

SALVAGE EXCAVATIONS IN THE VICINITY OF KAMLOOPS

Robert L. Wilson

INTRODUCTION

The Simon Fraser University excavations undertaken in Kamloops, British Columbia in the summer of 1971 were initially concerned with salvage archaeology on the Kamloops Indian Reserve. The project's purpose was to preserve as much archaeological information as possible from the sites that were immediately threatened with destruction, and ultimately to establish a local sequence of prehistoric cultures for the Kamloops area.

Historically, Kamloops was occupied by the Shuswap Indians, a Salishan tribe formerly inhabiting the region between the Columbia River watershed and the Fraser River. The Shuswap border on the other Salishan tribes, the Lillooet, the Thompson, and the Okanagan, to the south and the Tsilkotin, an Athapascan tribe, to the north.

During the season five sites were excavated: two pithouse village sites, EeRb 3 and EeRb 10 on the Kamloops Reserve; a burial site, EeRc 8, in North Kamloops; a cache pit site, EdRa 11, 14 miles east of Kamloops; and EeRh 3, located beside Cache Creek on the Pass Valley Road, five miles east of the town of Cache Creek. Most of the three month field season was spent excavating the two sites on the Kamloops Reserve.

KAMLOOPS RESERVE SITE EeRb 10

EeRb 10, containing eight housepits, was in the greatest danger of immediate destruction and as such was the first site excavated. It is located on the Kamloops Indian Reserve on the north side of the South Thompson River, approximately 500 meters north of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Company warehouse

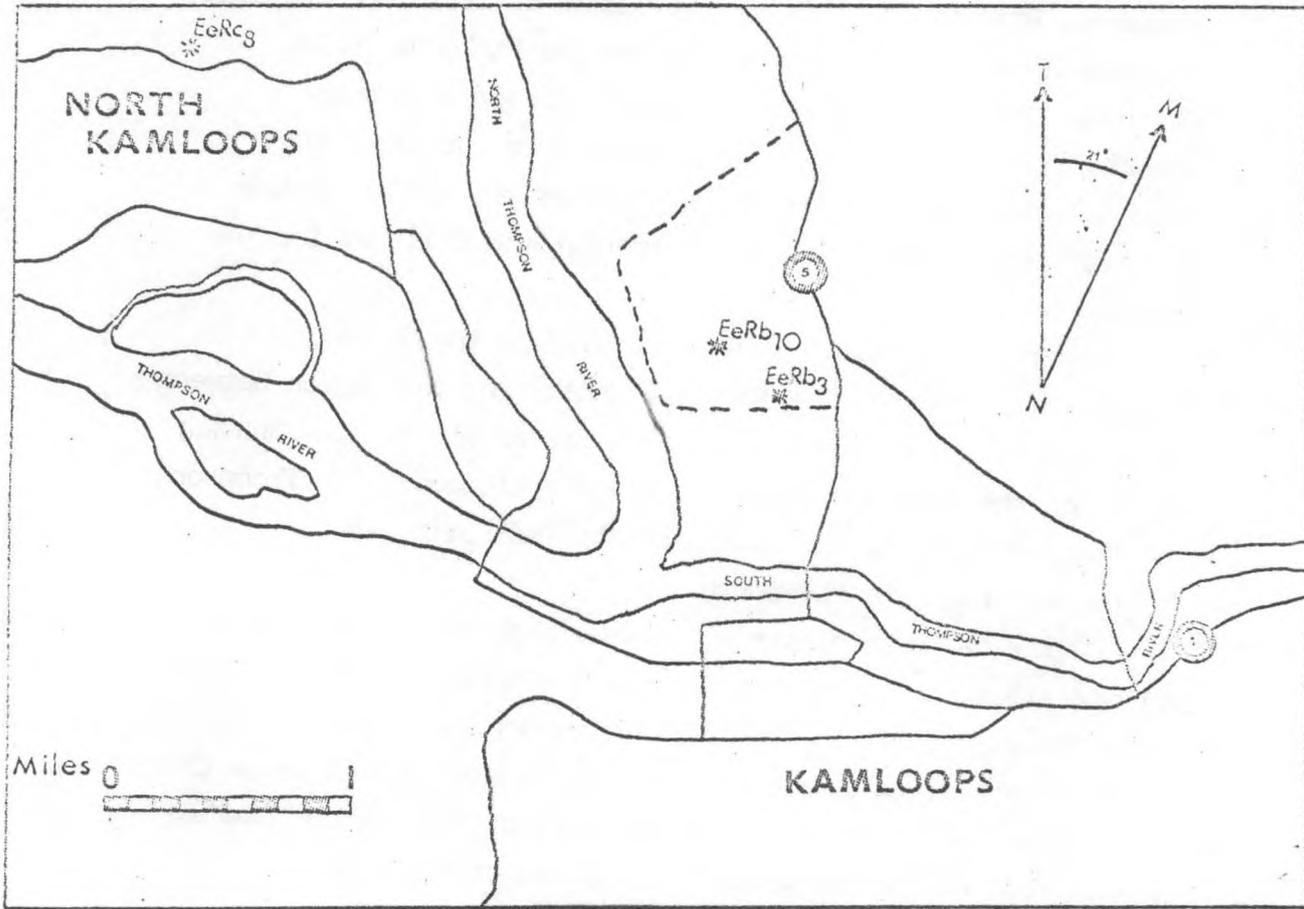


FIG. 61. Map of the City of Kamloops

and 450 meters east of the CNR tracks.

The aeolian soil of sand and clay loams supports a vegetation of low lying sage brush and grasses, typical of the entire region, with groves of poplar and alder in the former sloughs adjacent the north and south edges of the site. The largest housepit, number 3, is 16 meters in diameter, while the smallest, number 8, is 6 meters in diameter.

Excavation

A total of 75 cubic meters of deposit from 27 2 by 1 meter squares were excavated in arbitrary units of 10 centimeters. Emphasis was placed on trenching the interior of the housepits with two cross trenches bisecting and extending down the outside slopes of housepit 3.

Stratigraphy

The deposit consists of two major stratigraphical units: water deposited sands and sand loams, upon which lay the main concentrations of cultural material in a series of aeolian loams of varying sand and clay densities. In the squares within the housepits, the cultural and associated material extend down to 100 centimeters below surface with the bottom 10 centimeters being the water-deposited sands. The greatest concentration of cultural material is on the inside slopes of the housepits.

The only indicator of a living floor is a 20 to 30 centimeter thick layer of slightly darker brown loam, ranging from approximately 30 to 50 centimeters below surface within housepit 3. A 5 centimeter wide layer of charcoal, 70 centimeters below surface in housepit 4 is the only evidence uncovered of a burned fallen pithouse roof within the entire site. In the squares outside the housepits

very little charcoal or dark discolouration are present, and cultural material does not extend below a depth of 60 centimeters.

Artifacts

A total of 306 artifacts, a yield of about four artifacts per cubic meter, were recovered. These are listed in Table 14. The 33 flaked stone projectile points and bifaces constitute 10.8 percent of the assemblage. The 160 retouched flakes, 50.8 percent of the assemblage, are comprised of 126 unifacially retouched and 34 bifacially retouched flakes. The greatest concentration of these tools was on the western inside slope and southern inside slope and ridge of housepit 3. 92 flakes, 29.2 percent of the assemblage, can be classified as utilised flakes on the basis of minimal retouch. They follow much the same distribution as the preceding type, but are most frequent on the southern ridge of housepit 3.

Three sandstone whetstones or abraders were recovered. Two have one abrasive surface each, whereas the third is ground on both faces and has in addition a long groove in one face. Five hammerstones of granite were found; two show abrasion from grinding as well as from battering. A unique artifact is a flat, circular granite stone, 33 centimeters in diameter which has four equidistant indentations along its edges, and may be a canoe anchor.

Two antler tips are worked, but are not classifiable as to artifact type. One partially decayed antler object is probably a wedge; the distal end is unifacially bevelled to a blunt tip and there are no signs of battering at the proximal end.

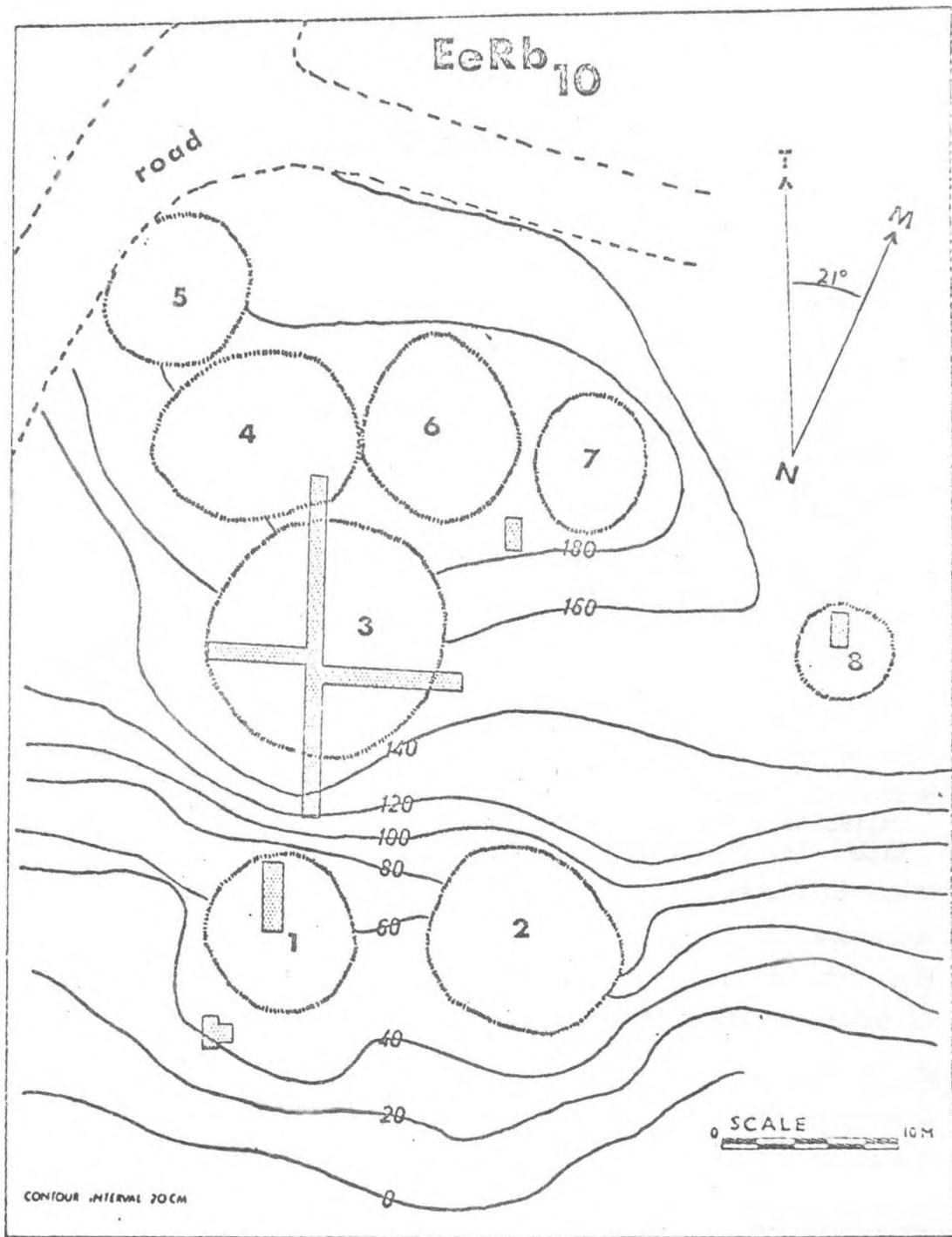


FIG. 62. Map of EeRb 10

Table 14. Artifacts from EeRb 10

| | QUANTITY | FIGURE |
|---|----------|-------------------------|
| <u>STONE ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Projectile points | | |
| Leaf shaped: | | |
| convex base (Group 1) | 4 | 63c, e, g. 64i |
| straight base (Group 2) | 2 | 63b, h |
| concave base (Group 3) | 1 | |
| Corner notched: | | |
| expanding concave base, barbed (Group 4) | 1 | 63d |
| expanding concave base, shouldered (Group 5) | 3 | 64a, h, k |
| contracting stem, no barbs (Group 6) | 7 | 63a, f. 64b, e, f, g |
| Single basal notch (Group 7) | 1 | |
| Bifaces and fragments | 14 | 64c, d, j |
| Retouched flakes: | | |
| Unifacially retouched | 126 | |
| Bifacially retouched | 34 | |
| Utilised flakes | 92 | |
| Whetstones | 3 | |
| Hammerstones | 5 | |
| Circular granite object | 1 | |
| <u>BONE ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Unbarbed points and fragments | 4 | |
| Ground fragments | 3 | |
| <u>ANTLER ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Bilaterally barbed point fragments | 1 | |
| Worked tips | 2 | |
| Wedge (?) | 1 | |
| <u>SHELL ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Dentalium shell | 1 | |

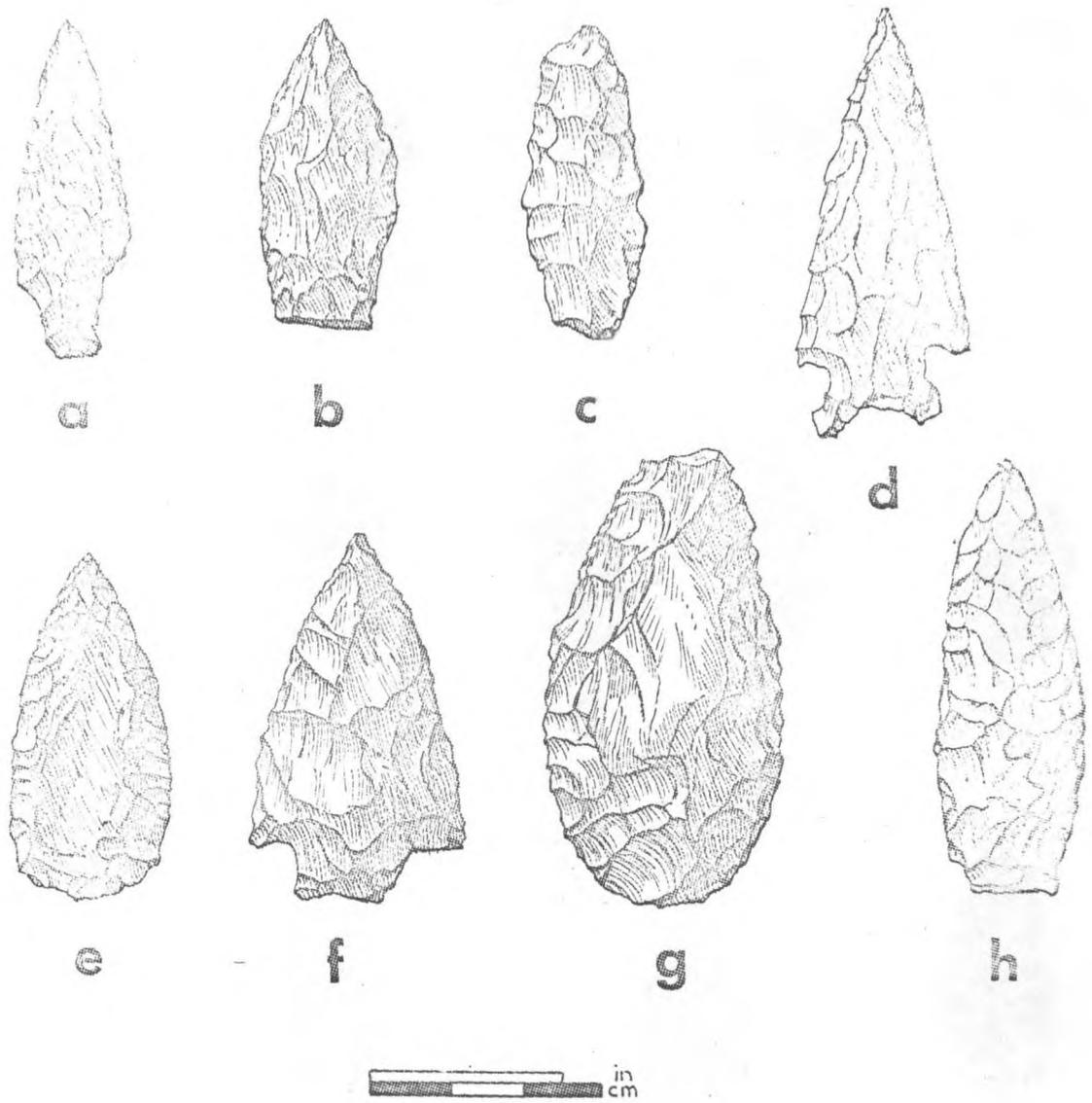


FIG. 63. Projectile points from EeRb 10. c, e, g: Group 1.
b, h: Group 2. d: Group 4. a, f: Group 6.

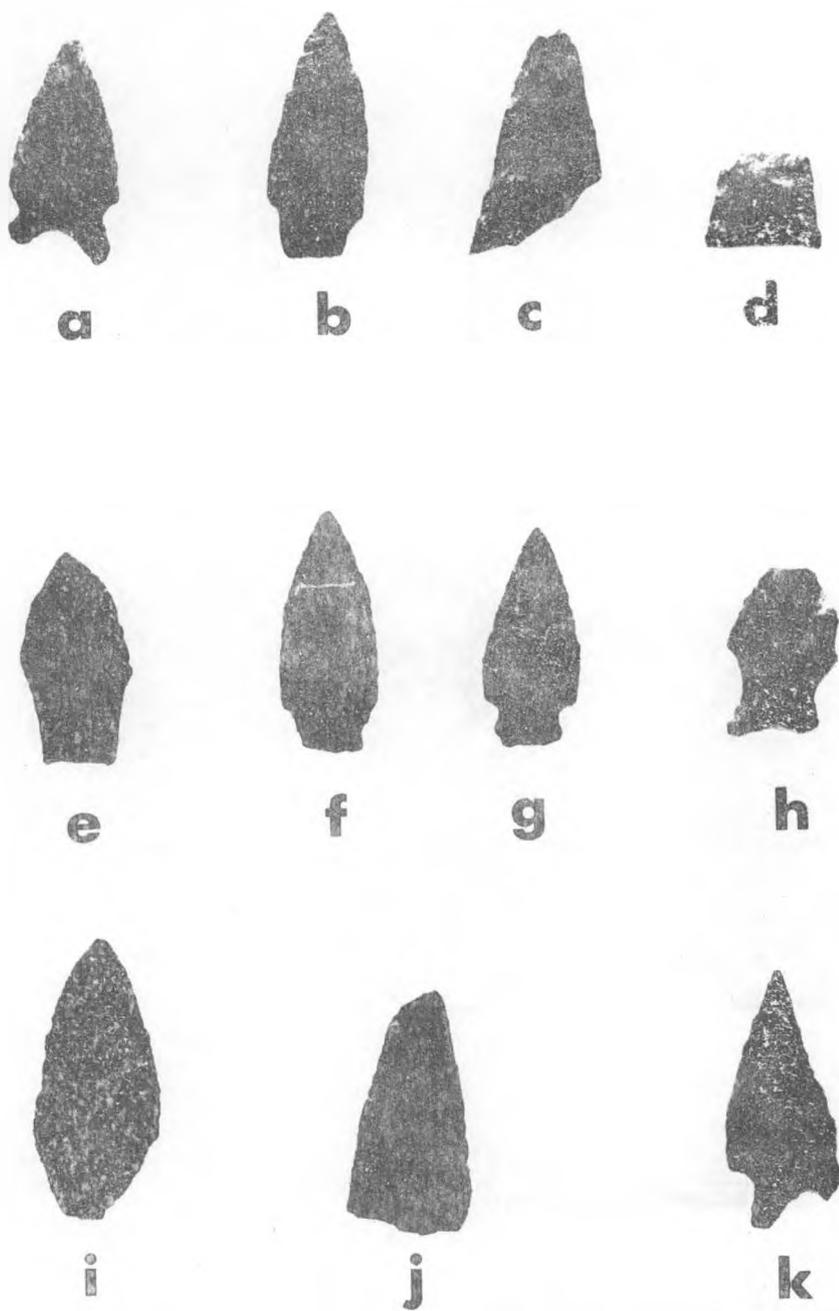


FIG. 64. Projectile points and bifaces from EeRb 10.
i, Group 1. a, h, k, Group 5. b, e, f, g, Group 6.
c, d, j, bifaces.

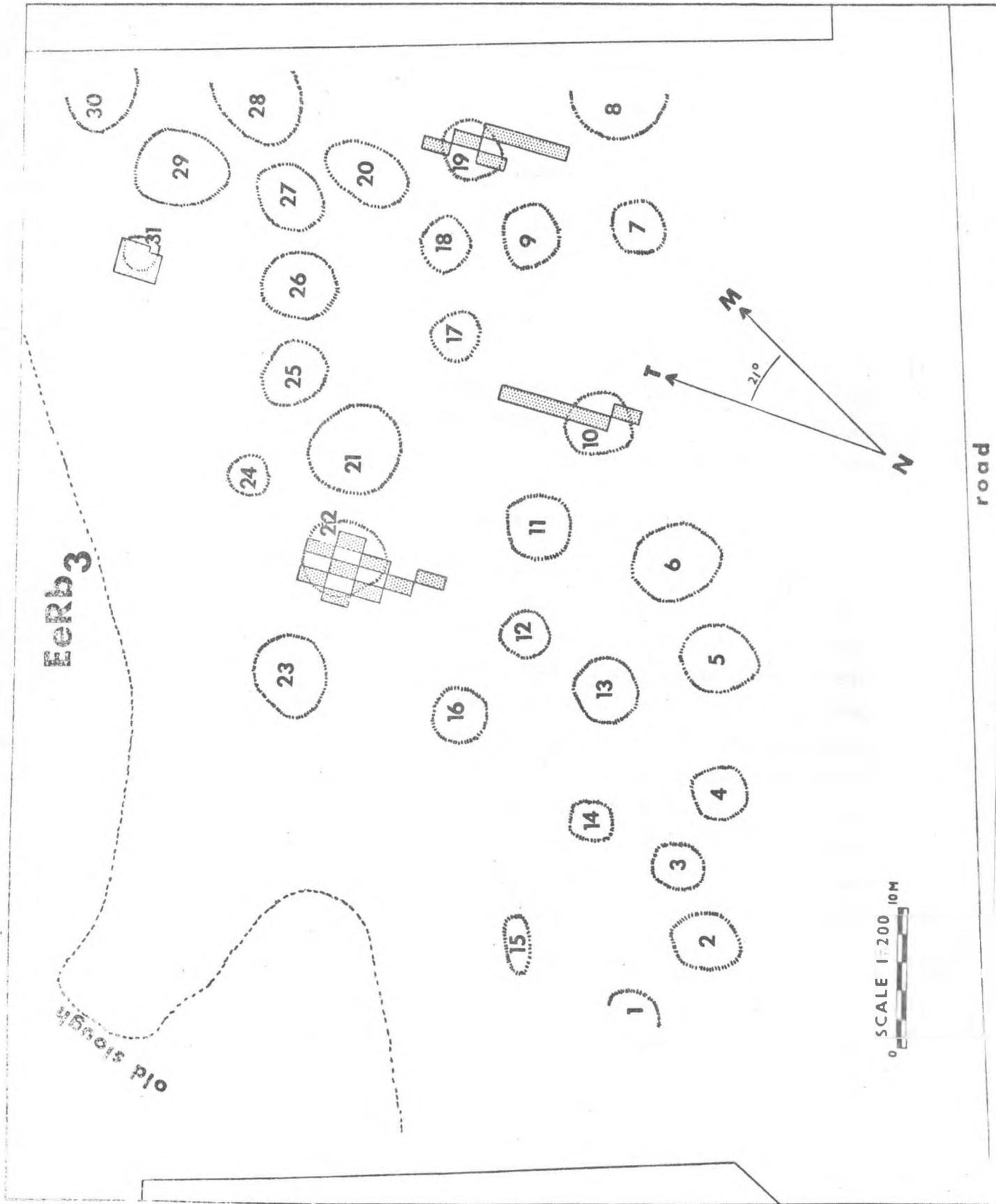


Fig. 65. Map of Eerb 3

One complete dentalium shell was the only object of this material recovered.

Discussion

The entire assemblage from EeRb 3 indicates a relatively short, single component occupation. There are too many discrepancies to link this site specifically with any of Sanger's (1970) three periods, although the styles of projectile points suggest that this component predates the Kamloops phase. Additional excavations in the Kamloops locality may well yield a slightly divergent chronological sequence from that in the Lytton - Lillooet locality.

KAMLOOPS RESERVE SITE EeRb 3

This was the largest pithouse site in the Kamloops region until two years ago when 90 percent of it was bulldozed for a still unfinished parking lot. All that remains are 31 small housepits, located directly opposite the John Deere warehouse on the Kamloops Reserve. EeRb 3 is approximately 500 meters southeast of EeRb 10, and like the latter has been surveyed for industrial development. The aeolian soil has a much higher clay content than that of EeRb 10, but the same vegetation of low lying sage brush and grasses exists. Adjacent to the northwest edge of the site is a former slough supporting poplar and alder.

Excavation

A greater amount of time was spent excavating this site as it proved to yield a larger artifact assemblage. Twenty-four 2 by 1 meter squares were excavated in and outside four housepits using a technique of excavating squares which were adjacent at the corners rather than consecutively in a

line. This method produced more data on pithouse architecture and stratigraphy, and allowed for greater freedom in location of squares. Also, the first 10 centimeters below surface was removed from around the entire depression of housepit 10, and a definite post-hole pattern was revealed.

Stratigraphy

There are three major stratigraphic units in this deposit: water deposited sands and sand loams being the oldest; living floors and occupation levels of clay loam directly above them; and aeolian loams and clay loams being the most recent. The living floors are readily identifiable by their abundance of charcoal, and by their continuity in corresponding to surface contours. Housepit 22 has two living floors; the earliest is 5 centimeters thick and 80 centimeters below surface, and the latest is 8 centimeters thick and 60 centimeters below surface. The living floors in housepit 19 are between 5 and 15 centimeters thick, and are located between 50 and 100 centimeters below the surface. That of housepit 10 is 5 centimeters thick and is 50 centimeters below surface.

Artifacts

Including the 356 artifacts from the surface of the disturbed portion of the site, the assemblage totalled 1314 specimens. Those from the excavated sections are listed in Table 15. All the whetstones were abraded on one surface only. The flaked stone tools were made from basalt, petrified wood, and chert. Artifacts from the disturbed part of the site which had previously been gleaned by relic collectors were all of stone, the majority being retouched flakes, scrapers, knives, and utilised flakes. Less than

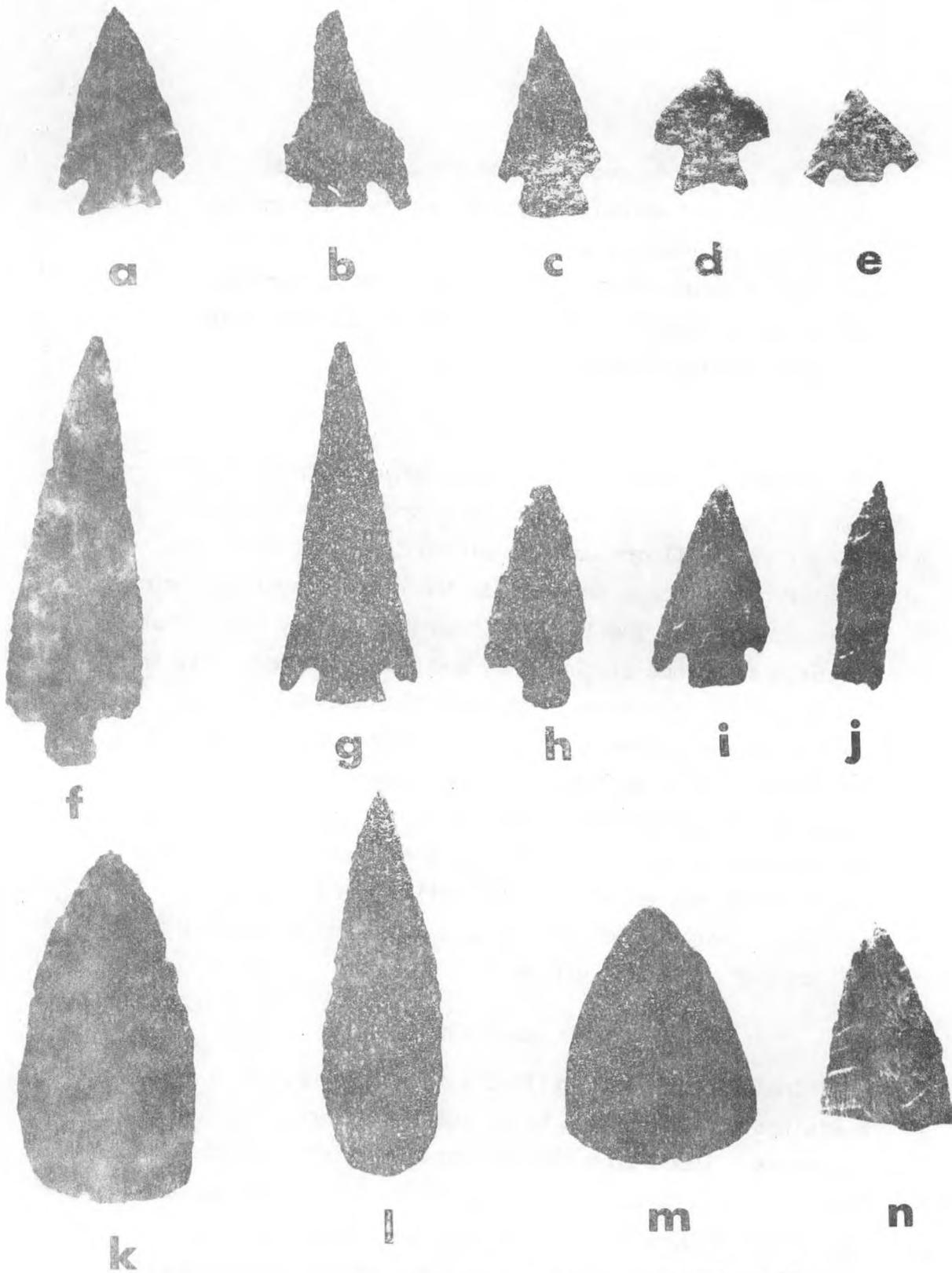


FIG. 66. Projectile points and bifaces from EeRb 3. l, Group 1. j, Group 2. a, c, i, Group 3. e, g, Group 4. f, h, Group 5. b, d, Group 6. k, m, n, bifaces.

Table 15. Artifacts from EeRb 3

| | QUANTITY | FIGURE |
|--|----------|-----------------------------------|
| <u>STONE ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Projectile points: | | |
| Leaf shaped, convex base (Group 1) | 1 | 66 <u>l</u> |
| Leaf shaped, straight base (Group 2) | 3 | 66 <u>j</u> |
| Corner notched, barbed (Group 3) | 12 | 66 <u>a</u> , <u>c</u> , <u>i</u> |
| Basal notched, barbed (Group 4) | 6 | 66 <u>e</u> , <u>g</u> |
| Straight stemmed, shouldered (Group 5) | 2 | 66 <u>f</u> , <u>h</u> |
| Expanding stemmed, protruding barbs (Group 6) | 4 | 66 <u>b</u> , <u>d</u> |
| Bifaces and fragments | 57 | 66 <u>k</u> , <u>m</u> , <u>n</u> |
| Retouched flakes: | | |
| Unifacially retouched | 542 | |
| Bifacially retouched | 60 | |
| Utilised flakes | 244 | |
| Whetstones | 3 | |
| Flaked drills: | | |
| Unifacially retouched | 2 | |
| Bifacially retouched | 3 | |
| Stemmed scraper | 1 | |
| D-shaped pestle | 1 | |
| Spall tool | 1 | |
| Cores | 2 | |
| Long ground and chipped tool | 1 | |
| <u>BONE ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Points, unbarbed | 3 | |
| Worked fragments | 7 | |
| <u>ANTLER ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Elk antler wedges | 2 | |
| <u>TOOTH ARTIFACTS</u> | | |
| Incisor with ground edge | 1 | |

three percent of these surface artifacts were projectile points.

The greater concentrations of the excavated cultural material lay on the inside slopes of the housepits to a depth of 110 to 120 centimeters below surface. Most of this material is associated with and below the living floors.

Features

Two habitation features were uncovered in the course of excavation. The first consists of a pattern of post holes associated with housepit 10. The 84 post holes revealed do not conform to the accepted pithouse structure of the Interior Plateau. Three clusters of approximately 20 post holes each are aligned in a southwest to northeast direction across the southeastern boundary of the housepit. Another cluster of ten post holes is located on the northwest ridge, which may be associated with housepit 11, and five more on the northern ridge. Thus instead of a circular semi-subterranean structure with four main supports, we have more of a lean-to type of structure.

The second feature is a circular concentration of rocks associated with depression 31 40 to 50 centimeters below surface. Since the depression is too small for a pithouse and there is a large quantity of charcoal lying underneath the rocks, this is probably some form of sweathouse structure.

Discussion

The artifact assemblage is very similar to that of site EeRb 10, and suggests contemporaneity of the two sites. While both are single component sites, showing similar cultural material, the difference in size of the housepits

at the two sites may be indicative however of a temporal difference. The single C-14 date so far obtained is A.D. 30 \pm 100 (GAK 3902).

BROCKLEHURST BURIAL SITE EeRc 8

This single burial site is located in a gravel pit, operated by Studer Brothers Construction, in Brocklehurst, North Kamloops. Through immediate co-operation from Studer Brothers, the R.C.M.P., and the Kamloops City Museum, we were informed of its destruction and were able to conduct salvage excavation.

The burial was approximately 4.5 meters below the surface in the wall of the gravel pit. Originally, however, it was 6 meters below surface, as Studer Brothers had already scraped off 1.5 meters. The floor of the gravel pit is 4 meters below the burial. Thus it was virtually impossible to conduct a controlled excavation of the burial because of its difficult location, and because the walls of the pit were far from secure. We were forced to excavate it from the side and remove each bone as we came to it.

The soil is comprised of water deposited gravels, except for a layer of aeolian clay, 50 centimeters thick, directly above the layer of darker gravel in which the burial was located.

Artifacts

Since the power shovel had sliced the skeleton into two, and most of the artifactual material was among the gravel debris on the floor below the burial, it was impossible to establish exact proveniences. All the artifacts can therefore only be assigned as likely belonging with the burial. They are listed in Table 16.

Table 16. Artifacts from EeRc 8

| | QUANTITY | FIGURE |
|--|----------|-----------------------|
| Stone fish net weights | 5 | |
| Abrading stones | 3 | |
| Small stone mortar | 1 | |
| Retouched flakes | 4 | |
| Utilised flakes | 1 | |
| Tips of bone points | 3 | |
| Unilaterally barbed bone leister points | 1 | <u>67a</u> |
| Unilaterally barbed bone point fragments | 1 | <u>67e</u> |
| Antler harpoon fragments | 1 | <u>67b</u> |
| Grooved tooth pendants | 1 | |
| Perforated bear tooth pendants | 12 | <u>67c</u> , <u>d</u> |
| Shell beads | 92 | |
| Orange ochre sample | 1 | |

The 92 shell beads were found in close proximity with the tooth pendants on the floor of the gravel pit. It is assumed that the individual was wearing both of these decorative sets of items. Dr. T. W. McKern of the Department of ARchaeology, Simon Fraser University, identified the skeletal material as belonging to a 30 year old male. This affirms the fact that the type of artifacts associated with the burial are male-oriented.

Discussion

It is impossible to know how much of this site has been destroyed, but the data collected are assumed to be representative of the entire site. The fact that the age of the burial may predate any recorded archaeological finds in the Kamloops area, is based solely on its depth of 6 meters below surface in water deposited gravels. More data must be collected from other sites however, to establish any cultural comparisons.

SITE EdRa 11.

Stretching in an east-west line approximately 65 meters long and 10 meters wide, this site is composed solely of 45 cache pits. A property line divides the site almost in half with 25 cache pits to the west of the line and 20 to the east. We concentrated on the former because the owner, Emilio Queltieri, was about to start construction and destroy his portion of the site. However, he was very kind and delayed his operation for two days so that we might salvage the site's archaeological information.

The site is located on the north shore of the South Thompson River, approximately 2.5 miles east of the Lafarge Cement plant, 15 miles east of Kamloops. Pithouse depressions

are scattered throughout the entire area, but none are closer than 300 meters to this site.

The vegetation is typical of the area with very high sage brush, most of it over a meter high, and short grasses. Aeolian loam constitutes most of the soil. The surrounding topography is flat, as it is a beach terrace of the South Thompson River, presently situated less than 100 meters away. The cache pits however are located on a ridge from 50 to 100 centimeters high, most likely due to all the earth that was moved when the cache pits were dug.

Excavation

Time limited us to a minimum of excavation; however a more than adequate amount of data was collected. Three 2 by 2 meter squares were excavated within depressions, with the trench 3-4W/0-4N bisecting two of them. Two 1 by 1 meter squares were also excavated, one within a depression and one on the ridge of the cache pit mound.

Stratigraphy

There is no definite layering of strata because of the disturbance in the construction of the cache pits. The walls and floors of the cache pits do not extend lower than 80 centimeters below surface, and are represented by black midden soil.

Artifacts

Even though the site had previously been surface collected, we found a total of 74 basalt flakes on the surface, of which 21 showed either retouch or utilisation. Excavation yielded only 10 artifacts, including three bifacially retouched flakes, three unifacially retouched

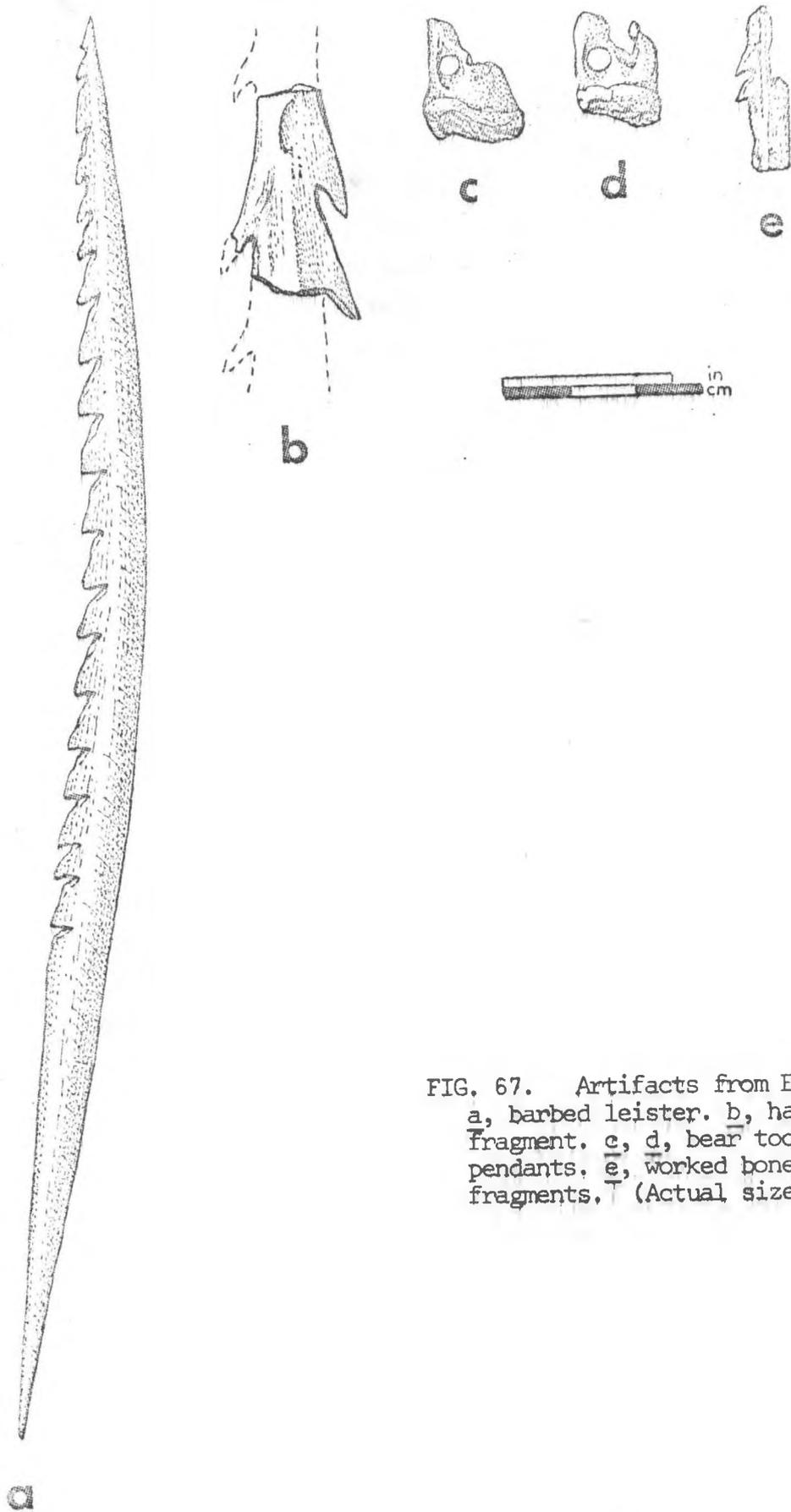


FIG. 67. Artifacts from EeRc 8.
 a, barbed leister. b, harpoon
 fragment. c, d, bear tooth
 pendants. e, worked bone
 fragments. (Actual size)

flakes, a shouldered projectile point, and three clusters of pieces of tightly rolled birch bark, of which the largest is 14.8 centimeters in length and 3.5 centimeters in diameter. All the birch bark was located within cache pits, and may have been used for torches, or for the wrapping of food. No faunal material or fish vertebrae, however, were found in direct association with the birch bark. All the excavated artifacts were recovered from within cache pit depressions.

Discussion

As with other cache pit sites in the Kamloops region, EdRa 11 did not yield much artifactual material. Most of the associated material, land mammal bone fragments and fish vertebrae, were directly associated with the black midden soils of the cache pit floors, between 50 and 80 centimeters below surface. None of the artifacts are diagnostic and no historic goods were recovered.

CACHE CREEK SITE EFRh 3

The Inland Natural Gas Company was very considerate in allowing a crew from Simon Fraser University to survey its new pipeline route in the vicinity of Cache Creek. One site through which the 40 foot wide right-of-way went is EFRh 3, at the juncture of the Pass Valley Road with Cache Creek (the stream), five miles east of the town of Cache Creek. The site is extremely flat with no surface features, 100 meters long and 30 meters wide, up approximately 8 meters from the east bank of the stream, and it is completely cleared of the surrounding young coniferous forest.

Excavation

Seven 2 by 1 meter squares were excavated, six of which were directly on the pipeline right-of-way. In the two days the site took to complete, all seven were brought down to sterile sub-soil at an average of 40 centimeters below surface,

Stratigraphy

The soil deposit of the site is all glacial till, with the first 30 centimeters below surface being light brown rocky clay loam, under which lies a mixture of grey brown medium course sands and gravels. The cultural material is evenly distributed throughout the first 20 centimeters below surface.

Artifacts

The surface of the site was littered with basalt detritus and cores, and we collected a total of 24 retouched flakes and bifaces. Excavated material included approximately 200 basalt retouched flakes, bifaces, hammerstones, and abraders, with very little found beyond 20 centimeters below surface.

Discussion

No habitation features, the amount of detritus totalling 300 to 400 flakes in some levels, and the fact that the only major outcropping of basalt in the entire region is just a mile away at Arrowstone Creek, all support the assumption that this site is a flaking station and resource centre. The shallow depth of deposit indicates a relatively short duration of occupation during a time period that has yet to be established.

Acknowledgements

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