

# MINNESOTA TRADE MATERIAL

## FROM A BURIAL AT SHAKOPEE

by  
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Trade material can be of considerable value to the archaeologist in that it offers a means for approximating the time that Indian habitation sites were occupied. It can also be used, within limits, of course, to determine the time of burial when it is found associated with skeletal remains. In the southwestern part of the United States accurate dating within the past century or two can often be done by means of tree ring chronology in which the width of the annual rings of existing trees are correlated with those of timbers and pieces of wood found in ruins. This is out of the question in Minnesota as our climatic conditions are such that wood exposed to the elements, or buried in the ground, lasts for only a relatively short length of time. Therefore, the writer is of the opinion that a study of trade material, with special emphasis on the time of manufacture as well as when it was traded to the Indians, offers great possibilities.

When trade material is found associated with objects that are usually considered to be prehistoric, such as stone implements, we are safe in assuming that they are representative of an early historic period, or a period of transition between prehistoric and historic times. If we have information as to the dates of manufacture of the trade material, or when it was traded, we are in a position to say, with some degree of certainty, about when a camp site was occupied or when a burial occurred.

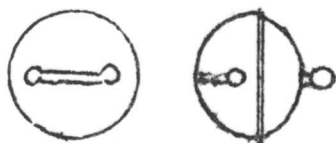
Investigation made on various habitation sites in the state have shown that not all are strictly prehistoric or historic. In many cases sites that were undoubtedly originally prehistoric were also occupied by Indians during historic times. In the area adjacent to the Twin Cities three types of sites have been differentiated; those that are unquestionably prehistoric, those that are historic, and those in which there is a mingling of prehistoric and historic materials. The writer will describe some interesting objects found on a burial site in Scott County, Minnesota, and how these objects were used in dating the site.

These burials, which were apparently made in coffins constructed of wood, were investigated some years ago, though not by the writer, who took the opportunity recently to make a record of the objects found before they became scattered and their archaeological value lost for all time, as is all too often the case. The plates accompanying this paper show most of the articles found, which were in all likelihood prized possessions of Sioux Indians who probably were members of the Shakopee band.

Most of the objects found were very likely of English manufacture. The brass buttons were a running fox design which is a characteristic of

# TRADE MATERIAL FROM GRAVE SITE

## SCOTT COUNTY - MINN.



28 BRASS BELLS



EAR RINGS  
SILVER ON COPPER  
3 COMPLETE  
17 PARTS ONLY



8 BRASS BUTTONS  
RUNNING FOX DESIGN  
THESE WERE ATTACHED  
TO BROWN FELT CLOTH



BUCKLES  
SILVER  
3 COMPLETE  
9 PARTS ONLY

$\frac{1}{16}$ " ROUND GLASS @  
BEADS (NUMEROUS)  
DARK RED COLORED  
AMBER COLORED



SHELL TUBULAR BEADS  
(NUMEROUS)

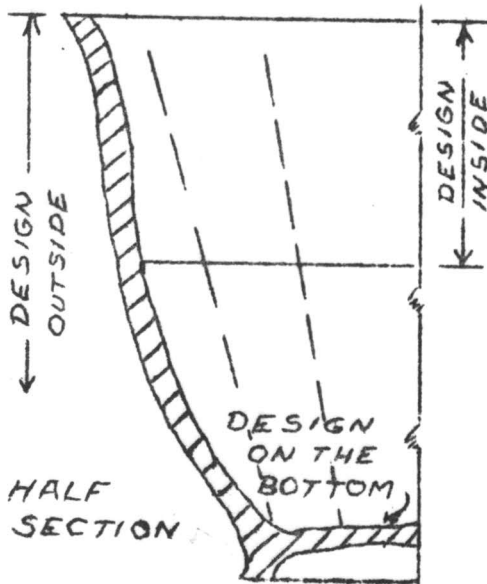


CREAM COLOR  
TUBULAR GLASS  
BEADS (NUMEROUS)

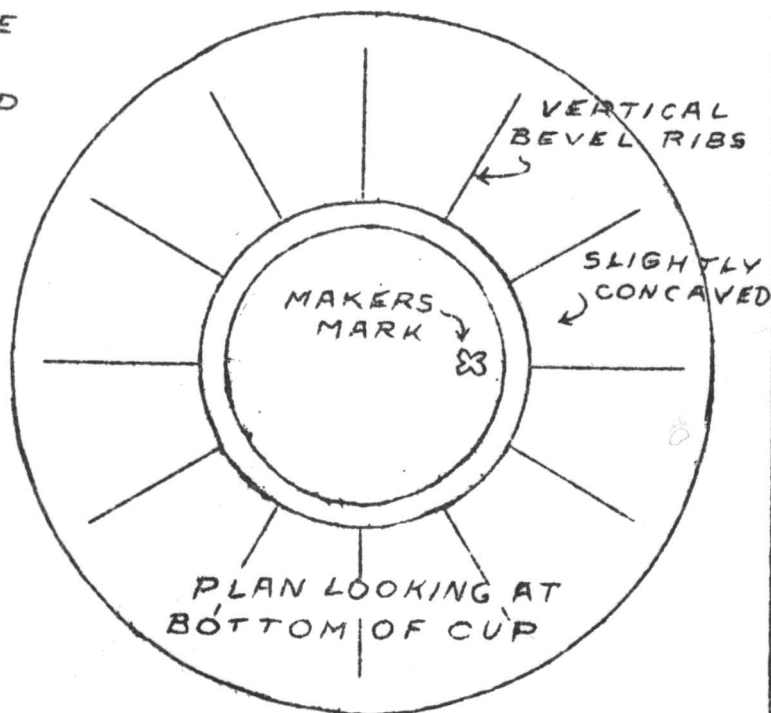


CREAM COLOR  
ROUND GLASS  
BEADS  
(NUMEROUS)

ENGLISH  
STAFFORDSHIRE WARE  
DESIGN BLUE  
NO HANDLE TYPE CUP



GEORGE FLASKERD



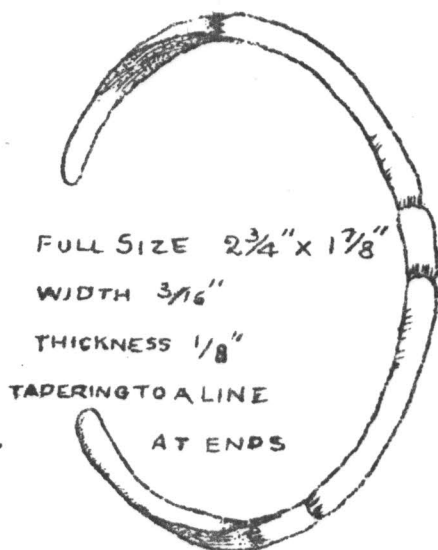
FULL SIZES

many articles traded to the Indians by the Hudson's Bay Company. A blue Staffordshire ware cup was found as well as a soup plate, not shown in the drawings, of the same ware. This plate is 8-3/4 inches in diameter with a depth of 2-1/4 inches and bears the mark of J. and G. Meakin. The writer ascertained that this English firm commenced making this ware for the American trade about 1845. The small doll with hood, as well as the detached doll arms and leg, and the small child's play cup, might yield interesting information if examined by a specialist in this field though none showed any marks whereby the manufacturer might be identified. The pipe is of interest as are the United States coins since their dates are legible, - 1852, 1853 and 1856. Two metal spoons, two metal cups one of which was a drinking cup, a brass watch chain, 34 assorted glass beads, a number of square iron nails that were machine made and that may have come from the coffins, 12 human teeth, and part of a human skull were also found. None of these articles are shown in the drawings. There were no stone implements found with the burials.

The writer thinks that his study of the materials mentioned in this work is an example of what can be accomplished in the way of dating the time burials were made, or camp sites were occupied, though he recognizes the fact that not in all cases are coins with legible dates available. He is of the opinion that the burials were made shortly after 1856.

The writer is very grateful to Messrs. Fred K. Blossing, Jr., and John Schoffman for the opportunity to examine the material used in connection with this work, and to the Art Department of the Minneapolis Public Library for assistance in obtaining information relating to the china plate bearing the name of the maker.

### TRADE BRACELET OF THE MIDDLE 1800'S



This brass trade bracelet was found in an Indian grave at the old Shakopee village site, Scott County, Minnesota in 1940. Elof Wedin of Minneapolis, Minnesota secured this piece from one of several graves situated on his farm near the junction of Eagle Creek and the Minnesota River. This specimen, covered with green patina, was of the characteristic style worn by the Santee Dakota Sioux about 1850. The Sioux Treaty at Mendota, 1851, resulted in the rapid removal of all these peoples to the Yellow Medicine Agency on the Upper Minnesota River. (The piece is now in the writer's possession.)

Harvey Soulen