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Documentation of a Collection of Archaeological Materials from the Millsey Williamson Site (41RK3), A Historic Nadaco Caddo Settlement

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DOCUMENTATION OF A COLLECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIALS FROM THE MILLSEY WILLIAMSON SITE (41RK3), A HISTORIC NADACO CADDO SETTLEMENT

Timothy K. Perttula and Bo Nelson

Introduction

The Millsey Williamson site (41RK3) is a well known historic 18th century Nadaco Caddo site on Martin Creek in Rusk County, Texas (Jones 1968:62-84). It is one of a number of 18th and early 19th century Kinsloe phase sites in the middle Sabine River basin (Perttula 2006: Figure 312) apparently affiliated with the Nadaco Caddo settlement of the region.

An unknown number of historic Nadaco Caddo burials have been excavated at the site over the years, especially along the western part of the terrace landform above Martin Creek (Jones 1968: Figure 5), now marked by the Martin Lake shoreline. There has been intensive collecting activities at Millsey Williamson since Martin Lake was built more than 30 years ago. The collection we document here came from the shoreline in the general area of the other Nadaco Caddo burials reported from Millsey Williamson.

The Collection

The collection from the Millsey Williamson site includes three ceramic vessels, one unidentified lead fragment (52 x 19 mm in length and width and 4.8 mm thick, possibly a large piece of lead sprue), 36 glass beads, and 40 plain or decorated ceramic vessel sherds.

Vessels

Vessel 1 is a simple bowl (Table 1) with nine irregular rows of tool punctations that extend from the rim to the vessel base (Figure 1). The rim is direct with a rounded lip. Punctated vessels are common utility wares in Kinsloe phase burial assemblages (see Perttula 2007, this volume).

Table 1. Millsey Williamson vessels.

Vessel No.	Temper	Firing	Height (cm)	Orifice Diameter (cm)	Thickness at rim (in mm)
1	none	F*	7.9	13.0	4.6
2	bone	G	4.0	7.1	4.3
3	grog	F	9.3	7.3 (body)	4.8

*F and G: fired in an oxidizing environment, but cooled in the open air

Figure 1. Vessel 1, Millsey Williamson site.

Vessel 2 is a distinctive Natchitoches Engraved bone-tempered miniature bowl (Figure 2a). The bowl is decorated with a semi-circular motif repeated four times on the vessel (Figure 2b). The motif extends from near the rim to near the base, and consists of two semi-circular engraved lines with excised pendant triangles or tick marks, above which are hatched panels on either side of a small triangular element with excised pendant triangles or tick marks. Other than Simms Engraved, Natchitoches Engraved is the most common fine ware in Kinsloe phase assemblages (see Perttula 2007, this volume).

Figure 2a. Vessel 2, Millsey Williamson site, side view.

Figure 2b. Vessel 2, view of the bottom of the Natchitoches Engraved bowl.

Vessel 3 is a bottle with a spool neck that is swollen in the middle like many Keno Trailed and Natchitoches Engraved vessels (see Suhm and Jelks 1962: Plates 44a-e and 57h). The bottle is engraved on the body with sweeping upper and lower continuous scrolls, and there are hatched zones both above and below the scrolls (Figure 3). There is a red pigment smeared in the engraved lines.

If there were tick marks on the scrolls, we would be inclined to consider it a variety of Natchitoches Engraved. The sweeping continuous scrolls are indicative of Hodges Engraved, but the negative ovals are absent and the zones above and below the scrolls are not cross-hatched. On the basis of vessel shape, it resembles Hodges Engraved, *var. Ouachita* (see Weinstein et al. 2003:353 and Figure 131).

All three vessels from the Millsey Williamson site are small in size (Figure 4). They may have been funerary accompaniments for a child or juvenile.

Figure 3. Vessel 3, possible Hodges Engraved or Natchitoches Engraved bottle, Millsey Williamson site.

Figure 4. Vessels 1-3 from the Millsey Williamson site.

Vessel Sherds

The 40 ceramic vessel sherds include 21 plain body and rim sherds and 19 decorated body sherds. The vessel sherd assemblage is distinctive because of the high percentage of bone-tempered (61.4%) and shell-tempered (7.7%) vessel sherds. In this part of northeastern Texas, the occurrence of shell-tempered vessels is exclusively found only in historic Caddo contexts. Jones (1968) notes that about 10% of the vessels in Kinsloe phase sites (including Natchitoches Engraved, Simms Engraved, *var. Darco*, Emory Punctated-Incised, and Henderson Plain vessels) are shell-tempered.

Among the decorated sherds are both utility wares (n=13, 68%) and fine wares (n=6, 32%). Many of the utility ware sherds have either brushed (Bullard Brushed) or incised decorations (Maydelle Incised) on vessel bodies, or rows of tool punctations (Emory Punctated-Incised). The fine wares have engraved decorations, although five of the six have non-descript straight or parallel sets of lines (including one bottle sherd). The sixth engraved sherd, from a bowl or carinated bowl, has a cross-hatched triangular engraved element.

Glass Beads

There are seven different glass bead varieties in this collection from the Millsey Williamson site. The beads would have been worn as necklaces or sewn onto clothing.

All 36 of the beads are small (less than 4 mm in length and diameter) drawn beads (Kidd and Kidd 1970:48-49). They are either tubular-shaped with simple or monochrome bodies (n=3); rounded with simple or monochrome bodies (n=17); tubular-shaped with compound or multi-layered bodies (n=5); or rounded with compound or multi-layered bodies (n=11). The Kidd and Kidd (1970) bead varieties are listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Beads from the Millsey Williamson site.

Variety	Shape	Color	N
Ia5	tubular	white	2
Ia13	tubular	light blue	1
IIa6	round	black	1
IIa13	round	white	5
IIa36	round	light blue	11
IIIa3	tubular	red outer color/black core	5
IVa2	round	red outer color/light gray core	11

Bead colors are light blue, white, black, and red, with the latter color being the most popular in this small collection (Figure 5). The red beads with the black or light gray core are called Cornaline d'aleppo beads, and they are usually common in 18th century sites in French Louisiana and Spanish Texas (Perttula 2005:90, 92).

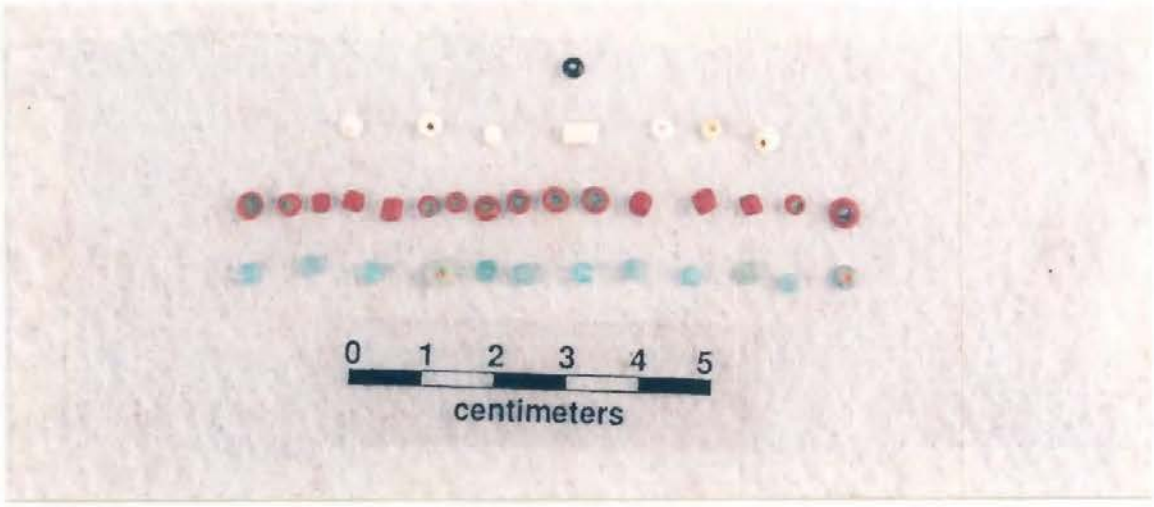

Figure 5. Beads in the Millsey Williamson site collection.

Conclusions

This documented collection from the Millsey Williamson site (41RK3) is from water-eroded contexts along the Martin Lake shoreline. The whole vessels indicate they are from an historic Caddo burial belonging to the Kinsloe phase (cf. Jones 1968). These Kinsloe phase sites are affiliated with the Nadaco Caddo. Our best estimate of the age of the collection—presuming the vessels and glass beads are from the same archaeological deposits—is ca. A.D. 1740-1790. This is based on the overall abundance of Cornaline d'aleppo beads among the glass beads (see Perttula 2005: Table 2).

As long as shoreline erosion continues at Martin Lake, it is likely that other Nadaco Caddo burials and burial collections of artifacts will be exposed and reported from this important historic Caddo site in northeastern Texas.

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