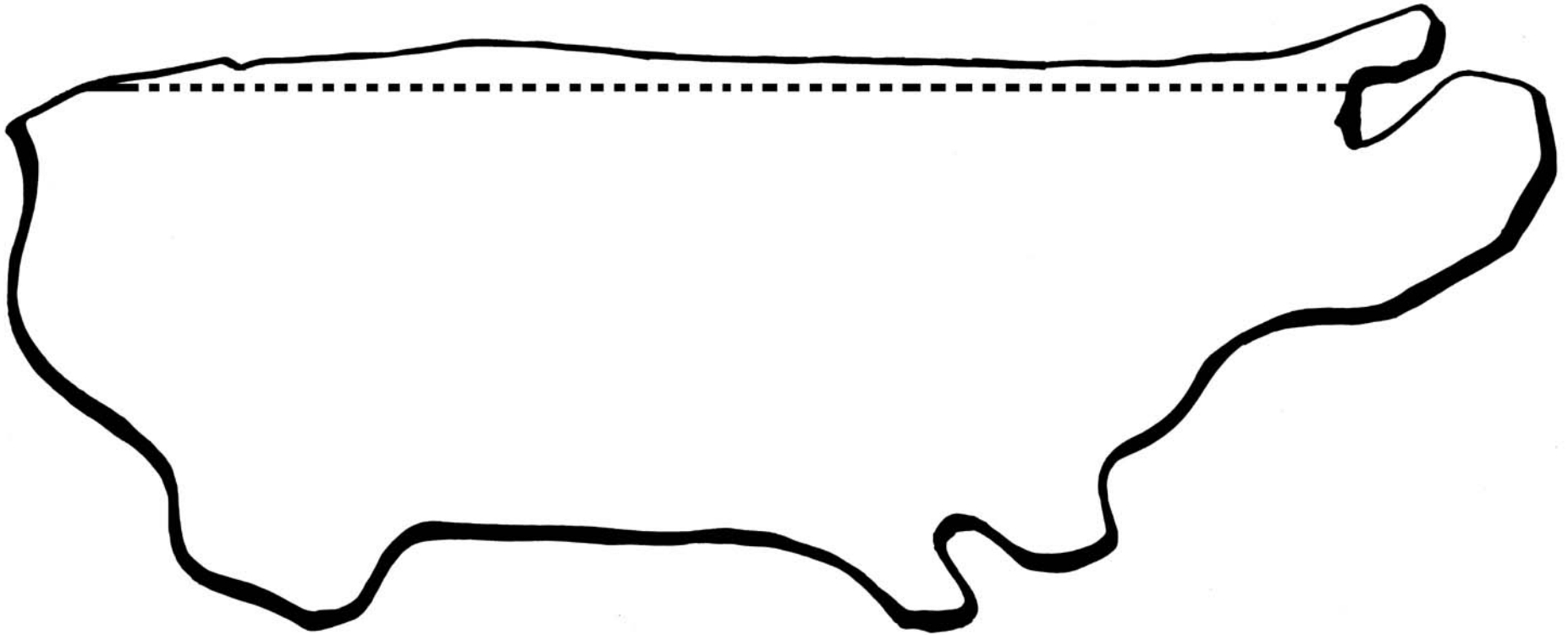


# Squaring up a side

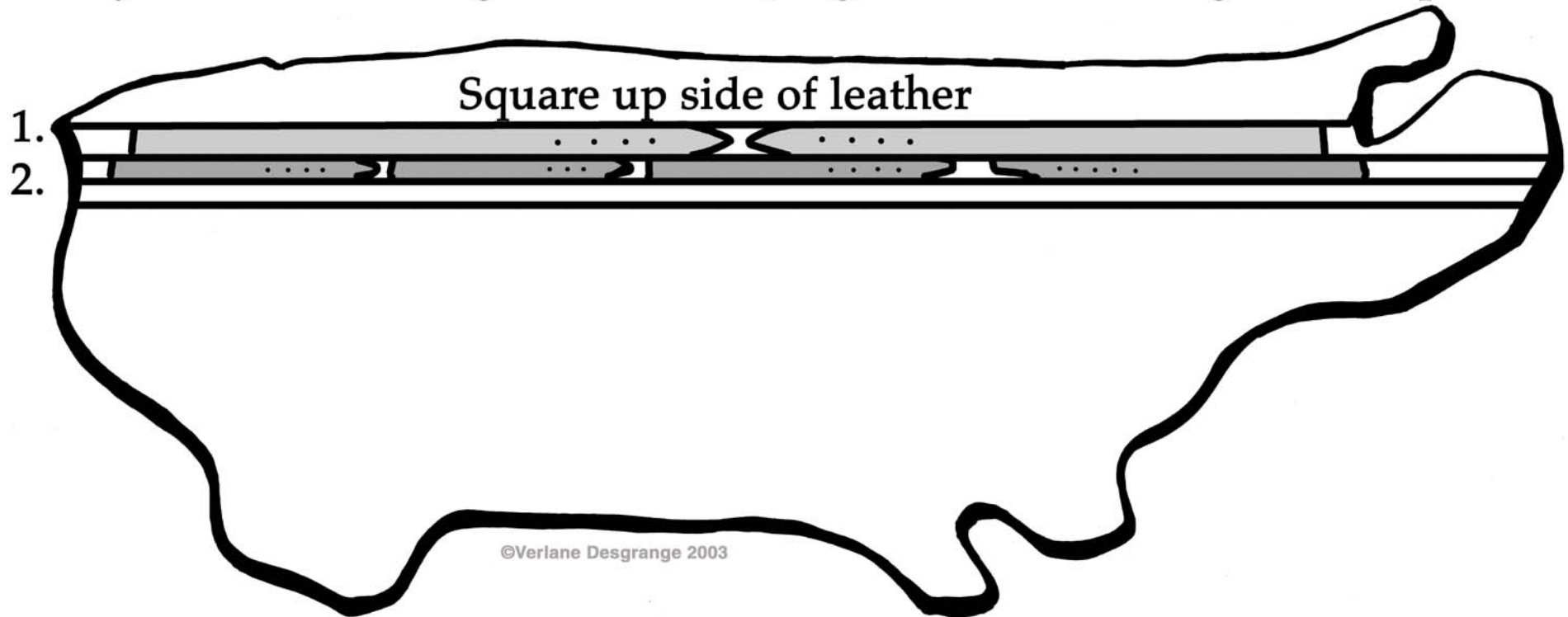
## in preparation for cutting straps



Mark a line along the back (top) that most closely approximates the shape of the side in a straight line. The leather you cut off should eliminate any nicks or clamp marks from the tanning process. Ideally the less you cut off from the top, the better cutting economy you'll have. There are times when you may have to bend your top line just a bit so as not to waste as much leather. Bend only slightly if you have to do it this way. Cut this top line as accurately as possible, for this is the beginning of all the straps you'll cut. Do not undercut or put a wavy line along the top, as accurate strap cutting will be almost impossible. Re-do the top cut again if you make a mistake. Save the leather you cut from the top: it is usually the best part of the side. Many times you can make a complete bridle from this premium leather.

# Strap cutting strategy

Always cut the full length of the side, regardless of the length of strap needed

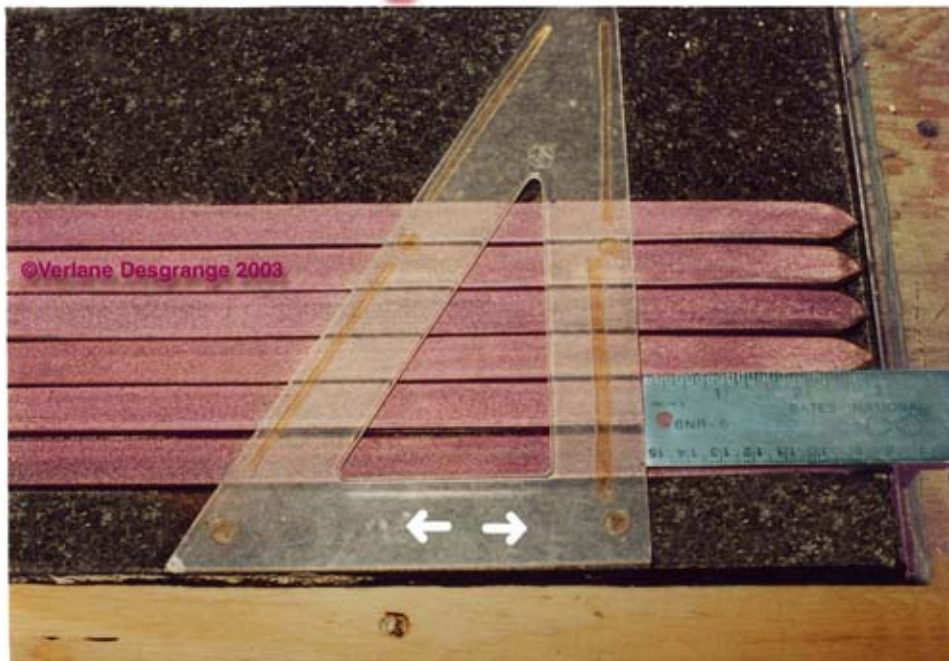


Two different possibilities:

1. For longer straps, cut billet ends in center of side, shown by billet tips and holes punched. Billets face each other.
2. For a series of shorter straps, set billet tips to center of side, except last strap which faces in opposite direction

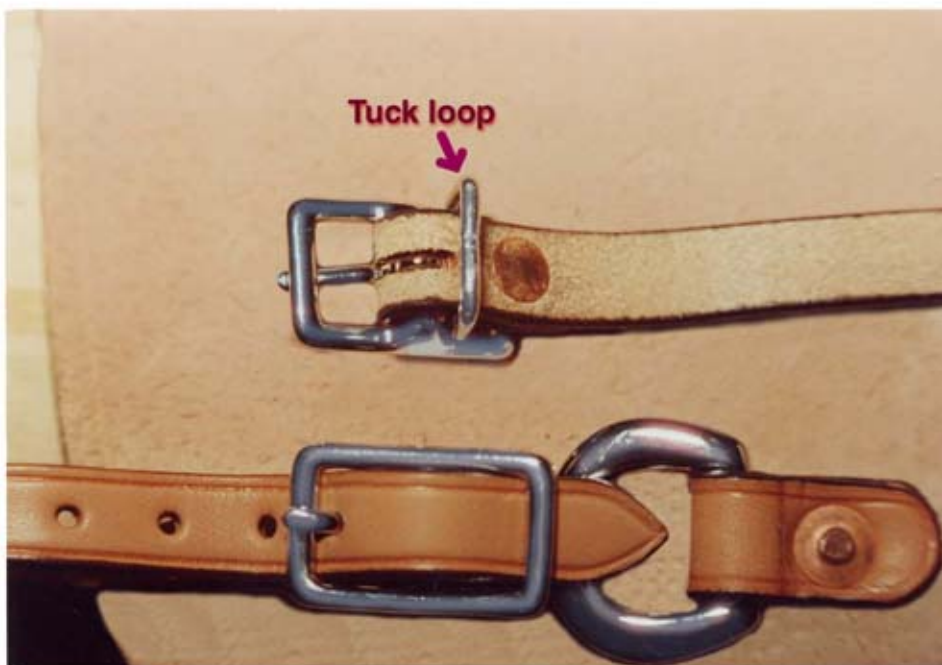
**In both cases the billet tips are in the prime area of leather**

# Strap Work



*Slide triangle left or right on straight edge. One angle of the triangle must be 90° for this to work. A carpenter's square or T-square will give the same results.*

Make all six straps for bags simultaneously. Line up billet tips on straight edge and cut all straps to same length on chape end (tips are already cut). Then mark all buckle slots by sliding a right angle along bottom edge. Mark center lines for slots. Next flip straps over to F.S. to mark holes. Mark first hole as shown, about 3" from tips. Then mark all holes on each strap by sliding triangle along a bottom straight edge. This method makes for fast accurate work.



*Without a tuck loop, the billet attachment strap will not stay situated on the saddlebags. Use stainless steel, as this area will be right next to the horse's sides where there is a high concentration of sweat, dirt, and salt: things that destroy plated metals.*

For straps that buckle to flank cinch, a simple center bar buckle with a stainless steel tuck loop affixed with a single copper rivet is quite sufficient. Attach tuck loop to backside of strap as shown so that strap can pass through loop when attached to D-ring. Be sure to lap buckle chape around to G.S., thus preventing a lump where strap passes through loop. Rivet burr should also face to topside. Attached strap is shown in lower part of picture.