

GLASS INDIAN TRADE BEADS IN CENTRAL TEXAS.

By FRANK H. WATT and DR. W. P. MERONEY

Among the various methods that primitive man used to satisfy his desire for personal adornment was a world wide use of beads of diverse forms and sizes. These have been found in prehistoric campsites, in ancient burials and in association with modern historic locations. Even among the descendents of these peoples, to this day, beads form a large proportion of their adornment. Beads have also been used as mediums of exchange, for recording history, as messengers and as charms and objects of ceremony.

The aborigines of Central Texas left in their camp sites and burial grounds some proofs that they offer no exception to this wide-spread instinct for adornment.

Only a comparatively few burials have been excavated in Central Texas and with these burials the finding of either "Trade Beads" or those of Indian make has been a more or less rare occurrence.

Of 16 burials removed by Texas University from a burial mound on the Leon River, only 1 blue glass bead and 1 bone bead were found. Of 35 burials removed from a shelter in the same general area, no beads of any description were found. This same condition existed with a group of some 20 burials found near Waco on a sand terrace of the Brazos. Of 5 burials removed from a gravel bed near Marlin, only one contained beads. These were Indian make of Olivello shells. Other isolated burials were also destitute of any form of beads.

Jackson in his "Ornaments of East Texas Indians," reports finding 2 large blue glass beads in one grave—another yielded 26 blue trade beads—at an extensive campsite on the Red River were found a great many glass and procelain beads on the surface—found with these were flint and metal projectile points, fragments of pottery, etc.—all surface beads were large—only one of eight near by burials contained beads—of the 19 beads found in this burial, none were large or of the type found on the surface of adjacent campsite.

Prehistoric man made his beads and ornaments, crudely and laboriously by hand, utilizing bird and animal bones,

shells, stones, fossils, seeds and such metals as he could shape with his crude tools. The problem of manufacture for the historic aborigines was largely solved when the white man with his superior methods made glass beads and made possible his securing them by gift, exchange or sale.

No study of this phase of Indian remains has been made in Central Texas. This may be attributed somewhat to the 10 cent store aspect of the specimens found, but more to the difficulty of location and to the labor entailed in recovering the beads.

Very few locations have been made and of these only one has been developed to any extent.

A brief report can be made at this time consisting of descriptions and recording of types found to date. This report is based on discoveries made in campsites of known historic tribes of Indians and the materials recovered consist mainly of glass beads manufactured by the white man for barter with the Redman.

These beads were found on the surface or by sifting the surface soil, no intact burials having been located in connection with them. Beads have been picked up from the surface at these locations for years. The larger ones, easy to see have been taken first, accounting for the fact that so few large specimens are now found.

The campsite from which the major portion was secured lies on the slope of an alluvium sand hill that has been in cultivation for the greater part of the last century. Erosion has gradually lowered the surface until the farmer's plow reached the burials, and year by year reduced them to smaller and smaller pieces, until now only tiny fragments remain and these constitute about 60% of the small debris retained by the screen. During this process of shifting and turning the beads have become disseminated throughout the soil and all supporting materials have been entirely destroyed.

Associated with the beads were metal projectile points, flint points, scrapers, knives, hammer stones, etc., also assorted lengths of metal bracelets, both plain and decorated, brass beads, round lead balls from muzzle-loading muskets,

parts of metal gun fittings, bridles and spurs, square hand cut nails, a silver band ring, fragments of clay pipes and pots.

Over 30,000 glass beads have been recorded and a list of types compiled. A segregation of colors gives the following results:

Milk White Opaque Glass.....	39	%
Transparent Blue Glass.....	17	%
Clear or Crystal (no color) Glass.....	14	%
Transparent Green Glass.....	12	%
Black Opaque Glass.....	6	%
Blue Opaque Glass.....	4	%
Red Opaque (Hudson Bay) Glass.....	3	%
Yellow Opaque and Translucent Glass.....	1.6	%
Miscellaneous	3.4	%
Consisting of numerous tints and combinations of colors.		

These figures are approximate, and additional finds may alter the ratios somewhat.

The variety of beads predominating nearly all colors is the seed-bead, ranging in size from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 m m in diameter and including types of globular, disk shaped and short tubular.

In recovering these beads the soil in which they were found was very carefully sifted and washed, then examined with a magnifying glass so very little material was lost. The smaller red and black beads are extremely hard to find otherwise and many would have been overlooked.

The preference in color ranges has varied somewhat, as in some other areas, the reds, blues and yellows predominate.

The tribes of the Wichita Confederacy (The Caddoes, Tehuacanies and Wacos) living in Central Texas during this period produced a limited amount of bead work consisting mainly of isolated colored designs with white edging or borders, accounting for the predominance of white beads over all colors.

The seed beads were used chiefly for covering surfaces with various designs, with some of the larger specimens at times being used for stringing as necklaces. The red opaque beads are interesting in that they are the variety known as

Cornaline d'Allepo, (from the town of Allepo where made.) Distributed widely through the Hudson Bay Company's trading posts, they became known as "Hudson Bay Beads" and were one of earliest kinds of beads used in the Canadian trade. They are widely distributed throughout the North American Continent, independent traders carrying them into their regions to the southward.

Now comes the question of the date and the source of supply of these beads. We know that they were made in many countries through many ages and of types similar to those being made today. Early and late Egyptian days, Roman, Grecian, Venetian, Phoenician, Chinese, Italian, French, English, American and others contributed their products.

During certain periods particular types predominated while other types seem to be common through many periods.

The bugle or pipe beads of the 17th century were long and delicate tubular beads, similar to but unlike the short beads of later periods, including the early part of the 19th century. Long tubular beads ranging from those with twisted opaque red exteriors and translucent green interiors, through a variety of opaque white, red, yellow, blue, green and other colors are usually associated with early to late 17th century burials.

Faceted beads may be divided into three divisions: Those with molded irregular facets, 16th, 17th and early 18th centuries; those with irregular cut facets, late 18th to mid 19th centuries, in general use from 1800 to 1860; those with regular pressed facets of the late 19th and 20th centuries to the present time.

The earlier Beads were probably distributed at infrequent intervals by Spanish and French Missionaries and trappers. Later the missions and trading posts were established under Spanish and American domain and these became a permanent and ready source of distribution; but where the beads originated is not known. It was during the period of the trading posts that the bulk of the material was disbursed.

Seemingly the majority of types of beads would indicate mid to late 18th century distribution, with some late 17th. Some types of the early to mid 19th century, (1820 to 1850) predominate in the quantities of beads found.

During the winter of 1924-25, while on a hunting trip, Jim Martin of Hamilton County found the skeleton of an Indian in a crevice of a bluff on Partridge Creek, that erosion had partially uncovered. This skeleton was removed to Hamilton and was on exhibition there for several months.

Of interest to this report was the fact that this Indian had on his person at the time of his death, a number of glass trading beads, presumably in the form of a necklace.

On looking over the location after the removal of the skeleton, F. B. Journey and B. B. Stanford, found some beads. Careful search and sifting of the soil in so far as possible with fingers and sticks, uncovered over a thousand specimens. Of these 6 or 8 were shell beads of Indian make, some $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches long, about a dozen large white glass beads and the balance were of colored glass. The beads were divided in approximately equal numbers between Mr. Journey and Mr. Stanford, and this report is made from those retained by Mr. Journey, many having admittedly been lost since the finding.

There are 381 beads in all. 2 shell beads, 82 mm in length and 27 mm in diameter, maximum thickness. 2 milky white opaque globular glass beads, 8 mm long and 10 mm in diameter with parallel flat ends 7 mm in diameter; 1 milky white opaque globular glass bead 7 mm in diameter, dull grayish tinted from erosion; 2 transparent ruby red globular glass beads, 7 mm in diameter with white paste lined lumen; 2 translucent ruby red globular beads, 8 mm in diameter with milky white core and slightly flattened ends; 2 transparent

FIGURE 1

- 1-2. Two types of metal arrow points, 1 inch to 3 inches long.
- 3-4-5. Beads of unusual design. See text for description, Nos. 106, 107 and 109.
6. Metal bead, formed by bending small strip of metal into tubular form with edges brought together on an even plane.
- 7-8. Sections of engraved metal bracelets.

dark blue 18 faceted cylindrical beads, 6 mm in diameter and 5 mm long, having 1 central row of 6 irregular rectangular shaped facets and 2 end rows of 6 each, irregular triangular shaped facets; 240 sky blue opaque seed beads, 2 mm in diameter; 16 greenish blue bubble glass, striated short cylindrical beads, 3 to 5 mm in diameter; 114 transparent greenish blue short cylindrical beads, 4 to 6 mm in diameter and 2 to 6 mm in length. At least this Indian was partial to blue, all but 9 of the beads being of that color.

Also reported as found with the skeleton were parts of a Spanish spur, a jack knife and a quantity of fine copper wire, partially coiled partially broken into short segments. The beads were strung out in somewhat of a line and may originally have been on the wire.

HISTORICAL

After the fight with a band of Indians in which Lt. Carter was killed near the town of Hamilton in 1860, a number of whites pursued an Indian from near some large springs northwest of Hamilton, trailing him with dogs and taking pot shots at him through the Cowhouse bottoms. At the mouth of Partridge Creek the trail was lost as he had taken to the water. Though the whites were absolutely certain they had hit and badly wounded the Indian, no trace of him was ever found after that time.

When this skeleton was found a short distance above the mouth of Partridge Creek, in a crevice of a bluff with fallen rocks over it, old settlers of the region were fully satisfied that this was the Indian they had chased in the early days. This is said to be the last Indian killed in fights with the settlers in Hamilton County.

Another narrative differing only in the location and manner of finding of the skeleton is known.

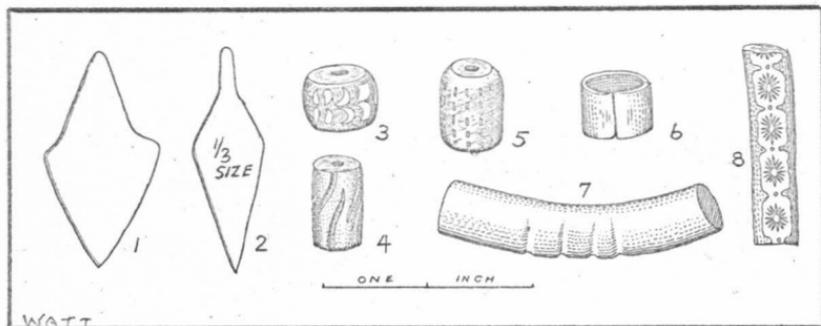


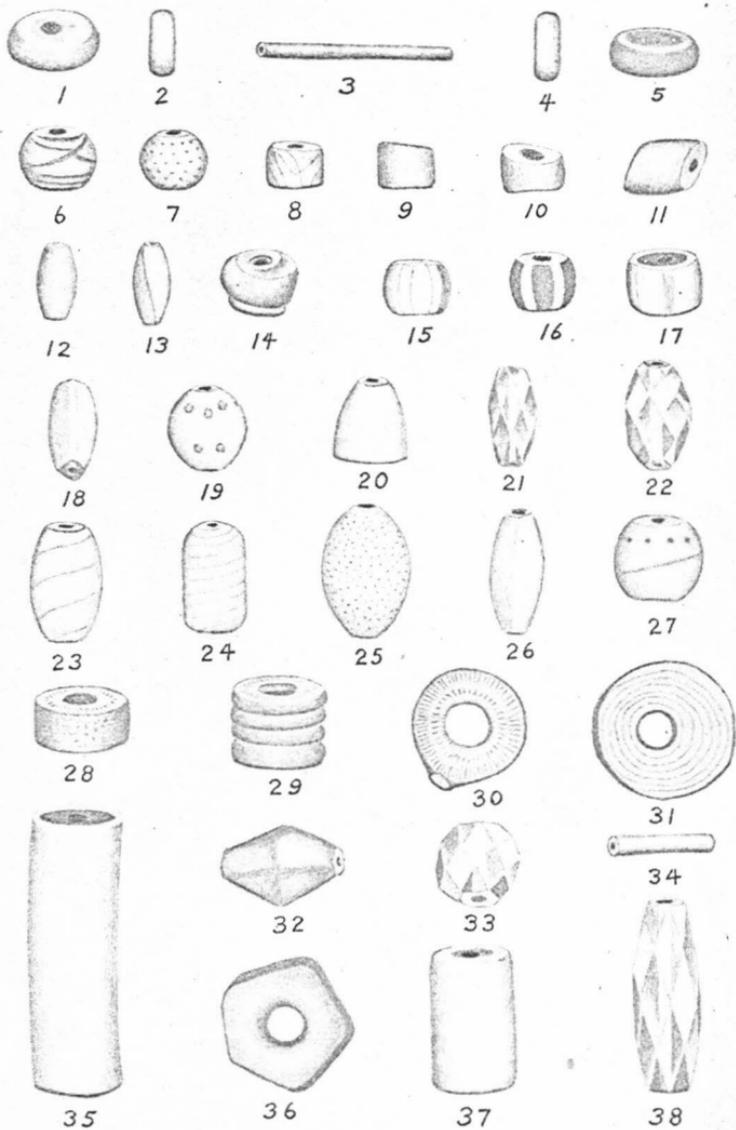
FIGURE 1

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PLATE IX

Drawings of glass Indian Trade Beads from Central Texas. Numbers 28 to 31 inclusive are fossil beads of Crinoid stems. They are pictured 1 1/3 natural size. For data on the beads see text, the small figures at the end of each description referring to the numbers on this plate.



FRANK H. WATT 1937



PLATE IX