

Summary of Sixth Season (1936)

for American Antiquity

Believed
used.

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The sixth University Museum at Piedras Negras was devoted principally to working out further details in temples and palaces. The most significant deductions refer to the cultural debt of this western Usumacinta site to the central and probably older Peten region. This debt is greater than has been supposed. Nevertheless, at least after the earliest period, Peten influences were met by transforming ideas originating locally or received on earlier time levels. Space permits mention of only one specific instance - a temple (Structure J-29) in all essentials typical of the famous Tikal buildings except for the temple room itself. This always had a reasonable room width and began with three doorways separated by nearly square piers. This chamber was later converted into a one-doorway room, in this respect like those of the central Peten, but at the same time as much of the exterior Peten design as was practicable was obliterated. We wonder if ^{elimination of doorways} this was for structural reasons connected with the introduction of a vaulted masonry roof, since in a third period the two missing doorways were restored, with new and heavier piers between them. The typical Piedras Negras rear sill, niche, column altar and ventilator - i.e. the functional apparatus - was part of the original design and persisted through out.

Building stratifications greatly strengthened the hypothesis that Usumacinta architecture developed without the masonry vault or "Maya Arch", adding it at Piedras Negras in a middle period. Work in the palaces produced two new masonry thrones,

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adding a new variety to a long Usumacinta series. Excavations in our intriguing series of eight "Type X" buildings were strictly

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confined to establishing two remaining doubtful examples as such. Examination of modern Mexican highland buildings by Francis M. Cresson Jr., assistant archeologist, on his way home, in our opinion has eliminated all question as to the sweat house function of these structures, as first suggested by Dr. Merley.

Two sub-temple trenches, added to those of former years, make it increasingly probable that elaborate tombs were not placed below temple floors in this region, in contrast to the Peten sites Holmul and Uaxactun.

Several pottery types, new to the site, were identified, most of them probably trade pieces and therefore of great potential value. One of these, a complete vessel was datable with reference to the architectural series and be neither very early nor very late "Old Empire". Certain others are almost certainly late.

Three days were spent at Palenque, making certain studies on the architecture and the thrones there, and establishing without much question the presence of a ball court, near the palace, spotted on Maudsley's map by Mr. Cresson, where it is perfectly obvious. Ball courts were probably universal at important southern Maya sites.

The party consisted of Mrs. Satterthwaite and the writer, Miss Tatiana Preskouriakoff, architect, Mr. Cresson and Don Victor M. Pineo, representative of the Guatemalan government.

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[1937]

For Maya Research
(unpublished yet)
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The Sixth and Seventh University Museum
Expeditions to Piedras Negras.

Following is a skeleton resume of work at Piedras Negras, Peten Guatemala during the 1936 and 1937 seasons, bringing up to date similar accounts in this journal (Vol. 1 No. 1 and Vol. 111 No. 1). The staff in both seasons under review consisted of the writer and Margaret C. Satterthwaite, his wife, Francis W. Cresson Jr. and Miss Tatiana Proskouriakoff, working under the general direction of Dr. J. Alden Mason, Curator, American Section, University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, who initiated the project in 1931 and inspected the site in 1936. Something over three months was spent at the site each year, plus a three-day stay at Palenque in 1936.

Former excavations were greatly extended in eleven temples and eight palaces. We now have reliable plans of the interiors of fifteen temple buildings. Of these the exterior outline also is completely known for five. Using these as a basis, combined in some cases with the high probability that temple buildings followed their substructures more or less closely, the number of reliable temple plan reconstructions can be raised to twelve without apparent danger of serious error. We have some knowledge of two others. Among the palaces, usually much better preserved, three are completely cleared, four virtually so. Plans of ten others are completely known in main essentials, with little or no theoretical reconstruction. Of these last, excavated samples in all have revealed significant interior arrangements in five.

The extensive work on buildings rather than intensive investigation of fewer units has been largely at the expense of the substructures on which they stand. The effort has been to prepare for

adequate interpretation of role these two building types played at one particular site. During the period under review, however, substructures of sixteen temple units have received considerable attention. The foundation platforms immediately below eleven temples, two of them not on pyramids, have now been worked out sufficiently for reliable reconstruction. Some data ^{have} been secured on four others, and on three platforms which may not have supported buildings. We can now reconstruct six pyramids more or less completely, relying in most cases on excavation of one-half the front. There ^{are} ~~is~~ available incomplete but significant data on eight others. Complete knowledge of substructures will assist greatly in relative temple dating and in gauging the extent of the local debt to foreign centers.

Two "TypeXX" were cleared at doorways, checking their formerly provisional identification. Deep cuts were confined to trenches below two temples and in Court 1 of the Acropolis.

- Temples -

Illustrations of temple types encountered through 1936 have been published. Figure shows a new variation, placed on a mere building platform without a pyramid below that. It is now practically certain that four temples had thick masses of fill between the inner and outer sides of the rear wall, in the Tikal fashion, presumably for support of roof-combs. It is especially important to note that two of these apparently combined rear combs with non-vaulted temple rooms. For the first time the column altar has been found in position outside the temple chamber. ~~Being found in position outside the temple chamber.~~ Being found in semi-position in the chamber of Structure R-9, it was repeated at the base of the

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main pyramid stairway and again at the base of the step-like terracing leading down from the stela-bearing terrace to the plaza proper. All three altars were on the center axis. Below the two exposed ones were caches.

Two corrections must be made to statements in our last summary in Maya Research. The early supposed three-cell temple referred to on Page 79 has turned out, on further excavation, to be the surviving end of a long double range palace, from which the medial wall was later removed. This glaring error in reconstructing on insufficient evidence was repeated in the publication referred to in above. Figure 6 of that paper is completely wrong together with considerable reasoning from it. The three-cell plan (three non-communicating small chambers side by side) remains a late modification, known only from the originally single-room temple J-4. With further knowledge of local temple design, it becomes highly probable that the front gallery of Structure O-15, referred to on page 80 of the summary was part of the original design, though actually constructed after the rear chamber. Of this is correct the building never showed an even number of doorways in the facade.

✓ Ten elements now known at the site appear to us to result from central Peten influence. On the buildings these are centered rear projections, lateral projections making the front longer than the rear, indentations just behind these, narrow one-entrance rear rooms shorter than front rooms or galleries, solid masses of fill making rear or side walls very thick, or both. The building platforms (the immediate temple foundation, which may or may not be placed on a pyramid) tends to follow the building outline, but does not always do so. Besides this they or the pyramids, or both, may exhibit the following apparently Peten features: heavy apron moldings at the top

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ledges or moldings at the bases of the terraces, inset corners, round or rectangular, the latter sharp or slightly rounded, a nearly vertical cutting off of markedly battered walls. The building platforms commonly shows a step-up from the front level. A type of decorative panel (probably involving a mask) is represented twice, and may have roots in the Peten. These were repeated on either side of the pyramid stairway, undoubtedly on each of the three terraces of the pyramids concerned. The central niche contained stucco work which projected and the sides were covered with flat stucco relief. The stucco was unfortunately almost entirely peeled off. Large masonry blocks divide substructure stairways at or near plaza level. Both were probably plain, though possibly bearers of ornamental stucco.

- Palaces -

A surviving double-range palace without transverse end rooms has been found. The roof was non-vaulted, the building facing the court of the earliest stelae. The buried end of another, otherwise destroyed, has been properly identified. This last is stratigraphically at the beginning of the long Acropolis building sequence. To another almost completely removed double range palace, of which parts of the plan have been made out, and end room was certainly added. It is probable the end room was lacking in the original plan, though not certain. It surely was in still another, which survived to the end except for secondary modifications which inserted the transverse rooms at either end. This was built during the last main period on the Acropolis. There is thus considerable evidence that the end room, universal on the other Acropolis double-range palaces, was originally absent, and continued so for a long time.

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Evidence of function has been the main objective in the palace
work now under review. No evidence of fires, domestic or otherwise,
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has been found in any palace, nor are there nearby buildings or foundation platforms which might have been separate kitchens.

The total of known palace thrones has been raised from two to ten. Of these nine have ornamental back screens, the tenth tapering slab legs, both elements appearing on Throne 1 and illustrated in use on Lintel three. Six of these are solid masonry benches. In addition, the screen probably had disappeared from another badly damaged bench. A bench of typical throne height and proportions is best interpreted, we believe, as a twelfth palace throne, (Fig.). At Palenque screenless stone and masonry tables are plentiful in the palaces and the reliefs on House C indicate they were thrones. The back-screen appears to be a valuable function indicator when present, but a non-essential element.

In most cases the thrones are placed in small rooms, usually formed by secondary walls, so that we are dealing with throne rooms and not mere pieces of furniture. Two of these rooms have windows connecting with the adjoining rooms. One of these has been excavated and found to be empty. The placement of these rooms in the palace as a whole varies from the most to the least prominent and accessible position possible. Within the rooms the thrones may be centered behind a doorway or placed across the end of the room. in the latter position with one exception they extend from wall to wall on either side. (Fig.)

Three narrow benches, two of them L-shaped and placed in corners, probably supported the rear of large stone slabs, in the manner of table-thrones, which they probably were. If so, two had been removed from the same room before the final period, the bench-supports alone surviving. The third being in the same room as Throne 1, may have survived. The possibility of two thrones in one room is thus

indicated twice, but we cannot be sure. In any case none of these benches could have served as sleeping places, the function assigned by Vaillant to larger benches at Holmul. One other bench, of uncertain height, projects about 80 cms. from the wall. This is considerably wider than the known rear supports for table thrones, and narrower than the typical thrones whether table or bench type. But we have in the same building one atypical bench throne even narrower than this, its function indicated by a plain stone screen.

If correctly identified this example raises the number of throne rooms in contemporaneous use from twelve to thirteen, distributed in either case in seven palaces. It is known that three other palaces did not contain any interior furnishings, unless of perishable materials.

The throne rooms are for the most part formed by secondary partitioning of long Palenque open type galleries. Two are transverse end rooms. In size they vary from almost minimum to maximum possible; in position from the most to the least prominent and accessible positions in the building. No palace was devoted exclusively to them, the maximum number in one palace (as now known) being two, or, if our interpretation of screenless benches is correct, four.

Building Sequences

Two more temple platforms have been sectioned to depths of about three meters, revealing a lower temple platform in one case. With these, four pyramid temples certainly, another probably, failed to reveal sub-floor tombs. A stratification of inset square over inset round temple platform corners has been found. A deep pit in Court 1 of the Acropolis places the long double range palace type very

early. As has been noted this lacked transverse end rooms. Careful sample sections of all Acropolis palace floors show that six of the seven double-range and at least two of the eight single range vaulted units replaced one or more earlier buildings on their platforms. There was little or no modification of the latter. This conclusion allows for the possibility that platforms were plastered before erection of walls. In three cases prints of the earlier walls, or basal courses of the earlier walls themselves, were found, just below the final floor surface. With sufficient time, the essential plans of several vanished palaces can be recovered. Earlier construction has been found below all vaulted palaces and below four of the six vaulted temples.

Excavations in the stela bearing terrace of Str. R-9 in the South Group increase the probability that this group was laid out with low building platforms antedating the pyramids and the carved stelae, which are the earliest at the site. A very small irregularly formed plain stela was broken up and used in early fill here.

The front terrace silhouettes of the latest and next earlier of the three superimposed temples of Structure K-5 have been largely worked out, proving the important point that the large stucco God-masks date from the final period.

Carved Stone

A beautiful middle period but undated fragment, probably from a broken-up and reused panel, was recovered from Structure O-13. A jamb stone in Structure J-9 is inscribed with two non-calendrical hieroglyphs. On a building stone of this structure a profile head was incised, and then the outline of the head changed somewhat, as if in practice. These pieces are numbered Miscellaneous Sculptured

Stones 16, 19 and 20, respectively.

Pottery

Clearing of the palace J-12 has given us a rich haul in definitely late pottery shapes. This is the only building where numbers of vessels were left directly on thrones and floors, and therefore were in use up to the end. Many were undoubtedly polychrome but the designs are in most cases completely weathered to the slip. Both incised and painted glyph forms are represented. Sherds were collected in moderate quantities from various building levels, and in a South Group pit, but no long-used dump has been encountered. Anticipating a proper study it seems safe to say that at least two periods, distinguishable by shapes and to some extent design, will be identified. The moderate sized rounded-bottom flanged tripod bowl occurs in the earlier known deposits, specifically as refuse on bed rock under Court 1 of the Acropolis. For the first time figure carving is represented by more than two or three sherds. It is found only in "surface debris" and undoubtedly is late, probably very late. No plumbate has appeared as yet. Figurines include a double-headed bird, probably a dove.

Ancient Destruction.

With further excavation in the South group the evidence for intentional destruction of buildings there ~~has~~ evaporated. Natural collapse of terrace walls might have produced observed results. But evidence of violence on the Acropolis at the time of abandonment has doubled. The stone seat of a second table throne was unquestionably intentionally broken up, because more than half of it, including all of the front edge, was missing from its room. A large rear portion remained in position and a large middle fragment leaned against this.

There was a nicely smoothed top and edge which could scarcely have been missed on other fragments. All stone in the room was examined.

Palenque

A three day vist was paid to Palenque in 1936. The principal purpose was to secure architectural data in the north group of temples, and to complete a study of the palace tables. Mr. Cresson suggested that the two parallel mounds of the palace formed a ball court. Surface examination indicated presence of the benches along the inner sides, and make the identification fairly certain. A morning's work, with permission to excavate, would settle the matter.

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Collections of figurines and pottery from this ceramically rich site have been augmented by purchase each year, and are held at Tenosique. Drawing and photographs have been made of all, and are available for study. The figurines indicate knowledge if not use of carved table thrones, with tapering legs and back-screen, as at Piedras Negras.

Publications

Brief summaries of the work have appeared in Dr. Mason's contributions to "Notes and News" in American Antiquity, Vol. 1 No 1 and Vol. 2 No. 2. A Fifth Piedras Negras Preliminary Paper by the writer "A Pyramid without Temple Ruins, Structure J-3", mimeographed and privately distributed, was issued in 1936. Several short illustrated articles have appeared in the museum's bulletin. These are summaries intended for museum members, but many illustrations may be of more general interest. One of these, Mexican and Mayan Sweat-Baths, by Dr. Mason, Vol. 6 No.2, deserves special mention,

as it helped to establish the sweat-house function of our eight "Type X" buildings. The proof of this, we believe, was completed by Mr. Cresson with his "Mayan and Mexican Sweat Houses", a master's thesis on deposit in the Library of the University of Pennsylvania. A condensation of this will appear in the American Anthropologist. "Foot Forms of Pottery Vessels at Piedras Negras" by Mr. Cresson and "Identification of Maya Temple Buildings at Piedras Negras" by the writer, both short papers, appeared in the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Studies: Philadelphia Anthropological Society, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1937.

Remarks

Unfortunately the three new supposed cases of Tikal-style heavy rear roof combs supported by very thick rear walls are reconstructions. No vestige of roofs or combs remained, and the outsides of the rear walls were entirely gone. The thick rear mass was there if the temples followed the probable outlines of their platforms. Two of these temples were not roofed with the Maya vault. If they had the rear comb, the roof probably was beam-and-concrete as thatch is difficult or impossible to imagine on this style of building. Efforts to detect evidence of beam-and-concrete construction in debris of these buildings failed. It is known here on a probably much later building, combined with vaulting. The question is raised whether the great towering Tikal roof-combs, resting on their own foundations in one-room buildings, may not have evolved before the vault. If beam-and-concrete roofs evolved before the vault, combs would at that time have been feasible, but could not have been placed over the rooms. The beam-and-concrete roof seems a more logical earliest alternative to thatch, because of its close analogy to plastered wattle-and-daub walls, known to be very early at Piedras Negras. Real proof of this type in early surface buildings can be expected only by lucky

circumstance.

Evidence of Peten influence on temple building and substructure design has been referred to. It apparently was in effect by the time the earliest carved stelae were erected. At this time it is probable the site already had passed through a period characterized by small plain stelae and the absence of high pyramids. The presence of temples on low separate platforms, possibly from this period, has been well established. The presence of flanged bowls in the earliest known deposits seems to carry this ceramic shape well back toward the beginning of Cycle 8; but limits the city's age to something considerably less than that of Uaxactun in the center of the southern area. Late figure-carved sherds and certain glyph forms on late pottery, may have a bearing on important current theories.

The extensive re-building on the Acropolis during its latest main period is one of many factors pointing toward a long pre-vault period. No known vaults are in any sense primitive. In the writer's opinion this feature was probably borrowed from the Peten in fairly well developed form, arriving not much before the middle of cycle 9, or later.

The large number of contemporaneously used throne rooms confirms the existence of the well-organized hierarchy which everyone assumes existed. They also provide one important, but not exclusive, public or semi-public function for the palaces, and raise the question whether this may not have been wide-spread, numerous palace benches at other sites being ceremonial seats. Evidence of ordinary domiciliary use is entirely lacking.

Throne 1 is dated 9.17.15.0.0 and nearly all the others are secondary, or probably so, in vaulted buildings which are believed to be late. But one stone table is in a non-vaulted palace in the

early south group. Miscellaneous Sculptured Stone No. 9 bears a calendar round date read by Dr. Morley as 9.11.10.0.0 and called "Throne 2". It is a fragment which can be considered part of an unusually small table throne, but corresponds to no other known subject of sculpture at the site. Total length is unknown, but the front-to-rear dimension is perfect for restoration to the L-shaped bench in the non-vaulted palace J-12. Removal of such a slab is guaranteed by the butt of the single leg necessary to support one corner, found buried below the final floor. This fairly well established break-up of obsolete thrones removes any presumption that this use of palace space was exclusively late. In the only palace which, by plan, roof construction and position, seems fairly early, and in which we have really searched, a throne has turned up. Throne rooms may have been used over a long period, whether or not the date on M. S. S. No. 9 is contemporary. If reconstructed as proposed, the seat edge could have accommodated seventeen or eighteen glyph blocks, of which only the first seven are known.

The Piedras Negras palaces are much like those of Palenque except for the transverse end rooms, absent at Palenque and also at Yaxchilan, except for a single Maler reconstruction which the writer believes is correct, but which may be wrong. The apparently late adoption of the end room at Piedras Negras is probably under influence from the Peten, where it is very common. If this is so and the chronologists will allow it, its distribution in Yucatan may have a similar origin.

[1937]

PIEDRAS NEGRAS EXPEDITION

The Expedition to Piedras Negras, Guatemala, under the leadership of Linton Satterthwaite, Jr., has this year been handicapped by several unforeseen factors but is nevertheless on the point of completing a season of good work with important scientific results. Leaving Philadelphia on March 7 they reached camp on the 22nd. Work continued steadily since that time until May 29 when the majority of the workmen were discharged. Mr. Satterthwaite will continue special investigations with fewer men until about July 3rd. Mr. Cresson and Miss Proskouriakoff will then return, arriving home late in July, while Mr. and Mrs. Satterthwaite will journey through the lowlands of the Peten region, visiting important archaeological sites such as Uaxactun and continuing on to Guatemala City to study the archaeology of that highland region, and to make desirable contacts with Guatemalan officials and archaeologists. They will return in early September. The expenses of this trip, which will give Mr. Satterthwaite valuable information, important for his comparative studies, and very desirable official contacts, are defrayed by a grant from the American Philosophical Society.

The work of the expedition was somewhat retarded and comfort lessened by delay in receipt of the equipment. This was occasioned by the tardiness of the Mexican Government in granting permission for entry; the equipment and food supplies finally reached the camp twenty days late. An even greater handicap than this was the continuous rains. Ordinarily the month of April is practically rainless and May rather dry, but this year, according to Mr. Satterthwaite's last letter of May 30, "The rains have never ceased and have slowed us up greatly". Until April 15 they were almost constant.

The excavations have, as in other recent years, been devoted mainly to clearing out numerous small edifices which had previously been examined only superficially, and to uncovering the early phases of certain buildings to note the alterations and additions, and thus to secure data on architectural develop-

ment at this site. Certain dated monuments have now been correlated with certain levels of buildings, and ceramic types tied up with these so that now better data exist on pottery sequences and chronology. Much attention has been paid to ceramics this year. Mr. Satterthwaite writes that his main program this year was to get enough information to reconstruct twelve pyramids, the temples and subsidiary platforms only of which have been known to date."

Six new thrones, each of a new or slightly variant type, have been found this year, but none of sculptured stone. One of these was obviously intentionally destroyed, another corroboration of our opinion that the city suffered a violent end. A number of complete pottery vessels have been found, but apparently none of outstanding esthetic value. One of the newly excavated buildings was decorated with stucco mask panels.

The excavations have ~~now~~ proceeded far enough so that Mr. Satterthwaite is now willing to hazard an opinion as to the appearance of Piedras Negras and the nature of its architecture in its earliest days. He sees a provincial, peripheral settlement, of a later date than the cities in the Peten which were then further advanced in culture and architecture. The buildings were roofed with thatch or with beam and mortar and stood on low platforms, not on pyramids. No stone stelae, or at any rate no carved stone stelae, had yet been erected. Such a picture is very different from our concept of a typical Maya city, and very ~~different~~ different from the Piedras Negras of later days. The determination of the nature of this early period is vitally important for the study of Maya development; it is the first time that so detailed and complete a study has ever been made, and such results are possible only from the slow, meticulous, detailed but unspectacular excavations ^{that} at Mr. Satterthwaite has been making for the past seven years. Several more seasons of such work are necessary before the picture will be entirely clear.

[1937]

The University Museum prosecuted its seventh season at Piedras Negras, Guatemala (Maya "Old Empire"), with the writer and Mrs. Satterthwaite, Francis M. Cresson, Jr. and Miss Tatiana A. Proskouriakoff as staff, Don Victor M. Pinelo as Guatemalan government Inspector.

Six "palaces" were worked for information on the function of these long buildings. Six new thrones were encountered, each with the ornamental back-screen which we consider a safe throne diagnostic, together with two benches similar to many throne seats, one without the screen, the other possibly without it. A throne is a stone or masonry table or bench on which a Maya notable sat in state. This we deduce from relief representations in the Usumacinta, Puuc and central Peten regions. To date, out of seventeen known palaces, eight contained eleven thrones and two benches which may have been such. This number may increase with more complete excavation of four of these eight. Four palaces did not contain furnishings of imperishable material; five others have not been investigated for them. Among the palaces there is still no sign of the burned stone "column altar" which occurred or probably occurred in fourteen of the sixteen supposed temples. In only one temple is there a bench of the throne type, and that temple plan is atypical.

It seems clear that in the temples the priest usually functioned as the servant of the Gods, burning incense around the altar, the center of interest. In some of the rooms of many of the palaces the thrones made the priest himself the center of interest, perhaps as civil or religious administrator. This is true also of one, probably two, and possibly more outer rooms of the eight known sweat-houses.

Only two of the thrones are so placed that more than a few persons could gather in a court or plaza in front of the rooms containing them, as is the case with the temples; nor are the thrones usually centered behind a doorway. Many of them could have functioned in no larger a gathering than that depicted

on Lintel 3, now in the ^{University} Museum. Since many of our thrones are secondary constructions, and thrones are absent in at least one quarter of known palaces, other uses for these buildings seem assured. There is no sign that this was ordinary habitation.

A minor problem in palace design was attacked and perhaps solved. The transversely placed end-rooms so common in double or multiple-range palaces in Peten and Yucatan are typical at Piedras Negras but rare or absent at Yaxchilan and Palenque, the two other important Usumacinta district sites. Three bits of evidence point to its introduction here under Peten influence in a middle period. These are the discovery of a double-range palace without the end-rooms, the late addition of the end-room to the predecessor of another, and the re-modeling of a third to supply them where originally absent. Apparently this was an innovation rejected at the other sites.

Excavations on nine temple substructures showed marked correspondences with central Peten design; this influence, established a year ago, was evidently strong for a considerable time. A stratification of inset rectangular over inset round corners was found. Two pyramids had a type of relief decoration new to the site and possibly to Maya architecture generally. The elaborate deity masks of Pyramid K-5 were shown to belong to the latest of three superimposed pyramids. A seemingly new type of geometric relief terrace decoration was found on the Acropolis. Apparently fairly early, this was incorporated in the base of a later pyramid showing Peten characteristics.

Work in the group containing all the earliest dated stelae confirms the belief that this group originally consisted of buildings on low substructures, preceding the later pyramids and probably preceding the carved and the few well-made plain stelae on the surface. Finding an extremely small crudely formed plain stela, broken and used in early masonry, suggests that the stela idea

reached the site before it was ready for stone carving or the erection of moderately heavy monuments.

An important series of late pottery shapes comes from one palace, where pots were left in profusion on floors and thrones. This collection was begun a year ago, but is now greatly augmented. Most were undoubtedly polychrome painted, but being in a non-vaulted palace with little protecting debris, humic acid has destroyed most of the decoration. Sherds in moderate numbers were collected from various superimposed building levels. Anticipating a proper study of sherds now available, it seems safe to say that two pottery periods will be distinguishable on the basis of bowl shapes and decorations. The moderate sized rounded-bottom flanged tripod occurs in the earliest known deposits. Since similar flanged forms are typical of the third of four main ceramic periods at Uaxactun, in the Peten, a later beginning of occupation at Piedras Negras is implied. This does not impeach the architectural evidence that this was before the earliest carved Piedras Negras dates. For the first time figure carving is represented by satisfactory portions of several bowls, all surface specimens of flattened hemispherical form. Plumbate ware continues to be absent from our collections. In view, however, of the extreme rarity of carved ware -- a dozen or so of finds in seven seasons -- it may have been missed.