



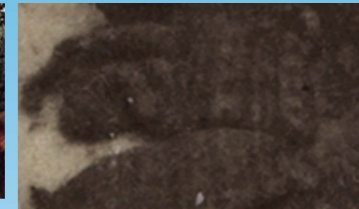
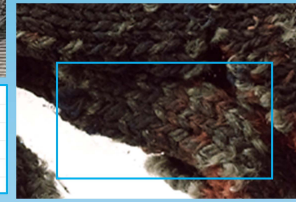
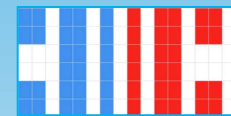
Technical Aspects: three visual sources for the gloves exist, 1) the physical fragment held by the National Maritime Museum (NMM) which is very degraded, 2) the contemporary engraving done for the Illustrated London News (ILN), and a partially obscured image in Cheyne's stereoscopic slide photography. Starting from the very beginning I knew the detail in the color work would require very thin yarn and very small needles but beyond that there were two factors to consider in recreating these gloves; 1) gauge, which in knitting refers to fabric density and is a measurement of the number of stitches and rows in one square inch of completed knitting, and 2) pattern repeats, both factors combine to make a glove that matches the available images and is correctly sized.

Gauge: as no measurements were taken when the glove was intact, gauge had to be calculated in a roundabout way. Cheyne's photograph includes other artifacts some of which are existent and have been measured. Using several of these artifacts and the peerie patterns as landmarks I measured a rough gauge of 13-14 stitches and 13.5-15.5 rows per inch. Using 000 needles and lace weight yarn (2/13.5nm) the example show measures 14 stitches and 16 rows per inch.

Repeats: the peeries can fit into almost any number of stitches but the stars and Xs are larger and require a specific number of stitches to fit correctly. All the images show a star centered with two full Xs and two half stars or four of each around the whole glove. Using the NMM photograph for exact stitch counts, one full repeat of this pattern from the middle of one star to the middle of the next is 30 stitches, with four repeats worked for a total of 120 stitches per round.



The Fingers: no available source gives a clear image of the pattern of the fingers. The NMM fragment shows a portion that likely is part of a finger and the Cheyne photograph shows them in a degraded state already. From these two partial images we can extrapolate a few potential similar possibilities, neither more or less potentially accurate. The ILN engraving suggests an afterthought thumb, color work that does not extend the entire length of the finger and slightly pointed fingertips.



Concluding Thoughts: While the NMM suggests that these gloves were likely purchased from Danish settlements in Greenland I do not believe the patterning is indicative of that. The stars are unique and I have been unable to find other examples like them in collections of historical knits. The pattern is also not indicative of traditional Shetland colorwork in terms of color balance or stitch counts. When I started this project almost two years ago I would have said we would likely never know anything more about these gloves but as the recent identification of Fitzjames goes to show, the past is often closer than we think.

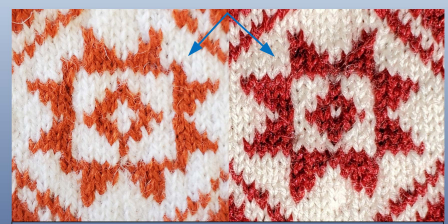
Stars and Xs: this is a common motif in colorwork both historical and modern, however the stars in these gloves are notably different than typically seen 8-pointed stars in British or Scandinavian knitting. In the ILN engraving (circled right) the stars have more than 8 points, there are two on each side and an additional point at the corners.



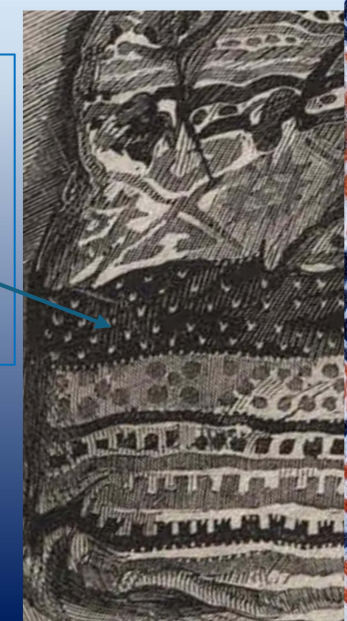
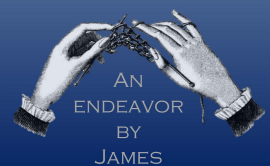
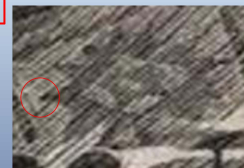
RECREATING THE FRANKLIN RELIC GLOVES

This star can further be seen in the fragment held by the NMM. The red yarn has almost entirely degraded leaving only the outline of the star visible (illustrated below left with transparent red). The white center square is 9x9 but there are only 7 rows making up the two points per side whereas in traditional stars these numbers would match thus proving the accuracy of the ILN engraving. This fragment also provides specific stitch counts for the Xs. There are 9 stitches at the bottom of the X 'legs' and one white stitch between them (below, right).

Peeries: the bottom half of the glove consists of small repeated patterns (known as peeries in Shetland colorwork) in two colors. The colors can be determined by the two shades in the ILN engraving (immediately right). However, the engraving shows only 5 rows of white stitches in the blue section when the Cheyne photograph almost certainly shows 6.



Relic glove star vs traditional 8-pointed star



Sources
<https://www.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/rmgc-object-2125>
<https://archive.org/details/dli.venugopal.525/page/n359/mode/1up>
<https://www.illuminator.blog/p/cheynes-relics.html>
https://libraries.tas.gov.au/Digital/NS1155-1-20/NS1155-1-20_08
 Get the pattern: <https://www.ravelry.com/patterns/library/franklin-relic-gloves>