

TANIKO WEAVING



HOW TO MAKE MAORI BELTS
AND OTHER USEFUL ARTICLES

BY

S. M. MEAD

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Bay of Plenty Maori Schools



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FOREWORD

IT IS SURPRISING, in view of the long time which has elapsed since the late Sir Peter Buck published his scientific studies of the techniques of Maori weaving and plaiting, that there has not hitherto been published a series of popular booklets explaining to the ordinary citizen how to learn these crafts himself.

It is a credit to Mr. Mead that he has now filled one of the gaps in our text books on Maori crafts and it is particularly pleasing that this lead should have been given by one who is of Maori descent.

Among the numerous crafts of the old-time Maori there are many that must, in the nature of things, eventually die out, particularly those which are inseparable elements of some occupation or utensil that has no purpose in modern life. On the other hand there are many which have their place in modern life or which can be adapted to some modern purpose. Chief among these is the art of *taniko* weaving, which will survive, not only because it is pleasing in appearance, but also because it can be used in a variety of ways in everyday life.

This craft must eventually become part of our national culture and the need for instructional text is apparent.

I am sure this booklet will play its part in the gradual welding together of our two cultures into one characteristic whole.

J. M. McEWEN
Secretary, Maori Purposes Fund Board

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TO MY READERS

THIS BOOK has been written for beginners, both juvenile and adult. I have endeavoured to make the instructions as simple as possible by including many diagrams. You will find that you can very nearly learn by looking at the diagrams alone. Other chapters have been added so that you may learn a little of the history, the possibilities and the future of taniko weaving.

Of the numerous Maori crafts, taniko weaving has been the most adaptable to this modern world and perhaps, too, the most acceptable. Hundreds of New Zealanders can boast a taniko belt. Hundreds more wish they owned one. This is an opportunity for you to learn how to make one so that you may own one too.

You will at the same time do a service to Maori art which is gradually disappearing to the vaults of our museums and to the depths of Papa, the Earth Mother of Maori legend. Let us bring it back into the homes and schools where it may flourish again as part of our common culture. This book is a humble attempt to revive one aspect of our Maori or New Zealand art.

S. M. Mead.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GRATEFUL THANKS are extended to all those who have assisted me and given me encouragement, and most particularly to my wife, who is quite an expert herself; also to the many children who did not know they were helping me while I was helping them; and to Mrs. du Toit, who kindly offered to write the chapter on "Lining Taniko Belts"; and to Mr. W. H. O. Johnston for the photograph of taniko belts; and to my publishers, who have been so helpful.

Further information about Taniko weaving will be found in Elsdon Best's *The Maori as He Was* and Sir Peter Buck's *The Coming of the Maori* and *Maori Clothing*.

S.M.M.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS TANIKO WEAVING?

THE TANIKO PROCESS, peculiar to the Maori of New Zealand, was evolved through years of experimenting to satisfy a desire to embellish cloaks and kilts:

Its use was confined largely to narrow borders such as are found in the lower and side borders of cloaks and the top decorative bands of superior kilts. Sometimes it was used for incidental articles such as pois and headbands. The taniko borders were never attached separately after the manufacture of the article. In the case of cloaks and kilts the taniko bands were employed to finish the articles off neatly. The warps from the body of the garment were used for the taniko band. In kilts (piupius) the scraped top ends of the tubular flax strands formed the warp threads for the decorative border.

The colours originally used by the Maori weaver were very limited in number. These were red (obtained from the Tanekaha* bark), white (obtained by bleaching), black (obtained by dipping into a particular type of mud) and sometimes yellow (dye obtained from Coprosma). Possible colour combinations were therefore just as few as the colours themselves. Red and black was by far the favourite dual combination, with white and black a close second; the

only triple combination worth mentioning consisted of red, white and black.

The taniko technique made a very stiff fabric, rendering it unsuitable for a garment worn next to the skin. Consequently, the Maori did not make taniko cloaks, but reserved its use for decorative borders only.

Incidentally, the taniko process cannot be called a true form of weaving, for, although warp and weft elements are used, there is no such thing as changing "sheds" or weaving a weft element in and out of warps.

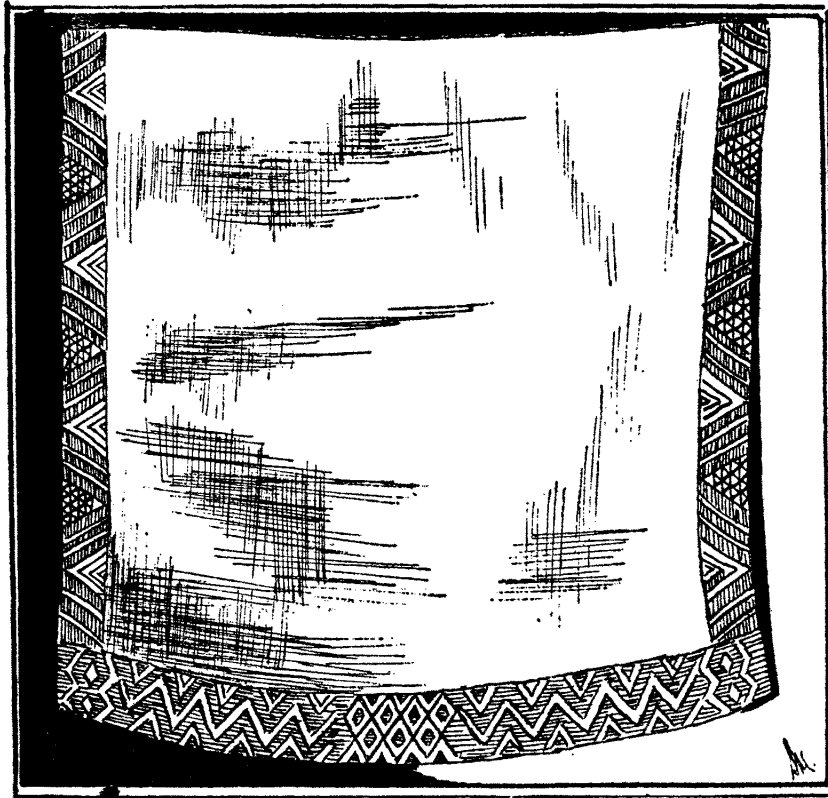
All weft threads are fixed on to warps by twisting the former. Perhaps instead of "taniko weaving" we should say "taniko twisting."

Modern taniko "twisters" use macrame twine, which is sold in balls of different colours, for the warps, and knitting silk, sold in hanks, for wefts. There was no such choice for the taniko expert of bygone days. She had to make her own strands (takerekere) by rolling the white flax fibres (whitau) on her thigh and then she had to dye them to the required colours.

There was a certain amount of tapu attached to ancient weaving. A beginner had to go through an initiation

*Tanekaha Tree—scientific name
Phyllocladus

TANIKO WEAVING



A Maori cloak showing taniko borders on three sides

ceremony before she could practise the craft freely. There was a school of weaving called the Wharepora to which the novices went. The pupil upon entering the wharepora was made tapu (holy) by a recognised authority on weaving (a tohunga) and was thus prepared for serious study. When the pattern piece was commenced the tohunga recited incantations and charms to make the pupil's mind receptive and retentive. After the lesson the tapu was lifted (whakanoa), whereupon the student was at liberty to mingle with others and pursue her weaving practice.

As a rule, the first article made after graduation from the wharepora was given away or destroyed. Superstitions declared that if that was not done the weaver would not be able to finish articles properly and would in all probability lose the knack altogether. Although the writer does not agree with the old reason for doing so, he will nevertheless say that the actual giving away of the first article is a sound idea; for after considerable practice the expert would be rather amused, if not ashamed, to look again at the first effort.

WHAT IS TANIKO WEAVING?

In Maori myth, it is said that one Mataora visited the underworld and found there some weird and wonderful crafts. He took a fancy to their tattooing methods and to their cloaks and belts. Being filled with a desire to teach his Maori people how to tattoo and how to weave, he brought back samples with him. Among these were a cloak and belt named Te-rangi-haupapa and Ruruku-o-te-rangi respective-

ly. These two prized possessions were used as patterns by the women of this world, and ever since then they have continued to weave garments in a similar manner. No details were supplied as to whether the belt was made with the mat technique or with the taniko technique, but as taniko is inseparable from Maori weaving, we may thank Mataora for his thoughtfulness in leaving us with a useful legacy.

CHAPTER 2

MAKING A SAMPLER

THE ILLUSTRATION on the cover shows, in the top-left corner, a sampler, and you will be taken right through the manufacture of this sampler, which when completed may be used as a serviette ring. Alternative methods will be dealt with in a later chapter. This will avoid unnecessary confusion to the beginner, who will have sufficient to contend with in mastering one method.

You will find the procedure adopted here a useful one to follow when planning the manufacture of any taniko article.

The directions are given under the following headings:—

- Step 1—Preparation of the design.
- Step 2—Preparation of warps and wefts.
- Step 3—The casting-on or fixing process.
- Step 4—Twisting.
- Step 5—Casting-off.

Materials required

1 ball of macrame twine (or thick binding twine), 2 hanks of knitting silk of different colours (white and black, red and black, etc.) (or strong wool), graph paper, scissors, pencil and eraser.

Step 1—Preparation of the design

1. Make a freehand drawing of the design.

2. Draw design on to graph paper. The design as it appears on graph is as it will look in the finished article.

Each square on the graph represents a place where a weft crosses a warp thread. Black crosses indicate where you must bring up the black threads; the blank squares indicate where the white threads have to be shown. (You will understand this better when you come to Step 4.)

Further reference to the graph will reveal a number of facts, viz.: the number of wefts for the design itself (10 rows) and the number of warps, which is in this case 43—an impossibility!

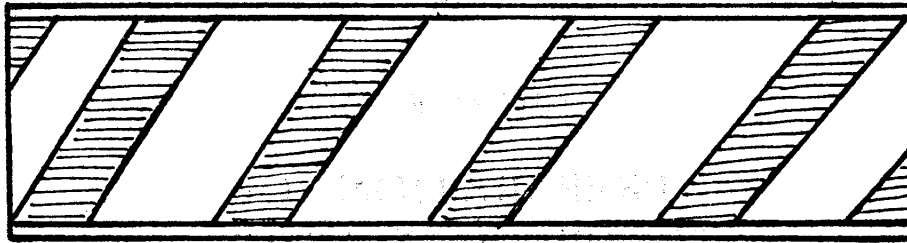
As each warp element is doubled the number will always be an even number. As a general rule, too, always use an odd number of wefts for designs. The reason for the latter will be obvious later, when you study other taniko patterns.

3. Read off numbers and sequence of threads from graph and arrange as in this diagram:

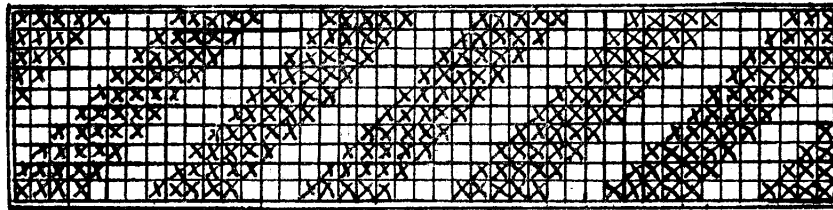
B = black thread. W = white thread

During manufacture of the sampler refer constantly to the graph for comparison of designs and to the chart for the numbers and sequence of colours.

MAKING A SAMPLER



A freehand drawing of the design



The design on graph paper

Row	Order and number of Colours												
1st	4B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	4B	—	—
2nd	3B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	—	—
3rd	2B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	1W	—
4th	1B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	2W	—
5th	—	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	—
6th	—	2W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	1B
7th	—	1W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	2B
8th	—	—	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	3B
9th	—	—	4B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	4B
10th	—	—	3B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B	3W	5B

This diagram shows the order of the colours as they appear in each row of the sampler

CHAPTER 3

PREPARATION OF WARPS AND WEFTS

CUT 30 three-inch lengths of macrame twine or thick string. These are your warps.

Cut a length of white silk 16 inches long and the same length of black silk. These are the wefts.

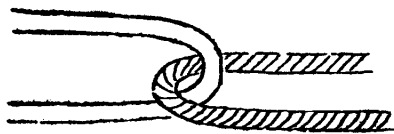
When preparing large numbers of warps it is a good idea to find some

object like a medicine bottle, the circumference of which is equal or nearly equal to the length of one warp, in this case 3 inches. Wind the macrame around this object and cut along one side. In this way you mass-produce the warps.

CHAPTER 4

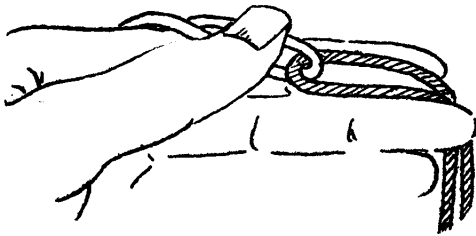
CASTING - ON

THE FIXING PROCESS



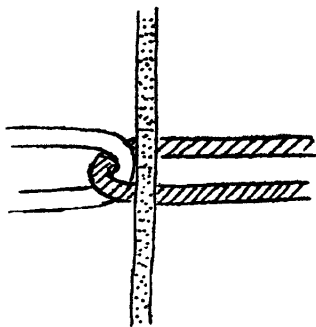
1.

1. Double white and black wefts and link together.



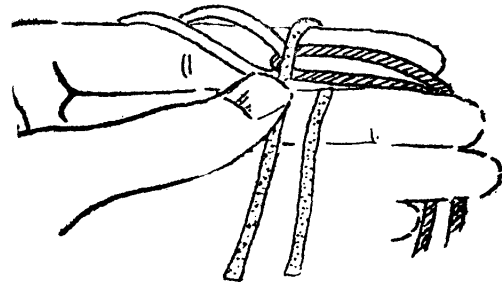
2.

2. Hold in the left hand.



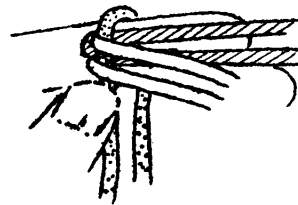
3.

3. Place the first warp thread (3 inch macrame) over the black threads, making sure that the middle of the warp is lying across the black wefts.



4.

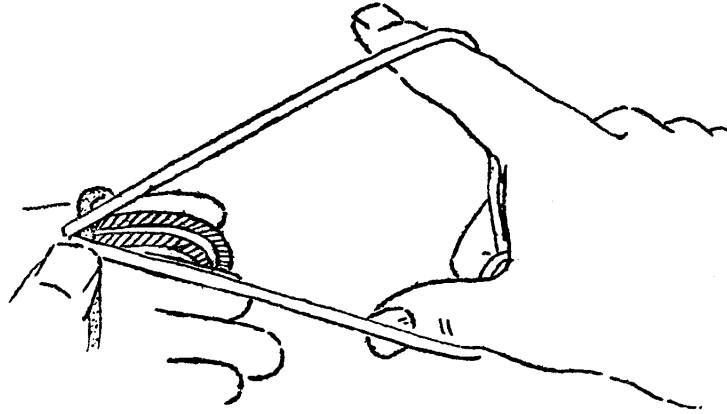
4. Bend the upper end of the warp back and bring it through between forefinger and middle-finger. Hold it in that position.



5.

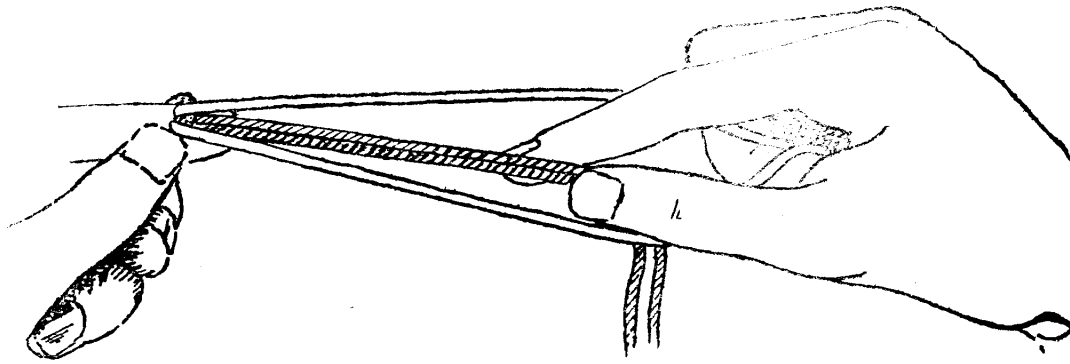
5. With the right hand pick up the white weft threads and transfer to the right of the warp.

TANIKO WEAVING



6.

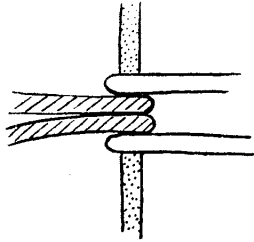
6. Hold the white wefts in the right hand leaving the thumb and forefinger free. Now place thumb and forefinger down in between the 2 whites.



7.

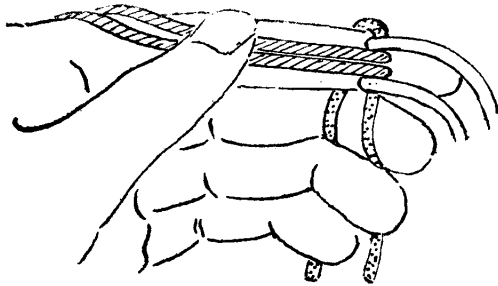
7. With the thumb and forefinger take hold of the black weft threads and bring them up through the whites (as shown in diagram) at the same time dropping the whites.

CASTING-ON



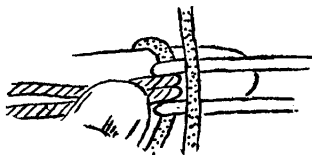
8.

8. Carry the blacks over to the left side of warp to original position of white. The wefts have now changed places.



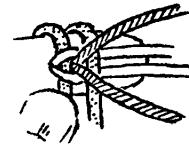
9.

9. Hold as shown and this will free the right hand.



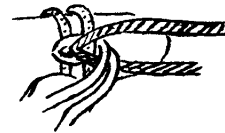
10.

10. Place the second warp into position, this time over the white threads. Bend upper end down as for first warp.



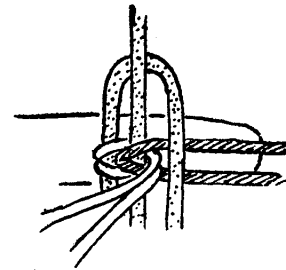
11.

11. Bring black weft threads over and repeat figures 6 and 7.



12.

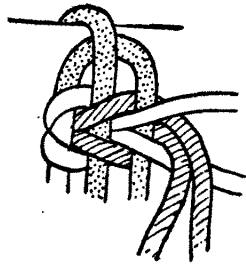
12. The result of these moves is shown.



13.

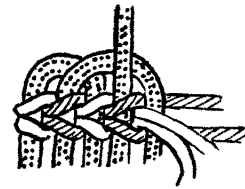
13. Release the two upper ends of the warps from the forefinger and middle-finger grip. **TURN UPPER END OF FIRST WARP** behind **SECOND WARP** and down over black wefts. Repeat 5, 6 and 7.

TANIKO WEAVING



14.

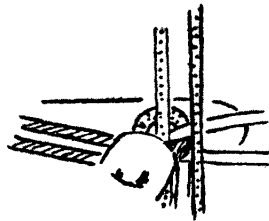
14. This is the position now reached.



17.

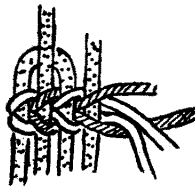
17. Release upper ends of second and third warps. Bring the upper end of the **SECOND WARP** behind **THIRD WARP** and down over the wefts. "Fix" in by repeating 5, 6 and 7.

The rest is now a matter of repeating 15, 16 and 17 until the end is reached.



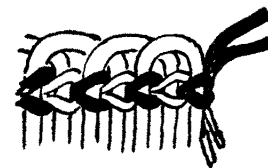
15.

15. Place the third warp over the white wefts.



16.

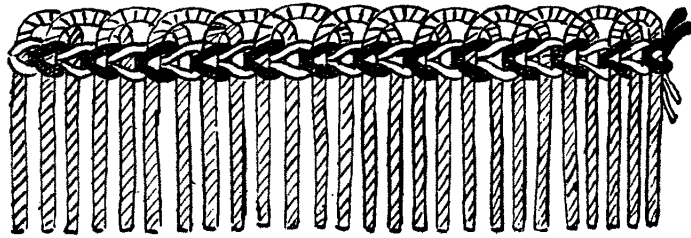
16. "Fix" this one in by repeating 5, 6 and 7.



18.

18. The last warp is not fixed in the usual way, but is simply tied in by tying the two pairs of wefts into a reef knot.

CASTING-ON



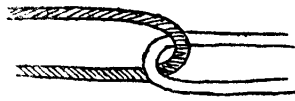
19.

19. A diagrammatic picture of what our article should look like when the casting-on is completed.

CHAPTER 5

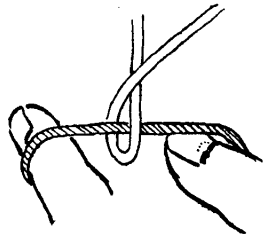
TWISTING

THE ACTUAL WEAVING OF THE DESIGN



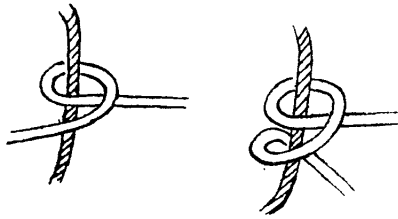
1.

1. Cut two-foot lengths of black and white silk threads and link them.

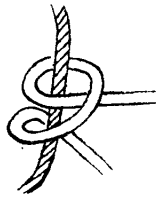


2.

2. Hold black thread about the middle with forefinger and thumb of left hand.



3.

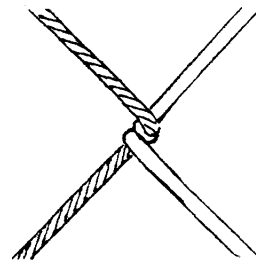


4.

3. and 4. Hold white in right hand and twist as shown.

We are here preparing two lots of weft threads. One lot (a black and a white) will be used for the first row of the design while the other will be ready for the second row. This is purely a time-saving method and, incidentally, a neater one. You could, if you so desired it, prepare one row at a time by tying the two ends together.

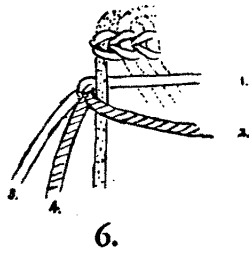
The twisting of the linked weft threads is to prevent them from slipping when the first warp is twisted into place.



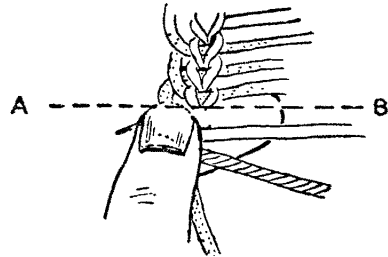
5.

5. Pull threads to tighten the grip.

TWISTING OR WEAVING

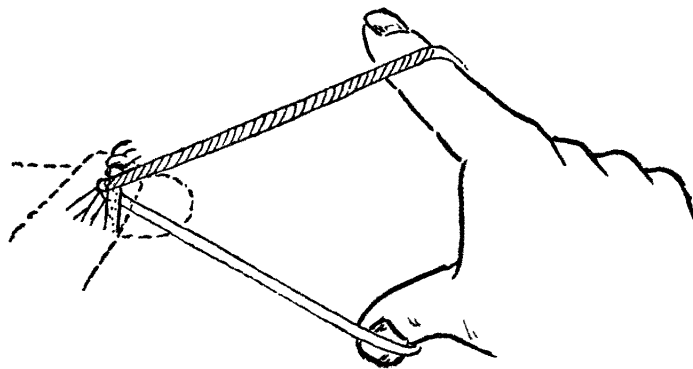


6. Bring the first warp into place, making sure that it lies over the white and under the black, because black is the colour we want shown. (Refer to graphed design or to number chart).



7. Push the wefts right up against the casting-on weft row and hold with thumb and forefinger of left hand.

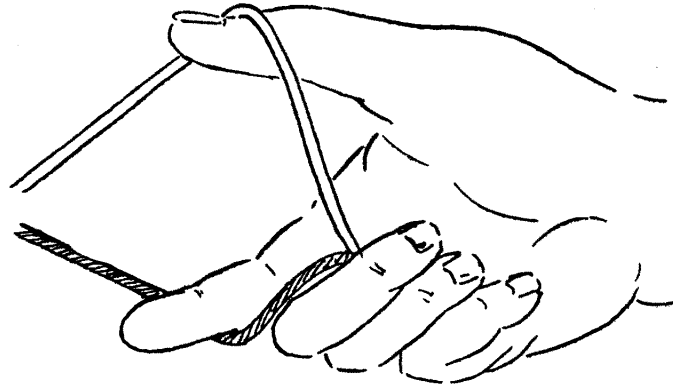
Note: In the diagrams following fig. 7 all that section above the line AB in fig. 7 is left out for the sake of clarity. Let your imagination add that portion to the rest.



8. Position One.

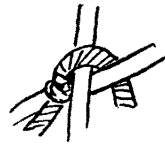
8. Place the black thread over the forefinger of the left hand and the white under the thumb. This will be referred to now as *Position One*. In this position the right-hand palm is facing out from the body.

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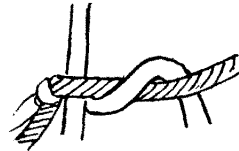
9. Position Two.

9. Now rotate the palm of the right hand away from the body, towards the floor (clockwise) until the palm is facing upwards. This is *Position Two*. The palm now is towards the body and facing upward. The rotation of the hand from the wrist, covers half a circle and this represents what we will term a "twist." It will be obvious, of course, that the hand is incapable of making a complete circle.



10.

10. Remove thumb and forefinger from the wefts and insert again between threads, from body-side outwards so as to arrive at Position One again. As a result of the half-turn, the forefinger now carries the white and the thumb carries the black.

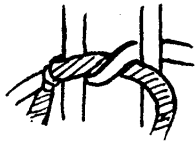


11.

11. Repeat the movements from Position One to Position Two. You have now made two twists or a complete revolution of the hand in two stages. The second twist brings the black up and (if you remember) black is the colour required by our design to show over warp two.

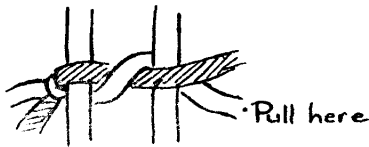
TWISTING OR WEAVING

Refer again to 10 and 11. Here you will see what the two twists actually do. Compare your effort with the diagrams.

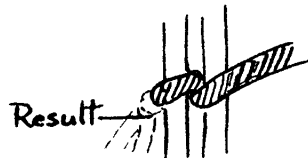


12.

12. Bring the next warp into place (fig. 12) making sure that it lies over the white and under the black weft as illustrated.



13.



14.

13. and 14. Hold second warp down with thumb and forefinger of left hand and *pull the white tightly* so that only the black shows at the front.

This is extremely important and I want you to take careful note of what this does. If the black is pulled instead, it is obvious that the white would show. Let us now learn this rule: **WHEN TIGHTENING WEFTS ALWAYS PULL THE BOTTOM WEFT.**

Repeat Position One to Position Two twice; i.e., twist twice over the second warp to bring black up again.

Bring 3rd warp into place.

Tighten previous one by pulling white.

Twist wefts twice to fasten 3rd warp in.

Bring 4th warp into place and tighten the previous one by pulling white.

TWIST ONCE to bring white forward (see graph).

Bring the next warp into place and tighten the previous one by pulling **BLACK**.

I must now leave you on your own, as the rest is simply a matter of repetition. However, for your guidance here are two rules in connection with the twists.

Rule 1.—TO BRING THE SAME COLOUR UP AGAIN, TWIST TWICE.

Rule 2.—TO CHANGE COLOUR, TWIST ONCE ONLY.

When you reach the end of each row, tie the ends of the wefts with a reef knot.

TANIKO WEAVING

General Notes on Stage 4

1. When the first row is completed begin the second, the threads for which you have ready. (fig. 6—threads 3 and 4).

2. After completing the second row, prepare wefts for the next two rows, as shown, and so on, until you have done the required ten rows.

3. You have probably noticed that some taniko belts have 3 colours and not just 2.

“How do I manage three colours?” is a question you may ask. The answer is simple enough. Prepare a 3-colour weft row the same way as you have been shown for a two-colour one, and when twisting bring up the colour you want the usual way and use the other two for tightening.

4. Some people have a tighter twist than others, thus producing a closer and stiffer fabric. You must determine your own tension. It is, however, better to twist a little tighter than a little too loose.

The Last Two Rows

Although the actual design contains only 10 rows you will find that you have actually 12 rows by the time you complete the 10th row of the design—2 rows were put on during the casting-on. To balance the design therefore, we must add another 2 rows in the same manner as the first two. Now, refer back to the casting-on diagrams on pages 17, 18 and 19.

(a) Prepare double threads as in 1 and hold as in 2 on page 17.

(b) Bring end of first warp over black as in 4 on page 17.

(c) Repeat stages up to 9 (pages 18 and 19).

(d) Bring end of second warp over the white as in 10.

(e) Fix in as for first warp.

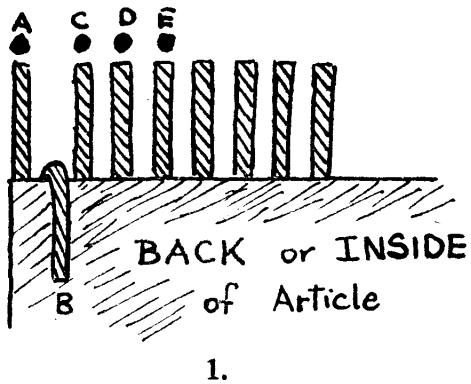
(f) Repeat the above until the last warp is reached. End this off the same way as in the casting-on.

(g) You are now ready to cast-off.

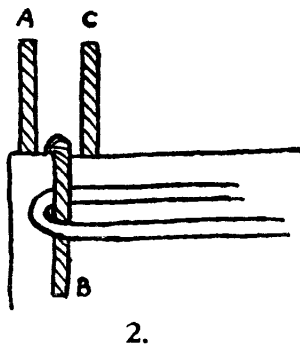
CHAPTER 6

CASTING - OFF

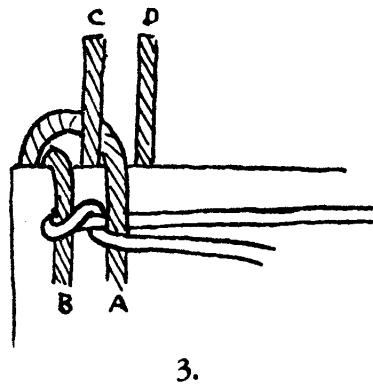
TURN THE ARTICLE upside down so that the hanging warps are at the top and the inside is facing your body.



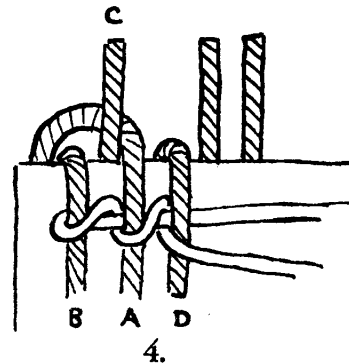
1. Bend the second warp (b) down.



2. Attach the doubled weft as shown.

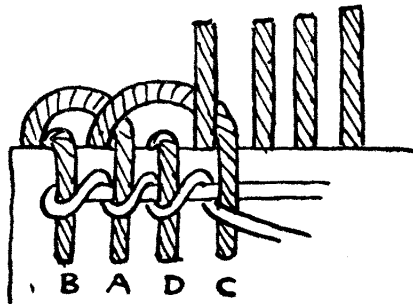


3. Apply a single twist. Bend warp A over behind warp C and down in between wefts. Fix this in with a single twist.



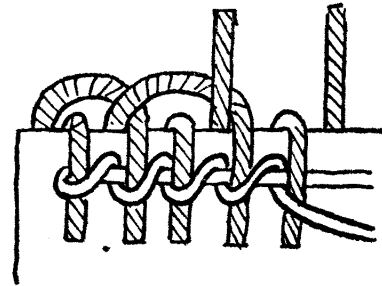
4. Bend warp D down and fix with a single twist.

TANIKO WEAVING



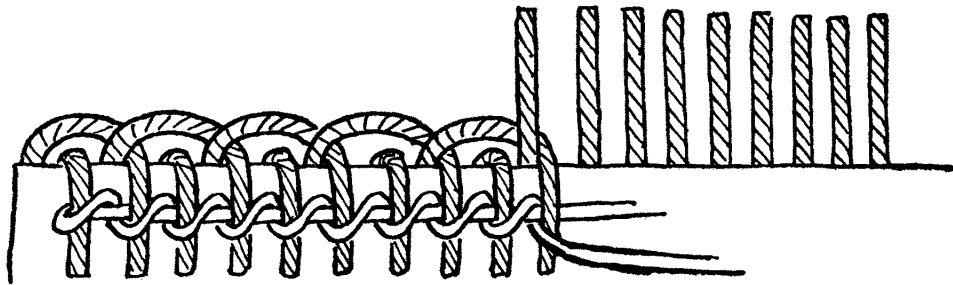
5.

5. Bend C over, behind E and in between wefts. Fix this in the usual way.



6.

6. The rest is now a matter of repetition. Figure 6 gives the next stage from which you should be able to continue on your own.



7.

7. The pattern of the warps caused by the casting-off is shown in this diagram.

When the last warp has been fixed into place tie the loose weft ends together with a reef knot.

This completes the actual taniko weaving, although there still remains one more task before our sampler

assumes that "finished" look. That final task is to line or cover the inside with a strip of cloth or leather. Instructions for backing taniko articles are given in another chapter.

Nowadays most taniko weavers take their belts to a saddler to be lined with leather, but you could quite easily do your own.

C A S T I N G - O F F

Before closing this chapter here are two facts which may help you when planning future taniko articles.

(1) When using macrame twine and knitting silk about 10 warps are required for every inch.

(2) About 10 weft rows are required to every half inch.

It often happens, however, that macrame twine varies in thickness, in

which case the above facts would not be too reliable. The number of wefts to the half inch depends on the tension you use and on the thickness of the silk or wool, although the silk varies very little if at all.

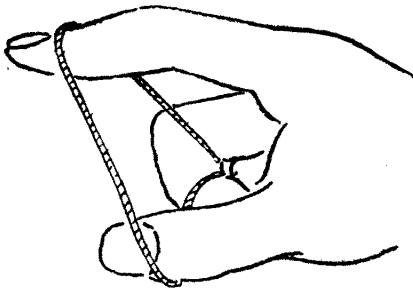
Now that you have been right through the various stages of this sampler you should be able to make a taniko belt or some other article on your own. Only experience can teach you the finer points of the craft.

CHAPTER 7

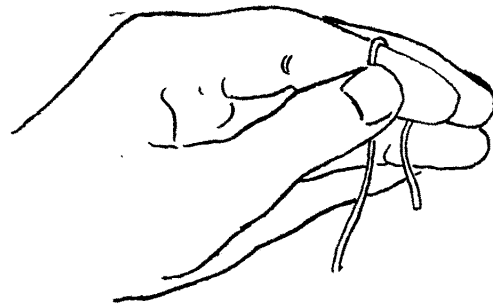
ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF CASTING-ON

IN THE METHOD illustrated one doubled thread is used instead of the pair used for the sampler. A study of these diagrams will show you what

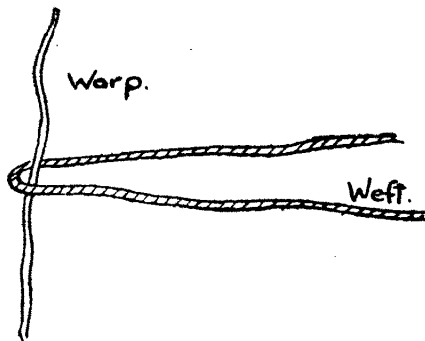
was done. After figure 12 many variations are possible, although few are practicable.



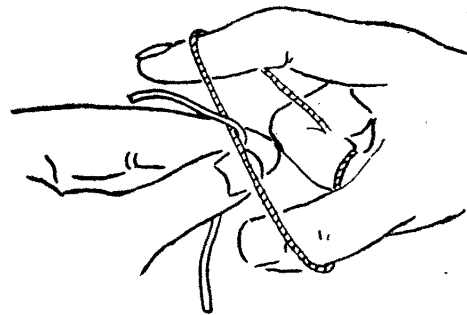
1.



2.

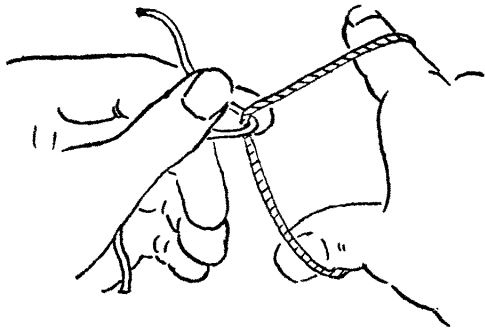


3.

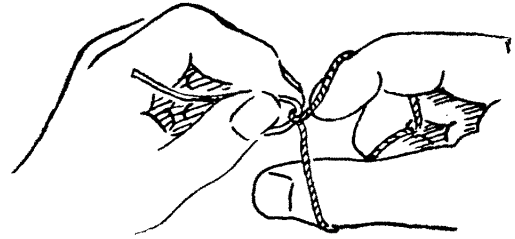


4.

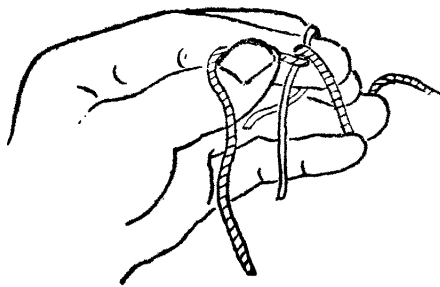
CASTING-ON—ALTERNATIVES



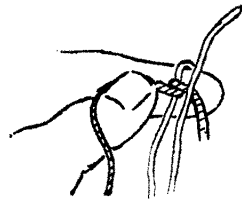
5.



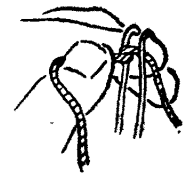
6.



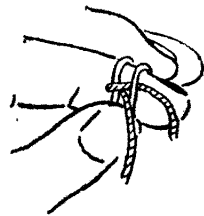
7.



8.



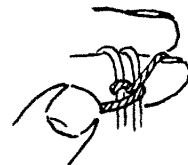
9.



10.

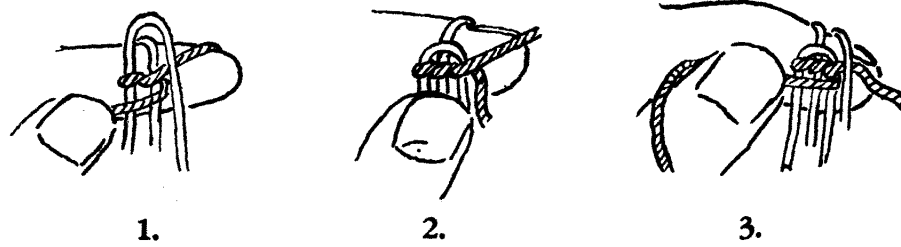


11.



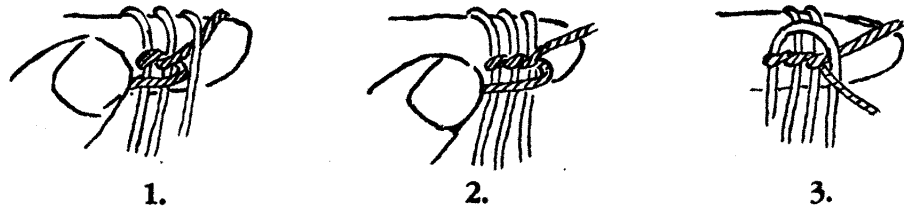
12.

TANIKO WEAVING



Method A

Diagrams 1, 2, and 3 above show the three stages in this method of casting-on. The top end of the first warp is turned over after fixing in the second warp.



Method B

In this method, the top end of the first warp is turned over after fixing the third as shown in the three stages above. You may also turn the first over, after fixing the fourth one, but

you need to experiment to find the one which suits your tastes. The casting-on method used for the sampler may be varied the same way.

Twisting

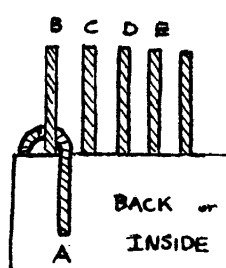
There are no alternative methods for twisting as far as the author is aware. However, you may discover better grips and hit upon time-saving ideas, especially in the actual twisting.

To help keep the work tight, some weavers use an extra weft with each row. This weft is kept at the back all the way and when the row is completed, is pulled to tighten or straighten.

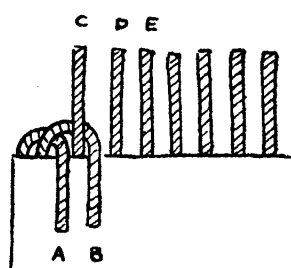
CHAPTER 8

ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF CASTING-OFF

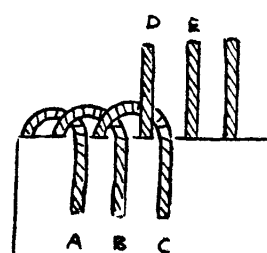
Two other methods are shown here.



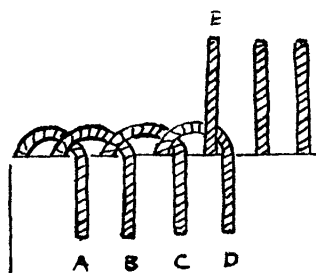
1.



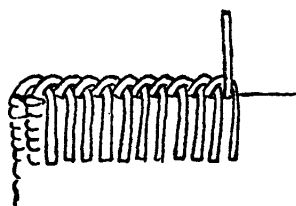
2.



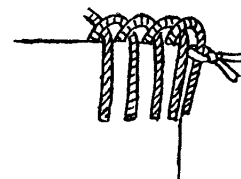
3.



4.



5.



6.

Method A

Method A is by far the easiest method of casting-off, but, unfortunately, it is not the neatest; thus not many people use it. No weft element is used; the warps are interwoven in such a way as to keep themselves in place. Refer now to the diagrams

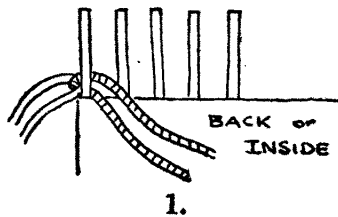
which explain themselves. The article is turned upside-down as before. Some indication of the pattern formed by the warps is given in figure 5. When the last warp is reached, turn it down and tie as shown in figure 6, with the loose ends of the last weft row.

TANIKO WEAVING

Method B.

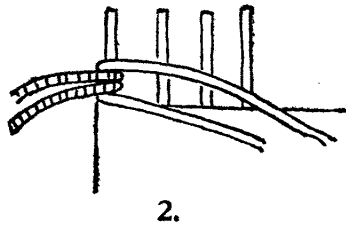
Method B looks a bit more difficult but will save much time because you put on the last two rows (refer to end of Chap. 5—The Last Two Rows) and cast off in the same operation.

Prepare the doubled pair of wefts and link together as you have been shown.



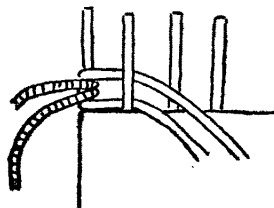
1.

1. Turn the article upside-down so that the warp ends are at the top.



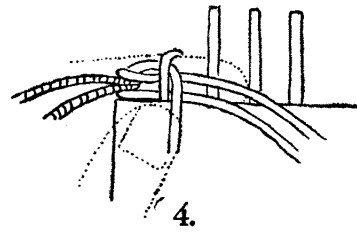
2.

2. Place the wefts around the first warp and fix this in (as 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 on pages 17, 18 and 19) as shown.



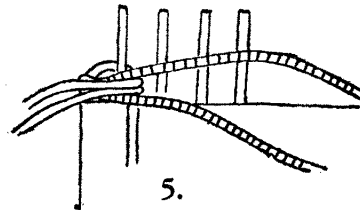
3.

3. Bring second warp into place.



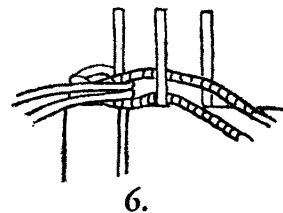
4.

4. Now turn end of first warp over behind the second and down over wefts. This is held by the left hand as shown by the dots, thus leaving the right hand free.



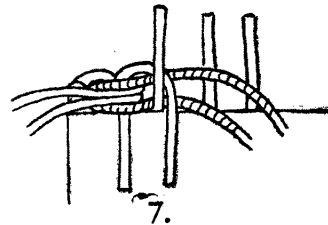
5.

5. Now fix these two in together.



6.

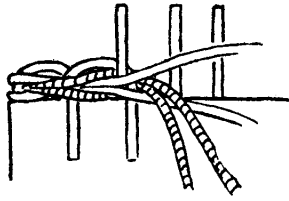
6. The rest is now a matter of repetition. The 3rd warp is put into place.



7.

7. The end of the second is turned over behind this and down over the wefts.

CASTING-OFF—ALTERNATIVES



8.

8. Fix these two and so on.



9.

9. The pattern as formed on the outside of the article is shown here. You will recognise that the last two rows correspond with the first.

No matter what method you use for casting-off, the ends of the warps must be pulled down evenly afterwards.

You may have to repeat this operation several times before you arrive at a satisfactory finish.

CHAPTER 9

TANIKO DESIGNS

THE PRE-EUROPEAN taniko designs were based on triangles (Δ), chevrons (∇) and lozenges (\diamond) and the old Maori did not depart from these three main motifs. It was technically impossible owing to the nature of the taniko technique, to secure a true curve, thus all taniko designs were rectilinear, that is, the patterns were based on straight lines.

It is quite a problem to draw the line between original Maori patterns and those of the post-European era. Those illustrated in this book belong to the pre-European period. They are simple, effective and they never depart from the three motifs of the conservative old-timer. There were, however, some fairly complicated patterns used at the lower bands of cloaks, but these probably belong to a later stage in the development of taniko patterns.

By re-arranging the straight lines and spaces the old designer could have added other geometrical combinations to her collection, but this was "not done." However, with the advent of the White Man other combinations soon crept in, to take away much of the classical beauty of the old patterns.

Post-European designs are a mixture of old and new motifs, loosely arranged and balanced symmetrically. The aim was to produce a design as complicated as possible and this was then consider-

ed the sign of an expert designer. Gone was the appreciation of simple beauty! We must wait a little longer to see what the modern artist will do to taniko designs. We already see efforts to produce curves from rafter patterns (kowhaiwhai) and from carving; we find fern leaves, crosses and stars, side by side with the old motifs. The untutored eye thinks they are lovely, but when compared with the old patterns the former show signs of decadence rather than progress. We are here considering these designs purely from an aesthetic point of view.

There is much in common between taniko and tukutuku (lattice or reed-work) patterns, both being rectilinear and more or less interchangeable. The tukutuku patterns, however, stressed the vertical, lines being longer in height than in width, whereas the taniko normally stressed the horizontal. (The former is a panel while the latter is a long, narrow border.) These two spaces require totally different treatment in order to arrive at a pleasing pattern.

There is no reason why taniko designs should not be improved by the modern weavers. The writer will certainly not advocate the mere copying of the past; but he *will* advise a study of past designs. Having dis-

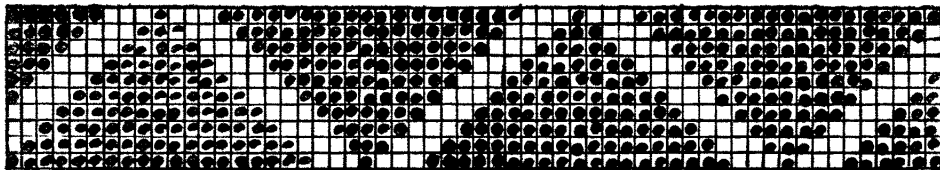
TANIKO DESIGNS

covered the principles underlying them the designer should be able to move forward. To begin with, we have to accept the fact that taniko designs have to be rectilinear, and secondly we should remember that a good pattern looks good from any angle (the right way up, upside down, or one end up) and that it should balance formally or informally all along the border. A symmetrical arrangement horizontally is not sufficient.

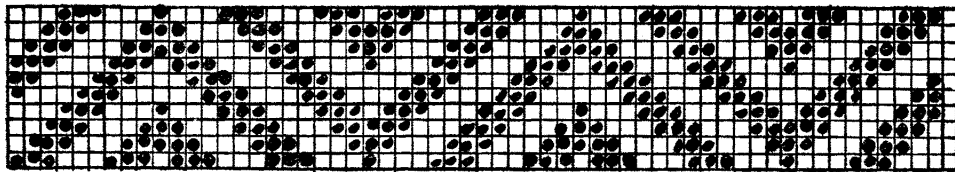
With reference to Maori art, far too many people are concerned only with the names and origin of Maori patterns, and what the various motifs represent, instead of considering it

largely from an aesthetic point of view. One wonders whether our anthropologists and ethnologists, through no fault of their own have been responsible for this analytical and "what-does-that-represent" attitude. There is always "rhyme" in art, but sometimes no reason other than that it rhymes. This applies to Maori art also.

However, as an aid to remembering the designs, the names and origins are definitely useful. The following are some of the common names attributed to the Maori taniko patterns listed. It is regretted that the writer does not know the name for every pattern illustrated here.

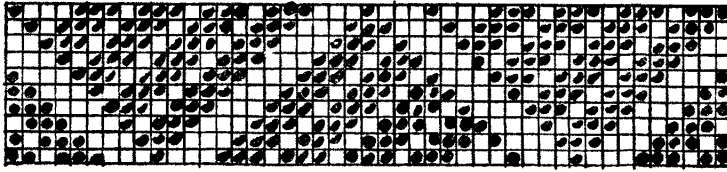


No. 1. TAUPOKIPOKI is the Tuhoe term for this design, which is one of many based on the triangle, generally an isosceles triangle.

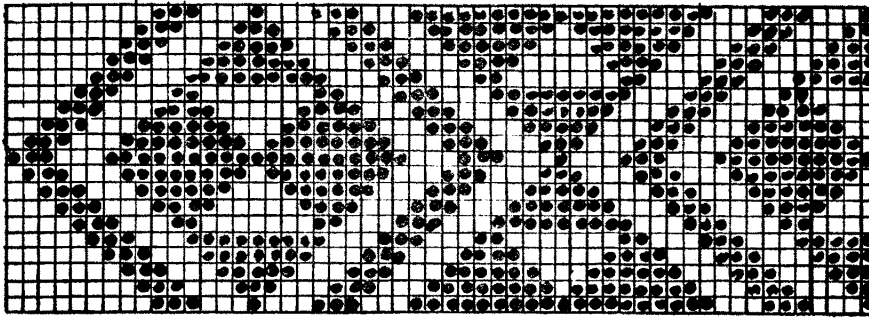


No. 2. This is a variation of NIHO TANIWHA (dragon's teeth) and it could also be a PATIKI (flounder) halved.

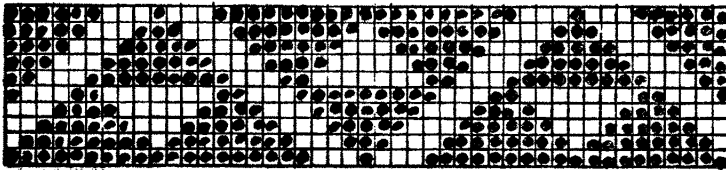
TANIKO WEAVING



No. 3. Shown here is a variation of ΤΑΥΡΟΚΙΡΟΚΙ (the diagram is No. 7 below).

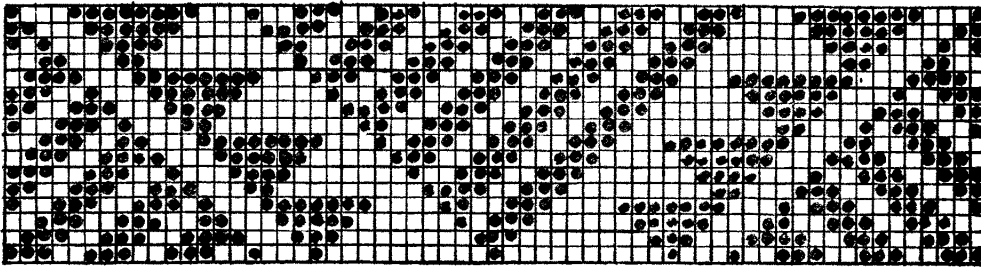


No. 4. A further variation of ΤΑΥΡΟΚΙΡΟΚΙ is illustrated.

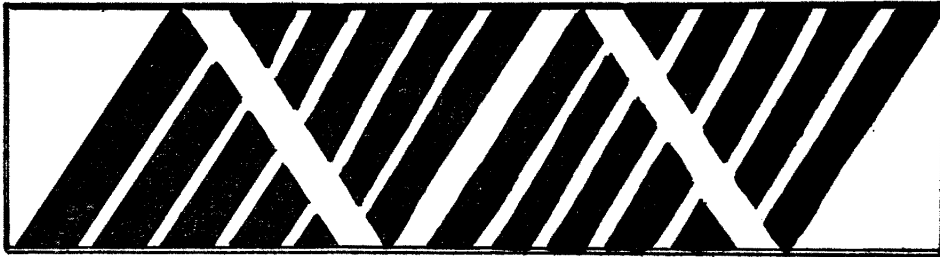


No. 5. This design is a combination of ΤΑΥΡΟΚΙΡΟΚΙ and ΚΑΟΚΑΟ (ribs or armpits).

TANIKO DESIGNS



No. 6. This is a further enhancement of TAUPOKIPOKI.

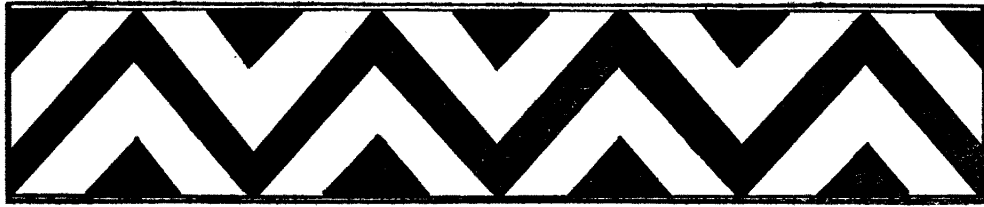


No. 7. Design No. 3 is here shown in diagram form.

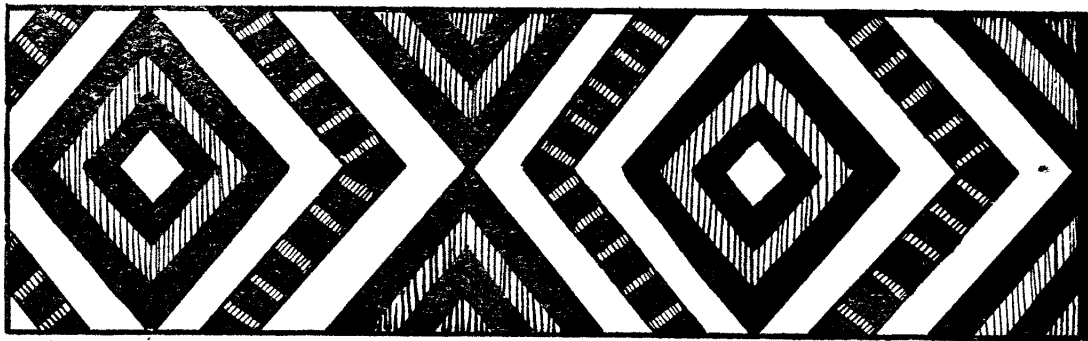


No. 8. Here is a combination of TAUPOKIPOKI and NIHO TANIWHA (Niho = tooth: taniwaha = fabulous reptile).

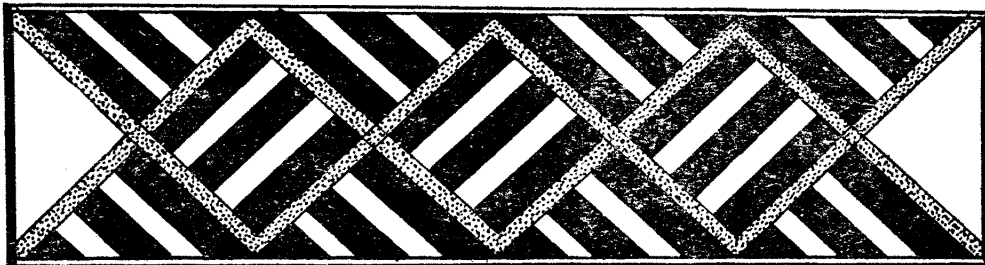
TANIKO WEAVING



No. 9. This is a variation of NIHO
TANIWHA.



No. 10. This variation of PATIKI
has the bars of KAOKAO added.



No. 11. In the photograph on the cover, the bottom belt and the third from the bottom show a design known as PATIKITIKI-PAPAKI-RANGO. "Patiki-tiki" was the term given to a flaxen, fan-like object which was used in the old days for swatting flies. The suffix PAPAKI-RANGO denoted its use (papaki

= to hit or clap: rango = fly). This is a Ngati-Poru (East Coast area) pattern and still holds an honoured place among that tribe.

N.B.—Nos. 1 - 6 have been graphed for you and are ready to be used.

CHAPTER 10

MAKING A TANIKO BELT

NOW THAT you have studied and practised the various methods of taniko weaving and have made a sampler to give you the necessary confidence, it is a simple step forward to plan and produce a more useful article. If you have seen anyone wearing a taniko belt you will realise that here is an interesting project, one which will add a useful article to your wardrobe and which will attract attention wherever you wear it. You will be proud to explain that your belt was of your own design and manufacture and that it put to modern use one of the most interesting crafts of the old-time Maori.

You are reminded here that Maori beliefs recommended that the first taniko article to be woven should be given away or burned. This belief was merely a superstition, of course, and you may decide to keep the sampler by you as a guide in the making of a belt. If you are anxious to make a real success of the belt you will probably try out a design or two on samplers before deciding which one will make the most attractive belt.

Here, then, are the instructions for belt making:—

1. Make all wefts half as long again as the length of the belt. This means that if the belt is to be 24 inches long,

each *doubled* weft will be 36 inches long. The belt should be made to fit the person for whom it is intended, of course, and you will need to make allowance for the two leather ends. Instructions for attaching these are given in the next chapter. Allow only half an inch for stretch in the belt.

2. The doubled warps should be half as long again as the width of the article, and this is especially important in narrow work such as a belt. With wide articles there is not the same necessity for this excess length and you will find for yourself the extra required.

3. Using standard macrame warps and silk wefts in a fairly loose weave there will be approximately 16 weft rows to the inch. Using a tighter weave there will be about 20 weft rows to the inch. It is advisable to discover for yourself the number of wefts that *you* weave per inch. A second sampler, on which you will be more experienced, will reveal this information, which is invaluable in planning patterns for belts and other articles.

4. With standard materials there will be approximately 10 to 12 warps to the inch.

TANIKO WEAVING

5. It is important to keep your work of a standard tension. Practice alone will bring skill, but it is not difficult to attain.

6. Always work from your graphed design—there are several in Chapter 9 ready for use—until you have memorised the details of the pattern.

7. You will find it a help to prepare a diagram showing the order and number of the colours, as demonstrated on page 15. This will save you the trouble of checking back and counting squares when you take up the work again after leaving it overnight or when you have forgotten the sequence.

8. As a rule always use an odd number of wefts for the designs. This

is necessary for patterns like 10 and 11 on page 30.

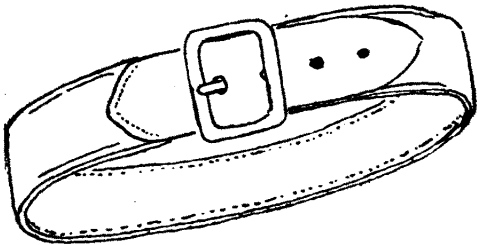
9. When the design has been completed to the desired length tack the belt down on a piece of board, stretching it to its full extent.

The illustration on the cover shows a number of designs for belts and it will be obvious that the taniko process is ideal for anyone who wishes to make for himself or as a gift, an unusual and attractive article. In addition you are using an ancient craft that might well have died completely without the enthusiasm of those who are now putting taniko weaving to practical use.

CHAPTER 11

LINING AND FINISHING

YOUR BELT is now ready for lining. This can be done with a variety of materials, but a thin leather is best, as this will not cling to your clothing, but will slide easily. The leather must be thin to avoid giving the work a clumsy appearance, and for this reason skiver leather is the most suitable. It can be obtained in a number of good shades, as well as a natural colour. Lining basil is another good material, and this is always in a natural shade.

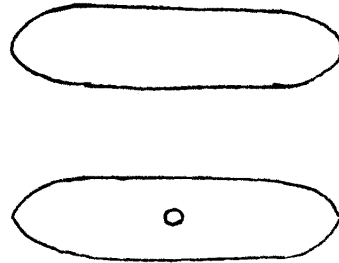


Your taniko belt requires a leather lining as well as the two leather ends and a buckle.

These materials can be bought from any wholesalers of leather, but it would be necessary to purchase a whole skin. This is all right for schools, or where a number of students could share the skin. However, smaller pieces can usually be obtained from a sadler. Small pieces of thin calf or basil can also be obtained for attaching to the ends of the taniko belt.

FINISHING THE ENDS

Cut leather for the belt ends according to the width of the belt and buckle.



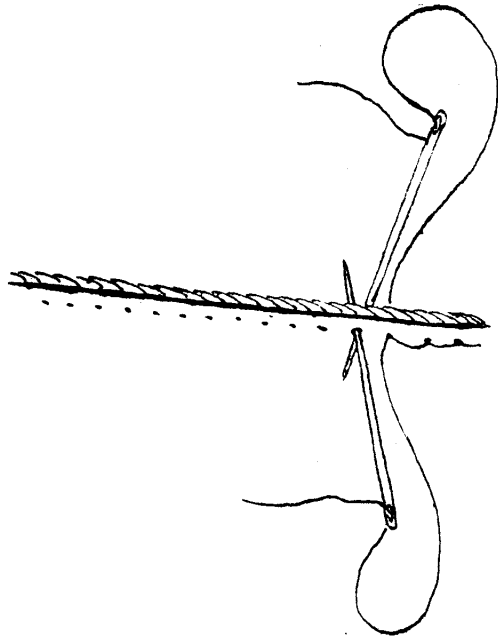
The bottom leather end has a hole punched to take the buckle.

On the buckle end cut the leather twice the required length; punch a hole in the centre of this piece, passing the prong of the buckle through, and doubling the leather to the back of the belt. Make a narrow keeper for the belt end, after passing it first through the buckle. This narrow piece is lined and stitched, then joined to form a ring, slipped over the leather before the buckle and before the leather is folded to the back.

STITCHING BY HAND

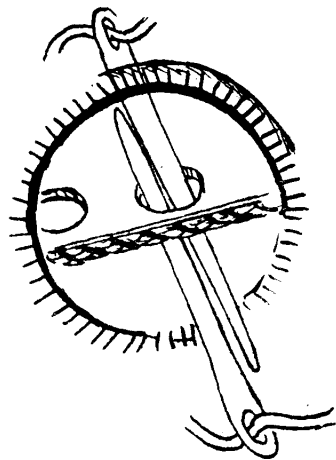
A tool known as a "stitch spacer" can be used for making the holes for stitching, otherwise use an unthreaded sewing machine, moving the stitch to

TANIKO WEAVING



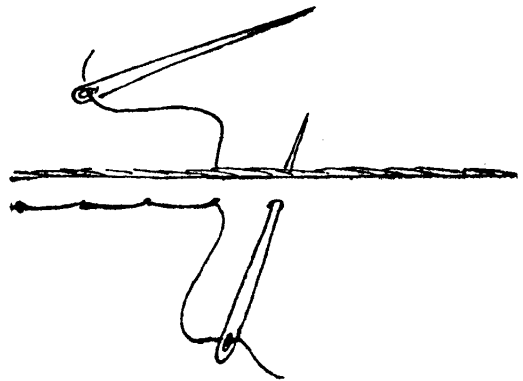
Using two needles for stitching.

the biggest possible. The stitching can be more regularly done with two needles, these being passed through the same hole in opposite directions.



Close-up sketch of the two needles.

In this way there is an even pull on both threads, and the stitching is alike on both sides. The sewing is greatly simplified if both hands are free, so that both needles can be pushed through at the same time. This can be done where it is possible to place the work between two heavy objects



Pushing the needles through one at a time.

to serve as a clamp. When it is necessary to hold the work in the hands while sewing, the needles must be pushed through one at a time.

Strong thread should be used for sewing. It should be as near as possible in colour to the work. If the thread is slightly waxed, by pulling it through a piece of beeswax, it will make it firmer and less likely to knot during sewing. The best needles to use are those which have a round eye large enough to take the thread easily.

If the stitching is done with one needle only, take the needle and thread in and out of the stitch holes, making running stitches. When at the end

LINING AND FINISHING

of the row, turn and come back, in and out, filling up the spaces and making a stitch which resembles machine stitch. Keep the thread pulled taut all the time.

If it is required to handstitch with a different colour each side of the work—when, for instance, the edge of your taniko work may be black, and your leather lining cream—then a needle must be threaded with one colour and the thread fastened on at the beginning of the row.

Withdraw the needle from the thread and re-thread with the second colour. Holding the first thread tightly along the back of the row of holes, stitch with the second colour, taking the needle into each hole in succession, looping the thread over the first colour and returning to the right side of the work. There the second thread must be pulled tightly to draw the first half-way through the thickness of the work.

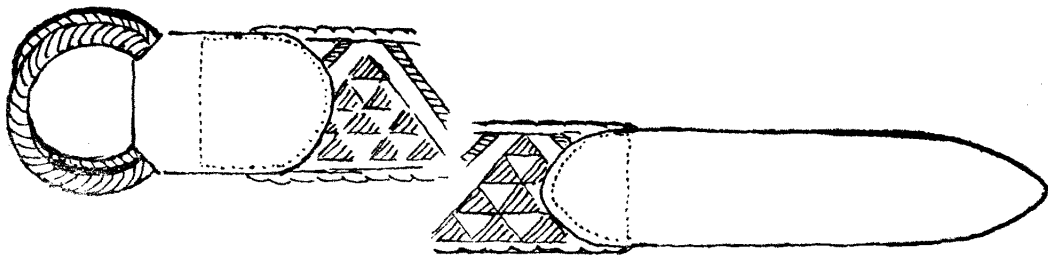
CONSTRUCTION

Having cut the leather ends of your belt to the required length, sew them to your taniko work, overlapping the taniko by about one inch. Glue the lining to the back of your leather, and leave under a weight until thoroughly dry, then stitch along both edges in either of the methods described.

Another way of fastening a lady's belt, instead of using a buckle, is to use two rings. Ordinary brass curtain rings—in a size to suit the width of the belt—are first bound round with macrame twine in one of the colours of your taniko.

These rings are both slipped over your leather end, the leather is then doubled back so that the rings lie on the fold of the leather, the cut edges then being sewn to the taniko, overlapping it by about one inch.

The other leather end is pointed, and to fasten is passed through one ring and back through the other, making a very firm form of fastening.



These diagrams show the two finished ends of a belt in which two round rings have taken the place of the buckle.

CHAPTER 12

OTHER USES FOR TANIKO WEAVING

MAKING A TANIKO BELT is an ideal first project for male weavers and for those girls and women who wish to make an unusual gift for a relative or friend. There are, however, endless uses to which taniko weaving may be applied and the results will be equally as useful in practice and as attractive in appearance.

Headbands (tipare or mekameka) are as simple to make as belts and a number of schools have made them part of the girls' uniform. Different classes and sports teams can have their own distinctive designs.

Ceremonial brassieres (pari) can be adapted by girls for use as sun-tops and halters and are an attractive item of beach-wear.

Lovely small purses can be made, either using one piece of taniko work or several.

Sets of doilys and table mats are an obvious practical application of taniko weaving. Table mats can be made to

one design, or in a variety of designs (of the same size) for different members of the family.

Tobacco pouches made like simple purses and lined with a plastic material should prove an ideal gift for father. A zip fastener across the top adds to their appearance and practical value.

These are but a few of the modern ways in which taniko weaving can be used and there are many more. Competitions for inventiveness will produce a host of useful articles and the competitions should also be judged for attractiveness of design and skill in weaving.

Taniko weaving produces articles of beauty and genuine usefulness and it is the author's hope that this simple introduction to the art will encourage many more to adopt it and thus keep alive an ancient art that has been handed down by generations of old-time Maoris.

TANIKO WEAVING

HOW TO MAKE MAORI BELTS
AND OTHER USEFUL ARTICLES

By S. M. MEAD

Taniko weaving is one of the few arts of the old-time Maori which can be adapted to useful purposes in this modern age. Many New Zealanders are the possessors of handsome woven belts which have been made by the taniko method, and there are many more who wish they could make or possess a taniko belt themselves.

Mr. Mead's is the first book to explain taniko weaving in simple terms as a craft that anyone can master. Despite the fact that it has been written primarily as a handbook for children in Maori schools, it is none the less suitable for study by older students and adults.

A remarkable feature of the book is the method adopted by the author to explain each stage by the use of illustrations. In addition to the descriptive text there are almost 100 sketches which give step-by-step instructions as well as a useful number of attractive patterns. The book deals mainly with the making of a taniko belt, but it is explained that taniko weaving can be adapted to the manufacture, at home and school, of other useful objects as well.

In addition to those who adopt this book as a guide to making a taniko belt of their own, it is hoped that schoolteachers and other students of Maori arts will welcome it as the first practical book explaining an old-time craft for useful, present-day adaption.

Price 6/-

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