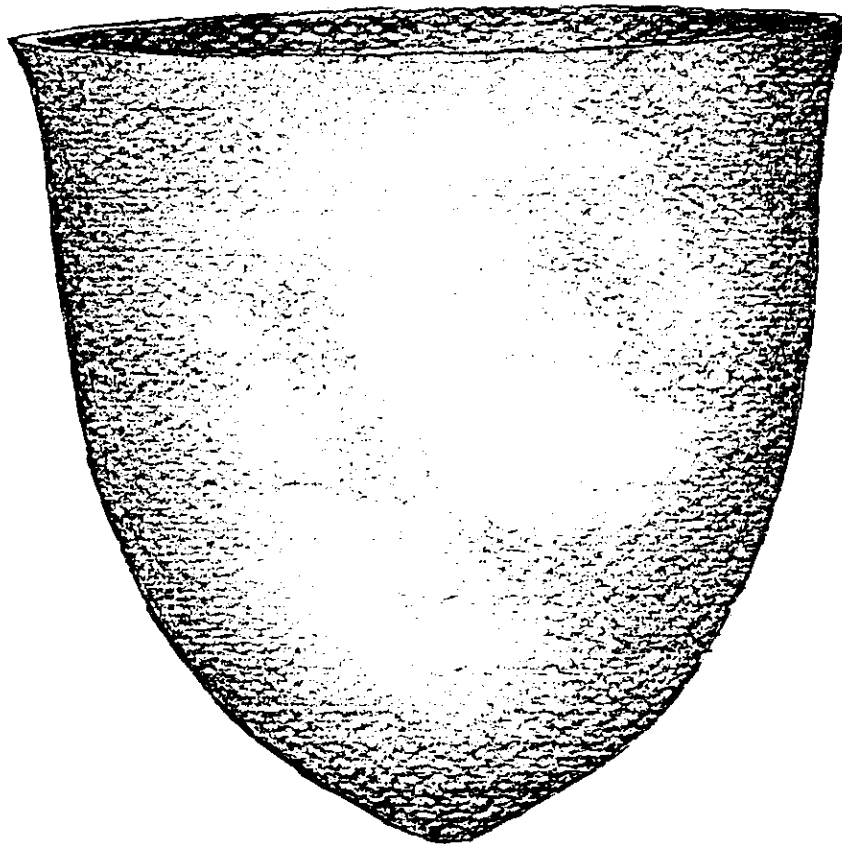




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Goose Creek Pot

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The Kovar Site, 41WH69, Wharton Co., Texas

L. W. Patterson and J. D. Hudgins

Introduction

This article describes a surface collection and results of excavations for prehistoric site 41WH69 in Wharton County, Texas. The site was originally found and recorded for state records by Joe Hudgins. Work at this site was made possible through the courtesy of the landowner, Dennis Kovar.

Site 41WH69 is located on the west bank of the San Bernard River in a sandy area. Its location is typical of known locations for prehistoric sites in this geographic area. The general area is a mixture of woodlands and coastal prairie. A wide variety of faunal and floral food resources would have been available to prehistoric Indians in this area.

Participants in the excavation work by the HAS included Alexandra Hamaker, Rita Crofton, Jeff Hansen, Ray McCausland, Allen Swift, Linda Swift, Fr. Edward Bader, Carolyn Walker, Ramon Canti, Eileen Smith, Anna Rozin, Dee Rhea, Sabrina Weil, Sterling Fener-West, Mike Johnston, Terry Paliwoda, Robert Shelby, Linda Moorrees, Dave Atherton, Mike Marshall, Bernard Naman, Dick Gregg, Gary Ryman, Karen Acker, Ray Trebbi, Kim O'Conner, Joan Allen, Cindy Johnson, Wayne Kerr, Carolyn Faz, Maggo Faz, Renny Wolf, Rick Bailey, Tom Nuckols, C. R. Ebersole, David Pettus, Pam Wheat, Lee Patterson, Joe Hudgins, and Sheldon Kindall. Field work was directed by Sheldon Kindall and laboratory work was directed by Melissa May.

The field work at this site also provided an educational opportunity for two groups of students. Fr. Edward Bader brought a group of students from St. Thomas University, and Pam Wheat brought a group of students from the University of Houston West Institute.

Surface collection

The surface collection for site 41WH69 made by Mr. Kovar consists of projectile points, lithic flakes, miscellaneous lithic tools and a potsherd. Artifact types indicate an occupation sequence from the Late Paleo-Indian period (8000-5000 B.C.) through the Early Ceramic period (A.D. 100-600). The Late Paleo-Indian period is represented by a Scottsbluff point and an Angostura-like point. A Williams and a Pedernales point represent some portion of the Middle Archaic (3000-1500 B.C.) to Late Archaic (1500 B.C. - A.D. 100) time periods. A Gary and a Kent point represent some portion of a long time period from the Middle Archaic through the Early Ceramic periods. All projectile points are shown in Figure 1. The points are made of local types of chert, except that the Angostura-like point is made from petrified wood and the Scottsbluff point is made from exotic Edwards Plateau flint. The basal edges of the Scottsbluff point are ground. Several of the lithic specimens, including some projectile points, show evidence of heat treating, in the form of reddish coloration and waxy luster.

Dart point preforms found include 3 complete specimens and 2 fragments. Other lithic tools found include a stemmed scraper, with a bifacial stem and a unifacial working end (Figure 1G), and a bifacial tool with a graver spur (Figure 1H). Both of these tool types are representative of the Late Paleo-Indian time period.

Lithic manufacturing activities are shown in the collection by 7 chert cores and 106 chert flakes. A summary of flake size distribution is shown in Table 1. Although this is probably a biased sample, the large proportion of flakes with sizes above 20 mm square probably represents the earlier time periods of this site, as is typical of other sites in this area (Patterson et al. 1987: Table 11). A quartzite flake that was found shows use of quartzite hammerstones at this site.

A Goose Creek Plain sandy paste sherd that was found could be from either the Early Ceramic or the Late Prehistoric time periods. Since no arrow points were found, this ceramic specimen is probably from the Early Ceramic period.

Excavation results

Excavations were conducted by the Houston Archeological Society on March 31 and April 21, 1990, to determine if there were any portions of the site remaining intact. Nine one-meter square test pits were made outside of the main area of sand removal, as shown in Figure 2 (from a sketch by Sheldon Kindall). Excavations were made in 5 cm levels and all soil was put through 1/4-inch mesh screens. Excavation results show some soil disturbance over the general area of excavation. Modern materials were found at 10-15 cm in Pit B, at 10-15, 15-20 and 20-25 cm in Pit D, at 45-50 cm in Pit G, and at 30-35 cm in Pit I.

A Goose Creek Plain sherd with a brushed surface was found at 60 cm in Pit G. Dart point fragments were found at 15-20 cm in Pit G and at 35-40 cm in Pit H. A dart point preform fragment was found at 125-130 cm in Pit H. A summary of chert flakes recovered in the excavations is shown in Table 2. Most of the flakes were under 20 mm square in size. The quantity of flakes at any level in any test pit was small. Small amounts of freshwater mussel shell were found as deep as 35 cm in Pit A, 25 cm in Pit B, 20 cm in Pit D, 35 cm in Pit E and 50 cm in Pit G.

It is concluded that most of site 41WH69 was destroyed by modern sand removal operations.

Summary

A long occupation sequence is shown by the surface collection from site 41WH69, from the Late Paleo-Indian through the Early Ceramic time periods. Excavations made by the HAS indicate that little of this site remains intact. It is important to record surface collections of this type while the locational context is still available. Data from surface collections are an important part of the regional archeological data base.

This is one more addition to an increasing number of sites in Southeast Texas that have very long occupation sequences (Patterson 1983). Even though Indians of this region practiced a nomadic hunting and gathering lifeway, a rather stable settlement pattern is indicated by data now available.

References cited

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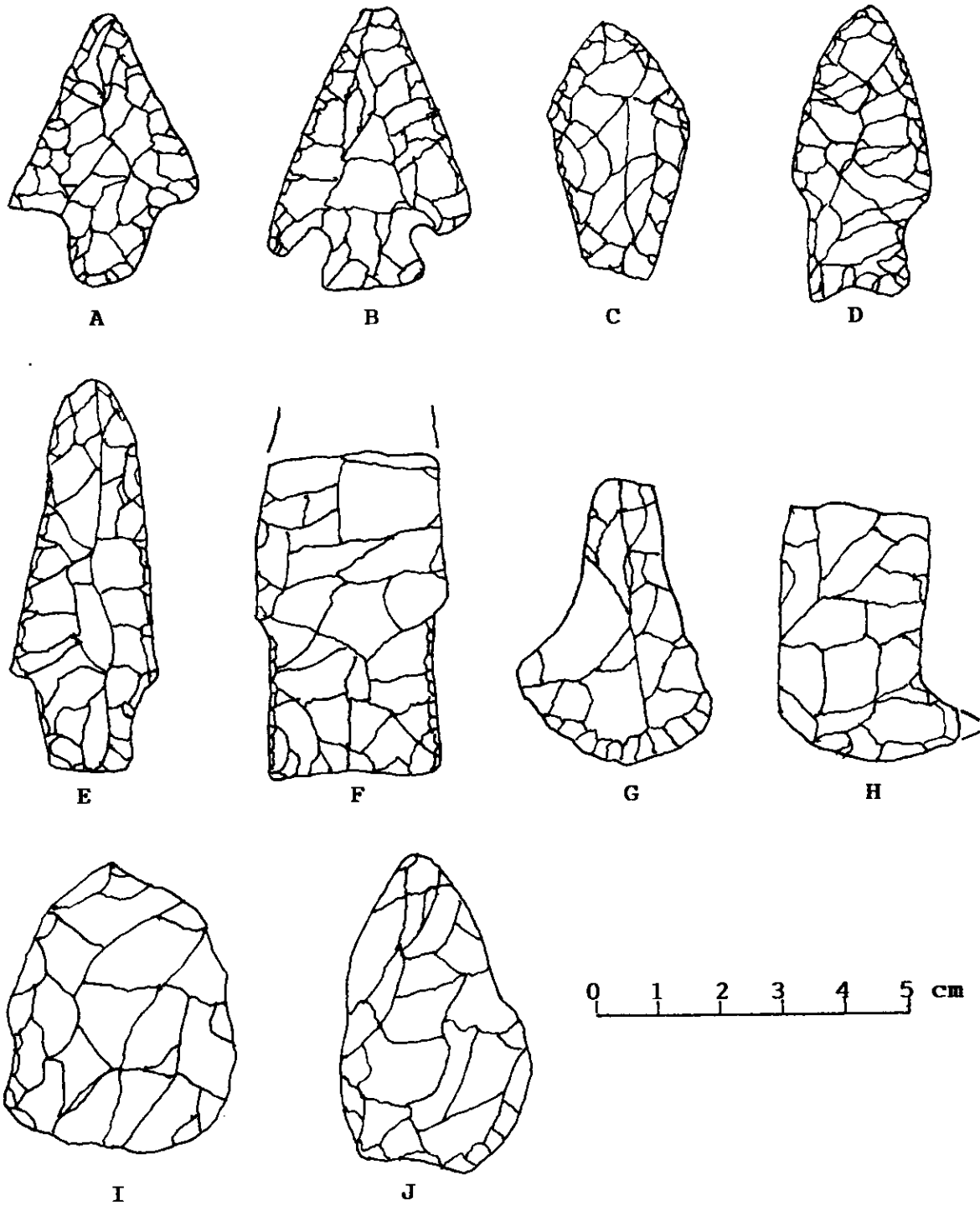
1987 Excavations at Site 41WH19, Wharton County, Texas. Houston Archeological Society, Report No. 4

Table 1. Flake Size Distribution, Kovar Collection

size range mm square	number	percent
under 15	13	12.3
15-20	14	13.2
20-25	27	25.5
25-30	21	19.8
30-35	22	20.7
35-40	6	5.7
40-50	3	2.8
total	106	100.0

Table 2. Summary of Excavated Chert Flakes

level, cm	excavation pit								
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
0-5					1				
5-10		1		4	1		1		
10-15	2	3		2	1		2		
15-20		1		1	1		1	1	
20-25	1	2	1	2	2	1		1	
25-30	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	1	
30-35	4			5	3		2		
35-40					3				
40-45						3	3	1	
45-50							4	2	
50-55								1	
55-60								1	
60-65							6	2	
65-70								3	
70-75									1
75-80								5	
80-85								3	
85-90									
90-95								1	
95-100								3	
100-105									
105-110								3	
110-115								2	
115-120								8	
120-125								2	
125-130								7	



A - Gary point, B - Williams point, C - Angostura-like point, D - Pedernales point,
 E - Kent point, F - Scottsbluff point, G - stemmed scraper, H - bifacial tool with spur,
 I - misc. biface, J - dart point preform

Figure 1. Site 41WH69 lithic artifacts

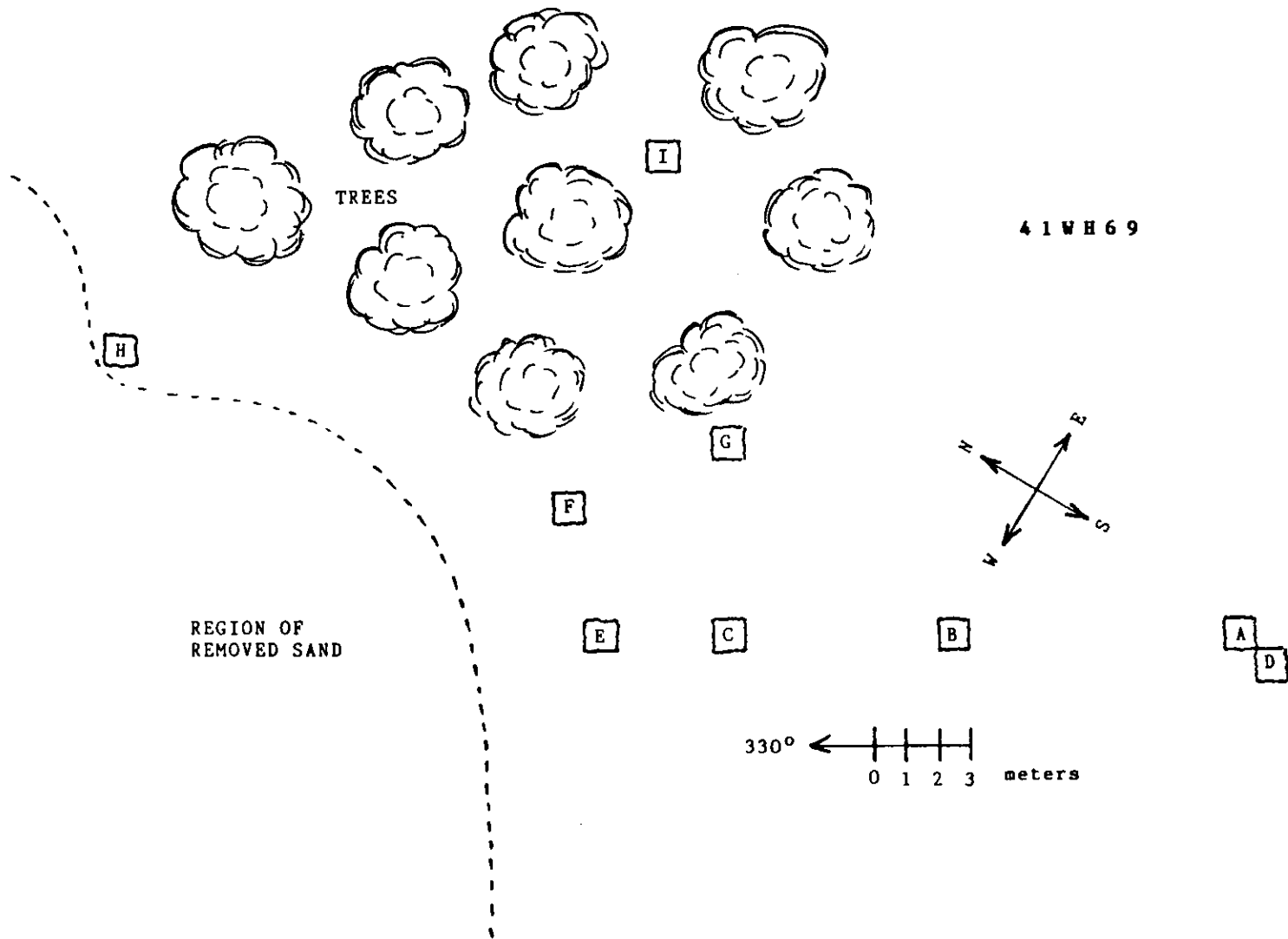


Figure 2. Site 41WH69 excavation layout

Seaberg Site C, 41HR684, Harris Co., Texas

Leland W. Patterson

Introduction

In a separate article (Patterson 1990), artifact collections made by Curtis Seaberg have been described for prehistoric sites 41HR641 and 41HR642 in eastern Harris County, Texas. These sites were found during farming operations. Mr. Seaberg has now found a third site, 41HR684, and the collection of artifacts from this site is described in this article.

Site 41HR684 is about 50 by 100 yards in size. It is located on sandy soil near a relic lake bed. This would have been a good campsite area for Indians with a hunter-gatherer lifestyle when the lake existed. A wide variety of food resources would have been available.

Artifact types found on site 41HR684 indicate an occupation sequence from the Early Archaic through the Early Ceramic periods. The presence of bone-tempered pottery may indicate some even later occupation of this site, during the Late Prehistoric time period. This is another example to be added to an increasing list of sites in Southeast Texas that have long occupation sequences (Patterson 1983).

Projectile points

Dart point types found on this site represent a possible time range from the Early Archaic period (5000-3000 B.C.) through the Early Ceramic period (A.D. 100-600). The Early Archaic period is possibly represented by two specimens that might be classified as Trinity points. This point type occurs during the Early Archaic at other sites in Southeast Texas (Patterson 1980, 1983). A Williams-like point represents some portion of the Middle Archaic (3000-1500 B.C.) or Late Archaic (1500 B.C. - A.D. 100) time periods. A stem from a possible Pedernales point also may represent some portion of these same time periods. Gary and Kent points found at this site occur during the Middle Archaic, Late Archaic, and Early Ceramic periods at other sites in this region. Yarbrough points found here represent some portion of the Late Archaic and/or Early Ceramic periods. Since ceramics were found at this site, occupation during the Early Ceramic period is better demonstrated than by projectile point types alone. A summary of dart points is given in Table 1. Some of the dart point specimens are illustrated in Figure 1.

Ceramics

Fourteen Goose Creek Plain sandy paste sherds were found. A Goose Creek Incised sherd was recovered, with one horizontal and two vertical lines. Goose Creek pottery occurs in both the Early Ceramic and Late Prehistoric time periods. Three bone-tempered sherds were also found. Bone-tempered pottery might indicate additional later occupation of this site during the Late Prehistoric period (A.D. 600-1500). Bone-tempered pottery is found in the Late Prehistoric period in the Galveston Bay area (Aten 1983: Figure 14.1), but bone-tempered pottery starts in the Early Ceramic period at some sites in inland Southeast Texas (Patterson 1980).

General lithic materials

Formal types of lithic tools, other than projectile points, found at this site include a bifacial pebble tool, a bifacial drill, and 3 unifacial scrapers. Two miscellaneous biface fragments were also

