

THE ZIMMERMAN SITE:

**Further Excavations at the
Grand Village of Kaskaskia**

by

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flattened, may be possibly the initial stage in the construction of another snake.

Brass or copper snakes are not uncommon in the protohistoric and historic times. One made from native copper was found at the Dumaw Creek Site (Quimby 1966: 42); another was found at the O'Regan Oneota Site (Wedel 1959: 20); and five made of flattened pieces of sheet copper were in burials at the Anker Site (Bluhm and Liss 1961:126). A snake from the Fifield Site (Faulkner 1972: 138) has not been analyzed and may be either native or trade material. Similar effigies have been reported from other sites in the region — Summer Island (Brose 1970: 17), Madisonville (Griffin 1943:128), and other unreported sites in Illinois (Cheryl Munson, personal communication 1972). These objects generally are assumed to have had ceremonial importance as snakes were a part of some religious activities. The Illinois, as discussed by Deliette (Pease and Werner 1934:372-4) had men who handled snakes to arouse awe and thus obtain obedience.

Iron

Thirteen pieces of iron, including two staples and six nails, came from the upper six inches of features; these are likely to be later intrusions. Sixty-two pieces came from lower levels. Most of the iron was corroded beyond recognition. Two pieces of wire were found, one bent into a hook shape. There is a round ball 9 mm in diameter. A portion of what may be a large spoon is 90 mm long and has a roughly triangular section of iron attached to a narrowed portion of the "bowl." One corroded item about 60 mm long may be a small clasp knife.

A fragment of an offset awl came from Feature 27. The fragment is 62 mm long and is round in cross section (Plate VII:a). Similar awls were found at the Bell Site (Wittry 1963:34). A straight awl was part of the trade material found in 1947. A cut and crushed axe was found; the socket was hammered together and could not be measured, and the axe blade was broken off slightly below the socket (Plate VII:h). Portions of two axe or hoe blades, the blade of a French clasp knife, and an iron ring or chain loop were found in 1947. The overall length of the

knife is 12 mm and its greatest width is 22 mm. It belongs in Class I, Group I, Type 1, Variety *a* of Stone's classification (1970). Three iron tinkling cones were constructed from strips of iron in the same manner as the brass ones.

Glass Beads

Sixty-two seed beads were located by troweling and in the flotation process. In addition beads occurred in Burial 28; and 72 beads were found in the 1947 work, mostly in Burials 2 and 3 on the river bank. Ten necklace beads were found in 1970 and 1971, seven from Burials 24, 25, and 26, a bundle burial. Three blue beads, larger than seed beads, and a blue drawn tubular bead, 47 mm long and 5 mm in diameter, are said to have been found in 1947.

The majority of the seed beads were of various shades of blue (Table 13) although there were five white (*V.a*) and three black (*V.y*) (Classification based on Stone 1970). The red bead mentioned in the earlier report (J.A. Brown 1961:60) is actually a two-layered bead with a dark green center and a red exterior, popularly known as Corneline d'Aleppo (C1, S.B., B, T2, *V.a*). One of these was found also in the recent work. The seed beads are about 2 mm in length and in diameter and the necklace beads 6 to 8 mm long with a diameter of approximately 5 to 6 mm. No necklace beads similar to those from the Zimmerman Site were found at Michilimackinac although the beads are the same color as the seed beads of Variety *f*.

Small blue seed beads are found on many sites of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. The larger necklace beads are not as common nor are the drawn blue cylindrical ones. One of the latter type occurred at Summer Island (Brose 1970:17).

Native-made Glass Objects

Modification of the glass beads was done by the Indians. Eight fragments were found of native-made glass objects formed by grinding the small glass beads into a powder, making it into a paste probably with saliva as the binding agent and heating the paste on a piece of brass until the glass melted and fused together (Ubelaker and Bass 1970).

TABLE 13
SEED BEAD VARIETIES

FEATURE	CLASS 1, SERIES A, TYPE 1											SERIES B, TYPE 1
	VARIETY											VARIETY
	A	C	D	E	F	L	M	O	Q	R	Y	A
12	1				1	2			1			
13					1							
19					1							
20												
22												
27									1		1	
32									1			
34					2	2			3			
35	1		2									
41								6		1	1	
42								1				
52	2		1									1
53	1						1	5		1	1	
55								1				
56								3				
57										2		
60								1				
62		1						1				
65				3				2				
68												
72								2				
TOTAL	5	1	3	3	6	6	2	24	6	5	3	1

NOTE: Classification based on Stone 1970.

None of the pieces were whole; so it could not be told what type of decorative object these represented, but they appear to have been circular. The pieces were rough on the reverse and imperfectly fused on the obverse with large granules still quite distinct. They were manufactured from the blue trade beads. In 1947 what was called "melted beads" were found. Examination of these suggests that they are worked since some of the beads had been ground prior to melting. All of the items seem very crude in comparison to finds at sites later in time, and possibly these pieces were made when the technique was still new and experimental (M.K. Brown 1972). Where this technique originated is not known. Late accounts from the Arikara suggest that it was taught them by a Spanish slave. Considering the far-ranging journeys that the Illinois made to obtain slaves, this would not even be an impossibility for them, but the real source remains unknown.

These glass objects may have been the blue stones referred to by Father Rasles in 1723, although a blue stone was to be found on the Meramec (Villers 1926:17).

They wear collars and earrings made of little stones, which they cut like precious stones; some are blue, some red, and some white as alabaster . . . (Thwaites 1896-1901:LXVII, 165)

Other European Artifacts

Feature 13 contained Burials 23 to 26. Near the bundle burial containing Burials 23 to 25 was an iron tool. The tool has a hollow iron handle attached to a square-sectioned iron rod. The rod originally was within a wooden sheath which had iron supports down the sides and across the bottom (Plate IX: g). The overall length of the tool is 29.3 cm; the sheath is 16.8 cm in length, and the handle is 12 cm long and 2.1 cm in diameter. The tool was examined by X-ray to determine more about its structure (Plate VIII). The lower end of the rod appears to expand slightly and possibly to twist.

What the tool was has not yet been determined. With the thought that it might be a ship-building tool (the *Griffin* had been built during the possible timespan of the village), photos and a radiograph were sent to the Smithsonian Institution to the Division of