

Indian Glass Trade Beads

108.



ORIGINAL glass beads brought into Lancaster County by the whites were generally round, and of all colors, solid and striped, and of many sizes. The oldest colored beads are of the blue variety about three-eighths of an inch in diameter, of poorly constructed glass which could not withstand the weather all these years as the rest did, many crumbled in my hands while taking them out of the ground and many more broke after they were out of the earth awhile, and many have broken while stringing them. The most valuable beads among the traders and the Indians were the Star Beads, these were dark blue on outside and dark blue stripes with ends of red and white star design. Some of the star beads are green on the outside, and some were made flat by the Indians rubbing them down on a hard stone with sand and water making a very brilliant bead as the colors came through. I have found these beads in many stages, and not a few were melted into a small glass mass showing that they were in a fire, probably thrown into the funeral fires as a sacrifice or gift to the dead during a ceremony. Many other beads are as colorful and just as pretty to the eye but the star beads, in the trade, were on the top. Two beaver skins were given for a star bead as the colors took the Indian's eye and fancy therefore there was a demand. These beads were called the chevron bead, and are found in North America from coast to coast, in Europe, Northern parts of Africa, and in South America they were also used by the explorers for trade for many years.

Explorers and traders as early as the fourteenth century found glass beads were desirable medium of exchange with natives of different lands, the majority of which were made in Venice, Italy, and even today the Indians all over the United States still buy glass beads made in Italy through jobbers in New York. The particular type, color and size differs among the different tribes, some demand transparent beads, and these very tribes have always wanted these certain styles for centuries.

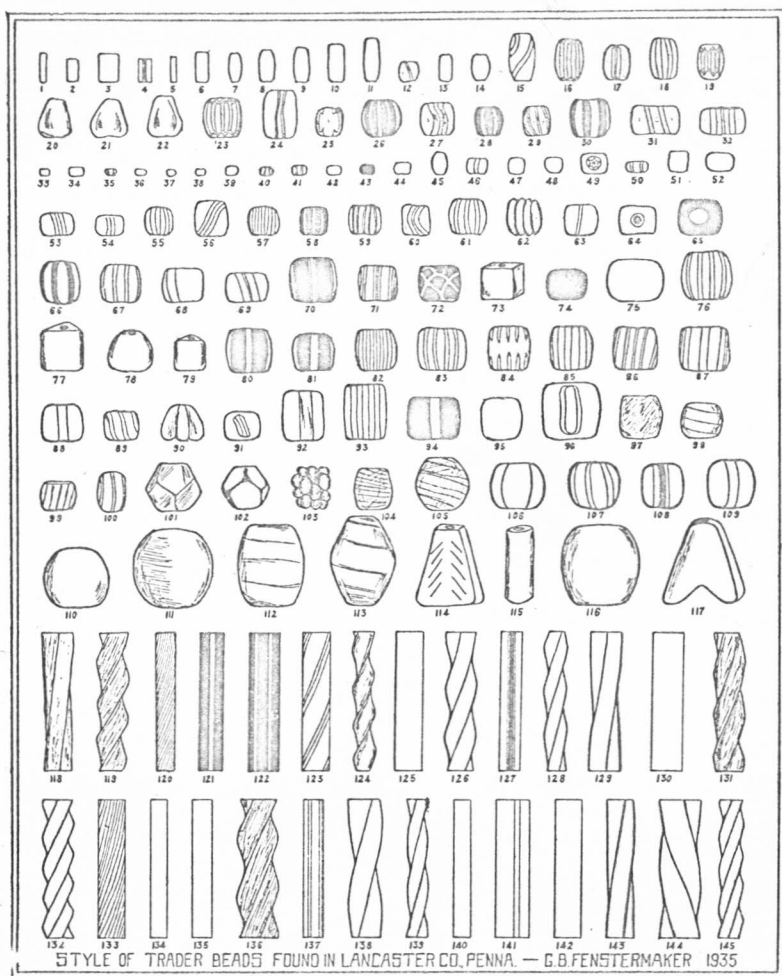
The first glass beads made in this country were manufactured in Jamestown, Virginia, where a new glass factory was erected in the year 1622 for the manufacture of beads to be used in competition with the imported beads. Several years ago a large number of these beads were excavated in the old settlement of Jamestown, having been hidden there by the whites and never taken away or probably forgotten after the destruction by fire of the first glass factory. A traveling salesman happened to pass by as they found the beads and bought a number of them. I read his advertisement, he lived in Massachusetts, and I secured some of these rare beads, the first made in this country. They certainly attempted to copy the original trader beads.

The second contact trader site uncovered by the writer in his research and excavations reveals a still different style bead, mostly the long thin cylinder type in many colors, sizes and twists. These beads are very hard to secure in lengths of two inches or more and many are found broken in very short pieces.

Glass beads are often shaped to represent the grain of corn, these are called the corn beads; there are also the wheat beads in natural wheat color and in white, the very shape of the grain of wheat. These were probably only introduced into this county after the white traders had witnessed the Indians stringing grains of all sorts into long strings, as other style beads, and had conceived the idea the Indians would want the same thing duplicated in the

glass for different grains and being a brighter color and of material to wear better they certainly wanted them.

Glass beads were introduced into Lancaster County long before the English or Dutch traders came there and even before the first white man came up the Susquehanna. He was Captain John Smith, who came in July, 1609, and



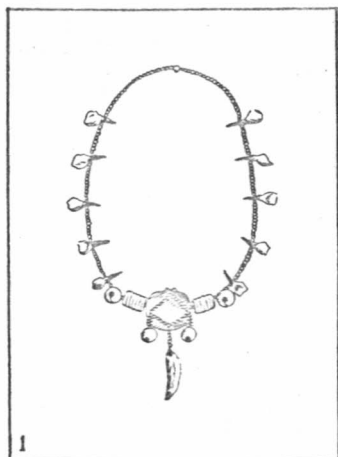
EVOLUTION OF INDIAN BEADS

Chart Prepared by Gerald B. Fenstermaker

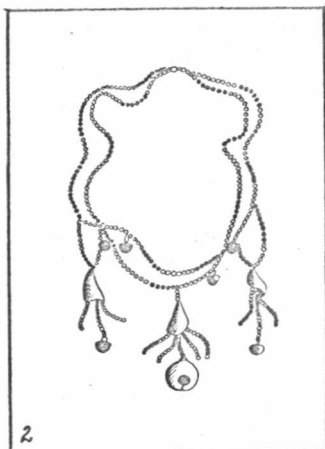
met these fierce savage Indians for the first time. They had never seen a white man or had he met Indians in this great river valley. He was surprised to find these Indians supplied with iron tomahawks, iron knives and bedecked with many strands of glass beads. Smith learned that the Indian traders or runners were bartering with the French traders to the north some 350 miles distant to the St. Lawrence district, so we learn that many of these glass beads are at least 300 years old. The writer has excavated more glass trader beads

than any other person in Eastern United States; 35,000 of these glass beads are in the State Museum at Harrisburg and some 30,000 glass beads are in his present collection, while many complete glass bead necklaces have been found while excavating.

These beads were not strung up entirely in solid strings of glass beads but made up as to one's fancy, for many varied take the string shown in No. 1. On the end as a dangle is a bear's tooth, drilled and strung just above it are two trader bells made of brass, a small round brass disc cut from the bottom of a brass kettle then some coiled brass beads, still more trade bells, then next we find many human teeth strung up on this string which were probably taken from a white trader or another warrior in a skirmish for a trophy and remembrance. In some pockets of beads there were found 2,000 glass beads as many as 50 human teeth and many glass trader beads.



THE TEETH TROPHY



THE SHOE BUTTON CHOKER

Necklace No. 2, there are many trader beads in all colors, conical brass beads made by the native from metal obtained from the first whites, a very large trader bell hangs below. The rather odd thing about this string is the trader shoe buttons, some are black and others are the large brass shoe buttons, the wearer probably took the buttons off the victim's shoes as a trophy, it seems that anything that had a hole in it the natives were glad to obtain and wear around their necks, even old chest keys were known to be put to this use.

Necklace No. 3 consisted of many trade beads, brass cylinder beads, trader bells which are sometimes called hawk bells, the lower piece represents a serpent made up of coiled brass sheet taken from the bottom of a brass trader kettle, this ornament was worn for protection.

Necklace No. 4 consisted of similar beads, bells, and brass cylinder beads several places were flat clam shell beads native made, the harder glass beads being strung next to these. From continuous wear the glass beads wore a regu-

lar socket into the shell part. The lower piece was two scoop spoons made from trade brass these shined up were fine looking ornaments and at the same time very useful as spoons thus being carried with the native all the time.



THE PROTECTOR MODEL



THE UTILITY MODEL

The writer has many complete necklaces, arranged as found the rawhide is gone and these beads must be restrung as the study is made while excavating great care must be taken to place the beads in their proper and respective places.

Unusual Enamel Formation on Teeth of Indians

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I have found a number of the teeth on a historic Iroquoian site of first trader contact period in Washington Borough. The teeth had the unusual location of spherical nodules of enamel sometimes called enamel pearl, probably due to some irritation or over activity of the enamel organ during the formation or developing stage, the enamel organ or portions of it, may assume an abnormal relation to the pulp. Apart from these, there are evidences seen in the teeth which show that portions of the enamel organ may become detached from the main organ, and develop enamel in unusual situations, thus columns of enamel may penetrate the body of the dentine.

A small nodule or cap of enamel overlaying dentine, and itself overlapped at the edges of cementum, may be found upon the root of a molar, usually upon the side of an upper third molar at a point about $\frac{1}{8}$ " from the cervical margin of the crown enamel, but one may be $\frac{1}{2}$ " distant from the enamel margin. A thin ridge of enamel sometimes, though not usually, may be seen connecting them which indicates that the nodule may have been formed by a detached portion of the original enamel organ.

This formation may occur upon a lower molar, though usually found upon the upper molars. Two may exist on opposite sides of a molar. A similar formation has been found on a bicuspid tooth. There are formations found on teeth of white persons similar to these that are found on the teeth of Indians who lived about 300 years ago.