

77. THE MOHAWK GLASS TRADE BEAD CHRONOLOGY: AN ADDENDUM, by Donald A. Rumrill (1994, 25:11-12)

Response to "The Mohawk Glass Trade Bead Chronology: ca. 1560-1785," which appeared in Volume 3 (1991) of *Beads*, has so far been very positive. Since its publication, the author has continued to seek and examine new collections in order to confirm or help refine the information presented in the report. This work has revealed a few problems with the data presented for the Rice's Woods (Cnj-26) site. The bead collection from this site was the only one that the author did not examine personally, relying instead on two conversations with a primary source for the published information. The author recently had the opportunity to catalogue the Rice's Woods collection with the following results.

There are 32 varieties among the 2,878 glass beads in the collection. Only five of these are chevrons, contrary to the published statement that "a very high proportion" were chevron varieties (Rumrill 1991:11). Over half (1,679 specimens or 58.3%) of the bead collection is composed of small (under 4 mm in diameter), circular IVa12 beads which have a transparent light grey exterior and core, and an opaque bright navy middle layer. As this bead appears blue, as noted by Kidd and Kidd (1970:79), others who have catalogued the Rice's Woods material have identified this bead as varieties IIa41 (robin's egg blue) and IIa46 (shadow blue). Fortunately, the author had excellent lighting and a magnifier, and could, therefore, distinguish the three layers. It is almost impossible to distinguish them otherwise.

The above information has been shared with others researching the Iroquois chronology, and the same misidentification detailed above has been noted after a closer scrutiny of the relevant beads. In all cases, Kidd variety IVa12 appears to date around 1615, and may be considered diagnostic of the early 17th century, along with chevron, gooseberry, and flush-eye varieties.

In light of the above, it may be worthwhile for those involved in Iroquois trade bead research to re-examine their bead collections.

References Cited

Kidd, Kenneth E. and Martha A. Kidd

1970 A Classification System for Glass Beads for the Use of Field Archaeologists. *Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History* 1:45-89.

Donald A. Rumrill

1991 The Mohawk Glass Trade Bead Chronology: ca. 1560-1785. *Beads* 3:5-45.

78. CORNERLESS CUBE STONE BEADS IN EGYPT AND PALESTINE, by Peter W. Schienerl (1985, 7:8-9)

Until quite recently many dealers in Egypt had a stock of old stone beads among their "antiquities." Beads and pendants made of carnelian and probably imported from India (cf. Peter Francis, Jr., "Indian Agate Beads," *The World of Beads Monograph Series* 6) formed the larger part of the stock. The specimens varied considerably in size and shape and will be dealt with separately.

The subject of this note is a stone bead always made of some green material (agate?) and shaped as a cornerless cube. Such beads occurred in comparatively large numbers and many of them showed considerable traces of wear. It should be noted that no other material seems to have been used for cornerless cube beads. One never got any reliable answer concerning the use and provenience of these beads, but their weight makes it difficult to believe that they might have been strung to form complete necklaces.

The photo archive of Edelgard Schienerl, Oldenburg, contains a very important picture. It shows a woman of Bedouin stock who temporarily (1973) stayed in the Fayoum Oasis, about 100 km southwest of Cairo. The woman carries her baby and a green cornerless cube is fastened to the hood of the child. When asked for the reason the mother only referred to its protective virtue against the "Evil Eye," but such an answer is of no great consequence as usually the original (possibly very specific) meaning of amulets has been obscured by now. Nevertheless, the amuletic character of the mysterious green cornerless cube beads has been established and it is obvious that such beads were worn singly.

Further references to the amuletic use of green beads were provided by the excellent study of Tawfiq Canaan: *Aberglaube und Volksmedizin im Lande der Bibel*, Hamburg, 1914. The author states that at the beginning of this century Palestinians used green beads to ward off the dangers originating from *el kabsa*. This word means "pressure," but it seems that *al kabsa* is another expression to describe the ill-doing of the well-known female demon *al-Qarina* (cf. *Ornament*, 1979, 4[2]:33). According to Canaan these green stone beads are termed *harazat al kabsa* or *kabbas* and were worn in Palestine on a cord around the neck. It was obligatory for the mother to wear such a bead during labor and for forty days afterwards. After this period the stone had to be placed in water and the child washed with this liquid.

However, according to another statement, the child received a green stone bead immediately after birth.

Similar traditions are still alive in Jordan, where Birgit Mershen observed that beads of green stone are popular as amuletic devices. In addition to cornerless cubes, she found heart-shaped pendants and oblong beads made of green agate.

In this short note I wanted to stress the fact that beads may be much more to certain people than mere items of personal adornment. But I also hope to secure the help of readers of *The Bead Forum*. As I am preparing a study on these items, I would be grateful for any information or suggestions concerning the age of such beads (are there any from stratified sites?), their origin, distribution, use, and place in local folklore and magical beliefs. It would also be interesting to know if such items are reused by contemporary craftspeople, bead stringers, and other designers of personal jewellery. It goes without saying that no information would be used without the consent of the informer, and the source would be duly stated.

79. TRADE BEADS EXCAVATED FROM A EUROPEAN/KONYAG CONTACT SITE ON KODIAK ISLAND, ALASKA, by Elizabeth G. Shapiro (1988, 13:7-12)

This report is intended to acquaint the reader with the site in question, the placement of the beads in the site, and the types of beads excavated from the site. By reviewing this evidence, it may be possible to trace and compare historic accounts of European intervention on Kodiak Island, while at the same time, develop the beginnings of a chronological sequence of trade beads in southern Alaska. The town of Karluk, Alaska, is located on the northwestern side of Kodiak Island and is separated from the Alaskan mainland by the 25-mi.-long Shelikof Strait (Fig. 1). Two sites at Karluk were chosen for archaeological survey and excavation during the summer of 1984, under the supervision of Dr. Richard Jordan, former Professor of Anthropology at Bryn Mawr College and currently chairman of the Anthropology Department at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The second site, consisting of 42 house pits (major portions of which date back to the period of Russian occupation) is known as the village of Nunakakhnak, and will be referred to as the KAR-37 site. The collection of beads excavated from one of these house pits constitutes the data presented herewith.

Briefly, the contact history of Kodiak Island centers on Gregor Shelikov who, in 1784, established the first permanent Russian settlement in Alaska on Kodiak Island at

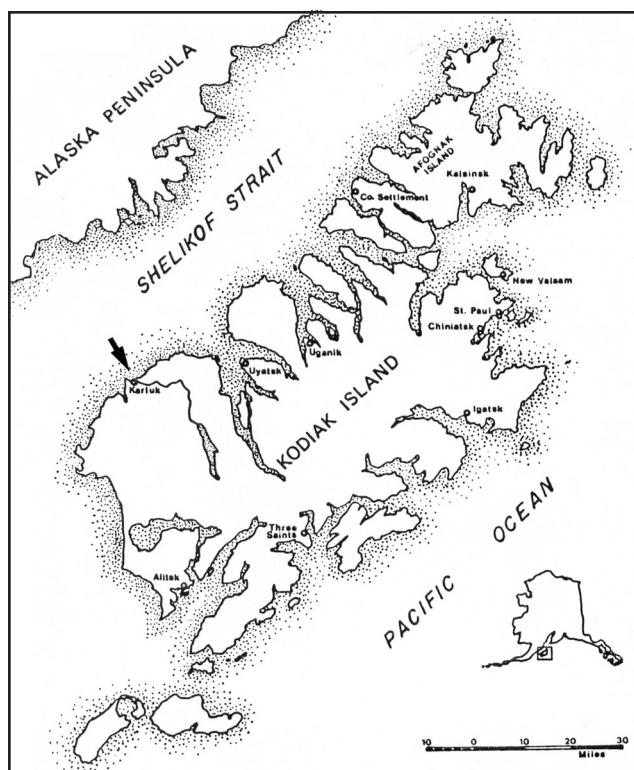


Figure 1. Map of Kodiak Island showing the locations of mid-19th-century Russian Period settlements including Karluk (arrow) (Knecht and Jordan 1985).

Three Saint's Bay. During the winter of 1785-1786, a party of Russians, Aleuts, and Konyags (the indigenous population), established the first Russian encampment on the Karluk site. In 1786, an *artel*, or trading post, was established by Shelikov at Karluk with trade goods coming from Russia, Britain and later, even America. At its peak, according to accounts from 1804, the village consisted of 34 *barabaras* (sod houses) with a speculative population of 680 natives. The settlement was short-lived, however. In 1821, the Russian population had decreased to a three-person management of the *artel*, which, by the 1840s, had been demoted to an *odinochka*, or one-man post (Knecht and Jordan 1985:20-21). Finally, a chart dated 1849 portrays the site as the remains of a Konyag resettlement project undertaken by the Russian-American Company during 1840-1844. It is believed that the site was abandoned before the late 1880s, as an 1888 map of Karluk Lagoon shows settlement locations only at Old and New Karluk (Knecht and Jordan 1985:21). For a more detailed history of the KAR-37 site, I refer readers to the article by Knecht and Jordan (1985:20).

The structure (no. 1; Fig. 2) which was excavated consists of a "large central room and four adjoining side rooms, at least one of which functioned as a sleeping room" (Knecht and Jordan 1985:22). Preliminary observations