

Title IV Curriculum Materials
(Adapted and condensed for 7th Grade)

ARAPAHO CULTURE LESSON

Students will research and collect information on culture and history from parents, elders and other family members.

ARAPAHO LANGUAGE LESSON

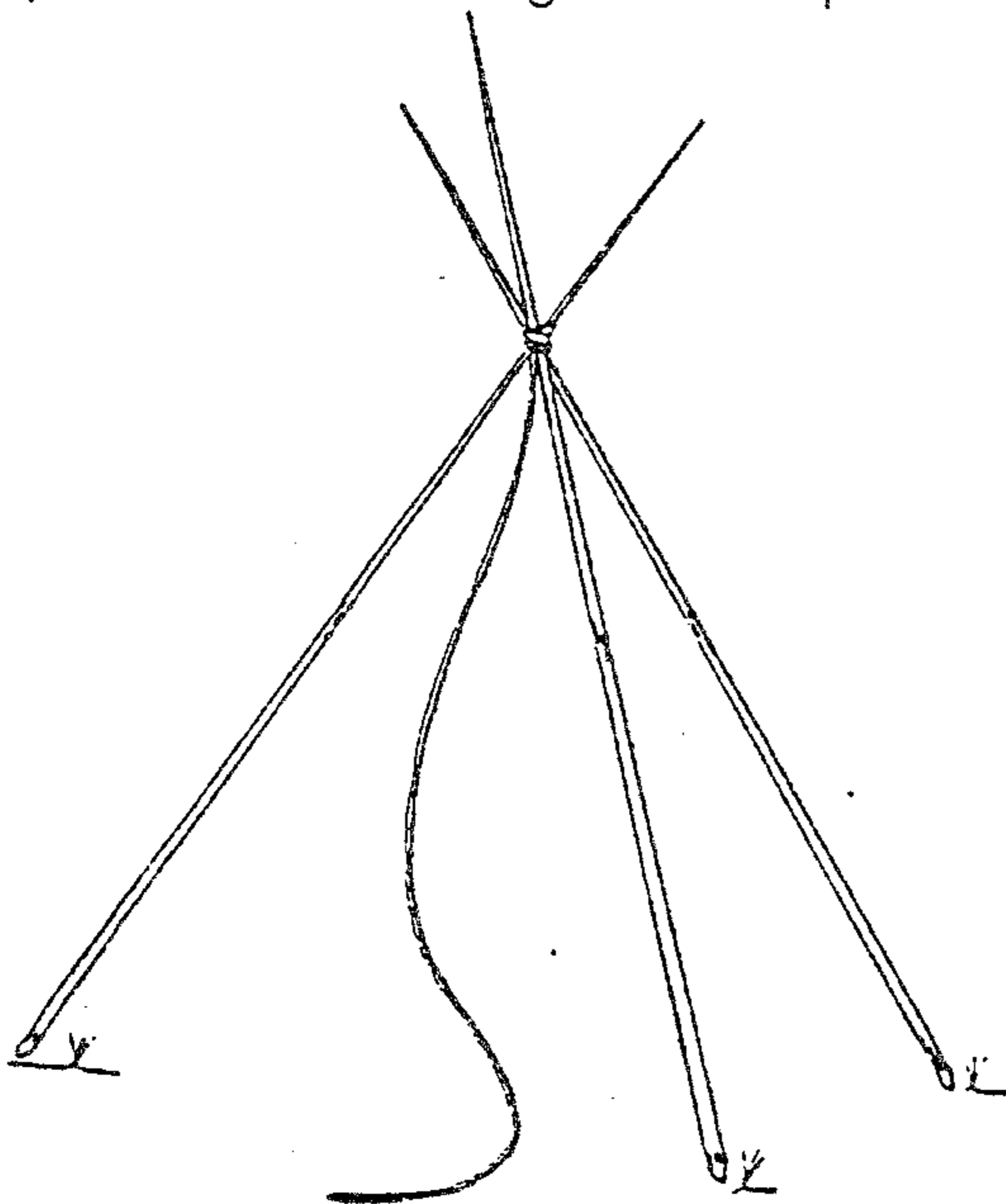
Students will translate main words from "Shelters" from English to Arapaho. They will construct simple sentences in Arapaho.

SHELTERS

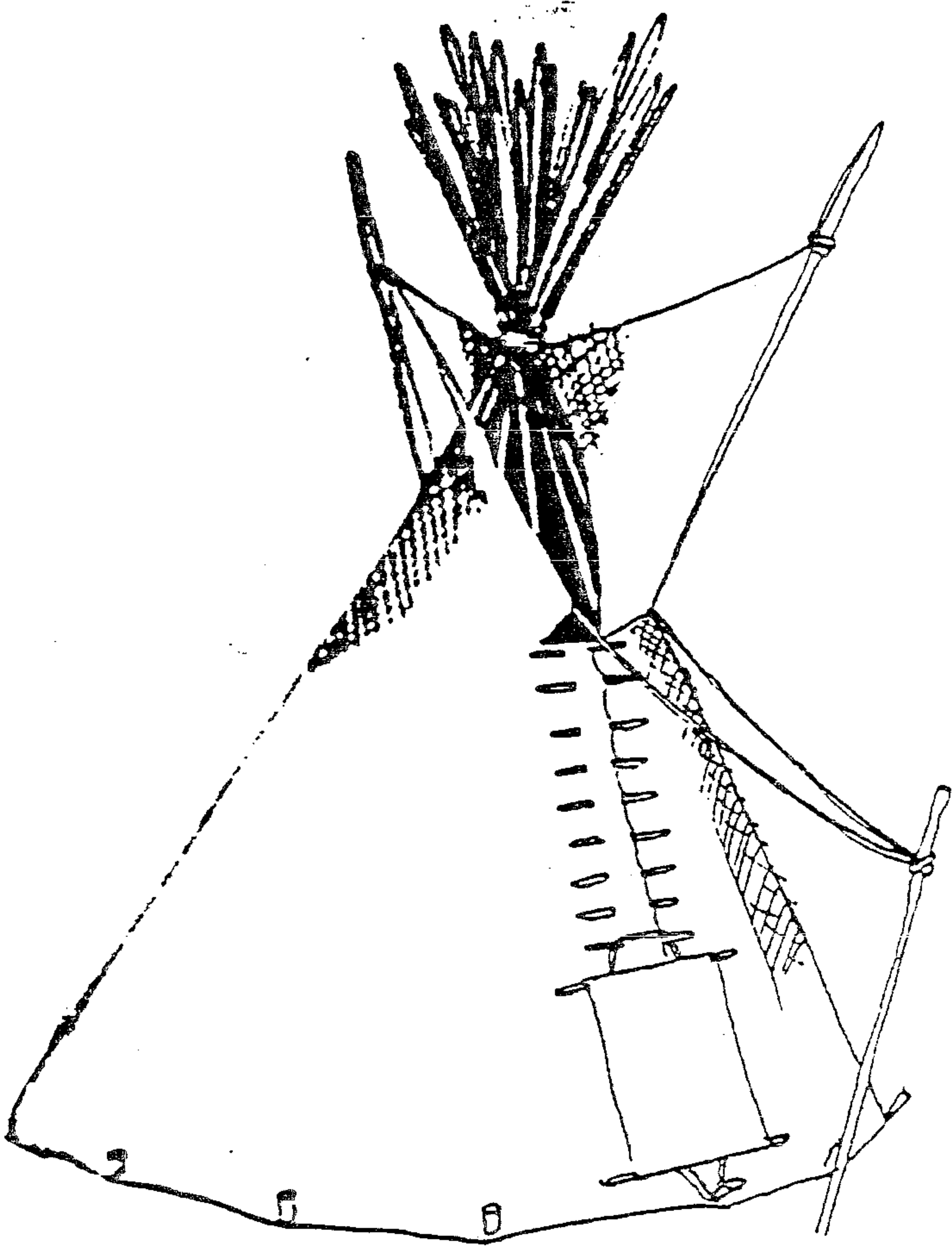
The early homes of the Plains Indians were tipis. It is not known when the Arapahos began constructing tipis, but it could have been after they moved onto the Plains in the early 18th century. The Shoshones also began using tipis when they moved onto the Plains around 1725. The tipi proved to be a very sturdy, yet portable shelter. It was ideally suited to the tribal lifestyle of the time. Before the arrival of the horse, the tipi was made quite small. The women and the domestic dog had the responsibility of transporting the tipi. Since the introduction of the horse in the 17th century, the tipi was made bigger, stronger and in one large piece.

The first tipis were made from tanned buffalo hides, supported by a framework of long, slender pine, cedar, or other wood poles. These poles were trimmed of all the bark and made smooth. When a tipi was erected, sixteen to twenty poles were used and brought together about three to four feet from the top.

During the time when buffalo were plentiful tipis were made exclusively from tanned hides. The covering for the pole framework took from fifteen to twenty tanned hides depending on the size and the number of hides available. They were sewed together to make one large piece. Longer pieces were attached at the top, and were called "ears" or smoke flaps. These flaps had small pockets at the tips and were held up by long poles. The tips of the poles fit into the pockets and the poles were leaned against the tipi. The ears could be adjusted to control ventilation of the tipi.



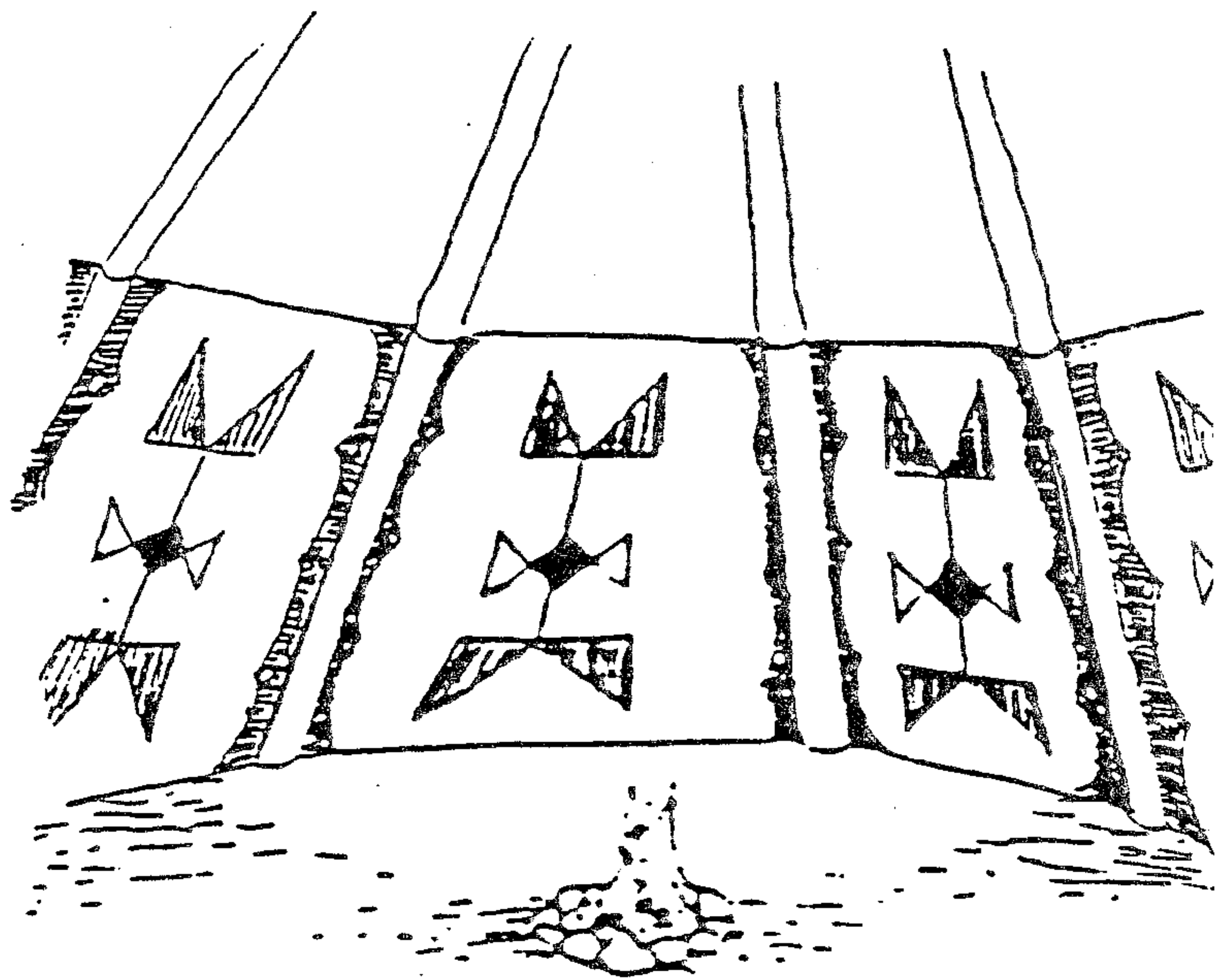
The Arapahos erected their tipis beginning with a tripod base. Three poles were measured against the height of the hide cover and tied together. These three poles were then stood up, and thirteen more poles were leaned into place at even intervals to form a circle. All of these poles were then tied securely into place with a long rope. The remaining length of rope was wrapped around one of the tripod base poles and tied near the ground. This framework supported the hide covering of the tipi. The last pole used in the framework was tied to the top of the hide cover, between the two smoke flaps, and used to lift the cover into place. Once the cover was up, it was wrapped

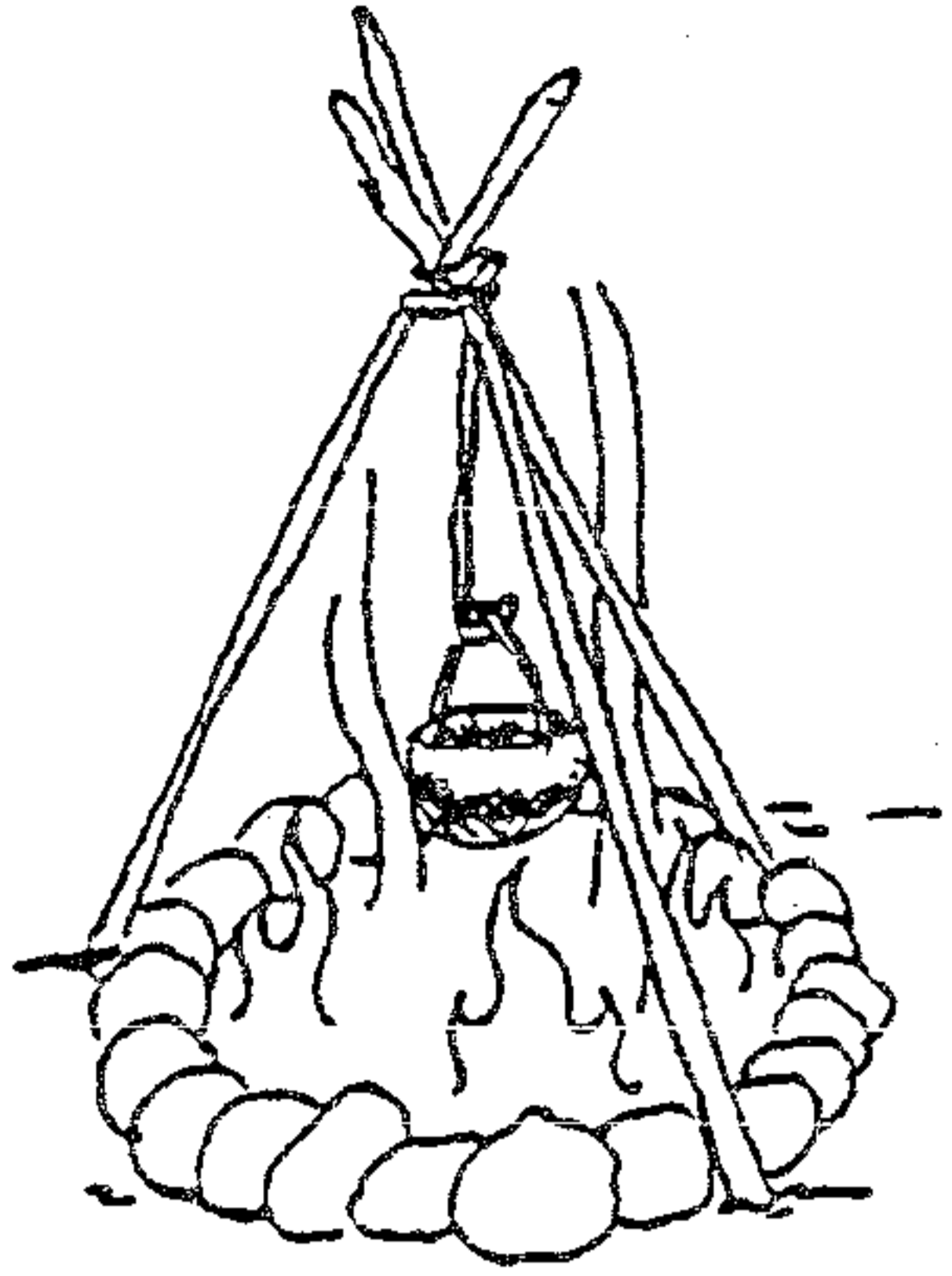


around the pole framework to enclose the living area. This cover was fastened together down the front with red willow pegs, and the entire cover was staked to the ground with stakes of red willow. The stakes were driven into the ground at the base of each pole, and these stakes held the entire structure firmly in place.

A cover was fashioned from a large piece of hide for the entrance. This cover was fastened to the bottom of the row of pegs that held the tipi closed. Straight sticks were attached to the door cover at the top and bottom to hold it in place. The entrance always faced east.

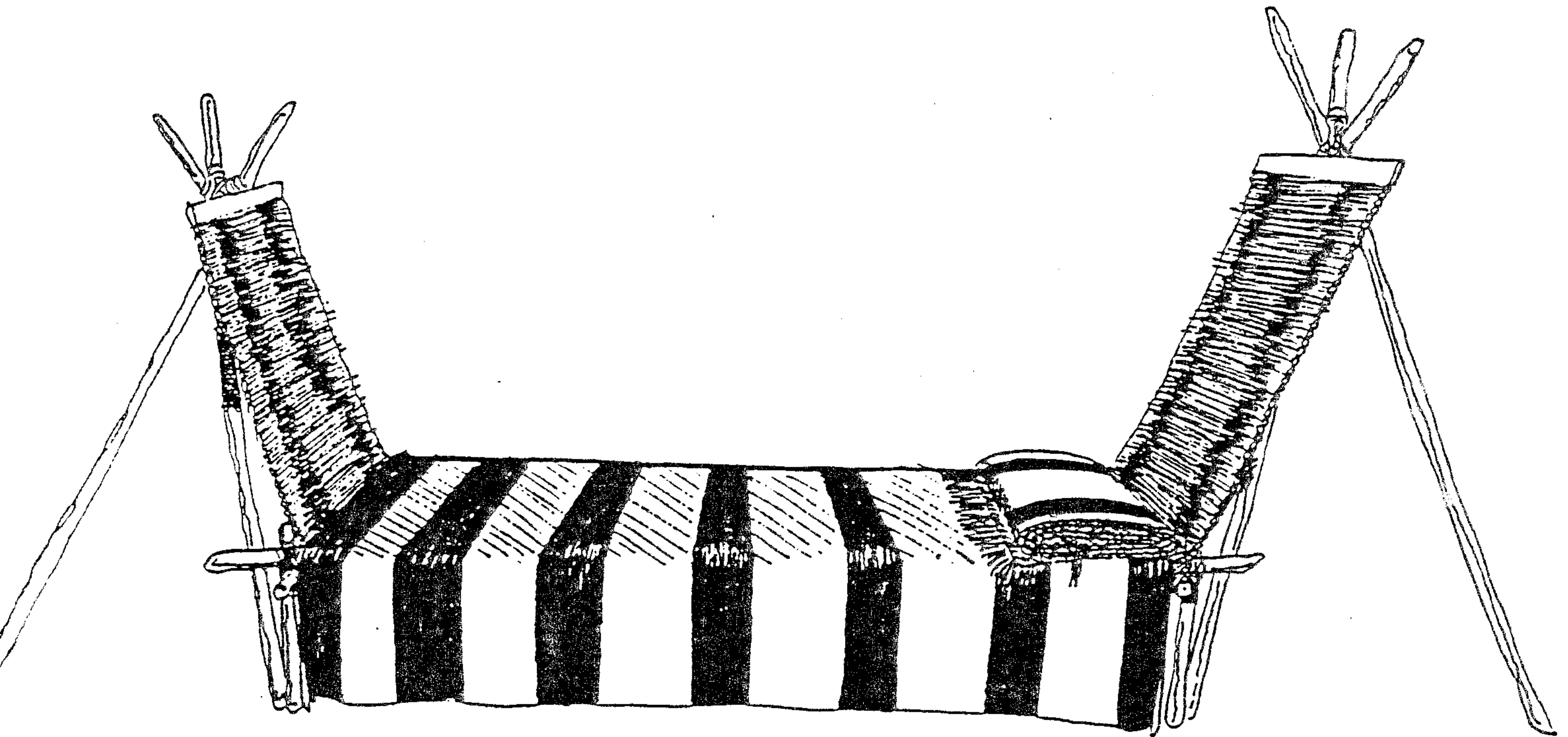
Tipis always had a liner made to fit the inside "walls". The liner was also made of buffalo hide, and later on, canvas. This liner was about six feet high and was suspended from the poles, reaching to the ground. The lining of the tipi served many purposes. It helped keep the tipi warm and it prevented rain from dripping off the poles into the living area. It also prevented casting of shadows from the fire and gave the family more privacy. These linings were usually decorated. The male occupant of the tipi would draw or paint his brave deeds on the lining. This decoration represented a story of some accomplishment or a vision. At other times, the liner was painted with purely decorative designs and symbols.

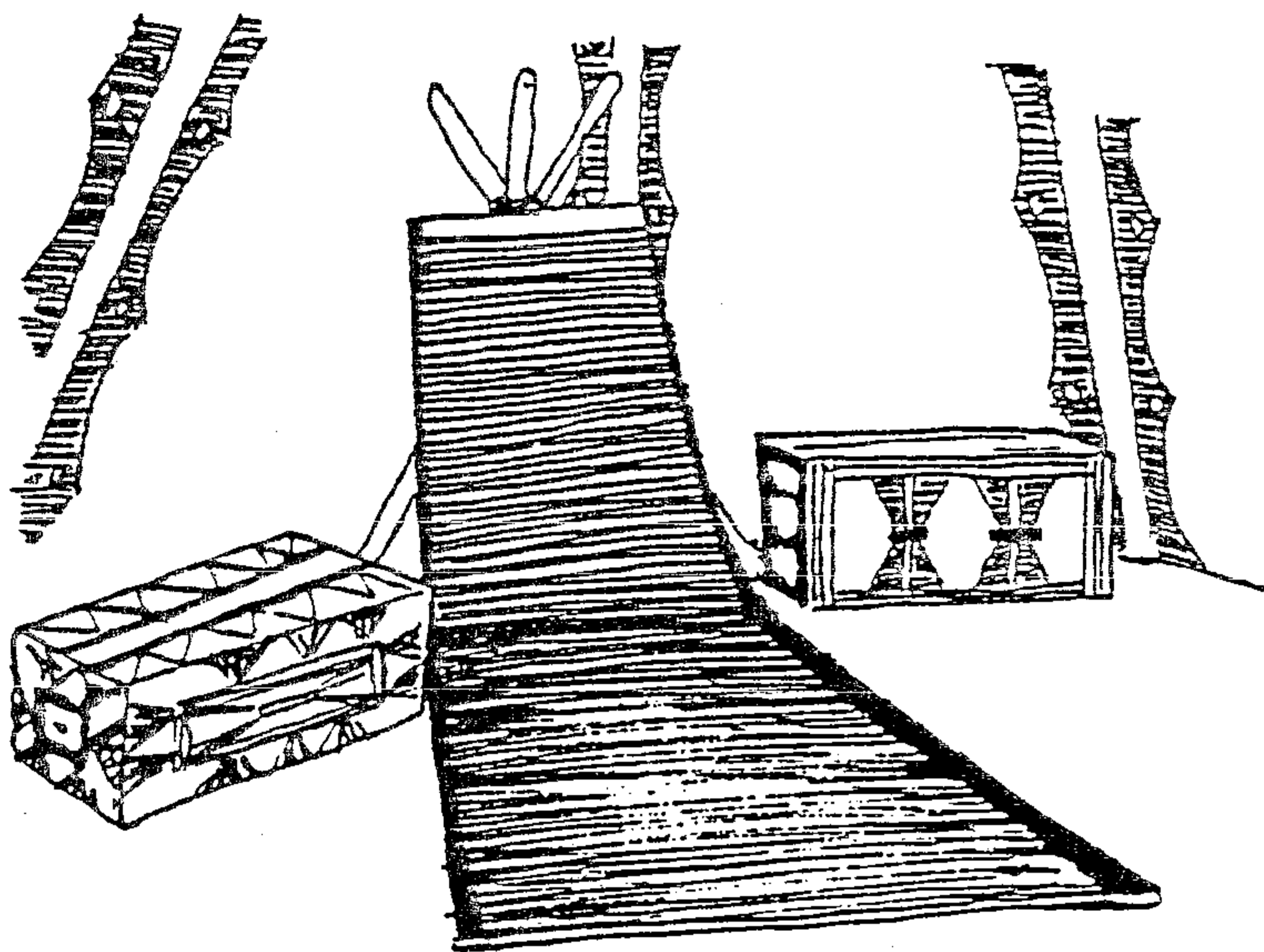




The fireplace was situated in the center of the tipi. A hole was scooped out of the ground, with stone surrounding it. The women cooked from a tripod base with pouches hanging down. Heated stones were dropped into the water, causing it to boil and cook the food. When the people began trading with the white traders, they acquired iron pots, and the old way of cooking died out.

The beds were placed close to the walls of the tipi. A bed was made of slender willow rods peeled and straightened, laid side by side and fastened together into a sort of mat by means of buckskin strings passed through the holes at the end of the rods. The bed was raised about a foot off the ground. The ends were raised in a hammock fashion by means of tripods and buckskin hangers. The width of the bed was usually three to four feet, while those forming the upright portion suspended from the tripod were narrower as they approached the top. The willow mats were bordered with buckskin binding and the exposed rods were painted in bright colors. Across the bed, buckskin and blankets were spread. These were used as couches during the day. In some large tipis, three or more beds were used. Pillows were made and stuffed with hair from deer, elk, and buffalo. Some of these pillows were also embroidered with quillwork.

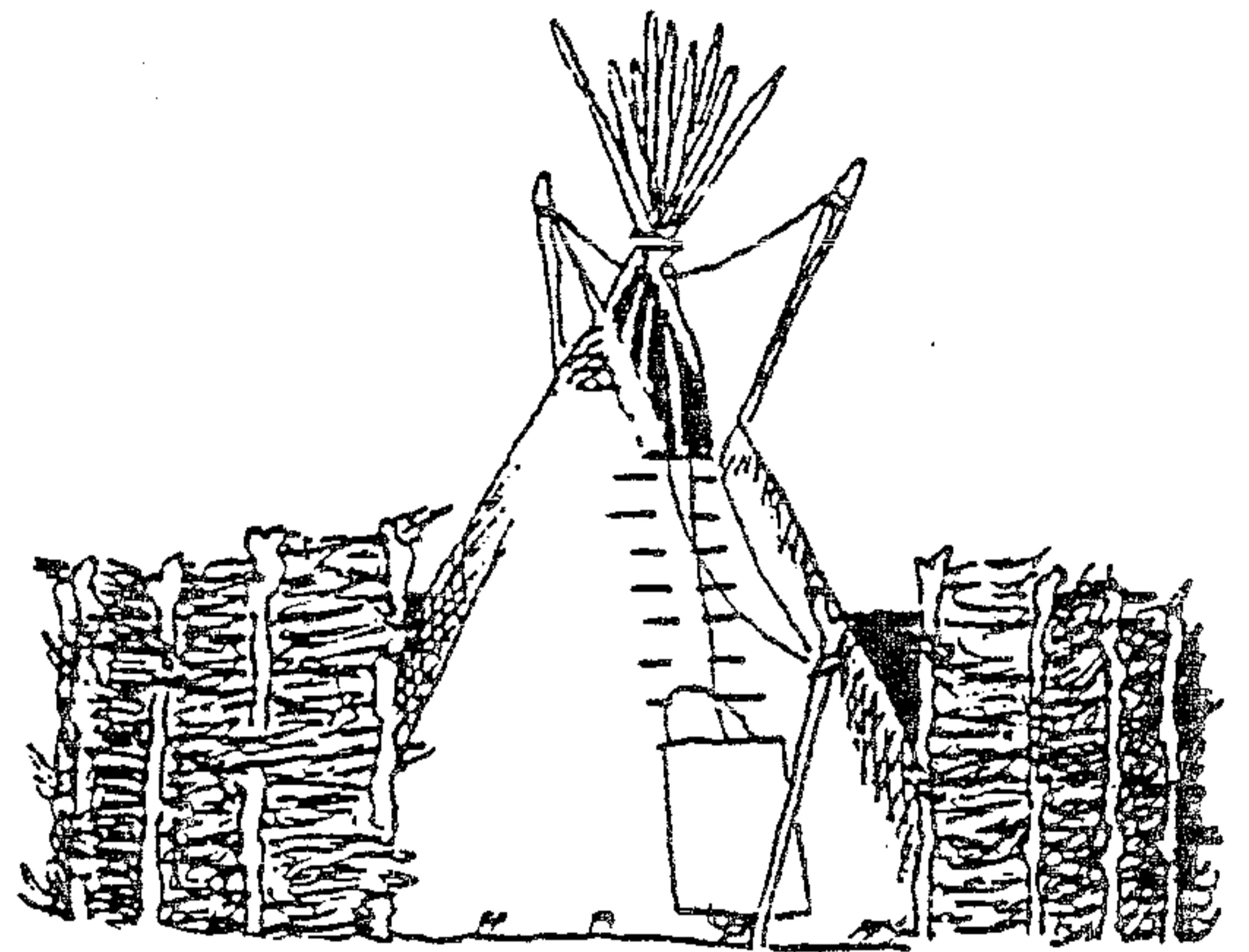




Parfleches, or storage boxes, were containers for food and other articles. These were made of rawhide and painted.

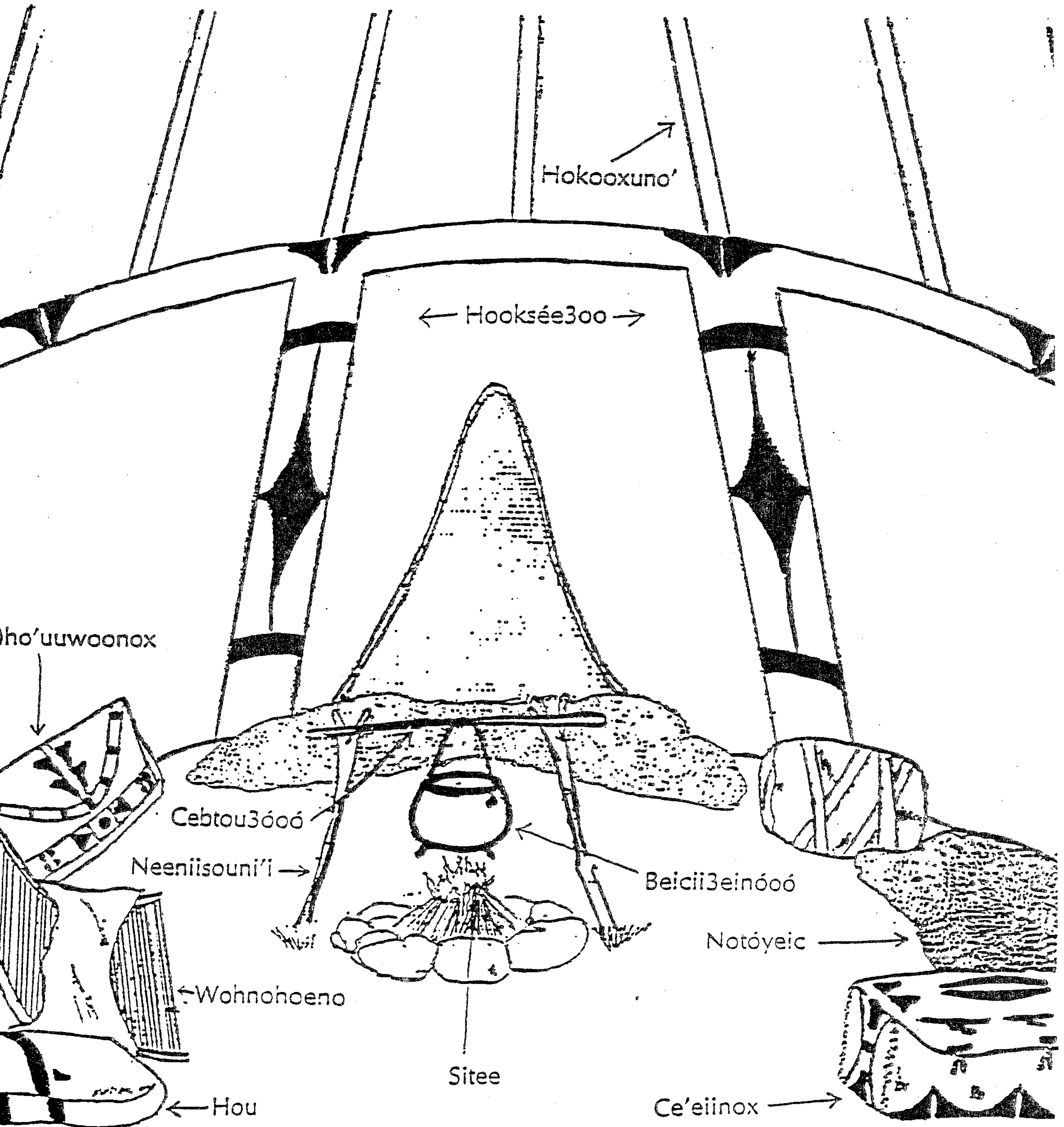
Backrests were used during the day as couches or chairs. They were the beds taken apart at one end and stretched out.

Surrounding the tipi during the winter months, the women constructed windbreaks around tipi to keep out the cold, snow and wind. They cut small trees and tied them together, leaning them against the tipi. The windbreaks were made out of poles and brush, ten to twelve feet high. Slender willows were bound to the poles, all the way around at a height of five to six feet. These structures were helpful in keeping the tipi warm in the winter.



There were no great differences between tribal styles of tipis-the basic construction was the same throughout the Plains. Tribal differences were shown in the size and height of the tipi, the number of poles used, and perhaps most clearly, by the manner of decorating the tipi. Among the Arapaho quilled pendants and medallions frequently decorated the outside of the tipi. If a tipi was to be decorated it was done while sewing the tipi together. These ornaments were made by the woman, who also owned the tipi. Decorating the tipi with quillwork required a ceremony by a group of women who were members of a sacred guild or society. When a tipi was newly made, a dedication ceremony was held where gifts were given out and a feast was held.

INSIDE A TIPI
 Ciitoowuu' Niinonee



HOKOONNOO

SEENOOK

WONOTONOU

HO' XKU300' HOENO

IIKOOEENO

TECENOO

NIINON
OR
3OU' YOKOY

