

THE PROPERTY FOR SALE
A Preliminary Archaeological Test Excavation of CA-Nap-518H

Soscol House
Route 29, P.M. 6.1
Napa County, California

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Glass Beads

The following notes on typology, synonymy, and chronology have been graciously contributed by Dr. James Bennyhoff. The small collection of 10 specimens illustrates the current problems in California glass bead identification, particularly since the examples lack datable context and six of the assemblage represent new types not represented in reference collections. As background for the synonymy, Meighan's typology is unpublished, but has been augmented by Bennyhoff. The Gibson types have been published (1976), and subsequently extended by Bone.

Two beads are the red and green "Cornaline d'Aleppo" classified by Meighan as type 105; by Gibson as C6a; and Bone as C3a. This was one of the most popular of trade beads and has been reported from at least 54 sites extending from Medea Creek period (1769-1782) to the Victorian period (1870-1900). At Soscol House, it could be associated with the Vallejo-Sutter years from 1834-1850; other marker types usually found in association in this period are lacking but the sample is small and the site peripheral to the Indian occupation at 4-Nap-15. These beads are listed as a. and b. in the distribution table.

Example c. is a very small and shiny black bead of the uniform seed bead size popular in the American period. If size variability and oxidation are discounted, this type might fit within Meighan's 189 and Gibson's C8a, which Gibson feels may first appear in the Malibu period (1785-1816). If patinated, Gibson places these in C8b. Bone classes the oxidized, variable beads as C8a and does not make the distinction. It is Bennyhoff's opinion that the Napa specimen is Meighan's type 222, which has been found as early as the 1850's but reached maximum popularity after 1870.

Bead d. is a slightly patinated copper blue which is difficult to date without association. It appears to be Meighan's type 279 or Bone's C2v, expanded from Gibson's C2e. The recorded occurrences for the type are at Hum-169 in the Victorian period and a questionable identification from La Purisima Mission. Despite the patina which suggests the Mission period, Dr. Bennyhoff ascribes this example to the Victorian period on the basis of the total assemblage.

The remaining six beads are not represented in the Meighan collection, but three of them resemble known types. Bead e. is a faceted biconical light green, clearly Victorian in age. A larger specimen of the same shade is Meighan's type 392 or Bone's F3h. Bead f. is a black spindle, probably Victorian. The same shape in copper blue came from the same site in Yolo which yielded Meighan's example of 392. This one if blue would be Meighan's type 76, Bone's W2f. Bead g. is a blown spindle with black tip. This particular variant is unique, but all other blown types appear to date after 1870. Bead h. is a wound pink with copper pin. Bennyhoff believes it is probably Victorian since all beads with wire found in Ventura (Gibson 1976) were placed in

period. Bead i. is hexagonal cobalt, snapped, and probably Victorian. Shorter specimens of different color and longer, larger examples have been recovered at late sites. Finally, bead j. is a blue glass example .9 x .6 cm, unidentified at this time.

It is Bennyhoff's opinion that all 10 beads represent the years between 1860 and 1900, with the possibility that the first three, a.-c., could originate in the Vallejo-Sutter years of 1834-1850. Bead g. is the only one which was recovered within a datable context; it occurred in the 60-110 cm level of Feature 3. Whether it was deposited during the use of the privy or when it was filled, the estimated age is congruent with the estimated span for the feature. All of the others were found on or near the surface, eight above 10 cm in depth, and only one in the 10-20 cm level.

Table 13

Distribution of Glass Beads

Item	Depth in cm				
	+10-0	Surface	0-10	10-20	Feature
a.	1				
b.				1	
c.			1		
d.			1		
e.			1		
f.			1		
g.					1*
h.		1			
i.			1		
j.	—	— 1	—	—	—
Totals	1	2	5	1	1

* Feature 3, 60-110 cm