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EXPLORATION OF THE BURTON MOUND AT SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

By JOHN P. HARRINGTON

INTRODUCTION

The present paper is a preliminary report on the collection taken from the Burton Mound at Santa Barbara, Calif. (pls. 1, 2), by the Thea Heye expedition in the summer of 1923. It presents our historical discoveries which led to the investigation of the site and describes the artifacts. The writer has in preparation a complete monographic account which will be published at a future date.

The principal rancheria or village of the ancient Santa Barbara Valley was not at the Mission, where the Indians were gathered in later times, but at the beach. It was situated a little to the west of the mouth of Mission Creek, where a landing cove for canoes and two low mounds, one by the beach and a larger one 650 feet inland and now known as the Burton Mound, afforded unusual attraction as a dwelling place for Indians. At a number of places in the locality were cold sulphur springs; also some springs of drinking water. The name of the village was Syujtún,¹ meaning "where the two trails run." There a thriving population lived on the wild food products of the neighboring beach and sea and of the Santa Barbara Valley, rich in acorn-bearing oaks and game animals.

Although the Relation of the Voyage of Cabrillo, 1542, records the name Syujtún and the early land expeditions passed by the village, little has been written on its history. After the establishment of the Santa Barbara Mission, the deserted locality of Syujtún became known as "el rancho de la playa."

In the early thirties this beach ranch of the Padres appears to have passed in rapid succession into possession of the Mexican Government, James Burke, and then Joseph Chapman, a young Englishman, who had been captured at the time of the Bouchard invasion and who erected a small adobe house on the mound. A few years later, tra-

¹ Indian names in this paper are in Spanish orthography; but c is pronounced as English sh; K is near k; ' is the glottal clusive; K', k', t', p' are of the "glottalized" variety; h is not silent as in Spanish but is pronounced as in English; a, e, i, o, u as in Spanish murcielago, "bat."

pp. 23-168

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BROOCHES

A little silver brooch of very modern appearance, 24.5 mm. long.

Brooch of black enameled metal with raised figures of a bird and plant. Elliptical in shape, 29 mm. long, 9.5 mm. wide. Probably Japanese manufacture.

MEXICAN POTTERY FRAGMENTS

Fragments of Mexican pottery bowls and crocks were identified by Mr. William L. Calver as follows:

Fragment of probably Mexican pottery, 49 mm. long, 5 mm. thick. The outside surface is coated with a black glaze.

Fragment of probably Mexican pottery. 32 mm. long, 7 mm. thick. Inside surface dark buff, outside surface brick red.

Central fragment of pottery, of Mexican or possibly American manufacture, 18.5 mm. long, 7 mm. thick. The outside surface has a brown glaze.

Fragment of probably Mexican pottery, 35 mm. long, 6.5 mm. thick. Reddish on both outside and inside surfaces, darker color in the interior.

Fragment of Mexican pottery. Surface not glazed. Reddish on outside and inside surfaces, dark gray interior. 42 mm. long, 8 mm. thick.

Another fragment of the same vessel from which the piece last described was taken, 34 mm. long, 8 mm. thick.

MODERN CHINAWARE AND PORCELAIN

The large number of modern chinaware and porcelain fragments taken were mostly from the excavations in the vicinity of the Burton adobe house, as might be expected. These fragments also were studied by Mr. Calver, who found pieces dating as early as 1820 and as recent as from the hotel.

A chinaware pitcher bearing a "transfer" design is from 1850, more probably from 1840. The fragment bearing the trade name "Spode" is old. Spode quit making pottery some sixty years ago. The piece marked "Japan" is from 1850. The piece with the "tapeworm" design is from 1840. The "tapeworm" runs entirely around the vessel. The fragments with green leaves and red berries are quite early, from the twenty's or thirty's of the past century. The orange-colored fragments are probably American and not Mexican ware.

GLASS BEADS

A very satisfactory group of glass-bead material was taken in the excavations. It includes practically every kind of European bead that has been reported from the Channel region.

One of the omnipresent types was the red bead with blackish inside lining. These were found in several sizes, the most frequent sizes being about 4 mm. diameter.

A few translucent red globular beads were found.

We recovered 10 pink-colored glass beads, triangular in section, which had been much disintegrated while in contact with the damp ground.

Barrel-shaped red glass beads.

Blue globular beads were found in several sizes and in three colors, which can be distinguished as blue, indigo, and bluish black. The last mentioned have an almost burnished appearance and show gleams of metallic luster.

Green beads also occur in four or five sizes, the commonest being about 3 mm. diameter. They are a light green color.

European beads of black color are rare but a few specimens were found. They are globular and 4.5 mm. diameter.

A few globular European beads were found of a purple or maroon color resembling that of grape jelly. One of these measures 3.75 mm. diameter, another 8.5 mm. diameter.

European beads of globular shape made of clear transparent glass were also encountered, and in several different sizes. They must have reminded the Indians of their own quartz crystals.

Glass beads of a lemon yellow color were also represented in the graves.

European beads of white color were among the commonest, perhaps next in frequency after the red, blue, and green. The 4 mm. diameter size was the commonest.

"Venetian" beads with dotted or striated surfaces were well represented. They occurred in globular and cylindrical form. One cache had these the size of marbles, the interior being blue and the surface ornamented with longitudinal white stripes.