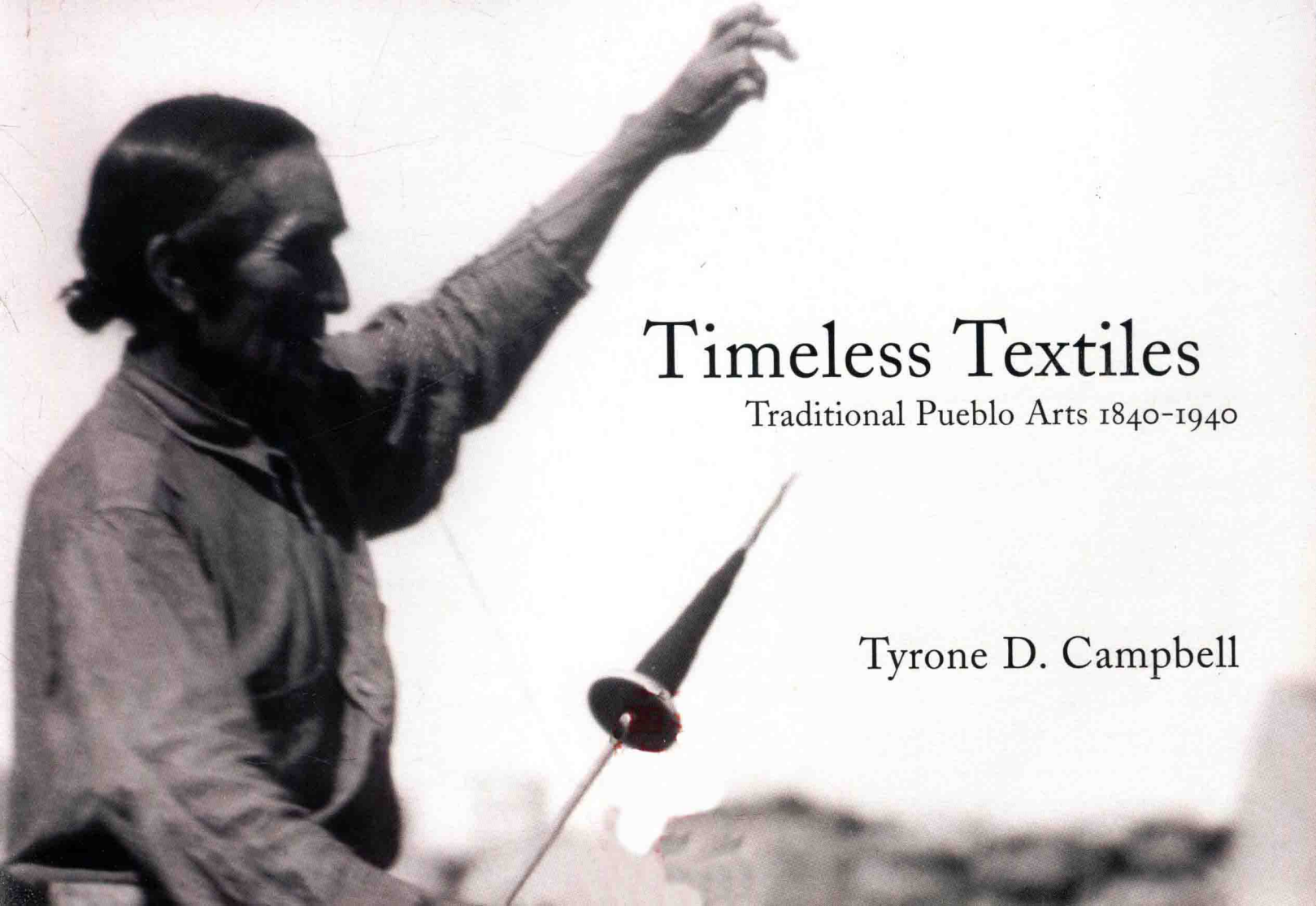


Timeless Textiles

Traditional Pueblo Arts 1840-1940

Tyrone D. Campbell



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Museum of Indian Arts & Culture

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1	Detail elements comprising the cover design from exhibition
2 3	textiles respectively pictured on (1) page 17 (2) page 16, bottom
4 5 6	(3) page 16, top (4) page 35, right (5) page 10, right (6) page 18, right.

Title page photograph: Hopi Spinner at Hopi, Arizona ca. 1920. Museum of New Mexico #21540

Contents page design detail from exhibition textile pictured on page 10, right.



Foreword

Over the past few years, growing numbers of woven rain sashes and belts have been appearing at Santa Fe's famed Indian Market, along with crocheted leggings and some very impressive embroidered kilts and mantas—all examples of Pueblo woven textiles. More and more Pueblo women (and a few men) are taking their art to outside markets and, in the process, broadening public awareness of and appreciation for the textile arts that have been produced for over two millennia.

One might think that the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture would have vast collections of historic-period Pueblo textiles. While there are some outstanding examples, the Museum has a total of only 375 items from the 18 pueblos, compared to 900 Navajo weavings of virtually all periods and all types. The reason for this imbalance is simple: Most Pueblo textiles were made not for the tourist trade but for internal use, within the family or the community.

We are fortunate that Charles Brunacini had the foresight to begin collecting Pueblo weavings some thirty years ago, and even more fortunate that he agreed to lend a significant number of them for this exhibition and catalog. Unlike numerous items displayed in museums, these pieces have not been restored, and a great many show evidence of use and wear. In that sense, it is an “honest” exhibit, reflecting the importance of these textiles in the daily lives of their Pueblo owners.

It is my hope that this exhibition and catalog will do much to educate the public about the importance of the textile arts to pre-World War II Pueblo Indians and will provide encouragement to potential buyers of some of the truly outstanding pieces that are being produced today.

Duane Anderson

Director, Museum of Indian Arts & Culture/Laboratory of Anthropology
Santa Fe, New Mexico

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Introduction

Pueblo Indian weaving has long been overshadowed by the more glamorous Navajo blanket and rug traditions. The public perception is that Navajos weave and Pueblos make pots. Few are aware that the Pueblos have a very ancient weaving tradition, including spectacular woven sandals and baskets that date back two thousand years to Basketmaker times. The Navajos were comparative late-comers who adopted the Pueblo loom and its technique around AD 1500 and soon developed their own distinctive tradition. Navajos wove for trade to outsiders--at first, blankets for Utes and Plains tribes, and later, rugs for Anglo-American and Hispanic homes.

The Pueblos, in contrast, wove items for their own use, although the early Spanish settlers collected mantas and other textiles as a form of taxation. Kilts and mantas were the proper attire for traditional Pueblo ceremonies and, because of this, became frozen in form in the nineteenth century. It is not considered proper to buy dance materials; a gift exchange is preferred. Such items remain valued heirlooms in Pueblo communities and are passed down within families through the generations.

A good example of such preservation is the Zuni black woven manta with indigo blue embroidered borders. When they needed refurbishing, the mantas were dipped in black dye, and this practice eventually led to the total black appearance of the manta (see page

19, left textile). Many Pueblo textiles show signs of body paint from being worn in ceremonies, as well as darns and other repairs. Some pieces were cut down to serve other purposes when they became too worn (see page 16, right image). Unlike ceremonial kilts and mantas, Pueblo woven belts have long been sold and traded to Navajos and Anglo Americans, a practice that continues today.

Pueblo woven textiles are subtle, but the opposite is true of Pueblo embroidery. Large patterns are executed in the unique Pueblo stitch, which relatively quickly can fill large areas of color in red, orange, black, and green. These embroideries draw viewers' attention across the dance plaza.

Embroidery has taken the place of many ancient weaving techniques and now, in turn, is being usurped by less expensive and time-consuming techniques such as appliqué, ribbons, and even commercially printed cotton cloth. Hand-woven wool or cotton cloth is rarely used as a base for embroidery today. It has been replaced by monk's cloth, a commercial material that resembles hand-woven cloth in appearance and texture. Indian schools in the twentieth century taught girls to embroider in techniques other than the Pueblo stitch and encouraged them to create pillows, aprons, and bureau scarves for their own homes and those of Anglos. Aside from anthropologists, few outsiders have collected Pueblo

textiles. Charles Brunacini is one of those rare individuals. Brunacini was born and raised in Albuquerque, where his parents bought a motel called La Hacienda on Route 66 in 1957. Many Pueblo people stayed there, and the Brunacini family bought pottery from them. Later, when his father was a utilities contractor for the Navajo Nation, Charles accompanied him to the reservation and was impressed by the traditional and timeless lifestyle of the people he met there.

Charles Brunacini began collecting textiles when he was a student at the University of New Mexico. One day in 1972 he visited Tobe Turpen's store on the edge of Albuquerque's Old Town and bought several rugs. As his enthusiasm grew, he began buying regularly from Turpen's store. In 1974 Brunacini opened an Indian art store in Paradise Hills, just west of Albuquerque. He sold a variety of Native arts and crafts and specialized in Navajo jewelry and rugs, but he never sold a Pueblo textile. He obtained the Pueblo material one piece at a time from a number of Southwestern dealers who thought he was foolish because there was no market for such items. Of all the dealers, Brunacini most admires Tyrone Campbell for his breadth of knowledge and his helpfulness.

After the death of his father in 1990, Brunacini left the Indian

art business to take over the family real estate interests. It was also a time when prices for Indian arts were becoming astronomical, and dealing was growing more competitive.

Charles Brunacini continues to admire and collect Pueblo textiles. This exhibition, and the accompanying catalog, make a part of his collection available to Pueblos and non-Pueblos alike, and will, it is hoped, stimulate greater interest in and appreciation for the Pueblo textile arts.

Marian Rodee
Curator Emerita, Maxwell Museum of Anthropology
University of New Mexico, and
Research Associate, Museum of Indian Arts & Culture



Tyrone D. Campbell (left) and Charles C. Brunacini examining Pueblo embroidered shirt pictured on page 39.



Composition of textiles pictured on pages 21 and 36. The skunk skin anklets are in the Museum of Indian Arts & Culture collection #56189.

The Pueblos are an ancient people
whose history goes back into
the farthest reaches of time.

Joe S. Sando, Pueblo Nations

Evidence of aboriginal peoples inhabiting the American Southwest dates back at least twelve thousand years. By AD 1000, tribal groups known as the Anasazi, the Mogollon, and the Hohokam appeared at sites such as Chaco Canyon in western New Mexico. These so-called Ancestral Pueblo cultures were advanced in the arts of architecture, agriculture, astronomy, weaving, pottery making, religion, and government. Although they mysteriously disappeared around the thirteenth century, by the fifteenth century many of their descendants were well established in villages throughout what is now New Mexico and northern Arizona.

The Ancestral Pueblo people were excellent weavers; plain cotton cloth appeared in the archaeological record by the first century AD. When the earliest Spanish adventurers arrived in the Southwest in the mid-sixteenth century, they were surprised to find the Pueblo people cultivating cotton and finely clothed in colorful and complex-patterned cotton garments. So great was the production of cotton cloth that the Spaniards initially felt no need to produce textiles for themselves. They introduced the *encomienda* system of taxes and forced labor that kept the Pueblo Indians virtually enslaved until the Pueblo Revolt of 1680. Each Pueblo family was required to furnish great quantities of cotton cloth to the Spanish settlers, a burden that undoubtedly kept the people occupied weaving plain cotton cloth for clothing, to the detriment of the finely designed and colored textiles of the precontact period. The cloth was in the form of *mantas*--a generic term for rectangular, horizontally woven

garments that may be worn as either shoulder blankets or dresses.

Although the colonists eventually acquired and constructed traditional European harness looms, neither the Pueblos nor the Navajos ever adopted them, preferring to go on using their own traditional upright looms. The spinning wheel, similarly, was present during both the Spanish and American periods, but it never replaced the traditional spindle and whorl still used by Native weavers to this day.

Two well-known scholars, Ruth Underhill and Kate Peck Kent, divide the postcontact development of Pueblo textiles into historic periods. Kent defines these as (1) the Spanish period, 1540 to 1848; (2) the Classic period, 1848 to 1880; (3) the Anglo-American period, 1880 to 1920; and (4) the Revival period, 1920 to 1950.¹

The Spanish period (1540 to 1848) changed Pueblo weaving in several essential ways, the most important being the introduction of sheep into the Southwest. By the mid-seventeenth century, textiles woven exclusively with wool had taken their place alongside the traditional cotton repertoire. Most prominent were blankets, *mantas*, and women's dresses. Two other important items were introduced by the Spanish: indigo dye, a permanent, rich blue plant dye, and *bayeta*, a finely worsted woolen cloth manufactured in Manchester, England, and shipped via Spain and Mexico into the Southwest. *Bayeta* came in a variety of shades of red, from rose to scarlet and burgundy, and provided colors unobtainable from local native plants. It was raveled, retwisted, and woven into

garments beginning about 1840. The greatest amounts of bayeta are found in mantas made by Acoma and Laguna weavers, although it was also used at Zuni and by the Hopis, particularly in "maiden" mantas.

Pueblo weaving reached its artistic heights in the classic period (1840–1880), with beautifully embroidered mantas woven primarily at Acoma and Laguna Pueblos of wool with bayeta embroidery. Scholars are divided on whether it was the Spanish who introduced the art of embroidery to the Pueblos; H. P. Mera, for one, believed it was acquired from Indian weavers in northern Mexico.² But there can be no doubt that Pueblo women achieved great skill and beauty in their embroidery during this period.

The Anglo-American period (1880–1920) brought both positive and negative influences. In the early 1880s the railroad arrived in the Southwest, bringing goods that would change Pueblo life forever. Perhaps the foremost of these were synthetic aniline dyes and machine-made Germantown yarns from mills in Pennsylvania. Machine-made clothing and trade blankets woven of both cotton and wool were shipped in large quantities, and an inexpensive version of bayeta called American flannel was also introduced.

So great was the influx and influence of American goods that by the late 1880s weaving had declined markedly at the Pueblo villages closest to the large population centers. By 1900 virtually all the Indian peoples of the Southwest had adopted American-style clothing and replaced hand-

woven blankets with commercial trade blankets, such as those woven by the Pendleton Woolen Mills. (The Hopi pueblos of northern Arizona weavers were a notable exception; thanks to their remote location, they were less subjected to external pressure and continued to weave traditional garments.) Germantown yarns, raveled American flannel, and synthetic dyes replaced bayeta and indigo in the years between 1870 and 1900. The Pueblo weaving tradition simply could not compete with these new, much less expensive goods.

The last period considered in the exhibition is that of the Revival, 1920 to 1950. Beginning in the early 1920s American Indian arts and crafts became increasingly popular with collectors, spurred on by heavy promotions by the Fred Harvey Company's Indian Rooms and shops along the Santa Fe Railroad lines. Headquartered in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the Harvey shops specialized in both ancient and contemporary Indian arts and crafts. The Harvey Company's "Indian Detours" took growing numbers of tourists to archaeological sites and Indian pueblos. Major shops selling Native goods opened in New York and Los Angeles, and archaeological and anthropological studies, which had been in full swing since the late 1880s, gained increased publicity in the media.

The Gallup Ceremonial, an important juried event of Indian arts launched in 1921, added to the growing interest in arts and crafts, and the New Mexico Association of Indian Affairs, founded in 1922, encouraged Indian artists through exhibitions. By the early 1930s, the Santa Fe Indian

School was encouraging students in the revival of traditional arts for sale to tourists. But World War II and a continued reliance on commercial fabrics brought the Revival to an end.

Pueblo textiles have never received the historical, financial, or aesthetic attention devoted to Navajo weavings. Although dozens of books have been written on the history and development of Navajo weaving, the bibliography for Pueblo weavings contains only a handful of texts.

Various theories have been proposed to explain this neglect. Pueblo textiles were woven for personal and ceremonial use and therefore were not particularly useful or appealing to the Anglo-American public. While Navajo weavings had been a commercial enterprise since the early eighteenth century and found favor with the early Anglo traders, few traders tried to create a market for Pueblo weavings because so few were available.

Attempts to create a lucrative market for Pueblo weavers during the Revival phase of 1920 to 1950 were never really successful. A Navajo rug or saddle blanket had a functional and commercial use, but what was one to do with a Pueblo dance kilt? Moreover, Navajo designs are bold, daring, and colorful and can be seen across a room, whereas a Pueblo manta must be viewed close up to appreciate its great technical achievement and subtle beauty.

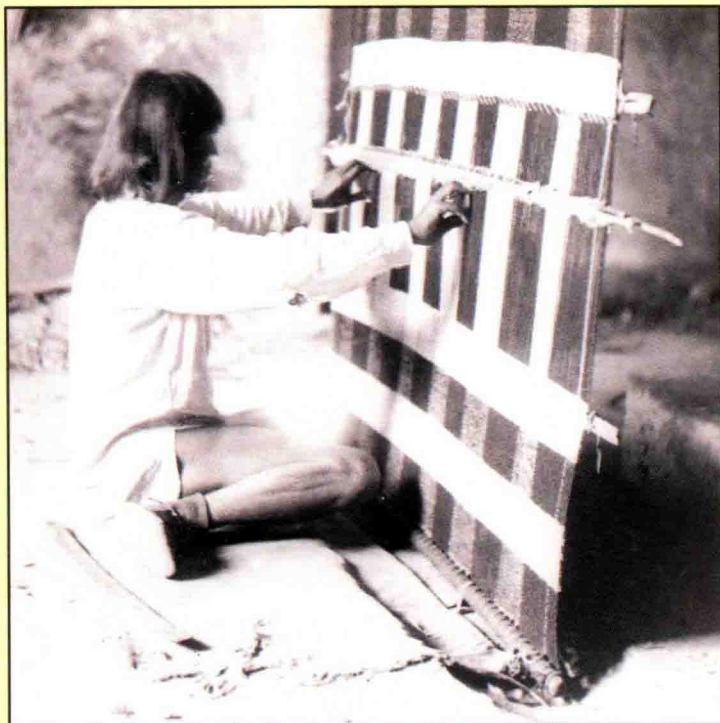
Another possible reason why Pueblo textiles have not received the critical acceptance they deserve is the conservative nature of the Pueblo people themselves and the primarily abstract designs, which essentially have

not changed for the last two thousand years. Navajo designs are powerful, never-ending variations of geometric and pictorial elements, whereas Pueblo designs are quiet and subdued and don't provoke a readily understandable emotional response. The difference between Pueblo and Navajo textiles may be compared to hanging a Rothko painting next to a van Gogh. Both are beautiful, but each requires a very different mind-set to understand and appreciate.

With the exception of a few early anthropologists and collectors in the late 1800s, Pueblo textile arts would have to wait until the mid-twentieth century to find their audience and their rightful place as rare and beautiful art. Despite the valiant efforts of individual artists at various pueblos, the future of Pueblo textile arts remains highly uncertain.

TYPES OF PUEBLO WEAVINGS

During the historic period, blankets, mantas, kilts, sashes, women's dresses, belts, garters and hair ties, shirts, breach cloths, and stockings were produced at all the pueblos. Men were the primary weavers and women did the embroidery, although there were exceptions. What follows is a brief description of the various categories of Pueblo woven textiles as well as some of the techniques employed in their making.

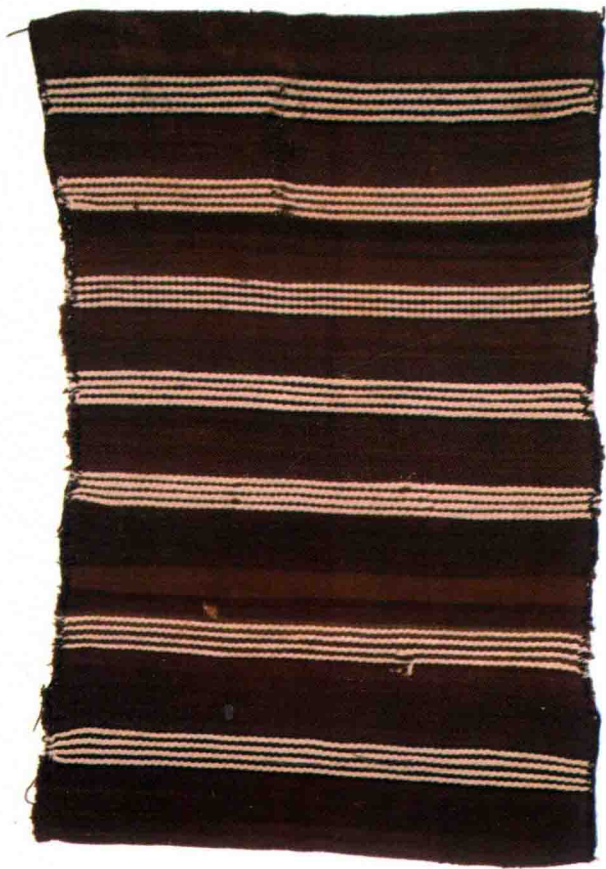


Hopi weaver at Hopi, Arizona. Photograph by Carl N. Wernitz, 1901. Museum of New Mexico #37526.

Blankets

Blankets and serapes were made primarily (but not exclusively) by the Zunis and Hopis. Woven in plain tapestry weave, the majority were fairly coarse, simple striped or banded designs, although the Hopis' so-called moki-style blanket had alternating indigo blue and natural brown stripes overlaid with geometric designs primarily in red and white; small amounts of green and yellow, and later, in the 1880s and 1890s, orange, were also used. Blankets were full-sized; they were worn primarily by men and were also used for bedding. Chief blanket styles, primarily a Navajo type woven longer than wide, were also produced.

A second type of blanket, after the common striped blanket, was the Hopi shoulder blanket. Woven in herringbone twill in natural brown and white checks (later, black and white), these were worn exclusively by men, although small sizes were made as gifts for infant boys. The large sizes died out almost immediately with the advent of machine-made blankets. For a brief period in the early twentieth century, Hopi men wove Navajo-style rugs in an attempt to gain some of the commercial tourist market that the Navajo had so successfully captured; but this attempt did not last.



Hopi blanket, 51" x 77", c. 1885-95.
Loosely woven in native handspun
merino wool in five zones of aniline
purple and natural dark brown
stripes. A classic example of Hopi
striped (or zoned) patterning.
Except for those made at Zuni, few
Pueblo weavings went beyond these
basic design concepts.



Hopi blanket, 40" x 64", c. 1890s.
Woven in native handspun wool
weft and cotton warp in beautiful
natural dark brown wool. This blan-
ket was collected at Second Mesa.

Zuni Pueblo blanket, 50" x 71", late Classic period, c. 1870-75.
Woven in native handspun merino wool warp and weft with
a raveled pink and a raveled red bayeta. Many Zuni blankets
were warped fringed.

Hopi infant boy's blanket, 23" x 25", c. first half of 20th century.
Woven in handspun cotton and handspun wool. Tradition has it that
these herringbone twilled blankets were given to newborn boys by
paternal relatives within a few weeks of birth or when the boy began to
wear clothes. Collected at Second Mesa.

