

THE LOOPING TECHNIQUE IN NETTING

In the January issue of *AMERICAN ANTIQUITY*, Volume I, Number 3, a paper by Mr. Horace Miner states on page 185, "As *knotted looping* implies, the loops are held intact by the knotting of the strand (Figure 3, No. 6c). The loops themselves, however, are not knotted onto the preceding row of loops, but are free to slide along the segment of cord over which they are looped.

"(D) *Netting* is the actual knotting of one row of loops onto the preceding row (Figure 3, No. 7). There is not, therefore, the small amount of movement between the loops typical of all other types. Their junction is fixed and definite" (p. 185).

I should like here both to ask a couple of questions and to offer a criticism. Is the *knotted looping* mentioned by Mr. Miner made in the same way as *plain*

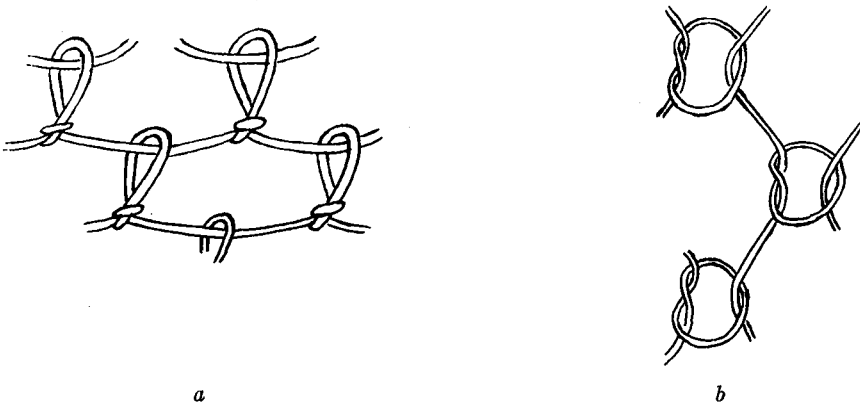


FIG. 6

looping, otherwise called simple looped knotless netting, except that instead of a loop a knot catches the preceding strands, as shown in Figure 6, a, with the same strand making a series of knots, one over each segment of cord separating the knots of the previous row? Also, what kinds of knots are utilized in this *knotted looping*?

One point of my criticism hinges somewhat on the answer to the first question. Should the answer be in the affirmative, I have no argument on this point with Mr. Miner as to the terminology used. If, however, the technique is similar to that used in the modern manufacture of nets, employing the *fisherman's knot*,⁹⁴ a finger-knot through which has been slipped another cord, which in turn is used in finger-knots which alternate with loops of the first row, I feel that Mr. Miner has established an artificial and unnecessary differentiation be-

⁹⁴ Scout Handbook for Boys, p. 76, knot 8.

tween this and his *netting* category. If the *fisherman's knot* (Figure 7, b) is to be placed elsewhere than under the *knotted looping* category, where would it fit? By Mr. Miner's definition, it could not be considered *netting*, since, to quote him, in *netting* "There is not, therefore, the small amount of movement between the loops typical of all other types" (p. 185) and the *fisherman's knot* does allow some slight movement between the loops. In fact, the easiest and quickest way to identify a *fisherman's knot* is to try to slide the knot along the loop strand. If the knot slides, there is a fine chance that it is the *fisherman's knot*. It has invariably been found that this proves true on more careful analysis. Why shouldn't such a knot be included in *netting*? By definition,⁹⁵ *netting* is "A piece of network; any fabric of crossing cords, threads, ropes, wires, or the like, with open spaces between." A net made with the *fisherman's knot* would fill that definition as well as would one made with the *sheet bend knot*. So, for that matter, would the various types of *looping*, so why not call the latter *knotless netting*, as has been done on occasion, and avoid a superfluity of terms?

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ON POTTERY RESTORATION

The presentation of the process described here has two purposes: (1) it is a pottery restoration process which can be used in small museums and laboratories limited in personnel and equipment; (2) it is hoped that this will encourage others to report on some of the simpler laboratory techniques in the "Correspondence" section of AMERICAN ANTIQUITY.

It is essential in this process that enough of the vessel be represented to show at least one-third of the curve of rim and body. When related sherds have been mended to form a single piece, the entire surface is covered with liquid soap, or a similar agent, to prevent the plaster of Paris, used as explained later, from adhering to the surface or in the lines of mending. When carefully covered by this film, the piece is placed to stand upright on its rim. Thus the plane of the table on which it rests becomes the plain of the rim, and the angle with this plane assumed by the walls of the vessel accurately determined. Then plaster, just thin enough to prevent air bubbles, is poured on the surface. The mold should be so made as to be easily removed after hardening. With this precaution observed, the mold may be built up to a thickness sufficient to insure against breakage in handling. It may be necessary to make the mold in two parts, depending on the amount of curve characterizing the pottery walls.

When the mold has become thoroughly dried, it should be removed with little effort. It is then placed on a sand-table, or in a position so that the entire inner surface is exposed. This surface is also thoroughly covered with the soap

⁹⁵ Webster's International Dictionary of the English Language (unabridged), 1929.