



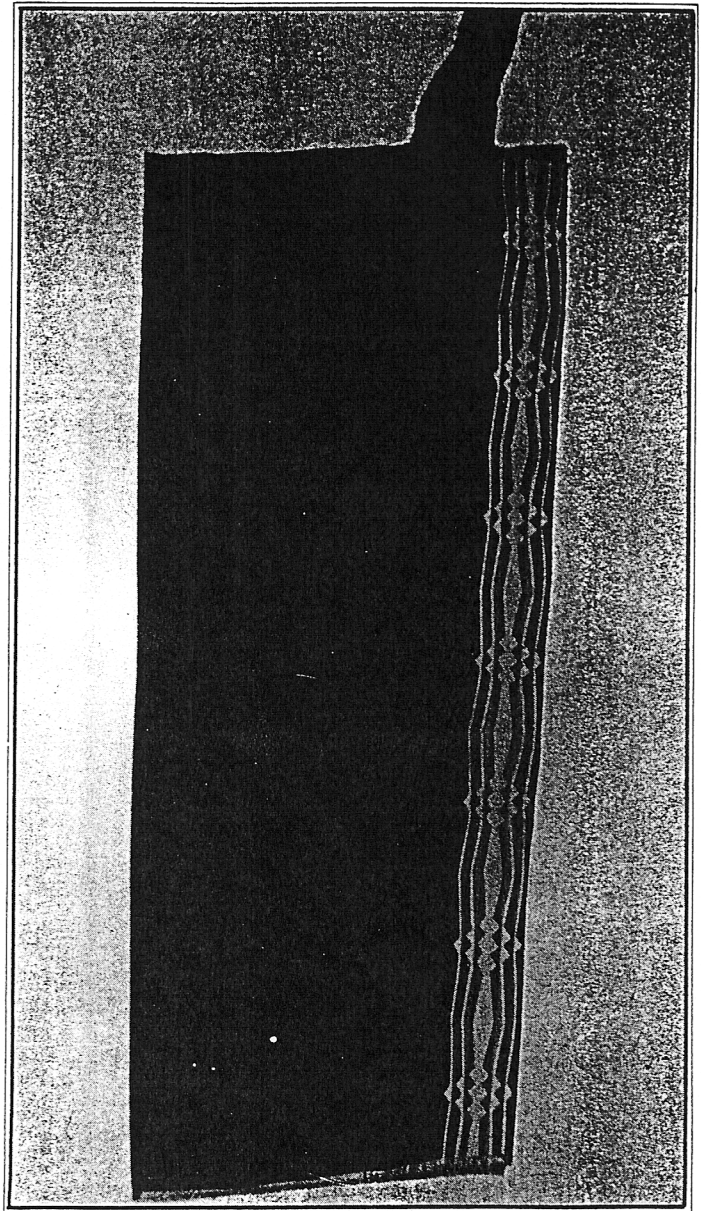
STRAIGHT DANCE LEGGINGS

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Since the breechclout and dance trailer for the straight dance suit are but rectangular pieces of cloth, cutting out the broadcloth to form these two pieces is rather simple; however, the leggings are another matter. The leggings are tapered slightly as in photo 2 and this taper requires a special treatment.

At one time before ribbonwork leggings were worn predominantly as a dance item, they were simply everyday wear. The legging at that time was a true rectangle. Then the leggings were worn frontwards so that the ribbonwork showed from the front view and the selvage edge showed from the back just like any other Plains legging - decoration on the front side.

As the leggings with the ribbonwork decoration on the outer edge of the legging flap were adopted as dance attire where the bells were to be worn at the knee, it was necessary to solve a simple problem. Worn frontwards, the




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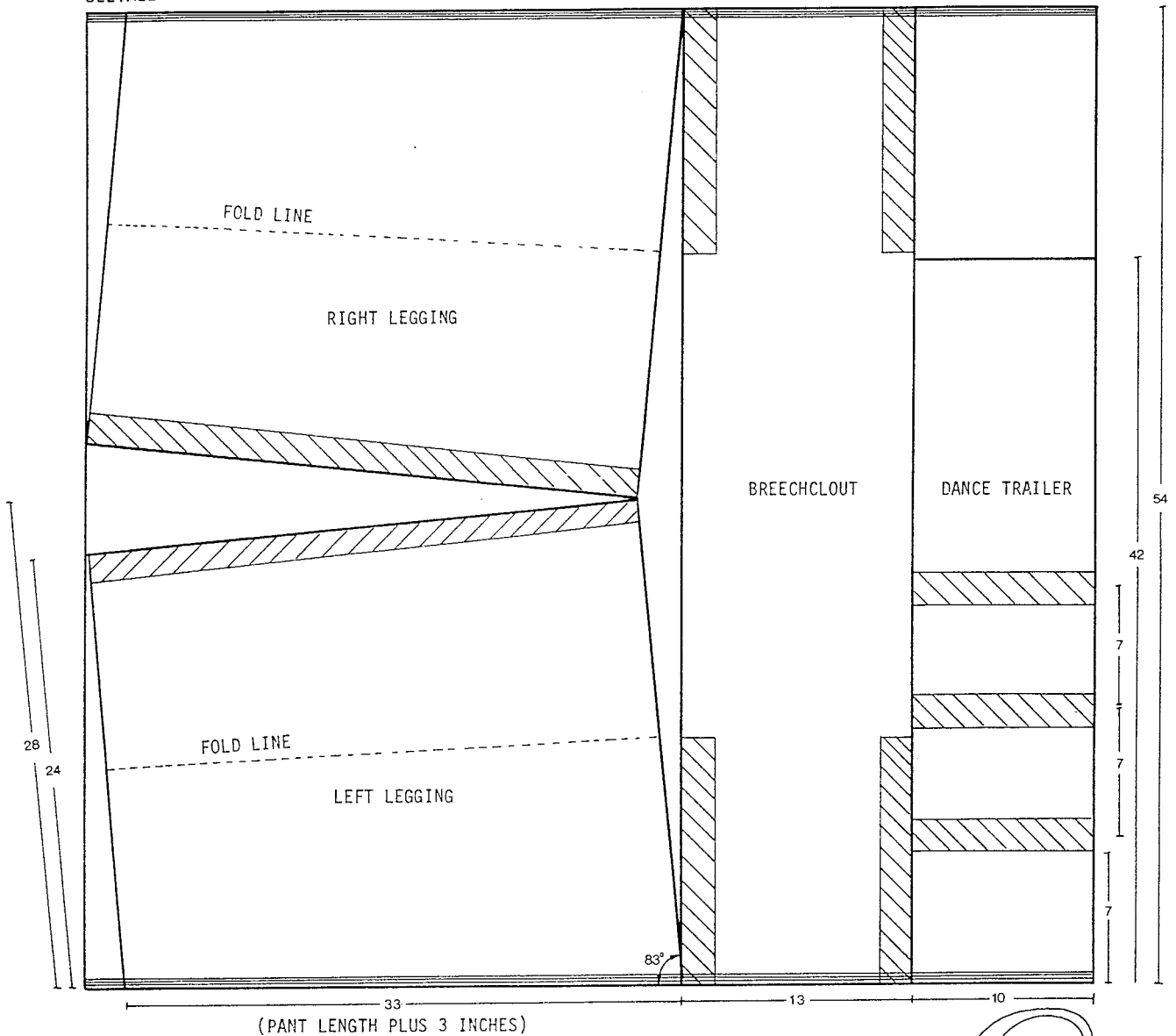
ribbon strips of the leggings would not be seen if the flap was folded to the front or the rear to accommodate the bells wrapped at the knees. Just gathering the legging flap would look too sloppy. The Sioux and other Northern tribes had no trouble with this as the legging beadwork was placed inside the legging seam and folding the legging flap back did not hide the decorative strip. Therefore, to solve the problem, the straight dancer wore his leggings backwards, left leg on the right and vice versa. Then the flaps were folded to the front so that the ribbon strips were revealed.

Due to the bulk of cloth at the knees and at the ankles under this system the rectangular legging cut was revised to the tailored tapered legging. Not much of a taper was needed but if one edge of the legging was to remain the selvage edge, the legging would have to be cut out at an angle.

The tapered legging in photo 2 was made by Mrs. Robinson of Red Man Store in Pawhuska, Oklahoma. Using the dimensions from this legging and the other pieces in the set, the diagram shown in Figure 1 was devised. Cutting the legging out according to the diagram will result in a piece of cloth with the the dimensions given in Figure 2 once the legging piece is folded. The extra triangular pieces left in the center of the cloth may be used as legging ties.

FIGURE 1
SELVAGE EDGE

FUTURE POSITIONS OF RIBBONWORK ALL 2 3/8" WIDE 



Once the legging is cut out, the ribbonwork is sewn in place. Remember, the last ribbon of this strip acts as a binding for the cut edge. Next, the bottom of the legging is bound either with a single ribbon (as shown) or with a two-ribbon pattern as illustrated in Moccasin Tracks, January, 1976.

The side seam is sewn on a diagonal once the binding is in place. Use the measurements given in Figure 2 and mark the wool with tailor's chalk before sewing. The opening at the bottom should barely allow the foot to slide through. The top of the legging may be cut off as shown by the broken line in Figure 2 if the excess of wool is bothersome in the crotch area. Also, a cut like this will allow a person with bigger thighs to wear the leggings. Usually the top edge is not bound.

The legging ties are sewn on next of the side seam on the back side of the leggings. This would complete the leggings but the entire ribbonwork edge does need to be edgebeaded in white 11/0 or 10/0 seed beads before they can be considered complete.

The dimensions given here are from a single pair of leggings; however, unless the measurement around the thighs is more than 26" then the dimensions given are good for most dancers once they are at the height of five feet. Those with really slender legs may need to cut down the width a bit.

FIGURE 2

