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Old Galveston Custom House

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Test Excavations at Site 41FB34, Fort Bend Co., Texas

L. W. Patterson and J. D. Hudgins

Introduction

This article describes the results of test excavations at Site 41FB34 in Fort Bend County, Texas, done by the Houston Archeological Society on February 15, 1986. This work is part of a continuing program by HAS to contribute to the data base for prehistoric sites on the upper Texas coast. Work was made possible through the courtesy of the landowners, Charles Boettcher and Tina Hollingsworth.

Site 41FB34 was originally found and recorded by Joe Hudgins on the basis of surface finds of small fragments of bone and freshwater shellfish remains. The location is on a large sand ridge near the San Bernard River. The general location is a mixture of woodlands and coastal prairie. This large sand ridge appears to be a completely post-Pleistocene geological formation.

Work was done under the overall direction of HAS Field Director, Sheldon Kindall. Participants in these excavations included: Dave Atherton, Cheryl Cohorn, C.R. Ebersole, Dick Gregg, Lonnie Griffin, Troy Herndon, Joe Hudgins, Rodger Heffington, Sheldon Kindall, John Leftwich, Melissa Marrs, Linda Moorrees, Tom Nuckols, Lee Patterson, Stan Perkins, David Pettus, Gary Ryman, Bill Schurmann, Mike Woods, and Jim Woodrick.

Results of these excavations provide significant data on the subsistence pattern of this geographic area during the Middle-to-Late Archaic time periods. Site 41FB34 appears to be a seasonal campsite that was used over a considerable time interval during the Middle Archaic, with some evidence of lighter occupation during the Late Archaic.

Excavation Details

To test the nature of this site, six one-meter square test pits were dug, according to the layout shown in Figure 1. All soil was put through 1/4-inch screens.

On the basis of finding only small fragments of bone and shell on the surface, caused by gophers, Hudgins predicted that human occupation levels would be located fairly deep. This prediction turned out to be correct. All archeological materials from this site appear to be from preceramic periods, with no undisturbed materials near the surface. Most of the archeological specimens in the top 50 cm appear to have been deposited there from soil disturbances by gophers.

Based on the scarcity of archeological materials in the top 50 cm of excavations, test pits 3, 4 and 6 were taken rapidly to a depth of 100 cm and test pit 1 was taken to a depth of 120 cm before encountering significant concentrations of artifacts, while test pits 2 and 5 were excavated in smaller intervals from 50 to 100 cm. This strategy allowed work to be directed to the deeper levels where the significant artifact concentrations were located. All six test pits were completed during the one-day effort.

All test pits were taken down to sterile levels with the possible exception of Pit 3. All pits had sandy matrix throughout, except that clay was found in Pit 6 at 177 cm. The excavated sandy soil was dark brown, with a distinct change to a lighter tan color at 170 cm in Pit 3.

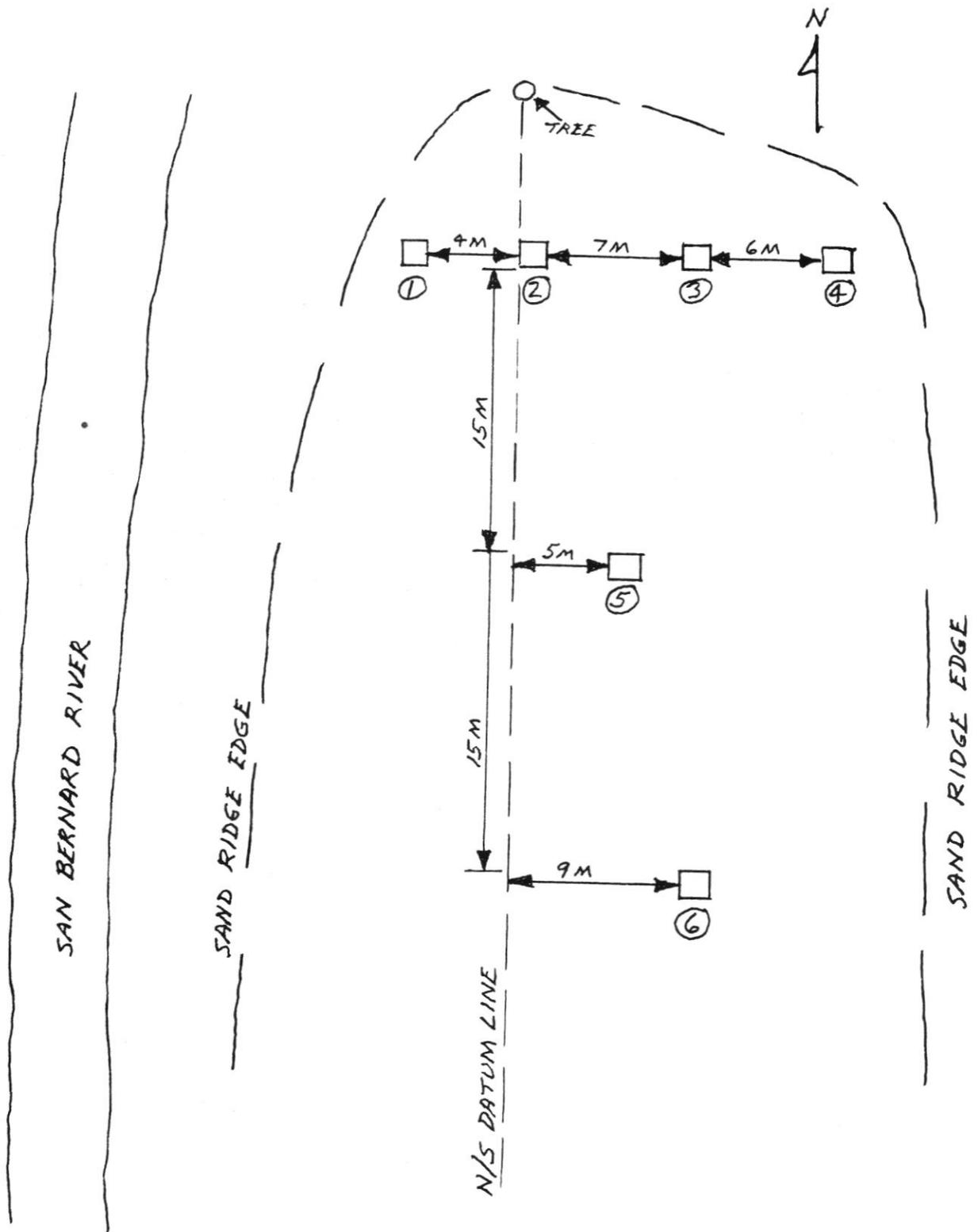
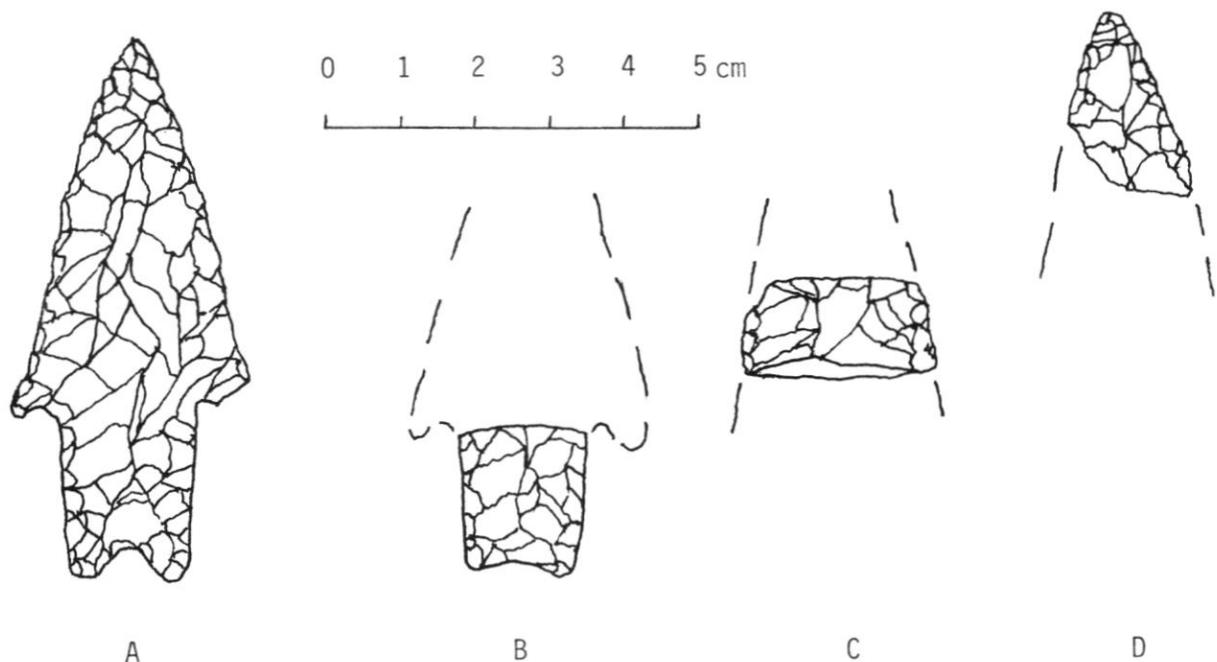


Figure 1. Site 41FB34 excavation layout



A,B – Pedernales; C,D – dart point fragments

Figure 2. Site 41FB32 projectile points

Lithic Materials

There were surprisingly few lithic materials found at this site, compared to other prehistoric sites in this general area. There was either little flintknapping activity here, or the test pits missed areas of the site where knapping activities had taken place.

Pedernales points were found in the main deep deposits (Figure 2A,B). A whole Pedernales point was found at 170 cm in Pit 3 and a Pedernales stem was found at the 120-130 cm level in Pit 1. The lateral edges of the stems of both specimens are ground. According to Suhm and Jelks (1962:235), stem grinding is not common for the Pedernales point type.

Pedernales points are usually associated with the Middle Archaic in central Texas. The only dated Pedernales points for the upper Texas coast are from Allens Creek (Hall 1981:49) in Austin County, with a date range of 2610 B.C. to 1530 B.C., which would be in the Middle Archaic period in the chronological classification given by Patterson (1979:106) for the upper Texas coast. Duke (1982) has shown at another site in Austin County that Pedernales points may also occur in the Late Archaic. Unclassified dart point fragments were found at 115-125 cm, 135-145 cm, and 145-170 cm levels in Pit 3.

It should be noted that chronological terms are not completely consistent for central Texas and the upper Texas coast because the preceramic period extends to a later time in central Texas. Prewitt's (1981:Figure 3) time range for the Middle Archaic in central Texas is 2600 B.C. to 250 B.C., compared to Patterson's (1979:106) time range for the Middle Archaic on the upper Texas Coast of 3000 B.C. to 1500 B.C. Also, it should be noted that Prewitt's (1981:80) placement of 1450 B.C. to 650 B.C. for the Pedernales point in central Texas is later than Hall's (1981:49) dated time range for this point type on the upper Texas coast. Prewitt's assigned time range for the

Pedernales point may be too narrow.

Summaries of flint flakes from this site are given in Tables 1 and 2. Only 28 scattered chert flakes were found in the upper excavation levels (above 100 cm), and 77 scattered chert flakes were found in the lower excavations levels (below 100 cm). All lithic materials were types that can be obtained within 50 miles of the site. Most chert flakes did not have any remaining cortex. Therefore, only trimmed lithic raw materials were being brought to this site. In the upper excavation levels, 79% of the chert flakes were under 15 mm square, 11% were 15 to 20 mm square and 10% were over 20 mm square. In the lower levels, 65% of the chert flakes were under 15 mm square, 21% were 15 to 20 mm square and 14% were over 20 mm square.

Faunal Remains

Faunal remains from this site consist of bone and freshwater shellfish. There were significant shell deposits in the lower levels of Pits 1, 3, 4, and 5. Pit 5 also had shell deposits from 40 to 80 cm that indicate later occupation events, possibly in the Late Archaic. The lower level shell deposits are associated with Pedernales points of the Middle Archaic period, although the deepest materials in Pit 3 could be somewhat earlier. Summaries of freshwater shellfish remains are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Due to the high soil alkalinity maintained in the shell deposits, preservation of bone materials here is very good, compared to most inland sites in this region. Remains of deer, turtle and gar seem to be common. W. L. McClure will do a separate detailed analysis of faunal remains from this site. Counts of bone materials are given in Tables 3 and 4.

Clayballs

Many fired clayballs were found in the lower levels of this site, associated with the heavy shell deposits. Fired clayball hearths are common at sites in this region. Fired clayballs were found for all time periods, from Paleo to Late Prehistoric, at nearby Site 41WH19 (Patterson and Hudgins 1983) in Wharton County. At most inland sites, however, fired clayballs have not been associated with shell deposits. Most clayballs at Site 41FB34 had diameters of 25 to 90 mm. Clayball counts are given in Tables 1 and 2.

Conclusions

A number of observations can be made concerning this site. Not all prehistoric sites along streams in this area have evidence of shellfish use. Apparently, shellfish were harvested mainly at locations where they could be gathered in significant quantities. Use of shellfish in this general area has not yet been established as common during the Middle Archaic, so this site may or may not be unusual in that respect. Some shellfish remains were found for the Middle Archaic period at Site 41AU36 (Hall 1981:Table IV-2), but not in the large quantity found at 41FB34.

Probably the most important data to be obtained from this site concerns subsistence patterns. The good bone preservation here appears to afford an unusual opportunity for giving a detailed picture of dietary items.

Pedernales dart points have been found at several sites in this general area, such as Site 41WH2 (Patterson and Hudgins 1980:fig.3). This point style seems to reflect influences from central Texas, as discussed previously (Patterson 1983:263).

Table 1. Clayballs and chert flakes, 41FB34 upper levels

level, cm	Pit Number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
0-10	ST	ST	0(1)	0(0)	0(0)	ST
10-20	0(1)	0(0)	0(1)	0(1)	0(0)	ST
20-30	0(0)	0(1)	0(0)	0(1)	0(0)	ST
30-40	0(0)	0(1)	0(0)	0(1)	0(0)	0(1)
40-50	0(2)	0(1)			1(0)	0(3)
50-60		0(0)			0(2)	
60-70		0(2)			1(1)	
70-80		0(0)			1(1)	
80-90		4(A)			0(1)	
90-100		7(0)			0(0)	
40-95				0(2)		
50-120	6(2)					
totals	6(7)	11(5)	0(3)	0(4)	3(5)	0(4)

clayballs: first number; chert flakes: in parentheses;
ST: sterile; 0: none; A: small chert core

Table 2. Clayballs and chert flakes, 41FB34 lower levels

level, cm	Pit Number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
95-104				65(0)		
100-110		2(0)			0(1)	
104-115			30(3)	63(2)		
110-120		0(0)			5(1)	9(11)
115-125			227(0)	1(0)		
120-130	14(5)	5(4)			2(2)	0(1)
125-135			26(2)	ST		
130-140	45(14)				0(6)	7(5)
135-145			73(0)	ST		
140-150	26(2)				3(1)	16(2)
145-170			41(8)			
150-160					4(0)	ST
170-200			24(7)			clay
totals	85(21)	7(4)	421(20)	129(2)	14(11)	32(19)

clayballs: first number; chert flakes: in parentheses;
ST: sterile; 0: none

Table 3. Faunal remains, 41FB34 upper levels

level, cm	Pit Number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
0-10	ST	ST	2(0)	5(0)	2(F)	ST
10-20	1(F)	0(F)	10(F)	2(0)	8(F)	ST
20-30	8(F)	11(F)	12(F)	0(F)	5(F)	ST
30-40	23(F)	8(0)	10(F)	8(F)	4(0)	7(0)
40-50	29(F)	12(F)			12(114)	8(0)
50-60		10(F)			21(226)	
60-70		12(F)			13(57)	
70-80		13(F)			4(57)	
80-90		11(0)			4(F)	
90-100		1(0)			22(F)	
40-95				3(226)		
50-120	15(F)					
totals	76(F)	78(F)	34(F)	18(226)	95(454)	15(0)

bone: first number; shell: in parentheses;
ST: sterile; F: small fragments; 0: none

Table 4. Faunal remains, 41FB34 lower levels

level, cm	Pit Number					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
95-104				39(226)		
100-110		10(F)			26(0)	
104-115			74(454)	89(1020)		
110-120		12(F)			35(567)	8(0)
115-125			39(1700)	20(181)		
120-130	41(F)	75(F)			56(454)	1(0)
125-135			14(794)			
130-140	84(113)				71(680)	0(0)
135-145			53(1474)			
140-150	134(680)				26(567)	2(0)
145-170			100(1814)			
150-160					32(680)	ST
170-200			54(340)			clay
totals	259(793)	97(F)	334(6576)	148(1427)	246(2948)	11(0)

bone: first number; shell: in parentheses;
ST: sterile; F: small fragments; 0: none

Summary

Test excavations at Site 41FB34 have resulted in good data on the nature of this site. It appears to have been a seasonal campsite for nomadic hunter-gatherers, with significant use of freshwater shellfish as well as use of a wide variety of animal food resources. Occupations of this site seem to have been entirely in preceramic periods, predominantly in the Middle Archaic.

Test excavations of this type have the potential to make major contributions to the prehistoric data base for this region. This is an efficient method to obtain detailed data on many sites, without the large manpower requirements of major excavations. Also, surface surveys often do not provide details on the exact nature of archeological sites, such as can be obtained by short-time test excavations.

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Early Custom Houses of Galveston

Jean L. Epperson

"A house made out of raw cedar logs..."¹

The celebrated corsairs Luis De Aury and Jean Laffite were the first to establish custom houses on Galveston Island. Aury was named governor of Texas on or about September 12, 1816 by the provisional revolutionary Mexican government. Aury installed Juan Pedro Rousselin as collector of customs at Galveston to certify the division of spoils and clear the privateer vessels for New Orleans.² These ships carried legitimate American registry papers, so Aury could sell the merchandise legally in New Orleans. Nineteen cargos were sold there between October 13, 1816 and June 11, 1817 on which \$36,933 in duties were paid.³

Aury abandoned the Island in 1817 and Laffite took control of the base. As the vessels operating under Laffite did not carry American registry papers, the goods for resale had to be smuggled into the United States.

Laffite reorganized the commune to include an admiralty court and a customs office. He converted two of his old vessels into offices after the storm of September 1818 made them unseaworthy. The *Saragosa* was used as a "customs office for the inspection of goods from the privateering captains." Laffite burned his stronghold on the Island in March 1821 because he was ordered to do so by the United States.⁴ Apparently all structures were destroyed, as persons observed on the Island in November of 1821 were living in a large tent made from the sails of a brig which had been scuttled nearby.⁵

The Karankawa Indians, expelled from the Island after the Battle of Three Trees by Jean Laffite's men, reclaimed and inhabited it again briefly after 1821. In 1825, they were driven from the coast by Stephen F. Austin's settlers, and moved west of the Brazos.⁶

Stephen Churchill, a lieutenant under Lafitte, claimed to have located on the eastern end of Galveston Island in 1827 when he was a pilot in the employ of the Mexican government. He planted china (berry) trees and resided at what he called the "diggings." This must have been a very temporary shelter as no contemporaries ever mentioned it.⁷ Dr. George M. Patrick visited Galveston Island in 1827 on his way up the bay and described it as uninhabited and "not inviting to the eye of a Kentuckian."⁸

The next structure noted was a rude dwelling built by the Mexican soldiers under the command of Colonel John Davis Bradburn sometime after founding of the military cantonment at Anahuac in 1830.⁹ This building served as living quarters on the Island for a small detachment of soldiers and a marine pilot. It also served as a custom house when Georg Fisher, the Mexican customs officer, arrived late in 1831. Fisher actually made his headquarters at Anahuac because its location at the upper end of Galveston Bay was a more agreeable place to live. However, it was an inconvenient location for the ships needing customs clearance. In January of 1832, Fisher contracted with William P. Harris and Robert Wilson, the owners of the steam sawmill at Harrisburg, to build custom houses, warehouses and other buildings at Galveston and Velasco and to supply ferry boats for these locations. In March, Fisher complained to Harris that the work had not begun on the buildings even though the partners had already received half the stipulated sum.¹⁰

George Willich, a German immigrant aboard the schooner *Climax*, wrote that they were guided into Galveston Bay on the 22nd of July, 1834 by the good and honorable pilot, Mr. (George M.) Patrick. Willich noted that the pilot was accompanied by his swarthy and colorful household, all armed to the teeth.

The narrative continues:

"Here (Galveston Island) we received for the first time a conception of our future way of living. A house made out of raw cedar logs laid one over the other, the spaces between stuffed with pretty, pleasant smelling tree moss, several yards long; the roof out of crudely split pine shingles nailed one over the other; in every corner of the single communal room a pure cotton mattress beside an overhang of course net or curtain for protection against mosquitos; a few iron pots and tin or earthen bowls and plates; a tea kettle, and a coffee mill screwed to the wall for grinding coffee and wheat specifically for bread; a number of gourds for funnels; dippers for milk, water, brandy, fats and fish oils; and around on the walls a quantity of hides of buffalo, oxen, horses, calves, deer, panthers, tiger cats, wolves, racoons, and other; a good stock of kiln-dried cow and deer meat strung up by strings; rifles, muskets, snake-sticks, axes, hoes and shovels. That was the furnishment and decor of the house in which also in a corner under a chimney of mud and wooden blocks laid one over the other, a big fire was blazing."¹¹

This building must have been the one built by Colonel Bradburn and his soldiers, as Wilson and Harris would have used lumber from their saw mill. Willich mentioned only one structure on the Island in July of 1834, suggesting that Harris and Wilson built their custom house after that.

William P. Harris served in the General Council until December 30, 1835, when he left to assume duties as collector of the Port of Galveston. The *Telegraph and Texas Register* of March 12, 1836 posted notice that Harris was the collector of customs at the custom house on the east end of Galveston Island. An interesting notation in Harris family papers states that their home at Red Bluff burned January 31, 1854 and the family moved into the store room and custom house. Did Harris sometimes administer his custom collection duties at Red Bluff?¹²

A second structure was described by Colonel Amasa Turner as the Mexican custom house located on the eastern end of Galveston Island. He said it was an excellent frame building, of cypress timber, enclosed and roofed, about twenty-five by thirty-five feet, had no doors, windows or floors and was one and a half stories high. (There must have been openings for entering the structure even though the description leaves it to the reader's imagination.) It stood on the highest ground on the bay shore of the Island, near what is now the corner of Avenue A and Eleventh Street.¹³ Turner made the old Mexican custom house more comfortable with the lumber he had brought in and moved his family into it in 1837.¹⁴

A source stated in the 1830's that of the two custom houses which had been erected on the Island, the one built by Harris and Wilson was still standing; the other (cedar log hut) had been consumed as fuel for the steamboat *Yellowstone*.¹⁵

"In June, 1837, the custom house of the Republic of Texas was established at Galveston and Gail Borden was appointed collector. Mr. Borden occupied a part of the first floor of the old Mexican house, my family the rest, and the upper part,..." Amasa Turner recalled.¹⁶

A third custom house was built and completed in October of 1837 near 23rd and Strand. The keys were delivered to Borden. Two days later, Racer's Hurricane blew the building down and it was washed out to sea. The brig *Perseverance* went ashore near the foot of Bath Avenue. Undaunted, Borden rented the stranded brig and used it as a custom house until a new building was erected by the Republic on the site of the old one.¹⁷

The old Mexican custom house survived the terrible storm, the only building on the island to remain intact. It was probably saved, in Turner's opinion, because the building was crammed with refugees; some ninety persons were standing on the lower floor and fifteen persons above.¹⁸

When Galveston was platted, the custom house occupied lot 671 and was in the path of a proposed street. In 1838 Turner moved it "out of the street", remodeled it into a good house and lived in it.¹⁹ It was built of cypress lumber from the Trinity River. Hemlock, spruce and pine, from the state of Maine, also were used in the construction or reconstruction of the building. Sometime between 1844 and 1846, the old custom house was sold to S. Lewis, who moved it on rollers to

21st and Strand. It stood there for many years; part of the time it was used as the printing office of the newspaper *Galveston Civilian*. Later it was bought by Thomas H. Edgar, Sr. He moved it to the southwest corner of Church Street and 18th to become part of his residence.²⁰ Perhaps the old building had some sentimental value to Edgar. His father, Alexander Edgar, had settled on Galveston Island in 1836 and during the hurricane of 1837 had lost his home and had taken refuge in the old custom house with the Turner family.²¹

The first school building of Galveston also became a part of the Edgar home, probably acquired before the custom house. Built in 1838 by the Galveston City Company on the northwest corner of Church Street and 19th, the school was financially unsuccessful and closed after a few years.²² Edgar bought the two-story building from Elbridge Walbridge, moved it across the street and east a block. The first building was placed across lots 6 and 7 on block 378, facing Church Street. The second building was attached to the first at the back, forming an L-shape and facing 18th Street. Drawings of the Edgar home are clearly discernible on the 1871 and 1885 city maps of Galveston²³ (see cover page).

The devastating fire of November 13, 1885 swept through more than forty blocks of Galveston, destroying nearly every structure in its path. The Thomas H. Edgar home, consisting of the old Mexican Custom House and the first school building, was in the fire's path and was destroyed.²⁴

Notes

1. George Willich, Jr. to Doris Willich (his wife). September 6, 1834. German transcript and English translation from the personal papers of Albert Willich of Living Manor, New York. Sam Houston Regional Depository and Library, Liberty, Texas.
2. Stanley Clisby Arthur. *Jean Laffite*, 152,154.
3. Consular Letters, Galveston,1817-1841, vol. 1. Department of State MSS. National Archives.
4. Jean Laffite. *The Journal of Jean Laffite*, 119,102.
5. ____ Lewis. "Adventures of the *Lively Immigrants*". *Texas Historical Association Quarterly* 3:17.
6. Charles W. Hayes. *Galveston: The Island and the City*, 1:128.
7. *Ibid.*, 1:129. There is no evidence that Churchill was ever in the employ of the Mexican government even though he stated he was. If he acted as a pilot at Galveston in 1827 it was as a free agent.
8. *Ibid.*, 1:128.
9. Anonymous. *A Visit to Texas in 1831*, 72-73.
10. Jorge Fisher to Captain William P. Harris. Anahuac, March 20, 1832. Benjamin Franklin Papers. Barker History Library. University of Texas, Austin, Texas.
11. *Id.*, Willich Letter; *A Visit to Texas in 1831*, by an anonymous author places the arrival of the brig *Climax* and her loss in 1831 near Point Bolivar on the Gulf shore. Willich describes the arrival and loss of the schooner *Climax* in Galveston Bay in 1834 near Edward's Point. Apparently there were two vessels named *Climax* which were lost near Galveston within a few years.
12. Walter Prescott Webb, et al., eds., *The Handbook of Texas*, 1:777; William Beazley Account Book of 1845-1855. Harris Family Papers in possession of Lois Harris Walker of Seabrook, Texas.
13. Hayes. *Galveston*, 1:130.
14. *Ibid.*, 1:275.
15. Charles A. Gulick, (ed.). *The Papers of Mirabeau Bounaparte Lamar*. "Notes upon the Taking of the *Martha*, etc. ", 2:352.
16. Hayes. *Galveston*, 1:276.
17. *Ibid.*, 1:277,279,285.

18. Ibid., 1:279.
19. "Colonel Warren D. C. Hall, His Residence, The Grape Arbor or Mot, Texas." Philip Crosby Tucker Papers. Rosenberg Library, Galveston.
20. Ibid. P.C. Tucker was mistaken about the address of Tom Edgar. He never lived at 26th Street and Avenue K.; Galveston City Directories of 1868 through 1896.
21. Hayes. *Galveston*, 1:277-278.
22. Galveston City Directory of 1859-60, p. 54.
23. Map Collection of the Rosenberg Library. City of Galveston in 1871 and No. 396A, the 1885 Fire Map.
24. Ibid.

The Willow Fork Site (41FB129), Fort Bend Co., Texas

Bruce R. Duke

Introduction

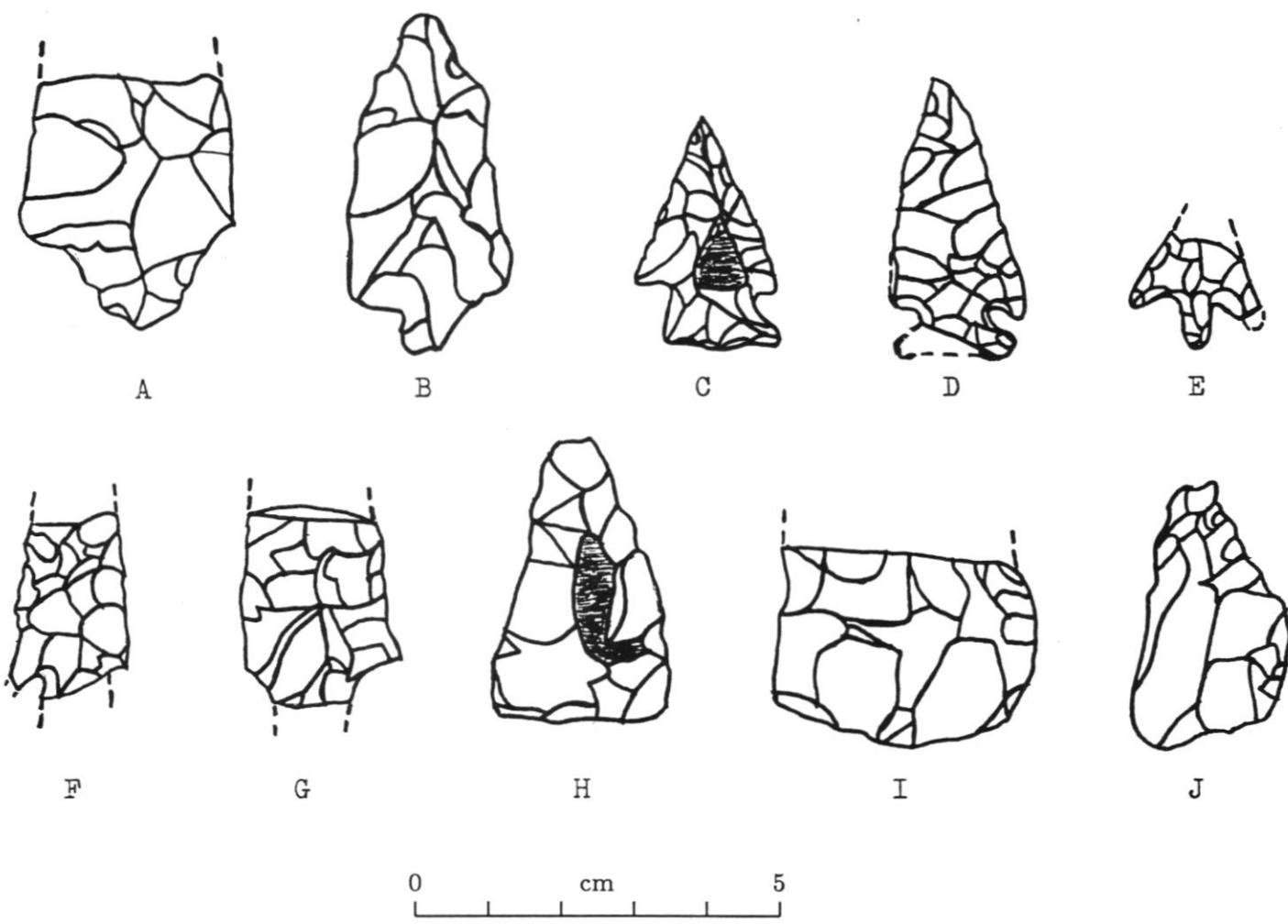
Site 41FB129 is located on the Willow Fork of Buffalo Bayou in Fort Bend County, Texas. This watercourse was channelized many years ago in the vicinity of the site and has resulted in a rather steep bank subject to considerable erosion. Due to this ongoing erosion, a small surface collection is available for discussion. Most of Site 41FB129 appears to be intact. As is typical of similar sites in this region, this site was occupied by nomadic peoples as a seasonal campsite. Surface finds indicate the site could have been occupied from the Middle Archaic through the Late Prehistoric periods (see Figure 1).

Discussion

The Gary, Kent and Ellis dart point types found at the site were in use over a long period of time and could be from the Middle, Late or Transitional Archaic time frames (Turner and Hester 1985:54,55,93,101,110). The Late Prehistoric period is represented by Scallorn, Perdiz and unidentified arrow point types (Turner and Hester 1985:52,187,189). Seven Goose Creek potsherds were found at the site. Other prehistoric artifacts include numerous chert and petrified wood nodules and cores plus many chert flakes (see Table 1). A flat quartzite cobble smoothed by use on one side was also found. All artifacts were located along a 25-meter stretch of the streambank and appeared to be eroding from a gray, fine sandy loam that constitutes about the top 75 cm of the soil profile.

Table 1. Lithic flake distribution

flake size, mm square	Site 41FB129		Site 41FB102
	count	percent	percent (updated July 1986)
under 10	14	6	5
10-15	51	22	20
15-20	76	33	38
20-25	48	21	21
25-30	23	10	11
30-35	17	7	4
35-40	0	0	1
40-45	0	0	1
45-50	0	0	0
total	229		



A - Gary dart point; B - Kent dart point; C - Ellis dart point; D - Scallorn arrow point;
 E - Perdiz arrow point; F - unidentified arrow point; G - unidentified bifacial tool;
 H - triangular biface; I - broken biface; J - unifacial tool

Figure 1. Site 41FB129 artifacts

Summary

Site 41FB129 has components which are very similar to some of those of two other nearby prehistoric sites on Buffalo Bayou, Sites 41FB101 and 41FB102 (B. R. Duke 1985a, 1985b, 1986). Site 41FB129 has an Archaic component like both other sites but has no Paleo-Indian component as does Site 41FB102. Site 41FB129 also has a Late Prehistoric component like Site 41FB102 but contains a very recent arrow point type, the Perdiz. The lithic flake distribution is comparable to that of Site 41FB102. Site 41FB101 has no Paleo-Indian or Late Prehistoric aspects. Goose Creek potsherds have been found at all three sites.

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Site 41HR571, A Long Prehistoric Sequence in Harris Co., Texas

L. W. Patterson

Introduction

This article describes artifacts from surface collections for Site 41HR571 in Harris County, Texas, and results of limited test excavations at this site. A record of this site has been made for the state files of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory by W. L. McClure. Arrangements for viewing collections of artifacts and for obtaining access to the site were made by Lonnie Griffin.

Site 41HR571 is located at the edge of a previous small lake that has now become part of a large modern reservoir. This location fits the general settlement pattern for prehistoric sites on the inland coastal plain, as being located near a water source.

Artifacts from this site represent a very long occupation sequence of possibly up to 12,000 years. A significant number of sites with long occupation sequences are now known for this region (Patterson 1983). Site 41HR571 has yielded artifacts that represent all major prehistoric time periods for human habitation of the upper Texas coast, starting with the Early Paleo-Indian period.

Appreciation is expressed to Mark Adams and Joseph Owen for making their collections of artifacts from this site available for study.

Paleo-Indian Artifacts

Collections from this site contain many Paleo-Indian artifacts. The Early Paleo-Indian period is represented by two Clovis projectile points (Figure 1). Clovis points are usually associated with a time period of approximately 10,000 to 9000 B.C. (Jennings 1974: Figure 3.27). Clovis points have been previously found at only a few locations on the upper Texas coast (Long 1977; Suhm and Jelks 1962:177; Hester 1980; Wheat 1953).

The Late Paleo-Indian period in Texas is usually referred to as a time period of approximately 8000 to 6000 B.C. (Story 1981). Collections from Site 41HR571 contain several point types that are associated with this period. These point types include Plainview, Plainview-like, and a possible Golondrina specimen (Figure 2). San Patrice (Figure 3), Scottsbluff and Angostura points are also included. One wide lanceolate point specimen is similar to a specimen found at Site 41HR182 (Patterson 1985:Figure 1D), and to specimens illustrated by Shafer (1977:Figure 4p,q) for this time period.

Collections from this site contain several Albany scrapers (Turner and Hester 1985:230) that have been associated with San Patrice points (Webb, et al. 1971:Figure 10d). Other Paleo-Indian stone tool types include large end scrapers on elongated flakes, and large side scrapers. Large side scrapers with graver points found here are similar to specimens from Paleo-Indian excavation levels 3 and 4 of Site 41WH19 (Patterson, field notes).

Several specimens of Early Side Notched points (Figure 4) with well ground basal edges have been found at Site 41HR571; they are similar to specimens from excavation levels 3 and 4 of Site 41WH19 (Patterson and Hudgins 1983).

A number of large bifacial drills were found at this site. All specimens have bases similar to Paleo-Indian lanceolate projectile points.

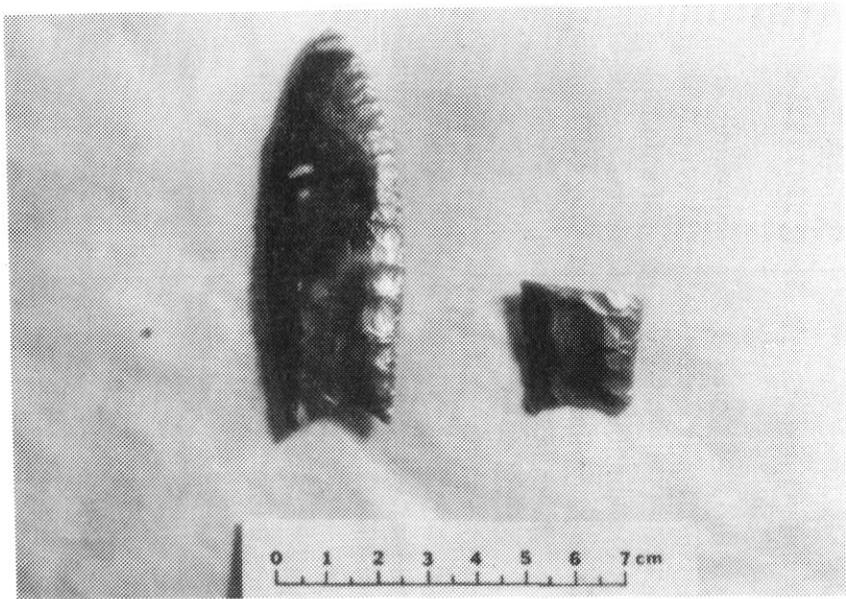


Figure 1. Clovis projectile points

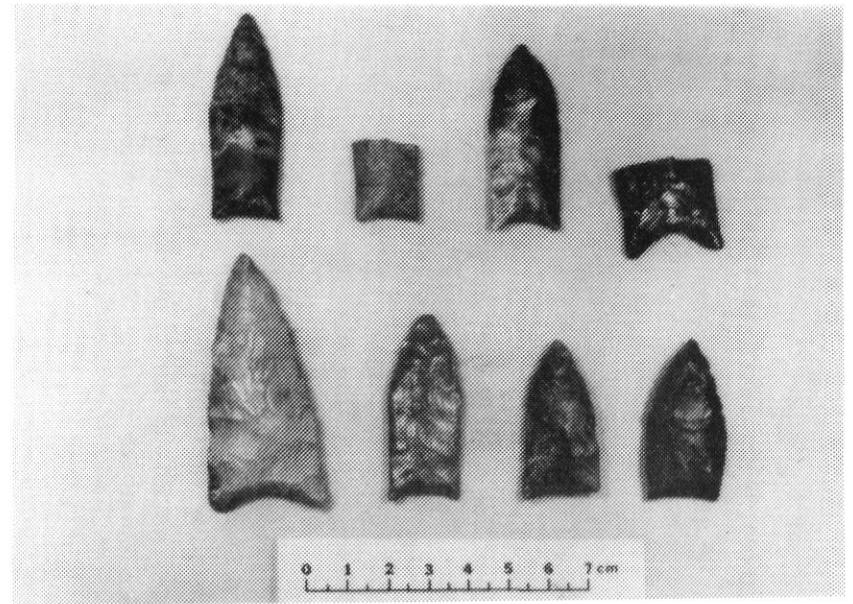


Figure 2. Plainview and Plainview-like points

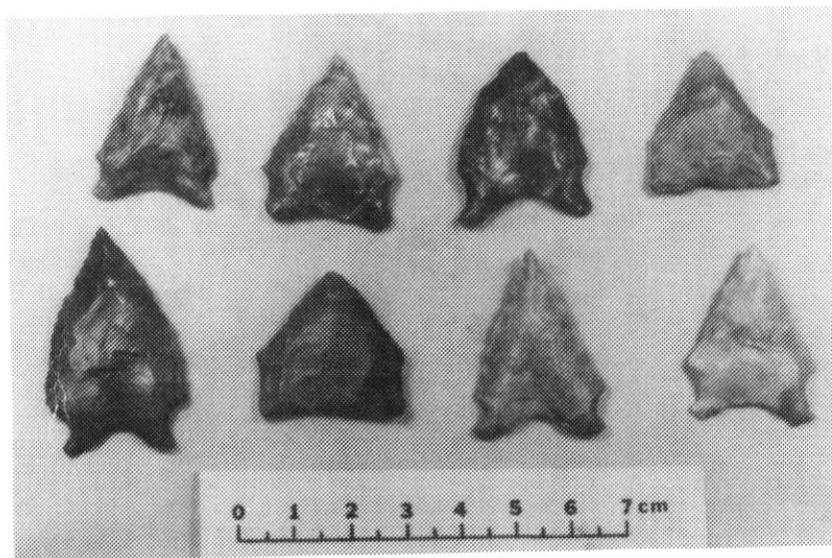


Figure 3. San Patrice points



Figure 4. Early Notched points

Other Time Periods

Collections from Site 41HR571 also contain projectile point types from later time periods. These include Carrollton, Bulverde and Gary points from the Archaic period of approximately 6000 B.C. to A.D. 100. Gary points also occur in the later Early Ceramic and Late Prehistoric time periods (Patterson 1980). A third collector has found arrow points on this site; these represent the Late Prehistoric period.

Goose Creek potsherds have been found here. They represent some or all of the postceramic periods, after A.D. 100 (Aten 1983:297).

These collections appear to contain a few gunflint specimens, so that there are also traces of the Historic period here.

Excavations

Since surface collections at this site included archeological materials covering a long time range, test excavations by the Houston Archeological Society were conducted on the edge of the first terrace above the shoreline to determine if any intact stratigraphy was still present. Steve Woolworth, president of the local homeowners association, arranged for access. Persons participating in the excavations included Dave Atherton, C. R. Ebersole, Dick Gregg, Lonnie Griffin, Joe Hudgins, Sheldon Kindall, Linda Moorrees, Lee Patterson, David Pettus and Bill Schurmann.

Three one-meter test pits were excavated on April 27, 1986. The first test pit (A) was quickly abandoned after it was determined that the matrix consisted of modern fill materials. Two other test pits were excavated with 10 cm levels. Pit B yielded a few small chert flakes at levels of 10 to 100 cm, and was sterile at greater depth. One Goose Creek Plain potsherd was found in each of the 20-30 cm and 30-40 cm levels. One piece of plastic was found in each of the 50-60 cm and 80-90 cm levels, showing that at least part of this pit was contaminated with modern fill. Pit C yielded a few small chert flakes at levels 20 to 100 cm, and was sterile from 100 to 150 cm.

It is concluded that most of this site is now under water and that wave action has completely removed intact stratigraphy. There is still a possibility of prehistoric cultural materials at other locations on this terrace, but extensive testing would be required to locate any possible intact stratigraphy.

Recent Surface Collection

During the excavation activities, a surface collection of prehistoric materials was also made. Lithic materials found included 3 chert biface fragments, 4 thick chert pieces, 97 chert flakes and 3 petrified wood flakes. Of the chert flakes over 15 mm square, 3% were primary flakes (completely covered with cortex), 31% were secondary flakes (partially covered with cortex) and 66% were interior flakes (no remaining cortex). Three possible limestone hammerstones were found. Several chert flakes showed evidence of heat treating, by waxy luster and reddish coloration.

A number of potsherds were found. Goose Creek Plain sherds included 2 rim sherds, 41 body sherds and 2 carinated body sherds. One Goose Creek Incised rim sherd was found with 3 parallel incised lines. One bone tempered sherd and one Conway Plain sherd with coarse sand tempering were also found.

Summary

Artifacts from collections made at Site 41HR571 represent a very long occupation sequence. The site location near a small lake was probably attractive to nomadic peoples with a hunting and gathering lifeway. This site fits into the concept of a longtime, stable settlement pattern for the inland portion of the coastal plain of southeast Texas, as now known from numerous examples of sites of this type (Patterson 1983).

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A Holly Fine Engraved Sherd from the Reese Site (41WA55), Walker County, Texas

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Introduction

The Reese site is located in Walker County along Winters Bayou, just across the line from San Jacinto County. It is situated on a sandy hill that slopes gently to the Bayou and is part of a ridge composed of sandy and clay hills that continues into San Jacinto County and across the county road for a distance of at least 50 meters. Every sandy hill along this ridge in the immediate area has produced evidence of prehistoric occupation, while the clay hills are seemingly sterile of cultural material. The depth of cultural material at the Reese Site is approximately one meter in places.

The Reese Site has been known to local collectors for a long time. Mr. Max Hill (personal communication 1985) began collecting from the site in the 1930s and had heard stories of collectors many years prior to his first collecting trips. The author first learned of the site in the 1960s while a student at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. During this time he made surface collections and recorded the site with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin, Texas. Later, he conducted limited testing with Dr. Harry J. Shafer of Texas A&M University (Shafer and Moore n.d.).

Typical projectile points from this site include contracting stem dart points of the Gary type as well as forms resembling Kent and Palmillas. Arrow point types Alba and Catahoula are also common.

Pottery is frequently found, with undecorated body sherds tempered with sand, bone or grog appearing most often. Decorated sherds have been found, and motifs such as parallel lines around the rim and fingernail punctations on the body seem to be the most common.

Discussion

Recently, a Holly Fine Engraved rim sherd (Suhm and Jelks 1962) (Figure 1) was given to the author by Max Hill of New Waverly, Texas; this specimen represents the only known example of this pottery type from Walker County. The sherd, according to Mr. Hill, was found on the surface at the Reese Site when this area was under cultivation. This site has been plowed over the years and the exact context of this artifact cannot be determined.

This artifact is a rim sherd from a carinated bowl with a scalloped flange bent outward at a right angle to the rim. The design is unmistakably Holly. The rim form is unusual but a few similar to this have been recovered from the Davis Site (41CE19) in Cherokee County, Texas (Dr. Dee Ann Story, personal communication). It is believed, based mainly on the exterior color, that this vessel was not made by a Davis Site potter; it does not have the reddish hue of many of the Holly Fine Engraved specimens from the Davis Site. On the scalloped lip there are traces of a black stain that is shiny and resembles asphaltum.

Measurements and attributes of this artifact appear below:

thickness (just above carination): 0.6 cm
height of rim : 2.1 cm
estimated diameter of bowl: 12 to 13 cm



Figure 1. Holly Fine Engraved sherd from 41WA55.
(a) front view, (b) rim profile

interior surface finish: well smoothed
exterior: rim engraved/incised, lower body smoothed
surface color: brown with fire clouds
paste: fine with finely pulverized grog particles

Summary

The full significance of the occurrence of this Caddoan pottery type at a site in Walker County can not be ascertained until more ceramic period sites in the area have been investigated in order to see if Caddoan materials are present. Because it appears that this sherd was not made by a Davis Site potter, other possibilities for its origin have to be considered.

Trade is a likely assumption for the presence of this sherd this far south. The occupants of 41WA55 could have obtained this specimen from a Caddoan traveler or they may have ventured into Caddoan country where it was available. Another possibility is that it could have arrived there from another group of people who traded with the Caddo and marketed their goods with other groups.

Since the three counties directly north of Walker County (Houston, Madison and Trinity) have received very little attention from archeologists, this must be considered as a poorly understood area archeologically. Until more work is done in this area, the southern limits of Caddoan influence will remain poorly known.

Acknowledgments

Max Hill is acknowledged for making the Holly Fine Engraved sherd available for this article. Dee Ann Story graciously examined the artifact and offered constructive suggestions. Debra Meiers illustrated the artifact and David L. Carlson allowed use of his word processor.

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HAS Historic Note Number Eight

Alan R. Duke

1967-1968

Officers for 1967-68 were as follows:

Chairman - Lawrence Aten (Charles K. Chandler)*

Sec.-Treas. - Louise Caskey

Directors - Alan R. Duke, Charles K. Chandler (Jay Sharp),*
W. L. Fullen

Newsletter Editor - Alan R. Duke

* Lawrence Aten resigned as Chairman to pursue a degree in anthropology. In a special election, Charles Chandler was selected as Chairman and Jay Sharp became a Director replacing Charles Chandler.

The HAS hosted the TAS Annual Meeting at Rice University on November 3-5, 1967. Dinner was held at Ye Olde College Inn and the speaker was HAS member Dr. Frank Hole of Rice University. His subject was "A New Look at Old Oaxaca." Attendance at the meeting was 142, including 32 HAS members. Fifty persons, guided by HAS members, made field trips to shell sites at Wallisville, Texas.

The HAS published Special Report Number 1 in October 1967: *Excavations at the Jamison Site (41LB2), Liberty Co., Texas* by Lawrence Aten. This publication was the record of the first major excavation conducted by the HAS in 1959-1961 near Dayton, Texas.

Eleven HAS members attended the TAS Field School in June 1968.

1966-1967

Officers for 1968-1969 were as follows:

Chairman – Charles K. Chandler

Sec.-Treas. – Ann Childers

Directors – Alan R. Duke, Jay Sharp, Frank Brezik

Newsletter Editor – Alan R. Duke

Excavations by HAS members continued at Honea Reservoir near Conroe, Texas, under the direction of Charles Chandler.

HAS member Frank Hole, on sabbatical leave from Rice University, traveled to Iran to spend a year surveying and excavating sites in the Khuzistan area.

The HAS received special written recognition from the TAS for its site survey work in various areas. Under the direction of Dick Hsu, survey archeologist for the State Building Commission, 20 HAS members started another site survey in January 1969 in the Livingston Reservoir area.

Lou Fullen was elected a TAS Director and Charles Chandler was elected a TAS Regional Vice-President (Region 5) for 1968-69.

The HAS celebrated its 10th anniversary in May 1969.

Nine HAS members attended the TAS Field School at Lake Meredith in June 1969.

Excavation of the Boys School Site at Clear Lake, Harris County, Texas, proceeded under the direction of Lawrence Aten in May-June 1969.

The HAS provided active support for the proposed Texas Antiquities Code by contacting state senators and representatives. Members of the HAS played an important role in passage of the Code in September 1969.

Erratum

On page 4 of the previous issue, the special issue of Geophysics should have been given as Vol. 51, not Vol. 53.