

EVEN MORE ON FRIT-CORE BEADS

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This article corrects the dating of a frit-core bead from Quebec reported in 2018, and reports three new find sites, two in North America and one in Europe. One of the American sites was occupied well past the 1560-1610 date range proposed for these beads, while the other is situated well to the south of all the others. The third site is in Rouen, France, where two different types were found with wasters from the production of drawn glass beads.

In the recent *Beads* article, “More on Frit-Core Beads in North America,” the authors ascribed the Type 5A specimen recovered from the site of Fort Ville-Marie at Pointe à Callière, Quebec, to its early occupation which began in 1642 (Karklins and Bonneau 2018:58). One of the archaeologists who excavated the bead has since informed me that the specimen – recovered from the upper level of a pit (BjFj-101) – most likely relates to an earlier aboriginal occupation:

“BjFj-101 has a ^{14}C date of 1600-1615 in a pre-Ville-Marie level, and in an even older level, it has wonderfully preserved remains of garden, a longhouse and four large fireplaces including one with lead shot in it. That level also has a lot of Native pottery and it’s not SLI [St. Lawrence Iroquois] – it could be Ontario Huron or New York Iroquois. The pollen stratigraphy dates this level to about 1590-1610. So the frit-core bead fits with that data” (Brad Loewen 2018: pers. comm.).

The revised dating places the Fort Ville-Marie specimen within the expanded 1560-1610 date range proposed for these beads in northeastern North America and is therefore probably not an heirloom as proposed in the 2018 article.

It should, however, be mentioned that a likely heirloom Type 2 frit-core bead (Figure 1) came to light just as the 2018 article was going to press. It was recovered from the Seneca Marsh site in Ontario County, New York, which was occupied from ca. 1650-1670 (Michael Galban 2018: pers. comm.), making it the most recent frit-core bead in



Figure 1. Type 2 bead from the Seneca Marsh site (photos: Michael Galban; courtesy of the Rock Foundation, Rochester Museum and Science Center).

the chronological sequence. It joins the Type 2 bead from the Seneca Power House site (ca. 1640-1655) as the only other frit-core bead to fall outside the proposed 1560-1610 range proposed for this bead category (Karklins 2018:58). It is interesting to note that frit-core beads are present at six consecutive Seneca sites occupied over a ca. 100-year period from 1570 to 1670. Almost all the other sites yielding frit-core beads were inhabited during the period from ca. 1580-1600 (Karklins 2016:62). It will be interesting to see if other frit-core beads are recovered from equally late contexts.

Another find of note is an incomplete Type 3 bead (no decoration) uncovered at Mission Santa Catalina de Gualé on St. Catherines Island, coastal Georgia. This is way to the south of the main cluster of frit-core beads in the Northeast. The bead was found immediately to the west of a mission-era structure (St. 5) that appears to have been a high-status Gualé residence (Blair 2015:90-100). Associated beads and other artifacts suggest it dates to the latter half of the 17th century. There was, however, both a French and a Spanish

occupation somewhere in the immediate vicinity of the mission in the 16th century so the bead could conceivably have derived from one or the other (Elliott Blair 2019: pers. comm.).

The bead is somewhat oblong (Figure 2), measuring 7.6 mm in diameter and 8.8 mm in length with a perforation 2.1 mm in diameter. This is in keeping with the Type 3 beads recovered from two sites in Nova Scotia which are 6–7 mm in diameter and 8–11 mm in length (Karklins 2016:60). These two sites are the only others where Type 3 has been encountered. The mission bead is unusual in that the core consists of a crude glass with numerous inclusions unlike the Nova Scotia examples which had cores composed of what appeared to be slightly fused sand (Whitehead 1993:66). The cores of other Type 3 beads consist of fused coarse granules of crushed quartz (cf. Figure 1). The Guale specimen may represent a more refined technique for producing frit-core beads later in the 17th century.

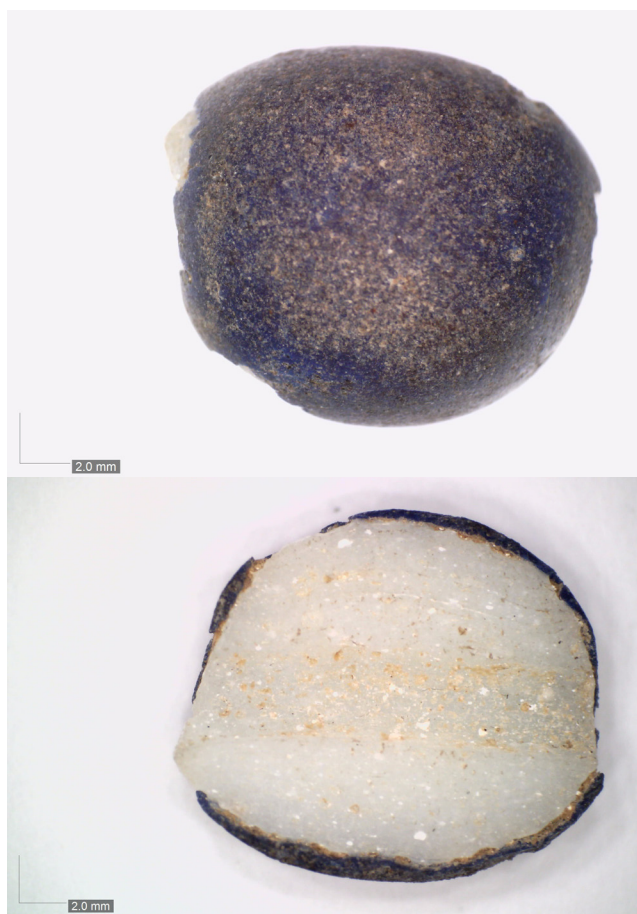


Figure 2. Type 3 specimen from St. Catherines Island, Georgia (photos: Pierce Wright).

Also noteworthy is the presence of two frit-core beads in material collected by Mr. Jacques-Michel Thaurin during street construction in 1869 at the intersection of rue Jeanne-d'Arc and rue du Gros-Horloge in the old section of Rouen, France. Attributed to the beginning of the 17th century, the material is held by the Musée des Antiquités (2014), Rouen; inv. no. 1718.1.2 (D). The first specimen is Type 2 (Figure 3, left) with an oblong dark blue body decorated with four rows of three dots and four longitudinal stripes in white. The other bead is Type 6. It has a round dark blue body encircled by a wavy white line. In each undulation of the line is a floral design composed of 6 light blue dots around a yellow dot (Figure 3, right). Of three known specimens, this is the only one where the colors of the various design elements could be observed. Both beads are slightly malformed and likely represent production rejects.



Figure 3. Type 2 (left) and Type 6 (right) beads from Rouen, France (© Musée-Métropole-Rouen-Normandie; Cliché Yohann Deslandes).

The Rouen specimens were found associated with a variety of drawn glass beads as well as their production tubes and malformed specimens suggestive of local production (Figure 4). This association suggests that frit-core beads were produced at the same shops that also made drawn beads. In the initial article on frit-core beads, it was postulated that France was a likely candidate for their production (Karklins 2016:64). While the presence of two specimens in excavated material in Paris (Turgeon 2001) and another two in the Rouen collection does not positively prove this, it does add to the evidence for this being the case, especially since both specimens from Rouen appear to be production rejects. It is hoped that additional museum, archival, and archaeological research will eventually confirm a French origin for the frit-core beads, with Paris and Rouen among the production centers.

The frit-core beads reported in 2018 and here are summarized in Tables 1 and 2 for ease of reference.



Figure 4. The production tubes and wasters associated with the two Rouen frit-core beads (© Musée-Métropole-Rouen-Normandie; Cliché Yohann Deslandes).

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Table 1. Distribution of Frit-Core Beads in North America (Continued from Karklins 2016).

Site	Location	Bead Type (Quantity)	Date	Cultural Affiliation
Odonak (Karklins 2018:55)	Pierreville, Quebec	Type 6 (1)	1571-1595	Abenaki
Unknown (Karklins 2018:56-57)	Quebec (?)	Type 1 (3) Type 2 (1) Type 7 (2) Type 8 (2)	?	?
Power House (Karklins 2018:55)	Lima, New York	Type 2 (1)	1640-1655	Seneca
Marsh	Ontario County, New York	Type 2 (1)	1650-1670	Seneca
Mission Santa Catalina de Guale	St. Catherines Island, Georgia	Type 3 (1)	1650-1700 (?)	Guale

Table 2. Distribution of Frit-Core Beads in Europe.

Site	Location	Bead Type (Quantity)	Date
Jardins du Carrousel (Turgeon 2001:63)	Paris, France	Type 1 (1), Type ? (1)	1590-1605
Old Rouen (Musée départemental des antiquités 2014)	Rouen, France	Type 2 (1), Type 6 (1)	early 17th century

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