

ARCHEOLOGY OF MISSISSIPPI

by

CALVIN S. BBROWN

*With a New Introduction by*

*PHILIP PHILLIPS*

*Curator of Southeastern American Archaeology  
Peabody Museum*

Published by AMS Press, Inc., New York  
for Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology  
Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
1973

NATIONAL MUSEUMS OF CANADA  
MUSEUMS NATIONAUX DU CANADA

## CHAPTER IX.

### POST-COLUMBIAN MATERIAL.

The Indians remained in Mississippi long after the coming of the Europeans. Until the treaties of 1832 and 1834 there were many living in the state; in 1910 there were still 1253 Indians in Mississippi; and in 1920 there were 1105, living mostly in the counties of Leake, Neshoba, Scott, and Newton. These are Choctaws and speak the Choctaw language as their mother tongue.

In the later Indian graves are not infrequently found objects of Caucasian manufacture or showing Caucasian influence, such as beads, silver ornaments, tomahawks, and other objects of bronze or brass, even cups, saucers, plates, and glass bottles. The purpose of the present chapter is to illustrate and describe a few of these later objects in order to give a general idea of them. The chapter might easily be very greatly extended.

Among the objects that traders found of value for exchange with the Amerinds were beads of glass or other composition. Personal adornment played a large part in the childish lives of these primitive people. Even yet the Choctaws in Mississippi, both men and women, wear beads. In the graves of the north-eastern part of the state about New Albany, Tupelo, and Pontotoc, and further toward the south-west near Vicksburg and Natchez, quantities of trade beads are found. In Mr. James M. Watts's collection five miles north-east of Pontotoc, I measured a string of 37 feet of those late beads, which he had put together from the graves in his vicinity. These beads vary in length from one-twentieth to one-half an inch, are of many colors, and often have spirals of color in the glass. The

author's collection contains 27.5 feet of trade beads from the vicinity of Tupelo.

A good illustration of some of the variation in size, shape and color may be seen in figure 346, which shows a string from the Natchez territory. These should be compared with the prehistoric stone beads mentioned in a former chapter and shown in figures 125-128. To the post-Columbian period most probably belong also the copper beads made of thin sheet metal rolled into cylinders.

An unusual find was made some years ago in a field about three miles south-west of New Albany, Union County. A brass kettle fifteen inches in diameter and nine inches deep containing many objects was unearthed; the kettle itself is in excellent preservation but the iron handle or bail has entirely rusted away. Among the more notable things found in the large brass kettle near New Albany were:

- 2 big dinner plates of chinaware; 3 saucers;
- 6 china cups or bowls; 2 metal spoons;
- 2 metal knives; 22 feet of trade beads;
- 1 Jefferson medal of silver (figs. 348, 349);
- 1 pair of silver bracelets, 2.75 inches wide;

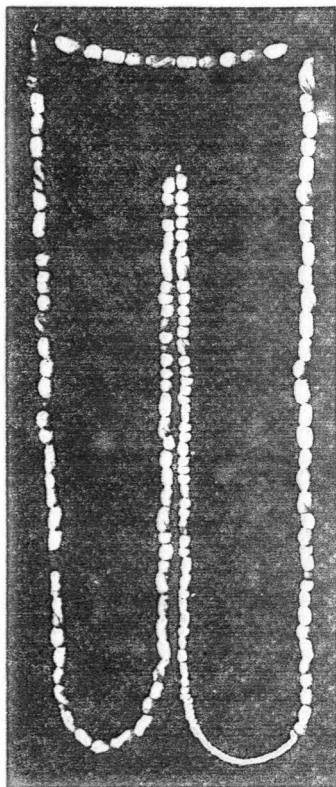


FIG. 346. Trade beads from Natchez, considerably reduced. Rufus Learned collection, Natchez.