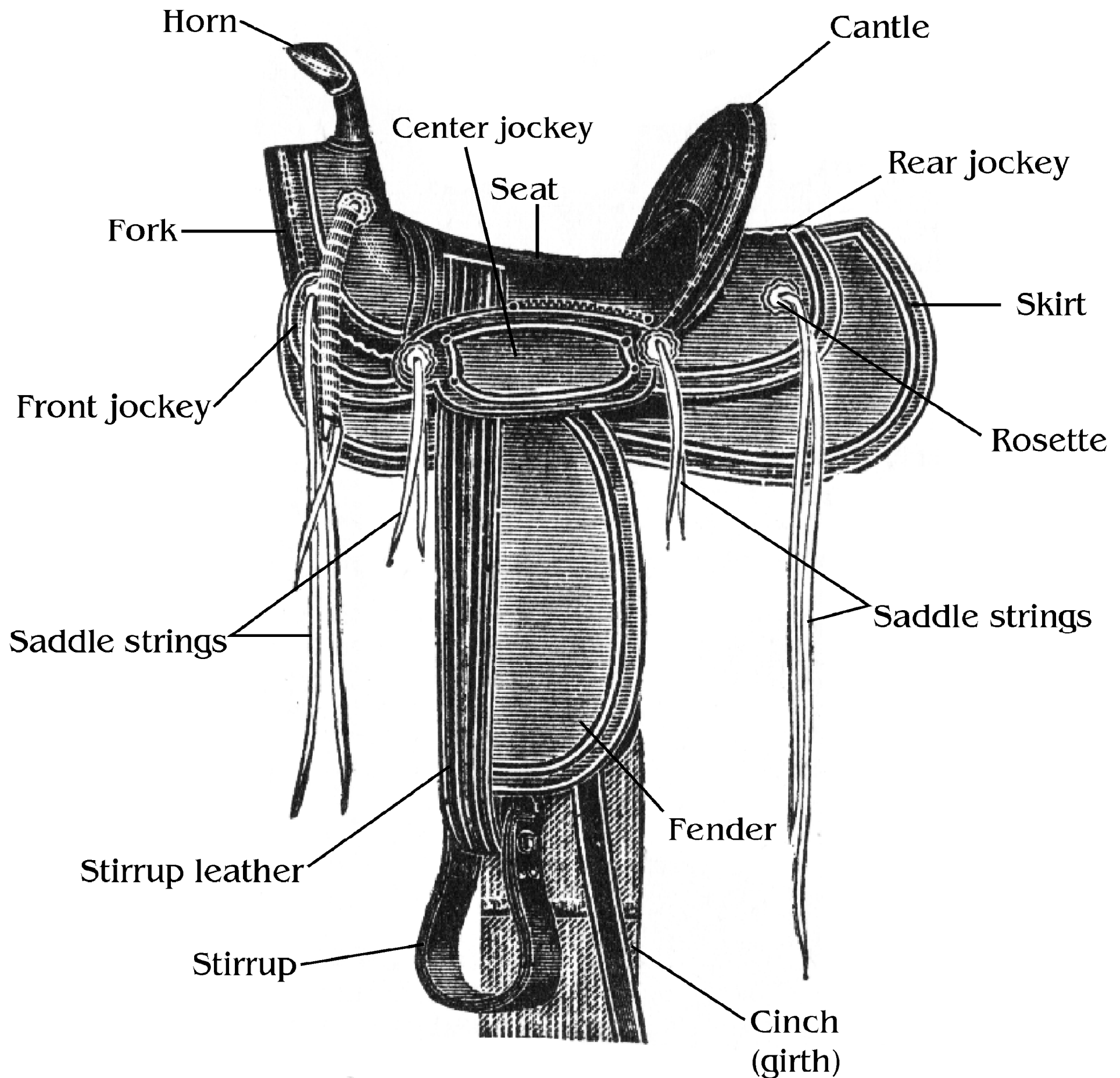


A Cowboy's Saddle

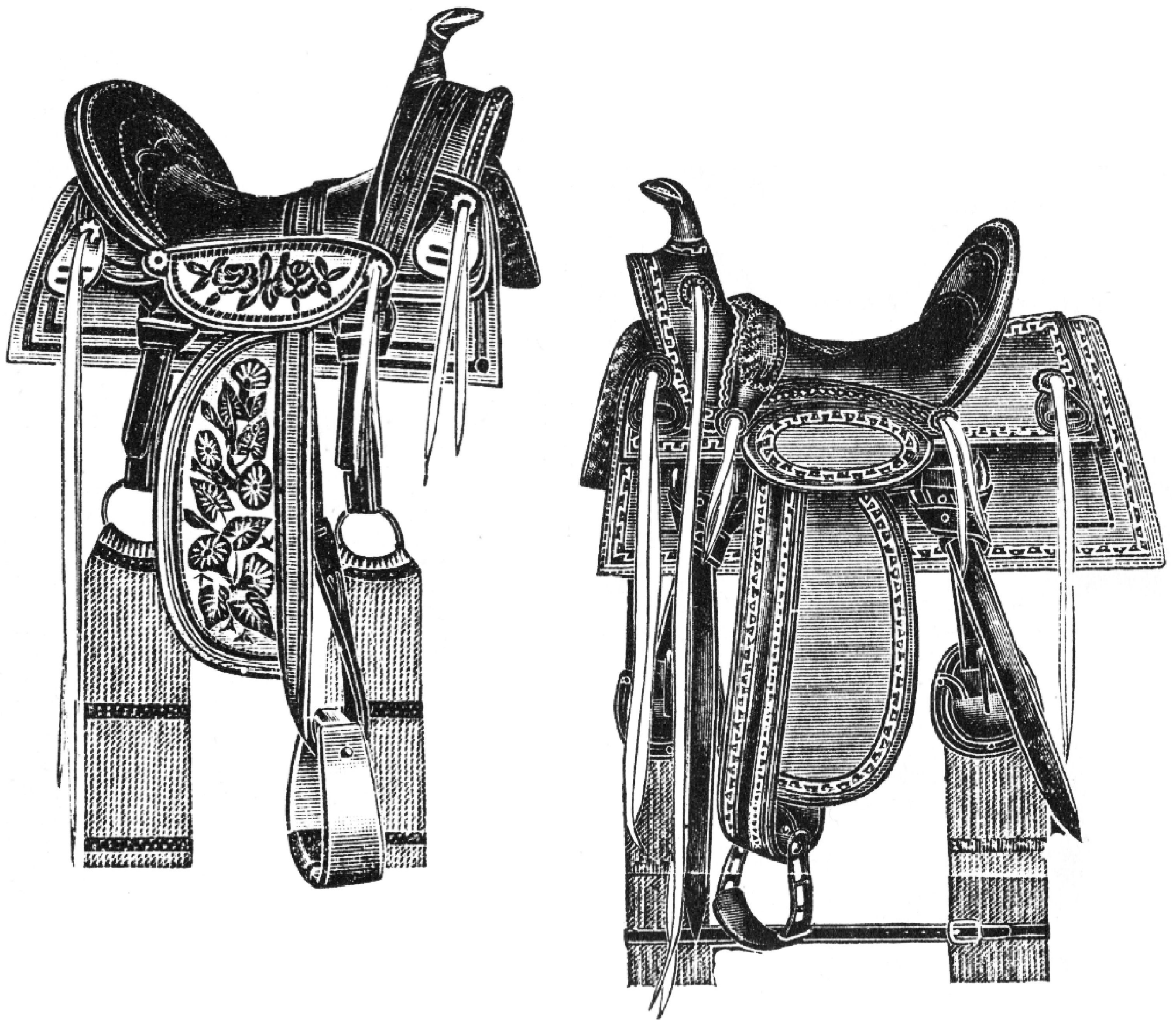


The cinch, or girth, wraps under the horse's belly like a belt, to keep the saddle in place.

The saddle strings are used to tie equipment, like a lariat or a bedroll, to the saddle.

The rosette is a leather circle sometimes topped by a decorative metal disc called a *concho*. These pieces keep the saddle strings from tearing through the skirt or jockey.

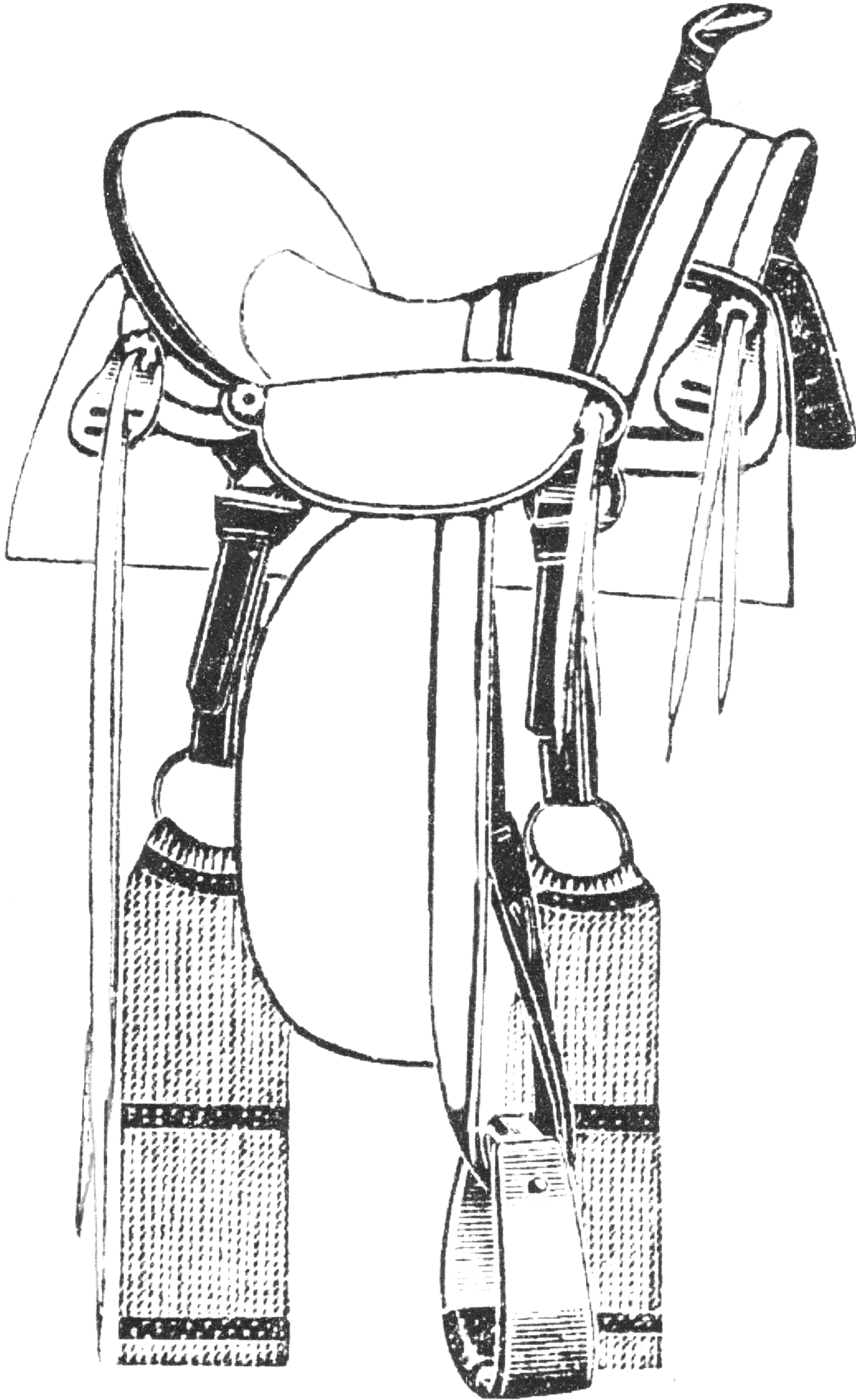
Saddle Designs



Cowboy saddles with only one cinch are called "single-fire" or "center-fire" rigs. Some, like these two, have two cinches. Cowboys call these "double-fire" or "double barrel" rigs

Notice the elaborate designs on these saddles - the one on the left has a floral pattern, and the one on the right has a "serpentine" or "Greek key" border. These designs, called "tooling", are stamped into the leather with special metal tools. They are not only decorative, but they help keep the leather from cracking, making the saddle last longer.

Design a Saddle



Imagine that you're a saddle maker in the Old West. What kind of tooling designs would you stamp into the saddle leather?