
CORD-DECORATED POTTERY IN THE GENERAL PEORIA REGION

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Cord-decorated* pottery, a pottery decorated with cord-imprint lines, is a quite distinctive type of Woodland pottery occurring at various sites in Illinois but not often described or commonly familiar. It is here reported as known to the writer from a number of sites in the middle Illinois River Valley, in the general region of Peoria, with special attention given to the Clear Lake Village representation.

The outstanding trait of this ware is a surface decoration utilizing a short straight cord-imprint as a line, the line being employed to form geometrical and linear arrangements on neck and lip, or lip only. A "squared mouth" effect, produced in several ways, is a second conspicuous characteristic. There are, also, other distinctive features.

The cord-impressed decoration is stated by Dr. James B. Griffin, Assistant Curator, Ceramic Repository for the Eastern United States, University of Michigan, to be very widespread in North America east of the Rockies, and its ultimate origin he believes to be Asiatic. A cord-decorated pottery of Illinois, designated as Maples Mills Cord Decorated, is considered one of the late boundaries of the Woodland in Central Illinois. Mr. Griffin states that this ware has never been earlier than, or contemporary with, Hopewellian but always later, and that it has never been found outside of a

local area. Its presence on a Hopewellian, or other culture, site indicates successive periods of occupancy of the site.

A cord-decorated ware in Wisconsin was described by Dr. S. A. Barrett in *Ancient Aztalan*, 1933 publication of the Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wis. An angular mouthed ware was designated simply by the general term, "Woodland ware;" a circular mouthed was called Lake Michigan ware. Both have been stated to belong to the Michigan phase of the Woodland, a phase named by Dr. W. C. McKern of the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Cord-decorated pottery from central Illinois was described by Dr. Fay-Cooper Cole and Dr. Thorne Deuel in *Rediscovering Illinois*, 1937 publication of the University of Chicago, dealing with exploration in Fulton County, and was designated as "Type 5, Maples Mills Corded-Design." It was stated to occur at the Gooden component in Fulton county and also at the Clear Lake Village and Mound sites in Tazewell and Mason counties. The Gooden component was classified as belonging to the Maples Mills focus, undetermined aspect, phase tentatively designated Tampico, Woodland pattern. The name, "Gooden Cord Impressed", has been used for this ware by Dr. Griffin, who considers it to be a recognizable subdivision of the pottery belonging to the Lake

* Cord decorating should not be confused with cord roughening, which is an all-over rough surfacing such as could result from use of a cord-wrapped paddle in shaping the pot.

Michigan phase of the Woodland. Amounts of the ware were given as three ollas and a few sherds at the Gooden site, and nine sherds, including rims, at the Clear Lake sites.

Cord-decorated ware was reported from the Clear Lake, Mossville, and Blumenshine or Knocke Villages by the writer in 1940 and was further described in Clear Lake reports of 1941, 1942, 1943 and 1944, published in *Transactions of Illinois State Academy of Science*.

Two appearances of pottery with cord-impressed decoration were described by Mr. Griffin in *Contributions to the Archaeology of the Illinois River Valley*, 1941 publication of the American Philosophical Society, dealing with explorations along the lower Illinois River valley made by Dr. Warren K. Moorehead for the University of Illinois. The ware was recorded from the Hagan Mounds at Browning, Illinois, and from Snicarte Village, near Snicarte, Illinois; the Hagan pottery was stated to closely resemble that belonging to the Maples Mills focus, and a majority of the Snicarte ware was said to be of the Maples Mills type. Mention was made that similar pottery had been collected by Mr. J. L. B. Taylor at a number of village sites in Illinois River valley.

The Corbin site in northern Illinois is listed as of the Maples Mills focus, with the University of Illinois as the source of record.

This 1946 report concerns cord-decorated pottery from nineteen sites, some but not all recorded in the Peoria Academy of Science archaeological survey. Included are Clear Lake village (No. 30), Blumenshine or Knocke village (No. 5), Steuben village (No. 22), Rench village (No. 3), Williams village (No. 24), Copperas Creek village (No. 32), Partridge Creek Village (No. 33), Mossville village (No. 10),

Hildemaier village (No. 4), Krause site, Ashelon village (No. 35), Metamora Road site, Little Creek site (No. 39), Crane site, Keithburg site, Platform Hill site, Texaco site, Schultz village (No. 36), Orchard Mines village (No. 37).

Material studied, in addition to the Schoenbecks', is from the collections of Anson M. Simpson (now the property of Peoria Academy of Science), Virginius H. Chase, Leroy P. Elliott, and Willis D. Speight.

Maples Mills cord-decorated ware has been shown, through excavations made at Clear Lake Village by Mr. and Mrs. Schoenbeck and Mr. Simpson, members of Peoria Academy of Science, to have been present there in considerable amount, and to have forms, characteristics, and variations additional to those recorded in Cole and Deuel's original type description. The Schoenbeck collection now includes about 120 rims, over 200 lower rims, considerable portions of nine pots, one decorated body sherd, and some hundreds of cord-roughened body sherds, recognizable when they bear a particular cord roughening characteristic of a part of the ware. The Clear Lake representation seems, to-date, to have strong individuality but also includes variations.

This ware, in such an amount, at this site classified as Hopewellian, shows successive occupation of the site by early and late peoples. Clear Lake Village has now been shown to have had a long occupation and a long pottery developmental sequence with changing concepts. Extended research, resulting in richer discovery, has borne out Cole and Deuel's original hypothesis. The pottery sequence has recently been pronounced by Dr. Deuel to be the longest known for any site in Illinois. The exceptionally rich pottery complex shows Woodland and Hopewell-

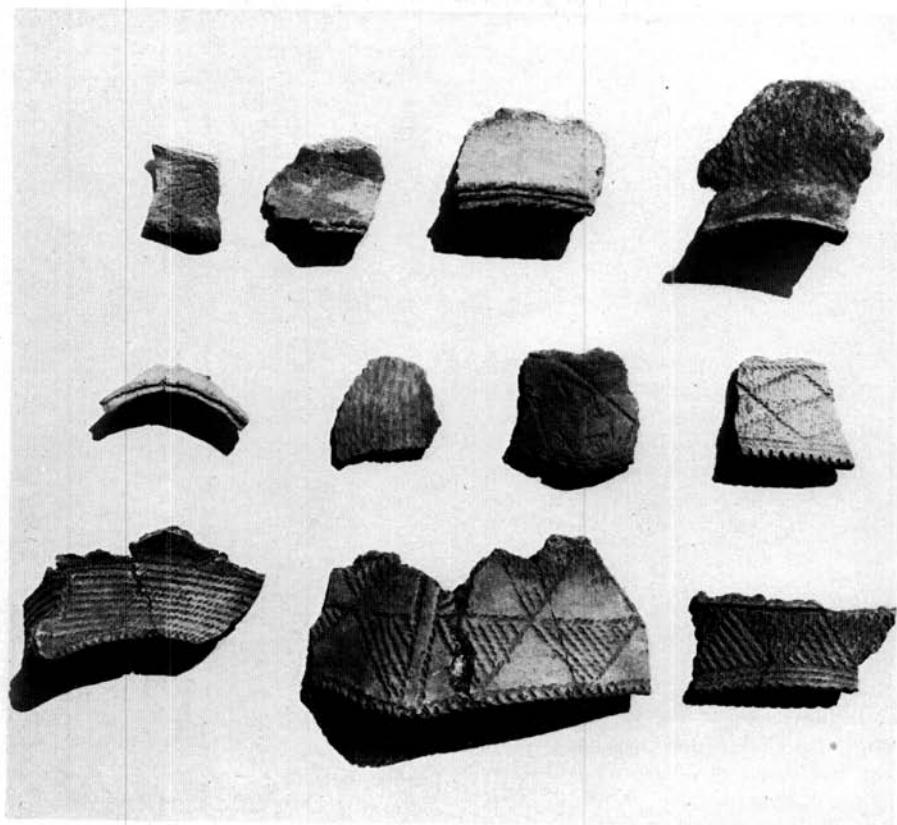


FIG. 1.—Maples Mills cord-decorated ware:

Photograph by William Holling.

Clear Lake Village, Nos. 1 to 7.

- First row—1. alternate diagonal-hachured triangle.
 2. alternate hachured and plain triangle, double row.
 3. horizontal lines, broken by line and punctate design at point area.

- Second row—4. diamond pattern.
 5. angular, but ungeometrical design.
 6. body sherd showing fat, 2-ply-cord cord-roughening.
 7. Corded Lip, plain surfaced.

- Third row—8. Knocke Village, Corded Lip, 2-ply-cord cord-roughening.
 9. Orchard Mines Village, Corded Lip, plain surfaced.
 10. Orchard Mines Village, Corded Lip, plain surfaced.
 11. Schultz Village, whole rim decorated, lugged.

Specimens 9, 10, and 11 are from the Willis D. Speight collection.

ian in early, transitional, advanced and latest forms. It includes all Woodland and Hopewellian types listed by Cole and Deuel for Fulton County and Clear Lake; most of those described by Griffin for the lower Illinois River valley; some not yet described or named as types, including ware not previously known to Dr. Griffin; Marksville

Red Filmed, Negative Painted, Thickened Rim, Gono Cord, Morton Incised and additional types. Several Mississippian types are present in exceedingly small amount. Maples Mills ware would be the latest Woodland type.

To the original Maples Mills descriptive data, the writer has added, from occurrences revealed in the

Clear Lake representation, the use of two particular temperings; the frequent appearance of a special cord roughening; other punctates, surfaces, designs, necks, colors and shapes; more descriptive details for the various features; and a few variations differing in one or more chief characteristics. Variations are described separately. A sub-group is suggested for one; a type for another.

Decoration, emphasizing and encircling the neck, expresses the idea of collaring. Confined to necks, lips and neck lugs, with one exception, it consists of both surface ornamentation and modeled features. Surface decorative elements are the cord-imprint and the punctate. Modeled features number three, all used to produce the "squared mouth" effect, the raised point, the lug sometimes placed on the point, and the trimmed or "cut-out" lip. A modeled collar is reported under the suggested type. Flaring the points, also sometimes angling or cornering them, often aids in accomplishing the "squared mouth," which seems limited sometimes to an effect only, the base of the neck remaining circular. In the cord-decorated, lugs are used only as additions to points, to strengthen the effect, never accomplishing effect alone. Decoration of lip is a strong characteristic.

Decoration always covers the entire neck on the exterior; it often appears on the interior in the area bordering lip, and in rare instances, extends the neck depth. It appears on practically all lips and on all lugs. It is often finished at top and bottom with enclosing or bordering lines, strengthening a horizontal or band effect around the neck, and is placed on both cord-roughened and smoothed surfaces.

Cord lines are used to form geometrical designs and patterns for the band. Designs composed of lines in other angular arrangements do occur, but rarely. Design units are commonly repeated to build up the pattern for the band and are modified in shape and arrangement to conform with the widening of the band where the raised points occur. Special arrangements of lines often mark the point areas. The triangle is the common design; a ladder, a very rare one. Designs and patterns other than the geometrical are not identified yet, or easily described. The row of alternating triangles; the group of horizontal lines, broken at the point areas; and the diamond comprise the identified patterns. Triangles alternate in surfacing, hachured and unlined or hachured in opposing directions, such as the two diagonals. The unlined triangle may be smooth or cord-roughened. Occasionally two rows of triangles, one above the other, occur. The pattern of horizontal lines is broken at points with a design or an arrangement of lines. The diamond pattern is a simple crossing of oblique lines.

A comparison with the Aztalan ware shows that whereas the line arrangements in that ware were reported so varied that each new sherd was expected to be different, much of the ware of the Peoria region lacks variation, having considerable repetition.

The cord line is one half to several inches long. Cord is 2-ply twisted, and is generally large and round but varies to quite fine. It appears singly, in pairs, and in groups. In the paired imprints, the ply twists of the two cords may appear in the same or opposed positions. A long, continuous, horizontal line may not only border the band or make up the pattern but also parallel the lip on

the interior or run through the lip surface entirely around the circumference. Fine striations often show in imprints, suggesting a rather harsh fiber. A cord differing in some respects from the usual also occurs. As to methods of producing the cord imprint, a paddle with neatly spaced cord wrapping could have produced all short lines, including groups. Long straight lines might have been made by the short line repeated, end to end; long curved lines might require a length of cord. A short touch with paddle edge could make the punctate.

The punchmark, or punctate, appears on both outer and inner rim surfaces, on both outer and inner edges of lip, and on top lip. Used on lip it sometimes produces a notching effect which might be called punch-notched; when this notching is closely spaced a waving edge results, which might be called punch-waved. It has been repeated to form a bordering line for the band, the line generally subtending when used at base. Rarely it may form lines in design.

It includes the common punctate; the cord punctate (Cord Punctate being a name previously offered by the writer as more correct than "Bent Twig"); a fingernail punctate, and a flat punctate. The fingernail is a small, sharp, curved line (such marks often occur on inner surfaces of pottery where made accidentally in the manufacture of the ware). The flat is a broad imprint such as might be made with the back of a thumbnail or by a bare paddle edge, lightly applied.

The principal shape has a vertical neck, sharply set off from the much larger, somewhat flattened shoulders of a globular body or of a bulging-shouldered body with semiconoidal base. A globular form without the shoulder flattening also occurs.

A different neck is one that is curved and flaring.

Another flattened-shoulder globular body with a differing rim, a sloping-shouldered jar, a form with brief rolling rim, and other variations are among those described separately. Necks generally measure two to three inches, though shorter ones occur. Though the neck is sometimes straight, it often flares slightly at top or bottom, or both. Size of pots ranges from small to quite large. Mouth diameters vary from $4\frac{3}{4}$ " to 14" and a large pot may be 53" around.

Lips may not only be simple and rounded; or horizontal, often flanged and overhanging exteriorly; but also outwardly sloped, both with and without the overhang; briefly rolled; horizontal and flat; and sometimes considerably thinned and waved. Overhanging lips may measure $\frac{1}{2}$ " in width. Lips are mostly decorated, some elaborately, lip decoration being a conspicuous feature.

The raised points, produced by a gradual heightening and lowering of the rim top edge at intervals around the mouth, seem to number four as indicated by spacing and shaping on rim portions of sufficient size to show. The lugs, sometimes present on rim at tips of raised points, are elongated, vertically placed, and always decorated.

While the usual color is a red-brown, there is also a gray-tan and an infrequent gray-blue. Inner surfaces, well smoothed, are often decidedly blackish, and the writer suggests they may have been subjected to some slight treatment. To the cord-roughened exterior originally cited is added a smooth one, an infrequent occurrence described among the variations.

The distinctive surface-roughening, reported as a characteristic of a portion of the Clear Lake ware in

1944, definitely identifies even an undecorated body sherd, making it easily recognizable at a glance. The general effect is an all-over pattern showing orderly alternating small oval pitting or dimpling, such as might be caused by the bulging twists of fat-bodied strands in a 2-ply cord. Sometimes noticeable are broad corrugations in an up and down direction, caused perhaps by quite round full cords. The strand imprints often show the fine striations noticed in the decorative cord line imprints. The whole appearance is dull in texture and surface finish, showing no polish or highlight.

The previously reported, particularly, black, sharp-angled tempering material, or basaltic hornblende, suggested by the writer as possibly the same tempering described for part of the Aztalan ware, is coarser than the other grit used, and in the coarsest sherds is sometimes exposed on the surfaces as flat, black planes with irregular outlines. Clay has a tendency to crack or flake. Other grit used may be quite fine, allowing hard surfaces and thin walls. A tempering material containing lime was used also, as indicated by leaching out of tempering fragments, leaving holes. A pottery with missing tempering is also described from Aztalan, as "cell-tempered" pottery in which the tempering has disappeared, leaving empty cells.

Walls vary from quite thin to heavy, the thinnest being about 2 millimeters or 1/12 inch and the thickest, about 1 centimeter or 2/5 inch. They often thicken at the joining neck and shoulder.

Variations include the following specimens. There is a sloping-shouldered jar shape with alternating hatched triangle decoration applied crudely over cord-roughening which shows the fat-bodied cord.

Lip slopes outward and bears the cord running through center and cord punctates on outer edge.

Three variations are plain surfaced. One has a one-inch vertical neck, undecorated but for the cord line running through the center of the flat, horizontal lip. It is yellow-brown in color and has the black angled tempering. Ware with only the lip decorated appears also at other sites, with frequency and in amount sufficient to give it identity, and the writer suggests it might be considered a subgroup of Maples Mills Cord-Decorated and designated as Maples Mills Cord-Decorated Lip pottery. Maples Mills "Corded Lip" might suffice. Although necks are generally plain and smooth, one specimen from another site shows fat-cord cord roughening on the body.

Another plain surfaced sherd has no neck, only a brief rolled rim with wide flat horizontal lip that overhangs exteriorly, bearing short cord lines across its surface. It is dark gray in color and the body seems to be globular. The interior is smooth; thickness is 3/16 inch. It might be considered as belonging to the "Corded Lip".

The third plain surfaced sherd is a lower rim showing only vertical cord lines. It is 5/16 inch thick and light brown.

Another variation is a shoulder sherd showing the strong shoulder, the black angled tempering, and the fat-cord cord roughening, but having a decoration composed of a round punctate and a fingernail punctate used together on the shoulder. This is the only decorated body sherd.

A collared rim ware, without cord decoration but apparently closely associated with, and possibly related to, the cord-decorated pottery, is present at this site. The rim is upright with the upper inch or half

inch thickened exteriorly, forming a collar. This collared rim is described for the Aztalan site, and Mr. Griffin states it is a feature of the pottery in the Lake Michigan phase in Wisconsin and Michigan and is often associated with Gooden Cord Impressed (Maples Mills Corded Design) pottery from northern Illinois. The writer suggests it be classed as a type and offers the name, "Maples Mills Collared," as correctly expressive of both its relationship and physical characteristics.

One collared specimen shows a flattened-shoulder globular bowl having a vertical neck, sharply angled with, and much smaller than, the shoulders. Lip is smooth, flat, horizontal, and thinner than wall which is $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Exterior is cord roughened to lip with the fat-cord roughening and the interior is smooth. Color is dark red brown. Surface of collar slopes outward, forming a slight ridge at bottom. Tempering includes some black angled mixed with fine grit. Bowl is about 10 inches high and mouth is 11 inches in diameter.

Another collared rim shows a limestone tempering in process of disintegration, there being flinty fragments, crumbling fragments of limestone, and holes where other fragments have disappeared. Another has a one-inch collar.

Among other local sites showing cord-decorated ware, Blumenshine or Knoeke village is important for having the type as its dominant one. It is not a large site and the material, mostly collected from the surface, is small in amount, but the purity of the pottery complex gives it special interest. There is almost a total absence of other Woodland ware. Of the 59 rims and lower rims in the Schoenbeck collection, 57 are cord-decorated, one is plain and one is Mississippian. Nearly all



FIG. 2.—Maples Mills collared ware:
Clear Lake Village

Flattened shoulder pot has the fat 2-ply-cord cord-roughening.

body sherds are fat-cord cord roughened, or plain. Black angled tempering is much used but in combination with other. Most sherds show black interior surface. Designs and patterns are the usual ones, including the diamond, but several rims show decorations on lip or inner lip only. One hollow lug suggests it had been made by an outward push from the interior. One perforated lug is in the Simpson collection.

The Steuben site has an exceedingly small amount of cord-decorated pieces among hundreds of punctate, dentate stamped, and some finer Hopewell. Only nine sherds, two lower rims and seven body, are in the writer's collection. Eight have the fat-cord cord roughening and three have black interiors.

The Rench village has very small representation, although there is considerable dentate stamp and other Hopewell. Decoration in limited amount, on lip and inner lip, is noticeable, and so is the black inter-

ior. There is some fat-cord cord roughening and a little black angled tempering.

The Williams village has also but a small showing, with much more dentate stamped and Mississippian. The sherds, both from the surface and from excavations, show all to have the fat-cord cord roughening and most to have the black interior. There is some black tempering mixed with other.

The Partridge Creek village has yielded mostly cord-decorated pottery through surface collecting. The greater part has the fat-cord cord roughening, the black interior, and the black angled tempering mixed with other.

Copperas Creek site has a small showing of the ware from its plowed surface. The sherds are rather coarse and have mostly ordinary grit temper. There is little of the particular cord roughening and no black interiors.

The Mossville village ware is described as known from the Simpson collection. Two pots have cord decoration, the one across the lip and one on inner lip. The second has a pentagonal mouth. Cord is stated to be 2-ply. The diamond pattern is included among the few rims. A part of the ware resembles a heavy, rather coarse gray Woodland Plain or Woodland Cord roughened. The site has also Hopewellian and Mississippian wares.

Sites with the cord-decorated pottery, as revealed by the L. P. Elliott collection, included four already listed and in addition the Platform Hill site near Havana. This site showed pottery with the black angled tempering, one-fourth of which had the particular cord roughening. The representation was small.

Five additional sites are recorded from the Willis D. Speight collections. The Hildenmaier village, a

Mississippian site with mounds, showed only one lower rim of a decided blue-gray color, gritty texture, and bearing cord lines.

The Texaco site had but one low rim, showing a lug without raised point, and the diamond pattern.

Pottery from the Ashelon, Schultz, and Orchard Mines villages was of one general character. It was decorated on lip only; was plain surfaced so far as rim shoulders showed; had outward-sloped, often wide lips, sometimes overhanging; was light reddish brown in color, rather coarse, gritty, and medium to heavy in thickness. Necks were vertical, sometimes flared at top, and were placed at an angle with the round full shoulders. There were some cord-roughened body sherds, a few showing the fat-cord roughening. There was little black angled tempering. One rim showed sloping shoulders and cord roughened body. Poor firing was indicated frequently by walls being gray in center. The greatest lip width observed was 9/16 inch.

Lip decoration consisted of one or several long cord lines running through center of lip, occasionally accompanied by punctates on outer edge of lip, and of short lines crossing the lip. Sometimes the long lengthwise line and the short crosswise line were used together. The short crossing line was sometimes oblique. Punctates included the tube (which shows a little peak of clay in center such as would be left by a hollow or tube-like tool) and the short incised. Only one rim and two lower rims had decoration similar to the usual Maples Mills. The rim had the raised point bearing a lug and the decoration the full depth of rim, composed of opposing lines. The lower rims had cord-roughened body attached; one showed a horizontal line and the other, punctates.

Ware from these sites might be included with that for which the name Corded Lip, was offered, considered as possibly a subgroup of Maples Mills Cord Decorated.

Material from the Krause site, the Metamora Road site, the Little Creek site and two sites not local, the Crane site near Crane, Ill. and the Keithsburg site near Keithsburg, Ill., contained cord-decorated ware as shown in the Virginius Chase collection. The local sites had merely a representation of the type, too small to furnish information other than a record of the ware, and revealing no different or outstanding features.

Of the two distant sites, the Crane site was of most interest. Its representation consisted of only one rim but it was entirely different. It had a wide plain band around the top of the rim, beneath which were vertical columns of short horizontal cord lines, the columns being repeated around the neck. The lip was horizontal, flat, and notched on inner edge. Tempering was ordinary grit. The rim was nicely finished and the general effect brought to mind Cole and Deuel's type 2-a.

A rim from the Keithsburg site had ordinary grit tempering and the usual red-brown color. Decoration showed about ten horizontal lines. Lip was notched on inner and outer edges alternately so that a waving resulted.

Among the Clear Lake pottery, not yet described or named as a type for this area, is a pottery which bears as the only, or chief decoration an imprint made with the edge of a cord-wrapped-paddle, for which the writer offers the name, Clear Lake Corded-Paddle-Edge. This decoration has previously been termed cord-wrapped-cylinder or cord-wrapped-stick but corded-paddle-

edge is offered as more correctly descriptive, the cord-wrapped modeling paddle simply turned edgewise being more easily and more probably used than a second special tool.

The paddle-edge may be imprinted flatwise or edgewise, in the second instance leaving a lengthwise line in the center of imprint. Cord wrapping may be widely or closely spaced, and the cord may vary in size from medium to quite fine.

The pottery grades in weight from heavy to light. In general, the heavier compares in weight, paste, temper, texture, color and shape with Cole and Deuel's type 2, or Griffin's Naples Dentate Stamped, and the lighter weight comprises the rather thin ware bearing this decoration which Cole and Deuel placed in subtype 3-a.

In the heavier pottery the print may be used on upper rim, lip, or body. It may be but a short stroke repeated around the upper rim; generally the position is diagonal right-to-left, rarely vertical or diagonal left-to-right. It may appear as a small lip notching, which sometimes waves the lip. Occasionally it appears on the top or on interior of lip. Sometimes it covers the whole rim. It may appear in horizontal position. It may make a long continuous line and may occasionally be combined with incising in zoned designs. The boss is used with it frequently, and a punctate, less often. It is placed on both smooth and cord-roughened surfaces. Lips may be flat, horizontal, inward or outward sloped, occasionally overhanging.

In the lighter weight pottery the use of the imprint is limited to the simple upper rim, with a design or other exception extremely rare. The usual position is the oblique right-to-left. Imprint may notch lips. The vertical and the diagonal left-to-right positions are also infrequent in

this weight, as is an imprint on inner lip. The fingernail punctate is combined with the imprint in rare instances. The collar and channel sometimes occurs. The imprint is placed on a surface smooth to the shoulder, and often cord-roughened from the shoulder down. The wide-interval cord roughening, with the cord imprints sharp, distinct, and fine, so abundant at this site, often appears in this weight. Necks are vertical or flared outward. Lips are simple, flat, or rounded, horizontal, rarely rolled. Instances of cord roughening on lip and neckless forms occur as exceptions. Color is

light brown or gray. The form is a wide-mouthed sloping shouldered jar with a conoidal base.

An interesting but puzzling occurrence is a rim with outer surface missing but with inner surface bearing this imprint and the rim seeming to show a corner.

The heavier pottery numbers around 100 rims and lower rims. The lighter weight includes over 450 rims but it seems probable that they represent a lesser number of pots since their general similarity and frequent small size have made it difficult to distinguish related ones.