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News

The Meeting for the month of February will be held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Herschel N. Cobb at 3644 Gaspar Drive. The time is 7:45 P. M. and the date is Friday, February 9, 1962. Mr. Cobb will speak on the Caddo Foci near the Bowie County area.

At the February meeting our President Dr. Huff will pass out a little memo on " How to Write a Paper " by Dr. E. Mott Davis, State Archeologist. Your Editor wishes that you would each read this memo and think seriously about writing up for The Record some of your recent or past work on archeological Sites. If your old editor can be of any help, just call on him by phone at Dal-1660 or come by to see him at the address shown above.

At the fall meeting of the Texas Archeological Society it was announced that the Dallas Archeological Society would help the State Society sponsor an excavation near the Dallas area. In the next few weeks Mr. Ed Jelks and Mr. R. K. Harris will meet to make plans for this summer dig. The site will be the Gilbert Site in Rains County.

The Caddo Conference met at the University of Texas in Austin on Friday and Saturday February 2 and 3. Your editor and Mr. W. W. Crook Jr., were invited. As your editor could not attend due to heart attack in December, Bill Crook carried the load for our group. Bill reports a very fine meeting with a real good program. The next meeting of Caddo Conference will be at the University of Arkansas.

ANOTHER MARKER ON THE TRAIL OF THE NORTEÑO:

A Preliminary Report on the Gilbert Site

We are writing this paper to make a preliminary report on a newly discovered historic site located 70 miles east of Dallas in Rains County, Texas, on Lake Fork Creek, a tributary of the Sabine River. This site appears to be another Norteño site. Norteño is a Spanish word meaning "nations of the North". This name was applied to a band of Indians of the Caddo stock which later became known as the Wichita Confederacy. It was composed of nine groups, one of which was the Tawakoni.

The Choctaws gave this Confederacy the name of "Wichita", which describes the dwellings built by these Indians. "Wia Chitoh" are the original words from which Wichita is derived: -- "Wia" meaning brush arbor, and "Chitoh" meaning big, referring to the grass thatched dwellings for which the Wichita peoples have been noted since their discovery. These houses were patterned after Caddo houses of the Neo-American period. They were made from the trunks of trees placed upright in the ground, usually in a circular pattern. The tops were then bent over, tied, thatched with grass and then plastered with mud. This made a structure much like an old-fashioned bee-hive.

In the last two years three or four pieces of metal and several pottery sherds were found by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Aiken and his father and mother, at a site in Rains County. These were sent to the University of Texas where they were identified as gun parts.

Mr. Edward Jelks of the University of Texas asked Mr. Harris to investigate and see if the gun parts came from the historic Pearson Site on Hooker Creek in Rains County where he had assisted the University. However, it was found that the fragments were from a previously undiscovered site.

During the summer and fall of 1961, we made several field trips and made notes from which this paper is written. In this report we also record information from test pits made, with the help of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Aiken and the following members of the Dallas Archaeological Society: Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Cobb, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Harper, Dr. Mark Huff, Mr. Charles Nemeec, Mr. Bobby Vance and Mr. and Mrs. Lester Wilson.

The new village, named the Gilbert Site, is located near the banks of Lake Fork Creek, on a hill about 500 yards southwest of the creek, in a densely wooded area. Trees found in the area include black jack oak, hackberry, water elm, red oak and pin oak. Small underbrush consists of Indian currant, briar bushes, wild dew berries, poison ivy and Cherokee rose, pale pink in color. Among the trees several varieties of grasses

grow. These include: Johnson grass, blue stem grass and Bermuda grass.

Material from tests made indicate that the Indians who occupied this site lived here for several years. Test pits yielded animal bones, shells, flint artifacts, metal gun parts, many small sheet copper fragments, glass trade beads, glass bottle fragments, glass mirror fragments, pottery sherds of vessels and pipes and stone pipes.

ARTIFACTS

Lithic Artifacts.

Flint work from the Gilbert Site consists of the following: arrow points, dart points, scrapers and gun flints.

Arrow Points. The arrow points are of three types: Fresno, Harrell and Maud. Each type measures about 1" long and $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide at the base. These were used for hunting: -- everything from birds to bison.

Dart Points. Small Gary dart points appear in one or two portions of the site.

Scrapers. The scrapers vary in sizes from small to large, ranging from $\frac{3}{4}$ " to $2\frac{1}{2}$ " in length and about $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. These are end and side scrapers in type.

Gun Flints. The gun flints are of both native and European manufacture. These measure about 1" to $\frac{3}{4}$ " square, and $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick. They were used by the Indians in flintlock rifles.

Materials from which the lithic artifacts were made consist mainly of Central Texas types of flint, and Kay County, Oklahoma flint. The last mentioned flint is found in Kay County, Oklahoma near the Arkansas River where the Indians were contacted by the French Explorer Bernard de La Harpe in the fall of 1719.

Metal Artifacts.

Copper-Brass. Gun parts of brass, hawk bells of copper, tinklers of copper, fragments of copper kettles, rivets of copper and several fragments of sheet copper were found in the tests. In two house areas, small thin strips of copper were found. These proved to be blanks for rolled sheet-copper beads and rivets.

Iron. Gun parts of iron were found in the tests. Two awl-like artifacts of iron were also found on one house floor. One of these may have been used as a punch. The other was a screwdriver-like tool, probably used to repair guns.

Glass Artifacts.

Beads. The earth from the test pits was brought home and washed through fine screens. Several hundred glass trade beads were recovered. These were of the following colors: white, sky-blue, red, black, clear and green. The source of these beads was probably the old French Trading Post at Natchitoches, near the present day Natchitoches, Louisiana. Documents of 1770 show that the Indians exchanged their deer and bison hides for glass beads, measured by the pound, in colors of sky-blue, white and black.

Mirror

Fragments. Test pits produced several glass mirror fragments, some of which had been chipped by the Indians. Evidently they had been chipped in an attempt to make projectile points. Records of the French Trading Post at Natchitoches also mention mirrors as trade items.

Wine Bottle

Fragments. The test pits yielded several fragments of French wine bottles. These ranged in color from light green to a brownish olive-green.

Pottery Artifacts.

Test pits in the midden exposed many pottery sherds, several being of a type called Womack engraved, a diagnostic type of the Norteño Focus. See Fig. 1, Page 9.

Bone Artifacts.

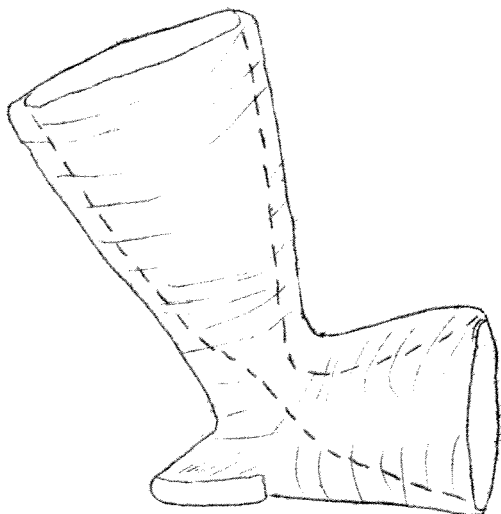
One bone awl and two flaking tools made of a heavy bison bone were found on one house floor. Several small fragments of bone tools which could not be identified were also found.

Plate I., Page 5 shows chipped artifacts, and one pipe of white stone from house floor No. 1.

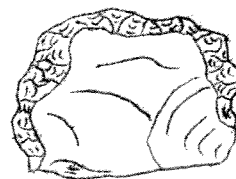
Plate II., Page 6 shows gun parts of iron and brass from the Gilbert Site, most of which came from the floor of House No. 1.

FOOD EVIDENCE

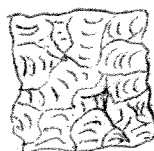
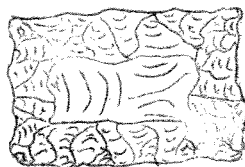
Bones and shells indicate the Indians lived on a diet which included deer, bison, small rodents, terrapin and fresh water mussel.



A
Pipe of White Stone



B
French Gunspalls



C
Native made Gun Flints



D
Arrow Point Types



E
Small Gary Dart Point



Small



F
Medium



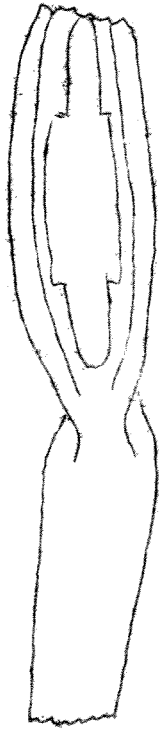
Large

End Scrapers



G
Side Scraper

Plate I
Ra. 3 Gilbert Site
Various Artifacts
Scale - Full Size



A

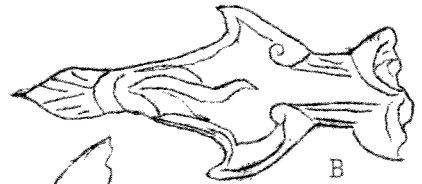


Trigger Guard Fragments

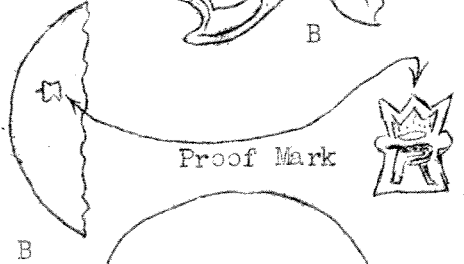
A and B - Brass



B

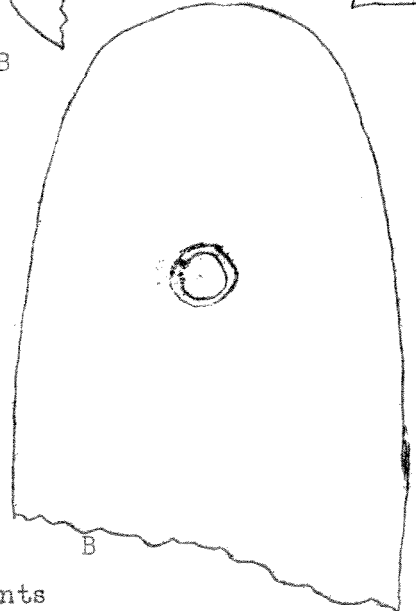


B



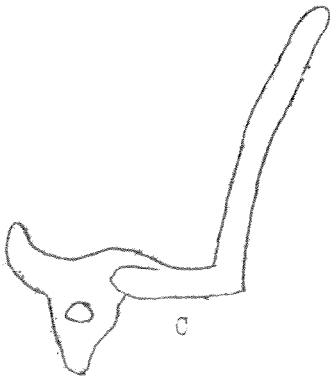
Proof Mark

B



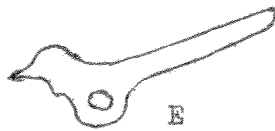
B

Butt Plate Fragments



C

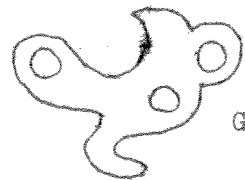
Frizzen
(side view)



E

Sear (side view)

C, D, E, F & G - Iron



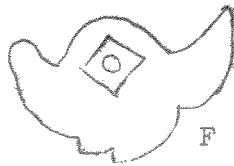
G

Tumbler Bridle
(side view)



D

Spring Fragment
(side view)



F

Tumbler
(side view)

Plate II
Ra. 3 Gilbert Site
Gun Parts - Iron &
Brass
Scale - Full Size

CONCLUSIONS

In 1759 French traders visited a site of the Tawakoni and Yscani located on a tributary of the Sabine River, in the present Rains County, Texas, and records show that in 1760 Father Joseph Calahorra from Necogdoches made a trip to the Sabine River. From his description of the site, he probably visited the site on the Pearson farm, now under the waters of Lake Tawakoni. He left a good description of the Indians, after staying with them some two weeks. He stated that these Indians were well developed physically, were industrious in their gardens and that they were breeders of fine horses. It is possible that the Tawakoni Indians did not show Father Calahorra their main village in 1760, as the occupation at the Gilbert Site is heavier than that at the Pearson Site. Indians were sometimes noted for evasive action such as this.

Another possibility is that when Father Calahorra made his second trip to the Sabine River in 1761, he did not visit the same site as in 1760. However, inasmuch as he did not leave a good description of the second trip, this possibility will have to remain rather vague at the present.

The beads, gun parts, pottery and lithic artifacts from the Gilbert Site are very similar to those from the Pearson Site. One of the frizzens found is from a Spanish military rifle.

At present the Gilbert Site is in the preliminary stages of being developed. The artifacts are very similar to those found nearby at the historic Pearson Site in Rains County. They also resemble artifacts found at the Womack Site in Lamar County and the Spanish Fort Site in Montague County.

Therefore, with the present facts known, the Gilbert Site appears to be another village on the trail of the Norteños.

January 22, 1962
9024 San Fernando Way
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R. K. Harris
Inus Marie Harris

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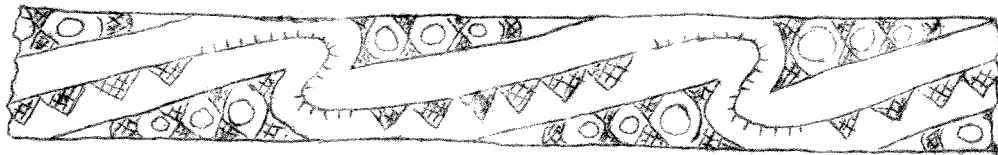


Figure 1 New type of Womack Engraved

On page 37 of the Pearson Site report (Duffield and Jelks, 1961), they show 3 different designs found on Womack Engraved pottery. Of these 3 designs, design "a" is found at the Gilbert Site. The design shown above is a new variety for Norteño Sites. The vessel form, paste and temper places this vessel in the type Womack Engraved.