

THE EUFAULA LAKE PROJECT,
A CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

Gregory Perino and Jerry Caffey

Sections by:

Mary Elizabeth Good

Marshall Gettys

Paul W. Parmalee

Abridged

Gregory Perino and Jerry Caffey, Museum of the Red River, Idabel, Oklahoma
Mary Elizabeth Good, Tulsa, Oklahoma
Marshall Gettys, Fort Towson Historical Site, Fort Towson, Oklahoma
Paul W. Parmalee, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee

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AN HISTORIC TRASH PIT AND CEMETERY ON EUFAULA LAKE

Marshall Gettys

Introduction

During the course of an archaeological survey of Eufaula Reservoir under Corps of Engineers contract DACW56-79-C-0254, a large historic trash pit was discovered beginning to erode from the bank of the reservoir along a portion of Gaines Creek. Although the survey was originally intended to deal with surface material, special permission was obtained to excavate the pit; it was excavated by Gregory Perino, principal investigator for the project and his assistant, Jerry Caffey.

Near the pit was a cemetery that had been disturbed at some time in the past, disturbed by the Corps of Engineers. Material from this area was collected and bagged at the same time the excavation of the pit was undertaken. This was done in the belief that the cemetery and the trash pit were possibly related to the same family. Both the trash pit and the cemetery were assigned the single site number PS-212. All recovered material was processed at the Museum of the Red River, after which the author contracted to provide description and analysis of the artifacts.

Material from the two areas has been described in separate sections, each with its own discussion and conclusions. Although there is some overlap in artifact classes described for each area, it was felt that dividing the two provenience units would eliminate the need for charts or other types of provenience statements. In general, comments (such as intersite comparisons) concerning specific artifact classes have been made in the descriptive section dealing with the trash pit. However, there were several cases in which material found in the cemetery area was not found in the trash pit, and in these cases the comments for the specific artifact classes will be found in the cemetery section. A general concluding statement follows these two sections.

Archaeological Background

Creek archaeology in Oklahoma has been conducted at only a few sites, largely in association with the construction of reservoirs or roads. The Longtown Creek site (Proctor 1953) was excavated as the result of the construction of Eufaula Reservoir. Although the site was recommended for excavation because of the presence of a prehistoric component, the Creek occupation here is one of the better reported ones in the literature.

No features were recorded at the site. However, there was a significant amount of historic Creek pottery which merits some discussion. McIntosh is the basic named pottery type of the historic Creeks in Oklahoma. A more detailed description of the type is provided under the artifact descriptions, but it should be noted here that the type commonly occurs in two varieties with identical paste and temper, differing only in surface treatment, one being roughened and the other being smoothed. At the Longtown Creek site a third and uncommon type was found. Seventeen of the 139 sherds recovered are red slipped, but in all other ways are the same as the other historic aboriginal sherds (Proctor 1953:47).

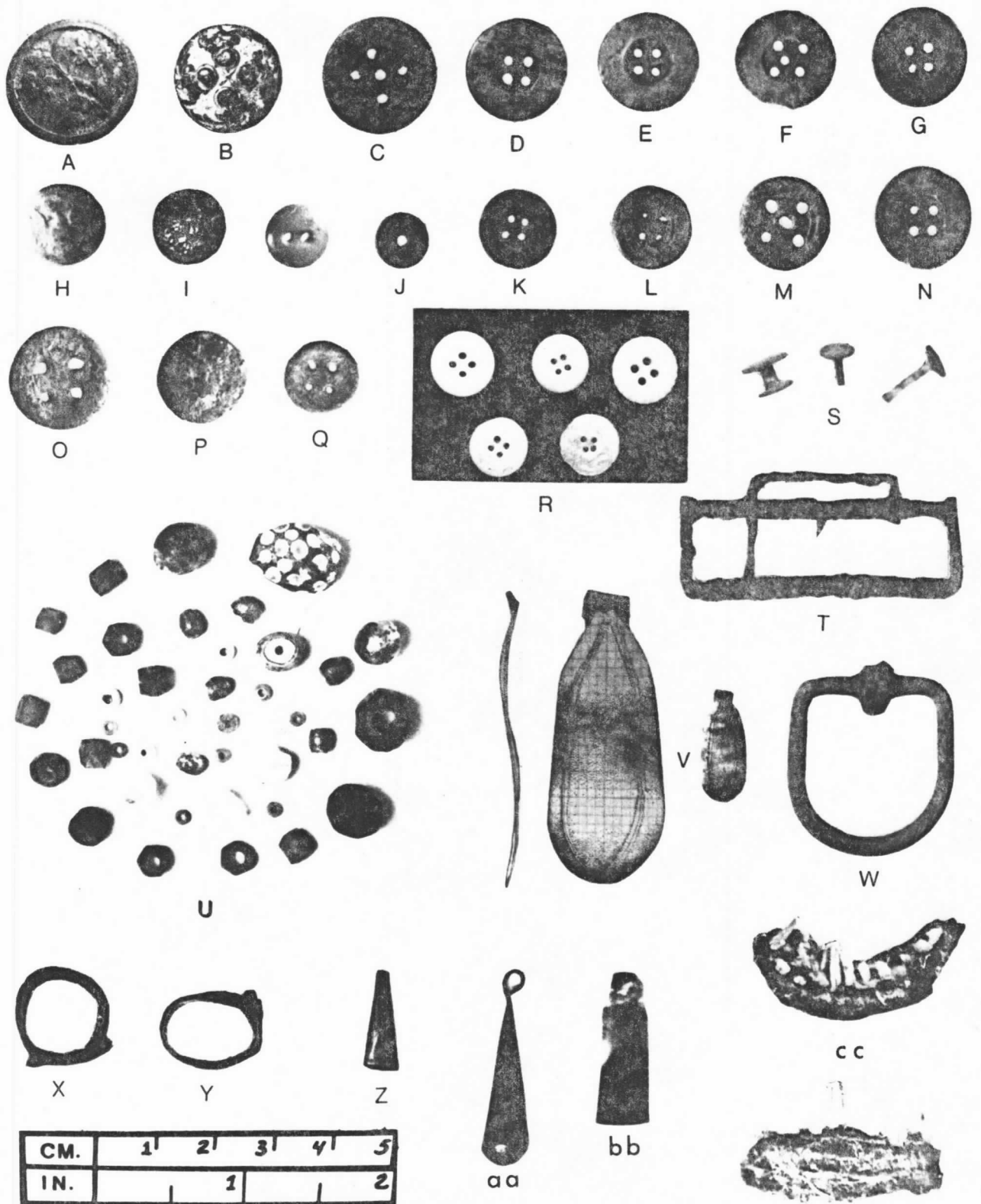


Figure 76. A-B) Metal buttons; C-G) bone buttons; H-I) uniform buttons; J-N) bone buttons; O) pewter button; P) uniform button; Q) pewter button; R) glass buttons, upper row; shell buttons, lower row; S) garment rivets; T) suspender buckle; U) trade beads; V) decorative silver; W) "D" buckle; X-Y) finger rings; Z-AA) decorative silver; BB) polished stone; CC) shoe heel; glass button, unmarked.

of leather materials. Curvature is the attribute used to assign the fragments to a heel rather than to some other portion of the shoe.

Finger rings (Figures 76X-Y)

Number of specimens: 2

The specimens differ radically in condition, with one having very little corrosion and the other being virtually corroded away. The better preserved specimen consists of a small brass rod that had been flattened and then bent to form the ring.

The second specimen is also of brass, but is more slender and badly corroded. This specimen appears to be more sophisticated, possibly of commercial manufacture. Like the better preserved specimen, this one consists of a brass rod or wire bent to form the ring. Unlike the first specimen, there is no overlap to allow for sizing, but rather this specimen has enlarged areas at the point where the ends meet.

diameter: 1.30 cm (2 specimens)

Decorative silver (Figures 76V, Z, AA)

Number of specimens: 3

Two of the specimens have the same teardrop form. The complete specimen is a carefully made hollow teardrop formed by a conical shape with a rounded piece soldered on the open end to form a teardrop and a wire loop on top. The second specimen is similar in construction, with a portion of the wire attachment loop remaining but broken off level to the top of the cone. The wire loop on the broken specimen is of ferric metal.

The third specimen is an elongated oval of silver with a brass loop soldered on the rear to form a pendant. Three rows of fine engraving are visible along the edge of the piece on one side; they appear to have been created by a single tool, possibly with a rocking motion.

length of complete teardrop: 2.94 cm (less wire loop)

length of silver oval: 1.77 cm

Trade beads (Figure 76U)

Number of specimens: 40

Most of the bead types found have been described in other publications from sites both in and out of Oklahoma. This report will lean heavily on Good's (1972) work at the Guebert site where, with two exceptions, beads similar to those found have been recovered and described. Numbers of types refer to Good's (1972:105-129) bead descriptions. Length and ranges are measured from end to end along the axis of the hole.

Type 10: 2 specimens. These are translucent, dark blue faceted beads with 20 and 22 facets respectively. They measure .74 cm and .77 cm respectively.

Type 11: 6 specimens. These beads have two layers, with the inside being a pale opaque blue and the faceted exterior, a translucent blue. They are faceted in a manner similar to type 10 but with fewer facets, and they range in length from .41 to .53 cm.

Type 14: 5 specimens. These are similar to type 11 but lack the two layers of glass and are somewhat darker. None appear to be moulded. The beads measure

from .30 to .53 cm.

Type 21: 2 specimens. These two beads resemble type 10 except that they are colorless. They have 18 facets each and measure .58 and .77 cm respectively.

Type 23: 1 specimen. This deep magenta bead does not appear to be moulded, but rather is a mandrel-wound, pressed faceted bead. There are more than 21 facets on the specimen which measures .62 cm.

Type 54: 1 specimen. This bead has been assigned to type 54 in spite of the fact that it appears somewhat more opaque than those pictured by Good (1972: Color Plate 4). It is believed that the opacity is largely from weathering and was not an attribute of the original specimen. The bead is round and measures .74 cm.

Type 62: 7 specimens. These pale blue, small beads are of relatively consistent size with the exception of one which is somewhat larger. The large specimen measures .28 cm while the range on the small specimens is from .17 to .21 cm.

Type 107: 4 specimens. These beads are badly weathered, but the two layers (the white inner layer and the thin, clear outer layer) are clearly visible on three specimens and show on portions of the fourth. The specimens measure .23 to .33 cm.

Type 129: 2 specimens. These two brick red beads are wound and there is no evidence that there was more than one color of glass used in the bead, as was the case with some of this type noted by Good. The beads measure .76 and .96 cm.

Type 130: 1 specimen. This badly weathered specimen has the white interior and red exterior found in the type. The specimen measures .19 cm.

Type 131: 1 specimen. This compound bead consists of a white inner layer and a red outer layer. It is olive-shaped and measures .60 cm.

Three types of beads were recovered that are not described by Good. The first type includes six red barrel-shaped beads. They are made of one layer of red glass and appear to be of wound construction. The specimens measure .44 to .51 cm.

One aqua bead was recovered. This round specimen is constructed from a single color of glass and does not appear to be of wound construction. The specimen measures .45 cm.

The last specimen is a complex bead consisting of a reddish or purple base into which has been set small complex dots of other glass colors. These dots consist of a red or green core set into a white border with the entire color dot then set into the bead. It is shaped like a flattened football with blunted ends. There are thirty-nine color dots, the arrangement of which is roughly linear, parallel to the long axis.

length: 1.63 cm

Polished stone (Figure 76BB)

Number of specimens: 1

This is a cross sectional fragment of polished stone of unknown function.