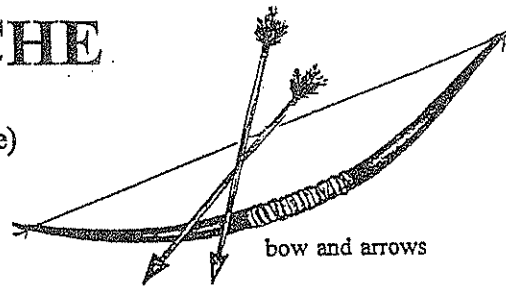


# COMANCHE

(kah·MAN chee)



bow and arrows

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE FAMILY
Texas Panhandle south to western Texas	1700 (estimate) -- 20,000 1990 Census -- 1,478 in Texas	Shoshonean

## HISTORY

The Comanche name comes from the Spanish term, *camino ancho*, meaning "wide trail." The Comanches were said to be the most determined enemies the Spaniards, Mexicans, other Indians, and Texans ever had.

Before 1600 there was one large group, the Shoshones. During the 1600s the group separated -- the Shoshones remained in Wyoming and Montana, and the Comanches moved into what is now Colorado.

Originally the Comanches were made up of six divisions that had very descriptive names -- Honey Eaters, Those Who Turn Back, Those Who Stay Downstream, Liver Eaters, Buffalo Eaters, and Root Eaters. Later, a seventh division was added, the Antelopes.

In the early 1700s, the Comanches moved south from Colorado into Texas to challenge Apache control of the Plains. The Spaniards had taught the Comanches the value of horses in the hunt and in war. Comanches became master horsemen. They owned many horses, more than any other American Indian tribe of that time.

The Comanches displaced Apache Mescalero and Jicarilla bands who retreated to the south and west. The Lipans alone were left to fight the Comanches. Eventually even the fierce Lipans fled into south-central Texas. The Comanches flourished. The plains were perfect for people who lived on horseback. The canyons of West Texas offered natural horse corrals, and the plains

above the canyons had limitless grass and much game.

By 1750 the Comanches controlled the southern plains including western Texas, and would rule it for the next hundred years. The Texas Rangers were organized to protect the white settlers from the Comanches.

## SETTLEMENTS

The Comanches had no permanent settlements, but lived in tipis as they followed the buffalo. The Comancheria ("land of the Comanche") covered an area of more than 240,000 square miles. It remained under their control until 1875.

## APPEARANCE

The Comanches were copper-colored with long, straight hair. The men wore their hair in two braids decorated with strips of fur, leather, and perhaps a feather. Women cut their hair so it was shorter than the men's and also wore braids.

Comanches were short and muscular. The men plucked out their facial hair and tattooed their faces and bodies. They pierced their ears so they could wear earrings made of shells or bone. Women painted red or yellow lines above and below their eyelids. They also painted the insides of their ears red and drew red circles or triangles on both cheeks.

## CLOTHING

Buffalo hides and deerskins were used by the women to make clothing for themselves and their

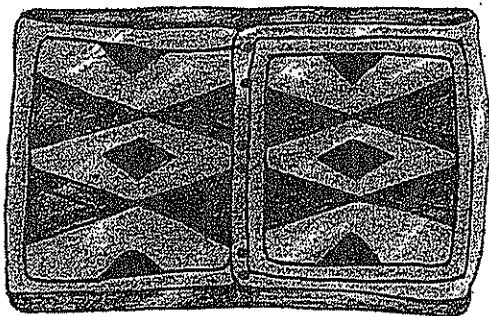
families. Boys wore no clothing for most of their first ten years, then began wearing breechcloths.

Girls wore breechcloths until they reached their teens. Then they wore loosely fitting, long-sleeved deerskin dresses that were decorated with fringe and beads. For cooler weather, everyone wore robes and high boots made of buffalo hides.

## FOOD

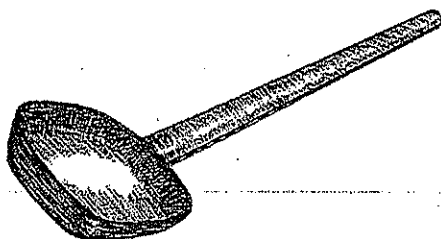
Buffalo, which they hunted from horseback, was the lifeblood of Comanche culture. The animals were butchered at the site of the kill. The meat was then wrapped up in the hides and packed back to camp on horses. Comanches also hunted elk, black bears for their fat, antelope, deer, even wild horses if they were very hungry. They preferred not to eat fish, wild birds, dogs, or coyotes, but had no taboos against eating anything when food was scarce.

The women gathered wild plants, fruits, berries, prickly pear tunas (fruits), pecans, acorns, and various roots to vary their diet. They did not farm but obtained corn and tobacco through trade. The women made pemmican (a dried meat mixture) and stored it in parfleche bags.



## TOOLS

The Comanches owned only those tools that could be easily carried during their frequent moves. Small household utensils such as scrapers for tanning hides and spoons and ladles carved from wood were always included.



Bison-hide shields were decorated with bear teeth to show that the owner was a great hunter, and with horse tails to show power as a raider. Feathers were used on a shield to fool the enemy and spoil his aim as the shield moved. Comanches also used red-painted lances when hunting buffalo and a short ax in war.

The men's most useful and valued tool was the bow and arrow, made from Osage orange or hickory wood. The bow was short, about three feet long, so it would be easy to use while riding a horse. The bowstring was made of buffalo or deer sinew which had been twisted together to make it very strong. Arrows were made of straight sticks from the dogwood tree.

## CEREMONIES

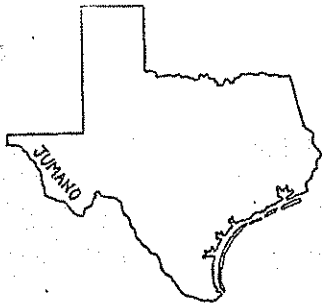
"Counting coup" was showing courage during battle by touching or hitting an enemy or killing him close up, or by capturing horses from an enemy camp. For the coup to count, it had to be witnessed by others. After a battle, coups could be claimed and judged by the rest of the warriors.

An eagle dance, featuring weapons and clothing decorated with eagle feathers, was given by a warrior for his son or nephew so the boy would get strength and power from the eagle.

## CUSTOMS

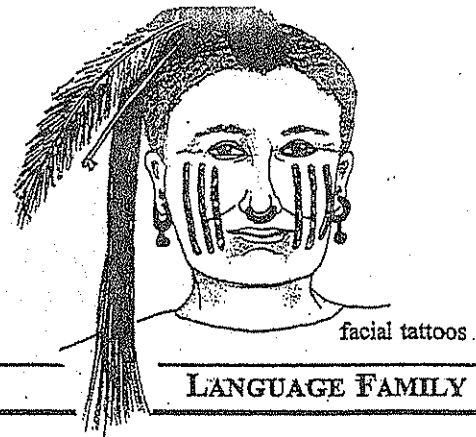
When a tribe member got sick, a special ceremony might be held to help him get well. The shaman, or medicine man, prayed, smoked tobacco, and used various herbs as medicine for the sick person. If the person died, all the female relatives cried, tore their clothing, and cut themselves with knives or sharp rocks. Sometimes they even cut off a finger to show how sad they were. The male relatives might cut their hair.

The band council usually chose a war chief and a peace chief. The war chief was an aggressive, courageous warrior. He had total authority only during raids or battles. The peace chief was usually a wise and respected older male who was willing to act as an advisor for the band.



# JUMANO

(hoo MAH no)



facial tattoos.

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE FAMILY
Rio Grande Valley from El Paso downstream to the junction of the Rio Grande with the Mexican Rio Conchos	1582 -- 10,000 (high estimate) 1900 -- 0	originally Uto-Aztecan or Tanoan; later Apache, Spanish, or Caddoan

## HISTORY

Of all the Indian tribes that have lived in Texas, the Jumanos are the most mysterious. In 1536 they welcomed the Spanish traders, Cabeza de Vaca and his three companions, the first Europeans to travel west along the Gulf Coast into the interior of North America. These Spaniards reported that the Jumanos were very friendly and offered to be their guides into the plains. Before long, the Jumanos became the trade middlemen between various Texas Indian tribes and the Spanish colonists who came north from Mexico. The Jumanos had acquired horses from the Spaniards and became busy horse traders.

Anthropologists and historians often refer to the Jumano "problem," that is, where they lived and why they disappeared. There is evidence that the Jumanos were farmers in the Rio Grande River Valley during the winter and buffalo hunters on the plains during the summer. Most of our knowledge about the Jumanos is based on the writings of Spanish and French visitors.

## SETTLEMENTS

The Jumanos probably lived in *rancherias*, or villages, and successfully farmed what was then a fertile part of the Rio Grande's Big Bend region. Their adobe houses (pueblos) were low and square, half under and half above ground. This type of house was well suited to long, hot summers. A Jumano family slept in the cool underground section during the day and, after the

sun set, climbed up to the strong, flat roof to catch the evening breezes.

When Jumanos went buffalo hunting into the western Texas plains north of the Davis Mountains, they lived in easily-transported tipis.

In the late 1600s, when their Spanish friends and protectors left the area, Jumano bands may have allied with the strong Apaches. Other Jumanos may have moved south into Mexico to earn a living by working in silver mines. The Jumano people gradually disappeared during the 1700s as they blended with other Indian groups.

## APPEARANCE

The Spaniards found the Jumanos to be a clean and handsome people. A Jumano man cut his hair to the middle of his head and used a special red dye to make it look like a cap. From the top of his head grew a long lock of hair into which he twisted goose or crane feathers.

A Jumano woman wore her hair either loose or tied close to her head. Both men and women pierced ears and noses so they could wear the coral and turquoise ornaments they obtained through trade. They also tattooed *rayas* (stripes) onto bodies and faces.

## CLOTHING

Since the Jumanos lived in a climate that was warm much of the year, the men and children usually wore no clothing. The warriors would put on buffalo-skin robes for special occasions. Women and older men wore clothing made from

deerskins that were tanned until they were very soft. The women made skirts and poncho-type blouses of deerskin and cloaks from the tanned hides of cattle.

## FOOD

The Jumanos were mainly farmers, but they did not irrigate their fields. Since the area where they lived did not get much rainfall, they planted their crops in river valleys and flood plains where the soil was fertile and moist.

Both men and women worked in the fields and raised beans, gourds, squash, corn, cotton, sunflowers, and tobacco. The women also kept house, took care of the children, ground the corn and seeds for flour, and cooked the food.

Food was cooked by stone boiling. Stones were heated in a fire, picked up with long sticks, and dropped into a gourd partly filled with water. When the stones began to cool, they were taken out, and more hot stones were added until the water started to boil. Then food was put into the gourd. Stone boiling was done until the food was cooked. If there were no gourd to use as a cooking pot, the Jumanos would dig a hole in the ground and line it with a piece of rawhide to serve as a makeshift pot.



The Jumanos gathered and ate several kinds of cacti, including pitahaya and tunas (fruit) of the prickly pear. Agave bulbs were cooked in earthen ovens. During dry years the Jumanos ate flatbread made from grinding mesquite and tornillo bean pods.

The Jumanos hunted large and small game including deer, antelope, elk, rabbit, armadillo, beaver, and even porcupine, rodents, and snakes.

Part of the tribe traveled long distances to find buffalo. The meat had to be dried during the hunt so it would not spoil during the trip home. Before the Jumanos owned horses, everything from the hunt had to be carried on men's backs or on dog travois.

## TOOLS

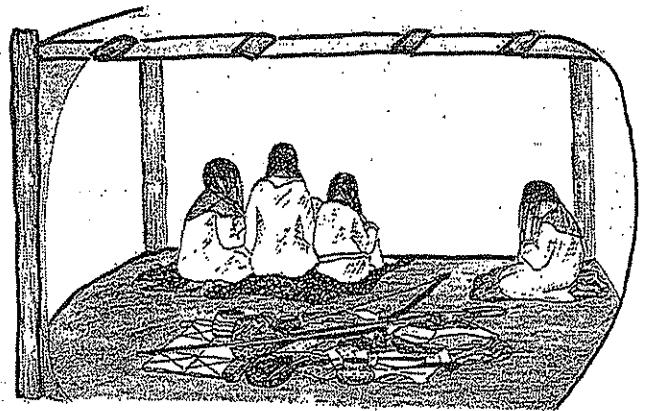
The Jumanos probably used digging and weeding tools made out of sticks and animal bones. We know they used bows and arrows, with bowstrings made from animal sinew, to kill smaller game and for war. They also used wooden clubs and protected themselves with buffalo-hide shields.

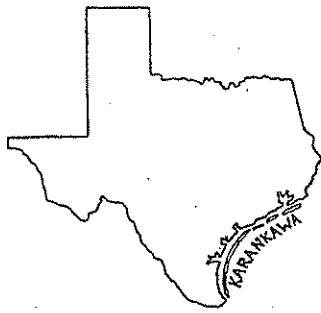
## CEREMONIES

The harvest celebration always included a big bonfire and lots of food. The Jumanos made music by clapping their hands together and singing. Others danced in time with the clapping.

## CUSTOMS

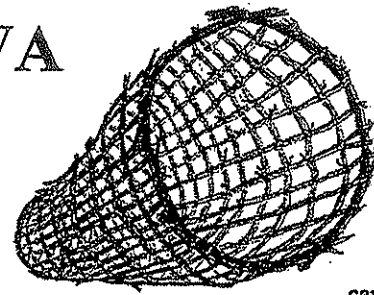
When the Jumanos celebrated harvest time, it gave them an opportunity to get together with other bands and tribes. A special house was prepared for guests, but the Jumanos did not come out to greet them. Instead, they stayed in their own houses and piled their belongings in a heap in the middle of the room. Then they sat turned toward the walls, heads down, with their hair hanging over their faces. This was their way of welcoming their visitors.





# KARANKAWA

(kah RONK ah wah)



cane weir

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE FAMILY
on the Texas Gulf coast from the southern tip of Galveston Island south to present-day Corpus Christi	1690 (estimate) -- 2,800 1858 -- 0	Karankawan

## HISTORY

In 1528 the Spanish explorer, Cabeza de Vaca, and about 90 of his men were shipwrecked on an island off the coast of present-day Texas. The survivors were found and cared for by two Karankawa tribes. By spring, most of the Spaniards had died of hunger or illness and had given the Indians a stomach disorder that killed about half of them.

The twelve surviving Spaniards, including a seriously-ill de Vaca, traveled to the mainland where they lived with another Karankawa tribe for six years. After the Spaniards left, no Europeans visited the Karankawas for more than 150 years.

In 1685, French explorer La Salle landed at Matagorda Bay and established a fort in the heart of Karankawa country. Settlers soon followed. Spanish missionaries came north from Mexico.

De Vaca's account of his experiences with the Karankawas is the most complete record we have. As Spanish mission documents are found and read, scholars may someday learn more about the Karankawas and their lifestyle.

## SETTLEMENTS

The Karankawas lived in northeastern Mexico and along 400 miles of the southeastern Texas coast, including the offshore islands. The mainland was a coastal prairie -- flat and grassy, with sandy ridges and swampy regions. There were wooded areas along the many streams that wandered to the Gulf. As hunter-gatherers, the Karankawas lived off the land.

Since they ventured out to barrier islands and traveled even as far as 100 miles inland to find food, their houses were portable lean-to shelters covered with woven grass mats. Their biggest problem was finding drinkable water. During the summer, rain was frequent, but it evaporated rapidly, so the Karankawas did not plant crops. There was little rainfall in the winter.

There were at least five major bands or groups. They shared a common language and culture, but each lived independently of the others. None of them got along with their Apache neighbors to the southwest, the Comanches to the west and north, and ever-increasing numbers of settlers coming from the south and east. Excellent trackers who knew the countryside of central and south Texas, the Karankawas later became scouts for the Mexicans and Anglo-Americans in wars against their Apache and Comanche enemies.

## APPEARANCE

The Karankawas were very tall and strong. They had great endurance and could walk for miles through the sand and swamps without tiring.

The Spaniards reported on the Karankawa males' ferocious appearance. The faces of young boys were tattooed, and the men pierced each side of their upper chest and lower lip, pushing pieces of reed through the holes. The men braided their long, coarse hair, but the women let theirs hang loose and uncombed. Mosquitoes were thick along the coast, so Karankawas smeared strong-smelling alligator grease and mud onto their bodies as a repellent.

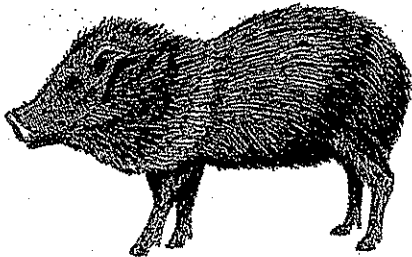
## CLOTHING

Living in a warm climate, the Karankawas did not need much clothing. Karankawa women wore knee-length skirts made of deerskin and shawls of Spanish moss. Warriors sometimes wore breechcloths, with fringe that almost touched the ground behind them. Their neighbors, the Tonkawas, called the Karankawas "no moccasins" since they always went barefoot. During colder weather the Karankawas wrapped up in bear skins.

## FOOD

The Karankawas looked for food by wading in shallow lagoons. Because of this, their Lipan Apache neighbors called them "people walking in the water." The Karankawas didn't use fishhooks, but caught fish and alligators by shooting them with bows and arrows. They also trapped fish in cane weirs, raked up mussels and oysters, and caught turtles.

On the mainland the Karankawas hunted deer, occasional stray buffalo, javelina, antelope, bear, small mammals, and birds. They gathered birds' eggs, berries, nuts, and seeds.



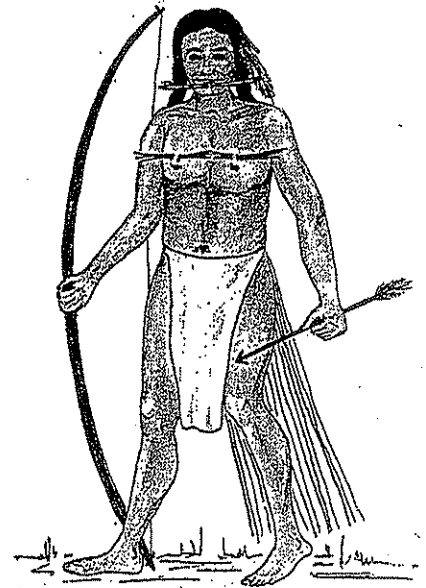
Finding food was a grim struggle. In order to survive, they had to eat almost any food they found, including locusts, lice, bear fat, and even raw and spoiled meat. They never spent more than a few weeks at any one campsite but would return year after year to favorite places.

## TOOLS

Karankawa pottery was coated with asphaltum (a tar-like substance) to make it waterproof. They cooked by pushing pots containing food down into glowing coals. They ground nuts, seeds, and corn between large, flat stones, using the meal to make bread that was baked in hot ashes.

The Karankawas made wobbly dugout canoes that were propelled with poles. These canoes were used only for short trips across quiet lagoons. Fortunately, Karankawas were good swimmers, as the canoes often tipped over.

The Karankawas used cedar bows that were as tall as they were. Their arrows were made of long pieces of cane, with three feathers at the end to increase accuracy. The Karankawas often wore deerskin guards on their left wrists when shooting arrows, to protect themselves from the snap of the bowstring. The long bow and arrow in the hands of a strong Karankawa hunter was a powerful weapon. It was reported that they could kill an animal from a distance of 100 yards.



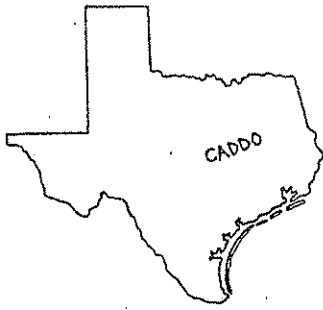
## CEREMONIES

There was a dance held at each full moon and to celebrate successful fishing and hunting trips. Every day of the three-day ceremony each man drank about five gallons of a bitter tea called "black drink."

The Karankawas made music with tortoise-shell tambourines, reed whistles, and simple flutes that produced a droning sound. The men, who had painted half their faces black and half vermilion (red), performed a "shuffle dance" in a circle around a big bonfire while making loud shrieking sounds and contorting their bodies. Women never danced but stayed on the sidelines where they howled with their hair over their faces.

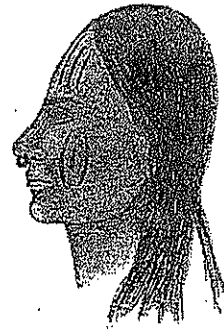
## CUSTOMS

It was reported that the Karankawas practiced cannibalism. If they did, it was not due to hunger but to take the ultimate revenge on their enemies or magically to gain their courage and power.



# CADDO

(KAD doe)



facial tattoos  
and pierced nose

LOCATION	POPULATION	LANGUAGE FAMILY
northeastern Texas	1500 (estimate) -- 200,000 1690 (estimate) -- 8,500-10,000 1990 Census -- 289 Caddo in Texas	Caddoan

## HISTORY

In 1541-42 the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto and his army reported Caddo bands living in northeastern Texas and northwestern Louisiana south of the Red River. In 1686 the French explorer La Salle and his companions encountered Caddo bands living along Shawnee Creek in Rusk County, Texas.

Early in 1691 four Spanish missions were established among the Caddos in East Texas. Not wanting to give up their own religion, the natives became hostile, and the missions were abandoned. By 1715 the Spanish decided to try again and reopened these missions.

Meanwhile the French had founded Natchitoches in 1699, and had built trading posts in this area. At first the Caddos bartered mostly with the French, who had a more generous trade policy than did the Spanish. When the Caddos found out that the French also traded with their enemies, they decided to align themselves with the Spanish.

By 1835 the Caddos of Louisiana had been pushed westward and relocated among the Caddos and Choctaws in Texas. In 1859 the Caddos were removed to Indian Territory in Oklahoma.

## SETTLEMENTS

Made up of more than two dozen tribes, the Caddos were the most sophisticated of all Texas Indians. Successful sedentary (settled) farmers, they produced a bountiful food supply and had a well-developed social and religious organization.

The Caddos were grouped into three large, loosely organized confederacies -- the Hasinai (the largest), the Kadohadachos ("real Caddo" or "Caddo proper"), and the Natchitoches (the smallest) -- all sharing the same culture, but living in separate villages.

The large Caddo population of about 200,000 at the beginning of the 1500s decreased quickly as they died from the European diseases of smallpox, measles, and cholera. Two hundred years later, the population had fallen to perhaps 10,000.

Caddo country is in East Texas, gently rolling countryside sloping toward the Gulf of Mexico, now known as the "piney woods." Part of the Texas coastal plain, it has a mild climate. The Caddo tribal complex, controlled by the tribe, is located on 37 acres, seven miles north of Gracemont, in Caddo County, Oklahoma.

## APPEARANCE

When seeing Caddos for the first time, early visitors were startled. Caddos had obviously slanted foreheads (deliberately deformed during infancy), pierced ears and noses (*Caddo* means "pierced nose"), and were tattooed on their faces from the forehead, down the nose, to the tip of the chin. On their bodies were fancy tattoos of plant and animal designs.

Men's hair styles varied from tribe to tribe. Some men cut their hair short but let a thin, waist-length lock grow from one spot. Others shaved or plucked out all their hair except for a narrow band extending over the head from forehead to neck.

It was dyed red, greased, and feathers and down from swans or ducks were stuck into it.

Women's hair styles were much simpler -- greased and parted in the middle, then braided or gathered together and tied with strips of rabbit skin into a knot at the neck.

### CLOTHING

The Caddos were expert tanners of deerskin. Using deer and buffalo brains, they treated deerskin until it was very soft and became a rich black color. Garments were fringed and small white seeds were sewn on. Men wore leggings, breechcloths, and shirts of deerskin. Women wore sleeveless deerskin blouses and breechcloths under mulberry bark or deerskin skirts. Buffalo-hide cloaks were worn in colder weather.

### FOOD

Traditional Caddo farming was quite sophisticated. They rotated their crops and used plant and animal matter as fertilizer. Both men and women worked in their large gardens. They grew maize (corn), five or six varieties of beans, squash, sunflowers, melons, pumpkins, and tobacco.



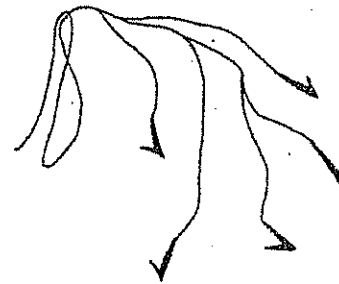
These crops were eaten along with meat from deer, buffalo, and bear. The Caddos picked wild berries, nuts, figs, cherries, and peaches and dug up edible roots and tubers. Occasionally, they found a beehive and removed the honey.

The Caddos were clever hunters. Before they acquired horses, they used dogs to hunt bear, javelina, and even buffalo. Besides tracking down animals, a dog could pull supplies on a travois. The Caddos dug pits and baited them to trap rabbit, coyote, fox, and beaver. A hunter disguised himself with the antlers and hide of a deer so he could crawl close up to his quarry.

### TOOLS

The Caddos used very basic cultivation methods. In order to clear taller weeds from a field, they set it on fire. They used hoes made from wood or from the shoulder blade of a buffalo to prepare the soil for planting and to clear weeds from around growing crops.

The Caddos invented and used the same trotline fishing rig that is used in East Texas and throughout the Southeast today. Short lines were attached about a foot apart along a long line. Each short line had a baited hook. One end of the long line was weighted down, and the other was tied to a boat or a tree. Lines were checked several times a day. Many large fish were, and still are, caught using this method.



The Caddos made pottery from clay, shaping the jars and bowls by hand, polishing the clay with smooth stones, and using shells and sharp sticks to scratch designs on the wet clay.

Bamboo canes were split into threads and woven into mats, sieves (strainers), fish nets, animal traps, and baskets. Some of the baskets were made in animal shapes; some were lined with clay to make waterproof containers.

### CEREMONIES

Special houses were built for war, feasts, and dances. Prayers were said and offerings were made for seven or eight days before war. When the war was over, the special house was completely burned to the ground.

### CUSTOMS

Caddo men had a custom of weeping and wailing when greeting strangers. Guests were welcomed with much ceremony, gifts, and food. A crowd of people would gather to look at the visitors.