

Introduction²

This study began in 1949 when I was a student at Berkeley. I pursued it fairly intensively for three years and have done occasional up-dating of my records since. However, the data were never published for two reasons. First, I could not find an outlet that would provide the essential color illustrations, a problem that has been overcome through use of a microfiche color catalog (envelope inside back cover).³ More important, the study of glass beads turned out to be, like so many other archaeological studies, nowhere near as simple as I originally thought it. My hope was that glass beads in California (figure 2) could be used to provide precise chronological markers for the associated archaeological finds, and further that I would be able to recognize the sources of the various kinds of glass beads (Spanish, Russian, American, etc.). For reasons discussed below, neither sourcing nor chronology is as precise as the archaeologist would like. I used my data to serve as a consultant to several projects,⁴ but felt sufficient uncertainty in the results that I was not eager to rush into print with insecure conclusions.

After this long lapse of time, however, it appears desirable to place my information in the public record. Following the older general studies of Beck (1928) and Orchard (1929), the recent expansion of interest in historical archaeology has led to many new studies of trade beads. In 1970, Kidd and Kidd published a new classification system for glass beads;⁵ a whole journal devoted to beads (*The Bead Journal*)⁶ initiated publication in 1974 under the editorship of Robert Liu, and in 1972 Karklins and Sprague published an annotated bibliography on glass trade beads in North America.⁷ Also during the 1970s, many site reports detailing the occurrence of glass beads have appeared (see, for example, Bone 1975a; Gibson 1975; 1976; the several reports of Fenstermaker). All of this tends to make my data of more relevance than they were when I began—it must be remembered that nearly all of the key historical sites for this study have been excavated in recent years and none of them were reported at the time of my initial work, including Hudson's Bay forts in the Northwest, Fort Ross in California, and the sites of the Spanish Missions in California. The recent studies have provided me with information on the bead types associated with historic sites of known age—data of extremely limited scope in the pre-1960 period.

Another reason for making this study generally available is the continuing use that has been made of my original type collection of glass beads assembled at the Hearst Museum in Berkeley. Over the years, for want of anything better to consult, many scholars have made use of this collection, and the type numbers that I used have been published in numerous site reports. These numbers are largely meaningless to readers and the publication of color photos will allow the reader to see what these numbered types look like without making a trip to Berkeley to study the type collection.

Finally, some publications have assigned time periods and sources to these bead types, presenting conclusions that are often somewhat more precise than the data justify—a general overview of distribution and dating is therefore useful in preventing erroneous conclusions.

Over a period approaching 30 years, it is obvious that I have badgered dozens of people about this topic and I have had the cooperation of at least fifty archaeologists who have shown me their specimens and contributed their knowledge of the glass beads they have found. I cannot acknowledge all of them individually without simply publishing a roster of nearly all the active archaeologists in the state, and I can only make clear that my database is the result of wide collaborative effort. The re-study and up-dating necessary to this report were much aided by the Hearst Museum at Berkeley, which loaned me my original type collection for photography, and C. W. Clewlow of UCLA who transported this large and bulky set of museum trays back and forth to Los Angeles.

Some additional people deserve a special note of thanks: C. McClellan provided contemporary Hudson's Bay Company beads; F. de Laguna loaned me her trade bead collection from Alaska; Bruce Bryan of the Southwest Museum gave access to collections of that museum; M. R. Hardwick aided study of the collection at La Purisima Mission. At Berkeley, A. Elsasser, J. A. Bennyhoff, and Barbara Gorrell all helped in checking the type collection and identifying some additional

² All footnotes are by the editor.

³ The proposed microfiche color catalog has been replaced with illustrated color plates (figures 4–13).

⁴ For example, he analyzed the glass beads from Mission San Antonio (Meighan 1985) and consulted on the analysis of the beads from Medea Creek cemetery (King 1982:494–497).

⁵ This classification system has since been republished twice (Kidd and Kidd 1983, 2012[1970]).

⁶ This journal was rebranded as *Ornament* magazine in 1978, and in 1989 *Beads: Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers* was established.

⁷ This bibliography was updated in 1980 and a supplement was published in 1987 (Karklins and Sprague 1980; 1987; <https://beadresearch.org/resources/north-american-trade-beads-bibliographies/>). Digital copies of most of the papers listed in these bibliographies are available online through the Society of Bead Researchers (<https://beadresearch.org/resources/trade-bead-bibliography-texts/>). Additionally, an expanded, global, bibliography is currently maintained on the Society of Bead Researchers website (<https://beadresearch.org/resources/researching-the-worlds-beads-bibliography/>).

CALIFORNIA - Counties



U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Figure 2. Map of California counties (US Census Bureau, Public Domain).

beads I collected. Judi Johnson of the Illinois State Museum loaned slides and data on the Dan Frost trade bead collection. Jack Ripley gave me a number of type specimens belonging to his great grandmother, a Paiute Indian born in 1846. Finally, Robert Hoover of California State Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo has provided me with several leads and important sources of data.