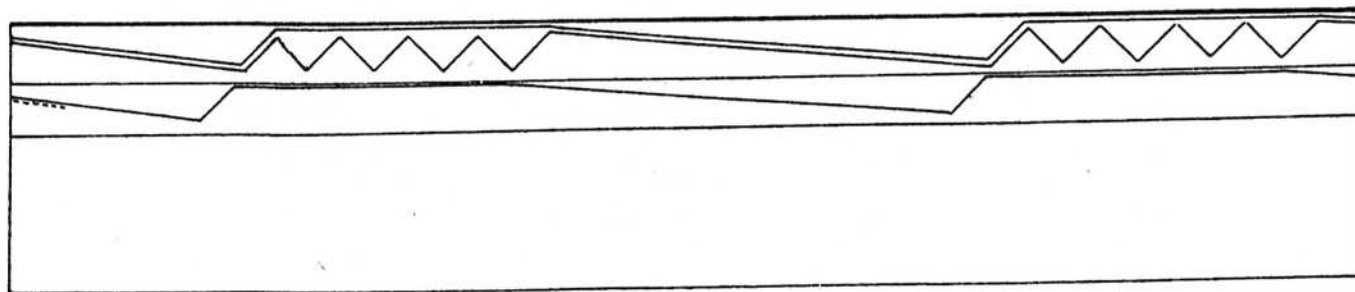
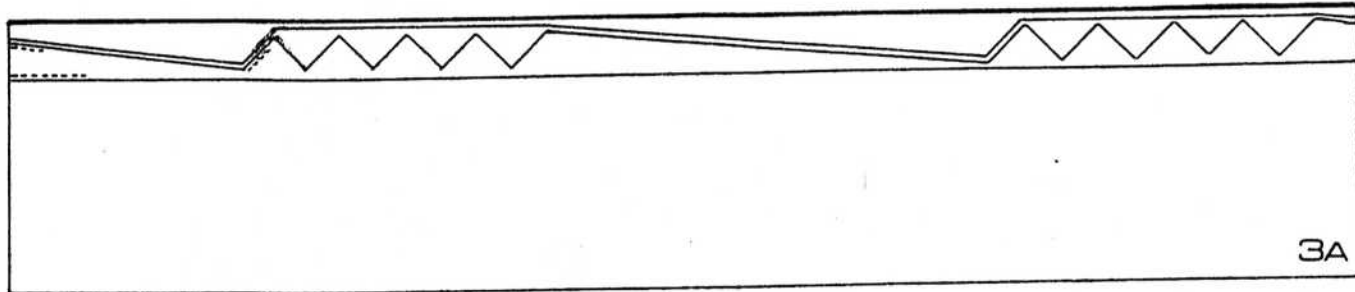
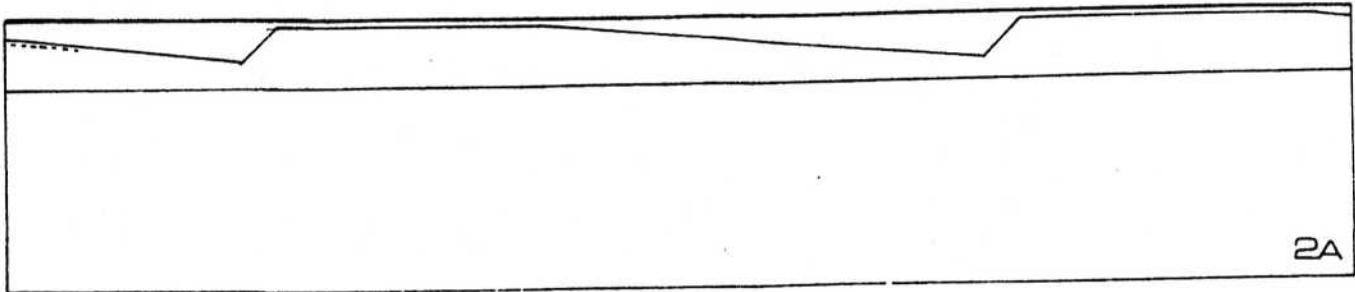
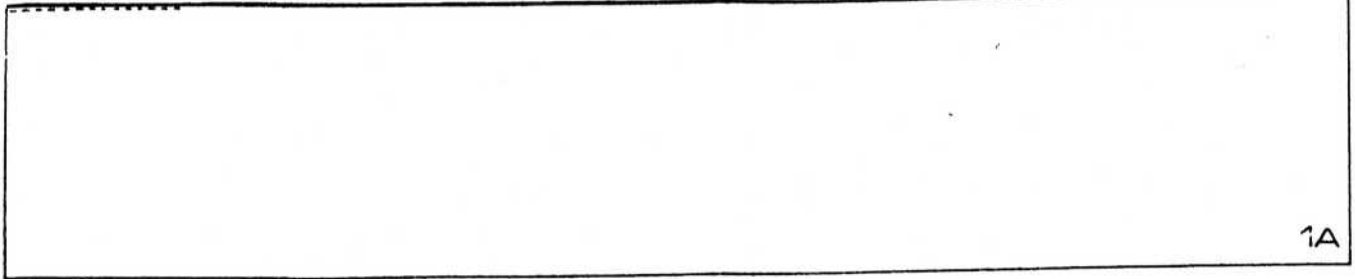
As each third piece is a plain uncut ribbon, just folded and sewn in place, this pattern would be an easy one to complete. It seemingly (no pun intended) would be a one step advance on the pattern presented in Moccasin Tracks, Feb. 1978 in which every other ribbon was uncut. Notice that each ribbon with the

set of points must be skewed left to create the correct look very similar to the pattern shown in Moccasin Tracks, Sept. 1978; see step # 5.

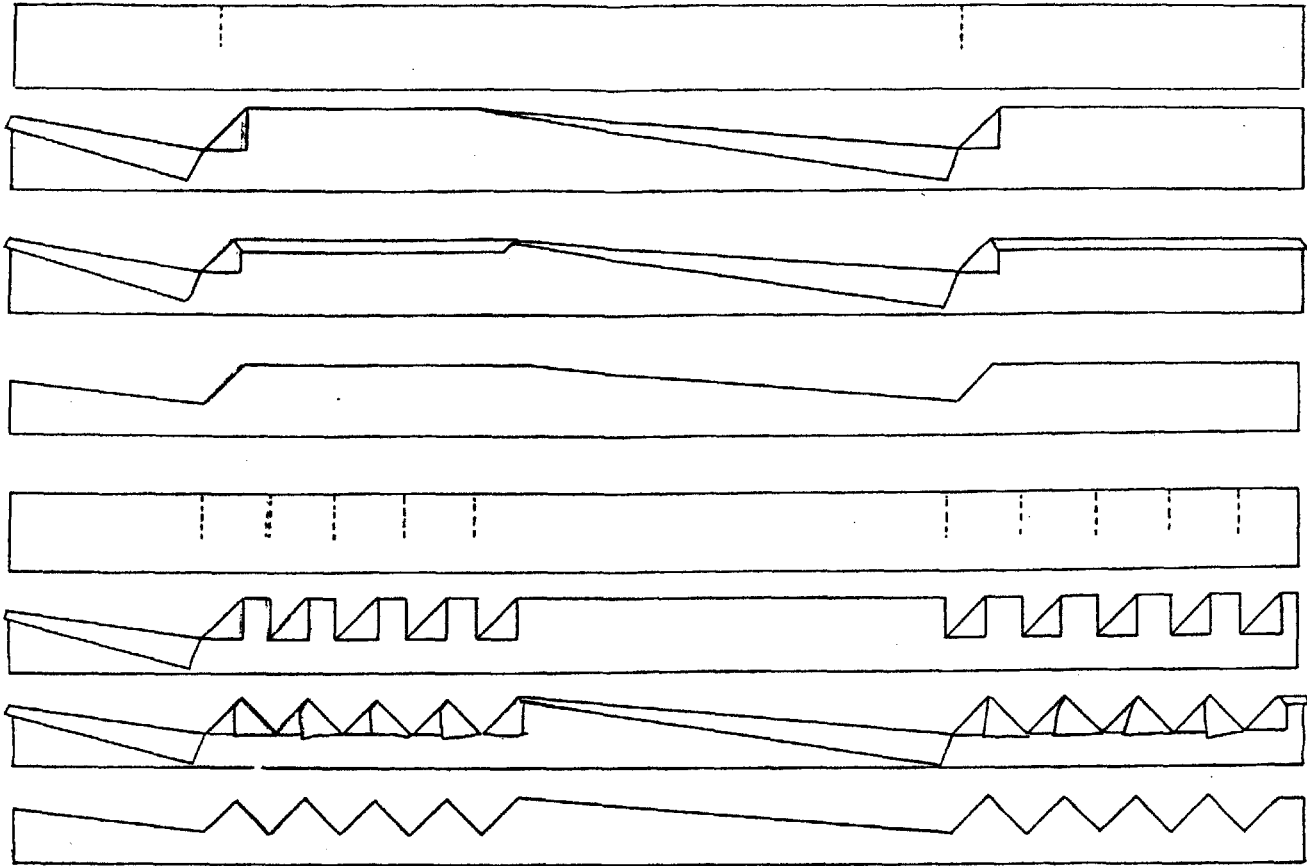
The color scheme is very important. Ribbon # 1 and # 13 are in the medium range while 2,5,8, & 11 must be very bright. Ribbons 3,4; 6,7; & 9, 10 are of different color but of the same hue. Of the same hue to the extent that at a distance the eye sees a single ribbon and not a pair. Thus, the design appears to be a bed of triangles connected by slanted parallelograms. A possible color scheme is as follows: 1) rose 2) white 3) deep purple, 4) royal blue, 5) white, 6) deep purple, 7) royal blue, 8) white, 9) deep purple, 10) royal blue, 11) white, 12) deep purple, 13) rose. The finished pattern in width measures a little under 2 inches.

PHILBROOK PATTERN





A



The same pattern detailed above was created in the Philbrook exhibit using 10 ribbons instead of thirteen. Illustrations 1A-6A indicate how this was accomplished by use of a single pink base ribbon. Four pairs of cut and folded ribbons were sewn in place in a manner letting the pink base ribbon peek through as though it had been sewn on separately. Drawings 1A-5A show the exact sequence and 6A illustrates the finished product. Again the last ribbon, finishing ribbon, in a plain uncut ribbon which is unique to this pattern constructed by either method.

Another time-saving aspect and highly unusual feature of this Philbrook piece was the fact that ribbon #2 (illustration 2A) and every other ribbon was not seamed in place!! The ribbon sewn on top of it so nearly follows its outline that it was not deemed necessary by its maker. As a result only 4 ribbons are sewn in place and the finishing ribbon makes 5 before it is stitched to the broad cloth. Very clever!

The color scheme here was as follows: pink, white, purple, (pink), light blue, green, (pink), light blue, green, (pink), white, purple, and pink.

It would be interesting to take colored pencils and color in the illustrations. They were left unscreened for that reason.

It was a pleasurable curiosity to discover both of these methods and it is hoped that the reader will benefit from the details imparted as well as the evident philosophy about "solely correct" construction.

REFERENCES

- Sheppard, Paul
1979 Ribbonwork Review. Moccasin Tracks, March.
- Smith, Jerry
Moccasin Tracks: March 1981, Advanced Ribbonwork; Sept. 1978, Ribbonwork #3; June 1978, Ribbonwork #2; May 1978, Osage-Style Ribbonwork; Feb. 1978, Osage-Style Ribbonwork, 4 Ribbons.

RIBBONWORK

AN ADVANCED PATTERN

by Jerry Smith

Over the past three years, several ribbonwork designs and patterns have been detailed in Moccasin Tracks along with their folding and sewing instruction. These patterns, as with most standard ribbonwork patterns worn on straight dance suits, are simple geometric patterns. They are all relatively easy to make and a gal who sews ribbonwork finds one pattern about as easy as the next. The multiple ribbon pattern presented here is really not "advanced" for one who does ribbonwork but it is not recommended as a pattern to try on ones initial effort.

As with all multiple ribbonwork of this type, several cut and folded ribbons are sewn in place, each overlapping the previous ribbon. The May '78, June '78 and Sept. '78 issues of *Moccasin Tracks* illustrate this process. 100" rayon taffeta imported ribbon is used for this type of work; however, taffeta yardage is used by many ribbonworkers due to expense and availability of the ribbon. The ribbon or yardage is cut into about 1" wide strips and cut to the length of the finished piece desired.

The pattern shown here in photo 1 & 2 and in Figure 9 is composed of thirteen ribbons but it can be reduced to a band of nine ribbons or slightly altered to an eleven ribbon pattern. The first ribbon is not cut or folded to create peaks and valleys; it is "plain". It is the next 12 ribbons that are cut and folded. Figures 1-8 illustrate the cuts and finished folded ribbons for the first 5 ribbons of this pattern. The next eight ribbons are exact repeats of these four ribbons following the sequence 2,3,4,5,2,3,4,5.

Figure 10 and Figure 11 indicate how folds are made on ribbon number 2. The folding process is very similar for the other ribbons. Use an iron to help hold crease in the folds.

One feature that makes this pattern "advanced" is the different length cuts made in ribbons #2 (Figure 2) and #4 (Fig. 6) to create peaks and valleys at different levels. In Figure 5, cut A is 1/8" deeper than cut B. Though the cuts on ribbons 3 and 5 are all uniform in depth the different levels of peaks and valleys is created in the method of folding.

Once a ribbon is folded it is basted in place by hand upon the previous ribbon and then machine stitched with a straight fine stitch very close to its folded edge. A matching color of thread is used. When ribbons are used, one can be sewn right to the other; however, when using taffeta yardage, the work is sewn to a pellon strip or directly to the broadcloth. Remove the basting stitches before sewing on the next ribbon. Remember, the first ribbon sewn down is plain and the other ribbons are sewn in place starting from left to right (or visa versa) not from the center out. Each ribbon overlaps the other like shingles on a roof. Also, the first or last ribbon doubles (first in photo 1) to bind the broadcloth.

It is always good to make a sample or two before tackling the "real" project and this would be helpful here. Note again the ends of the breech-clout strips in photo 1 and on Abe Conklin in photo 2. The ends hang beyond the edge of the cloth and they are not sewn in place; yet, the ends are pinked.



11. Moccasin Tracks, March '81

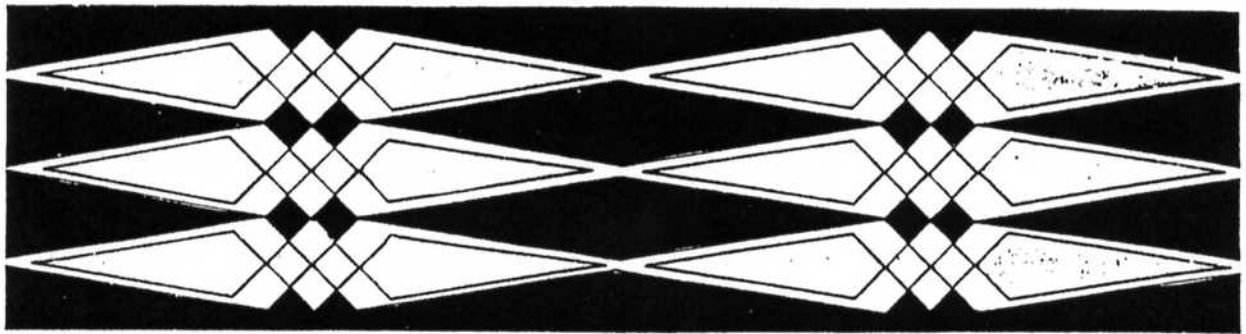


FIGURE 1

70% ACTUAL SIZE

RIBBON #1

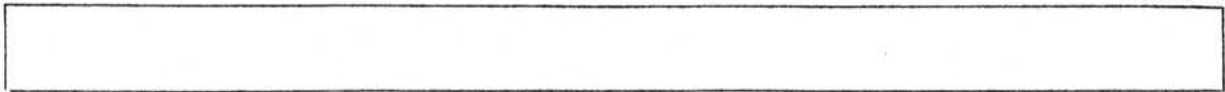


FIGURE 2

RIBBON #2

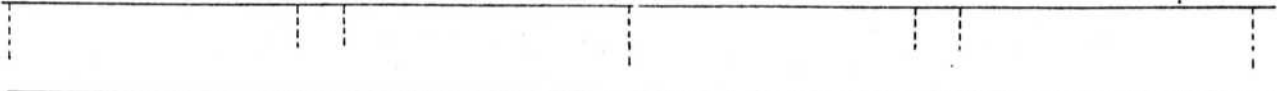


FIGURE 3



FIGURE 4

RIBBON #3

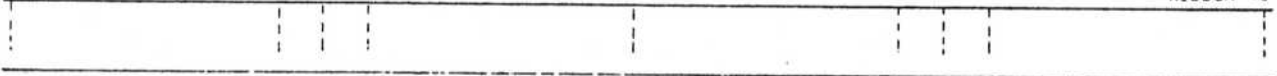


FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6

RIBBON #4

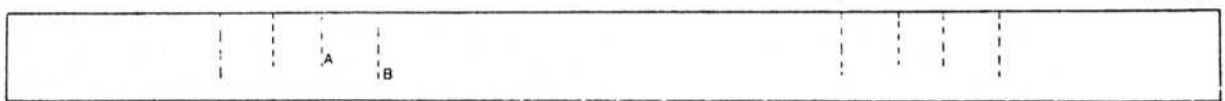


FIGURE 7



FIGURE 8

RIBBON #5

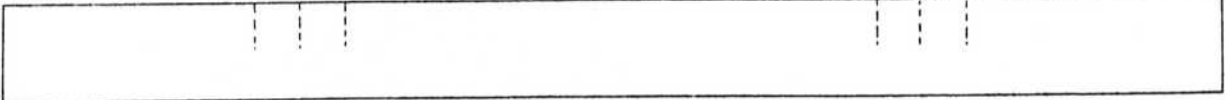


FIGURE 9

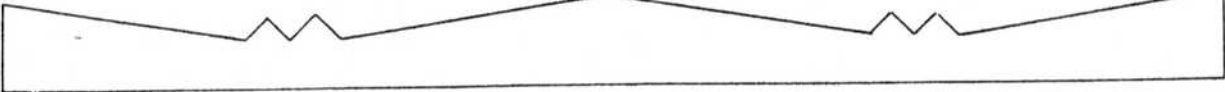


FIGURE 10

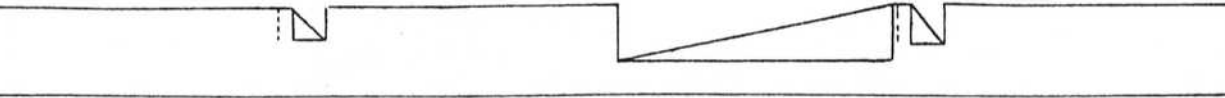


FIGURE 11





style 1

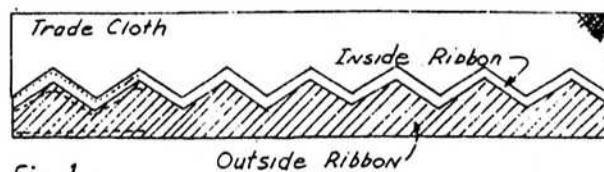


Fig. 1

Two-Ribbon Bindings

By Jerry Smith

The cut edges of several items made of "trade cloth" or backed with trade cloth are often bound with a decorative two-ribbon binding (Fig. 1 & 2) rather than with a single straight ribbon binding. Such two-ribbon bindings are found on the sides of otter caps, blankets, gourd dance blankets, aprons, bustle trailers, otter baggers, straight dance trailers and straight dance legging bottoms. The method below will produce very fine results when using rayon taffeta ribbon; adjustments must be made when using a substitute such as taffeta.

COLORS: Always use two contrasting colors such as; red and white; red and turquoise; red and yellow, purple and lt. yellow, purple and lt. green, pink and green, maroon and lt. blue, etc.

QUANTITY: Purchase enough rayon taffeta ribbon in each color to bind half the length to be bound. By thread to match each color.

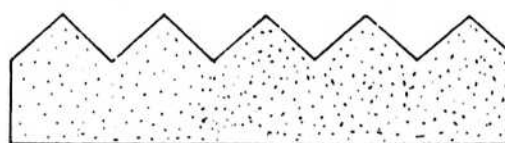
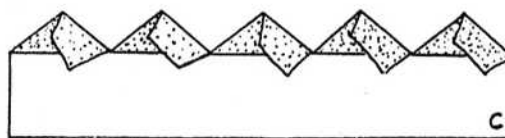
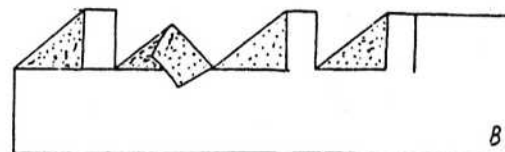
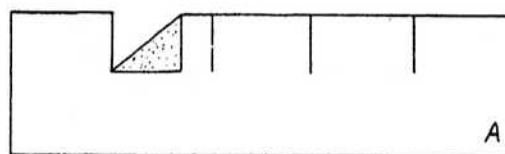
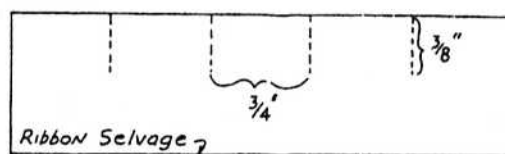
TECHNIQUE:

Step 1: Cut each ribbon in half, length wise down the center.

Step 2: Cut a series of $\frac{3}{4}$ " apart and $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep slits in the darker ribbon as indicated either for style #1 or #2 in the diagram. Uniform depth and width of cuts is extremely important for quality results.

Step 3: Fold peaks into darker outside ribbon as shown in diagrams A, B, and C, using finger nails. It is important first end of each peak (A) be over half way prevent raveling. An iron may be used after all folds have been made for a final crease.

Step 4: Sew cut and folded darker outside ribbon to inside ribbon along folded edge. Use a small stitch about 16 per inch.



Step 5: Cut and fold the lighter colored inside ribbon with folded darker ribbon sewn on as in A, B, and C of diagram. This ribbon is cut and folded second to conveniently match up peaks and valleys of each ribbon.

Step 6: Sew pair of ribbons to trade cloth or wool cloth. The peaks of the design should be $\frac{5}{8}$ " from the edge of the trade cloth. Now, cut off excess inside ribbon to meet flush with edge of the cloth. Sew second (optional) straight seam as in Fig. 3.

Step 7: Fold outer ribbon over to form an actual binding and hand sew to back side of cloth with whip stitch.

Practice on an 8" strip of cloth will increase the quality of the final effort.

style 2

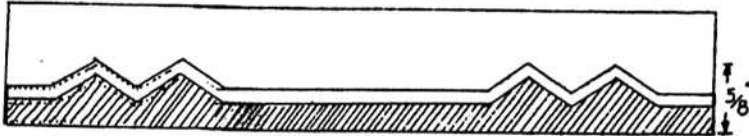
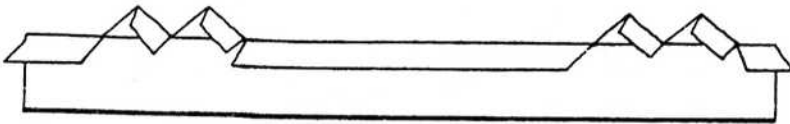
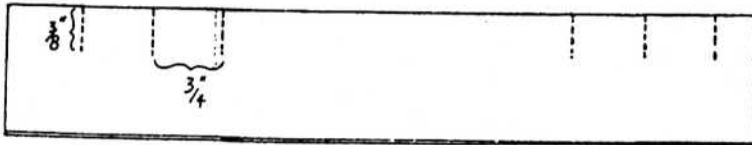


Fig 2



B

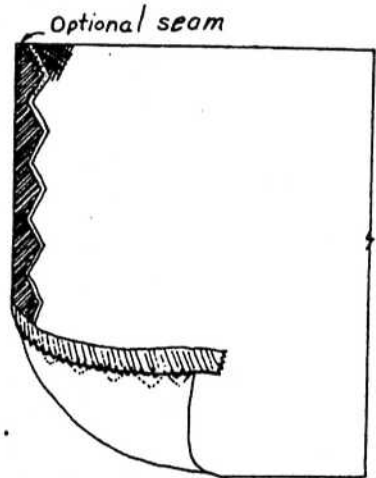


Fig. 3



2

SOUTHERN PLAINS STYLE

Old & New Vests

by Jerry Smith

In the early decades of the 20th century, vests were often worn as part of the dancing clothes among the tribes of Northeastern Oklahoma. These early vests were broadcloth vests patterned after the regular suit vests and they were trimmed with sequins, brass shoe buttons and/or metallic fringe. Examples of these early vests are worn by the young Osages pictured in photo 1.

However, it was not long before the beadworkers artfully began to decorate the fronts, backs and edges of these vests. The result was a somewhat standardized vest among the Otoes, Pawnees, Osages and Ponca which featured a loom beaded waist band and three loom beaded back strips. Several of these are present in photo #2 of an early Pawnee dance. The two outside strips matched in color and design but the other bead strips were of completely different designs though the background colors matched. The fronts of the Otoe and Osage vests were applique beaded in curvilinear designs as in photo 3. If the vest front was not beaded in this manner, horizontal sections of metallic or leather fringe were sewn in place (like false pockets) as on the earlier vests, see photo 5. The vest in photo 6 has both the fringe and beadwork.

Other common adornments present in these photos are:

1. Leather or metallic fringe sewn on under the waist bead strip. Metallic fringe is also sewn under the back outside strips in photo 7.



1

2. Metal sequins border the loomed strips or border the front and arm openings. Sequins are sewn in a decorative pattern between the three back loom strips also in photo 7.
4. Large beads strung on front leather ties.

As for the construction, it's simple. Usually these three piece vests were cut from the broadcloth with the selvage edge at the bottom of each piece. The



Omaha vest on the back depicts this fact. Three seams need only be taken; at the shoulders and at the sides. The armholes, neck and front opening are bound with thin leather or maybe with ribbon. Most vests were not lined.

Modern Vests

Vests in this old tradition are still being made and worn by straight dancers. The 3 vested dancers at a recent Osage Ilonska (photos 13-17) wear vests of this type. However, there are many other modern versions being worn today. See photo 18 as one example. One of the finest adaptations of the traditional vest is one in which the beadwork strips are replaced with ribbon-work panels. These panels match the other ribbon-work worn by the dancer. The description that follows outlines the construction method for such a vest.

Photos

1. A Love photo circa 1924 of Osage men (standing L-R) are Ne-wal-la (Red Eagle), In-gran-kah-shim and Wah-ses-tah-shin-kah; (seated L-R) Wah-she-hah (Bacon Rind) O-lo-hah-wal-la.
2. Late 20's Pawnee dance. Note three vests and extra fine dance aprons, no others but plains leggings.
3. Vest and dance suit displayed in the Woolaroc Museum. L.R.Strom Photo.
5. Ponca or Pawnee dancer at Frank Phillip's Ranch 1928-29.
6. Painting of Osage man from Osage Tribal Museum.
- 13-14. Osage boy at Pawhuska in 1972 wearing traditional vest.

