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# ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT HORSESHOE BEND

## NATIONAL MILITARY PARK, ALABAMA

BY

ROY S. DICKENS, JR.

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY

LINDA F. CARNES
JAMES H. CHAPMAN
PAULA F. EDMISTON
MARVIN T. SMITH
CLAIRE C. B. VAUGHT

AND APPENDICES BY

WALTER N. DIETZEN
JOAN C. RUPP

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

Horseshoe Bend National Military Park is located on the upper Tallapoosa River in east-central Alabama (Figure 1). The park, established in 1959, contains within its 2040 acres the area of the 1814 battle between Andrew Jackson and the Creek Indians, the site of the village of Tohopeka, which was occupied by the Red Sticks immediately prior to the battle, and the site of the village of Nuyaka which was founded in 1777 and destroyed in 1813 (Figure 2). These sites are situated in close proximity to a large bend in the Tallapoosa River (Figure 3), for which the park and battle are named.

The battle site is located on elevated terrain within the "neck" of the river bend. Here, the Indians constructed a fortification, or "barricade," which stretched from bank to bank and was the focal point of the engagement. There is no remaining above-ground evidence of this fortification. The site of the village of Tohopeka lies in the "toe" of the river bend on the active river floodplain. The surface of this site has been severely scoured by river action during the past century. The Nuyaka village site is located on the northeastern portion of the park, mostly but not completely within the park boundary. It is about 1800 yards upstream from the river bend and on the opposite bank from the other two sites. Nuyaka covers a much larger area than Tohopeka and is situated on a first terrace of the river. It has been subjected to modern plowing, but is less damaged by river erosion than Tohopeka.

Both the battle site and Tohopeka village site are open to the public and form an integral part of the park's interpretive (museum and tour) program. The Nuyaka site, however, is presently closed to the public and is given only peripheral treatment on the museum exhibits interpretive literature.

## Project Design

This project at Horseshoe Bend was brought about for the purpose of investigating specific historical and interpretive questions, and for enhancing the archaeological knowledge of Upper Creek culture in the late historic period. Four "project areas," outlined in the contract agreement, are listed below in order of priority:

(a) Indian Barricade site (A.D. 1814): archaeological investigations to determine, if possible, the location and construction details of the barricade so that it might be accurately reconstructed.

Glass Trade Beads from Nuyaka
by
Marvin T. Smith

This is an analysis of 24 glass trade beads from the Nuyaka Village site. No glass trade beads were found at the Tohopeka or Barricade sites. The beads are described using standard type descriptions. Sizes given are diameters perpendicular to the perforation, unless otherwise stated (it should be noted that due to the handmade nature of the beads, sizes will vary). The provenience of all beads is given in Table 19.

The beads were also compared to collections from other sites in the Eastern United States: the Guebert Site, a Kaskaskia Indian town in Illinois occupied 1719-1833 (Good 1972); Fort Michilimackinac, a French and later British fort in Michigan occupied 1715-1781 (Stone 1974); Chota, an Overhill Cherokee town circa 1745-1799 (Gleeson 1970); Coosawattee Old Town, beads from one Cherokee structure dated ca. 1780 Smith 1973); the Creek town of Atasi (personal information), and the Creek site of Childersburg (DeJarnette and Hansen 1960). The Nuyaka beads were also compared to beads in a Wichita Indian glass bead sequence, developed from several sites in Texas (Harris and Harris 1967).

All beads in the collection were made by the hollow cane method. In this manufacturing technique, a large bubble of molten glass was pulled out to form a long hollow tube. This tube was broken into sections the length of the beads, which were either left rough, or were tumbled. Tumbling is a process for smoothing the fractured ends of the broken tube (called a cane). Ash was placed in the perforations of the beads, and the beads were then heated and tumbled in a drum to obtain smooth, rounded ends. The ash functioned to keep the perforation from melting closed. For a further description of bead making, see van der Sleen (1973) or Kidd (1970).

Following Harris and Harris (1967:138), beads are further described as simple, compound, or complex. Simple beads are made of one structurally undifferentiated mass of glass. Compound beads consist of two or more concentric layers of glass. Complex beads have decoration, such as stripes, made from glass rods impressed into the surface. Only one complex bead was found at Nuyaka.

Type Descriptions (Figure 111):

(1) Opaque white untumbled tubular bead of compound construction. Three specimens: 2.9-3.5 mm. in diameter. A thin transparent clear layer overlies the opaque white.

This bead is probably Childersburg Type 2, Georgia White Cylindrical dated 1750+. It is present at Guebert (Type 119), the Wichita sites

| Provenience | Bead Type Number | Number of Specimens |
|---|---|---|
| Back dirt 100R850 | 6 | 1 |
| Feature 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | 2 | 1 |
| | 3 | 1 |
| | 4 | 1 |
| | 5 | 2 |
| | 6 | 3 |
| | 7 | 1 |
| | 11 | 1 |
| Feature 4 | 1 | 1 |
| | 2 | 2 |
| | 5 | 2 |
| | 6 | 1 |
| | 10 | 1 |
| | 11 | 1 |
| Feature 9 | 2 | 1 |
| | 8 | 1 |
| | 9 | 1 |
| | Total | 24 |

Distribution of Glass Trade Beads at Nuyaka

Table 19

(Type 65, 1676-1820), Fort Michilimackinac (Type C1, SB, T2, Vb), Atasi, and Chota.

(2) Opaque black untumbled tubular cane bead of simple construction. Four specimens: 2.7-3.2 mm. in diameter. This bead occurs at Childersburg (Type 9, Georgia Black Cylindrical 1750-1825), Wichita sites (Type 66, 1740-1820), Fort Michilimackinac (Type C1, SA, T2, Vb), Chota, and Coosawattee Old Town. This bead is a good marker for the last half of the 18th century.

(3) Translucent burgundy untumbled tubular cane bead of simple construction. One specimen: 2.7 mm. in diameter. This bead was not found in any report consulted, but is a color variety of Type 2 and Type 5.

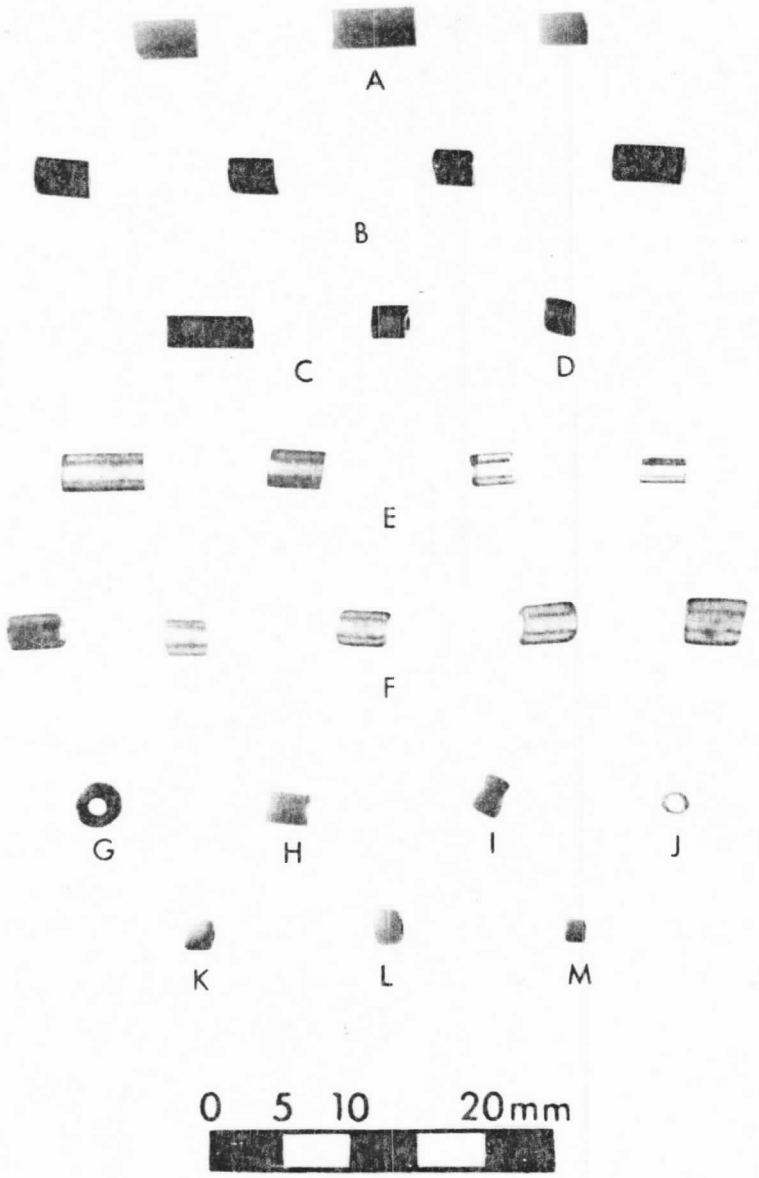


Figure 111. Glass trade beads. a, Type 1. b, Type 2. c, Type 3. d, Type 4. e, Type 5. f, Type 6. g, Type 7. h, Type 8. i, Type 9. j, Type 10. k, Type 11. 1, Type 12.

(4) Short tumbled tubular red bead of compound construction. One specimen: 2.8 mm. in diameter. This bead is an opaque dull red over a transparent light green core. It is called the Cornaline d'Aleppo in the literature. This bead occurs at Childersburg (Type 46, 1685-1825), Coosawattee Old Town, Guebert (Type 127a), Wichita sites (Type 51, 1700-1836), and Chota. This bead is very common and has a wide chronological and geographical range. Generally, this type is replaced circa 1800-1820 by a similar bead having a translucent red outer layer over an opaque white core.

(5) Short untumbled tubular transparent medium blue bead of simple construction. Four specimens: 2.2-3.0 mm. in diameter. This bead occurs at Childersburg (Type 8, "Georgia Transparent Blue Cylindrical" 1775-1825), Coosawattee Old Town, and Chota. This is a good time marker for the late 18th century.

(6) Short tumbled tubular transparent medium blue cane bead of simple construction. Five specimens: 2.9-3.8 mm. in diameter. These beads may simply be well worn specimens of Type 5, instead of being truly tumbled. However, this tumbled type occurs in the Wichita sequence (Type 61, 1740-1820). These are probably grouped with Type 5 in Childersburg Type 8, "Ga. Translucent Blue Cylindrical."

(7) Small tumbled black donut-shaped seed bead of complex construction. Six white stripes are inlaid parallel to the perforation. One specimen: 3.7 mm. in diameter. I was unable to find this bead in the literature, however it is similar to Type 91 in the Wichita sequence which has four white stripes and is dated 1740-1767. This four stripe variety also occurs at Fort Michilimackinac and Chota.

(8) Small tubular untumbled opaque light blue cane bead of simple construction. One specimen: 2.7 mm. in diameter. This bead is similar to Type 5 except for color. This bead is also found at Fort Michilimackinac (Type C1, SA, T2, Vc) and it may be present at Chota (incomplete description).

(9) Small tumbled barrel-shaped opaque light blue seed bead of simple construction. One specimen: 3.0 mm. in diameter. This bead is the same color as Type 8. It occurs at Fort Michilimackinac (Type C1, SA, T1, Va) and may be Type 68 at Guebert.

(10) Opaque white tumbled barrel-shaped seed bead of compound construction. One specimen: .26 mm. in diameter. White core with clear exterior layer. This bead occurs at Guebert (Type 109a), Wichita sites (Type 5, 1700-1836), Coosawattee Old Town, Fort Michilimackinac (Type C1, SB, T1, Va), and Atasi. This is an extremely common bead type of no chronological significance.

(11) Opaque white tumbled barrel-shaped seed bead of simple construction. Two specimens: 2.0 mm.-3.1 mm. in diameter. These beads may be

patinated examples of Type 10, in which the thin clear outer layer has weathered away.

In conclusion, eleven types of beads were described from the Nuyaka site. All types that could be compared with examples in the literature date from the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, which coincides with the historical evidence for occupation of the site during the period 1777 to 1813. The absence of certain bead types which are common on earlier sites suggests that the site was not occupied earlier than 1777 in the historic period. Similarly, the absence of certain bead types, such as the red over white form of the Cornaline d' Aleppo and the blue faceted "Russian" bead which appeared during the period 1800-1820, indicates that the site was not occupied after 1813-1814.