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TOLEAK POINT--AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE ON THE
NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON COAST

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BY

THOMAS STELL NEWMAN

PULLMAN

Miscellaneous Artifacts

Blue "O. P." or "Russian" Beads

Three whole beads and one broken bead were found in a test pit near the cabin used for the field laboratory and cooking (Plate XVIII, Fig. 4). These beads are dark blue and are cylindrical. They each have either six or seven large facets and twelve or fourteen small facets ground into them. The large facets are in the middle of the bead and the small facets are on each edge of the bead. There are three sizes present in the four beads:

1. Large--one bead; weight 1.5 g.; length 11 mm.; diameter of bead 11 mm.; diameter of center hole 5 mm.; thickness of sides 3 mm.; 7 large facets and 14 small facets.

2. Medium--one whole bead and one broken one. The whole bead measured: weight .7 g.; length 10 mm.; diameter of bead 10 mm.; diameter of center hole 6 mm.; thickness of sides 2 mm.; 6 large facets and 12 small facets.

3. Small--one bead; weight .4 g.; length 8 mm.; diameter of bead 8 mm.; diameter of center hole 3 mm.; thickness of sides 2 mm.; 6 large facets and 12 small facets.

These beads were identified by Arthur Woodward of Altadena, California. He states that they are called "O. P." or "Russian" beads. They are made by taking a glass tube and breaking it into the desired bead sizes. A varying number of facets is then ground on each bead. They range in color from clear, uncolored glass through topaz, green and blue. These beads were used as necklaces or as fringes on bags, gun cases, and clothing (Woodward 1959).

Like "O.P." or "Russian" Beads

A picture in Teit's Thompson Indians of British Columbia shows facettted beads of this type (1900: 384, Fig. 313).

A "facettted blue glass bead" was found in a woman's grave at Anvik River in Alaska by De Laguna (1947: 138).

Arthur Woodward, a bead expert of Altadena, California, reports that these beads came into the Northwest Coast trade in the early nineteenth century. The term "Russian" is a collector's term and actually incorrect because it was born in ignorance of their origin. The Russian American Fur Company did trade these beads, but they acquired them from Murano.

The large sized tube from which some of these beads were made produced an inferior bead that was brittle and easily broken. In 1826-1827, the Indians at Fort Vancouver complained of these beads, the "aqua marine colliers," and substitutes had to be obtained (Woodward 1959).

PLATE XVIII

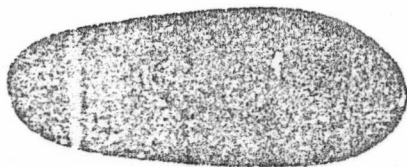
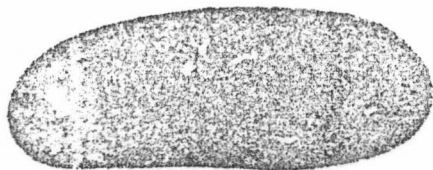


Fig. 1

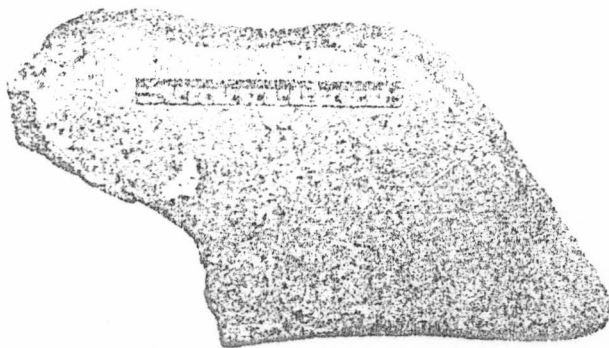


Fig. 2

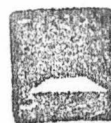
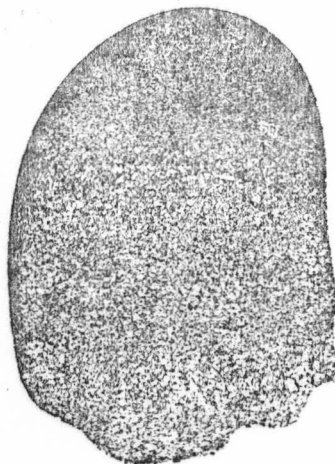


Fig. 4

"RUSSIAN" BEADS