

Mrs. Richard N. HAHN

HISTORIC MATERIAL FROM PENSACOLA, FLORIDA

Pensacola has been a town nearly three centuries longer than Florida has been a state. Evidences of the passage of many nations can be found today in downtown Pensacola along the waterfront where the old trading vessels from foreign countries dumped rock ballast. Mixed with the jetty-like ballast piles today are great varieties of items. Among the old coins found there are a 1694 British penny with Britannia on the obverse face and the profiles and names of William and Mary (spelled Willmvs et Maria) on the reverse (Fig. 1A); two French "dix centimes" (10 centimes) dated 1855 and 1864 and inscribed Napoleon III Empereur (Fig. 1B and 1C); an 187? Belgian penny inscribed Leopold II Roi (Fig. 1D); and an Italian coin with Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia inscribed on it (Fig. 1E). The date is worn off, but this coin was minted only from 1861 to 1867. The coin (Fig. 1F) was found on the site of the old Fort San Carlos. It is a 1782 Spanish coin with Carolus III Dei Gratia inscribed on it. Other items found in this area are the American enlisted man's First Light Artillery button, circa 1820 (Fig. 1G), with 16 stars surrounding a large LA over I; a French military button (Fig. 1H) with a star covering the front and "Paris" written on the back; a British button (Fig. 1I) with a crown across the top of an anchor; a button inscribed Ferro Carril Del Sui Limitada (1800 Spanish Auxiliary Railroad) (Fig. 1J); a British medallion with the profiles and names of Edward VII and Alexandria I (Fig. 1K); and a crudely made cast brass little-finger ring (Fig. 1L).

The brass bowl (Fig. 1M) was found by Mrs. Don Jaekels of Gulf Breeze, Florida, in Pensacola Bay under 4 feet of water and 3 feet of sand at the site of several old shipwrecks. On the bottom of the bowl is the picture of an Oriental-looking woman in a kimono and around the sides is written in Arabic, "The people made the government of Iraq." This translation was made by a native of Bagdad now residing in Birmingham. According to Richard Howard, Curator of the Birmingham Museum of Art, the bowl was made in the 14th or 15th century.

The brass seal (Fig. 2A) has an unidentified family crest on the base. On the left side of the crest is a lion rampant, and on the right are 3 fleur-de-lis surrounded by 11 stars, or estoiles, grouped 4, 5, 1, and 1. Centered above the crest is a helmet with visor with two gauntlets on either side. The seal was found by Mrs. C. J. Reinschmidt of Gulf Breeze, Florida.

Many trade beads have been excavated in Indian burials in this area. The bead (Fig. 2B) has been identified as the "old star" or "chevron" type. (Based on photograph, this appears to be "Weiss Blue Asterisk" in unpublished Weiss Basin Report.)

Brass bells of a type common on historic Indian sites (Fig. 2C) were found, along with Civil War lead bullets; Minie balls; roofing tile from France and Spain; brick from Leeds, England; and painted Spanish hearth tile made in the 1700's. Many small clay pipes have been recovered by Norman Simons, Curator of the Old

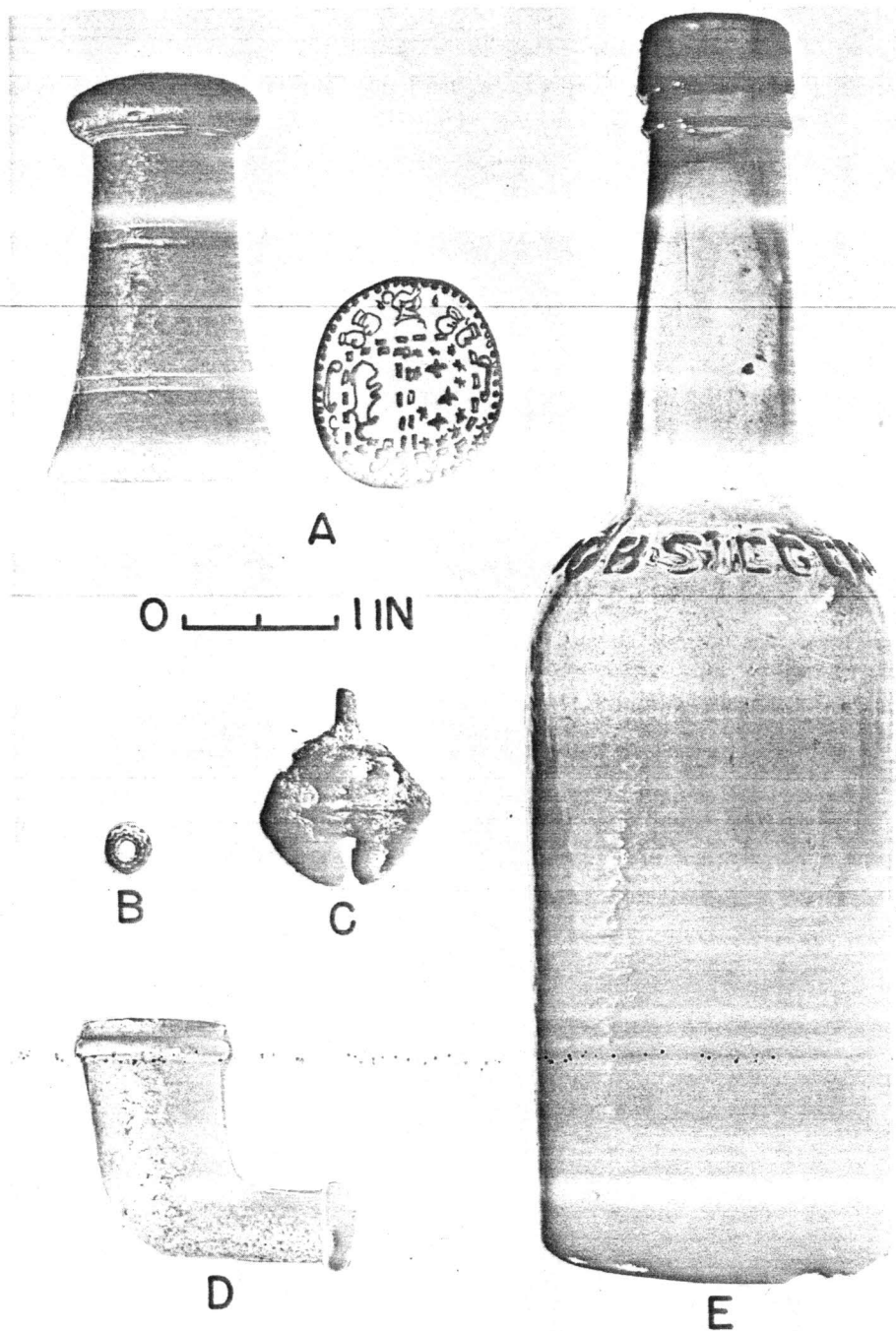


Fig. 2. Indian and European items: brass seal, A; trade bead, B; brass bell, C; clay pipe, D; and bottle, E. (Photos by Long.)