To the Point

Graham Cave

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This is a modified version of the discussion in Sandstrom and Ray (2004:29-30); drawings prepared by Del Thompson.

Graham Cave

**Description:** Graham Cave is a relatively large (except if extensively resharpened as in Figure 1) and typically thick side-notched point. The base may be slightly or deeply concave (Figures 2-3) and it is almost always basally ground. As for Dalton and other early point types, the blades of resharpened specimens are usually beveled (generally on the left side, as opposed to the right side for Dalton) and serrated. The manufacturing technology for Graham Cave points rarely involved heat treatment. Graham Cave points presumably represent multipurpose tools that had variable functions depending on their use-life and the extent of resharpening.

**Age:** Generally assigned to the Early Archaic, Chapman (1975:248) suggested that the type dated to a broad time span of 8000-5000 B.C. O'Brien and Wood (1998:142) suggest that they were produced before 5500 B.C. and Justice (1987:66) also assigns an age range of 8000-5500 B.C. The unmixed Early Archaic Graham Cave component at the Big Eddy site was dated to ca. 8600-8200 B.P. (6650-6250 B.C.) (Ray and Lopinot 2005:264).

This is corroborated by radiocarbon dates from Horizon 11 at the Koster site, which had a Graham Cave component. Four of five dates assigned to this component ranged from 8480 ± 110 B.P. to 8430 ± 90 B.P., or basically 8500-8400 B.P. (Hajic 1990:Table 2).

**Distribution:** Widespread and relatively common throughout Missouri.

**Comments:** Graham Cave points can be confused with later Middle Archaic side-notched points such as the Godar, Raddatz, or White River side-notched types. The primary attribute that distinguishes a resharpened Graham Cave point from the later Archaic side-notched types is a beveled blade. The blade is also usually longer and thicker.

**References**


