

POST-CONTACT GOODS FROM Dhrt2 (MUSQUEAM SITE)

by

D.R. Foster

(Anthropology 420)

Manuscript on file, Laboratory of Archaeology,
Department of Anthropology/Sociology

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Vancouver.

April 12, 1961

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INTRODUCTION

The material discussed in this paper was recovered in the course of excavation of the Frank Charles house on the Musqueam Indian Reserve, and from surface finds made in the vicinity of the house and at Musqueam Northeast (Fig. 1). This represents the total material recovered since excavation began in 1951 by Dr. C.E. Borden and student field parties from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.

An effort has been made to show the range of material which was utilized by the inhabitants of this site, as well as a chronology of the material that it has been possible to date with surety. In addition, a brief outline of this historical period is presented in order to substantiate the conclusions drawn from the range and chronology of material obtained from the site.

LOCATION

The Musqueam Indian Reserve lies within the City of Vancouver on the North Arm of the Fraser River. It is bounded, roughly, by Southwest Marine Drive on the North, Camosun Street, leading Southeast into Wallace Street on the East, the North Arm of the Fraser River on the South, and the Western boundary terminates about one-quarter mile East of the Simon Fraser Memorial Monument on Southwest Marine

Drive. The material discussed herein comes from that part of the Reserve known as Stselax Village or Musqueam East, and Musqueam Northeast, or DhRt₂ and DhRt₄ under the Site Designation Scheme (Fig. 1).

This site has experienced continuous occupation since shortly after the first millenium A.D. The Frank Charles house (Figs. 2,3) was constructed about sixty years ago and was used for ceremonial purposes for much of the period since. It was last occupied by Frank Charles until his death in 1946.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MATERIAL

The items described are nearly all of European origin. Some items show secondary manufacture from artifacts originally European. The preponderance of material is of the post-1900 period. This is indicative of the extent of acculturation, which materially was nearly complete at this time. There is a paucity of material prior to 1900, and extending back to the contact period. A consideration of some of the possible reasons for this will be discussed later.

Iron objects, particularly nails, iron bolts and tools comprise much of the material recovered. It was not possible to obtain positive identification of some objects.

A. Construction and Woodworking Materials

Nails. The nails found at the site were all square, except two. No hand wrought nails were recovered. Square

MuE 3214 and MuE 1601 (t,u) are pearl button fragments. MuE 2213 is a blue glass composite button with four embossed hearts opposing one another (v). MuE 1770 are two small shell buttons (w,x). MuE 1807 is a small glass button (y). MuNE 985 and MuNE 986 (Fig. 9z, aa), are two brass ball Russian fur trader's buttons.⁹ The identification source did not place any date on these buttons except to say that they were "early" Russian fur traders' buttons. Since the Russian period of influence ceased with the purchase of Alaska by the United States in 1867, these buttons date at least from this period and likely much earlier.

MuE 4157 Black glass button (bb).

MuE 4150 Red and white glass button (cc).

MuE 1604 Composite, white glass button (dd).

Trade Beads

There were altogether twenty-one trade beads recovered from the site (Fig. 9 a-r). Beads a, f, j, o were recovered from the burnt remains of a large mortuary house at Musqueam Northeast (DhRt_L) on 13 April 1957. The beads are of three main shapes and of several sizes within two of these shapes. Fig. 9(o) typifies the six and seven-sided, faceted bead. Fig. 9 (r) typifies the ovate, and 9(c) the seed bead, of which there is only one example .5 cm. in diameter x .8 cm. long, and of light blue glass. The faceted beads are of several sizes and sub types. The table below relates the four sizes to Fig. 9.

⁹ L.S. Albert, K. Kent, The Complete Button Book, New York, Doubleday, 1949, p. 131, Fig. 14.

Dimensions -- Faceted Beads

Size (o).	Diameter 1.3 cm.	Length 1.3 cm.
(Fig.9)		
" (p)	" 1.1 "	" 1.0 "
" (n)	" 0.7 "	" 0.7 "
" (d)	" 0.5 "	" 0.5 "

Quantity -- Faceted Beads

	(o)	(p)	(n)	(d)
Uniform Colour				
Blue glass	1	2	1 frag.	--
Concentric Colours				
Blue outer glass				
White inner glass	--	--	1	1
Concentric Colours				
Blue outer, white medial, blue inner glass	--	--	2	--

Dimensions -- Ovate Beads

Size (r).	Diameter 1.7 cm.	Length 1.6 cm.
(Fig.9)		
" (q)	" 1.1 "	" 1.0 "
" (k)	" 1.0 "	" 0.85 "
" (i)	" .85 "	" 0.7 "

Quantity -- Ovate Beads

	(r)	(q)	(k)	(i)
Dark blue glass	1	--	8	--
Light blue glass	--	--	--	1
Reddish-brown glass	--	1	--	--
Pinkish-red glass	--	--	1	--

Trade values of beads varied from place to place.

The values established by the Hudson's Bay Company in the North for one "made beaver," that is, a pelt which had been dried and made ready for shipment, was fifty cents.¹⁰ The value of

¹⁰ William C. Orchard, Beads and Beadwork of the American Indians, Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York, 1929, p. 87.

the following beads is that recognised by the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Simpson on the Red River.¹¹

MuE 3095, MuNE 840 (Fig. 9e, n). These beads are similar to those described by Orchard as being worth six beads for one beaver skin.

(No number) (Fig. 9q). Although this bead is reddish-brown, a blue bead of this size was worth three for one beaver.

MuE 2211 (Fig. 9r). A bead a little larger than this brought two for one skin.

MuNE 983 (Fig. 9, p. k, g, b). Beads of this size were worth six for one skin.

Not all the beads recovered appear to be typical of those traded by Hudson's Bay Company. It has not been possible to ascertain when beads of this type were traded. Since the fur trade was rapidly drawing to a close by the 1840s and emphasis turning to agricultural settlement,¹² it may be surmised that these beads date somewhat earlier than 1840.

Ornaments of Indian Manufacture

Several items were recovered which are of Indian manufacture, or which were possibly adopted for ornamental wear from European materials.

MuE 3245 Tubular copper bead, .8 cm. in diameter x 7.7 cm. long (Fig. 7e). This is identical to those recovered by Osborne in excavations in the McNary Reservoir and is of a type common in aboriginal North America, first being manufactured of native copper and later being fashioned of European

¹¹ Ibid., p. 87.

¹² Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, Vancouver, MacMillan, 1958, p. 81.

INTERPRETATION AND SIGNIFICANCE

As suggested in the introductory remarks, the lack of early trade goods from this site is significant. Various sources indicate an early use of iron tools and objects on the Pacific coast, and trade items of many kinds and in large quantities were present in the 1730s and 1790s. Early trade items such as kettles, beads, scissors, knives, guns, and smoking pipes are either lacking or exist in very small quantities, and are not of a very early date. The events of European settlement and the Fraser and Cariboo Gold Rushes of the middle 1800s, one would expect, leave their mark in the form of a profusion of European artifacts. Steamers were even plying the Fraser River as early as 1827, and the trade in furs was still an important aspect in the economy of the country until the 1840s.

The lack of early trade goods may be attributed to the relatively late exploration of the Gulf of Georgia (Valdez and Vancouver 1792) and the perilous and difficult travel which the use of the Fraser Canyon offered as a trade route. Simon Fraser felt that the Fraser offered no prospects as a trade route and it was not until 1828 that Governor George Simpson decided to re-examine the possibilities of the Fraser as a trade route when the retention of the Columbia River route was threatened.²² From the evidence at Musqueam

²² W. Kaye Lamb, ed., Simon Fraser, Letters and Journals, 1806-1808, Toronto, Macmillan, 1960, p. 29.

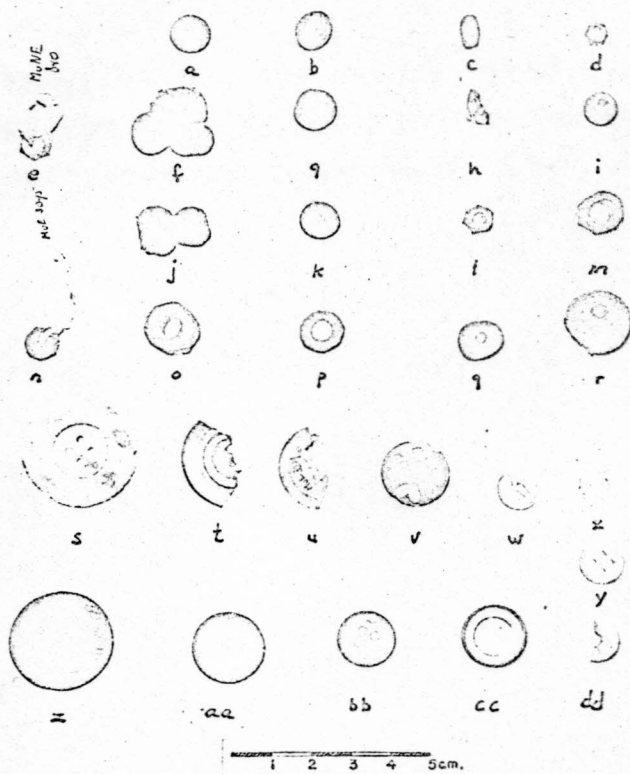


Fig. 9 Beads + Buttons.