

GP72 Jenny Griffin's moss stitch messes and columns gansey

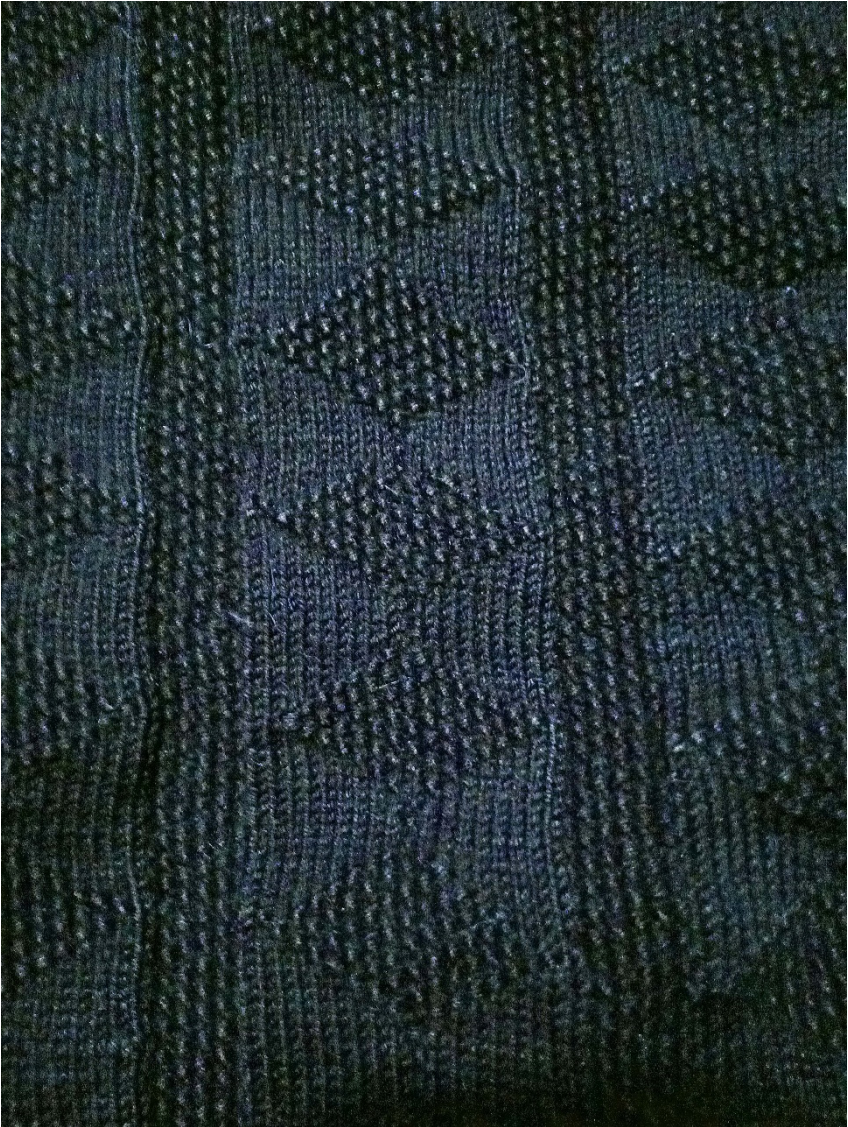
Flamborough, c. 1949

■ = purl stitch on the right side (knit stitch on the wrong side)
2022.

Gansey no.: SHMMT :

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29	28	27	26	25	23	22	21	20	19	18	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	5	4	3	2	1															





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Tension: 8.25 spi.

Welt 3 inches; plain 1 inch. The yoke pattern begins straight after the plain with no rigs. Pattern continues down the arm five and a quarter inches (4 meshes). Shoulder strap of 5 rigs with no obvious bind-off. Gusset is asymmetric (longer down the arms). False seam is made of k1 p1 rib (6 sts wide) between two (back and front) moss panels. Standup collar 2 inches. Sewn in labels near welt and under collar "*P. Griffin*" (for the original owner, Penny Griffin).

Errors

This gansey is beautiful and is very well made and creative but has clearly been made at speed because there are numerous errors that have gone uncorrected. These are probably completely un-noticeable to anyone who is not examining it closely. The first to be noticed was the 9th row of diamonds up, where the meshes are larger than the rest, back and front Meshes are 17 sts wide rather than 15. In the band of stocking stich below the deep yoke there is a random column of purl stitches, for no apparent reason. There are other errors too.

This is a good comparison with Sheringham ganseys. Firstly, it is much courser being 8.25 spi and made of the usual yarn for Yorkshire - very hard 'Seamen's Iron' 5-ply worsted yarn. Secondly, being professionally knitted (and perhaps because it was knitted for a stranger or an outsider?) it is riddled with errors. Most likely this gansey was knitted for a fixed price and the knitter evidently did not have the time or the inclination to go back and correct errors. While this does not detract from the overall effect or the practicality of the gansey it does not have the sense of pride or care that invariably goes into Sheringham examples. Mistakes in Sheringham ganseys are rare and never obvious. In Jenny Griffins gansey errors are widespread. There are 72 meshes on each side. On one side there are 23 meshes that are mis-shapen because they have the wrong number of stitches in them (7, 9 or 10 rows per side when the correct number is 8).. On the other side there are 14 mis-shapen meshes. That is a very high error rate and surely indicates the time pressure the knitter was under. She may have had lots of work to do besides knitting, running the household, caring for children, possibly helping her husband if he was a fisherman in baiting lines or shucking mussels for bait.

Provenance

Jenny Griffin (née Webster) was a volunteer at Cromer Museum in the 1980s and 1990s and she loaned this gansey to the museum for many years (loan number E7701). After the Second World War she had been a theatre designer in the repertory theatre in Bridlington. She was friendly with the fishermen of Bridlington, especially the crew of the M.V. Pride of Bridlington, namely Charlie Newby (boyfriend), George 'Nasher' Broadbent, Stan Clarke, Maurice ?, Freddie Burdall and Tom Collins. She did an oil painting featuring this crew at work baiting lines and at the time of writing it hangs in the staircase of the cottage in Chapel Street, Cromer where Jenny and John Griffin used to live (now Penny's). She had the gansey knitted for her by the same professional source in Flamborough that the Bridlington fishermen obtained theirs. Donated to Sheringham Museum 2022.

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Jenny Griffin told me that it was knitted for her by a professional in Flamborough, where the fishermen of Bridlington got theirs. The numerous errors in the knitting are further indication that this was commercially produced, knitted for a price, at great speed and errors going uncorrected. It was presumably thought to be plenty good enough by the knitter (for the money) and an authentic, endearing example of a professionally knitted Yorkshire gansey.



Right: *Painting by Jenny Griffin of the crew of the motor vessel 'Pride of Bridlington' baiting lines with mussels, c. 1948-1950*

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