

Egyptian Socks at The Textile Museum
A Study of Extant Knitted Items

By Susanna Lockheart

In the study of historical knitting, published information is unfortunately somewhat limited in scope. Knitting is mentioned infrequently in historical documents, and such mention is generally a passing reference that gives little clue to the techniques or items actually made. Previous generations of researchers often placed little value on textile finds, particularly those unlikely to gain much attention in a public display. Knitted textiles were commonly mislabeled or disregarded entirely. In the published information, it is uncommon to find any technical details of construction. Fortunately, a number of extant knitted pieces survive from the medieval period, and among the oldest of these remaining items are patterned Egyptian socks.

A number of pieces from Egypt comprise the earliest known knitted artifacts, some dated as early as 1000 AD. The majority of these items are fragmentary blue and cream cotton; most are now unidentifiable, but several were elaborately patterned socks. Some of these fragments were pictured and described in a catalogue of the Bouvier textile collection, which was published in French. Each photo is accompanied by a brief summary which includes an approximate date, the size of the piece, and a description of the pattern and colors.¹ In his comprehensive book on historical knitting, Richard Rutt devoted several pages to the Egyptian socks, mentioning that a number are extant and housed in various museums. He pictured one complete sock and graphs illustrating patterns from several others. Of greater significance, he revealed that a number of these socks are housed in The Textile Museum in Washington, DC.

The Textile Museum has an extensive collection of textiles from the Eastern Hemisphere. However, due to the fragile nature of the collection, the museum does not have any long-term exhibits; temporary exhibitions are organized with specific themes. Like many museums, they have a public access policy, which makes their holdings available for private research by appointment. For this study, four blue and white knitted socks typical of the Egyptian pieces were chosen and retrieved from storage for the appointment. Some of the pieces selected were displayed once, in a 1997 exhibit, "Looping and Knitting, A History".² During the appointment, the researchers were permitted to take photographs and examine the socks by their own methods. The details of the study are attached in Appendix A.

In the construction of handknitted socks, there are specific details which are critical: the gauge of the stitches, the direction of work, and the method used for shaping the toe and heel sections. Most modern knitted socks, and all known European stockings from the medieval period, are constructed from the top down, beginning at the top edge and ending at the toe. In the published material about the Egyptian socks, there was no description of the gauge of the stitches or the construction of the toe and heel; they are described as being knitted in the round, from the toe up, with the pattern jog running up the side of the leg.³ Knitting in the round is a method which creates a tubular fabric. Because the fabric is constructed in a spiral fashion, each row building on the one previous, any pattern

¹ P. Andre, *Tissues D'Egypte: Temoins du Monde Arabe VIIIe – XVe Siecles* (Musee d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneve, Institute du Monde Arabe, Paris, 1993), 268.

² Appendix A: Study Data, 3, 5, 7.

³ R. Rutt, *A History of Handknitting* (BT Batsford, London, 1987), 33-35.

reveals a steplike “jog” where the rows begin and end. Because the toe and heel are shaped as a part of this process, a sock constructed in the opposite direction must use entirely different techniques for shaping the toe and heel. This matter of working direction places the Egyptian socks in a different tradition from European stockings. At some point, Lilinah biti-Anat also viewed at least some of the socks at The Textile Museum; she has constructed similar socks based on her analysis, but she has not publicized the toe or heel construction in detail.⁴ Nancy Bush also had sufficient interest to include a pattern for a similar-looking sock in her book, but her sock is knitted from the top down.⁵ In the patterns they have published, both ladies use modern sock shaping techniques for their toe and heel shaping.

Approaching the museum socks, the goal was to fill in some of the gaps in the available information about medieval knitting techniques. This study sought to document not only the toe and heel construction, but also the techniques used to begin and end the work (the cast-on and bind-off), and the types of increases and decreases used to shape the fabric during knitting. This information was unavailable in any of the published resources.

Sock Type I.

Of the four knitted socks examined at the Textile Museum, three were very similar.⁶ All were knitted from plied cotton yarn, with elaborate all-over patterns in blue and cream. The cream areas appeared to be simply undyed natural cotton; it was similar in color to modern unbleached “natural” cottons. The blue areas showed a great deal of variation in color. In some places, the yarn had a lighter color in the creases between plies, as if the yarn were not left in the dyebath long enough to completely absorb the color. In other places, the blue appeared faded from wear, much like modern denim. This tendency for the color to wear off is characteristic of indigo dye, and is called “crocking”.⁷ One of the socks used a second, lighter shade of blue as contrast, which was probably produced via a reduced exposure to the same dye. This could be done either by soaking it for a shorter time or by using a dyebath which was weaker or partially exhausted (the chemical components of the dye were absorbed by a previous use). Both the dark and light blue colors are similar to shades produced by either indigo or woad.⁸ Based on the color and the crocked appearance, I believe the yarn was probably dyed with indigo. By the period 1200 – 1500 in Egypt, the Middle East had been importing indigo from India for centuries.⁹

⁴ L. biti-Anat, “My Recreation of A Medieval Egyptian Sock in The Textile Museum, Washington, DC” (<http://home.earthlink.net/~lilinah/Knitting/EgyptKnit2.html>, as of 2/12/2007).

⁵ N. Bush, Folk Socks: The History & Techniques of Handknitted Footwear (Interweave Press, Loveland, Colorado, 1994), 76-78.

⁶ Appendix B: Study Photos, A, B, C.

⁷ J. N. Liles, The Art and Craft of Natural Dyeing: Traditional Recipes for Modern Use (University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1990), 67.

⁸ R. Buchanan, A Dyer’s Garden: From Plant to Pot Growing Dyes for Natural Fibers (Interweave Press, Loveland, CO, 1995), 104-109.

⁹ M. Pastoureau, Blue: The History of a Color (Princeton University Press, Princeton and Oxford, 2001), 17.

The socks of this group were knitted at gauges ranging from 9 – 10 stitches and 10 – 13 rows per inch. All three were begun with 4 loops pulled up in a distinctive overlapping pattern,¹⁰ which I was able to duplicate experimentally using a technique called a cable cast-on. From there, the toes were shaped by adding stitches (increasing) along lines in an X shape, centered on the initial 4 loops. This would tend to produce a pyramid shape. Because knitting is inherently stretchy, the result is a rounded toe that tends to crease along the lines of increase. Once the toe cap was formed, the foot was knitted without shaping out to the heel.

The heel itself was shaped by working back-and-forth on only the stitches under the heel, decreasing the number of stitches in each row until the heel section was the desired length. This is significant, because in order to create a smooth-faced fabric while working back and forth, the knitter had to have a method for creating a stitch which faced the back side of the fabric, a purl stitch. The purl stitch had not previously been established prior to the 1500s. On one sock, the purl stitches in the heel were performed in a way that caused the stitches to twist. Some modern knitters do this deliberately, to make a stronger heel, but it also may represent an error. One of the socks revealed a distinct pattern of decreased or bound-off stitches on one side of the heel, where one stitch was pulled over an adjacent stitch at the end of each row.¹¹ All of the socks also showed a tendency to come apart along the back of the heel section. Finally, the pattern jog continued in all cases up the side of the leg, lining up with one side of the heel section.

Using modern knitting methods, this type of heel shaping would be performed by leaving the last stitch of each row un-knitted, putting the unnecessary stitches aside. After the heel section was finished, work in the round would be resumed from the center of the heel, simply knitting each stitch around. This tends to leave small gaps in the finished sock between the put-aside stitches. The Egyptian socks do not have these gaps. Because working in the round is resumed from the center of the heel stitches, it is then natural to place the pattern jogs along the center back. Based on the decrease stitches, the lack of gaps, and the placement of the pattern jog, I believe that the heels were shaped by either decreasing or binding off one stitch at the beginning of each row until the desired length was reached. Because of the tendency of the heels to come apart along the last row of the heel section, I believe the remaining stitches were bound off at that point. Work would have resumed with the stitches put aside at the instep. Additional stitches would then have been added by pulling up loops through the side edges and last row of the heel section, completing the round. By resuming work in the round at the instep, it is natural to place the pattern jogs along a line running vertically up the side of the sock. Because the yarn would be cut after binding off the heel stitches, that would become a point which could easily begin to ravel with use.

In addition to the construction, the Type I socks also shared similarities in the patterning. All had the same, distinctive color pattern on the toe and heel. The toes were constructed with a design of concentric blue and cream diamonds, coming to a point at the tip of the

¹⁰ Appendix B: Study Photos, D.

¹¹ Appendix B: Study Photos, E.

toe. The increases made to shape the toe area were placed along the outward-expanding lines of the diamonds, so that the color pattern followed the pyramid-like construction. Where the toe section reached its full circumference, the diamond shapes reached their widest points and began to narrow from there. In the heel, all three of these socks were patterned with alternating horizontal stripes of cream and blue, each stripe two rows deep.

The foot and leg portions of the socks are divided into patterned bands. Most of the pattern elements are geometric, bordered by stripes. Also present on two of the three socks are bands featuring a stylized Arabic script. Such bands of script are frequently found on Islamic artifacts.¹² The particular inscription on the socks is nearly identical to several illustrated in Richard Rutt's A History of Hand Knitting, where it was translated as "Allah".¹³ Several of the geometric motifs are seen in other textiles of the Mamluk period in Egypt, from 1250 – 1517. A simple overall diamond pattern is also seen on an embroidered sampler scarf,¹⁴ and a zigzag design is identical to one found on a 14th century embroidered sampler.¹⁵ An eight-pointed star with a rotated square is repeated on a linen band fragment.¹⁶ In addition to specific motifs, the overall style of the socks is similar to that of a number of Mamluk embroideries from the Newberry collection. All feature a single color design against an undyed background, with strongly geometric elements and an extensive use of borders.¹⁷

One of the socks of this group featured a design of two deerlike animals surrounding a palm tree, placed so that the grouping repeated on the front and back of the leg. This engaging pattern is on a very small sock, with the foot measuring only 5 inches long and a leg length of 7 inches. The other two Type I socks could have belonged to either an older child or a small adult. The feet measured 7 and 8 inches, with legs measuring 12 and 14 ½ inches tall. Based on a comparison to my own measurements (foot length: 9 inches, leg length to knee: 16 inches), I believe the Egyptian socks were probably calf-height, possibly reaching as high as the knee.

The small "deer" sock was widened slightly in the leg by increasing the number of stitches. The increases were hidden in the background areas around the deer scene, and appeared to be performed by working an extra stitch between the stitches of the previous row. All of the socks end with a pattern border and an ordinary bind-off edge. The bind-off appears to be identical to that used today, and the edges do show a tendency to curl. This curling is typical of plain-faced (untextured) knitting. A modern sock would normally end with a ribbed edge that would not curl. Ribbing also creates a more elastic edge that helps to hold the sock in place on the leg. The untextured knit of the Egyptian socks would have no elasticity, particularly utilizing color patterns, because the floats on the back side of a patterned knit prevent the fabric from stretching. The colorwork does

¹² T. Stanley, "The Art of the Qur'an", Palace and Mosque: Islamic Art from the Middle East (V&A Publications, London, 2004), 27.

¹³ R. Rutt, 36.

¹⁴ M. Ellis, Embroideries and Samplers from Islamic Egypt (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 2001), 36-37.

¹⁵ Ellis, 44-45.

¹⁶ Ibid, 50.

¹⁷ Ibid, 26-53.

make the fabric much thicker and stiffer. The extra substance of the fabric may have been sufficient to keep the socks from falling during wear, or they may have been gartered or tucked into snug-fitting trousers in some way.

There is no doubt that all of the socks examined were worn. All of the soles showed the unmistakable flattening and discoloration that is characteristic of use. Interestingly, aside from the tendency of the sole to detach from the heel of the sock, there was no discernible wear on the back of the heels. Likewise, no wear was noted on the top of the toe area. Both of those areas tend to show wear in modern socks, where the foot rubs against the shoe. Although variation between modern and medieval shoes might result in different wear patterns, I do not believe that the difference would be this dramatic. I suspect that these Egyptian socks may have been worn indoors, without shoes, much like modern slipper socks.

Sock Type II.

Among the knitted socks examined during my appointment at The Textile Museum, one was distinctly different than the others. It is not unique, however. In Richard Rutt's A History of Hand Knitting, a well-preserved sock is pictured which has many of the same characteristics. The photo caption reads "Sock knitted in blue and white cotton, with Kufesque inscription 'Allah'. Of unknown origin, possibly thirteenth century. Length 50 cm (20 in.), width 15.5 cm (6 1/5 in.)."¹⁸ The accompanying text does not provide any more detail, and the photo is black and white. It would not be possible to reconstruct any specific construction details based on this photo, but based on the similarities to the sock examined during this study, it is reasonable to categorize the two together. A black and white photograph of the sock studied in The Textile Museum was published in Nancy Bush's book, although she did not provide any information about it, other than the caption "Arab Stocking".¹⁹

The sock from my study was knitted in dark blue, light blue and cream colored cotton, with construction beginning at the toe.²⁰ As in the Type I socks, the cream areas appear to be undyed cotton. The dark blue areas show some fading, particularly on the foot, with darker color remaining in the creases between the plies of the yarn. The lighter blue sections are much more variable in color; this may have been caused by soaking the yarn in the dye bath for a shorter period of time, which would allow the dye to saturate the yarn unevenly. As in the Type I socks, I believe the yarn was dyed with indigo.

Compared to the socks of Type I, however, the working gauge of the stitches was much finer, at 14 stitches and 17 rows per inch. While the work appears to have begun with 4 overlapping stitches, the toe area was worked entirely in cream.²¹ In the first few rows, the shaping was accomplished by increasing in every stitch, using what appeared to me to be a lifted increase. In a lifted increase, a stitch is added by knitting into the stitch below

¹⁸ Rutt, 35.

¹⁹ Bush, 13.

²⁰ Appendix B: Study Photos, F.

²¹ Appendix B: Study Photos, G.

the next working stitch. After several rows, the increases were gradually spread out to larger intervals, but not lined up in any particular way. This produced a gently rounded shape to the toe. The foot was knitted in the round, without shaping, to the heel area.

The heel section of this sock has several significant characteristics. It is surrounded by a patterned border, which reveals that the heel section was worked down from the ankle. Shaping was accomplished by decreasing two stitches in each row, along a diagonal line which runs toward the point of the heel.²² All of the decreases were accomplished by working two stitches together. This is interesting to note, because working a decrease leaves the stitch leaning to one side or the other, depending on the method used. By using the same decrease method for all of these stitches, the result is very neat on one side of the decrease line, but not so on the other side. A modern knitter would most likely choose two decrease methods which leave mirror images in the resulting line, creating a neater-looking heel. When only a few heel stitches remained on the needles, they were probably joined and bound off from the inside. No obvious bind-off was evident from the outside.

The foot measures 9 inches long, with the leg rising to 13 inches. Again, using my own measurements as a guide, I believe this sock would have belonged to an adult, and that the sock would probably reach to the calf. The sock ends with an ordinary bind-off of the type most commonly still in use. There is no ribbing or other clear means of holding the sock in place. There was some rust-colored discoloration on the leg of the sock, but without any information about the origin of the piece, it is impossible to say what caused this. It is certainly possible that the discoloration was caused by metal buckles on garters or boots, but it is equally possible that the stain was left by contact with some object during the centuries since the sock was worn. Unfortunately, the entire sole of this sock is missing, so it was impossible to determine any wear pattern.

The color patterns on the Type II sock are limited to five bands on a solid cream background. The bands themselves are very elaborately patterned with large diamond shapes filled with geometric motifs. Some of the designs are virtually identical to motifs found on an embroidered sampler of the Ayyubid period in Egypt, from 1172 – 1249.²³ The heel section is bordered with a scroll-like design.

Conclusions.

Prior to this study, the published information available provided very limited specific details. The Egyptian socks were lumped into a broad group and collectively dated at 1000 – 1500 AD. The specific techniques used by medieval knitters were not addressed. Through the examination of the extant pieces, several of the technical skills employed by medieval Egyptian knitters were determined.

To cast-on the initial working stitches, the Egyptian knitters used a method similar to what is now called a cable cast-on, beginning with only 4 stitches. They widened their

²² Appendix B: Study Photos, H.

²³ Ellis, 24–25.

knitting using a lifted increase, adding a stitch by working into the previous row. On some occasions, they knitted into the space between stitches in the previous row. To narrow their work, they performed a simple decrease by knitting two stitches together. They ended their projects by binding off their stitches in the same way most commonly used today.

Because medieval knitting was generally done in the round, the front side of the stitches was always facing the outside of the work, which was tubular. This automatically creates a smooth-faced fabric by working only knit stitches. In a flat piece, the work progresses from right to left on a row, then the piece is turned and worked back across, with the front side facing away from the knitter. To create a smooth-faced fabric while working a flat piece, it is necessary to work every other row in purl stitches, which are formed with the right side of the stitches facing away from the knitter. The heels of the Type I socks were constructed by working back and forth, and the smooth face of the fabric proves that the Egyptian knitters were able to work a purl stitch.

The Type I and II socks appear to represent two separate traditions of sock knitting in Egypt. While both traditions used a plied cotton yarn, combining the unaltered cream color with blue shades most likely dyed with indigo, the selection of patterns and the construction techniques were very different. Based on similarities to embroidered textiles, it is most likely that the Type II socks were made during the Ayyubid period of 1172 – 1249. The Type I socks probably date to the Mamluk period of 1250 – 1517.

Undoubtedly, there is more information to be gained from study of the Egyptian socks. The data presented here was collected from only four of the socks in The Textile Museum's collection; they have at least fifteen pieces of this type. Similar items are housed in a number of other museums, and European knitted items exist as well. Hopefully, further examination of extant knitted items will shed further light into the technical skills of medieval knitters.

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APPENDIX A: Study Data

Study Conducted:

The Textile Museum
Washington, DC
6/9/2006

Methods of Study and Documentation:

Researchers: Jackie Oppelt and Sheree Krasley

Museum Information: The assistant curator provided printouts from the museum database for several of the pieces examined. The database listed a general description, as well as an exhibition history and a bibliography of publications which had included the item.

Equipment: Magnifiers of various types and powers, rulers & tape measure, hand-knitted samplers showing various techniques for comparison, DMC thread color chart, digital camera. Small light sources were available but were not used, as the study area was adequately lighted. The camera's flash function was disabled for all photos, to avoid potential for light damage to the items studied.

Study Method:

Despite arriving without a particular plan, we quickly settled into a standard approach for each piece. The plastic rulers were laid out as near as possible to the sock, attempting to show the approximate length of leg and foot sections. In some cases, this was impossible, as the piece was larger than the rulers, and the tape measure was too small to photograph clearly. In these cases, we made our best effort to place them so as to give a reasonable demonstration of size. An overview photo was taken, showing the piece in entirety with rulers. Close views were then taken to show the details of toe, heel and upper edge. Additional photos were taken as warranted to detail patterning or other details.

Sheree made comparisons between the museum items and the DMC color chart, documenting the nearest approximation of the current colors with DMC numbers. (Note: In every case, the object was to document the color at present, without attempting to estimate the color when new.) She then made an effort to determine the direction of spin and/or plying by examination of a damaged section, where individual threads could be seen. In some cases, it was impossible to be certain, but our best effort was made to document at least the plying twist.

Jackie concentrated on making technical observations about the knitting, paying particular attention to the shaping of toe and heel, the cast-on area, and increases and decreases. A gauge sample was quickly counted for each piece. Particular note was taken of signs of discoloration and wear on the sole, which was present in all cases.

Sheree then carefully held the upper area of each sock open to allow for a photo of the inside, showing the floats on the back side of the piece. Museum staff were requested to turn the piece, and the process was repeated on the other side.

To ensure that we collected as complete information as possible, we used a simple form listing the various pieces of information desired for all of the pieces. As we studied each item, we completed the form with brief notes on as many issues as we could.

Limitations:

It should be noted that this work was undertaken with certain limitations. Our equipment was limited to that listed above – we had no ability to test chemically or to view the fibers microscopically. In recording the fiber of which each item was made, we relied on our own observations of sight and touch.

Time was limited as well. The Textile Museum was kind enough to grant a two-hour appointment, but divided to cover 6 pieces, this was not much time. All our observations had to be made quickly and with an eye on the clock. An effort was made to photographically document each item as thoroughly as possible, to the best of Jackie's (limited) ability as a photographer.

Textile Museum Item # 73.696

Information Provided by the Museum:

Sock – Islamic – Light, dark blue and off-white in geometric designs – Eastern Hemisphere

Length: 19.70 inches 50.00 cm

Width: 6.30 inches 16.00 cm

Bibliography:

Stevens, Rebecca A. T. Old Traditions/New Directions. The Textile Museum, Washington, DC. 1981. Reference Page 7

Bush, Nancy. Folk Socks: The History & Techniques of Handknitted Footwear. Interweave Press, Loveland. 1994. Reference Page 78 (left sock)

Exhibition History:

EX1997.1 “Looping and Knitting, A History” 2/7/1997 – 7/27/1997

Information from our Study:

Foot Length:	7 in
Leg Length:	12 in
Width at Foot:	4 in
Width at Top:	
Material:	Cotton, throughout
Spin/Ply direction:	Z
Number of Plies:	At least 2
Gauge:	13 r / 10 st / in
Colors (DMC Reference #s):	Dark Blue: #311 – at deepest tones fades to #3842 Light Blue: #518 Cream: #3033
Cast-on	Overlapping cross shape – not clear
Bind-off	Unremarkable, curls
Toe	Increases along lines of X from center point
Heel	Incomplete, short-row style with little shaping
Floats	Stranded
Increase types	Inc in St Below
Decrease types	

This sock was knitted from the toe up. The sole showed wear and staining from use. Based on the size, this could have been worn by an older child or a small adult.

The blue shades are not consistent on the yarn, showing a variegated appearance. It is not certain whether this is the result of a poor dye batch or whether it was deliberate. In the case of the dark blue, wear and age may also be a factor. This is unlikely in the lighter shade, since it ranges to a shade dark enough to leave little contrast with the dark blue, and the two shades were used side-by-side to form a pattern. Lighter areas were visible between the plies of the yarn, suggesting that the plied yarn was placed in the dye bath for a short time.

The design is very geometric in nature. The foot is covered by a repeated triangular pattern in alternating rows of cream and light blue on a dark blue ground.

Textile Museum Item # 73.700

Information Provided by the Museum:

Sock – Islamic – Blue and white animal designs and geometric pattern – Eastern Hemisphere

Length: 11.82 in 30.00 cm

Width: 5.12 in 13.00 cm

Bibliography:

Falick, Melanie. “A Place to Come to”. January/February. Piecework. 1997: pp. 66-68. Reference Page 68.

“History Through the Loop”. Issue 94, September. Exhibitions, Hali, London. 1997: p. 99. Reference Page 99.

Exhibition History:

EX1997.1 “Looping and Knitting, A History” 2/7/1997 – 7/27/1997

Information from our Study:

Foot Length:	5 in
Leg Length:	7 in
Width at Foot:	3 ½ in
Width at Top:	6 in
Material:	Cotton throughout
Spin/Ply direction:	Zss – loosely twisted
Number of Plies:	2
Gauge:	9 r / 10 st / in
Colors (DMC Reference #s):	Dark Blue: #3842 fading to #517 Cream: #739 to #3033
Cast-on	Overlapping X shape
Bind-off	Unremarkable
Toe	Increases along lines of X
Heel	Short rows with little shaping
Floats	Stranded
Increase types	Inc in the bar between stitches
Decrease types	S, K, PSSO

This is another very appealing little sock. Again, the size of the foot section suggests that it belonged to a child, and the pattern also has a certain childlike appeal. While the other similar socks had very geometric patterns in the leg and foot, this sock has very simple but flowing designs. The foot is decorated with a barbed stripe pattern that resembles vines, and the leg shows two deer-like animals on either side of a palm-like tree. The design was clearly very carefully planned, with increases hidden in the cream sections in the leg design.

The blue dyes were again variegated on the yarn. Above the ankle, it showed dirt and staining; the truest colors were on the top of the foot.

Textile Museum Item # 73.697

Information Provided by the Museum:

Sock – Islamic – Blue and white – Eastern Hemisphere

Length: 18.52 in / 47.00 cm

Width: 5.71 in / 14.50 cm

Bibliography:

Stevens, Rebecca A. T. Old Traditions/ New Directions. The Textile Museum, Washington, DC. 1981. Reference P. 7.

Bush, Nancy. Folk Socks: The History & Techniques of Handknitted Footwear. Interweave Press, Loveland. 1994. Reference P. 78 (right sock).

Exhibition History:

EX1997.1 “Looping and Knitting, A History”, 2/7/1997 – 7/27/1997.

Information from our Study:

Foot Length:	8 in
Leg Length:	14 ½ in
Width at Foot:	4 in
Width at Top:	6 in
Material:	Cotton
Spin/Ply direction:	Szz
Number of Plies:	2
Gauge:	10 rows/in
Colors (DMC Reference #s):	Blue: 3842 faded to 3760 Cream: 3033
Cast-on	Overlap
Bind-off	Unremarkable
Toe	X-type
Heel	Short row
Floats	Stranded floats
Increase types	
Decrease types	

The blue shows some variegation in the dye on the yarn. The cream-colored areas appear to be the natural cotton color. The upper leg is stained, and there is dirt on the toe.

Textile Museum Item # 73.698

Information Provided by the Museum:

Information from our Study:

Foot Length:	9 in
Leg Length:	13 in
Width at Foot:	
Width at Top:	
Material:	Cotton
Spin/Ply direction:	S ply
Number of Plies:	
Gauge:	14 stitches/ 17 rows/ in
Colors (DMC Reference #s):	Dark Blue: 336 Lt. Blue: 3760 Cream: 3033
Cast-on	
Bind-off	Unremarkable
Toe	Round, increases staggered around
Heel	Add-on, decreasing to a point
Floats	Stranded floats
Increase types	Lifted – increases within stitch
Decrease types	

There is noticeable variation in the light blue yarn. There is some variation in the dark blue, but mostly appears to be due to wear; the original dark blue was probably even in color.