

Gourd

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A gourd used during the French Regime period that could be carried over the shoulder.

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Date 1750 c

Materials ceramics

Measurements 17,2 x 11 cm

Historical context

People have always needed to carry water to quench their thirst. In France, white earthenware gourds with blue decoration appeared as early as the end of the 17th century. They were manufactured in various pottery centers, including Rouen, Angoulême and Nevers. However, only one archaeological site in North America, the Trudeau site in Louisiana (USA), reveals examples of such gourds.

This undecorated gourd is representative of the common earthenware models produced until the early 19th century. The handles on either side of the body allow a cord to be threaded through, enabling the gourd to be hung from a horse's saddle or slung over the shoulder. Its small size and low capacity indicate that it is more likely to be used for alcohol than water.

While today we associate the gourd with military equipment, this was not the case in New France. No such individual containers were supplied to soldiers during the Seven Years' War. Instead, much less fragile tin cans were distributed as water containers to each group of soldiers.

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On display