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Caddo Ceramic Vessels from the Eli Moores Site (41BW2), Bowie County, Texas

Timothy K. Perttula

INTRODUCTION

The Eli Moores site (41BW2) is an important ancestral Caddo mound center and habitation site on the Red River in the East Texas Pineywoods, likely part of the Nasoni Caddo village visited by the Teran de los Rios entrada in 1691 (see Sabo 2012; Wedel 1978). The Eli Moores site is situated on a natural levee of the Red River, currently about 2.5 km north of the site (Figure 1).

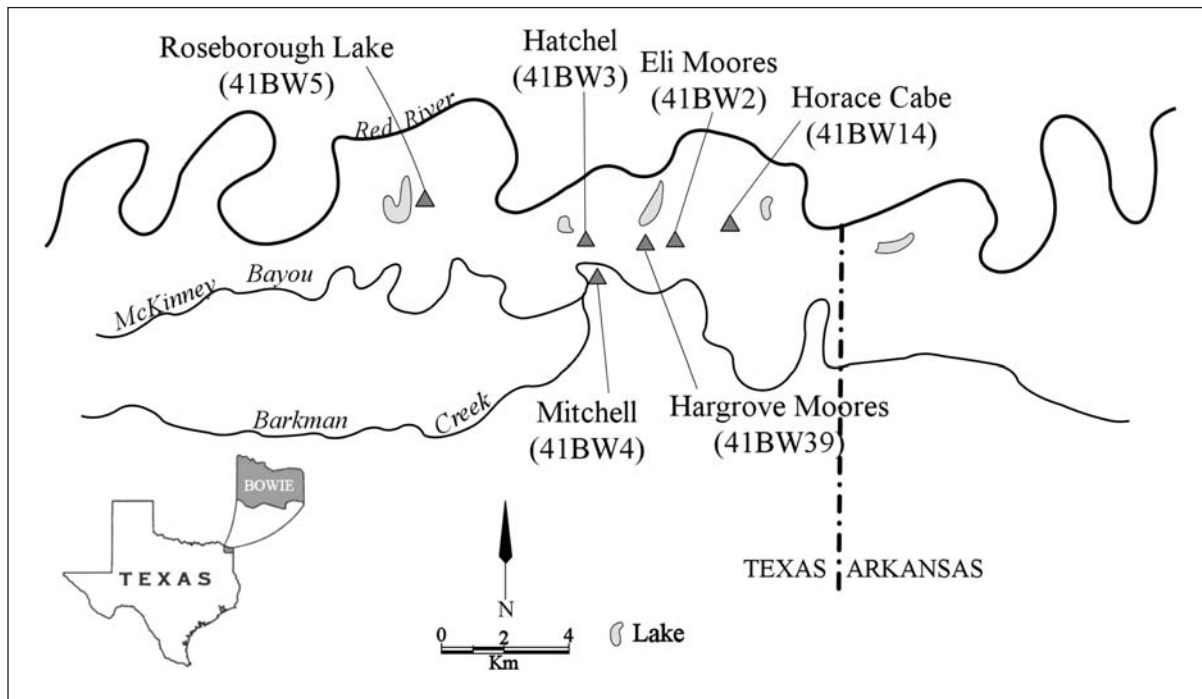


Figure 1. Location of the Eli Moores site (41BW2) and other ancestral Caddo sites on the Red River in Bowie County, Texas.

The site, occupied from the 17th to the early 18th century, may have been the residence of the *Caddi* of the Nasoni Caddo when it was visited by the French and Spanish, and the *Xinesi* lived in a temple on the mound at the nearby Hatchel site (41BW3). The site was investigated by the University of Texas in 1932 (Jackson 1932; Good 1977; Gilmore 1991; Perttula 2014), and in one of the mounds and in associated midden deposits, the remains of Caddo structures, midden deposits, features, eight burials (with nine individuals), and a large ceramic and lithic assemblage were recovered, along with well-preserved plant and faunal remains.

The principal occupation of this part of the Red River basin in East Texas in prehistoric and early historic times (up to about A.D. 1790) was by Caddo-speaking Indian groups that lived in settled horticultural and agricultural communities (cf. Barr 2007, 2011; Campbell 1996; Foster 2008). In historic times, there were several Caddo “confederacies” in East Texas and Northwest Louisiana, including the Kadohadacho on the Red River and the Hasinai in East Texas.

The large mound on the 1691 Teran de los Rios map has been identified as the large earthen mound at the Hatchel site (see Wedel 1978), while the *Caddi's* compound may well have been at the Eli Moores site. The map also showed many houses, and associated outbuildings, from numerous individual compounds in the village. The village itself is believed to have extended several miles along the Red River, likely encompassing contemporaneous sites such as Eli Moores (41BW2), Paul Mitchell (41BW4), Hargrove Moores (41BW39), Hill Farm (41BW169), and Horace Cabe (41BW14) (see Figure 1).

The University of Texas 1932 excavations at the Eli Moores site concentrated on Mound #1. This mound was estimated to be ca. 20 m in diameter and 1.5 m in height, and there was a borrow pit directly north of the mound (Figure 2). A blue glass bead had been previously found on the surface of the mound (TARL 1931:28). Mound #2 is ca. 12 m southwest of Mound #1, while an unexplored mounded midden deposit is ca. 15 m south of Mound #1. Mound #2 had a small “test hole” excavated in it by the UT crew, but only midden deposits were encountered there (Jackson 1932:51); a small borrow pit was located just south of this mound. Jackson also noted that there were several midden deposits north and east of Mound #1, one of which had much daub (Jackson 1932:55), suggesting it was the location of a burned structure.

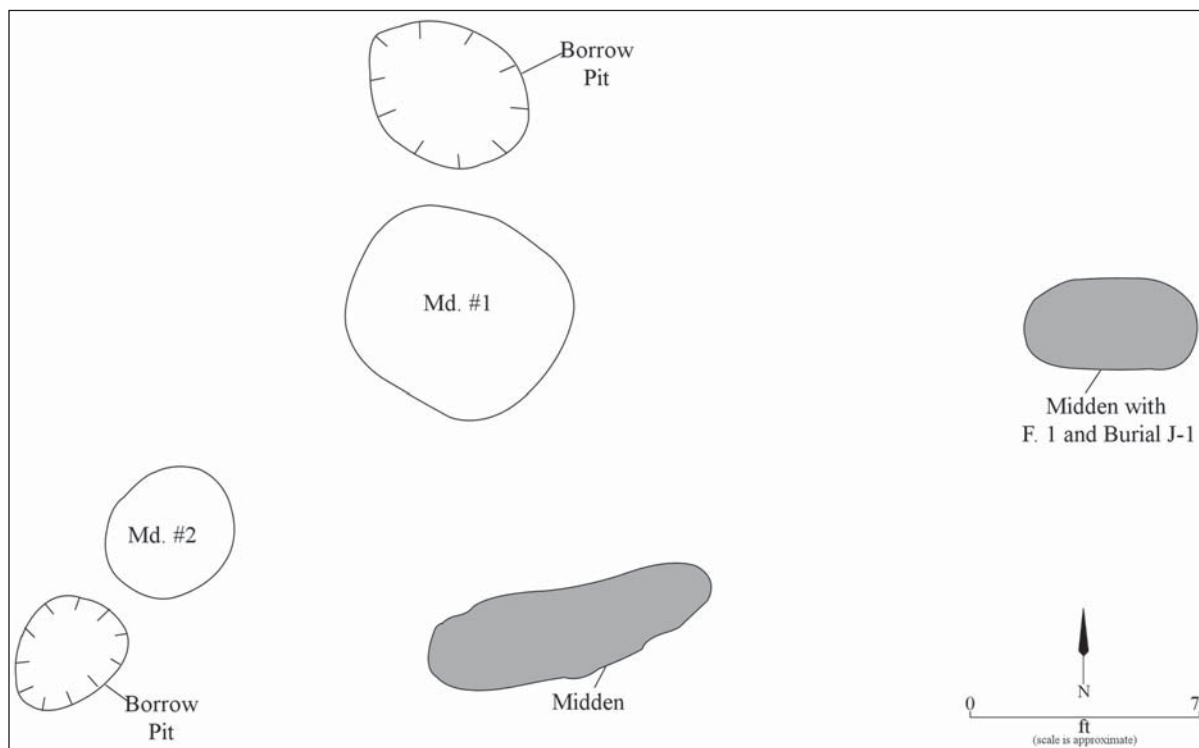


Figure 2. Plan of mounds, borrow pits, and one midden area at the Eli Moores site.

In one of these midden deposits (about 45 m east of Mound #1, see Figure 2) a Caddo burial (J-1) and a flexed dog burial (Feature 1) were discovered lying about 1.8 m apart in the excavations (Jackson 1932:7-8); the small to medium-sized adult dog (Good 1977) may have been associated with the Caddo burial as it lay near the feet of the deceased Caddo adult. The Caddo burial was that of a 20-30 year old female (Lee 1997:Table 2, Accession 577), with its head to the southeast. The Caddo burial was found only ca. 15 cm bs, and had been disturbed by plowing; skull fragments were noted on the surface before the excavations began. Associated with the individual were two ceramic vessels (a bowl and a jar) and a ceramic spindle whorl. The dog lay slightly deeper (ca. 30 cm bs); fragments of one of the vessels were found above the dog's head.

The excavations in Mound #1 proceeded first through the excavation of 1.5 m wide north-south and east-west trenches that cut across much of the mound, and then much of the central portion of the mound

was excavated (Figure 3). These excavations encountered evidence of two wood structures (that may have been burned down), an ash pit, and seven burials (J-2 to J-8) (Perttula 2014:11-22).

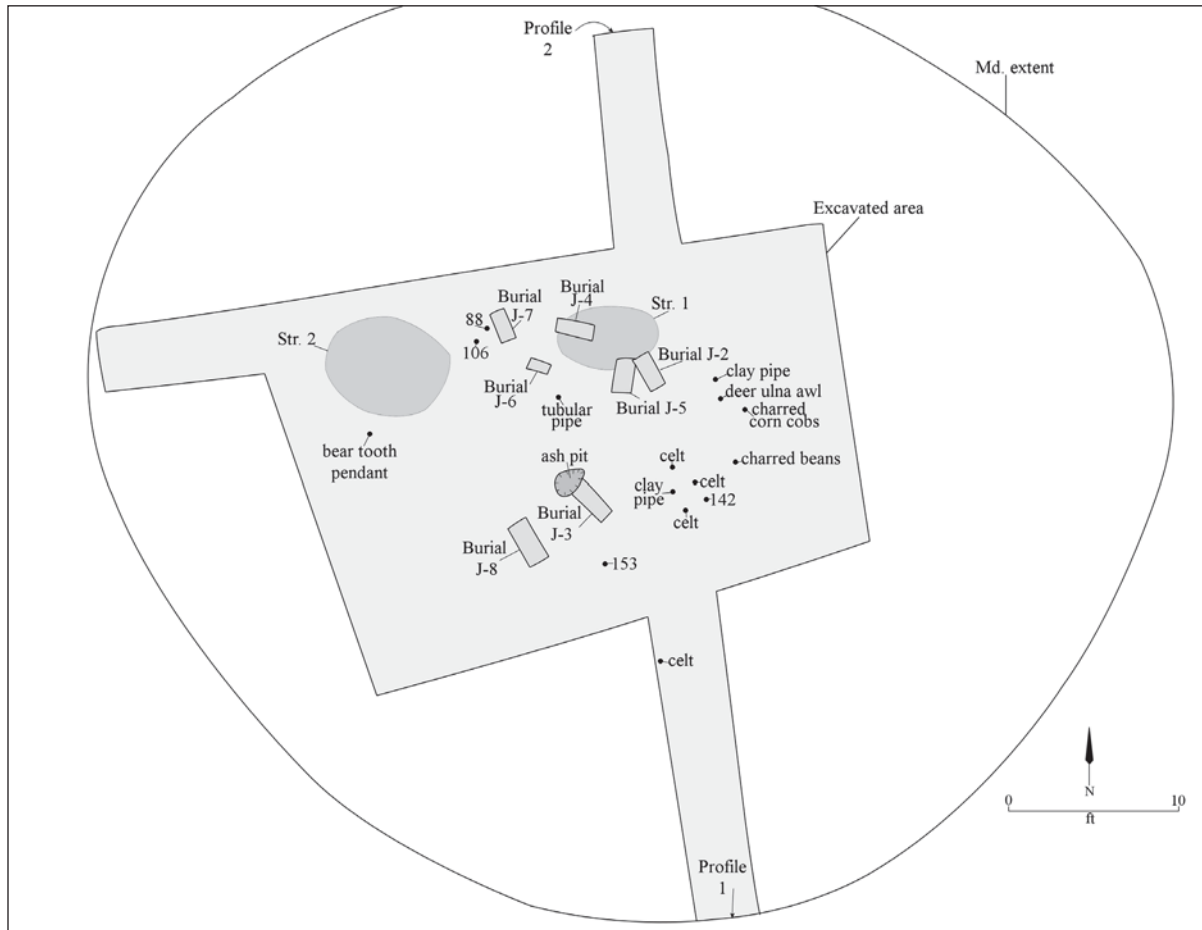


Figure 3. Jackson's plan map of excavated areas in Mound #1 at the Eli Moores site, and locations of burials, structures 1-2, and various artifact find spots.

Seven burials were excavated in Mound #1 at the Eli Moores site, including eight individuals. Six of the burials (and seven individuals) are children less than 6-7 years of age at their death, while Burial J-3 is that of an adult male; Good (1977) considers this burial to be intrusive into the mound, while the others were buried during the accumulation of the mound midden deposits.

Vessel Documentation

There are 10 ceramic vessels in the collections from the Eli Moores site. Seven of the vessels are from five different burials (J-2, J-4, J-5, J-7, and J-8), two others are from "general digging" contexts in the mound (see Jackson 1932), and one partial vessel is from an uncertain context, but possibly Burial J-1. In general, the vessels are rather small in size—some approaching miniature forms—which is consistent with their being funerary offerings for Caddo children and adolescents.

Burial J-2 is that of a child of unknown age (see Lee 1997:Table 2), possibly 8-9 years of age (Good 1977), laid in the grave (at a depth of 91 cm bs) in an extended supine position with its head facing to the southeast. There were two ceramic vessels—an incised-punctated jar (cf. Pease Brushed-Incised), and a Simms Engraved carinated bowl—placed in the grave as grave goods. There was also a section of a grog-tempered Taylor Engraved carinated bowl in the Burial J-2 fill (Perttula 2014:Figure 14).

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores (41BW2)

VESSEL NO.: 63, Burial J-2

VESSEL FORM: miniature jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: A (fired and cooled in an oxidizing environment)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 4.5 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

HEIGHT (IN CM): 4.9

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 6.5

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 5.3

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 2.7; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.2

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel rim has three rows of tool punctations (Figure 4). There is a continuous series of vertical incised lines on the vessel body that extend to the vessel base.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Incised-punctated jar



Figure 4. Incised-punctated jar in Burial J-2 at the Eli Moores site.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 33, Burial J-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: dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM):
rim, 5.0 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE
TREATMENT: burnished

EXTERIOR SURFACE
TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 8.0

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM):
11.7

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM
OR NECK (IN CM): 12.2

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND
SHAPE OF BASE: 7.2; circular
and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.5

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim panel is divided into four sections by sets of three vertical engraved lines (Figure 5), and there are upper and lower horizontal engraved lines around the rim. Within each section is a single centrally-placed row of excised punctations.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Simms Engraved



Figure 5. Simms Engraved carinated bowl from Burial J-2 at the Eli Moores site.

Burial J-4 is that of a child about 4 year old at its death. The child was laid east-west in an extended supine position, at a depth of 95 cm bs, in the grave, with its head facing to the west (Jackson 1932:29). Grave goods placed with the child included an engraved ceramic bottle and a Belcher Engraved compound bowl by the head.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 88, Burial J-4

VESSEL FORM: Bottle

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

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

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: black

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: black

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 5.7 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT:
burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 10.2

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 4.5

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR
NECK (IN CM): 3.9; maximum body diameter
of 7.8 cm

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE
OF BASE: 3.1; circular-rounded and dimpled

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.12

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The top of the vessel body has a single horizontal engraved line with four large engraved pendant triangles around the vessel (Figure 6). Three of the pendant triangles have a single inner engraved triangle, while the fourth has two cross-hatched engraved lines.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified fine ware



Figure 6. Engraved bottle from Burial J-4 at the Eli Moores site.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 72, Burial J-4

VESSEL FORM: Compound bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: black; fire clouds on the rim

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

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim,
4.8 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT:
burnished

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT:
burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 5.1

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 12.5

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM
OR NECK (IN CM): 8.3

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

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS):
0.51

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The upper panel of the vessel has three horizontal engraved lines with downward-pointing linear tick marks (Figure 7). The lower panel has four large applied nodes with sets of six diagonal engraved lines on either side of the nodes; the diagonal lines point in opposing directions.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: white pigment in the engraved lines

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Belcher Engraved, *var. Belcher* (Schambach and Miller 1984:120)



Figure 7. Belcher Engraved, *var. Belcher* compound bowl in Burial J-4 at the Eli Moores site.

Burial J-5 is a ca. 5-7 year old child (Jackson 1932:35), lying at a depth of 122 cm bs. This burial pit had been cut into by the Burial J-2 pit, and the Burial J-5 skull lay about 30 cm below the feet of Burial J-2 (Jackson 1932:35). One small applied ceramic jar was placed as a grave good with Burial J-5, and it rested under the skull.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 84, Burial J-5

VESSEL FORM: miniature jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: reddish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown;
fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 3.9 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

HEIGHT (IN CM): 4.3

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 5.8

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 5.2

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

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.15

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): There are four large (7.1 mm in diameter) applied nodes on the vessel body (Figure 8).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified utility ware

Burial J-7 is that of a child of undetermined age (possibly ca. 2 years old), buried at a depth of 132 cm bs in an extended supine position with its head facing to the north (Jackson 1932:36). A portion of a broken ceramic vessel, a very distinctive incised-punctated jar, probably of the Cowhide Stamped type (Perttula 2014:Figure 31; see also Suhm and Jelks 1962:Plate 15a, d), lay nestled along the right shoulder of the child. A broken vessel section of a grog-tempered Barkman Engraved carinated bowl was also in the fill of this burial (Perttula 2014:Figure 22).



Figure 8. Applied jar from Burial J-5 at the Eli Moores site.

Burial J-8 had two children in it, one about 2 years of age (Skeleton 1), and the other between 0-6 months of age at death (Skeleton 2); the younger child appears to have been buried atop the older child. Grave goods found with the two children include two small ceramic vessels, one of which is a Barkman Engraved carinated bowl and the other is a plain well-polished bowl.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 119, Burial J-8

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Direct rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown

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

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 4.2 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 5.1

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 8.9

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 9.4

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 4.5; circular and rounded

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.27

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The top of the rim has three horizontal engraved lines (Figure 9), while the bottom has four engraved rectangular panels. The top and bottom horizontal engraved lines on the panels have downward-pointing excised tick marks, and the sides of the panels have narrow vertical hatched columns. In the center of each panel is a single row of excised tool punctations (Figure 9).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: white pigment in the engraved lines

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Barkman Engraved



Figure 9. Barkman Engraved carinated bowl in Burial J-8 at the Eli Moores site.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 126, Burial J-8

VESSEL FORM: Bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: black

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: black

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.4 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT:
smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT:
burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 4.6

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 5.8

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR
NECK (IN CM): 5.8

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE
OF BASE: 2.5; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.2

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): Plain (Figure 10)

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified plain ware



Figure 10. Plain bowl in Burial J-8 at the Eli Moores site.

In one midden deposit about 45 m east of Mound 1 a Caddo burial (J-1) and a flexed dog burial (Feature 1) were discovered lying about 1.8 m apart in the excavations (Jackson 1932:7-8). The Caddo burial was that of a 20-30 year old female (Lee 1997:Table 2, Accession 577), with its head to the southeast. Associated with the individual were two ceramic vessels (a bottle and a jar) and a ceramic spindle whorl; fragments of one of the vessels were found above the dog's head.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 70, Burial J-1

VESSEL FORM: Bottle

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog and bone

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 5.4 mm; body, 8.9 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

HEIGHT (IN CM): N/A

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 6.4

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 7.9

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: N/A

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): N/A

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): There are horizontal trailed lines on the upper vessel body.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): cf. Keno Trailed

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: No number; Burial J-1

VESSEL FORM: Jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: N/A

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown; fire clouds on the base

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the body and base

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): body, 7.0 mm; base, 7.6 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

HEIGHT (IN CM): 15.8+

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 17.1 [on the body]

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): N/A

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 9.2; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS):

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel body is covered with vertical brushing marks to within 3.1 cm of the vessel base (Figure 11).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Karnack Brushed-Incised



Figure 11. Karnack Brushed-Incised vessel section in Burial J-1 at the Eli Moores site.

Another vessel was found in what Jackson (1932) described as “general digging;” it was not clearly found in funerary context. It was a plain compound bowl.

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Eli Moores

VESSEL NO.: 71

VESSEL FORM: Compound bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

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

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown; fire clouds on the rim

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the body and base

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.4 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

HEIGHT (IN CM): 5.7

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 10.2

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 8.3

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 4.5; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.46

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): Plain (Figure 12)

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified plain ware



Figure 12. Plain compound bowl from the Eli Moores site.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The 10 Caddo ceramic vessels from the Eli Moores site (41BW2) in the collections of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at The University of Texas at Austin are from at least six different burials—five in a burial mound (Mound #1) and another from a nearby midden deposit. The burials in Mound #1 with ceramic vessels are all those of children, and the ceramic vessels are small in size, almost miniatures, consistent with their being funerary offerings for Caddo children.

All of the vessels are grog-tempered, and one of the vessels also has burned bone pieces added as a temper. The Eli Moores site vessels were predominantly fired in a reducing or low oxygen environment (90 percent), with 60 percent of these pulled from the fire to cool in the open air. One vessel (a miniature jar in Burial J-2) was fired and cooled in a high oxygen or oxidizing environment.

The two plain vessels in the assemblage include a burnished bowl from Burial J-7 and a compound bowl found in what Jackson (1932) described as general diggings. Two of the three utility ware vessels are from burials. The first is a small jar from Burial J-2 with three rows of tool punctates around the rim, and a series of vertical incised lines on the vessel body. The second is a small jar in Burial J-5 with a plain rim and four equally-spaced and large applique nodes on the vessel body. The third is a vertical brushed-incised Karnack Brushed-Incised jar with a missing rim, from Burial J-1. The other five vessels from the Eli Moores site are fine wares with engraved designs. This includes an inverted rim Simms Engraved carinated bowl from Burial J-2; an engraved bottle with open pendant triangle elements on the body and a Belcher Engraved, *var. Belcher* compound bowl (see Schambach and Miller 1984:120 and Figure 11-11) from Burial J-4 with white pigment rubbed in the engraved lines; and a Barkman Engraved carinated bowl from Burial J-8. This vessel has had a white kaolin clay pigment rubbed in the engraved lines. Another Barkman Engraved carinated bowl was found in general digging in the mound at the Eli Moores site (see Jackson 1932).

The range of plain and decorated vessels from mound and burial contexts at the Eli Moores site is consistent with the assemblage of plain and decorated sherds discarded in midden and mound fill deposits at the site (Pertulla 2014). They are from contexts that could date as early as the 15th to early 16th century (Burial J-8, based on the Barkman Engraved carinated bowl left as a funerary offering in the grave) to later in the 16th and 17th centuries in the case of the vessels from the other burials. The Belcher Engraved, *var. Belcher* compound bowl from Burial J-4 is considered a ca. A.D. 1500-1680 ceramic marker (Schambach and Miller 1984:120).

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