



Gansey Glossary

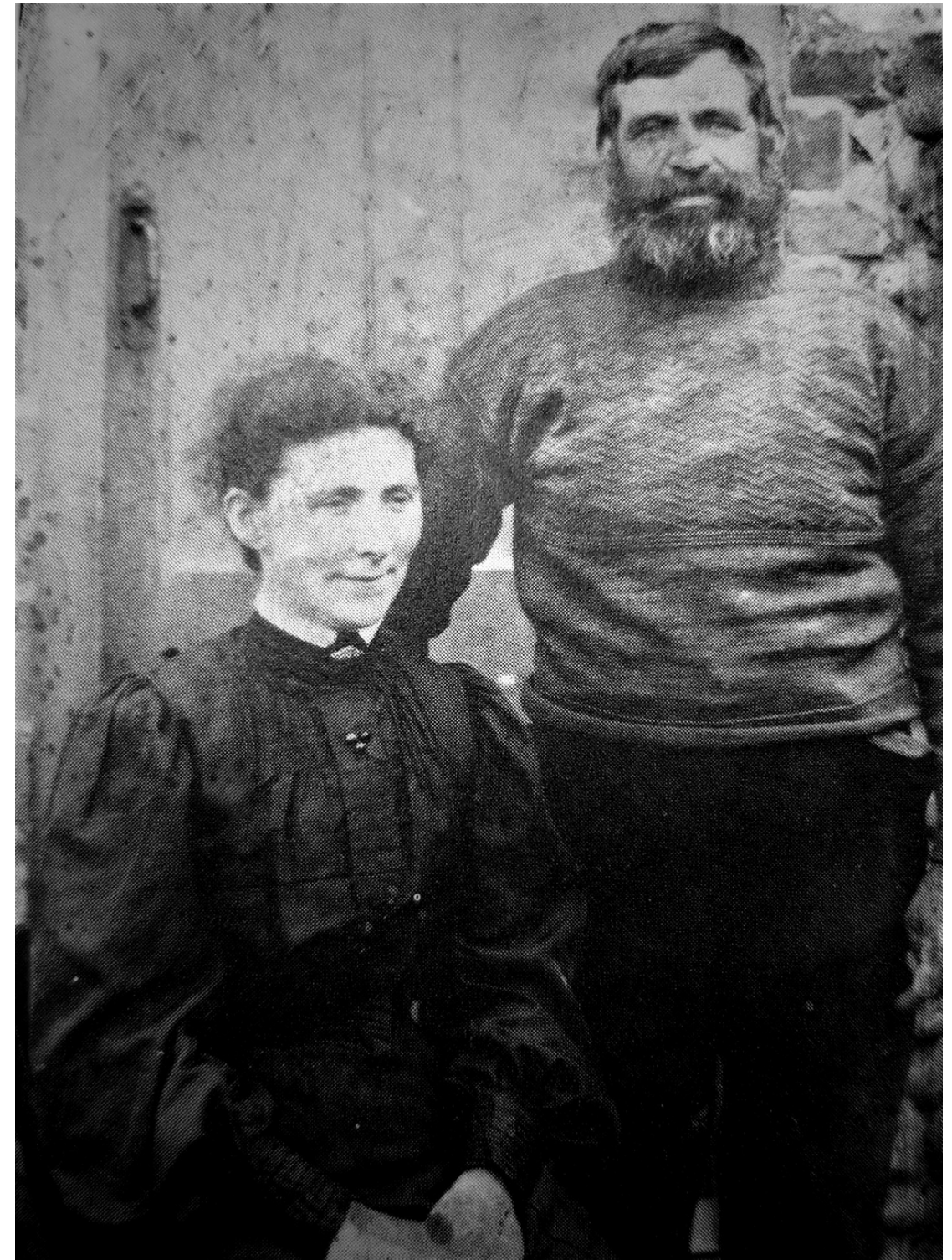
Welcome to your Gansey Identificaton Toolkit. This has all of the information you need to identify parts of your gansey for the Gansey Heritage Knitting Network.



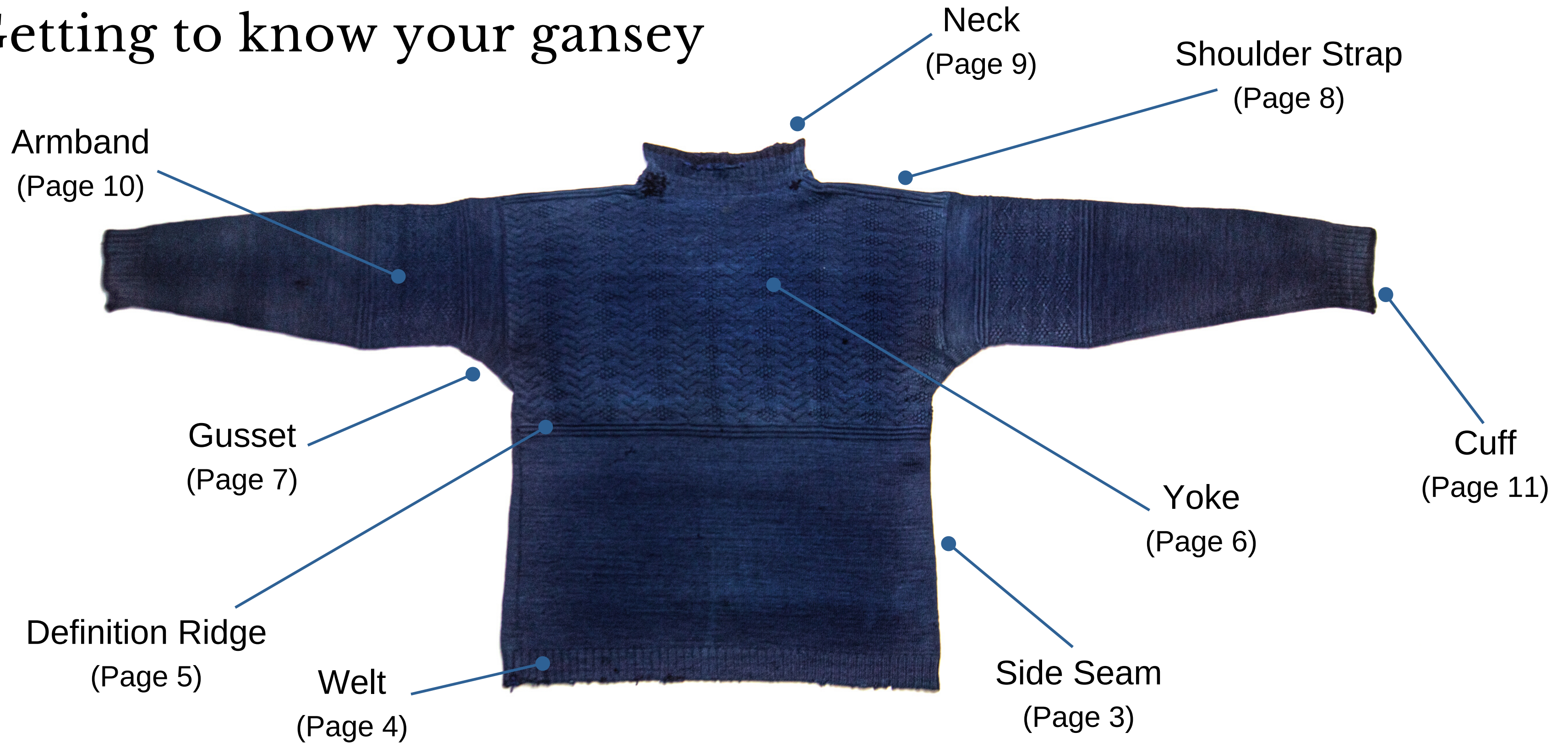
What is a gansey?

A gansey or Guernsey is traditionally a navy blue fisherman's sweater. It can be hand-knitted in 'the round' with four or more double-pointed needles or machine knitted and purchased from a marine chandler. Traditionally these are tight fitting garments that are made with diamond shaped underarm gussets for added flexibility. Areas of plain and patterned knitting form textural motifs.

Mr and Mrs Robert 'Tarr' Bishop- circa 1900.
This is the Gansey you will see in this glossary.

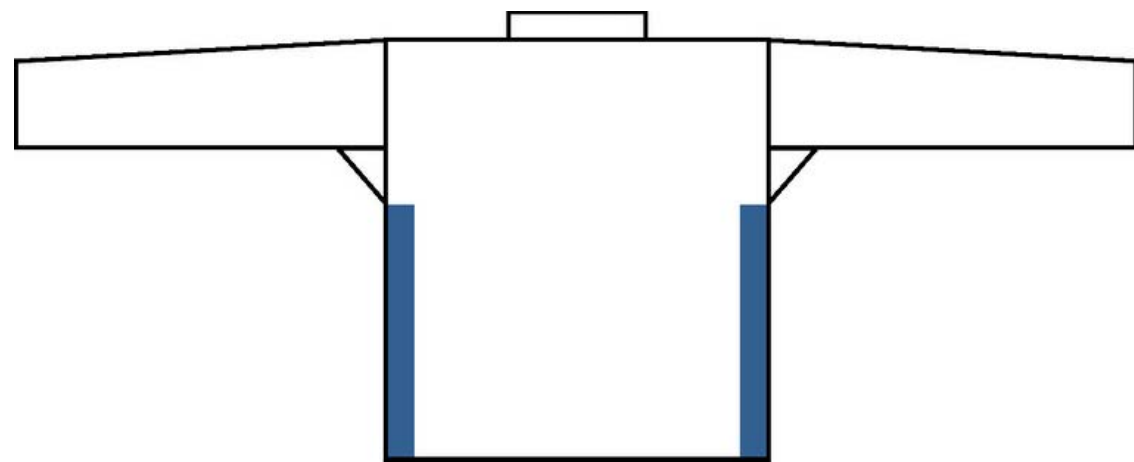


Getting to know your gansey



Side seams

Ganseys are commonly knitted in the round without seams (Figure A), this way the strength of the wool is maximised since there is no inherent weakness in the seam line. Some ganseys were still knitted with the more modern two needle method which results in seams (Figure B and Figure C).



A.



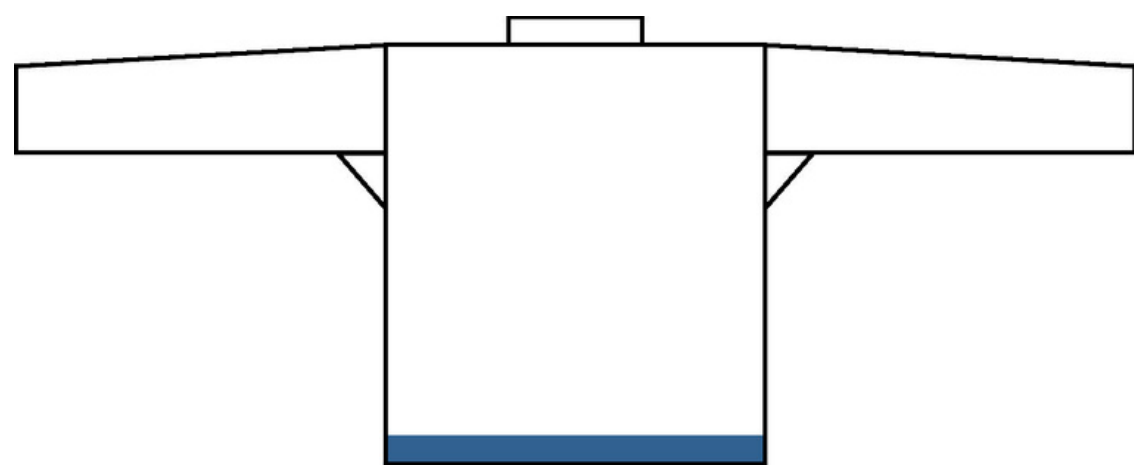
B. Recto (front)



C. Verso (reverse)

Welt

The welt is the bottom edge or waistband of the gansey, often knitted in a rib to allow elasticity. The function of this is to stop the garment edge from rolling up, and to give it strength and flexibility. There may be a continuous welt (Figures B, C and D), or a split welt (Figure A). Initials are sometimes worked within the plain area above the welt.



A.



B.



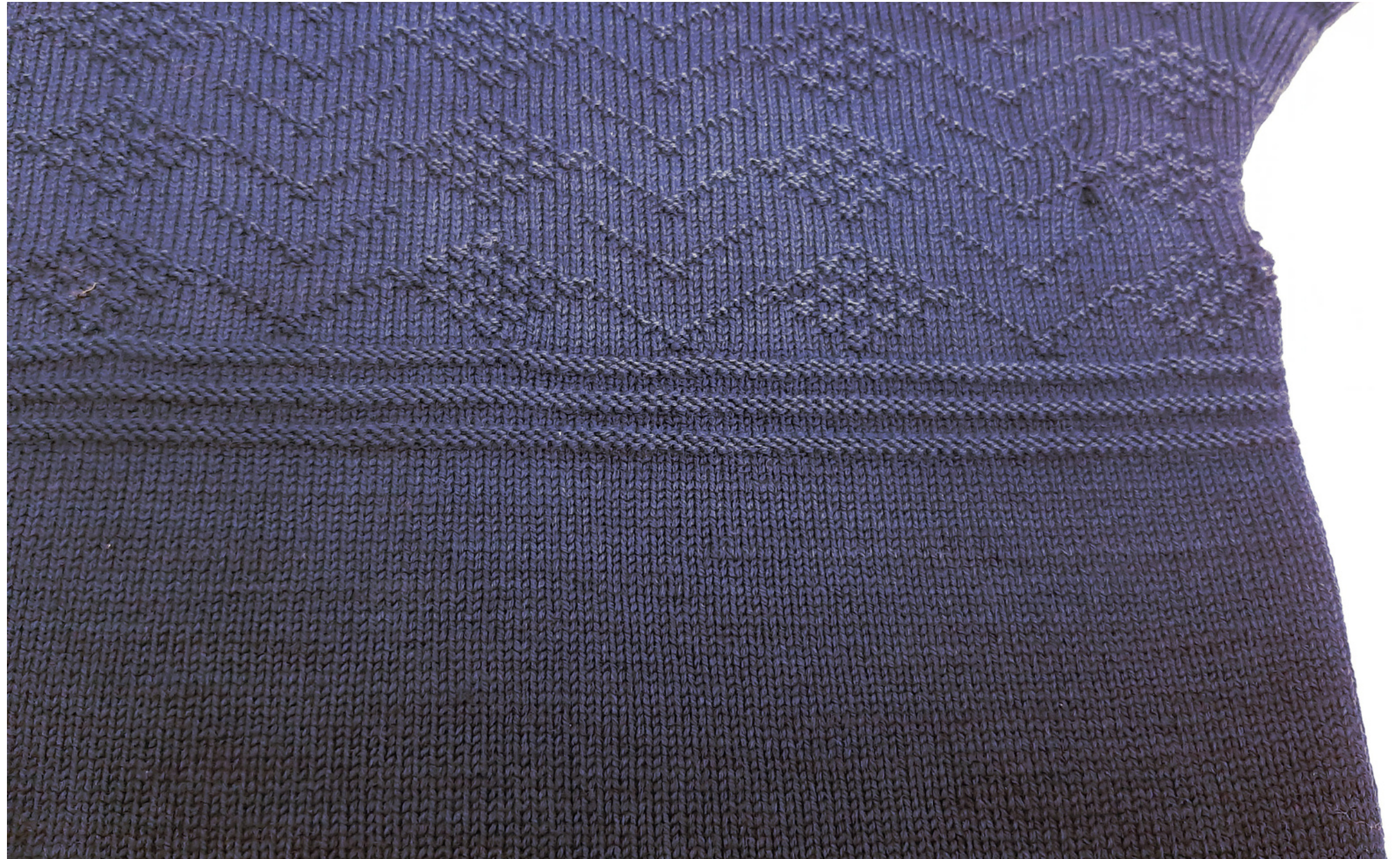
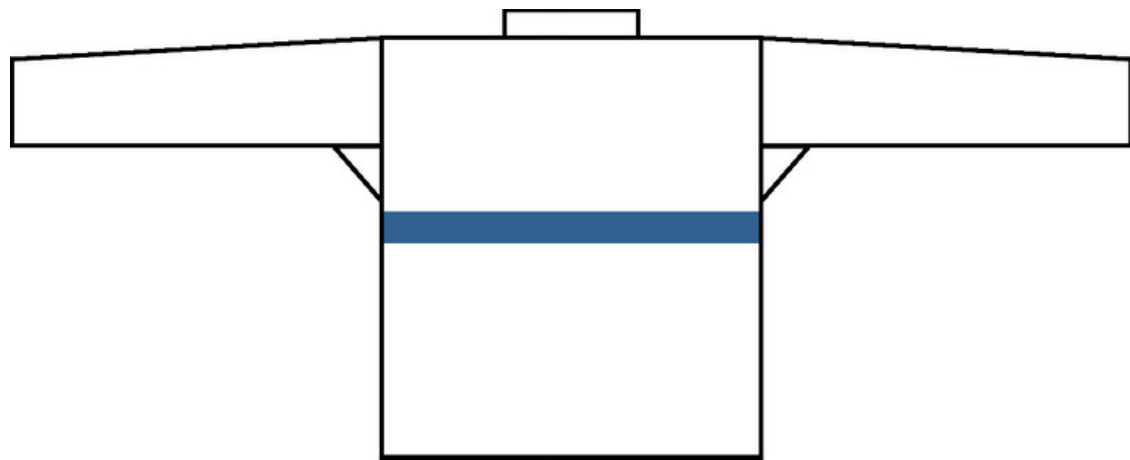
C.



D.

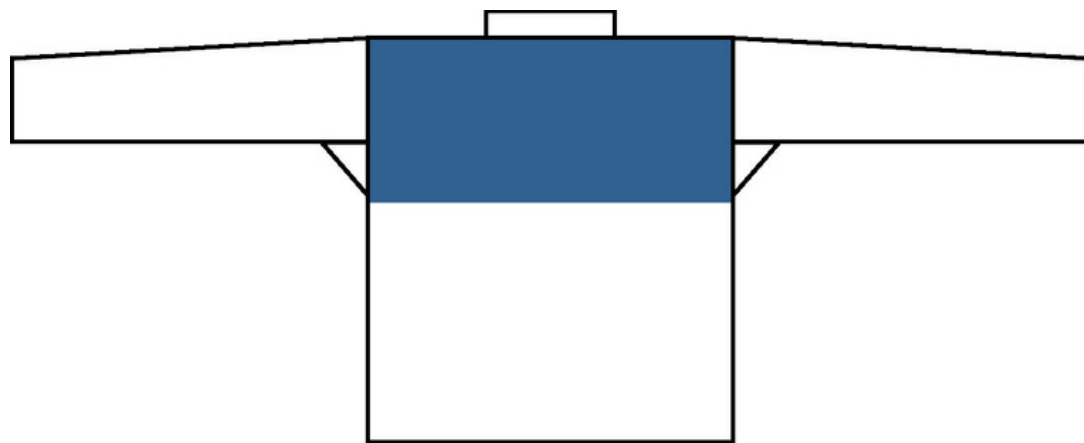
Definition ridge

This section of knitting sits above the plain area underneath the yoke (see page 6). The ridges are known as rigs and furrows. The number of rigs may define the number of the wearers children.



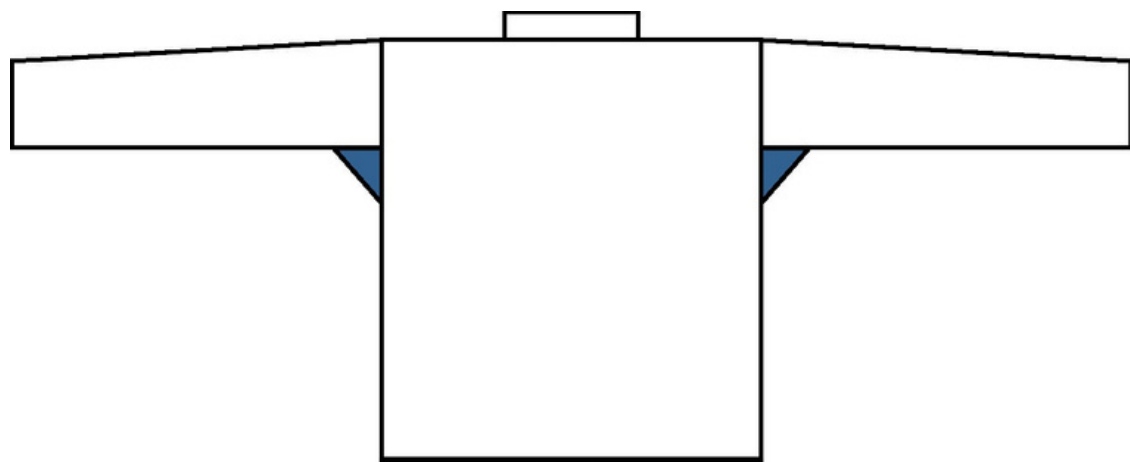
Yoke

The yoke is an area of pattern on the upper torso below the neck. This typically reaches to the underarm in Norfolk. In other geographical areas it may extend almost all the way down to the welt. The yoke can commonly be patterned or textured but may not be.



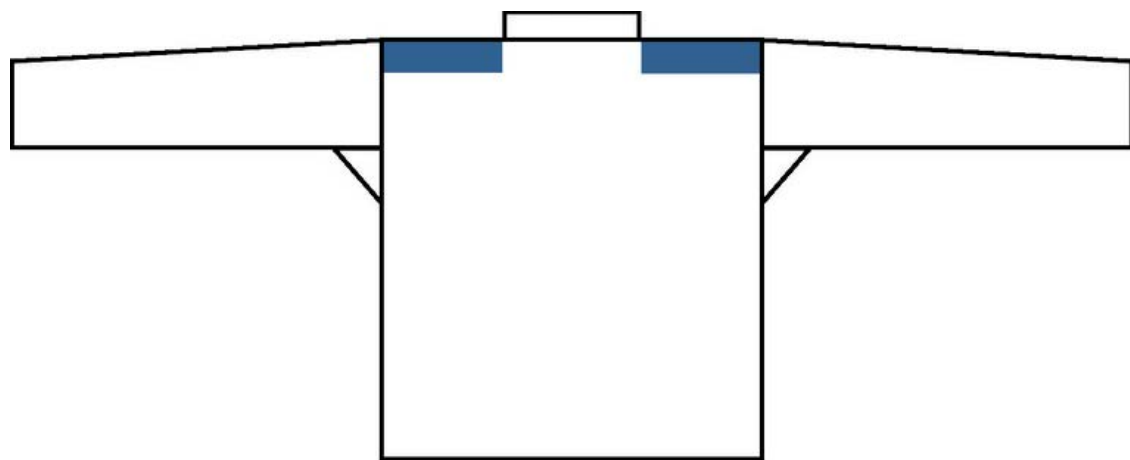
Gusset

The gusset is a diamond-shaped piece inserted or worked in under the arm. This allows the wearer more freedom of movement and strengthens the garment.



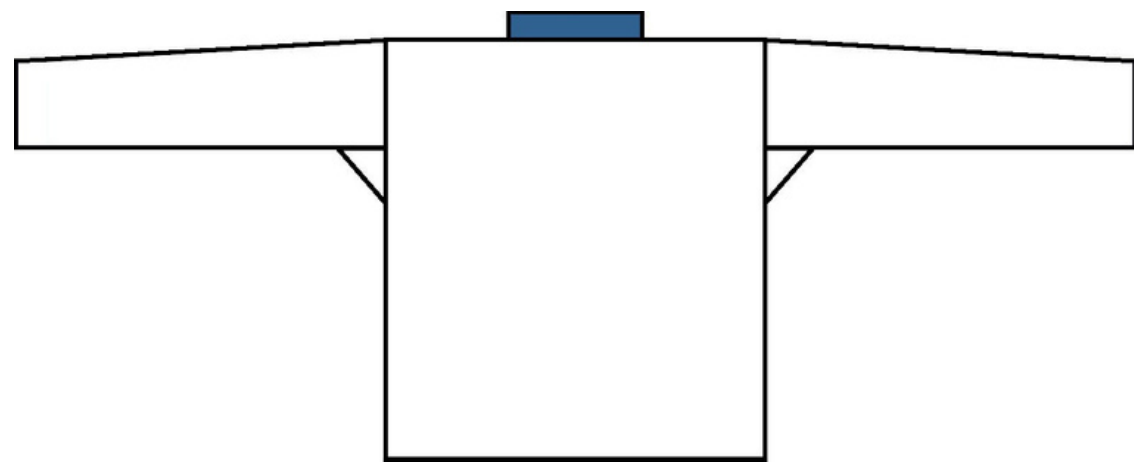
Shoulder strap

There are several ways of joining the shoulders including grafting, either producing a ridge or a flat seam, or by working a decorative shoulder strap band. This acts to strengthen the garment on an area that would take great strain.



Neck

The cuffs and necks tend to be ribbed for elasticity and strength. Necks can have fastenings such as buttons (Figures A and B), or are boat-neck or crew-necks of varying tightness, sometimes small triangular gussets are made at the inner edge of the shoulders.



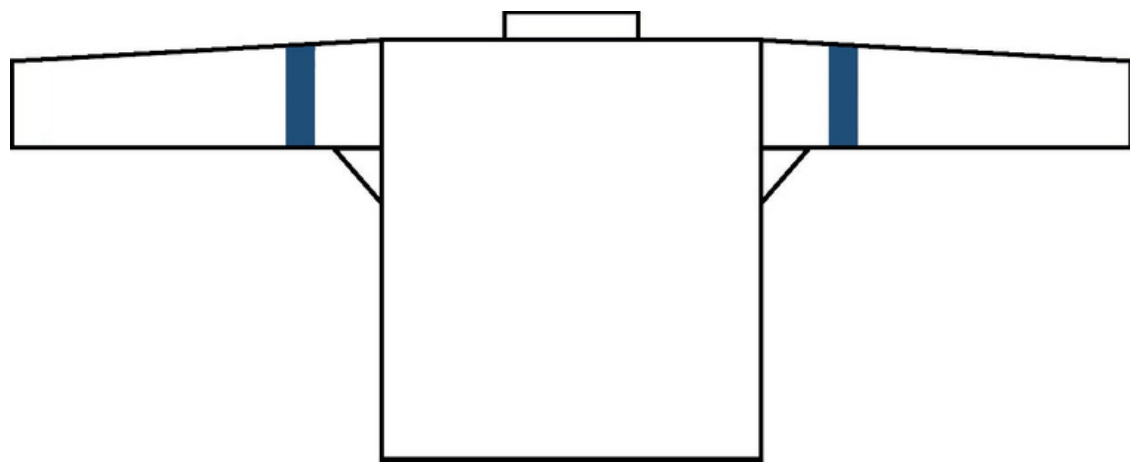
A.



B.

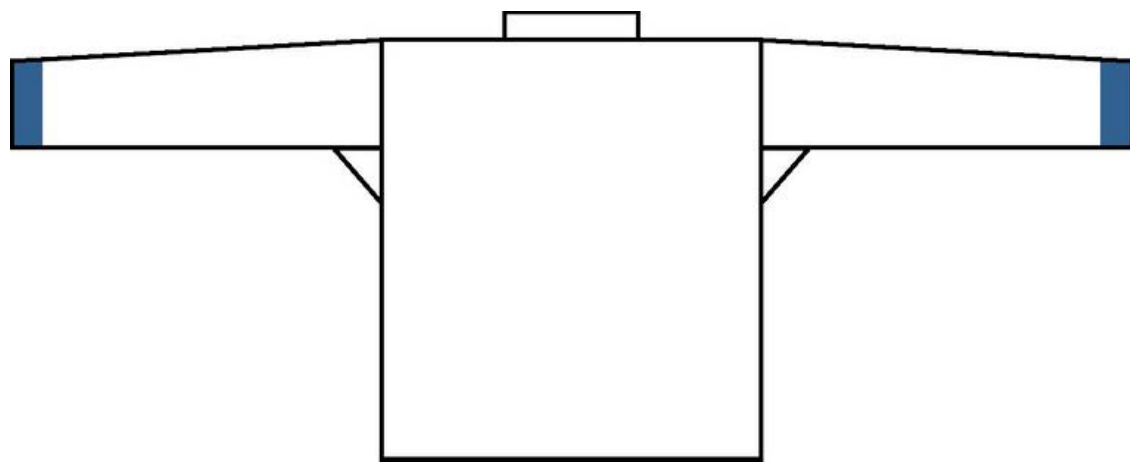
Armband

The arm pattern will often be outlined with a rib and furrow and repeat design motifs from the yoke.



Cuffs

The cuffs tend to be ribbed for elasticity and strength (Figures A and B). Cuffs were often re-knitted, due to wear and tear, this can result in slightly different shades of yarn being visible (Figure A).



A.



B.

Measuring a stitch sample

-Loops

Here we refer to loops to mean 'stitches' which is the international terminology. This number of loops changes depending on the pattern, fineness of wool, gauge of needles and tension.



Measuring a stitch sample

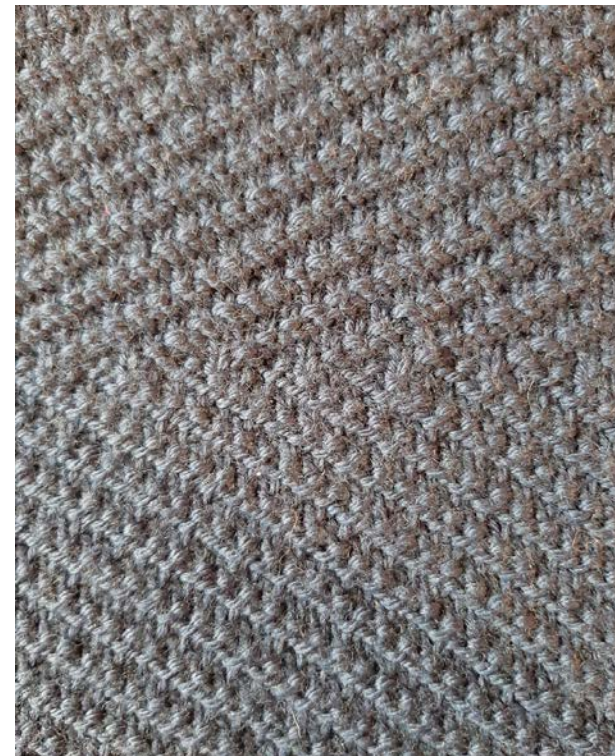
-Rows

Here we refer to 'rows' which is how the knitting grows. Here we are counting the 'V' shape of each stitch between the pins.



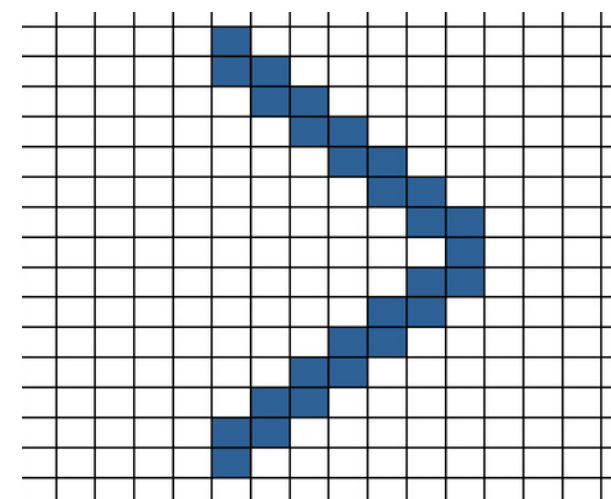
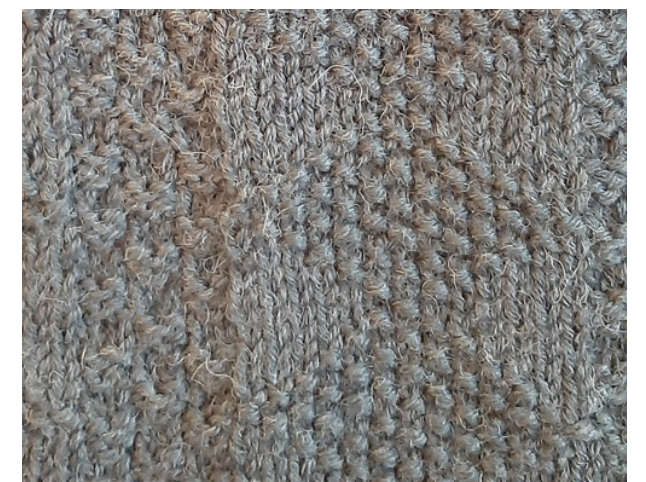
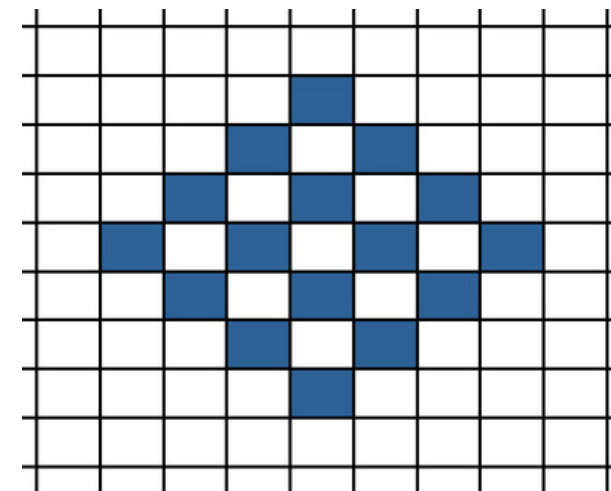
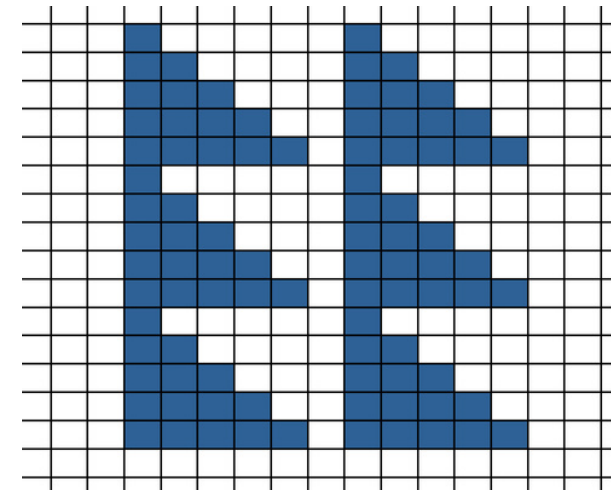
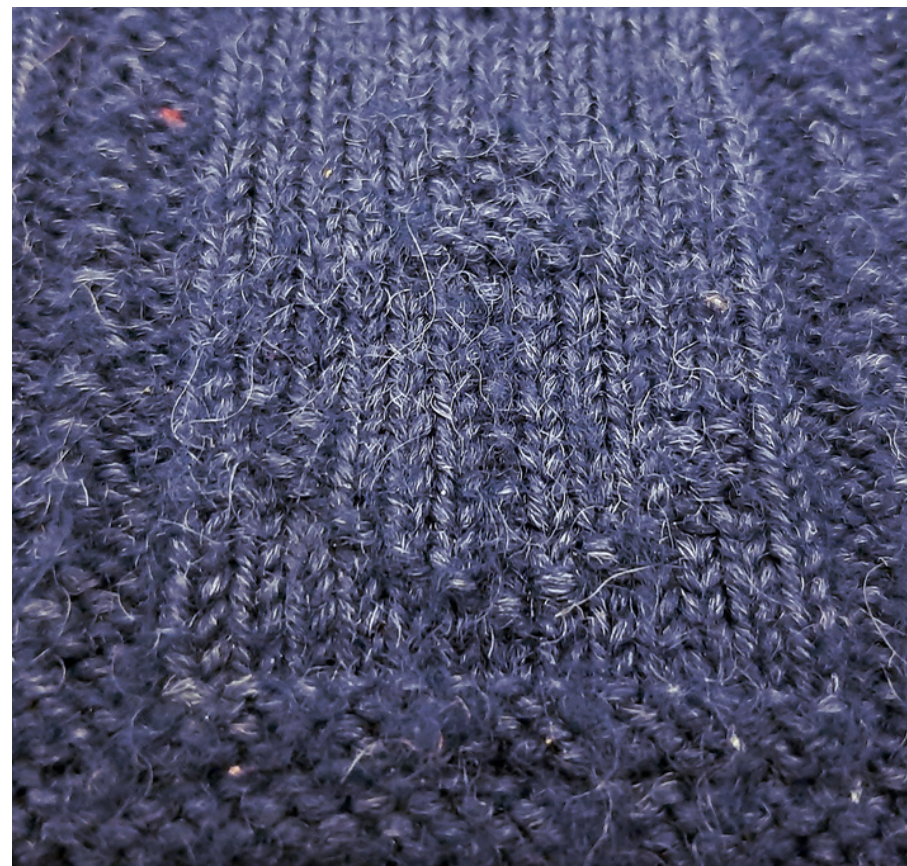
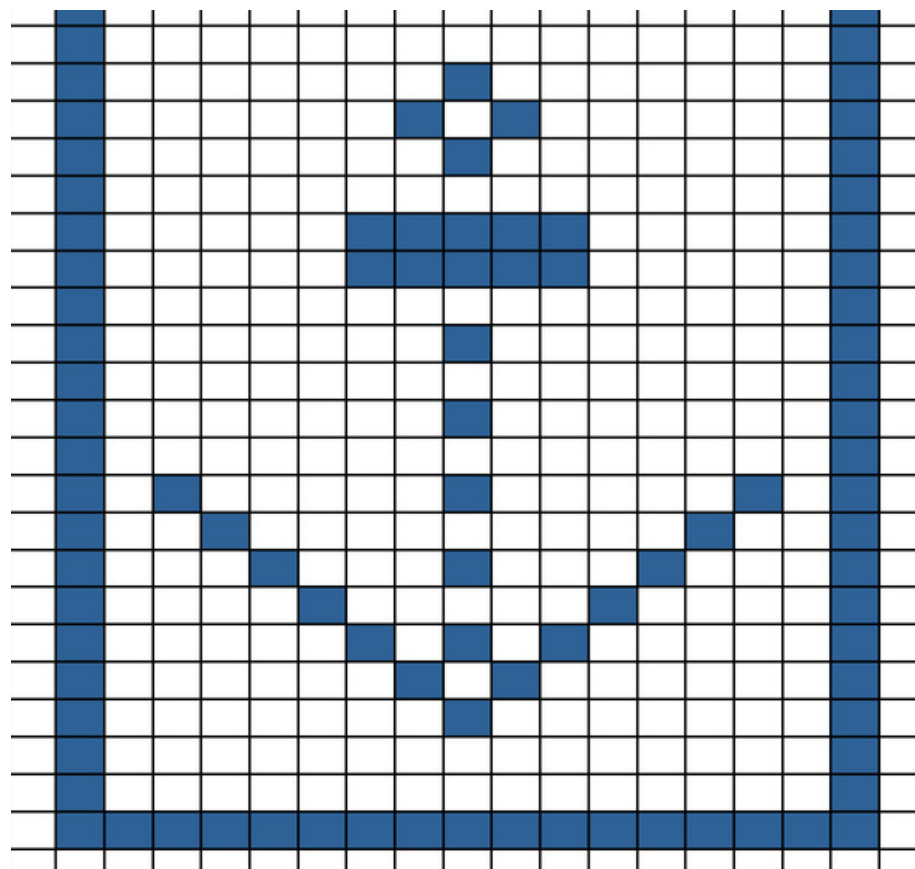
Common stitch combinations

Some stitch combinations are used in horizontal and vertical repeats, and often are interspersed with motifs specific to the location or preferable to the knitter. The knit and purl stitch can be used in infinite combinations to great effect. Examples of these include seed, moss or double moss with names such as 'hailstones'. They are often used as infill patterns between herringbone, zig zag/ marriage lines or diamond shapes such as the 'netmask'.



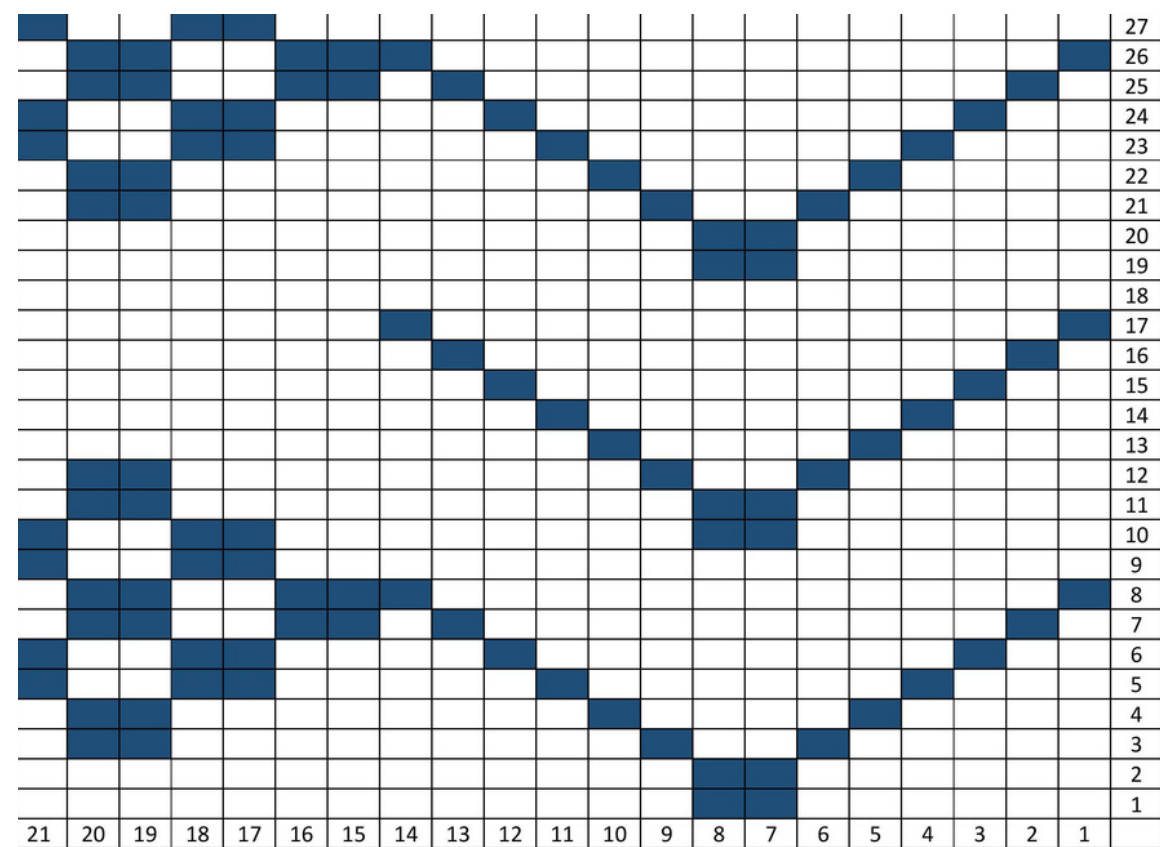
Common motifs

Motifs are often placed in panels between textured columns of seed stitch and can be easily recognisable motifs, such as flags, trees or anchors. Depending on the yarn, and the combination of knit and purl stitches, the design can either be crisp and clear or definition can be lost with a fluffy yarn such as with the anchor below.



Charting our gansey

Here is the charting of Mr Bishop's Gansey.
The pattern is a repeat, but we have just charted part of it.



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Thank you for your contribution.

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The Gansey Glossary and Recording Toolkit was made possible with Art Fund support.

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