

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY IN GRAND TETON NATIONAL PARK

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During the summer of 1973 our archaeological survey concentrated on the north end of Jackson Hole and the lower elevation areas of the valley. Our survey along the Snake River recorded only a few new sites: several along Ditch Creek; one in the area of the proposed construction at the Jackson Hole Airport (Wright, 1973); and one overlooking Saw Mill Ponds. Our work tends to confirm Love's 1972 hypothesis that the Snake River was a major barrier to the prehistoric inhabitants of the valley along most of its length.

Further survey was done in the Two Ocean Lake Quad. Only one new site was recorded along the hypothesized migration route proposed by Wright (1972). However, a series of sites were found between Pacific Creek and Two Ocean Lake suggesting such a route. Projectile points span at least 2000 years back to 2000 B.C.

Two sites--Owen and Reuel--were test excavated. The Reuel site had produced, from surface collecting, a Cody Knife (Wright, 1972). Our tests recovered two pointed pebble choppers, several flakes, one hammerstone, and one hearth without charcoal. The geologic reconstruction suggests that the site, when occupied, was located on a higher (+5 feet) beach of Emma Matilda. If we accept the contemporaneity of the Cody Knife with the excavated material, this would date the higher lake level at ca. 7000 B.P.

The Owen site is situated on a knoll along the northeastern shore of Emma Matilda. The sandstone bedrock is apparently the Meetees Formation of late Cretaceous age. Two undiagnostic points were found last year (Wright, 1972), and we had hoped to recover material for dating. Unfortunately, the site is very thin (less than 9 inches) and only a few chips came out of the excavations.

Survey work was also conducted in the John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Memorial Parkway (= the corridor). Ten prehistoric sites were found, all either along the Snake River or overlooking "Soldier Meadow". In addition, we surveyed intensively the east side of Polecat Creek near its mouth to locate the former Snake River Soldier Station (1891-1902) (Haines, 1973). We were unsuccessful.

Very little work was done in the high country. One day was spent surveying near Jackass Pass. One (?) site, nearly 3/4 of a mile long, consisting of considerable chipping debris of ignimbrite, chert, and quartzite, and four McKean-like points, was visited (see, also Love, 1972). Ignimbrite outcrops nearby. We hope to test excavate this site in 1974.

Three additional projects were either started or furthered during the summer. Each of these will be of some interest to other scientists working in Jackson Hole. One was an attempt to refine the chronological and geomorphological situations in the valley since the retreat of Pinedale ice from the Burned Ridge moraine, i.e., over the last 15,000 years. For example, we rented an airplane and took movies and slides in order to increase our understanding of the relationships between the ancient Snake River channels and terraces and the moranic systems.

Secondly, we began a series of pollen cores from ponds. In one, located just south of Signal Mountain, we found at a depth of 4.0 feet what appears to be a different vegetational regime than at present in the valley. It is extremely low in lodgepole pine pollen (Pinus contorta) compared to the top of the core. We hope to return during the winter, 1974, to core through the ice.

Finally, we completed our survey of the major elk (Cervus canadensis) summer ranges in the valley, i.e., Burned Ridge and Timbered Island Moraines, Signal Mountain, etc. We found no sites. It was suggested by one of us (G.A.W.) in a seminar at the Research Station that elk may, in fact, be a very late (post A.D. 1200) entrant into the mountains, even though it has a long history on the Plains.

Literature Cited

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