

LA TIERRA

Quarterly Newsletter of the Southern Texas Archaeological Association

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T. C. Hill, Jr.
Newsletter Editor

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La Tierra is distributed quarterly to members of the Southern Texas Archaeological Association. For membership information, contact the Treasurer.

Manuscripts and other items for the newsletter should be submitted to T.C. Hill, Jr., Box 518, Crystal City, Texas 78839.

REMARKS FROM THE EDITOR

Pretty smooth STAA operation, I'd say, in San Antonio at the first quarterly meeting of 1975. People easily doing their jobs correctly, no wide anxious eyes, no strain. Growing up, maybe? The meeting was held at the temporary campus of UTSA. We would like to thank the Division of Social Sciences for being our host.

New officers were elected: Anne Fox is this year's Chairman, Jamis Townsend is the new Secretary, Mary Francis Chadderdon continues as Treasurer and T.R. Hester will be Program Chairman. Shirley Van der Veer deserves a gold star for her efforts in the areas of Membership and Publicity, as do others too numerous to list.

After the business was disposed of, Dr. Hester and Harvey Kohnitz held forth on the new rockshelter site near Wimberly which is being excavated by our organization. The most amazing recovery to date is a tiny corn cob in the upper levels of the rockshelter. Other works are proceeding at the group of nearby burned rock middens. A lot of evidence should eventually be assembled from these sites to help clarify a borderland Plateau-South Texas lifeway.

The big presentation, of course, was Dr. Harry J. Shafer of Texas A&M University. He spoke of a survey which he had conducted during recent months along the juncture of Atascosa and McMullen Counties, operating ahead of a proposed lignite coal strip-mining operation. Having already received my copy of his published report, I did not expect to be unduly stirred-up by his lecture. Wrong again! Harry J. came on like a small controlled explosion and taught us Southern Texas "experts" a lesson about our own Tierra. His particular observance of the uplands, the divides between main creek drainages, revealed heavy "home camp" occupations up there, as opposed to creekside home camps with occasional working excursions to the hills and ridges that show up here in Zavala County.

His too-brief discourse on flint flaking, accompanied by a colorful display of slides, was worth the price of admission. Although very few artifacts were recovered by his expedition (after years of private collecting by local residents, deer hunters, etc.), his conclusions drawn from the very nearly undisturbed flaking trash at the sites were masterful.

Will he return to Southern Texas? We hope so...where else can a scientist drive a hundred miles or so and end up squarely in the middle of one of the world's longest-lived move-around, hunting-gathering memories? And his terse description of that section of the Brush..."endless archeological monotony"...betrayed his interested awe, and might explain why we're being investigated by more and more studious "outsiders". We do offer a spectacular view of the early wanderers, do we not?

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You know, I have been involved for some time in the problems of primitive pottery manufacture (has anyone been allowed to forget it?), and have maybe picked up a few pointers about what our very late local prehistoric potters might have been up to. For example, our biggest pottery site, 41 DM 70, where 2,000-plus sherds have been collected, has puzzled several of us for years. How on earth does such a massive accumulation of busted pots occur at one small spot? A very long single occupation? Probably not. Many returns to the same site, for years? Maybe. A terrible hail-storm, smashing the entire campout? Logical, perhaps...such disturbances are fairly common out this way. But what happens when an outcrop of special fine clay (as

occurs at DM 70) is located by fanatic potters, with plenty of water and fuel immediately available? They are going to get busy and make pots, that's what. And what happens when they make pots? Oh, mercy, they bust a lot of them... that's automatic. As Dr. Shafer remarked, the only fairly sure way to recognize a manufacturing site, where continuity cannot be demonstrated, is the accumulation of fractured firing mistakes.

Who actually made this plain pottery in South Texas is still a tedious problem which may someday be worked out. How such a complicated art managed to spring up, full bloom, seemingly overnight, out here where a pot was likely more trouble than it was worth in all the commotion of eternally moving about, boggles the mind.

Strongly suspecting that our pottery sites of 300-400 years ago were abandoned by bonafide potters, we find our imaginations more strongly stirred than with the idea of a "trading" business...trade for what, rats, mice, prickly pear? But what of the unusual assortment of recovered sherds, the predominant bone-tempered "Leon Plain" stuff of generally reddish-brownish hues, pointing toward the Edwards Plateau? The few sandy gray fragments with their occasional black smears suggesting a coastal affiliation, the fine pink stuff? I just don't know. But I have found that a single brush-fired pot will exhibit a sheer rainbow of tints, that wall thicknesses can vary all over the place in that one single pot, and that a combination of the above variations plus an uneven fire plus a gusty breeze will more often than not result in a whole pile of cracked crockery. Too bad, but that's the happy irony of fooling around with clay and fire, and it leaves a remarkable mess lying around for future folks to puzzle over.

What's so interesting about Leon Plain pottery in the first place, you say? Not really that much, after you break up a tiny sherd and note its crisp firmness, its almost-always dark core enclosed between thin colored walls, its crazy determination to have been tempered with finely crushed burned bone fragments, and its often "creamy" smoothed outer wall finish as opposed to its rather casual, rougher inner wall. Sometimes it is accommodated by the addition of small loop handles or perhaps small finger-like protruding "lugs" for easier handling, both attachments often cunningly and sturdily fastened to the body by means of a small "rivet" set into the pot wall before the mounting of the handle.

Nope, it couldn't have been too exciting of a little pot, compared to those made by folks who decorated lavishly and sometimes turned out huge vessels for various suspected usages. But it seemed to have suited those who felt they needed it, it was probably as strong as just about anybody else's, and so the style managed to remain in fashion, apparently unchanged, for several hundred years.

You ponder Leon Plain and you automatically envision "simple", "undecorated", perhaps "drab". Probably this is a pretty good description, and it seems that earlier highly technical potters chose to devise rather ordinary, quickly made wares for everyday utility, to reserve their finest efforts for their Sunday best wherein every conceivable sort of decoration was demonstrated.

Damp-pot incising and stamping and fluting, fired-pot engraving, slipping the pre-fired pots with a mud which might polish more finely and/or fire to a more startling color than the underlying material, painting crude to fantastically complicated designs on inner or outer surfaces, just about every method which could be inflicted upon wet or fired clay objects, was practiced around the New World.

Imagine the potter's delight at discovering a new method for decoration, or a new design. She would go wild with it, I'd bet, and her contemporaries would copy her work to create a style which might endure for a considerable while.

Wonder why something like this never happened with Central and Southwest Texas' favorite style, Leon Plain? Surely, as much as folks have played with mud over the centuries in this country (witness the perfectly rounded small ball of mud, with fingerprints, from an apparent Archaic site in western Zavala County, which somehow got into a fire and was thoroughly baked), somebody would have eventually fingernailed or sitck-scratched a wicked design into a new Leon Plain pot and started a fad. But apparently this was frowned upon, apparently it was never required, and so the end came before the "fancy" began.

There are a few sherds which show a very light scratching, but these are so rare as to be practically negligible. But you know, I'm beginning to notice a few things which might hint at an occasional attempt at decorating Leon Plain, thanks to a year and a half of trying to reproduce it.

One of my pottery collections include a dozen or so "typical" sherds collected over the years from four Dimmit County pottery sites. These sherds include 9-10 rim fragments, three of which contain loop handles. Interestingly, two of the rims show a hint of black paint or stain along their lips, seemingly different from the sooting or fire-mottling which produces a similar color. A third rim, however, has definitely been black-painted with a 3/8 inch wide stripe, now faded and faint, but applied in a perfectly straight manner. Another rim fairly blushes with a pretty red, finely ground red ochre application which seems to have been water-mixed and applied as a sort of "wash" after firing. 41 DM 70 is particularly blessed with an abundance of soft red ochre, and a number of bird-beak-shaped, scraped samples have been collected there. I've used this material as a pre-fire paint, but it always tends to darken to a shade of maroon with extreme heat.

This is all very interesting, and leads one to speculate upon what other forms of simple decoration might have faded or weathered away over the centuries, to leave "Leon Plain" the rather drab but sturdy style that it now appears to have been.

But that's not all. One of the rim sherds with loop handle attached is a warm bright red, and first glance shows it to be different somehow from the average grainy to delicately smoothed fragments surrounding it. It appears the thing was slipped with a different creamy mud, was delicately smoothed with a tool while the slip was still damp, to produce a fairly good fired-out glistening sheen, and a really pretty job must have been the result. A small hole where a piece of flammable substance burned out exhibits the lighter-hued underlying basic clay, and underneath the handle (where a hasty potter always tends to neglect her "slipping") the ragged, disjointed edges of the applied thin mud are perfectly displayed.

Important? Maybe not, but it whispers to me that "Leon" might not have been as monotonously "Plain" as we have taken it to be. Maybe a little "pride", a little "respect" is once more evidenced in this portion of Southern Texas, where precious little of these elements have been demonstrated amidst the helter-skelter of feeding the family. Yes, it is important, in a sort of "insight" manner. You throw in the semi-fancy tubular bone and polished coastal shell beads from some of these sites, the twin-holed gorgets and their fragments, the nightmarishly-reamed tubular pipes of sandstone and soapstone, the pretty ground and polished fragment of a bowl devised of micaceous schist, the other "luxury" items which we will get around to reporting one of these days, and you got a picture of a sort of "class" living. Add the suspected woven fiber goods and articles of wood and bone and hide, and "survival" in Southern Texas is suddenly rendered much more endurable, a little less simple and savage.

But to me there is one simple, glaring, out-of-place item and this has to be the Leon Plain pottery. As out of place as the tiny corn cob from the Wimberly cave. Pottery is highly expensive in that a good deal of time and technology are required to bring it to usable form. The "time" was perhaps fairly inexpensive, but the technology had to be a dearly-purchased commodity which demanded (in the absence of formative evidence) an immediate grasp of the problems and solutions of a rather involved process.

The evidence, to date, seems to point to a quick comprehensive embracing of a brand new idea, by a people who were perhaps only faintly brushed by the concept of "pottery". That they messed around with crude notions of decoration, a little slipping and a little painting, is a truly fascinating thought, particularly when they chose to ignore the most primary decorative method of all, the incising and stamping and manipulating of the damp surface of the fresh pot!

The use of primitive pottery out here? Probably many uses, but it would be necessary to pick up and move out to the creek bank for several weeks to realize those uses, since it cannot be done around the homestead, that's for sure, where aluminum and glass and plastic and fine china have simply placed the seeping, non-glazed earthenware objects of yore into a limbo of shelf-sitting, dust-gathering puzzlements.

So I'm intrigued with our local primitive pottery, as you've guessed, and perhaps we'll soon have the opportunity to dwell at length upon it, say about next July. Stand by, friends, because Little Flower (the fabulous 14 year old Coahuiltecan ceramicist) is planning upon entering the field of journalism. Advanced students of the ceramic arts may shudder and gasp and turn away, but I'd recommend interested "insight" seekers to give us a chance, because we're setting out to explore the dark deep depths of sheer ignorance! Interested researchers will surely be given their chance to reply (Anne Fox, take note), but me and Little Flower must be given our moment of glory. We promise to take you right out there to the creek and demonstrate, and stuff like that is awfully hard to come by these days.

T. C. Hill, Jr.

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MAY QUARTERLY MEETING OF STAA

The STAA will meet in San Antonio on May 17-18, 1975. Details on the meeting will be mailed to all members. A tentative program has been worked out and will focus on the Paleo-Indian period in Texas. Curtis D. Tunnell, State Archeologist, will be the guest lecturer and will discuss his research at a major Folsom site in the Texas panhandle. Several other short papers will be presented by STAA members and will deal with evidence for Paleo-Indian occupations in various parts of southern Texas.

Plans are being made for a workshop session on Saturday night. There will be a field trip on Sunday. Please make plans to attend.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONFERENCE IN MONTERREY

Dr. J. F. Epstein (University of Texas at Austin) has organized symposium on "The Prehistory of Northeastern Mexico and Texas", to be held at the Casa de Cultura in Monterrey, Mexico, April 23-26, 1975. This conference, along with one dealing with the history of the area, is being sponsored by the Instituto Nacional de Antropologia e Historia (INAH). Among the persons participating in the archaeological program are STAA members Dr. R.E.W. Adams, Dr. Thomas R. Hester and Dr. Harry J. Shafer. The proceedings of the conference are to be published, and readers of La Tierra will be notified when this important publication becomes available.

SOCIETY FOR AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

The Society for American Archaeology (SAA) will hold its annual meeting at the Hotel Adolphus in Dallas, May 8-10, 1975. Archaeologists from around the nation will present papers. Non-members may attend by paying a registration fee of \$7.50.

JOIN THE TEXAS ARCHEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

STAA members are urged to join and participate in the activities of the statewide organization, the Texas Archeological Society. Dues for active membership are \$7.50 per year; students (under 21 years of age) may join for \$5.00.

The Society issues an annual Bulletin (the 1974 volume was 251 pages long and contained 20 papers, notes and book reviews). Drs. T.R. Hester and H.J. Shafer are editors. There is also a quarterly newsletter, Texas Archeology edited by Anne Fox. And, the Society has recently issued a Special Publication entitled "The Bentsen-Clark Site, Red River County, Texas: A Preliminary Report" (by Larry D. Banks and Joe Winters). This documents the salvage of interesting cultural features (including a large burial pit) exposed by the sloughing of the banks of the Red River on the Texas-Oklahoma border. Cost of the report is \$5.25 for TAS members, \$6.75 for non-members.

If you join the TAS now, you can purchase back issues of the Bulletin from Vol. 29 (1957) to Vol. 34 (1964) may be purchased for \$3.00 each. Also, when you join the Society, you can select one of these volumes free. For membership in the TAS, write: Mr. Howard Muhm, Secretary-Treasurer, Texas Archeological Society, S.M.U., Box 165, Dallas, Texas 76575.

EXCAVATIONS AT TIMMERON ROCKSHELTER

The STAA and the UTSA Center for Archaeological Research have been conducting excavations at Timmeron Rockshelter (41 HY 95) and nearby burned rock midden sites in Hays County. Attempts have been made to contact all STAA members and to invite their participation in the project. If you have not been contacted, please get in touch with Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Van der Veer, 123 Crestline, San Antonio, Texas 78201.

Excavations in the large shelter have revealed occupations largely attributable to Neo-American (Late Prehistoric) times, particularly the Austin and Toyah phases. Excavations are being carried out in 1.5 meter squares, proceeding in 10 cm. levels. All deposits are being screened, with much of the deposit being passed through fine screen or subjected to flotation. Perhaps the most important discovery thus far is a tiny corn cob associated with Perdiz points (Toyah phase). It has been analyzed by Dr. Richard I. Ford of the University of Michigan, who notes that it shows closest similarities to specimens unearthed by Dr. Dee Ann Story in her excavations at the George C. Davis site in Cherokee County, eastern Texas. The specimen is only the second example of aboriginal corn to be found in central Texas. Such evidence suggests that perhaps the peoples of the Toyah phase occasionally practiced maize agriculture.

CENTER FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The UTSA Center for Archaeological Research has conducted several archaeological surveys in recent weeks, under the supervision of Dr. Thomas R. Hester, Center director. Anne A. Fox is coordinating an archaeological survey of the proposed Coletto Creek Reservoir in Victoria and Goliad Counties. Her survey efforts have received valuable local assistance from STAA members William W. Birmingham and E.H. (Smitty) Schmiedlin. Feris A. Bass, Leo C. Fletcher, and Thomas C. Kelly carried out intensive survey and test excavations at site 41 JW 8 in northern Jim Wells County, in the area proposed for a Soil Conservation Service reservoir. Details on the important discoveries at this Late Prehistoric site will be reported in a later issue of La Tierra. Bass also coordinated surveys in the area of four floodwater retarding structures proposed by the SCS for construction in the Upper Cibolo Creek Watershed of Kendall County. Additional survey work by Bass and Fletcher has also been conducted in portions of Starr County.



Scenes from the first quarterly meeting of 1975, San Antonio, February 15. (Photographs by E.S. Harris)



OBSERVATIONS ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS
AT PUEBLO DE LOS INDIOS, NORTHERN MEXICO*

David M. Wilson and James Warren

Not long ago, Jim Warren, Jack Klatt, and Dave Wilson were invited by Ramon Garcia to visit a ranch in Mexico located in the Tamaulipas Mountains, about 150 miles south of Brownsville not too far from the city of Victoria, in order to have a look at some apparently unrecorded archeological sites. The four of us made the trip over an Easter weekend, and, because of the interesting sites seen on the trip, another trip was made a year later, again as a guest of Ramon Garcia. This group included Jim Warren, Wade Warren, Rex Wayland, Dave Wilson, and Melissa Wilson.

One thing about the interest in the sites of this particular area that is significant is the fact that some ceremonial mounds or possible temple bases were viewed. Mexico and Central America, of course, have a very intensive development of temple mound sites, the greater part of which occur in the high, central valley of Mexico, the lower Gulf Coast, the Chiaspas area, Yucatan, and then on into Central America in Guatemala and Honduras. Until this particular trip, the most northerly mounds that we had been aware of had been reported on the Gulf Coast of Mexico (in the Huastecan area), just north of Tampico along the Rio Panuco. Apparently it was known and understood that other mounds did occur in the southern Tamaulipas Mountains, but no serious study had been given to them.

It is also well known and documented that a great deal of mounds and temple mounds occurred in the Mississippi River area and its watershed of the United States proper. Some of these mounds occur in Louisiana and northeast Texas, but apparently that was the extent of their frontier to the southwestward. It is generally acknowledged that a large amount of the temple mound "cultures" in the Mississippi Valley areas were somehow related to those of Mexico. The connection and actual relationship is unknown and by some it is assumed that communication was via water. This distant relationship makes it interesting to encounter temple and/or ceremonial mounds in connection with an abandoned village some distance north of those areas previously recorded. The distance is still great from this area that we visited to the area of northeast and east Texas; however, it could enhance the possibility of overland contact between the two areas or a shorter distance for water travel. This, of course, is pure speculation, but speculation as such makes the pursuit of archeological investigation interesting.

The trip was made by pickup truck and four-wheel drive vehicles, climbing high into the rugged mountains. Access to the site area is via a recently made vehicle trail which had been constructed by a bulldozer cutting a swath through the veritable jungle up into the mountain ridges. Prior to the building of the trail, Ramon Garcia informed us that the trip often took three to four days on horseback. The sites visited were in isolated mountain country some 3500 to 4000 feet in altitude. The area is rich in foliage with many sub-tropical and temperate plants and trees intermingled - oaks were in great abundance. Even though the area is lush with growth, there were no flowing streams nor ponds or lakes in the area. Deep in a canyon, a dry river bed had a few stagnant ponds left in erosion-worn basin of rock.

Workers and caretakers in the area live in thatch-roofed huts in essentially the same manner as when Columbus came to America. These little buildings are highly functional and well-suited to the environment. We had the pleasure of staying in

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the December 7, 1974, meeting of the Southern Texas Archaeological Association, Corpus Christi.

such a cabin on the second trip, located on what was obviously a rather old building site within the Pueblo de los Indios, as the local caretaker called it. The village was composed of many low mounds and terraces constructed on the crest of the particular hill on which it was located.

On our first trip to this area, we had been told by Ramon Garcia that there were some pictographs in a nearby canyon. This being of interest to us, our first efforts then were to visit these pictographs. We hiked from our campsite to the pictograph area by foot, which was quite a trek down the mountainside into the canyon. The pictographs were located 10 to 12 feet up on a rock wall that had been carved by a turn in the stream bed. Several colors were used, the most prominent being rust-orange and black. Most of the markings were vertical marks and appeared to be such as tally marks or test marks. There were a few representative objects that could represent animals or men. One particular grouping was made up of a series of dots. Photographs and movie footage were taken of the pictographs. The hike back up to the campsite was long and tedious and quite a physical effort for everybody except Jack Klatt who virtually ran up the hill.

The next day was spent looking over an area that had recently been burned over for stone artifacts such as points, tools, and chips. A number were located along with many bits of broken pottery. In the afternoon, we returned to the Pueblo de los Indios and looked over some of the terraces near the trail. Time was taken to cut a small trench through the side of one of the small terraces toward the center of the circular area. Nothing particularly significant was noted, and the effort was not pursued too far because the owner, who was staying nearby, was a bit concerned about us doing any digging in an area that might contain burials on an Easter Sunday.

On this first trip, we did not fully realize the extent of the village and the owner, who was also there, did not indicate the extent to us. On our return out of the area down the mountain, we paused along side the road to look at some rock that we had noticed on the way up. Looking through the brush, this particular rockwork turned out to be a portion of a ceremonial mound or temple base. It had been exposed by the bulldozer during road construction, as Ramon Garcia explained to us, and apparently the workmen had found one or two stone artifacts and possibly some pottery. It was obvious to us that the mound and another one nearby across the trail had been despoiled by man at an earlier date, possibly looking for artifacts and pots. On the north and south sides of the mounds, where one might expect to find stairways, there appeared to be spaces that might have been rooms (Fig. 1, A). At least they had three sides, two of which would normally be the balustrades and the third a vertical wall as part of the mound base. Rocks had obviously been torn out of this area, so it was difficult to tell whether the base was made up this way for steps or whether these actually had been rooms. The main mound that we looked at appeared to be about 40 or 50 feet in horizontal dimension per side at the base. In plan shape, it was somewhat of an oval, or one might say, a rectangle with fully-rounded corners. The height was about 12 to 15 feet, and the top would have been an area of roughly 10 feet by 10 feet.

That essentially ended the trip and we headed home. We had seen enough to plan a return trip.

RETURN TRIP

The following year, a return trip was made to the area with Ramon Garcia, Jim Warren, Wade Warren, Rex Wayland, Dave Wilson, and Melissa Wilson. On this second trip, Ramon had noted our interest in the ceremonial and/or temple mounds and said there

was one that he knew of on some nearby property. After making our base camp in the cabin, we traveled the next day to that area. We had to approach the area in a four-wheel drive vehicle. The approach was up a long slope, most of which was very rocky and grassy. On the way up to the mound site, Jim Warren observed in the middle of the trail what appeared to be a burial pot. He and Wade stopped to examine it while the rest of us proceeded on to the mound site.

Once at the mound site, which was heavily covered with brush, we proceeded to clear part of it by machete. We exposed approximately half of the mound. The mound was located on a sloping site, so the base on one side of it was considerably lower than the other (Fig. 1,B). The downslope side appeared to have a configuration similar to balustrades and a stairway. The balustrades appeared to be stepped. The long dimension of the mound, which was oval in plan, was approximately 43 feet at the base, 30 feet near the top where the major area turned downward for the sloped sides, and about 20 feet long at the very top. The balustrades also appeared at the short side of the mound directly opposite those on the other end. These balustrades or protrusions occurred at the north and south sides of the mound. The lower ones at the south side, where the mound was only about 6 feet high, were about 9 feet wide, 3 feet for balustrades and roughly 3 feet between them for what had apparently been steps or stairways. The top of the mound had been ravaged with a large hole, possibly put there by somebody looking for artifacts or pots. A fairly large piece of stone in a slab-like form was found at the top of the mound; however, its significance was not determined. The effort of exposing the mound took most of the morning. Jim Warren and his son joined us after they had finished clearing the burial pot that they had found. We returned to the cabin, and because of the heavy work, most of the party decided to rest a bit. During this time, Dave Wilson wandered down the slope from the cabin toward where some contemporary animal pens were, just to be taking a walk. As he walked down past them, he looked up between some trees, and there, just three or four hundred yards from the cabin, was a very large mound. The terrain about the mound was flat, and nearby there were more other mounds of a smaller size. The large mound appeared to be some 20 to 25 feet high.

The balance of the afternoon was spent looking over the mound and visiting the other mounds and terraces about the site. We then began to realize the size of the area. We asked the caretaker about the mound and the fact that it hadn't been mentioned to us, and he said that it just hadn't occurred to him to mention to us that it was there.

After this, it was mentioned to us that there were two other mounds uphill from the village site that might be of interest. They were almost of identical size, some 60 to 70 feet long and some 20 to 30 feet wide in an elliptical shape, and about 6 feet high. They appeared to be rock rubble, but upon closer look it was apparent that they had been faced with stone and at some later date had either been destroyed by plant growth or by persons looking for artifacts. The two mounds were side by side and roughly oriented north and south on the longitudinal axis (Fig. 2,A). No further investigation was made, so we are uncertain as to whether they had been burial mounds or what their function was. They were, however, situated at the crest of the hill and looking north overlooked the village site. Today, from that vantage point, there is no view of the village site due to heavy growth.

The next day we spent a good deal of time looking around the village site following the trail past the large mound, on down the hill to what was the water source for the caretaker, a well about a mile down in the ravine. On this walk down to the well, we continually observed, in the brush alongside the trail, terrace after terrace. The apparent occupation zone of this village extended from the crest of the hill down this valley ravine. We are not aware of the density of the terraces

and small mounds to each side of the trail, but there appeared to have been enough terraces for houses and gardens to have supported a village of at least a thousand or so people. All of the structure bases and terraces were faced with laid stonework. A round stone metate was found in one of the circular terraces or building mounds. In another terrace, a mano was found. We did not make an extensive search for artifacts and the ones mentioned were found on the surface. Nearly all of the major bases which may have supported buildings had been violated with one, two, or three holes near the center.

After performing this very brief visual survey, we made a rudimentary map of the main site around the main temple mound, noting the general terrain and the major mounds, platforms, and terraces (Fig. 2,B). Also, by vehicle, we measured the distance from the cabin up near the crest of the hill down to the water well. This distance measured approximately a mile to a mile and a half. The major mounds appeared to be rectangular with well-rounded corners or rather squarish ovals (Fig. 3,A). The lower platforms or mounds, in most cases, were oval or circular. Some had balustrades and stairs. These lower bases were measured anywhere from two to four feet high. At one place, a terrace near the ravine edge, where the hill from the village dropped off steeply, had a laid stone wall approximately 10 feet high. At a spot almost midway between the cabin and the main temple mound, there was, at the head of a small ravine or swale, a built-up area which might have contained a cistern or a catch basin, and right at this point was a small mound or platform. These are just basic observations, and no investigation was made to determine whether there was any significance to the mound and the contained depression there. We did not find any water sources other than the well preciously mentioned, which was well down the trail. The caretaker at this particular ranch was in the process of digging a well while we were there, the location of which had been found by water-witching. He was already well below the level at which he was supposed to encounter water and still had not run into any. His hole was some 15 feet deep at that time.

In elaboration on the main mound, we observed that one corner of the mound had been virtually destroyed by plunderers (Fig. 3,B). A big gaping hole had been dug into the structure, and the rubble was strewn to the side. Most of the rock facing of the mound had been destroyed by trees, plant growth, or man. A few portions of the original stone facing were still intact. Because so much had been destroyed or disarranged, it is difficult to determine the original shape of the mound. It could be, from what is visible, that the mound was possibly stepped in one or two stages with a main staircase or accessway on the north and the south sides. Two or three great trees are growing out through the rubble. There is an extensive plaza or flat area to the north and south of the mound extending at least 100 yards in either direction. In a rudimentary survey of the general area, there appears to be no regular pattern or symmetry to the additional mounds in relation to the large main mound. In no place did we observe any use of plaster in conjunction with the stone facing. Most of the stonework appeared to be obtained from its original source in layer form and fitted, as pieces fit, to form the walls or sides of the platforms, terraces, and main mounds. It is obvious that some shaping was done, but apparently no fine or accurate cutting was made.

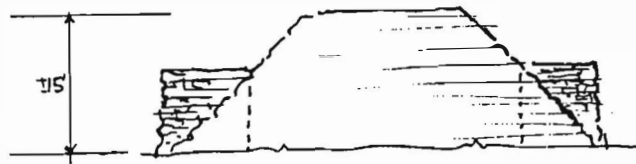
The basic structure of the mounds consist of the roughly-laid exterior surface and then rubble fill in the internal portion of the mound. It appeared that the mounds could have been constructed in this manner rather easily and rather quickly. The stonework is rough and rustic and does not indicate a great deal of expertise or care.

After we left this site and headed back, we stopped again down the mountain where we had previously seen the temple or mound ceremonial mound bases. We checked through the brush around these mounds looking for additional terraces and mounds because of the fact that we had encountered so much at the village site. We found several circular low platforms 2 to 4 feet tall, along with terraces. In most cases, the mounds had a balustrade and steps on the north side; however, in one instance, there was one with steps on the west side, if this should have any significance. The caretaker Indians in the area, in talking about these mounds, indicated there are many of these "lookout stations" around the hills. These particular mounds were on hillsides, so there could be the question of whether they were lookouts or had some special significance for their locations, because if there was not the heavy foliage, one would have a grand view of the valleys below. Of course, we really do not know why they were constructed.

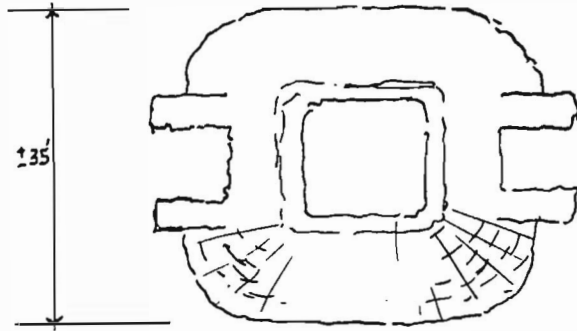
There are some interesting thoughts on this. R. M. Laughlin had been near this area, or at least in the area to the south, near Tampico, and had done some extensive studies and writing. In his discussions of the area, he mentions stories that when the Spaniards moved into the area shortly after the conquest they tried to secure indentured labor in the general Victoria area. The Indians had heard of such activities in areas to the south and retreated into the hills where the Spaniards could not find them. This raises the speculation that they retreated into the hills where perhaps they had had some summer encampments and little villages. Perhaps they re-grouped after the conquest and have constructed the major units we had seen. We raise this as a possibility because the stonework is simple and looks like it could have been hastily done. Many of the major mounds, even though there have been trees and foliage growing around them don't look very, very old. This is offered as a general observation since there were some low mounds in the little village near the main mound that did look older than others. This could be a casual observation completely in error, but we think it is a point worth noting. We think it would be interesting if one could ascertain that mound building did continue in this remote area for a short period of time after the conquest. We do not think this is inconceivable, and it would make a significant chapter in the study of the archeology and the cultures of the Indians of this area.

Certainly, all we were able to do was make a brief visit to this site. No detailed studies were made because of time and the vast amount of material available. We did not observe any surface artifacts of any significance other than the metate, mano, and a few broken points, tools, and sherds. The main village area had been ravaged by pothunters. Whether they found anything, we don't know. The caretaker indicated that about 15 years ago, a "gringo" had been through the area and hired people to search for artifacts, and then loaded up a truck and left. He added that a few days later in the Ciudad Victoria newspapers, they had read an article about an American who had been stopped at the border with a truckload of artifacts, all of which were confiscated. He wondered if they were the same person!

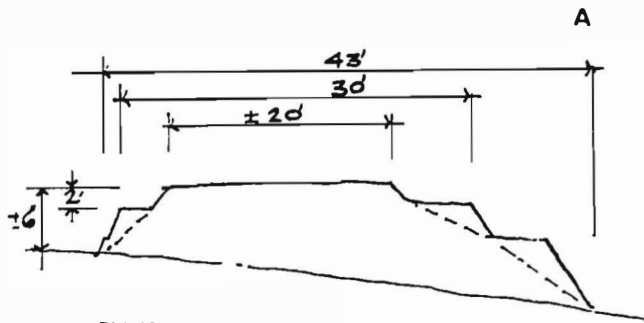
We find this little isolated village site in the Huastecan area to be very intriguing. It has apparently not been recorded as we checked with the National Museum of Anthropology and they were unaware of the site. However, they pointed out that there were other sites further south in the same mountain region, and they were thus not surprised that one occurred in this particular locality. They did acknowledge that this would be as far north as they knew they existed. Certainly, if nothing else, from a romantic point of view, it is rather exciting to wander among the ruins where very few people, both Americans and Mexicans alike, have visited in recent years, and where many years ago a thriving little village existed, complete with a plaza and mounds.



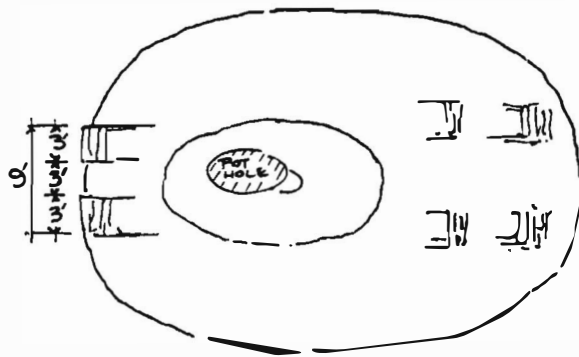
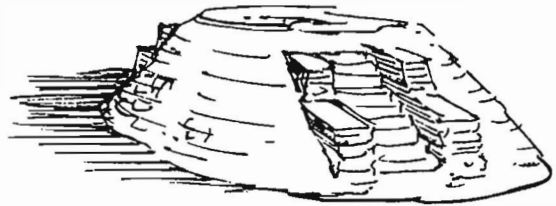
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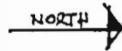
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B

Figure 1. Mounds at Pueblo de los Indios

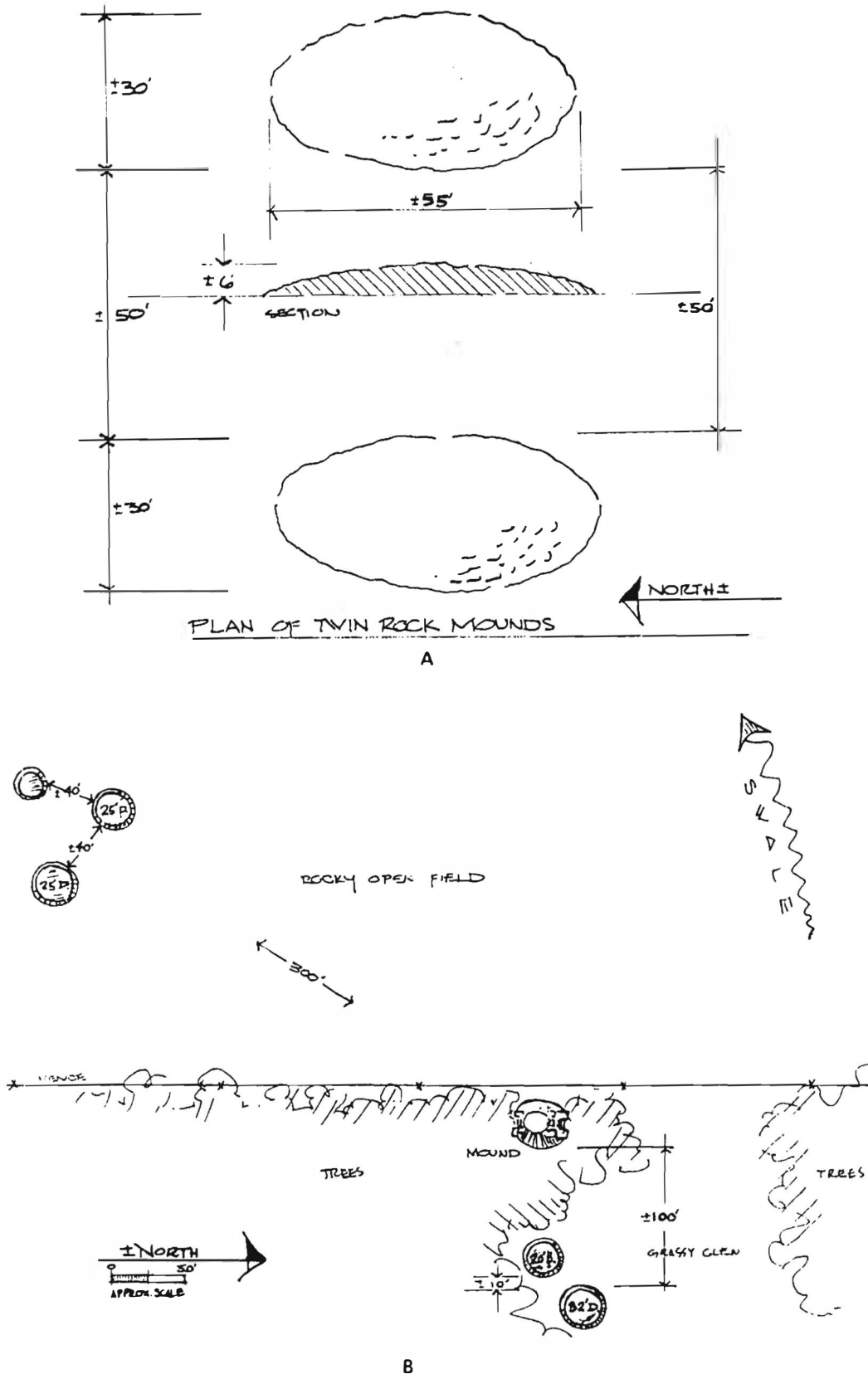


Figure 2. Pueblo de los Indios
 a, rock mounds; b, plan of part of the site

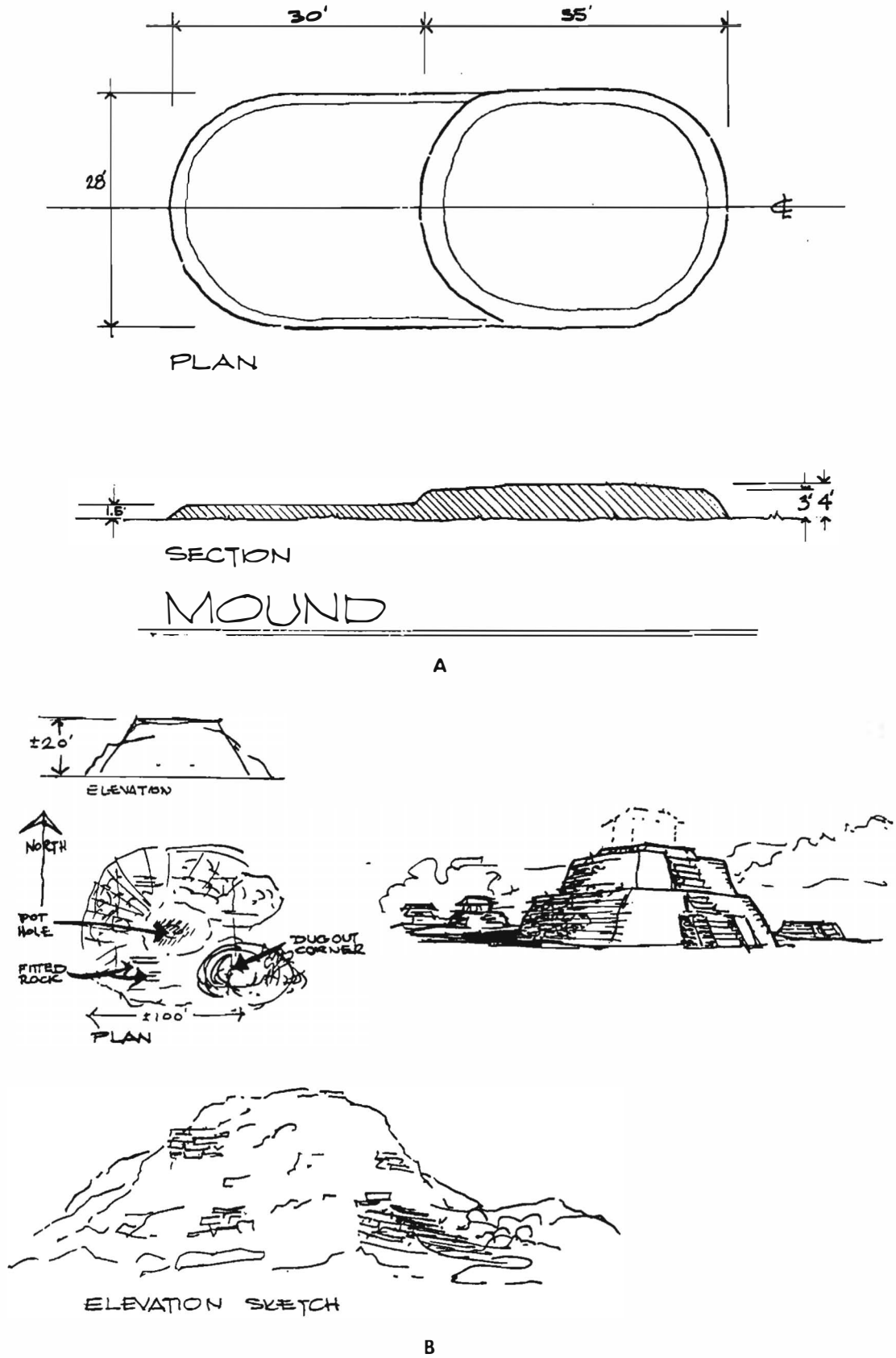


Figure 3. Mounds at Pueblo de los Indios

POSSIBLE HUT SITE IN CENTRAL TEXAS

Malcolm Johnson

Site 41 GL 44 is located in Gillespie County, Texas, not far from the town of Fredericksburg. The exact location is on file with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory, Austin.

Recently while searching the site for additional hearths or other features, it was noted that several fist-sized stones lay close together and formed an arc. Believing that it may be part of a large hearth it was investigated more closely. There are numerous cobbles scattered about and some are broken in such a way as to suggest thermal fracture. It became evident that if the curve of the arc was projected, some of the other stones seemed to fall in place and form a circular arrangement which seemed to be superimposed over another partial circular arrangement.

The arrangement is slightly oval in shape and is approximately seven feet along the long axes. A cluster of stones offset to the east of the center of the outline may represent a central hearth. On the southwesterly side is an area about two feet wide where there is an absence of stones and this may represent the doorway.

There are scattered and usually vague references in the literature to small brush arbors or jacals being used by Indians in central and south Texas. However, the arrangement of stones in the features at the site would indicate a desire to seal the outer edges, and this could probably best be done if hides were used as the outer covering rather than brush.

The possible location of a doorway on the southwesterly side may indicate that the hut was purposely oriented with the back of the hut facing a northerly direction as a deterrent to the cold north wind. If we assume then that this was a winter camp, again a covering of hides could be suggested as offering more protection from cold wind and rain than brush or matting.

Another type of hut mentioned in the literature is the "sweat hut". It may be that a hut which has been sealed around the bottom and with a hearth inside of it can be attributed to one of these "sweat huts". However, on the north side and about two and one half feet from the edge of the hut outline is another feature that appears to possibly be a rectangular hearth. There is no positive proof that this hearth is directly associated with the hut outline; however, its location and size (about one and one half feet by four feet) strongly suggests it may have been used in conjunction with a rock of some sort for smoking meat. In view of this, and until future finds prove otherwise, it appears this hut was probably built for a living shelter rather than a "sweat hut".

Another area of concern is the reason for one hut outline to be superimposed over another one. On the basis of presently accepted theories it may be reasoned with considerable merit that this indicates a hunting group's seasonal return to a favorite camping spot. Another possible explanation is that a member of the party left or died, and the hut was rebuilt to a smaller size because some of the hides were taken, or so it could be more efficiently heated.

Approximately 35 feet south east of the central hearth is another small hearth about two feet in diameter. It is not known if this hearth can be associated with the hut outline.

One of the most important questions is what cultural affiliation such a hut may have. Up to the present time no metal or glass objects or anything suggestive of a historic affiliation have been found. For that matter, no really diagnostic artifacts have been found near the hut as yet. A worked flint, possibly a side scraper, and some flint flakes have been found within a few feet of the hut. A few dart points, sparsely scattered over a wide area indicate local occupation during the middle and late Archaic periods, and for the present, that is all that can be said about cultural affiliation.

It should be pointed out that the property was owned by the same family from the 1880's until 1970. According to family members the area around the site has never been root-plowed or disturbed except by natural erosion and grazing animals. It is located near a tributary of the Pedernales River on a slight ridge with shallow soil and probably has not received any deposition for many hundreds of years.

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A GROOVED STONE ARTIFACT FROM VICTORIA COUNTY, TEXAS

E. H. Schmiedlin

The artifact illustrated in Figure 1 was recently brought to the attention of the author. It was discovered in a gravel bar in the channel of Spring Creek in Victoria County. Other artifacts have been found in this same context, and are apparently eroding out of a nearby, but yet undiscovered, archaeological site.

The specimen is made of brownish quartzite, and is fully grooved. Both ends bear evidence of battering, and it is suspected that the artifact served as a hafted hammerstone. To my knowledge, no similar artifacts have yet been reported from this region.

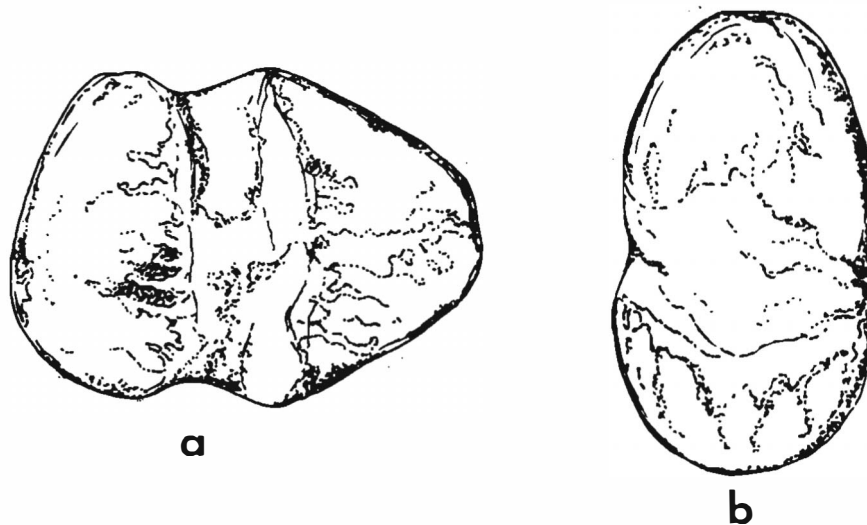


Figure 1. Grooved Hammerstone from Spring Creek, Victoria County, Texas. a, side view; b, top view. Note battering on both ends. (Artifact is illustrated actual size)

A POTTERY PIPE FROM LASALLE COUNTY, TEXAS

Jimmy L. Mitchell

There have been a number of unusual artifacts reported from LaSalle County in southern Texas, in recent years, including an unfinished boatstone (Hoover and Hester 1974) and a square-poll celt (Hester and Funnell 1974) from the Johney Creek area. The present report illustrates another unusual artifact from the area, a small pottery pipe from the Las Raices Creek area in southwestern La Salle County.

This small, stemless pipe bowl was found on 41 LS 13 in March, 1974, by A. J. Hoover, now of Harwood, Texas, while he was surveying for new sites in an area adjacent to Las Raices Creek. A site report giving location of the area is now on file with the STAA secretary and with the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory in Austin.

This specimen is most unusual for southern Texas since tubular stone pipes are the most typical type of pipe reported for the area. This pottery pipe bowl is pinkish in color and seems to have been tempered with crushed bone. Its interior walls are irregular in thickness which suggests that it was made by pinching the clay into the present shape. Most pottery reported for this area is bone tempered plain ware made by the coil method (Hester and Hill 1971); however, a small pottery spoon and a small flat-bottomed vessel made by the pinch method have been reported from 41 AT 18 in nearby Atascosa County (Mitchell 1974).

Since this artifact was a surface find, there is no controlled context through which we may assess its origin. However, other surface artifacts in the same pasture include scrapers and the three projectile points shown in Figure 1,b-d. The small side notched projectile point is also unusual for this area; it is somewhat similar to the Reed point type of Oklahoma, where it "is likely to occur in late pottery sites" (Bell 1958:77). Such points are estimated to date between A.D. 500 and 1500 in Oklahoma. Similar small side-notched points have also been reported from northeastern Mexico (Hester 1971).

The other two projectile points appear to be within the Fresno point type and thus, while indicating a late prehistoric origin (that is probably post-A.D. 1200), they are not particularly diagnostic of a specific cultural horizon. All of these artifacts are now in Mr. Hoover's collection.

In an adjacent area downhill toward the creek (plowed field), Mr. Hoover recovered Archaic triangular points and scrapers, a fragment of historic china, a rim-fire .45 casing and a .45 slug. This material had been brought to the surface by the recent plowing of the field and while it is considered to be part of the same site, it is about 1/4 mile from where the pottery pipe was found. The presence of Archaic, late prehistoric, and historic materials suggests that this site was used intermittently over a considerable span of time.

Lacking any controlled contextual material, it is impossible to firmly identify the specific origin or date of the pottery pipe bowl and the projectile points. However, it has been demonstrated that this area was frequented by Kiowa, Comanche, Kiowa-Apache, Wichita, Cheyenne, and Arapaho from Oklahoma during historic times, who were seeking Peyote from this part of Texas and adjacent Mexico (Steward 1974).

This is documented for the period since the 1880's and can be presumed to have occurred in earlier times as well. In addition, there is considerable evidence for fairly extensive trading during prehistoric times between the Rio Grande Plain and the Pueblo area to the west, with the Caddo area in east Texas, and with Mexico (Hester 1972). Thus, we perhaps should not find it surprising to see continued reports of unusual stone and ceramic artifacts in LaSalle and adjacent south Texas counties.

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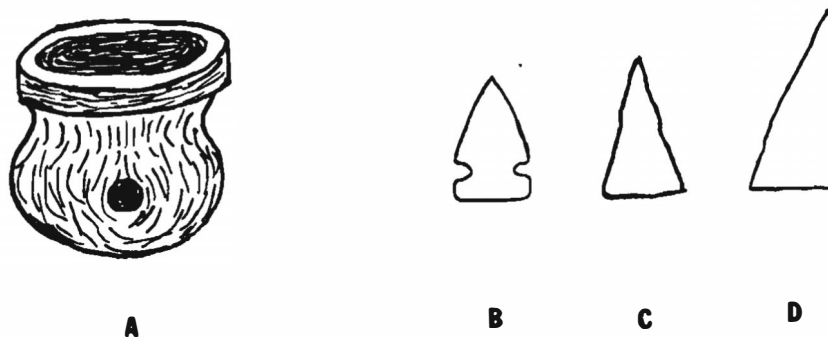


Figure 1. Artifacts from the Las Raices Creek Area of LaSalle County, Texas a, pottery pipe; b, side-notched point; c-d, triangular points (illustrated actual size)

CHRONOLOGICAL PLACEMENT OF "GUADALUPE" TOOLS

Thomas R. Hester and Harvey Kohnitz

Amateur and professional archaeologists working in the San Antonio and Guadalupe River basins have long been familiar with a distinctive chipped stone artifact known as the "Guadalupe adz" or "gouge" (sometimes called the "Attwater adz"). These bifacial specimens are often keel-shaped, trianguloid in transverse cross section, and have an oblique, single faceted distal end or bit (see Fig. 1; see also Fox *et al.* 1974: Fig. 14, c,d). Although such functional appellations as "adz" or "gouge" are sometimes applied to this tool form, the true function of these artifacts remains unknown. No systematic wear pattern analyses or replicative experiments have yet been published. We suggest that the term Guadalupe be used to describe these tools until such functional evidence is available. It is not our intent here to offer a formal type description or to provide a detailed discussion of the tool's attributes. We do know, however, that the Guadalupe form is a distinctive and widespread one, with numerous examples known from the middle and lower reaches of the San Antonio and Guadalupe River drainages (cf. Fox *et al.* 1974; Campbell 1962 has noted their abundance at the Morhiss site in Victoria County). Although they are a common tool form, and often attributed to the "Archaic" period, their exact temporal placement has been uncertain.

Excavations supervised by the writers at site 41 BX 271 (Granburg II) along Sadado Creek in San Antonio, have yielded a number of "Guadalupe" specimens in stratigraphic context. The stratification at 41 BX 271 is schematically shown in Fig. 2. In brief, the top 55 cm. of deposit (Stratum II; Stratum I is recent fill) can be described as a "burned rock midden" (gray-black ashy midden soil with an abundance of burned rock and occupational debris). Diagnostic artifacts from this upper unit date from the Late and Middle Archaic periods of the central Texas sequence, with Montell points stratigraphically superior to Pedernales. At a depth of 55-60 cm., Stratum III occurs as a 10-15 cm. "transitional" zone, with burned rock and ash-stained midden soil grading into gravel. Pedernales dart points were found at the top of the zone, lying on the contact with the overlying burned rock midden. Beginning at approximately 60 cm. and continuing to a depth of 3.60 m., there is an alluvial gravel deposit in which the following strata were recognized: Stratum IV: small gravels in yellow-red clay matrix; burned rocks and lithic materials were found. This stratum, produced most of the diagnostic tools. These included several styles of dart points (see several examples in Fig. 1) such as Bell, the "Early Corner Notched" and "Early Triangular" of Hester (1971), Gower-like, several corner notched points, numerous large unifacial Clear Fork tools, a number of Guadalupe tools, preforms, cores, and much lithic refuse. Stratum V: distinguished by coarse gravels and 75 cm. thick. Stratum VI: composed of fine sand and mixed sand gravels; it is about 25 cm. thick. Stratum VII: also marked by fine sand, but with small gravels, many of which appear crushed. Stratum VIII: a very compact charcoal stained zone about 10 cm. thick. Part of a distant living floor was exposed, beginning at ca. 245 cm. in the illustrated profile and sloping upward to roughly 230 cm. in adjacent units. On this floor was lithic debris, snail shells, some burned rocks, and several Guadalupe tools, four found in an apparent cache. Some of the flakes that were found appear to be related to the Guadalupe manufacturing process. Stratum IX: composed of fine sorted gravels, .5 to 3 cm. in diameter. Stratum X: sandy clay with some gravels. Stratum XI: the deepest stratigraphic unit that we exposed is composed of large, heavy gravels. In this stratum, a chert core was found. It exhibited sharp edges and showed no evidence of having been stream-rolled. This specimen was the deepest object of definite human manufacture.

Given the clearly stratified context of the Guadalupe tools at 41 BX 271, we believe that they can be assigned to an early part of the Archaic period. None of the diagnostic projectile points (Bulverde, Nolan, Travis) of the Early Archaic were found in the gravels. However, several projectile point styles of a very early phase of the Archaic (the Pre-Archaic of Sollberger and Hester 1972) did occur and in this early lithic horizon at 41 BX 271, numerous Guadalupe and Clear Fork tools are clearly associated.

We are continuing to work through the Southern Texas Archaeological Association and the University of Texas at San Antonio at sites along the Salado Creek drainage. Excavation at a nearby site (41 BX 229) have yielded even earlier materials (Folsom, Plainview) in alluvial gravel deposits on a higher terrace. The analysis of these discoveries, and the artifacts from 41 BX 271, will provide new and significant information on the early human occupation of south-central Texas.

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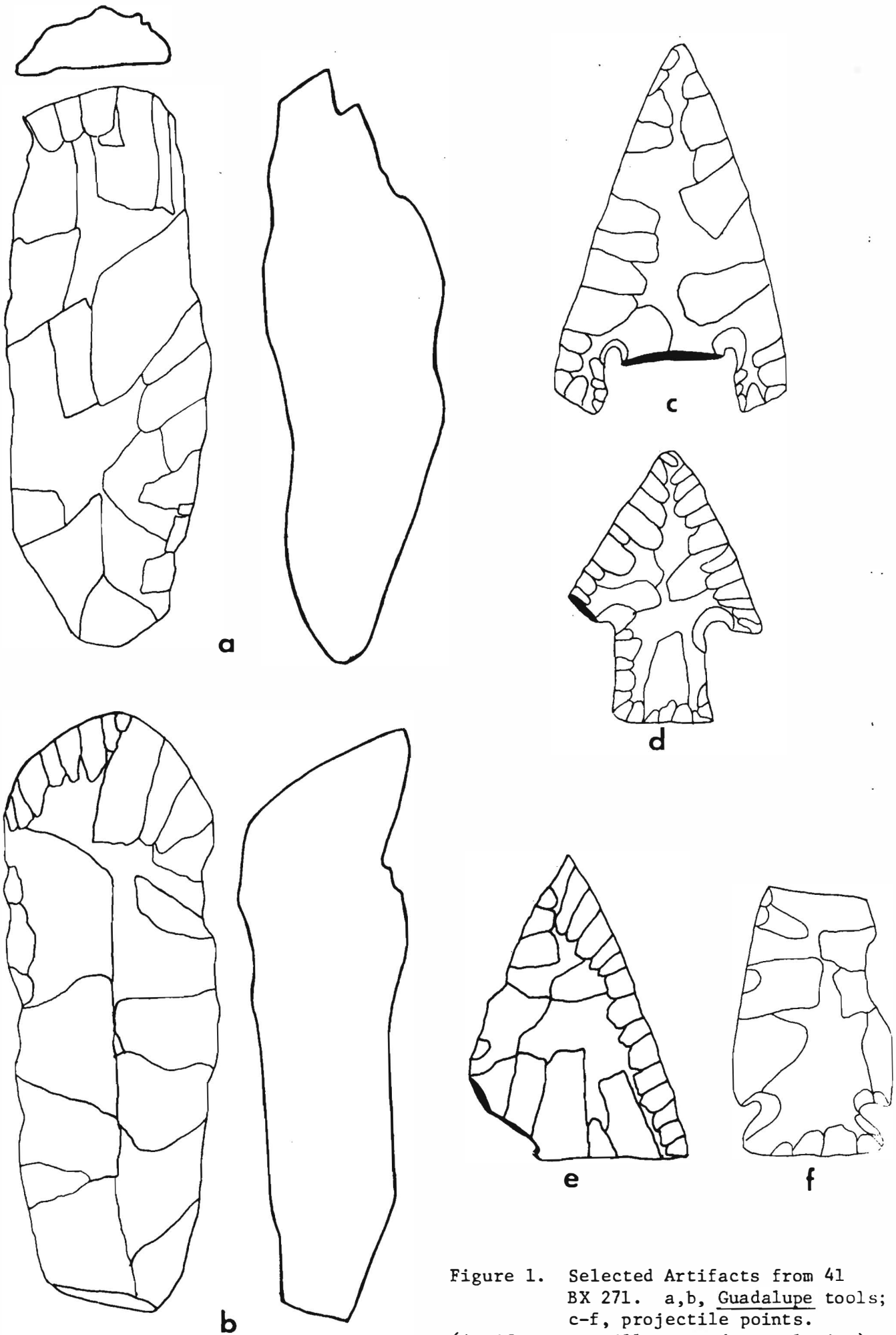


Figure 1. Selected Artifacts from 41 BX 271. a,b, Guadalupe tools; c-f, projectile points. (Artifacts are illustrated actual size)

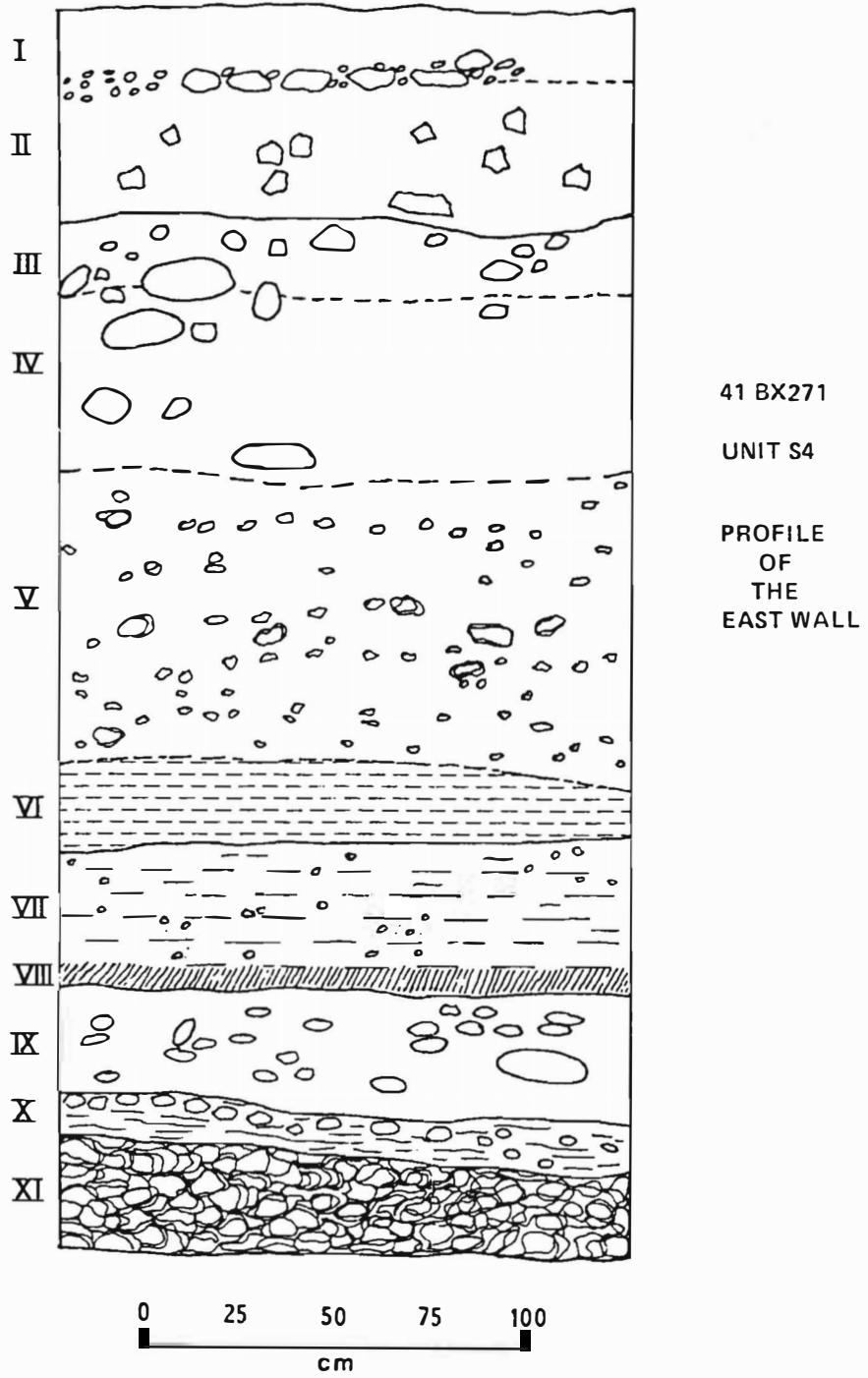


Figure 2. Schematic Profile of East Wall, Unit 54, 41 BX 271

