



# Index of Texas Archaeology: Open Access Gray Literature from the Lone Star State

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Volume 2016

Article 56

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2016

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### Repository Citation

Perttula, Timothy K. (2016) "Caddo Vessels from the Susie Slade Site (41HS13), Harrison County, Texas," *Index of Texas Archaeology: Open Access Gray Literature from the Lone Star State*: Vol. 2016 , Article 56.

<https://doi.org/10.21112/.ita.2016.1.56>

ISSN: 2475-9333

Available at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/ita/vol2016/iss1/56>

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# Caddo Vessels from the Susie Slade Site (41HS13), Harrison County, Texas

*Timothy K. Perttula*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Susie Slade site (41HS13) is an ancestral Nadaco Caddo settlement and cemetery on a sandy knoll in the Potters Creek valley in the Sabine River basin (Figure 1). The site is known to have had a large cemetery (> 90 burials) that was excavated by a number of East Texas collectors and amateur archaeologists in 1962 (see Webb et al. 1969:8), University of Texas (UT) archaeologists (Scurlock 1962), and Buddy Calvin Jones (1968:98-125); one burial reportedly had 36 stacked Simms Engraved vessels as funerary offerings. Ceramic vessels from the UT investigations at the Susie Slade site are in the collections of the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory (TARL), along with vessels donated to TARL by Forrest Murphey, one of the amateur archaeologists that worked at the site. These vessels are documented in this article, following the standard protocol for vessel documentation in use for several years in the analysis of Caddo ceramic vessels from East Texas sites.

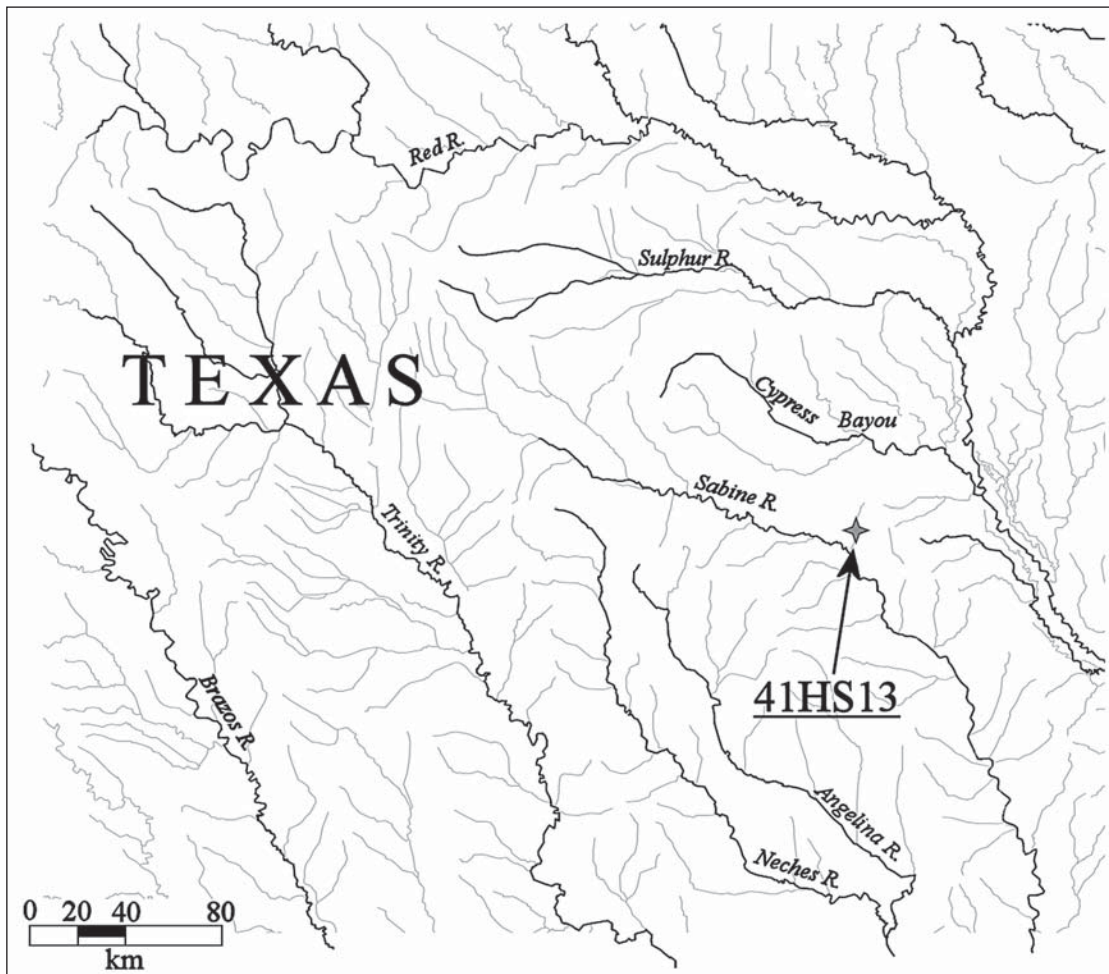


Figure 1. The location of the Susie Slade site (41HS13) in East Texas.

### **Archaeological Context**

The burials at the Susie Slade site were reportedly spaced from 1.8-4 m apart, and they were oriented in extended supine position in east-west pits, with the head of the deceased facing to the west or southwest (Jones 1968:102). The UT investigations in 1962 excavated two burials at the site: Burial 4 and Burial 5 (Scurlock 1962). Burial 4 did not have any ceramic vessel funerary offerings, but did have 15 marine shell beads, seven blue glass beads, and one triangular Fresno arrow point. The UT vessels documented herein are from Burial 5, and other funerary offerings in this burial included nine blue glass beads, 10 marine shell beads, and one marine shell disk bead (Scurlock 1962).

Three radiocarbon dates have been recently obtained from the Susie Slade site, dating organic residue on a La Rue Neck Banded jar and an incised-punctated jar from two different Caddo burials excavated by Jones (Perttula and Selden 2014, 2015). The median calibrated dates for all three samples range between A.D. 1769-1774, and the likeliest probabilities of the three dates overlap between A.D. 1720-1811. The calibrated dates clearly support the notion that the occupation of the Susie Slade site by the Nadaco Caddo took place during much of the Historic Caddo period.

### **Vessel Documentation**

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: 1, Burial 5

VESSEL FORM: Jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.4 mm; body, 5.8 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed on the body

HEIGHT (IN CM): 8.9

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 9.2

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 8.9

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 5.1; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.5

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim has two horizontal rows of tool punctations.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Emory Punctated-Incised

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: 2, Burial 5

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl, hubcap style

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: shell

RIM AND LIP FORM: Inverted-everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim, body, and base

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 4.5 mm

INTERIOR  
SURFACE  
TREATMENT:  
none

EXTERIOR  
SURFACE  
TREATMENT:  
none

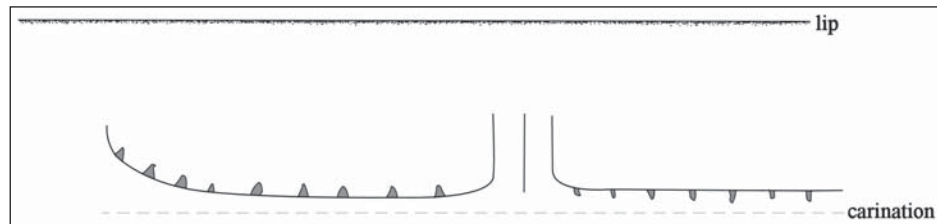


Figure 2. Simms Engraved, *var. Darco* carinated bowl from Burial 5 at the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

HEIGHT  
(IN CM): 7.0

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 15.8

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 16.1

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 10.2; circular and rounded

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.7

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The lower part of the rim panel has eight separate vertical to curvilinear engraved scroll lines with small excised tick marks that either point upwards towards the rim or downward towards the vessel carination (Figure 2).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: red pigment in the engraved lines

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Simms Engraved, *var. Darco*

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: 3, Burial 5

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Direct rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: F (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim, body, and base; organic residue on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 7.3 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

HEIGHT (IN CM): 13.3

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 23.0

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 22.8

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 7.6; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 1.8

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel rim has single upper and lower horizontal engraved lines. Between these engraved lines are a series of four horizontal and curvilinear scroll lines divided by engraved brackets (Figure 3). The brackets each have two linear tick marks, one pointing upwards towards the rim and the other pointing downwards towards the vessel carination.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): cf. Ripley Engraved, *var. Pilgrims*

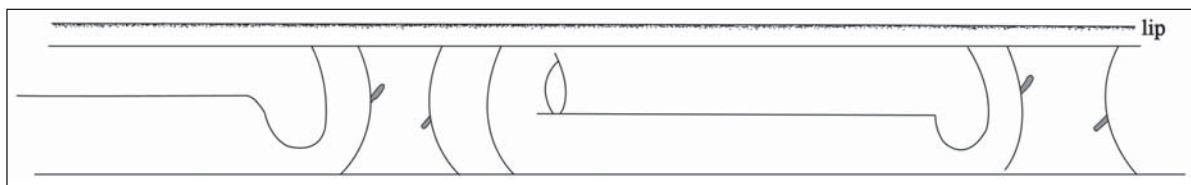


Figure 3. cf. Ripley Engraved, *var. Pilgrims* carinated bowl from Burial 5 at the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: 4, Burial 5

VESSEL FORM: Bowl with four rim peaks; found inside Vessel 3

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: bone

RIM AND LIP FORM: Direct rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown; fire clouds on the body

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 4.8 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 4.2

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 7.0

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): N/A

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 3.7; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.1

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel is decorated with two upper and two lower horizontal engraved lines, the top and bottommost lines having excised tick marks (Figure 4). Between these sets of lines are two curvilinear and meandering engraved scroll lines, one of which has excised tick marks. The upper scroll fill zones consist of four large excised pendant triangles, while the lower scroll fill zone is marked by four large engraved and hatched triangles connected by a single curvilinear engraved line.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none; green clay pigment inside of the vessel

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Taylor Engraved

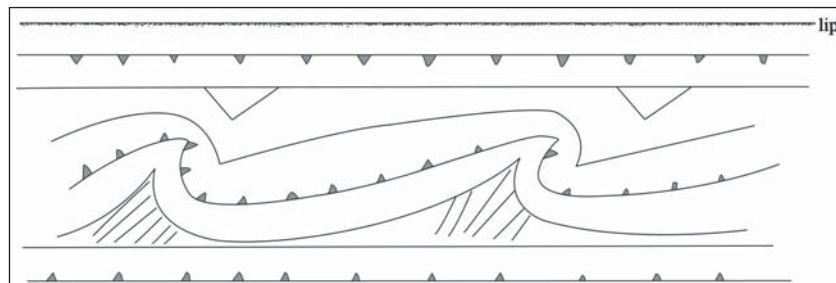


Figure 4. Taylor Engraved bowl in Burial 5 at the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: 5, Burial 5; the information on this vessel was obtained from a photograph on file at TARL and Scurlock (1962); the vessel is missing from the TARL collections.

VESSEL FORM: Miniature bottle with a short neck

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: N/A

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: N/A

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: N/A

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): N/A

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: N/A

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: N/A

HEIGHT (IN CM): 6.1

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 1.8

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 2.7

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 3.5

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 0.1

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The vessel body is decorated with vertical engraved lines between upper and lower horizontal engraved lines that encircle the vessel.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: red pigment in the engraved lines

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified fine ware



SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: Murphey #1

VESSEL FORM: Jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: bone

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim and body; organic residue on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.2 mm; body, 6.5 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed on the lower body

HEIGHT (IN CM): 22.6

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 22.7

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 21.5

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 7.6; circular and concave

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 4.6

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim has horizontal brushing marks, while the vessel body has vertical brushing marks that extend to within 5.0 cm of the base.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Karnack Brushed-Incised

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: Murphey #2

VESSEL FORM: Jar

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Everted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: yellowish-brown; fire clouds on the rim, body, and base; organic residue on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 7.9 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: none

HEIGHT (IN CM): 25.4

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 24.2

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 23.8

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 5.1; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 8.0

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim of the vessel is decorated with sets of diagonal opposed incised triangles. There is a single row of tool punctations at the rim-body juncture (Figure 5).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Unidentified utility ware

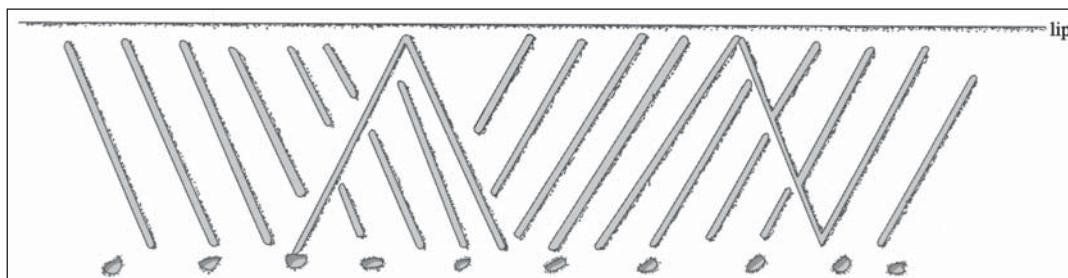


Figure 5. Incised-punctated jar in the Murphey collection from the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: Murphey #3

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog

RIM AND LIP FORM: Inverted rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR: G (fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air)

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: very dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: brown; fire clouds on the rim and body

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.7 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 14.8

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 21.5

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 24.7

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 7.6; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 2.8

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim has a single horizontal engraved line, under the lip, with downward-pointing excised tick marks. There are also four sets of single horizontal engraved lines mid-rim; these also have downward-pointing excised tick marks on them (Figure 6). These horizontal engraved lines are divided by four sets of six diagonal or curvilinear engraved lines with sideways-pointing excised tick marks.

The vessel also has a curvilinear red and white painted zone on the vessel body, a very rare decorative treatment on East Texas Caddo ceramic vessels.

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: red pigment in the engraved lines

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Simms Engraved

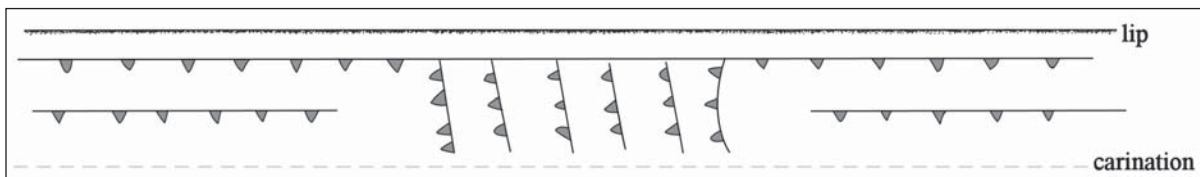


Figure 6. Simms Engraved carinated bowl in the Murphey collection from the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

SITE NAME OR SITE NUMBER: Susie Slade

VESSEL NO.: Murphey #4

VESSEL FORM: Carinated bowl

NON-PLASTICS AND PASTE: grog and bone

RIM AND LIP FORM: Direct rim and rounded lip

CORE COLOR:

INTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: dark grayish-brown

EXTERIOR SURFACE COLOR: brown; fire clouds on the rim, body, and base

WALL THICKNESS (IN MM): rim, 6.4 mm

INTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: smoothed

EXTERIOR SURFACE TREATMENT: burnished

HEIGHT (IN CM): 11.5

ORIFICE DIAMETER (IN CM): 17.8

DIAMETER AT BOTTOM OF RIM OR NECK (IN CM): 17.8

BASE DIAMETER (IN CM) AND SHAPE OF BASE: 7.6; circular and flat

ESTIMATED VOLUME (IN LITERS): 1.2

DECORATION (INCLUDING MOTIF AND ELEMENTS WHEN APPARENT): The rim is decorated with four sets of engraved horizontal-vertical scroll lines. These scroll lines are divided by sets of three vertical engraved lines that extend from just under the lip to the carination, as well as two short vertical lines (Figure 7).

PIGMENT USE AND LOCATION ON VESSEL: none

TYPE AND VARIETY (IF KNOWN): Ripley Engraved, *var. unspecified*

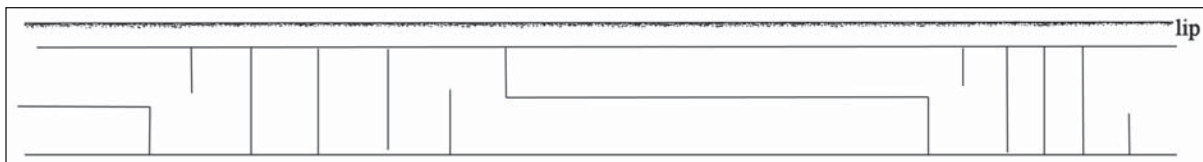


Figure 7. Ripley Engraved, *var. unspecified* carinated bowl in the Murphey collection from the Susie Slade site (41HS13).

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The TARL collections have nine ceramic vessels from the Nadaco Caddo Susie Slade site (41HS13), including five vessels from a burial feature excavated by UT archaeologists that dates from the early 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century that also had European glass trade beads. The vessels include several fine wares: Simms Engraved, *var. Darco*, Simms Engraved, Taylor Engraved, cf. Ripley Engraved, *var. Pilgrims*, and Ripley Engraved, *var. unspecified*. There also is a miniature engraved bottle of undetermined type. The utility wares in the small vessel assemblage include jars of Emory Punctated-Incised, Karnack Brushed-Incised, and an unidentified incised-punctated vessel. The vessels are tempered with grog (56 percent), grog and bone (11 percent), bone (22 percent), and shell (11 percent).

Of the 22 ceramic vessels reported by Jones (1968:Table 3) from the Susie Slade burials, there are 13 ceramic vessels that can be identified from these burials in the collections at the Gregg County Historical Museum (Perttula et al. 2014). Utility wares in the Buddy Jones collections from the Susie Slade burials include La Rue Neck Banded and Emory Punctated-Incised. Fine wares are comprised of Natchitoches Engraved (n=3 vessels), a post-A.D. 1685 ceramic ware, Simms Engraved, Simms Engraved, *var. Darco*, a Hood Engraved effigy vessel, and Ripley Engraved, *var. Pilgrims* (Perttula et al. 2014:32-47). This set of vessels is tempered with grog (92 percent) and grog and bone (8 percent).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the staff at the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory for access to the Susie Slade site collections for ceramic vessel documentation purposes. Lance Trask prepared the figures in this article.

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