

# THE JOHN GREEN SITE

Greensville County, Virginia  
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The John Green Site lies on the left (north) bank of the Meherrin River, 1.9 miles southeast of the center of Emporia, Greensville County, Virginia. It lies about two miles east of Hick's Ford (by water). Hicks Ford was the site of a historic trading post during the period 1709 to 1730, operated by Robert Hicks and his sons. For further data on the history of this important site and the events there, we refer the reader to the recent publication, "Sketches of Greensville County, 1650-1967" by Mrs. H. D. Brown of Emporia. The site is not at the immediate edge of the terrace bordering the river, but it lies about 300 yards north of the river, bordering a former channel (ox-bow) of the river. The map (Figure 1) shows the site location and the surrounding topographical features. The site has long been known to collectors as the Triangle Site, but its official designation is site number 44 Gv 1. In line with our usual practice, the site is named for the owner, the late Mr. John Green, whose estate includes the site area. We are indebted to Mrs. John Green and to Mr. William A. Robinson of Emporia, who leases the area from Mrs. Green, for permission to do the work described here.

The soils at the site are sandy-clay overlying gravelly clay. The part of the terrace on which the Indians had lived most intensively is lightly higher than the surrounding field and has a sandy-humus topsoil. This combination would have made the site attractive to Indians, because the soil would have been easy to cultivate and to dig, and in addition would have drained well in wet weather. Fresh water would have been available from springs which keep the former river channel wet and at times filled with standing water. The nearby Meherrin River would have provided a convenient source of fish, fresh-water mussels, turtles, eels and water-fowl, and a handy water-way for travel. Low hills to the north helped protect the site against cold winds and wind-driven snow and rain, especially when the hills were wooded. The local forest is (and probably was) a mixture of evergreens and deciduous trees, with the wetter areas taken over by cypress. The varieties of vegetative cover and conditions of standing water would have supported a large faunal population and would have afforded the Indians a varied diet. Rainfall in the area averages about 44 inches per year, and the annual mean temperature is 58°F, with extremes of approximately 100°F and +5°F.

Surface indications of an Indian village are scattered rather densely over an area measuring about two hundred feet in diameter, with lesser amounts of debris scattered more widely. The most common debris item found is pottery, although numerous chips of quartz and other stone are also found. Occasionally, a scrap of animal bone or a mussel shell is found on the surface probably turned up by plowing through the upper parts of refuse-filled pits,

is the S-shaped piece to which the flint was attached. It is illustrated in Figure 15b and is also illustrated in the book "Arms and Armour in Colonial America" by Harold S. Peterson. The dog-lock was an early form of flintlock which became popular in the colonies around 1650, although it continued in use until much later. The fragment found may have been part of a weapon traded or sold to an Indian, but this cannot be proven from the gun-part alone. It could equally as well have been lost or discarded by a later settler or hunter.

Glass artifacts were represented by beads and by fragments of bottles. Three fragments of glass wine bottles were found in Level 1 of the general excavation. All are too small to show the shape and size of the original bottles and are therefore not usable for dating purposes.

With Burial #3 were many beads made of glass (Fig. 10). One large wire-wound bead is  $3/4$ " (19mm) thick and long, and has four facets on each end, for a total of eight facets. The perforation measures  $1/8$ " (3.3mm) across. Ten small (3mm diameter) red beads with black centers (Kidd's Type 11a2) were found with an assortment of 167 white beads at the left hand of Burial #3. The white beads range in size from  $1/8$  to  $3/8$  inches in diameter and from  $1/16$  to  $9/16$  inches long, with the smaller sizes most numerous. Color in most is an "off-white", while two are nearly clear with a pearly luster.

The glass beads have been dated by comparing them to those illustrated in the booklet, "Oneida Iroquois Glass Trade Bead Sequence, 1585-1745," by Peter P. Pratt. The comparisons show the following results:

Small red beads - most like Pratt's bead type #85, which he dates from 1677 to 1710.

Pearly-luster beads - most like Pratt's #100, which he dates to after 1710. (Kidd's Type W165)

Luster-less white spheres and ovals - most like Pratt's #43 and 98, which he dates to either the 1625-1637 period or later to the period 1710-1745. (Kidd's Types 11a11, 12 and 15)

Kaoline artifacts were limited to six pieces of European-made tobacco pipes. Five are segments of stems yielding the following stem-hole measurements:

4/64ths	2	5/64ths	2	6/64ths	1
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One of the stems has enough of the bowl and heel attached to indicate a date of about 1650-1700. The stem-holes indicate a central date of 1720-30, using the Binford formula, although the sample is much too small for accurate dating. The other specimen is a complete bowl, lacking most of the stem. From the style of the bowl and the diameter of the stem-hole (5/64ths), we can date it to the period from 1680-1730. This specimen was part of the grave-goods found with Burial #3.

Figure 10: Shell and glass beads found with Burial #3.

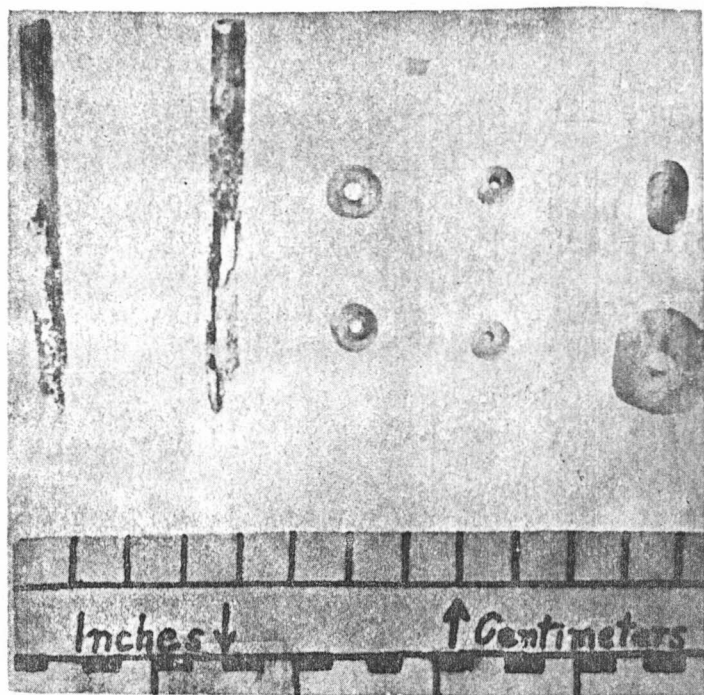


Figure 11a: Necklace of shell and steatite beads, collected by Mr. Lawrence Vick.

