

BEADS, PENDANTS AND BUTTONS FROM EARLY HISTORIC CREEK CONTEXTS AT THE TARVER SITES, GEORGIA

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Recent excavations conducted on historic Creek Indian components at the Tarver (9JO6) and Little Tarver (9JO198) sites in central Georgia produced an extensive collection of European trade material, including a large sample of glass and lapidary beads, pendants and buttons. The bead collection is significant for its size, as well as the fact that virtually all of the material was recovered from undisturbed and tightly dated burial contexts attributable to the relatively brief period between about 1695 and 1715.

INTRODUCTION

The adjoining Tarver (9JO6) and Little Tarver (9JO198) sites are located near Macon in southwestern Jones County, Georgia (Fig. 1). The two sites occupy most of a broad ridge overlooking the confluence of Town Creek and the Ocmulgee River. The Tarver sites are located only about 10 km to the northwest of the famous site of Macon Plateau (9BI1), now part of the Ocmulgee National Monument. Massive excavations at Macon Plateau by the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s revealed the remnants of an early-18th-century British trading post and associated Creek village (Fairbanks 1956; Kelly 1938; Mason 1963; Waselkov 1994).

Like Macon Plateau, the Tarver sites are historically important as the location of one of the Creek Indian towns of the late 17th and early 18th centuries. During the 1680s, Creeks living along the Chattahoochee River in what is now western Georgia and eastern Alabama found themselves the object of attention among both the Spanish and the English. After learning that British traders were operating among the Indians in the area, the Spanish moved to reassert their control by burning several towns and establishing Fort Appalichicola. Subsequently, many

of the Creeks moved east to the Ocmulgee River Valley to be closer to the English traders and further from the Spanish. Early maps and records document at least ten towns in the area during the early 18th century (Cumming 1962:213; Hann 1988:363; Swanton 1946:437-438). But the Creeks' stay in the Ocmulgee Valley was brief; just 25-30 years after their arrival, the British forced the Creeks from the area in the aftermath of the failed Indian uprising known as the Yamasseee War (Crane 1929). Thus, the historic Creek occupation of the Tarver sites, like those of Macon Plateau and other sites in the Macon area, can be securely dated to a relatively brief interval between around 1695 and 1715.

The planned construction of a new water treatment plant and associated infrastructure precipitated data recovery on a portion of the Tarver site, and on the entire Little Tarver site. In order to comply with federal regulations, archaeological data recovery was necessary to mitigate the loss of information due to construction (Pluckhahn 1997). The work was completed by Southeastern Archeological Services, Inc., under sub-contract with Woodward-Clyde Federal Services, Inc., and was funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Data recovery on the Tarver sites commenced with the excavation of a number of shovel tests and test units, and culminated in the mechanical stripping of large portions of the two sites. Despite the fact that both sites had been severely impacted by erosion, features were relatively common, with a total of 406 being identified in the 2,345 m² of soil excavated at the two sites.

The largest of the four excavation blocks on the Tarver site contained the remains of two or three small

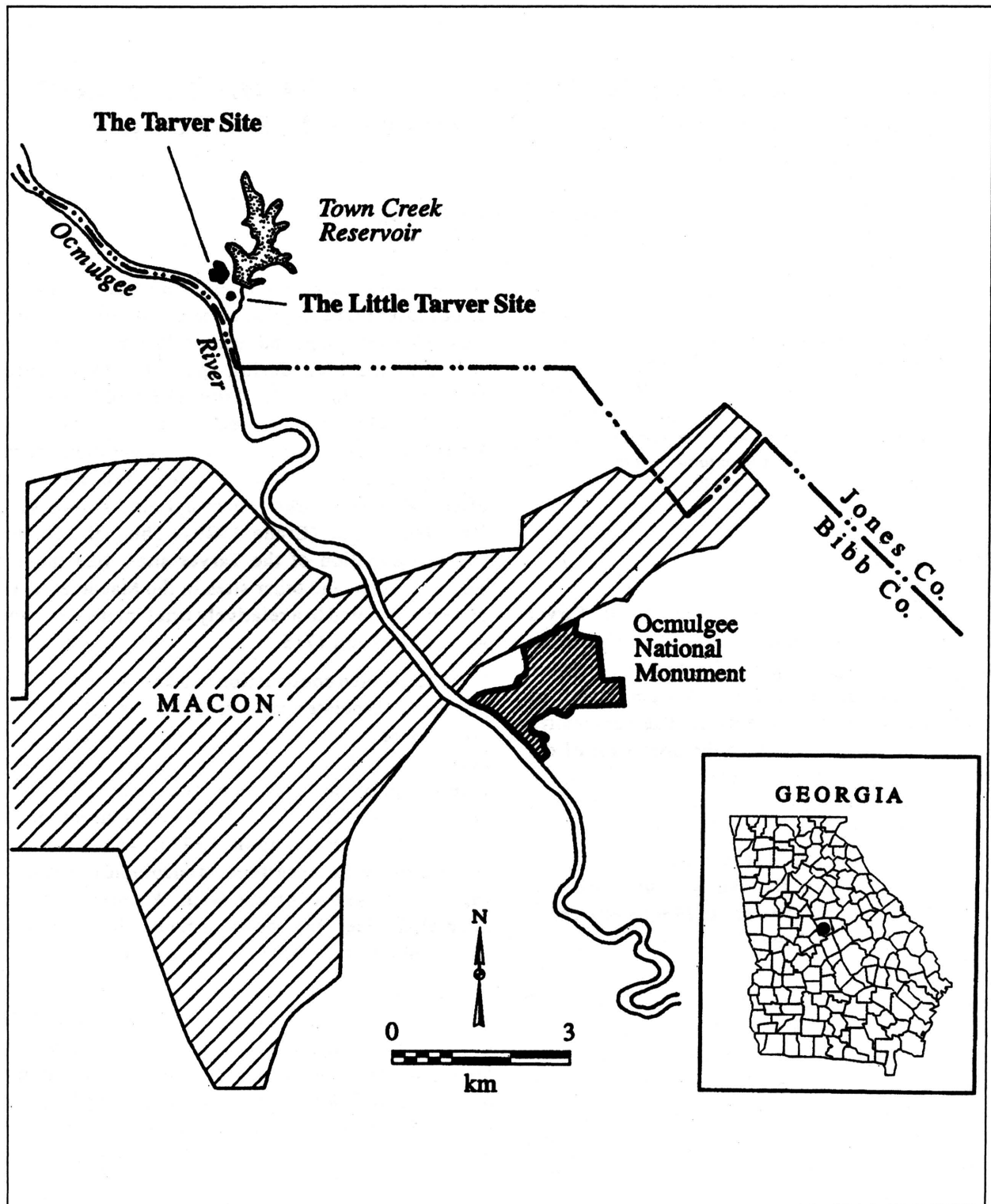


Figure 1. Location of the Tarver sites (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).



Figure 2. View to the north of Structure 1 at the Tarver site (photo: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

and insubstantial summer houses, similar to those used slightly later by the Creek Indians (Bartram 1792). Three burial pits (Features 49, 50 and 51) were identified in the center of Structure 1, the better preserved of the structures (Figs. 2 and 3). One additional grave (Feature 30) was found some distance away in another excavation block which contained no definitive architectural patterns.

Limited architectural evidence was discovered in the one large excavation block on the Little Tarver site. However, the partition of the 10 burials into three distinct clusters suggests that a few small structures may have been present (Fig. 4).

THE BEAD ASSEMBLAGE

The Tarver sites produced an extensive collection of artifacts, including a number of objects of European origin. Perhaps most impressive were the quantity and variety of the beads, pendants and buttons of glass and stone. These artifacts not only outnumbered all the other trade goods combined, but were actually the most

abundant of any artifact class, outnumbering even pottery and flaked lithics.

Totaling just under 53,000 beads, the collection from the Tarver sites is one of the largest ever professionally excavated in the southeastern United States. All but 24 of the specimens, or less than one-tenth of one percent of the total collection, were found in burial contexts. Fourteen of the 16 historic Creek burials uncovered at the two sites contained at least a few beads. The only exceptions were the graves of two adults (Features 28 and 39) on the Little Tarver site. In order to maximize bead recovery, the fill from burials and selected other features which contained small beads was water screened through 1/16 in. mesh. Because most of the beads were encountered in burial contexts, we were limited in the amount of analysis and photography that could be conducted according to an understanding between FEMA and the Muscogee Creek Nation. However, we were able to sort the assemblage into varieties so that the beads could be adequately described and quantified. Following analysis on site, all the artifacts from burial contexts were reinterred.

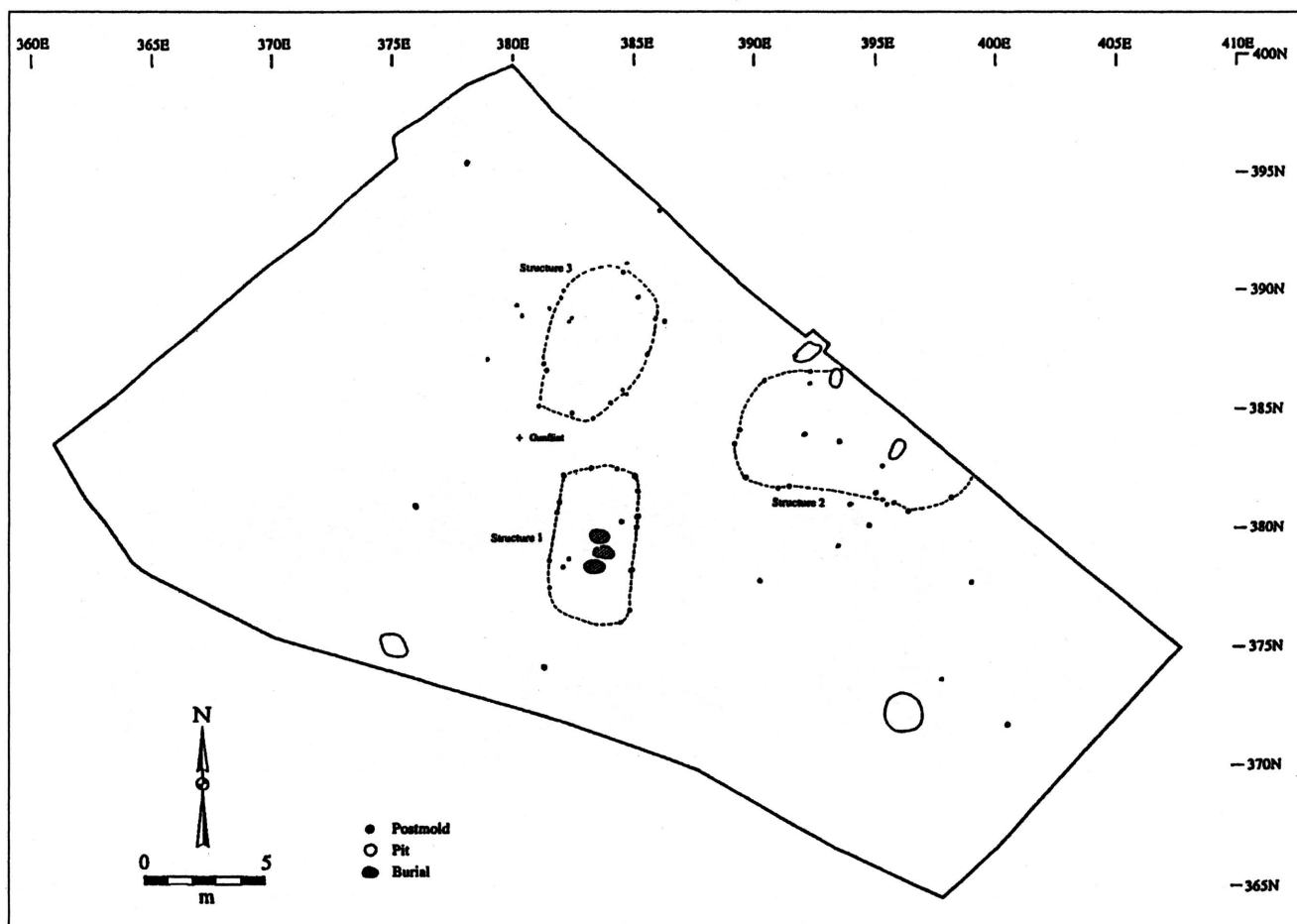


Figure 3. Plan view of Block B at the Tarver site showing the location of structures and burials (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

The bead assemblage from the Tarver sites includes some varieties that are very common on Creek sites, as well as a few that are quite rare. The beads were classified using the typology developed by Kidd and Kidd (1970, 1983) and expanded by Karklins (1985). A minimum of 40 Kidd varieties are present in the collection. Thirteen bead varieties are unlike any of those described by the Kidds. These are denoted by an asterisk (*).

Table 1 lists the recorded bead varieties and their quantities. The first column correlates the recorded bead varieties to Plate VI, while the other columns provide the appropriate Kidd code and other relevant details. The descriptions are based on nomenclature provided by Brain (1979), Deagan (1987), Kidd and Kidd (1983) and Smith and Good (1982). In the case of

the large quantities of seed beads encountered in a few of the features, the total numbers were estimated based on weight. The range of measurements was often approximated by picking out what appeared to be the largest and smallest examples of each variety. Time constraints precluded the use of the applicable Munsell color charts to describe the beads.

Table 2 relates the recovered beads to specific burials and also lists associated grave goods. Determination of the age and sex of the interred individuals was conducted in the field, and was limited by the amount of analysis that was permitted. Features 47, 53 and 58 did not contain any bone, but are presumed to be the graves of infants or children based on the small size of the pits. Feature 409 was looted before it could be excavated, precluding estimation of the burial's age or sex.

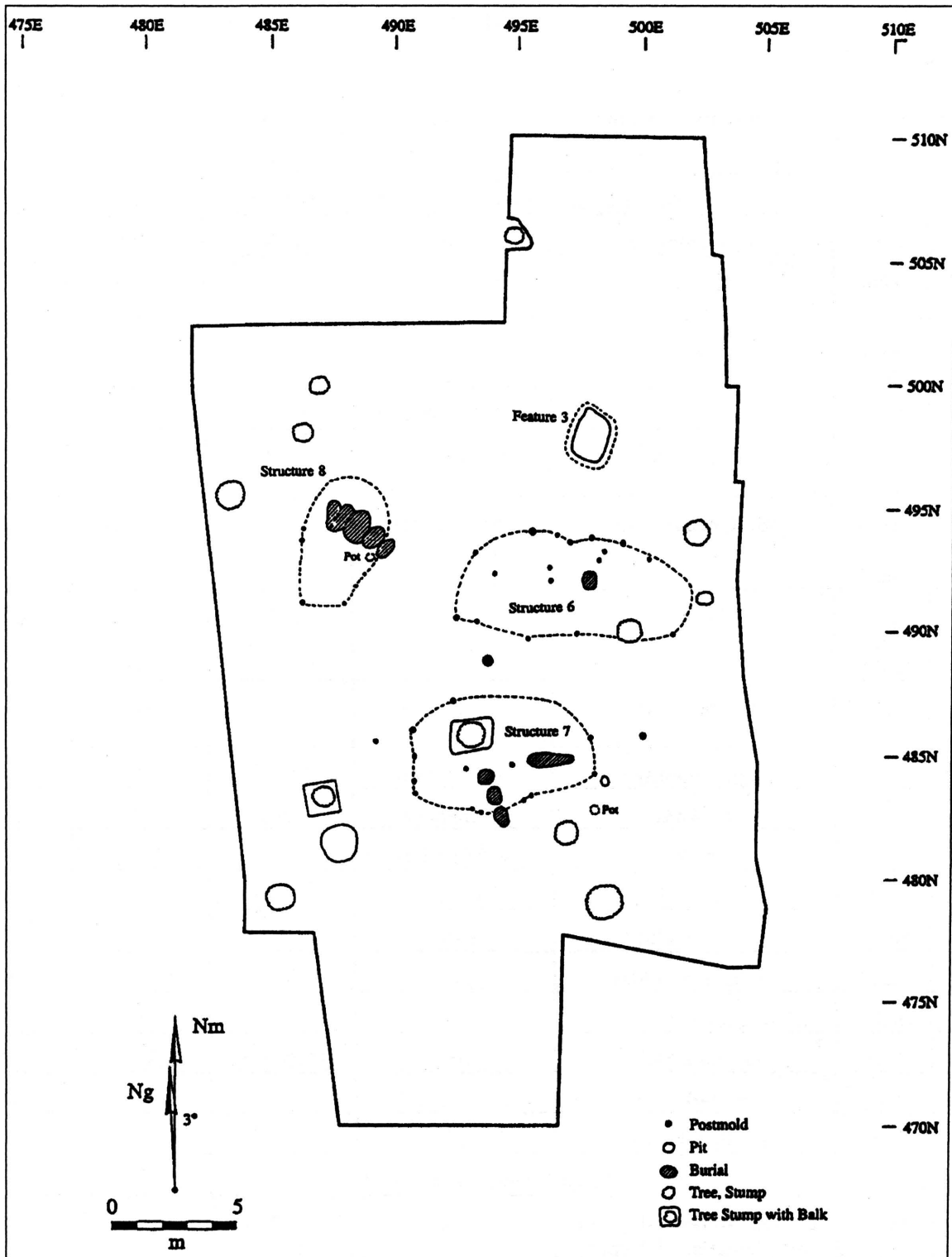


Figure 4. Plan view of the excavation block at the Little Tarver site showing the location of possible structures and burials (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

Table 1. Bead Inventory for the Tarver Sites.

Pl. VI Key	Kidd Code	Diaphaneity/Color	Shape	Size Range (mm)		Quantity
				Length	Diameter	
Single-layered (Monochrome) Drawn Beads						
a	Ila40	op. turquoise	ring	0.5-1	1-2	45,269
b	Ila6 Ila7	op. black	ring/subspherical	1.7-2	2-3	
c	Ila40 Ila41	op. turquoise	ring/subspherical	1.5-3	2-4	
d	Ila13	op. white	ring/subspherical	1.3-1.9	3	
e	Ila55 Ila56	tsl. dark blue	ring/subspherical	1.5-3	2-4	
f	Ila25 or Ila35	op. light aqua blue	subspherical	4.5-9.8	5.4-7.0	224
g	Ila36 or Ila46?	op. light blue	subspherical	2.7-3.7	5-5.5	2,040
h	Ila55 Ila52	tsl. dark blue	subspherical	4.7-7.3	6.8-7.5	93
i	Ila40	op. turquoise	subspherical	3.8-7.5	4.5-8	16
j	Ila13	op. white	subspherical	5.5-8	7-7.5	1,311
k	Ila1	op. red	subspherical	2.9-4.1	2.5-3	130
l	Ila6	op. black	barrel	3.5-7.1	6-9	650
m	Ila54	tsl. dark blue	oval	13.5-17	5.1-7.3	156
n	Ila42	op. light aqua blue	oval	9.5-13.2	5.6-6.5	6
o	Ila32?	tsl. turquoise/light green	oval	11-15.2	6.3-8	3
p	Ila*	op. dark blue	oval	11.4-14.5	6.3-7.8	12
q	Ila*	op. dark blue	subspherical	2.7-3.5	4.5-5	260
r	Ila22	op. light brown	spherical	7.3	7.5	1
Multi-layered Drawn Beads						
s	IVa5	op. red exterior/ tsl. green core (Cornaline d'Aleppo)	ring	1.3-2.5	2.4-4	1,678
t	IVa6	op. red exterior/ tsl. green core (Cornaline d'Aleppo)	spherical	3.6-4.9	4.4-6.2	705
u	IIla1	op. red exterior/ op. black core (Cornaline d'Aleppo)	tubular	5.9-15.5	3.5-8.7	107

Table 1. Continued.

Decorated Single-layered Drawn Beads						
v	Iib32?	op. white with 2 red and 2 light blue stripes	oval	12.1	7.1	1
w	Iib*	tsl. dark blue with 2 white stripes	spherical/ subspherical	5.5-8.5	7-8.5	117
x	Iibb27	tsl. dark blue with 3 red-on-white stripes	subspherical	6.5	6.6	1
y	Iibb28 ?	tsl. dark blue with 3 red-on-white stripes	oval	13	7	1
z	Iib67	tsl. dark blue with 3 white stripes	oval	15	6.7	3
aa	Iibb25	op. light blue with 3 red-on-white stripes	oval	14-16.9	7-7.3	5
bb	Iibb12	op. white with 3 blue-on-red stripes	subspherical	6.5	9	1
cc	Iibb24	op. light blue with 3 red-on-white stripes	subspherical	6.3	6.4-6.8	4
dd	Ib*	op. white with 4 red stripes	tubular	15.9	4.5	1
ee	Iib53?	tsl. green with 8 white stripes	subspherical	7.4	8	1
Decorated Multi-layered Drawn Beads						
ff	IVbb3	op. red exterior with 3 black-on-white stripes/ tsl. dark green core (Cornaline d'Aleppo)	subspherical	7.3-8.5	7.4	4
gg	IIIb*	op. blue exterior with 12-14 white stripes/op. white middle layer/op. blue core	tubular	15-18	3.8-5	20
Monochrome Wound Beads						
hh	WIic7?	tsl. green	pentagonal-faceted	8-9	10-11	4
ii	WIId1	tsl. light gray	"raspberry"	8-9	9-10	1
jj	WIId4	tsl. amber	"raspberry"	8-9	9-10	86
kk	WIle*	indeterminate (patinated)	ribbed subspherical "melon"	5.5	6.5	1
ll	WIIf*	indeterminate (patinated)	faceted oval	6.1	2.1-2.3	2

Table 1. Continued.

Polychrome Wound Beads						
mm	W IIIb*	tsl. burgundy (appears black) with intertwined white stripes	subspherical	9	11.7	1
nn	W IIIb*	tsl. burgundy (appears black) with 3 spiral white stripes	subspherical	6.4	8.3	2
oo	W IIIb*	op. black with feathered design of light blue and aventurine glass	oval	-	8	1
pp	W IIIa*	gilded op. olive green (Seven Oaks Gilded)	oval	9-10.5	5.7-6.2	27
qq	W IIIa*	gilded op. olive green with impressed dot and line decoration (Seven Oaks Gilded Molded)	oval	10.4	7.4	1
Glass and Lapidary Pendants						
rr		colorless (quartz)	faceted ovate (Florida Cut Crystal)	20-26	13-16	15
ss		tsl. blue (glass)	ribbed teardrop (Punta Rassa)	23-26	11-14	2
tt		tsl. blue (glass)	fairly smooth teardrop (Punta Rassa)	21-30	10-15	19
Glass Buttons						
uu		tsp. light gray	spherical	8.1	10.5	3
vv		op. dark blue with white stripes and yellow dots	spherical	8	12	1
TOTAL						52,985

Single-layered (Monochrome) Drawn Beads

The most common beads at the Tarver sites, as on most sites of similar age, were monochrome "seed" (under 2 mm in diameter) and very small (2-4 mm in diameter) glass beads of drawn manufacture. Encompassing ring-shaped and subspherical specimens, these beads were present in various shades of turquoise (IIa40-41; Pl. VIa, c), black (IIa6-7; Pl. VIb), white (IIa13; Pl. VIc) and blue (IIa55-56; Pl. VIe). They accounted for approximately 85% of the assemblage, and were recovered in substantial

quantities (at least a few hundred) in virtually all of the graves that contained beads. These beads tended to be particularly plentiful in the graves of children, with a total of over 5,000 being associated with five of the nine child burials. The same pattern appears to have held true at Macon Plateau. Although total bead counts for the burials there have not been published, Mason (1963) notes that "thousands" and "many" beads were recovered from the graves of children.

Seed beads, usually of opaque or transparent blue glass, are common on archaeological sites in Florida

Table 2. The Varieties and Quantities of Beads Associated with Burials at the Tarver Sites.

Burial	Beads			Other Grave Goods
	Kidd Code	Key to Plate VI	Quantity	
Feature 47 (infant?)	IIa40/IIa41, IIa13	a, c, d	6,870	iron bracelets
	IIa25/IIa35	f	7	
	IIa55/ IIa52	h	28	
	IIa40	i	2	
	IIa13	j	36	
	IIa6	l	1	
	IIa54	m	18	
	IIa42	n	2	
	IIa32?	o	2	
	IIa*	p	12	
	IVa5	s	3	
	IVa6	t	95	
	IIIa1	u	32	
	IIb*	w	113	
	IIbb28?	y	1	
	IIb67	z	2	
	IIbb25	aa	3	
	Ib*	dd	1	
	IVbb3	ff	3	
	IIIb*	gg	20	
Feature 53 (infant?)	IIa40/ IIa41	c, d	1,698	pottery vessel fragment
	IIa55/ IIa52	h	22	
	IIa13	j	51	
	IIa6	l	2	
	IIa54	m	137	
	IVa5	s	4	
	IIb*	w	4	
	IIbb12	bb	1	

Table 2. Continued.

Feature 53 (continued)	Ibb24	cc	4	
	IVbb3	ff	1	
Feature 58 (infant?)	Ila6/Ila7, Ila40/Ila41, Ila55/Ila56	b, c, e	3,007	none
	Ila13	j	174	
Feature 78c (young adult female)	Ila6/Ila7, Ila40/Ila41, Ila13, Ila55/Ila56	b, c, d, e	402	iron bracelets
	Ila25/Ila35	f	216	
	Ila55/ Ila52	h	5	
	Ila13	j	2	
	Ila1	k	123	
	Ila42	n	4	
	IVa6	t	3	
	Ibb27	x	1	
	Ibb25	aa	2	
Feature 78d (child)	Ila40/Ila41, Ila13, Ila55/Ila56	a, c, d, e	5,077	copper button, 2 iron buttons, brass C-bracelet, iron sword fragment
	Ila36 or Ila46?	g	2,025	
	Ila55/ Ila52	h	12	
	Ila40	i	6	
	Ila13	j	467	
	Ila6	l	583	
	Ila32?	o	1	
	Ila*	q	259	
	IVa5	s	3	
	IVa6	t	2	
	Ilb67	z	1	
	Ilb53?	ee	1	
	WIIc7?	hh	3	
	WIId1	ii	1	
	WIId4	jj	86	

Table 2. Continued.

Feature 78d (continued)	WIIe*	kk	1	
	WIIIf*	mm	1	
	WIIIf*	nn	1	
	WIIIf*	oo	1	
	decorated button	vv	1	
Feature 78f (adult male)	IIa40/IIa41, IIa13, IIa55/IIa56	c, d, e	16	28 brass tinklers, bone-handled knife
	IIa36/IIa46	g	14	
	IIa55, IIa52	h	1	
	IIa13	j	41	
	IIa6	l	1	
Feature 78g (adult male)	IIa40/IIa41, IIa13	c, d	9,451	iron scissors, 2 brass pins, brass needle, iron bracelets, 3 brass C-bracelets
	IIa40	i	1	
	IIa13	j	1	
	IIa1	k	7	
	IVa5	s	45	
	IVa6	t	587	
Feature 31 (child)	IIa40/IIa41, IIa55/IIa56	c, e	9,451	26 copper buttons
	IIa25 or IIa35?	f	1	
	IIa55, IIa52	h	3	
	IIa40	i	1	
	IIa13	j	161	
	IIa6	l	53	
	IVa6	t	13	
Feature 49 (child)	IIa40/IIa41, IIa55/IIa56	c, e	2,431	28 shell beads
	IIa13	j	375	
	IIa6	l	1	
	WIIc7?	hh	1	

Table 2. Continued.

Feature 50 (child)	IIa6/IIa7, IIa40/IIa41, IIa13, IIa55/IIa56	b, c, d, e	13,760	124 copper beads, 3 copper buttons, 5 brass C-bracelets, 6 shell earpins, 1 black-glass bottle, Colonoware pot, brass kettle
	IIa36 or IIa46?	g	1	
	IIa55/ IIa52	h	20	
	IIa6	l	1	
	IVa5	s	1,610	
	IIIa1	u	75	
	WIIj*	ll	2	
	WIIIa*	pp	27	
	WIIIa*	qq	1	
	Florida Cut Crystal	rr	15	
	Punta Rassa Pendants (ribbed)	ss	2	
	Punta Rassa Pendants (smooth)	tt	19	
	tsp. light gray button	uu	3	
Feature 51 (adult of unknown sex)	IIa6/IIa7, IIa40/IIa41, IIa13, IIa55/IIa56	b, c, d, e	331	none
	IIa55/IIa52	h	1	
	IIa6	l	2	
	IVa5	s	13	
Feature 409 (unknown age and sex)	IIa6/IIa7, IIa40/IIa41, IIa55/IIa56	b, c, e	13	none
	IIa40	i	3	

dating to the first half of the 16th century. Beads under 4 mm in diameter are sometimes referred to as "embroidery beads" because they were frequently used to ornament clothing (Deagan 1987:169-170). However, they were also undoubtedly strung on necklaces. The recovery of many seed beads in the neck region of the burials at the Tarver sites supports the hypothesis that most were utilized in this manner. More direct evidence is supplied by a number of blue seed beads found strung on a fragment of cordage at the neck of the child buried in Feature 31 at the Tarver site. Also common at the Tarver sites (and on many other

Creek sites in the Southeast) are somewhat larger monochrome drawn beads. The specimens exhibit a great deal of variety in size, shape, color and diaphaneity (Pl. VIf-r). The translucent to opaque turquoise beads in spherical (IIa40) and oval (IIa32?) shapes (Pl. VII, o) appear to equate with those that are sometimes referred to as "simple tumbled turquoise" or "Ichtucknee Blue" (Deagan 1987:171). Deagan (1987:171-175) reports that these are found in late-16th-century and (more commonly) 17th-century contexts in Spanish Florida.

Decorated and Undecorated Multi-layered Drawn Beads

The multi-layered drawn glass beads in the Tarver collection consist primarily of those that are of the Cornaline d'Aleppo style. Having a distinctive opaque red exterior and a translucent green or opaque black core, these beads are relatively common on Creek sites of the 17th and 18th centuries. Varieties that are represented include a tubular form (IIIa1; Pl. VIu); seed and very small ring-shaped specimens (IVa5; Pl. VIs); a somewhat larger subspherical form (IVa6; Pl. VIIt); and a decorated variety with three black-on-white stripes (IVbb3; Pl. VIff).

Cornaline d'Aleppo beads were found in small quantities in most (n=10 or 62.5%) of the graves at the Tarver sites. The smallest examples were particularly abundant in the grave of a child (Feature 50) on the Tarver site. The larger specimens were plentiful only in the graves of an adult male (Feature 78g) and a child (Feature 47) on the Little Tarver site. Mason (1963) mentions that Cornaline d'Aleppo beads were encountered in only four of the 35 graves at Macon Plateau. All four burials were identified as adults (Mason 1963; Powell 1994). Half of these were females; the sex of the other two could not be identified.

At the site of mission San Luis near Tallahassee, Florida, Cornaline d'Aleppo beads were found exclusively in Spanish contexts, prompting Mitchem (1993:409) to suggest that they were reserved for Spanish use, rather than being for trade with the native population. While this may have been the case at San Luis and in Spanish-controlled Florida, the common occurrence of these beads at Tarver and, to a lesser extent, at Macon Plateau (Mason 1963) suggests that they were easily obtained from British sources on the Carolina frontier.

Twenty examples of another multi-layered bead variety were recovered from Feature 47 at the Little Tarver site. These are tubular specimens with an opaque blue exterior decorated with 12-14 white stripes, an opaque white middle layer and an opaque blue core (IIIb*; Pl. VIgg). This bead is reportedly quite rare in the Southeast (Marvin Smith 1996:pers. comm.), but is relatively common on Seneca Iroquois sites dating from around 1650 to 1675 (Wray 1983). These beads were likely manufactured

in either Amsterdam or Venice (Karklins 1998:pers. comm.).

Decorated Single-layered Drawn Beads

A number of different varieties of decorated single-layered drawn beads were recovered from the Tarver sites, but generally only in small quantities. The vast majority were found in Feature 47 at the Little Tarver site, apparently the grave of an infant or young child. The most common variety (n=117) is translucent dark blue with two white stripes (IIb*; Pl. VIw). These were spherical to subspherical in shape. A similar oval variety with three white stripes (IIb67; Pl. VIz) was recovered in much smaller numbers. Feature 47 also produced a single specimen of a bead with a white body decorated with four red stripes (Ib*; Pl. VIdd). Other striped white beads found at the site include varieties IIb32? (Pl. VIv) and IIbb12 (Pl. VIbb).

A single translucent green bead with eight white stripes (IIb53?; Pl. VIee) from Feature 78d is similar to a specimen in the Tunica Treasure collection (Brain 1979:98). Beads of this type have been found on sites in Louisiana, Mississippi, Michigan and Texas (Brain 1979:112).

A bead style represented by several varieties (IIbb24-25, IIbb27-28?) has a blue body decorated with three red-on-white stripes (Pl. VIx-y, aa, cc). Deagan (1987:170-171) suggests that striped beads such as these originated earlier than monochrome beads, and states that blue beads with red-on-white stripes are the most common striped beads in Florida. Brain (1979:104) notes that this variety has been found at a number of sites in the Southeast.

Wound Glass Beads

Wound glass beads became increasingly common in the Southeast after about 1650 (Deagan 1987:175). At the Tarver sites, all the wound beads were found with just two burials, both of which were children (Feature 78d at Little Tarver and Feature 50 at Tarver). However, the only variety that these two burials had in common is the translucent green, pentagonal-faceted one (WIIc7?; Pl. VIhh). Mason (1963) describes the recovery of similarly shaped "decahedral" beads of green, white and brown glass from the graves of two

children at Macon Plateau. Although the sample is small, the fact that this bead type was restricted to children's graves both at the Tarver sites and at Macon Plateau suggests that this was a deliberate custom.

The 87 "raspberry" beads (WIIId1, WIIId4; Pl. VIIi-jj) from Feature 78d at the Little Tarver site are similar to those that have been excavated at many other sites throughout much of North America (Brain 1979:111; Deagan 1987:178; Good 1972). The Tarver specimens, all but one of which were amber colored, were found tightly clustered in the area of the child's neck, indicating that they had comprised a necklace.

Three decorated wound beads, each represented by a single specimen, were also found in Feature 78d. Two of these have translucent burgundy bodies which appear black unless held up to a strong light. One is decorated with three spiral white stripes (WIIIB*; Pl. VIInn). The other exhibits a lattice-like design formed by three intertwined white stripes (WIIIB*; Pl. VIImm). These varieties have been found at a few sites in the Southeast, the Midwest and the Northeast (Brain 1979:110; Rumrill 1991:Plate IIB). They may be of Dutch manufacture (Brain 1979:110). The third specimen, represented by two fragments, is a black oval bead with a combed or feathered design of light blue and aventurine glass (WIIIB*; Pl. VIloo). Marvin Smith (1996: pers. comm.) notes that beads of this type have typically been found in contexts dating slightly later than the Creek component at the Tarver sites.

Feature 50 at the Tarver site produced 28 examples of Seven Oaks Gilded (WIIla*; Pl. VIpp) and Gilded Molded (WIIla*; Pl. VIqq) beads. These were first described by Goggin (n.d.) based on finds from a few sites in Florida. The Seven Oaks beads in the Tarver assemblage were generally poorly preserved, and the gilding was missing from many of the specimens. The glass beneath the gilding appeared to be opaque olive green, as noted by Goggin (n.d.). The single Gilded Molded example exhibits a simple line and dot design. Although these designs were previously thought to be imparted by molding, Peter Francis (1998:pers. comm.) believes they were imparted by a small pronged tool. Mitchem (1993:402) reports that Seven Oaks beads have been found at the mission sites of San Luis and San Juan del Puerto in Florida, and at the mission at Casas Grandes, Mexico.

Three wound beads from Features 78d and 50 could not be properly classified as they were too heavily patinated to determine the original color. All that could be observed was that the glass was opaque and dark. One of them is a ribbed-subspherical or "melon" bead (WIIe*; Pl. VIkk); the other two are faceted-oval forms (WIIj*; Pl. VIII). One of the latter seems to exhibit four or five longitudinal facets. The other is slightly different. It has large tapered facets separated from each other by smaller triangular ones.

Glass and Lapidary Pendants

Feature 50 at the Tarver site produced all the recovered glass and lapidary pendants. These include 15 Florida Cut Crystal pendants (Fig. 5; Pl. VIrr), another type defined by Goggin (n.d.). These teardrop-shaped ornaments, ground to shape from quartz crystal, exhibit variously shaped facets and a small perforation at the narrow end (Pl. VC). The holes were drilled from one side. When the drill broke through the other side, it removed a tiny flake in this area which is still visible. Although many of the pendants had been displaced by an intrusive burial, several were found around the child's neck, suggesting that they formed a necklace. Their dimensions are consistent with those recorded by Goggin (n.d.).

Florida Cut Crystal pendants are generally thought to date to the late 16th century (Deagan 1987:180; Goggin n.d.). However, Deagan (1987:180-181) notes that Fairbanks recovered a slightly smaller ovate form at Appalachian mission sites in Florida and suggests that this variety may be slightly later (approximately 1650 to 1700). The Tarver examples probably fall into this latter category.

Noting the amount of labor involved in the production of Florida Cut Crystal pendants, Deagan (1987:181) suggests that they were probably either special gifts to the Indians from the Spanish, or represent personal possessions of the Spaniards that somehow came into the hands of the natives. The Tarver examples may represent plunder from the raids made by Creek Indians and British soldiers against the Spanish and Indians in Florida in 1702 and 1704. Mitchem (1993:403) notes that Florida Cut Crystal pendants are most common in Florida, but have also been found in Louisiana, Tennessee and Virginia.

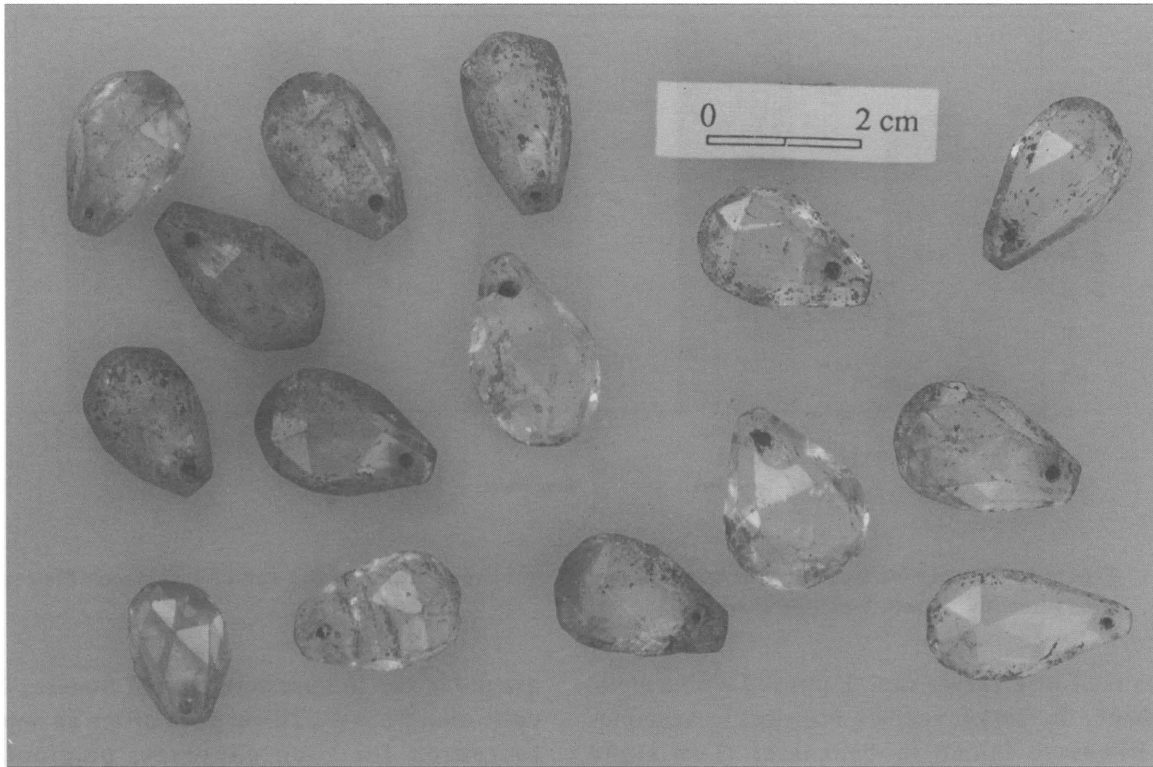


Figure 5. Florida Cut Crystal pendants from the Tarver site. Note the variation in shape (photo: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

Feature 50 also produced 21 Punta Rassa Teardrop pendants in various shades of translucent blue glass (Pl. VD). Again, many of these had apparently been displaced by an intrusive burial, but a few were found *in situ* near the child's neck and appeared to have comprised a necklace with the Florida Cut Crystal pendants. Although they exhibit considerable variation in size and shape (Fig. 5), the pendants correspond closely with the dimensions cited by Goggin (n.d.). Most have smooth surfaces except for the occasional presence of small nodes at the neck (Pl. VIIt), but two exhibit several longitudinal ribs (Pl. VIss). With the exception of these two, all the specimens have flanges that encircle the body parallel to the long axis, suggesting that they were pressed in a mold. However, a tiny scar or pontil mark at the bottom of most specimens indicates that they were first free formed from a gather of molten glass before being clamped in the mold. On the complete examples, a suspension loop is present at the narrow end.

Prior to the Tarver excavations, Punta Rassa pendants were only known from a few sites in Florida,

primarily Spanish missions, and from Macon Plateau (Fairbanks 1956; Goggin n.d.; Mitchem 1993). Goggin (n.d.) feels that the specimens from Macon Plateau are late examples, and that the pendants were more common in the early 17th century. Mitchem (1991), citing Muller (1972), notes that earrings formed of such pendants were popular in Spain during the 16th century.

Like those at the Tarver site, the two Punta Rassa pendants at Macon Plateau were also found in the grave of a six- or seven-year-old child (Fairbanks 1956; Mason 1963). Again, although the sample size is quite small, this coincidence would appear to be more than fortuitous, and likely reflects Creek mortuary customs.

Glass Buttons

A small sample of glass buttons was recovered from the Tarver sites. One specimen, with a very dark blue body decorated with yellow dots and white stripes (Pl. VIvv), was found in the grave of a child (Feature

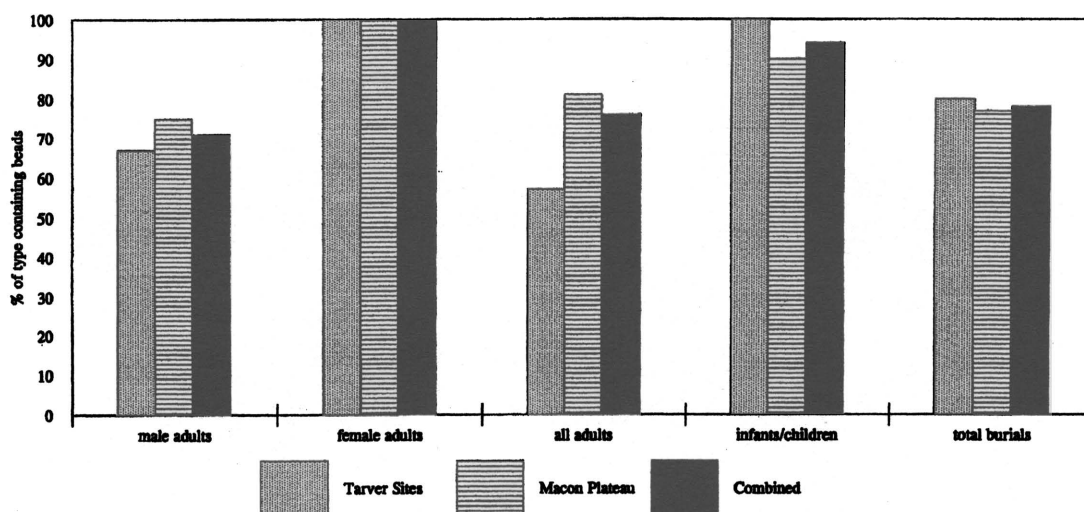


Figure 6. The relative frequency of beads in the historic Creek graves at the Tarver and Macon Plateau sites (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

78d) on the Little Tarver site. Equipped with a metal loop shank, the button appears identical to examples from Hiwassee Island in Tennessee (Lewis and Kneberg 1946:Plate 85c) and Fort Moore in South Carolina (Story n.d.). Unfortunately, no contextual data are available for either of these examples.

The three remaining specimens (Pl. VIuu) were found in Feature 50 at the Tarver site. These colorless spheres were poorly preserved and crumbled upon excavation. Their identification as buttons is less than certain, but they were not perforated and, therefore, did not appear to be either beads or pendants.

DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS

Although they had primarily become fashion accessories by the 18th century, beads may have retained their role as a mode of communication well into the historic period (Braund 1993:123-124). Whelan (1991) has noted the possible social and ritual significance of different types and colors of beads among the 19th-century Dakota, and how these meanings may be manifested in the archaeological record, particularly in burials. However, with the exception of Mitchem's (1991) analysis of the distribution of beads and pendants at the San Luis site in Florida, relatively little attention has been paid to the social context of beads among historic Indian

groups in the southeastern United States. The bead collection from the Tarver sites offers an opportunity to search for such contexts, particularly in combination with bead data from the closely related site of Macon Plateau.

Several general trends in bead distribution at the Tarver sites have already been noted. The most obvious is the tendency for the graves of children to contain both larger numbers and greater varieties of beads. Beads were present in all of the children's graves at the two Tarver sites, compared with only 57% of the adult burials (Fig. 6). Of the eight graves which contained more than a thousand beads, only one (Feature 78g on the Little Tarver site) belonged to an adult. Moreover, the graves of four of the eight children (excluding the looted burial) contained at least ten varieties of beads, while this was the case with only one adult (Feature 78c). The same general pattern appears to hold for Macon Plateau where glass beads were present in nine of the ten children's graves (Mason 1963). Clearly, there is a strong association between beads and the graves of children on Creek sites in the Macon area.

Fig. 6 also demonstrates that the occurrence of beads may be correlated more strongly with the graves of females vis-à-vis those of adult males and adults in general. Each of the seven identified adult female graves in the combined sample from Tarver and Macon Plateau produced at least one bead. This in

Table 3. Color Frequency Among the Larger Beads at the Tarver Site.

Color	Quantity	Percent
Blue	2,979	43.7
Red	1,812	26.6
White	1,315	19.3
Black	655	9.6
Gold	28	0.4
Clear	19	0.3
Green	4	<0.1
Brown	1	<0.1
Total	6,813	100.0

comparison with 71% of the adult males, 76% of the adults as a whole and 78% of all the burials. Although the evidence is equivocal due to the small sample size, the data from these three sites are consistent with ethnographic observations which suggest somewhat more frequent use of beads among women (Adair 1775; MacCauley 1887).

It is difficult to determine color frequency for the Tarver bead assemblage. The smaller beads were generally not sorted by color, and a number of the larger specimens are multicolored. The frequency of the dominant colors of the larger beads is presented in Table 3. At least in general, Smith's (1987:151) observation of a preference for blue beads on historic Indian sites in the Southeast holds true at Tarver. The inclusion of the smaller specimens would significantly increase the counts of blue, black and white beads.

How the four dominant colors were distributed among the burials at the Tarver and Macon Plateau sites is documented in Fig. 7. Blue and white beads were found in most of the graves at all three sites. Black beads occurred in smaller quantities in many of the graves at the Tarver sites, and were even less common at Macon Plateau. Red beads (typically Cornaline d'Aleppos) occurred slightly less frequently at the Tarver sites.

Fig. 8 contrasts the occurrence of the principal bead colors among the different segments of the burial

populations at the Tarver sites and Macon Plateau. In this series of graphs, the values are expressed as percentages of the total sample for each subset of the population. Because only a small number of the remains at Tarver could be adequately sexed in the field (and the percentages for the site are therefore skewed), the data from the Tarver sites and Macon Plateau have been combined.

Beads of each of the four colors occur more frequently in the graves of women and children than in those of males or adults in general. This should probably be expected, given that beads were more frequent among these segments of the population. However, there are some potentially significant differences in the occurrence of colors among the different age and sex groups. For example, white beads occurred in a far higher percentage of the graves of infants and children than those of adults. In contrast, the relative frequency of white beads in the graves of women was roughly equal to the average for all the burials combined, while the male and adult subcategories contained lesser percentages of white beads.

The strong incidence of white beads in the graves of children may be significant as it seems to mirror the tendency for children to be accompanied by objects of shell. The possible association of white beads and shell tends to be borne out by the grave goods

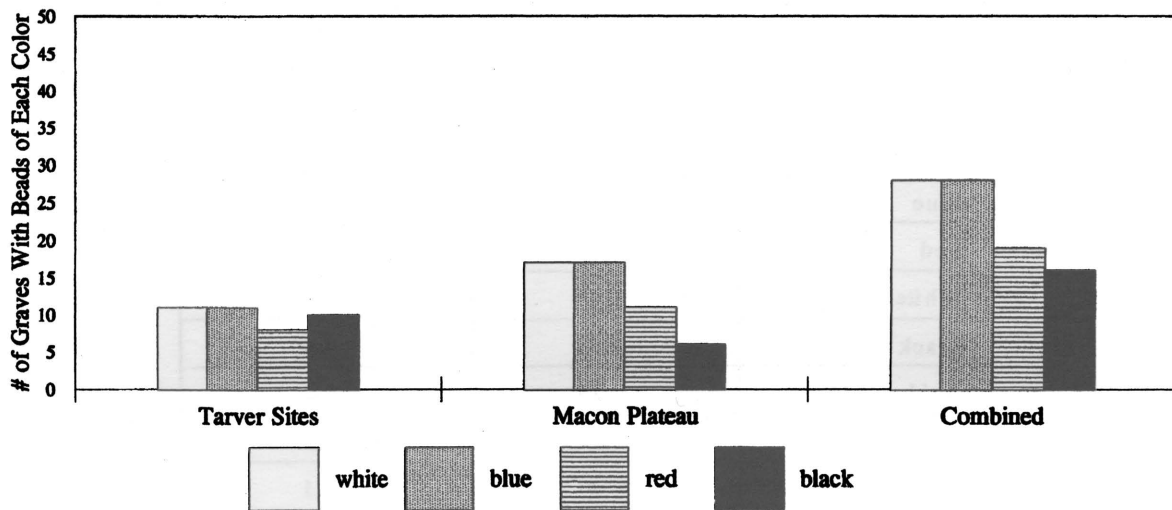


Figure 7. The number of graves at the Tarver sites and Macon Plateau which contained beads of the four dominant colors (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

associated with the child in Feature 49 at the Tarver site. The material included several necklaces of columella beads and white glass beads.

Generally, in the belief systems of the southeastern Indians, white was considered "the color of that which is old, established, pure, peaceable, holy, united, and so forth" (Hudson 1976:235). Among the Cherokee, colors were associated with the four cardinal directions, white relating to the south, as well as to warmth, peace and happiness (Hudson 1976:132).

Although the highest percentage of blue beads was found in the graves of women, significant quantities were also found with children and, to a lesser extent, males. Swanton (1946:517), citing Speck (1909), notes that late-19th-century Yuchi women wore strings of blue beads around their necks, and that these were said to have something to do with fertility. In the Cherokee belief system, blue was symbolic of north, the direction of cold, trouble and defeat (Hudson 1976:132).

Red beads also occurred more often in the graves of women relative to other segments of the population. Red was generally associated with conflict, war, fear, disunity and anger among southeastern Indian groups (Hudson 1976:235). Given this, it is perhaps noteworthy that red beads were found in a relatively small percentage of male graves. In ethnographic observations of the southeastern Indians, red is often mentioned as the most common choice of color for body paint and hair dye (Swanton 1946).

Black beads occurred in a slightly lower percentage of the graves of children at the Tarver and Macon Plateau sites. However, the differences between children and the other subsets of the population are even more dramatic than with the color white. Black beads occurred less frequently than any of the other principal colors in the graves of males, females and adults in general. Among the Cherokees, black was associated with the west, which was also identified with the moon, the souls of the dead and death (Hudson 1976:132). Swanton (1946:528-529) mentions black as a common shade of body paint in the Southeast.

CONCLUSION

The size, diversity and temporal specificity of the bead collection from the Tarver sites will, no doubt, make it of considerable interest to archaeologists and bead researchers. However, in addition to its possible diagnostic value, the collection is important for what it may convey about early historic Creek society. The strong occurrence of beads in the graves at the Tarver sites, as well as at Macon Plateau, indicates that these were valued trade items and favored possessions during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. Although the choice of particular colors and varieties of beads may well have varied greatly from individual to individual, the association of particular varieties and

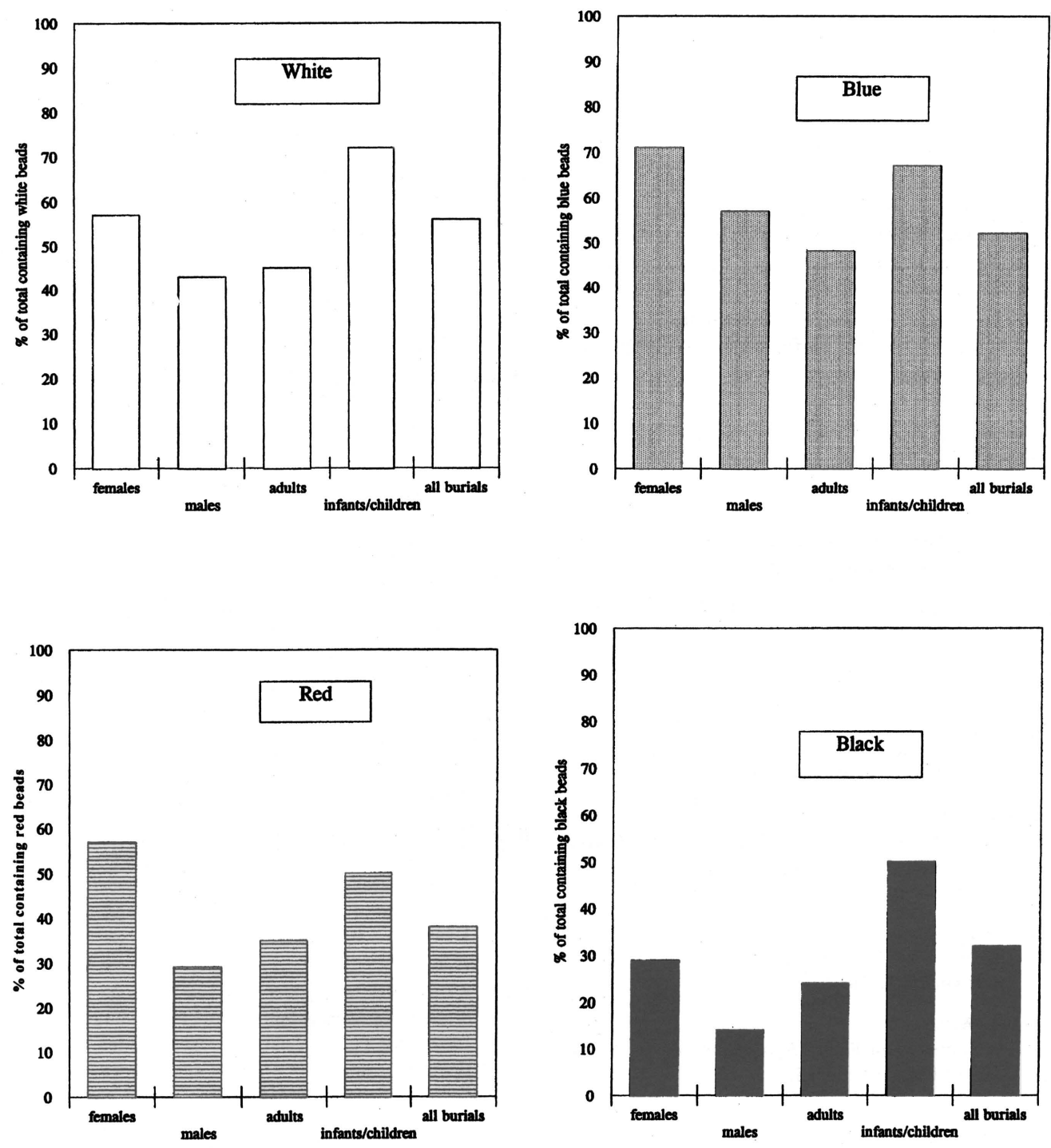


Figure 8. Comparison of the occurrence of the four principal bead colors in the burial population at the Tarver and Macon Plateau sites (drawing: Gisela Weis-Gresham).

quantities of beads with certain segments of the population both at the Tarver sites and Macon Plateau hints at deliberate cultural preferences.

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