

# EARLY TRADING POST BEADS



**BILLY BOWLEGS**  
Famous Seminole  
Indian Guide

VOLUME XX

G. B. Fenstermaker  
24 Michigan Avenue  
Lancaster, PA 17602

## INTRODUCTION

The beads in PLATE I are from the stock of a post in Southwestern Florida, circa 1839.

During the Second Seminole War (1835–1842) Col. William S. Harney along with twenty-nine Dragoons, two traders and two Negro interpreters were attacked while along the banks of the Caloosahatchee River in Southwestern Florida. Twenty-two of the soldiers and the two traders were killed while the Negroes were taken prisoners.

The traders had with them, among other items, a quantity of beads.

The two-hundred-fifty attackers of Col. Harney's party were led by Chief Boleck, known as "Billy Bowlegs", "Billy Boleck" or Holatter Micco, his Seminole name.

The Seminoles were avenging the death of their Chief Osceola by hiding in the swampy land of the Florida Everglades, only emerging to attack and then withdrawing to safety.

The Negroes accompanying Col. Harney as interpreters are understandable, as the Colonel was under orders of the Indian Removal Bill (1830) to remove the Seminoles to the west and any Indians found would be approached with this object in mind.

Were the traders in the party under the protection of the Dragoons, or were the Dragoons using the traders and their stock as bait to draw out the Indians hidden in the Everglades?

Whatever the circumstances, the beads and other trade items came into possession of Chief Billy Bowlegs and his warriors.

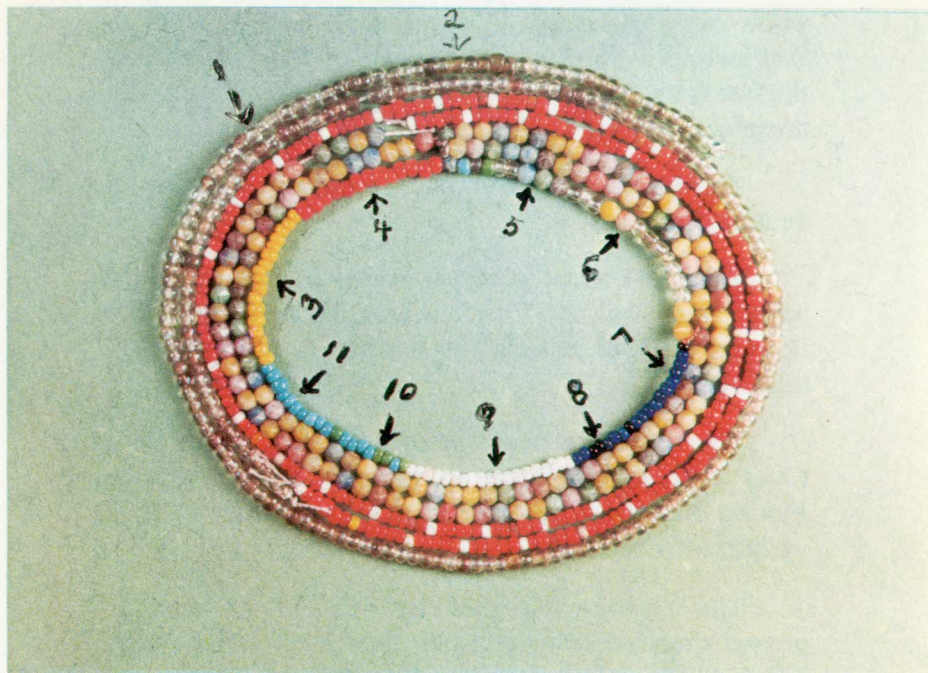


PLATE I

Diameter	Color
1. 3½ mm	transparent
2. 3½ mm	transparent with age patina
3. 2½ to 4 mm	cadmium yellow
4. 2 to 4 mm	red
5. 3 to 4 mm	pale blue faceted
6. 4½ mm	light pink faceted
7. 3 mm	dark ultramarine blue
8. 3 mm	black
9. 3 mm to 3½ mm	white
10. 3 mm	green
11. 2½ to 3½ mm	pale blue

4th and 5th rows from the outside are faceted. Various colors of rose, yellow, blue and green.



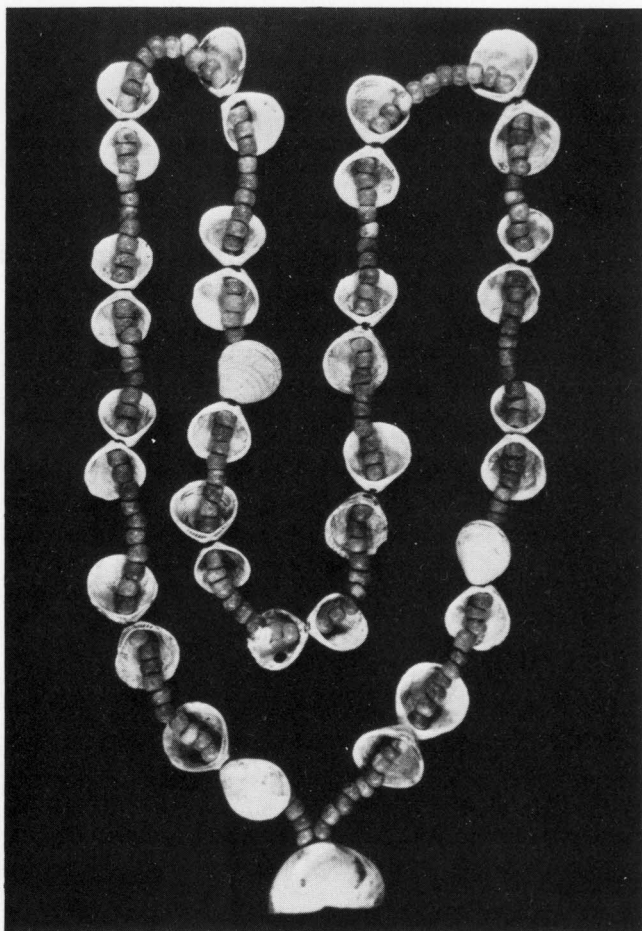


PLATE II  
 "Hubbell" Beads—circa 1920's

These now scarce beads were traded with the Navajo at the Hubbell Trading Post in the southwest U.S. The beads are of Czechoslovakian manufacture.

These glass beads are imitation turquoise with all the hues found in the natural stone.

All beads are from the Fenstermaker Collection.

The "Hubbell" beads are now in the Museum of Native American Cultures Collection, Spokane, Washington.

G. B. Fenstermaker—Editor  
 Nancy Buckwalter—Assoc. Editor