

January 25 1973

At the Mertz coffee house, the herders are arguing about whether wool was higher in 1951 or 1952. Nobody is paying attention to the wool boom that's going on in 1973. Their interest is in the action of 20 years past, not in yesterday's trade.

Over in San Angelo there's a cow market going on that'd make the Rockefeller Trust look like it was hung on high center, but coffee drinkers there are still replaying the Super Bowl.

I've been too busy hunting arrowheads to mess with the markets or the coffee drinkers. An old partner of mine has been out to the ranch. We've spent several afternoons stumbling around the old camp grounds, picking up what we imagined were artifacts.

After the recent week long blizzard, hunting was exceptionally good. Arrowheads seem to come out better after ice and snow has been on the ground for a few days.

The cattle have been bothering us so much that we couldn't concentrate on our work. You can't expect a cow brute to understand that amateur archeology is more important than making a feed run; still, the old sisters don't have to follow us around the pasture, reminding us of their ignorance.

Shortgrass Indians scattered their stuff as bad as cowboys lose wire pliers. They couldn't have stayed in equipment if they'd worn pants like we have to. Indians were mighty lucky they didn't have a hole in their pocket to add to their handicap. I'm sure glad I didn't have to keep them in pocket knives. My sons are enough of a problem.

Whiskered archeologists worry over why the redmen left so many unfinished arrowheads. Lots of points and tools are found in that state. I think the reason that they left so much work incomplete was the squaws' fault.

Indian men, you see, didn't have the old office dodge or the old ranch dodge to get away from the wigwam. They had to work at home.

All you married men know what it'd be like to try to work around the house and be a complete errand boy service at the same time.

I see ads in the magazines about how to open your own business right at home. All I ever could get open around my house was a stopped up drain or a can of beer.

So it's not difficult to reconstruct the scene of the Indian days.

The brave would be down to the most tedious part of making an arrowhead. Just as he was going to make the last chip, his wife would yell for him to go get the kids out of the creek and bring her some wood on the way back.

You know how far he'd throw his work and his tools and what he'd say under his breath.

I can see him now, walking down toward the creek, using cuss words that'd scald the hair off the toughest part of a hog, making his kids run further in the water.

And all the while, she'd be standing outside the teepee, tossing her head and jerking on her beads, acting like she was ready to charge.

Then when he'd get back, the kids would be squawling and the wood would be wet. She'd be all bowed up and he'd be ready to unbow her.

For sure, she'd have to bring up how much firewater he'd drunk at the last rain dance. Then for certain it'd end up with pottery being thrown and more artifacts being scattered in every direction.

Archeologists must be awfully simple if they can't figure that out. I can't see why they haven't learned a long time ago why Indians' things are often unfinished. Most archeologists must be bachelors.

The big livestock boom is going to be over before the coffee loiterers notice it ,was ever here.

What's of most concern now is to get the cows settled, so the arrowhead hunt can go on without interruption.