

# HISTORIC ARTIFACTS FROM THE PLAINS OF TEXAS

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The Historic stage includes all remains associated with objects of European, American and Spanish origin such as metal, glass beads, guns, and items that came from the Anglo-American.

Historic sites are very scant on the plains of Texas and are almost barren of camp debris. Stone circles or "tipi rings" have been found, but it seems as a general rule the nomadic hunters of the Historic period left extremely few artifacts or burials in one place. However, we do find a few metal projectile points, glass trade beads, cartridge shells, and military buttons at random on a few sites. These relics must be considered more scarce than the usual amount of Neo-American and Archaic material that is found.

A Historic burial has been excavated south of Crosbyton, Texas, with glass trade beads, a whelk shell, elk tooth pendants, a brass buckle, cinch, and an iron axe. This Comanche cave burial was dated a few years after 1790. There have been about half a dozen other Historical burials excavated in this area of Texas with about the same type of artifacts associated.

In Figure 16 are some glass trade beads from Europe, musket balls, a bell tinkler, four metal projectile points, one spear or knife blade, two military buttons and European tubular bone beads.

The long spear or knife blade was made from a file; the ridges can still be seen. This particular relic was probably made

by the Indians after they had obtained possession of the file from the white man.

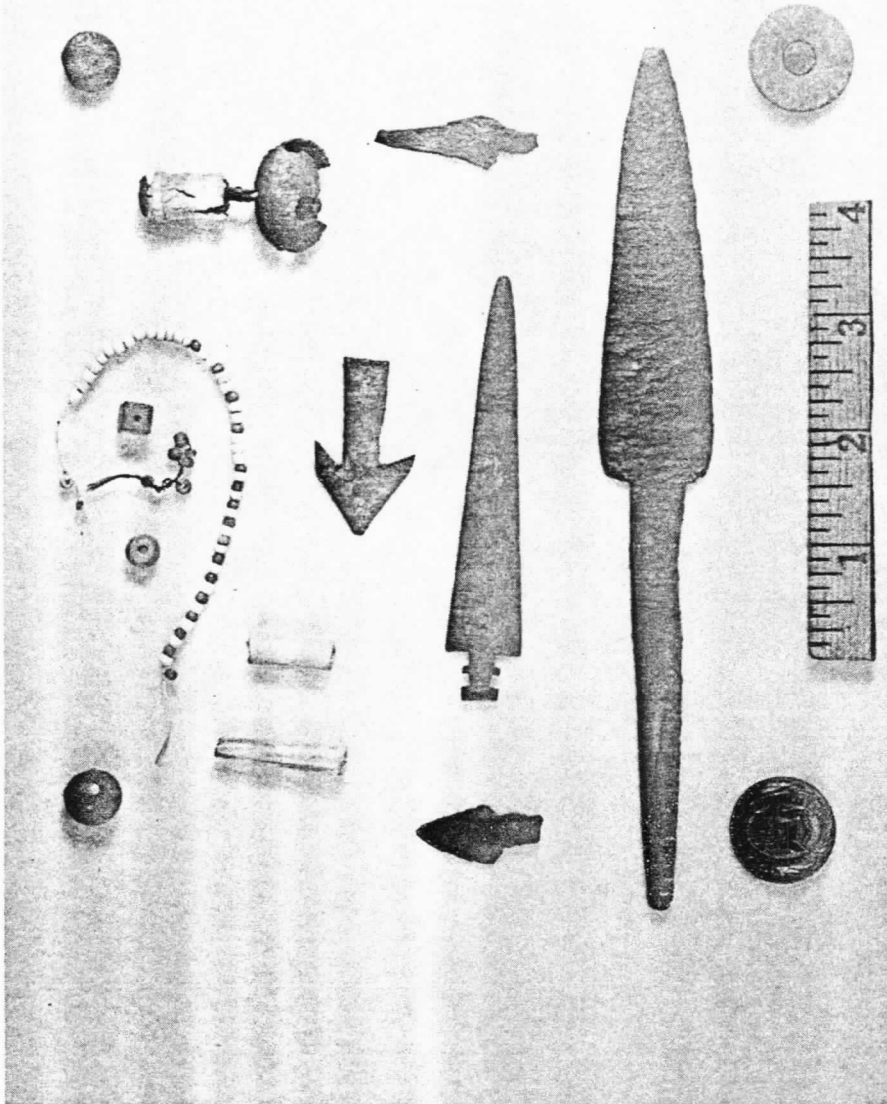
The long iron projectile point with the notches at the base is a possible Comanchero trade point. The writer found this metal point on the L 7 Ranch in Crosby County, Texas, on a probable late Comanche site. The Comancheros were doing a lot of trading with the Comanches in the 1850's in this area of Texas.

The square or cube blue glass trade bead is a different variety for the plains of Texas. We have uncovered several hundred small round glass trade beads, but only one cube bead to my knowledge. The English people were making a cube bead during the Historic period, so perhaps this bead was originally made in England. I found this faded blue square bead on a surface site where both Historic and Neo-American artifacts are recovered.

The Historic Indians used almost any type of metal they could acquire from the Anglo-American to make their tools and weapons. One of the most frequent iron materials used was the barrel hoops used to hold the wood staves of the barrel together. The nomadic Plains Indians made projectile points, spears, and knives from these iron hoops. A collector from Garza County, Texas, found a large spear or knife made from a door hinge. The pugnacious Indians of the Plains were certainly using many different types of metal to accommodate their needs during the Historic period. □

## REFERENCES

- Erikson, Joan, *The Universal Bead*. 1969.  
Parsons, Mark, *Archaeological Investigations in Crosby and Dickens Counties, Texas*. 1967.  
Sleen, Van der, *A Handbook on Beads*.



**Figure 16**

Historic artifacts, probably Comanche, found on the plains of Texas by Wayne Parker, Crosby County Museum Association, Crosby County, Texas.