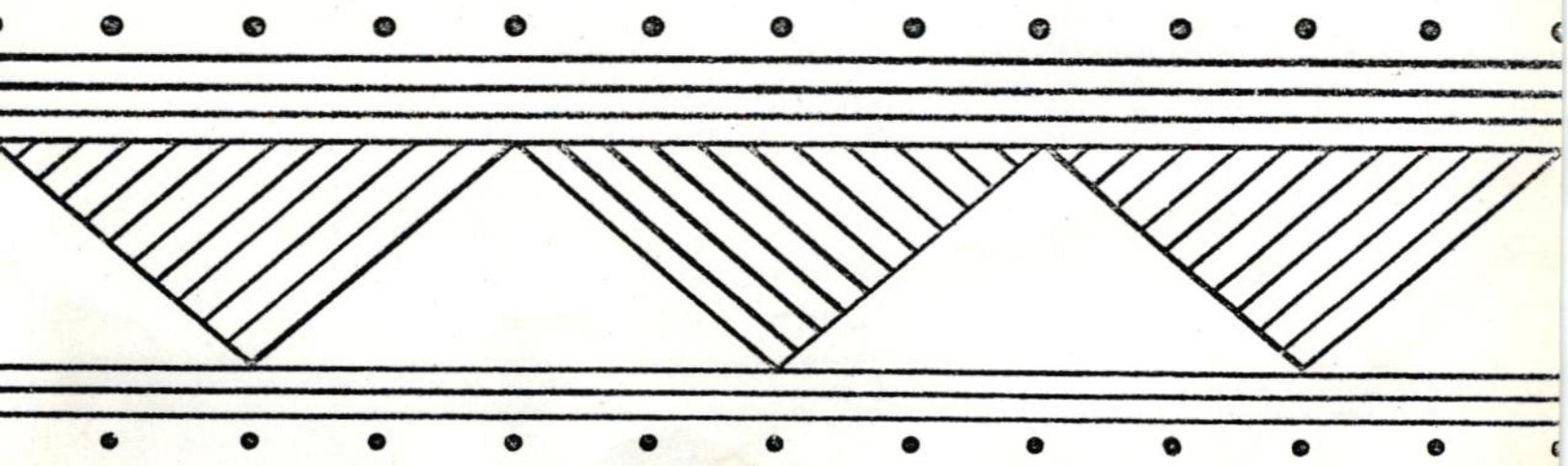


# HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 63

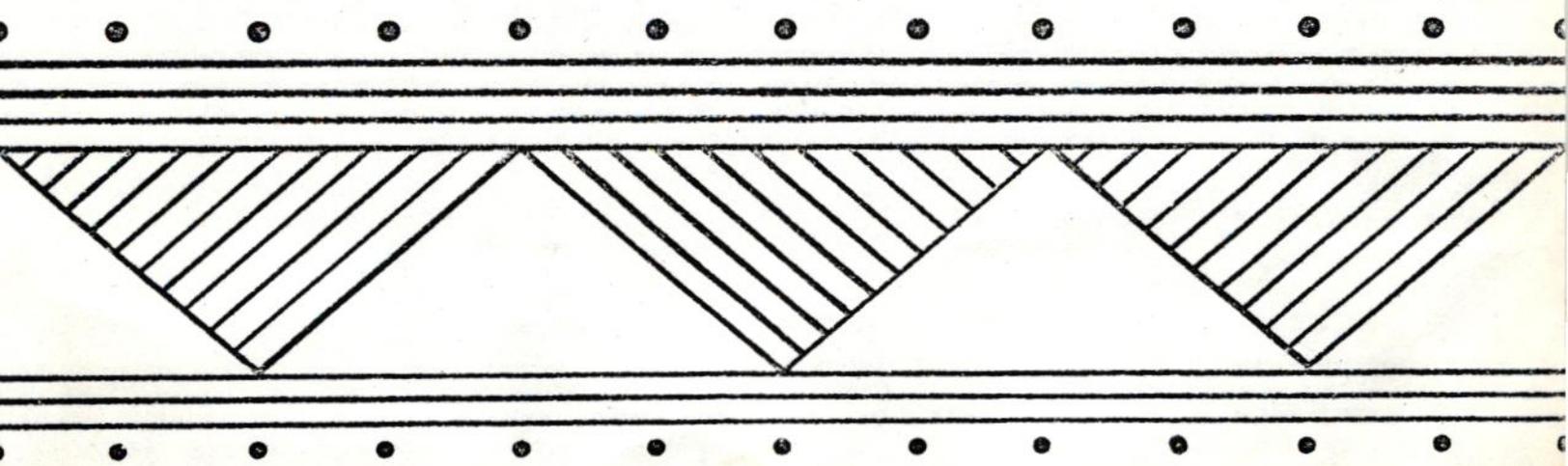
APRIL 1979



# HOUSTON ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 63

APRIL 1979



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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HAS Officers - 1978-79

Chairman - Richard Gregg, 5322 Stillbrooke, Houston, Texas 77096 - 721-4865

Sec.-Treas. - Bill McClure, 1409 Springrock, Houston, Texas 77055 - 465-2170

Directors - Kathryn Salzar, John Herbert, Charles Magan

#####

Activities - 1979

- April 20-21 - Annual Historic Preservation Conference of Texas Historical Commission and Texas Historical Foundation, Kerrville, Texas.
- April 23-25 - Society for American Archaeology 44th Annual Meeting, Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, British Columbia.
- May 27 - Aug. 5 - Exhibition of the Prehistoric Archeology of Japan in the Mitchner Gallery, Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas - Austin. Archeological materials dating from 50,000 years ago to about AD 800.
- June 16-23 - 1979 Archeological Society Field School - Eubank Ranch near Brownwood, Texas.
- June 16-23 - 1979 Archaeological Society of New Mexico Rock Art Recording Field School - Chaco Canyon National Monument.

Current Local Activities

- Houston Archeological Society field work at Hungerford. Contact Sheldon Kindall at 334-2160 or Karen Faggard at 661-6029 for details.
- Spanish treasures from the Gulf Coast may be seen at the Houston Museum of Natural Science thru May 30, 1979. A recent publication of the Texas Antiquities Committee, entitled The Nautical Archeology of Padre Island: The Spanish Shipwrecks of 1554 provides excellent reading on the Spanish treasures.
- The Houston Archeological Society will have a special exhibit at the Houston Lighting and Power Company downtown office - April 16 - May 4. Special opening Friday P.M. on April 20.

#####

Harris County Site 41HR244 Revisited - L. W. PattersonIntroduction

A description of archeological site 41HR244 in Harris County, Texas has been previously published (Patterson 1976a), including a summary of artifacts collected from the surface of this site. This site has now been destroyed by housing development work, but additional diagnostic materials were collected since publication, that should be added to the literature concerning this site.

This site was previously described (Patterson 1976a) as having predominantly Woodland period occupation (approximately AD 100 to 600), with a small amount of Late Prehistoric materials and the possibility of some Late Archaic occupation (approximately 2000 BC to AD 100). My present impression of this site, with additional data, remains about the same, although the Late Archaic component may be under-emphasized. Without excavation, it is difficult to separate Late Archaic and early Woodland artifacts, because the transition brought little change in lifestyle and projectile point types. The start of the Woodland period is simply noted by the use of some pottery. In the late Woodland, it appears that some styles of projectile points were made in smaller sizes (Patterson 1976b).

The additional materials summarized here that were collected from the surface of this site cover all time periods previously noted. This additional information furnishes a larger and more varied data base, but in general only strengthens previous conclusions.

Additional Artifacts

The total collection of projectile points from this site is now as follows, to the end of 1978:

<u>Arrow Points</u>	
Catahoula	2
Scallorn	2
Perdiz	3
unclass. fragments	2
	<u>9</u>
<u>Dart Points</u>	
Catan	1
Carrollton	1
Darl	1
Ellis	2
Gary	10
Kent	7
Kinney	1
Paisano	1
Pandora	1
unclassified	2
preforms	7
blade fragments	7
square stems	4
round stems	2
concave stem	1
misc. fragments	2
	<u>50</u>

(Pedernales?)

Arrow point types may cover the entire time range of the Late Pre-historic (approximately AD 600 to 1500), although this is simply a personal opinion based on information from other sites in this area. Catahoula, Scallorn and Perdiz arrow point types are represented here. The presence of a newly found Carrollton dart point (Figure 1A) gives the possibility of an earlier starting date for this site. This is a typical Carrollton specimen, with ground stem edges. The use of Carrollton type points may start in the Middle Archaic period of approximately 4000 to 2000 BC (Smith 1969:5), although use of this point type could continue into the Late Archaic. Most of the other dart point types listed above are known to have been used in both the Late Archaic and Woodland periods. Approximately half of the dart points were found in the central dark soil midden in apparent association with pottery. Catan, Kinney and Pandora dart points may indicate contacts to the southwest, where these point types are common. The Paisano point is similar to a specimen shown by Suhm and Jelks (1962:plate 114c). This could indicate a long range contact with the Trans-Pecos area of Texas. An alternate explanation is that this specimen is a poorly made example of a Maud type point (Suhm and Jelks 1962:281) typical of northeast Texas. In any event, this projectile point type (Figure 1I) is not locally common. A few Toyah arrow points found on other Harris County sites may also indicate long range contacts to the west.

All ceramics have been found on or near to a central dark soil midden. All sherds are of the Goose Creek sandy paste type. Seventeen rim sherds and 136 body sherds have now been found, of sizes over 15 mm square, along with many other smaller pieces. One sherd has a neatly drilled hole and two sherds have incised patterns, as shown in Figure 1. This is one more example that incised pottery is not too common in inland Harris County.

Several hundred additional flint flakes have been found, but the general characteristics of the lithic collection remains as reported previously. A bifacial end scraper shown in Figure 2 is an additional find of a type not common on sites in this area.

The flint core shown in Figure 2 is an interesting specimen. Superficially, it resembles a crude thick bifacial tool, but no real thinning has been done. Instead, this core has been used to produce product flakes. On the side face illustrated here, a row of small prismatic blades has been removed.

Several hundred additional small pieces of bone have been found. Even though much bone has been preserved in the central dark soil midden, almost all pieces are small. Perhaps this is from people and/or animals chewing up all of the bone, or it may only reflect a poor state of preservation. A group of teeth were found, which appear to be a mixture of deer and human teeth. My local dentist feels that one molar and two incisors are of human origin, although identification is not completely positive, as he is not familiar with animal teeth. These teeth were found in an obvious cooking midden. While perhaps fortuitous, the human teeth might be an example of cannibalism. If this does indicate cannibalism, it is not a common occurrence, judging by the lack of similar evidence on many other sites in this area.

### Summary

Additional data has been presented here on materials collected on site 41HR244 since previous publication. While this data furnishes some additional details, previous conclusions about the general nature of this site remain

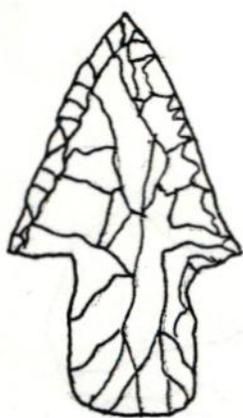
unchanged. This site represents a series of probably seasonal occupations, starting sometime in the Archaic period and ending in the Late Prehistoric. There is no evidence of historic contact. This site is also one more example of the rapid destruction of archeological resources due to urban development.

### References

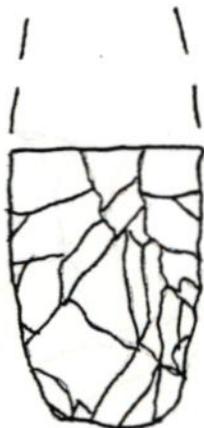
- Patterson, L.W. 1976a A Predominantly Woodland Site 41HR244, Harris Co., Texas. Houston Archeological Society Newsletter 53:2-7
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## FIGURE 1

41HR 244 ARTIFACTS (ACTUAL SIZE)



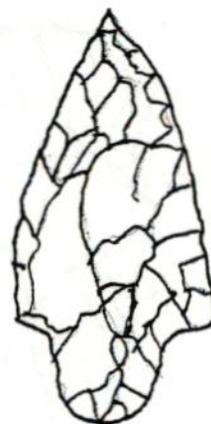
A



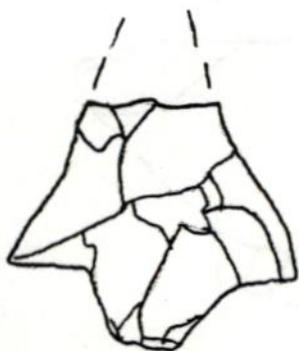
B



C



D



E



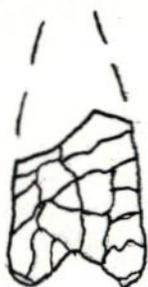
F



G



H



I



J



K



L

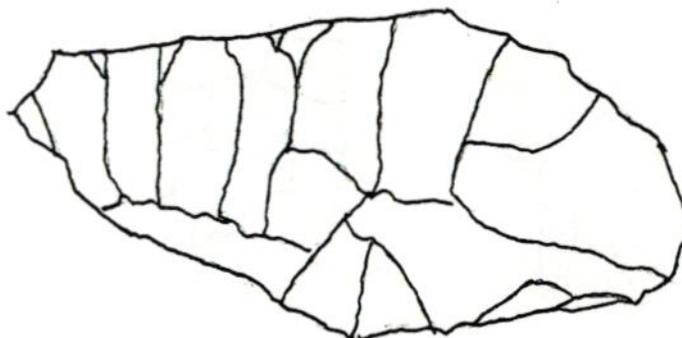
A - Carrollton Point, B - Pandora Point, C,D - Kent Points, E - Gary Point,  
 F,G - Preforms, H - Catahoula Point, I - Paisano Point, J - Sherd with Drilled Hole,  
 K - Incised Body Sherd, L - Incised Rim Sherd

FIGURE 2

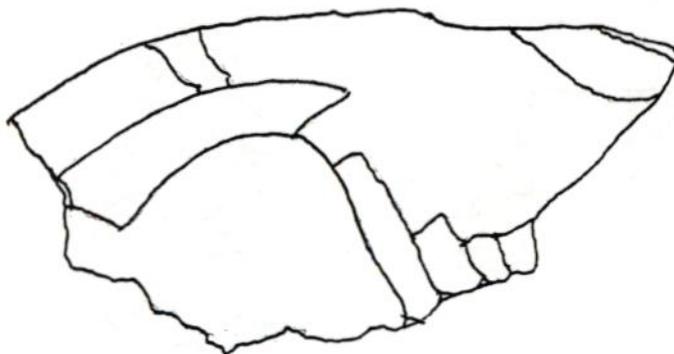
LITHIC ARTIFACTS (ACTUAL SIZE)



A



B - Side View



B - Top View

A - Bifacial Scraper, B - Blade Core

Operation Neidigk

W.L. McClure

## Houston Archeological Society Activity in Montgomery County, Texas

On June 1, 1977, as part of the Houston Archeological Society's search for more evidence of the historic Orcoquiza Indians, Charles Magan and Bill McClure went to Neidigk's Lake, near Decker's Prairie in Montgomery County, Texas.

Local tradition indicates that a large Indian village had been located on Spring Creek at Mill Creek. In 1756, the Spanish trail from Bexar to El Orcoquiza passed through the village of 'El Gordo'. The accounts seem to place the village at the confluence of Mill and Spring Creeks.

The property is now owned by Lester Neidigk, whose father had built a dam across Mill Creek just above Spring Creek. Sometime later, overflow water eroded the soil downstream of the dam and exposed artifacts. The Neidigk family collected much of the material such as arrow heads, pottery and a metate. The collection was lost when the family home burned.

Magan and McClure walked over the area and found no artifacts but were convinced that the site was worthy of further investigation by the Houston Archeological Society, when convenient. On the basis of Neidigk's information, a site report was prepared and sent to the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory. The area below the dam was numbered 41 MQ 44 and was designated 'The Neidigk Lake Site'.

At 8:30 A.M., on April 30, 1978, nine members of HAS gathered at Neidigk Lake. Participants were Frank Brezik, Dick Gregg, John Fullen, Lou Fullen, Marge Fullen, Charles Magan, Bill McClure, Barbara Neal, and Tommy Nuckols.

**METHODS:**

The morning effort was at the hill on the east side of the lake. Three one-meter test pits were dug. The soil was passed through  $\frac{1}{2}$ " mesh screens. Retained material was bagged as a unit for each pit. Notes were made of soil changes and depth of particular artifacts. One test pit hit sterile clay at 1.4 meters and the others were stopped at about 1.25 meters. The backfill included metal beverage containers which will facilitate relocation of the pits in future investigations. In addition, shovel tests were dug to 50 cm. in four directions from the test pit area, in order to determine the area of occupation.

This site was subsequently reported to TARL and was designated 41 MQ 48.

After lunch, effort was directed to 41 MQ 44. Several test pits were dug on the east side of Mill Creek. One test pit was dug on the west bank and another in the area between the original channel of the creek and the new channel. Exposed soil along the creek was examined for evidence of earlier occupation.

Poison ivy, ticks, and a water snake were encountered during the day.

**RESULTS:**41 MQ 44

At the Neidigk Lake Site, one chert flake was found in the test pit on the west bank of the natural channel. In this pit, the upper 30 cm. of soil was hard packed sandy silt. Below the silt is a somewhat looser sand, within which the flake was found.

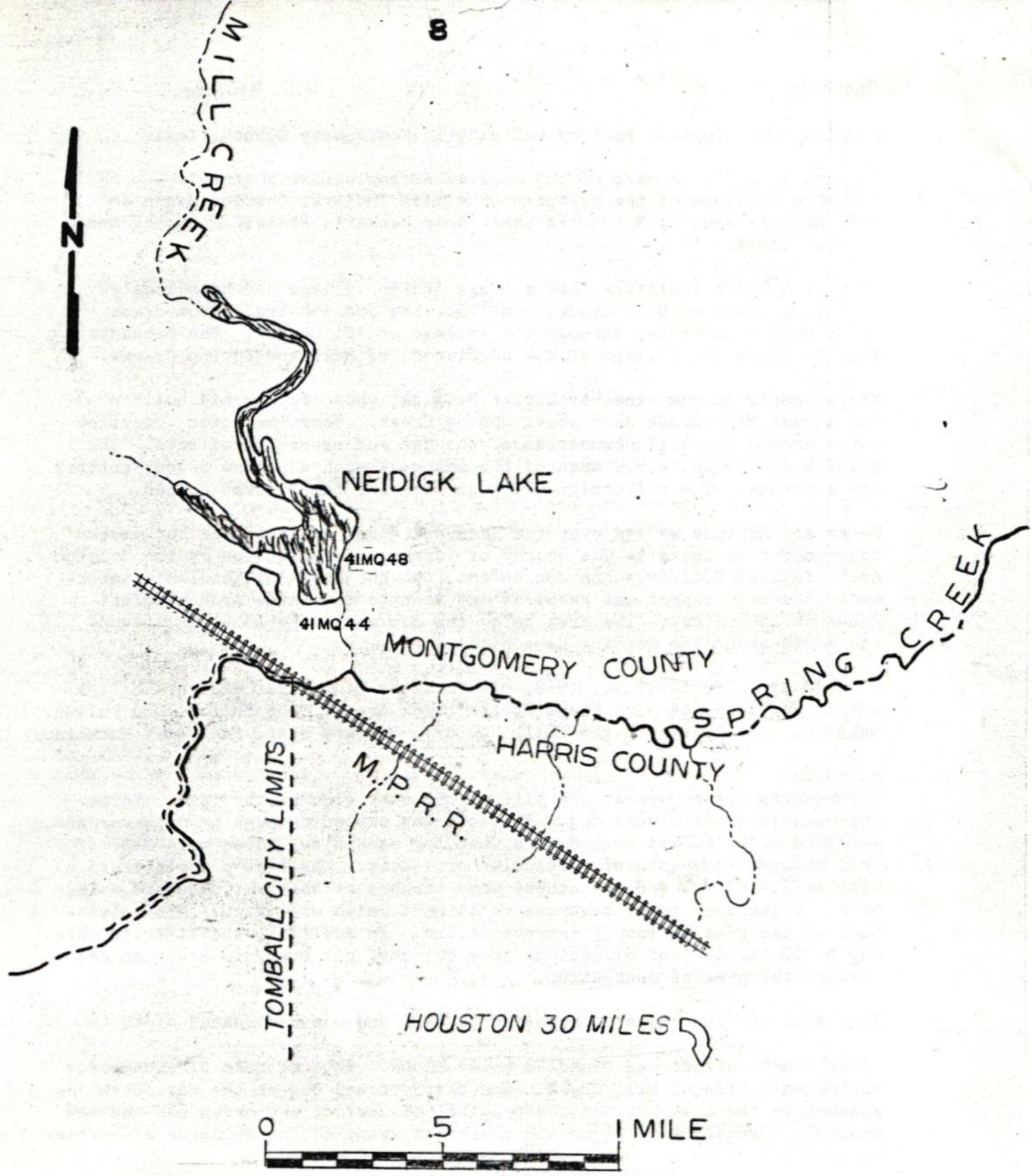


Figure 1

T. Nickols  
2-79

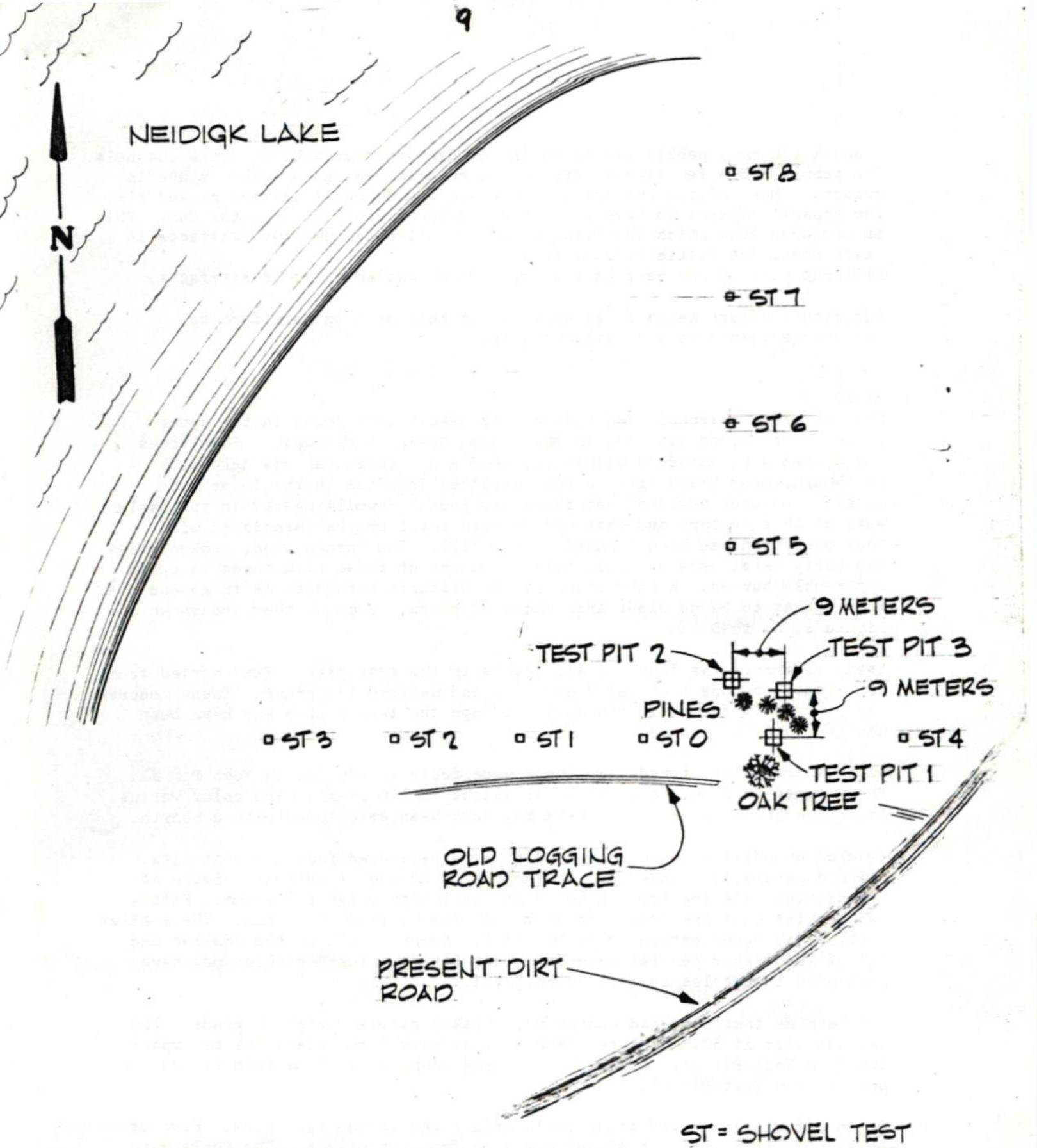


Figure 2

41MQ48

T. Nuckols  
12-78

A small (50 mm.) pebble was found in the disturbed area between the channels. The pebble had a few flake scars but no apparent intended shape or use is evident. Most of the surface soil between the channels is hard packed clay. The topsoil appears to have been eroded away by overflow from the dam. This is the area from which the Neidigk family collected numerous artifacts in years past, but little remains today.

All test pits on the east bank of Mill Creek failed to yield artifacts.

Additional effort needs to be expended in this area in an effort to relocate evidence of the historic site.

41 MQ 48

Charred wood, charcoal, and historic artifacts were found in the upper 25 cm. of the test pits and in the shovel tests to the west. Some trees had barbed wire embedded within the wood and a large oak was deformed, as though, many years ago, it had sustained injuries to the lower two meters. Neidigk advised that there had been a sawmill nearby in the early part of this century and that one or more small shacks associated with that operation had been located on the hill. The burned wood, broken glass and rusty metal were probably related to one of those structures that had apparently burned. A tabulation of the historic artifacts is in Appendix A. They appear to be no older than about 60 years. Some of them are shown in Figure 3, A. to D.

Iron ore gravel was found at all levels in the test pits. Size varied from quite small to one that was 9 cm. long and weighed 133 grams. These concretions probably formed in the soil although the larger ones may have been used by early occupants.

Several irregular, fired-clay lumps were found at -80 cm. in Test Pit #2. The largest is 5 cm. long and total weight is 140 grams. The color varies from dark brown to orange. These may have been associated with a hearth.

Several unmodified, hard-rock pebbles were recovered from the test pits. All are naturally rounded and no indication of use is evident. Seven of the pebbles that are from 30 to 45 mm. in length weigh 127 grams. Fifty-two pebbles that are from 5 to 20 mm. in length weigh 60 grams. The smaller pebbles may occur naturally in the soil. However, 69% of the smaller and 71% of the larger pebbles came from Test Pit #3. These pebbles may have been used in rattles or as 'pot boilers'.

Ten pebbles that have had one or more flakes removed weigh 70 grams. The largest size is 50 mm. Three pebbles that have flake scars due to impact are from Test Pit #1. Six heat-fractured pebbles are from Test Pit #3 and one is from Test Pit #2.

Seven bifacially-worked stone tools were found in the test pits. Five of these were from Test Pit #2 and one each from the others. The tools were all more than 80 cm. below the surface. The bifaces are illustrated in Figure 3.

Item E., from Test Pit #3, is a chert cobble that has been battered at both ends in an apparent attempt at thinning. The nature of the material caused step fractures and it was discarded without use. Weight is 97 grams.

Item G. is an unfinished dart point from Test Pit #1. The flaking characteristics of the chert prevented it from thinning sufficiently. There is no evidence of use. Weight is 14 grams.

Item F. is a Clear Fork Gouge made of brown and yellow chert. It is triangular in outline and the convex edges are not well worked. Cortex remains in two small spots. Length is 45 mm. Width is 38 mm. Maximum thickness is 12 mm. The bit angle is 63°. The dimensions are very close to the mean dimensions of gouges from Webb County, Texas, as reported by Shiner in Texas Archeological Society's Bulletin #46. The concave area was produced by removal of one large and several smaller flakes. Chip scars from use are on the face of the bit. Weight is 20.3 grams.

Item H. is part of a thin chert biface. The edges are somewhat smoothed either due to use or grinding. Weight is 7.4 grams.

Items I. and J. are basal fragments of chert bifaces. Each weighs 0.5 gr.

Item K. is a rough biface of silicified wood. There is no indication of use. Weight is 14 grams.

Flakes and chips of chert and silicified wood were found at all depths in the test pits. All were collected and tabulated by size for comparison. Test Pit #1 had 112, Test Pit #2 had 186, and Test Pit #3 had 173 flakes and chips. Total weight of the 471 items is 228 grams. Size variation between the test pits is similar although Test Pit #2 had 10% more flakes that were smaller than 10 mm.

Each test pit had flakes that were fire-popped with 38 (8%) in all. Test Pit #1 had four lipped flakes as from biface thinning. Test Pit #3 had three possible microblades.

Minor evidence of use was noted on 18% of the flakes. This included 11 flakes with retouched edges, two of which are straight, four are convex, and four are concave. Nine flakes had been used as scrapers and seventy-four had been used as cutting tools.

One unifacial tool from Test Pit #2 is shown in Figure 3, L. As illustrated, the upper and lower edges had been snapped off and the other edges were retouched. The edges marked with small arrows were used as cutting tools. Maximum thickness is 4 mm. and weight is 7 grams.

Except for the retouched flakes and the uniface, none of the utilization of these flakes is very extensive. All of the flakes and chips appear to be of local material with at least 3% of coarse silicified wood.

#### DISCUSSION:

The absence of pottery indicates that this site was not occupied during the Woodland Period or later. The only identifiable artifact in the assemblage is the Clear Fork Gouge which is more common in Archaic sites to the west.

The presence of flakes throughout the full depth of the sand suggests that the site was occupied for a long period of time. There are some differences in the material from the test pits that may point to different activities. Test Pit #1 had the lipped flakes and the pebbles that were broken by impact. Test Pit #2 had the fired-clay lumps, the most bifaces, and the most small flakes. Test Pit #3 had the microblades, the most pebbles, and the most heat-fractured pebbles.

41 MQ 48 should probably not be disturbed further until it is desirable to investigate the inter-relationship of the Archaic occupation in the area with other cultures.

The presence of modern material at the surface should not change any of the above.

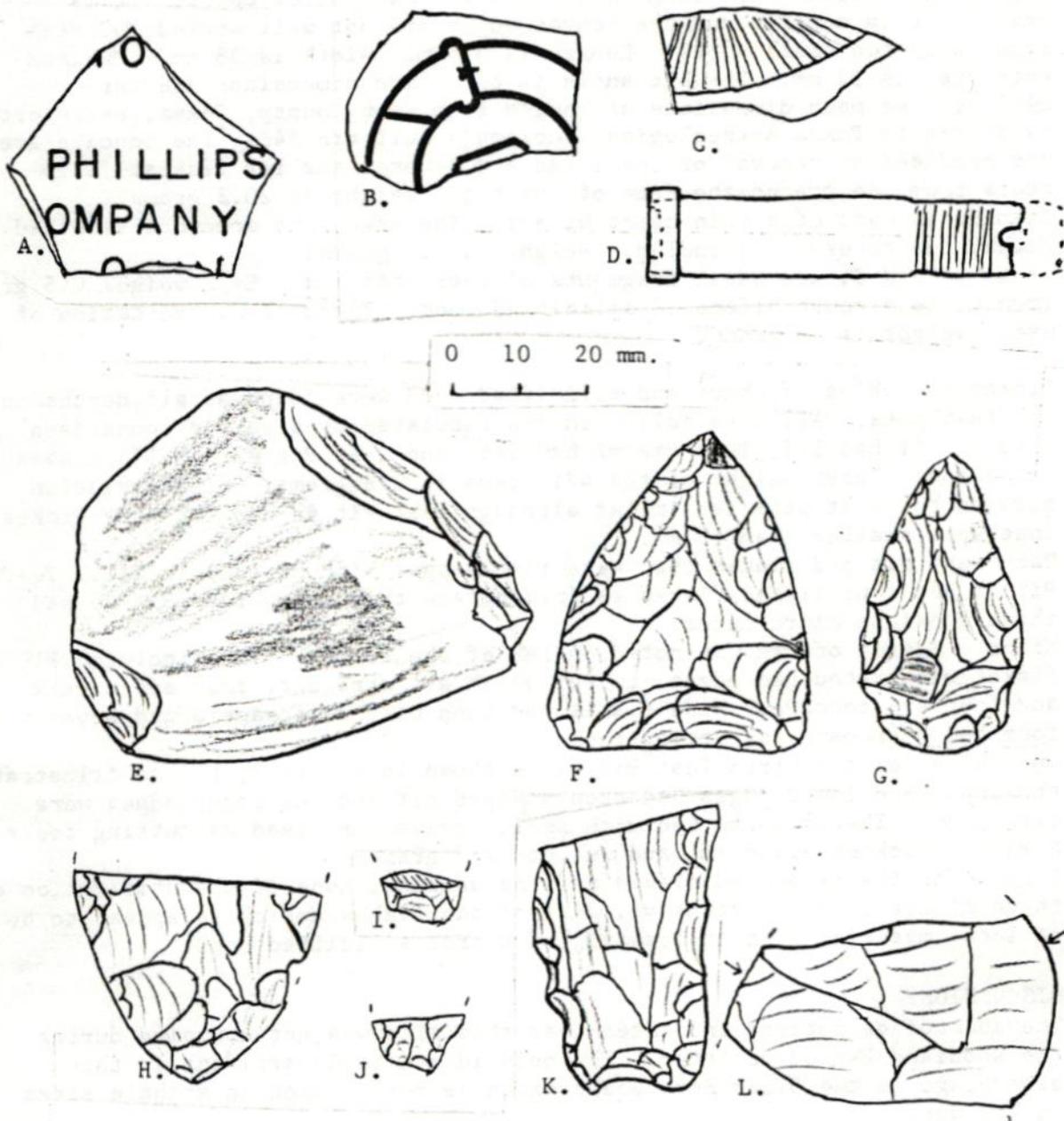


Figure 3 Artifacts from 41 MQ 48

Size	Utilized				Unutilized				Totals				
	P.	S.	I.	total	P.	S.	I.	total	P.	S.	I.	total	
0 to 10mm.		4	24	28	19	43	222	284	19	47	246	312	66+
10 to 15mm.		6	33	39	11	16	62	89	11	22	95	128	27+
15 to 20mm.		4	10	14	1	4	6	11	1	8	16	25	5+
20 to 25mm.		1	2	3	1			1	1	1	2	4	1-
25 to 30mm.			2	2							2	2	1-
Totals		15	71	86	32	63	290	385	32	78	361	471	

Table of Sizes of Flakes and Chips

## APPENDIX A.

## MODERN ARTIFACTS; 41 MQ 48:

Test Pit No. 1.:

Barbed wire in tree

## Common nails:

- 2 20d.
- 1 10d.
- 6 8d.
- 5 6d.
- 5 fragments.

## Roofing nails:

- 7 5/8"

## Sheet metal:

- 26 fragments of rusty, thin metal such as tin cans.
- 1 piece rusty wire, 3/16" dia., 7" long.
- 1 rusty metal ring about 1" dia.
- 1 missfired 22 cal. cartridge, short; SUPER X; chrome case.
- 2 pieces brown glass (snuff bottle ?).
- 1 piece blue glass (Vicks ?).
- 2 pieces clear glass, 3/32", flat.
- 2 pieces clear glass, 5/64", flat.
- 4 pieces clear glass, 3/64", curved.
- 1 button made from oyster shell (2 holes), about 10 mm. dia.

Test Pit No. 2.:

## Common nails:

- 1 6d.

Steel bolt or pin; 1-5/8" long, 3/8" dia.; nut is 1/2" square, 1/4" thick, appears to be attached w/o threads; other end is threaded and had hole such as for cotter pin. (Fig. 3, D.).

Test Pit No. 3.:

1 small piece of angular cast iron such as from stove.

Shovel Tests:

- 1 10d. common nail.
- 1 3d. finishing nail.
- 29 fragments of thin sheet metal from large tin can.
- 5 pieces blue glass (Phillips). (Fig. 3, A., B.).
- 2 pieces light green glass dish that fit together. This was apparently cast in two steps. First it was cast with a smooth exterior and a patterned interior. Then it was cast with a smooth interior. This left the radiating lines visible but both surfaces smooth. After breaking, it separated at the embossed layer. (Fig. 3, C.).
- 7 pieces bottle glass, 2 clear, 2 very light green, 2 light green, and 1 very light rose).

White Oak Bayou continued from HAS Newsletter No. 62 W.L. McClure

41 HR 279-A

This site is on the south side of White Oak Bayou; downstream and outside of a large horseshoe bend that once was in the natural channel. Two small ponds that are north and south of the bayou at this point appear to be due to sand pit excavation. Soil in the bank of the bayou at the site is fine sand that is in an old channel fill. It is probable that this represents an earlier loop in the bayou. The yellow clay stratum is eleven feet below the present surface.

Artifacts continue to be exposed and washed away as the banks erode during rains and slough away when the stream is high. The site extends along about 180 feet of the bayou. Surface elevation is 81 feet above sea level.

The site was found by W.P. Caskey in 1960 or 1961. His collection is at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory.

#### FEATURES:

A hearth was exposed in the bluff, five feet below the present surface, as the bank eroded and sloughed away. The hearth was about one meter along the exposed edge but its shape could not be determined by observing what was left after each rain. The hearth was composed of irregular lumps of clay that were apparently roughly shaped and placed together while still slightly plastic. The lumps were probably allowed to dry in place before a fire was built. They then became hardened by fire. The lumps, when dry, are moderate reddish-orange (10R6/6) in color except where they were in close contact with other lumps, in which case, the color grades to medium gray (N5). Wet colors are 10R4/6 and N3. Only one flint flake was observed among the clay lumps but flakes and dart points were found with displaced lumps, below the hearth where they may have dropped during erosion.

The hearth will be called 'Feature #1' herein.

High water in December, 1977, washed away a large amount of the soil on the slope below the hearth. Numerous sherds and flakes and a few dart points and bones were found embeded in the clay stratum, six feet lower than the hearth. The clay was fire-stained but had not become fired as had the clay lumps in the hearth. Perhaps this indicates that the soil was damp when the fire was built and the fire was not of long enough duration to cause fusion of the clay particles. This activity area is about 5 meters long and at least a meter wide. It must have been very near the level of the stream at the time and apparently was buried when the bayou changed its course.

This activity area will be called 'Feature #2' herein.

#### BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL:

##### Mollusca:

A few fragments of tests of fresh water mussels and land snails were found in positions that may have been associated with the human occupation of the site.

41 HR 279-A

Reptilia:

The remains of at least two box turtles (*Terrapene* sp.) are in the collection. One individual is represented by numerous fragments of carapace and plastron. The other specimen is heavily coated with calcium carbonate. The carapace appears to have several holes that may be drilled but may be due to the way that the caliche formed within the soil.

Mammalia:

At least two kilograms of mammal bones were collected at the site. Some of the bones have calcium carbonate deposit on surfaces. Some of the bones fell apart when exposed by erosion. Whitetail deer and bison are in the collection.

Whitetail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*)

Many of the deer bones had calcium carbonate deposit on surfaces. Adult and young animals are represented. Shed and unshed antlers are in the collection. Figure 34, A.-A' shows two views of a large shed antler that apparently was used as a tool. The brow tine is missing and in its place is a concave area that has been abraded away either by being used as a hammer or by some other deliberate action. The surface of the concavity has caliche deposits that indicate that the development of the concretion postdates the use as a tool.

The ulna of a deer has been grooved for some purpose. Figure 34, B. shows a large groove on one side and several shallower grooves on the other. Figure 34, C. shows a fragment of a leg bone that has numerous cut marks that are probably due to skinning operations.

Bison (*Bison bison*)

Most of the bison bones were found in one location over a period of many months as continual erosion exposed and washed away the bones. Most parts of the skeleton are represented. They were found directly above Feature #2 within soil that previously sloughed away from above. The bones would not have been associated with Feature #2 as that feature probably was buried before the bison died.

Dr. Dalquest at Midwestern University examined some of the bones and he indicated that some of the material is undoubtedly bison. Dr. B. H. Butler at North Texas State University has the rest of the bones and will report on them at a later date.

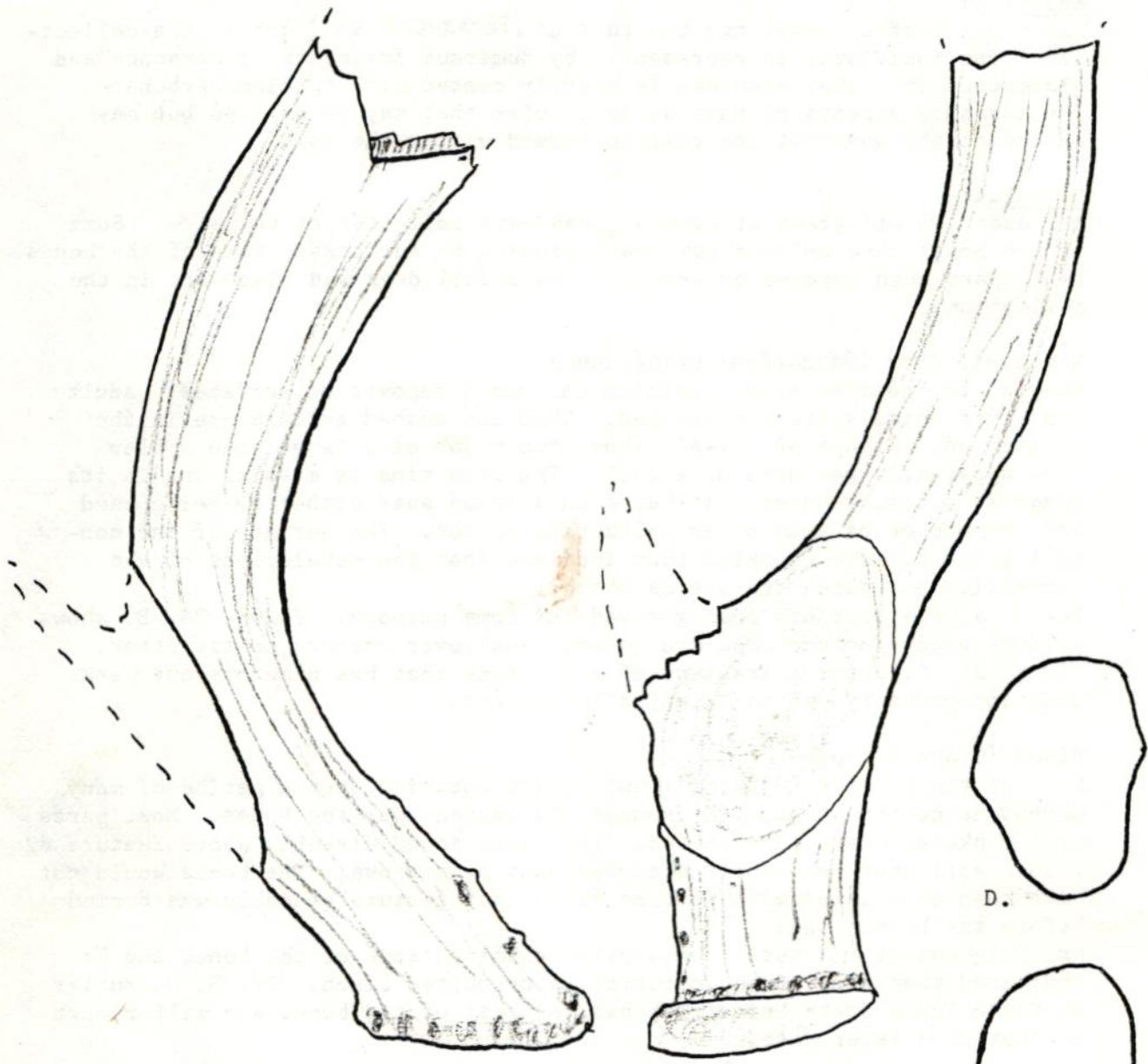
BONE-CERAMIC OBJECT:

A bone from an unidentified animal and a sherd of Goose Creek Plain pottery were found together. The convex face of the bone was nested in the concave face of the sherd and their outlines were superposed. Both objects had been rounded in outline and on edges. They may have had the identical shape before being deposited in the site. The bone shown in Figure 34, D. is 3 mm. thick and weighs 1.66 grams. The sherd shown in Figure 34, E. is 4 mm. thick and weighs 3.92 grams.

The implications of this bone-ceramic object are unknown.

A discussion of the lithics and ceramics will be in later editions of the Newsletter.

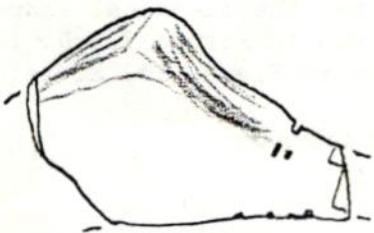
41 HR 279A



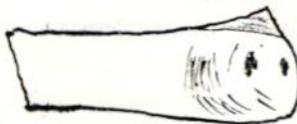
A. from rear

A'. from left side

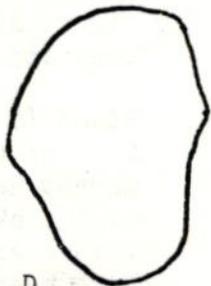
RIGHT ANTLER OF WHITETAIL DEER



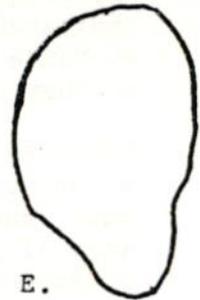
B.



C.



D.



E.

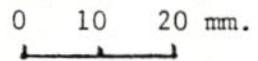


Figure 34

WOB-81