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Ancestral Caddo Ceramic Vessels from the J. B. Sparkman Site (41HP26), Hopkins County, Texas

Timothy K. Perttula

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF THE VESSELS

Two ancestral Caddo vessels were excavated by a J. B. Sparkman from a burial that had been exposed by erosion. The burial was found on the site in the Caney Creek valley in the upper Sabine River basin near the community of Black Oak in southeastern Hopkins County, Texas (Figure 1). The University of Texas purchased the two vessels from Mr. Sparkman in May 1931.

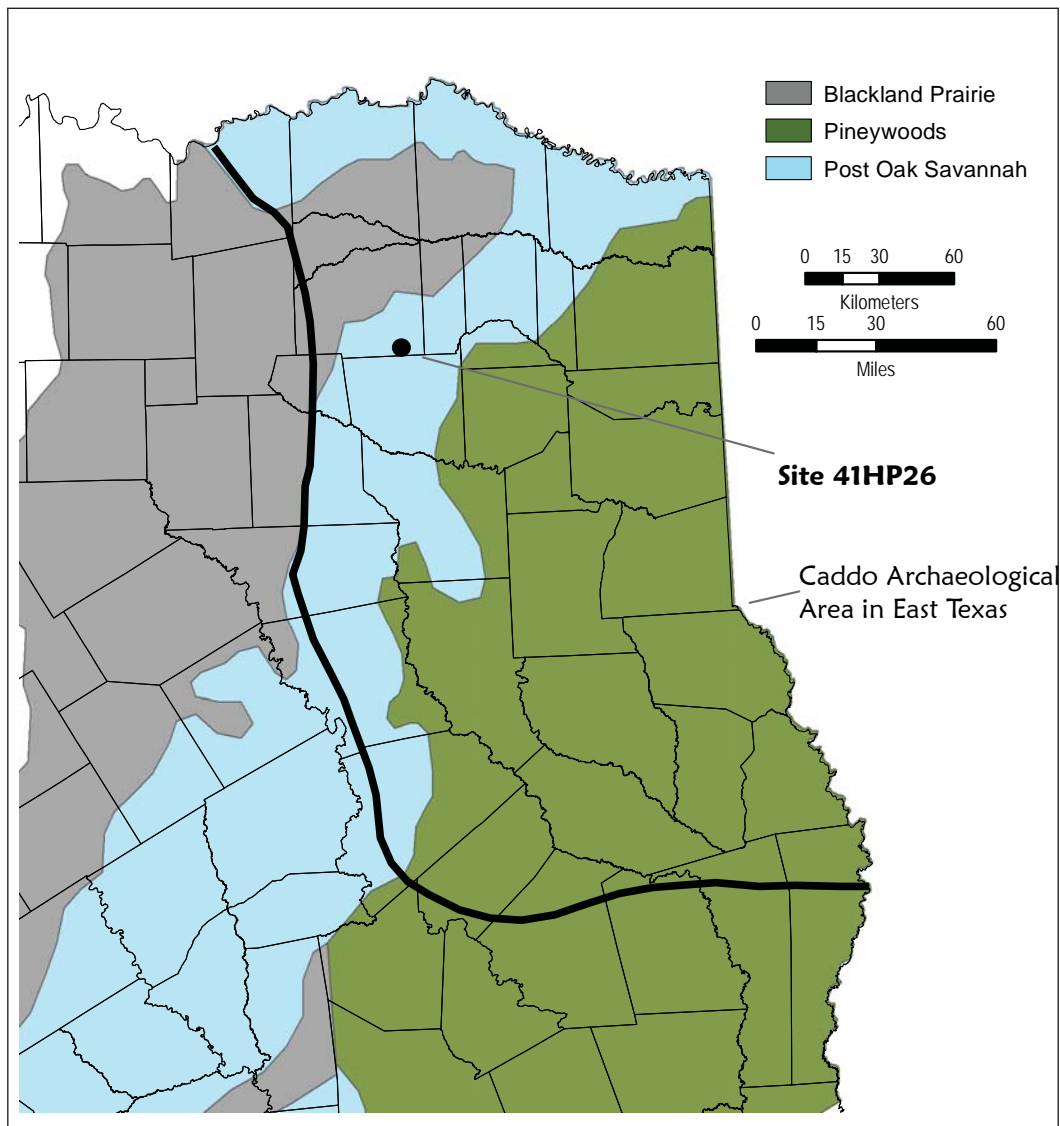


Figure 1. Location of the J. B. Sparkman site (41HP26) in East Texas.

Ceramic Vessels

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: J. B. Sparkman, 41HP26

VESSEL NO.: 41HP26-1

VESSEL FORM: Bottle with a carinated body

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Direct rim and a rounded-exterior folded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: brown; fire clouds on the rim, body, and base

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 5.0 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE

TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE

TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 11.5

ORIFICE DIAMETER

(IN CM): 3.7

DIAMETER AT

BOTTOM OF RIM

OR NECK (IN CM): 3.6

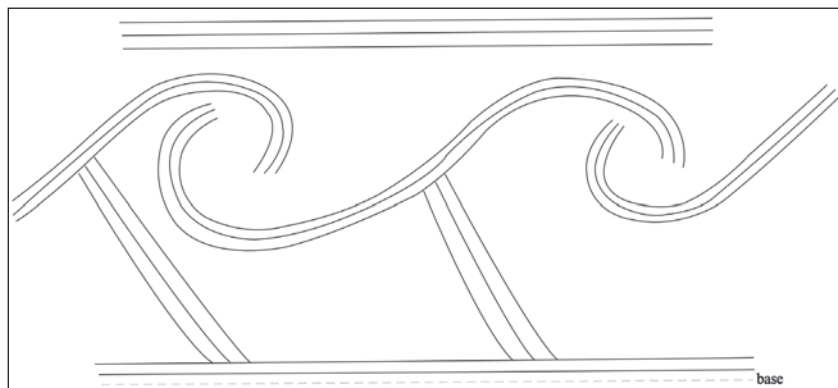


Figure 2. Taylor Engraved bottle from the J. B. Sparkman site (41CP26).

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 3.7; circular and concave

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.17

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel has a series of four interlocking engraved scrolls comprised of three closely-spaced engraved lines (cf. Suhm and Jelks 1962:Plate 76). Attached to each of the lower portions of the interlocking scrolls are a series of three diagonal engraved lines that extend to the upper of two horizontal engraved lines encircling the base. At the top of the vessel body are three horizontal engraved lines (Figure 2).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Taylor Engraved

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: J. B. Sparkman (41HP26)

VESSEL NO.: 41HP26-2

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Inverted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: B (fired and cooled in a reducing or low oxygen environment)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 5.1 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 7.6

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 10.2

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 11.6

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 6.4; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.47

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): Underneath the single horizontal engraved line under the lip on the narrow rim panel of the carinated bowl, the panel is divided into at least nine sections by a series of three closely-spaced vertical lines (cf. Suhm and Jelks 1962:Plate 711) (Figure 3). The vessel lip is notched.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Simms Engraved

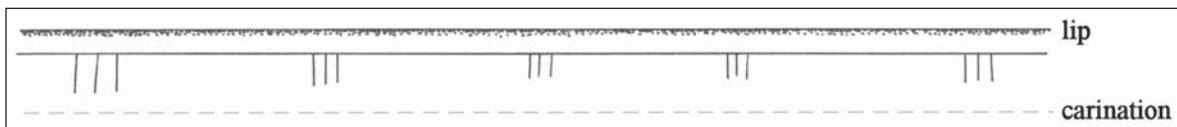


Figure 3. Simms Engraved carinated bowl from the J. B. Sparkman site (41HP26).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

J. B. Sparkman excavated a Caddo burial with two ceramic vessel funerary offerings from a site in the Caney Creek valley in the upper Sabine River basin in East Texas. These vessels—a Taylor Engraved bottle with an interlocking scroll and a Simms Engraved carinated bowl with a series of three short vertical engraved lines and a notched lip. The burial likely dates to the latter part of the Titus phase, ca. A.D. 1550-1680, as these ceramic decorative styles are present in sites in this area only during that temporal interval (see Perttula et al. 1993).

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