

SOUTHWESTERN POTTERY FROM SITES IN THE VICINITY
OF SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

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In 1957 the senior author, who for years has been accumulating data on archeological sites near San Antonio, sent 16 potsherds to The University of Texas for identification. As very few of the sherds were clearly of local origin, and several were obviously from the Southwest, the junior author forwarded the potsherds to Mr. Stanley Stubbs, Laboratory of Anthropology, Santa Fe., New Mexico. In a letter dated August 15, 1957, Stubbs reported that four of the sherds are unmistakably Southwestern and are from vessels made in the central part of western New Mexico and adjoining portion of Arizona. He also reported that two additional sherds might be of Southwestern origin.

The 16 potsherds were collected from the surface of sites in or near the city of San Antonio. These sites have yielded artifacts referable to the Edwards Plateau Aspect and/or the Central Texas Aspect. Sherds from four of these sites are briefly described and identified below.

(1) Site in San Pedro Park, San Antonio. This park, a rectangular tract of 46 acres, is located about one mile north of the downtown business district. In the northwestern section of the park is an oval midden area having a maximum length of about 400 feet. Three potsherds were collected from the eroded surface of this site during the period of 1930-31. Later, in 1933-34, the midden was extensively damaged by a municipal drainage project, and since then soil from other areas has been dumped on the midden. Of the three potsherds collected here, two represent an unidentified red ware with fiber temper and imperfectly polished surfaces (tool marks observable). The third specimen is definitely of Southwestern origin, a fragment of Tularosa Black-on-white pottery with sherd temper.

(2) Site in Olmos Park, San Antonio. In this large park reservation (over 1,000 acres), which is located in the northern part of the city, are seven separate localities that show evidences of prehistoric occupation. During the years 1923-24, and before the park was established, four Southwestern potsherds were collected from the surface at two of these localities. Both localities are on the western side of Olmos Creek and in the immediate vicinity of Olmos Dam, a large structure built for temporarily retaining flood waters. One locality is north of the dam, the other south, the distance between the two being about 900 feet. Each of the four sherds collected represents a different type of Southwestern pottery. These are: Reserve Black-on-white, Tularosa Black-on-white, Los Lunas Smudged, and a sherd of ribbed coil ware with sand temper which Stubbs thinks is related to Los Lunas Smudged.

(3) Site near Dripping Springs, Bandera County, northwest of San Antonio. One sherd from this site is plain red ware with bone temper, apparently Leon Plain (Central Texas Aspect). A second sherd is a polished, plain brown ware with sandstone and schist temper which Stubbs thinks could be a Southwestern brown ware of the Mogollon series. Similar brown ware, with slightly different temper, is distributed from the Verde Valley of Arizona eastward to the Big Bend region of western Texas.

(4) Site near Caña Verde, Willson County. One sherd from this site is similar to the brown ware sherd from Dripping Springs reported above.

Of special interest are the four sherds representing Reserve Black-on-white, Tularosa Black-on-white, and Los Lunas Smudged. In terms of the Anasazi sequence, these are usually referred to Pueblo II and III. Tularosa developed from Reserve Black-on-white, and both were made in the Reserve area of western New Mexico and adjoining eastern Arizona. Los Lunas Smudged was made in the territory lying between Los Lunas and Acoma, New Mexico. Both Tularosa Black-on-white sherds are tempered with crushed potsherds and, according to Stubbs, are a late variety dated at about A. D. 1300. It will be noted that Tularosa Black-on-white pottery

was collected from two different sites in San Antonio. These sites are both in the northern section of the city but are separated by a distance of about 2.6 miles.

As the most positively identified Southwestern sherds were found in a large city, it is possible that they were discarded prior to 1931 by one or more individuals who had previously collected potsherds during a trip to the Southwest. It is also possible that these sherds were transported to the vicinity of San Antonio in prehistoric times. Southwestern potsherds have been found elsewhere in Texas at equally great distances from the Southwest. For example, Stephenson (Bull. Tex. Arch. and Pal. Soc., Vol. 20, 1959: 28) reports a sherd of Tonto Polychrome, a Pueblo IV type, from the rearsall site north of Dallas, and Krieger (U. Tex. Pub., No. 4640, 1946: Plate 6) illustrates a sherd of Chupadero Black-on-white, several Puebloan corrugated sherds, and a sherd of Mogollon brown ware--all from sites in the Caddoan area of northeastern Texas. Some of Krieger's sherds are from sites of the Titus Focus, which is dated at A. D. 1200-1500. The intrusive Southwestern sherds fall within the same time range. In northeastern Texas Hayner (Bull. Tex. Arch. Soc., Vol. 26, 1955) collected what is believed to be a sherd of Mogollon grown ware from central Arizona, but the site otherwise yielded only Archaic materials. Campbell (Bull. Tex. Arch. Soc., Vol. 27, 1956: 41) reports a sherd of Carretas Polychrome from an Aransas/Rockport site near Corpus Christi. This sherd is from northern Chihuahua and is dated A. D. 1300-1400.

The difficulty with all of these extreme eastern occurrences of Southwestern pottery is that they are surface finds. We are not prepared to reject the Southwestern sherds from San Antonio as modern tourist imports or to accept them as clear evidence of prehistoric contacts between two relatively distant areas. At this time we merely report additional occurrences of Southwestern potsherds in the eastern half of Texas. Until such specimens are found in place in excavated sites, their status will remain in doubt.

CRITIQUE OF MAGGOWAN'S EARLY MAN IN THE NEW WORLD

By Cyrus N. Ray, D. O., Abilene

[Editor's note: a synopsis of this paper appeared in the last issue of the Newsletter]

Early Man in the New World, by Kenneth Macgowan (Macmillan, 1950), has a long list of evidences of early man in America, and in the main these seem to be valid, and the reasoning is fairly good in most cases. The book has 260 pages of text, it is 5-3/4 by 8-1/2 inches in size with many illustrations. We believe that this book could have been a valuable source of information for the amateur had its editor exercised more discretion in screening certain erroneous statements, and incorrect indentifications of the fossils shown.

Dr. Wormington, who the author quotes as an authority on the Abilene region, never has been there as far as we know; neither, to our knowledge, has Gladwin. If one is unwilling to accept the descriptions of a person who had spent many years working out the solutions, and instead one uses the opinions of visitors who spent about three or four days hastily going over them then there is likely to be confusion. The erroneous conclusions of Drs. Antevs, Howard, and M. M. Leighton were due to their too-hasty examinations of the Abilene sites which lasted only a few days in 1934. Macgowan seems to think that I should have agreed with their incorrect guesses as to the age of my sites. Since I had studied the sites for years, and they for about three days, it does not seem reasonable. When did it become desirable that all scientific workers would be moulded to the same pattern?

Gladwin quotes Dr. Wormington as follows: "The only way to approach publications dealing with the archeology of this region is with a large bottle of aspirin in either hand." By correcting her grammar we assume that she meant in each hand,