

TRANSITIONAL POINTS?

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Arthur George Smith gave the name Transitional to the points featured in this paper. Mr. Smith was considered one of the foremost authorities on Indian relics in his time. He wrote a paper in the *Ohio Archaeologist* in 1957 vol.7 no.4 pages 118 and 119 with pictures and description of points he called Transitional. In his description he wrote "It is characterized by a concave base, stem widening towards the shoulders without any suggestion of notching, deliberate basal thinning, sometimes amounting to fluting, the edges of base and stem are heavily ground to the very points of the shoulders." Mr. Smith wrote "West of the Appalachians it is found sporadically not on regular sites with the same distribution pattern as Paleo-Indian types." In his paper, he pictures fourteen points all from different sites. So this would support his belief that they are found sporadically and not on regular sites. With the information he had, this statement was true to its time. You must remember this paper was written fifty plus years ago.

In his fine article "An Embedded Projectile Point Found Near Wapakoneta, Auglaize County, Ohio" by Richard Michael Gramly gave us insight as to the true age of the Transitional Point (*Ohio Archaeologist* Vol 46 No 3 Summer 1996 pages 5 thru 9). Jim Bowsher and his nephew Neil were searching for mastodon bones. They found no mastodon bones but did find mussel shells and beaver-chewed logs. In wiping the soil off one of the logs, Jim Bowsher's hand hit something hard. It turned out to be the base of a projectile point embedded in the log. Later Dr. Gramly was shown the log and with the permission of the finders had the log x-rayed and radiocarbon dated. The x-ray clearly showed the point to be a 2 3/16" Transitional point. The radiocarbon date came back 11,490+/-80 years. This moves this type point into the Paleo time period 8,500 B.C. to 12,000 B.C. Smith was right when he believed this type of point was a derivative of the fluted point technique.

I have found 10 Transitional points while surface hunting the Don Paul Site. (Figure 1) This is the largest number of Transitional

points that I know of from one site. The Don Paul Site is a Paleo and early Archaic site in Fairfield County, Ohio. I found four fluted points along with Paleo square knives, Uni-face Blades and End Scrapers with Graver Spurs. It has more Paleo artifacts "at least 50" than any other recorded site in the Hocking valley. Robert Converse wrote in a paper in the *Ohio Archaeologist* (volume 35 no.1 winter 1985) "The Don Paul Site represents a significant Paleo occupation and a heavy Archaic occupation in Fairfield County, Ohio." Robert Converse in his excellent book *Ohio Flint Types* writes about Transitional Points "It is rarely found in any concentration, but is scattered across the northern two thirds of Ohio, southern Michigan and into Ontario." The Don Paul Site is one of the few sites where a concentration of Transitional points was found.

References

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Figure 1 (Casto) Transitional Points from the Don Paul site. One on bottom right is two and one quarter inches long.