

Some Observations on Caddy Park

Mary E. Gage

Introduction

In 1999, archaeologists Thomas Mahlstedt and Margo Muhl Davis excavated a Native American feature (now called the Moshup site) at Caddy Park in Quincy, MA. A detailed report on the site was featured in the *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* (Mahlstedt and Davis 2002). The 1m x 2m feature contained four discernible tight groupings of artifacts (caches A,B,C, and D), four plummets arranged in a pattern suggestive of a net, a whale effigy, and a variety of other artifacts scattered throughout the feature. The artifacts were placed on a layer of red ocher, and an additional layer of red ocher was sprinkled on the top of the artifacts. Several dense areas of red ocher suggest that bags of ocher were also interred. Caddy Park was interpreted as representing a maritime procurement culture. The feature itself may have been a burial, cenotaph, cache, or ceremonial offering.

Caddy Park bears a remarkable resemblance, in terms of its use of groups (clusters or caches) of tools and organized tool kits, to Burial G1 at the West Ferry site, Rhode Island. In turn, Burial G1 has been compared to the Orient phase on Long Island. The Orient phase is noted for the consistent inclusion of organized tool kits in its burials. Although the Orient phase is similar to Caddy Park in terms of the interment of tool kits, it lacks several other diagnostic characteristics of the Caddy Park site. In particular the Orient phase burials had no bags of red ocher, pressure flaked bifaces or large caches of tool/preforms. These three characteristics are documented in the Meadowood phase burials in New York State. The Meadowood phase existed contemporaneously with the Orient phase. Although the Meadowood phase was largely confined to New York, two caches of Meadowood mortuary 'blades' were found in Connecticut, and a few have been surface collected on Martha's Vineyard.

This article is exploratory in nature. It examines the possibility that Caddy Park was

influenced by the Orient phase culture of Long Island, and to a lesser extent by the Meadowood phase from New York State. Secondly, having presented evidence that Caddy Park was influenced by the Meadowood and Orient phases, it suggests a date range for the site.

Terminology

For the purposes of this article, the following terminology is used to denote specific arrangements of tools and/or artifacts. These terms are italicized in the main text:

Group - consists of artifacts tightly gathered together. The *group* must show some physical separation from the rest of the artifacts in the feature. The tools can be all the same, unrelated, related or a mixture. The quantity per *group* is unlimited.

Small Tool Kit - is made up of two or more types of related tools. An example is three gouges and one sharpening stone that combined form a *small tool kit*. These tools can be placed together in a *group*, scattered throughout the feature, or a combination of both.

Overall Tool Kit - consists of the majority of tools and artifacts in a feature that relate to the day to day subsistence activities. It may or may not contain smaller units such as *group(s)* or *small tool kit(s)*. For an example, the Caddy Park feature's tools and artifacts were interpreted as reflecting a 'maritime procurement culture'. The majority of tools and artifacts were related to subsistence activities associated with food procurement, boat building, and other maritime-related activities.

Methodology

The methodology used was a standard comparison of the Caddy Park diagnostic artifacts and features to other sites along the coast of New England and New York State.

The literature review was limited to major published works on these geographical regions. The review focused on sites from 6,000 B.P. to 1,700 B.P., the date range given for the Caddy Park site. This search, although far from exhaustive in nature, yielded several sites and archaeological phases with comparable diagnostic traits. The diagnostic traits used in these comparisons include the three specific tool and artifact arrangements defined in the terminology section above, as well as pressure-flaked bifaces, interment of large quantities of tool/preforms, and interment of bags of red ocher.

Caddy Park, Quincy, MA

Caddy Park contained all six of the diagnostic traits used in these comparisons. This section describes those traits in greater detail. See Mahlstedt and Davis (2002) for additional information.

Groups - Four caches of tightly clustered tools and artifacts were found in the Caddy Park feature. They were labeled caches A, B, C, and D. Cache A had three adzes, one adz/gouge, an oval core, a pebble and 65 edge tool/preforms. Cache B had two long bifaces, a quartz core, and 42 edge tool/preforms. Cache C had five small stemmed points and 24 edge tool/preforms. Cache D had one biface, an oval disk, and seven edge tools/preforms. Each is a *group* formed by several artifacts tightly grouped together and separated from the greater whole of artifacts.

Small Tool Kits - Within Cache D there was a *small tool kit* called a stone polishing kit made up "...of two flat ovoid-shaped pieces of stone, possibly used to polish the adz tips, and a fine polishing tool" (Mahlstedt and Davis 2002:18).

Overall Tool Kits - Caddy Park's *overall tool kit* was interpreted as representative of a maritime procurement culture. The major artifacts of this *overall tool kit* include: a gouge formed into a whale effigy, partially surrounded by four plummets (net sinkers) that were probably attached to a net, four adzes indicating woodworking and boat building, small stem points and an atlatl indicating hunting, and

four large bifaces indicating possible ceremonial activity.

Pressure-Flaked Bifaces - Four large, finely pressure flaked bifaces were recovered.

Large Quantities of Tool/Preforms - A total of 185 artifacts classified as 'edge tool/preforms' were recovered from this feature.

Bagged Red Ocher - Two caches had dense concentrations of red ocher and were interpreted as 'bags of red ocher' interred with the other artifacts.

Wapanucket Site, Middleboro, MA

The first definitive tool arrangements that show up in southeastern Massachusetts were found at the Wapanucket site in Middleboro, Massachusetts. This site has a date range of 4,700 B.P. to 3,550 B.P. At Wapanucket, twenty-two burials were excavated; eleven were inside an ossuary. Within the ossuary, two related tools kept appearing, a gouge accompanied by a sharpening stone. According to archaeologist Maurice Robbins, "Gouges with their sharpening stones were conspicuous among the grave goods from this feature [ossuary]" (Robbins 1968:63). The ossuary is dated to 4,290 B.P. Six of the eleven ossuary burials had the combination gouge and sharpening stone. Seven of the ossuary burials had gouges and more were found in the general pit. Of the eleven other burials, three more had gouges and two contained a *small tool kit*. The *small tool kits* from Wapanucket are made up of gouge(s) and sharpening stone(s), and in one case, an ulu and sharpening stone. No adzes, tightly packed *groups* or *overall tool kits* were found (Robbins 1968).

West Ferry Site, Narragansett Bay, RI

Conanicut Island is located off the southeastern edge of Rhode Island in Narragansett Bay. At the place called West Ferry (named after the old ferry) Native American Indian graves were found between 1936 and 1937. The site was closed from 1937 until a formal excavation by William Simmons was conducted in 1966 and 1967.

This cemetery was located on a sandy knoll on the Watson farm and was placed on the top-most portion of the knoll seventy feet above sea level in sandy, rock-free soil. All the graves were shallow, occurring within 30 to 55 inches below the surface. Most of the burials post-dated European contact, however, a few graves were found that dated to a much earlier time period, the Transitional Archaic period. Two have ^{14}C dates: burial A-33 (with no artifacts) was dated 3,380 B.P., burial G-1 (which contained steatite vessels) was dated 3,280 B.P. and 3,225 B.P. (Simmons 1970:16,21). Altogether seven cremation burials were found. They had tools manufactured by percussion flaking, pecking, and polishing techniques. All the burials had charcoal, however none had powdered red ocher (Simmons 1970: 3-34). With the exception of burial G-1, none had an *overall tool kit*.

Burial G-1, rich in grave goods, was unique at the West Ferry site although two other burials with similar grave goods were found in nearby Charlestown, RI. Of all the southeastern coastal burials, G-1 at the West Ferry site comes closest in overall structure and quantity of contents to the Caddy Park feature. Although it has characteristics in common with Caddy Park, it has no direct artifact associations. Burial G-1 has a tightly grouped set of objects that include: two complete steatite bowls arranged one inside the other, a small grooved ax placed on the rim of one bowl, and four spear points underneath (The bowls did not rest on the points). Near the bowl group was 'a clutch of four black pigment stones of graphite' (Simmons 1970: 17) making up a second small group. The other objects in the burial included: fragmentary human remains (from one child and one adult), a large steatite kettle (complete), a long pestle, 21 projectile points, a naturally perforated black stone, an adz, a gouge fragment, a drill, a flake, two gorget fragments, a steatite amulet, a tablet, several tiny lumps of red ocher, and a red pigment stone. Several natural stones were recovered from the top level of pit. The heaviest concentration of objects occurred in the mid to lower level near the north wall. Other objects were scattered throughout the pit (Simmons 1970: 16-21).

Taken as a whole, the artifacts from burial G-1 form an *overall tool kit* providing for cooking and eating, woodworking, hunting, personal

adornment and cosmetic needs. Within this *overall tool kit* are several *small tool kits*. There is a food preparation and eating *small tool kit* composed of the two bowls, the kettle, and pestle. There is a personal adornment *small tool kit* formed by an amulet, gorget, and the red and black pigment stones. As previously described, there are two artifact *groups* in the burial. Burial G-1 contains all three tool organizations: *groups*, *small tool kits*, and *overall tool kit*.

Caddy Park and West Ferry G-1 burial share three traits in common: *groups*, *small tool kits*, and an *overall tool kit*. The two sites also have some distinct differences. Caddy Park's four large bifaces are pressure flaked whereas West Ferry's projectile points were percussion flaked. Caddy Park also has large quantities of edge tool/preforms and powdered red ocher. Burial G-1 has neither of these traits. William Simmons links the West Ferry site with the Orient phase of Long Island, NY (Simmons 1970: 11).

Orient Phase

Archaeologist William Ritchie discusses the Orient phase burials in detail (Ritchie 1994:164-178). These cemeteries contain two types of burials: individual and large communal burial pits. The communal burial pits all contain

"...features having one or more directly associated 'caches' of burial offerings. The latter in nearly every case included a fire-making kit, a number of projectile points, one or more 'killed' stone vessels, a hammerstone, and a paintstone, and they frequently included an adz or celt" (Ritchie 1994: 177).

This common feature of Orient phase communal pit burials constitutes an *overall tool kit*. As Ritchie states:

"The typical basic grave lot therefore provided for hunting game, kindling fire, and cooking food with a cosmetic kit thrown in" (Ritchie 1994, 176-7).

Within the *overall tool kit* was a *small tool kit*: a fire-making kit. It consisted of iron pyrite and a quartz or flint striker (Ritchie 1994: 167). Some burials had powdered red ocher at the base of the pit. No pressure flaked tools were reported; all chipped stone tools seem to have been made by percussion (Ritchie 1994:171). Orient sites

have a date range of 2,993 B.P. to 2,713 B.P. and are a component of the Transitional Archaic period (Ritchie 1994: 165). In sum, Orient phase communal pit burials contain *small tool kits* and *overall tool kits*. They lack bagged red ocher, pressure flaked tools, and large caches of tool/preforms. It is unclear if they had any artifact or tool groups.

Meadowood Phase

Caddy Park has three characteristics not found in the Orient phase. For these characteristics, we look to the Meadowood phase of inland New York dated to 2,948 B.P. and 2,513 B.P. (Ritchie 1994:181). These traits are pressure flaking, large quantities of edge tools/preforms, and bagged red ocher. During the Meadowood phase, large quantities of mortuary 'blades', an average of 100 to 250 per burial, were included in graves. (It is unclear if these large quantities of mortuary 'blades' were in groups or not.)

"These points, ranging in length from about one and five eighths to three and a half inches, are extremely thin and very skillfully made by a well-controlled pressure-flaking technique. It is not certain if these basic triangular shaped blades are finished blades or blanks/preforms" (Ritchie 1994: 183).

Red ocher has been found in all but one cemetery.

"In all save one cemetery (Oberlander No. 2), use was made of powdered hematite or red ocher, which was sprinkled or more liberally poured over the grave contents, human and artifactual, or included in a bag or pouch in certain of the graves" (Ritchie 1994: 198).

Like the Orient phase, Meadowood phase burials generally contain a fire making kit composed of iron pyrite and flint strike-a-light. The Meadowood fire making kits were contained in a small pouch or rolled up in bark (Ritchie 1994: 199). The fire making kit, as previously discussed, constitutes a *small tool kit*. Meadowood burials also contained large quantities of mortuary 'blades', and some burials contained food remains and other artifacts. The available information suggests that Meadowood burials for the most part lacked an organized *overall tool kit*.

Caddy Park and the Meadowood phase have four traits in common, three of which are not found in the Orient phase: the presence of pressure flaked bifaces, bagged red ocher, and large quantities of tool/preforms. The fourth trait that both phases have in common is *small tool kits*. The four large pressure flaked bifaces found at Caddy Park have no real equivalent in the Meadowood assemblage in terms of shape and form. However, they were created by the same technique and demonstrate a high level of skill. As Mahlstedt and Davis (2002:13) note

"the large size and thinness of the blade [33cm], coupled with a quartz vein that runs through the middle of the piece attest to skill of the knapper".

The technique, high level of skill, and the thinness of these bifaces sound very similar to Ritchie's description of Meadowood 'blades.' In addition, Caddy Park contains several 'caches' with significant quantities of 'edge tool/preforms'. This trait resembles the large quantities of mortuary 'blades' found in Meadowood burials and caches. Ritchie speculates that the mortuary 'blades' may have been preforms (Ritchie 1994: 183). Finally, the interment of bags of red ocher is documented in the Meadowood phase. Several high concentrations of red ocher in the Caddy Park feature were interpreted as having been placed in bags. Taken together, the evidence suggests the culture that created Caddy Park was influenced by the cultural ideas of the Meadowood phase. Secondly, the creators of Caddy Park may have learned the technique of pressure flaking from the Meadowood phase.

Conclusion

Three of the six diagnostic traits used to compare the Caddy Park site to various other sites and archaeological phases involve intentional arrangements of tools and artifacts in a buried feature (whether a grave or cache). These intentional arrangements of tools and artifacts represent cultural traditions, practices, and behaviors. It is a well accepted fact that cultural ideas are transmitted from generation to generation, and even from one culture to another. The evidence suggests that the culture that created the Caddy Park feature was an amalgam of a number of cultural ideas taken from its predecessors and its neighbors.

The Wapanucket site in Middleboro, MA is one of the earliest sites in southeastern Massachusetts that contains a definitive arrangement of tools, in this case a *small tool kit*. The *small tool kit* was composed of a simple arrangement of a gouge and sharpening stone. Caddy Park contains a somewhat similar *small tool kit*, three stone polishing tools 'possibly used to polish the adz tips' (Mahlstedt and Davis 2002:18). Caddy Park contained four adzes. One of the polishing stones was found in direct association with a broken pendant suggesting an intentional arrangement between the two artifacts.

Caddy Park and Wapanucket share a common theme in *small tool kits* - a tool/artifact accompanied by a tool used to create or sharpen it. There is definitively a time difference between the two sites. Also, Wapanucket contained only gouges and no adzes. In comparison, Caddy Park contained four adzes, and one gouge. While the shift from gouges to adzes as the predominant woodworking tool may indicate a substantial passage of time, the continuity in *small tool kits* suggests that Caddy Park had some ancestral ties to the culture that created the Wapanucket feature.

The *small tool kits* of the ossuary feature at Wapanucket date to 4,290 B.P. The practice of placing *small tool kits* in burial features is documented one thousand years later at the burial G-1 (3,234 B.P.) at the West Ferry site. In addition, burial G-1 contained an *overall tool kit*, and a *group* of tightly clustered artifacts. The tool arrangements in burial G-1 were far more sophisticated than the simple tool arrangement associations found at Wapanucket. This suggests a potential elaboration of the burial practices. Granted, burial G-1 was unusual compared to other contemporary graves at the site. However, it does testify to the presence of these cultural ideas or practices during that time period. Caddy Park has far more in common with burial G-1 than with Wapanucket. Both have *small tool kits*, an *overall tool kit*, and one or more *groups* of tools. Burial G-1 and the West Ferry site in general lacked red ocher, pressure flaked tools, and large quantities of tool/preforms. Burial G-1 is arguably closer in time with Caddy Park than the Wapanucket site, however, the differences suggest they were not contemporary.

Dincauze has argued that the Coburn site on Cape Cod was a direct ancestor of the Orient phase on Long Island (Ritchie 1969:222). Simmons links the cremation burial ceremonialism of the West Ferry site with the Hawes site in Lakeville, the Coburn site, and Orient phase burials of Long Island. These ties and relationships between southeastern New England sites and the Orient phase are important.

All six of the Caddy Park traits analyzed in this article are found in either the Orient phase or its neighbor the Meadowood phase. Both of these phases were contemporaneous with each other. Neither phase by itself contained all of the traits that are present at Caddy Park. The Orient phase burials show a consistent use of *small tool kits* and *overall tool kits*. The Orient phase burials lack the interment of bags of red ocher, pressure flaked tools, and large quantities of tool/preforms. The Meadowood phase burials contain all three of the traits lacking in the Orient phase. This evidence suggests that Caddy Park was influenced by both the Orient and Meadowood phases.

Having established parallels between Caddy Park and both the Orient and Meadowood phases, it is possible to make an educated guess as to the earliest possible date for Caddy Park. Ritchie dates the Orient phase from 2,993 to 2,713 B.P., and the Meadowood phase from 2,948 to 2,513 B.P. (Ritchie 1994: 165, 181). Caddy Park shows traits of both phases, therefore its earliest possible date could be 2,948 B.P. when both phases were contemporaneous with each other. The Orient and Meadowood phases are contemporaneous with each other till 2,713 B.P. This may represent the potential terminus date of Caddy Park. In sum, a possible date range for Caddy Park is circa 2,950 to 2,710 B.P.

Both the Meadowood and Orient phases were notable for being part of an elaborate mortuary ceremonialism found in the Northeast during this time period. The Caddy Park feature, whether a burial, cenotaph, or offering, speaks strongly of ceremonialism. Caddy Park is therefore arguably an example and microcosm of the elaboration in ceremonialism that was sweeping through the Northeast.

References Cited

Mahlstedt, Thomas & Davis, Margo Muhl

- 2002 Caddy Park, Wollaston Beach, Quincy, Massachusetts: Burial? Cenotaph? Cache? Or Offering? *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeology Society*, Volume 63 (1,2):11-23.

Ritchie, William A.

- 1969 *The Archaeology of Martha's Vineyard: A Study in Coastal Ecology and Adaptation*. Garden City, NY. The Natural History Press.

- 1994 *The Archaeology of New York State*. Revised Edition. Fleischmanns, NY: Purple Mountain Press.

Robbins, Maurice

- 1968 *An Archaic Ceremonial Complex at Assawompsett*. Attleboro, MA: Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Inc.

Simmons, William S.

- 1970 *Cautantowwit's House: An Indian Burial Ground on the Island of Conanicut in Narragansett Bay*. Providence, [RI]: Brown University Press.