

Camp "Piedras Negras", Guatemala
April 21, 1931.

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson,
Moorestown, New Jersey.

My dear Mr. Johnson:

I have been intending to write to you for such a long time, and I can hardly explain even to myself why I have put it off so long. Of course there are always things to be done and we never get entirely caught up, at any rate I never do, with the demands of urgent correspondence, night photographic work, and finances. All are always behind hand. We are called at five, breakfast at five thirty and get to work soon after six, the workmen at six. Although they end work at three thirty, we generally stay out till five, and as we must get to bed rather early account of the early rising, the evening hours are short and busy with photographic work, writing and figuring. If we had a photographer and a Spanish-speaking bookkeeper I could find more leisure time. But I think especially I have been putting off writing to you in hopes that I would have something of especial interest to report to you, and particularly I wanted to send you a set of photographs from here. But although I have neither of them ready for you, I am not going to wait another day before writing you.

I presume you have heard from Mr. Jayne, to whom I send frequent reports, how the work is going here. The camp is now very pleasant and comfortable. I have, fortunately, a picture of the camp, taken from across the river on the Mexican side, and I enclose this. It is on a high bank above the Usumacinta River so that we have a beautiful view both up and down stream. The country is practically unpopulated, there being a small settlement of a half dozen houses an hour's ride down stream, and the next settlement of equal size about four hour's journey up stream, and not a house between, just virgin forest. A year ago when I came here all was dense forest and bush, but today we have a most pleasant camp. When we arrived on Washington's birthday, two months ago, only the main building was done, and the foreman had worked till midnight the previous night getting that done. But in a few weeks we had a small house for my assistant, Mr. Satterthwaite and his wife, another for my engineer, Mr. Wyer and his wife, one for myself, a storehouse, kitchen, guesthouse, house for the Guatemalan Inspector, workmen's kitchen, workmen's living shed, toilet and bath, and shed for the horses, all made of palm thatch and tied together with vines, not a nail being used in the construction. A dairyman from Tenosique brought up a number of milch cows, poor things, of course, compared with our dairy cows, but at any rate we have fresh milk, and our garden is beginning to yield some greens, so we are living in more comfort than most of us anticipated. Mosquitoes very few but other insect pests annoying.

As you of course understand, one of our principal purposes is to take out some of the great stelae which were erected at this site at five year intervals, probably from about 400 to 600 A. D., more or less. These are wonderful works of art and are slowly going to pieces here in the woods. All are fallen and many are broken. Of course all those that fell face up have been entirely eroded, being made of limestone which can be cut deeply with a knife when they are water-soaked, but those which fell face down were well preserved when Teobert Maler, who discovered the site about 1895, turned them over to photograph them. In the last thirty years they have eroded somewhat, but still are magnificent pieces of sculpture. I do not hesitate to compare them favorably with the Assyrian bas reliefs which we are soon to lose. I do not think that there is a good Mayan stela in any museum in the world outside of Mexico, and those here represent the finest period of Mayan art. I presume that Mr. Jayne has showed you the plates of the stelae in Maler's report, and I have sent him some photographs showing some of them as they are at present. As soon as possible I am going to send you photographs of some of them for yourself. Mayan monuments are found only in Mexico, Guatemala, and at one site in Honduras. Mexico would never permit one to leave her soil, and practically all of those in Guatemala are in places where their exportation would be impossible. This is the one site from which they can be exported without immense expense, and we are to be congratulated on having secured permission from the Guatemalan Government to take them out. As you are doubtless aware, I had much trouble in securing the permission of the Mexican Government to take them out through Mexican territory, the only possible way, and this permission was refused in February, but this is fortunately all settled now.

Fortunately we are on a river which becomes navigable not far below us. If it were navigable to this point, our difficulties would have been greatly simplified, but on the other hand if this had been the case the monuments would have been taken to England or elsewhere long before the local government awoke to the importance of their archeology and prohibited the exportation of such things. So I had to arrange to have a road built from here for a distance of about 37 miles to a point on the river from which they can be transported by large dugout canoes for a few miles further through some swift shallow water to a point near Tenosique where they can be loaded on large river boats and taken to the seaport at Frontera. As you probably know, I was lucky enough to meet in Guatemala City last summer, I mean last spring, my engineer, who had just the experience needed, and I sent him in here to begin the road. He did much of it last year, and it has been pushing ahead for the last two months and now is practically done. As soon as a few small bridges over gullies are put in, and the road made last year cleared of fallen trees, it will be ready, and this is promised by May tenth. If it had not been begun by Mr. Wyer last year we could not have taken out anything this year, but now I think it almost certain that some of the finer smaller stela will be taken out this year, and I know that you will be entranced by their beauty when you see them. Of course the road is only a wide cleared trail over which oxen can draw heavy wagons, with the bad places graded, and is unsurfaced so that it can be used only in the dry season. The dry season may end late in May or early in June.

will have but little time at our disposal this year. Difficulties will crop up, of course, but the principal ones have already been overcome and we feel confident of surmounting the others as they arise and of getting out some of the finest monuments this year.

Of course the expenses for this year have been very high and the greater part of your gift will be spent this season. This is due, of course, to the high overhead. This overhead includes the expense of my long trip to Guatemala last year to secure the contract from the Guatemalan Government, the building of the road, and the purchase of the equipment for the expedition which of course had to include expensive heavy wagons, a tractor, and such things. Fortunately we were able to purchase these from a lumber contractor in the neighborhood who had ceased work here and could be secured almost on the spot for a cost much less than they would have cost new in the States. Moreover there will be salvage on these when our work here is over. But all of this overhead expense needs to be paid only once, and next year the work can be carried on with a budget of certainly less than half of what we have spent this year.

Of course the removal of the stelae is only one phase of the work here and most of our energies are devoted to excavation. Unfortunately these yield little of small objects of museum value. The Mayan cities were ceremonial centers and small objects are of rare occurrence in them. We are getting important data on architecture with excellent photographs, and almost certainly will discover some decorated lintels of high artistic value. I found one, but it was badly broken and only parts of it are worth taking out. I am now excavating on a pyramid on the top of which was a temple which almost certainly held three carved lintels, for one was found and a fragment of a second one, both of them taken to the Peabody Museum at Harvard by Maler years ago. I am making a long search for the missing one and for the rest of the second one, the small fragment of which Dr. Morley considers the finest piece of art in the Maya area. I hope I shall find both.

To find good small things, such as pottery and jade we need to find a graveyard, or to learn the surface indications of graves. We may be on the trail of these, for Mr. Satterthwaite is working in a portion of the ruins where the structures are not impressive, and which may be a domiciliary region. There he has found three graves and we hope before long to discover some which contain objects of artistic and scientific value.

Now since I have broken the ice and introduced myself to you, I shall write you more frequently and keep you informed from time to time of the course of the work of your expedition, of its finds and disappointments, its accomplishments, and its difficulties, which latter we hope will be few, and intend to surmount.

With our most cordial regards, and our appreciation to you for having made this expedition possible, believe me

Sincerely yours,

Camp Piedras Negras, Guatemala.
April 20, 1931.

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson,
Moorestown, New Jersey.

My dear Mr. Johnson:

After waiting so long to write you, in hopes of having something worth writing about, it was just my bad luck to write you just one day too soon. In fact I do not think that the messenger had left camp with your letter, I mean my letter of the 21st to you, when my workmen turned up what I am sure is the finest work of art ever found in preColumbian America. In fact there are very good reasons for believing that it was the greatest work of art ever carved in preColumbian America. These reasons are, that this art of this city, Piedras Negras, was probably the highest in the Maya region, which of course means the highest in America. The pyramid where this was found dates from the last period of the city when art was at its maximum development. This was one of, probably, three lintels from the temple on the summit. Lintels being smaller than stelae were more delicately carved and four of the stelae around this period rank as ~~the~~ among the most artistic in the Maya area (I hope to get all four out for the Museum, probably three if not all four this year.) The three lintels of this temple may therefore be expected to be the high points of Maya art. One, and a fragment of a second were found by Maler, the discoverer of the site and are now in the Peabody Museum at Harvard. The third, which we have now found, is far superior to the entire one at Harvard, lintel 2, and its only rival for premier honors may be the broken lintel 1, for the rest of which I am now seeking. I do not believe any Mesopotamian work compares with it for artistic feeling, and I doubt if any Egyptian object equals it. It compares well with Grecian or Roman art. Others may think that I am over-enthusiastic about it -- maybe I am, but I am sending you and Mr. Jayne photographs of it; judge for yourselves. Unfortunately it is broken and one small part has not been found. The high relief is badly eroded but shows well the capabilities of the sculptor; many parts of it were in full round relief and shows perfect command of the human figure in naturalistic poses; the low relief is magnificent and well preserved. It is wonderful how well it is preserved, for it is well over a thousand years old and when the building fell with its massive roof the lintels were thrown down the sides of the pyramid and crushed beneath tons of masonry. I feel sure that when you see this magnificent piece of art that you will feel that this alone is worth the expense of the expedition. Fortunately it is so small, about 125 x 60 x 12 cm., that it can be easily brought out, and I think it very likely that we can bring it home with us within two months.

I am now hunting for the rest of lintel 1 and hope
found and will also be well preserved; fortune

lintels naturally fall face down and are generally well preserved.

I spent most of this morning printing photographs for you and am sending you in separate package a group of 33 selected photographs of the stelae, altars, lintels and other objects here, of the architectural details we have uncovered, of the camp and the building of the road. I enclose herewith a list of these photographs corresponding to the numbers in the back of the photographs, so that you may identify them.

I do hope that you will consider that the results of this year's work justify a continuation of it for several years more. It is a remarkable opportunity, this permission that we have secured from the Guatemalan Government to work here and to take out these magnificent works of art. No other Museum has ever had an equal opportunity, and even if we are allowed to keep them for only the minimum period of ten years, it will be well worth while, although I strongly believe that they will never be recalled. I hope that work will continue here for quite a period of years. Now that our road is finished and the camp built and everything in running order the expense for the ensuing years will be very much less. Although the initial appropriation was expected to cover two seasons work, there will almost certainly not be enough left, on account of the high cost of overhead and preparatory work, to see us through next season, although the additional requirements for next year will not be very great. I am writing today to Mr. Jayne to ask him if he approves of my bringing home my Engineer, Mr. Wyer, so that he may work at the Museum during the summer and fall and be available again next year for the continuation of the work here, as he is a valuable man and I depend very much on him.

With the cordial regards of all the members of your expedition, believe me

Sincerely yours,

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

May 22, 1931.

Mr. J. Alden Mason,
Camp Piedras Negras,
Guatemala, Central America

Dear Mr. Mason:

I received your letter of April 26th and also the photographs. You seem to have made quite a find and I hope the missing piece turns up. It is very interesting. Do not fail to let me know when you return; I would like to have a chat with you.

I am leaving on the twenty-sixth instead of the twentieth for Europe, but expect to be home by the tenth of July.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

July 13, 1931

My dear Mr. Johnson:

I returned from Guatemala on July 4, and found awaiting me your letter of May 22, which had unfortunately never reached me in Guatemala and had been returned to this country. I look with pleasure that you intend to be home about this time and I would be indeed delighted to have an interview with you and to explain in person the results secured by your expedition at Piedras Negras. The specimens secured by us are in this country and on their way here now and should arrive very soon. The fine lintel I asked to have sent on by express and it should be here next week. I hope that it will be ready for you to see on your first visit to this museum.

I succeeded in getting several of the larger monuments over our road to the river but as the rainy season had set in, the river was too high to get them out. However, there is a short dry season in August when my agents in Tenosique will employ every effort to get them down the river and I have great hopes that there will be one or two of them here by September or October.

Thank you for your hearty interest in this work. With hopes that you had a pleasant trip to Europe and with anticipation of seeing you in person before long, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

J. Alden Mason, Curator

Eldridge H. Johnson, Esq.
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

no answer needed

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

July 14, 1931.

Mr. J. Alden Mason, Curator
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Sir:

Your letter of July 13th for the purpose of informing Mr. Johnson that you have returned from Central America and have certain of your finds ready to exhibit has been received here.

Mr. Johnson's return from abroad has been extended indefinitely; however, your letter will be placed on his desk.

Yours very truly,


Secretary

HRH:LEC

October 27, 1931

Eldridge R. Johnson, Esq.
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

My dear Mr. Johnson:

I was very glad to hear from Mr. Jayne that you have returned home and I am anticipating the pleasure of an interview with you, as you suggested in your letter to me of May 22, at any time and place that would be convenient to you. I want to tell you more about the work of your expedition at Piedras Negras and of our plans for the continuation of the work there.

Of course Mr. Jayne has told you that on November 19th we shall have a special view of the finds from this expedition in connection with the opening of our newly reinstalled American Halls. Our fine lintel will then be put on exhibition for the first time. All authorities who have seen this agree that it is the finest known piece of Pre-Colombian American sculpture.

I would be able to see you at any time, any day except this Saturday and I am also free practically every evening after this week and I shall be happy to hear from you when it would be convenient for you to see me.

Sincerely yours,

J. Alden Mason

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

October 30, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of October 27th. I do not recall Mr. Jayne mentioning the event of November 19th, although he may do so later on.

I will try to arrange so that I may have the pleasure of having you lunch with me some day next week, and would also like to have you meet my son, who has just returned from an expedition to Matto Grosso, Brazil. Will you please inform me by return mail how you can be reached by 'phone, as we can best arrange a date to our mutual convenience in that manner.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

October 31, 1931

Eldridge R. Johnson, Esq.
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you so much for your letter of yesterday. I shall be delighted to have lunch with you any day next week and also to meet your son, Mr. Fennimore Johnson. I have long been anticipating the pleasure of meeting both of you.

I can be reached any time during the day from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at the Museum here and in the evenings at my home in Berwyn. The telephon number is Berwyn 246-M.

Sincerely yours,

JAM/LWB

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

November 3, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

Pursuant to our conversation concerning the Islands on the Coast of Yucatan, Tulum and Cosonel, can you refer me to any papers or books that would give me information on these Islands? I expect to take a Caribbean cruise as usual this winter and am always looking for points of interest.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

November 3, 1931

Eldridge R. Johnson, Esq.
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

My dear Mr. Johnson:

First let me tell you how much I appreciated the pleasure of taking luncheon with you and Mr. Fennimore Johnson and knowing you both better as well as of inspecting your beautiful yacht. Allow me also to thank you most heartily for your willingness to carry on for another year the work of your expedition at Piedras Negras. I feel sure that the results, both in scientific information and artistic objects will please you and be worth far more than the costs of the work.

I am taking the liberty of sending you, under separate cover, an article from my personal library which is, I regret, rather old and in poor condition. If you find it of sufficient importance you may be able to secure a copy from the government printing office in Washington. It is an article from one of the annual reports of the National Museum and refers to Easter Island. You will find it full of data and written in a non popular vein and therefore different from most publications on this region. However, it was not done by a scientist and I should not put too much faith in his deductions and conclusions. I regret that Easter Island is not in my field of work or I might be able to refer you to other works of importance.

With regard to the Maya region I am taking the liberty of suggesting some works which would be of interest to you and which you might like to secure for your library, especially since I understand that you intend to visit some of these places. You should get "Archaeological Studies Among the Ancient Cities of Mexico," Anthropological Series, Vol. I, No. 1; Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, 1895. This is one of the classics on this region and will be of special interest to you because it is the result of a trip rather similar to the one which you project. About 1892, Mr. Allison V. Armour took several scientists on his yacht "Ituna" to Yucatan and Mexico and this work is the result of this expedition. Not only is it a classic of Maya studies but the incidents of yacht travel in

that region might be of great importance to you. I am not sure whether you have Gregory 'Mason's. "Silver Cities of Yucatan" which recount his exploration along the east coast of Yucatan where I understand you also intend to travel. His party also traveled in a small boat and the details of their voyage might be of importance to you. In regard to the city of Tulum which you propose visiting on the east coast of Yucatan, there is a large publication on that city entitled "Tulum" by S. K. Lothrop. This is publication 335 by the Carnegie Institute Washington, D.C., 1924, \$4.50. While I am referring to the Carnegie Institute, let me call to your attention a magnificent work which they have just this year published on the excavations of the Temple of the Warriors. This I believe consists of one volume of texts and one of plates. It is publication 406 and I think the price is \$20.00, but it is something that you should by all means have in your library. There is also a popular lower priced edition of the same thing just out by Earl Morris but I forget the name of the publisher and the price. Not over \$5.00 I should think.

The classics of travel in this region and the work which first brought my works to the attention of the public are two volumes by John L. Stephens, "Incidents of Travel in Central America" Chiapas in Yucatan, 1841 and "Incidents of Travel in Yucatan in 1855". These are of course long out of print but Leary's book store generally has a copy available as there was a very large edition of them. Another valuable work on the Maya published this year is the "History of the Mayans" by Gann & Thompson, Scribners, \$2.50. For more general and less detailed works on this region there are three principal ones, "Mexican Archaeology" by Joyce, which you have; "Ancient Civilizations of Mexico" article #3, American Museum of Natural History, New York, by H. J. Spinden, and "The Civilization of the Mayans" leaflet 25, Anthropology, Field Museum of Natural History of Chicago, by J. E. Thompson.

Trusting that these citations will be of interest to you and again thanking you for your interest in the expedition and for the kind hospitality to me, believe me as ever,

Sincerely yours,

November 4, 1931.

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson,
608 Wilson Building,
Camden, N. J.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

As I presume you realized, your letter of yesterday requesting titles of works on the East Coast of Yucatan crossed in the mail one from me giving the information which you request. You will find a large bibliography in Lothrop's work on Tulum which presumably gives all the works which refer to this region up to 1924, and since that time I can think of none except Gregory Mason's Silver Cities of Yucatan. Holmes visited these sites in 1894 on Armour's yacht Ituna and has some information on Mugeroc, Cancun and Cozumel Islands; otherwise these are little known. His publication has long been out of print, but I was informed when I was at Field Museum in September that they had found a few copies in the basement and that a few remain on sale. For many years these two volumes have been unobtainable, and I would suggest that you grab one before the few remaining ones go. I can think of no other works to add to those I mentioned in my letter of yesterday.

With cordial regards, believe me

Sincerely yours,

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

November 4, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of November 3rd
and thank you very much for the information contained
therein. I shall secure the copies that you have
recommended and I am sure they will be of great as-
sistance to me.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

November 4, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I received the Smithsonian Institute Report devoted largely to the Easter Island. Thank you very much for sending it. This looks like real information. If you know of any other papers like this gotten out by any other museum, I would be very pleased to know about them. I think it is quite likely that the British Museum has issued a report something like this. It is astonishing what a lot of romance has been written about this Island. It is a bit unusual, but no more remarkable or mysterious than thousands of other locations.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

November 7, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of November 4th, and thank you very much for the list of books you sent me in your previous communication. I have arranged to order them and I will no doubt get the information I require when I receive them.

As to the two papers which I received on Easter Island, do you wish these returned; and if so, how long may I retain them?

I am sorry, but I will be unable to attend the special exhibition of the Maya sculpture work, as it occurs on a date which comes within my Bermuda trip.

Thanking you very much for your kindly assistance and information, I am

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

November 25, 1931

Eldridge R. Johnson, Esq.
603 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I have been lax in replying to your kind letter of November 4 and that of November 7, but I knew you were on your trip to Bermuda and we were up to our ears in work getting ready the special exhibition of the Piedras Negras material and the newly reinstalled American halls. I regret greatly that you were not able to be here for the opening and hope that you will soon come out here and let me show the exhibits to you. The new lintel in particular makes a beautiful effect and is admired by everyone.

I asked Mr. Hall to give me a bibliography of Easter Island which he very kindly did but I then discovered that one of my colleagues in Germany, Dr. Lehmann, had published in 1907, in one of the anthropology periodicals, a complete bibliography on Easter Island up to that time. I thought a copy of this would be more serviceable and less trouble so I wrote to Dr. Lehmann asking him for a reprint. If he sends me one, as I hope, I shall send it to you with the addition of a few more that have appeared since 1907; if not I will send you as full a bibliography as I can with the citation of the periodical in which Dr. Lehmann's was printed so that you may look it up.

You ask about returning the articles which I sent you. You may have noticed that one of them is from the museum library and must eventually be returned but we have it as a reprint in another article so there is no hurry for it. The other is from my personal library but is now out of my field and you may keep it if you wish or return it to me when you no longer want it.

I regret that you were not here to hear the lecture by Dr. S. G. Morley of the Carnegie Institute in Washington here last Saturday. He gave the work of your expedition at Piedras Negras the highest praise. Since you are planning to visit Yucatan this winter or spring I think you would find it most pleasant and advantageous to you to meet Dr. Morley who is in charge of the work at Chichen Itza, the most important work now being done in American archaeology at the site which you will certainly want to visit. Dr. Morley is now in the East on a lecture tour and I asked him what date would be possible for him to have lunch with you as his evenings are occupied with lectures. He may come over from New York on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, December 1, 2, or 3 or if these dates are not convenient to you either the 15 or 16 of December, preferably the latter.

November 25, 1931

I sincerely trust that you will be able to make an engagement to meet Dr. Morley. He has all the funds that he needs for working at Chichen so you need not hesitate a moment for fear of solicitation. Please let me know as soon as possible if you can meet him and on what date in order that I may advise him at once. I hope Mr. Fenimore Johnson will be able to meet him also.

We are all working strenuously endeavoring to raise funds to carry on for another year at Piedras Negras. Trusting that you had a delightful trip to Bermuda, believe me as ever,

Sincerely yours,

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

November 27, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of November 25th, and I will be very glad indeed to receive the bibliography of Easter Island if you succeed in securing a copy.

As to the articles you sent to me, I shall be very careful to return them both to you as soon as I have had time to read them carefully, which I think will not be until during my winter cruise, as work is piling up on me to such an extent that I will only have time for business matters until I get away.

I am very sorry I could not hear the lecture of Dr. Morley on Piedras Negras. Some of my guests this winter are most enthusiastic on archaeology. Do you suppose it would be possible to pay a visit to Piedras Negras; that is, could we go and come on one day-, sort of a picnic? I well understand that there are no accommodations for a longer stay.

I would certainly love to meet Dr. Morley. It has been one of my great ambitions to see Chichen Itza. I certainly would be pleased to visit the same. Can you give me any information as to how it could be accomplished? I fear from your letter that it will be impossible for me to meet Dr. Morley, as I must leave by noon of December third and shall not return until about the first of April. Every moment of my time between now and the third is called for by some important matter and then some. However, I see no reason why my son, Mr. Fenimore Johnson, should not meet him. I know he would be pleased, and I am handing him your letter in the hope that he may take up the matter with you and secure a date that will be mutually convenient.

I have just written to Mr. Jayne that I will supply the funds to pursue your work for another year. I suggested to him that he find someone to take my place in the excavations of Ur and leave me free to Piedras Negras. However, so far he has been unable to do so, but I can assure you that your work can go on for another year, at least.

Yours very truly,

Charles R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

November 30, 1931

Eldridge R. Johnson, Esq.
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I should have replied immediately on Saturday to your letter of November 28 but I was busy all day with a visitor. I cannot tell you how delighted we are that you have been able to furnish the funds for another years work at Piedras Negras. We shall be off toward to end of January and I feel sure that you will find the result of the next season's work such to justify the outlay that you are kind enough to give us.

I am so sorry that you will not be able to met Dr. Morley. I sent him a hasty letter on Saturday suggesting that he write to you and inform you of the best way of seeing Chichen Itza which you must by all means see. I presume that during your absence letters sent to your Camden address will be forwarded to you. I presume that Dr. Morley will write you and give you the desire information. Could you tell me about when in your itenery you plan to reach Yucatan? I think Dr. Morley will begin work there early in January. He will make arrangements for you to see the site if you get there before he does, but it would be so much better if you visit it while he is there and at work. It will mean a trip of several days. The yacht will land at the port of Progreso from which point you will have an hours ride by auto to the capital of Yucatan, Merida. From there you take a train in the early morning, get to the nearest railroad station at about noon and have an hours auto ride to Chichen Itza where there are most pleasant conveniences for staying and seeing the ruins. If you cannot spare more time you can leave the ruins at noon on the following day and get back to Merida at night. If you can spare another day, and I strongly advise you to do so, you can also see the second largest ruin in Yucatan, Uxmal, leaving Merida in the morning and returning in the evening. This can only be done by the help of a man in Merida, Mr. Barbachano, who runs a tourist agency. I will take the liberty of sending you a letter of introduction to him.

It would be a great joy to us if you were able to visit the camp at Piedras Negras but I fear that this will be impossible in the short time you have at your disposal. The site is a hundred miles or more up the Usumacinta River which I fear would not be navigable for a boat of the draught of your yacht and it would take several days to make the trip by small river boat. Then from the head of navigation it would take you at least a day to reach the camp. I am afraid that the only possible way by which you could see it would be to engage an amphibian airplane and fly up

there from the port of Carmen. You could probably land on the river within a few miles of the ruins. If you would care to give this suggestion any consideration, I would be delighted to give you further information and advice.

I hope that Mr. Fenimore Johnson will be able to make an engagement to meet Dr. Morley as you suggest and I would be very pleased to hear from him in this connection.

It would be a great treat to see you and your party at Piedras Negras could you find it possible to get there and you need not worry about lack of accommodations. We could put you up comfortably for as long as you might care to stay. But if that is impossible by all means see Chichen Itza and Uxmal and I shall be delighted to do anything that I can to assist you in this.

Thanking you again most heartily for your munificent gift and with my most cordial wishes for a pleasant cruise, believe me as ever,

Sincerely yours,

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

December 1, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
University of Pennsylvania Museum,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of November 30th. According to my present plans I expect to board the CAROLINE at Wilmington, North Carolina, January 15th. Other guests will join me at Miami in three or four days, which would bring the possible sailing date from Miami up to the twentieth of January. From Miami to Yucatan is only a short trip. Whether we visit Yucatan and on what date would depend entirely on Dr. Morley's advice and the disposition of my guests. Personally, I shall certainly take advantage of the first opportunity to visit the ruins at Chichen Itza. It is even possible that I might fly into Piedras Negras and other points of interest, but I would not care to do so unless my son accompanied me or someone else who would be an interested companion.

At present I will not fix any dates. It might be that we could not do anything of this sort this year, as we may have ladies aboard who would not care for this sort of thing and whom we could not leave very long alone on the yacht, so I can only leave it this way, that I should like to see as much as I can whenever I can, but I will make no plans until I hear from Dr. Morley.

Yours very truly,

Eldridge R. Johnson

ERJ ALC

December 11, 1931

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson
608 Wilson Building
Camden, New Jersey

My dear Mr. Johnson:

Again I must apologize for waiting so long in answering your kind letter of December 1, but there seemed to be no urgency about it and I have been tremendously busy every moment. Dr. Morley wrote me expressing his great delight that the work at Piedras Negras is to continue for another year and told me he had written you promising his hearty hospitality when you visit him at Chichen Itza. I presume that you received this and answered him. He will be here again on the morning of Tuesday the 15, and I will then see that all possible arrangements are made for your entertainment and comfort while at Yucatan. I will write you again shortly thereafter. I am sure that Dr. Morley will also make arrangements so that you may get through the rather annoying Customs, immigrations and other official troubles of entrance at the Port of Progreso, Yucatan.

I think that in my last letter I gave you a brief description of the methods of reaching Chichen and I imagine that Dr. Morley has written you in more detail and if not I will ask him to do so.

It was with the greatest delight that I learned by your letter and also from Mr. Fennimore Johnson, that you are actually considering flying in to visit our camp at Piedras Negras. You can be certain of a most cordial welcome and a pleasant stay for as long as you are able to remain. I will endeavor to see Mr. Fennimore Johnson and to give him more details than I am able to give you in this letter. After we leave here, which will be toward the end of January, correspondence with me will be rather difficult and slow. There is a telegraph office at Tenosique and mail should also be addressed there. Air mail gets to the State of Tabasco rather quickly from Yucatan or from the United States but from there it takes a long trip up the river and may be many days getting to Tenosique. From there either mail or telegrams must be brought in to our camp, a trip possibly two days, by the next person going over the road and that maybe a matter of several days. There is no landing field in that region for airplanes and the only way of reaching us is by way of hydro plane or sea plane. There is a line of Mexican planes which fly around the southern coast of the Gulf from Vera Cruz in Mexico to Merida in Yucatan with landing fields at Villahermosa in Tabasco and Carman, or Laguna as it is also called, in the State of Campeche. But only terrestrial airplanes are used on this route. The Pan American Airways use hydro planes or amphibians leaving Miami and stopping at Havana, Cozumel Island off the coast of Yucatan, and at Belize. The most feasible plane to engage would be a Sikorsky amphibian from the Pan American Airways which would leave the lagoon or Cozumel Island and fly to the landing field at Carman and could stop at the landing field at Merida or at Campeche. And I strongly advise you to try to

get pilot Frank E. Ormsbee who was our pilot last year when Mr. Percy C. Madeira, Jr., Mr. Gregory Mason and I flew over this route. We can recommend him most highly in all respects. On this trip you could also see the magnificent ruins of Palenque farther down the river from us and those of Yaxchilan farther up the river. These latter ruins we could not see on our trip although we flew over them. They were hidden in the deep forest. Last spring the Mexican government put a caretaker there and they are now partly cleared and visible.

The river is very wide at Tenosique and you can easily land there as we did and you should inquire for my agent, the principal merchant of the town, Sr. Francisco Villanueva. If you can let me know the date or approximate date when you will arrive I will plan to be there myself or have someone else there who speaks English as there may not be any English speaking person in the town. At present there is an American doctor there Dr. M. C. Todd, but I hope that he will then be with me hauling the monuments over the road. If no one is there I shall at least have a letter for you advising you of the best method of reaching our camp. The river for possibly 10 miles above Tenosique is broad and not swift but above that there are many rapids with spaces of slow water in between. Just at the camp there are rapids but I am certain that within a few miles there are spaces of smooth water where the airplane can descend and arise without danger and I will make it my first duty upon getting there to ascertain where the nearest stretch of smooth water is and will immediately send you a letter with that information and will send a copy of that to Tenosique in care of Villanueva. If you fly as far as Yaxchilan it will require a capacity load of gasoline to get you from Carman there and back, unless you have fewer passengers than the total of six, including the pilot and raider operator, than we had.

I think this is all the information that I can give you at present although I will endeavor to see Mr. Fennimore Johnson and have a more detailed talk with him upon this subject.

Wishing you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, hoping to see you in Piedras Negras, and again thanking you for your interest in making another year's work at this site possible, believe me as ever,

Sincerely yours,

John Alden Mason

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON
CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY

Pinehurst, N.C.
December 26, 1931.

Mr. John Alden Mason,
The University Museum,
University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Dear Mr. Mason:

I have your letter of December 11, 1931, which I do not think I have acknowledged. I thank you for all the information, which is of great value to me.

Progress

According to our present plans the CAROLINE will arrive at Belize about February the second. Belize is the only safe port that can accomodate the new yacht, as she draws over seventeen feet when fully loaded with fuel and water, as she will be on this trip.

As to visiting Piedras Negras, I did not figure on the flying part of it. I have never flown, and do not care much about making a start, but I am very anxious to see the ruins of the Mayas, all of them, and my keen desire may over come my timidity. Mr. Fenimore Johnson will be with me, and I have no doubt but that he will take advantage of your kind invitation, as may perhaps others of the CAROLINE's guests. Any further instructions or information you may be able to give me will be greatly appreciated.

I expect to leave Boxwood Court, Pinehurst, North Carolina, on or about January 15th, and Miami, Florida about January 20th; from Miami to Nassau, and then to Havana. After Belize we go to Panama and then on to the Galipagos, where I hope to get some submarine pictures.

If I were a younger man I would like to join you in your work, but I fear I am now past hard physical exertions and I do not stand roughing it very well. My son is good at such things, however, and perhaps you could get him interested in Maya investigation. I don't like his Brazilian adventures over much.

I see new wonderful discoveries have been made in Columbia. They are no doubt the Incas, an early settlement. I was expecting something like this, and I believe that quite extensive cities or remains will be discovered. The discoveries on the Indus are also of great importance. Some day science will be forced to admit that human culture existed prior to the Ice Age, and then they will begin to investigate the Arctic and Antarctic for early man.

Wishing you the best of luck and all the joys of the season, I am

Yours very truly,

ELDRIDGE R. JOHNSON

E. R. Johnson
Secretary

January 8, 1911

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson
Boxwood Court
Pinehurst, North Carolina

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I was pleased to received your kind letter of December 26 which I found awaiting me on my return from the Christmas meetings of the American Anthropological Association at Andover, Mass. At that meeting I gave a talk on the beautiful lintel from Piedras Negras and Mr. Satterthwaite gave an address on the general results of the expedition. I have been intending for a long time to send you some photographs of the work and shall try to do so as soon as the photographer has time to make them. I shall send you a photograph of the lintel immediately as it is worth framing.

We are all hard at work making preparation for leaving and in preparing the reports of last years work which Mr. Jayne wants to have completed before we leave. I have been promised free transportation for the party on the boats of the United Fruit Company but I am not sure whether their boats run in the region which we must traverse. I have written to the President of the United Fruit Company to ask about this and also whether they can give us free freight for the monuments and small specimens. Our plans for departure depend very largely on his reply. If the entire cost of passage for the personnel and freight can be secured free from him then we will have much more funds for our excavations and will be able to leave earlier. If we have to pay transportation and freight out of our budget then it would seem wiser to postpone our departure until the weather is at its best and to work at the maximum of efficiency for a shorter period. It is therefore doubtful when we will leave but it will probably be sometime in February.

I presume that you have been corresponding with Dr. Morley and have about settled your plans for visiting Chichen Itza. You must by all means make every effort to see that beautiful site. As of course your captain knows and as I think I told you, the only port for Yucatan is an open roadstead. There is a pier there which steamships tie up to but I do not know the maximum draft of boats which can tie up at this pier. At any rate I am inclined to think that if there is a storm ships must put out and wait outside until after the storm abates. Larger boats such as those of the Ward Line lay several miles outside in deeper water, passengers and freight are brought ashore in small boats. There is no reason of course why the CAROLINE could not do the same but if there happened to come a storm during the time that you were there it might be necessary for you to wait some time to get ashore or aboard. However if this is the only way you could see Chichen Itza it is well worth any trouble you might go to. When I was down there there was no way whatever of getting to Belize to Merida but I have been told that an airplane company, probably

the Pan American Airways, now has a line of amphibian planes which fly from Belize to Merida and then to Havana or Cosumel Island. I presume that you or Mr. Fenimore Johnson have ascertained the truth of this from the company as Mr. Percy C. Madeira, Jr., informed me that the manager of the Pan American Airways wrote him that you had been making such inquiries.

I do not believe there is anything I can add to my former letter regarding other details of airplane travel in this region. It would be a great delight if we could look forward to seeing you and Mr. Fenimore Johnson and other members of your party at Piedras Negras. Some time ago I wrote to my correspondent in full detail and asked him to ascertain where on the river is the nearest place to the camp that a hydroplane could descend and arise again. I will write you as soon as I hear anything. I will keep you informed from time to time of our plans for departure so we can be ready for you if you succeed in making plans to visit us, as I hope you will.

I heartily agree with your hope that Mr. Fenimore Johnson will show interest in excavations in the Maya region and I feel certain that after he has seen Chichen Itza, our work at Piedras Negras and other Mayan sites, that he will be most interested. I will be delighted to encourage his interest in any way and I extend to you both a hearty invitation to join us in any work at any time, for as long as will be convenient to you.

You speak of wonderful new discoveries in Columbia. Personally I had not read about there but someone told me that he had read in a paper about an extraordinary find of gold objects in that country. These large finds are generally made in the highlands of Columbia where ancient Chibcha and Quimbaya had very high culture, probably next highest after Mayas and Mexicans and Peruvians. While rather similar in culture to the Incas of Peru, they had no historical connections with the Incas. Another very interesting culture of Columbia was in the region of Santa Marta on the Caribbean coast. I was down there working for Field Museum of Chicago in 1922 and the first part of my report on the work is just off the press. I will be delighted to send you a copy of this at once. Mr. Gregory Mason has just returned from work in this region where he conducted a joint expedition for us and the Heye Museum. Possibly you are thinking of including the city of Santa Marta in your itinerary this year; it has a deep and well protected harbor. The city itself is not particularly interesting because, although it is the oldest city on the South American mainland, it was sacked so many times by pirates that no old buildings remain. However, some of the places referred to in my archaeological report can be reached by automobile or by short horseback rides from the end of auto roads and you might find this a pleasant experience. The beautiful snow-capped mountains, 13,000 feet high and only 20 miles from the coast, are wonderful to see if they can be seen at this season. The old town of Cartagena, a little further west, is a more interesting place since the old Spanish walls are still in perfect condition. Possibly you might find it convenient to visit this city during your trip.

January 13, 1932

Mr. E. R. Fenimore Johnson
West Jersey Trust Building
Camden, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Mr. Jayne showed me this morning your recent letter in which you solicit his help in getting governmental permission so that your father will not be inconvenienced by unwelcome delays and expenses while visiting Mexican ports. Mr. Jayne asked me for advice and help in this matter and I have given him some suggestions which I presume he will follow. He will probably write to you about them. The import of my suggestions to him was that he should in addition to addressing the Secretary of State, also take up the matter with the Mexican Ambassador in Washington. Unfortunately the ambassador has been changed and although I was well acquainted with the former minister, Manuel Tellez, I am not acquainted with the present one who I think is Sr. Puig y Casaranc. On account of this I think a letter from Mr. Jayne will carry more weight than one from me.

I have written to your father several times and given him a great deal of information and there is little more I can add. I have gone through the port of Progreso only a few times and I am not acquainted with the officials there so that I can give you no help at that point, but Dr. Morley is certainly well known to them and probably has considerable influence there and I shall urge him to use this influence to see that your father is relieved as far as possible of inconveniences there. I understand that Dr. Morley has had considerable correspondence with your father and I presume that he has already done something in this matter.

As regards landing in Cosumel Island, the principal town on the island is very small and I do not believe that there is any American Consul or consular officer there. The town is called San Miguel. We visited it on our airplane trip and were hospitably entertained by the comandante who was then and possibly is still Gen. Trevino. I have already written him a note asking him to show you all possible hospitality. I do not know anything about the depth of the water off San Miguel but I presume you can anchor rather close to it. The lagoon there is the port for the Pan American Airways. It is 6 or 8 miles north of San Miguel.

As regards visiting the ruins of Tulum, you should do so by all means; as you state there is no port there and you might have to anchor some distance outside since I think the water deepens slowly. There is no population there but the Mexican government keeps a caretaker there who keeps the ruins cleared. This man is an employee of the Departamento de Monumentos Prehispanicos under the Secretaria de Educacion Publica in Mexico City, the director being Sr. Jose Reygadas Vertiz. I shall immediately write to Sr. Reygadas informing him of your proposed visit there and asking him to grant you official permission. I am not sure if permission from other governmental

authorities is required to allow you to land on the coast where there is no port. I presume that if other permission is required it will be received through the State Department or through the Mexican Ambassador.

For more detailed information regarding the east coast of Yucatan, I suggest that you write to Mr. Gregory Mason at 63 St. John Place, New Canaan, Conn. Mr. Mason was not only on the airplane flight with Mr. Madeira and me, but also several years before this travelled along this coast in a small boat and knows it far better than I do. You probably know his book, "Silver Cities of Yucatan" which he published as a result of his trip along that coast.

As regards the airplane flight to Piedras Negras, I have sent your father all the information that I can and I presume he has referred it to you. I am sorry that we cannot look forward to seeing him there but I hope that you and some of your guests will find it possible to make the flight. I will write your father concerning this as soon as I have any additional information. If I can give you any further help please do not hesitate to call upon me.

Cordially yours,

P. S. It is nearly closing time, or I would write you more at length regarding the trip to Piedras Negras by water and land. Probably E will write you again tomorrow and give you more details about this trip; I want to get this letter off tonight. I fear you may be too busy getting ready for your departure on Monday to take the time to come out and talk with me concerning these details. If more convenient to you, I might see you in the city sometime for an hour or so. I am mighty busy too, getting ready for departure.

I am mailing you today the large map of Yucatan. It is rather old, 1907, and, being Mexican, probably not accurate, but it gives more towns and is on a larger size than any other map that I know of the region. I have had Mr. Satterthwaite add on it the course of the Usumacinta River, Palenque, Tenosique, and Piedras Negras. If you make the trip by land, you must by all means take another couple of days and see the ruins at Palenque, some of the most beautiful and best preserved in the Maya region. The buildings are very well preserved and well cared for. At Piedras Negras we have no standing buildings, but the carved monuments are the finest in the Maya region.

Hastily,

February 4, 1938

Mr. Eldridge R. Johnson
S. S. CAROLINE
General Delivery
Colon, Panama

Dear Mr. Johnson:

I trust that you have had, are having, and will have a most pleasant trip. I was disturbed to receive a letter from Dr. Morley in which he said that he had heard nothing from you since leaving the States and that if you were coming to Chichen Itza he hoped you would wire him to that effect. I wonder if I did everything possible to facilitate your visit to Yucatan? I presumed that all the details had been arranged between you and Dr. Morley. I called Mr. Hathaway who told me that so far as he knew, you reached Progreso on Saturday, January 30, and left on Monday, February 1. I fear that this short visit would not give you time to see Chichen thoroughly if at all but I hope that I am wrong in that. I also received a letter from Jose Beygadas Vertis, the chief of the Department of Archaeology in Mexico City, inclosing copies of instructions which he had sent to the inspector of monuments in Merida and to the guardian of the ruins at Tulum, instructing them to give you all possible aid. Unfortunately Sr. Beygadas had been absent from Mexico City visiting the wonderful finds at Oaxaca and did not reply to my letter until January 26. The instructions were dated January 27 and 28, and I greatly fear that they would not reach the addressees in time to be of service to you. However, I am eager to hear if you succeeded in seeing Chichen without great difficulty.

We are planning to leave for Piedras Negras about two weeks from now and are looking forward to a successful season there although we greatly regret that you will not be able to visit us there.

Sincerely yours,