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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
REGION FOUR
San Francisco, California

ARCHEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT FORT SPOKANE
1951, 1952 and 1953

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1954

ARTIFACTS FOUND DURING THE EXCAVATIONS

The artifacts found during the 1951, 1952 and 1953 excavations add much to our understanding of the mode of life of the old fur trade period depicted at this group of trading posts. Many objects of both European and Indian manufacture came to light. For the 1950 excavations a total of 235 objects were cataloged. For the three following years objects were found which brought the total of cataloged items to more than 1,000 for the study collection now deposited at the Eastern Washington State Historical Society. Following is the tabulation of the number of objects cataloged by year:

1950	235
1951	340
1952	257
1953	<u>202</u>
Total	1,034*

TRADE ITEMS

The most numerous objects found were those used in the fur trade. Beads from cellar depression No. 3 and from the burial area were the most numerous single group of objects found. These will be described carefully for possible cross-dating purposes. It is of interest that many of the trade items found during the archeological salvage work in the reservoir area behind Coulee Dam in 1939 and 1940 were

* This does not include human bones which were individually numbered to add more than 100 additional items to those already cataloged.

duplicated in the Fort Spokane excavations. The following list of trade items found at Spokane shows the prices (number of beaver skins) charged at Astoria and Spokane in 1824-1825:^{19/}

Goods	Astoria	Spokane House
Balls, lead musket		
Beads, glass		
Bells, hawk		
Buttons, Y and W metal, per doz.	1	1
File, bastard		
Flints, gun, per doz.	1	1
Glasses, looking, wooden cased		
Guns, common (musket) each	20	18
Jew's-harps		
Knife, clasp	1	1
Kettle, copper, per lb.	2	2 1/2
Needles, per 20	1	
Rings, plain brass, per doz.	1/3	1
Shot, per lb.	1/2	1
Thimbles, brass, per doz.	1/2	1
Vermillion (hematite in paper wrappers), per lb.	4	8

For convenience and until a better classification is worked out, the beads will be described merely by size, color and shape. A use classification has been tried at the Spokane Museum by which the beads are placed in three categories: embroidery, pony, and necklace. However, it is found that many of the pony beads were also used for embroidery and for necklaces. The embroidery bead would be the very small size, usually less than 3 mm. in diameter. The pony bead, used

^{19/} Merk, Fur Trade and Empire, pp. 172-3.

on horse trappings, is an average of 4 mm. or more in diameter. The necklace bead is the largest and is often found strung on the ends of buckskin fringes.

The most numerous single bead type found at the Spokane excavations and in the Coulee Dam reservoir area is a light opaque blue type. They average about 4 mm. in diameter and slightly less in thickness. Many of them have a pointed tip of glass, a result of manufacture, which is usually next to the hole. On many of this type these tips have been ground off either intentionally or by wear after being strung. A very few of these beads have tiny air bubbles showing on their surfaces. Generally they have very shiny surfaces. Another size of this type, measuring 6 mm. by 5.5 mm., also occurs. A large translucent blue bead of this same shape and slightly larger also occurs but in very few numbers.

A still larger opaque blue bead is found in small numbers. It usually measures 10 mm. in diameter by 4 mm. in thickness. It is perfect in shape and the hole is always uniform. Some are found that are smaller in size. Although similar in color to the first type described, none of these has the shiny exterior. All have a dull, satiny finish.

Another blue bead is also very common and is often in association with the above-mentioned type in burials as though strung on the necklaces. They may be either flat or cylindrical and vary in size from about 3 to 4 mm. in diameter and the same in length. They are tubular

rather than round. This same type occurs in green and a dark blue color and tend to be of translucent glass rather than opaque.

A third type of blue bead has a greenish tinge and is translucent. It is round but larger in diameter than in thickness. It averages 6 mm. in diameter and 5.5 mm. in thickness. These were numerous and probably used mainly for necklaces.

Still another type of blue bead is one which measures 6 mm. in diameter and 3 to 4 mm. in length. Lines appearing in the opaque paste give the impression that the glass was rolled into this shape. Similar but smaller beads in white and red occur but in very small numbers.

White beads occur in a wide range of shapes and shades but were not as popular a trade item as were the blue beads. Two large white beads measured 13 mm. each in diameter. Another smaller one measured 6 mm. in diameter. The long white oval was represented by two specimens each measuring 9 mm. long.

The common white variety is cylindrical in shape and usually about 4 mm. in diameter and in length. It is opaque in makeup.

Red beads were of two varieties, both cylindrical and similar to the blue and white cylindrical types. One red bead type has a dark green underlay or core and the other a white underlay.

One clear brown bead was found which is cylindrical, measuring about 6 mm. in diameter and the same in length.

One faceted dark blue specimen with white underlay was recovered in a test trench outside the fort area to the south.