

ALBERTA ARCHAEOLOGY

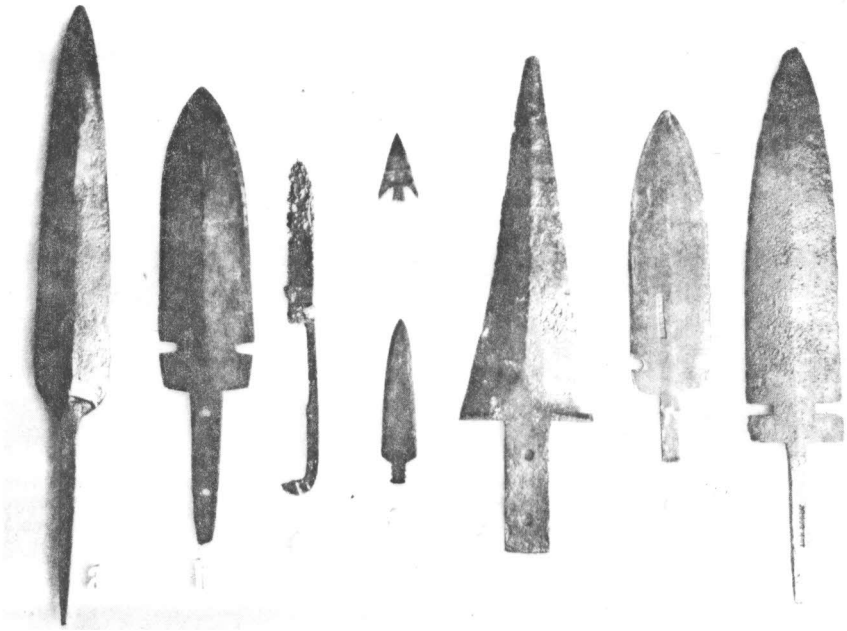
*A HANDBOOK
FOR AMATEURS*

Donald
By D. R. KING

1968

HIGH RIVER TIMES
HIGH RIVER, ALTA.

PLATE 5



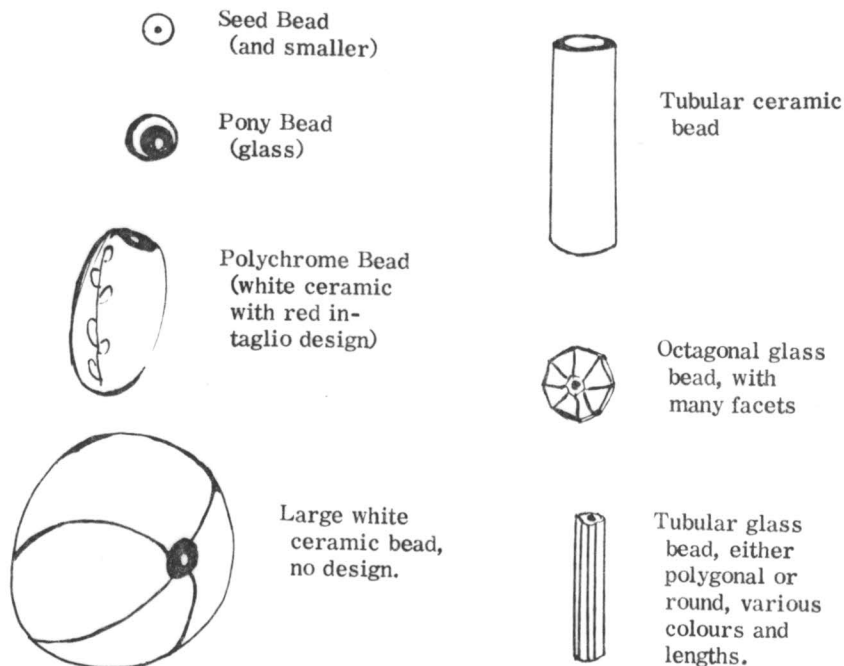
Trade goods — spear points and knives,
some of local manufacture.

TRADE BEADS

The most common form of Indian bead was the coloured glass trade bead introduced by the white traders. These beads, sometimes known as 'seed beads' were made to resemble the brilliant porcupine quills with which so much of the finer Indian clothing was decorated. Sewn together into solid patterns, the effect of the beads very closely resembled the intricate patterns formerly contrived with great effort out of quills.

Glass beads were many shapes, sizes and colours. From the seed bead, in white, black and red mainly, with a few blue and purple, we run through the larger 'pony' beads right up to the huge ceramic or glass polychrome beads.

Some forms of Trade Beads:-



PROBLEMATICAL OBJECTS

It is not uncommon for an amateur to find in his collection one or more artifacts which defy classification. These items are usually worked to a definite shape and yet they do not fit into any known category. For this class of material we have adopted the term **PROBLEMATICAL OBJECTS**. Some of these items have been given names, for want of better classification, such as 'bannerstones', 'birdstones' and 'boatstones', 'stone balls' and 'eccentric flints'. There are many others which cannot even be described, however those which appear in the same form more than once can be placed in some sort of category.

Bannerstones have no known use but some authorities feel they are associated with ritual or ceremony, being placed on the end of a staff, much after the fashion of the old Roman eagle, to serve as some form of rank badge or standard; hence the name 'banner'. Boatstones and birdstones are generally effigies of some sort, either in the form of boat-shaped animals or with the boat shape without any animal features. Birdstones may take the shape of a bird, as illustrated in Figure 14.

Both birdstones and boatstones bear a remarkable resemblance to atlatl weights and may have been used for this purpose, yet there is such a variation in forms that no definite theory has yet been advanced.