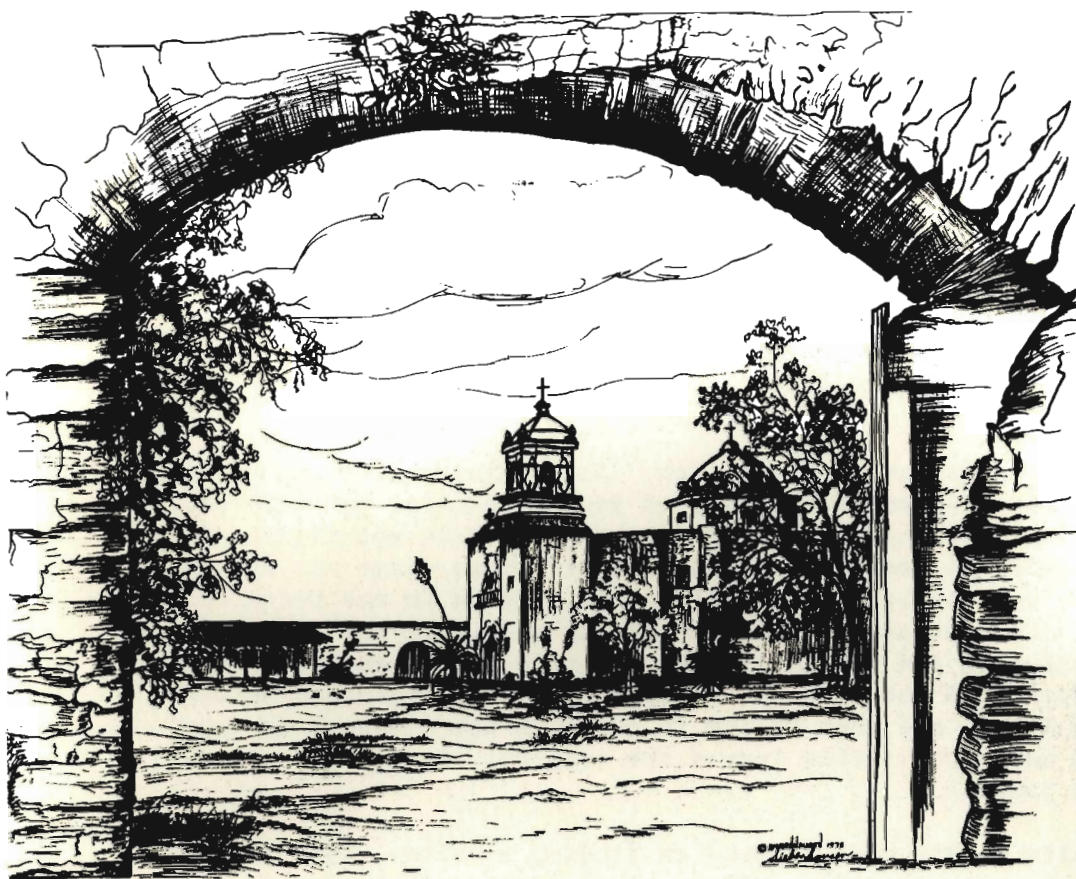


**JOURNAL OF THE
SOUTHERN TEXAS
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION**



Mission San José

**LA
TIERRA**

Vol. 7
No. 1
1980

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Articles dealing with the archaeology or ethnology of Southern Texas and adjacent areas are invited. Short articles dealing with specific sites, with types of artifacts, or with archaeological ideas (phases, periods, relationships with historic Indian groups, etc.) are preferred; see the articles in this issue for examples. Priority for publication will be given to original works; however, some reprints of previous work will be used, particularly when they were originally published in journals not readily available in South Texas.

Manuscripts can be submitted in any form (handwritten, printed, typed, etc.) although double spaced typed drafts are preferred. We understand, however, that typewritten material is not possible for everyone and will gladly work with whatever you choose to submit. To protect your work and to protect *La Tierra*, you are encouraged to make a copy (Xeroxing is available almost everywhere) of your work. That way, if your manuscript is misplaced or lost in the mail, it can still be used without having to rework the material.

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Authors will receive two extra copies of the issue in which their article is published. These will be mailed after the regular mailing to STAA members has been completed.

LA TIERRA

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Jimmy L. Mitchell
Editor

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By Rose Marie Siebenhausen (Pen and Ink)

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EDITORIAL

THE SPANISH MISSIONS IN SOUTH TEXAS

To begin 1980, the Southern Texas Archaeological Association held its first quarterly meeting in the Granary at the Mission San José y San Miguel de Aguayo. The business meeting and election of new officers was conducted in front of a sparking fireplace with the gusty wind occasionally sending a cloud of sparks roaring up the chimney.

Guest speaker for the day was Mr. José Cisneros, director of the new Missions National Park, which will tie all of the San Antonio Missions into a single protected federal area. Mr. Cisneros spoke of the current problems in getting the new park fully operational and of the legal and financial hurdles which have yet to be mastered. He answered questions as to the impact of the park on the local area and what members of the STAA may do to help in the project.

John Clark of Austin outlined the history and archaeology of the San José mission and spoke of the research which was conducted there in the summer of 1979 just adjacent to the granary. He highlighted the importance of having a systematic plan for the study and preservation of the archaeology of the San Antonio Missions.

In the lead article for this issue, John Clark has prepared an invited paper on the history and archaeology of San José which further details previous work and illustrates the earlier condition of the mission. He interprets the research which has been accomplished to date and poses questions which need to be answered for the future.

All of this focus on the San José Mission celebrates and highlights what I hope will be the beginning of an extensive series on the historic Spanish archaeological sites in Southern Texas. Thus, Clark's report is but the first of a series of articles which will try to summarize both historical and archaeological data on the Spanish Missions. Such a series is designed to help increase our understanding and appreciation of these unique archaeological sites and to motivate us to participate fully in the conservation and preservation of these irreplaceable cultural resources.

For the April issue, Harvey Smith has been asked to prepare an article on the Mission San Francisco de la Espada....

SA REINA NORTEÑA:

History and Archeology of San José Mission

John W. Clark, Jr.

INTRODUCTION

Fray Juan Augustine Morfi during his 1777 visit to San José described the mission as the queen of missions. Certainly this was a high compliment from a quite candid visitor. It is even more remarkable considering the distance of San José from the center of baroque architectural and cultural developments in México, Puebla, Zacatecas and other cities in the core area of Spanish Colonial culture in Nueva España.

But San José was not merely an excellent example of baroque architecture. It had other more important functions and a much deeper meaning. It was the culmination of the Spanish counter-Reformation and approximately 200 years' experience in colonial missions. What, exactly, was the meaning of San José? A gross oversimplification suggests that the mission, coupled with the presidio, was the representative of the two-headed coin of the Spanish Empire--Church and State--in maintaining Spanish claims to a vast territory. A mission was a complex affair. To the religious it was a means of converting the gentiles. It was also a training institution for instructing the acolytes in arts and industries useful to the Spanish community, a means of reducing the hostile aborigines to friendly allies, a means of converting a tax drain on the government into tax assets and was a political entity enhancing claims to territory.

To the Indian, it was a different sort of institution, particularly in Texas. It was a refuge of virtually last resort from incursions of Lipan Apaches and, later, the Comanche. It was a place in which food, chocolate, piloncillo and sundries were regularly distributed. The mission served as a place of protection and a social institution. It cannot be assumed that initially the aborigines were attracted to the glories of Christianity. However, through persuasion of the padres, aided, occasionally, by some use of force, the Indians became good acculturated Spanish citizens. That Christianity and the hard work associated with the Spanish lifestyle were not overwhelmingly attractive is evinced by the frequent incidence of the Indians' return to the "monte."

Unfortunately, in this short summary it is not possible to expand on these aspects of Spanish Colonial policy and culture. Suffice it to say, San José mission was an excellent example of the system developed by the Spanish over two hundred years of expansion and colonization. The initial commissary and support for San José was provided not only by viceregal funds but by funds, equipment and personnel from the "Colegio de Propaganda Fide de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas" and supplies and livestock from the gateway missions of San Juan Bautista and San Bernardo, as well as military support from the presidio of San Juan Bautista.

For the clerics, the purpose of the mission was to convert and confirm Indians who did not wish to aggregate in the mission San Antonio de Valero because the Indians in that mission were presumably traditional enemies. For the military, the presence of another mission meant a little more security and more allies. For military families and other settlers, the mission was to provide additional lower class citizens as servants, workers, artisans and stockmen. For the Indians, the mission was a refuge from pressure from their enemies and a source of dependable food supply. Of course there were negative aspects to the founding of the mission. The settlers developed jealousies regarding irrigation rights and productivity. Presidial captains found maintaining a guard at the mission and recapturing escaped Indians somewhat burdensome, and Indians found the Spanish lifestyle too demanding.

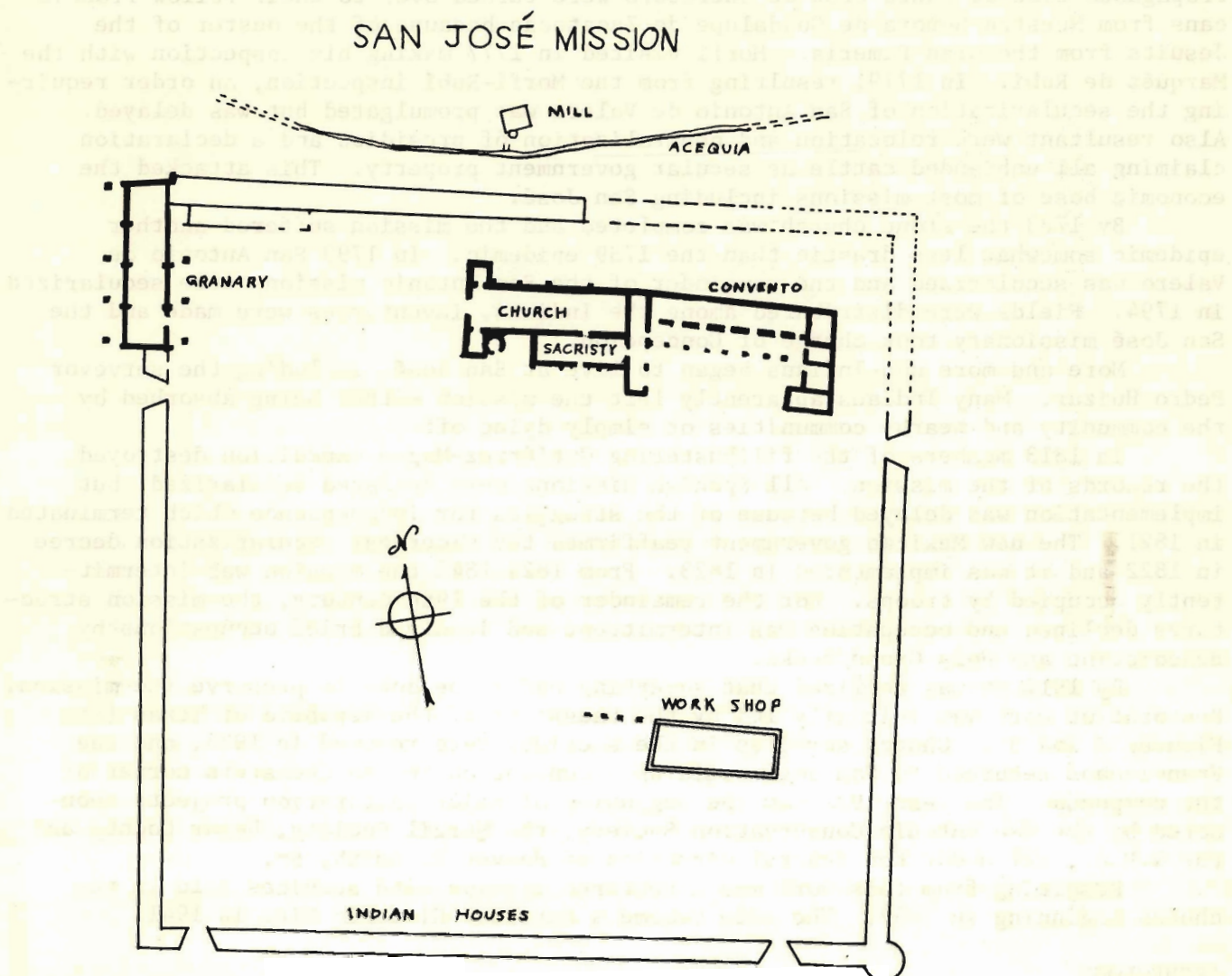


Figure 1. Plan of the reconstructed mission complex showing relationships of granary, Indian houses, church, mill, and acequia. (Drawing by the author)

the adobe church had been razed and the stone church begun. It was at this time that the name of the mission ranch was specifically mentioned in a mission inspection. It was Rancho Atascosa.

The seventies were eventful for not only San José mission but for the other Texas missions. In 1773 the San Antonio missions pertaining to the Colegio de Propaganda Fide de Santa Cruz de Querétaro were turned over to their fellow Franciscans from Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Zacatecas because of the ouster of the Jesuits from the Gran Pimeria. Morfí visited in 1777 making his inspection with the Marqués de Rubí. In 1779, resulting from the Morfí-Rubí inspection, an order requiring the secularization of San Antonio de Valero was promulgated but was delayed. Also resultant were relocation and centralization of presidios and a declaration claiming all unbranded cattle as secular government property. This attacked the economic base of most missions including San José.

By 1783 the stone church was completed and the mission suffered another epidemic somewhat less drastic than the 1739 epidemic. In 1793 San Antonio de Valero was secularized and the remainder of the San Antonio missions were secularized in 1794. Fields were distributed among the Indians, inventories were made and the San José missionary took charge of Concepción.

More and more non-Indians began to live at San José, including the surveyor Pedro Huizar. Many Indians apparently left the mission either being absorbed by the community and nearby communities or simply dying off.

In 1813 members of the filibustering Gutiérrez-Magee expedition destroyed the records of the mission. All Spanish missions were declared secularized, but implementation was delayed because of the struggles for independence which terminated in 1821. The new Mexican government reaffirmed the viceregal secularization decree in 1822 and it was implemented in 1823. From 1824-1842 the mission was intermittently occupied by troops. For the remainder of the 19th century, the mission structures declined and occupation was intermittent and involved brief occupations by Benedictine and Holy Cross monks.

By 1917 it was realized that something had to be done to preserve the mission. Restoration work was initially led by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas (see Figures 2 and 3). Church services in the sacristy were resumed in 1923, and the Franciscans returned to San José building a convent on the northeastern corner of the compound. The year 1932 saw the beginning of major restoration projects sponsored by the San Antonio Conservation Society, the Margil Society, Bexar County and the W.P.A., all under the general direction of Harvey P. Smith, Sr.

Resulting from this work was a restored mission with services held in the church beginning in 1937. The site became a National Historic Site in 1941.

ARCHEOLOGY

Recorded excavations at San José began in 1917, instigated by the Archbishop John W. Shaw of the San Antonio Diocese and funded by an anonymous donor. The principal aim was to remove rubble from the church entrance, to clear a path to the sacristy and to clear the altar steps (*San Antonio Light*: October 14, 1917). The aims were not archeological and were very limited in nature.

During the 1930s, excavations were conducted by Harvey P. Smith, Sr. in connection with his restoration efforts (See Figures 4-5). His excavations were oriented to following wall lines of Indian quarters, clearing the acequia and exposing one mill and associated features. Traces of his trenches were later found in Clark's 1974 excavations (Clark 1976, 1978) including Test Pits 1-3 and 5-7 and later in Clark's 1979 excavations (Clark and Prewitt 1979) in Test Pit 11. The evidence of his work consisted of a stratum of light brown-gray friable deposits containing early 20th century artifacts, a lime-filled trench in Test Pits 5 and 11 adjacent to the granary and 50 cm wide trenches following walls in Test Pits 6 and 7. In



Figure 2. San Jose (41 BX 3) as it appeared during the early 1900s with the roof and north wall collapsed (Photo courtesy San Fernando Archives Collection).

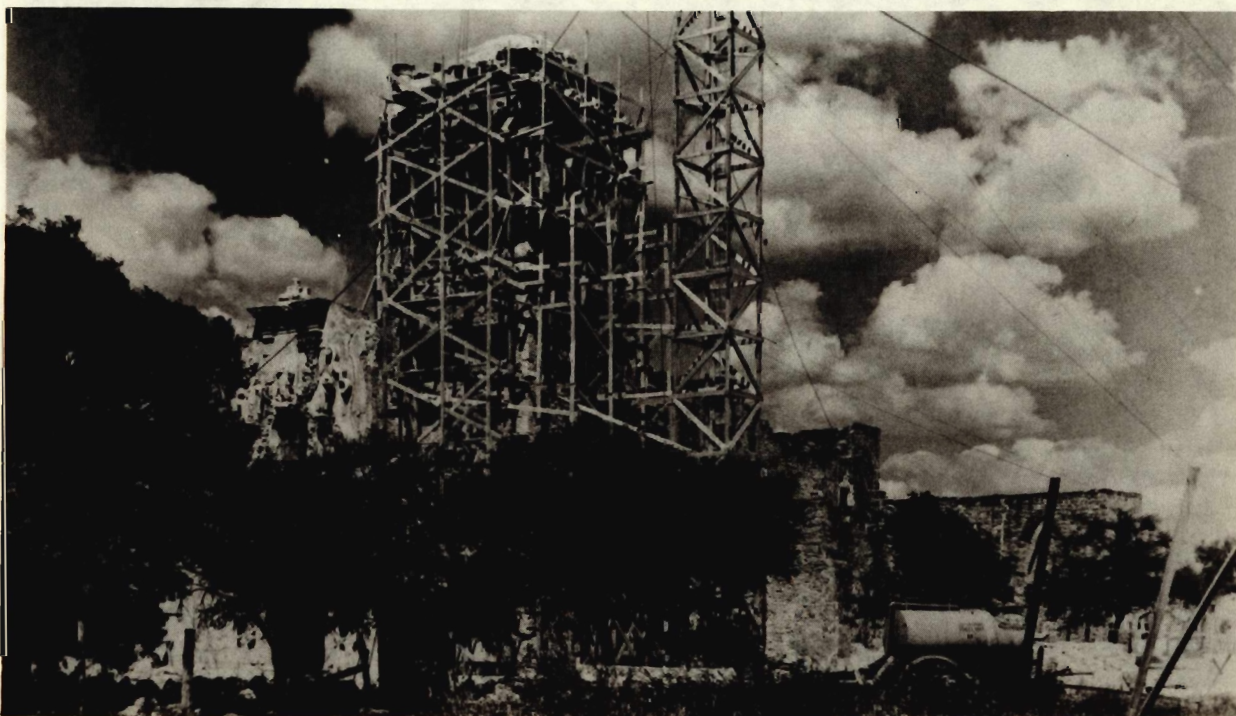


Figure 3. Reconstruction work during the early 1900s, looking northeast (Photo courtesy of the San Fernando Archives Collection).

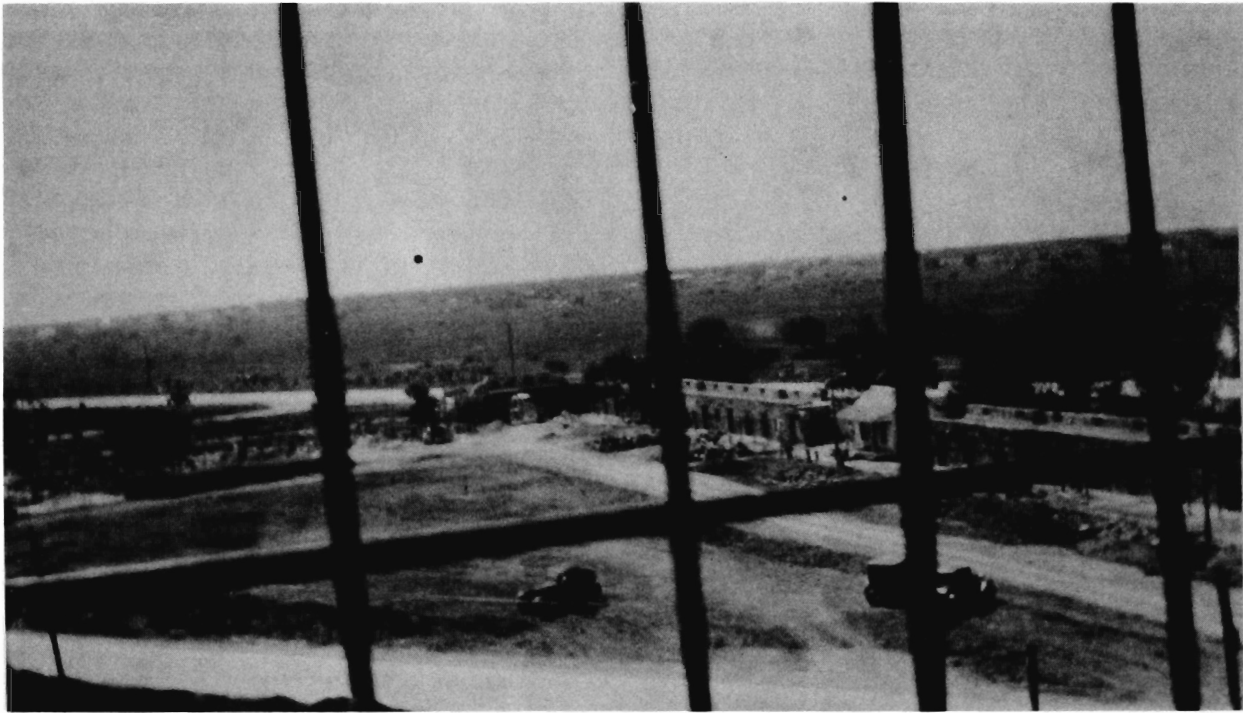


Figure 4. View to the southwest from the top of the church during the W.P.A. work of the 1930s. (Photo courtesy of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department - Schuchard Collection)

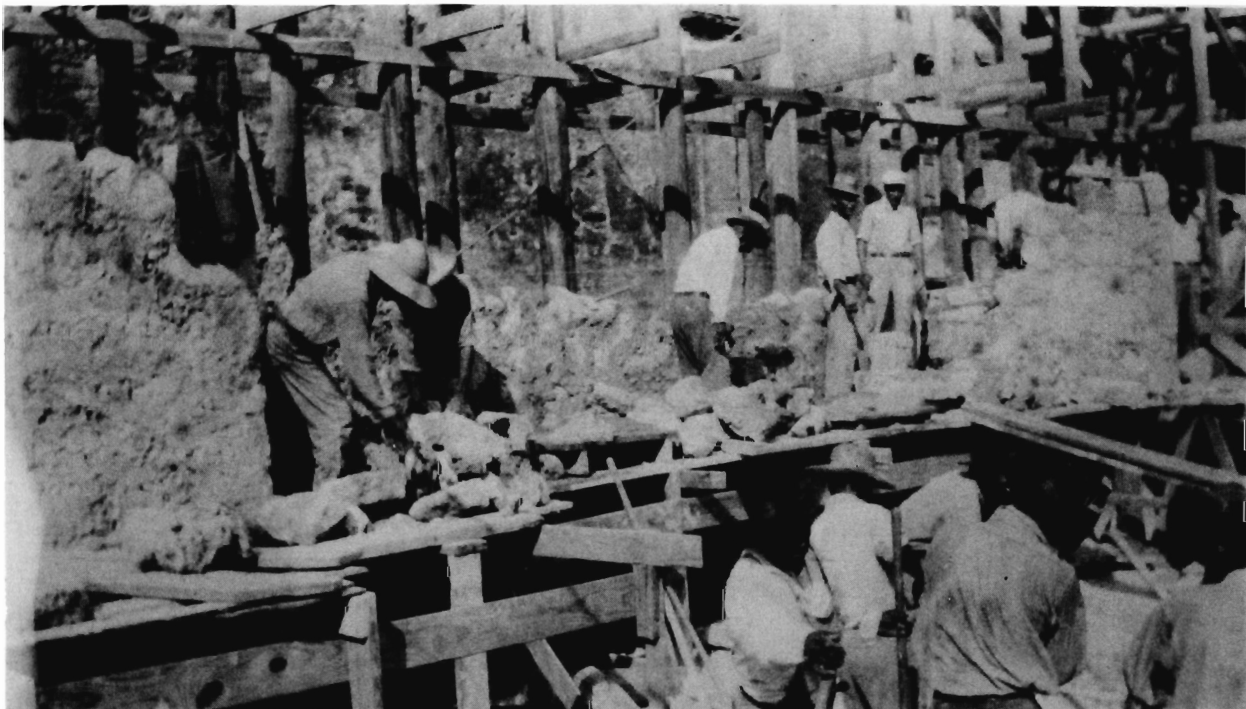


Figure 5. W.P.A. reconstruction in the 1930s. Note post construction of scaffolding; post molds from such scaffolds were evident during excavations in the 1970s. (Photo courtesy of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department - Schuchard Collection)

addition to the record of his excavations in subsequent excavations, there is a set of drawings showing wall positions and levels in the mill-lime kiln area. At least a sample of the artifacts from Smith's excavations is stored at the Witte Memorial Museum.* Selected artifacts were listed in Schuetz's (1970:28-32) report of excavations connected with the installation of a sprinkler system.

Although Smith's objectives and techniques were limited, he accomplished a great deal in addition to his restoration. He defined a relatively long segment of the acequia. While exploring this feature, he found a lateral leading into a cistern-like structure with an opening near the base. Adjacent to this feature was a vaulted chamber with walls above. This feature was identified as an early turbine mill. Other features encountered during the clearing of the mill complex were three lime kilns. Nearby was another feature thought to be a leather tanning vat. His excavations delineated the compound and small segments of interior structures.

Although Smith's excavations were extensive, they were confined to the objectives delineated in his purpose of reconstructing the church, granary, compound and mill. For example, in following walls in the compound his trenches were relatively narrow. He did not, however, record his trenches nor make a serious effort to collect artifacts. He cannot be faulted for this lack of control as most archeological excavations at that period were little better. His excavations served his purposes well allowing him to faithfully reconstruct the principal structures of the mission. They also served future researchers well, being confined to specific structures and limited in extent, even though they were the most extensive ever conducted at the mission.

The next period of excavations at the mission was 1968 when Mardith Schuetz (1970) conducted test excavations in advance of sprinkler system trenching and installation. The project was sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department through a contract with the Texas Historical Commission. Mardith Schuetz of the Witte Museum was contracted to do the work aided by Anne Fox.

The sprinkler trenches were dug to a depth of about one foot. Features located in the trenches were mapped. Screening was done in selected areas as a sample. In addition to the sprinkler trenches, five trenches were excavated in the southwestern portion of the quadrangle to a maximum depth of three feet. A relatively large number of artifacts were encountered dating from the present to the Colonial periods (for examples, see Figure 6).

Additional salvage archeology was done in 1969 and 1970 in connection with electrical line and sewer installation. The sewer line was located north of the compound and south of the acequia, and the electrical line was located on the northern side of the church. In this same period the removal of a small tree necessitated additional salvage. These excavations are reported by Daniel E. Fox (1970).

The electrical trench was one foot wide and two feet deep. Fox excavated three 1 x 2 meter pits (A, B, C) and a larger pit (D) and encountered portions of Indian quarters north of the convento north wall. These were indicated in the Smith drawings of the site. The features encountered in the excavated trench from east to west consist of an area of limestone cobble rubble in a Smith wall area, charcoal, a stone wall, a small area of flagstone floor and two additional walls, both associated with flagstone floors. The second of these two walls was constructed over a flagstone floor. Coterminus with a wall separating the compound from the present monastery was the foundation of another wall. West of this a shallow ditch was encountered.

The sewer trench was two feet wide and up to eight feet deep. Two profiles were recorded in segments of the trench. A deep trench or gully was encountered running perpendicular to the north wall of the compound. This was partially filled with Colonial artifacts and fragments of building materials. The nature of this feature remains undetermined.

The three test pits, A-C, revealed portions of a trench in the floor plans. This may have been a remnant of one of Smith's trenches. One of Smith's walls was encountered in Test Pit A. Two postholes were located in Pit B, probably originating

* Editor's Note: Anne Fox reports that these artifacts are now at the mission.

for scaffolding used in the reconstruction of the north wall of the church. Test Pit D was located in the southern side of a gap in the north compound wall. A plastered floor and probable wall footing intersected by recent water pipes and a cedar post were noted.

Two excavation projects were conducted in 1974, one by Wayne Roberson of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and one contracted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to the Texas Historical Commission conducted by John W. Clark, Jr. (1976, 1978). The first excavation was located within three rooms of the west side of the southwestern corner of the compound. These rooms were to be converted into park offices. Profiles of Roberson's excavations describe limestone-caliche cobble interior and front wall foundations with a binding of "gray and brown soil mottled with caliche specks." Similar features were located in the later 1974 excavations. The excavation was confined to narrow trenches along the walls.

The second period of excavations was one of the more extensive projects at the mission, comprising eight 1 x 2 meter pits but was also, in many ways, more restricted than most of the others. The pits were located adjacent to known structures in order to examine conditions of foundations and their relationships to long-term soil moisture. The project was a part of an overall preservation study.

Three test pits were placed adjacent to the church and associated structures. Two pits were placed adjacent to the exterior compound wall at the southeastern corner. One unit was excavated under a flying buttress at the exterior northwestern corner of the granary, another was located adjacent to a wall of the supposed leather tanning vat, and finally, one was placed on the southern side of the acequia in advance of construction of a footbridge.

In conformance with the requirements of the contract, temporary soil moisture characteristics were observed at the time of excavation and long-term moisture characteristics were analyzed through the collection of malacological (snail) samples which were processed through a very fine mesh screen. In addition to these matters, soil characteristics were described and cultural phenomena were recorded.

All excavation units, except the one adjacent to the acequia and adjacent to the vatlike structure, encountered evidence of the Smith restoration and excavation projects. Adjacent to the sacristy, north bell tower and at the juncture of the northern wall of the church and convento, the evidence was confined to a narrow band of Portland cement designed to prevent moisture problems. Smith's excavation trenches were located at the southeastern corner and a lime-filled trench was encountered adjacent to the granary wall.

A number of features were encountered in the excavation units. Adjacent to the sacristy, a series of five pits were encountered with four pertaining to the Colonial period. The pit adjacent to the convento-church resulted in the discovery of an additional Indian quarters wall not encountered by Smith or Fox, thus extending the length of the quarters in that area. Post molds probably pertaining to 1930s scaffolding were also found. The pit adjacent to the granary encountered post molds, a possible utilities trench and a burned surface. The pits on the southeastern corner encountered original foundations and a concentrated midden.

In addition to the features, a large number of artifacts and other materials were recovered (see Figure 6). Among these items were large numbers of animal bones and carefully collected malacological samples. Little difference in this study and the others can be perceived in the general methodology of artifact analysis. However, there are major differences and accomplishments in this study not present in other studies. A substantial portion of the report deals with the history of the mission and the history of the construction and degradation of the buildings with a review of previous archeological investigations. Equally important was a detailed analysis of soil characteristics (undisturbed), the malacological study which indicated long-term local moisture conditions and the faunal analysis. This analysis identifies the species and estimates of the number and weight of individuals in each unit. An analysis of butchering techniques was also made.

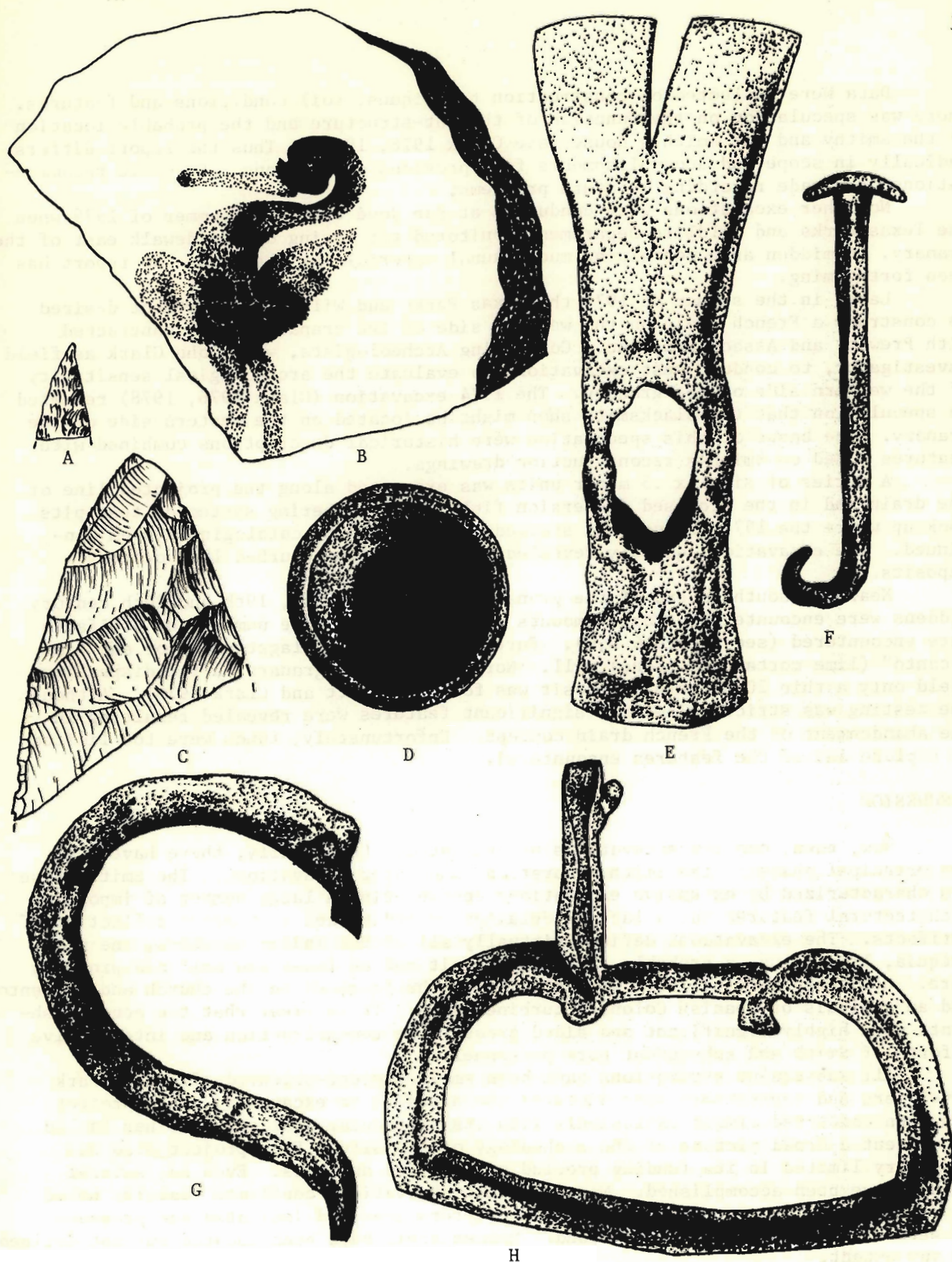


Figure 6. Artifacts from San José (41 BX 3): A, glass arrowpoint; B, Puebla blue-on-white majolica; C, flint biface; D, two peso nest weight; E, claw hammer head; F, forged nail; G, copper handle; and H, brass stirrup buckle. (A, C - Clark 1978; B, E, F, H - Schuetz 1970; D, G - Clark & Prewitt 1979)

Data were collected on construction techniques, soil conditions and features. There was speculation on the function of the vat-structure and the probable location of the smithy and the smith's house (see Clark 1976, 1978). Thus the report differs radically in scope and accomplishments from previous excavations. Specific recommendations were made regarding moisture problems.

No other excavations were conducted at San José until the summer of 1979 when the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department monitored the laying of a sidewalk east of the granary. A midden area containing much faunal material was observed. No report has been forthcoming.

Later in the summer of 1979 the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department desired to construct a French drain on the western side of the granary. They contracted with Prewitt and Associates, Inc., Consulting Archeologists, with John Clark as field investigator, to conduct test excavations to evaluate the archeological sensitivity of the western side of the granary. The 1974 excavation (Clark 1976, 1978) resulted in speculation that the blacksmith shop might be located on the western side of the granary. The bases of this speculation were historical descriptions combined with features noted on Smith's reconstruction drawings.

A series of six 1 x .5 meter units was excavated along the projected line of the drain and in the proposed dispersion field. The numbering system of test pits took up where the 1974 excavations stopped. Likewise, the cataloging system continued. The excavations quickly revealed significant undisturbed 18th century deposits.

Near the southern end of the granary, stratified 18th, 19th and 20th century middens were encountered. Large amounts of bone and moderate numbers of artifacts were encountered (see Figure 6 D,G). Further north was a flagstone floor and "cal y canto" (lime mortar and stone) wall. Northwest of the granary in the dispersion field only a thin 20th century deposit was found (Prewitt and Clark 1979). Although the testing was strictly limited, significant features were revealed resulting in the abandonment of the French drain concept. Unfortunately, funds were too limited to explore any of the features encountered.

DISCUSSION

How, then, can the excavations be evaluated? Essentially, there have been two principal phases: the Smith excavations and later excavations. The Smith phase was characterized by extensive excavations encountering a large number of important architectural features but a lack of detailed recording and systematic collection of artifacts. The excavations defined virtually all of the Indian quarters, one mill, acequia, lime kilns, a probable lime slaking pit and at least one well and probably more. Connected with his work were studies of the frescoes on the church and convento and an analysis of Spanish Colonial turbine mills. It is clear that the accomplishments were highly significant and aided greatly the reconstruction and interpretive efforts of Smith and subsequent park personnel.

All subsequent excavations have been small project-oriented efforts. Park developers and contractors have dictated the areas to be excavated. Each project has been concerned almost exclusively with its particular goal and thus has failed to present a broad picture of the archeology of the site. Each project also has been very limited in its funding precluding detailed analysis. Even so, several things have been accomplished. Many of these excavations confirmed features noted by Smith. They have extended the Indian quarters area and indicated the presence of several structures in the compound. Midden areas have been located but not defined to any extent.

The Clark (1974) excavation was the most comprehensive in terms of area excavated and detailed analysis of the second phase. There are still, however, many areas that should be excavated and analyzed. There are significant archeological

questions relating to the mission which desperately need to be answered. Among the questions and project possibilities are the following:

- 1) Explore and define the possible blacksmith shop and house;
- 2) Explore and define the sugar refining complex;
- 3) Define interior compound structures;
- 4) Define midden areas;
- 5) Check for archeological deposits on the interior of the church;
- 6) Locate and delineate the campo santo;
- 7) Identify workshops and their functions;
- 8) Analyze all artifacts from all previous excavations and any additional excavations;
- 9) Attempt to define plaza areas within the compound;
- 10) Attempt to locate specialized activity areas within the compound; and
- 11) Re-excavate the acequia to define its original configuration.

Of course these items comprise only a small portion of the potential of the mission for archeological investigations. Of special interest is the potential to combine the excavation results with ethnological data in the historical documents and cultural remnants remaining in Latin American cultures. In addition, demographic studies in the San Fernando archives should be fruitful even though many of the mission records were destroyed during the Gutiérrez-Magee filibustering expedition. What is needed is a comprehensive plan for understanding and developing the potential of the mission in the most efficient and fruitful manner possible. An approach emphasizing cultural interpretations through an understanding of Spanish Colonial culture can be the most useful.

Finally, the previous excavations at San José can be seen as very limited project-oriented excavations with a lack of interpretation. No major goals have been selected; there is no master plan. Until such a plan is developed, excavations must remain merely salvage. They will accomplish little and fail to answer questions of archeological, historical, architectural or cultural significance except in rare cases and by accident. This should not be considered an indictment of the past excavations. They have all addressed the required problems posed by the contracts under which they were working; in fact, they have generally accomplished more than could be expected.

What is needed at San José and the other San Antonio Spanish sites is a philosophy the basic premises of which are the preservation of the archeological deposits and architecture, faithful historic and cultural interpretation and a desire to collect and interpret cultural data from the site in a fashion preserving the major portions of the site. It should be recognized that the history of the mission, the architectural models and virtually all aspects of the culture represented at the mission (excepting the relatively small degree of syncretism eventually resulting from the conversion of natives of the area) had their origin in Nueva España.

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COVER ARTIST

Rose Marie Siebenhausen

The view of Mission San José shown on the cover of this issue is the work of Rose Marie Siebenhausen, a well-known San Antonio artist. She holds membership in the Texas Fine Arts Association, Metropolitan Art League (Victoria), River Art Group, and the Helotes Art Guild.

Rose Marie was commissioned to do three historic paintings for the San José Mission State Park. These paintings depict the early Coahuiltecan Indians; these naturalistic works are on display at the mission. Rose Marie was particularly elated by the honor of painting a portion of history concerning the Queen of the Missions (Sa Reina Norteña).

A native of Dallas, Rose Marie has been interested in art since childhood and has continued to develop this talent through study and application. She attended Victoria College, Dominican College of Houston, and Incarnate Word College, at which she received her B.A. in Art.

Notecards showing this cover scene and other San Antonio Missions by Rose Marie Siebenhausen are available at:

San José Gift Shop
Institute of Texan Cultures
River Art Gallery, La Villita
Frost Brothers

or from the artist:

254 Rosemont
San Antonio, TX 78228

TEST EXCAVATIONS AT THE CLASSEN ROCKSHELTER,
NORTHEASTERN BEXAR COUNTY, TEXAS, 1967

Daniel E. Fox

INTRODUCTION

The John Classen Ranch is an old family landholding which includes a large section of the Cibolo Creek Valley. It has been used for many years as a recreation area by hunters and Boy Scouts of the local community. The Classen family has been interested in the prehistory of their land and during the 1960s invited volunteer archeologists sponsored by the Witte Memorial Museum to survey parts of their property. The Classen Rockshelter was found and recorded as site 41 BX 32 in July, 1967, by the author and Damon Kasper, fellow high school students.

These amateur investigators felt that the rockshelter could contain relatively deep, stratified cultural deposits, although they could find only a few scattered traces of prehistoric occupation and some late 19th century and 20th century artifacts on the shelter's dusty, tick-infested floor. In August they conducted test excavations to determine the archeological potential of the site. Anne Fox lent a hand. Following is a report of their preliminary archeological investigation.

THE SETTING

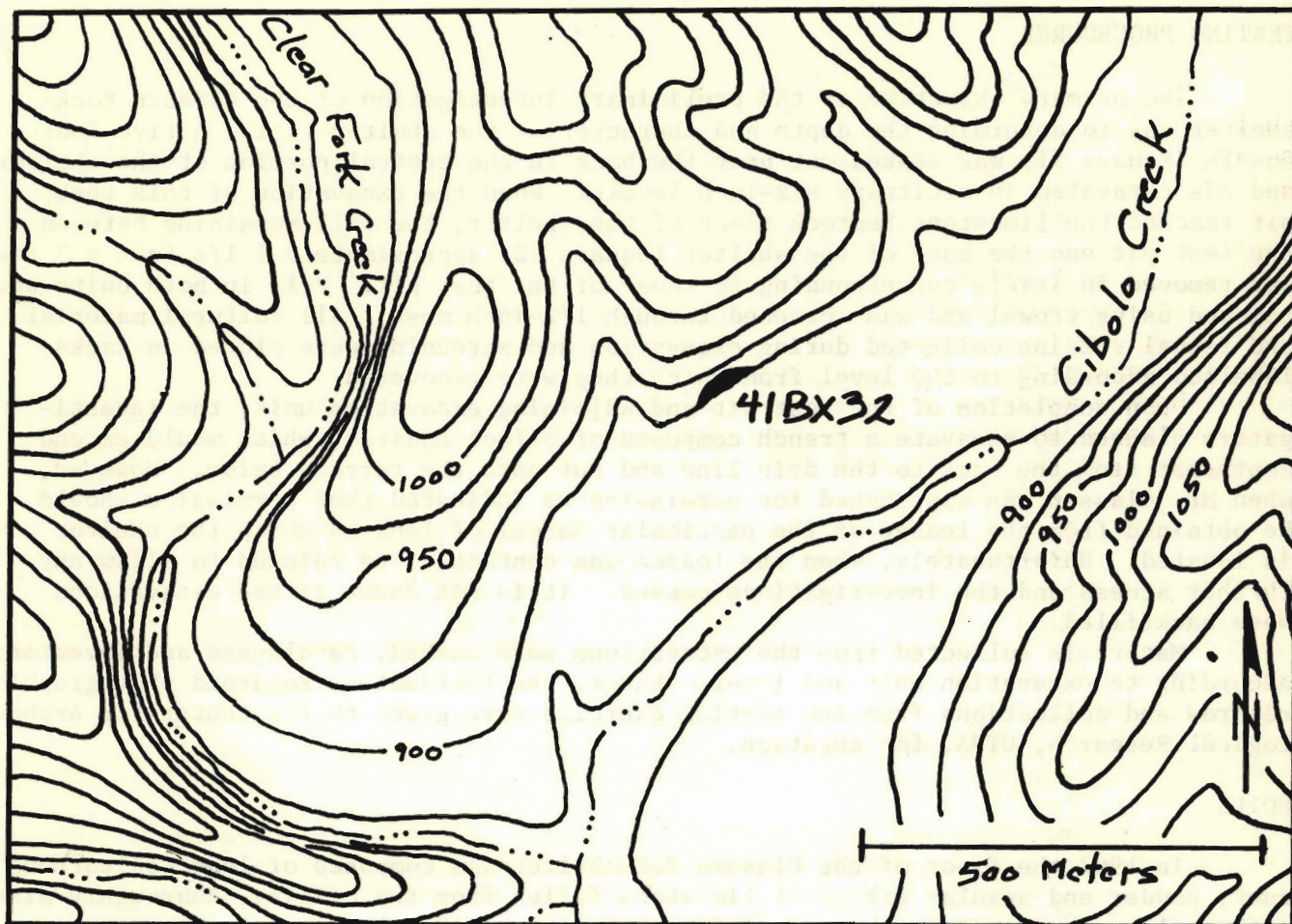
From headwaters in the limestone hillcountry near the western edge of Kendall County, Cibolo Creek runs east through the Glen Rose Limestone Formation, turns south through the Balcones Fault Zone, and enters the Edwards Limestone Formation at the intersection of West Fork and Clear Fork creeks on the Classen Ranch north-east of the City of San Antonio (Gerstle, Kelly and Assad 1978:31-32). The Classen Rockshelter is located upstream from this confluence in a limestone bluff which forms the west wall of the Cibolo Creek canyon (Figure 1, a).

The shelter is situated in the lowermost, steepest portion of the bluff and opens onto a broad, relatively flat alluvial terrace which stretches to Cibolo Creek, about 200 meters to the east. The creek bed is broad, rocky and dry, except for some holes or ponds which hold water year-round. During severe floods, water probably covers parts of the terrace, but seldom, if ever, reaches the rockshelter, which is about 10 meters above the creek bed. The terrace supports a growth of tall trees, including oaks, hackberries and elms, cedar and grasses. Some areas of the terrace are more open and may have been cleared for pasture or cultivated in the past. The bluff top is rocky and covered by scrub oak and cedar.

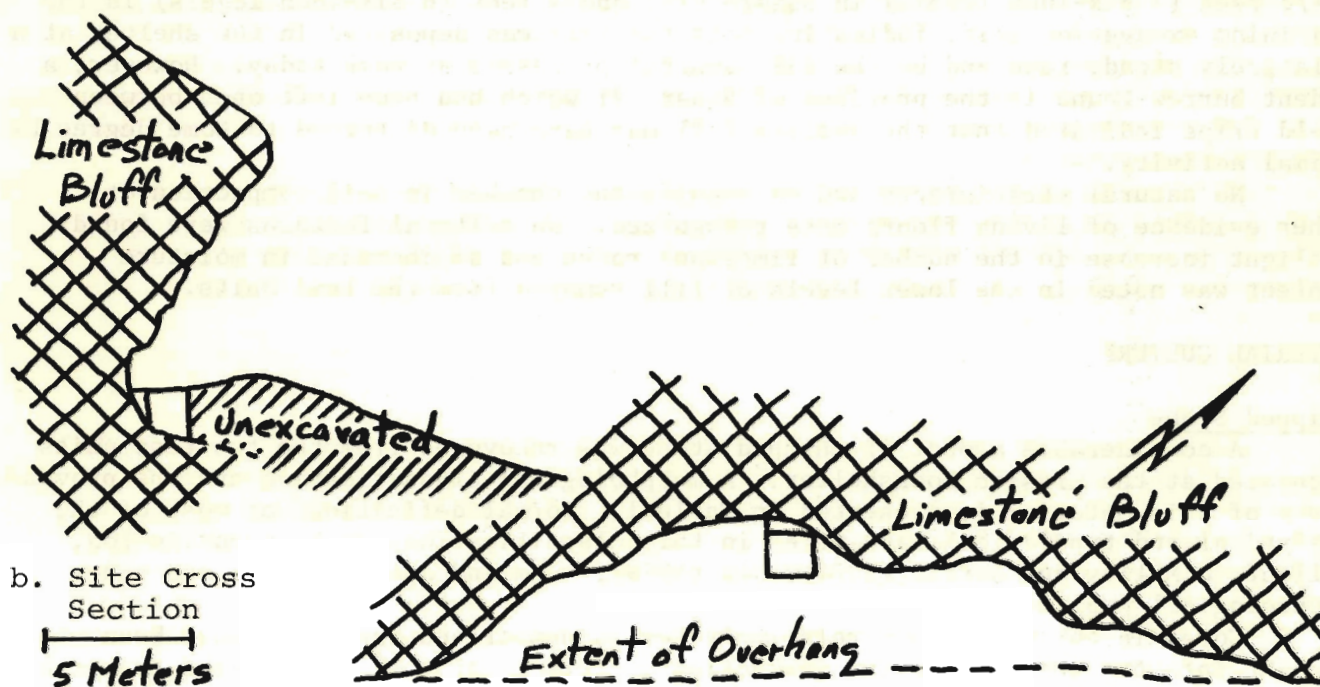
THE SITE

The Classen Rockshelter occurs as a tall overhang about 25 meters wide (Figure 1, b-c). Its honeycomb limestone ceiling sloped gradually inward as much as 4.5 meters from a height of about 7 meters above the shelter floor and covers an area of approximately 90 square meters. Along the front, a drip line of rocks and soil from the bluff above is about 30 centimeters higher than the floor level near the back of the shelter. In front the ground surface slopes gradually outward about 10 meters to the terrace which is about 2.5 meters lower than the shelter floor.

Near the northeast end of the shelter, there is a small cave in the honeycomb limestone of the bluff. Moisture and water-loving vegetation in the opening indicate that it may be a spring when the bluff is saturated with groundwater. Burned limestone rocks occur on the surface of a distinct mound of rocks and other talus below the cave opening. Occasional burned rocks also occur along the slope in front of the shelter.



a. Physiographic Location



c. Site Plan

Figure 1: Classen Rockshelter (41BX32)

TESTING PROCEDURES

The primary objective of the preliminary investigation of the Classen Rockshelter was to determine the depth and character of the shelter fill. A five-foot square (Square #1) was staked out near the back in the central portion of the shelter and was excavated in arbitrary six-inch levels. When the excavation of this test pit reached the limestone bedrock floor of the shelter, the fill remaining between the test pit and the back of the shelter (Square #2, approximately 1 1/2 feet x 5 feet) was removed in levels corresponding to those of the test pit. Fill in both units was removed using trowel and was screened through 1/2-inch mesh. All cultural material and faunal remains collected during excavation and screening were placed in sacks labelled according to the level from which they were recovered.

Upon completion of the test pit and adjoining excavation unit, the investigators planned to excavate a trench composed of 5-foot squares, which would extend southeast from the back to the drip line and out onto the terrace below. However, when Mr. Classen was approached for permission he indicated that permission should be obtained from the leasee of the particular parcel of land on which the shelter is located. Unfortunately, when the leasee was contacted, he refused to allow any further access and the investigations ceased. It is not known if the excavations were backfilled.

Materials collected from the excavations were washed, catalogued and inventoried according to excavation unit and level. Later, the fieldnotes, Polaroid photographic records and collections from the testing exercise were given to the Center for Archaeological Research, UTSA, for curation.

SOILS

In 1967 the floor of the Classen Rockshelter was composed of loose calcareous dust, powder and angular pieces of limestone fallen from the ceiling, thoroughly mixed with soils washed in from the drip line and overhang. Similar soils, although more compact and slightly darker in color, were penetrated to the bedrock at a depth of 3 1/2 feet (7 six-inch levels) in Square #1, and 3 feet (6 six-inch levels) in the adjoining excavation unit, indicating that the fill was deposited in the shelter at a relatively steady rate and by the same general processes at work today. However, a rodent burrow found in the profiles of Square #1 which had been left open between field trips indicated that the shelter fill may have been disturbed to some degree by animal activity.

No natural stratigraphy and no significant changes in soil compaction or other evidence of living floors were recognized. No cultural features were found. A slight increase in the number of limestone rocks and an increase in moisture content was noted in the lower levels of fill removed from the test units.

MATERIAL CULTURE

Chipped Stone

A considerable amount of chipped stone was recovered from the two test units excavated at the Classen Rockshelter. A morphological classification and the provenience of this material is presented in Table 1. Formal definitions of most of the analytical and typological categories in this classification can be found in Fox, Mallouf, O'Malley and Sorrow (1974), Fox (1979), Suhm and Jelks (1962), and other archeological publications.

Cores in the sample are relatively few in number and appear to have been brought into the shelter for the production of flakes for tools. Core-Bifaces probably represent attempts to reduce cores directly into thick or thin biface tool forms. Although flakes and chips represent the initial as well as the final stages of lithic tool production, the lack of primary flakes and the relatively low frequency of occurrence of secondary flakes indicate that much of the initial reduction of

| Cores Core-Bifaces Flakes and Chips | Square #1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Primary | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Secondary | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Cortex Platform | 5 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 13 | 13 | 3 | 13 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| Single Facet Platform | 17 | 13 | 9 | 19 | 23 | 12 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Multiple Large Facet Platform | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 3 |
| Multiple Small Facet Platform | | 1 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | | 1 |
| Tertiary | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Single Facet Platform | 33 | 46 | 43 | 38 | 53 | 30 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 8 | 5 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 315 |
| Multiple Large Facet Platform | 7 | 7 | 7 | 5 | 7 | 4 | | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 51 |
| Multiple Small Facet Platform | 27 | 35 | 58 | 78 | 79 | 73 | 15 | 20 | 8 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 21 | 435 |
| Chips | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Corticate | 2 | 3 | 2 | 22 | 34 | 2 | | | | | | | | | 12 |
| Partially Decorticate | 28 | 28 | 19 | 22 | 207 | 21 | 4 | 11 | 3 | | 1 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 186 |
| Decorticate | 91 | 136 | 158 | 172 | 207 | 132 | 33 | 46 | 17 | 9 | 15 | 13 | 10 | 35 | 1,092 |
| Trimmed Flakes and Chips* | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| End | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| End and Sides | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 3 |
| Sides | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | 4 |
| Thinned and Shaped | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 8 |
| Irregular or Indeterminable | 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | 3 |
| Bifaces | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Thick | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| Thin | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Unstemmed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Pointed-Ovate | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | 10 |
| Subtriangular | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| Triangular | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| Irregular | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Stemmed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Palenmutes</i> (Fig. 2,g,j) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| <i>Castroville</i> (Fig. 2,e) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| <i>Marshall</i> (Fig. 2,d) | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 6 |
| <i>Montell</i> (Fig. 2,f) | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| <i>Prin/Benson/Fairland</i> (Fig. 2,b-c) | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | 4 |
| <i>Dart</i> (Fig. 2,a) | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 11 |
| Miscellaneous (Fig. 2,h-i) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 |
| Thin Biface Fragments | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Large ("Knives"/Preforms) | 5 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 28 |
| Small (Projectile Points) | 1 | 4 | | 3 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 20 |
| TOTALS* | 225 | 293 | 319 | 359 | 438 | 287 | 73 | 2 | 114 | 49 | 16 | 29 | 35 | 35 | 82 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 36 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2,392 |

* Numbers of Trimmed Flakes and Chips are included in totals of Flakes and Chips and should not be counted twice.

Table 1. 41 BX 32. Chipped Stone.

locally available chert nodules and cobbles was done outside the shelter and that the final reduction, shaping and retouching of tools was performed in the shelter.

The comparatively small number of trimmed flakes and chips includes flake tools and broken preforms for thin bifaces. Two thick bifaces appear to represent abandoned attempts to reduce cores or flakes into thin bifaces. One thick biface is comparable to "Cuero Gouges" (Group II, Form 3 Thick Bifaces) reported from the Lower Guadalupe River Valley (Fox *et al* 1974:37-41). The relatively large number of thin bifaces recovered from the rockshelter represents various shapes and stages of thin biface tool production. All chronologically diagnostic thin biface forms (Figure 2, a-g, j) are typical of the Middle and Late Archaic periods of Central Texas prehistory.

Approximately 10 percent of the sample of chipped stone exhibits signs of having been burned after it was produced. Occasional slightly patinated chert artifacts occurred in lower and upper deposits in the rockshelter. Two small fragments of clear quartzite thin bifaces were the only chipped stone that was not chert.

Pecked and Ground Stone

Two fragments of flat, ovoid pecked and ground quartzite pebbles probably represent grinding implements (Table 2).

Painted Pebble

A flat, roughly oval limestone pebble (Table 2) bears a black painted line across one end and a faint black smudge under it. The pebble appears to have been burned and possibly once had other painted elements on it.

Faunal Remains

Numerous well-preserved bone fragments were recovered from the test excavations. Many (perhaps 30 percent) of these have been burned. Deer-size animals are represented by most of the bone fragments. Some rodents and other small animals also are represented by burned and unburned bone fragments.

Numerous shells of *rabdotus* land snails were encountered in the excavated deposits. No mussel shell was found.

Bone Awl

The ulna of a mature deer (Table 2) was found which has been fashioned with a smooth, polished pointed end.

Historic Materials

A variety of historic artifacts (Table 2) represent post-Civil War use of the Classen Rockshelter as a trash dump and perhaps a storage place or a still. Most, if not all, of the glass sherds probably are from alcoholic beverage bottles and flasks. Metal artifacts represent farm and ranch equipment and a wood stove. Ceramic sherds are mostly from stoneware crocks, jugs and churns. Buttons are the only personal items and there is no definite evidence of household occupation of the rockshelter, itself, although it is possible that a household was located somewhere nearby.

INTERPRETATIONS

Test excavations at the Classen Rockshelter recovered minimal information applicable to the evaluation of the site's archeological potential and basic

| OTHER PREHISTORIC MATERIAL CULTURE | | HISTORIC MATERIALS | | TOTALS | |
|------------------------------------|-----|--------------------|---|--------|----|
| Pecked and Ground Stone | 1 | | | | |
| Painted Pebble | | | | | |
| Bone Awl | 1** | | | | |
| TOTALS | 1 | 1 | 2 | | 4 |
| HISTORIC MATERIALS | | | | | |
| Glass | | | | | |
| Olive-green | | | | 10 | 14 |
| Aquamarine | | | | 4 | 6 |
| Clear | 1 | | | 10 | 17 |
| Brown | | | | 2 | 3 |
| Ceramics | | | | | |
| Stoneware | | | | 1 | 22 |
| Porcelain Saucer | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Porcelain Buttons | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Metal | | | | | |
| Stove Part Fragments | | | | | 2 |
| Shovel Hafting Band | | | | | 1 |
| Wagon Box Strap | | | | | 1 |
| Rattail File Fragment | | | | | 1 |
| Fence Staple | | | | | 1 |
| Iron Caster Fragment | | | | | 1 |
| Long Iron Bolt or Rivet | | | | | 1 |
| Shell Button | | | | 1 | 1 |
| TOTALS | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 74 |

Table 2. 41 BX 32. Other Prehistoric Material Culture, and Historic Materials.

**** This is the suspected provenience.
The artifact is missing from the collection.**

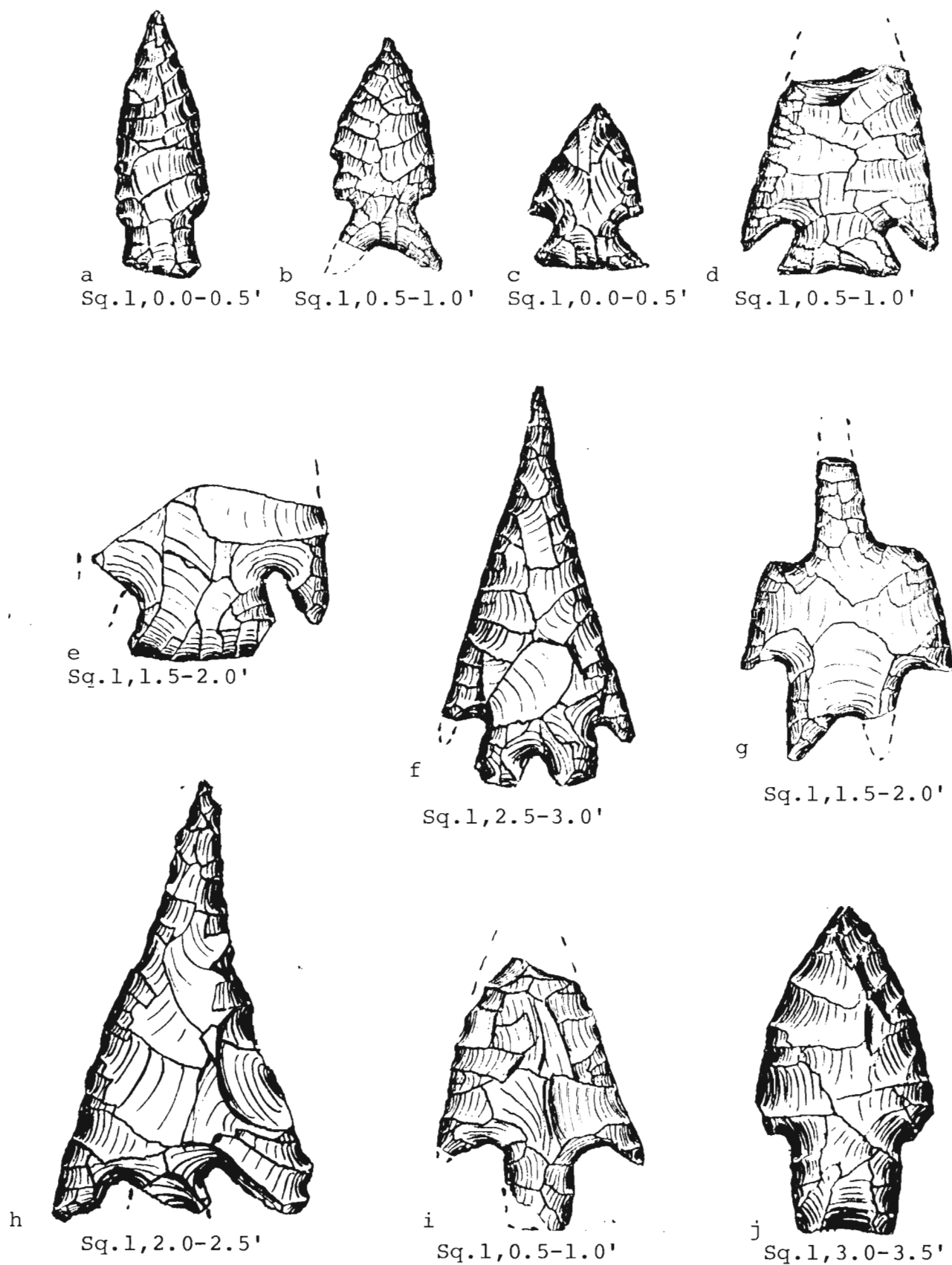


Figure 2: Classen Rockshelter (41BX32)
Stemmed Thin Bifaces

comparative data concerning chronology of occupation, site function, subsistence and settlement pattern. The rockshelter can be considered a potentially valuable cultural resource. Although soil stratification was not recognizable and it is possible that rodent burrowing and possibly prehistoric human activities have churned up the shelter fill somewhat, cultural materials seemed to occur in relatively well-preserved deposits of more than a meter deep in some areas from the bedrock shelter floor to the present ground surface. The general vertical distribution of occurrence of temporally diagnostic projectile points from earlier to later supports this contention. It is possible that the shelter contains hearths and other archeological features and that activity areas are observable in the horizontal distribution of cultural remains there.

Chronologically diagnostic artifacts recovered indicate that the rockshelter was occupied from the Middle Archaic, Weir's (1976) Round Rock Phase, to the end of the Archaic, Weir's (1976) Twin Sisters Phase, supporting the hypothesis that Middle Archaic and later peoples sought more elevated campsites in response to increased mesic conditions (Gerstle, Kelly and Assad 1978:35). If the variation in the frequency of occurrence of cultural materials through time can be considered as a reflection of variation in the frequency of occupation, the Classen Rockshelter seems to have been occupied most intensively at the beginning of the Late Archaic, Weir's (1976) San Marcos Phase, and its occupation gradually lessened in intensity until the beginning of the Late Prehistoric Period. Historic use of the shelter began after the Civil War.

The frequency of occurrence of various analytical categories of tool-making debris (Table 1) indicates that throughout the period of prehistoric occupation partially completed tool preforms were carried from nearby resource areas to be finished in the shelter. Faunal remains and various types of tools recovered probably indicate that food preparation and a variety of other subsistence and maintenance activities took place in the shelter.

This is about all that can be said based on field notes, artifact collections and the author's personal recollection of a preliminary investigation that was conducted more than 12 years ago. If the Classen Rockshelter still remains intact amidst the development of sprawling suburban northeast Bexar County, the site should be preserved and managed as a significant cultural resource.

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PAINTED MAYA VASES OF BELIZE

Harvey P. Smith

INTRODUCTION

Within the large body of painted polychrome Maya vases, a limited number come from the east coast area of Belize. These vases appear to have certain special characteristics that appear to isolate them culturally and by provenience. The following discussion will attempt to recognize these special features and establish a stylistic, regional identity for Belize and its painted vases.

Four vases are presented for comparative study which were selected because of their variation in subject matter, provenience and use of unique individual elements. A formal study will follow which analyzes each vase separately, building from elements to themes and finally to postulates regarding iconographic meaning.

DISCUSSION

The four vases selected are identified and listed below in their order of discussion. The numerical order will also be retained for ease of reference in the following pages.

1. ANIMAL VASE, RIO HONDO
THOMAS GANN, 1918
SAN ANTONIO, QUINTANA ROO
2. ANIMAL VASE
#75 - 6216 - to 18 HELMUTH
SITE Unknown
3. ALTUN HA VASE
PENDERGAST - 1967
4. COLHA VASE
T. HESTER, 1979

Sources of information for all four vases varied as to type and quantity, therefore discussions of each vase will be limited to the available references and may differ because of these conditions.

VASE NO. 1

The Animal Vase, Rio Hondo, derives its name from the theme depicted which appears to be a series of "curious mythological animals," to quote Gann. However, we will see that with closer inspection, these are not all animals (Gann 1918).

The first distinctive element is the use of black as the background color. This feature becomes a distinctive culture marker when it is established that all four of the study vases employ a black background. In recent years several other vases from Belize have been located that make this same use of color. This black background appears to be found only on the east coast vases, and must be considered as one of the regional inventory of identification.

Several other elements found on Vase No. 1 could be described as symbolic or stylistic:

- A. A Series of small circles in descending order of size with a curving alignment depicting an animal's tail.

- B. Placement of straight lines along the outline of an animal to denote hair.
- C. A plant with water lily bulbs at the end of intertwining stalks.
- D. Several small isolated "symbols" appear to be floating along the top of the panel and are not related to the several figures.

The individual creatures are of considerable interest and appear to give Vase No. 1 a distinctive regional stylistic character (Figure 1). These figures have a certain playful manner to them and seem to be indifferent or unaware of each other as they move about. There is no discernable motive to their activities. Each of these curious beings floats in space - some with head down - some with head up - and some poised at an angle. Only Figure B-1 performs the specific act of biting a snake, held firmly in his mouth.

Individual creatures are described as follows:

A-1. A monkey poised in a vertical dive (?) with his stylized tail, consisting of a series of diminishing circles or dots. A long, slim projection appears to extend from his mouth, and a feather blanket (?) covers his back. He is shown in right profile.

A-2. This reptilian creature has one human hand and one paw. Hair is depicted by a series of straight lines, and he has been presented from a top view with head in right profile. Small "floating" symbols are placed above and ahead of him, although these may be unrelated.

A-3. Another reptilian creature seen from above is similar to A-2, but with much more slender arms and legs. Decorated, oval panels on the back and tail could be death spots. Again, no relation to the other figures seems to exist (Quirarte 1976).

B-1. This animal, seen in body-left and head-right profile, has the shape and size of a coatimundi and performs the familiar feat of killing a snake between his jaws. Although the diving monkey is above this animal, there does not appear to be any real interaction between them. His back is decorated with what could be symbolic death spots (or a pattern) (Figure 1-C).

B-2. This bird, seen in right profile, could be defined as a parrot with a long, exaggerated topknot (Figure 1-D).

B-3 and B-3-A. This is the only situation in our multiple scene where a possible interaction does exist between the two creatures depicted. The avian creature appears raptorial in specie and is placed above B-3 in such a position that it might be about to grasp B-3 in its talons. The artist seems to present B-3-A in a more or less conventional manner in left profile with feathers in normal position. However, one exception is a symbolic sign on top of its beak which could be a water lily blossom. Only, the beak seems to fall short of having a raptorial quality, since it lacks a pronounced curve (Figure 1-E).

In the lower position, B-3 appears to be the long-lipped deity with a plant growth emerging from its head consisting of two intertwined stems terminating in buds of the water lily. Thomas Gann interprets this complete grouping as symbolic of water or fertility (Gann 1918:110).

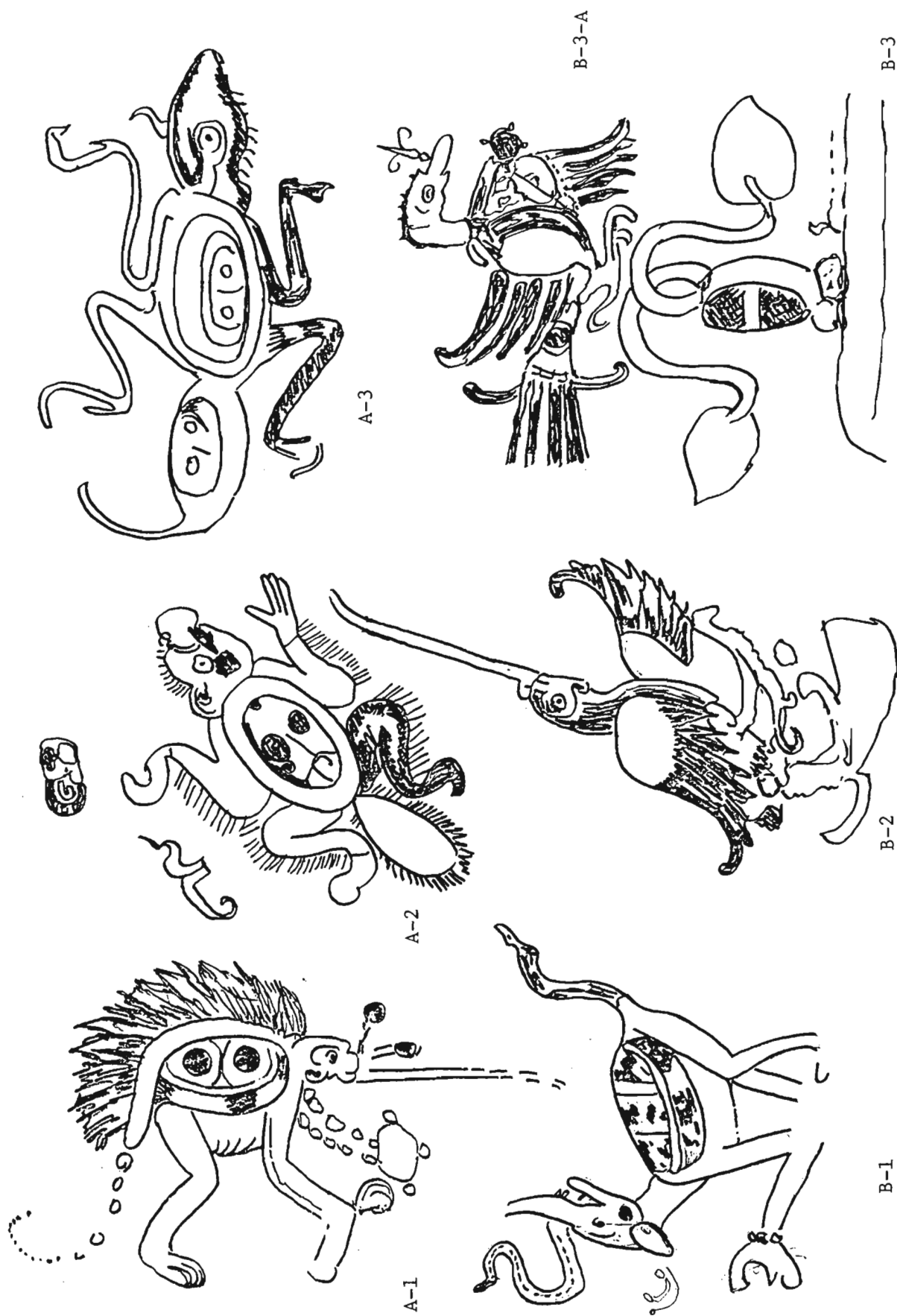


Figure 1. Vase No. 1 - Animal Vase. Rio Hondo.

VASE NO. 2

The second "animal" vase has no known provenience, but it is very similar to Vase No. 1 in many ways. The black background is present at top and bottom and on the reverse side in almost identical manner to Vase No. 1, with the immediate ground being a pale yellow, thus creating the pictorial panel on which to place the multiple scene (Figure 2).

In Vase No. 2 a pronounced change is apparent since the six individual creatures are interacting with each other in very specific ways:

A-1 and A-2 are conversing on the upper level.

B-1 is attacked by B-2 on the lower level.

A-3 and B-3 are in impending conflict, between upper and lower levels.

Vase No. 2 is similar to No. 1 in that both have symbolic heads on the reverse side done in a very different style much akin to a paper cut-out. These are not discussed by the original authors. The individual creatures in the multiple scene will be described in pairs in accord with their interaction and conflict between one another:

A-1 and A-2 appear to be engaged in a vigorous conversation symbolized by an arched line of (air?) bubbles in black outline with red centers and in descending size toward the mouth of each speaker.

A-1 is feline in character with a conventional body and tail, claws and head. A symbolic plant appears to grow out of the base of the head with a death spot on the right cheek and striped body markings. Both creatures appear to be seated with A-1 in right profile and A-2 in left (Quirarte 1976).

A-2 is clearly a monkey with a death spot (?) on his cheek and a feather fringe along the extremity of the tail. He gestures with both hands. A similarity to the monkey A-1, in Vase No. 1, should be noted. The string of circles in descending size, in this instance, is implying the extent of the tail. Also note the feather fringe along the back.

B-1 and B-2 are clearly engaged in combat with the feline creature appearing to be pressing the attack. B-2, the feline, is covered with black death spots and appears to be perched on an oval object with a cruciform symbol, but is otherwise depicted conventionally.

B-1 is a strange symbolic form which seemingly extends below the limits of the lower border in a series of oval shaped appendages. B-1 is apparently in right profile with B-2 in left profile. At this point one could visualize a conch shell form with a large eye or head protruding to the right, with double plant forms growing from the "head" extending in reverse curves and ending in a bud or mushroom-like dual form. The whole configuration might represent God "N" under severe attack, noting also that God "N" appears in the "B" position of the glyphic inscription (Coe 1973).

A-3 and B-3 are apparently another version of the instinctive conflict between the coatimundi and the snake. In this version of the theme, the similarity of the small animal with the one depicted in Vase No. 1 is striking. However, in addition, this animal, B-3, is also shown crouching on a stylized temple

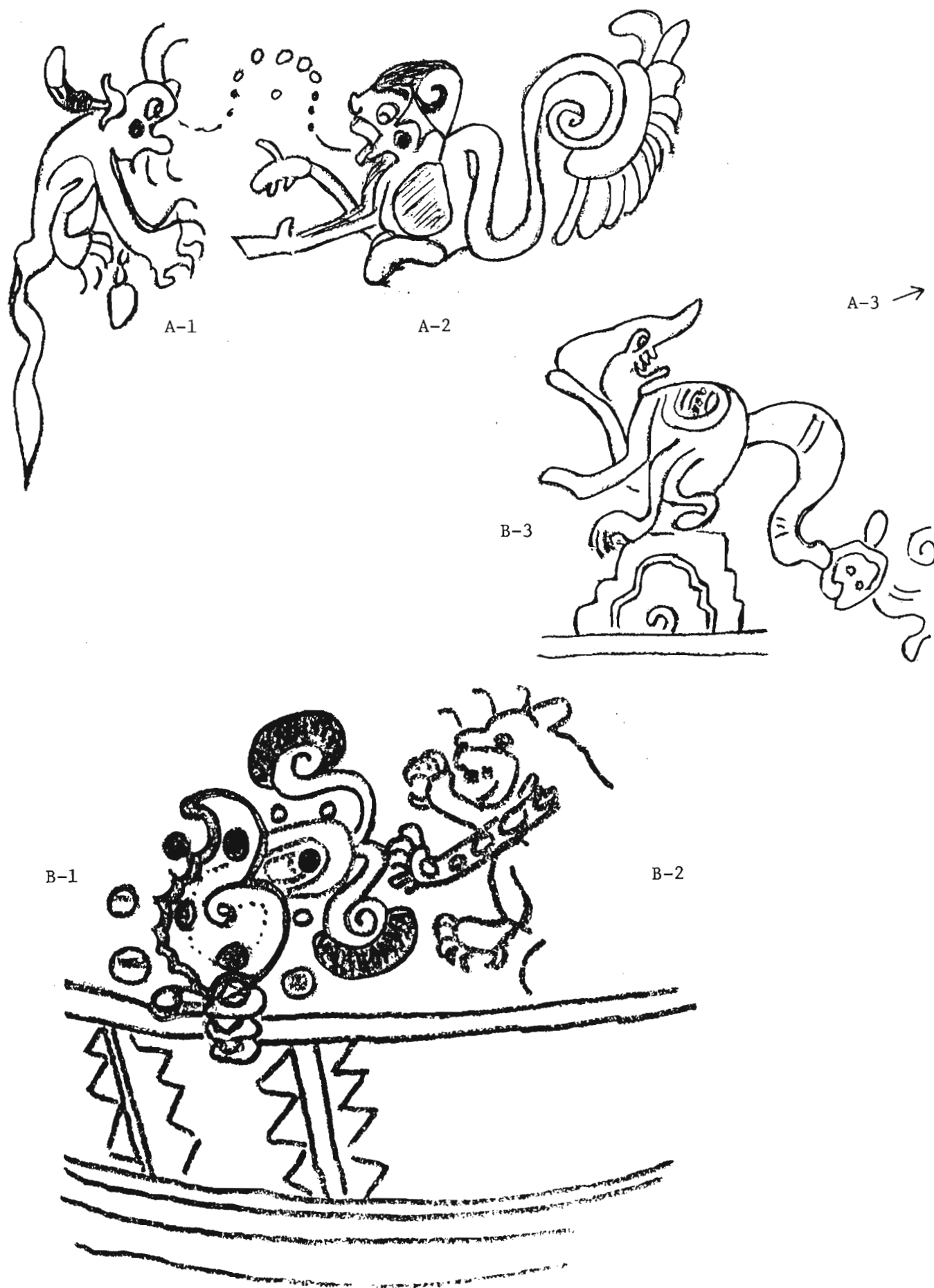


Figure 2. Vase No. 2 - Animal Vase. Site unknown.

platform and with a glyph attached to the tip of the tail with an added plant form. Two rather complicated oval patterns appear on the body with circular versions around the tail. The body is in left profile and the head is turned in right profile, as he faces his reptilian antagonist above. (A-3 not illus.)

VASE NO. 3

This vase, Altun Ha, depicts a double image consisting of a two-headed compound creature shown frontally (Quirarte 1978+B). It is not clear if the artist was portraying a two-headed compound creature, or two separate dragon heads back-to-back. The black ground is painted on directly, showing both heads between vertical separation bands.

Individual elements include an orbital plate with a cross symbol and a complicated horizontal headpiece extending from the top of the head. Flower motifs extend below the mouth, curving right and left with blossom-tipped ends. Feather fringes border the right and left side of the heads.

An upper horizontal glyph band runs around the top margin of the base with a light colored ground. Quirarte has postulated that the compound creature is bicephalic with the base itself symbolizing the body (Quirarte 1978-B). (Vase 3 not illus.)

VASE NO. 4

This vase has the typical black background with a top glyph band, but is fragmented with no base remaining. The central panel appears to contain an avian-like creature, but this is unclear due to the incomplete condition of this vase.

The colors, in addition to the background, are red and yellow with black outlining, and a light tan background for the glyph band. The style is quite similar to the other vases, with the addition of a very fine black line forming an inner border for the glyph band and for the narrative band.

Although fragmented, the central figure appears to be treated as a double image arrangement. Two separately formed narrative bands are visible, and in each are portions of what appears to be an avian creature. The provenience of this vase is accurately known, and it comes from a site about fifteen miles south of Orange Walk Town. (Vase 4 not illus.)

CONCLUSIONS

In summarizing the regionally identifiable aspects of the Belizian vases, we must group them by item and then attempt to establish a model of regional cultural identity.

Probably, the use of a black background is the most quickly recognized feature and is common to all four of the study vases. This appears to be an exclusive, as well as consistent, feature with this region.

Similarity of style among the bases of Belize is basically what creates regionality either in this area, or other areas where style similarity exists. What appears as the dominant stylistic character for these east coast vases is the rather lighthearted, carefree feeling portrayed by the artist. The narrative scene in the two animal vases has no center of interest and is fragmented into a series of vignettes and unrelated individual figures. In some instances the individuals appear almost comical, even where conflict is portrayed. As a group, a feeling of casualness is conveyed to the viewer.

The double image vases, although more serious in their treatment of subject, still seem to convey a style similarity of regional scope. To summarize, the painted Maya vases of the east coast region could be characterized as black background vases with rather casual portrayals in their narrative themes, that do not direct the viewer to any strong, central thematic focus.

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DUGOUT CANOE FROM THE NUECES RIVER

Malcom L. Johnson

About 1949 a trip was made to the Boy Scout camp, "Camp Karankawa," located on the shore of what was then known as Mathis Lake, now known as Lake Corpus Christi.

In front of the building that housed the camp director's office was an old, rotting, dugout canoe. It was mounted on top of two creosote posts, about two feet high, and was fastened to them with nails driven through the bottom of the boat.

An inquiry was made of the camp director as to its origin. He stated that it had been found in a mud bank in the Nueces river after a flood, by a local rancher, and he then donated it to the Scout camp when it opened, about 1945.

The building of the Wesley Seale dam, which was dedicated April 26, 1958, necessitated the moving of some of the buildings at the Scout camp to higher ground, and the canoe was removed also. Mr. Vern Herring, Corpus Christi Scout Office, recalled that the canoe was placed up in the rafters of the old mess hall, and remained there for several years, but he had no recollection of what had become of the canoe (personal communication).

About 1955, I saw the canoe again. We were on K.P. and were hauling trash out to the dump while attending summer camp, when the canoe was noticed, badly broken, along with refuse from the old mess hall, which had by then been torn down. Evidently the canoe had still been in the rafters when the building was demolished, and was also hauled to the dump. According to Mr. Herring, the site of the old dump has been leveled and cleared by heavy equipment, and is the location of the present shotgun range (personal communication).

For several years an effort has been made to locate any old photographs that may show the canoe in front of the original buildings, so far without success. However, I feel sure that somewhere, in someone's old album, such a photo exists.

The canoe was quite distinct from the descriptions and references to dugout canoes that I have been able to locate, so an attempt will be made to describe it from memory.

Aluminum canoes were just coming into use at the camp, and were about fifteen feet long. Most of the canoes in use at the camp were still the wooden, canvas-covered type, and they were approximately twelve feet long. The dugout canoe was noticeably shorter than either of the modern types, and is estimated to have been about ten feet long.

It was fairly narrow, and is estimated to have been only about eighteen inches wide. Both ends of the canoe were nicely tapered to a point, and the somewhat rounded bottom curved upward gradually. The overall depth of the dugout is estimated to have been twelve to fourteen inches, with twelve inches probably more nearly correct. A canoe on display at the Institute of Texan Cultures, San Antonio, Texas, is also attributed to the Karankawa, but is larger in all of its proportions. The thing that makes the Nueces River canoe distinctive is that the top four or five inches of the sides were separate pieces, like planks, which were fastened to the dugout portion of the hull. In order to fasten the planks to the hull, a row of holes had been drilled in the bottom edge of the planks, and another in the top edge of the hull. The holes were not aligned one above the other, but were offset to form a zig zag pattern. The pieces were then lashed together, possibly with rope or rawhide. As I recall, the original lashings had been replaced with a small rope. The holes were somewhat cone-shaped, and were probably bored by hand, or possibly burned through. It seems to me the planks were sort of fitted into the hull, and that the top edge of the planks were about even with the top edge of the hull near the ends.

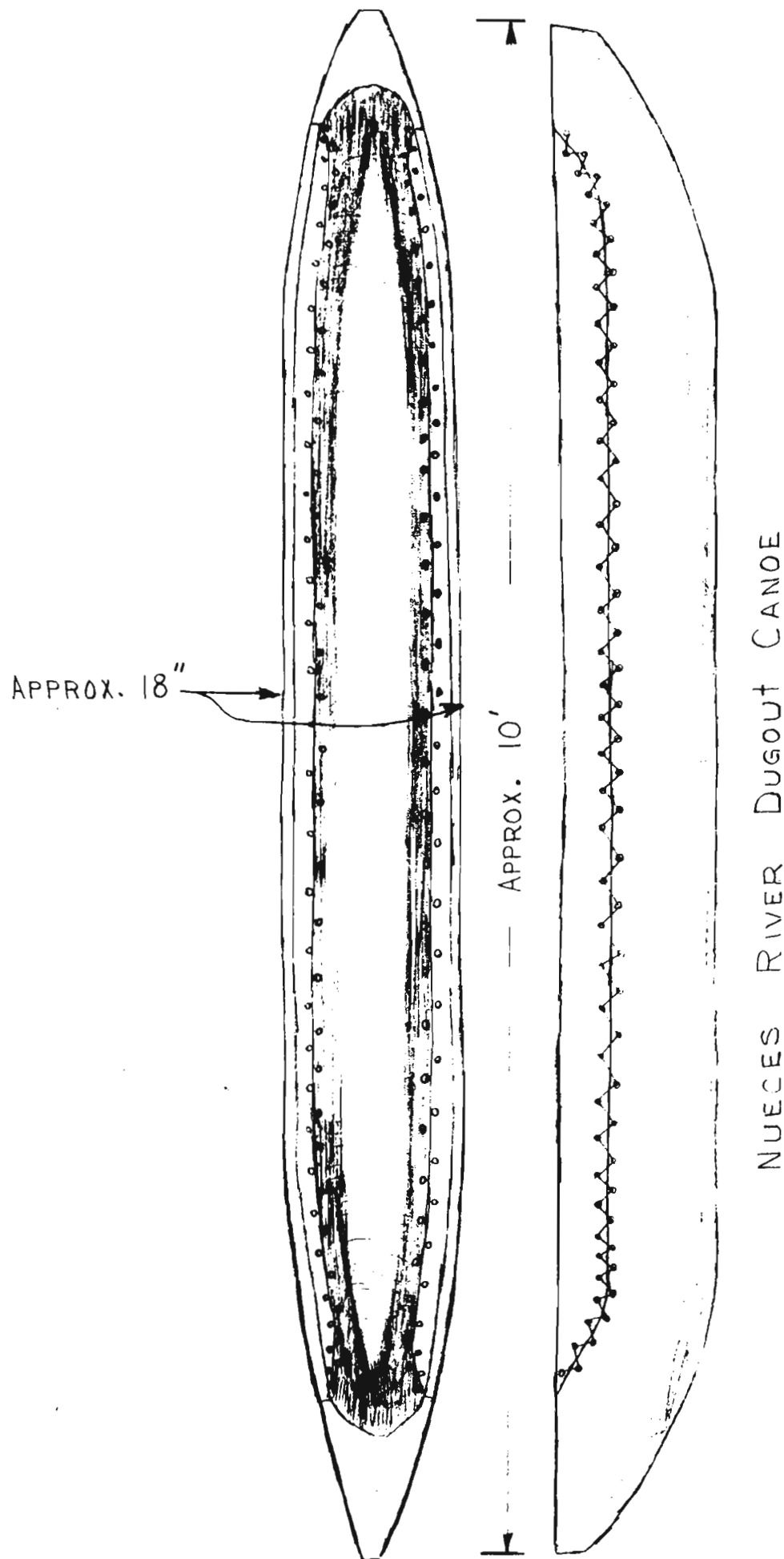


Figure 1. Nueces River Dugout Canoe; reconstruction from memory (Drawing by the author).

Mr. Herring is in general agreement with the description, except he believes the planks were extended all the way to the ends of the canoe (personal communication). The wood was weathered a dark gray to ashy gray, with streaks and blotches of black or very dark gray, and the bottom was rotted through in a couple of places. Mr. Herring states that at one time an opinion was offered that the dugout portion may have been made of mahogany. We both agreed that the planks may have been of a different type of wood from the hull (personal communication). Mahogany can be considered as a possibility, since mahogany logs are known to wash ashore along the coast. There is no positive proof that this dugout was indeed made by Indians. But it must be noted that no metal nails or fasteners were used to secure the planks to the sides. This, in my opinion, strengthens the possibility that it was not of modern construction. From my recollections of the dugout, it is very possible that the canoe had originally been built as a basic dugout, and that either because of damage or deterioration of the gunwales, portions of the sides were removed and refitted with the planks as a method of repairing it.

It is likely that the blackish colorations that I recall were due to a burning and scraping process used in the manufacture of the canoe. In 1699, Penicaut observed Indians using fire and wet clay to form dugout canoes on Biloxi Bay. The scraping was done with "big cockle shells," and the wood used was cypress. Du Pratz, living near the Natchez Indians, observed dugouts being made with fire and scraped with wooden scrapers in 1758, and clay was being used to control the depth of burning. It is said the type of woods most often used in dugout construction along the southeastern states were cypress, pine, poplar, black walnut, and possibly red cedar (Stowe 1974).

A dugout canoe was found in 1973 on the east bank of the Tombigbee River, near Peavy's Landing, Alabama. It is made of cypress, and is 20.1 feet long, with a beam of 1.7 feet. Bow and stern are somewhat squared, with small platforms extending outward. Another has been found near Van Cleave, Mississippi, that is 16.1 feet long, with a beam of 2.8 feet, and an inside depth of 0.8 feet. The ends are rounded.

An unfinished, and perhaps recent, canoe was found near Van Cleave, Mississippi, on Cedar Creek. It is 9.95 feet long, and 1.4 feet wide, with an inside depth of 0.7 feet. Possibly made of pine, the bow is pointed, and the stern is squared. Still another canoe is at the Spanish Fort Museum, Pascagoula, Mississippi. Origin is unknown. The length is 15 feet; beam, 1.5 feet; depth 0.8 feet. It is pointed at both ends.

It is not known how far back in time dugouts were being used on the Texas Coast. However, a C-14 date for a dugout from North Carolina has been calculated at A.D. 1005 (GX-1574), and two dugouts from Florida have been dated A.D. 765 (ML-324), and 1090 B.C. (I-1661) respectively. So it can be said that dugouts were in use along portions of the coast at least by the Late Archaic period and possibly earlier.

It has been demonstrated that shell scrapers, adzes, gouges, and possibly celts, were utilized in dugout manufacture (Ball 1974). During historic times, dugout canoes were used by the Pamunkey of Virginia, the Cherokee of Tennessee, the Cusabo of South Carolina, the Timucua, Tequesta and Calusa of Florida, the Choctaw and Natchez of Mississippi, and the Atakapans and Chitimacha of Louisiana, as well as the Karankawas of Texas, and the Maya, and the Caraib of Jamaica, as well as others (Ball 1974).

In a narrative published in 1588, Thomas Hariot describes the manufacture of a dugout large enough to carry twenty men and their baggage, in Virginia, by means of burning and scraping with shells and with some use of stone hatchets, or possibly celts (Ball 1974). The Seminoles and early settlers in Florida evidently used fire and steel tools to manufacture dugouts (Ball 1974).

Along the Texas Coast, Dr. Gatschet records that the Karankawa were highly mobile, and they made dugouts from trees with the bark left on. The ends were

bluntly pointed, with a triangular deck at each end, and were poled while standing on the stern. They are described as "long and narrow, yet capacious." Gatschet adds that they were "so frail and untrustworthy that they could hardly have ventured out upon the open waters of the Gulf." He also mentions the Karankawa used "old skiffs," obtained from the whites. These were flat-bottomed and broader than the dugouts and were apparently propelled by sail power rather than by rowing (Schaedel 1949). It is also mentioned that the canoes were large enough to carry about a dozen slender willow poles in a bundle, which were necessary for the construction of their ba-ak, or hut.

Cabeza de Vaca mentions that weirs were used to catch fish, while Oviedo states fish were killed from canoes, probably either with bow and arrow, or spear. This took place on the Isle. Malhado.

It should be noted here that the Johnson Site (Campbell 1947) contained bones of porpoise or manatee, and it may be that these mammals were speared from a canoe as they came up for air. Perhaps these were the kind of "fish" that were being "killed" from canoes that Oviedo later witnessed.

Cabeza de Vaca and Oviedo also noted that the Indian houses were portable, being carried about on canoes and on human backs. Oviedo also describes a deer drive on the Central Texas Coast, in which the deer were driven into the water, and kept there by canoes, until they drowned. They were picked up as they washed ashore. (Krieger 1956). This method would require that deer range very near the shores, and I can vaguely recall an incident where a deer was seen swimming across a body of saltwater. I believe this was near the Flour Bluff area. Deer and javelina tracks were found frequently along the shores of Tule Lake, near Corpus Christi, during the late 1940's and early 1950's. Deer have also been observed close to the bays near Bayside, Texas.

Dyer mentions that the Atakapa of southwestern Louisiana, were using "a few of the globular...oil jugs of the Carancahuas, ...fitted in cane frames," in their canoe voyages (Fitzpatrick 1964). This may indicate some trade was being carried on along the coast by canoe.

In excavations at the Johnson Site (Campbell 1947), the Kent-Crane Site (Campbell 1952), and the Live Oak Point Site (Campbell 1958), it has been demonstrated that numerous adzes and gouges made of shell are present in the Archaic period Aransas Focus, of the Central Texas Coast. These tools are similar to the shell tools which have been observed being used in other areas in the manufacture of dugout canoes. This is an indication, at least, that the manufacture of dugouts on the Texas Coast may have been carried on in Archaic times as well as during the Historic period.

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The Lithic Artifacts of Indians at the Spanish Colonial Missions, San Antonio, Texas

Daniel E. Fox

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