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Duncan P. McKinnon

University of Central Arkansas, Jamie C. Brandon Center for Archaeological Research

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Someone's Best Friend: Caddo and the *Diitsi'*

Duncan P. McKinnon

University of Central Arkansas, Jamie C. Brandon Center for Archaeological Research

The special relationship that humans share with Canis familiaris (Caddo: diitsi') is the result of a long history of cohabitation with a high degree of variability in the role of dogs. In this paper, I present an inventory of dog burials documented in the Caddo Archaeological Area, consider symbolic dog representations in material culture, and examine Caddo ethnographic accounts that document human-canine interactions. Results reveal numerous forms of dog burial treatment, canine symbolism in ceramic, shell, and stone media, and a shared role of dogs in human ritual. These examples highlight the special relationship between the Caddo and their dogs, which were often buried in a similar concern as those afforded to human burials.

Introduction

The affectionate and mutually adaptive relationship that past and present humans share with the dog (*Canis familiaris*; Caddo: *diitsi'*) is the result of a long history of domestication and cohabitation. Recent DNA research suggests that the process of domestication and morphological evolution from the wolf (*Canis lupus*) could have begun as early as 30,000 years ago in Europe (Druzhkova et al. 2013; Skoglund et al. 2015; Witt et al. 2014). Additionally, it has been suggested that early forms of domesticated canine offered a significant adaptive advantage to *Homo sapiens* who migrated into southern Europe and encountered Neanderthal competitors (Shipman 2015; see also Higham et al. 2014).

In North America, the use of skeletal and dental morphology to define evolutionary stages of domestication suggests the oldest well-documented remains of *Canis familiaris* date to at least 10,000 years ago. These examples are not interpreted as deliberate burials, but were largely preserved within the dry caves and shelters in the Great Basin region (Berta 1981:17; Grayson 1988:23; Morey and Wiant 1992). Some of the earliest known deliberate *Canis familiaris* burials are from the Koster (11GE4) site situated along the Lower Illinois River Valley (Brown and Vierra 1983; Morey and Wiant 1992). At Koster, three dog burials dating to 8,500 years ago were discovered in basin-shaped shallow dug pits. A single female dog (F2256) had a metate and mano resting near the skull, although it is

inconclusive if these items are deliberate grave goods (Morey and Wiant 1992:225). If the metate and mano are considered grave goods, purposefully buried with the female dog, it is interesting to consider ethnographic accounts in the central Midwest that describe the sacrifice of dogs during corn planting ceremonies (Cook 2012:500; Nuttall 1980:106).

Further south, Early Archaic sites such as Bering Sinkhole (41KR241) and Schulze Cave in Texas contain examples of domestic dog remains (Bement 1994:51-56; Dalquest et al. 1969). In both cases, dog remains were found in close relationship to human burials. However, it is not fully understood if these were deliberate burials or a scenario in which the dogs (and perhaps the humans) had inadvertently fallen into the sinkholes and subsequently perished. Excavations at the Britton (41ML37) site suggest a Late Archaic possible multi-dog burial (Mehanchick and Kibler 2008; Story and Shafer 1965). The dogs were found among numerous features that included ash lenses, hearths, and concentrations of mussel shell (Scott et al. 2002).

Among Middle to Late Woodland period cultures, canines have been documented as deliberately buried within mounds at several important and regionally influential Marksville, Troyville, and Coles Creek culture sites in Louisiana. In these examples, dogs were often afforded a depositional location and treatment similar to humans (see Perri 2017:92-95). It has been suggested that the disposition of dogs in mounds during the Middle to Late Woodland period was part of a regional early burial mound tradition with

“a deep seated custom” (Schambach 1997:55; see also Ford 1951:107; Ford and Willey 1940:41; Jeter et al. 1989:151). Dog burials have also been documented as buried within the thick, dark Fourche Maline (Woodland period) middens in Arkansas (Girard et al. 2014:33; see also Leith 2011; Schambach 1982). In contrast to Louisiana Woodland sites, “Fourche Maline mounds [in Arkansas] seem to have been for the human, perhaps mostly male, elite, and no dogs allowed” (Schambach 1997:55).

By the time of the Mississippian period (ca. post A.D. 1000) in the southeast, deliberate dog burials have been found at several important and regionally influential mound sites (Schwartz 2000:Table 1). At Etowah (9BR1), two dog burials were found in context with structures and activities associated with the pre-mound surface of Mound C and the communal and ceremonial use of this space related to public, political, or religious feasting events (Larson 2004:133; van der Schalie and Parmalee 1960:50). At Cahokia (11MS2), two, possibly three, dog burials were found within Monks Mound. A small adult dog (F50) was buried outside of a “Final Structure” (Mortuary Rack) on the third terrace – an area that earlier housed a massive “Major Structure” (charnel temple) and likely an “important location to the people of Cahokia” (Nelson 2009:48). The F50 dog was buried with a “shell-tempered, cuplike, plain pottery jar and about 50 g of red ocher” (Nelson 2009:49). A second dog burial (R17) was found buried in a pit with human remains within the “formal and ritualistic” Upper Ramp at the “gated entrance” to the First Terrace (Nelson 2009:60-61). Dog bones and ceramic sherds were also found in a pit (F70) south of the palisade (F56) on the Third Terrace (Nelson 2009:64). At the Sunwatch (33MY57) site – a Fort Ancient culture village (see Cook 2007) – seven deliberately buried dogs are documented, many of which are in direct association with human burials. They were buried within a large red cedar structure that is interpreted as a possible clan- or sodality-based ceremonial wolf lodge (Cook 2012:512-519).

These are but a terse few examples, as there is an enormous amount of literature documenting dog and human interactions (see Walker 2000). These studies describe the role of the domesticated dog around the world, the evolution and skeletal morphology

of early dogs, the practical and ritual uses of dogs, relatedness of modern canine varieties to earlier forms, and zooarchaeological methods associated with the study and analysis of canines (Bethke and Burt 2020; Crockford 2000; Morey 2006; Walker 2000). It is evident there is a high degree of variability in the role of dogs among humans. They served as human partners, friends, and companions in hunting and herding, as pack animals, and as guard, fighting, and dogs of war. They also served as active participants in ritual, and as meat for consumption in lean times or reserved as offerings in ceremonial feasting. There is little question that the domesticated dog was an important partner and often treated with a high degree of adulation and reverence. In many cases, they were accorded special mortuary treatments and often buried within delineated ceremonial or ritual spaces – and occasionally with humans (see Harrington 1920; Perino 1983; Webb 1946, 1950; Webb and Haag 1939; Yohe and Pavesic 2000). At times, dogs were also buried with grave goods. Burial items may be rudimentary or meager in size, but this action represents a human-made material object that was purposefully, and meaningfully, deposited with a “non-material” canine to accompany its journey into the Otherworld.

Herein, I narrow the broad scope of dog mortuary and burial practices in North America to an inventory and consideration of canine burials located within the Caddo Archaeological Area during a span of time defined as the Caddo cultural tradition from around A.D. 900/1000 to as late as the early nineteenth century in some places (see Perttula 2012). Additionally, I consider dog representations present in symbolic material form and review Caddo ethnographic accounts associated with human-canine interaction. Because of the long and enduring human-dog partnership, a comparative analysis of canine ritual and mortuary treatment can shed light on the variability of human cultural traditions linked to the care, maintenance, and treatment of *Canis familiaris* as evidence of a “special bond between people and dog that supersedes purely pragmatic considerations” (Morey 2006:164).

Criteria for Burial

Determination of deliberate dog burial and mortuary treatment in Caddo archaeology literature (and

generally) is not without challenges. This is especially the case with early archaeological reports that often provide terse descriptions of canine remains or meek interpretive suggestions regarding the presence or condition of burials (see Morris 2011:168; Perri 2017:98). However, it is clear from a detailed review of archaeological reports that dog fauna is present at numerous Caddo sites and in diverse contexts. But, given the multiple roles of the dog, which can include various forms of consumption, faunal presence does not necessarily indicate a deliberate burial treatment. For example, at the Sanders (41LR2) site was found the disarticulated remains of “three long, sharp-nosed dogs” mixed in the Mound 1 midden. The disarticulated nature of the bones, their mixed deposit in the midden, and a lack of an identifiable pit suggests they are not deliberate burials. However, a fourth dog, also found within the Mound 1 midden, was an articulated “complete skeleton of another such dog” (Jackson et al. 2000:33). Because of its articulated remains, the fourth dog is considered a deliberate burial that might represent a primary or secondary burial in the midden – perhaps a high-ranking dog related to a high-ranking individual. Nonetheless, it is distinctive from the disarticulated and mixed canine remains also present in the midden. Thus, the multiplicity of roles that dogs occupied, or more adequately the roles that were assigned by humans (see Morey 2006; Pluskowski 2012), are represented archaeologically as different types of disposal. In this light, an application of “context-specific interpretations of dog deposition” can illuminate “the varying relationships between dogs and humans in the past” (Perri 2017:89) and guide canine faunal evaluations as being a deliberate dog burial or simple disposal and disposition.

Yet, there is also the very real issue of potential errors in field-based faunal species assignment, often associated with taphonomic processes or post-depositional disturbances of faunal remains. This concern was recently highlighted in a reanalysis of dog burials found at Middle Woodland mound sites in Illinois. In this study, an intentional burial, previously identified as a canine, was correctly identified as a young bobcat containing a necklace of shell beads and two bear canine teeth (Perri et al. 2015). In the Caddo Area, to my knowledge, there has not been any published reanalysis

of canine remains. In fact, published descriptions on detailed zooarchaeological or faunal analysis of dog remains in the Caddo Area are infrequent. These limited zooarchaeological data are an added challenge since lack of comprehensive comparative data concerning physical injury or trauma during life, the presence of pathologies or age-related stress, or evidence of post-mortem treatment offers an incomplete understanding of human-canine relationships (see Perri 2017). Regardless, faunal interpretations and subsequent taxonomic descriptions, terse as they may be in current Caddo literature, are considered appropriately sufficient to begin this inventory and analysis.

For this discussion, canine remains in Caddo archaeological literature were evaluated using a proposed two-level typological model of dog deposition outlined by Perri (2017). Using this typological framework, remains were first considered as burials based on the presence or absence of the following variables: osteological traits (articulated, disarticulated, etc.), burial location (mound, midden, etc.), types of grave goods (lithic, ceramic, etc.), and relatedness to human depositional types (mortuary treatment, positioning, etc.). Once identified, dog burials were then classified based on five depositional types: burial within a dedicated dog “cemetery” (isolation), inclusion (association) of dogs in human burials, burials not located within a cemetery but buried within a defined pit (component), portions (elements) of dog remains found with humans, or articulated or disturbed disarticulated remains (expedient) without a defined pit (Table 1). For example:

1. Canine remains were found in an articulated position in a defined burial pit (component deposition). At the Roitsch (41RR16) site an “adult-sized dog had been buried on its side in a ca. 80 cm diameter pit, with its head at the eastern end of the pit, and the front and back legs were partially flexed” (Perttula 2008a:344). At the Arnold (41HP102) site, articulated remains of four dogs were found in burial pits such that “the dogs were [likely] pets and did not contribute to the prehistoric diet” (Henderson 1978:105). At 34CH37 in Oklahoma, a dog burial (Feature 5) was found in a “pit filled with black midden soil that had been excavated into the brownish-yellow sterile sand [containing a dog buried with] four unmodified fresh water mussel shells, one

Table 1. Current corpus of canine burials in the Caddo Archaeological Area.

Trinomial	Site Name	County	Date	# of Burials	# of Dogs	Age	Osteological Traits
41HP240	Anglin	Hopkins	AD 1500-1700, Titus phase	5	5		disarticulated/disturbed
41HP102	Arnold	Hopkins	Woodland to Early-Middle Caddo	3	4	1 elderly, 1 juvenile, 2 adult buried together	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	AD 1550-1700	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	AD 1550-1700	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	AD 1550-1700	1	1	puppy 2/3 months	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	AD 1550-1700	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	Late Caddo (AD 1300-1700), McCurtain phase	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	Late Caddo (AD 1300-1700), McCurtain phase	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	Late Caddo (AD 1300-1700), McCurtain phase	1	1	adult	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	Late Caddo (AD 1300-1700), McCurtain phase	1	2	puppy, 6 weeks	articulated
41RR16	Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman	Red River	Late Caddo (AD 1300-1700), McCurtain phase	1	2	adult & puppy	articulated
3LA97	Cedar Grove	Lafayette	AD 1670-1730	2	2	unknown	articulated
34CH37	CH37	Choctaw	AD 1300-1500	1	1	unknown	articulated
41RR11	Dan Holdeman	Red River	AD 1000-1500	2	2	unknown	articulated
41NA27	Deshazo	Nacogdoches	AD 1690-1750	1	1	elderly	disarticulated
41BW2	E.H. Moores	Bowie	AD 1570	1	1	unknown	disarticulated
41WD3	Earl Jones Farm	Wood	AD 1430-1680, Titus phase	1	1	unknown	skull
41CS23	Goode Hunt	Cass	AD 1500-1700	1	1	unknown	articulated
41FN1	Harling	Fannin	AD 1561	1	1	unknown	articulated
3SV29	Holman Springs	Sevier		3	3	unknown	articulated
41HP106	Hurricane Hill	Hopkins	AD 1250-1400, Middle Caddo	1	1	unknown	articulated
34CH1	Mahaffey	Choctaw	Late Caddo	1	1	unknown	disarticulated/disturbed
41DT1/41DT2	Manton Miller	Delta	Terminal Archaic to Middle Caddo?	1	1	unknown	articulated
41HP238	R.A. Watkins	Hopkins	AD 1500-1700, Titus phase	1	1	unknown	disarticulated/disturbed
3.25 miles north of Ozan	Robins, H.E., Place			1	1	unknown	articulated
34MC215	Roden	McCurtain	AD 1300-1500	1	1	unknown	articulated
34MC215	Roden	McCurtain	AD 1300-1500	1	1	unknown	articulated
34MC215	Roden	McCurtain	AD 1300-1500	1	1	unknown	articulated
41BW5	Roseborough	Bowie	ca. AD 1750, Late Contact period	1	2	5+ years/puppy	articulated
41LR2	Sanders	Lamar	1300-1400, Middle Caddo	1	1	unknown	articulated
3LA83	Spirit Lake/ Cabinas	Lafayette	AD 1600-1700	1	1	adult	disarticulated/disturbed
41WD529	Steck	Wood	AD 1470, Late Caddo, Titus phase	1	4	2 adult, 2 sub-adult	articulated
41NA231	Tallow Grove	Nacogdoches	AD 1200-1500	1	3	unknown	articulated
41HP237	Tunier Farm	Hopkins	AD 1500-1700, Titus phase	3	3	unknown	disarticulated/disturbed
41WD6	Winterbauer	Wood	AD 1430-1680, Titus phase	9	9	unknown	skulls
Totals:				55	64		

Location	Burial Goods	With Human?	Depositional Type	Reference
Twelve units	none reported	No	expedient	Schniebs 2009; Todd 2013
	none reported	No	component	Henderson 1978; Todd 2013
Burial 1, "four dog burials located in what must have been a special cemetery for them in the area between house areas 2 and 4" Perino 1983:47	none reported	No	isolated?	Perino 1983:47; Todd 2013
Burial 2, "four dog burials located in what must have been a special cemetery for them in the area between house areas 2 and 4" Perino 1983:47	none reported	No	isolated?	Perino 1983:47; Todd 2013
Burial 3, "four dog burials located in what must have been a special cemetery for them in the area between house areas 2 and 4" Perino 1983:47	Small jar	No	isolated?	Perino 1983:47; Todd 2013
Burial 4, "four dog burials located in what must have been a special cemetery for them in the area between house areas 2 and 4" Perino 1983:47	none reported	Child	association/ isolated?	Parmalee and Opperman 1983; Perino 1983:47; Todd 2013
Block III, Feature 346, associated with a structure	Red soil, shell, sherds	No	component	Perttula 2008a:344-347; Todd 2013; Yates 2008
Block IV, Feature 401	none reported	No	expedient	Perttula 2008a:347-348; Todd 2013; Yates 2008
Feature 701, proximate to human cemetery	Ceramic sherd near right eye	No	isolated?	Perttula 2008b:372-373; Todd 2013; Yates 2008
Feature 702, proximate to human cemetery	Clay cap?	No	isolated?	Perttula 2008b:372-373; Todd 2013; Yates 2008
Feature 703, proximate to human cemetery	Shell-tempered pottery sherds (Nash Neck Banded)	No	isolated?	Perttula 2008b:372-373; Todd 2013; Yates 2008
Feature 4 and Feature 10; a few meters to the east and west of Structure 2	Single sherd on ribs of F4.	Feature 4 contained a single human tooth	association?	Kelley 2012:414; Styles and Purdue 1984:218; Trubowitz 1984:87
Feature 5	Four freshwater mussel shells	No	component	Lewis 1973:15; Perino and Bennett 1978:12
Sub-Mound	none reported	Yes	association	Girard et al. 2014:45; Perino 1995:9-10; Schultz 2010:160
Unit 2, Area D Midden	none reported	No	isolated	Good 1982:92-93; Henderson 1982:135; Todd 2013
150 feet from Mound 1	Fragments of a bowl	No	association?	Jackson 1932b:7-8; Todd 2013
	none reported	No	expedient	Perttula 2015c:13
	Engraved compound bowl, unknown type (Vessel 38); Perttula 2015:33	Nearby	component	Jackson 1932a; Perttula 1992:193, 2015a:33; Todd 2013
Feature 43, top of the mound	none reported	No	component	Davis 1962a, 1962b, 1996; Perttula 2015b:82
	none reported	No	component	Davis 1986:9
Feature 37	none reported	Nearby	component	Fields et al. 1997:23-33; Perttula 1999:101; Schultz 2010:258; Todd 2013; Yates 1999:352
Feature 4	none reported	No	expedient	Perino and Bennett 1978:12
Area B Midden	none reported	Nearby	expedient	Fields 1997:15-17; Johnson 1962; Todd 2013
Three teeth and foot from surface	none reported		expedient	Schniebs 2009; Todd 2013
Mound 1	Burial had a "bottle of archaic form [Hempstead Engraved], to the right of the [human] skull, and an inverted bowl on the left shoulder" Harrington 1920:51	Yes	association	Harrington 1920:51
Found "deep in the present bank of Red River" (Perino 1981:18)	none reported	No	expedient	Perino 1981:18
Refuse pit (Feature 31) (Perino 1981:18)	none reported	Nearby	expedient	Perino 1981:18
Feature 54, 28 inches deep near house sites" (Perino 1981:18)	none reported	No	expedient	Perino 1981:18
Area A, Feature 2, shallow pit	Close proximity to smudge pit	No	component	Gilmore 1986:26, 118-120; Todd 2013
Mound 1, Midden	none reported	No	expedient	Jackson et al. 2000:33; Todd 2013
Feature 3, midden	"Small sooted bowl... resembles McKinney Plain" Hemmings 1982:82, Table 5-4	No	expedient	Hemmings 1982:72, 88; Moore 1912:574
Midden	none reported	No	expedient	Butler and Perttula 1981; Todd 2013
Feature 25, large storage pit excavated into a midden	none reported	No	component	Perttula 2008c:239, 583; Todd 2013
57 specimens from one shovel test	none reported	No	expedient	Schniebs 2009; Todd 2013
Clumped together in a mound midden	none reported	No	isolated	Perttula 2015b:24; Wilson and Jackson 1930

placed just beneath the vertebrae and the others just beyond the distal ends of the rear legs” (Lewis 1973:15). In this instance, articulated remains in a pit are also accompanied with grave goods.

2. If the canine remains were found in an articulated or mostly articulated position without a defined pit (expedient deposition), such as the articulated “fourth dog” Mound 1 midden burial at the Sanders site (mentioned above). At the Steck (41WD529) site were “at least four individuals” with one dog burial found “lying on the left side with the head to the north, excavated from the midden” (Butler and Perttula 1981:123). At the Manton Miller (41DT1) site dog remains were found where a pit outline was not discernable, yet “the remains nevertheless seem to represent a deliberate interment judging from the well-articulated skeleton and its neat placement” (Johnson 1962:241).

3. If the canine remains were associated with more than one individual, such as a group of skulls, which might suggest a dedicated space for burial or disposal (isolated deposition). At the Winterbauer (41WD6) site, “nine canid skulls, probably marking the deliberate burial... of dogs [were found] in the midden deposits, in the southern part of the midden mound” (Perttula 2015a:24). At the Deshazo (41NA27) site, a dog was found intentionally buried with additional disarticulated dog remains scattered in a midden (Unit 2, Area D), such that it “appears to be held in high esteem” (Good 1982:93; Henderson 1982:135).

4. If the remains were located in a disturbed area containing an abundance of dog bone fragments suggesting the location of a former burial (expedient deposition). At the Mahaffey (34CH1) site, was a potential burial of canine “bones [that] had been badly destroyed by rodents. It contained a few scattered bones plus a skull and jaw sections” (Perino and Bennett 1978:12). At the R. A. Watkins (41HP238), Anglin (41HP240) and Tunier Farm (41HP237) sites, an analysis of dog faunal suggested “most likely the dog remains are from disturbed burials” (Schniebs 2009:73).

5. If dogs remains were included with human burials (association burial). At the Roitsch (41RR16) site was the burial of a child, in which a “well-preserved skeleton of a dog was found 10 cm deeper, about 30 cm from the legs of the child” (Perino 1983:44). At the

Robins Place site was found a dog burial with a “bottle of archaic form [Hempstead Engraved], to the right of the [human] skull, and an inverted bowl on the left shoulder” (Harrington 1920:51).

Caddo Dog Burials

The corpus discussed in this paper is based solely on published faunal identification and described interpretations of disposed dog remains recovered from known Caddo sites. Literature on Caddo archaeology, history, and ethnography is extensive, yet fairly easily to search for citations and sites thanks to the long-standing efforts of Dr. Tim Perttula and his management of the Caddo bibliography (Perttula 2021). Additionally, a significant amount of grey literature, as well as a few complete journal volumes, are freely accessible (with in-text searching!) on the *Index of Texas Archaeology* database (<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ita/>). The Caddo Conference Organization also maintains a membership library housing all of the *Caddo Archeology Journal* volumes and several *Journal of Northeast Texas Archaeology* volumes (<http://www.caddoconference.org/library.php>). Yet, despite the organization and fairly easy accessibility of Caddo citations and references in multiple databases, I certainly have not reviewed them all. Thus, this consideration of Caddo dog burials and symbolic material representations is far from complete. No doubt, additional examples of dog remains and burial treatment at sites throughout the Caddo Area remain elusive.

Building upon the work of Todd (2013), the current corpus contains 55 canine burials (see Table 1). There are a Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI) of 64 dogs. Burials have been identified at 25 archaeological sites situated within the Caddo Archaeological Area (Figure 1). Winterbauer (41WD6) and the Bob Williams/Roitsch/Kaufman (3RR16) sites each contain nine burials, whereas others have only one or two identified canine burials. Several sites are spread along the Red River and within clusters along the Sulphur, Big Cypress, and Sabine River drainages in East Texas. Burials largely fall within the Middle and Late Caddo time periods. Dog burials from six Caddo sites (mounds and farmsteads) are summarized below.

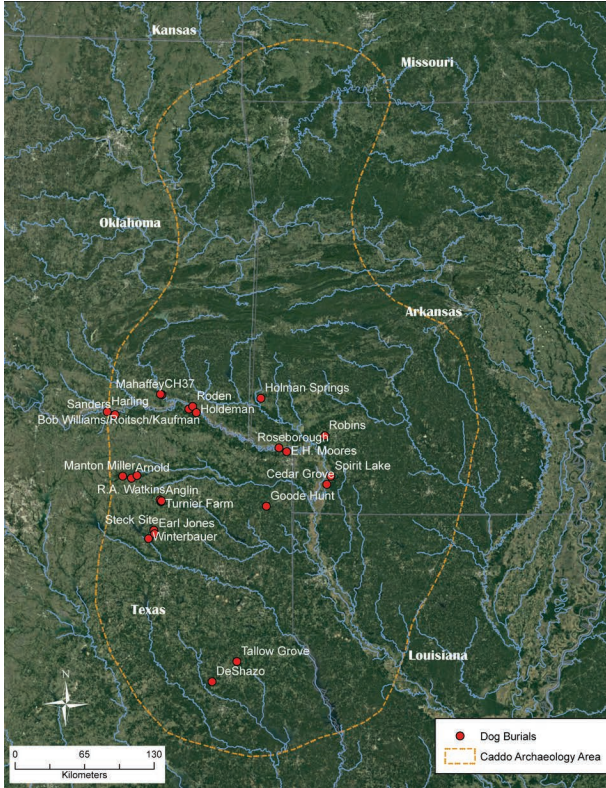


Figure 1. Distribution of identified canine burials at Caddo sites.

Bob Williams/Roitsch/Kaufman

The Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman (41RR16) site represents a complex or community of Middle to Late Caddo houses and cemeteries. Over the course of several investigations beginning in the late 1970s, a total of nine canine burials with 11 dogs have been identified (Parmalee and Opperman 1983; Perino 1983; Perttula

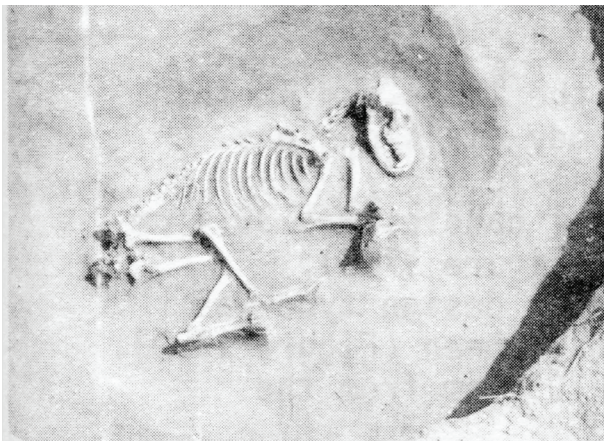


Figure 2. Dog burial at the Bob Williams/Roitsch/Kaufman site, House 4 (Perino 1983, Figure 5). Image used with permission from the Museum of the Red River.

2008a; Yates 2008). In the 1970s, Greg Perino excavated dog burials associated with House Pattern 2 (Burials 1, 2, and 3) and within the floor of House 4 (Burial 4). Of note are Burials 3 and 4. Burial 3 is a puppy estimated between 2 to 3 months. It was buried on its “left side curled around a bowl made from the bottom of a small jar” (Perino 1983:47). Dog burial 4 was in a flexed position, also on its left side, and buried 30 cm from the legs of a child burial (Figure 2). Both the dog and child were buried within House 4. A small Hudson Incised bottle was with the child.

In the early 1990s, the Texas Archaeological Society conducted field schools at the related Roitsch site where five canine burials containing a total of seven dogs were excavated (Perttula 2008a). Feature 346 is an adult dog buried in an 80 cm diameter pit and in close association with a structure that had burned and collapsed at some point prior to the burial. The dog was situated in a burial pit with a mussel shell placed near the back legs, some scattered sherds near the chest, and red soil around the chest and head area (Perttula 2008a:347, Figure 19).

Burial Feature 401 is an adult dog simply recorded as a “flexed dog burial” (Perttula 2008a:344) with no burial goods reported. The burial was located outside of a possible structure, defined based on posthole configurations, a central hearth, and concentrations of daub (Figure 3).

Burial Features 701, 702, and 703 were found on the periphery of a Late Caddo McCurtain phase cemetery at the site (Perttula 2008a:364, Figure 37).



Figure 3. Dog burial at the Bob Williams/Roitsch/Kaufman site, Feature 401 (Perttula 2008a:348, Figure 21). Image used with permission from the Texas Archeological Society.

Feature 701 is a flexed adult dog, situated on its left side, and buried with a ceramic sherd near the right eye. Feature 702 is a puppy buried in a tight bundle with a possible clay cap over the burial. Tooth buds of a second canine were also found with 702, which are suggested as a possible multi-puppy burial (Yates 2008:474). Feature 703 is a double burial containing an adult female and puppy. Buried with the dogs were shell-tempered sherds, of which one is identified as Nash Neck Banded (Perttula 2008b:372; Yates 2008:474). The cluster of dog burials found proximate to a human cemetery might suggest the location of an isolated dog cemetery.

Dan Holdman

The Dan Holdman (41RR11) site is a multi-mound site excavated by Perino in the early 1980s (see Girard et al. 2014:45). The site contained a small mound that had covered at least three likely rectangular structures. Included was a McCurtain phase child burial (Burial 15) and two associated dog burials, each buried within deliberate pits approximately 70 cm deep (Perino 1995: Figure 4; Perttula 1995:73; Schultz 2010:160). Perino also records the presence of two “smudge pits” with the hearths, pits, and burial features, although their chronological relationship to the dog burials is indeterminable (Girard et al. 2014:45; Perino 1995:10). No further discussion is given to the dog burials, apart from their location relative to excavated features. However, at the Roseborough (41BW5) site was found a dog burial containing two dogs, which was also documented in “close proximity to the smudge pit (a female activity locus)” (Gilmore 1986:119).

E. H. Moores

The E. H. Moores (41BW2) site is a multi-mound Late Caddo site. A. T. Jackson excavated at the site in the fall of 1932, where he opens his notes by stating that “each evening, shortly before dark, an aerial attack was staged against our camp by thousands of mosquitos, armed with long bills” (Jackson 1932a:1). As part of his explorations, he documents a single dog skeleton with excellent preservation, although not complete, located about 150 feet east of Mound 1 in a “crumpled position, as if a small hole had been dug and the dog skeleton crammed into it” (Jackson 1932a:7). Buried with the dog, a few inches from the head were several fragments

of a ceramic bowl of an unknown type. A human burial (Burial J-1) was located six feet to the southeast and Jackson suggests that the human and dog were buried together. There is no additional information.

Spirit Lake/Cabinas

The Spirit Lake (3LA83) site, first recorded by C. B. Moore in 1911 as the Cabinas site (Moore 1912:573), is a Late Caddo farmstead. Riverbank salvage excavations in 1979 discovered a disturbed small adult dog burial (Feature 3) in Trench A and within a household midden. The dog was buried with a small “nearly plain grog-tempered [sooted] bowl with everted rim that resembles McKinney Plain” (Hemmings 1982:72). During Moore’s limited investigations at Cabinas, he makes note of the burial of “a dog, judging from the size and general appearance, - which fell into fragments on removal... and on the skull was a large fragment of pottery” (Moore 1912:574). While the Moore and Feature 3 dogs may be two different burials, it is conservatively assumed that the disturbance of Feature 3 is a result of Moore’s discovery and reburial of the same dog 68 years prior. As such, only one identified dog burial is assigned to this site.

Cedar Grove

The Cedar Grove (3LA97) site is a Late Caddo farmstead contemporaneous and situated close to the Spirit Lake farmstead site (Trubowitz 1984, ed.). Two flexed dog burials (Features 4 and 10) were found during salvage excavations throughout the fall of 1980 (Figure 4). Both were buried on their right side and located a few meters from Structure 2 and in proximity to a cemetery. Feature 4 contained a single sherd of an unknown type that had been placed on the ribs. Feature 10 is described as having the hind legs deliberately tucked below the stomach (Styles and Purdue 1984:218; Trubowitz 1984:87).

Good Hunt

The Good Hunt (41CS23) site is a Late Caddo site where a single dog burial was found at the northwest periphery of a cemetery. A. T. Jackson discovered the burial during his work at the site in 1932, where he describes it as “the first case noted in Texas where a vessel not with a human burial has been in direct

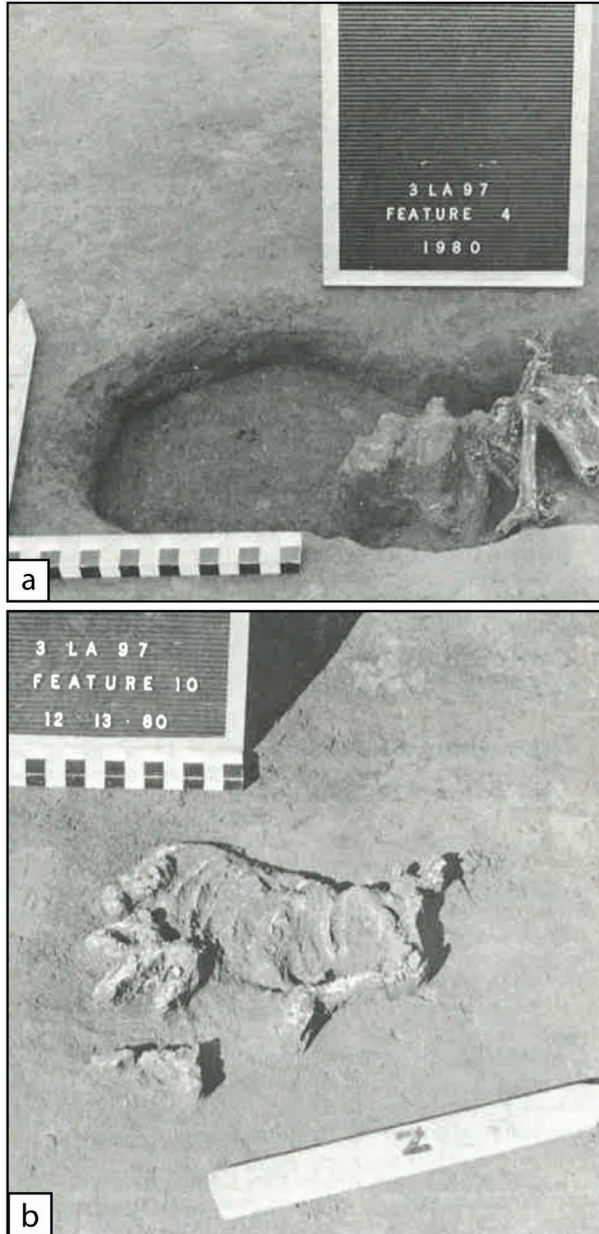


Figure 4. Dog burials at the Cedar Grove site: *a*, Feature 4 (Trubowitz 1984:Figure 9-7, ARAS # 807979); *b*, Feature 10 (Trubowitz 1984:Figure 9-8, ARAS # 808003). Images used with permission from the Arkansas Archeological Survey.

association with any part of a dog skeleton. The occurrence would seem to suggest the possibility that this might have been a dog burial, with which the vessel was placed as a token of esteem by its owner” (Jackson 1932b:15). The vessel to which he is referring is Vessel 38, an engraved compound bowl of an unknown type (Perttula 2015b:33).

In sum, the burials described, along with others in the corpus (see Table 1), reveal a suite of diverse

burial treatments where dogs are buried on both the left and right sides in shallow pits, in house floors, or in middens. Eleven examples (16%) were interred with burial items, such as ceramic sherds, small bowls, jars, or bottles, or other items. There are two instances where dogs are buried in close proximity to smudge pits. There are six (10%) that are either buried with humans or in close proximity to human burials or cemetery areas. In one case, Perino (1983:47) suggests that a concentration of dog burials at the Bob Williams/Roitsch/Sam Kaufman site may represent “a special cemetery” reserved for dogs.

Dog Symbolism and Ethnography

While not as frequent as the stylistic designs, motifs, and geometric symmetry that define the Caddo ceramic tradition (see McKinnon et al. 2021; Suhm and Jelks 1962), avian, mammalian, amphibian, and reptilian zoomorphic representations do occur on a variety of media. They are visible as incised or engraved depictions on ceramic vessels (Gadus 2013; Hart and Perttula 2010; Perttula and Walters 2016; Turner 1978, 1997; Walters 2006), as effigy applique “tail riders” on ceramic bowls (Hathcock 1974; Krieger 1946:Figure 16; Perttula and Selden 2015; Trubitt 2017), as highly stylized whole effigy vessels (Bell and Baerreis 1951; Early 1988; Trubitt 2017), or as representational forms on worked shell, bone, and stone or sandstone (Dowd 2011; Emerson and Girard 2004; Jackson 1935; McKinnon 2015; Webb and Dodd 1939).

Examples of canine representations potentially occur in some of the same media forms, although more rarely. For example, recorded from the Middle to Late Caddo J. M. Riley (41UR2) site in Upshur County, Texas, is an effigy bowl that has been interpreted as a deer or dog (Figure 5) (Perttula 2019:Figure 772). The bowl is classified as Hood Engraved and has a protruding head with a long nose and ears and a flat tail on the opposing side of the vessel. Three engraved horizontal lines are on the body. Perttula and Selden (2015) document six ceramic vessels with four-legged effigy tail riders (Hood Engraved, *var. Allen*) from Middle to Late Caddo East Texas sites (Figure 6). In five examples, the quadruped tail riders are opposite an avian effigy plumed head. A single smaller vessel



Figure 5. Hood Engraved effigy bowl from J. M. Riley (41UR2) site (Perttula 2019:Figure 772). Image used with permission from the Friends of Northeast Texas Archaeology.

(Figure 6f) lacks the opposing avian head. Between three and four horizontal engraved lines are on the body of the vessels. In Arkansas, a similar example is present in Joint Educational Consortium's Hodges Collection. The bowl resembles the East Texas forms (although not formally typed) with four horizontal engraved lines and a four-legged tail rider facing inward (Trubitt 2017:71). An avian plume head is not present.

Tail rider effigies have been referred to as "bear" effigies (Phillips et al. 1951:169). While these effigies may contain greater meaning than naturalistic interpretations, I suggest some tail rider effigies might also represent canines. For example, a small shell-tempered effigy head from a tail rider was documented in the George T. Wright collection from Red River

County, Texas (Figure 7) (Perttula et al. 2018). The effigy more resembles a dog than a bear with its "engraved open mouth, two eyes, and two upturned ears" (Perttula et al. 2018:94). An effigy vessel from the Pierce Freeman (41AN34) site (see Figure 6b) is similar with tall ears and a long nose (Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 6). When compared as a group, some tail riders are more bear-like with rounded face and hunched body whereas others are more dog-like with upright ears and a more pointed, long nose. Yet, there is consistency with the vessel form, design, and positioning of the tail riders. Interestingly, there is a documented relationship of a role of the dog as a Caddo companion when hunting bear. Dogs were used during bear hunts to rout out bears from their dens and send them up into trees (Swanton 1942:137). Whether there is any correlation will likely never be known, but it is compelling enough to highlight here.

Dogs are possibly symbolically represented in other media forms. For example, Schwartz (2000) proposes an alternative interpretation of a Spiro (34LF40) Craig Mound gorget (Phillips and Brown 1984:Plate 128). Rather than a raccoon, it is observed that the animal being held by the neck is missing the distinctive raccoon eyes and possibly represents a dog about to be sacrificed (Schwartz 2000:220). Hamilton (1954:Plate 22) illustrates a possible dog-snake effigy



Figure 6: Composite of Hood Engraved effigy bowls from East Texas: a, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 3 (41AN1); b, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 6 (41AN34); c, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 13 (41AN54), Perttula and Sitters 2017:9; d, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 17 (41CE12); e, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 19 (41CE12); f, Perttula and Selden 2015:Figure 18 (41CE12). Images used with permission from the Friends of Northeast Texas Archaeology.

pipe also found at Spiro. He describes the pipe as having a raised serpent design on the sides, a figure of a rattlesnake on the bottom, and a “canine head on prow” which projects beyond the pipe bowl (Hamilton 1952:39).

Ethnographic data highlight that the Caddo had no domestic animals, except for the dog, and that dogs often participated in the green corn ceremony. As part of the ceremony and prior to the consumption of the green corn, a series of rituals and offerings are undertaken. If corn were eaten by a human before the precautionary rituals, the violator would “be infallibly bitten by a snake” (Swanton 1942:225). Observations by Spanish missionaries provide several examples where dogs are afforded the same precautionary restrictions (see also Carter 1995:135). In one instance, it is noted that when corn is harvested the Caddo would “tie their fore-feet to their [dog’s] snouts, which prevents their eating fresh corn, of which they are exceedingly fond” (Swanton 1942:225). A second observation describes, “[The Caddo] bound their [dog’s] jaws and tied one paw in front under the throat, so that they might not be able to get at the stalk of the corn,” (Swanton 1942:227). And another, “even the dogs share in this threat or interdict: so, in order that a dog may not eat of the corn, the Indians tie one of his legs or paws to his neck so that he goes around hungry on three legs and can not eat the corn, for dogs are extremely fond of it” (Swanton 1942:227-228).

Conclusion

Through a combination of archaeological, ethnographic, and iconographic or symbolic data, it is clear there existed a special relationship with the domestic dog (*diitsi*) and the Caddo. However, there is still the pressing issue of a lack of detailed canine faunal analysis or reanalysis of collections within the Caddo Area. Such an effort can provide an additional suite of data that further highlights the special human-canine relationship evident in burial and symbolic treatment. Importantly, it can also shed light on the treatment of the canine as part of the active, living relationships, as evident in diet, provisioning, pathogens, and patterns of age and sex selection (Losey 2020:258).

Nonetheless, when current data are evaluated

cumulatively they illuminate the purposeful treatment, reverence, and deliberate burial of dogs. They demonstrate a “capacity for friendship” in which deceased dogs were often treated like deceased people, thus “reflecting their status as real friends of people while they were alive” (Morey 2006:164). Certainly, in many instances they were, and are (Monagle and Jones 2020:49), considered members of the community – linked to the ever-changing social processes that define the mutually beneficial human-canine relationship (Losey 2020:255-256). Throughout the Caddo Area, there are several cases of dogs interred with burial goods within prepared pits with a similar concern shown of human burials where burial goods were placed as provisions for the next world. Canine symbolism is present in ceramic, shell, and stone, perhaps as the symbolic representation of the dog that served as guides to the next world (Schwartz 2000:224). It has also been suggested that the dogs themselves, and similarities to human mortuary treatment, may represent symbolic substitutes or proxies for humans (Larsson 1989). It is clear that the specific mortuary treatment and canine representation in material form suggests a special relationship between the Caddo and their dogs, perhaps even considered as pets to members of a family group and “buried as though they were someone’s best friend” (Griffin 1967:178).

While these considerations are ongoing, as additional examples are surely expected, I conclude these considerations with a Caddo story recorded by



Figure 7. Fragmented tail rider, Perttula et al. 2018: Figure 86. Image used with permission from the Friends of Northeast Texas Archaeology.

George Dorsey in the early twentieth century entitled, "The Man and the Dog Who Became Stars" (Dorsey 1905:25).

A young man had a Dog, which he always took with him whenever he went to hunt. When he was at home he did not pay much attention to the Dog, and the Dog acted like any other dog, but when they were off alone the Dog would talk to his master just as if he were a man. He had the power of a prophet and could always tell what was going to happen. One time, while they were out hunting, the Dog came running back to his master and told him that they were about to come to a dangerous place. The young man asked where the place was, and the Dog said that he did not know just where it was, but that he knew it was not far away. In another instant, the Dog scented a deer and started out on its trail, and the man followed. Soon they came upon a deer. The man shot it, but only wounded it, and it continued to run until it reached the lake, and then jumped into the water. The Dog jumped in after it and soon caught it, because he could swim faster than the wounded deer. He held it while the young man threw off his clothes and swam to his assistance. Soon they killed the deer, and then the man put it on his shoulders and started to swim to the shore. All at once the Dog cried out, "Look out!" There before them and all around them were all kinds of poisonous and dangerous water animals. The man thought that they would surely be killed, for the animals were so numerous that they could not possibly swim past them. He began to pray to the spirits to help him, and as he prayed the water leaped up and threw them on the shore. The young man felt so grateful to the spirits who had saved his and his Dog's lives that he cut some of the flesh from the deer and threw it into the water as a sacrifice. Then he and the Dog decided that they would not stay longer in this dangerous world, and so they went to the sky to live. There they can be seen as two bright stars in the south. The one to the east is the young man, and the one to the west is the Dog.

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