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DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN ART

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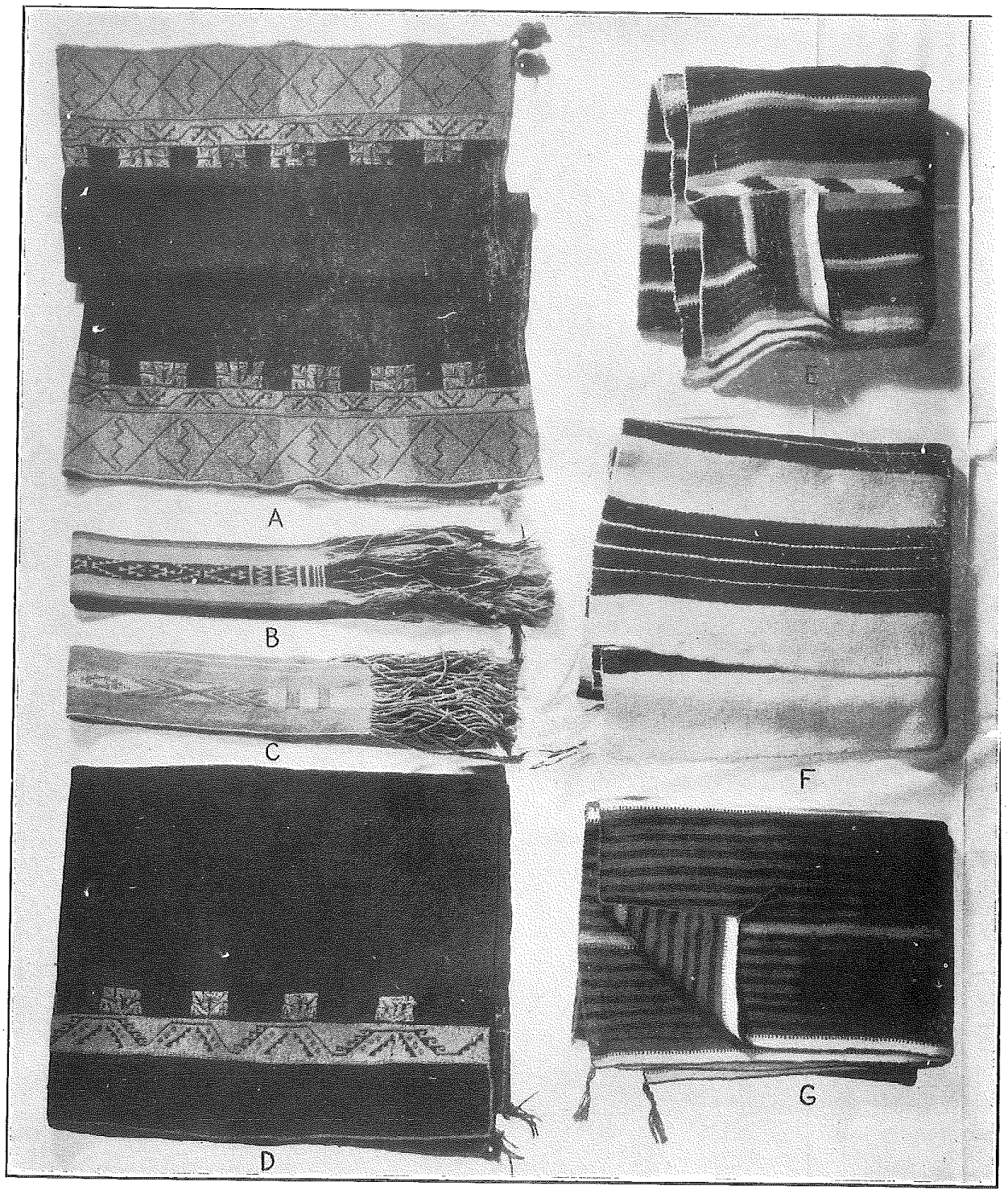
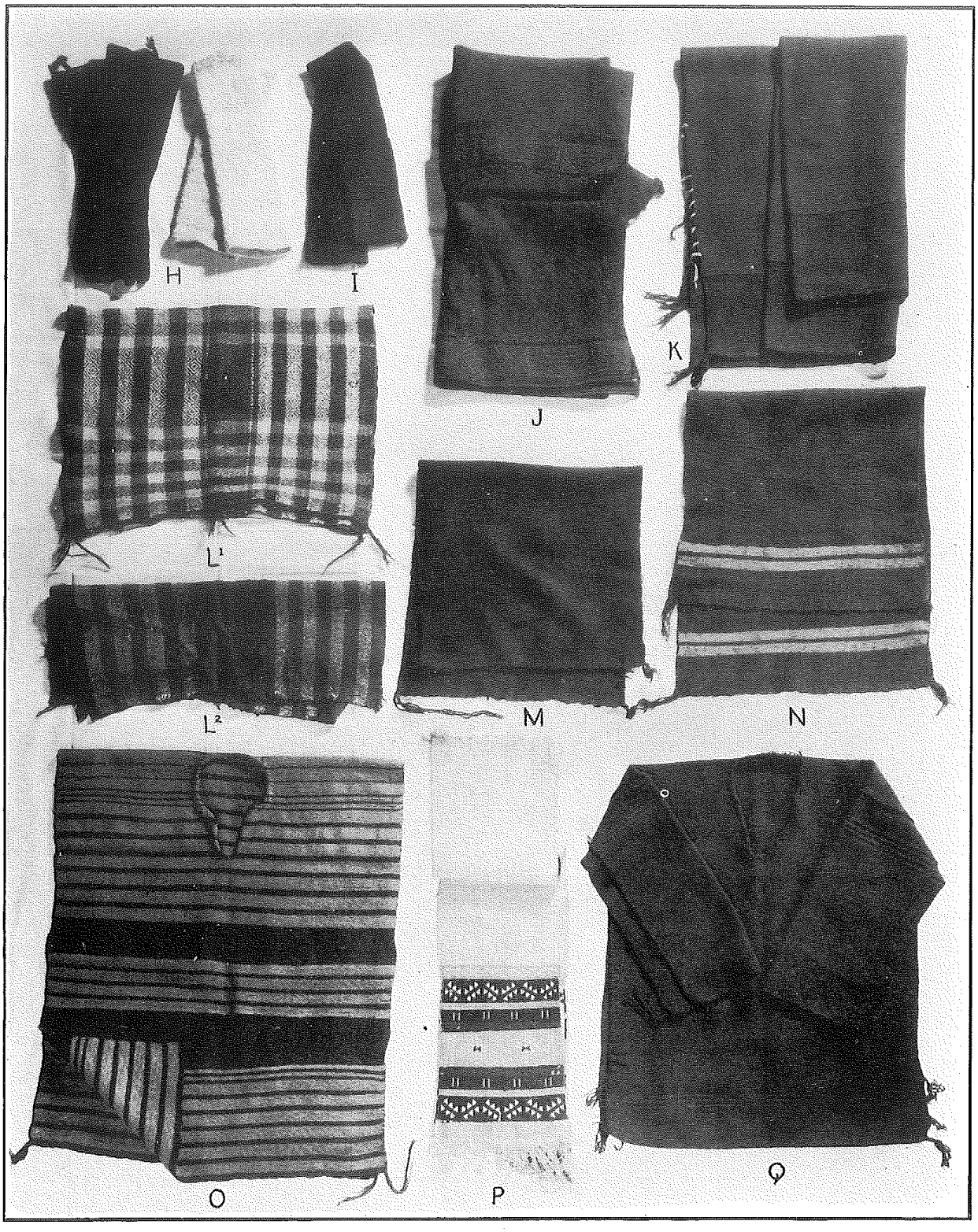


MAIN TYPES OF PUEBLO WOOLEN TEXTILES

LEAFLETS 94-95

JANUARY, 1940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1. **INTRODUCTORY.** The purpose of this leaflet is to describe the main types of articles made from wool by the Pueblo Indians of Arizona and New Mexico. For the names, locations and other facts about these people and their villages see Leaflets 45-46. The distribution of the manufacture of these different articles in the last century is described in the following leaflets in this series: Hopi, Leaflet 18; Tewa, Leaflet 90; Keres, Tiwa and Jemez, Leaflet 91; Acoma, Leaflet 89; Zuni, Leaflets 96-97. In these leaflets references are made to various articles without giving much detail about them. These details are given in this leaflet and in Leaflets 92-93 which deal with cotton articles. References in the text of this type "(90; F)" are to illustrations in other leaflets of this series.

2. **THE HISTORY OF WOOL WEAVING** has received little attention from students so that information about it is scant. Its beginning was due to the introduction of sheep into the Southwest by the Spanish. Sheep were brought in by the first parties of explorers in 1540. But these animals were eaten, not used to produce wool. It appears that sheep as a source of wool did not become available in quantity until sometime soon after 1600 when permanent settlements by the Spanish were established. How soon after 1600 the Pueblos began wool weaving and whether the Spanish taught them to use wool are not at present known. By the 18th century wool weaving was well established for there are references to it in Spanish documents. There are American references to it in the early and middle 19th century. But no actual dated specimens go back farther than 1879 when James Stevenson began to make scientific collections in the region for the Smithsonian Institution. Investigations conducted in recent years indicate that by the 1880's Pueblo weaving had begun to decline in general because of the coming of the Rio Grande and Santa Fe railroads and the introduction of commercial cloth by them to the Indians. Being the farthest of all Pueblo tribes from the railroad the Hopi felt this influence much less than the others, with the result that today Hopi weaving is still an active craft with many followers. For many years the Hopi have supplied the other Pueblos with woven articles in wool and cotton. Weaving is also fairly active at Zuni. But elsewhere among the Pueblos it has disappeared with a few sporadic exceptions. There has been some revival of cotton weaving among school girls through the efforts of the United States Indian Service schools. Belt making is the only type of wool weaving which is done among the Pueblos except, as noted above, in the Hopi and Zuni villages.

It must have been relatively easy for the Pueblos to learn the use of wool in weaving. For its preparation for use is just like that of the cotton they had used so long—except for the removal of seeds—and therefore could be learned without trouble. Furthermore exactly the same loom is suitable for both; and the technics used in cotton weaving could be done equally well in wool.

3. **THE HISTORY OF PUEBLO WEAVING** is discussed at some length in Leaflets 92-93 and therefore needs only to be summarized here. It began in the 8th century A. D., advanced to a climax of complex weaves and designs in and around the 15th century and apparently thereafter began a very slow decline which is still going on, with the end apparently not very far away if present conditions continue.

4. **PREPARATION OF WOOL.** Wool is clipped from the sheep with commercial steel clipping shears obtained from the traders. The wool is washed and when dry is combed out, or carded, with pairs of commercial wool cards. These are small oblong boards with a short handle on one long side, and set

on one face with wire teeth. A small bunch of tangled wool is laid on one card. The other card is then drawn across the first a number of times. The combed bunch of wool is removed from the card in a soft fluffy roll. A number of these rolls are spun together into yarn with the aid of the same simple spindle used for cotton by the Pueblos for centuries; and for wool by the Navaho. It is a slender rod 1 to 2 feet long with a small flywheel. The roll of wool is caught on the point, the rod is spun with one hand, and the other draws the thread away from the point. The first spinning of the Navaho is coarse and must be repeated several times to produce fine yarn. But the Hopi produce fine yarn with one spinning. For extra fine thread the Hopi spin twice and rub the spun yarn with a corn cob to remove rough spots. Pueblo yarn is likely to be smoother and more even than that of the Navaho.

5. **THE LOOM** is the same as that used by the Pueblos for cotton weaving and by the Navaho. It is a simple frame stretched upright between the ceiling beams and the floor of the house, or of a kiva or ceremonial chamber. The Hopi and Zuni use one accessory which is certainly not common, if used at all, on the Navaho loom. It is a slender stick fastened across the back of the warp and moved upward as the finished edge of the fabric rises. Its purpose is to keep the fabric at an even width. The details of this loom and the process of weaving are described in Leaflet 3. Smaller looms based on the same general plan are used for weaving brocaded sashes, and belts, garters and hair ties.

6. **SEX OF WORKERS.** Both weaving and embroidery are the work of men among the Pueblos with one main exception and several minor ones. At Zuni today—and apparently for some time—women do most of the weaving. Zuni men seem to know how to weave and a few do. But women weavers are the rule there. The minor exceptions are found in a number of villages where an occasional woman learned to weave, or, more commonly, to embroider. This was especially true of Acoma where women embroiderers were common. Another minor exception is that today wool belt weaving is generally done by women in the numerous Pueblo villages in which this craft still exists as the only form of wool weaving.

BLANKETS

7. **INTRODUCTORY.** Blankets are the largest articles made of wool and must have been the most common product of the loom until the introduction of commercial blankets. For not only did both men and women wear them but also quantities were made for sale or trade to neighboring tribes. The lower Colorado River tribes are mentioned as wearing Pueblo blankets in the 1770's, for example. Today the woman's black dress is probably the most common product, still being used in many Pueblos for every day use and in many others for ceremonial dress.

8. **STRIPED TYPE** (E, F, G: 89; D: 90; I: 96-97; L). Since such blankets were worn by people of all ages there is considerable variation in size, though the general proportions remain about the same. A typical large blanket is 4 x 6 feet in size. Some are proportionately somewhat narrower, others somewhat more square. The latter are discussed in the following paragraph.

There are two points in connection with tribal identification of striped wool blankets on which some light can be thrown. One deals with the question of Pueblo versus Navaho origin, for both groups made blankets of identical appearance. Though there may be exceptions, Navaho blankets of this type may be identified by the presence of irregularly placed diagonal lines in the

weaving; and Pueblo pieces by the absence of such lines. The technical reason for these lines is explained in Leaflet 86. The catch is that we do not know whether Navaho women always weave so as to produce these lines, usually called "lazy lines." If a Navaho woman does not wish to put them in she does not need to do so, thus producing a blanket indistinguishable from that of a Pueblo weaver, as far as our present knowledge goes. We feel much safer about Pueblo weavers for they do not weave so as to produce "lazy lines". But it should be noted that there is nothing to prevent their so doing and it may happen occasionally. The second point about tribal identification deals with discovering from which Pueblo any given blanket came. In this case we can only differentiate the blankets of Zuni, and that not with entire surety. Existing blankets known to be from Zuni are obviously more square than those known to be non-Zuni; and aged weavers at Zuni and elsewhere back this up, saying, however, that it was not an absolute rule. So we can only say that square blankets are likely to be from Zuni. As far as the blankets of other towns are concerned nothing can be said. All Pueblo blankets are usually called Hopi. But any blanket known to be 50 years or more old might be from any one of a number of towns. So it seems best to call any blankets not positively identified by the general term "Pueblo".

Striped blankets fall into two classes on the basis of design. One group is white or cream with dark striped designs (F: 90; I: 96-97; L). The other (E, G: 89; D) is entirely covered with blue and black stripes with some decorative stripes in other colors, most commonly white, with red in second place. Those with the blue and black stripes are often called "Moki pattern" blankets, though it is certain that not all were made by the Hopi (Moki). The white pieces appear invariably to be rather coarse and loosely woven, while the other type is usually fine and tight, though it may be loose. In all striped blankets the stripes run across the piece, never lengthways. Besides simple stripes there may be bands with little simple geometric figures (E); or those with edges trimmed with beading. (Beading in textiles is not decoration with glass beads, but the production of narrow decorative rows made up of small blocks in alternating colors.) Pueblo blankets are not fringed, only having scant corner tassels.

9. ZUNI BLACK BLANKETS (96-97; K). The Zuni man wore coarse striped blankets for everyday use. But on ceremonial occasions he wore—and still wears—a type of blanket found only in this Pueblo. It is solid black, with no design whatsoever. They are full-size blankets and rather coarse in weave. They are sometimes called Shalako blankets, though their use is not restricted to that ceremony. Because of the introduction of commercial blankets by the railroad in the 1880's; and because old people have been buried in their black blankets, hand-woven examples of this type are today excessively rare. None has been produced—as far as we know—for at least 50 years, though there are weavers alive who formerly made them. All black blankets worn today are factory-made.

10. HOPI CHECKERBOARD BLANKETS (L). These are made in black and white—with an occasional one in brown and white; or brown, black and white—in complex diagonal and diamond weaves. They have groups of light and dark stripes crossing each other at right angles in the general manner of a Scotch plaid. In addition the surface is covered with sections of diamond and chevron weaves. They are made only by the Hopi in sizes varying to fit persons of different ages; and are worn by men and boys. The specimen shown is a very small one for a little boy.

For little boys, brown blankets with groups of white stripes running along the long sides, are made (L 2).

Formerly only naturally colored black wool was used in these blankets because black dye had to be boiled and articles with boiled dyes could not be taken by the dead into the next world. Only textiles made of naturally colored materials, or those dyed with unboiled dyes such as indigo could be used in the next world. These ideas about dyeing apply to other types of clothing.

11. NAVAHO STYLE BLANKETS. The modern Hopi make a certain number of blankets with designs adapted from the Navaho. Some imitate the Navaho man's blanket—commonly called the "chief blanket"— with its broad light and dark stripes running the length of the piece. Sometimes simple large diagonal patterns in another color are made to cut across the striped background. An occasional piece is made which is a rug for floor use rather than a blanket. One made 25 years ago by a blind Hopi weaver has a border, and designs made up of triangles which could not be distinguished from a Navaho piece. Another I have seen has a design representing the mask of a kachina or minor god woven into it. But these last two are decidedly freakish and do not represent a common type. Today a number of small floor rugs, based on the Navaho saddle blanket, are made by the Hopi. Though made as blankets many of these Navaho style pieces are so heavy as to be better suited for use as rugs.

11. WOMEN'S DRESSES AND SHAWLS. The standard woman's dress in the Pueblo area is a piece of wool cloth (K) with a black or dark brown diagonal weave center and wide bands of blue figured weaving—usually diamonds—on the long edges. Many examples of this type have red and green cords outlining the top and ends of the diamond weave side bands. These are not put in by the weaver but by the owner when she begins to wear the dress. At Acoma she removes these cords when she discards the dress. The Hopi do not use the cords if the garment is to be worn as a shawl (see end of paragraph). I have no data as to whether these two customs were general among the Pueblos; but it seems likely. When worn the dress is folded once across the width and placed on the body so that the fold comes under the left arm and the edges on the right side. The upper corners are caught over the right shoulder and the edges held together with a belt. The size depends on the size of the wearer, for these dresses are made for everyone from tiny girls to stout old ladies. In any case the dress reaches from the neck to somewhat below the knees. Until fairly recent times these articles were also worn as shawls draped over the head and shoulders.

Though the blue edges are usually in a diamond weave they may be plain or zigzag. At Zuni the dresses are frequently dyed solid black; and at Acoma, Laguna and a few other places the dresses were redyed from time to time to freshen up the black, thus almost obscuring the bright blue of the edges.

The dress-shawls at Zuni, Acoma, Laguna and several Tewa towns north of Santa Fe were trimmed with embroidery on the long edges instead of having the woven blue edge. The Zuni pieces (J: 96-97; M) have only dark blue embroidery—there are a few odd pieces with red—in rather narrow bands. The other type (A: 89; A) has much wider bands of embroidery in several colors. Red and blue are the most common, with green much less so and yellow very rare. Ordinarily shawls to be embroidered were woven with a

plain instead of a diamond edge. But some diamond edge dresses are embroidered, the decoration being placed above the upper edges of the diamond sections (D).

A few plain medium brown examples exist, apparently made by the Hopi and Zuni. Those I have seen have no decoration. They are said to be used for burial, but this is not certainly known.

At Laguna a special type was made (91; A). It had a white center in diagonal weave, rather narrow side bands in blue diamond weave, and on the latter three blocks of parallel red stripes. One example at least is known, the appearance of which checks exactly with that given independently by several aged Laguna people.

Women dancers in the Hopi Marau ceremony wear a poncho-like shirt made of two shawls with solid blue centers and red side bands.

12. MEN'S SHIRTS. These are of two types. One is solid black or blue (Q: 90; G: 96-97; I) while the other has horizontal red stripes in various combinations (O). Both are woven in three pieces which are later sewn together. The large piece is a long oblong with a neck hole. This covers the back and chest. The sleeves are oblongs (91; D) or truncated triangles (92-93; I) which are sewn to the large piece at the shoulders. The edges are not sewn, tie strings being used. Some of the striped examples have no sleeves.

13. BREECH CLOUTS (N: 96-97; H). These are about 40 x 16 inches in size, with smaller dimensions for boys. They are all dark blue or black but show several types of decoration. I have seen one with blue diamond ends and pairs of red stripes near the ends (N); another with blue center, black diamond ends and widely spaced black stripes; and a third with very dark blue center and wide ends in black diamond weave. (96-97; H). The Hopi sometimes sew on parallel strands of red and green yarn. Solid color is also used. The Hopi breech clouts only in ceremonies. The Hopi make breech clouts to be used as burial garments at Isleta Pueblo.

At Zuni some of the clouts were embroidered on the ends with the same dark blue as is used on the dresses.

14. MEN'S KILTS (M) are long oblongs of black or dark blue cloth 16 to 18 inches wide and of varying lengths to fit different sized people. A 40 inch length is about average. I have only seen examples in solid color, but know that at Zuni some were embroidered on the short ends with the dark blue designs peculiar to that Pueblo.

15. BROCADED SASHES (P) are 5 to 6 feet long, exclusive of the long end fringes, and 6 to 8 inches wide. They are white with 6 to 10 inches of brocading in several colors at each end. The design is highly standardized, being always the same as that shown in the cut, with a few very minor internal variations. The design is a conventionalization of the mask of the Broad-faced kachina. The technic of making these sashes is fully described in reference 2. They are worn around the hips of men dancers in the ceremonies of many Pueblos.

16. WOMEN'S BELTS (B, C) are 5 to 7 feet long and 3 to 5 inches wide. They are almost invariably red with side stripes in other colors and a band of raised designs, usually groups of small triangles, down the center. Red, black

and green, red, black and white, red and black, white or green alone are the common combinations. They are made today by the women of many Pueblos. Related in technic and design are hair binders about 1 x 18 inches (91; G); and garters, made in pairs, about 3 x 15 to 18 inches (91; F).

Reference 5 describes Hopi belt weaving in great detail. It shows that there are two distinct types from the technical point of view. One, usually red, black and green, has a band of floated warps down the center bearing a continuous row of black designs. The other, usually red, white and green, has a series of separate designs in white, also made by warp floating. In the first type both background and designs are floated; while in the second only the background is floated. Each type has its own heddle rig, the second type having two supplementary heddles to control the warp floating.

17. KNITTING (H, I: 96-97; C) was widespread among the Pueblos and Navaho and still is done to a considerable extent. It appears to have been introduced by the Spanish, though this is by no means certain. Four needles are used and rather complex close and openwork technics (H) have been developed. The most common product of the knitter is the tight fitting legging covering the calf only (I). Black or dark blue are the common colors, with some work in white.

At Zuni ankle height socks (96-97; F) were knit in complicated checkerboard patterns.

Compiled by F. H. Douglas from his field notes, study of the great collections and the following references:

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1. The arts and crafts of the Hopi Indians—M.-R. F. Colton. Museum Notes, Vol. 11, no. 1. 1938.
2. Notes on Hopi brocading—F. H. Douglas. Museum Notes, Vol. 11, no. 4. 1938.

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3. The Hopi Indian collection in the U. S. National Museum—Walter Hough. Proceedings, Vol. 54. 1919. Diagrammatic drawings of many types of specimens.

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4. Zuni weaving technique—Leslie Spier. Vol. 26, no. 1. 1925
5. Notes on Hopi belt weaving of Moenkopi—Kenneth MacLeish. Vol. 42, no. 2. 1940.

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6. Manuscript on Pueblo Clothing—Matilda Stevenson. 1910.

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7. Hopi Journal of A. M. Stephen—E. C. Parsons, ed. Contributions to Anthropology, No. 23, 2 vols. 1936.

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