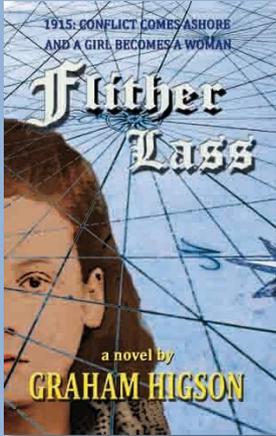


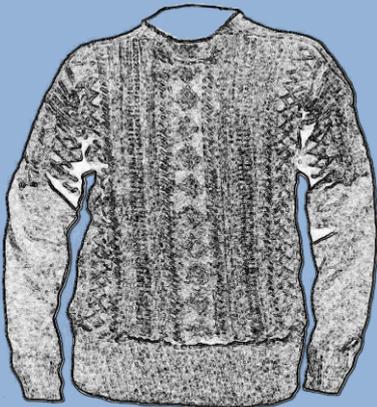
## Fishermen's Ganseys



In *Flither Lass*, Amy's father wore a fisherman's gansey. In one scene, Larry explains to Dan why this was a common practice at that time.

A gansey is a hardwearing, distinctive woollen sweater, designed not only to provide protection for fishermen from wind and the elements, but also – due to each area's individual style of pattern – to aid identification of bodies washed up; coastal fishing has never been a safe occupation. They were often knitted by mothers, wives, girlfriends, who sometimes included intentional mistakes in order to further personalise them.

Whilst they look chunky and made of thick wool, they are in fact knitted out of pure wool, but using 5-ply that is thinner than the more normal double knitting, so is fairly fine and close-knitted and provides better water and weather protection. Also, if the wearer were to fall in to the sea, he wouldn't be as likely to get weighted down as with chunky wool.



The other point that makes ganseys so very different from other jumpers is that there are no seams down the body nor the sleeves as they are knitted "in the round", using four

needles for the sleeves and, traditionally, four or five needles for the body. The modern method is to use a circular needle for the body.



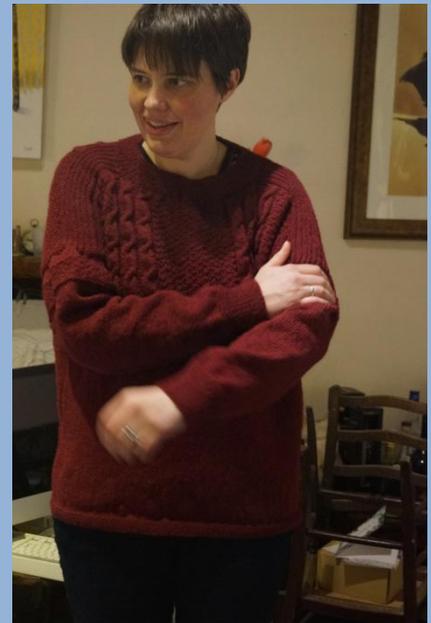
The Lunn brothers of Robin Hood's Bay, as immortalised in the Leo Walmsley books, wearing ganseys. [Source unknown]



So warm were they, that being worn next to the skin was all the protection that was needed. The neck and sleeves were so tight that it wasn't unknown for the wearer's ears to bleed when putting it on.



Close-up of the Caister pattern

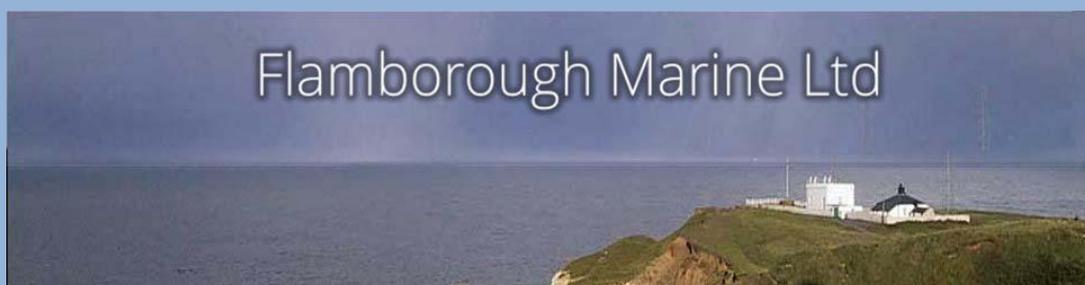


Here's one knitted by my wife, with the Caister pattern (Norfolk).



This one, also by my wife, shows the Flamborough pattern.

The home of the gansey is [Flamborough Marine](http://flamboroughmarine.co.uk), who sell proper ganseys in various sizes and colours, as well as gansey kits for you to knit your own. There's also more information on their site.



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