

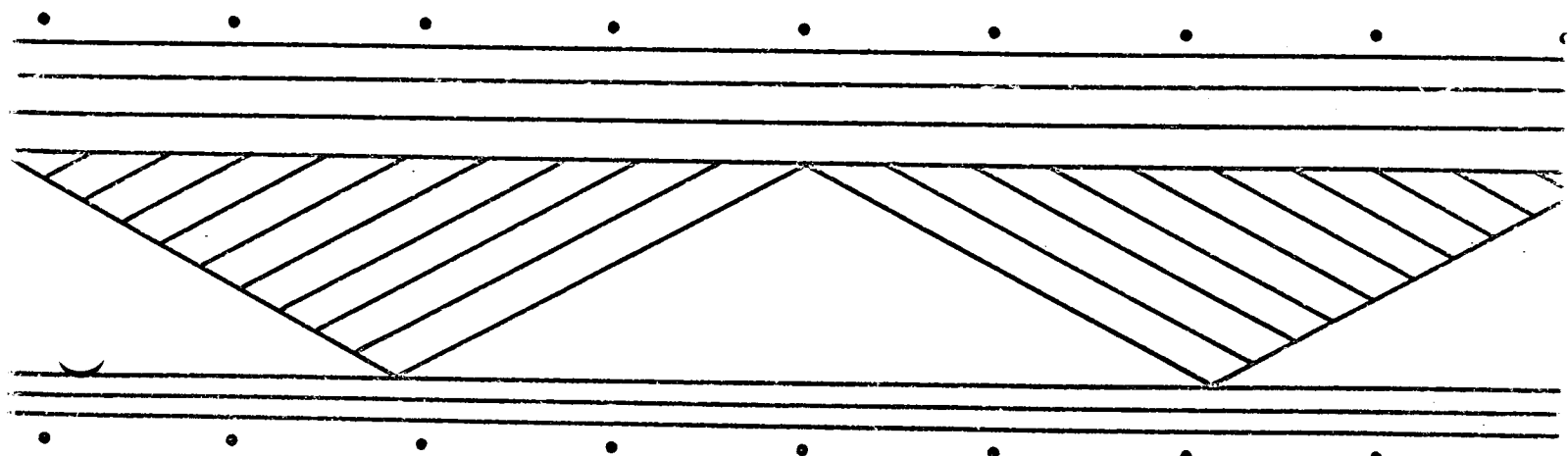
NEWSLETTER

of the

HOUSTON GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Newsletter is published four times per year by the Houston Archeological Society. Contributions of news items, short articles and information of archeological significance should be sent to the Editor - Alan R. Duke, 1706 Oaks Drive, Pasadena, Texas 77502.

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Front Cover

The Apache is Athapaskan - related to the Athapaskan speaking tribes of the Northwest. The Mescalero, Lipan and Kiowa Apaches ranged thru parts of Texas - the Mescalero in the Panhandle, the Davis and Guadalupe Mountains and the Lipan and Kiowa Apaches on the southern plains. These eastern Apaches dominated the southern plains in the 16th and 17th centuries but were scattered and decimated when the Comanche appeared on the Texas scene. Suggested reading - "The Mescalero Apaches" by C. L. Sonnichsen; "The Indians of Texas" by W. W. Newcomb, Jr.

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Past and Future Programs

- April 1968 - Lou Fullen, Charles Chandler and Alan Duke presented "A Primer on Houston Area Archeology".
- May 1968 - Mr. Derwood Lane, former archeologist for National Park Service and formerly associated with Bureau of Indian Affairs presented "A Synthesis of Anasazi Culture and Present Day Indian Life".
- June 1968 - Dr. Frank Hole, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Rice University, will present an illustrated lecture on "European Paleolithic Cave Art".
- July 1968 - Dr. D. R. Lewis will speak on "Thermoluminescence in the Archeological Dating of Pottery".
- August 1968 - Dr. Frederick Gamst, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Rice University, will discuss "Stone Tool Technology".

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Texas Archeological Society Seventh Summer Field School

The TAS field school will be held June 15 thru June 22 at a site in Victoria County - 50 miles from the Gulf. The principal purpose of the school this year will be instruction in the basic principles of archeological field techniques. The site selected will include everything from the Archaic to the Historic period. It will be a salvage project also since the site is in danger of destruction.

You must be a TAS member (1968 dues paid) or belong to the immediate family of a member to attend. If you forgot to register, you may still be able to participate if you contact the Texas Archeological Society, SMU Box 165, Dallas, Texas 75222.

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News from other Societies

The 1968 Pecos Conference will be held August 23 at The University of Texas at El Paso and on August 24 at the Museo de Arte e Historia de Ciudad Juarez. Hosts will be the El Paso Centennial Museum of the University of Texas at El Paso, the El Paso Archeological Society and the Museo de Arte e Historia de Ciudad Juarez. The meeting will be devoted to "Current Trends in Archeological Theory and Method". For further information contact Mr. Vernon Brook, 2621 Memphis, El Paso, Texas 79930.

The Central Texas Archeological Society of Waco who will host the 1968 TAS annual meeting in November, has a number of back issues of the Central Texas Archeologist for sale. Also, a reprint of special interest to students of Paleo-Americana - "First Citizens of Central Texas" (Watt and Agogino 1968) is available. For information on these publications, contact Central Texas Archeologist, Box 1176, Waco, Texas.

The Rankin Archeological Society has been formed in West Texas. Roy Johnson is president and J. C. Surber is secretary. Our best wishes for success go out to them!!

The Fourth Annual Symposium of the Southwestern Federation of Archeological Societies, hosted by the Iraan Archeological Society was attended by 215 persons - a new record for the SWFAS, and was an unqualified success. Dr. E. Mott Davis was the Saturday night banquet speaker - the title of his talk was "Pyramids, Prehistory, Parlor Games and People".

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Visit to the Lehner Mammoth Site

Your Editor had an opportunity to visit the Lehner site in southeastern Arizona last month. Our tour of the excavations and ranch was conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Lehner who were most gracious hosts. More mammoth bone and tusks are eroding out of the walls of the excavations and additional work is being planned for the summer of 1969 by the University of Arizona. Perhaps we'll accept the invitation to become a member of the "dig" crew!

The San Pedro valley sites which include the Lehner, Naco and Murray Springs Mammoth sites have yielded 25 Clovis points and many other tools including the now famous mammoth bone shaft wrench from the Murray Springs site.

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Artifacts from Olduvai Gorge

We have received word from Dr. L. S. B. Leakey that casts of typical artifacts from various sites excavated at Olduvai will be made available to "Museums, Universities and other Institutions". It is expected that ten sets, each containing 25 specimens, will be offered initially. Exact price has not been established. For further details contact your Editor.

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Ancient Wood from DuPont Plant - LaPorte, Texas

Chunks of blackish-brown wood, preserved and intact, were retrieved from 175 feet below the surface during the drilling of a well on the plant. The ground surface at the well site is only 25 feet above sea level.

Radiocarbon tests on the wood were made by the University of Pennsylvania and it was found that the age of the wood exceeded the dating capabilities of the equipment - greater than 39,800 years!! There should be something significant in this find, archeologically speaking, if we are just sharp enough to see it.

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Odds and Ends from the News Media

Showdown at Sundown Looms In Battle for Stone-Age 'Dig'

Yermo, Cal. (AP) — Deep in the barren Mojave Desert, archaeologists say they think they've found the earliest evidence of man's presence in the western hemisphere.

Now, the painstaking task of proving their find faces a deadline — sundown tonight.

The work at the diggings in the Calico Mountains, 10 miles east of Barstow, halted when Glen S. Gunn, a miner holding claims to the federally owned property, ordered the scientists off the land. Gunn values his claims at \$25 million and has offered them to the scientists for that sum.

But the archaeologists say they'll resist his demand for them to leave the land.

"We've moved all specimens, all notes and records just in case we should have to grab hats and run," said Ruth Simpson, expedition director. "But our plan is to stay on at

the site despite Mr. Gunn's ultimatum."

Their belief that the relics date to the Stone Age is supported by Dr. Louis S. B. Leakey who, in Africa, discovered the earliest known human remains, which may be as old as 1.3 million years.

Leakey has said the evidence gathered at the Yermo diggings, including more than 100 man-made tools, warrants continued research until the age of the relics is proved. But Gunn said the presence of the researchers is keeping him from digging bentonite, a rare earth from volcanic ash, on claims he has held since the early 1950s.

At the request of the archaeologists, the Bureau of Land Management is assaying the deposits to determine whether the claims are worth mining. If they aren't, bureau officials

say, the claims can be nullified.

The bureau also has suggested that the five-acre diggings be set aside for further study and possibly opened to the public. Meetings have been proceeding for several days between representatives of the scientists. Gunn and his attorney seeking an arrangement which would enable the research to continue.

The original discovery which led to the dig, sponsored by the San Bernardino County Museum, was made in 1963 by Miss Simpson. The researchers have worked since then, using linoleum knives, dental picks, chisels and pick hammers, excavating several pits, each 20 feet deep, in a prehistoric alluvial fan — a deposit formed where debris spilled from a stream at the end of a gorge.

Indian Burial Spot Protected From Diggers

Oakland, Cal. (AP) — The children at Lodestar Camp near Jackson won't be digging up any pretty beads from the ground near their swimming pool this summer.

The ghosts of the Miwok Indians who buried the beads to honor their dead will be at rest, for their sacred mourning spot is now protected by wire and a strict order against digging anywhere within 20 feet of the mound. Eventually the camp hopes to raise \$700 for an archaeological dig to discover the time period of the Indian's existence.

The camp is operated by the Piedmont Community Church as a summer camp for children from Northern California. Last year, said Herman Trutner, on the board of camp management, "one of the unadvertised joys of camp life was being able to dig up enough Indian beads for one necklace."

Oldest American

One summer day in 1953, Keith Glasscock, a pipeline welder and amateur archeologist, was digging near Midland, Texas, and unearthed what looked like ancient human bones. Scientists from the area, circumspect about announcing the discovery because of the Piltdown Man hoax, painstakingly analyzed the bones and deduced they were the remains of a 30-year-old woman who had lived about 10,000 years ago. Midland Man has generally been regarded as the oldest evidence of human life in the Western Hemisphere.

Now the Midland find may have to yield its claim to primacy. A team of scientists from Washington State University has unearthed some human bone fragments at the bottom of a canyon near the confluence of the Palouse and Snake Rivers in southeastern Washington. Carbon-dating some mussel shells found with the bones—and also calculating the age of the geological strata containing the remains—scientists determined that the bones were from 11,000 to 13,000 years old.

Scoop: The WSU team will report its finding this week at the Society for American Archeology meeting in Santa Fe, N.M. But the discovery was first revealed last week by Sen. Warren G. Magnuson in Washington—and promptly dubbed "Cro-Magnuson Man." The joke had a point: the Democrat from the State of Washington eight years ago sponsored a law to preserve archeological relics threatened by Federal projects. Indeed, the Lower Monumental Reservoir will flood the area where the bones were found. Under Magnuson's law, the WSU team could get government funds to complete their work. They have asked for \$70,000 but, though indebted to the senator, the scientists decided officially to name their discovery Marmes Man, after Roland J. Marmes, owner of the ranch where the bones were found.

Washington State scientists began digging for geologic and archeological infor-

mation at the site in 1962. In 1965, Roald Fryxell, a geologist, accidentally unearthed the first bone fragments. But it wasn't until last year that they were certified as human. To date, the archeologists have found more than 50 fragments of the skull, face, ribs, fingers, wrist, a vertebra and what may be part of a leg. They believe Marmes was a nomadic male or female around 20 years old who fished and hunted giant elk and perhaps even mammoth. Marmes had a Mongoloid-like head—flat, short, relatively thick skull—and probably resembled the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. Marmes Man would not be particularly out of place in today's society. "You might find someone who looks like him in New York City," says anthropologist Prof. Henry T. Irwin of the WSU team.

Marmes Man's presence in the State of Washington supports the widely held theory that ancient man entered America from Asia across the narrow Bering Strait. The question that has long puzzled scientists is when man made the crossing. The Pleistocene glacial age was coming to an end about 11,000 years ago. Until recently scientists believed the ice cap had made the whole region impassable. But Irwin argues that "man could have come across at any time. The ice age would not preclude his arrival." Still, it took man a long time to migrate from his probable birthplace in Africa—where human fossils have been found dating back 1,750,000 years—to the Western Hemisphere.

Dinner: Scientists suspect cannibalism may have been practiced by early Americans. "It seems quite possible Marmes was eaten by his tribesmen," observes Fryxell. He points out that the animal and human bones found were charred—as if they had been cooked—and split lengthwise, the aboriginal method of getting at edible bone marrow. And, according to Irwin, the number and irregular shape of the bone fragments indicate Marmes "was beat up pretty well" before he was eaten.

The skeletal remains were found in a "living site"—an area also containing arti-

facts and animal bones. Archeologists so far have excavated an area only about 10 feet square, and they are highly optimistic they'll uncover more artifacts, possibly even other skeletons. But they'll have to hurry; flooding is set for December.

Our thanks to L. D. Stewart
for sending us this article.

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Paleo Points From Nueces County, Texas

So far this Newsletter has a distinct "paleo" flavor so to further enhance this theme here is an article about paleo points on the Gulf Coast a subject dear to the hearts of many of us!! Our thanks to William Stantor and Thomas Roy Hester for this contribution to our knowledge of Gulf Coast archeology.

PALEO-INDIAN MATERIALS FROM A SITE
ON OSO CREEK, NUECES COUNTY, TEXAS

By
William Stanton and Thomas Roy Hester

ABSTRACT

The basal fragments of four Paleo-Indian projectile points (one Plainview, two Angostura, and one indeterminate) found at a site on Oso Creek near Corpus Christi, Texas, are described. Other evidence of the Paleo-Indian stage on the southern and central Texas coast is also discussed.

INTRODUCTION

The senior author has collected fragments of four Paleo-Indian projectile points from the surface of a site in Nueces County, Texas (Fig. 1, E). The site (University of Texas designation 41 NU 47) is located on the southern side of Oso Creek near Corpus Christi. The specimens were found near the lower edge of the first terrace of the creek where they were eroding out of a clay stratum. They were the only artifacts recovered from the site; no other cultural debris was evident, though some burned clay lumps and shell fragments were observed at various places both east and west of the area where the points were found. The exact location of the site and other pertinent documentation are on file at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at Austin.

THE ARTIFACTS

The four specimens (Fig. 1, a-d) recovered from site 41 NU 47 are described below:

Specimen A represents the basal portion of a Plainview point. It is made from a light cream-colored flint and shows good workmanship. Several short vertical flakes thin the base on both faces, and neat parallel flaking is present on the blade. The lateral edges are only slightly smoothed. The specimen has a planoconvex transverse cross section. The basal width is 30.5 mm. and the maximum thickness is 4.5 mm.

Specimens B and C are both basal fragments of the Angostura type as defined by Suhm and others (1954: 402). Specimen B is made from white flint; it has light lateral edge smoothing and a biconvex transverse cross section. The basal width is 13.5 mm. and the maximum thickness is 5.0 mm. Specimen C is rather crudely fashioned from a reddish-brown flint. It is steeply beveled along the left lateral edge of both faces. Heavy lateral edge smoothing is present, and the base is slightly damaged. The maximum thickness is 6.0 mm. and the basal width is 14.0 mm.

Specimen D seems to represent the stem fragment of a rather large projectile point. Just above the stem, and at the break, the blade rapidly expands. The lateral edges of the stem are quite heavily dulled, much more so than on Specimens A through C. The specimen is heavily patinated and appears to have been fashioned from a mottled gray-brown flint. Overall workmanship is rather crude. Basal width is 16.0 mm., and the maximum thickness is 7.0 mm.

It would be difficult to fit Specimen D into a recognized type; its possible Paleo-Indian affinity is suggested by the heavy lateral edge smoothing. The fragment is somewhat reminiscent of the Hell Gap type

described by Agogino (1961: 558-560) from a site in the Hell Gap Valley of eastern Wyoming. This site also yielded specimens of the Agate Basin type which are quite similar to what Suhm and others (1954: 402) call Angostura. Specimen D is also quite similar to a specimen illustrated by Orchard and Campbell (1954: Fig.2,T) from Blanco County, Texas. They suggest that it may be an Angostura variant.

COMPARISONS

In addition to Specimen A, several other Plainview points are known from the central and southern Texas coast. Recently, Malcolm Johnson (personal communication) has found another Plainview specimen in Nueces County. It was found on the south side of the Nueces River, some three to four miles inland from Nueces Bay. In Victoria County, E. H. Schmiedlin (personal communication) has found five Plainview points at two sites. A single Plainview was recovered during the excavations at the Morhiss Site in Victoria County, and has been illustrated by Suhm and others (1954: Plate 116,E). Finally, five Plainview specimens have been reported by Enlow and Campbell (1955: 36) from the vicinity of St. Nicolas and Willow Lakes in Refugio County.

Angostura specimens (similar to Specimens B and C) are even more poorly represented than Plainview on this section of the coast. E. H. Schmiedlin (personal communication) has found several Angostura points at sites 41 VT 5 and 6 in Victoria County; in the same county, the Morhiss site has yielded one Angostura point (Texas Archeological Research Laborator Collections). Four Angostura specimens were found in Bee County by Sellards (1940:1638-1644). One specimen has also been recorded by Enlow and Campbell (1955: 36) from Refugio County. Campbell (1960:166) has referred to this projectile point as Agate Basin.

Neither Angostura nor Plainview points were recorded in recent site survey work on the extreme southern coast, below Corpus Christi (Hester, 1968).

SUMMARY

Four Paleo-Indian points from a site on the Oso Creek, Nueces County, Texas, have been reported. One specimen fits well within the Plainview type; two others are classified as Angostura, while the fourth bears some similarities to both Hell Gap and Angostura variants. A number of other Plainview and Angostura specimens from the central and southern coast were briefly discussed.

Our knowledge of the Paleo-Indian tradition on the Texas coast is still quite limited. It is hoped that members of the various coastal archeological societies will make an effort to report the recovery of Paleo-Indian materials in the future.

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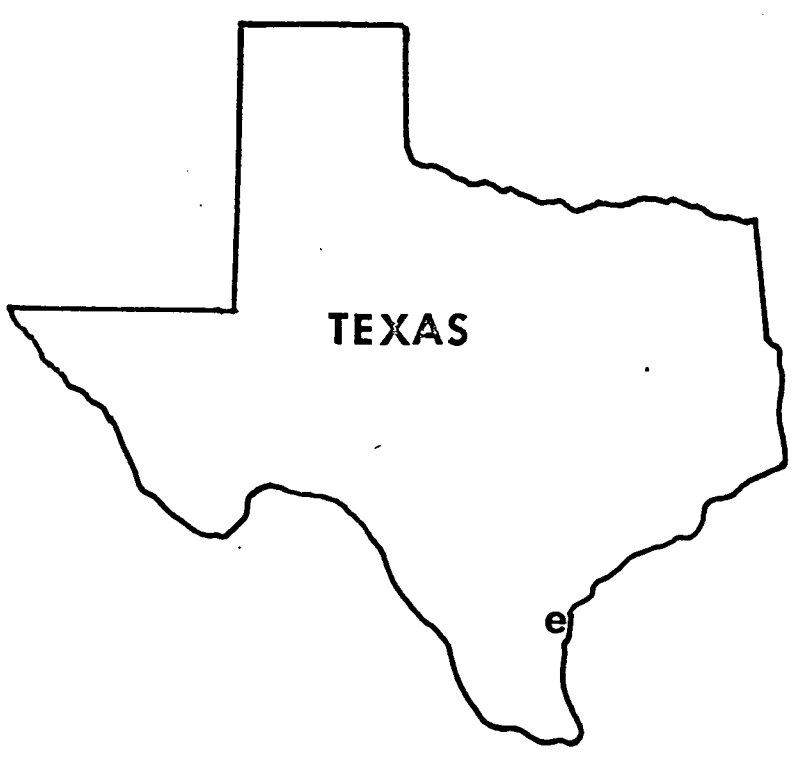
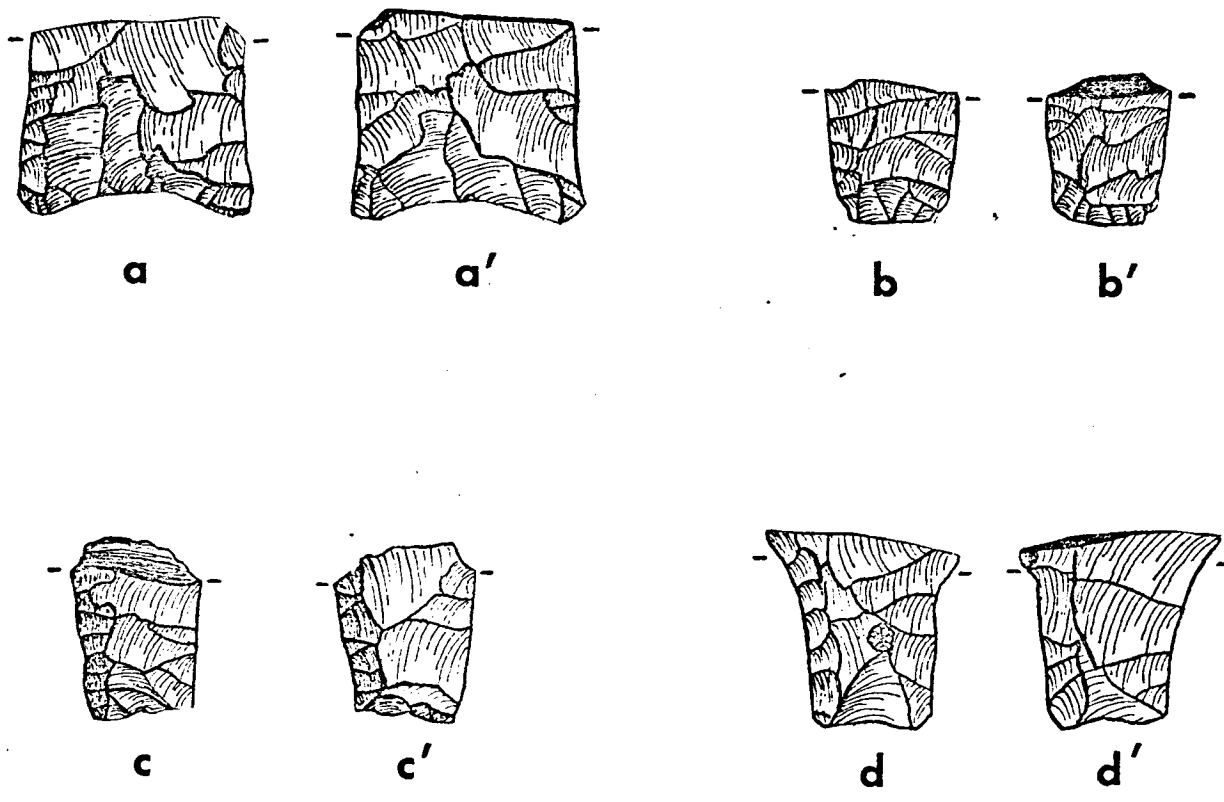


Fig.1
a-d': 41 NU47
e: Nueces County