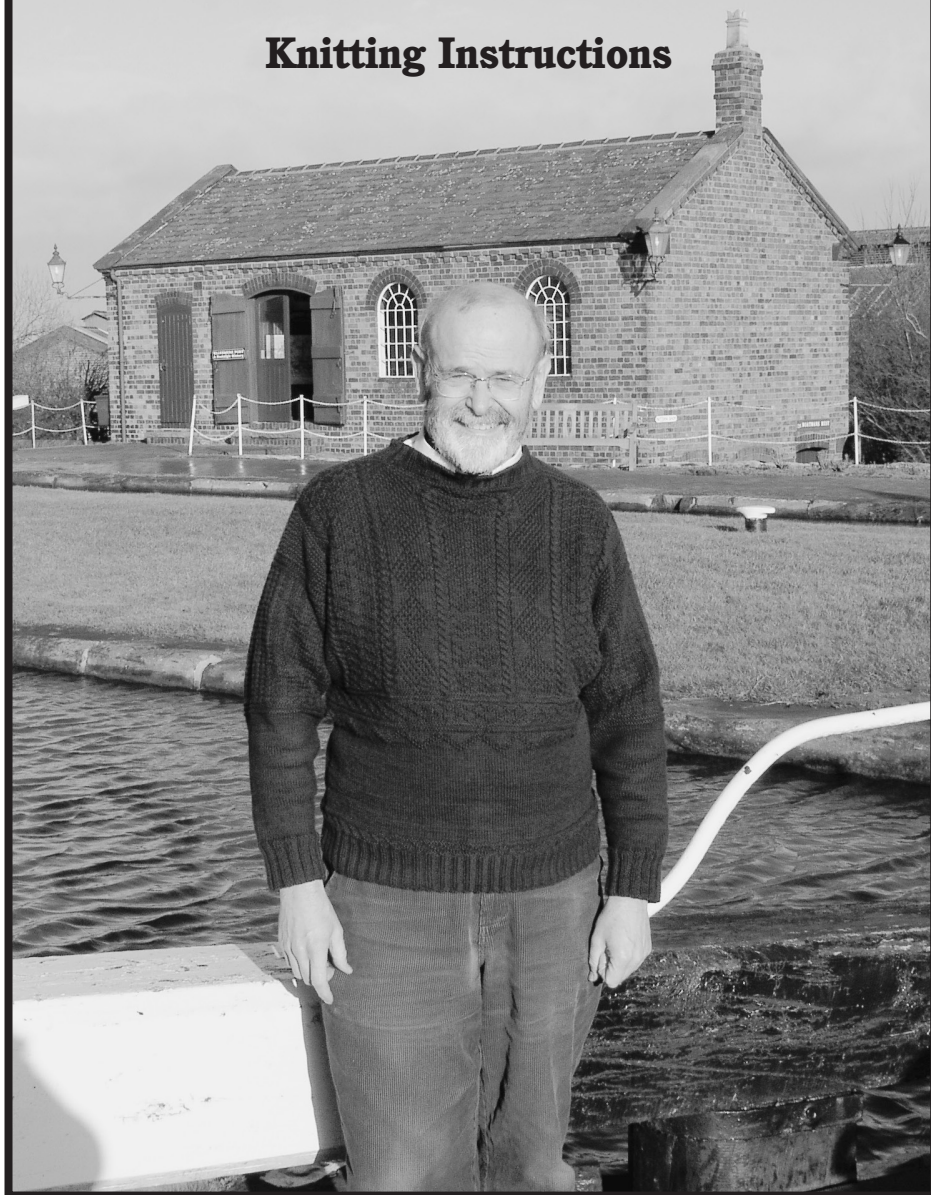


***A Traditional Leeds & Liverpool
Canal Boatman's Gansey***

Knitting Instructions



The traditional clothes worn by boatmen on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal were dark blue courdoroy trousers and a dark blue gansey. The gansey was knitted using oiled wool and was at least shower-proof and extremely warm in winter. The were often knitted by the boatman's wife. On the Leeds & Liverpool Canal, boatmen's families usually lived in a house, the boatmen living on board their boat when away from home. On sunny days in Burscough, where many of the canal's boating families had a house, boatmen's wives could often be seen sitting outside knitting a gansey.

These were guernsey-style garments, which were knitted without a seam on five needles, and were similar to fishermen's or seamen's ganseys. One difference is that on the canal there was no specific family or village design. The under-arm gusset also provides more room for movement than with some fishermen's ganseys.

This pattern is based upon a gansey now held by the National Waterways Museum in Gloucester. It was knitted in the 1930s by a woman in Bootle who was well-known for her work and is an extremely good example of the canal's style of gansey. To make it easier to knit, the pattern has been converted so that it can be knitted in sections and then sewn together as it is extremely heavy when nearing completion.



A boatmen wearing a gansey on an Ainscough's boat, c1920, which carried grain between the docks in Liverpool and Birkenhead and the flour mill at Burscough.

Ganseys were originally knitted using an oiled woollen yarn, but we have replaced this with cotton as this will show up the pattern better. However, the pattern can be used for knitting a woollen gansey.



Boatmen on a Yorkshire coalboat iced up at the top of Bingley five-rise locks in the 1930s.

Materials: 21 (50 gram) balls of Owen dark cotton, pair of no.14 and no.13 needles

Measurements: To fit chest 40-42 in (102-107cm); length from top of shoulders 25 in (64cm); sleeve seam 20 in (51cm).

Tension: Cast on 12 stitches on no.13 needles. Work 18 rows in stocking stitch and cast off. The square should measure 2 ins (5cm) each way.

Front/Back: Follow the same instructions.

(K2, P2), repeat to the end.

(P2, K2), repeat to the end.

Repeat these two rows 11 times.

K row increasing 4 stitches evenly across the row (136 stitches).

K1, P2, (K4, P1) repeat until last 3 stitches, P2, K1.

P1, P2, (P4, K1) repeat until last 3 stitches, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K1, P1, (K4, P1) 25 times, K3, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P2, (K1, P4) 25 times, K1, P2, K2, P1.

K1, P2, K3, P1, (K4, P1) 25 times, K1, P2, K1

P1, P2, K to last 3 stitches, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K to last 3 stitches, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P to last 3 stitches, K2, P1.

K1, P2, K to last 3 stitches, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P to last 3 stitches, P2, P1.

Repeat last 4 rows until work is 9 inches from cast on edge.

K1, K2, K6, (P1, K12) 9 times, P1, K6, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P5 (K1, P1, K1, P10) 9 times K1, P1, K1, P5, K2, P1.

K1, P2, K4 (P1, K1, P1, K1, P1, K8) 9 times P1, K1, P1, K1, P1, K4, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P3 (K1, P1, K1, P1, K1, P1, K1, P6) 9 times K1, P1, K1, P1, K1, P1, K1, P3, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K2 (P1, K1, P1, K3, P1, K1, P1, K4) 9 times P1, K1, P1, K3, P1, K1, P1, K2, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P1, (K1, P1, K1, P5, K1, P1, K1, P2) 9 times K1, P1, K1, P5, K1, P1, K1, P1, K2, P1.

K1, P2 (P1, K1, P1, K7, P1, K1, P1) 10 times P2, K1.

P1, P2 (P1, K1, P9, K1, P1) 10 times P2, P1.

K1, K2 (P1, K11, P1) 10 times K2, K1.

P1, K1, P130, K2, P1.

K1, P2, P130, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P130, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K130, K2, K1.

P1, K2, K130, K2, P1.

K1, P2, K130, P2, K1.

P1, P2 (P5, K2) repeat to last 7 stitches P4, P2, P1.

K1, K2 (K3, P1, K2, P1) repeat to last 7 stitches K3, P1, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P1, (K1, P1, K1, P4) repeat to last 6 stitches K1, P1, K1, K2, P1.

K1, P2, K1, (P1, K6) repeat to last 6 stitches P1, K2, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P1, (K1, P1, K1, P4) repeat to last 6 stitches K1, P1, K1, P2, P1.

K1, K2, (K3, P1, K2, P1) repeat to last 7 stitches K3, P1, K2, K1.

P1, K2, (P5, K2) repeat to last 7 stitches P4, K2, P1.

K1, P2, (K3, P1, K2, P1) repeat to last 7 stitches K3, P1, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P1, (K1, P1, K1, P4) repeat to last 6 stitches K1, P1, K1, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K1, (P1, K6) repeat to last 6
stitches P1, K2, K2, K1.

P1, K2, P130, K2, P1.

K1, P2, P130, P2, K1.

P1, P2, P130, P2, P1.

K1, K2, K130, K2, K1.

P1, K2, K130, K2, P1.

Moss stitch: **12** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Pattern A: **18** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Pattern B: **17** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Pattern C: **18** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Pattern B: **17** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Pattern A: **18** stitches; Cable: **4** stitches;

Moss stitch: stitches.

Total **136** stitches

Moss stitch (12 stitches)

K1, P1, repeat to end.

K1, P1, repeat to end

Continue this pattern for 120 rows.

Cable (4 stitches)

K4.

P4.

C4. (ie slip next 2 stitches on cable needle
and leave at front of work, K2, then K2
from cable needle)

P4.

Repeat four rows 29 times.

Pattern A (18 stitches)

K2, P1, K5, P2, K5, P1, K2.

P2, P1, K1, P3, K1, P2, K1, P3, K1, P1, P2.

P2, K2, P1, K1, P1, K4, P1, K1, P1, K2, P2.

K2, P3, K1, P6, K1, P3, K2.

K2, K2, P1, K1, P1, K4, P1, K1, P1, K2, K2.

P2, P1, K1, P3, K1, P2, K1, P3, K1, P1, P2.

P2, P1, K5, P2, K5, P1, P2.

K2, P1, K1, P3, K1, P2, K1, P3, K1, P1, K2.

K2, K2, P1, K1, P1, K4, P1, K1, P1, K2, K2.

P2, P3, K1, P6, K1, P3, P2,

P2, K2, P1, K1, P1, K4, P1, K1, P1, K2, P2.

K2, P1, K1, P3, K1, P2, K1, P3, K1, P1, K2.

Repeat the twelve rows nine times.

Pattern B (17 stitches)

K2, K6, P1, K6, K2.

P2, P6, K1, P6, P2.

P2, K5, P1, K1, P1, K5, P2.

K2, P5, K1, P1, K1, P5, K2.

K2, K4, (P1, K1) twice P1, K4, K2.

P2, P4, (K1, P1) twice K1, P4, P2.

P2, K3, (P1, K1) 3 times, P1, K3, P2.

K2, P3, (K1, P1) 3 times, K1, P3, K2.

K2, K2, (P1, K1) 4 times, P1, K2, K2.

P2, P2, (K1, P1) 4 times, K1, P2, P2.

P2, K1, (P1, K1) 5 times, P1, K1, P2.

K2, P1, (K1, P1) 5 times, K1, P1, K2.

K2, (P1, K1) 6 times, P1, K2.

P2, (K1, P1) 6 times, K1, P2.

P2, (P1, K1) 5 times, P1, K1, P2.

K2, (K1, P1) 5 times, K1, P1, K2.

K2, K2, (P1, K1) 4 times, P1, K2, K2.

P2, P2, (K1, P1) 4 times, K1, P2, P2.

P2, K3, (P1, K1) 3 times, P1, K3, P2.

K2, P3, (K1, P1) 3 times, K1, P3, K2.

K2, K4, (P1, K1) twice, P1, K4, K2.

P2, P4, (K1, P1) twice, K1, P4, P2.

P2, K5, P1, K1, P1, K5, P2.

K2, P5, K1, P1, K1, P5, K2.

Repeat the 24 rows four times.

Pattern C (18 stitches)

K2, K3, P1, K6, P1, K3, K2.

P2, P2, K1, P1, K1, P4, K1, P1, K1, P2, P2.

P2, K1, P1, K3, P1, K2, P1, K3, P1, K1, P2.

K2, K1, P5, K2, P5, K1, K2.

Repeat four rows twice.

K row.

P row.

P2, K3, P1, K6, P1, K3, P2.
K2, P2, K1, P1, K1, P4, K1, P1, K1, P2, K2.
K2, K1, P1, K3, P1, K2, P1, K3, P1, K1, K2.
P2, K1, P5, K2, P5, K1, P2.
Repeat last four rows twice.
P2, K to last 2 stitches, P2.
K2, P to last two stitches, K2.
Repeat the 28 rows three times plus first
eight rows.

P row.
P row.
K row.
K row.
Cast off all stitches.

Sleeves

With no.14 needles cast on 64 stitches.
[K2, P2] repeat to the end.
(P2, K2) repeat to the end.
Repeat these rows eleven times.
Change to no.13 needles.
P1, K across row, P1.
K1, P across row, K1.
P1, increase in K stitch, K across row,
increase in K stitch, P1.
K1, P across row, K1.
Repeat last four rows until 100 stitches on
increase row.
K1, K across row, K1.
P1, K across row, P1.
K1, P across row, K1.
P1, P across row, P1.
K1, P across row, K1.
P1, K across row, P1.
K1, K across row, K1.
P1, K across row, P1.
K1, (P2, K2) repeat until 3 stitches remain,
P2, K1.
P1, K across row, P1.

K1, P across row, K1.
P1, (K2, P2) repeat until 3 stitches remain,
K2, P1.
K1, P across row, K1.
P1, K across row, P1.
Repeat last six rows until sleeve measures
20m inches.
K row.
Cast off.

Neck

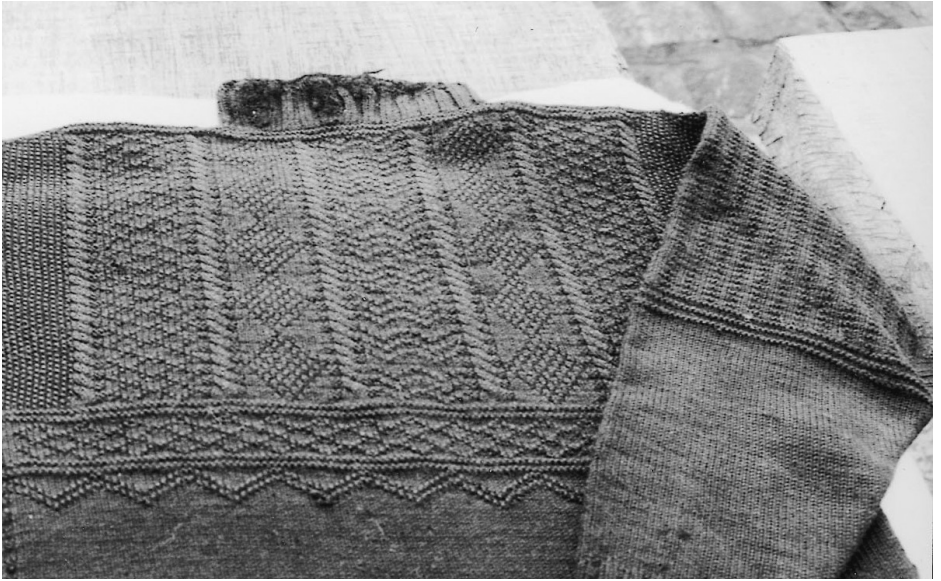
Pick up and knit 56 stitches from front
and 56 stitches from back.
(K2, P2) repeat across the 112 stitches.
(P2, K2) repeat across the 112 stitches.
Repeat last two rows 12 times.
Cast off.

Gussets

Cast on two stitches.
K2.
Increase in both stitches.
P1, K2, P1.
Increase, P2, increase.
P2, K2, P2.
Increase, K1, P2, K1, increase.
P3, K2, P3.
Increase, K2, P2, K2, increase.
P4, K2, P4.
Increase, K3, P2, K3, increase.
Continue to increase until 32 stitches
reached.
Reverse instructions, decreasing until two
stitches reached.
Cast off.



Boatmen on board the boat Don at Crabtree Bridge, Burscough, in the 1930s. A gansey was often too hot in the summer, but was ideal for the open-air life in the winter.



Left and above: Two views of the original gansey in the museum at Gloucester from which this pattern was made.