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The Garvis Anglin Site (41HP253): A Woodland Period Site on Stouts Creek, Hopkins County, Texas

Lee Green

Introduction

The Garvis Anglin site (41HP253) was first brought to my attention in the spring of 2003 by the landowner Mr. Garvis Anglin. Mr. Anglin reported “flint chips” on the surface after having plowed the ground for the purpose of planting a food plot for deer. In June 2003, at Mr. Anglin’s request, uncontrolled excavations began at the site and continued sporadically throughout the summer. Large quantities of lithic debris and stone tools were recovered along with a small quantity of ceramic artifacts. Ceramics from the site included only four sherds and one small, but complete, utility ware jar. The site was formally recorded in June 2015. This article represents my attempt to mitigate the loss and destruction of the Garvis Anglin site.

Setting

The site is situated on a toe slope projecting into the floodplain of Stouts Creek (Figure 1) in eastern Hopkins County, Texas. This part of Hopkins County lies within the biotic zone known as the Post Oak Savannah. The Blackland Prairie lies approximately 20 km to the north and west while the area known as the Pineywoods lies approximately the same distance to the south and east. The low knoll is comprised of a yellowish-brown sandy loam that overlies a yellowish-red sandy clay. The depth of the sandy loam decreases on the east and southern portions of the knoll, which is bordered by the lower-lying floodplain of the modern-day channel of Stouts Creek. Stouts Creek flows northward to its confluence with White Oak Bayou, a tributary of the Sulphur River.

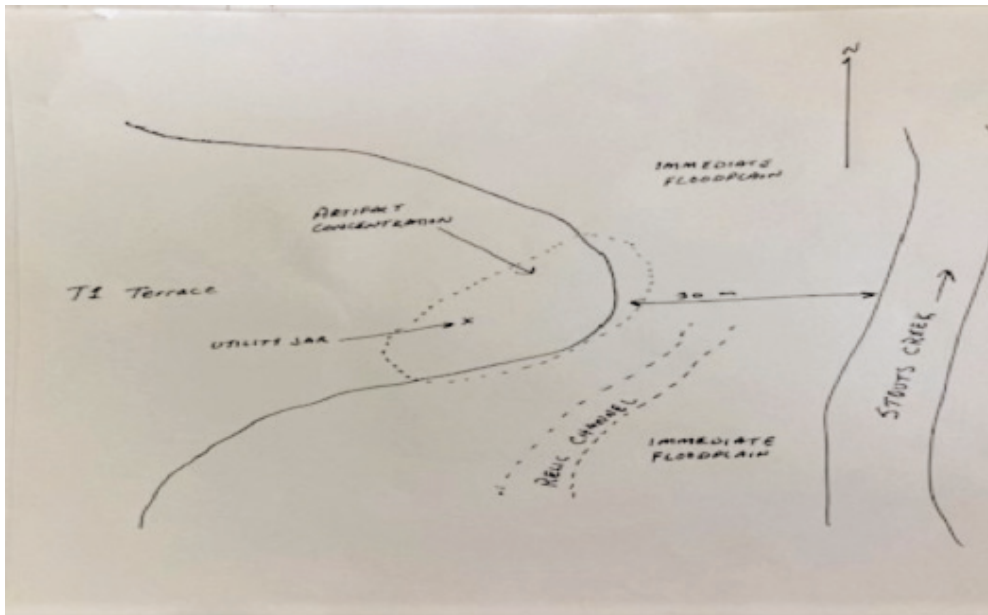


Figure 1. Map of the Garvis Anglin site area along Stouts Creek.

Excavations

Excavations at the Garvis Anglin site were largely uncontrolled. However, some notes were taken on artifact recovery. As excavations of the site progressed, a pattern was noted that all of the arrow points and most of the smaller Gary dart points were recovered near the surface while the larger Gary, Kent, and Edgewood dart points tended to be recovered at greater depths and closer to the underlying clay. Although exact quantities of lithic debris were not measured or recorded it is likely that the individual pieces recovered exceeded 1,000 in number. The remainder of the recovered lithic artifacts included dart and arrow point forms, ground stone tools, side and end scrapers, biface fragments, cores, flakes, and fire-cracked rocks. Lithic materials recovered were dominated by orthoquartzites found locally. Other material types included petrified wood, cherts (light tan, brown, grayish-black, grayish-brown, banded/mottled), and sandstone. In stark contrast to the large quantity of lithic debris and tools, only a handful of ceramic sherds and one complete ceramic vessel were recovered during the excavations. No organic remains or residues were observed in the deposits or on individual artifacts. The proximity to Stouts Creek and the site's elevation less than 1 m above the floodplain would have resulted in frequent flooding. This may or may not have contributed to the lack of organic remains preserved at the site.

Lithic Artifacts

During the excavation of the Garvis Anglin site, 51 dart points and 19 arrow points were recovered, along with two ground stone tools (Figures 2-7). As previously mentioned, all of the arrow points and a few of the smaller Gary and Kent type points were recovered in the upper 20 cm deposits at the site. Larger dart points were recovered below these levels as deep as 60-70 cm to the underlying clay. Eleven bifacial preforms were recovered in the 20-70 cm bs levels as well. Thirty-eight of the 40 Gary points were made from local orthoquartzite materials. The two remaining Gary points were made from a light tan colored chert. Six of the eight Kent points are made of orthoquartzite material while the remaining two are made from petrified wood and gray chert. Three Edgewood type dart points (Figure 2) were found along the southeastern edge of the site. All three examples are made from chert materials not found locally.



Figure 2. Edgewood points from the Garvis Anglin site.



Figure 3. Ground stone tools from the Garvis Anglin site.



Figure 4. Examples of large Gary and Kent points from the Garvis Anglin site.



Figure 5. Examples of medium-sized Gary points from the Garvis Anglin site.



Figure 6. Examples of small Gary and Kent points from the Garvis Anglin site.



Figure 7. Examples of Friley, Steiner, and Scallorn arrow points from the Garvis Anglin site.

The Friley, Steiner, and Scallorn arrow points were made from local orthoquartzite materials (see Figure 7). Two ground stone tools were recovered during the excavations (see Figure 3). Both exhibit wear patterns that suggests they were used in the manufacture of stone tools at the site. Both are made of a very coarse-grained sandstone. As previously mentioned, lithic debris was abundant at the site as well as were preforms in various stages of reduction.

Ceramic Artifacts

In comparison to the extremely high density of lithic artifacts from the Garvis Anglin site, ceramics are almost non-existent. However, four sherds and one complete vessel were recovered during the excavations. All four sherds are undecorated body sherds with thicknesses ranging from 6-9 mm. Three are grog-tempered while the remaining sherd is grog-tempered with a small amount of bone added as temper (Bo Nelson, 2020 personal communication) Also, small crystals in this fourth sherd may indicate the inclusion of sand as a temper or the potter's use of a naturally sandy clay in vessel manufacture. This sherd has a gritty feel and is noticeably different than the other three sherds from the site; sandy paste sherds are present in East Texas Woodland period sites (see Ellis 2013; Perttula and Nelson 2004).

One complete ceramic utility ware jar was recovered at the Garvis Anglin site. It was tempered primarily with grog, with an estimated 1 percent bone temper. The vessel was found in an upright position in the 30-50 cm bs levels. Due to the scarcity of ceramic artifacts being recovered at the site, the discovery of the complete vessel was surprising. Careful excavation of the area around the vessel yielded no other artifacts or evidence that the vessel was part of a burial. This, of course, does not exclude the possibility that the neck banded utility jar was indeed a burial artifact. The placement of

utility jar forms in Titus phase burials in the upper Stouts Creek valley does occur. There have been 32 Late Caddo period Titus phase burials encountered within two kilometers of 41HP253. Twenty-six of these have been documented (Scurlock 1962; Perttula 2009). The preservation of human remains in these local burials is poor (Jackson Culpepper Site Notes and Green Tuinier Site Notes). La Rue Neck Banded sherds have been recovered from the nearby Anglin Midden site and from a Late Caddo midden at the Tuinier Farm site. Utility jar forms of the types La Rue Neck Banded, McKinney Plain, and Anglin Impressed (corncob impressed) have been recovered from burials at the nearby Odell (41HP239), Tuinier Farm (41HP237), and Culpepper (41HP1) sites. When compared to three local specimens of the utility jar type, the vessel from the Garvis Anglin site (41HP253) differs most (aside from the obvious decorative treatment) in its base diameter versus body diameter ratio. It is also much smaller (Table 1). The neck banding appears cruder (Figure 8) when compared to other neck banded sherds from vessels recovered in local Titus phase sites previously mentioned. Initially it was thought that the vessel may have been manufactured by Woodland period people and left intact at the site along with other artifacts from that period.

Table 1. Utility jar measurements from the Upper Stouts Creek valley.

Vessel type	Site	Height (cm)	Base (mm) thickness	Rim (cm) diameter	Base (cm) diameter	Body (cm) diameter
Neck Banded	41HP253	10.2	11	11.8	7.5	10
McKinney Plain	41HP237	19.0	11	15.9	8.5	15
La Rue Neck Banded	41HP239	15.1	11	16.0	7.5	14.4
Anglin Impressed	41HP237	21.1	8	20.6	8.7	16.7

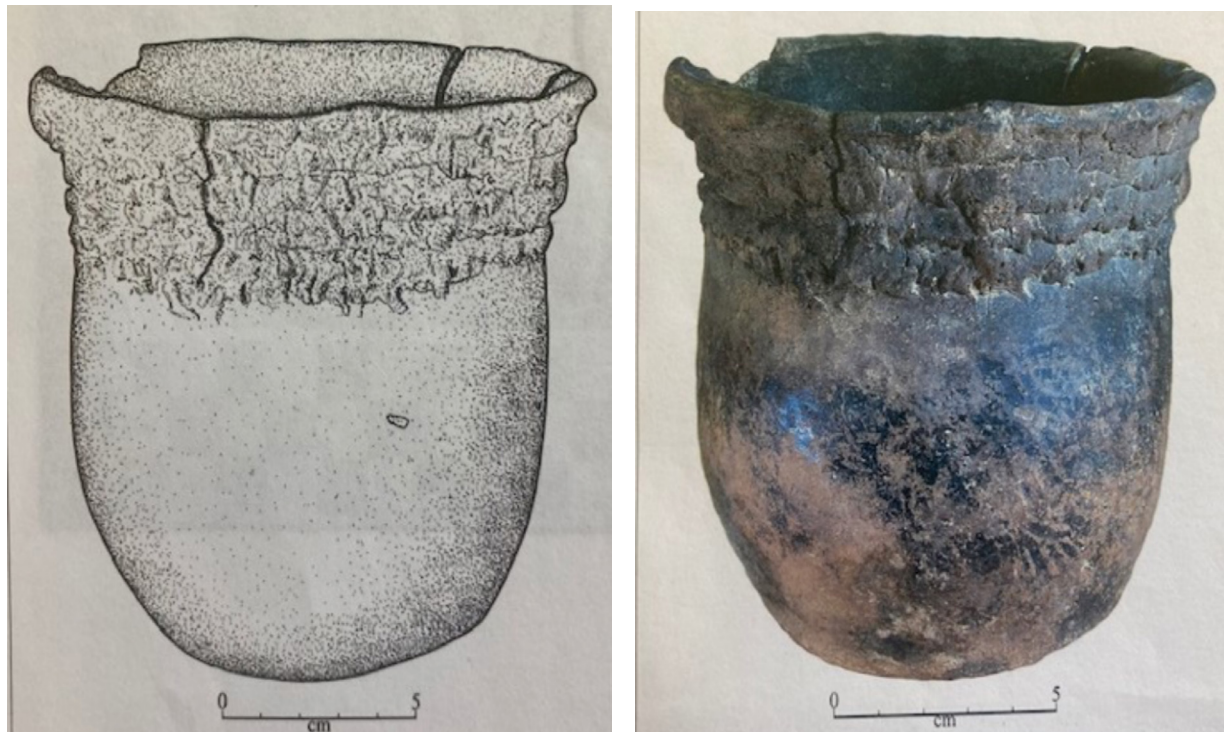


Figure 8. Drawing and photograph of small neck banded jar at the Garvis Anglin site.

Summary and Conclusions

The Garvis Anglin site (41HP253) appears to be a multi-component site occupied sporadically by Late Archaic and Woodland period peoples based on diagnostic dart and arrow point forms, with a single intrusive Late Caddo burial vessel. The vertical distribution of the tool forms fits nicely within the established parameters of Woodland period archaeology in East Texas. Furthermore, this site contains traits that are indicative of Woodland period Mill Creek Culture sites (Ellis 2013; Perttula and Nelson 2004:155-161). In general, these traits are a low density of ceramic sherds, especially when compared to the high density of lithic artifacts, implying the use of ceramic vessels was not extensive during the Woodland period; a low number of features, suggesting the sites were not occupied for long periods; Gary and Kent dart points (some very small in size); and certain early forms of barbed/stemmed arrow points. According to the map of Woodland cultures in Perttula and Nelson (2004:Figure 64), the Garvis Anglin site is situated very near to the recognized boundaries of the Mill Creek and Fourche Maline culture areas. The most likely explanation for the utility jar is that it is from a single Late Caddo burial placed there by Titus phase people living nearby (Perttula, 2020 personal communication).

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