

Clovis Points from Blanco, Coryell and Williamson Counties, Central Texas

David L. Calame, Sr.

ABSTRACT

Three Clovis points, from Blanco, Coryell and Williamson counties are documented, illustrated and discussed. Detailed illustrations are provided for each specimen.

INTRODUCTION

As a result of conversations with several artifact collectors, I was able to study three Clovis points from Central Texas. One specimen each came from Blanco, Coryell, and Williamson Counties (see Figure 1).

These artifacts are described in this paper. The illustrations provided here were done by Richard McReynolds of San Antonio, Texas.

Specimen # 1 Blanco County (Figure 2)

A fragmentary Clovis point was surface collected from site 41BC152. The site is on an eroded terrace on the south side of North Grape Creek, with thin soils to bare rock, and a previously deflated, light lithic scatter. No other time-diagnostic artifacts were found at this site. A burned rock midden exists due north of and across North Grape Creek from 41BC152, but the finder did not have time to further investigate this midden.

Attributes of this Clovis point are listed in Table 1 below. This fragmentary Clovis point is made of slightly coarse-grained, gray Edwards chert. The point is thinned at the base by a single, short flute on the reverse side, which terminated in a hinge. Lateral edges and the basal concavity are heavily ground. As can be seen in Fig. 2, this specimen's lateral edges flare outward strongly at the base. Grinding on the both lateral edges extends to the fracture, suggesting the fracture occurred within the hafted area of the point. The fracture itself appears to have occurred by



Figure 1. Locations of Clovis Points Reported in this Paper. 1, Blanco County, 2, Coryell County; 3, Williamson County.

pressure being applied to the obverse face. That face exhibits remnants of three large percussion flakes, while the reverse, two large percussion flakes. Examinations under a UV light produced a yellow-orange response, which is well within responses expected from Edwards cherts.

Specimen #2 Coryell County (Figures 3, 4)

A fragmentary Clovis point was uncovered underneath a large roof spall in a rockshelter at the Chrisner's pay dig site. A small portion of the

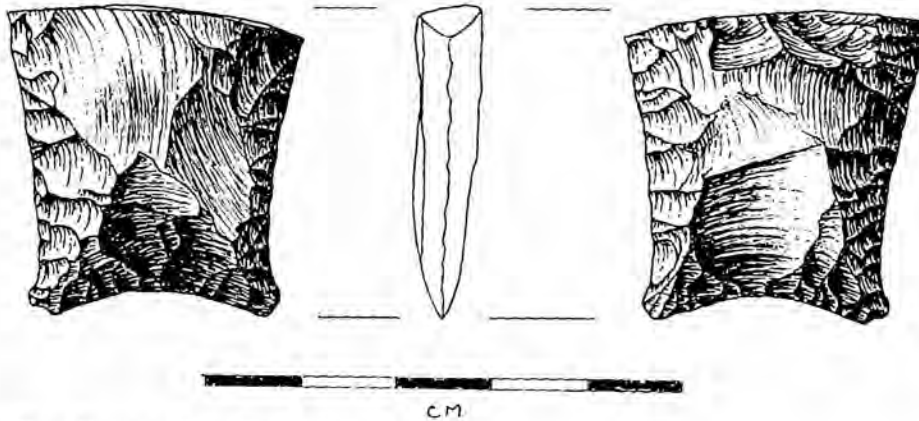


Figure 2. Clovis Point Fragment from Blanco County, Texas.

midsection of this point is missing, and fractures surfaces within the missing section are of a much lighter shade than the rest of the artifact, and appear very fresh in observation under natural light and under UV light. So it is possible the point was broken either by digging tools or by the removal of the roof spall itself. It seems quite apparent this point was not fractured in antiquity. This specimen fluoresced a classic Edwards chert "pumpkin orange" under the UV light analysis. The specimen exhibits very smooth surfaces even on flake ridges, which is reminiscent of stream rolling. It is possible that this artifact spent some amount of time in the river before being transported into this rockshelter, perhaps by folks during a time period later than Clovis.

The basal area of this specimen is very uncharacteristic of Clovis projectile points in that it is convex rather than concave. It has obviously been reworked after fluting had been accomplished, however, the reworked area appears just as smoothed and buffed as the rest of the artifact, suggesting the reworking occurred long ago, and the area of reworking has endure the same processes of smoothing and buffing that the rest of the point has been subjected too. Pressure flaking of the basal area appears to have produced a slight rectangular stem. Whether this was intentional or not is unclear. What is clear is that re-workings have obliterated the origins of the flutes themselves. The obverse base was thinned by a single flute, while the reverse appears to have been fluted twice.

Lateral edges on this specimen are heavily ground, and the obverse face exhibits remnants of four

percussion flakes. The reverse face exhibits remnants of four percussion flakes as well. The distal tip has been blunted slightly, and appears to exhibit a much heavier sheen than the rest of the artifact and maybe evidence of use wear. Attributes of this artifact are found in Table 1.

Based on the author's experience in flintknapping and observing breakage patterns on bifaces, he does not think this is a manufacturing failure. However, a

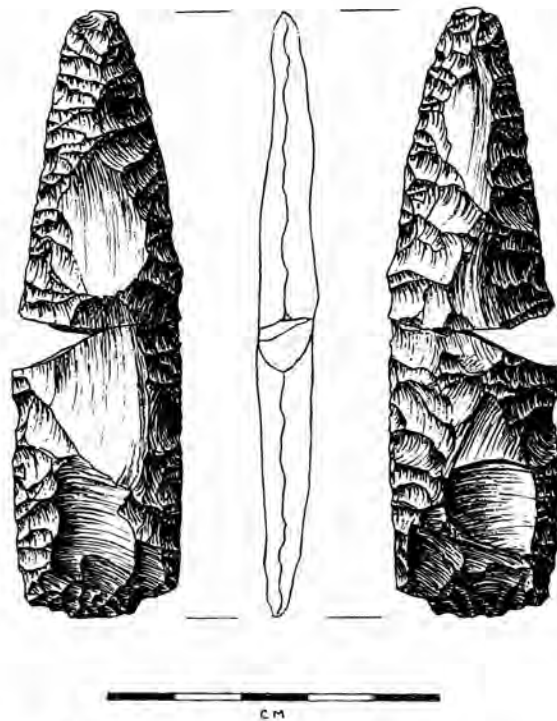


Figure 3. Clovis Point from Coryell County, Texas.

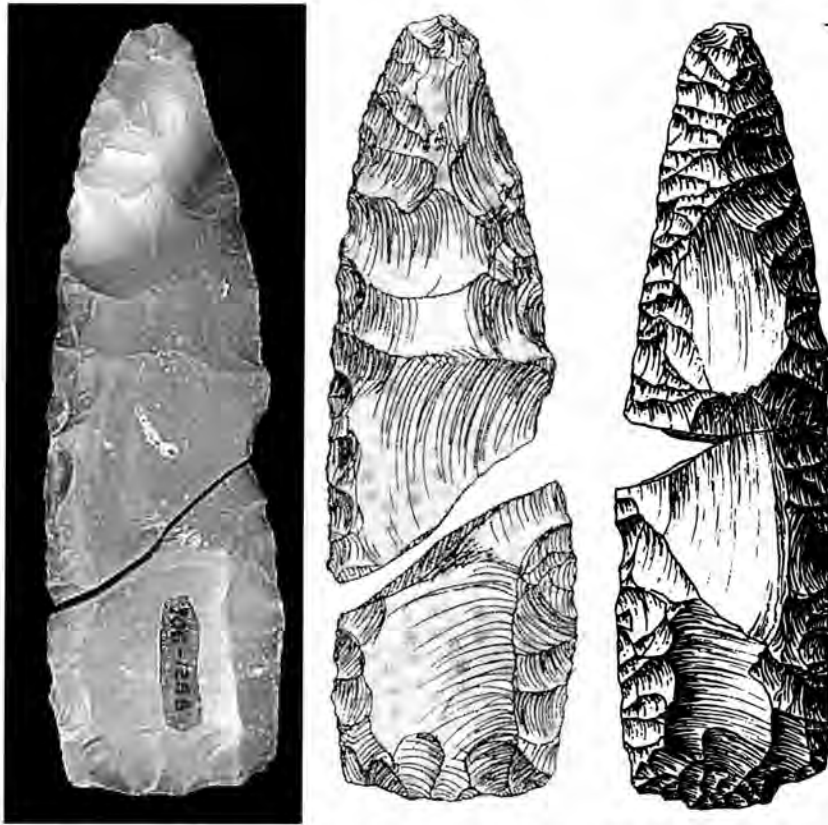


Figure 4. Comparison of Clovis Preform from Kincaid Rockshelter with Coryell County Clovis Point. The two images on the left are from Kincaid Rockshelter (photograph adapted from *Texas Beyond History*, and the drawing is from Collins 2004, Fig. 3-11a). Sizes are approximate.

Clovis perform from Kincaid Rockshelter (Collins 2004:Fig. 3-11,a) has some striking similarities to the Coryell County artifact (see Figure 4). The Kincaid specimen is larger, with a clear manufacturing break. However, the Coryell specimen retains some features (flake patterns and basal edge shape) found on the Kincaid perform.

Specimen #3 Williamson Co.
(Figure 5)

This is a complete Clovis point made on moderately patinated, high quality, tan Edwards chert. This artifact was discovered during non-scientific excavation of a burned rock midden. It is said to have been found in loose association with Nolan points, within the midden itself. The site is 41WM690. The site, originally recorded by Prewitt and Associates in 1985, is described as “a large burned rock midden” along the banks of Cowan Creek, just upstream from it’s

confluence with the Berry Creek. The site was known to local collectors as one of the “richest sites” in the area, referring to the incredible amounts of artifacts found there. In addition, the site has also produced as many as four Late Prehistoric burials.

The site is situated near a strong spring, which feeds Cowan Creek and sits in the amidst abundant lithic resources. The site was investigated again in 1998 by Horizon Environmental Services, who did a site update and testing ahead of the development of the Sun City project.

The most noteworthy attribute on this complete Clovis specimen is an impressive impact fracture that originated at the distal tip on side 2 of the specimen, then rolled over and took off the left lateral edge. The impact fracture terminated in a hinge within the hafting area. Most likely, the hinge occurred as a result of the surface pressure being applied to the lateral edge by the hafting itself. This impact fracture may have caused the hafting to loosen, and the point may have

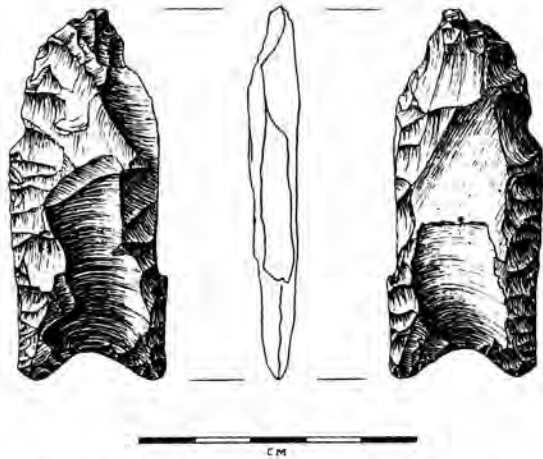


Figure 5. Clovis Point from Williamson County, Texas.

then been discarded, even though the point was not fully exhausted. This is a phenomenon not unexpected in a chert rich area, where, once the hafting has failed, mounting a fresh point would not jeopardize material conservation as it would in regions where lithic sources might be scarce. This specimen fluoresced pumpkin-orange as would be expected of Edwards formation cherts.

The impact fracture itself has been obliterated by reworking 10.76 mm below the distal tip, apparently for the purpose of using the discarded point in some sort of expedient tool, possibly in scraping activities. The reworked edge, however, is patinated in the same manner as the rest of the point, so the re-use

Table 1. Measurements for Clovis Points from Blanco, Coryell and Williamson Counties.
All measurements are in centimeters.

Specimen	1	2	3
County	Blanco	Coryell	Williamson
Material	Edwards	Edwards	Edwards
Max. Length	3.31	9.25	6.74
Max. Width	3.09	2.56	2.74
Basal Width	2.58	2.41	2.62
Base to Max. Width	3.31	3.92	1.77
Max. Thickness	0.743	0.921	0.908
Base to Max. Thickness	3.31	5.52	4.78
Max. Flute Thickness	0.564	0.63	6.67
Basal Concavity	0.285	Reworked	0.637
Obverse Flute Length	None	2.39	3.23
Obverse Flute Width	None	1.31	1.9
Reverse Flute Length	1.61	2.45	2.16
Reverse Flute Width	1.5	1.27	1.65
No. Flutes Obverse	0	1	2
No. Flutes Reverse	1	2	1
Grinding Length Left	3.28	2.17	3.05
Grinding Length Right	2.99	2.34	1.9
Basal Grinding	Yes	Reworked	Yes
Fracture Type	Bending	Complete	Impacted
Patinated	Slight	No	Yes

of this point as a tool occurred before or early in the patination process.

Lateral and basal edges of this specimen, where present, are heavily ground in the hafting area. One face retains remnants of four percussion flakes, while the reverse face retains remnants of three percussion flakes. The basal concavity of the reverse retains the negative bulb from removal of a fluting flake. The fluting flake scar on the other is very erratic. This base is thinned by two flutings, while the reverse base was thinned by a single flute. Attributes of this artifact can be found in Table 1.

DISCUSSION

This paper reports fluted Clovis points and their metric attributes from central Texas. These artifacts attributes add to the growing database on Texas fluted Clovis points and also to their distribution. All three artifacts described in this brief paper have been reported to the Texas Fluted Clovis Point Survey, continuing to be compiled by David Meltzer of Southern Methodist University (see Bever and Meltzer 2007).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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