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CONTRIBUTIONS TO
POLAR ESKIMO ETHNOGRAPHY

BY

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Abstract

The paper presents the ethnographic observations made in connection with archeological, linguistic, and folkloristic work undertaken during stays with the Polar Eskimos during the years 1935-37 and 1946-47. The descriptions are devoted in most detail to conditions of dwelling, hunting, fishing, and craft, but by and large should convey a general impression of the conditions in the Thule district at the beginning of this century, when especially the missionaries and the establishment by KNUD RASMUSSEN of the Thule Station have placed their stamp on the existence.

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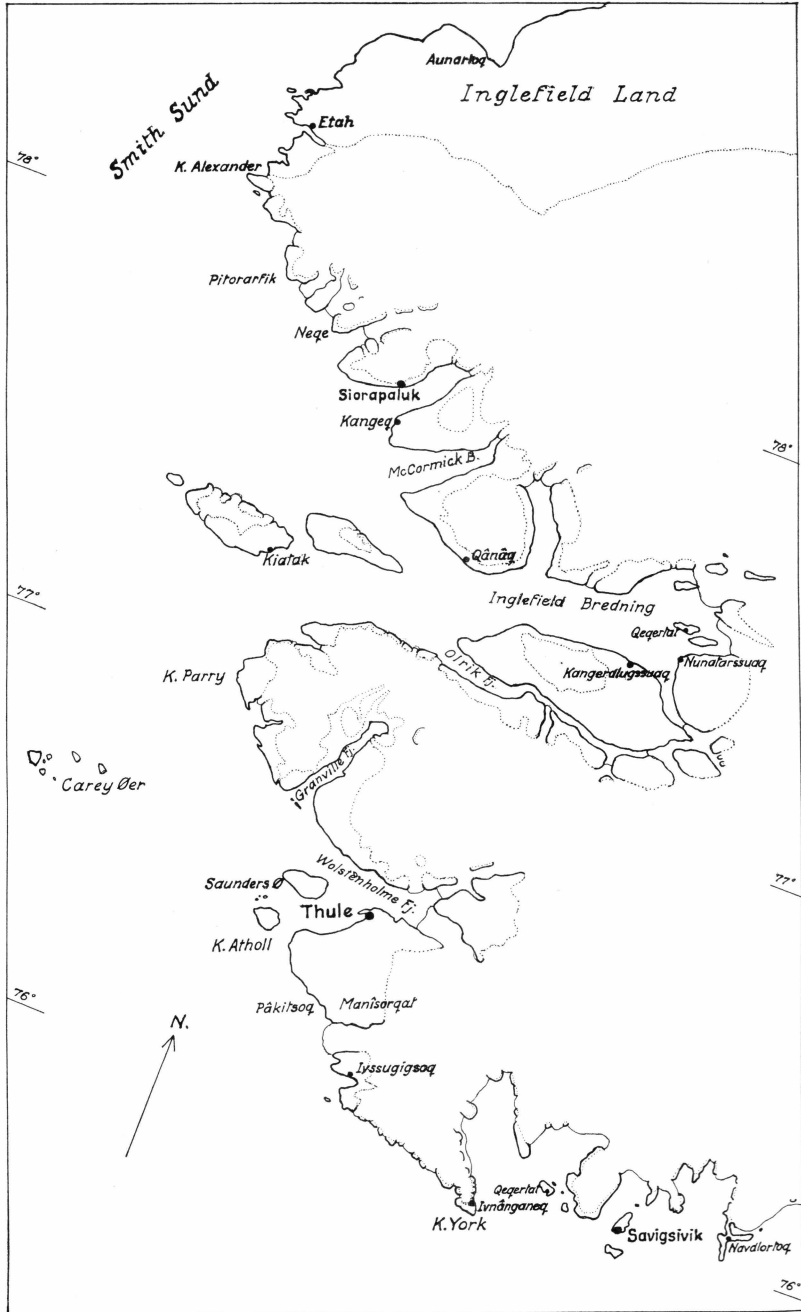


Fig. 1. Survey map of the Thule district indicating sites inhabited 1935-36.



Fig. 2. KNUD RASMUSSEN'S memorial rock at the old Thule.

INTRODUCTION

The ethnographic descriptions given in the following are based on notes made from time to time during my stays in the Thule District from 1935 to 1937 and from 1946-47, when the main purpose was archeological investigations and the collection of linguistic and folkloric material. In regard to the more common ethnographic studies, conditions were such that chief importance had to be placed upon direct observation, in particular regarding hunting and craft, supplemented by information given by the inhabitants. I also owe a good many data to the late manager HANS NIELSEN as well as to Pastor JENS OLSEN, both of whom were themselves skilful hunters and, through their many years of work in the district, had a thorough knowledge of the Polar Eskimos and their mode of life. I also owe a vote of thanks to MOGENS HOLM, M.D., with whom I had occasion to travel through the entire district on his medical journeys, and thus had the opportunity of meeting all the Polar Eskimos then living, and whose information on family relationships was a most valuable help to me. A great deal of the material was collected during sledge trips, and I owe much to my untiring helpers during the summer stay on Inglefield Land in 1936, not least to old Moses (Torng) who still

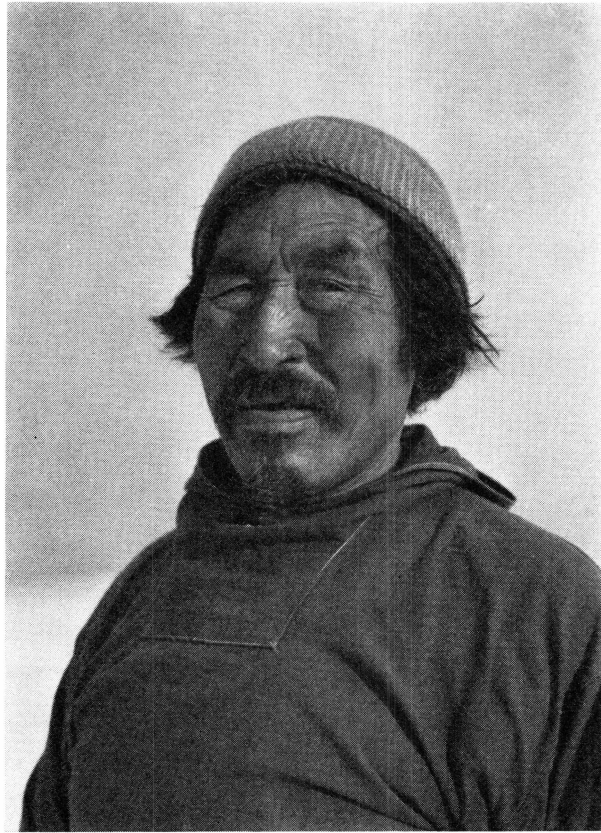


Fig. 3. Moses (Torngne).

had the old way of life fresh in memory. The same is true of the renowned Ūtâq, the North Pole traveler, who lived at Thule for a while in 1947.

The Polar Eskimos were always willing to give information and were conscientious in answering my questions. With the younger generation, however, I found considerable uncertainty on many points when discussing conditions that were a little remote in time. Even with the older folks there were at times diverging opinions on this or that. Possibly this must be seen in the light of the immigration that took place in the 1860's of people from America, and which entailed changes especially in the conditions of making a living, in that the kayak, the bow, and the trout spear then came into general use after having been forgotten by the Polar Eskimos. But in other respects, too, the traditions of the foreigners have left their marks, although no doubt deeper marks in some families than in others. In a good many cases it might thus be said that surely this or that had been heard of but that it was something special for "*adlat*". Something similar is no less true of the store of myths.

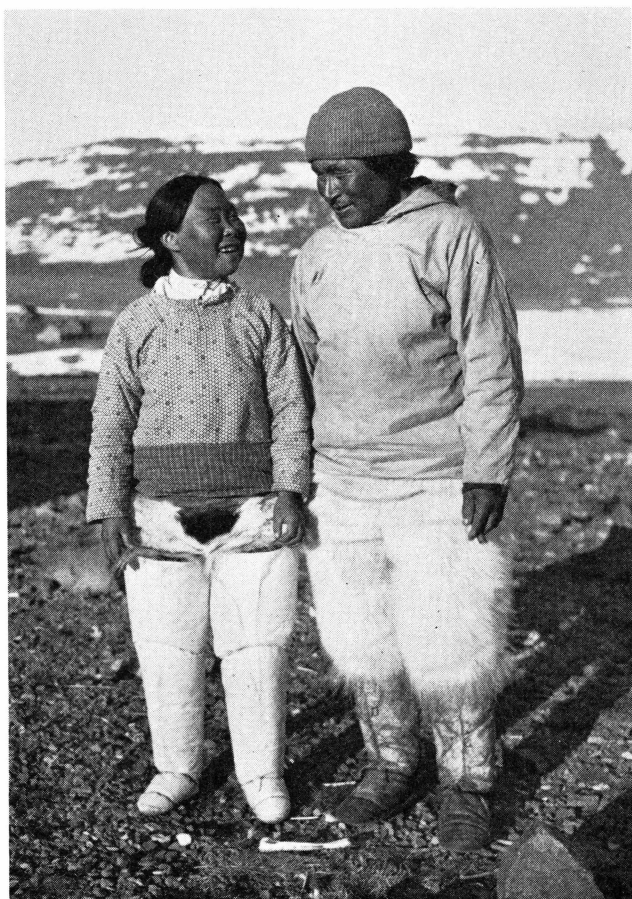


Fig. 4. Ūtâq and his wife Kujapik.

The general impression was that the times before PEARY (Pivli) and KNUD RASMUSSEN now seemed quite distant to most Polar Eskimos, a fact which can hardly seem surprising considering the strong impression which the missionaries and the many new material advances must have made on the minds. The older times, however, have been described copiously and vividly, particularly by KROEBER, PEARY, MYLIUS-ERICHSEN, HARALD MOLTKE, and KNUD RASMUSSEN; and what the older folks still remember is but a weak reflection of the past.

In Siorapaluk I thus had the opportunity in 1936 of meeting old Ítugssarsuat, the oldest person in the tribe, who is thought to have been born in 1851 and would consequently have been well up in her eighties at the time. Apart from a bad knee, however, she was still hale and hearty and could walk around, and though at times she had some difficulty keeping her mind on a definite track, she was still surprisingly



Fig. 5. Ítugssarssuat.

unimpaired in mental faculties. She still remembered *Âsi*, HANS HENDRIK, the well-known interpreter of several expeditions, whom she had seen when a small child up at *Îta* (Etah). She also recalled having been told about the ship that burned at *Aunartoq*¹⁾, and about the white men who took the clothes of the inuit while they were asleep²⁾. She remembered that *akilinermiut*, those who had immigrated from America, wore furs with long tips front and back, and that the women had boots that bulged out at the sides. She thought games and pastimes approximately the same then as now, but in her youth people had to walk much and often had to push their sledges ahead of them, because they had no dogs. Often the dogs starved, and the people themselves were frequently destitute. Conditions nowadays were considerably better she thought.

¹⁾ KANE's ship "Advance" which was left in the ice 1854 and later burned through carelessness of the Eskimos.

²⁾ An episode on KANE's expedition 1853-55. — Cf. KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Foran Dagens Øje*, p. 185.

In regard to people's implements she recalled that formerly cups were made out of wood that was scraped very thin so it could be bent. The cups had an edging of caribou antler or ivory. Dishes were made of skin with an edge of caribou antler and wooden braces. Meat trays for dog food were made in the same way. Water buckets were made from bearded seal. She did not seem to know *umiaq*, but she recalled that the immigrants had had kayaks along with them on the sledges. Ítugssarssuat died in 1939.

Another woman, INUGARSSUK, who was born around 1890, and seems to have led a rather eventful life, told me that her grandmother and grandfather who was a great *angakkoq* had gone to America with four others at one time, presumably with PEARY. One of them was MINIK who was then only a child. Minik returned later but went back to America where he died after a rather adventurous life. This Minik seems gradually to have become a legendary figure to the Polar Eskimos who have many anecdotes to tell of him and his doings. — The six Polar Eskimos here involved are the six, taken along to America by PEARY in 1897–98, from whom KROEBER obtained his information.

A younger man named OLE, who was a grandchild of HANS HENDRIK, told of the whalers (*tuluit*), that they showed up in spring near Ivnânganeq and at times went ashore to trade. They were called *upernaardleet*. They liked to get little auks and down, which they would pay for with knives and crackers.

A new turning point has, of course, now occurred in the eventful existence of the Polar Eskimos of the last hundred years — and perhaps the most severe one — with the construction of the American military base at the old Thule, due to which the Polar Eskimos are no longer the unrestricted masters of their own country. The beginning of the new epoch began in 1946 when the Danish-American meteorological station was established, and with my stay of 1935–37 in mind, it was very clear to me in talking to the population that to quite some extent, the minds had lost their former equilibrium due to a feeling of uncertainty regarding the future. — Since then, presumably, the most noteworthy change in conditions of life has been the more common use of motor boats which has especially benefitted the hunting of walrus in open water. Natural conditions, however, limit their use greatly, so that traditional methods of hunting are of necessity still used. Keeping in mind that here, too, very likely greater or smaller changes may take place, the following descriptions should be taken as characteristic of “Knud Rasmussen's Thule” i.e. the time from the establishment of the Thule Station in 1910 until it was taken over by the Greenland Administration in 1937.

Therefore, when Thule is here referred to, the original Thule (Ūmánaq) at North Star Bugt is always meant. Since then, the extension

of the American military base has forced the population to leave the place, and the center of administration and trade has been moved to the more northerly Qânâq, which has from then on taken over the name of Thule, according to the desire of the population, and with the deeper root in old-Eskimo ideas about the meaning of the name and the respect harbored for it, — while the old Thule is now officially called Dundas.

In reproducing the Polar Eskimo words of the text, a simplified phonetical notation has been used. In this connection, it should especially be noted that *g* between vowels signifies the open, velar sound (as in Danish “sige”, “dage” etc.), while in front of a consonant it signifies the corresponding voiced plosive. *x* signifies the open, unvoiced velar, *rr* (or *rhr*) the long, unvoiced *r* (uvular), and *L* the unvoiced *l*. *ng* signifies the velar nasal. In the Polar Eskimo dialect, the *s* is often softened to *h*. A long vowel or consonant is here indicated by writing the sound in question double, although the long *ng* is shown as *ngg*.

The translation to English has been made by JØRGEN S. PLESNER and RIGMOR E. HOLBROOK. Drawings and photographs by the author.

I. DWELLING AND FURNITURE

Winter House.

The forms of dwellings now in use reflect perhaps more than anything else the transition from old to new. The decisive factor in this respect is the easier access to wood, and the dimensions of the houses are generally determined by the lengths of the boards sold by the store, most often approximately 4 meters.

The dwellings are in part more or less permanent houses of stone, turf, or wood, possibly with outhouse and racks for sledges, kayaks, and meat; in part temporary dwellings such as *qarmaq*, tent, snow house, or hunting shelter.

As a consequence of the extensive use of wood, the old rule, that anybody had the right to use an abandoned house, has now but very limited validity. However, since the Polar Eskimos often change settle-

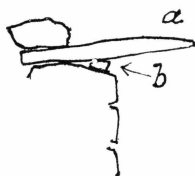


Fig. 6. Detail of house wall with cantilever stone.

ment, undoubtedly things are often settled by borrowing each other's houses. Yet, some of the most prominent hunters were said to own houses in several places of the district.

The winter houses of the old time, that is before wood became generally available, were partly dug down into the ground, with a deep house passage into the house, otherwise built of stone and turf and with a roof of large, flat stones. These were partly supported by long stone girders (*tikkuutit*), which were solidly anchored into the crown of the wall and from there protruded toward the center of the house (fig. 6. a). If necessary, they were wedged into place by means of smaller stones or bones (*isaagutit*) (fig. 6. b). Abandoned ruins are still seen of this construction which is still known but is only used in quite exceptional cases. The ground plan of the house was most often of the so-called pear shape,

i.e. rounded off and with the two front corners widened at the sides. This ground plan is still used in a good many houses, which are undoubtedly in many cases built on the old sites. But even in some newer houses with wooden walls a tendency is still noticeable to make them broader in front so that a trapezoid-shaped ground plan results (fig. 14). The usual trend, however, is toward building the houses rectangular and, as is natural, they are most commonly built in the immediate vicinity of the three places with stores, i.e. Thule, Savigsivik, and Siorapaluk.

In all cases the wooden house is covered by a wall of turf which must often be rebuilt from the ground in the fall. Preferably moist turfs are used for this, since they are easy to cut and stack and will freeze up in winter into a solid wall. They do not, however, conserve the heat as well as dry turf, which on the other hand is more apt to collapse. The result, however, is that at times the people must half-freeze in the house throughout the winter, as was the case, among others, in the winter of 1936-37 when the cutting of turf had been delayed until after the frost had started. The turf is usually hacked off with an old flensing knife or an ice chisel, and is carried in bunches by means of a rope or a tumpline. However, conditions of the ground permitting, it is preferably transported on dog sledge, even though the land is still free from snow. Frequently, an additional outer wall is built up from snow blocks in the winter for further warmth.

In houses with wooden walls these are usually covered on the inside with old newspapers or magazines, partly for warmth, but also to give more light in the room. However, in several houses it is still only floor and ceiling that are made of boards, while the walls consist of turf and stone. In several cases especially the front wall with the window is found to be beautifully built from large stones. Stone floors were found in only a few houses.

The roof may be flat but is usually supported by a center beam lengthwise to the house, from where it slopes slightly toward the sides. The roof is covered by two layers of turf, the bottom layer with the grass side down toward the ceiling, the top layer grass side upward. The ridge pole may be supported by a house post placed at the fore edge of the platform. At times a second post is placed in the center of the floor, in a few houses even two or three.

In the turf wall houses the walls are usually covered with wall skins, and at least formerly it was common to fill up the space between wall and skin with heather, preventing the skins from becoming moist. If the ceiling boards do not lie close together, or if the walls are not completely covered with skins, the warmth of the house will soon make the plants of the turf shoot forth long, pale shoots, giving the impression of an arctic winter garden. An old saying is that when the plants of the



Fig. 7. Typical interior of Polar Eskimo house.

house start budding, there will soon be ice on the water (*iglume nauhun nauлераangata sikuinnassilerisoq*); but if on the other hand these shoots are picked, it will be long before ice forms. They are therefore handled with care even though they may sometimes hang down far from the ceiling.

The houses always are supplied with a house passage (*katak*), which is more or less sunken, although as a rule least in the more modern wooden houses. The length varies between 2 and 5 meters. Often it is only 2 meter, but it is usually extended in the winter with a snow passage (*paa*), and in the same way, it is common to build a small front house out of snow (*torsut* or *qanitan*). The ceiling of the house passage is called *kataup qulaa* and the threshold stone at the entrance of the passage into the house is *manuaq*. Nowadays the house passage is closed both outwardly and toward the house room by a wooden door which is slanting a little so it will close by itself.

The house passage most often leads into the middle of the front wall so that its inmost top-stones double as sill stones (*igalaarfik*) of the deep window niche of the house. The side stones of this are called *eersalisik*. The entrance part is usually the finest and most carefully executed part of the stone wall. As a rule it is also the best-preserved part of the old ruins.



Fig. 8. Avörtúngiaq's house at Qânâq with a very large gut skin pane.

A few houses at Thule and Siorapaluk have now windows with glass panes, but generally the old panes made from gut skin are still used. They are sewn together from strips of bearded seal intestines and then sewn to a frame of skin (*erqut*). The gut skin panes give a warm pleasant light, but one cannot look through them, for which reason they are provided with a small square peep hole in the middle, immediately adjoining a seam. The panes vary a great deal in size but as a rule are no more than 50 cm wide and slightly higher. In a few cases however, they may be considerably wider. As an example, the pane in Avörtúngiaq's house in Qânâq (fig. 8) was sewn together of 14 widths of intestine while 4 or 5 appear to be the rule. Furthermore, some houses have two windows, in which case there is ordinarily one on each side of the entrance. This seems to be common in houses where the front wall is all wood.

In the roof of the house, near the front wall, an air hole (*qingaa*) is to be found which provides the ventilation. The air seldom feels heavy in the houses of the Polar Eskimos.

In addition to the window niche there is at times found an extra niche in the front wall. Finally, a special lamp niche (*puiattuk*) in the back wall of the house for a small lamp (*atLeq*) is also mentioned.

The sleeping platform (*igdleq*) takes up the back part of the house in its entire width. Its front edge is named *kitaun* (or *kitarun*) and the supports of the platform *aterqan*. Along each side wall a narrow lamp

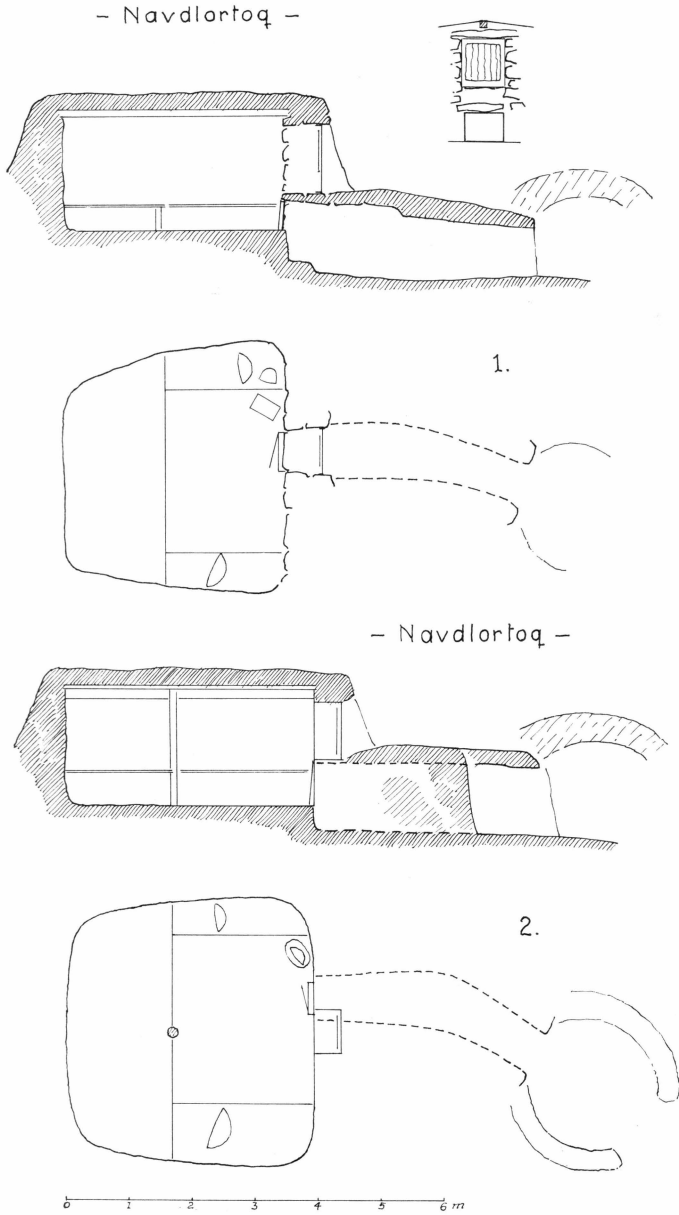


Fig. 9. Houses at Navdlortoq (1-2).

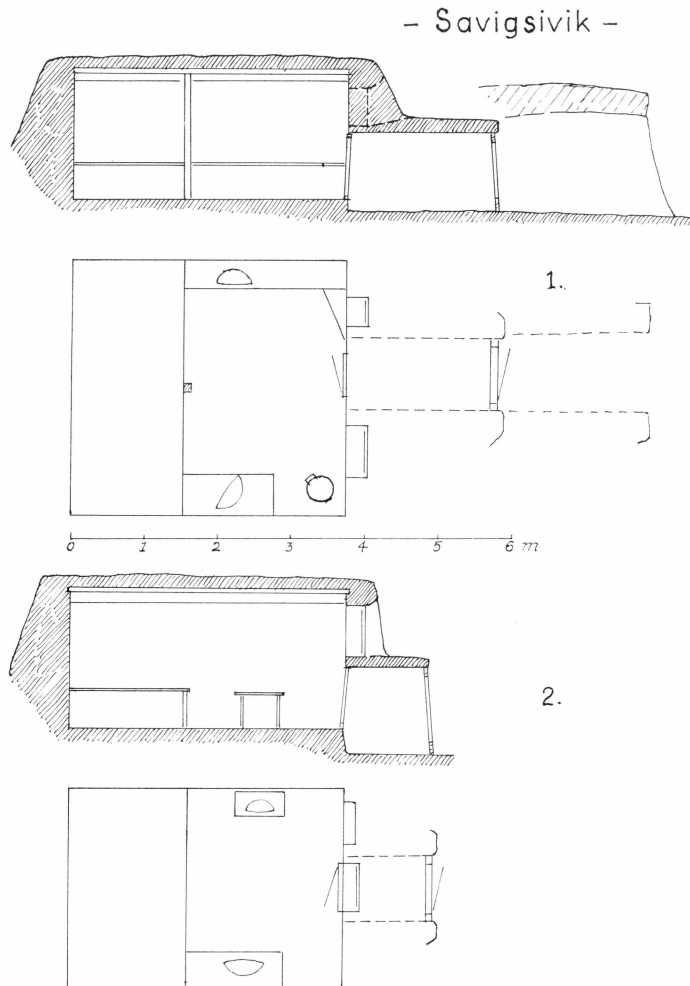


Fig. 10. Houses at Savigsivik (1-2).

platform (*ikpan*) usually extends from the sleeping platform. On one side it usually goes all the way to the front wall while the one on the other side is shorter so that the corner at the front wall is free. Here, meat is usually hung up for thawing, and on the floor there is room for a large meat tub. In the few cases when a stove has been acquired, that too is placed in this corner. Besides this, the traditional furniture consists as a rule only of a box where the man keeps tools etc. Occasionally it may also be used as a dining table for placing the platter of meat. In the space below the platform (*qaaneq*) skin objects and the like are kept.

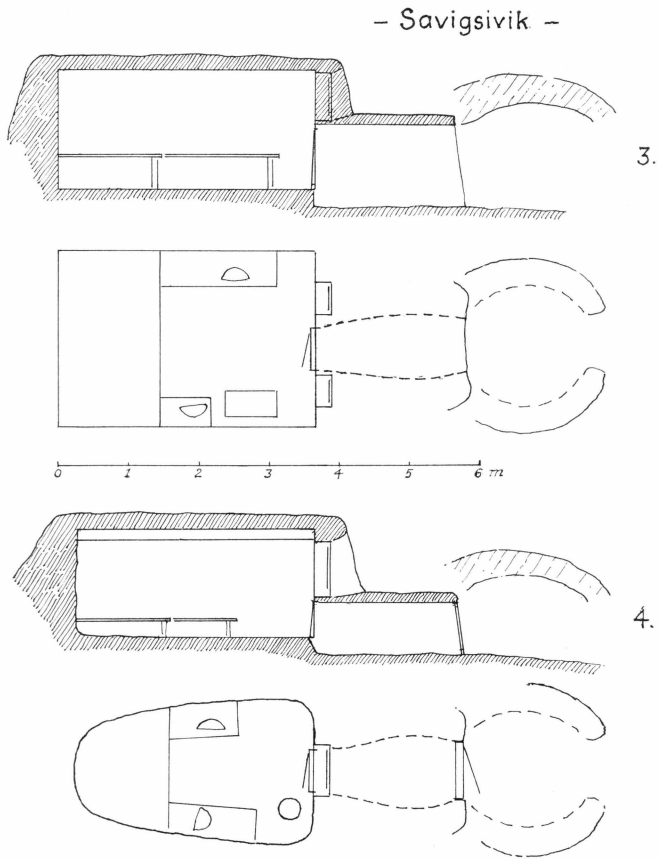


Fig. 11. Houses at Savigsivik (3-4).

Double houses (*sangmisoreen*) no longer appear to be common, although one house in Thule was divided into two rooms by means of a wooden partition. In one room the married son of the head of the family lived. Another house, built in angular shape, was occupied by two married half-brothers.

Fig. 9-16 shows a number of houses surveyed at the settlements south of Thule. Unfortunately, it was not possible to survey the houses in the rest of the district, however, by and large they offer similar variations in the style of building.

- Savigsivik -

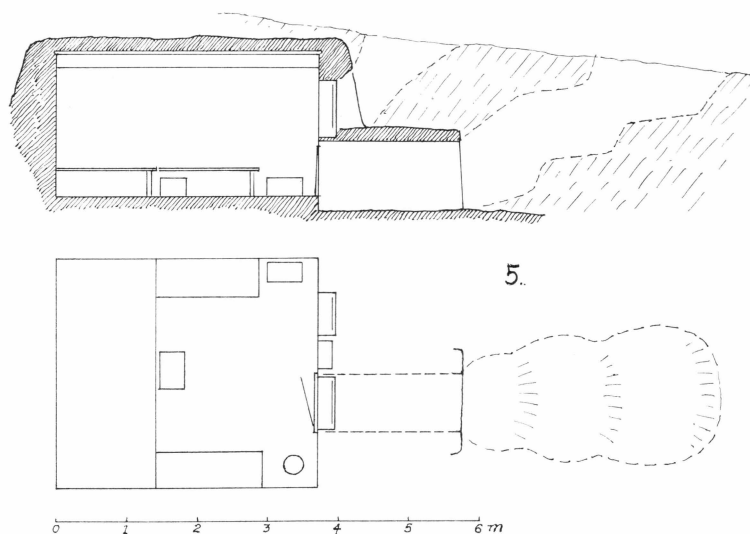


Fig. 12. House at Savigsivik (5). The figure shows how it has become totally covered with snow in winter. The house is entered through a deep tunnel in the snow, and a shaft has been dug down to the window.

Domestic Utensils — Fire.

The half-moon shaped blubber lamp (*qutLeq*) still serves for both lighting and heating. It was formerly made of soapstone, but the old stone lamps were now only seen in a few houses. The lamps nowadays are usually made of copper, hammered out of copper plate which was introduced at the time by the Thule station. They have the great advantage that they cannot break and are not very heavy either. They are, therefore, easier to transport on the sledge than the stone lamps which always had to be handled with a certain amount of caution.

In order to give the lamp the right inclination it is wedged up by means of three wooden sticks or three small stones, of which the two front ones are called *pituk*, the back one *erqulisaq*. A dripping bowl (*erngaut*) sewn together of seal skin was formerly used under the lamp. This is not so necessary with the copper lamps since the train oil cannot filter through them, yet they are at times seen placed on a sheet-metal tray or something similar. A lamp stool (*nikorfautaq*) was mentioned, though it was not clear whether one had been in use.

For tending the lamp a lamp stick (*tarqisuut*) is used which may be a simple wooden stick. Usually, however, the lamp stick proper is

- Ivnānganeq -

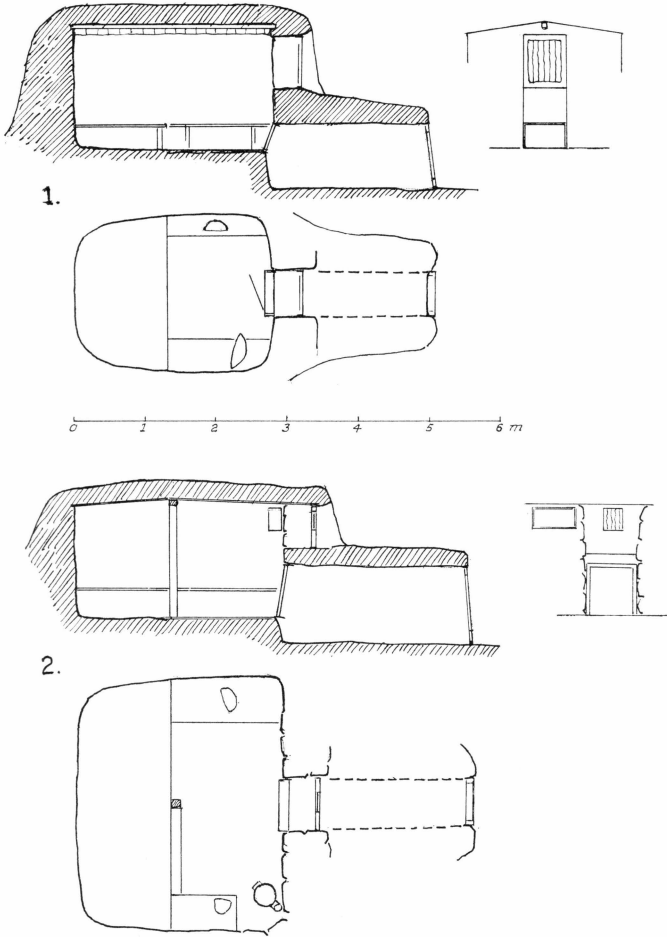


Fig. 13. Houses at Ivnānganeq (1-2).

- Ivnānganeq -

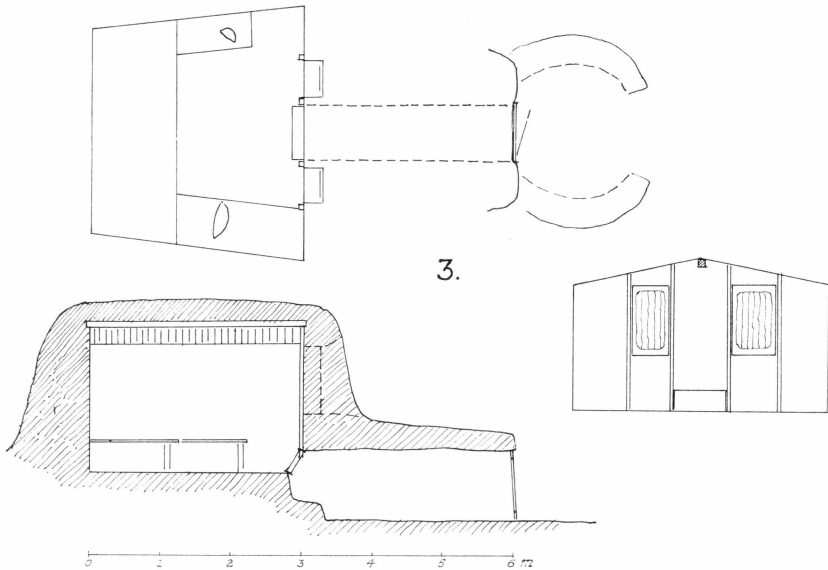


Fig. 14. House at Ivnānganeq (3)

inserted into the end of a handle, making the complete implement look most nearly like a wooden hammer (fig. 17).

The dimensions of the lamp are generally appr. 40–50 by 25–30 cm., but often an additional smaller lamp of conventional shape is found in the house. In addition to these, however, in several cases a small, quite primitive lamp was seen which was called *atdleq*, and sometimes consisted simply of a flat tin-can with a wick made of a small piece of cloth. It had its place on the lamp platform, next to the big lamp.

In all houses a square drying frame (*innitat*) hangs from the ceiling above the lamp. It consists of a number of wooden bars that are pinned into two slightly heavier end pieces. As a rule it is filled up with skin clothing placed there for drying.

The drying frame serves at the same time for hanging the cooking pot, which was also formerly made of soapstone, but which is now nearly always an enameled tin pot. It is hung up by a strap or string, sometimes in a special pot hook carved out of walrus tusk, which makes it possible to regulate the height by means of a special clasp — similar to modern turnbuckles.

The original domestic utensils included a water bucket sewn from sole skin and impregnated with hot blubber; also a sucking tube

- Qeqertat -

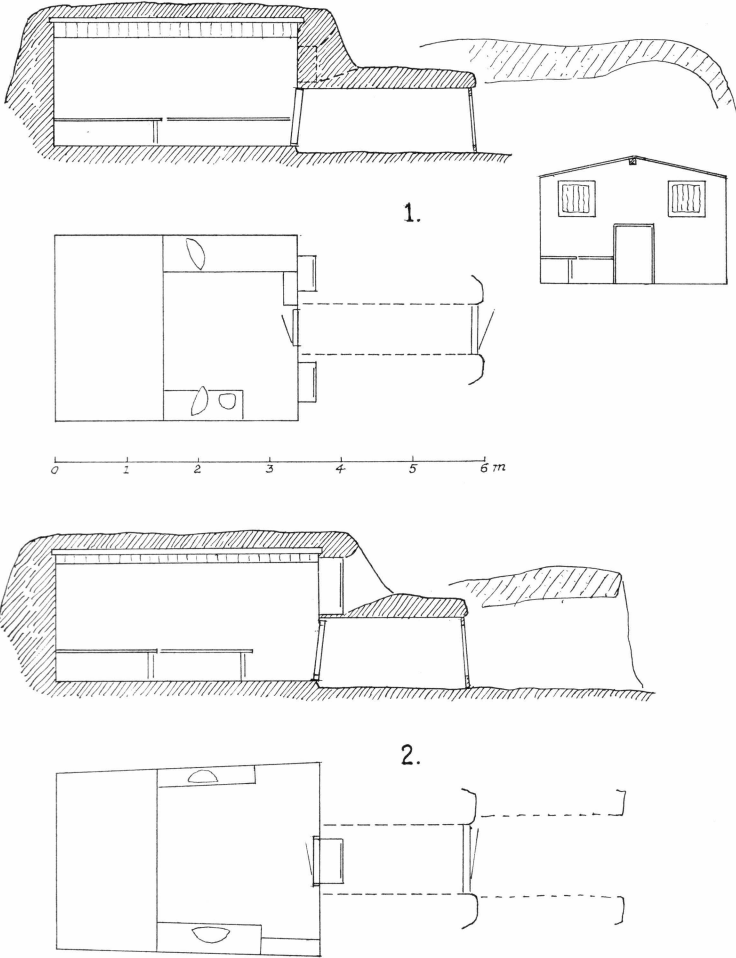


Fig. 15. Houses at Qeqertat (1-2).

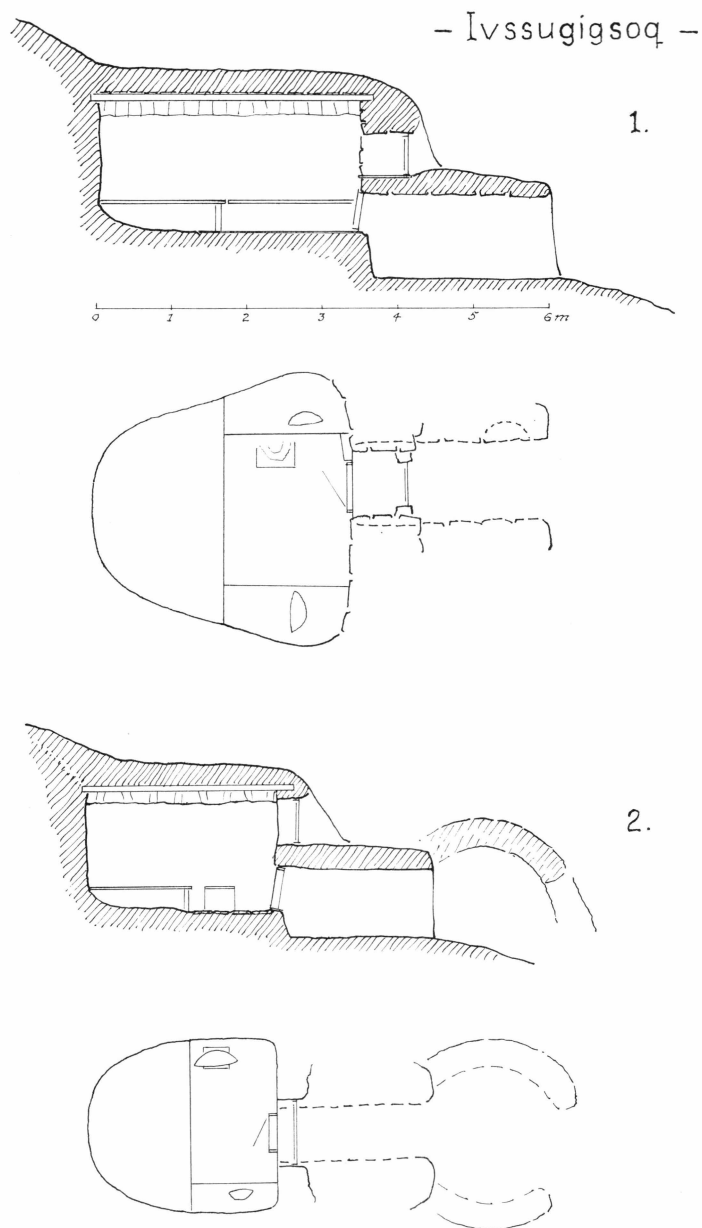


Fig. 16. Houses at Ivssugigsoq (1-2). The houses here were more primitively built than at most other places, mainly being inhabited through the fox hunting season. In house 1 the wooden floor had to be adjusted to the rock which cropped up in one side of the house.

(*tordluag*) made from a sea-gull bone or a piece of narwhal tooth. For serving the cooked meat, a board (*manguvsak*) or the shoulder blade of a walrus was used. A pointed walrus rib served as a meat fork (*ajagxaut*). It was asserted that a marrow spoon was unknown. On the other hand, drinking cups made of skin were said to have been seen in old tombs. It goes without saying that these things have now been replaced by European kitchen utensils bought in the store. Small gasoline stoves (Primus stoves) are also used at times for cooking in the houses, although they are mostly used on sledge trips.

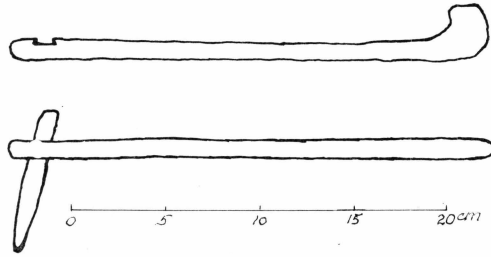


Fig. 17. Lamp trimmer.

For making fire matches (*ingnerit*) are now always used, although the old methods are still known, of either striking fire with pyrite and flint, or by means of the fire drill. Willow down or cotton grass (*iserqavik*) was used for tinder, and kept in a small bag which on a trip or while hunting was carried in against the body in order to keep it from becoming moist. A man now living had himself seen people strike fire by means of a lump of fire stone which was struck against a piece of steel or a "hard black stone". The fire drill, too, is known by older people. The fire-drill stick (*niun*) was pressed down on a piece of dry wood by means of a special top piece and turned around quickly by means of a strap (*aglunaag*) with a handle at each end. The embers produced in this way were poured into a piece of peat and blown into a flame.

Cooking, especially in the summer time, still often takes place over an open fire outside (*igahorng*). A small fire place built of two stones is named *kiglo*. In the summer, however, a larger fire place is at times made from stones, and it is then called *igxavik*. Heather (*igxutin*), peat (*ivsorsuin*), or blubber (*orsoq*) is used for fuel. Heather is preferred to peat because it gives a white smoke and less soot. In houses with stoves, peat is also used for fuel, unless one can afford coal. It also happens that turf from the house wall is used in a pinch. To start a blubber fire one first melts a little blubber in his mouth, then spits it out over a little heather or dry willow twigs, which are then lighted, after which the firing is continued with pieces of blubber.

Roasting of meat takes also place in the open at times, chiefly on caribou hunts. A big flat stone (*seraalatsit*) is used for a frying pan, it is placed so that a fire of heather may be lit under it. The hot stone is rubbed with caribou tallow, after which the pieces of meat are put on for roasting. The meat thus roasted is called *seraalatat*. The eating of it has an almost festive character, undoubtedly because it happens only on rare occasions.

Fresh water must in most places be procured all year around by melting of ice. On trips this is at times done by making a niche in an iceberg in which some blubber is set afire (*kukuktor*). The heat will then make the water trickle down the sides and collect in a depression that has been made below. This is said to make a wonderful drink: "Water below and blubber on top".

Large blubber torches (*nanerussat*, singular *naneruaq*) are made for lighting outdoors by pouring train oil over a piece of turf which is then ignited. Indoors a wooden stick (*targisuut*) is used, one end of which is dipped into the train oil in the lamp and lit at the lamp. Such a stick is also used at times for lighting a pipe of tobacco.

Tending the blubber lamp in the house is the job of the woman and calls for a good deal of practice. When the lamp is to be lit (*ikit-seesog*) the wick moss (*iperaq*) is first rubbed between slightly moist palms of hands (*agxalidlugo*) until almost a powder. It is then wetted with train oil (*mingulikterai*) and placed in a strip or in small regularly shaped piles along the front edge of the lamp, then tapped in place with the hammer-shaped lamp stick and lit (*targisoq* or *ingnilerisoq*).

For use in the lamp blubber from the white whale is considered best, in that it produces a tall flame without soot. The next best is seal blubber. Walrus blubber is only used when nothing else can be had.

Train oil for the lamps is tried out in the summer time (*hivalisoq*). The train oil thus tried out is named *hivehaarnng*. In the winter the frozen blubber is usually pounded with the back of an axe, and the pieces of blubber thus pounded (*oqummasat*) are placed in the lamp bowl where they gradually melt by the heat from the flame.

Store Houses — Meat Caches.

A special outhouse (*serdluaq*) built of stone and turf usually belongs to the winter house. This may be either a small addition to the house or a separate little building nearby. It is used for storing skin clothing, tools and the like, but not meat. In the corner between the front wall and the house passage, a small den (*siseegaq*) may also be arranged for a dog with puppies. In Ivnānganeq a snow toilet had been fixed up outside one of the houses consisting of a half-circle formed wall of snow

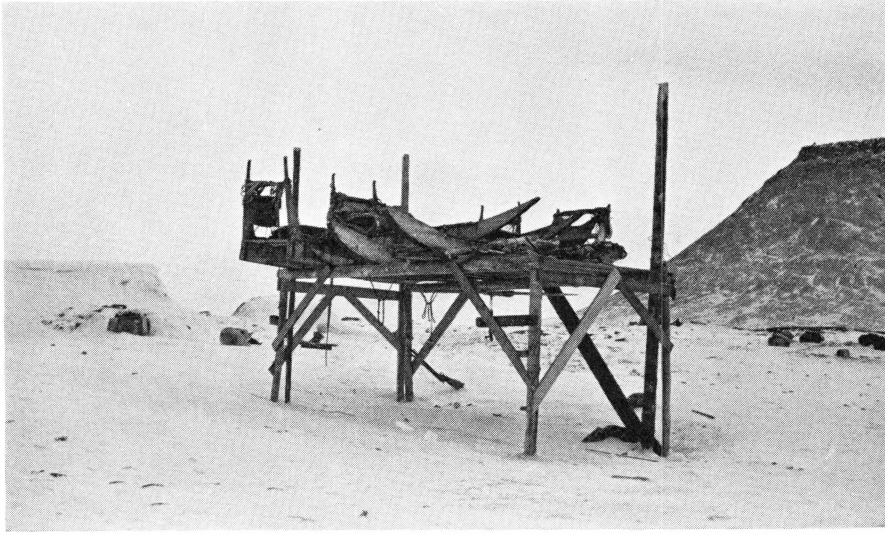


Fig. 18. Meat scaffold with sleds.

blocks as a wind break, and at Qânâq, a small snow kitchen was used for cooking in open air.

In order to keep meat, kayaks, and sleds safe from the dogs, scaffolds are built which may be of two types. One type (*ikaaq*, or in the plural *ikerqat*) is built up of stones, turf or snow, as a massive, usually square building. The other and now more common type (*qikaaq*) (fig. 18) consists of a square platform, constructed of bars or boards and supported by four long corner posts. In the case of sufficiently high and isolated houses, the flat roof is sometimes used in a similar way.

The meat caches proper are, as a rule, placed at a fair distance from the house, often out near the hunting places, and the meat is carted home by sledge as needed. For one thing this ensures a better economy with the supplies, and at the same time the meat caches serve as provision depots during sledge voyages.

The Polar Eskimos distinguish between meat caches for different purposes and have different names for them. *qingnivik* is a meat cache arranged for storing whole seals throughout the summer. As a rule it is the catch of *ūtoq* that is stored in this way. Before placing anything in the meat cache it is necessary to see that the cache, or the place where it is to be built, is free from snow. If this is not the case, the seals are temporarily placed on the ice.

iliorqavik is the name of a meat cache for storing meat and blubber for use in the winter time. *qulisivik* is a dolmen or the like where the air has free passage; it is used for storing dried meat etc. Finally, the name *qimatulivik* is applied to a meat cache that is covered at the top so no

water can penetrate. It may f. inst. be arranged under an overhanging rock and closed to the outside by piled-up stones. These are used among other things for storing bags of little auks.

It is said to have been the custom in older times to place a louse in the spring meat caches in order to prevent bears from eating them. The idea was that the louse would scream and scare the bear away.

Qarmaq.

qarmaq is the name of a house for temporary stays in the spring or summer time. The word really means simply "a wall", and a *qarmaq*, as it has been used by the Polar Eskimos and is possibly still used at times, actually consists simply of a wall built up of stone and turf, without a house passage. The roof is made of walrus hide which at times, for lack of wooden bars, was supported by protruding stone girders (*tikkuutit*) as in the winter houses. It is said to have been best to use two layers of walrus hide, both placed with the hair side up and with a layer of heather (*issutin*) in between.

According to Ûtâq, the last-immigrated people called their winter houses *qarmat*. Like the houses here they were built of stone and turf and had a house passage, whereas the roof consisted only of two layers of hide with heather in between and supported by some wooden rafters. Apparently, they have been quite similar to those on Baffin Island described by BOAS¹).

Tent.

Skin tents (fig. 19) were still commonly used in the summer time, although hardly all families possessed one. Especially at Thule and Siorapaluk their use was decidedly on the decline. The explanation given was that the dogs there had to be loose in the summer because sufficient meat could not be gotten for them, since the seals moved farther away earlier than before. Others, however, did not conceal their opinion that it was because people sold their seal skins in order to get money for purchases in the store. Presumably both reasons have contributed.

The tent (*tupeq*) has a door frame in front, consisting of two side poles (*qannat*) connected on top by a cross bar (*tuusaq*). The door frame is supported by the long, sloping ridge pole (*qimerun*) the front part of which is fastened to the middle of the cross bar while its rear part rests on a large stone (*kujagut*) which is usually propped up on the inner side by a smaller stone (*sardliag*). On each side of the ridge pole, a further number of bars (*qanausan*) is distributed, resting partly on the cross bar and partly on a stone. The stones that form an approximately circular

¹) FR. BOAS: The Central Eskimo (1888), p. 548 ff.



Fig. 19. Pualorssuaq and his wife Qiajuk outside their tent at Thule.

ring on the ground are collectively called *tinorqutaq*. They combine into the so-called tent ring which the Polar Eskimos call *inersuaq* (plural *inersussat*).

Over this frame a double tent skin (*itsan*) is placed, which is laced together in front at the cross bar and is weighted down toward the ground by stones all the way around. Formerly the tent was closed in front by flaps of the tent skin. Now, however, a wooden door is usually found inserted into a special door frame. Hides of bearded seal (*ugxuk*) or ringed seal (*puise*) are used for tent skins. A special translucent skin (*sordluilisaq*) consisting of the meat side (*maminga*) split from the hide of bearded seal, is usually inserted in the front above the door in order to let more light into the tent. At times several of these nearly transparent skins are used in the front part of the tent (fig. 20). Gutskin is also said to have been used at times in a similar way as a sort of window, but never for a door curtain. For door curtains (*umik*), on the other hand, split hide has also at times been used.

The rear part of the tent is occupied by the sleeping platform in the way as in the house. It is now usually made of wood and is only raised very slightly above ground. Also in other respects, placement of lamps etc., the tent is arranged in a similar way to the winter house.

It has been stated by STEENSBY, who had his information from KNUD RASMUSSEN, that the Polar Eskimos at times used tents of the *erqulik* type, a type best known from the Egedesminde district in West

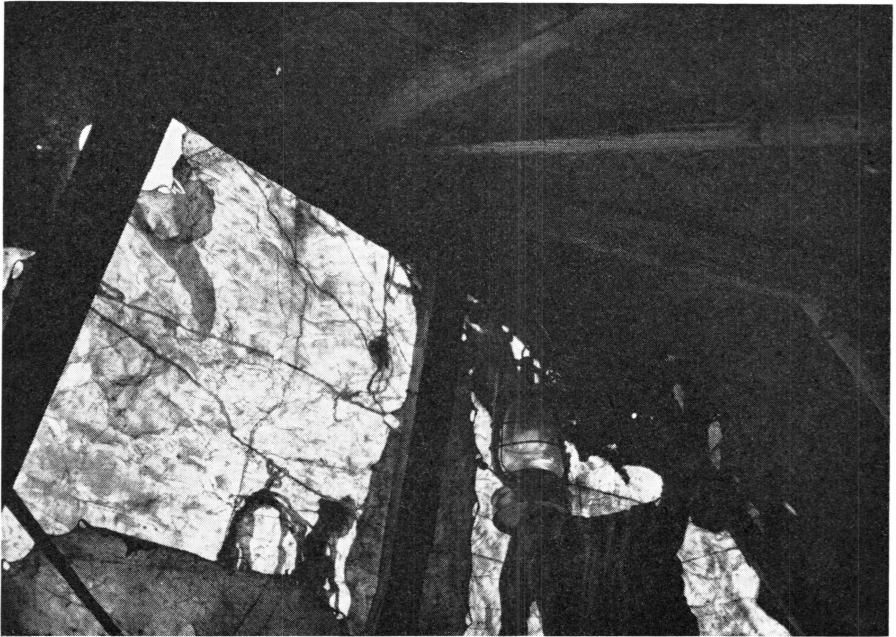


Fig. 20. Front side of tent with clear, split skin above the door.

Greenland¹). The designation *erqulik*, it was now claimed, was chiefly applied to roof tents of canvas. It might perhaps be understood as a skin tent with *sordluilisaq*, although this is usually called simply *tupeq*. At times, however, a tent type had been used which in all probability must be the one that was compared to the *erqulik* tent. However, it is called *tupeq qanisaling*, i.e. a tent with a front compartment, in the same way as a house with an entry chamber of snow is called *iglo qanisaling*. Like the typical *erqulik* tent this also had two door frames connected on top by bars so that a flat roof part was formed. The rear frame, however, was the highest, and from its cross bar (*tuusaq*), the tent poles went to the back at an angle in the usual way. The cross bar of the lower front frame was called *qanaguaq*. The two frames were not connected by bars other than the two top ones. In reality, therefore, a tent type like the one generally used in South Greenland is involved. Another point of resemblance may perhaps be seen in the way the tent is raised from the ground, making it more spacious. However, the Polar Eskimos use single stones while in South Greenland a low turf wall was built.

Snow House.

The snow house (*igluvigaq*) is still used by the Polar Eskimos, although chiefly for overnight stays on trips in the winter. Formerly it

¹) H. P. STEENSBY: *Origin of the Eskimo Culture* (1916), p. 197.

was used to a somewhat greater extent, especially by people who traveled up to Neqe or Arfagdluarfik toward the end of the winter to catch walrus. In this way, however, it is still used to a certain extent.

The snow house is built up in the known way, in a spiral, from cut-out snow blocks, and offers effective protection against even the heaviest snow storm. A snow knife (*saviusag*) made of bone or walrus tusk was formerly used for cutting out the snow blocks. Now they normally use a saw with a large, broad blade, which lends itself very well to the purpose, or the long flensing knife is used, which is also applied in adjusting and joining the snow blocks. A spacious snow house is built in this way by 2 or 3 men in less than an hour. The master builder works inside the house and finally walls himself in while the helpers cut out the blocks and hand them to him. A snow house for three men on one occasion required 34 blocks. Usually no house passage is made for travel use. Only a narrow entrance hole is cut out, which is closed with a snow block. No special snow probe is used, but the consistency of the snow is checked by means of the foreshaft of the ice-hunting harpoon, or a whip handle.

The Polar Eskimos are said to have learned from the last immigrants how to build snow houses in a spiral shape. They were very skilful snow house builders. They further supplied their snow houses with a wall covering of skin (*quliaruseq*), making them both warmer and longer lasting. The snow houses also had window openings cut out in a spherical triangle and with a pane of gut skin or ice. Before that time, Moses told me, the Polar Eskimos also built round snow houses, but those were built up from the two sides beginning at the entrance.

On a few occasions people have stayed overnight in a cave (*najugaq*) hollowed out in a snow drift. Such a cave is said to be even warmer than a snow house, but it requires something with which to shovel out the snow.

For short stops because of storm one sometimes gets on with a halfcircle-shaped snow wall the height of a man, as a wind break. If the storm turns out to last, however, regular snow houses are built. Similar wind breaks, but smaller in size, are also frequently built for cooking in the open.

Hunting Shelter.

In many places, both near the coast and far inland, small hunting shelters built of turf and stone are to be found. As a rule they are no more than just big enough for one man to lie inside and consist simply of a low wall, open in front. If necessary, a sealskin is placed over the top as a roof, sometimes supported by an improvised roof construction.



Fig. 21. A hunter's shelter in the interior of Inglefield Land.

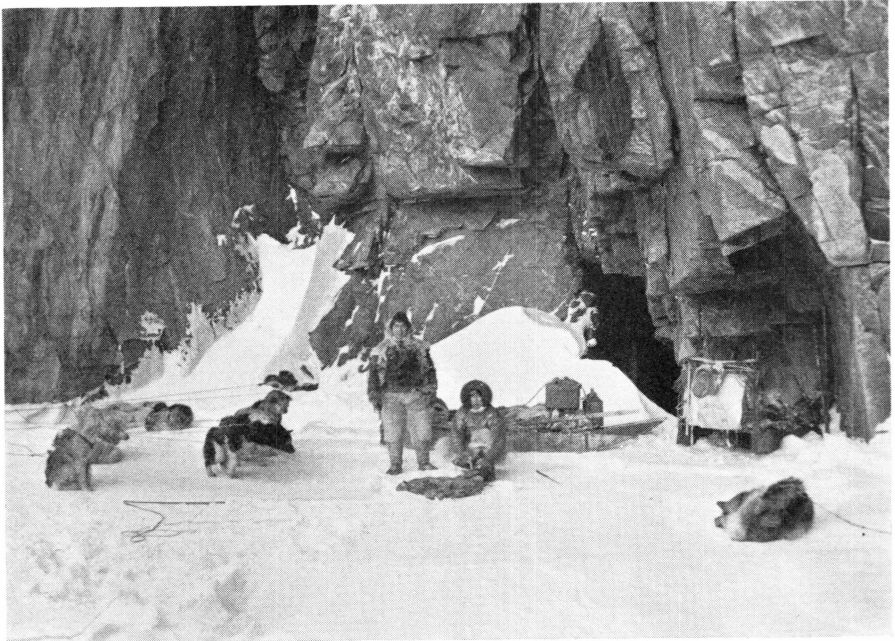


Fig. 22. A dog sled resting before the entrance to the big cavern at Pákitsoq.

In shelters used by caribou hunters inland, a light roof construction has sometimes been made from caribou antlers (fig. 24).

Natural caves are found in many places in the district. For example, on Saunders Ø there is a whole series of small caves washed out in the sandstone, which are used at times by walrus hunters staying there overnight. Larger rock caves are found in the stretch between Kap Atholl and Pitugfik Gletcher. Best known and most used among them is the cave at Pâkitsoq (fig. 22), which is so large it will hold several sledges. Travelers have often sought shelter there in stormy weather. Under such conditions, however, it has also happened that ice has broken up right outside the entrance and both sledges and dogs have been lost in this way. There are reports of people having had to save themselves by climbing up over the steep mountain, which is difficult to pass, and walk home overland.

II. CLOTHING

The high arctic nature makes it necessary that the greatest care be taken with clothing, and although there is a great consumption of cotton and woolen goods, bought in the store, the skin dress still plays a predominant and necessary role. Only the inner coat made of bird's skins has now been completely replaced by European underwear, just as cotton anoraks are used daily by all. On sledge trips the skin coat is pulled over the anorak, which as a rule is used as outer clothing at home. Even in summer, however, the men, with few exceptions, wear bear skin trousers and the women their short fox skin trousers and long skin boots.

The following description of the clothing of the Polar Eskimos is, to a considerable extent, based on patterns which at my request were cut out in paper by two women, Avôrtúngiaq and Kujapik. Kujapik's patterns were done on a reduced scale, probably making certain details a little less exact than Avôrtúngiaq's, which in most cases were done full size.

Men's Clothing.

Man's Outer Coats.

Man's Outer Coat of Caribou Skin. For use in winter men now nearly always have an outer coat of caribou skin (*qulitsaq*). Hunting in the district, however, does not cover the need, so that imported skins, which are sold in the store, have to be used. Nevertheless, skins from one's own hunting are preferred, being easier to prepare.

Fig. 23 A shows a pattern for a *qulitsaq* cut by Kujapik. The back skin (*tunua*) continues up and forms the hood (*nasag*) which at the top has only a median crown seam. At the top of the body of the coat special shoulder pieces are inserted which connect the back and the hood with the front piece (*sá*). Each piece is cut out for the sleeves, most deeply in the front piece. Logically, the hood is formed partly from the head skin of the caribou, and both eyes and ears are often seen. The face opening of the hood (*nuila*) is edged with black fox tail on the part

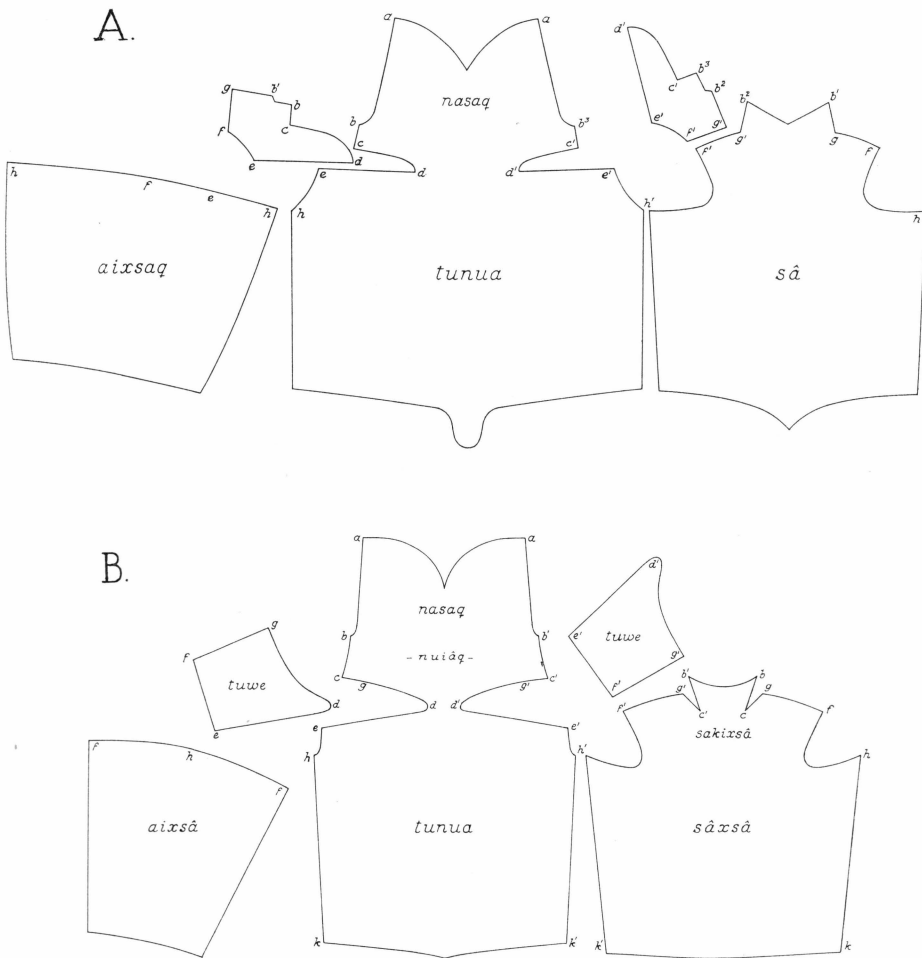


Fig. 23. Patterns of man's outer coat of caribou skin.

b-a-b³, while the chin part b-b¹-b²-b³ is edged with white fox tail. The cuffs, too, are edged with fox tail which may be either black or white. A strip of bear skin is sewed all along the bottom edge of the coat.

Fig. 23 B shows a corresponding pattern cut to full size by Avôr-túngiaq. For the main part it corresponds to Kujapik's but is undoubtedly somewhat more exact both in the proportions and in the details. In particular, it deviates in the shapes of the shoulder pieces (*tuwe*) and in the way they are joined to the hood and the chin part, as well as by the lack of the fur flaps at the bottom of the coat. In regard to the shoulder pieces, however, I was told that they are gathered at the seams d-g and f-g, making them fit the rounding of the shoulders. Furthermore, the

sleeve (*aixsá*) is sewed on with the long seam out so that it meets the shoulder seam.

According to Avôrtungiaq's pattern the chin piece is joined directly to the front edges of the hood, b-c and b¹-c¹, while on Kujapik's a small piece of the shoulder piece, b-b¹ and b²-b³, seems to have been inserted. Presumably, individual variations in the execution must be taken into account, just as the sizes of the skins may play a part.

The top part of the front piece (*sáxsá*) is called *sakixsá*, i.e. "the chest piece", and the arm hole *aitsernga*. The entire neck part of the hood is called *nuiáq*. The back piece (*tunua*) and the shoulder pieces are cut out of one skin, the shoulder pieces from the hindmost part of the skin, down toward the tail. —

I was told that an outer coat of bear skin was formerly sometimes made, provided plenty of bear had been bagged. Musk-ox skin was also sometimes used for *qulitsaq*. It was very warm but heavy to wear. In rarer cases an outer coat was made of hare skin which was said to be warmer than fox skin, although it was very fragile. The late Kaigungnaq was said to have such a hareskin coat. Also, Ápilaq, a man still living, had had an outer coat of seagull skin. There is no information about how these coats were cut.

Dog skin was not used in the old days for men's outer coats. Now it happens at times. A dog skin coat is sometimes sewed in the same way as the caribou skin coat, sometimes like a fox skin coat.

Man's Outer Coat of Fox Skin. — Formerly, the men generally used an outer coat of fox skin (*kapatak*), which was both lighter and warmer than a caribou skin coat. However, since fox skin has become an important trading commodity, a fox skin coat has become a luxury that the men no longer permit themselves. In 1936, as far as is known, only a single man still had a fox skin coat. A coat requires eight fox skins.

Fig. 24 shows a pattern for a *kapatak*, cut by Kujapik. Chiefly, blue-fox skins are used, only the two pieces (*aterdliaq*), which together form the front part of the hood and from there stretch out over the shoulders as a yoke, are made of white fox. The edgings of the sleeves and of most of the hood openings are of dark fox tails, only the piece under the chin being white. At the bottom, the coat is edged with bearskin.

In the greater part of the Thule district few white fox are caught. They are more plentiful in the northern part of the district and occasionally a man has been known to have a *kapatak* entirely of white-fox skins.

Coats of fox skin must be treated with great care as they are rather fragile. Also, they are taken off before entering a house from the cold, since the hot and moist air would make them wet immediately. They are preferably kept in a special stone house (*serdluaq*) where they are

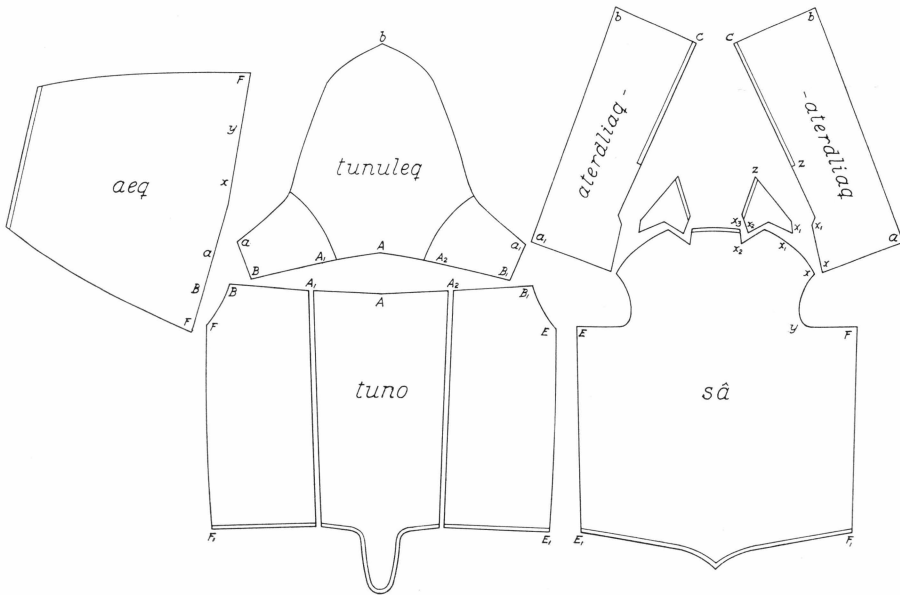


Fig. 24. Pattern of man's outer coat of fox skin.

protected against the dogs. If a fox skin coat is not to be used for some time, it is turned inside out and rolled up and hung up, for instance at the back wall of the house.

Man's Outer Coat of Seal Skin (*natsiaq* or *natseq*). — Strictly speaking, *natsiaq* is the designation for the coat, *natseq* for the seal. However, both designations are used interchangeably, perhaps with a certain preference for calling the coat *natseq*. In this connection it should be noted that the Polar Eskimos now generally call the common ringed seal *puise*.

The coat requires three skins. Fig. 25 shows a pattern for such a coat cut full size by Avôrtúngiaq. The front piece (*sâ*) has a narrow tongue (*igxiaq*) at the top which reaches up under the chin and which is joined to two symmetrical chest pieces (*sakeq*). At the top a special half-moon shaped chin piece (*manuilisag*) of bear skin is sewed on. The back piece (*tuno*) continues with a very narrow neck piece (*akuliaq*) up into the hood. At each side of this, on the back, there is a deep cut (h) corresponding to the tongue-shaped extension (*sagloqinneq*) on the shoulder piece of the sleeve. In the figure, the front piece must be visualized placed on top of the back piece, so that the sleeve is joined to the back and the hood over the section c²-h-g-d¹-d. The part between d and g on the shoulder piece of the sleeve (*tuixsaa*) is gathered, especially around d¹. The large sleeve piece, too, is gathered somewhat from c³, in order to make

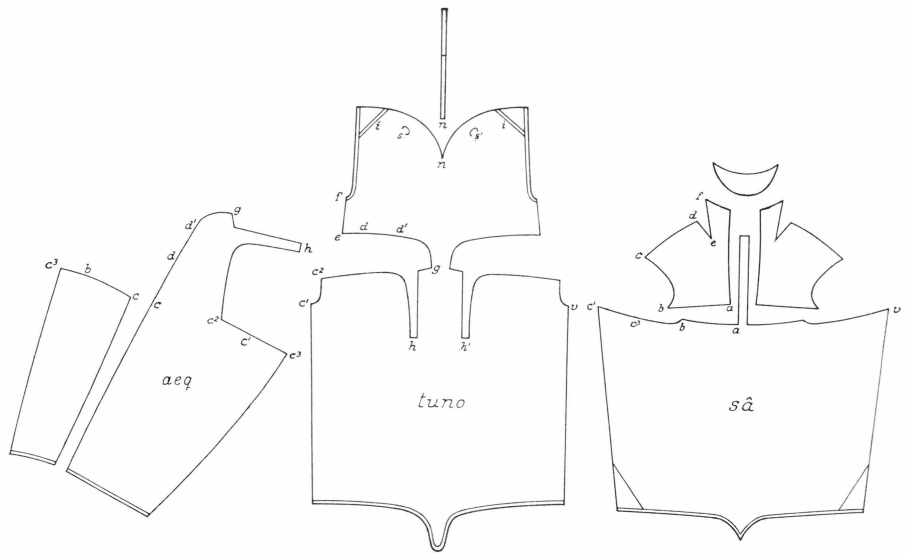


Fig. 25. Pattern of man's outer coat of sealskin.

room for the elbow. The hood is then wedged into the slit of the chest piece d-e-f, and the shoulder piece is joined from d to the chest piece at the seam d-c as far as the arm hole. The sleeve is sewed of two pieces of which the narrower piece (*ilutaxxaq*) is on the inner side. If skin is scarce, however, the sleeve is sometimes sewed of several pieces. It appears that part of the sleeve extends around to the back forming a strong connection with the body of the coat. The rest of the arm hole is indicated by c-b-c³-c¹-c². The inside long seam of the sleeve and the side seam of the body of the coat are thus staggered a little in relation to each other.

The skins for the back and front are dark in the middle and light toward the sides. The triangular piece (*qernertortaq*) at the bottom of each side of the front piece is of dark skin. The two parts of the chest piece are of the light neck skin of the seal. The tongue of the shoulder piece (*sagloqinneq*) is also light, and so contrasts with the dark back skin.

The top piece of the hood is made of the head of the seal with the ears. Over the forehead part of the hood runs a sewed-on strip (*nangmautaq*) (i), and from the neck (n) to the front edge of the hood is inserted a median strip (*nunggaq*) of skin from dog leg, the back part being white, the front part black. The hood opening is edged with a folded skin strip (*iluparuseq*) of dark, haired sealskin which forms a casing for a string of sinew thread, so that the hood can be pulled tight around the face.

The coat has along the bottom edge an edging (*kilungaut*) of light skin cut from the belly skin of the seal and folded double. The same is true of the cuff (*sine*), only here a strip of bearskin is furthermore sewed onto the inside in such a way that only the long hairs protrude. The flaps at the bottom are very short. The one in the front (*kineq*) is pointed while the one in the back (*akog*) is rounded and a little longer. The wedged-in pieces in the back skin are not sewed on completely at h and h^1 , forming two small openings that serve as ventilation holes. The two round holes S and S^1 in the hood skin are the ear holes of the seal.

A corresponding pattern was cut by Kujapik. The chief difference appears to be that the pieces cut out for the sleeves in the front piece were longer and that the seams of the sleeve and the side were therefore less staggered in relation to each other, or possibly met at the arm hole.

Inner Coat of Bird's Skin.

Formerly an inner coat (*atigeq*), made of little-auk or auk skin, downside in, was worn directly on the body. A few men still have such an inner coat. However, the usual thing nowadays is to wear a shirt and underwear of cotton. Fig. 26 shows a pattern of a bird-skin inner coat, cut by Kujapik. It is characterized by having a very plain poncho cut. The skins are sewed together into belts, and the body of the coat is the same in front and back and has only an open slit ($e-c$) in the middle for the head. Here the hood is sewed on over the section $a-e-d-c-b$, and the sleeves are sewed on straight out from the body. The edge of the hood (*iluparuseq*) is of haired sealskin while the cuffs are edged with bear skin (*nanorangguaq*).

The bird-skin coat always has a hood and is made alike for men and women, only the back and the hood are made considerably wider for a woman's carrying coat (*amaut*). With this, a loose hood is, or was, worn which might also be made of little-auk skin. An *amaut* of bird's skin is reinforced by a sewed-on ribbon of white sealskin extending over the shoulders, crossing the chest and extending around the back right under the back pouch. A little girl had had such a diminutive carrying coat sewed for her and sported it proudly with her doll in the back pouch. — When a bird-skin coat is not used it is stored turned inside out and rolled up. Over the bird-skin coat a sealskin coat was usually worn, in the case of children, however, usually the fox skin coat.

Kujapik herself had an inner coat (*atigeq*) of hare skin with the fur side in and with an attached hood, also of hare skin. Over it she wore a cloth anorak. All edgings were of blue-fox tails except for the chin piece which was white.

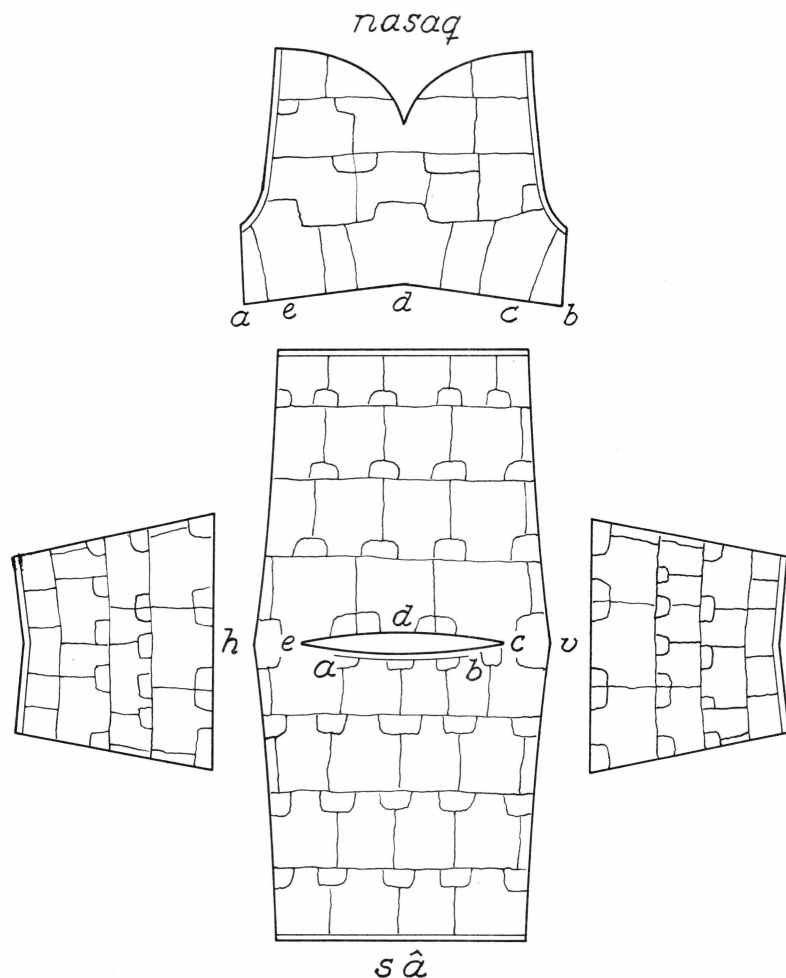


Fig. 26. Pattern of inner coat of bird's skin.

Gutskin Coat.

The gutskin coat (*kapiseq*) is known, and one has been used by a man still living. It was not used in the kayak but only as an overcoat on land. It was sewed of gut from bearded seal in vertical strips and with sewed-on hood "just like a cloth anorak". It was said that most women still knew how to sew a gutskin coat, although I did not succeed in obtaining more exact information as to the cut except that "it was sewed like an anorak".

Man's Trousers.

Trousers of bear skin (*nannuk*) are worn by men both summer and winter. They are extremely practical being both warm and strong.

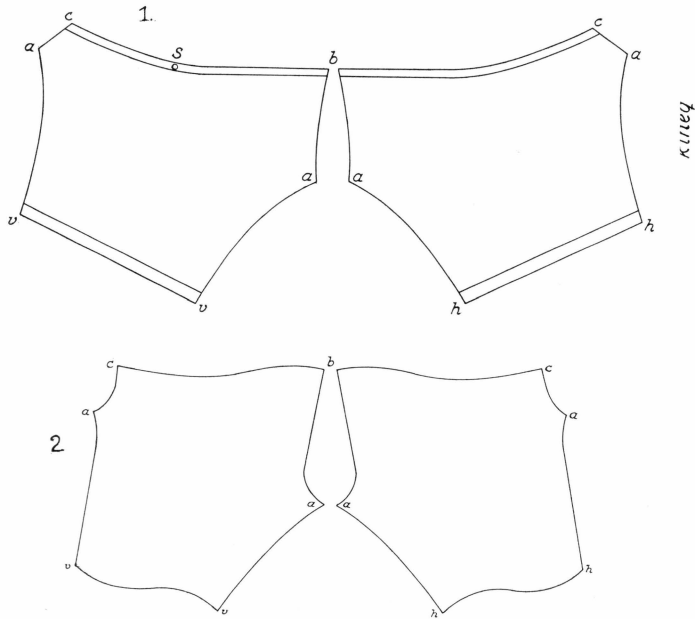


Fig. 27. Patterns of man's trousers of bearskin.

The bear's hairs being very smooth, they also have the advantage that the snow is easy to brush off of them. The same is true of ice which forms on them if they get wet in frost weather. The trousers reach to just below the knees. In the old days the top just barely covered the hip. Now they are usually extended upward with a sealskin belt sewed onto them and, according to West-Greenland pattern, have a trouser-flap in front as well as pockets in the sides, and they are held up by suspenders.

The pattern fig. 27.1, cut by Kujapik, shows the original cut. The two pieces are joined by a center Kujapik, from where seams are joined on the inner side of the trouserlegs (a-v and a-h). At the bottom an edging is sewed on, made of a special strip of bear skin (*nanoraq*). At the top is an edging (*terqixse*) of white sealskin (*kiak-taq*) which forms a casing for a string (*aglunaaq*) keeping the trousers in place over the hips. The ends of the string lead out through a hole (s) in the left side. The ends could sometimes be very long and were then called *suloragssaq*, in that they were used as spare whip crackers. They were wound up into a coil that would hang swinging at the side.

Fig. 27.2 shows for comparison a pattern cut to full size by Avôr-túngiaq. The S-shaped bottom edges of the trouser legs are here adjusted to the knee (*serqua*) and the back of the knee (*perqinganga*). The edgings above and below are not indicated but the top edge is called *terqixserfik* and the lower edge of the legs *ungiarfik*. —

Only in an emergency is dogskin used for men's trousers. More often it is used for trousers for children. It also occurred in a few cases that a man has had trousers made for him of caribou skin when it has been completely impossible to procure bearskin. Finally, a man was mentioned who had had trousers of muskox skin. Sheepskin from the store can now also come under consideration and is sometimes used for trousers for children. However, they are not very practical because they get dirty easily and are hard to clean.

In the summer time Moses used long sealskin trousers of West-Greenland cut, although he was probably the only one.

Man's Boots.

The men's boots (sing. *kamik*) reach to the knees. The soles are of bearded seal skin while the upper part is usually of sealskin. The dark waterproof boots are made of *neqpiagtaq*, i.e. skin from which the hair has been removed with a knife or an ulo, although some use *erisaaq*, i. e. skin from which the hair has been plucked out after dipping into hot water. However, this method was not used in the older days but is due to the influence of the West Greenlanders. The white boots are made of *kiaktaq*, i.e. sealskin from which hair and epidermis have been removed after extended treatment with hot water. Winter-dried white skin is most commonly used, although, especially for men, summer-dried skin is also often used, being softer and making a comfortable boot to wear.

Fig. 28 shows a pattern cut by Avôrtúngiaq. The boot leg has in the front a median seam, *qingasineq* (a-b) which is sewed with watertight running stitches (*akiserardlugo*). At the instep (*isik*) the seam divides into two seams (*itsineq*) (b-c and b-c¹), which run down on either side of the foot. The center section of the top edge of the boot leg is called *napariusaq* while the foot of the boot is *alaaq*. The top of the boot leg has an edging (*quliut*) sewed onto it, consisting of a folded strip of skin which forms a casing for a string (*ungerun*) so the boot can be pulled tight under the knee.

The sole is always cut out lengthwise of the piece of skin, otherwise it tends to twist. The edges are bent up only slightly, although somewhat more at the toes, where the bent-up and gathered part is called *qaxu-maneg*. When being sewed on, the sole is first fastened to the top part with a few stitches at the heel, the toe and the sides, after which the actual sewing is done with watertight stitches (*unguserdlugo*), beginning at the middle of one of the sides, or at the instep seam. The stitches are made perpendicularly through the sole skin, but lengthwise in the upper skin without going through it. At intervals the sinew-thread is

pulled tight, and in this way a very tight seam is attained, provided the stitches are not too long. Sewing with fine, close stitches is considered a matter of pride. A short slit (*putusak*) for the lace is cut in each side of the sole skin, slightly ahead of the middle of the foot and close to the seam. Also, the edges of the sole skin are usually scarfed slightly at the edges to make bending and gathering easier, although the full thickness is left over a small section at the lacing holes.

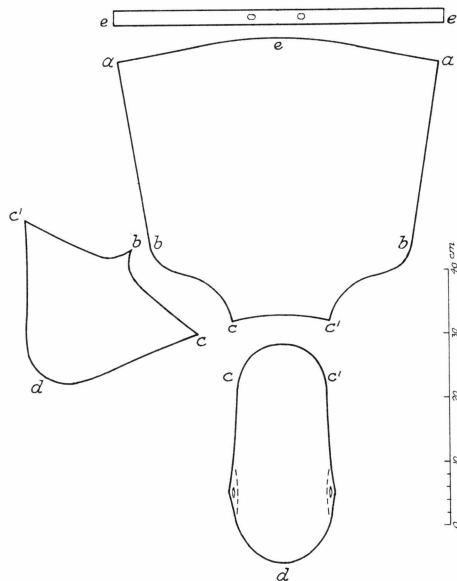


Fig. 28. Pattern of man's boot.

The boot lace (*singeq*) goes across the foot and through the slits, from where it is carried back around the heel where it is crossed, again brought forward and tied in front in a bow over the instep.

Boots of haired sealskin (*nioriak*) are used now and then. They are considerably warmer than boots of depilated skin.

Boots of bearskin are hardly used by adults but are not unusual for children. In the cold spring time (March) quite a few children were seen at Thule with such boots, sewed of skin from the forelegs of the bear and with only the sole made of bearded seal skin.

A four-year old girl wore boots of dog leg skin, and a little boy had had boots sewed for him for travelling of skin from caribou legs.

Skin boots require meticulous care if they are to hold warmth and be comfortable to wear. In use they get damp rather quickly and when they dry the skin becomes stiff and must then be softened. For this purpose a boot stretcher (*kammium*) is used, i.e. a long, wooden stick

in the end of which a piece of iron is inserted over which the boots are rubbed. First they are treated on the outside by folding the sole lengthwise, then lengthwise inside. Finally, they are rubbed again more loosely outside, both lengthwise and crosswise. The boots should preferably not be allowed to dry out too much before being treated with the boot stretcher. If this should be the case they may be dampened a little beforehand, although it is better to avoid this. Sometimes sheepskin stockings which may become rather stiff, are treated in the same way, but never hare skin stockings which cannot stand any rough treatment.

Man's Stockings.

The stockings (*alersit*) are cut exactly like the corresponding boot. They are usually made of hare skin with the fur side inward. Only as an exception are stockings of dog or caribou skin or possibly sheepskin used. *alerse* is strictly speaking the designation for the leg of the stocking while the foot piece is called *isik*, as on the boot. The sole of the stocking is called *ikernguaq*. At the top the stocking has an edging (*qule*) consisting of a strip of bearskin, the long hairs of which are pulled out as a border over the edge of the boot. Hare skin stockings are warm but very fragile. Therefore, a special reinforcement (*iserun*) of sealskin with the fur side in is usually sewed around the toe on the outside. Narrow strips of sealskin (*qulaernaveerqutit*) were formerly also sewed on from the top edge down along the legs. It was further mentioned that a slipper-like over-sock was used inside the boot, but whether or not it was sewed onto the stocking was not said. On the other hand, a short sock of bird's skin, as mentioned by HATT¹), was unknown. Neither could any explanation be given for the triple stockings casually mentioned by BESSELS²) although Ûtâq mentioned in this connection that the last immigrants (*at Larsuit*) had apparently sometimes used caribou skin stockings with bearskin sewed under the sole and sealskin over the foot.

Hare skin stockings should preferably not become too wet. During use they are taken out every day, turned inside out and dried, then rubbed with the hands and beaten in order to raise the fur and make them soft.

Hose does not appear to be commonly known. Ûtâq, however, mentioned that trousers and boots in one piece were sometimes sewed for children. The boot part was made of seal or caribou skin, sometimes of bearskin, sewed onto the trouser legs.

It was claimed that leggings had not been used; neither was combination suit known.

¹) G. HATT: Arktiske Skinddragter (1914), p. 48. From KANE: Arctic Explorations (1856) II, p. 23.

²) E. BESSELS: Die amerikanische Nordpol-Ekspedition (1879) p. 354.

Boot Hay.

Between the soles of boot and stocking, an insole of dry grass (*tungin*) is placed which serves to give warmth and absorb humidity from the sole, besides being more comfortable to walk on than the soles alone. It requires a good deal of experience to shape and place this insole without the hay lumping. It is taken out and dried along with the boot and the stocking. According to the designation, this insole appears to be specifically what is called *tunge* (sing.), the same word being used for an insole of e.g. caribou skin. On the other hand, it is also customary to place dry hay over the foot and sometimes also inside the stocking proper.

The Polar Eskimos are rather particular in their choice of grass suitable for boot hay. It should preferably be long and soft, and in some places it is necessary to travel far to find it that way. The inhabitants of Thule, e.g. usually fetched their boot hay somewhere south of Kap Atholl. Haymaking there took place in the winter, a grassy slope being selected from which the layer of snow was first scraped away. The grass cover was then chopped off from above in unbroken mats which were gradually rolled downward. Before the grass rolls were put on the sledge they were first spread out and trampled through to remove as much as possible of the snow. At home the grass was further cleaned and dried before being stored away for later use. However, it must not be stored so that it can dry out excessively, or it will become brittle.

Man's Over Boots — Sandals.

Over Boots (*kamikpang*) are used by some on sledge trips during the cold period. As a rule they are made from the fore legs of the bear — although never with the claws on, it is claimed. Sometimes, also leg skin of caribou is used.

Fig. 29 shows Kujapik's pattern for an over boot of bearskin. The wedge-shaped tongues at the foot have been cut away from the boot skin and other, more closehaired, pieces substituted. At the top the boot is edged with haired sealskin for a drawstring-casing so that the boot may be laced tightly at the top.

Short Over Boots (*isigammak*). — The designation *isigammak* is known for a kind of pull-over footwear and is now used interchangeably with *kamikpang*. *isigammak*, however, appears to have designated a shorter form, preferably sewed of caribou skin but possibly also of bearskin. The general opinion was that both designations referred to old-fashioned footwear.

Overshoes. — Some children were seen wearing very low overshoes of dog skin. Unfortunately no information was given as to either cut or designation.

Sandal of Sealskin (*alaammaq*). — So as not to wear the boot soles too much, especially on caribou hunts inland, when it is often necessary to walk a great deal in stony terrain, a sort of sandals or pull-over soles were sometimes used, usually cut from a piece of depilated seal skin (*kiaktaq*). They had holes all the way along the edge and were laced to the feet by a string pulled through the holes (*alaammalerdlune*).

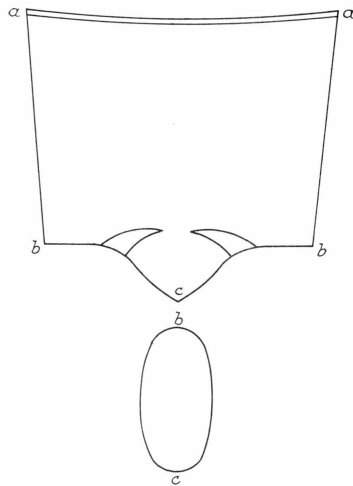


Fig. 29. Pattern of man's over boot.

Two women mentioned that they in their childhood had used *alaammak* (dual.) made of old boot skin, but they thought that such were no longer used. Sometimes, for use on long walks, *alaammak* might also be made of bearded seal skin. However, they had to be steeped in water first in order to bend them up around the foot; also, besides the string through the holes in the edges, they were fastened by a strap across the foot.

Sandals of trout skin for use on smooth ice, were sometimes used, since they make easier to stand firmly. However, they do not have holes around the edges but are laced to the foot by a string through holes at the heel and in front on the sides.

Sandals of bearskin (*tuterissat*) are still used for seal hunting at the breathing holes on smooth ice since they make it possible to move almost noiselessly over the ice. They consist simply of pieces of bearskin cut to the shape of the foot and fastened underneath the boot soles. Similar sandals have, according to Moses, also sometimes been used on caribou hunts in snow-covered terrain.

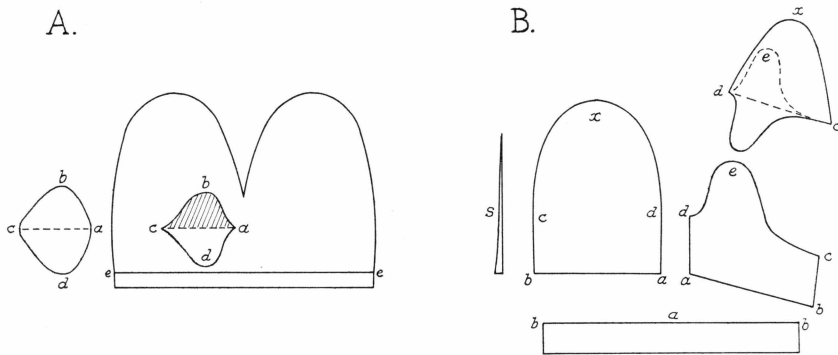


Fig. 30. Patterns of mittens.

Mittens.

Mittens (*aarqatit*) are most often made of white depilated sealskin. For men, however, water-proof skin is also used, and sometimes haired sealskin. As a rule, the mitten reaches only to the wrist, although for building snow houses some use mittens that cover part of the arm to avoid getting the sleeves filled with snow.

Fig. 30. B shows the cut now used, as indicated by Avôrtúngiaq. The mitten has a separate back piece (*tunuxxaq*) and a front piece in two parts. Each of the two front pieces has a tongue-shaped extension forming the inside and the outside of the thumb respectively. The piece forming the palm and the inside of the thumb is called *alaxxaq*, the piece with the outside of the thumb *kuvdlup qaaxxaa*. In sewing the pieces together, the front part of the back piece is bent and gathered to the palm piece. The two pieces are first joined by single stitches in front and at the sides, whereupon the pieces are sewed together. At the wrist an edging (*quliun*) made of a folded strip of white sealskin, is sewed on, although sometimes the mitten may also have an edging of bearskin. The narrow strip *s* on the figure is a strip of sealskin which is sewed onto the edge of each mitten so they can be tied together when not in use.

The pattern fig. 30. A, cut by Kujapik, shows an older cut for a mitten which is no longer used. The front and back pieces are here sewed together without gathering. In the palm-skin a piece is cut out that is bent back to form the outside of the thumb, while the inside is formed by a special, sewed-on piece which at the same time covers the cut-out part a-b-c.

In the old days an inner mitten (*ilupaaq*) of hare skin was used. According to Ūtâq, however, some have used hay in the mittens ("*iween-arning*") for lack of inner mittens. Inner mittens are now also made of dog skin, or woolen mittens are used.

Hay in Mittens is still used occasionally and is called *pineq* as distinct from *tunge* which is used of hay in boots. In connection with the old-fashioned mittens also the designation *ilupaaaxaq* (literally "something for use as an inner mitten") was applied. The same word is now also used of a towel.

A bag with down in which to warm the hands was unknown.

Abdominal Belt — Knee Warmer.

Abdominal Belt (*qarmmailisag*) made of fox tails was often used formerly when the pants did not reach as far up as now, which is why when sitting on the sledge, one might have a bare piece appear between the trousers and the bottom edge of the coat.

Knee Warmers (*maawsak*), also of fox tails, are still used by some to cover the open part that often appears between the edges of boots and trousers when sitting on the sledge. They are tied under the knees by means of sewed-on skin strings.

Snow-Goggles.

In the springtime when the light is reflected strongly by the snow or by haze in the air, it is necessary to use snow-goggles (*ixxaun*) when moving about outside, otherwise one is exposed to snow blindness which is very painful and may be of long duration. Nowadays spectacles with dark smoke-colored glasses, bought at the store, are almost exclusively used, although it is claimed that the old-fashioned snow-goggles of wood or ivory with a slit for the eyes are better because they do not steam up. For one thing this is of particular importance on *ūtoq* hunts where the hunter gets alternately hot and cooled off while sneaking up on the seal. Under such conditions most are inclined to remove the snow glasses and a mild degree of snow blindness therefore frequently occurs.

Mask — Brow Band.

Mask for cultic use is unknown. On the other hand, a mask of caribou skin (*keenarpak*) is sometimes used on which the hairs have been cut short for protection against the cold especially for children travelling. A brow band (*qakilisag*) of caribou skin is sometimes used in a similar manner.

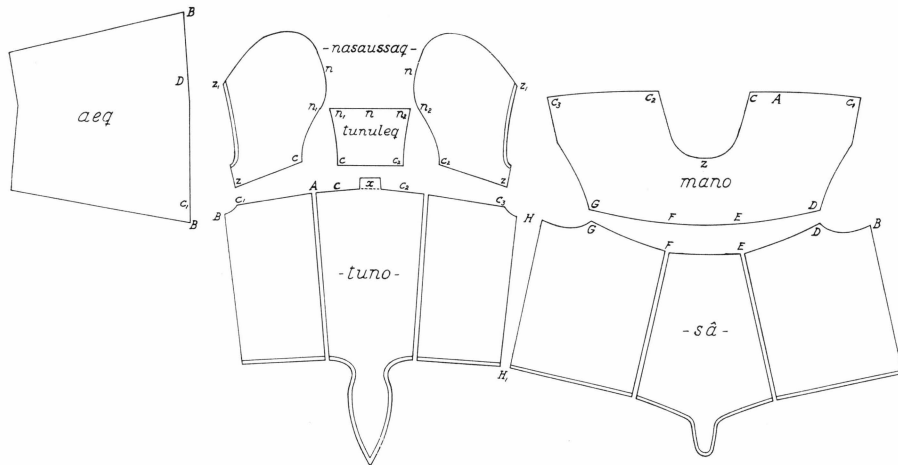


Fig. 31. Pattern of woman's outer coat of fox skin.

Women's Clothing.

Woman's Outer Coat of Fox Skin.

The coat (*kapatak*) requires the skins of seven foxes, one of which is white. Fig. 31 shows a pattern cut by Kujapik. Both the back (*tuno*) and the front piece (*sâ*) are sewed together of three pieces. The front piece is extended upward by a special chest piece (*mano*) that stretches across the shoulders as a yoke with a round opening for the hood. The hood (*nasausaq*) consists of two symmetrical pieces and a separate neck piece (*tunuleq*). When the neck piece is fastened onto the back, a tip *x* (*pamiunga*) is often allowed to hang out freely. It is used for taking hold of when the coat is to be removed. The center piece of the front side is of white fox, the other pieces of blue fox. The direction of the hair is downward on the front, upward on the back where the big flap at the bottom (*akoq*) is made of the head of the fox with the muzzle (*sigxua*). On the sleeves, the hairs turn upwards.

The two pieces of the hood are of light sealskin while the neck piece is of fox leg skin. The face opening is edged with dark, hairy sealskin. The same is true of the lower edge of the back piece. The center piece of the front with the flap (*kineq*) is edged with a strip of white dog leg skin, the two pieces, on the other hand, with bearskin (*nanoraq*). The sleeve edging is not indicated on the figure but consists of fox tail.

Amaut of Fox Skin.

An amaut requires nine fox skins. Fig. 32 shows a pattern cut by Kujapik, with indication of the numerous skin pieces of which the coat

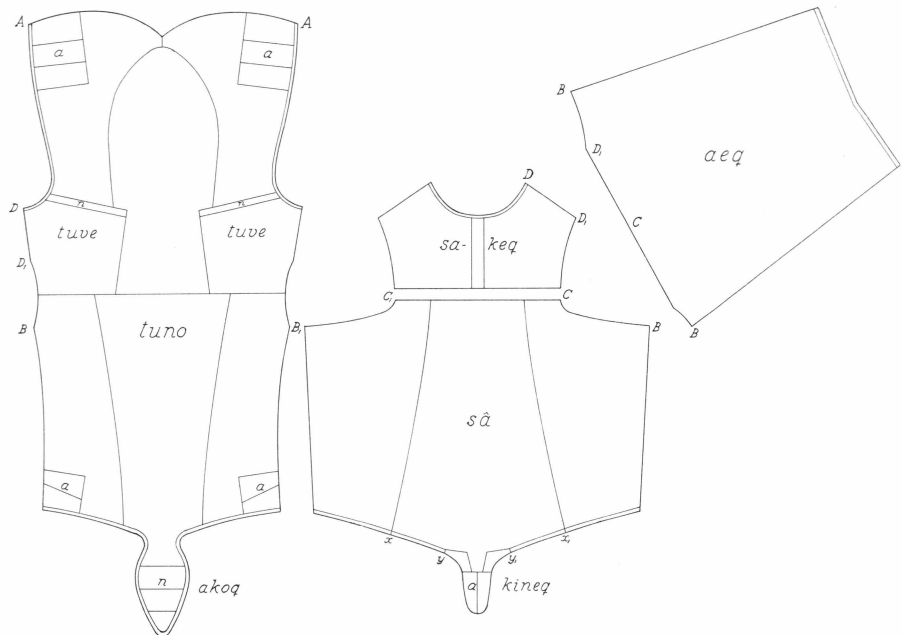


Fig. 32. Pattern of woman's amaut of fox skin.

is sewed together. The front piece (*sá*) and the back piece (*tuno*) as well as the hood piece each consists chiefly of three pieces. In addition there are two shoulder pieces (*tuve*) and the chest piece (*sakeq*) which also is made up of three pieces. The small square fields (*a*) as well as the flap in front (*kineq*) are of leg skin while the narrow strips at the shoulders (*n*) and the flap in back at the bottom (*akoq*) are of muzzle skin. The hood edging (*iluparuseq*) and the pieces *x-y* and *y¹-x¹* at the bottom edge of the front piece are of bearskin. The rest of the bottom edge and the small pieces at the root of *kineq*, at *y* and *y¹*, are of dark sealskin. The cuffs are edged with fox tail. The front of the sleeves is called *ilutak*, the back *silat*. The direction of the hair is down on the front piece, inward on the sleeves, and upward on the back piece, opposite the direction of the center piece of the hood.

Woman's Loose Hood.

In connection with an amaut, a loose hood (*siutailisag*) of light, haired sealskin is worn. Fig. 33 shows a pattern, cut by Kujapik, for such a hood. It is a simple two-skin hood in which two symmetrical pieces are joined by a median seam. The edging (*iluparuseq*) of the face and neck openings as well as the center strip *b-c* (*nunggaq*) are of dark, haired sealskin.

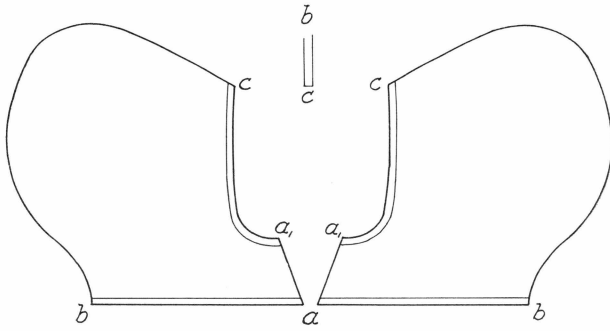


Fig. 33. Pattern of woman's loose hood.

Woman's Outer Coat of Sealskin (natseq).

This requires two sealskins. Fig. 34 shows a pattern cut by Kujapik. To understand better, it is necessary to visualize the front piece (*sâggâ*) pushed to the left on top of the back piece (*tunua*), after which one chest piece (*sakissaq*) (h) is bent forward across the shoulder joining the front piece by the seam e-e¹, while the other (v) is bent backward joining the back piece at the seam b²-a²-a³. The narrow tongues t and t¹ at the top of the back piece connect the latter with the hood in back and on the sides while the separate chin piece (*mano*) is wedged into the front between the two chest pieces.

The sewed-in strips (n) under the arm holes (*erсерutik*) are of dark, haired sealskin. The same is true of the two round spots (m) filling

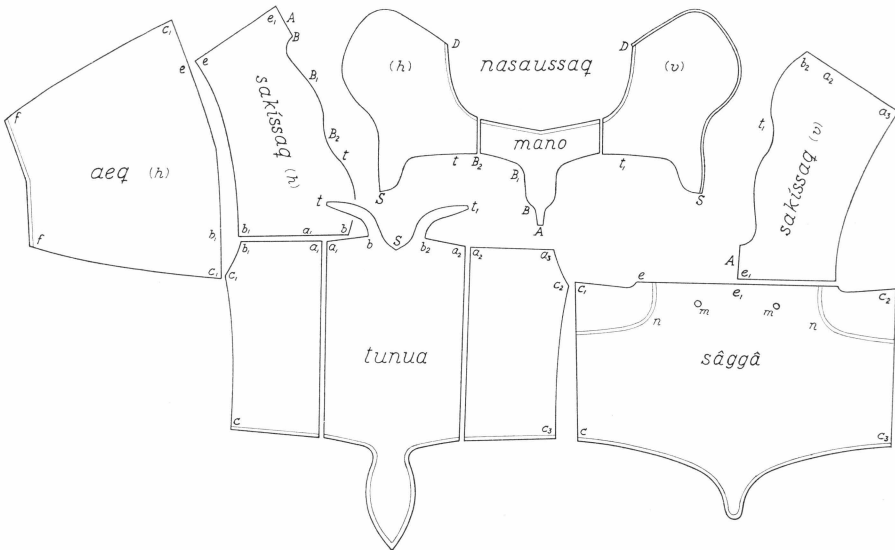


Fig. 34. Pattern of woman's outer coat of sealskin.

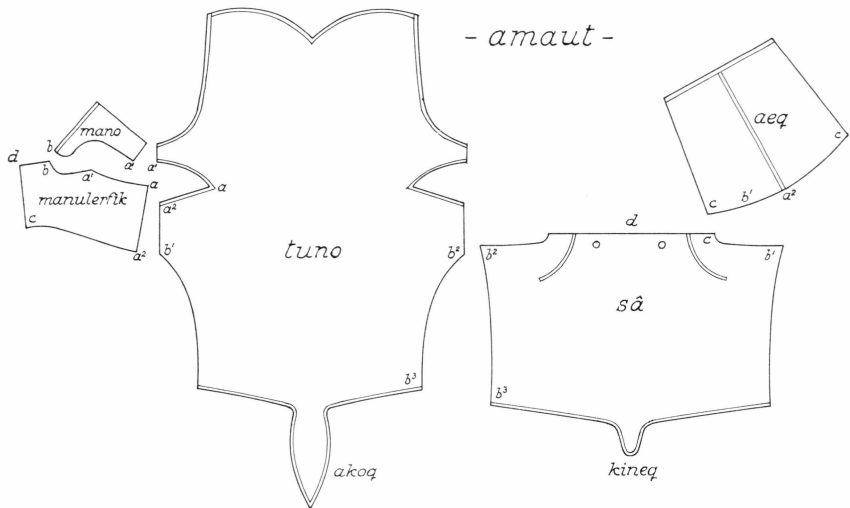


Fig. 35. Pattern of woman's amaut of sealskin.

the ear holes of the seal (*siutik*), the strip along the center seam of the hood, the edging of the face opening, and the lower edge of the two side pieces of the back. The rest of the lower edge and the cuffs are edged with light, haired sealskin.

The sealskin coat of the women was for some time decorated with buttons in the front on the chest, along the edge of the chin piece, and above the flap in back. However, this fashion has now completely disappeared.

Amaut of Sealskin.

Fig. 35 shows Kujapik's pattern for an amaut of sealskin. Of the chin pieces, *mano* and *manulerfik*, only one of the two symmetrical halves is shown. On the front piece between the two ear holes the amaut string (*qaxuwaun*) is sewed on, which runs around the back and in turn fastened in front by means of a button of ivory fastened to the free end of the string.

Woman's Trousers.

Fig. 37. A shows a pattern of woman's trousers of fox skin (*nannuk*) cut to full size by Avôrtungiaq. As will be seen, the trousers are sewed together from no less than 23 pieces of skin, not counting the edgings. The trousers consist of two symmetrical parts, joined by a center seam a-b-c. This ends at the top at a half-moon shaped piece (*ikpak*) (1) which is cut from the neck skin of the fox. In the crutch a short seam extends



Fig. 36. Woman carrying her child in the amaut.

from the center seam to each side (b-d and b-d¹) connecting the two pieces 8 and 9 (*akulaang*) with the front piece 2 (*ilutaq*), thus constituting the diminutive lengthwise seam of the trouser leg.

The piece 8 is white, 9 dark — or vice versa. Of the other skin pieces, 2, 3, and 10 are white, the others dark. Piece number 3 is called *sivoraa*. For 4 (*quputaa*), the middle part of the fox skin is used, for 5 (*kingoraa*) the skin of the thighs, and for 7 (*ukiutaa*) the head skin. The oblong piece that makes up the lower part of the leg and is composed of dark and white skins (10-11) is called *natLuilisaq*. On the inside it has an edging strip of bearskin sewn onto it. At the top the trousers have a narrow edging (*terqixsee*) of white depilated sealskin placed double.

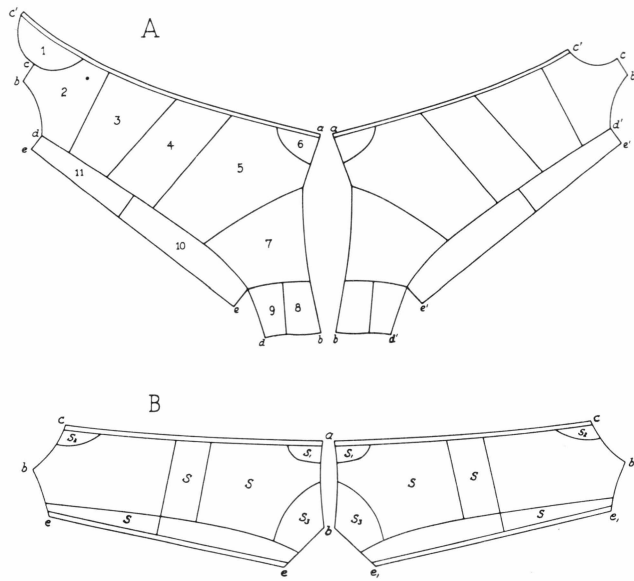


Fig. 37. Patterns of woman's trousers of fox skin.

Another pattern, fig. 37. B which was cut by Kujapik, corresponds generally to the above, although the crutch is cut more simply, the small pieces 8 and 9 being omitted.

Fox skin not being particularly strong, dog skin is sometimes used in the crutch of the trousers. If it is difficult to procure white fox skin, hare skin is sometimes used instead. This, however, is avoided as far as possible since hare skin gets dirty and mussy sooner and must be renewed frequently. One particular woman, out of need and for lack of anything else, had sewed herself a pair of trousers with the seat of caribou skin.

Woman's trousers of sealskin (*takisut*) are known and said to be used by a few in the summer. This, however, seems to be just a makeshift when fox skin is hard to get.

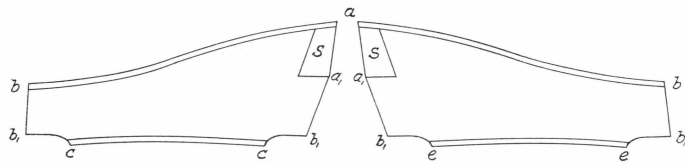


Fig. 38. Pattern of woman's under-trousers of sealskin.

Woman's Undertrousers of Sealskin.

Very short undertrousers of haired sealskin (*gardleek*) were formerly used by women and worn under the fox skin trousers. The pattern reproduced in fig. 38 was cut by Kujapik, who had used such undertrou-

sers herself. In the figure, a-a¹-b¹ indicate the median seam in the back, continuing in front in b-b¹ and in the side seams b¹-c and b¹-e. The field s-s in the back at the top (*ilaneq*) is of black sealskin. The same is true of the bottom edgings (c-c and e-e), whereas at the top the trousers are edged with a strip of white depilated sealskin (*kiaktaq*). Here too, the upper edging strip is called *terqixse*.

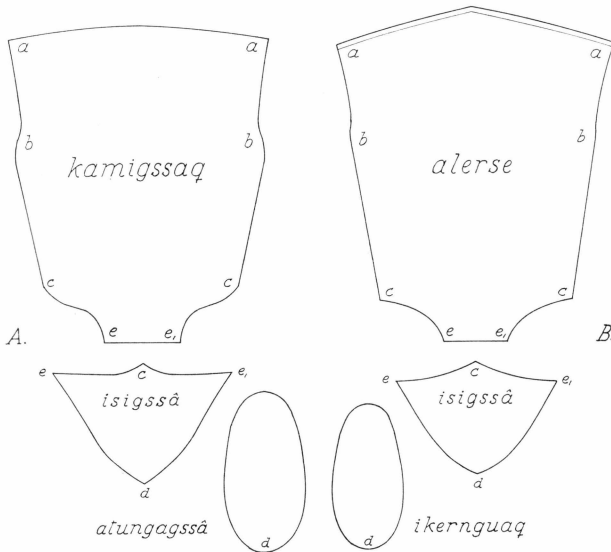


Fig. 39. Pattern of woman's boot and stocking.

Woman's Boots.

If the woman's trousers are so short as to just cover the hips and buttocks, the boots in turn are long enough to reach the crutch. Bootleg and instep are of white, depilated sealskin (*kiaktaq*), dried in freezing weather which gives it the necessary stiffness. To get the skins beautifully white they are hung out for bleaching in the spring sun.

Fig. 39. A shows the pattern for a boot. The bootleg (*kamigssaq*) is somewhat extended at the knee (b) and is sewn with a median seam in the front (a-b-c). At c it joins the instep (*isigssá*) and from there a seam goes down on each side of the foot (c-e and c-e¹). Thus d indicates the toe while the piece e-e¹ on the leg encloses the heel. The sole skin (*atungagssá*) is cut a little broader in front than in back. On the finished boot the corresponding parts are called: *kamik* (which also means the whole boot), *isik*, and *atungaq*. The bootleg has no special edging at the top.

Woman's Stockings.

As will be seen from fig. 39. B the women's stockings (*alersit*) are cut exactly like the corresponding boots, and likewise the designations

for stocking leg and sole are the same as for the men's stockings (*alarse* and *ikernguaq*). The stocking was formerly made of hare skin but is now probably always of caribou skin. In order not to make the stockings too voluminous, and at the same time uncomfortably warm, the caribou fur is cut very short. They are nevertheless very warm to wear in the summer time. At the top the stocking has an edging which nowadays consists of a strip of bearskin. It is considered very important for this to be as beautifully long-haired as possible. In the old days the edging at the top of the stocking was of fox tail. This was said to be better in the winter. During the cold period the women now often get cold at the back of their thighs where an open piece easily occurs between stocking and trouser edge. — New caribou-skin stockings, like sleeping bags, tend to collect moisture on the fur side ("*tukto quisog*"), although this disappears after some use.

The somewhat stiff footwear gives the women a certain tottering gait and requires some getting accustomed to. For small girls, who have usually heretofore been dressed like the boys but now have to wear long women's boots, the middle piece of the stocking is therefore sometimes made of dog skin since it is softer than caribou skin and consequently does not interfere so much with the bending of the knee. The rest of the stocking is made of caribou skin as usual. Amaunalik told me that she had made such a pair of stockings for her three-year old daughter.

Since in use the boots may tend to collapse somewhat into folds, they are sometimes braced by a splint (*qerataqut*) which is made of stiff bearded seal skin and is inserted between boot and stocking. It curves around a considerable part of the front of the leg and goes from the knee all the way down on both sides of the instep, for which there is a round cut-out.

Children's Dress.

When outdoors babies are carried in their mother's *amaut*. A very small baby lies there naked close to its mother's back, sometimes with a small bonnet-shaped hood on its head. In cold weather the legs of the child in the *amaut* are sometimes put into a small foot warmer of fox or hare skin. On trips small children are sometimes lashed to the sledge so as not to fall off, and in that case each leg is sometimes put into a separate narrow bag of skin.

Child's Outer Coat of Fox Skin. — Fig. 40 shows the cut of a fox skin coat (*kapatak*) for a small child, alike for boys and girls. However, the boys' coats are entirely of dark skin while the girl's have a front

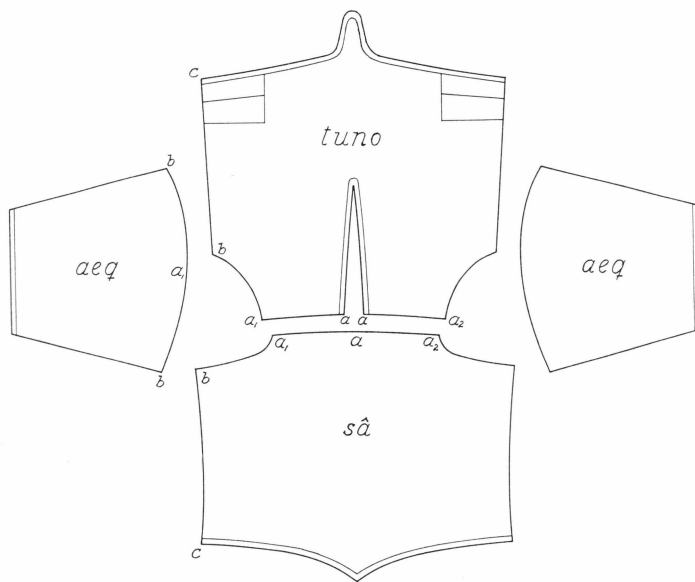


Fig. 40. Pattern of child's outer coat of fox skin.

piece of white fox. Likewise, the flaps at the front and back of the girl's coats usually have skin ornamentations while boys' coats usually have a flap of the same skin as the coats. The coat has no hood but a loose hood (*nasaun*) is worn with it.

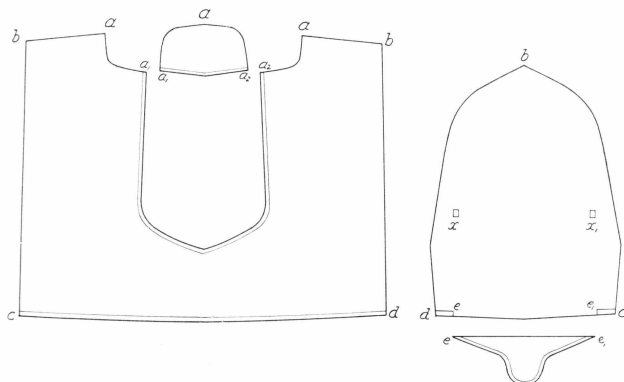


Fig. 41. Pattern of child's loose hood.

On the figure, *sâ* is the front piece. In the back (*tuno*) a deep slit is cut out which forms the neck opening and also runs down the back a way. The slit may be tied together in the neck with a couple of strings making the coat close tightly around the neck. The fields indicated in the lower corners of the back are of leg skin of the fox. The edging at the bottom is of bearskin (*nanoraq*).

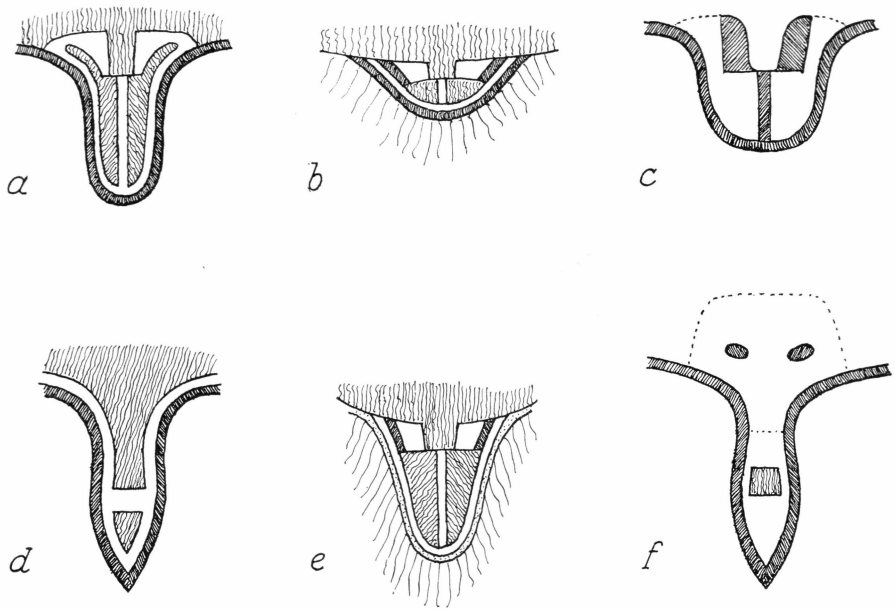


Fig. 42. Flaps of children's coats and hoods with skin ornaments.

Fig. 42. d and f shows two back flaps for girls' coats. The dark outer edge is of haired sealskin, the white parts of white fox skin. The coat f was entirely of white fox with the fox's head at the bottom of the back, the flap thus being made up of the skin of the muzzle. The eye openings are filled out with oval pieces of sealskin.

Loose Hood for Child's Coat. — Fig. 41 shows the cut of a child's hood (*nasaun*) of blue-fox skin. It is bonnet-shaped with a separate neck piece sewed onto it. The face opening is edged all the way around with dark fox tail, whereas the edging at the bottom of the piece e-d-c-e¹ is of bearskin. At the bottom, on the piece e-e¹, a separate flap piece (*papik*) of light sealskin is sewed on which is sometimes furnished with skin ornamentations. Tapes of haired sealskin are furthermore sewed onto the neck piece at x and x¹, so that the hood may be tightened at the back of the neck.

Fig. 42. a, b, c, and e are examples of ornamented hood flaps. a and the flap d belong to the same garment. The same is true of c and f, b and e are hood tips for a boy and a girl respectively. The edging strip of bearskin is sewed on with the meat side out. —

Apart from the hoodless child's fur jacket, children's clothing does not deviate in principle from that of the adults, except that more freedom is allowed in regard to the garment materials. Thus children's

trousers are most often made of dog skin. Also, trousers for little children are usually open in the crutch — for practical reasons.

It has already been mentioned that children's boots are sometimes made of leg skin of dog, caribou, or bear, also that trousers and boots may sometimes be sewed together into a kind of hose. Furthermore, that some children get low pull-over shoes for winter wear. Apparently, children's clothes are given considerable attention. Thus, as mentioned, a little girl had had a child's *amaut* of auk skin made for her, which must have cost no small amount of work to make, and during our stay on Inglefield Land in 1936, Avôrtungiaq collected the skins of the very young caribous shot, in order to use them for a smooth, lovely fur coat for her little foster son.

Toilet.

Hair Dress.

The men now usually cut their hair so that it falls along a straight line across the forehead without interfering with the eye sight. Formerly, it was generally allowed to grow long and was held in place by a hair string (*niaqoorut*) across the forehead and ears and around the neck. This hair string consisted of simply a thin sealskin strap.

The women gather their hair into a large double roll (*qilertse*) at the nape of the neck. A hair band (*qilersiut*) is tied around it, which in old times consisted of a strip of haired sealskin, — according to description about 1 cm wide and 35–40 cm long.

Tattooing.

Tattooing (*kakineq*) is now limited to small, bluish-black dots which are quite often seen on the back of the hand slightly behind the knuckles. They may be found on both men and women. I did not succeed in finding the true reason for these tattooings. For the operation the person bites around the place or pinches the skin between two finger nails to make it hurt less. Thereupon a thread blackened with soot is pulled through, either by the person himself or by a helper.

Louse Catcher.

Both head and body lice still occur frequently, and during visits in the houses a louse catcher (*kumagsiut*), consisting of a wooden stick with a tuft of bear's hair tied to the end of it, were seen in several places. It is put under the fur coat, and the lice are caught in the bear's hair. They are eaten by some. — A woman showed me such a louse catcher one day, and in fun she put it up into the fur hood with the tuft outward

like a pompon, telling me that her grand aunt used to wear it that way. Sometimes, too, a special back scratcher was used.

Ornaments.

Ornaments can hardly be said to belong to the Polar Eskimo dress, which in fact offers little opportunity for wearing ornaments. Nevertheless, special neck laces (*ujaming*) are known, and the designation *tuglerutit* is found for a necklace consisting of beads drawn on a string. A few women now wear earrings (*iverautin*).

More or less artistically carved ornaments of ivory, especially necklaces and brooches, are produced chiefly for sale to strangers and not used by the natives themselves.

Cleanliness.

The Polar Eskimos generally attach importance to cleanliness, but to be sure, climate and natural conditions limit the amount of personal hygiene one can afford. On the other hand, because of the natural conditions there is rarely an opportunity to get really dirty, except that when flensing it is easy to get spattered with blood and blubber. However, after flensing people are very particular in cleaning both hands and tools, also the clothing if necessary, most commonly with snow. If children have got their clothes soiled with blubber or otherwise, they may be told to slide in the snow to get them clean.

Body wash (*ugxartoq*) was usually done with a skin of little auk which was used as a wash cloth. A sea-gull skin was generally used for a hand or dish towel (*ivgun*). An old drum song (*piseq*) is still known, dealing with two men, one of whom washed himself each day with a little- auk skin, hoping to make a greater impression on the women, but without success, for which reason he is derided by the other in the song.

As for neatness in the daily housework it undoubtedly varies a great deal, but at any rate when guests are expected it appears to be a matter of pride to have everything bright and clean. In this respect, as well as in regard to general hygiene, there is no doubt a growing understanding thanks to the influence of both West Greenlanders and Danes, and a great educational job has been done, not least by the physicians.

III. MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Sledge and its Accessories.

The sledge (*qamutit*) is the most important means of transportation of the Polar Eskimos and is used as such practically year around, although naturally its application in summer is decidedly limited. Driving, as far as possible, is done on the sea ice or on the ice foot, which in the northernmost part of the district forms a comfortable road for driving until far into the month of June. But due to the geographical conditions it is often necessary to go over glaciers or through stony mountainous terrain which make the heaviest demands both on sledges, dogs and men. However, the Polar Eskimos are masters at managing even apparently hopeless situations. They know their country and its nature inside out, and although at times they travel with great daring, yet they rely on the security which the highly developed travelling technique and the experience of generations give them.

Compared to the West Greenland sledge, that of the Polar Eskimos is relatively long and narrow, yet not so pronouncedly as that of the Canadian Eskimos. It may be said, therefore, to take up an intermediate position. The size, however, may vary greatly, as will be seen from the following measurements:

	Length of runners	Length of nose	Breadth at the top	Breadth at the foot	Height of runners	Height of upstanders
Tâtiánguarssuaq.....	475	75
Kûtsikitsoq.....	390	95	91,5	93	23	93
Qarqutsiaq.....	373	85	84	86	20	90
Maigssánguaq.....	345	90	76	78	20	82
Moses.....	340	94	80	82	23	80
Qujakitsoq.....	336	83	76	79	20	84
Utûniarssuaq.....	330	96	84	87	20	86
Angutdluk.....	310	87	76	77	20	82
Ole Qvist.....	293	84	76	77	21	83
Inukitorsujuk.....	287	87	89	92	21	76

The length of the nose is figured from the front edge of the frontmost cross piece of the sledge. The breadth is measured at the outer edge of

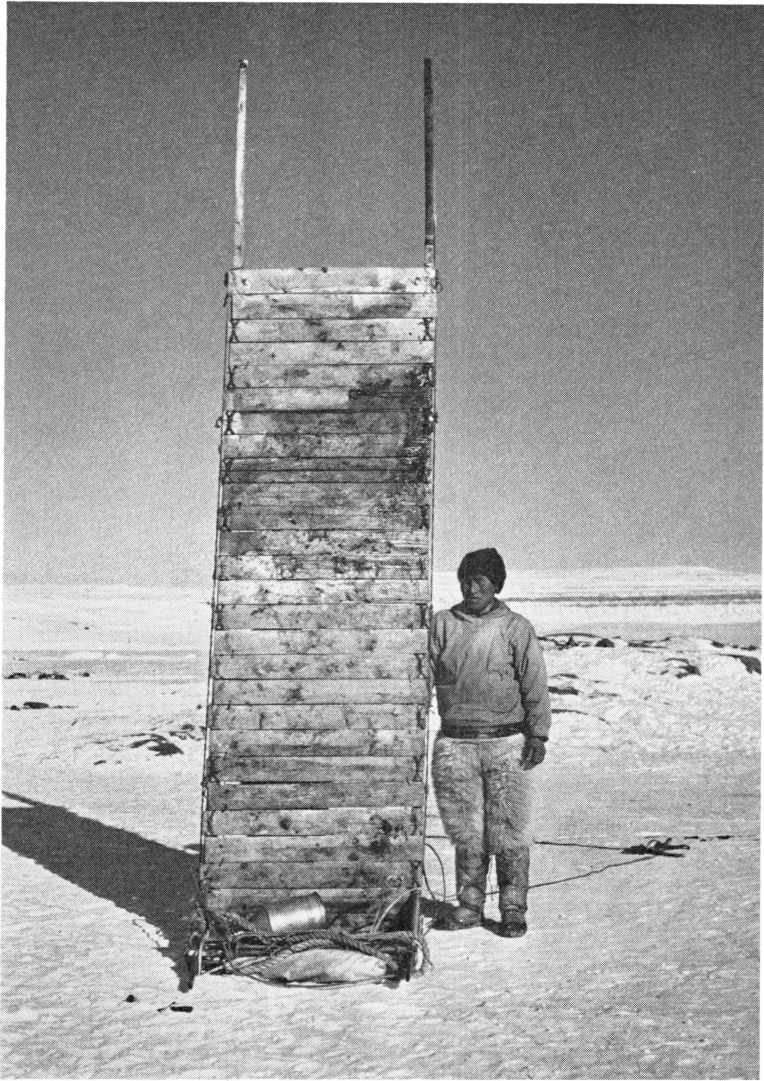


Fig. 43. Polar Eskimo sledge and its owner, Kûtsikitsôq.

the runners. The breadth at the foot will usually correspond approximately to the length of the cross pieces.

The long sledges now used (fig. 43) are, however, a rather late phenomenon and must be seen in relation to the present easier access to wood which was formerly a rare and costly commodity on account of the lack of driftwood. Wood had to be hauled on long sledge journeys south across the Melville Bugt, but for a long time, reaching up into the 19th century, this connection was closed, so the only recourse was to make

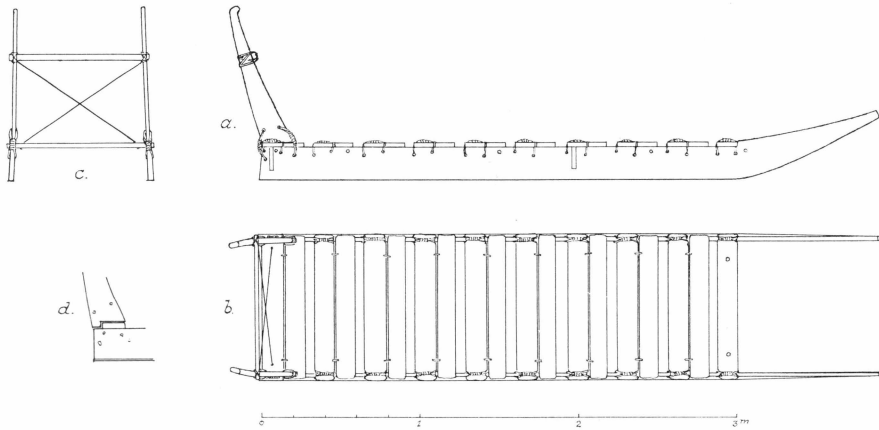


Fig. 44. Polar Eskimo sledge.

the sledge runners from pieces of whale bone artfully lashed together. During a period after the establishment of the Thule station, making the runners of oak wood was preferred because of its greater strength. However, this made the sledge rather heavy, and pine wood bought in suitable dimensions at the store is now most often used.

The runners (*qamutik*) are parallel although they diverge a little bit outward at the foot, appr. 1 cm to each side. Top and foot edges respectively are planned off so as to be at equal levels. — In front, a board is pieced onto each runner board and shaped so as to form an upward-turned nose. The curved part of the foot edge is called *qingua*. In several places, as a rule, vertical reinforcements (*attan*) of heavy iron band are attached, placed in pairs opposite each other on the inside and outside respectively of the runner, and are riveted together. They serve to prevent the runner from splitting if the sledge is exposed to very heavy side pressure, as often happens, especially when driving through pack ice or on mountain slopes. A piece of wood (*napisut*) is sometimes placed correspondingly at the very back, where there have to be lashing holes both for the cross piece and for the upstander. In the top part of the runner holes are also drilled for the lashings of the cross pieces and the placing of a side strap.

On the entire length of the bottom edge of the runners (*alue*) sledge shoes (*perdlaang*) are fastened, now always made from band-iron. They are fastened by means of long nails, the heads of which are sunk into the shoe which is first supplied with the necessary holes. Screws are not used, since if just partly torn out they lose the ability completely to hold the shoe. The shoes are first nailed onto the straight piece, after which the fore ends are lashed up to the curved noses by means of thongs, then nailed down in the same way. The breadth of the sledge shoes

usually corresponds to the thickness of the runners, appr. 3 cm, although for driving in areas with much snow sledge shoes of up to 8 cm width are sometimes used.

The cross-pieces (*naput*) are distributed uniformly from the back and forward to the place where the upward-turned nose starts. The hindmost cross-piece is called *erqordleq*, the front one *siudleq*. Near their ends (*niaque*), the cross-pieces have opposed notches for the lashings (*napuliutit*). Furthermore, on the top side a groove is cut out toward each end, in order to give room to the lashing thong when the tight lashing at last has to be given a cross-lashing. The lashing holes in the runners are placed, for the middle and front cross-pieces, at the same level while for the other cross pieces they are somewhat staggered in order not to weaken the strength of the runner more than necessary.

The space between the cross-pieces is filled entirely or partly by loose cross boards (*nakkareekutin*), which are only fastened to the cross-piece behind it by means of two lashings which act as a hinge. In this way they may ward off the blows against the fixed cross-pieces while driving through pack ice or rocky terrain. Between the front cross-piece and the nose of the runner, a slanted brace (*ajautaq*) is at times lashed to each side. This was especially common in old times.

The upstanders of the sledge (*naparissut*) are lashed in back to the hindmost cross-piece by means of strong lashings which are passed through holes in the runners. The front lashing hole in the upstander is named *issik* and the corresponding lashing *itsiutaa*, while the lashing behind the "heel" is called *kimmerqiutaa* and the hole *kimmerqiviserfia*. The foot of the upstander is often shaped as shown on fig. 44. d. At some distance from the top the upstanders are connected by a crossbar (*sannerun*), and two cross-straps (*nuluktin*) prevent them from working to the sides. The piece above the crossbar is called *agiaq*. In the top of the upstander a little notch (*savifwik*) is usually cut for tying the whip lash if it is to be stretched out for trimming. It is then tightened from there to a suitable place forward on the sledge, possibly the nose. On the crossbar is usually hung a spacious sledge bag of skin.

Along the outside of the runners is placed a heavy side-thong (*narratarfik*) for use in lashing the sledge load (fig. 45 a). The ends of the thong in front and back go through holes in the runner, and are fastened by knots on the inside. The foremost place for fastening right in front of the front cross-piece (d) is named *attungia*, the hindmost (b) *norruiserfik*. On the interjacent piece the side-thong is secured by one or more loops of thong (c) (*nunadlai*) which are placed in holes in the runner. To lash the load, the lashing thong proper (*narrataq*) is first fastened in back on one side of the sledge. It is then crossed over the load from side to side toward the front, each time being carried under

the side strap from inside outward. The lashing of the load in this way is a little more cumbersome than if the protruding ends of the cross boards were used as is done in West Greenland. This, however, is not practicable on the Polar Eskimo sledge because the cross-pieces protrude only very slightly beyond the runners and the system with the side-thong has the advantage that it secures the load absolutely, as it is out of the question that the lashing-thong would slide loose, even though for some reason it might slacken.

At the front of the sledge the inner part of the front strap (*pitu*) closest to the sledge (fig. 45. f) is fastened through holes either in the runners of the sledge or in the front cross-piece. The ends are fastened

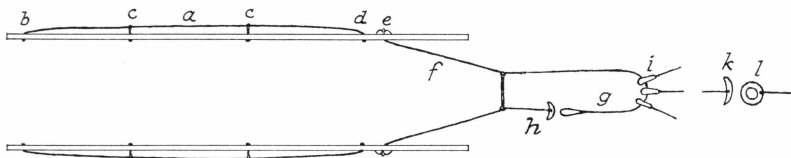


Fig. 45. Diagram showing sledge runners with side-lashing thongs and front strap with trace buckles.

on the outside of the runners and the top side of the cross-piece respectively, by means of toggles (*sanerutit*) (e) of ivory. The fore part of the front strap (*nuguit*) is tied to the center part of the *pitu*. It consists of two pieces of unequal length, of which the longer (g) end in a loop, the shorter in a toggle (*peersaut*) (h) which closes the front strap when the trace buckles are pushed onto it.

The dogs are hitched to the sledge in fan shape by means of the traces (singular *ipiutag*), straps of appr. 6-7 m in length, at the back end of which a trace buckle (*orseq*) (i) is fastened. It is usually flat pear-shaped and has a smaller hole in front where the end of the trace is fastened and a larger hole in back, through which the front strap is carried (fig. 46. c). In the front end of the trace a toggle (*pamiausaq*) is fastened through which it is connected with the ring-shaped buckle (*orsiusaq* or *tugleq*) in the back part of the dog harness. *tugleq* is said to be the original designation.

At times, a swivel (*qivsaarut*) is inserted on the trace; it is now most often a steel swivel which is bought in the store. The older form consists of a flat, square piece of bone with a hole in the center for a spindle of ivory, which in one end has a knob and in the other end a hole for fastening the end of the trace (fig. 46). At the corners of the square piece, pieces of strap of equal length are fastened, which are tied together somewhat further forward with another piece of the trace. Such swivels were still used by Moses.

The dog harness (*ano*) (fig. 47. 2) consists of two loops (a and a¹) (*attinnak*, singular *atineq*), which are formed of strips of skin, and each has an extension to the back (*papikLeraq*) (e). They are connected in

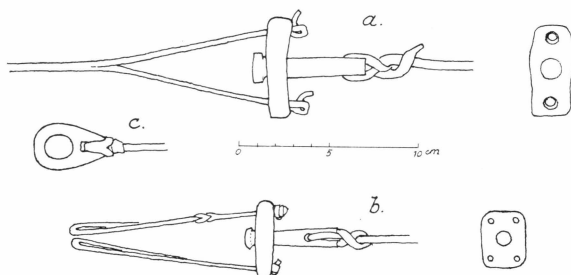


Fig. 46. Trace buckle and swivel.

the back, almost above the hind quarters of the dog, and continue in a piece of strap, to the back end of which is fastened the ring-shaped buckle (f) already mentioned. Each of the front paws of the dog is slipped through a loop. The skin loops are further connected by a cross band across the back (*aariagut*) (b) and two cross bands across the chest (*qorutit*) (d and d¹). The front one of the openings (*nuila*) (c) thus formed is meant for the dog's neck. A distance of about two hand breadths between the cross bands is considered suitable for a fair-sized

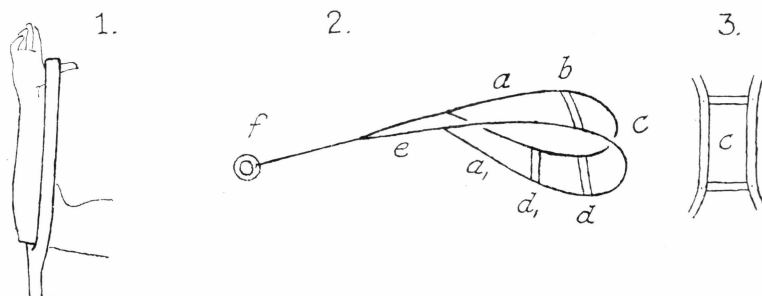


Fig. 47. Diagram of a dog harness.

dog. The length of the skin loops is determined by placing the skin strip around thumb and elbow as shown in fig. 47. 1. Dog harnesses are usually made of discarded women's boots or an old sealing float, cut up into strips and folded double. They are sewed with a thin skin string (*singsaaq*) or with sinew thread. Nowadays, twine is also used, however. It is said to be best if there is a little blubber left in the skin, so as to keep it flexible. However, it becomes brittle rather quickly, and dog harnesses should preferably be renewed every year.

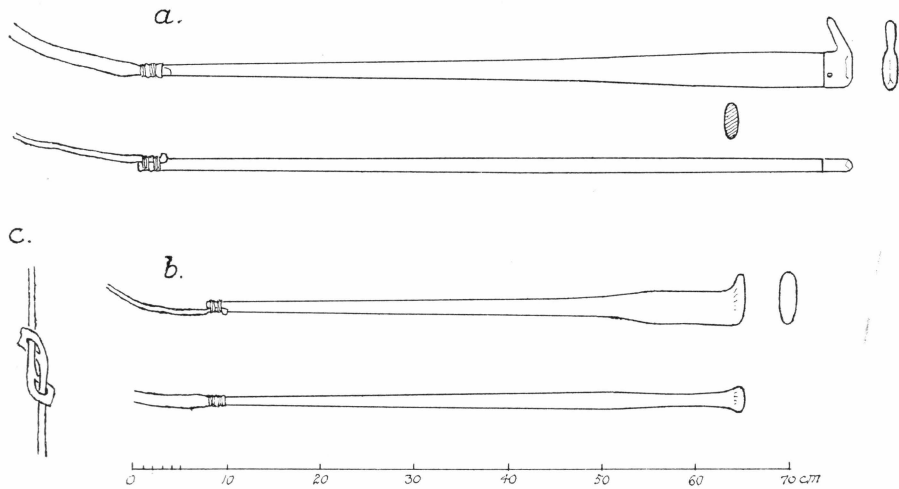


Fig. 48. Types of dog whips.

The construction with the two connected loops causes the pull to be distributed over the shoulders and chest of the dog, but it is always important to have the harness adjusted to the individual dog. "The old folks" said that if the chest piece of the harness is short, the dog is able to run fast. If it is too long the dog will fall behind. The cross strap across the chest should not be too short, however, or the dog will be apt to vomit; and if the loops for the legs are too narrow they will wear the hair off the dog.

Dog kamiks are sometimes used in the spring, when the snow on the sea ice forms sharp crystals which wound the paws of the dogs. They consist of a square piece of skin which is bent and sewn together on two sides, producing a bag which may be laced together with a string. Two holes are cut into the bottom edge, through which the dog's two long middle claws are slipped out, to give it foothold. As far as possible the use of dog kamiks is avoided since it is quite a bit of trouble to have to put them on a whole team; as a result, however, the dog tracks at that time of the year are often bloody.

On dogs with small puppies the teats are sometimes protected in winter by means of a piece of skin which is tied underneath the hind part of the body.

The Polar Eskimo dog whip (*iperautaq*) is rather slender. The whiphandle (*ipuxxaa*) is made of wood and usually has an oval cross section, decreasing gradually in thickness from the handle forward. In the rear end, the thickness may be 3.5×1.7 cm, decreasing in front to appr. 1.1×0.8 cm. However, the hindmost part is often a little wider and is at times so shaped as to form a convenient grip (fig. 48. b) The length

of the whiphandle is usually determined by the distance from the armpit to the stretched-out fingertips, or possibly from the ground to the top of the thigh bone. In the older days, the whiphandle often had a ferrule (*kange*) of ivory with a protruding spine on one side (fig. 48. a). According to an old saying, if the edging at the bottom of the sealskin coat (*natsip nuunga*) was not made of white skin, the wearer could not have a *kange* on his whip.

The whiplash (*iperautaq*) is carefully lashed with sinew thread at the extreme front end of the handle. It is widest, a little over 1 cm, a small distance from the handle and the lash decreases gradually in width forward toward the end (*sivua*), where the cracker (*suloraq*) is fastened. The part of the lash closest to the handle is named *teeaarun*. To make it more movable it is made a little narrower toward the end of the handle. Both lash and handle are provided with slight notches for support of the sinew-thread lashing. The length of the whiplash is as a rule appr. 6–7 m, to which is added the cracker of some 1½ m. The latter is a very thin skin string cut out with great care. The proper length is adjusted by experiments, and sometimes a man must scrap one after the other before he is satisfied. The cracker is connected to the lash by a characteristic joint, in that a small slit is cut into each, through which the two thong ends are pulled through each other (fig. 48. c). The cracker wears rather quickly in use and must be renewed frequently. Care is usually taken, therefore, to bring along a good supply of the thin strap (*singisaaq*) used for this purpose. — Using the dog whip requires considerable practice. So the children are given little whips from the time they are very small, and they may be seen standing and practising tirelessly for hours.

A part of the usual equipment of the sledge is a sledge skin (*ingioreq*), ordinarily a large sealskin placed directly on the sledge. If there is no load on the sledge, a sitting skin (*issiavik*) of bear or caribou is laid directly over it. Otherwise the sitting skin is placed on top of the load and lashed to the sledge along with it.

On rather long trips one or several coils of long straps are usually brought along, which are hung over the upstanders. They often come in handy in difficult situations, e.g. if sledges and dogs have to be lowered or pulled up in steep places. They are further used as brakes on the sledge when going down slippery glaciers where it is easy to lose control over the sledge. The braking is done by throwing a coil of strap down over each of the noses of the sledge; they will then be forced in underneath the runners and act as an effective brake. In dangerous situations it is possible to force the sledge athwart the path of driving by simply braking on one side, although to be sure this often turns the sledge over. On long downhill stretches, the dogs are often hitched up behind the

sledge so as to hold back as much as is feasible. A good many dramatic situations take place on this sort of occasion, not least while driving across the glaciers between Granville Fjord and Olrik Fjord, but as a rule no greater accidents happen than the breaking of a whip or an upstander.

Driving in stony terrain necessarily wears the sledge shoes a great deal, and they are often grooved deeply by sharp stones. Therefore, a large rough file also belongs to the sledge equipment, and in certain places along the sledge routes, as e.g. at Politikens Bræ at the head of Granville Fjord, it is established custom to stop and file the sledge shoes (*perdlarisartoq*) before beginning the ascent. The sledges are then unloaded and turned upside down so the shoes may be filed shiny and easy-running.

Occasionally, attempts have been made to ward off wear in stony terrain by tying walrus hide under the runners, meat side out so that it acts as grease. This, however, has not proved very practical, because the hide is very quickly cut to pieces by the stones. Under other conditions, on the other hand, especially when driving on the ice cap, the runners have been shoed with walrus hide, hair side out and iced over. This nearly does away with friction, and the method is especially useful in loose powdery frost-snow which acts almost like sand on the iron shoeing. The stomach of the caribou (*tuktup neruvkaa*) is also said to have been used on occasion instead of walrus hide. More common, however, is the procedure of covering the iron shoes with a coat of ice. This is done by quickly brushing water over them with a scrap of bearskin, afterwards rubbing them with snow. In older times, when the sledge shoes were made of ivory this method was more frequently applied, and a piece of bearskin was often sewed onto the outside of the sealskin mitten for use in brushing on the water. A mixture of water and blood has also been used. The ice coating, to be sure, is rather brittle and only suitable for smooth terrain, as e.g. on the ice cap. In descending, on the other hand, it may be a necessary precaution to scrape the ice coating off again. For daily driving, nothing extra is applied to the iron shoeing.

Dogs.

The dogs take up a goodly part of the existence of the Polar Eskimos. A good dog team is necessary in order to keep up what, according to Polar Eskimo conditions, is considered a high standard of living; and losing one's dog team is a very serious matter, which among other things entails greater dependency on others. The number of dogs in a team varies from time to time, but is generally between 7 and 15. However, a great deal of meat is naturally required for dog food so only the most

efficient hunters can afford to keep the really big teams. To understand the great importance of the dogs, one must keep in mind that the hunting trips of the Polar Eskimos often extend over hundreds of kilometers from home and may last for months. An existence without dogs is a toilsome existence. Nevertheless, times are recalled when the dogs for some reason had died and people had to push the sledges themselves by the upstanders (*kavsuartor*).

The original stock of dogs is said to have been strong, quite uniform black-grey animals, originating in America. Their procreative powers, however, are supposed to have ceased and they are no longer found. Nowadays, the dogs vary a great deal both in color and size, and dogs coming from the south at various times have often added new blood to the population. A good many dogs, however, are most nearly grey in color, others reddish-brown, black with a white blaze above the eyes, or nearly white (*quau*).

About the various types of dogs, opinions may be somewhat divided, although it is said that a dog with relatively high forelegs is stronger than one with low ones. On the comparison between male and female dogs as draught animals, the Polar Eskimos tell the following little story:

“Two men were going on a bear hunt. One had a team of all female dogs, the other of all male dogs. When they started out the females got far ahead because the males had to stop every few moments to piss. However, when they came to a bear track, the females fell behind, and they did not get there until the bear was already killed. — The story shows that an all-female dog team is good for traveling but not for bear hunting”. —

It is difficult to decide whether or not the Polar Eskimo dogs should be generally designated as fierce. However, it is always true that one should be cautious in approaching strange dogs. There is no doubt, either, that some dogs and even entire teams are fierce. Some hunters even have a reputation for having fierce dogs, and it was even said of one man that his dogs were so fierce that he had to have a helper swing the whip over the animals when they were to be hitched to the sledge, or when the traces had to be cleared. Neither does one enter a house without making certain that no dogs are lying in the house passage. If a man expects guests he will usually receive them outside the house and see to it that they are led in safely. To be sure, the team is usually tied up some distance away from the house, although a single dog often runs loose to keep other dogs at a distance; but it is quite common for a dog with puppies to be allowed to lie in the house passage. However, the dogs are not allowed into the house proper. An exception are the puppies that the children play with, or an especially favored or old dog that has seen much service and has difficulty getting along among the others.



Fig. 49. Removing the sharp points of the carnassial teeth of a young dog by means of a file.

There are undoubted advantages in having the team tied up at all times. No time is lost getting the dogs together again when they are to be used, and the risk of their eating straps and skin things is at least somewhat reduced. But the dogs are in this way prevented from getting some food for themselves and have to be fed regularly. If there is nothing to give them it is necessary therefore to let them loose. At Thule this was usually the case at a certain time of the summer (July), when hunting was normally slack, and nothing was safe then from the roaming dogs which could be dangerous, not least to the children.

When the dogs are tied up for a long time they are furthermore inclined to chew the traces with which they are tied. In order to prevent the traces from getting bitten through, it is therefore customary to knock or file the tips off the carnassial teeth (*keersautaisog*). It is done preferably while the dogs are still big puppies. The operation is done by two men forcing the jaws apart by means of a strap laid around each jaw, while a third holds the hind legs of the dog. The operator then strokes across the jaw with a big file until the desired result is reached (fig. 49). On older dogs, however, the tips usually have to be knocked off with a hammer. It requires a good deal of practice as there is always the risk of the teeth splitting. The whole thing lasts but a minute, and the dogs seem to recover surprisingly quickly after the operation, which is hardly painless

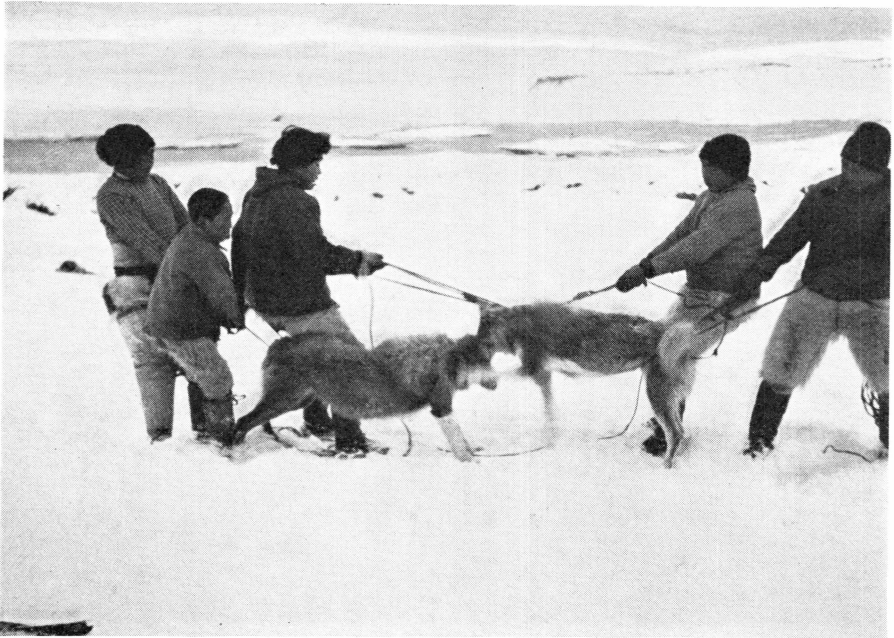


Fig. 50. *pårtitak*. A dog eager to fight becomes pacified by being attacked by other dogs one after another.

to them. A method that consist in "anaesthetizing" the dog by half choking it by strangulation (*anudlugo*) is also known, but is used only on big or very fierce dogs, or at times on dogs that have been brought up from the south.

If a dog is very quarrelsome and often gets into a fight with strange teams it is not unusual to put respect into it by a sort of "dog duel", called *paartitak*, whereby the aggressive dog is confronted violently with all the dogs of another team, one by one, and is exposed to their bites. It is done by having each combatant held by two men. One holds a strap put through the harness, the other a strap that is placed under the belly of the dog. In this way the dogs are lifted up and swung against each other to really provoke them so they will bite away at each other (fig. 50) When the quarrelsome dog has been mistreated in this way by all the others it will usually be pacified for a while. Curiously enough, however, it may also happen that a dog in the other team is favored by the quarrelsome one. In that case they may be bumped against each other as much as you please without causing anything but surprise and a reproachful glance. Formerly, *paartitak* was put on directly as a sport, in that people went around from settlement to settlement holding "tournaments" to test each other's dogs in this way.

If a dog is in the habit of running away and difficult to catch again (*alinggiattaq*), catching it with a thrown loop is sometimes tried. Puppies

that are especially shy are caught by making them run across a long thong which is being held by two men who suddenly tighten it upward at the moment it is under the belly of the dog (*naperdlugo*).

A dog with puppies is usually treated with great care and is often allowed to lie in the house passage or in a special little house (*siseegaq*), f. inst. a snow house built for it. When the puppies are a little bigger the children use them as playmates, and altogether they are allowed to frisk around rather freely. Not until they have to learn to go before the sledge as draught dogs does the serious moment come. They are then hitched up along with the grown dogs, with the result that time and again at the beginning they forget to follow suit and are dragged behind the sledge by the trace, until a flick of the whip makes them take up their places once again.

Formerly, magic means were also used to make good sledge dogs out of the puppies. A method is still remembered consisting of pulling the head and limbs of the tiny pup, blowing into its rear end, and pulling it like an accordion. That is supposed to make it grow fast, get big and become a fast runner. Dog amulets are also said to be still in use. Thus at Tuloriaq there is a rock from which people at times knock off chips for use as amulets, which are tied around the neck of the dog in a ribbon. The amulet is called *tuloriak*.

The dogs are also given names. The following were noted: *gernarisoq*, *idlungguanga*, *paappoq*, *hakkimaan*, *qupanuk*, *aluxaun*, *tarraktuun*, *niaqortoq*, *aterdluk*, *kaglutin*, *aleennang*, *heerruarng*, *atikaarruang*, *kajortor*, *naajuarruk*, *akuliartooq*, *takumnee*, and *aggerrungnaq*.

During the driving the dogs are directed partly by shouts and partly by the whip. The start signal is a quickly pronounced "*asuk!*". If the dogs are to be stopped, a long "*ai-ai-ai!*" is shouted. The usual shout to make the dogs use their strength better is an impatient "*hoq, hoq, hooq!*", mixed with "*asuk!*". If there are the least difficulties in the path e.g. pack ice, one hears incessantly "*hoq, hoq, hoq, hooq, asuk, asuk, aasuk!*" etc. Right turn is indicated by a sharp "*atsuk, atsuk!*", while at the same time the whip is hit into the snow to the left of the dogs. For left turn the driver shouts: "*hero, hero, herqo!*", while in the same way he hits with the whip to the right. As a special signal for speed some use "*quavsuar!*", strictly speaking "the big white", i.e. a bear. Often "*huxuar!*" is heard, or simply "*hukkor!*", which is said to be a distortion of "*inugssuaq!*", "a person". Other signals are a long drawn-out "*uloq!*", and "*taataq!*". If a sledge is driving in a circle around a breathing hole the dogs are kept going by a repeated "*la-la-la-la!*". If a couple of dogs begin to fight, an irritated "*alaaruk, alaaruk!*", "stop it!" is shouted.

A dog is sometimes taken along on a caribou hunt to be used as a pack dog. The baggage is placed in two skin bags which are hung

across the back of the dog, one on each side. Even though this may mean a considerable relief, it is rarely used in that such a dog is said to be hard to manage.

Rabies (*pivdlerorneq*) occurs at times. It is always thought to be due to bites by rabid foxes.

Snow Shoes — Skis.

The art of making snow shoes is known, probably learned from American expeditions. I saw one pair hanging in a house in the south district where the snow fall in the spring can be very heavy, and I also had one pair made for me on order.

Yet skis are used more commonly than snow shoes, also chiefly in the south district. They are made according to West Greenland pattern, covered on the underside by sealskin, and they are said to be useful when hunting *ũtoq*, because they make but little noise in the snow.

Tump Line.

In carrying heavy burdens, f. inst. on caribou hunts, or in transporting turf for the winter house, an improvised tump line is often used. A strap of suitable length is tied together by the ends and placed with one bight across the forehead and one bight across the chest, while the burden is placed between the strap and the back. The forehead part is usually made broader by triple-folding the line and tying knots at the ends of the forehead piece. If only a single strap is used a piece of skin is inserted in order to distribute the pressure on the forehead.

Kayak.

Until the late 1860es, the Polar Eskimos had no kayaks. When and how the kayak (*qayaq*) as well as other cultural elements went out of use is not known for sure. However, with the immigration of people from Baffin Island the kayak was reintroduced, for which reason it came to be the fairly broad, heavy Baffin Island type. Such a kayak is still used by Moses (fig. 51). In later years, however, the knowledge of the West Greenland kayaks has made itself felt, not least on the initiative of manager HANS NIELSEN and Pastor JENS OLSEN. The use of the kayak, however, is very much limited because of the short period of July-October when there is open water. Yet the kayak is sometimes brought along on the sledge for hunting at the edge of the ice. It is then placed with the stem lying between the noses of the sledge and lashed in back, the flat deck against the left upstander. In this way, it also gives the sledge driver a support to lean against, at times even protection against

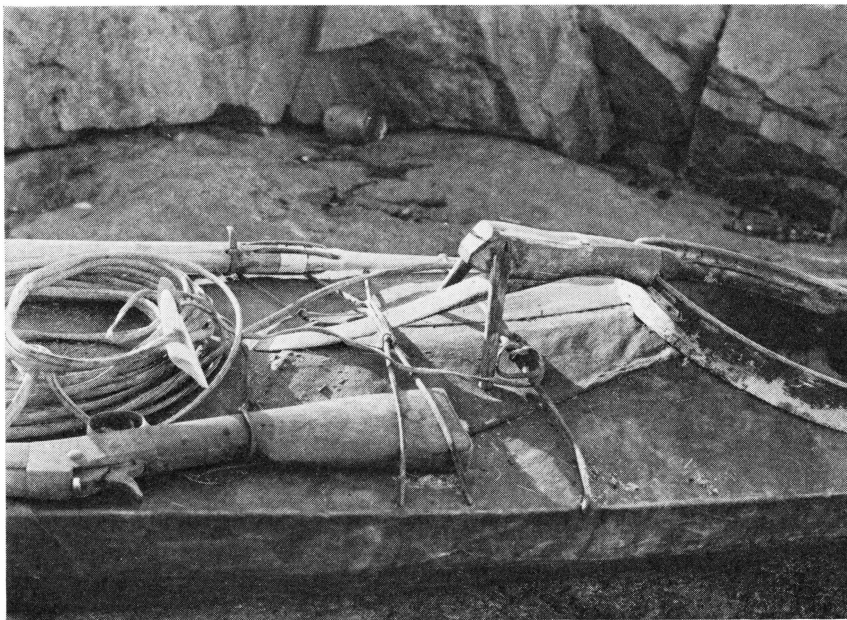


Fig. 51. Detail of Moses' kayak with paddle rest.

the wind. In heavy wind, however, it is a difficult matter to drive with a kayak on the sledge.

The construction of the kayak corresponds now generally to that of the West Greenland one, although modified somewhat to the available materials. This is especially true of the kayak ribs (*tikpin*) which must

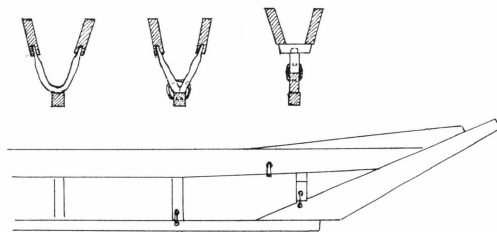


Fig. 52. Details of kayak stem.

often be pieced together of three pieces of wood, so that the two pieces are joined to the horizontal bottom piece by means of a lashing, and at the top are mortised into the gunwhale, where they are held by wooden nails (*nikartordlugo*) (fig. 52). As far as possible, however, osiers are now used, which are bent to the proper shape and, like the long laths, are available in the store.

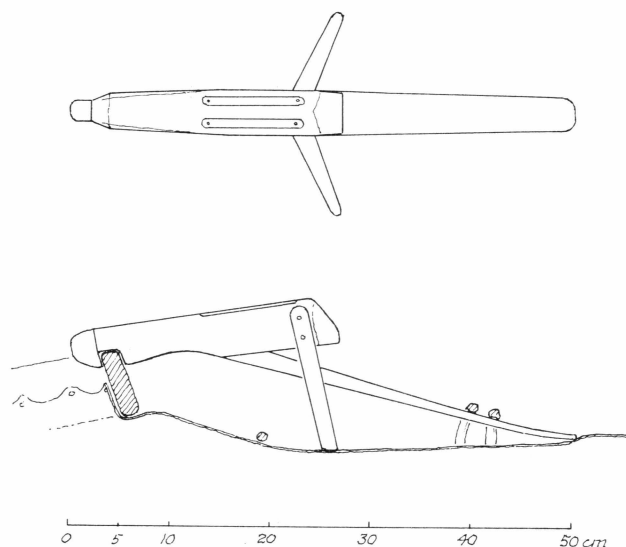


Fig. 53. Rest for kayak paddle.

Gunwhales and side laths are called *sanerautit*. The gunwhales are kept apart at the right distance by the deck ribs (*napue*), of which the one immediately in front of the opening of the kayak on which the kayak ring rests, is curved upward somewhat and is called *masik*. The corresponding rib in back is called *sulitarfik*. Lengthwise of the kayak, from the opening and some distance forward are placed two deck laths. The keelson (*kujaa*), in front and back, is joined to specially added prow

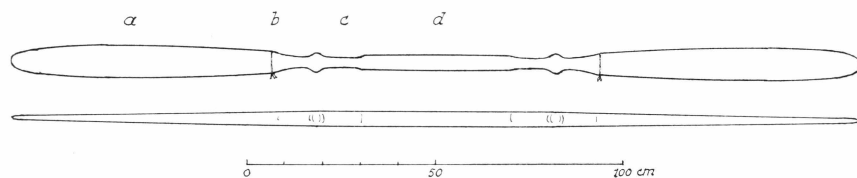


Fig. 54. Kayak paddle of old type, belonging to Moses.

and stern heads (*siornga* and *kingornga* respectively). The kayak ring or manhole (*paag*) is now circular but that, too, formerly had to be put together from several pieces of wood and consisted of a straight piece in back and a highly curved one in front. Covering the kayak usually requires 5 sealskins from which the hairs have been cut (*neqpiagtq*). Across the deck are placed a number of cross-thongs (*tarqat*), three or four a little ahead of the opening and one closely behind it, as well as one near each of the prows. On the cross-thongs may be inserted knobs

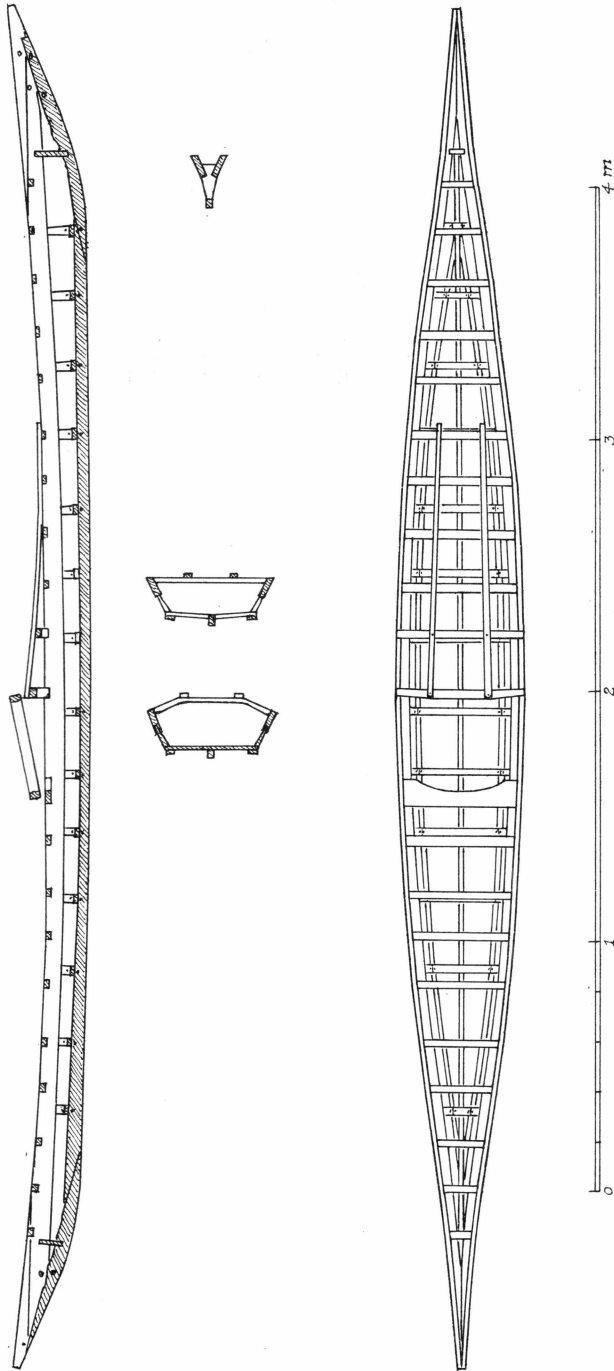


Fig. 55. The wooden frame of a Polar Eskimo kayak.

of ivory (*sukatsisit*), and to the left of the kayak ring is a harpoon rest (*unaarsivik*) (fig. 61. C and D). At times a keel mounting of bone (*perdlaaq* or *sikuarsiun*) is attached to the kayak. In older times a support (*agiaq*) was placed directly in front of the kayak ring for the rather heavy paddle. Such a paddle rest, as shown in fig. 53 was still used by Moses. It consists of a rather heavy piece of wood, some 25 cm long into which are mortised two bone rails on the side. In the back on the underside is a deep notch which fastens down over the kayak ring, and in front it is supported partly by two straddling legs (*niunge*), partly by a long flattened and springy piece which is pressed in under the cross-thongs of the kayak.

The kayak paddle (*pautik*) is now most often made of ash wood. The center part (*akuninga*) is oval in cross section, narrows somewhat at the handles (*teemisarfik*), and on each side changes gradually into the blade (*ulunnaq*) whose end (*nuugwik*) is either rounded off or is now somewhat pointed. The paddle has no bone edgings or mountings but is usually supplied with a drip ring (*qordlorfik*) consisting of a thin cord tied around each blade a slight distance from the handle and with the ends of the cord sticking out a bit. At times the drip ring is tied through a little hole near one of the edges of the paddle. On the older type of paddle (fig. 54) the handle was more definitely developed and separated from the blade part by a bead-like swelling. —

Fig. 55 shows the measurements of a kayak built by Qarqutsiaq during the stay on Inglefield Land in the summer of 1936, for which he had brought along the necessary wooden laths. It is 595 cm long and 54 cm wide at the center. For comparison may serve that Moses' kayak was 585 cm long and 56 cm wide. As will be seen from the drawing and the photo fig. 56, the ribs are each made of three fashioned pieces, the length of which is in each case determined by the place on the rib in the kayak frame. First the deck piece was made with the insertion of the deck ribs, so they came to sit flush with the top edge of the gunwhales, which were held in the proper position by means of lacings. Then the side pieces of the ribs were mortised in, which in turn were connected with the bottom pieces by lashings. Altogether, this was one great puzzle, requiring a great deal of patience. Keelson and side laths having been placed, and the prows having been given their proper shape by insertion of the special stem and stern heads, the frame was ready for covering.

The covering of the kayak, too, is a rather laborious process, although it has to be carried out with a certain rapidity, because the skins must not have time to dry before the covering has been completed. It is necessary, therefore, for several persons to work together. For covering Qarqutsiaq's kayak, 5 ringed sealskins were used, from which the hairs



Fig. 56. Qarqutsiaq's kayak under construction

had been shaved and which had only been scraped loosely so as not to remove all the blubber. First, the width of the kayak skin was marked off on each skin by punching holes, after which they were cut out so that they matched. Then the skins were lashed together at the corners so as to form a chain corresponding to the length of the kayak. To facilitate the sewing they were hung up by the lashes, one at a time, in a sort of gallows, made of three bars (fig. 57). The skins were sewed together from top to bottom by Qarqutsiaq's wife, Patdloq. The skins were sewn together with double, watertight seams, first on the outside, then on the inside. After each stitch the sinew thread was tightened well, and so as not to wear the skin off the fingers, skin sewing rings were used on the three first fingers, in addition to the thimble on the forefinger. The rings were made for the occasion from a strip of white skin which was put around the finger in question, cut off at the right length, and sewn together.

The covering of the kayak was started as soon as the sewing together of the skins was finished; it lay bottom up at a comfortable level on a couple of boxes. The skin was first laced around the stern, then stretched out and laced in the same way to the stem. It was then pulled around the kayak frame and tied together with a string behind the kayak opening, to be able to manage it. Now the kayak with the skin was turned over, so that it lies deck upward, and little loops or eyes of sinew



Fig. 57. Gallows for suspension of the kayak skin to be sewn together.

thread, for the tightening straps to pass through, were sewn at suitable intervals into the underside of the skin, some 3 cm from the edge of the skin. Such a tightening strap, which serves the purpose of pulling the skin edges together, is fastened to the skin in front and back and then pulled through the eyes, back and forth, zigzag, across the deck, each time pulled as tight as possible. The work requires two men, standing one on each side of the kayak, one of whom has the task of tightening the skin toward him. This is done by biting into it firmly and pulling hard with his teeth. To really get hold of it he puts a little wooden plug into the skin, a little inside the sinewthread eye, whereupon he will bite the skin together around the plug and pull hard. At the same time the helper tightens the strap from the other side, and they continue in this manner until the kayak opening is reached. When the skins have been pulled together across the deck in this way there are still some openings left between the edges of the skins.

Now, holes were drilled through skin and gunwhale in the positions where the cross-thongs were to be placed. These were inserted and fastened in the usual way, in that a slit was cut at a small distance from the ends, into which the bent thong end was inserted and drawn tight against the wood. One cross-thong was placed near the fore end and one aft, and four in front of the kayak opening. The two nearest of these were joined by two inserted bone pieces (*sukatsisit*).



Fig. 58. A kayak-ferry.

The skins were then sewn together over the deck, extra pieces being added at the widest part, near the kayak opening. Here too, a double seam is used, beginning fore and aft. For the inner seam, it was said, it did not matter so much if one should happen to pierce the lower skin. This seam may be done with ordinary overcast stitches. However, for the outer seams, this is not practicable on account of the tightness of the skins. It is sewn with a watertight seam, the needle always being passed lengthwise of the seam. In the same way patches are sewn onto the skin over any holes that may be found in the skin. The sewing was done by alternately sewing a small length on the underside, and then a corresponding length on the outside watertight seam, which swelled out like a bead due to the tightening of the skin edges. During the sewing the parts that were not immediately being worked on were covered with skin in order not to dry out too quickly. The tightness of the seams was constantly tested by applying the mouth and sucking.

Finally, the skin was sewn tightly to the kayak ring with a thin skin string which was pulled through holes in the ring. This was put in its place whereupon the skin was first fastened front and back with a single stitch of about 2 cm which at the same time held the kayak ring in its proper position. Then it was continued all the way around, and at last the skin edge was cut clean a little way above the sewing. When the covering was completed the kayak was allowed to lie and dry. If

strictly necessary, though, it could be used right away, according to Qarqutsiaq.

For further tightening of the seams boiled-down train oil (*puja* or *sergulaan*) was used. For this use it should not be too thick (*kinertog*), but preferably smooth-flowing (*piertog*), about like thick varnish. In the case at hand, blubber was used which had gathered on top of a puddle and was boiled in a tin can over a fire of wood chips and blubber. For greasing the dried kayak skin, as well as for the sealing float, blubber from bearded seal is supposed to be especially good, whereas it flows too thin for use in the lamps. —

The big skin boat (*umiaq*) is no longer known by the Polar Eskimos. Only a rather old man said he had heard that Qitdlaq who had immigrated a long time ago was said to have brought an umiaq with him, which he had used here until it was replaced by a wooden boat. —

A sort of kayak ferry is made at times when a passenger has to be transported. For this purpose two blown-up sealing floats are tied together solidly by means of a strap which is carried underneath the kayak so that the floats are pressed tightly against it, one on each side (fig. 58). The passenger then sits on the deck of the kayak between the two floats.



Fig. 59. Qarqutsiaq and Maigssánguaq wearing kayak half-jackets. Qarqutsiaq also wears kayak sleeves.

IV. HUNTING AND HUNTING IMPLEMENTS

Hunting from the Kayak.

Since the use of the kayak is limited by natural conditions to a few months of the year, it is understandable that the kayak technique is not as highly developed as in other parts of Greenland. The complete kayak jacket is not used, so the art of righting up the kayak with the paddle when capsized is not familiar. Yet a few use a kayak skirt of dark, depilated sealskin according to South Greenland pattern (fig. 59). The picture also shows Qarqutsiaq having pull-over half sleeves which prevent the anorak sleeves from getting wet from the dripping of the oar. As far as possible, paddling in kayak is avoided if seas are too heavy. Neither is the kayak stand used in that the coiled-up harpoon line is simply placed on the deck in front of the hunter. Nevertheless, hunting from a kayak is often done with great daring, not least when it comes to walruses; and it now plays an essential role within the yearly hunting cycle by taking up a period when the hunters were formerly limited to the catching of little auks, puffins, and minor land game.

The hunting implements applied are the kayak harpoon (*unaaq*) with its line (*aleq*), float (*avataq*), and sometimes a drag anchor (*niutaq*), as well as the kayak lance (*anguvigaq*). Now, furthermore, a rifle is

used which is carried inserted in a gun-bag of skin, resting on a small wooden support (fig. 60. a). A flensing knife is carried besides, and at times a special dragging hook with handle (fig. 60. b), used after flensing for dragging big pieces of meat.



Fig. 60. Kayak gun rest (a) and hook with handle for dragging meat (b).

Kayak Harpoon.

unaaq is used as the designation of the harpoon as a whole. The older type, still used, has a rather heavy wooden shaft about 2 m long and is provided with a finger rest (*tikaagut*) (fig. 61. E). It is usually thrown in a rather high curve and so hits the animal to a certain extent with its own weight. The considerable weight of the harpoon itself is especially expedient for walrus hunting from the kayak, when the harpoon has to pull the very long and heavy line after it. However, under influence from West Greenland, a lighter and more slender kayak harpoon is now used, which is thrown with a throwing board. The throwing board is used only for throwing from the kayak, and it is said not to be expedient if the harpoon is thrown from a standing position as e.g. when harpooning at the edge of the ice.

Fig. 61. A shows a knob harpoon with throwing board belonging to Moses. The foreshaft (*eemaq*) (a) is of walrus tusk and rests with a short tenon (*oqummiarattaq*) in a corresponding depression in the socket piece (*qaateq*) (b), which encases the end of the wooden shaft. The foreshaft has two holes for the line that keeps it in place at the end of the wooden shaft yet is so elastic as to allow the foreshaft to become dis-jointed when the harpoon hits. This facilitates the freeing of the shaft which is fished out while the harpooned animal flees with line and float following it.

The throwing board (*norsaq*) has finger grooves in its two edges and two holes for the pegs that fasten it to the shaft. The pegs and the holes together are called *napasortaq*. On the inside of the throwing board is a lengthwise groove (*kooroq*) corresponding to the curvature of the shaft. The tail end of the board is reinforced by a mounting of ivory. The throwing board must be fastened rather tightly to the pegs, yet it is claimed that even if tight it will always come free the moment the harpoon is thrown. — The harpoon shaft decreases gradually in thickness toward the tail end, on which a carved end knob of ivory (*papik*) is placed.

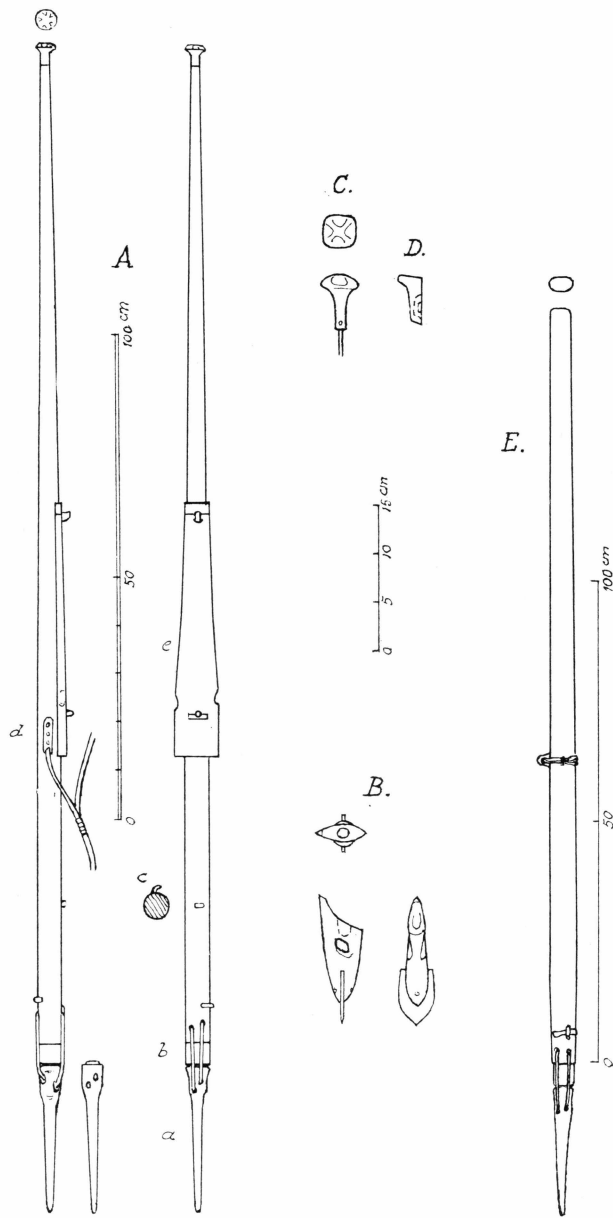


Fig. 61. Kayak harpoons (A and E), harpoon head (B), and harpoon rests (C and D).

The harpoon head of ivory belonging to it (fig. 61. B) is here of the "thin" (*sakko*) type. It has a closed socket (*toorfik*) for the foreshaft, an iron blade (*ulo*) parallel to the line hole (*puto*), and a single dorsal spur at the back (*pamioq*). To make the harpoon ready for throwing,

the harpoon head is fastened to the end of the foreshaft, and the foremost part of the line (*aleq*) is tightened down along the shaft and fastened to it by means of a thong buckle (*orseq*) (d), which is connected with the harpoon line by a short piece of line, and which buttons onto a small bone peg (*orsiserfik*). The line is further held tight to the shaft by a small bone hook (c).

For use in walrus hunting some hunters have changed over to using throwing harpoons with foreshafts of iron rod. The iron is in that case mortised into a foot of ivory in a way similar to the lance. The harpoon head belonging to it is then also made of iron.

Formerly, harpoon heads were used of the *sakko* type with an open socket. The knowledge of these is still preserved, and they are

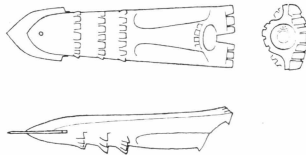


Fig. 62. Harpoon head of flat type for white whale hunting.

claimed to be really very excellent, but they are no longer used. — In kayak hunting in the summer, but not from the ice, harpoon heads of the flat type (*tuukaq*) are also used (fig. 62). They may be of considerable size and are often furnished with rows of small barbs or teeth on the ventral side. They are especially suitable for hunting narwhals and white whales. The flat type of harpoon head, like the throwing board, was thought to be due to influence from the south.

It is important that the harpoon head be properly proportioned, and in making it, the size of its cross section is carefully checked by means of a thread placed in a loop around it. The width of the blade is so adjusted as to be exactly sufficient to cut a hole for the front end of the harpoon head. At the tail end the harpoon head is somewhat fuller so that it requires a certain extra force to drive it through the skin of the animal. However, the difference in circumference at the widest part of the blade and the tail end of the harpoon head must not exceed 15 mm, though it must lie between 10 and 15 mm, in that it also must be taken into consideration how much space the harpoon line takes up in the wound. If the harpoon head is too wide in back, the risk is run of its springing back out of the wound, which is no unusual occurrence. The blade is preferably made of steel, most often from an old saw blade, and it is honed very sharp. Furthermore, the shaft socket of the harpoon head must be fashioned with great care so that it fits very tightly around the end of the foreshaft, in such a way that the throw is directed straight



Fig. 63. Drag anchor and sealing float.

and the harpoon does not fall off prematurely. The foreshaft should go exactly all the way in without creating tension in the shaft socket, otherwise the harpoon head will burst. In the case of harpoon heads with open shaft sockets, the requirements for the adjustment are not quite as great, in that the harpoon head is here held to the foreshaft by elastic cross lashings.

The harpoon line (*aleq*) used in hunting from the kayak generally has a length of some 18 m. The line used for walrus hunting is about 1 cm wide and about half as thick. For seal hunting, a somewhat lighter line is generally used.

The float (*avataq*) is made from a whole sealskin with the foreflippers hanging on to it. It is placed on the back of the kayak deck, on top of the drag anchor and has no special detaining pegs or anything else to fasten it to the kayak, as is the case in other parts of Greenland. The float has a heavy toggle by which it is connected to the tail end of the harpoon line.

The drag anchor (*niutak*) (fig. 63) consists of a square wooden frame which may be up to some 50 cm wide, made from boards appr. 7 cm wide and appr. $1\frac{1}{2}$ cm thick. The biggest forms are those used for walrus hunting while for white whales they may be somewhat smaller. The frame has a bottom of skin, tied around the frame and either sewn onto the top edge of the frame with a skin strap or held by a wooden list nailed on to it. The latter is said to be the most common. In the

center of the skin bottom is a round hole through which the water can sift slowly when the drag anchor is towed, and which helps it keep at a right angle to the direction of the pull. At each of the four corners, a strap is fastened, the end of which is split, and the two flaps are fastened through holes, one in each of the adjoining sides about 10 cm from the corner. The ends of the straps, some 50 cm in length, are joined by a 5 m long connecting thong which is coupled to the float by a loop.

Kayak Lance.

Fig. 64 A shows a kayak lance (*anguvigaq*) as now used. The length is 195 cm. The name *anguvigaq* applies to the lance as a whole, but in a narrower sense to the blade. The blade (a) is pointed-elliptical and inserted into a foreshaft (*ipuligaq*) which is now made of iron rod, and is fastened to a foot (*manguvfik*) (b) of ivory. Like the foreshaft of the harpoon, it ends at the back in a flat tenon which fits into a depression in the socket piece (*qaateq*) (c) at the front end of the wooden shaft (*unaartaq*) with which the foreshaft is connected by an elastic double lacing (*tavsutak*). The holes through which the lacing-thong goes are called correspondingly *tavsutarfik*. Approximately at the middle of the shaft is a finger rest (*tikaagut*) fastened by a lacing (*tikaustiut*).

For hunting white whale, a lance is still at times in use with a bladder lashed to it, consisting of a blown-up larynx of a white whale (*qilalukkap igxianga*). This bladder is called *avataaq* and is located near the rear end of the shaft, fastened by a lashing in front and back. On the other hand, such a lance with bladder is never used for walrus hunt.

Reserve Lance Head, for placing on the foreshaft of the harpoon, is known. The attaching of the reserve lance head is called *saviktartog*.

Fire Arms.

Through the foreign expeditions during the 19th century, and in particular through Peary's expeditions around the turn of the century, the Polar Eskimos had become familiar with fire arms, and several had come to possess them. Their use, however, was rather limited as long as ammunition for them could not be acquired regularly, which was not the case until the founding of the Thule Station in 1910. At that time the Polar Eskimos also were enabled to buy the most modern Mauser magazine rifles, especially suitable for walrus hunting which requires a weapon of great striking power. Therefore, a magazine rifle got the designation of *auversiut*, i.e. "a means of walrus hunting", while a rifle of older model (Remington .67) is called *koorortor*, or simply *serquut*. For smaller animals, 22-caliber rifles were also used, and for birds shot-guns (*suvdlutoog*).

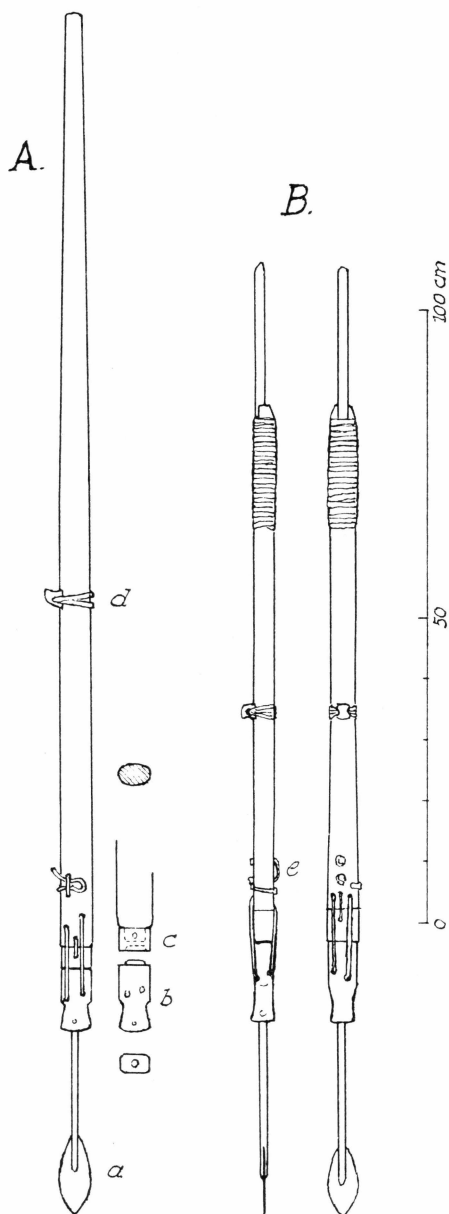


Fig. 64. Kayak lance (A) and lance with ice-chisel used in walrus hunting on the ice (B).

Taking the individual parts of the rifle, the breechblock is named *mato*, the cock *puikkartartog*, the pin *qaartsitsit*, the bolt *kikiak*, the trigger *nusugiaq*, the trigger guard *nusugissap tarxaa*, and the butt *ipua*. A cartridge as a whole is *ilulissak* while the lead bullet is *geekor*, the

percussion cap *qaartartor*, and the empty cartridge case *poor*. Shot is *amerdlasuut*, as in West Greenland. A cleaning rod is called *paulangeen*.

Towing Implement.

The towing thongs (sing. *kaglun*) commonly used by the Polar Eskimos consists simply of a thong with a toggle-shaped piece of bone (*peersaut*) at each end. One is passed through the eye of the seal, the other is fastened to the kayak.

Fig. 65 shows a towing implement which belonged to Moses but was said to originate from Angmagssalik. How it had come into the posses-

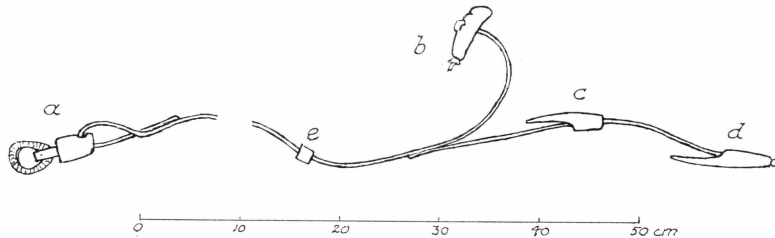


Fig. 65. Towing implement.

sion of Moses, I did not learn. It consists of a thong 180 cm long which at one end has a swivel (*qivsaur*) (a) of the barrel-shaped type, made of narwhal tusk, and at the other end a toggle of 4 cm length, carved with a penis-like head (b). About 20 cm from this, the thong has been lengthened with a 30 cm long piece of thong which is sewn on, and on which two 10 cm long, claw-shaped buckles (*peersaut*) (c-d) have been inserted. Also on the thong are 4 small bone rings as at (e).

Seal Hunting from the Kayak.

Seal hunting from the kayak is usually one man's hunt. However, several kayaks are preferably near each other, and at times the seals are hunted according to a common plan. Thus, at Thule, it happened, after the sailing of the ship, when meat was scarce, that a rather large number of hunters went out together accompanied by a row boat which carried the necessary gear for a trip of several days. In Wolstenholme Fjord the kayaks split up into two lines rowing forward slowly, one behind the other, first a way outward, then inward into the fjord. Once a seal emerged, the one who was closest tried to harpoon it. However, when the wind rose all the kayaks were tied together into a raft which was towed while the hunters themselves boarded the row boat for a while. It wasn't much good hunting seal while the wind was blowing, they declared, for then the kayak was in too much motion. The night



Fig. 66. A caught white whale is rolled up on the beach for flensing.

was spent partly in small stone hunting shelters, of which a good many were to be found on the north side of the fjord, partly in an abandoned house at Ugli on the south side. Nevertheless, the hunt had to be given up after a few days because of persistently bad weather, so the surplus of meat was not great on this occasion, since naturally quite a little was consumed for food on the way. —

White whale, too, is hunted from the kayak. Most white whales are caught from the settlements at Inglefield Bredning (Kangerdlugssuaq) where it is especially numerous. Unfortunately, I did not have occasion to see such a hunt. However, a few white whales were also caught in Wolstenholme Fjord and towed to Thule where the flensing was done. Also, a couple of white whales were caught in an open-water net belonging to the minister.

Walrus Hunting from the Kayak.

Walrus hunting from the kayak is done from the end of August and into October, as long as there is still open water. It is carried on principally in three areas: 1) Wolstenholme Fjord, i.e. the area between the mainland and Saunders Ø, 2) on the stretch from the eastern end of Herbert Ø north past Kap Robertson, and 3) in Smith Sund off Littleton Ø slightly to the northwest of Etah. The latter place, to be sure, is not always inhabited. However, summer hunting has been carried on since

1936 even further north at Marshall Bugt. In the former area mostly old males are caught, in the other places exclusively females, young, and half-grown males.

Even though walrus are most often attacked and harpooned from the kayak, a larger row boat or motor boat is usually taken along for transporting the hunters and gear to the hunting grounds proper and for help in towing and transporting the meat supplies home. At Thule, this was the usual procedure, and the hunters were taken by turns in the two motor boats of the station, four men in each boat as a rule. Each boat carried a kayak, although each man brought his harpoon with its line and float as well as rifle and flensing knife. The right to harpooning went by turns. When an animal was to be attacked the motor boats held back to avoid noise, while the kayakers tried to steal in on the animal and harpoon it, whereupon it was pursued and killed by shots from the motor boats. The walrusses, however, were also harpooned from the motor boats directly, especially when found sleeping on ice floes. Then they were approached with the sun in the back so the walrus would be blinded by the low sun and its reflection in the water so it could not see the boat. If only a row boat was used for the hunt, each participant brought his own kayak, as for seal hunting.

Like any big-game hunt, the walrus hunt demands a mixture of caution and daring. If the harpooning is done from the kayak, the animal is preferably approached from the back, and after having dropped the float and possibly the drag anchor, the kayaker continues on his course ahead. When hit, the walrus is apt to turn over in the water as it dives, returning to the surface further back for an attack, in the belief that this is still where the danger awaits it. When harpooning from a boat, the drag anchor is rarely used since it may involve a danger if not dropped in time. Furthermore, the floats are kept ready in the bow of the boat and at the gunwhale, the hunters with their harpoons ready, hiding behind them, to give the walrus the impression that just another walrus is approaching.

When walrusses occur in herds, as is often the case, especially toward the end of the season, it is very dangerous to attack them. The same is said to be true when they are found sleeping in the water with only the head above the surface. If there are several, the whole herd is likely to attack if only one is awakened and becomes disturbed. Likewise, one does not like to attack a walrus that is itself hunting, in which case it is very alert. It is also dangerous to approach walrusses lying on an ice floe if at the same time there are animals in the water trying to come up to sleep. The latter are usually extremely irritable. If in spite of precautions a walrus attacks a kayak or a boat, an attempt is made to scare it by a shot into the water, or the attack is averted by

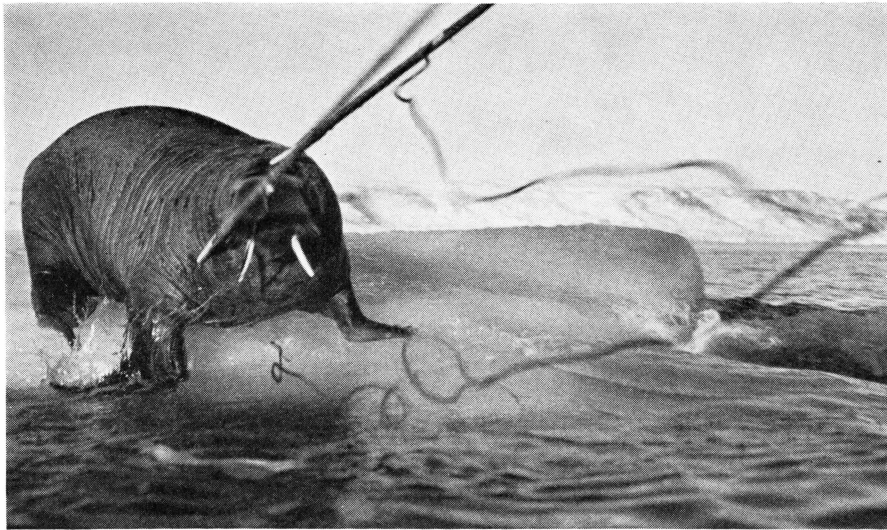


Fig. 67. A walrus harpooned while sleeping on an ice floe.

dropping a float, giving the hunters a chance to escape to safety while the float is hacked to shreds within moments by the tusks of the animal. As a rule, a few harpoon shafts are also lost in the process.

For hunting walrus the harpoon blades are whetted so as to be as sharp as razor blades. The thick, tough hide is hard to penetrate, and it is not unusual during this hunt for a harpoon to rebound. The floats, too, must be tight and well blown up. If a walrus succeeds in pulling the float below the surface for any length of time, the float soon loses its air and both float and walrus will be lost. If on the other hand a walrus should stay down immediately after being killed, it will as a rule float back up after about 24 hours. The walrus is most vulnerable at the base of the head and in the kidney region, and in the luckiest cases may be killed by a single well-aimed shot. Even though it appears to be dead, it still is approached with caution, and harpoon shafts are thrown at it to see if it still reacts. If it does not, the hunters make ready for the towing.

If the towing is done by boat, the fore and hind flippers respectively are tied together. These are fished out, either with a pointed boat hook or by a special grapnel with four pointed hooks placed as on a jig, 15 cm long in all. The back end of the animal is then pulled forward by the flippers and the head is pulled to the aft by a line tied through a hole in the nose, and the joined flippers pulled up close to the gunwale of the boat. For this purpose, a strap is also cut into the hide at the middle of the animal through which a line is pulled. Once the animal is thus secured to the side of the boat, belly upward, it is blown up by means

of a cannula which may be made from an old gun barrel. Air is blown in both above and below the diaphragm, and the holes closed with big wooden wound plugs — or for lack of these, with cartridge cases. However, the killed animal is not always taken along. If the hunt is to be continued for a while yet, the blown-up animal is simply left to float in the water with a float tied to it. In this way, it is easy to find and recover later.

In the area off Neqe in the northern district, where the walruses may occur in great numbers, but the sea often is rough, the towing may cause particular troubles, especially if the animals have been driven far out to sea during the hunt. It has therefore been common there to shoot them from land when they come close to shore, hauling them in afterwards. However, when shooting the animals before they are harpooned, the risk is great of losing several, and this was forbidden in the Thule area, subject to fine, unless done in absolute self-defense. A walrus killed under such conditions had to be given to the hospital.

In the summer, before the ice has disappeared completely, walrus may be hunted under certain conditions by a combination of kayak and ice-edge hunting. Off Marshall Bugt, e.g., herds of walrus appeared in August and could often be lured to come close by means of luring shouts. In this case, the hunters rowed out to the area where the walruses were near drifting ice floes. Here they boarded a suitable floe and pulled their kayaks up, whereupon the walruses were lured close enough to the floe so they could be harpooned from it. The harpooned animal was then made fast to the ice floe by means of the harpoon line, sometimes simply by the men holding on to the line while they put their feet against some bump in the ice. As a result, the walrus swam away with the entire ice floe until finally killed by rifle shot. As far as possible, an attempt was made to make it pull in the direction of land, so as to save part of the towing. This was done by the kayaks, in a line one after the other, harnessing themselves to the animal by means of a long thong, the animal having first been raised somewhat in the water by floats tied to it. Quite a few walruses were caught in this way.

During the flensing the stomach contents were usually carefully checked. They consisted chiefly of bivalves which were eaten immediately as a great delicacy after having been “blanched” like almonds, removing the outer, dark, skinlike membrane. The half-digested bivalve has a fresh, slightly acidulous taste.

Hunting from the Edge of the Ice.

Seal, walrus, or narwhal and white whale are at times harpooned from the edge of the ice where it adjoins the open water directly or where wide, open leads have formed or at holes in the firm winter ice due to

current. Such hunting was more common in former days but is still carried on occasionally where conditions favor it, especially off Kap York and Savigsivik, where wide leads are often formed late in the winter. Both narwhal and white whale are often caught there in this manner. As a rule, the kayak is carried on the sledge, although the harpooning proper is done from the ice and the float is fastened at the end of the harpoon line (*apaidlugo*). The hunting is usually done by two men, one of whom does the harpooning while the other helps secure the harpooned animal which flees at once. For his assistance the helper gets the hind half (*itersuaq*) of the animal as his hunting share. Having a man as a hunting partner in this way is called *itersorqakteqatardlugo*.

The expression "*apaidlugo*" really means "tethering it to something", and seems to go back to a time when no float was used on this occasion, but the animal was made fast to the ice or perhaps to something on land. The same expression is used in the old myth of the origin of the narwhal where the harpoon line is tied to a person who is supposed to hold back the animal.

Savsat, i.e. the hunting of narwhal or white whale caught in an opening in the ice when a large area has suddenly frozen over, does occur, although rarely, and then chiefly in Inglefield Bredning (Kangerdlugssuaq). On one occasion 80 white whales are said to have been caught there. Another such case is mentioned from Wolstenholme Fjord.

Ice-Hunting.

Because of the natural conditions ice-hunting must necessarily play a predominant role for the Polar Eskimos, hence all the most commonly used methods of ice-hunting are known to them, although not all are used to the same extent. Ice-hunting in the winter is chiefly for seals and walruses. The latter are of primary interest because only the hunting of walrus affords the possibility of acquiring the necessary quantities of dog food, and consequently this is the field in which the hunting technique has in particular been greatly developed. Seals are caught in the winter at their breathing holes or in tidal leads at icebergs. This hunt has special significance in the southern part of the district. Undoubtedly, however, the most advantageous seal hunting is in the spring when the seals climb up on the ice to sun themselves and sleep (*ūtut*).

The equipment for ice-hunting is usually very simple, often being limited to the ice-hunting harpoon itself with its line. For walrus hunting the special lance with ice chisel in the rear end (*toog*) is added. Also, as a rule, a rifle is nowadays included. Of the special equipment for hunting at the breathing holes only a three-legged hunting stool and

bear-skin sandals are sometimes used. For *ūtoq* hunting in the spring, a shooting screen is now used.

Ice-Hunting Harpoon.

The designation *eemaq* is used for the weapon as a whole, but in a narrower sense describes the foreshaft. Fig. 68 shows a typical ice-hunting harpoon. The foreshaft (b), which is now nearly always made of a piece of iron rod, is inserted into an oblong groove in the front end of the wooden shaft (*unaartaq*) and fastened there by a strong lashing. The part with the lashing around it is called *peerneq*, while the lashing thong itself is *nimeq*. The back end of the shaft (*papik*) (g) is broad and flattened out and used as a sort of ice scoop for clearing a hole in the ice of small pieces of ice. To the root of the foreshaft is fastened a thong (*noorqaut*) which is tightened lengthwise of the shaft and fastened by several half-hitches. In the back at (f) (*norruiserfik* or *attungia*) it is pulled through two holes in the shaft and fastened. This thong serves partly to keep the fore part of the harpoon line (*aglunatsiaq*) tight to the shaft, in that either a small strap (*savgun*) (h), which is sewn onto the line, is slipped in under the thong, or a bight of the harpoon line itself is slipped in under it. The former is used for seal hunting at the breathing holes, the latter always for walrus hunting. Partly, however, the tightening thong also serves to make sure that the foreshaft is not lost if it should break off beneath *peerneq* (*peernaartor*), as happens at times. At the center of gravity of the wooden shaft, a finger rest (*tikaagut*) is placed. At the root of the foreshaft is also sometimes fastened a small loop (*nuggivik*) (c), through which the harpoon line may be pulled if the harpoon is used as a throwing harpoon. The shaft in that case will remain hanging at the line and may be pulled back in. In some cases a short strap (*assak*) is fastened to the shaft of the ice-hunting harpoon, enabling the hunter to thrust it and let go, then quickly pull it back again.

For the ice-hunting harpoon nearly all now use an iron head of the *sakko* type (fig. 68. C, D) which is not ruined even though thrust hard against the ice. The fore end of the harpoon line is bent into a loop (*issaa*) into which the harpoon head is pushed (*uiguserdlugo*). The joint of the line, which is secured by heavy sewing, is called *uigutit*. At the tail end of the line is another loop (*nordlo*) which, when hunting seal, one throws around the left elbow in order to hold on better, and which, in the walrus hunt serves for making the harpooned animal fast. To this loop is sometimes tied a small piece of thong (*qilertoraq*) which the hunter holds between his teeth until the right moment comes for letting it fall down on the ice.

In former times the foreshaft of the ice-hunting harpoon was usually made of narwhal tusk and the harpoon head of ivory. One of these is

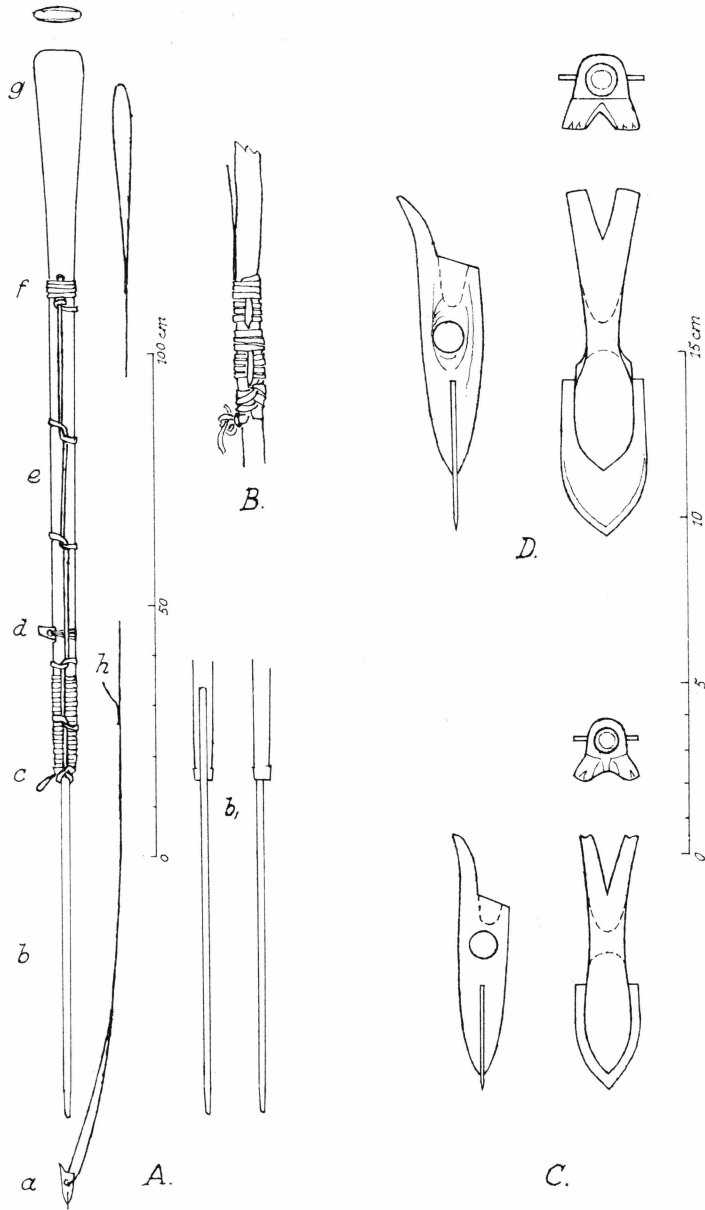


Fig. 68. Ice-hunting harpoon.

still used by a single hunter. At times, a whole narwhal tusk could even make do as both foreshaft and main shaft.

The ice-hunting harpoon serves not only for hunting but also as a sort of universal tool which is brought along on all sledge trips. It is used for chopping up ice, whether the purpose is to clear a breathing hole or to procure ice from an iceberg for melting into drinking water,

and it is also used for temporary tethering of the dogs or as an anchor for tent-ropes. It is especially important when used as an ice probe for testing the thickness of the ice when travelling over thin or unsafe ice; likewise it is used for testing the texture of the snow when a snow house is to be built.

Ice-Hunting Lance.

In hunting seal at breathing holes, no lance is used, the harpooned seal being either shot, or killed by a thrust with the harpoon foreshaft. For walrus hunting, however, a special type of lance is used which is called *tooq* (fig. 64. B). The fore part of the lance is not different in appearance from the kayak lance, but near the front end of the shaft a small strap (e) is placed, to which a short line (*nusukkaun*) may be fastened, by which the lance may be pulled back if it is thrown e.g. from the edge of the ice. What characterizes this type of lance is the powerful ice chisel, the real *tooq*, which is placed at the rear end of the shaft, where it is fastened in a way similar to that of the foreshaft of the ice-hunting harpoon. The ice chisel was formerly made of walrus tusk, but a heavy piece of iron rod is now always used. The lance also has a finger rest approximately in the center of the shaft. As will be further described the ice-hunting lance serves a double purpose, in that the harpooned animal is first secured by means of the ice chisel whereupon in killing the animal, the lance is used in the usual manner. Walrus now most often being killed by a rifle shot, the lance is no longer absolutely necessary, so that an ice chisel alone, placed in a wooden shaft, will do. But this seems to be used only occasionally. — For the heads of both harpoon and lance, a skin covering (*keenaalisag*) is often used, especially when taken along on the sledge.

Hunting Stool.

A three-legged hunting stool of light construction (*nikorfautaq*) is sometime used. Into the wooden seat are mortised three rather thin legs which are connected somewhat further down by wooden sticks and further steadied by cross straps. Bearskin is wrapped around the ends of the legs so as to avoid noise on the ice. The hunting stool is no longer — or at least rarely — used while waiting at the breathing hole. On the other hand, it is still used while waiting for the seal's snorting when hunting on smooth ice.

Shooting Screen

(*taarsaq*) (fig. 69) is now commonly used for *ũtoq* hunting in the spring. However, the knowledge of it goes back only to MYLIUS ERICHSEN'S



Fig. 69. ūtoq hunting with shooting screen.

Literary Greenland Expedition and so is entirely similar to that used in West Greenland. The white linen screen is stretched out on top of a small wooden sledge (*qamutarsut* or *qamutausaq*) where also the rifle is lashed onto two fork-shaped upstanders. Bearskin is placed under the runners. —

Field Glasses (*qerngut*) are now owned by many and are especially used when looking for seal that have climbed onto the ice.

Seal Hunting at the Breathing Hole.

The Polar Eskimos do not like to go breathing-hole hunting (*nik-parneq*) on old ice where there is a risk of having to wait for hours for the seal to come. There is usually no reasonable proportion between the yield and the efforts connected with waiting in the heavy cold without being able to stir in order not to scare the seal away. It has been known to happen that people have come home with severe frost bites. Only in times of emergency is it sometimes necessary to take recourse to this. In so doing, however, the breathing holes are usually selected at leads in the ice that have recently frozen over, since that is where the seal is most likely to show up. Both ringed seal and bearded seal are caught at the breathing holes.

More common is another type of breathing-hole hunt called *arquisut* where two men work together, one standing at the breathing hole

(*nikpaartor*), while the other man drives around it in a circle at some distance with a sledge (*aglusartor*) in order to scare the seal away from other breathing holes nearby. At times even the breathing holes near the one at which one wants to hunt are ruined by chopping them up with the ice chisel. The seals will then avoid these breathing holes and go to the one where the hunter is waiting.

No special probe is used nowadays for checking the shape of a breathing hole. However, Ûtâq reported that he had seen people using a long, thin stick of caribou antler, "but perhaps it was something they had learned from the immigrants". —

As often as occasion offers itself, the considerably easier hunting at the breathing holes on smooth ice (*quasalisog*) is carried on, but as a rule this is only possible during short periods in the autumn, since the snow soon settles on the ice. To be able to move without noise sandals (*tuterissan*) are used for this, and the breathing holes are located by intently listening for the breathing of the seals which in calm weather may be heard far around. The hunter then moves as fast as possible in the direction of the sound, standing still as soon as it stops. Once the breathing hole is reached he harpoons right down into the hole at the same moment the seal shows up. It is held by the harpoon line which the hunter has held rolled up in his left hand, the loop at the end thrown around his elbow. At the same time he puts his foot against the taut line, so as not to be thrown over on the slippery ice. — For this type of hunting the rifle is now often used. Then he takes aim at a point some 10 cm in front of the little hole in the ice, giving the greatest possibility of hitting the head of the seal. Still, the harpoon must be thrust into it immediately afterwards in order not to lose it. The hole is then chopped large enough to pull the seal up through it.

If it is a large seal or a bearded seal that has been harpooned in a breathing hole it may be difficult for a single man to hold it. In lucky cases he may succeed in putting the shaft of the ice harpoon through the end loop of the line and hold it across the breathing hole until the animal is tired and comes back to breathe. But it has also happened that a man has had to hold a bearded seal by simply placing his arm across the hole, at the risk of having it broken. On one such occasion a man lost a finger when the line, running out at full speed, had wound itself around it and torn it off.

Peep-Hunting (*itsuarneq*) is unknown among the Polar Eskimos.

Walrus Hunting on the Ice.

Unlike the seal, the walrus has no certain breathing holes to which it keeps, and which it keeps up. It prefers to move under ice which it is

able to break through at any time. It is not much use, therefore, to look for walrus on old, snow-covered ice, the snow presumably indicating to the walrus that the ice has been there for a long time and so is too thick. The hunting is best done on new ice of at times only 7-8 cm thickness with just a light snow cover. Under certain conditions, therefore, it is necessary to go far out to sea to find suitable hunting grounds. A particularly favorable area for this type of hunting is the ice off Neqe, Arfagdluarfik and Pitorâvik in the northern district, as the ice there often breaks up during spring storms, after which the sea usually freezes over within a short time. For this reason, people go up there from the south during March-April in order to procure meat, when their supplies have been exhausted, and live in snow houses during the time. People traveling north in this way are called *ingerdlartut*, while those going home are *uivartut*.

While hunting walrus on the ice, several men preferably go together and drive their sledges as far out as is considered safe. It is necessary to make a stop at a considerable distance from the hunting place so as not to scare the walrus away by the rumbling of the sledges. Then the men proceed outward, each man bringing only the most necessary hunting gear, i.e. harpoon with line, lance (*toog*), flensing knife and possibly rifle. They follow each other in single file, so as not to show up too much, and walk in each other's foot steps in order to crunch in the snow as little as possible. Once the swaying thin ice is reached, the front hunter tests the thickness of the ice from time to time by thrusting the foreshaft of his harpoon into it. If it goes through too easily, he tries at the side, or he may go back a way to look for a safer path. If walruses should come up nearby, but outside their reach, they all duck to make themselves unnoticed. On the thin ice the hunters walk with firm, elastic steps as a double check to see if the ice is still safe. There is always a risk of falling through so extra clothing is usually brought along on the sledge.

The haunt of the walrus is indicated by the breathing holes they have broken in the ice (*siko tulorroardlugo*), or at times they will turn up in openings in the ice. The men now wait listening, and if a walrus is heard at a breathing hole, they will come running from several sides and try to harpoon the animal by thrusting their harpoon into it. If the harpoon is thrown, the line must be connected with the shaft so that the latter will be pulled through the water without the danger of getting lost. It is said to be best to harpoon the animal from the front or from the side. A walrus is especially vulnerable in the arm pits, and is also inclined to turn sideways in the water when going down. Therefore, experienced hunters sometimes wait to harpoon until the animal has gone down a little and then harpoon it under the front flipper, where

it is said that the harpoon alone is able to kill it. As far as possible, all the hunters try to put their harpoons into the animal, and each man then immediately runs back a short way on the ice with his line, making it fast by means of the ice chisel of the lance, which is thrust down into the ice, the end loop of the line around it. Before the long line has run out entirely, this end loop has to be thrown on the ice after being spread out, so as to make an easy mark. It is important in thrusting the ice chisel, not to make it penetrate the ice all the way which would then be more likely to crack. If a rifle is carried, the lance with the ice chisel may be dispensed with, as already mentioned, in which case the walrus is simply made fast by means of the iron foreshaft of the harpoon. In all cases, care is taken to hold the end loop down close on the ice by stepping on it. The harpooned walrus will immediately go down into the water, and the hunter whose line proves to be the tautest is considered the real harpooner and receives his hunting share accordingly, i.e. first of all head, heart, and entrails.

While the walrus is thus secured, a bollard (*apak*) is chopped out of the ice with the knife, and as soon as the line slackens it is tied to this bollard, making the lance free for use. If the ice is very thin, or if only a couple of men are in on the hunt, it may become necessary to move the mooring point farther away from the breathing hole, taking advantage once more of the moments when the walrus is on its way back and the line is consequently slack. If the animal has not been shot, it is now important to get it killed with the lances; however, since the breathing hole often makes room only for the head of the walrus, it may become necessary to chop a number of holes around it through which the lances can be thrust into the animal from different sides.

The ice often being too thin for pulling the animal up on it, the flensing frequently has to be done while the animal is lying in the water. For this purpose two holes are first chopped, through which the hind flippers are pulled up. Lines are fastened to these, and enough is cut loose so they are only attached to the body by a small piece. Then they are pulled all the way up, and the lines are fastened quite a distance farther in on the ice, at the same time harpoon shafts being placed underneath them in order to distribute the pressure. Then a somewhat larger hole is made at the head end and the head and the fore flippers are pulled up and secured in a similar way. Finally, the ice is chopped out between the three holes, freeing the carcass of the walrus and making it possible to do the flensing from above. As the flensing proceeds, the animal is raised in the water by further tightening the lines.

At times, however, a different procedure is used, the walrus being dragged under the ice to a place where the ice is thick enough so it can

be hauled up there. To make this possible it is necessary to chop a number of holes in the ice at suitable intervals, whereupon the towing line is passed from hole to hole under the ice by means of a harpoon shaft to which it is tied, the shaft being pushed under the ice toward the next hole, where it pops up and can then be further dispatched. — The flensing finished, the meat is hauled away on the sledges.

When the sun begins to show in the spring, the walrus will sometimes climb up on the ice to sleep. It may then happen to such a walrus that in the meantime the water freezes so hard in the place where it has climbed up — in a lead or in a place where the current has kept the water open — so it cannot get down again. It will then go wandering in search of open water, perhaps by an iceberg. However, there are said to have been cases of the ice lying so far out from the place that the animal was unable to reach the water and died from hunger. More frequently, one will meet an itinerant seal (*paorngruliaq*) which is always an easy prey. — While a walrus sleeps on the ice in severe cold, the skin is said at times to freeze so stiff that a harpoon may splinter against it. —

If a man has caught a large animal which he cannot haul up onto the ice alone, he may call for people to help him by yelling “*qaaguk, qaaguk!*” or wave his arms (*nulurartog*). If he is out of ear-shot he may call for attention by walking back and forth or possibly by shooting. If it is dark he will light a candle or a fire, in which case others who are nearby will come to his assistance.

When men came home with a catch on their sledges it was customary, particularly if it was dark, to shout “*ha tsi-tsi-tsi . . .*” so others would know it in advance. When they got closer they would shout “*angorqisunga, angorqisunga*” (I’ve got a catch). On the other hand, if nothing had been caught, nothing was said.

ũtoq Hunting.

When the seal start climbing up onto the ice in May to sleep or doze in the sun in the immediate vicinity of the breathing hole, which is then big enough for the animal to come up through, the *ũtoq* hunting begins, and it may stretch out over the better part of a couple of months and bring a great yield within a short time. At this time of the year you seldom see a sledge without the shooting screen hanging on one of the upstanders (fig. 70).

In former days, this hunt was carried on by the hunter who crawling, stole so close upon the seal (*paornordlune aoriartog*) that he could harpoon it before it suspected anything, and even if it slid down into the water after having been harpooned, the catch was secured thanks to



Fig. 70. Sledge with shooting screen hanging on the upstander.

the harpoon line. Harpoon sledge and seal scratcher are said not to have been used in this connection. To calm the seal, however, the hunter would imitate its sound "xaau", and a clever hunter could in this way come close enough to the seal to kill it simply by a blow on the head with his fist. The method is still known by older hunters but hardly practiced any more. However, it had the advantage that the seal could be killed without scaring away all other seals in the vicinity.

The rifle is now always used for *ûtoq* hunting. The rifle is lashed onto the small shooting sledge with only the barrel sticking out through a slit in the white shooting screen covering the hunter as he approaches the seal in crawling position. As far as possible, however, he will walk upright with the shooting screen in front of him, and only when the seal starts showing signs of uneasiness by raising and turning its head is it necessary to proceed with more caution and crawl forward a short distance at a time, each time the seal has calmed down.

The moment the shot has hit, the hunter must jump ahead to catch hold of the seal and prevent it from sliding into the water as it will otherwise invariably do unless the shot has killed instantaneously. For this reason, the aim on the seal is always to the head. However, there is a certain tendency to shoot at too long a distance and many animals are lost in this way.

The trip to the hunting grounds is usually made by sledge, and the dogs must then always be stopped in due time and preferably be looked

after by a helper while the hunter sneaks up on the seal. The dogs will listen intently, and the moment they hear the shot they will proceed at a gallop toward the place. The helper is now helpless and can only try to hang on to the sledge. Only a very well-trained team may be left alone while the hunter steals upon an *ūtoq*.

Net Hunting (qaatarneq).

Sealing nets were introduced by Manager HANS NIELSEN and Pastor JENS OLSEN, and are now used by some of the Polar Eskimos. The nets are preferably set at ice-bound icebergs or leads in the winter ice. The meat from seal caught by net is considered to be especially tasty.

Bear Hunting.

Bear hunting is one of the subjects that most strongly occupy the mind of the Polar Eskimo, and having good bear dogs is a matter of great pride. To be sure, the bear rarely shows up within the inhabited area, but every year in the spring time protracted hunting expeditions (*qimusiartut*) are undertaken, partly to the south in Melville Bugt, partly north to Kane Bassin, where the bear may occur in comparatively large numbers, especially off Humboldt Gletscher and the east side of Ellesmere Island.

Bear hunting is of great importance because of the application of the skin for men's trousers which should preferably be replaced each year. However, one requirement is good implements, and another a strong well-fed dog team; likewise, care must be taken that the family is supplied with meat for the time that the men are away. So not everybody can afford to go on a bear hunt, which may well stretch out over a month or so.

If the sledge runs into bear tracks, these are examined carefully to determine the age. It only pays to follow a fresh track, which is characterized by the snow still being soft at the edges. Once the bear is finally in sight, one or more of the best bear dogs are let loose, often by simply cutting their traces. The bear tries to defend itself against the dogs which attack it from several sides, and so is held up until the hunter gets there. In the old days, a man would boldly go at the bear and kill it with the lance, which is still occasionally done, but more often the bear is now shot with a rifle. Even so, dangerous situations may well occur. As the hunter shoots, the dogs are said to be inclined to pull away to the sides, and the wounded animal may then well get it into its head to jump right at the man. Also, it is said that as long as the bear is bothered only by the dogs it will be inclined to turn to something that is not a dog, and in this way it is said to turn to the man, perhaps in hopes of finding help there.

It is also said that in the old days stone traps (*putLatit*) were built for bear. Remains of such traps are said to be found at Ivssugisoq and at Akuliaruseq, vis a vis Qeqertat.

When a man has killed a bear and approaches the settlement, he may announce it at a distance by running for a while beside the sledge yelling "*nanoqisunga*". If, however, his wife was under a taboo, (*aglertoq*), as might happen in the old times, he would shout "*quktoriaqisunga*".

Hunting of Land Animals and Birds.

Caribou Hunting. — Bow and Arrows.

Like the use of the kayak, the hunting of caribou and the bow used for this hunt had been forgotten until re-introduced in the 1860es by the immigrants from America. Since the introduction of fire arms the bow has naturally fallen out of use, although older hunters like Moses are still acquainted with it. Moses had thus in his younger days shot many caribou with bow and arrow, and the following data are in all essentials based on his explanations.

The bow (*pisikse*), which was made from caribou antler might have a length of about 1 meter, or from the ground to the hip, provided suitable pieces of antler were available, however, the length could vary a great deal depending on the material at disposal. The stave of the bow was made up of three pieces in continuation of each other, held together by elastic lacings. Flat pieces of antler were placed at the joints, both on the inside and outside, in order to lend more stiffness to the bow, and in the middle of the back of the bow was furthermore placed a piece that was flattened at both ends (fig. 71. a). The three pieces on the outside were designated by one word *tunuliaun*, the two inside pieces *qersutang*. Each end of the bow was so fashioned that a sizeable end knob (*naktitarfik*) was formed. The back side of the bow had a covering (*kujanga*) of braided sinew thread (*perdlaan*) which was pulled tight by hand from end knob to end knob. To keep the back string in place a special lacing was placed around them (*ningusartardlugo*), first from one end toward the middle, forming a sort of double half-hitches at suitable intervals, then similarly from the other end. The placing of these special hitches is shown in fig. 71. b-b¹.

The bow string (*noqarte*), of braided sinew thread, was adjusted to the length of the bow, having at one end one eye, at the other end two, secured with a special knot so as not to get displaced (fig. 71. d). The inner one of the two eyes was used in the winter, the outer in the summer, the braided sinew thread being affected by the degree of humidity in the air. The bow string was attached by first placing one eye around

one of the end knobs of the bow, then bending the bow sufficiently so the other eye could be pushed in over the other end knob with the thumb (fig. 71. c). The bow was stored thus strung.

The corresponding arrow consisted of a wooden shaft (*qarsog*), in the fore end of which a bone point (*narqong*) provided with an iron blade was inserted. The length of the wooden shaft was determined by the distance from elbow to finger tips, while the bone point was about the length of a hand. A notch (*itersuk*) was carved in the flattened tail-end

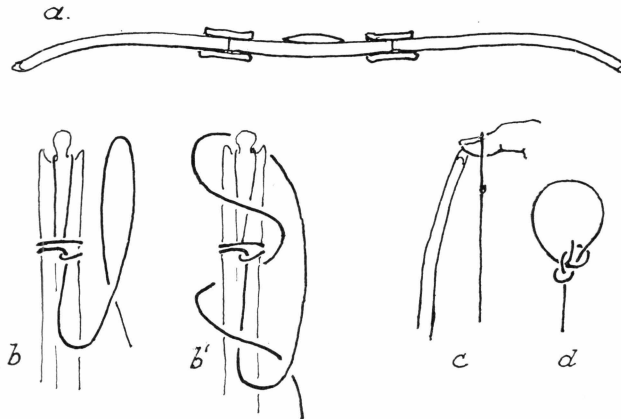


Fig. 71. Diagram showing a Polar Eskimo bow and the manner of securing the backing and the bow string.

of the shaft, and sometimes, but not always, the arrow had two guiding feathers (*sulue*). In shooting the bow was bent with the three middle fingers and the arrow held between forefinger and middle finger. A mitten was worn on the left hand.

To the bow belonged a special quiver (*atasuk*) of skin, which also had a compartment for the arrows and a smaller one for spare arrow heads. The bag for the arrows was provided with a cover whereas the compartment for the bow was open. The complete quiver was carried in a carrying string (*nangmautaq*), or by a handle connected with the bags by two short straps. In shooting the quiver was held under the left arm pit, in order to make it easy to pull the arrows quickly out of the quiver.

Moses did not know the special type of arrow (*pangaligtoq*) which has been used in West Greenland and was claimed to have the characteristic of working itself deeper into the animal during flight. However, he thought that any barbed arrow would work in this way.

The caribou population of the Thule district appears to have been reduced over a number of years, and the hunting of them has been of

very little significance. Formerly, one could often meet caribou in the area between Wolstenholme Fjord and Inglefield Bredning, but of late years real hunting has been carried on only on Inglefield Land, and even there with but small bags, and since the regular habitation of the land north of Etah ceased, it happens but occasionally. In older days this area was frequently visited by caribou hunters, as is evident from the numerous hunting shelters found around the inner parts of the country.

Hunting is now usually done by tracking the animals through the snow. A persevering hunter may sometimes follow such a track for days before he finally reaches the animal. However, other ways of hunting caribou are still recalled from the times when they were shot with bow and arrow. It thus appears to have been common to lie in wait for the animals on their paths, hidden behind a shooting-blind (*talut* or *taalutaq*). The tradition of using the caribou fences so well known in other places appears, however, to have been practically forgotten. Yet Ûtâq could report that in some places there were still remains of stone cairns to be found which can be more than 1 meter high and between which straps of haired sealskin were strung in order to lead the caribou down to the place where the hunters lay hidden.

A more uncertain tradition says that sometimes at Etah the hunters had surrounded the caribou (*ungordlugit*), or rather perhaps drove them toward a place where they were harpooned. Sometimes, also, it is said, the animals were driven out onto a lake with smooth ice where they were easy prey.

Fox Hunting.

Before steel traps became common after the establishment of the Thule station, most foxes were caught in stone traps (*putLatit*) of the usual Eskimo construction, consisting chiefly of a narrow stone chamber, open only in front where some stones (*torruxaa*) were placed, which guided and held the flat stone (*miligaq*) which formed the trap door. This was kept in position by a string (*qimmiag*) carried down to a stick (*pisiun*) which was fastened to the back wall of the trap where also the bait was stuck in in such a way that the string was released when the fox snatched the bait. Such traps, however, are hardly used any more, or at least only in exceptional cases. Similar traps, only longer and narrower, are said to have been used for catching ravens.

Tower traps were also used formerly for catching fox, and remains are found in several places, e.g. at Kap Taney on Inglefield Land, as mentioned by KNUD RASMUSSEN in "Grønland langs Polhavet" (1919) p. 183. There we found two, one of which was quite well preserved. It was built up like a beehive of flat stones and measured at ground level about 2 meters outside and about 1½ meters inside. The height

was about $1\frac{1}{2}$ meters, and the opening on top now about 60 cm diameter. The opening was to be closed with sea-gull wings that were wedged in between the top stones in such a way that they gave way with a springy action when a fox stepped out onto them, making it fall down into the trap without being able to get up from it.

The Polar Eskimos also described two kinds of deadfalls for fox. One was called *kavgiaq* and consisted simply of a large slab of ice placed at an incline and supported by a stick which was brought out of position when the fox touched the bait, so that the heavy ice slab would fall down over it and kill it. — The other kind consisted of a chamber made of pieces of fresh-water ice (*nilak*) placed just as for the stone traps, but with a whale rib suspended in it which would fall down and break the fox's back.

Most foxes are now caught in steel traps (*keesartut*) which may be bought in the store, although quite a few foxes are shot. Formerly, the value of the fox as a game animal was chiefly for skin for clothing, for men as well as women, but since the skins have achieved predominant importance to the economy of the Polar Eskimo as a trade object and have become the most important source of cash, only the women permit themselves the luxury of using fox skin for clothes. Yet, some women are said to have their private fox traps for this purpose, thus being more independent of the hunting of their husbands.

Considering the importance of that hunt, it is understandable that everybody is interested in getting fox. However, in order to make the hunting worthwhile, it is necessary to have sufficient meat to lay out to attract the fox, hence it gives an added advantage to the skilful and ambitious hunter. The meat is put out in the autumn, but they do not set out the steel traps (*keesartulersoq*) until the fox have started going to the meat and have eaten most of it. The steel traps are placed near the meat, most often on the side toward the sea. They are anchored with an iron chain to a rock, or to an ice bollard if set on the ice. If the land is still free of snow it is necessary to cover the trap with grass or a very thin slice of sod. Usually, however, the traps are set in the snow and covered with a slap of hard snow which is further scraped with a knife so as to be as thin as possible.

A man who has laid out meat for fox is considered to have exclusive rights to the area at about 100 paces from it. If nevertheless another man should set a steel trap at the meat, and the owner of the meat finds a fox in this trap, he is entitled to take the fox without further ado. If the owner of the meat has not yet set his traps, the pay for the fox is split. Likewise, a man usually gets a share if he finds a fox in another man's trap and brings it home to the owner. Sometimes people will jointly lay out large piles of meat and set traps near it. In that case

each man gets only the foxes that are caught in his own trap. No joint sharing of the returns takes place here. It happens from time to time that a loose dog makes off with meat that has been laid out for fox. If this is repeated, after a warning has been given, the owner of the meat has the right to shoot the dog. The same is true if the dog eats from an ordinary meat cache.

Thus the fox terrain is zealously watched, and all unnecessary traffic is avoided. Particularly after ice has formed it can become difficult to keep the fox around, so special care must be taken. If several men go together to the traps they usually walk in each other's foot steps. Urinating in the vicinity is avoided, and if the owner comes by sledge to fetch home some of the meat, he will leave the dogs down on the ice and push the sledge himself up on land as far as necessary.

At times fox traps are also set out on the sea ice. If a man has caught a seal at a breathing hole in the fall, he will sometimes leave it there to see if the foxes should possibly go to it. If this proves to be the case, he will set traps by the seal. To be sure, it may be a long time before the foxes discover it, and if they do not come at all, the seal is taken home. However, traps that are set out on the ice may easily get snowed under and be hard to find unless there are icebergs or other landmarks nearby.

In general, foxes caught in steel traps are rather young, although it does happen that old foxes are caught. The latter, however, are said at times to avoid them with great cunning. At times the trail of a fox has seemed to indicate that it has crawled along the snow over a trap and sprung it without itself getting its legs caught. At any rate, it does happen that a trap is found sprung without an animal in it. However, it also happens that a fox is caught in a trap but has escaped after biting through its own leg which is left in the trap. At times, too, a raven or a sea gull, or even a little auk is found in a steel trap, usually to the dismay of the owner. It is generally used for new bait.

This all makes it necessary to check on the traps regularly. If the owner finds a fox in his trap, he will go toward it, looking fixedly at the fox while at the same time he holds a stick or the handle of a knife toward it. Once the fox ill-temperedly has bitten into it, he will quickly put his foot on its chest, stepping down hard so as to press the chest together. Within a few minutes the fox is dead, then removed from the trap which is immediately set anew. The steel traps are not cleaned during their use. It does not matter if there should be blood on the trap or near it. It is even claimed to be an advantage, somehow making the fox feel safer. At the end of the trapping season all steel traps are taken home (*keesartuiartut*).

The fox themselves will also collect winter caches, especially of little auks and eggs, which they bury in pits, covering them over so they

do not show. According to descriptions, the pits may be some 30 cm deep and 10–15 cm wide. In the winter it scratches its way down to the provisions and covers them again each time. Yet, it is said that the fox prefers to save its own supplies and as far as possible steal those of others. It is said that a couple of women once found such a fox cache, and emptied it of little auks. There proved to be so many that they filled two skin bags of the kind used for preserving little auks.

Hare Hunting.

Hares are now usually hunted with rifle or shotgun but were formerly caught in long systems of snares, remains of which are still seen in many places. The so-called hare fences (*nigaasat*) consist of stones about 20–30 cm high (*naparutat*), set up at regular intervals in rows which may at times stretch far through the terrain. In some places, several such rows are to be found one behind the other, or two rows abutting at a right angle. Several systems of stone rows are found in the flat terrain above the settlement at Thule, where the hare were formerly more numerous than now, and at times would come very near the houses. Over the rocks thongs were stretched making the hare draw down close along the fence, where in some of the openings snares were hung up close together, presumably held stretched out by means of smaller rocks which may still be seen in the openings between the larger rocks. The hunting method is said at times to have given a good yield, and the method had the advantage of leaving the skins undamaged.

At the mountain Ikiqeq in Robertson Bugt hare were formerly caught by the following method: Some people went along on the ice driving the hare up into the mountain. Meanwhile, others had gone up behind the mountain to shoot them when they came running up the slope.

Bird Hunting.

Birds are a welcome contribution to the Polar Eskimo household, and auk, sea gull, eider, and ptarmigan are shot whenever there is a chance. Especially in the fall, after walrus hunting stops and until the water freezes over, ptarmigan is hunted eagerly and often with fine bags. Like caribou meat, ptarmigan meat was not eaten until it was learned from the last immigrants. However, the hunting of little auks is still of greater importance, although no longer carried on as methodically as formerly, when no kayaks were used and existence in summer, therefore, was essentially based on the catching of little auk. Manisorqat is mentioned as the best territory for little auk, this being a stony stretch of land just north of the Pitugfik Gletscher where countless little auks will breed. Many remains of temporary stone dwellings (*qarmat*) are said to be still

there, where especially old people, women and children could maintain living while the men tried hunting on other places.

Little Auk (*akpaliarsuit*) are caught with a net (*kagdlun*) furnished with a long, slim wooden handle (*ipo*) which is usually made of several pieces. For this purpose, dry willow branches (*amaoqtat*) were formerly used which were straightened out and assembled into a pole of the suitable length. At the end of the pole is fastened a thin ring (*qardluaq*) (fig. 72), on which the net is laced with a thin strap (*nalikaagun*). The connection of the ring to the pole is strengthened by means of a wooden

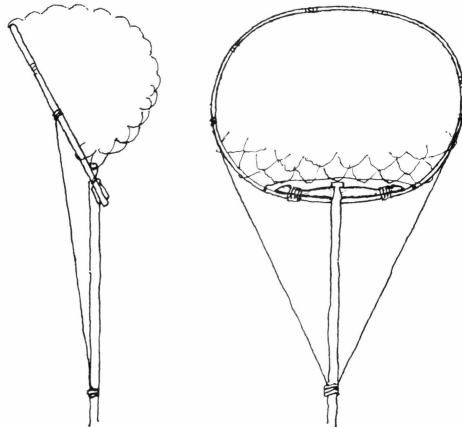


Fig. 72. Diagram of catcher for little auks.

cross bar (*sakiagun*), and the ring is held in a slightly forward bent position with a couple of strings (*ipiadlaang*), so as to form an obtuse angle to the pole. The man who does the catching hides between the rocks and swings the net quickly up and down again to the ground. The birds that are caught are removed immediately and the wings braided together on their backs so as to prevent them from flying, whereupon they are killed by pressure of the fingers into the arm pit against the heart. The dead little auks are sometimes pulled onto a string by means of a bone needle (*serqorqorng*) that is put through the lower bill. The bone needle used for this purpose is the same as that used for pulling shoe laces through the drawstring casing of a boot. More rarely it is also used for trout.

The little auks are preserved in bags of sealskin which have been flayed off whole (*najugaq*), and from which the blubber has not been removed. They are put down whole, feathers and entrails, and must be packed together very tightly so that no air space is left between the birds, which otherwise will be less palatable. Some even stamp them down. The bag thus filled is sewn together and covered with stones, making

sure that all openings are filled up with small stones. In this way the bag is left over the summer and is not taken home until winter. The blubber has then penetrated the birds, making them completely tender, and they are eaten raw as a great delicacy. Before eating the birds, the feathers are brushed off by hand and given to the dogs, which usually also get the emptied skin bag (*amersaq*), that is not good for anything else.

The hunting of auk as well as eider was also important in former times when the skins were used for clothing. Eider and sea gull were sometimes caught in snares on the breeding grounds, a small wall being built around the nest with only a single opening in which the snare was placed so the bird could not avoid getting caught when it wanted to go to the nest. Rows of snares suspended from lines at the breeding grounds are also said to have been used.

Auks are sometimes still caught in a peculiar way. The birds often fight each other so vehemently that at last the fall, insensible and exhausted, onto the ice below the bird cliff, where the people then run for them and catch them by hand. It is still better to have a dog that is trained to catch and bring them. —

The three-pronged bird spear is unknown, although the characteristic type of sea-gull hook with an inserted, oblique barb (*eesakiaq*) is still known.

The collecting of eggs and down still plays a rather important role, particularly the latter which may yield a good income. However, strict preservation regulations have been introduced for the eider, and it has been resolved that each man may collect only once in a season on the breeding grounds, and is obliged to make it known beforehand. As a result, the egg and down expeditions are in practice carried on as common outings so that no one can steal a march on the others. In the Wolstenholme Fjord area, the chief collecting of eider-down and eggs is done on Ederfugleøerne, which are located rather far out at sea between Saunders Ø and Wolstenholme Ø. Since the ice may at this time be in the process of breaking up kayaks are carried on the sledges, and the party must at times ferry on ice floes across wide, open leads.

The eggs that are not taken along right away are put down into pits or small cairns to be fetched in the winter. In some places small beehive-shaped stone buildings are found that are thought to have been used for egg caches. The collecting is usually done in the month of June, but the eggs may well keep all through the summer, provided they are stored cool and not exposed to the rays of the sun. They must not be shaken too much before being put down, however. The transportation of fresh eggs by sledge is avoided as far as possible, and they are preferably cached in the immediate vicinity of the place where they have been collected. Auk, sea-gull, and tern eggs are also collected where available.

Fishery.

Small salmon trout, as a rule no more than about 40 cm long, are found in numerous small lakes. However, larger salmon occur in some rivers near the inland ice in the land areas between Robertson Bugt and McCormick Bugt. They are caught by hook spear (*nigvik*) in the fall and deposited in caches for freezing.

In the lakes the trout are speared by means of a three-pronged trout spear (*kakivak*) (fig. 73) consisting of a wooden pole (*qisuktaa*), at the end of which is inserted a center point (*eemaq*). The two side prongs (*naxsuk*), made of caribou antler, each have a barb in front (*kukkik*) which is pointed obliquely inward and will hold the trout when

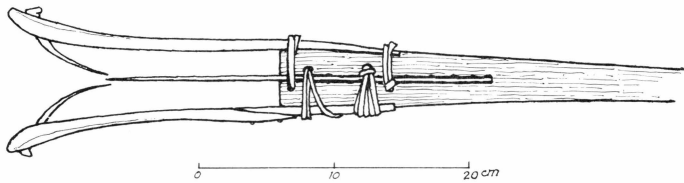


Fig. 73. Three-pronged trout spear.

pulled up. Now, however, the side prongs with barbs are often made of heavy iron wire, and the center point possibly of a leg from a discarded Primus stove. The trout spear is also one of the cultural elements that were re-introduced by the last immigrants.

Along with the trout spear, a small fish lure (*nakkartaun*) is employed, usually beautifully carved from ivory although in emergency a small, unworked piece of bone is substituted. The fish lure is suspended from a thin string which in turn is fastened to the end of a wooden stick.

Fishing with trout spear is best done in the fall on the frozen lakes before the ice has become too thick. With an ice chisel or the foreshaft of an ice hunting harpoon a circular hole of about 25 cm diameter (*kidlaq*) is chopped in the ice, and on one side of it a small notch is made in which the trout spear is placed so that it is ready for use (fig. 74). It is most convenient to have something or other to sit on, and if a sledge is taken along it is pulled alongside the hole for a bench. The lure is then lowered into the water and with the left hand pulled up and down with even tugs, letting the line slide along the edge of the hole and holding the handle over to one side a little so that it cannot be seen from below. If a trout comes along and snaps at the lure, the man carefully takes the trout spear and tries to steal it over the back of the fish until he sees a chance to spear it in the front part of the back (*kaperdluuk*). If he hits correctly, he pulls it up, removes it from the spear immediately, and kills it by a blow on the head with the shaft. Even if he misses the



Fig. 74. Trout fishing on the ice of a lake. The fish lure is handled with the left hand. The trout spear is placed obliquely in the fishing hole, ready for use.

first time an especially greedy trout may come right back at the fish lure. However, if the fish disappear, he will leave the hole and chop a new hole to try his luck there. On the other hand, if lucky, he may pull up a trout every other minute. — It is also possible to catch trout with the fish lure. A small piece of blubber is then put through a hole in the lure or bone piece, and when the trout bites into it the trick is to pull quickly. If the trout has bitten hard it may be difficult to remove the bone piece from its mouth.

Small trout are sometimes also caught on a plain fish-hook (*nakkartaiartog*). However, it seems to be chiefly left to the women to fish in this way. Sea scorpion is caught in a similar way in the tidal crack at the beach toward the end of spring. This, though, is chiefly a sport for the boys.

Nowadays, some hunters also have trout nets (*qassutit*) which are set from the shore in suitable spots. Finally, it has happened that a hunter has harpooned a large trout from his kayak. But this is said to be very dangerous because of the risk of the harpoon point cutting a hole in the kayak during the violent wriggling of the trout.

Some think they have heard of catching trout at a trout dam (*saputit* or *saputak*), although others claim that this has not been known or at least not used.

The two-pronged leister (*egalugsiut*) with inward barbs, and usually cut out of one piece of walrus tusk, is known but is thought to have been used only for fishing small fish at the beach.

The salmon trout is named *eqaluk*, and the red variety *ivisaarog*. In addition there are special names for the different parts of the trout: the head, *niaqog*, the snout, *sixxuuk*, the crown *qaaterfik*, and the fore part of the body behind the gill-slits *kaperdluuk*. The gills are called *pangaligixsan*, the two pectoral fins *talerquk*, and the lateral lines *kiluwat*. The middle part of the body to the dorsal fin (*suluxuut*) is called *qerqa*, the next part to the anus, *itersoraq*, and finally the back part of the tail is *nujatLuk*. The various little bones in the head of the trout have special names, like *auveq* with *avataq*, *qarsaarog*, and *tuluwaq*. A bone-like substance in the upper jaw is called *sako*.

Certain taboos and magic words connected with trout fishing on the ice are still known. Thus, if one is forced to make water on the ice, he should turn toward the shore in order not to insult the *inua* of the sea. Remains of gnawed off trout should not be thrown to the dogs. If a small trout, that it does not pay to spear, comes to the fish lure the fisherman says: "*uisartaarit, uisartaarit, angisuumik*" ("turn around, turn around, it must be a big one"), and while letting the lure down again, he will say as sort of a luring cry: "*qür, qür!*". —

Shark fishing, according to Moses, was sometimes done from the ice with lures. During late years, however, a more rational shark fishing has begun, initiated by the West Greenlander LARS OSTERMANN. Greenland halibut, too, is now caught to a certain extent in the southern district, using the West Greenland method with a tin glider which pulls the line obliquely through the water. Before this was introduced a lot of holes were chopped in a row through the ice, and the line was pulled from hole to hole, being fastened at each or at every other hole. This had the advantage that if the line was bitten through by a shark both pieces of line could be fished out, whereas now sometimes a long piece of line is lost with many hooks on it.

Flensing and Hunting Shares.

Like other Eskimos, the Polar Eskimos have an established and rather detailed system of sharing the catch (*ningerneq*). The details of the rules will be discussed under the respective animals. In general it is true that only the hunters who have participated in the hunt proper and in the flensing of a large animal will get a true hunting share (*ningeq*). If others happen to be near, however, they sometimes get a little meat as a present. Ordinary ringed seals are not divided into hunting shares,



Fig. 75. Flensing of a bearded seal.

but in this case, too, it is customary to give gifts of meat to the others at the settlement. No light was thrown on whether or not any certain rules were followed in this respect.

One peculiarity — which is known in other places as well as here — is the fact that just touching a killed animal gives one the right to a share of it. For example, if people on shore see a walrus or a white whale or a bearded seal being towed in, and flock down to touch it, this gives them a right to a share, however small it may be. I was told that even very small bearded seals will sometimes be cut into many small pieces. Only of ordinary ringed seal was this not true.

Sometimes, when a young man has made his “first catch”, the meat will be distributed to everybody in the place, especially the older people. This, however, is not always strictly observed.

Bearded Seal.

When a bearded seal is to be flensed, it is first laid on its back as shown in fig. 76. a and then four circular cuts are made into the skin all around the body of the animal as far as practicable. Thereafter, the chest piece is cut off along two longitudinal cuts through the arm pits, and the pieces with the fore flippers are cut loose and put out to the sides. Thereupon the two skin belts are loosened. The animal is now turned

around so as to lie on its belly, and the skin belts are loosened altogether and removed. Again it is turned on its back, cut open and carved into pieces. The chest skin (*sakertaq*) and the neck skin (*aariaktaq*), as well as the tail skin are utilized for soles, while the skin belts are cut into thongs and straps.

The broad belly piece belongs to the hunter, although if several men have shared in the hunting, the lower part of it as well as the tail piece are divided into hunting shares. The hunter, however, is allowed to decide for himself how large a share he is willing to give away, and if

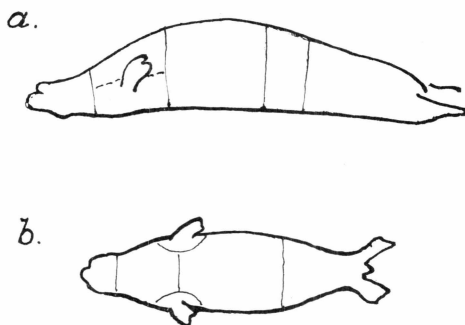


Fig. 76. Diagram showing how a bearded seal skin is divided up if intended for skin thongs and sole skin.

he intends to cut himself a walrus line, which because of its length requires a broad skin belt, he may take the hole. This is said to be abused at times.

If the skin of a bearded seal is wanted for a lashing thong the skin is also cut off in belts as shown in fig. 76. b. After the front flippers have been cut off three cuts are made all around, producing two broad belts that may be cut up into narrow thongs (*singisaag*).

Walrus.

On fig. 77 is shown in sketch form how a walrus is divided up into hunting shares. Flensing is done as soon as possible after the killing, as there is otherwise a risk of the meat freezing solid. If the hunting has been done from a kayak or boat and the animal has been towed to the beach, it is first punctured with a flensing knife so as to let out the air that has been blown into it. The bladder, too, is punctured. Hauling the walrus up onto the beach, where the flensing is to be done, cause some problems on account of its size and weight. A gently sloping beach is preferably chosen, and if possible the animal is hauled to shore and moored at high tide. Then all that is necessary is to wait for the tide fall. Under certain conditions, however, the flensing is reluctantly delayed, e.g. if several walruses are brought to shore simultaneously.

Then the heavy animal has to be rolled onto the beach. For this purpose a very long thong is used one end of which is firmly secured on shore. It is then placed around the middle of the walrus, and by pulling the free end it is rolled up a way. In the case of big walrusses it may be necessary to use a tackle. For that purpose, two parallel cuts are made in the hide at the outer side, and if a real tackle is available, its hook is fastened in the resulting loop of skin. However, it is also possible to get along by simply putting the thong through the skin loop and rolling the

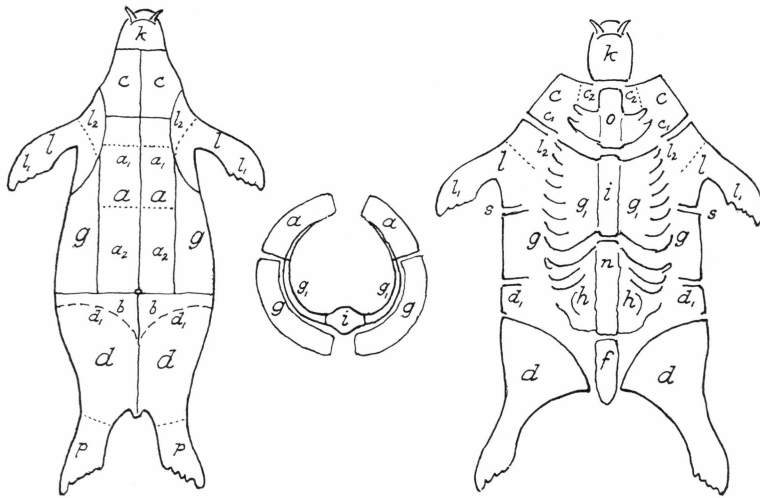


Fig. 77. Diagram showing how a walrus is divided into hunting shares.

animal a distance. One then continues to cut new skin loops and roll it a little further, until the animal has finally been rolled so far up the beach that flensing is possible. If the walrus has been caught at an ice edge that is sufficiently solid, it is hauled up in a similar manner, the thong being fastened to an ice bollard quite a way in on the ice. If the hunting has taken place on thin ice it may be difficult to get the animal hauled up because the ice breaks. In such case it may have to be flensed in the water, as described in detail on p. 102.

When the walrus has finally been hauled up on land or ice, it is placed lying on its back with the tail end towards the water, so that blood and entrails can run or slide down. Flensing is usually done in the following way: The fore flippers l-l (*talerussat*) are cut free and laid out to the sides. Then two cross cuts are made, one right under the arm pit, the other across the belly at the navel. Thereupon three longitudinal cuts are made, following the joints of the ribs and dividing the chest into two broad strips a-a (*sakiagin*), consisting of skin and meat. These are removed and may be divided into a¹ and a², in which case the lower

parts are called *attin*. Then the heart is taken out and wrapped carefully in the pericardium. Thereafter the belly is cut open enough so that the pieces of hide b-b can be laid out to the sides. Thereupon the entrails are pulled out and the blood allowed to run off.

Next, the neck (*qungaseq*) is cut open lengthwise and the pieces c-c laid out to the sides. If it is a large walrus, the pieces c are divided into a chin piece c¹ (*manusuaq*) and a neck piece c² (*pikusuaq*). Now the throat is cut and wind pipe and lungs are removed. The rib pieces g¹-g¹ (*tuliman* with a little bit of meat are cut off, leaving two ribs with the neck piece. Then one counts down nine ribs and leaves the last two or three ribs with the kidney piece. Before flensing of the hind part is carried out, the penis is cut out and thrown away or possibly used as a marker at a meat pile. The femoral pieces d-d (*quin*) with the hind flippers (*serqussat*) are thereupon cut off at the hip joint. The tail part and the lower part of the vertebral column f (*kuutsik*) are cut off, and likewise the lower part of the vertebral column n (*saorngalikkan*) and the cervical vertebrae o (*napasortat*) are cut off. Then the flank pieces g-g (*sanerqat*) with the skin are removed, and the kidney piece h (*nerping*) is cut off. Next the chest part i (*qimerdluin*) of the vertebral column is cut off without meat or blubber, the cervical column is severed, and the head k (*niaquaq*) is separated from the body. All the vertebrae of the spine are now removed, leaving the skin free. This is cut through along the line s-s and then lengthwise along the middle, producing two pieces l-l belonging to the foreflippers and two pieces below them. Ordinarily, l is divided into a flipper piece l¹ (*tajarnaq*) and a shoulder-blade piece l² (*kiasik*). In the case of small walrusses, however, they are left as one flensing piece. The same is true of the belly pieces d¹-d¹ (*akuamineq*) which in such case go with the femoral pieces; however, when the animals are fairly large, the belly pieces also are cut off as separate flensing pieces.

All participants in the hunt also take part in the flensing, each man cutting out the piece or pieces that are due him as his hunting share. It may look rather menacing when the long flensing knives work pell-mell in the bloody meat pieces and each man eagerly flenses away at the part that he thinks is rightfully his. Nevertheless, true controversies rarely arise in this way. If a man happens to trespass a little on the hunting share of the next fellow, at most it will rouse amusement.

By and large the distribution of the hunting shares takes place along the following lines: 1) the harpooner, 2) the man or men who shot the animal, killing it, 3) the boat team, and 4) others who may have been present at the flensing. The harpooner is always entitled to the head with the tusks, the heart and entrails, besides various pieces of meat. The gunners get their shares of the hind part of the animal. The liver may possibly be divided up into four shares for the boat team.

If two men have harpooned the same animal, the first one, as usual, is entitled to the vital parts, but number 2 on the other hand gets the largest one of the other hunting shares.

The meat which is not taken home right away is placed by each man separately in meat caches, provided such are found nearby or the necessary rocks are available. At the flensing place on Saunders Ø this was not the case, so pits made in the pebble gravel, after scraping away the snow, had to do. There the meat pieces were deposited hide side upward, in order to make it more difficult for the ravens to make free with them, and as far as possible they were covered with pebble gravel. Each man marked his pile with a stick or something that would protrude, in order to make it easier to find the pile when everything was covered with snow.

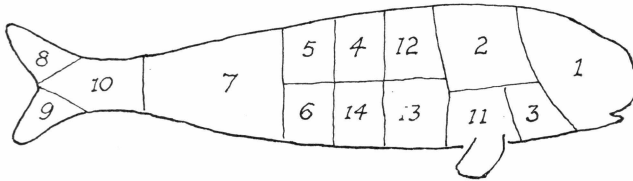


Fig. 78. Diagram showing how a white whale is divided into hunting shares.

White Whale.

The flensing of white whale is a welcome event, not least because the hide of white whale (*mattak*) is considered a great delicacy. If a white whale has been hauled ashore at a populated place, the people flock to the place armed with knives of every description and rush at the animal to carve out bites from the hide which are devoured right then and there. A point seems to be made of tasting the hide in as many different places of the animal as possible, and once the jaws are finally tired the animal offers a badly maltreated sight. Nor until then does the actual flensing begin.

On fig. 78 are shown the various parts into which the animal is carved out. The following designations are given:

- 1) *niagoq*, the head (and *agdleroq*, the lower jaw).
- 2) *erqoq*, the neck piece.
- 3) *mala*, the throat part.
- 4) also 11, 12, 13, and 14 appear to be called collectively *taleroq*, (although possibly this applies more specially to 11, the fore flippers).
- 5) *paperoq*, the loin piece.
- 6) *usuk*, the piece with the genitals.
- 7) *ergorssuaq*, the tail piece.
- 8-9) *sarpineq*, the tail fins.
- 10) *najatdluk*, the extreme, thin part of the tail.

7, 8, 9, and 10 are called collectively *iterssuaq*. Furthermore, the belly meat is *iluliaruseq*, and the meat in the tail *nakasungnaq*, while the back muscles with the tendons are called *uliutit*.

The pieces 4, 6, 11, 12, 13, and 14 may each be divided up into hunting shares. *niaqoq* (1), *ergoq* (2), and *mala* (3) go to the harpooner who also gets a piece of *uliutit*, as well as the heart and the entrails. If two hunters have harpooned the same animal, number 2 gets the tail (*iterssuaq*) and a piece of *uliutit*. However, it appears that the first harpooner is also entitled to *nujatdluk* (10). If there are only two who share the animal, the rest is divided up according to a line lengthwise along the middle. If there are several helpers, e.g. for the towing of the animal, they get parts of *taleroq*. The harpooners in that case get the blubber of *usuk* (6) and *paperoq* (5), while the meat inside is also divided among the helpers.

uliutit, the back muscles with the tendons which are to be used for sinew thread, are cut out with great care after the layer of blubber is first removed. Furthermore, an incision is made on the underside of the tail to make it possible to pull out the tendons located there.

V. CRAFT AND TOOLS

Like all other Eskimos, the Polar Eskimos distinguish between man's and woman's work and this distinction usually makes itself felt in the daily life too. Nevertheless, it can hardly be said that any job is strictly reserved for one sex or the other. There are women who are known for their skill in carving in bone or ivory, and even do not shun making a harpoon head for their husbands. On the other hand, the men usually help the women do the more strenuous parts of the skin treatment. A man is not afraid of sewing work either and as a rule brings along needle and sinew thread on extended hunting trips so as to be able to repair his clothing if necessary. On the other hand, the wife is also sometimes taken along, and not only on visiting trips, just so she can be helpful with the skin clothing, but quite a few women are also clever dog sledge drivers. One gets the impression that there is usually good cooperation between man and woman.

In general, however, the man is the one who makes tools etc. that are prepared from hard materials like bone, wood, metal, and stone, and by the same token it is the woman who makes the skin articles. Similarly, it is also proper to distinguish between typical man's and woman's tools. The man's tools are now mostly bought ready-made in the store, but he still makes the special knives and scrapers himself that are used by the women for their work. The Polar Eskimos are also very critical in regard to the quality of their tools, and so the Thule station has from the beginning made it a point to procure the best possible.

A well-equipped hunter is the owner of saw, files, axe, brace drill, etc. The generally used saw is a broad-bladed carpenter's hand saw that may also be used instead of the snow knife for cutting out snow blocks when making a snow house. File (*sisak*) and rasp (*tuugarsiut*) are used in working iron and walrus tusk respectively. The axe (*ikuutaq*) is used largely for chopping up frozen meat for dog food. The adze, that is usually preferred by the Eskimos for working wood, is named *agxersog* by the Polar Eskimos. However, it does not seem to be used the way it is in West Greenland where some make it from a broad chisel which is fastened so that it forms an acute angle with the specially fashioned handle.

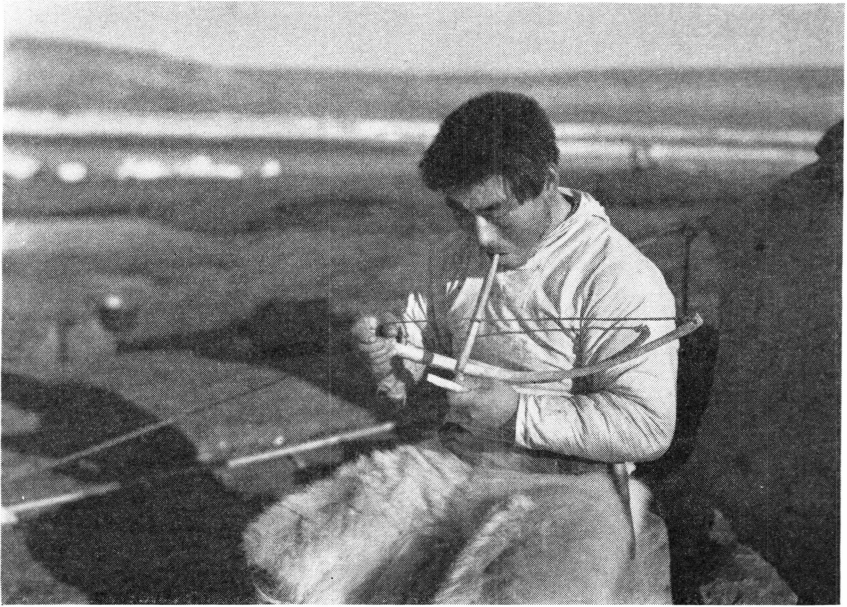


Fig. 79. Maigssánguaq drilling a hole with a bow-drill.

Part of the functions of both saw and axe are still carried out by the Polar Eskimos by means of a knife (*savik*), the same as is used for flensing. The common type is rather like a big bread knife with a long, relatively broad blade (*panaa*) solidly inserted into a wooden handle (*ipuaq*), sometimes fastened by a spike (*mulik*). The part of the blade that is closest to the handle is called *saviup kangia*, and a metal ring that encloses the adjoining end of the handle is *ummeeng*. Frequently, a hole is made at the end of the handle for a hand strap (*agxak*), so that the knife may be held more firmly when it gets greasy during flensing.

If the knife is used as a hewing knife, e.g. for trimming a walrus rib into a drum frame, the man holds the bone free in front of him with his left hand which is protected by a mitten. He carries the knife with his right hand, palm turned inwards, and by simply moving his wrist he directs the blows downwards on the side that is turned toward him, rapidly hewing off one little chip after the other down toward his left hand. In this way, the trimming may be done with great proficiency and elegance.

The same knife is also used as a kind of ice chisel when making an ice bollard for securing a thong to the ice. Two holes are chopped in the ice, at a distance of a little more than a handbreadth, and at a suitable depth a small passage is carved out between them with the point of the knife so as to form an ice bridge which can withstand even a very strong pull. As mentioned above, this is used especially when hunting walrus

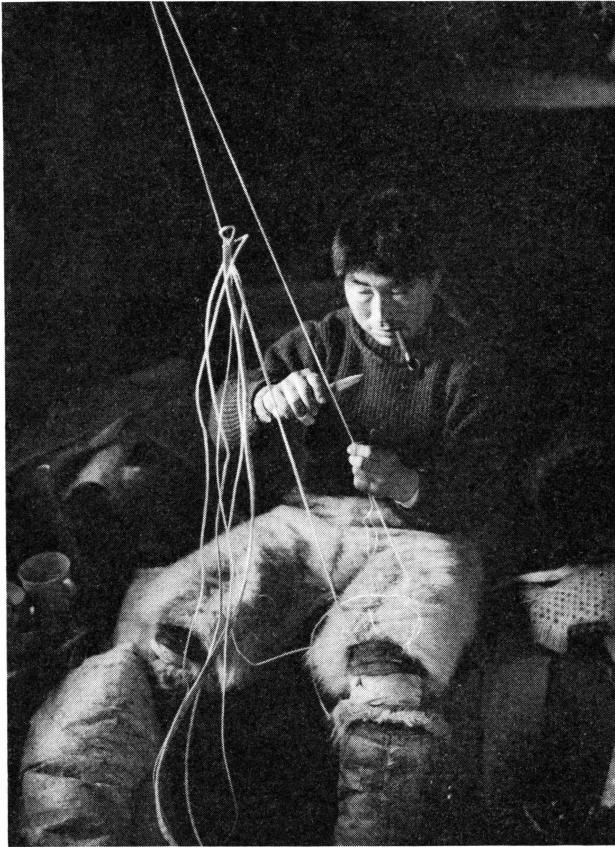


Fig. 80. Trimming of a whiplash.

on the ice, but also on any occasion when something e.g. a dog team or a tent is to be secured safely to the bare ice surface.

For drilling smaller holes some still prefer the old-fashioned bow drill with a mouth piece that is held between the teeth (fig. 79)

A kind of burin (*qiporqaun*) which had been used for splitting long pieces of caribou antler or walrus tusk was still mentioned. However, Ûtâq was of the opinion that it had been used in particular by the last immigrants, whereas formerly in Thule rows of closely placed holes were drilled, which is also confirmed by the archeology. — Moses used a similar name (*qiporqaq*) for a kind of saw with small bits of meteoric iron inserted, which he said was formerly used for sawing out pieces of walrus tusk.

It may be mentioned in this connection that Ûtâq described as a man's knife (*savik*) a small knife of a special type, which is known only from excavations and is characterized by the handle being relatively broad in front where a small side blade was inserted (cf. Medd. om

Grønl. Vol. 141.1, Pl. 21.10-16). However, nothing further could be said about its use. Possibly such a knife may have been used for the fine trimming of whip crackers or the like. For this purpose a sharp pocket knife is now used; the thong to be worked is held stretched out, sometimes by being led through a trace buckle in the ceiling and passed down around the left thigh, while the knife is used in a similar way as described before (fig. 80).

Women's tools are chiefly tools used for the treatment and sewing of skin. No doubt the most used is the curved knife (*ulo*) which may

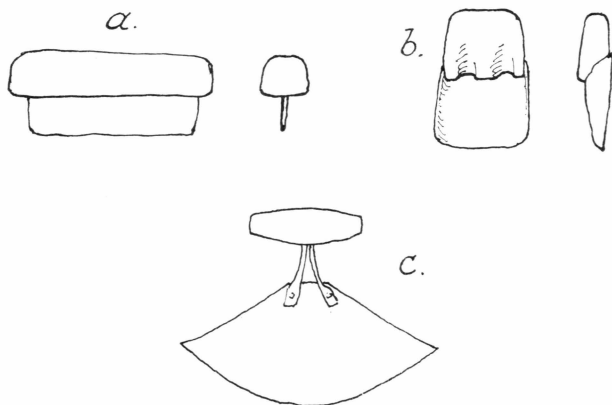


Fig. 81. Ulo (c) and two types of scrapers generally used, *kiliutaq* (b) and *ersorsit* (a).

be called the universal tool of the woman, in the same way as the flensing knife is that of the man. The *ulo* is used by the woman for every kind of cutting from flensing to the finest skin work, in part also for scraping skins. The form of *ulo* now used (fig. 81. c) has a relatively large blade (*ulua*) which is usually made from an old saw blade. It is appreciated if the *ulo* blade is not too thick, thus being easier to grind and to supply with a sharp edge (*keena*). To the blade is riveted a stem (*attatLaang*) that is ordinarily divided into two parts, and this is inserted into a handle (*kimaktuun*), usually made of ivory. However, this type of *ulo* is also thought to have been introduced by the last immigrants from America. In the older times, instead of the stem the *ulo* had a broad middle piece of bone, into the edge of which an iron blade was inserted.

In cutting, the *ulo* is held with the stem between third and fourth finger, all fingers grasping around the handle. If used for scraping, e.g. in removing blubber from skin (*qapiardlune*), it is held palm down and with second and third finger stretched out over the top side of the blade, the scraping being done away from the person doing it (fig. 83). At times, the thumb is also leaned against the top edge of the blade. In one particular case a special metal piece was riveted on and formed a con-

venient rest for the thumb. When cutting skin, a wooden cutting board (*tunggavik*) is used.

For scraping skin, two types of scrapers are used which are called *ersorsit* and *kiliutaq*. An *ersorsit* (fig. 81. b) has a hollow iron blade with a relatively narrow and slightly convex edge, so that very effective scraping can be done. In its entire length the blade is inserted into a short wooden handle which has two finger grooves down toward the hollow front side of the blade. The designation *ersorsit* is also used of a flat stone scraper, which, however, is now used only for sole skin. A *kiliutaq* (fig. 81. a) has a long iron blade, rather narrow toward the handle, with a straight edge, inserted into a relatively low and broad handle. It is used only for treating skins that are wet or moistened. Formerly, this type of scraper was sometimes made of narwhal jaw bone. An elderly woman reported having used one of this type for depilating sealskins. An ulo of stone was also formerly used for this purpose.

A scraping board (*qapiarfik*) is used in scraping skin; it is now always made of wood. It has no legs but is leaned against a rock or something else.

The Polar Eskimos know how to bend bone in hot water. This is especially done in making drum frames. The bone strip is dipped in hot water and bent, after which it is kept in the proper shape by means of a string, which shape it keeps after drying and removal of the string. The method is also applied in making thin chain links of ivory which are assembled into long neck chains that are sold to foreigners as handicraft.

Skin Dressing.

Sealskin.

In the summer the seal is flensed on the beach (*higsame amerdlugo*), and the skin is immediately rinsed in water to free it from blood. The hunter's wife then takes the skin up to the house while as a rule the husband continues the flensing and cuts up the seal. The skin is scraped free of blubber (*qapiardlugo*) right away with the ulo, being first placed on the scraping board. It is then spread out for drying (*pauktordlugo*) by means of pegs (*pauktuutit*) that are passed through holes cut all the way around close to the edge of the skin. For pegs, seal ribs are mostly used, or else wooden sticks made for the purpose. The skin is pegged down, flesh side up, close to the ground, in a place with grass turf (*tudlugit ivsorsuit*). Once the skin is dry, it is taken in and folded up, first lengthwise, hairside in, then crosswise, after which it is rolled up (*imudlugo*) and stored away, usually under the platform, until it is to be used.

If in winter the seal has been brought home frozen, it is brought into the house for thawing and flensing. The skin is rinsed in a tub of fresh water, and the scraping is then done in the usual way. Holes are cut in the edge and the skin is spread out now on a wooden drying frame (*innerfik*) by means of a string (*aglunaisaq*) that is pulled through the holes. Once it is dry it is folded and rolled up as described above.

If the skin with the hair on it is to be worked for a dress, it is softened again (*qitulisardlugo*) by first moistening it a little on the meat side with water, then chewing it through and rubbing it with the hands (*ulugdlugo*), whereupon it is scraped with a scraper (*ersorsit*) while the skin is now simply stretched over the thighs. It is then ready for sewing.

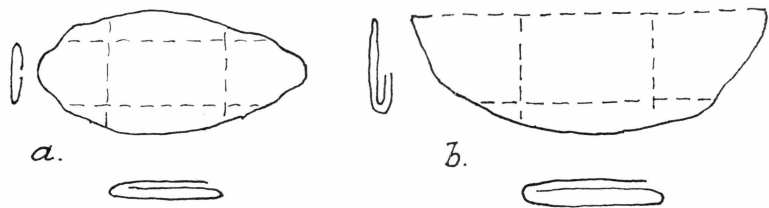


Fig. 82. Folding of a sealskin for storing.

If the hair is to be removed from the skin, the treatment depends on whether a black, watertight skin (*neqpiaqtaq*) is desired as used for kayak cover, men's boots or the like, or whether a white skin (*kiaktaq*) is preferred, which in turn may be either summer treated or winter treated.

The process of preparing waterproof skin (*neqpiaqtaq*) is called *neqpiarnerng*, which is explained as "cutting off the hair with the ulo" (*ulumik merque neqpiardlugin*). For this purpose the skin is taken absolutely fresh after having been just rinsed with water, is put on the scraping board, and the hair is removed (*kipidlugit*) with a sharp ulo. It is then spread out with pegs for drying, flesh side up. After drying it is moistened a little with water, and stamped against the floor or the ground (*tukardlugo*), that is, it is folded and stamped piece by piece, after which it is rubbed with the hands. The reason for the stamping is simply that usually rather large and stiff skins are used for the purpose. After softening, the skin is folded up, first lengthwise, flesh side (*maminga*) in. The outermost pieces at the long side are then folded in over the others (fig. 82. b), whereupon the whole skin is folded twice crosswise, the outermost parts being thrown in across the middle, the whole skin now forming a flat package. It is stored in this way for later use.

erisaaq is the designation for black sealskin from which the hair has been pulled out after the skin has been soaked in hot water. However, this method is described by the Polar Eskimos as South Greenlandic

and they say it has not been used by them formerly, and only a few have now taken up the method.

Summer-Treated White Skin (*kiaktaq*).—The fresh skin is scraped immediately so as to be freed fairly well from blubber. It is then dipped for a few minutes in very hot water (*misuktaisoq*). The water must be so hot that one cannot keep his finger in it. Some are said to use salt water for this purpose. It is necessary to feel one's way to see if the hair will loosen. The skin is moved in the water all the time, being held at the edge and passed from hand to hand. It is then placed on the scraping board, hair side up, and scraped with the dull scraper (*kiliordlugo*). In this way both hair and epidermis are removed. It is necessary here to use a great deal of strength, and if it is difficult to remove the hair in certain spots, these are dipped again into the hot water (*misorqidlugo*). Once the hair layer is thus removed, the skin is placed in cold water for 2-3 days (*erivversog*), whereupon it is stretched with pegs for drying a little way above the ground to allow passage of air underneath it. When it is dry it is rolled up from one end, with the outside of the skin inward.

When the skin treated in this way is to be used for sewing, it is softened (*qitulisardlugo*), after first being moistened superficially with water (*imardlugo*), then it is folded piece by piece and chewed (*anguladlugo*). Afterwards it is rubbed between the hands (*ulugdlugo*) and finally treated with a scraper (*ersorsit*). In former times this was of stone, but the one now used is of iron. The summer-treated white skin is used almost exclusively for men's boots and for mittens.

Winter-Treated White Skin (*kiaktaq*).—In the winter the seal as a rule is skinned immediately in the place where it is caught, and if intended for use as white skin it is folded before it has frozen stiff, the long sides first being bent in, with the hair in, whereupon the two ends are bent toward the middle (fig. 82. a). When the skin has been brought home, the wife immediately brings it in for thawing out. Then the blubber is removed (*orsotaiardlugo*) and the skin is treated with very hot water, and as in summer, it is scraped and put in cold water, then stretched out on the snow to freeze stiff. Once it is dry, it is rolled up loosely from the end and stored away in a small shed (*serdluag*). When the sun comes out, the skin is hung out for bleaching. In the spring time, therefore, long rows of such skins may be seen at the settlements, hung up on poles or clothes-lines, so they can be sewn into fine new women's boots before the Easter feast. As it is important for high boots to keep their shape the skin is not softened. On the other hand, if the skin is to be used for mittens it is moistened first with water or saliva, then rolled up and allowed to lie until the moisture has penetrated it and made it supple.

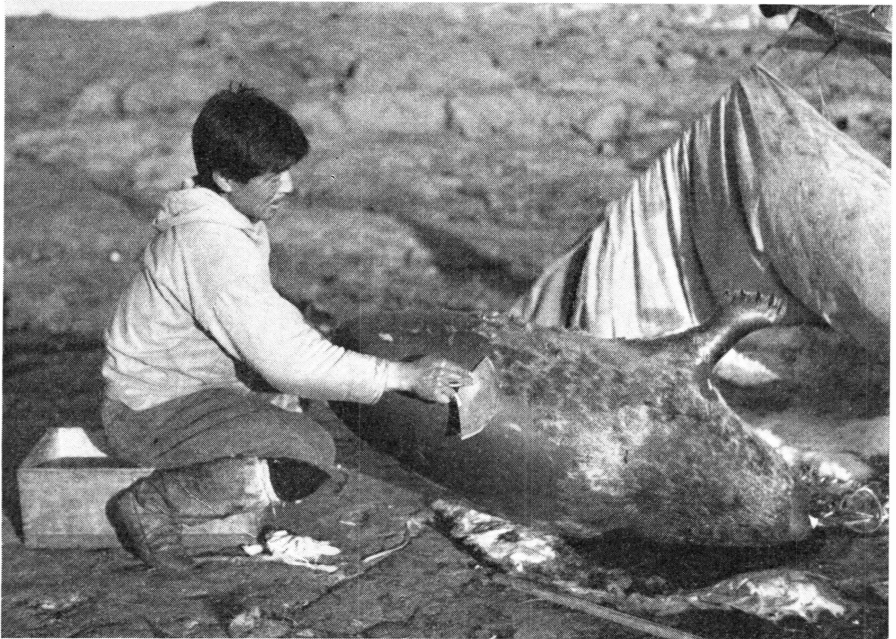


Fig. 83. The hairs are removed from a sealskin to be used for a float.

The Making of a Sealing Float (*avatsiviartor*).

The sealing float (*avataq*) is made from one ringed sealskin which is removed whole from the animal, in that the hind flippers and most of the tail part are cut off and the skin then removed inside out, beginning at the tail. The fore flippers are cut out so that only the extreme joint with the claws remains with the skin. Once the skin has been pulled off, the hair is shaved off in the places where it is necessary to lace it together, i.e. at the head, the tail, the teats, and harpoon holes. The teats are first scraped clean from blubber on the inside. This is done with the teeth. Then they are tied securely. In order for the string to be tightened well one end is tied to a loop in a strap which is passed around the foot. From there the string is passed around the place to be laced and the other end of it is held by the teeth, then tightened hard with foot and teeth. The harpoon holes are first sewn together, whereupon oval, wooden patching plugs (sing. *uarte*) are inserted. These plugs are pressed into the skin from the outside, and the skin is then tightened around the plug from the inside by means of a string which pulls the skin into the groove at the edge of the patching plug. At head and tail, where the largest openings are found, a string (*ungersaaq*) is sewn through the edge of the skin in a running stitch with a large needle. In front,



Fig. 84. Removing of blubber from the sealskin float while turned inside out and inflated.

at the head, the mouth piece (*puerfik*) is inserted which has two lashing grooves. The string, which is sewn in, is pulled around the inside groove and tightened by many turns, then the string is similarly pulled and tightened around the outside groove. The mouth piece is closed by a wooden plug (*simiaq*) which, when the bladder is being blown up, is held between the front teeth. In the back a heavy toggle (*saneruviaq*) is inserted, the skin having first been pulled together by means of the sewn-in string. Here the skin is cut so that a piece of the seal's tail remains outside the string. When the latter has been tightened, the tail piece is placed over the lacing, and the skin is once more laced up, both inside the toggle and across it.

Once the skin has thus been made air tight, the seal is blown up. As the skin is still wet, it swells up into a giant animal. Now the hair

is cut off the blown-up skin by means of a sharp knife or ulo (fig. 83). As a matter of principle, the proper thing is to use a knife, since this is considered distinctly man's work. In this context, the skin is called *salisag* and the man doing the work *salisisoq*. The corresponding operation on ordinary sealskin (*neqqiarneq*), on the other hand, is woman's work and done with the ulo. The job of depilating is done rather easily and quickly. Once it is finished, the toggle is taken out again and the skin is turned inside out, i.e. the flesh side is now on the outside. Then the skin is laced up once more and blown up, whereupon the blubber is cut off roughly with a knife (fig. 84). Quite a little blubber should preferably be left on the skin so as to make it pliable. The blown-up skin is then hung up to dry. Once sufficiently dry, the skin is again turned inside out, the toggle is put back in place and carefully lashed tight. Then the new sealing float is blown up for the last time during the production process, and hung up for the final drying.

Thongs.

The thong is cut out (*kilidlugo*) of the fresh belt of the bearded seal skin when it has just been freed from blubber but is still moist. The work is done by two men sitting down on the ground with the legs resting against each other. One of them, the helper, holds the cut-off piece of thong tightly against him, the thong being wound around a stick to make for a better grip. The stick is moved at suitable intervals as the cutting proceeds. The other man does the cutting, supporting with his left hand the skin belt which has the flesh side turned out. The knife is wielded in his right hand whose thumb rests against the skin, on top of it, at a right angle to the cut and the knife, the edge of which is carried close to the thumb. The index finger is held in a similar way under the skin which thus slides firmly pressed between the two fingers, while the knife is carried in the direction toward the man doing the cutting. The knife must be carried with sure movements, as it is particularly important to keep the cut at a constant width, and the two men must work well together to hold the thong suitable tight each time a cut is made. If the thong is to be used for a walrus line, it is cut to a width of about 2 cm, the thong shrinking nearly to half that width while drying.

The cutting completed, one end of the thong is fastened to a big rock or another firm object, while the other end is pulled out by means of a thong tackle. To get a firm grip of the fresh, slippery thong, a special skin strap is fastened to it by a sort of double sheetbend. In this way the strap corresponds to a loose pulley. The men now pull firmly, being careful not to tighten the fresh thong too much. Sometimes a thong snaps during drying, particularly if there has been a scar or other damage in

the skin. This may also happen to a used thong if it is stretched too tight after having been wet.

As soon as the thong is stretched out, it is shaved with a sharp knife. The thong is supported in the left hand, and with the right hand the knife is brought toward the body in quick strokes. The hair and the dark epidermis are easily removed in this manner. Hereafter, an old thong is passed around the fresh one a couple of times and pulled along the latter (*qipivdlugo*), so as to squeeze off some of the water, whereupon the thong is left to dry in the air.

A thong should preferably retain the surface given it in the cutting process. If it is split after having been stretched and dried, the pieces will lose a comparatively great part of their strength. However, whip thongs are cut so that a broad thong is divided diagonally (*savisog*), thus forming two thongs of gradually decreasing width, but in this case, of course, such maximum demands are not made as when a harpoon line is involved.

After the drying is finished the thong is very hard and stiff and must as a rule be made flexible, at least if it is to be used for a harpoon line. Often this is done by simply passing the stretched-out thong in a loop around a piece of bone which is pulled back and forth along the entire thong (*agxaktor*). There is also a special tool for this, a thong smoother (*navigsin*) of walrus tusk or caribou antler provided with two holes through which the thong is pulled. For harpoon lines, this method is usually considered sufficient, whereas a whip thong is chewed through in its entire length (*keesoq*: chews thong). This is done by putting the thong in the mouth a bight at a time and working it between the molars, as far as possible without wetting it through with saliva. This is a job that makes heavy demands on both teeth and jaws, and old people with worn teeth have to get along at times by hammering the thong fairly soft with a rock. Since it also in this case, has to be done one bight at a time, it is a rather laborious work.

A lashing thong of bearded-seal skin is cut out and treated in a similar way, except that it is cut considerably narrower. The very thin lacing strings (*singisaaq*) are usually cut from ringed seal skin (*puise*).

If a thong is to be cut out in the winter, the skin belt is sometimes first depilated by treatment with hot water (*kiagdlugo*). This is done by the hunter's wife, who afterwards also helps in the cutting of the thong. The freshly cut thong is freed from water as described above, but the drying is done inside the house, where the thong is hung up in large, loose bights without being stretched out. Before use it is softened in the usual manner.

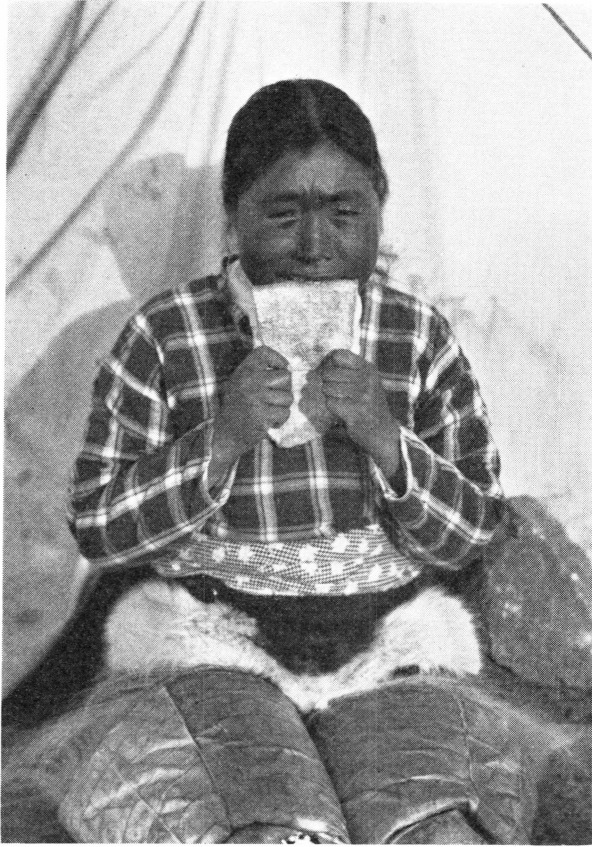


Fig. 85. Patdloq chewing a sole skin.

Sole Skin.

The pieces of the bearded seal skin that are to be used for soles are scraped but lightly of blubber. Then the hairs are removed by dipping it into hot water, as in the treatment of white skin, whereupon the piece of skin is stretched out for drying. The soles are always cut out lengthwise of the skin, otherwise they will become crooked during further treatment. Once the soles are cut out, they are chewed through very carefully and further treated with a scraper. For this use an *ersorsit* of stone is still used at times. It is quite common to see the women pull out a piece of sole skin and chew on it as a sort of useful pastime (fig. 85).

Splitting skin is sometimes done but this is a job that demands great patience and sureness in wielding the *ulo*. The blubber is first carefully scraped off, and then the inner skin (*mameq*) is split off. In this way, a light, parchmentlike skin is obtained which, among other things, is used at the top of the front side of the tent.



Fig. 86. Bearded seal intestine inflated to be dried and used for window panes.

Gutskin.

Gut of bearded seal is used for window panes and for gutskin coats, although the latter have now nearly gone out of use. However, in 1936 there were still a number of houses with gutskin panes, and while summering at Inuarfigssuaq, Patdloq prepared gut that was later used for the windows of the winter house.

The gut is first cleaned of the blubber adhering to it, and the inside layer is removed by treatment with warm water in a similar manner as for white skin. The water is wrung out by means of two sticks placed one at each end of the gut. Then one end is tied up, and the gut is blown up (fig. 86), whereupon the other end is quickly tied up. The blown-up gut is now allowed to dry, being simply hung up so as to flutter in the wind. After drying, the gut is cut open lengthwise and rolled up for later use.

Narwhal Skin.

If sufficient skin of bearded seal is not available the skin of narwhal may be used for lashing thongs and for whip crackers. If so, it is cut up into strips lengthwise along back and belly. It is said to be strong and excellent as far as it goes, although the length of a piece that can be obtained in this way is limited. The chest skin is also supposed to be

excellent for sole skin, the outer layer (*maktaa*, really the hair layer) being removed before drying. Narwhal skin was also used in the old days for water buckets.

Sinew Thread.

Once the long dorsal muscles have been cut out of the narwhal or white whale, and the outer layer of blubber and tissue has been removed, the sinews are taken out. The most deeply placed ones are pulled out with the teeth. The sinews are washed immediately in fresh water to remove the blood which would otherwise make them brittle. They are then scraped (*kiliordlugit*) on a scraping bench, to be completely cleaned of remnants of meat. They are thereafter split while still moist and laid out on a stony surface to dry. Once the sinew threads are dry, they are rolled up into a long bundle and put away in a bag (*ikpiarsuk*) for later use. In earlier times, the bag was made of sealskin and had a characteristic conical shape, "*itersoraq sordlo*", i.e. in the shape of a narwhal tail. It was said that such a bag could be rather large.

Walrus Skin.

Walrus skin is now rarely used for anything but dog food, and the meat pieces in question are usually cut out with the skin remaining on them. As already mentioned, the skin has sometimes been used for shoeing sledge runners, but it is hardly used in this way any more. Walrus skin has also been used in the old days for roofs of *qarmat*.

Sometimes thongs are cut out of the skin of a young walrus (*nu-kadlog*) in a similar manner as from a bearded seal. However, it is not suitable for harpoon lines but may be used for sledge lashing and the like. The skin of walrus fetuses may be used for whip crackers and also for boots. The latter, however, is said to have been done rarely. In such cases only the epidermis (*eqartaa*) was used, after the inner skin (*ma-minga*) had been removed.

Split walrus skin (*ikiardlugo*, i.e. splits it) may be used for tent skin, and the split skin of young walrus may, for lack of sealskin, be used for bags for little auks, but if so it is sewn together in bag form.

Bearskin.

The bear is cut up along the belly, from lower jaw to tail, and a cut is made across the chest and out a piece along the inside of the front legs. Likewise, a cut is carried outward along the inside of the hind legs. As a rule the skin is cut off above the extreme ungual phalanges, so that the claws are not included. The entire bearskin is named *nanoraq*.

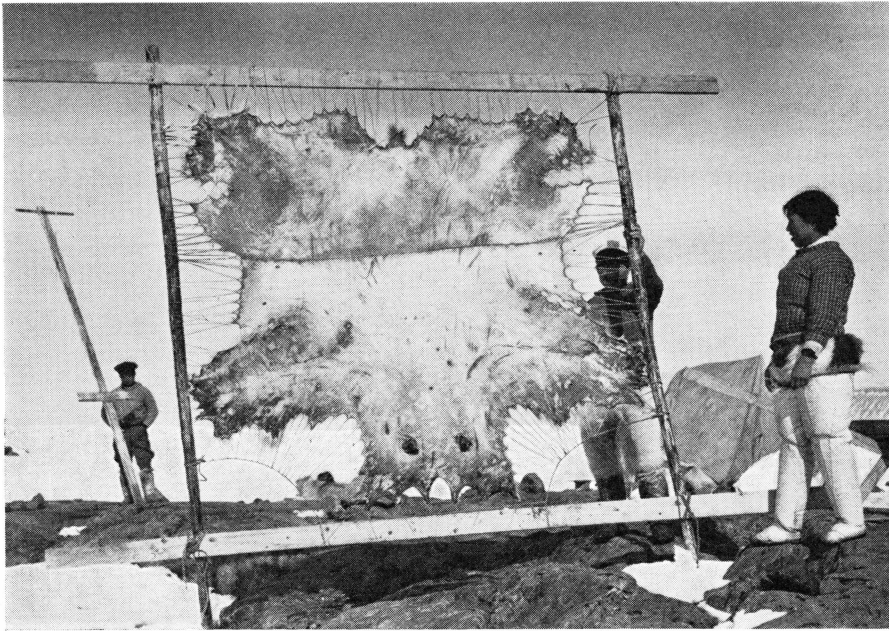


Fig. 87. Bearskin suspended in a frame for drying.

The tail piece is called *qungiaq*, the fore part of the skin *kian*, the center part *tavsinaar*, and the thigh pieces *ukpating*.

If the skin has been cut out in two pieces, as is usually the case, the pieces are sewn together before drying, and the skin thus sewn together is stretched out (*innerdlugo*) by means of a long string (*inniut*) in a special stretching frame (*innerfik*) made of wooden bars (fig. 87). While the skin is stretched out in this manner, the fat is scraped off the meat side with *ulos*. The fat that is scraped off is removed from the *ulo* with a finger as the scraping proceeds and devoured as a great delicacy.

When the dried skin has been cut out and is to be sewn into trousers, it is softened by wringing and squeezing by hand, piece by piece (*ulugdlugo*), sometimes also by chewing. It is then brushed over with water on the flesh side (*imardlugo*), and the two matching pieces are placed with the moistened flesh sides toward each other, rolled up and lashed together. In this way they are allowed to lie, usually for a day or so. Before the skin pieces are completely dry, they are treated with an iron scraper (*ersordlugit* or *tasiserdlugit*), whereupon the sewing may begin.

Caribou Skin.

The caribou is cut up lengthwise along the belly, and cuts are made along the front side of the forelegs and along the back of the hind legs.

When a hunter has brought a caribou skin home, his wife scrapes off the adhering tallow (*tunno*) with an ulo or with her teeth (*mikigdlugo*) "because it tastes good". The skin is then stretched for drying by means of pegs (*pauktordlugo*). According to some, the important thing is to stretch it as tightly as possible "*agsorsuar sukadlugo*". Others, however, prefer skins that have been dried without having been stretched in this way, if they are to be used for fur coats.

In former days, when there were many caribou, it was necessary to dry the skins quickly, particularly in the summer time, so they would not spoil. The skins are short-haired (*saxxapaluin*) at this time of the year and especially suited for coats. Since sufficient stretching pegs were rarely available in the place where the caribou was shot, the skin was simply laid out on the ground and kept stretched by simply placing rocks on its edges (*ujarqanik pernartordlugo*). When the skin is dry it is folded twice and stored away for later use. Before use it is softened (*qitulisardlugo*), sometimes by rubbing between the hands (*ulugdlugo*) but usually by chewing (*anguladlugo*), being moistened a little beforehand with water. Finally, the last softening is done with a scraper (*ersordlugo*), and the skin is now ready for sewing.

Fox Skin — Dog Skin — Hare Skin.

The skinning of a fox (*mikixsortor*) is a rather elaborate process requiring a great deal of experience. First the hide along the lips is cut open (*siggidlugo*), and the skin of the head is then pulled off. Then the skin is loosened from the body by passing a hand in under it and working it until the skin is free. Now the tail is loosened, the hand holding on all the time under the skin while the tail is caught hold of with the teeth from the outside and thus pulled off. The skin on the hind paws is detached in the same way, having first bitten through the ungular phalanges or broken them, and being careful not to bite holes in the skin. Finally, the skin is loosened of the fore paws in the same manner and the pelt is stripped off.

The skin thus removed is dried, fleshside out, on a stretching frame made especially for the purpose (*hanggitsivik* or *terianniamut panerseevik*) (fig. 88). The tail is stretched as far as possible, and a string is wrapped around it during drying. The object is to make the skin as fluffy and presentable as possible. In a warm house the drying of a fox skin lasts a couple of days at the most.

In the old days, while the skin was pulled off in the same way as now, the drying was done by simply putting it upon on the drying frame over the lamp. — The hair layer of fox skins or of pieces of fox skin clothing was sometimes cleaned by rubbing with pulverized soapstone



Fig. 88. Fox skin placed on a stretching board for drying.

or dry clay (*marqat*), which soaks up whatever grease there is on the skin and is then beaten off. Fox skins that are to be sold to the store are now cleaned in a similar manner with pipe clay.

If the skin is to be used for clothing it is not cut up until the sewing is imminent and until then is stored under the platform with head and legs turned into the skin. Before sewing it is chewed soft and then left to dry on the drying frame, after which it gets its final softening by rubbing between the hands (*ulugdlugo*).

Dogskin is stretched for drying. It is softened by simply rubbing between the hands, "*ulugsinardlugo*".

A hare is skinned (*mikixsordlugo*) by cutting the skin from the rump out along the inside of the hind thighs, and the skin is then flayed off inside out. It is dried with the fleshside out and stuffed with hay or other material. — Before use it is chewed soft.

Bird's Skin.

If the skins of auks are to be used for a coat, they are drawn off from the head (*aaktordlugo*), being first cut loose at the wing joints and at the legs. The skin is chewed free of fat (*nasisoq*), and then dried inside out. Thereafter it is cut open, sometimes along the back, sometimes along the breast, and cuts are carried from the neck out along the inside of the wings. When it is to be used it is first stretched by biting firmly into it and pulling with the hands. — If sea-gull skin is to be used for a coat it is treated in the same way as auk skin.

Sewing.

Cloth garments, especially under-clothing and anoraks, now make up an important part of the daily dress of the Polar Eskimos, and scissors and sewing machine are now in general use. However, the skin clothing is still indispensable, and the techniques involved have undergone no essential changes, except that the bone needle has been replaced by ordinary needles, and instead of the old skin sewing ring a thimble is now generally used. The Polar Eskimos seem to prefer the ordinary closed thimbles to the open metal sewing rings.

The cutting of skin (*iligxerdlugo*) to the proper shape for clothing is done with the ulo (*sanarruasog*) without the use of a pattern. Nevertheless, as guide for the cutting the contour of the piece may be loosely sketched out on the skin with a point of the ulo. Another practice is to mark off lines in the skin by folding it sharply, or by pinching small marks into it with the fingernails (*tigulerdlugo*). A cutting board (*tunggavik*) is used as a support during cutting. Formerly, it might be of bone but it is now usually made of wood.

The sewing ring or the thimble is placed on the index finger, and during the sewing the needle is carried from the outside in toward the person, who then pulls the needle toward her holding it between the thumb and the middle joint of the index finger.

The sewing of skin articles is done with sinew thread which is first split so that its thickness corresponds to the needle used. The thread is then moistened by pulling between the teeth, thereafter rolled either against the cheek or between the palms. Before the sewing begins, a knot is tied at the end of the thread. It is done as shown on fig. 89. 1. After the needle is threaded the other end of the thread is passed around the needle a couple of times. The thread is thereafter twisted a couple of times closely underneath the needle by turning it, and when thereupon the needle is pulled all the way through and the thread is pulled tight, a firm and sizeable knot results. When the thread is at its end,

the sewing is also ended by a knot which is pressed tightly down into the skin at the last stitch. It does not matter too much if a needle is perhaps a bit large as long as the sinew thread used is heavy enough to fill up the holes made by it.

On fig. 89. 2 is shown in general outline the sewing methods commonly used. a are ordinary overcast stitches (*mersorsinnardlugo*). b shows a corresponding seam (*merqinneq*) as sewn on clothing pieces of fox, hare or bird's skin. But here the sewing is not done along the skin edges themselves, but one skin edge is bent and the needle stuck through

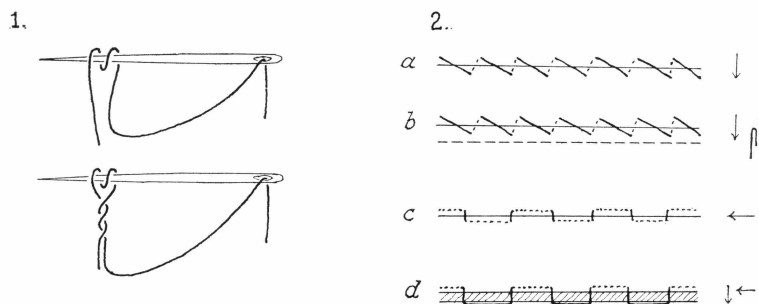


Fig. 89. 1. The method of making a knot at the end of a sinew thread.
2. Different kinds of seams.

the triple layer of skin. The seam c made by running stitches (*akiserardlugo*) are applied to stiff skins that must be sewed together on the right side, e.g. the long front seam on men's boots. Here, there is a choice of putting the needle either all the way through the skins or only halfway. The latter is used when the seam is to be water tight. If the sewing is carefully done, the two skin pieces will be pulled together very tightly, and the seam is almost invisible. The seam d is used for sewing soles onto boots (*unguserdlugo*). In this case the needle is put only halfway through the skin of the boot-leg, as for a watertight seam, but all the way through the thick sole.

For keeping sewing things, a little skin bag is used, which can be hung on the wall, and which has a flat, square pillow underneath it, into which the needles are put. The anchor-shaped sewing-ring holder is known but no longer used. The "winged" needle case is also known and sometimes used, although mostly as a souvenir with a bundle of carved figures attached to it.

VI. FOOD

Until groceries could be bought in the store, the Polar Eskimos lived almost exclusively on animal food, which still accounts for the greater part of the diet. The meat is eaten either boiled, dried, frozen or fermented. Only liver of seal and caribou is usually eaten raw right after the kill, but fresh raw meat is usually avoided.

The chief food animals are seal, walrus, and white whale, but in addition all available animals, probably without exception, are eaten. However, the livers of bear and fox are not eaten. It is said that these make one's skin peel off (*utinartog*). Liver of bearded seal is also avoided by most, although some persons do eat it and no harmful effects have been noticed.

The daily diet consists chiefly of boiled meat, while the other items add a festive touch to the menu. This is particularly true when a stored-away seal or a bag of little auks preserved in blubber is brought home during the winter after having lain to get tender over the summer. The meat broth is sometimes drunk, especially when out on a trip. New meat is also most often cooked in the soup so as to make it extra strong. At times blood is mixed into it. For use on winter trips soup is sometimes poured out into furrows in the snow where it freezes into bars that can be conveniently taken along and melted later.

Fermented meat is usually called *ivsuanneq*. Sometimes it is also boiled. The designation for fermented eider duck is *igunaq*. Boiled blood alone is preferably eaten only when greatly boiled down so as to be almost stiff. The boiled-down remnants of blubber that has been boiled into lamp train oil are also eaten. They become quite crisp and taste almost like greaves — of which of course they are a counterpart.

Frozen meat is eaten on sledge trips without much formality when the meat is chopped for dog food. The little trout caught in the lakes are also frequently eaten frozen and in that way are considered a delicacy. The truly proper way to eat them is indicated to be the following: First the fins are cut off and four lengthwise cuts made so the skin can be pulled off. Some eat the skin, others discard it. Thereupon the long, meaty part of the back is cut off, beginning at the tail and carving close to the spine down along the fish. Thereafter the balance of the

meat is split off the sides while bones and entrails remain hanging by the head and are thrown away.

The eating of little auks preserved in blubber, too, requires a special technique. First the feathers that stick to the skin are removed by biting into the bill of the bird and brushing the feathers off with a firm grip by the hand. Then a hole is bitten into the neck skin, and the entire skin is pulled off with the teeth and eaten. Actually, the fat skin makes up the main part of the meal. The rest of the bird is so tender that everything edible including the entrails is practically sucked out, leaving only the bones behind. Meat and skin may have a characteristic sharp but not unpleasant flavor, whereas the entrails may be rather too pungent for the European palate.

When occasion offers itself, meat of seal and narwhal or white whale is dried by hanging out in the open in sunny weather. Narwhal intestines too, are dried and eaten. However, they are very tough and are characterized as "something one cannot eat fast". Seal intestines, on the other hand, are usually eaten boiled.

The Polar Eskimos appreciate eggs greatly. In this respect, the large auk and eider duck eggs are most important, although sea-gull and tern eggs are also occasionally collected. Many eggs are eaten frozen after the shell has been thawed off by holding the egg for a moment in the warm hand. Sea-gull and tern eggs are boiled until hard. A chicken, if any, is simply picked out and the rest is eaten. The yolk seems to be most highly valued, many even discarding the white which has collected into a firm lump. Eggs are usually eaten with sugar if available. A special dish is sometimes made by emptying the eggs into a pot and stirring with sugar, after which the whole thing is cooked into a sort of omelet. Dried egg yolks (*itsiutin*), mainly from eider eggs, are stored in intestines of seal or bearded seal. Once the yolks have been put in, the intestine is tied up at the end and hung in the sun.

Mussels (*imanerin*) are in some places collected in the summer time, e.g. at Qânâq and Kiatak. They are eaten only boiled. However, the half-digested mussels found in the stomach of the walrus are eaten raw after the tough outer membrane has first been removed. On the other hand, these too are sometimes boiled.

Conditions permitting, a special mixed dish (*akutaq*) is sometimes made of caribou tallow and blubber. The tallow is first chewed together in the mouth, then spat out and put out to freeze. It is then beaten and mixed with beaten seal blubber, whereupon a little water is added, and everything is stirred together thoroughly until a consistency almost like whipped egg white is reached. Another dish which is also called *akutaq* consists of crow berries (*paorngran*) mixed with boiled-down train oil (*puja*) and willow down (*isergaveen*).

A sort of chewing gum, *qavnaq*, is produced by chewing willow down together with caribou tallow. This is considered a great delicacy and can be eaten afterwards. Children sometimes suck fresh hare eyes like a kind of hard candy.

On account of the natural conditions, plant foods cannot come to be of great importance to the Polar Eskimos. However, they like to collect crow berries which are sometimes eaten with blubber (*orsoherdlugit*). One species of lichen, *quajautin*, is said to be eaten at times boiled with blood. Finally, one kind of seaweed (*gerquaq*) is sometimes boiled and eaten with soup cooked on fermented meat. If people happen upon sorrel plants (*qunguleq*) they will eat the leaves, which however are not gathered systematically. Sometimes a decoction is made both of *qunguleq* and of another plant *ulunnausan*. The former is said to taste very acid whereas the latter is said to be more palatable. In this connection, another plant is mentioned, namely *paorngaqarfusat*. Blueberries (*kigutarngran*) are also used for cooking "tea". It is said to taste good.

In the summer, it is not unusual to see people chewing with gusto on thin barked willow roots (*patLersortog*). On the other hand, the twigs above ground (*qidlinerng*) do not taste good. The roots are sometimes also eaten with a little blubber.

It is well known that the acid contents of caribou stomachs are eaten as a great delicacy. The same is true of the contents of the large intestine (*orunit*) of the ptarmigan.

VII. SOCIAL LIFE

Population.

The Polar Eskimo community consists of households that are at least in principle independent of each other, and which in many cases consist only of husband and wife with their children. Often, however, the household includes other members who in most cases turn out to be either brothers or sisters of either husband or wife, or the children of either husband or wife from a previous marriage. More distant relations, too, may more or less permanently join a household; likewise, in various cases, foster children are taken in.

In 1935-36, according to the census, the Polar Eskimo population numbered 243 persons, distributed among 54 households which in turn were distributed among 13 settlements. To this must be added 31 persons of West-Greenlandic or Danish origin. In the Eskimo population families have here been included whose way of living is entirely Polar Eskimo, even though in some cases the wife originates from a West Greenlandic family. Likewise, the couple of cases have been disregarded of a man who has a foreign father. Taking into consideration further that seven children or young people were in the hospital at the time in question, the population was distributed in the following manner:

Number of persons:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
in number of houses:	2	3	10	16	13	7	3

As will be seen from this, the highest number of inhabitants in a house is seven, and the most frequently occurring number is four. Only in two cases did two married couples live in the same house, namely a young couple with the husband's and wife's parents respectively. In twenty cases the household consisted of only husband, wife, and their mutual children.

The Family.

It is considered almost a matter of course that a man marries as soon as he is able to support a wife. However, difficulties may turn up among the Polar Eskimos since the men are in the majority. In 1935 the population numbered 144 men and 130 women. For this reason,

there may be times when it is difficult for a marriageable man to find a wife, and in this connection it should also be considered that a man who loses his wife usually tries to marry again before long. As long as a man is able to hunt he needs a wife who can take care of treating the skins, sewing clothes, etc., so that he is not constantly dependent on the help of others who may not always be equally ready and willing. Especially for the old it may at times be difficult. To be sure, in many cases they are treated with great consideration by children and relatives, but cases also occur when they are sadly neglected by those nearest to them, especially when it comes to the clothing. Thus, an elderly man came and revealed that his son-in-law with whom he was living had not seen his way to give him any shoe laces for his kamiks, so he had to use a couple of pieces of frayed string. I was able to make another man happy at one time by giving him a pair of real skin mittens from my abundance. He owned only a pair of worn woolen mittens, which I believe were stuffed with hay, and when, a little surprised, I asked him if there was not one of the many women who could manage to sew him a pair of mittens, he simply seemed to smile at the thought. On another occasion, a woman told me resignedly that of all her many foster sons only one was a little considerate to her. It was also strange to see an old woman, who could hardly manage for herself, living all alone in the summer in a miserable canvass tent that was so small that she could just barely lie crouched together in it.

Orphans, too, may have a somewhat difficult time. Most often, however, they are taken in as foster children and treated by the people as their own. There were even cases when they seemed to be almost spoiled, perhaps because the foster parents themselves were childless. If the mother dies, the children, or some of the children, are sometimes taken as foster children by others. Most often it appears to be the sisters or brothers of the mother who take care of the children in such cases. However, times are still recalled when little children were sometimes killed upon the death of the mother, and apparently even though the children had got beyond the age when they needed mother's milk. Thus Inugârssuk told me that when her mother died while she was still very small she had to look on while her sister was choked to death by a string around her neck. The same fate was intended for her but she succeeded in freeing herself from the string, "perhaps because I was stronger".

In choosing a partner the inclination of the young people for each other in many cases undoubtedly means a great deal. But because of the limited possibilities, convenience often has the final word. It thus happens that a young man marries an elderly widow, and rather more frequently, an elderly widower takes a young wife. In some marriages the difference

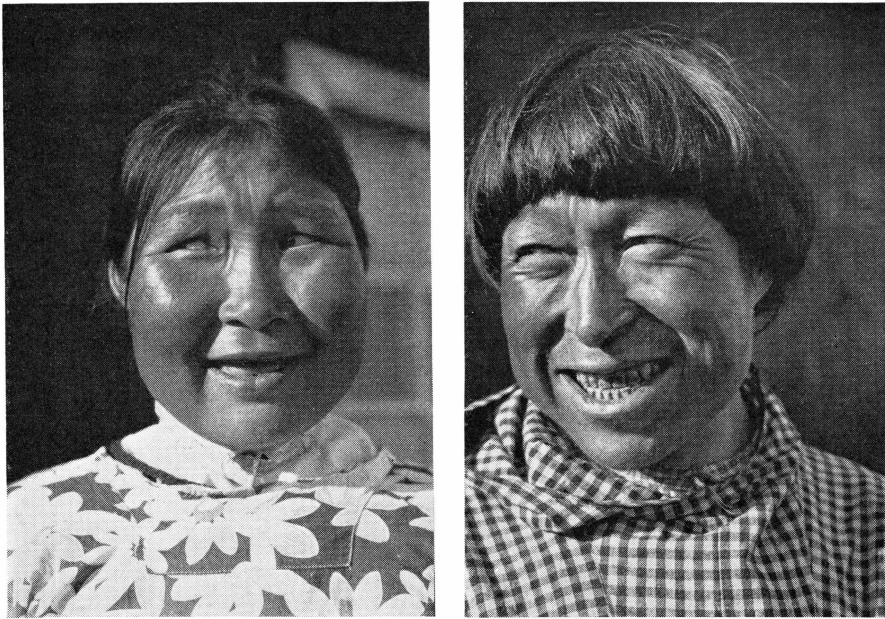


Fig. 90. Polar Eskimo types, Itutdlak and his wife Sauninguaq.

in age is 15–20 years. Usually the parents of the young people have to consent to the marriage. However, it was claimed that strictly speaking only the parents of the girl have to give their consent “because the man was now grown-up and outside the influence of the parents, whereas the parents had more authority over a daughter (*suliaritLugo*)”. Nevertheless, in at least one case, a young man had to give up the girl he would like most to have had because his parents opposed it strongly. The reason was probably that they were afraid of the girl’s family becoming too much of a burden to them. Sometimes the parents have picked out future spouses for their children. This, however, is said to be not absolutely binding for the future.

The relationship between spouses usually appears to be good. However, it still happens that husband and wife beat each other. Thus a woman appeared with a black eye as a result of a matrimonial controversy. A man was also mentioned who was said to have been very brutal to his now deceased wife, but it was obvious that such behaviour was generally disapproved, and the man in question, although in the prime of his life, had very great difficulty in getting married again.

There has been a case of divorce within the last few years. In spite of the fact that the man involved was competent and highly regarded, he seemed to have lost a certain amount of prestige, making it difficult for him to get a new wife. The man later married a widow.

In regard to pregnancy, it was said that anyone who wanted to leave a house where a pregnant woman was present should hurry out of the house passage. Presumably, this would help the woman to an easy delivery.

Births most often appear to take place in the usual house, or in summer in the tent. Yet it is said that some, though not all, formerly built a small snow house in the winter for the woman about to give birth, provided there was time to do so. However, everybody had access to it, and as soon as the woman was able to do so she would move back into the usual house. If a woman has to give birth while on a sledge trip, a small snow house is built for her, if possible, where the delivery can take place; however, the stay is made as brief as possible, and sometimes the trip is continued with mother and child safe and sound before twentyfour hours have elapsed.

The children are now usually given two to four names in baptism, and it is still customary to name them for persons recently deceased. Several persons living simultaneously may have the same name, but if so are distinguished from one another by the addition of *-paluk* ("the little one") or *-ssuaq* ("the big one"). However, it also seems possible to "be promoted" from one to the other. Furthermore, in the course of time, a person usually acquires nicknames, and the prevailing name may sometimes be completely replaced by another. This may mean that the same person is mentioned by a different name by different people, depending on which name they have been accustomed to hearing. The same, of course, may happen among ourselves. However, it was not possible to get an explanation of the exact reason for such a change of name. Possibly it may have some connection with the old custom of avoiding the mentioning of a dead person's name before that person had had someone named after him or her. It was explained that such a taboo applied to persons but did not extend to the identical names, if any, of animals or things. However, if a person had the same name as one recently deceased, one of his other names would be applied until someone had been named after the deceased one.

Nevertheless, the close association of a name with a certain deceased person still appears to be felt, even when the person in question has had someone named after him. It is as if an uncertain idea prevails that the dead one will still respond to his name. Thus, spouses usually mention each other by their names but when on one occasion a man talked about his deceased wife, he called her "*nuliara*", i.e. "my wife". Similarly, another avoided mentioning his late brother *Âpilaq* by name but called him "*Ûsarqaq's father*". In former days, it was said, a deceased person might appear as a ghost if his name was mentioned. Ordinarily, however, the fear is no longer so great of mentioning the name of deceased persons,

as I noticed on many an occasion. Nevertheless, people are said to be unpleasantly affected by the sight of pictures of deceased ones. The notion of an identity between the deceased and the present bearer of a name is frequently expressed plainly by even family relationships being transferred to the one living. Even strangers whose names remind the Polar Eskimos of their own names, are identified with a deceased person of the same name and, in a way hard for us to understand, considered to represent that person. Thus, a young Danish girl was addressed as "my mother" by an elderly man. How deep this goes is evident in the annoyance caused if it happens to show that one does not take it seriously.

Education.

The babies are cared for most tenderly, and when moving around outside, the mother usually has her baby in the bag on her back. Later, an older sister often is allowed to help out as a nursemaid and to wear the little one — and not without pride — in her mother's amaut. Suckling is continued for several years, and even though a new little brother or sister may have been added, even a 5-6 year old child may come to the mother and ask for a sip from the mother's breast.

As soon as the children can begin romping around by themselves they have the utmost liberty and are allowed to make experiences for themselves in the company of playmates of their own age or older. However, the parents usually see that they are not exposed to injury by the dogs, and they soon learn to handle a dog whip so as to be able to make themselves respected on their own.

Naturally, Polar Eskimo children may also get naughty or think up mischief, but that is usually taken by the parents with angelic patience. Even when serious consequences threaten from a child's acts, they are usually warded off so gently that the child feels no pressure. Actual punishment, let alone a beating, is hardly taken into use. At most, threats are resorted to. If e.g. a child keeps on crying, an attempt may be made to quiet it by threatening with "the raven": "*qianggittutin, qianggittutin, tuluvarhruum ihitutLassavaatit*" (don't cry or the big raven will come and hack out your eyes!). Or another way, simply: "*tuluvar-suaq axersoq!*" (the big raven is coming!).

However, in the old days, certain scare spirits were made use of. So Ūtâq told of some creatures, *avingarsuit*, coming out from under the platform and taking children if they crawled around on the dirty floor. Thus the children were threatened with "*avingarsuit pitLassavaatit*". Another scare creature (*peraapaluum aliageegaxsaa*) was called *niorqungorqaungaq* and used in the same way when the children were

crawling on the floor: "*niorqungorqaungap pitLassavaatit*". It is described as a small creature with a hook or perhaps a hooked finger. It was not quite definitely known.

Only a single lullaby, obviously traditional, was noted. Cuddling songs, as often found in West and East Greenland, do not appear to be common.

That the children are treated with such great gentleness, not to say respect, is probably to a great extent connected with the idea of seeing in the child the deceased person whose name it bears. The child's right of property is also respected. F. inst., the parents cannot give away any of their child's toys without first having secured its permission. Otherwise they run the risk of the child considering a great injustice to have been committed to it.

During their further growth the children are trained for their future occupation, partly through play, partly by following the grown-ups and taking part in their experiences. No actual ceremonies are connected with the transition from child to grown-up. For the young man the turning point occurs the first time he has caught a sizeable animal, usually a seal. This is celebrated as an important event within the small community, and sometimes the meat is on this occasion distributed to all the people at the settlement "especially to the old". Thus it does not now appear to be any definitely established custom. Formerly, it was not unusual for a young man or girl to assist an older person as a regular helper (*kiivfaq*). This may still happen. During my stay on Inglefield Land in 1936, f. inst. was the orphan Miteq helper boy to Moses.

In regard to "the house of the young people" it was difficult to obtain any real explanation. KNUD RASMUSSEN mentions that at each settlement such a house was to be found where the young men and girls lived together and got to know each other better without any binding obligations, until they found the right chosen one, whom they married provided the parents consented¹). — Such an institution, of course, is not consistent with the Christian religion, and some therefore claimed to know nothing about such a thing. One elderly man, however, admitted knowing it. However, no special house was involved, only what happened was that the young people gathered and had a good time with each other in a local house that was temporarily unoccupied.

Illness.

The treatment of illness that had no recognizable immediate cause was formerly in the hands of the shamans, and no kind of medical treatment seems to have been known. Frequently, the cause mentioned

¹) KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Nye Mennesker* (1905), p. 112.

was that the patient had broken a taboo. A child who had eaten prohibited things, such as eggs or entrails, would get spots on the body, it was said, and its mother would become ill with a swollen stomach (*nappartoq*). The expression *nappartoq*, however, was not used in the cases when a tabooed woman (*agdlertoq*) became ill because she herself had violated a food ban.

However, the Polar Eskimos knew how to treat successfully even serious injuries requiring surgical treatment, such as a bone fracture, or even the amputation of a leg¹). Wounds are still often treated by covering with a thin slice of fresh seal blubber or a piece of a flayed-off skin of little auk. In the case of inflammations, a plaster of hare skin was applied which was moistened on the flesh side and placed over the infected part. After some time the pus would contract and come out, the human skin becoming softened by the moist hare skin.

A kind of indisposition called *tumangguneq* may occur if one has eaten something indigestible or unaccustomed, and is said to show up as a pressing or squeezing feeling in the throat, possibly also nausea. Some are said to get it after eating oatmeal.

In the spring time, many are affected by snow blindness in a more or less serious degree. It is very painful and, besides, may involve seeing double for some time afterwards. The treatment, as a rule, consists in protecting the eyes completely against light, by means of a bandage around the head.

Fits of "Arctic hysteria", or so-called drum-dance fits, (*pivdle-rorneq*) are no uncommon occurrence. Persons with a somewhat nervous temper appear to be most strongly disposed to it and it is released if they are exposed to too great a mental pressure. The one attacked is in a condition of deliriousness and wants to tear his clothes off his body. Sometimes, it is said, they may think of eating turf or dirt, or even excrement. In that condition they may become dangerous to their surroundings so care is taken to bring knives and other hazardous implements outside their reach. It often appears as if the ill person seeks some kind of release in a continuous ecstatic drum song, hence the name "drum-dance fit". Some also think that one can become *pivdlerortoq* from eating fox meat. Possibly this may have something to do with the fact that foxes themselves can become "*pivdlerortut*", i.e. attacked by rabies, and in that condition are also dangerous to people.

Death.

In regard to measures in the case of a death, Ûtâq related that if it occurred in a house, the dead person was always carried out through

¹) KNUD RASMUSSEN: *Nye Mennesker* (1905), p. 30.

the passage. He knew nothing about any past custom of lighting a lamp outside the house on such an occasion¹). Inugârssuk recalled from her childhood that people used to stuff hay into their nostrils at a funeral. The same had been done to her, she said, but finding it very unpleasant she picked it out again. During the time of mourning after a man's death, the widow always had to wear her hood turned up and mittens on her hands even in the summer. She was not allowed to drink from the water container in the house but had to fetch water from a creek or other body of water some distance away and could only drink it from her own mug. Neither could she touch a knife. Others had to carve the meat out for her or else she had to eat it without having it cut apart. If a man had lost his wife, he would wear her needle case in a string over his shoulder. Only when eating would he put it away.

Before Christianity was introduced, the dead were buried in stone graves, and the belongings of the dead person were laid down as grave goods (*sanileq*) next to the tomb. Nowadays the body is placed in a coffin and buried in the ground, provided conditions permit this. Once the coffin is covered over, the participants in the funeral immediately collect rocks and place them as an edging around the tomb.

This possibly reflects the old Eskimo burial custom of only laying the corpse on the ground within a stone oval.

Administration of Justice.

The traditional principles of law of the Polar Eskimos center to a great extent on hunting and the distribution of hunting shares as mentioned in relation to the hunting of different animals. It may be added that if a man borrows another man's dogs for use in hunting, this does not usually give the owner of the dogs the right to any share in the catch. Sometimes dogs are lent out in this way to others when the owner himself does not have enough meat with which to feed them, the user naturally taking care of feeding the dogs. Only if a man borrows another man's dogs for bear hunt must he give the owner enough skin for a pair of trousers.

No consideration is usually granted for the use of another man's hunting implements. If any of the pieces borrowed should get lost or ruined, it is as a rule not necessary to replace them, provided the men are good friends. If they are not good hunting mates, however, it is considered reasonable that replacement be provided. As an example may be mentioned that during the summer on Inglefield Land Qarqutsiaq presented me with a harpoon point he had made. I lent it to Angutdluk who had more use for it, resulting in its getting lost. This apparently

¹) E. KANE: Arctic Explorations (1856) II, p. 118.

did not cause Angutdluk to feel any obligation to replace it, whereas Qarqutsiaq who had given me the harpoon point as a gift, presented me with a new one to replace it shortly afterwards. Only, this time he did not sharpen the blade, making it unusable, "so nobody would be tempted to borrow it". Some time later, to be sure, Angutdluk came and presented me with a paper knife he had made; however, it is uncertain whether or not it was meant as a sort of compensation for the harpoon point.

Theft appears to occur but rarely. To be sure, it was mentioned that young people sometimes might get into their heads to pilfer a little tobacco. However, the conception of theft is closely connected with the idea of right of property and, according to old Eskimo view, a man has only limited property rights to the things he does not directly need for himself or which he may have in abundance. If a man is on a sledge trip and the hunting fails leaving him short of meat, and he then finds a meat cache, then he is free to take from it whatever he needs, but he must tell the owner as soon as he sees him. Otherwise it will be considered theft. Other cases have been mentioned above as related to fox hunting.

This obligation of not keeping anything hidden is deeply anchored in the Eskimo mentality. It was originally considered to be one of the most important social obligations, and it may still show itself in a way that arouses the amazement of the stranger. In recent times, various rules of preservation have been introduced, particularly for fox and eider. They are usually adhered to quite loyally, yet it happens at times that they are infringed upon, in which case the "criminal" has been known to go to the hunters' council to give notice of his transgression, well knowing that he would be fined. In one such case I asked the man in question why he had shot the eiders when he knew he would have to pay a fine for so doing. Yes, he said, the fines after all are used for the benefit of the orphans and there are so many of them that one would like to help them. — Likewise, it is difficult for a Polar Eskimo to tell an untruth. Sometimes somebody may flippantly turn out a cock-and-bull story, maybe about some hunting exploit or what have you; but as though in fear of anybody taking it seriously he'll usually try to prevent that by adding: "*na-a, hagluhorhroanga*", 'No, it isn't true; I'm a big liar'. —

The drum-song contest as a way of settling between two hostile parties, as it is known from West and East Greenland, was not used by the Polar Eskimos. On the other hand, it has been common that good friends who regularly competed with each other in sports and hunting skill (*ivereegsut*), would also once in a while sing at each other and tease each other, jokingly presenting in a drum song (*piseq*) whatever disparaging things they had heard about each other. This, however,

seems to have rather strengthened the friendship, and later on the drum songs would often be sung as entertainment. Women, too, could perform in this way as drum song opponents (*mumerdlutik ivereglutik*). While one of the two parties sang, the opponent would hold up a small wooden stick, *aviorun*, between the fore fingers in front of the other's face, and once the song was finished, a long drawn-out "wæææ . . ." would be uttered. No further explanation of this *aviorun* could be given. The word is derived from *aviortog*, which in this context was said only to mean "saying wæææ". Accordingly, the literal meaning of *aviorun* would simply be "something used when saying "wæææ". In West Greenland *aviorpoq* is said of a seal crying during the rutting season. — The teasing songs are hardly made any more, yet the tradition has not been forgotten completely. Thus one day that Moses had had a fairly large sum of money paid out to him, he said he wished there was a man he could sing at in a *piseq* — so as to be able to brag that he could afford to buy two rifles at one time. Yet he had bought one of them for his son-in-law. — The stick, *aviorun*, is also still used in the same way when two singers sing a kind of drum-song duets as entertainment. Most often the songs have no real text, but even in the old teasing songs, the text was in many cases limited to casual hints while the greater part of the song consisted of *ajaa, ajaa*, etc. — The idea of *ivereegsut*, however, does not seem to have lost its meaning entirely. Thus in 1946 I had a couple of boys visit me, and when I asked them if they were good friends, using the expression *ikinggutit*, their reply was "no, we are *ivereegsut*". The same proved to be the case among others, whereas in regard to still others it was mentioned specially that they were not *ivereegsut*.

VIII. PASTIMES

Sports and Games.

Among the Polar Eskimos it is difficult to make a very sharp distinction between sports and games. Some games, to be sure, are decidedly children's games, but others are participated in by adults as well as by children. In this way the time is shortened, if e.g. on a hunting trip people are tied up by bad weather, and the adults are absorbed in the games with the same good spirits and sense of play as the children. The festive outings, too, that are undertaken from Thule at Christmas and New Year, are occasions for sportive display. The destination of the outing may be a frozen-in iceberg some distance away, and both on the way out and on the way back there is lively racing between the sledges. A special spirit prevails at the place of the feast itself. It is in the middle of the dark period, so the place is lit up by candles placed in small niches that have been chopped into the iceberg, or sheltered by small screens. In the flickering light, the women cook coffee while the men have a good time in various ways.

Football is sometimes played with a skin ball stuffed with hay. Formerly, it was the custom to play ball with a blown-up sealing float. Sometimes the ball would be abducted by one of the sledges and brought to another settlement, and it was up to the opponents to take up the pursuit and recapture the ball.

Trials of Strength. — A kind of pulling game (*aksaraartut*) is a popular sport and practiced in various ways. The two opponents sit down facing each other, with one knee bent and the other foot thrust against the knee of the opponent. Each grasps his part of a double handle (*assarang* or *aksarqak*) made of two wooden pieces firmly connected by a lashing of seal skin thong (fig. 91). The point is then to pull the opponent toward oneself, raising him up from the ground.

Similar trials of strength are undertaken with an arm (*talitsining*) or with a finger. The latter is called *akseruttut*, and depending on which finger is used it is named: *tikermisuk* if with the forefingers; *qiterLermisuk* if with the middle fingers; *mikileramisuk* if with the ring fingers; *egergormisuk* with the little fingers and finally *pakasummisuk* if with the wrists.

Crawling with two men on the back is also practiced as a form of test of strength or endurance.

Racing takes place at times. On one occasion it was done much like the Danish game "to mand frem for en enke", a kind of "tag" race.

Games. — As may be expected, some of the games have hunting as a model. — A "Bear Hunting" game (*uuligangguartut*) consists of one man covering himself with a bearskin after having walked some distance away from the settlement. The others then drive out and try to catch "the bear".

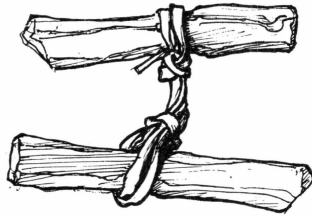


Fig. 91. Handles for trial of strength.

Walrus hunting, too, is imitated in a game. One man goes around with a long line that has a loop in each end and tries to throw it at another man. The one hit is then the harpooned walrus and tries to pull the line toward him. The point is now for the hunter to hold on to it and make it fast by means of his loop and a rib or something else that is pushed through the loop and pressed down hard into the snow while at the same time he steps down on the line with his foot, all in the same way as when a walrus is made fast with the ice chisel of the lance.

nauligangguartor. — A piece of meat (*nauligangguagaq*) is hung up in a string and the players try to hit it with small toy harpoons. The boys also practice in a similar way by throwing toy harpoons at a turf.

In *herquategangartor*, rocks are thrown (*mitLorLugit*) at white bones representing walrusses. — The game known so well in other parts of Greenland of hitting a set-up rock so that it falls over (*nakatauttut*) does not appear to be known.

ajuktartut is the name of a type of ball game, using a ball or sphere made of the round capitulum (*siwbiaq*) from the thigh bone of a caribou or walrus. The ball is thrown up a snow-covered slope and the point is now to prevent it from rolling down by knocking at it with a walrus rib, driving it back up the slope.

inung nanunggorartar is a "catch-the-bear" game played out on the ice, where the children take turns being the bear and getting caught by the others. The one who first catches up with the "bear" and touches

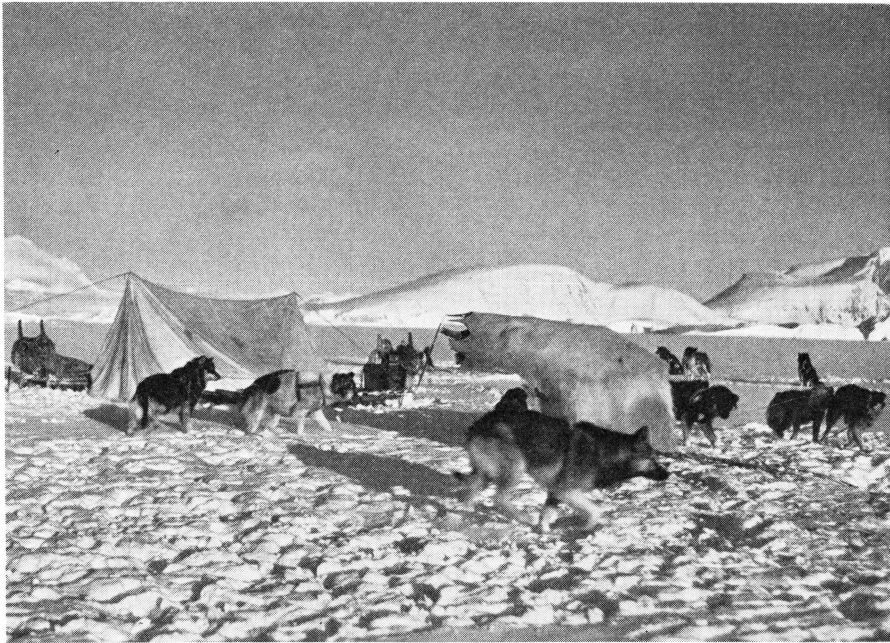


Fig. 92. Playing "bear" at Navdlortoq.

it, takes over its part and then it is his turn to get caught by the others. In other words, a form of "tag".

Hiding game (*ersuttauneq*). — One of the participants hides a small thing which the others try to find.

Guessing Game. — A person holds some object hidden in one hand and asks the other: "*nadler-piaarin?*" (which of them do you want?). If the opponent guesses right, he takes over the object, and then it is his turn to ask.

erdlaveersisq. — One joke consists of playing the "bowel robber" (*erdlaveersisq*). A string is tied under somebody's nose tip and tightened in the back around the head, forcing the nose upward, whereupon he looks at somebody else and says "*qungujuppoq-quppoq*" (he is smiling). He then pretends to lap up the bowels of the one smiling, licking his fingers one by one. In this way the memory is still alive of the mythical bowel robber who tried to rob strangers of their bowels when they visited the house of the moon man.

When at play, the children sometimes turn the hood of the fur coat inside out (*manggutartor*). No further explanation was given.

One game consists of two children standing face to face, taking each other's hands and swinging them from side to side while saying, giggling: "*hakune-hakune-i-i-i-i*". They then try to tickle each other.

qilorwrarwrai. — A piece of string with the ends tied together, as used for string figures, is placed around somebody's head as shown fig. 93. A, and held tight in front of the head by means of the forefinger of the right hand, which is inserted at *b* while the left-hand forefinger is inserted at *a*. The outmost part is now twisted with the right forefinger while singing "*eemaa-aaajaa, eemaa-aaajaa*". The twists are now pushed back toward the person's face and the left forefinger is inserted at *a*¹ as shown on fig. 93. B. The outmost part is now twisted the other way around while at the same time singing "*eemaa-aaajaa*". At last, the

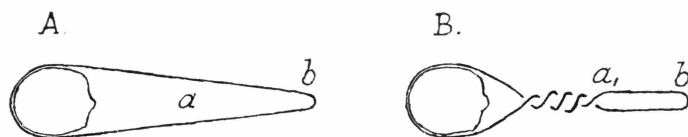


Fig. 93. The way of using the string in playing "*qilorwrarwrai*".

left forefinger lets loose, releasing the twists all at once, with the shout "*qilorwrarwrai*". —

The most common pastime for the children in the winter is undoubtedly sliding down a snowy slope. With this they can while away hour after hour, and they'll use for that purpose any flat objects they can find, pieces of board, bits of old sledge runners, tin plates etc., but best of all is sliding on the back of their bearskin pants.

Jingles. — The following, obviously popular jingles, were taken down, although unfortunately without entirely exact translations.

1) *aqweeq qiporqaq tunoliing — tikaagudliarsuk — anernilo kigutidlo — hu!* (A humpback whale with black blubber — a small lesser rorqual (?) — a blow of breath (?) and teeth — hu!).

2) *uluangorqaatiin ikeernarpaluxLiin — agxerpaluktitLo — qeerqaajangorpeqaatin — agxeriin — iwarqalaginnin — aqajamuxuanun maorqaain.*

The following explanation was given: A child has cold cheeks and hands and comes to its mother and wants to sit on her lap and warm the hands by sticking them in on the mother's stomach.

3) The following jingle is said to originate from "the old ones" and has almost the character of a proverb: *immertoorsuugame oqilanggitsog — nerersopaluugame oqilanggitsorsuaq!* — (he who has drunk much water moves heavily — he who has eaten too much moves very heavily!).

At play, children identify birds with various land and sea mammals. So, f. inst. they call:

<i>qupanuk</i> (snow sparrow)	<i>aqwerhrung</i> (whale)
<i>timmiatsiaq</i> (sandpiper)	<i>tuktorhrung</i> (caribou)
<i>akpaliarsuk</i> (little auk)	<i>anggorhrung</i> (? ? wolf)
<i>miteq</i> (eider)	<i>aiverhrung</i> (walrus)
<i>nauja</i> (sea gull)	<i>nanorhrung</i> (polar bear)
<i>taateraag</i> (kittiwake)	<i>qilaluwarhrung</i> (white whale)
<i>serfaq</i> (black guillemot)	<i>ugxorhrung</i> (bearded seal)
<i>akpa</i> (guillemot)	<i>aataarhrung</i> (harp seal)
<i>tuluwaq</i> (raven)	<i>umingmarhrung</i> (musk ox)
<i>qaquLLuk</i> (fulmar)	<i>natserhraarhrung</i> (hooded seal)

There seems in this to be some survival of the old belief that certain animals are each others' doubles or have a certain relationship to one another. However, in the cases known from other Eskimo groups, birds rarely seem to be mentioned.

Toys.

Here, as in other places, the children are given toys that correspond to the tools of the adults, only in a more or less simplified form, so that they are able to practice their use at an early age. In particular, the boys learn to handle the dog whip when they are small, and they may be seen practising sitting on a small sledge drawn by a puppy who does not always get the most gentle treatment. Before they reach that point, the "dog" consists of the humerus of a seal (*agxerqupaluk*), and a whole row of these may be harnessed to a larger bone representing the sledge. Similarly, the girls play with dolls, and often a considerable amount of work is spent in order to make the clothing as fine and correct as possible.

A Toy Propeller (*tseertaag*) was formerly a common toy but is now seen less often. The propeller has two holes through which strings are pulled. By alternately slacking and tightening the strings the propeller is made to whirl around alternately to one side and the other, producing a sound "tseer, tseer".

The Top (*kaavsak*) consisted formerly of a more or less oval disk of bone, wood, or baleen, with a stick stuck through the center. Yarn reels are now preferable used.

A Sling (*idluung*) is still sometimes used as a toy. Hurling a rock by means of the whiplash, folded in a bight, is also known. — A whip sling with a rock tied to the end of it is also known, but only used by children on dogs. Making use of such a whip sling is called *igdlortoq*, the same word as is used for an ordinary sling.

Carved Figures.

Many Polar Eskimos, both men and women, are skilled at carving ivory figures. Usually the molars of the walrus are used for this purpose. Thus a man named Tâtianguaq related that his grandmother had been especially skilful at this art. Her little figures of dogs and humans were used as toys and kept in bags of seagull feet, sometimes of considerable size and sewn of many seagull feet. He himself had at one time such a bagfull sent to him. In addition she made harpoon heads for her husband. A couple of women now living, Âtitaq and her sister Arnakitsoq, were known for their lifelike and artistically made figures, of which several are now to be found in the Ethnographic Collection of the Danish National Museum. To a large extent they represent persons from old myths and may be set up so as to form complete little scenes.

Ajagaq.

The *ajagaq* game is still practiced from time to time, although few now own an *ajagaq*. Thus none was found at Thule in 1935. Formerly, however, they have evidently been very popular. Thus it was said that sometimes at a settlement regular *ajagaq* tournaments were held where the *ajagaq* passed as sort of a challenging cup from owner to owner.

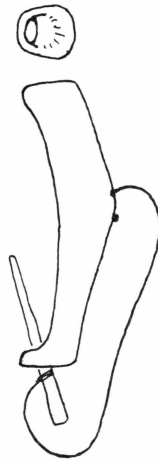


Fig. 94. Polar Eskimo *ajagaq*.

The characteristic Polar Eskimo *ajagaq* (fig. 94) is carved out of caribou antler or walrus tusk, while the *ajagaq* stick is of a pointed bone. In one particular case an *ajagaq* was said to have been made of a walrus radius, but it was very big and heavy. In the end of the *ajagaq* is a rather large hole that leads obliquely through to the concave side. A corresponding but smaller hole is found in the other end which is

curved slightly outward. About in the center of the convex side a small channel is drilled in which the string is fastened that connects the ajagaq with the stick. The other end of the string is fastened to the stick at some distance in front of the heavier end which serves as a handle. The trick now is to fling the ajagaq aloft on the string and catch it on the stick by hitting one of the holes (*ajaktoq*).

Usually, the aim is to catch the ajagaq 20 times in a row. The score is normally kept by counting although sometimes stories are told that mark, stroke by stroke, the number of times hit. If one had got 20 they would say "*kigutitaarqisoq*" (he has had new teeth) whereupon the person involved rattled with the stick in the hole of the ajagaq, which at the same time was held up to the mouth. Then it was moved to the side, the stick still rattling, as though the player was going to put it away or make himself free of it. When several sat in a circle playing ajagaq they took turns sunwise until 20 had been reached by somebody. Then they continued the other way around until somebody again reached 20, when direction was changed again.

When 20 had been reached, the designation *kauktut* was used for this number, while during the counting *igluane tatLimat* (i.e. 20) was said. The opinions appeared to be divided as to the meaning of the word *kauktut* (or *kawgwin*). One man thought that *kauktut* in this context must be equal to 21 and that *kauktor* meant "getting 21". To this, however, two women argued that *kauktut* should be taken to mean "the entire sum of 20", i.e. the 20 times that a hit had been made. It would be tempting here to advance the conjecture that *kauktut* perhaps is really a corruption of the word *kigutit*, cf. "gets new teeth".

There are different ways of flinging the ajagaq aloft. The simplest way is to throw it out from the person, and this may be done so that it turns either its convex or its concave side in. The ajagaq in the latter case is made to revolve half a turn in the air. Another way consists of hurling the ajagaq from outside in toward the person, and finally it may be spun around several times before being thrown aloft. However, this last requires considerable practice.

The Polar Eskimos have special designations for the various ways of catching. If the ajagaq is thrown straight out from the person, "*qimmeq atauseq*" (one dog) is said if the hole has been hit from the front end. If it is hit from the rear it is called *akkuatLaasoq*. If the big hole is hit from the inside they say *tatLorutaisoq* or *igluanut tatLorutaisoq*, depending on which side of the ajagaq is turned inward. Hitting the small hole from the inside is called *ningiupaluk*. If accidentally it is hit from the end they say *itipalua* or *itipalua ergoriga* (I hit its rump hole). If the ajagaq is twirled in toward the person and up they say *ulimikattartog* when the big hole is hit either from the end or from the inside. At



Fig. 95. Natuk shows how to make the string figure "tuktorsuk".

"*nanorsuaq*" the *ajagaq* is whirled around several times before being caught, and at "*umingmaq*" it is first whirled around alternately to one side and the other. If the *ajagaq* slips off after having been caught on the stick it is called *meriartor* (it vomits). —

Nothing in particular is known of *nuglutang*, although it had been heard of.

String Figures.

String figures or "Cat's Cradles" (*ajagaqutit*) are still made with great skill by many, chiefly by women and children. Thus the autumn of 1935 the children in the hospital were eagerly engaged in it. The string (*ajaraaq* or *ajagaq*) now usually consists of a piece of string about 100 cm long, the ends of which are tied together.

The string figures here pictured (fig. 96–101) were done by Amaunalik and were immediately sewn onto pieces of cardboard. In a couple of cases

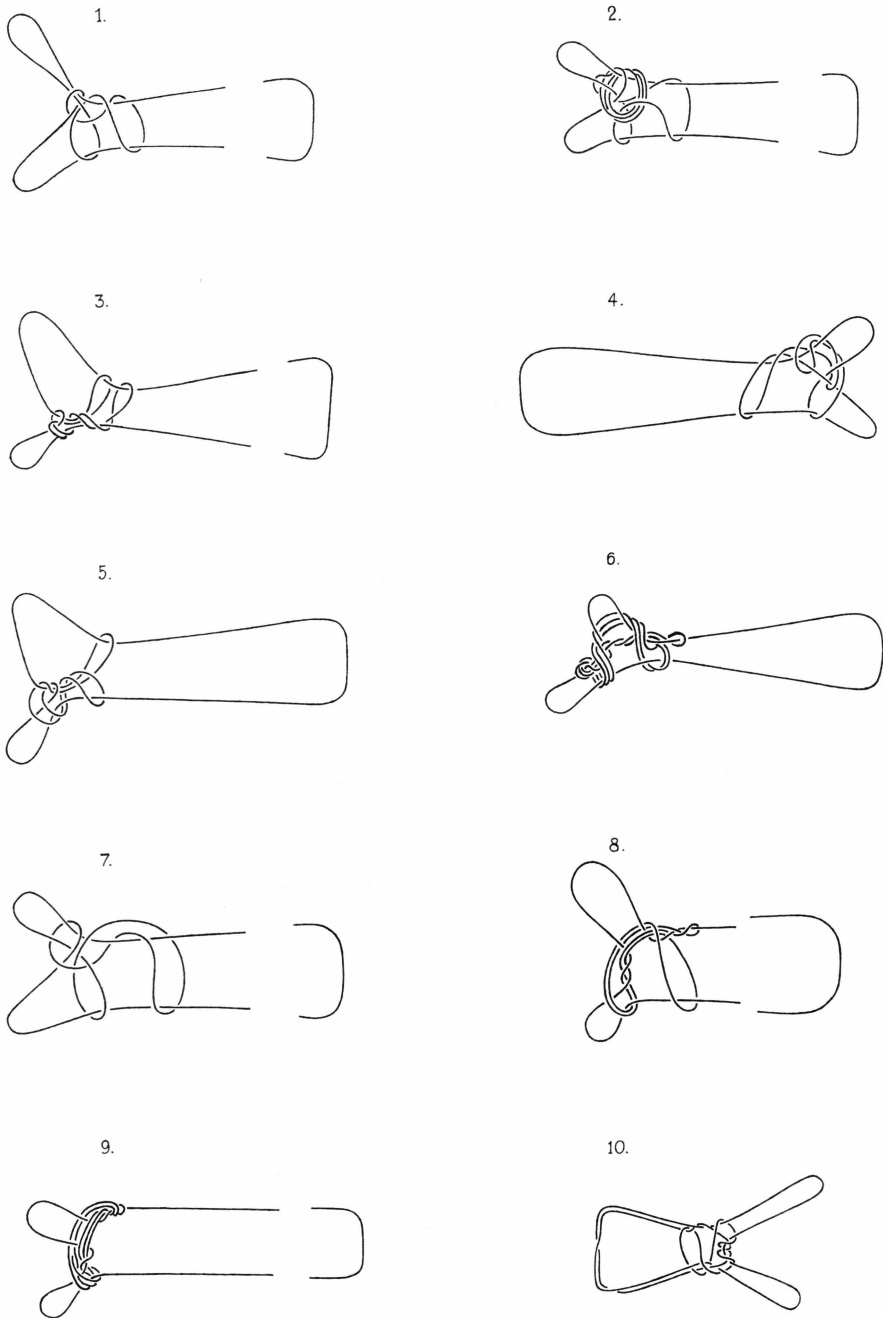
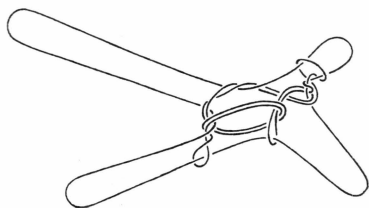
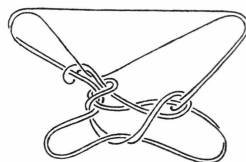


Fig. 96. String figures. - 1. *ukaleq* - 2. *ukaleq nigartalik* - 3. *tasixoraxeqatartarsuk* - 4. *amajorsuk* - 5. *martarsuk* - 6. *qimmeq* - 7. *tukto* - 8. *terianniaq* - 9. *inuk qeqartog* - 10. *sisorartog*.

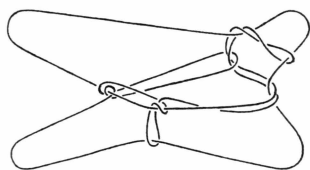
11.



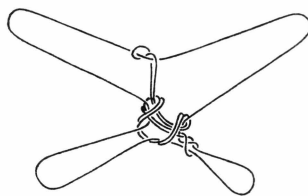
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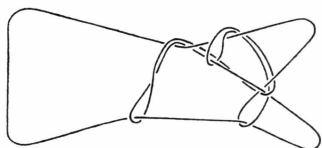
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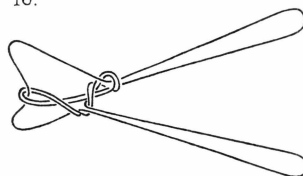
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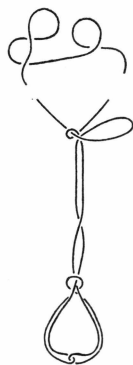
15.



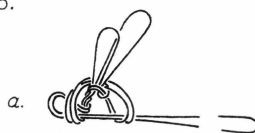
16.



17.



18.



b.

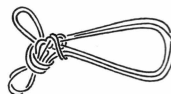


Fig. 97. String figures. — 11. *nanorsuk* — 12. *tuluwaq* — 13. *nauja* — 14. *quxuxung* — 15. *amajorsuk* — 16. *qupanuk* — 17. *nivingarhruartitaa* — 18. *qimerLorarqatartarsung*.

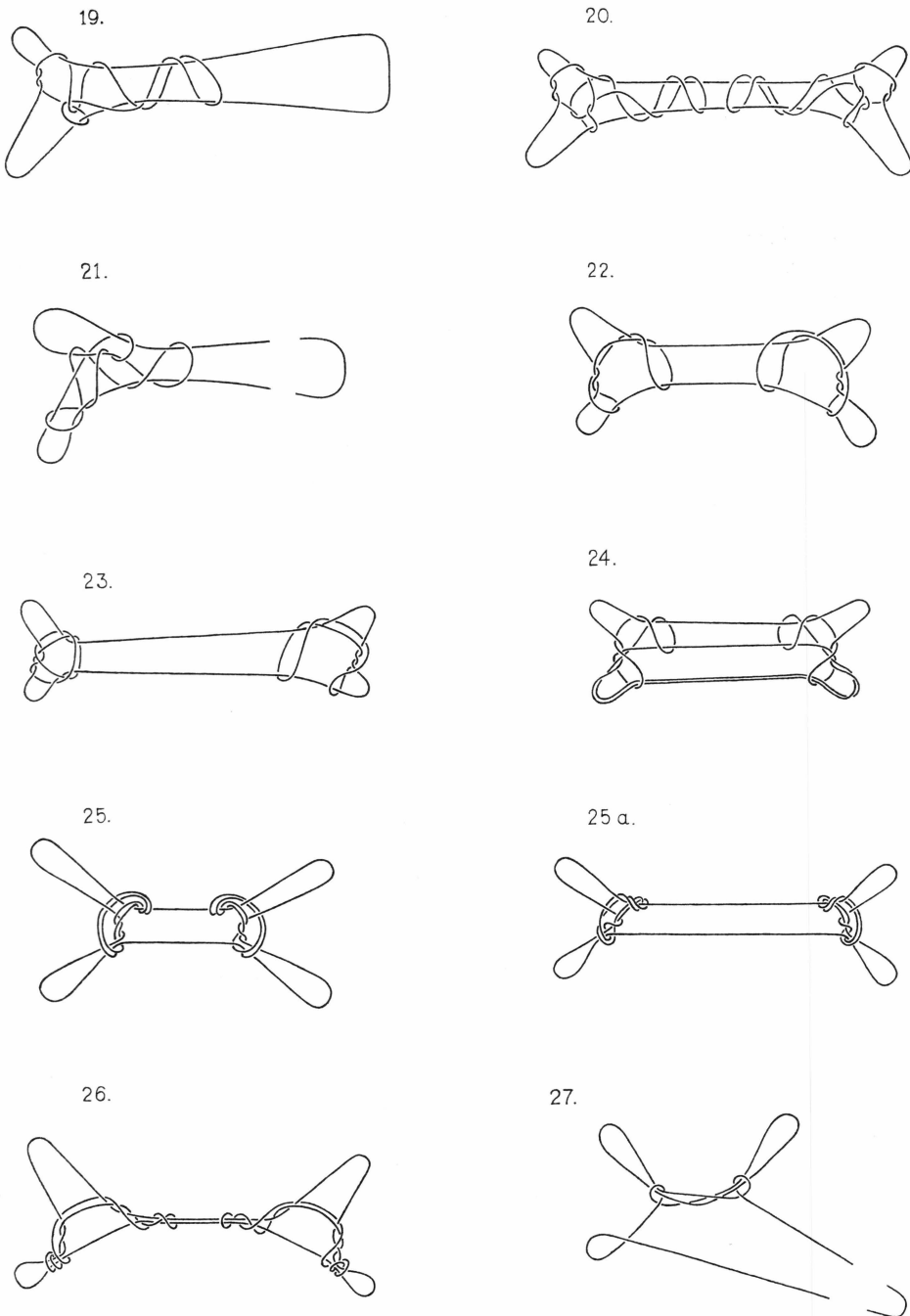


Fig. 98. String figures. - 19. *kiliguasuk* - 20. *kiliguattiaq* - 21. *perxersiorsuk* - 22. *axtarsung* - 23. *sisimit aniarsuk* - 24. *aqajaruattian* - 25. *nuijartuutorsuk* - 26. *aoriartorsuk* - 27. *qauserqaq*.

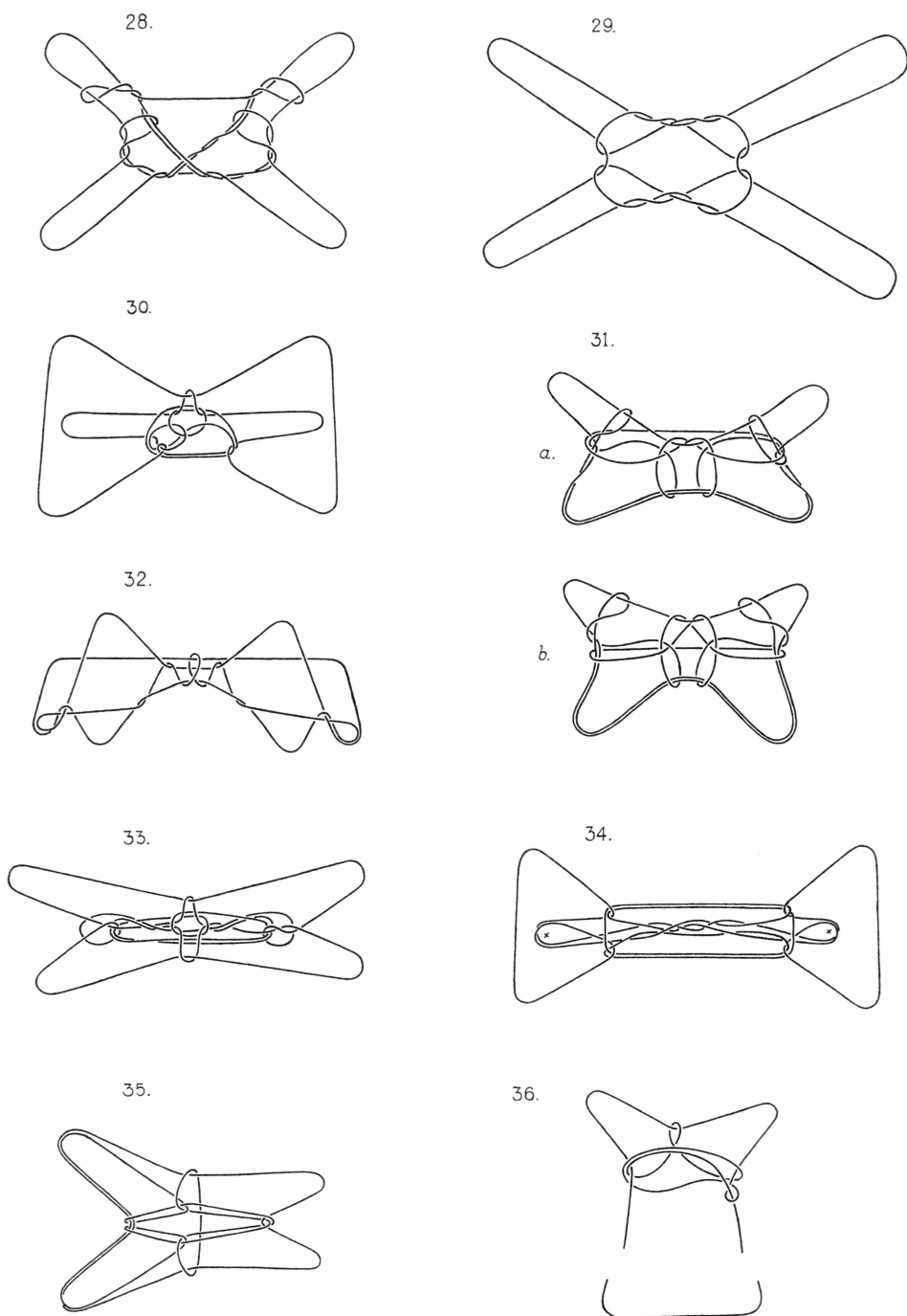


Fig. 99. String figures. - 28. naujuk - 29. ? - 30. arvhruarsuk - 31. nippartorsuk - 32. qanersortorsuk - 33. qajaq - 34. itiviattiaq - 35. puise - 36. avataq.

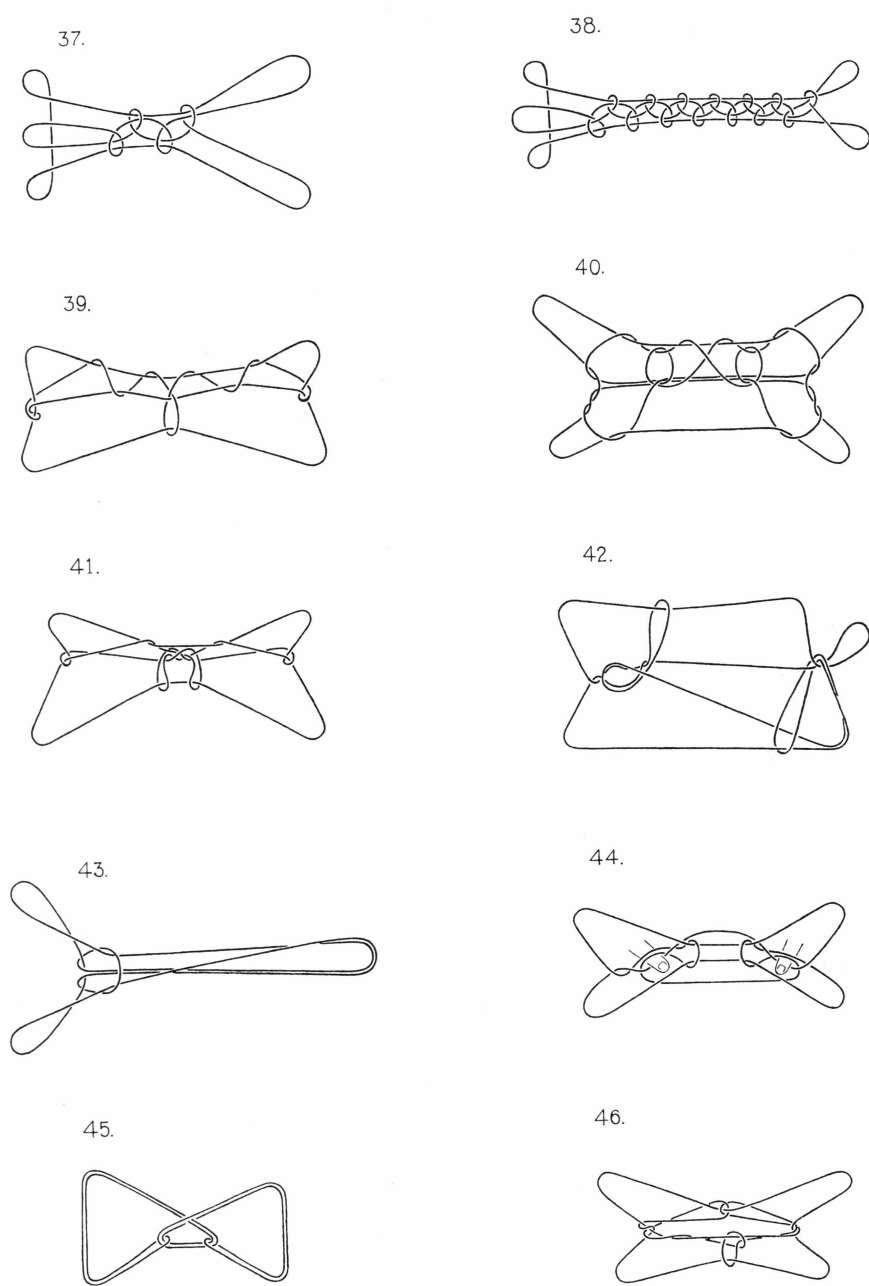


Fig. 100. String figures. — 37. *arLuin marLuk* — 38. *arLussuit* — 39. *qamingahaittiaq* — 40. *aaversuup erLavissue* — 41. *katasuk* — 42. *tulimait* — 43. *iteq* — 44. *kiasik* — 45. *qaneq* — 46. *qilaluwaq*.

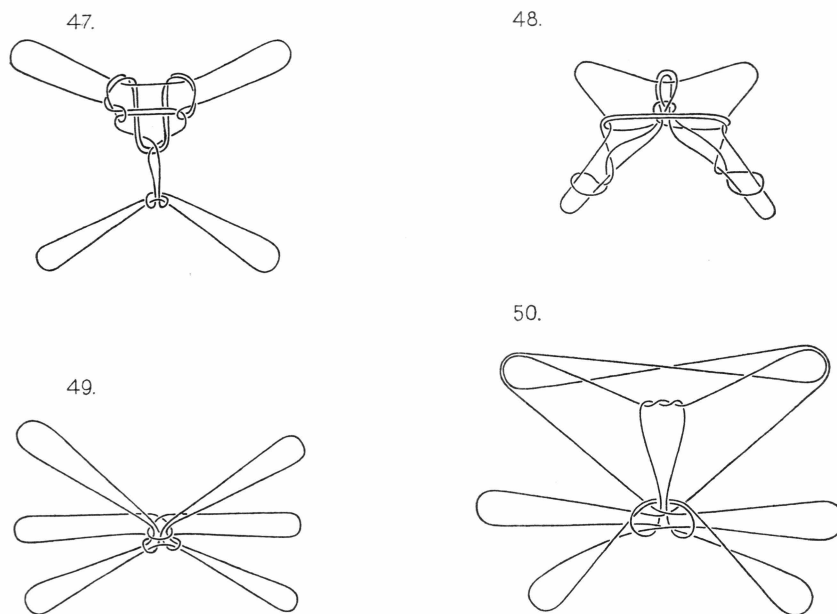


Fig. 101. String figures. — 47. *pisuattiaq* — 48. *harpituaratartorsuk* —
49. *qilersiartorsuk* — 50. ?.

the same figure has been included twice because different degrees of tightening of the strings have given the figures a changed character. The same problem sometimes makes a direct comparison of string figures difficult, particularly if one is not able to follow the course of the string completely. The collection here presented does not cover all the different figures known by the Polar Eskimos. A good many others are to be seen in PATERSON'S treatise "Eskimo String Figures and their Origin" (Acta Arctica 1949), in which, on the other hand, several of these pictured here are missing.

A little story belongs to several of the figures, in connection with the various steps in the production or dissolution of the figure. Unfortunately this was not gone into further and only the following short tales were noted.

Re No. 12:

tuluwaq qimmip pangalikpaa
nuijaratsiaq qulauppa
anoratsiaq axxerpog
puxer — puxer — puxer — puxer.

(A dog runs after a raven — it comes up above a cloud — the wind approaches).

Re No. 16:

qupanuk anaana: hunai ingga paneen ungatinne.

pania akivoq: itseq naulingalinguin itsersujuttut.

anaana: qaisuk qaisunuk itsersorLugo, itser-ter-ter-tar-tar!

(*itsersujuttut*: put dried egg yolk into intestine. —

The meaning was said to be that the sparrow mother warned her young).

Re No. 17:

akimme-qait-tiguu nivinggaruartitaaq!

(Take the meat that hangs in “*ake*”, i.e. the corner by the front wall).

Further was mentioned: *hittorittorhruk*, a bird that throws up its food, “*tingmiaq nerissane meriagaa*”. When the left thumb pulls to,

the food, i.e. a loop of string, is moved along the string to the left. —

anariartorhruk, one who goes to relieve himself. — *kivsartaartor*, a figure in which the string is twisted around the fingers in a certain way. When thereafter the string is pulled, the figure is dissolved and the string completely freed. — Furthermore: *aatarqisuk* and *tuutasuk*.

Puzzles.

A little trick is sometimes done with the string used for string figures, and seldom fails to provoke general mirth. A piece of the string is doubled in a special way and held between the fingers. Someone else is then asked to cut it through in two specified places. The ends are then

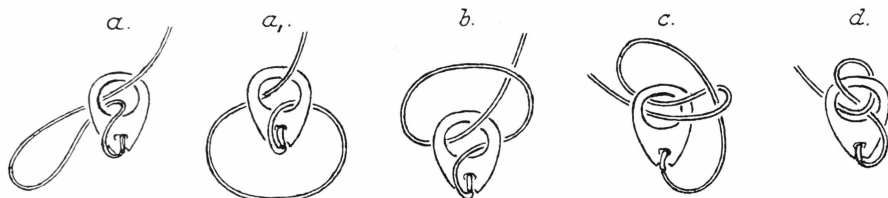


Fig. 102. Puzzle with a trace buckle.

put in the mouth and chewed, as though being chewed together again, and when the string is shown again it has apparently been cut in only one place. In fact a small piece has been cut off which the trick maker keeps in his mouth until he sees a chance to spit it out unnoticed.

Another trick is to make a complicated looking knot which is nonetheless easily dissolved when the right end of the string is pulled. There seems to be an old tradition for this kind of knot-tying, which may possibly have a certain connection with the ability of the shamans to get out of the ropes with which they were tied up before a séance.

A real puzzle game is made with a trace buckle to which a string is tied. Fig. 102. a–d shows four stages of the procedure. First the string

is pulled through the large hole of the trace buckle as shown a-a¹. The resulting loop is then passed up over the trace buckle (b), and by pulling the fastened end of the string it is now fished through the hole as indicated at c. Thereafter it is all tightened against the trace buckle (d). The point is now for another person to free the trace buckle without pulling the free end of the string through any place. Experience shows this to be extremely difficult to anyone not familiar in advance with the trick.

Drum Singing.

Drum Singing (*ingmerneq*) is still an important form of pastime, and there are still people composing new drum songs, in spite of the fact that even great drum singers now rarely own a drum. If a person does not have a song of his own he may well "use" someone else's and many songs of the departed are still well remembered and sung. A person's drum song is called his *pisia*. A new drum song is born in the poet's head, Inukitorsssuaq explained, and fixes itself in his memory. He himself had made his first drum song, he said, when he was with PEARY'S ship to Ellesmere Land. People who wanted to learn drum singing usually practiced without an audience and waited to perform until they thought they were sufficiently skilled. Sometimes they were taught by an older person, but apparently this was not always true.

The Polar Eskimo drum (*qilaun*) is very small as compared to other Eskimo drums. The drum frame consists of an oval bone ring appr. 20 × 30 cm made of walrus rib. A short handle of bone or ivory of only about 6 cm length is mortised in one of the long sides, and fastened by a wedge-shaped pin on the inside of the frame. The drum frame often has oblong openings in several places, and on the outside a groove is carved all the way around for the string that holds the drum skin. On old drums found in excavations, the frame is often more artistically profiled and its top edge is carved very thin. This is thought to be done in order to give the drum a better tone, but at the same time it made it more fragile. For a drum skin (*isaa*), the stomach (*aqajaroq*) of a dog is most frequently used. This is claimed to give the best tone. However, the spleen membrane or possibly the stomach of a walrus may also be used; likewise the larynx of the walrus (*puiag*), which it inflates when it sleeps in the water. Intestines of bearded seal may also be used. If so they are sewn together by a center seam lengthwise of the drum. The skin is applied moist, stretched over the frame and fastened by a string of sinew thread. When a woman was to put a new skin on a drum I had acquired, she brought it in her mouth in order not to let it dry on the way. Applying and stretching the moist skin is done with great care so as to attain the proper uniform tension when it dries. If it should

get too dry during use, it is moistened a little again perhaps by rubbing a lump of ice over it and drying off with the hand.

The appr. 25 cm long and usually slightly curved drum stick is also made of a walrus rib and is tied to the end of the drum handle by an appr. 25 cm long string. When the drum is used, the drum stick is beaten from below against the lower edge of the front of the drum frame, while at the same time the drum is moved up and down by a rocking movement of the wrist.

The actual drum singing and the atmosphere connected with it when performed in the Eskimos' own circle, is difficult to describe. The following notations which were made immediately after such a performance give only a vague impression of the mood that prevails on such an occasion and involuntarily grips you and carries you away, until perhaps you are overwhelmed by fatigue.

Pualorssuaq, whose self-composed drum songs undoubtedly number at least fifty, one day offered two songs in our house at Thule. For the last, Inugarssuk stood up before him and held a match box between her fingers, obviously as an aviorun, in order to sort of bait him. Two other women formed an accompanying chorus. Then suddenly Inugarssuk appeared to be seized by ecstasy. She took the drum and beat it with great violence while she wriggled her behind and unfolded her whole wild temper. After a brief pause she was heard again making a noise out in the kitchen and she now stood in a corner her hair hanging wildly down over her face while she hammered away on the drum, apparently completely in a delirium. And then suddenly the dance was over. She straightened up grinning all over her face, and rearranged her hair. —

Another day it was rumored that there was to be drum singing in Pualorssuaq's house that evening. It was not very big and it was not long before it was jammed with people. The drum, the only one to be found in Thule, belonged to Inukitorsssuaq. Inuiteq and Inukitorsssuaq who are both outstanding drum singers stood up opposite each other, Inukitorsssuaq with the drum. First he made some initial attempt and said, sort of embarrassed, as required by custom: "*qanoq pialerigiga-ajor, qanoq piartunga -ajor?*" (how am I going to manage this?) whereupon his partner says encouragingly: "*qaa-qaa!*". —

The two drum singers both sing, in unison. One beats the drum while the other just stands and sings, eyes toward the sky and usually closed. The drum man moves his body more, depending on the song and the ecstatic condition. The beat consists of three strokes in quick succession, dum dum-dum, the middle stroke being a grace note to the last one. This accompaniment is continued indefinitely, and only the tempo may increase, at times into the violent. The feet are not moved

during the whole performance. The singer keeps them a little apart, moving only the body, most often with the knees slightly bent. The behind is wriggled from side to side in time with the drum which at the same time is moved to the opposite side. The upper part of the body is also moved in the rhythm of the drum while the movements or shaking of the body and quite in particular of the shoulders are difficult to determine exactly. It looks as though spasms or rather vibration go through the body, much as when a dog shakes the water off his fur. An exact connection between song and drum rhythm is difficult to hear. It is as if the drum goes completely mechanically, independent of the movement or course of the song.

The song is very monotonous for a stranger to listen to, ajaaja, ajaaja ad infinitum. Long passages go in a smooth, calm progression, but suddenly the calm rhythm is broken, soon afterwards to be resumed, though possibly a little higher in tone, and then again the same. It is a constant rise and fall, now and then interrupted by noisy rolls. Often a passage ends in a sudden stop, like the last exertion before the breath is exhausted. Then breathing is resumed and the next passage begins.

When Inuiteq appeared to be completely in ecstasy, he would bend over completely, head bent down over the drum, and moving his head back and forth or shaking it in the same kind of strange twitchings as his body, his hair flying wildly in the air. His eyes were closed and his face distorted as though in pain, his lower jaw pushed back and down, and his upper lip tightened. At last he seemed to lose his composure completely, although in spite of everything the trance was not so deep that, in the middle of the singing, Inuiteq could not give me a sign a moment before the climax when I was to take a photograph, so I could open the cameras in time and have the flashlight ready. A masterpiece of acting!

There is no doubt that the drum singing demands the greatest concentration of its performer. But to a great extent it is a practised technique. It may seem quite surprising if e.g. the singer discovers he has forgotten something, or he is in doubt about something and suddenly turns to his audience for assistance, then at the next moment putting his "mask" back on and continuing where he left off. A great deal of the singing repertoire is known by the majority and it is not unusual for the entire audience to join into a chorus, when especially the high voices of the women penetrate strongly.

According to old tradition it is not permitted to sing drum songs until the sun is gone, Inukitsorssuaq related. Likewise, string figures could only be made in the dark period.

IX. ASTRONOMY AND TIME RECKONING

The astronomical knowledge of the Polar Eskimos is not very comprehensive. The following stars were the only ones of which names could be given.

tuktorsuit: The Big Dipper (Ursa major).

siudleek: A big and a small star slightly below the Big Dipper, presumably Castor and Pollux.

tungmergat: The three stars of Orion's belt.

akutoorsuak: The two stars outlining Orion's shoulders.

qiluktuusat: The Pleiads.

aagsuk: A large and a small star, possibly Little Dog (Canis Minor).

(*aagsung*) *quliak*: Two stars a distance above aagsuk, possibly Regulus or some other star in the Lion.

naulaxsaartoq: Venus, the only known planet (*uvdloriaq angalasog*).

sixsat: The Milky Way.

They had no name for the North Star. A shooting star was called *ingnaatLaktoq*, and a comet *neriusaalik*. A comet was said to have been seen when McMILLAN was in Etah for the first time (1914). If there is a ring around the moon it is called *pusisaalik*, and a sun with mock suns is called *seqineq tuglerutilik*.

The Seasons. — The starting point for the more general division of time is the winter (*ukioq*), whereupon follow spring (*uperngaag*) and summer (*ausaq*). A specific time within the year may be indicated fairly exactly by the moon, although a true moon calendar is not used and some even declared they knew only the Danish names of the months. However, the time around Christmas was known as *qaumarissoq*, "the strongly luminous one", or *aningaaq qiteq*, "the middle moon". During the subsequent time the moon was said at times to be bluish green and so it was named *tungujak*.

Some, however, still recalled the older names of the various seasons which may be heard on occasion. The following were mentioned:

seqinaaq: (appr. February).

uvdljuerssaat: (appr. March).

arqarjuerssaan: (appr. April).

timmissat tikittarfiat: "The time of arrival of the birds" (appr. May).

Other designations of the latter period were: *qaquLLuit tikippiat*, "when the fulmar petrels arrive", and

akpaliarsuit tikippiat "when the little auks arrive". For the period following was indicated: *naujat erniorpiat*: "the breeding time of the sea gulls" (appr. June).

timmissat audlartarfiat: "when the birds leave" (appr. August).

iterLaat sikusarfiat: "when the bays freeze over" (appr. October).

No particular designation was found for the summer month proper, i.e. July.

X. SURVIVALS OF OLD BELIEFS

Examples of old beliefs have occasionally been cited in the preceding chapters, and there is no doubt that a great deal is still alive in the consciousness or behavior of people although a total picture is now hard to obtain among those now living. To be sure, a good many of the older people have only been baptized as adults so have witnessed pagan times, but they appear to be reticent about their recollections and perhaps, too, these have naturally slid into the background as new forms of life have become fixed. As far as that goes, the young talked more freely about what they knew of that kind of things. In order to get the Polar Eskimos to open up completely, it is no doubt required that one stay among them for a long time and participate in their daily lives, allowing them time to get to know the stranger. Undoubtedly they are very positively disposed to strangers and they do not hide their disappointment that so many come, and then leave again just when the point is reached when the company is mutually enjoyed. No doubt the many different expeditions that have in the course of time taken advantage of the experiences and the help of the Polar Eskimos have contributed their share in producing a rather reserved and businesslike attitude which to be sure is quite often broken by the natural craving for openness so often met among the Eskimos. However, a more complete and vivid picture of conditions in the old days is preserved, particularly through the descriptions of MYLIUS ERICHSEN, HARALD MOLTKE, and KNUD RASMUSSEN.

In the following are given some scattered data which I succeeded in obtaining through conversations with people and which to a certain extent may be supplemented by what may be concluded from the tales collected (Medd. om Grl. Vol. 152.1-2). —

Some people were still mentioned as former shamans (*angakkut*). Of one of them it was related that he had received an omen of his imminent death by his old helping spirit, a bear, which appeared before him, and even during the latest years, some thought he was still practicing conjurations. Furthermore, one man told me of his father that he had been a great *angakkoq* who could see hidden things at a long distance. If anyone had dropped or otherwise lost anything he could find it,

sometimes *ingmerdlune*, i.e. by holding a séance with drum singing. When the missionary GUSTAV OLSEN was about to come, he knew it in advance, and the first time he attended a church service his body ached all over, especially in his chest and arms. In a regular act of conjuration, according to Inukitorsssuaq, there were usually two angakut, one of whom would beat the drum while the other one sang and now and then uttered peculiar sounds when he saw or heard the spirits. Using a mask for conjurations was unknown. In regard to the spiritual flight of the shaman (*ilummartog*) it was related that in such cases he always followed the sea ice and would never go across land, "perhaps because it was too rough and cumbersome". One angakkoq from up north once flew in this way down south to see somebody, but when the dogs got the scent of him and started to bark (*qiluktut*) he had to turn around.

The assisting spirits of the shaman were called collectively *torngarsuin*, but I was not successful in finding out anything further about these. According to Ûtâq, however, the designation *torngaq* was not used of the bear as an assisting spirit. So this suggests that the bear occupied a place apart in the religious world of ideas of the Polar Eskimos.

A man or woman who practiced witchcraft was called *ilisaitsoq*. They often used only magic words (*serratit*) for their activity. The idea of a *tupilak*, conceived as an artificial animal and composed of different ingredients, as described from other parts of Greenland, seems to be unknown. To be sure, an old man said he knew the name *tupilak* but only for a little figure or thing carved from ivory or similar material (*hanavkan*), and which was given to another person with the intention of conjuring evil on him.

Magic words or incantations are said to have been used formerly to a great extent and may still be heard used quite spontaneously. Once when we were in a thick fog on the inland ice, my companions thus suddenly shouted together: "*ataataga, ataataga, pujoq peersitLugo!*" (Grandfather, Grandfather, make the fog disappear). Actually, before many minutes, the fog started to clear away. — That an application to the grandparents is involved may also be seen from another formula that people have used for getting good weather (*qingnartut*). It sounded: "*atataa, atataa, anaanak, anaanak, sila eriarnarsitLugo!*" (Grandfather, Grandmother, let the weather be good).

On another occasion, when we were in the house of Itutdlak in Kangerdlugssuaq, there was suddenly a crack outside, possibly from a rock broken by frost, and immediately Itutdlak grasped a lamp stick, first pointing down to the floor, then up to the ceiling, saying as though conjuring: "*imnaluk tunisiuk*" (give it to the steep slope). Apparently he believed a threatening danger to the house could in this way be averted.

Ûtâq told of having once heard a man saying a *serrat* to lure nar-whal to him. Ordinarily, however, magic formulas are kept secret so as not to lose their power. If a person had used a *serrat* he was not allowed to let down the hood of his fur coat or lay away his mittens for five days. Neither was he allowed to cut off meat with a knife but only to bite it off with his teeth.

If the belief in the power of magic formulas has been weakened, there is certainly still considerable confidence in amulets. Thus several persons were mentioned who were known to possess amulets although not wearing them openly. One had an old mitten, another the head and tail of a seagull sewn onto the inside of his fur coat. Others had something sewn into a little bag. Also, when a child was born it was formerly customary to take "something or other" and sew it into a bag and give it to the child for an amulet. Most often the amulets were worn in a necklace or in a string across one shoulder. An amulet of a sparrow made the bearer sensitive to people approaching, it was said. — Also the men formerly wore skin bracelets, although it was not known why. The dogs were given amulets, as already mentioned.

There were supposed to have been people with the ability to change at will into a seal or a dog. Such a person was called *arnattartog*. If, e.g. he wanted to go inland to set a fox trap he would change into a dog as soon as he was out of sight of people, and would run away at a gallop. Then he would work on the trap as a human and run back again as a dog until he approached other people. The change was never made while others were looking. In this same connection it was related that if the person concerned was beaten as a dog he would simply say "a-a" and if his harness was poor he would freeze (*ikerisuktoq*) whereas he would feel warm and happy if the harness was new and pretty. — These apparently somewhat disjointed features are evidently bound up with the old Eskimo "myths of transmigration of souls" (cf. Medd. om Grl. Vol. 152.1 pag. 72). —

qilaneq.

As already mentioned, it was difficult to get any detailed information on how a regular act of incantation took place. On the other hand, people were entirely familiar with how to ask fate for advice by means of the so-called headlifting (*qilaneq*) which could also be practiced as leglifting, and which was demonstrated to me several times. However, it is hardly taken entirely seriously any more. Evidently the method could be used by anybody and was used e.g. to find out if a sick person would recover, or similar questions. — At headlifting, the patient would lie on the platform while the performer would alternately lift and lower

the patient's head by means of a string that was tied together and placed around the neck, while at the same time asking his questions. If the head felt heavy, it was taken as a confirming answer. Instead of the head, one foot might be lifted, as a rule by means of a boot lace with the ends tied together. In this way it was possible to inquire of the *qila* spirit by using one's own foot. If *qilaneq* took place while the patient was lying on the sleeping platform, everything had to be moved out from under the platform while it lasted.

A special feast or cult house was not thought to have been used by the Polar Eskimos. To be sure, the designation *qagge* was known but it was associated with those immigrated from America, "*atLarsuit piat*". It is supposed to have been a large snow house with a support of snow (*sukaq*) in the center, erected for festive uses at Christmas time ("*joordlime nuannaarfia*"). Also, two men apparently appeared in "ugly" costumes and people were not supposed to laugh at them. If a woman happened to laugh at one of the dressed-up men, "he would copulate a little with her". This is seen as a reminiscence of the Sedna celebrations of the Baffin Landers as described in detail by BOAS¹). Furthermore, at midwinter time the men were said to have been in the habit of copulating eagerly to make hunting game multiply. Conjurations were also sometimes performed with the same object in mind.

I was further told that the Polar Eskimos themselves had not had many myths whereas the immigrants had brought many with them. This would seem to indicate that a great many of the myths recorded from the Polar Eskimos originate with the people who immigrated in the last century.

In regard to the sea woman, *nerrivik*, she was known to reign over the underworld where also the old man, her father, lay without doing anything. The realms of the dead were named *qutLerpaat* for the world above and *atLerpaat* for the underworld. The inhabitants of the respective places were called *qutLeet* and *atLeet* respectively. It was best in the world above where people played (?) *aningaaq* and *erdlaveersisoq* (moon and bowel robber). In the underworld too, for that matter, existence was good. There was enough to eat but the water was bad. "*atLarsuit unga-taane*", the American Eskimos, had also told of a giant who produced storms by blowing with his mouth.

Likewise, the immigrants had told of a giant animal with fuzzy hair like a hare kitten, called *qoqoriaq*. It had its residence in the sea where it would lie and sleep with just the claws sticking up above the surface. If kayakers saw the claws sticking up they got frightened and turned around. It was also said that a *qoqoriaq* was not a *torngaq*.

¹) FR. BOAS: The Central Eskimo (1888), p. 605. — FR. BOAS: The Eskimo of Baffin Land and Hudson Bay (1901-7), p. 141f.

In the same connection, Ûtâq mentioned that he had been told of auk hunters at one time seeing a ship come in close past a glacier at Koorqut. But suddenly it was carried outward by the current and disappeared in the deep. Later, people saw pieces of wood floating up and it was thought that the monster had bitten the ship to pieces "*qoqorissam oqummersimagaa*". — Nothing was known of a special walrus monster at Force Bay, as mentioned by KANE¹. On the other hand, at least some people still seemed to have a rather vivid idea of a *torngaarhuxxuar*. Ûtâq said it was a creature of which he had been especially afraid. It is not clear, however, whether he was thinking of the mighty Toorngaarsuk from whom angakcut got their strength. Inûterssuaq's father was said once to have seen such a *torngaarhuxxuar*. According to description, it was supposed to have been about one meter tall with a head like a person and a lot of little legs on which it crawled forward like a caterpillar. He had immediately run to call people so they too could see it, but when they came back it had disappeared. The man was no angakkoq.

Ûtâq could tell of the *angiarnng* mentioned by KROEBER²) that it was like a small bird, but if anybody hit it with something or other, it would burst out and become all blood. If a person had an *angiarnng*, he would fall ill and eventually die. If on the other hand, another man hit it, then the sick person would get well again. In this way it could be killed by ordinary humans but, it was said, not by angakcut, who did not use it for an assisting spirit either.

Before the mission was started it was customary to gather bones of fox and hare, placing them on top of the meat scaffold so the dogs could not get hold of them.

Various old precepts were also observed. So e.g. it was not permissible to place a mug with hot soup on the floor. The floor represented the ice, and a dangerous hole owing to current could thus easily be made out on the real ice.

If a falcon were thrown into the water the ice would become very rough. And if a raven were thrown in the water the seals would disappear.

Bear and hare were considered each other's enemies. So it was not permissible to eat bear and hare meat at the same time. Similarly, bearded seal and caribou were enemies so caribou meat should not be carried by a thong of bearded seal.

If a man did not like the smell of fox he could not catch fox. If on the other hand a man killed spiders by pinching them between his thumb and the edge of his hand at the index finger, he would catch many foxes.

¹) E. KANE: Arctic Explorations (1856) II, p. 214.

²) A. L. KROEBER: The Eskimo of Smith Sound (1900), p. 309.

If a fox had eaten from the meat in a meat cache and the meat were brought into the house, only grown men and women without children were allowed to eat from it. Women with children must not touch it.

Finally I was told that the reason while there were so many eiders out on Kitsigsut was that the children out there cried like an eider.

This was mentioned as an old saying: *qarsaaroq imermut queratartog sialungnialeraangat*, "when the diver cries hoarsely, the weather will turn bad". — If one happened to sneeze the others would say: *tartu-xxakka aggerhrukkin* which might be freely translated "welcome my kidneys". — As a kind of proverb was mentioned: *tuhaangitsoq tupilarqisoq* corresponding to "he who won't listen must feel". Other than that the use of proverbs was not known.