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An Ancestral Caddo Utility Ware Ceramic Sherd from a Site in Williamson County, Texas

Timothy K. Perttula

A local resident of Williamson County, Texas, collected 20 or more years ago a single prehistoric ceramic vessel sherd from a site near Brushy Creek and the community of Noack in southeastern Williamson County, Texas (Figure 1). Brushy Creek is a tributary to the San Gabriel

Natural Regions of Texas

Figure 1. Natural Regions and the Location of Williamson County in Central Texas.
River, and joins with it a few miles downstream and to the east in Milam County. The site, 41WM763, is in the Blackland Prairie zone of Central Texas. The site lies about 90 m east of a prominent hill top that also has an archaeological site on it (41WM762, the Noack site), but one without any evidence of aboriginal pottery use.

The ceramic sherd is a body sherd from a utility ware jar tempered with grog and burned bone, and smoothed on its interior surface. The sherd came from a vessel that was fired in a reducing environment and cooled in the open air (Teltser 1993:Figure 2g). The body sherd is 8.2 mm in thickness.

The body sherd has two rows of fingernail punctations (Figure 2), and is from a vessel of either Dunkin Incised (Suhm and Jelks 1962:Plate 12a, g) or Kiam Incised (Suhm and Jelks 1962:Plate 45b-c, e) that was manufactured well to the east of the site by a Caddo potter that lived in the Post Oak Savanna and Pineywoods of East Texas. These particular ceramic types were made by Caddo potters between ca. A.D. 900-1250, and were often traded or exchanged with Central Texas groups living in the Brazos and Colorado River basins.

A recent compilation has identified at least 163 known sites and/or collections in Central Texas with ancestral Caddo ceramic sherds (Perttula 2018:Figure 2 and Table 1). Caddo ceramic sherds of ca. A.D. 900-1250 age are most commonly reported in Hill, McLennan, Williamson, and Coryell counties (Perttula 2018:Figure 89), in Blackland Prairie settings.

Acknowledgments

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Suhm, D. A. and E. B. Jelks (editors)

Teltser, P. A.