



# INDEX OF TEXAS ARCHAEOLOGY

*Open Access Gray Literature from the Lone Star State*

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Volume 2021

Article 17

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2021

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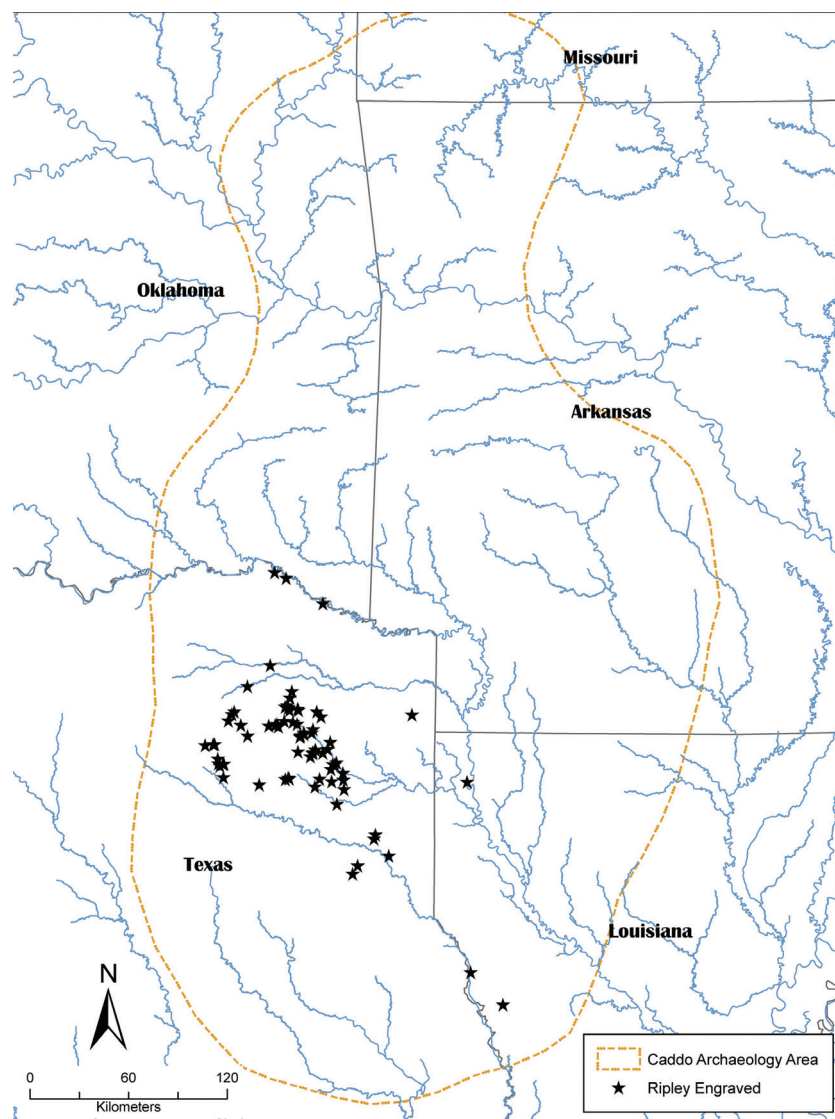
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# Ripley Engraved Ceramics: Taxonomic Re-Classification into New Types and Associated Varieties

*Timothy K. Perttula*

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Ripley Engraved was initially defined by Suhm and Krieger (1954) and Suhm and Jelks (1962) from large numbers of ceramic vessels recovered in excavations by University of Texas archaeologists and avocational archaeologists from what are now known to be post-A.D. 1450 ancestral Caddo sites of the Titus phase in parts of the Sulphur, Big Cypress, and Sabine stream basins in East Texas (Figure 1). Far-flung examples of Ripley Engraved are also present in McCurtain phase



**Figure 1.** Known distribution of Ripley Engraved vessels in documented ceramic vessel collections and archaeological sites. Figure provided by Duncan P. McKinnon; see also McKinnon (2021:Figure 9-4).

features on the middle Red River, on the Red River in Northwest Louisiana, and in Salt Lick phase sites in the middle part of the Sabine River basin (Figure 1). A major vessel database compiled by McKinnon (2021) has 1542 Ripley Engraved vessels in it, including mainly carinated bowls, but also bottles, bowls, compound bowls, and jars.

In a major study of the archaeology of the Big Cypress Creek basin in East Texas, Thurmond (1990:Figure 6) then defined 11 motifs on Ripley Engraved bowls from his analysis of vessels held by the Texas Archeological Research Laboratory at The University of Texas at Austin (TARL). These motifs were eventually codified into 11 named varieties of the type by Perttula (2005) beginning with the vessel assemblage from the Pilgrim's Pride site (41CP304), and these varieties have been used for years by Perttula and colleagues in documenting Titus phase vessel assemblages in private hands as well as in curatorial facilities such as TARL and the Gregg County Historical Museum in Longview, Texas. Fields and Gadus (2014:473-475) expanded the list of varieties of Ripley Engraved bowls to 18, and Fields (2021:Table 10.2) followed the variety definitions offered by Fields and Gadus (2014), but with a simplifying of variety names (Fields 2021:205).

These varieties of Ripley Engraved are assumed to have both spatial/community and specific temporal connotations, but these have been difficult to tease out of the archaeological record. It is known, at least, that Ripley Engraved vessels (including bottles of Ripley Engraved, *var. Ripley*) were manufactured between ca. A.D. 1430-1680 by Caddo potters in a large part of East Texas (see Figure 1), and that “some of the defined varieties of Ripley Engraved bowls and carinated bowls have spatial distributions suggesting that they could be reflective of localized communities of identity” (Fields 2021:220).

The continued consideration of the spatial-temporal context, as well as the social meaning, of variability in Ripley Engraved ceramics in Titus phase communities has led to this effort at its taxonomic re-classification into both old and new types and their associated varieties. While there is no limit, hypothetically, to the number of varieties one ceramic type can have, it is my opinion that 18 varieties of one type may be excessive in this case for the purposes of archaeological analysis, particularly given the differences between varieties in their primary elements and motifs. Since Titus phase ceramic assemblages are complex (see Perttula 2021:131-133), typological and taxonomic approaches must employ suites of archaeological data (both old and new, including ceramic types and varieties) as a means of better understanding the past of ancestral Caddo peoples and their social relationships, but not simply for cultural-historical purposes (e.g., Feinman and Neitzel 2020).

For this new classification of Ripley Engraved, I have grouped together 10 varieties that feature scroll motifs, especially slanted scroll motifs (Figure 2), either with or without primary elements. This follows the original definition of Ripley Engraved by Suhm and Jelks (1962:127). Vessels with these motifs are most common in Fields' (2021:Table 10.4) sample (n=870) of classified Ripley Engraved varieties by core Titus phase communities (Figure 3), accounting for 83 percent of the identified vessels. These varieties have a wide distribution across most of the core communities (Fields 2021:Figure 10.6), particularly *var. Galt*, *var. McKinney*, *var. Carpenter*, and *var. Gandy*. Ripley Engraved is generally thought to have been made by Caddo potters between ca. A.D. 1430-1680, but the varieties seem to be differentiated in age. Many more calibrated radiocarbon dates on vessel organic residues and other contexts where identified varieties occur in association with dateable organic remains are needed for this interpretation to be considered beyond reasonable doubt, however. At the Tuck Carpenter site (41CP5), for instance, different ceramic varieties of Ripley are correlated with different arrow points known to be of different ages, such that *var. Carpenter* may




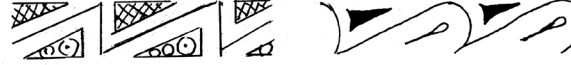
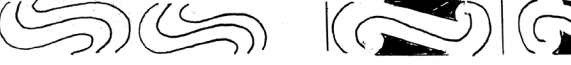




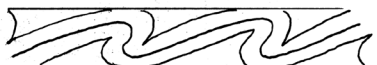
Ripley Engraved varieties based on bowl motifs	
Variety	Description
Galt	<p>Scroll (generally slanted) with circle as primary element. Circle can be partial, but more than half is present. Circle can have small circle, cross, or diamond element within it. Circle may be defined by hatched surrounds. No other secondary elements factor into variety definition. Encompasses Thurmond's scroll and circle motif.</p> 
McKinney	<p>Horizontal scroll with pendant triangles secondary element on upper and lower arms of scroll. Can have open circle, circle with cross, diamond, diamond with cross, or some combination of these as primary elements. Encompasses Thurmond's pendant triangle motif.</p> 
Enis Smith (formerly McKinney-Enis Smith)	<p>Version of variety McKinney with simple bar or no primary element between the scroll arms. Rather, the arm is bent up or down to form rounded abutting scroll ends. Retains the straight scroll and pendant triangles of McKinney.</p> 
Carpenter	<p>Slanted scroll with no primary element between the scroll arms. Secondary elements within scroll arm do not factor into variety definition. Encompasses Thurmond's continuous scroll motif.</p> 
Gandy	<p>Horizontal or slanted scroll with arms making a bisected simple scroll. No primary element or only a simple line between the scroll arms, which have rounded ends. This is Thurmond's scroll motif minus the SZ primary element.</p> 
Mockingbird (formerly Gandy-Mockingbird)	<p>Version of variety Gandy with crosshatched zones between and around the scroll arms.</p> 
Diana (formerly Gandy-Pine Tree)	<p>Version of variety Gandy with SZ primary element and slanted or horizontal scroll arms. This is true to Thurmond's original scroll motif.</p> 
Cash	<p>Slanted scroll with two opposed scroll arms that form triangular areas often filled with secondary circular element, curl, or simple hatching. Secondary element is not a factor in variety definition, but primary element between the scroll arms is generally some form of circle. May encompass Thurmond's circle and nested triangle motif.</p> 
Caldwell	<p>Slanted scroll with half-circle primary element. No secondary elements factor into variety definition. May encompass Thurmond's scroll and semicircle motif.</p> 
Harvard	<p>Sinuuous slanted scroll arms that are not broken by primary element, i.e., a continuous scroll. Scroll arms may be bisected by central line.</p> 

Figure 2. Ripley Engraved and its associated varieties.

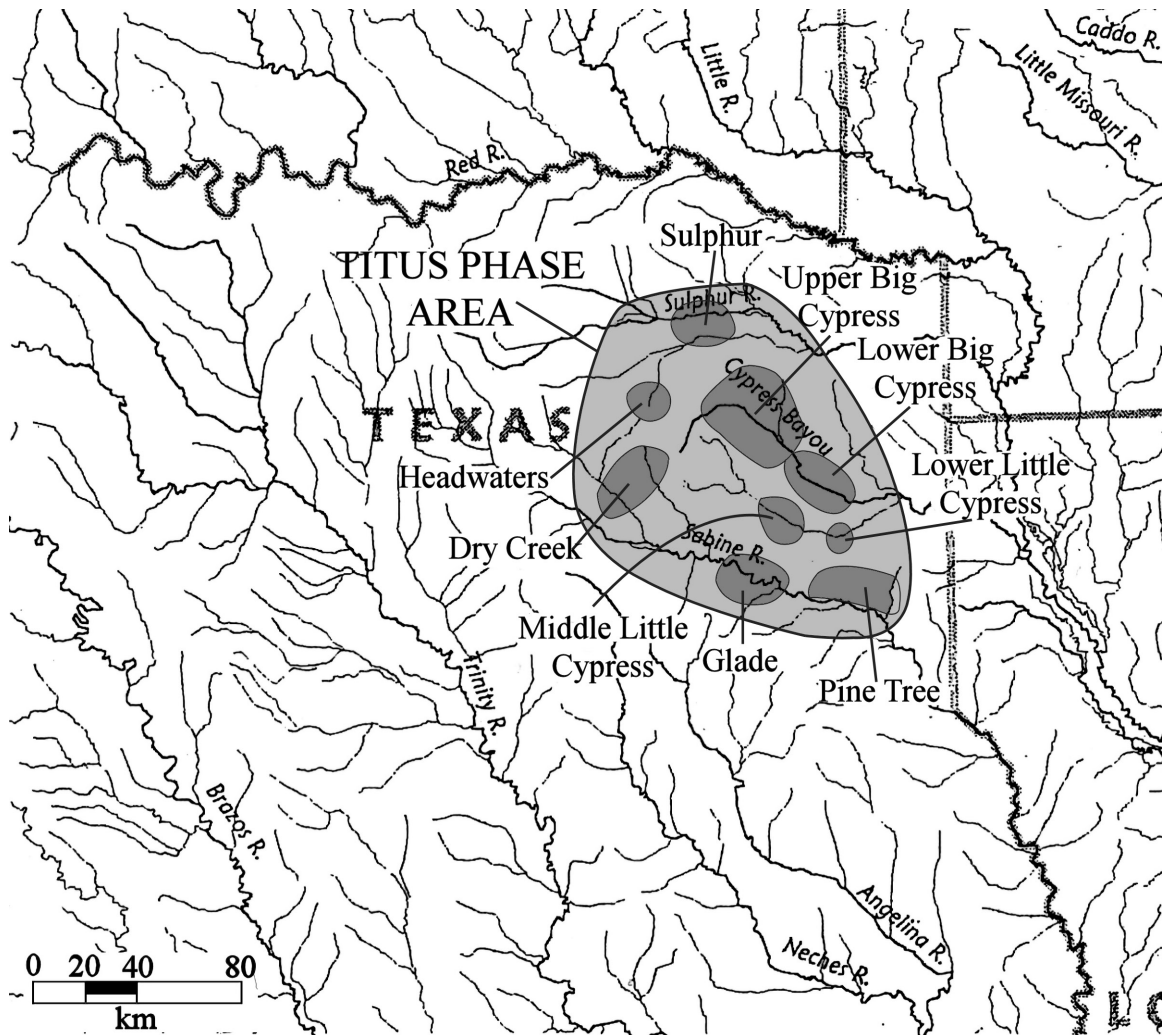

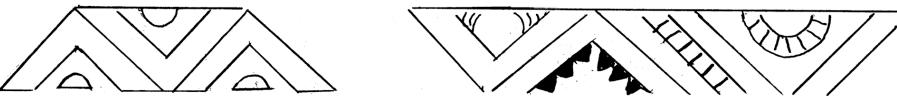





Figure 3. Titus phase core communities in East Texas.

date from ca. A.D. 1430 into the 16<sup>th</sup> century (and associated with Perdiz points), *var. Cash* and *var. Gandy* date from ca. A.D. 1500-1600 (and associated with Bassett or Maud points), and *var. McKinney* dates after ca. A.D. 1600, and occur in association with Talco arrow points (Perttula et al. 2017:197 and Table 9).

There are five varieties of Spencer Engraved, a new type extracted from Ripley Engraved (Figure 4): *var. Reed*, *var. Williams*, *var. Starkey*, *var. Pine Tree*, and *var. Spencer*. All have band motifs of one shape or another, including triangles, nested triangles, half-circles, circles, SZ elements, and nested semicircles. In Fields' (2021:Table 10.4) tabulation, these varieties represent 11.7 percent of the erstwhile Ripley Engraved bowls with identified motifs and varieties; *var. Williams* is the most common of the Spencer Engraved vessels. Spencer Engraved and its varieties are apparently contemporaneous with Ripley Engraved, based on their occurrence at a range of 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century sites, including A. P. Williams (41TT4), Taylor (41HS3), Spencer (41UR315), and Johns (41CP12). The spatial distribution of the varieties of Spencer Engraved are concentrated in the upper Big Cypress Creek communities and the lower and middle Lower Cypress Creek communities (see Figure 3). *Var. Starkey* and Spencer Engraved, *var. Pine Tree* occur in Titus phase sites in the Pine Tree community in the middle Sabine River basin (see Fields 2021:Figure 10.6).

**Spencer Engraved varieties based on bowl motifs**

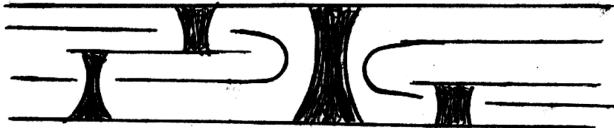


Variety	Description
Reed	Band motif with triangular elements alternating with bars, curls, or other elements. May encompass Thurmond's bisected diamond motif. 
Williams	Band motif with the three repeating slanted lines alternating with a circle, curl, or other element. May encompass Thurmond's alternating nested triangle motif. 
Starkey	Band motif with alternating half circles and bar elements. Half circles may have central vertical line. Hatching or crosshatching may surround these elements. 
Pine Tree	Band motif with alternating SZ, circle, or half circle elements. Hatching or crosshatching may surround these elements. 
Spencer	Band motif of nested semicircles emerging from lowest carination line and that may repeat or alternate with straight bars, slanted bars, or semicircle extending down from upper carination line. Hatching or crosshatching may surround these elements. 

**Figure 4. Spencer Engraved and its associated varieties.**

Justiss Engraved is the other new type extracted from the 18 varieties of Ripley Engraved vessels known in Titus phase vessel assemblages. The three varieties—*var. Pilgrim*, *var. Tiddle*, and *var. Richey*—feature horizontal scrolls (Figure 5). These varieties represent only 5.1 percent of the erstwhile Ripley Engraved bowls with identified motifs and varieties (see Fields 2021:Table 10.4); *var. Pilgrim* is the most common of the Justiss Engraved vessels. *Var. Pilgrim* is thought to date from ca. A.D. 1500-1600, and *var. Richey* may date from ca. A.D. 1430-1500 (see Perttula et al. 2017), contemporaneous with both Ripley Engraved and Spencer Engraved.

These varieties of Justiss Engraved are present in Titus phase sites primarily in the Middle and Lower Little Cypress Creek communities as well as the Lower and Upper Big Cypress Creek communities (see Figure 3) (see Fields 2021:Figure 10.6). In the upper Sabine River basin, *var. Pilgrim* vessels occur at the Goldsmith site (41WD108) in the Dry Creek community, while *var. Tiddle*

**Justiss Engraved varieties based on bowl motifs**

Variety	Description
Pilgrim (formerly Pilgrim's)	Horizontal scroll with interlocking arms that may have simple bisecting line. No primary element between scroll arms. Similar to variety Gandy but more rectilinear. Similar to Thurmond's interlocking horizontal scroll. 
Tiddle	Rectilinear horizontal scroll with or without hatched line bisecting the scroll arms. Arms interlock to form a series of elongated and nested Zs. 
Richey	Generally horizontal scroll with arm ends curled back on themselves. Engraved lines of an arm end in a small excised or hatched triangle. May have SZ, simple bar, or no primary element between the arms. 

**Figure 5. Justiss Engraved and its associated varieties.**

vessels also occur at the Pine Tree site (41HS15) in the Pine Tree community in the mid-Sabine River basin (see Figure 3).

**Acknowledgments**

Duncan McKinnon provided Figure 1 for this article and Figures 2-5 were modified by Lance Trask from Fields (2021:Table 10.2).

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