

Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech British Honduras (Belize) expeditions

1151

Finding aid prepared by Jody Rodgers.

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Penn Museum Archives
Creator	Satterthwaite, Linton, 1897-1978
Title	Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech British Honduras (Belize) expeditions
Call number	1151
Date [bulk]	1949-1953
Date [inclusive]	1949-1972
Extent	1.2 linear foot
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The Benque Viejo (Xunantunich), Cahal Pech expedition, conducted by Dr. Linton Satterthwaite, was an extension of his expedition to Caracol, British Honduras (Belize). It was conceived as a "Housemound Project" and continued for two seasons from 1950 to 1953. The area of Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech contained seventeen structures and five stelae for investigation. Much of the collection relates to the Ball Court and East Plaza sites, as well as Structure A6 first and A6 second. The expedition produced objects and numerous photographs of the area. The Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech expedition records consist of twenty-nine folders in three archival boxes. Materials relate to the proposal for the expedition, preliminary data, budget and financial records, maps, notebooks, field notes, diaries, bag study sheets, progress and summary reports, press and publication materials, and photographs.</p>

Cite as:

[Item name]. Box [Box number]. Banque Viejo, Cahal Pech British Honduras (Belize) expedition records. Penn Museum Archives. Accessed [Date accessed].

Biography/History

Linton Satterthwaite, Jr., associated with the University Museum for more than 30 years, was born in Trenton, New Jersey and educated in the public schools. After graduation from Trenton High School, Satterthwaite flew in World War I as a cadet and flying officer for the Royal Air Force. His education continued after the War and he attained his BA from Yale University in 1920. Satterthwaite supported himself as a reporter from 1920 to 1923 while attending law school. He practiced law briefly but enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania in 1929 to study Anthropology. Satterthwaite participated in expeditions in the Texas Panhandle, West Virginia, and Guatemala as an archaeological assistant from 1929 to 1931. In 1932, Satterthwaite was named Assistant Director for the expedition in Piedras Negras, Guatemala, becoming Field Director in 1933. He continued as Director until 1939. Satterthwaite was awarded his Ph.D. in Anthropology in 1943 then continued to pursue his area of major interest, Maya hieroglyphics and chronology. He served as project epigrapher in Tikal, Guatemala which investigated the carved inscriptions on Maya monuments.

Investigation into a possible expedition to Caracol, British Honduras (Belize) began in 1949 with a proposal submitted in 1950. Satterthwaite headed three sessions in Caracol from 1950 to 1958. His work at Cahal Pech, Benque Viejo, and other sites in Western Belize occurred in the same time period. While concentrating on hieroglyphics and chronology in Caracol, this expedition also produced twenty-six vessels of the early classic period, nine vessels of the late period, Stela 11, a new "giant glyph" altar, and the bottom portion of Stela 3 for the Museum's collection. The Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech expedition was conceived as a "Housemound Project" and lasted for two seasons. The trips yielded objects and photographs from the seventeen structures and five stelae in the area. Satterthwaite also explored other possible nearby sites in British Honduras and purchased or received gifts of items for the Museum's collection.

In 1955, Satterthwaite became Curator of the American Section of the Penn Museum and a Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania. As Curator, Satterthwaite accomplished a systematic locational guide and inventory of the collections from the new world. Satterthwaite published his findings from 1930 to 1962 in the Museum Bulletin as well as American Anthropologist, Science, American Antiquity, Scientific American, and Archaeology. In 1947, his work titled, "Concepts and Structures of Maya Calendrical Arithmetics" was published by the Museum and the Philadelphia Anthropological Society. He presented papers at scholarly meetings among them, "Moon Ages and the Maya Inscriptions: the Problem of their Seven-day Range of Deviation from Calculated Mean Ages", at the Proceedings of the 29th International Congress of Americanists in 1951. Satterthwaite retired from the Museum as Curator and Professor Emeritus in 1969 but worked on the data from Caracol and Benque Viejo during his retirement. He died on March 11, 1978 having made significant contributions to the intricate study of Maya hieroglyphics and chronology. His volume on the

Caracol expedition, "The Monuments and Inscriptions of Caracol, Belize", co-authored by Carl Beetz, was published after his death.

Scope and Contents

The Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech expedition, conducted by Dr. Linton Satterthwaite, investigated an additional area of Maya ruins in British Honduras (Belize) during the same time period as the expedition to Caracol. Like the Caracol expedition, the Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech study was proposed in 1949 and begun in 1950. It was conceived as a "Housemound Project" and continued for two seasons. The area contained seventeen structures and five stelae for investigation. Much of the collection relates to the Ball Court and East Plaza sites, as well as Structure A6 first and A6 second. The expedition produced objects and numerous photographs of the area for the Museum.

The Benque Viejo, Cahal Pech expedition records consist of twenty-nine folders in three archival boxes. The first series of the collection, Expedition Materials, begins with the proposal for the expedition and preliminary data, followed by budget and financial records, notebooks, field notes, diaries, bag study sheets, progress and summary reports. The remaining series are devoted to Publication data and photographs, and Maps and press coverage.

The project proposal is supported by geographical data and a checklist of mound sites with several hand-drawn maps. There is investigative data on adjacent sites, soil drainage, and mound diagrams. Linton Satterthwaite's "Notebooks" are in fragile condition and date from 1950 and 1951. The fieldnotes are accompanied by technical data such as transverse measurement sheets, level readings, and designations. The Benque Viejo field notes include several pages of cross-section and long-section material. Measurement sheets and work sheets along with drawings, dimensions, and frame estimates are also present. Cayo X notes feature transverse measurement sheets, level readings, and designations. Working maps of the Cayo X area are folded and in fragile condition.

The second series dealing with Publication data and photographs relate almost exclusively to the A-6 structure in Benque Viejo. Some communication with the museum is present with the data. There are 43 fragile pages of type-written text with subheadings: Architectural Sequences-Nomenclature; Descriptive list of Numbered Units; Access to the buildings-Stairways; Structure A-second; Structure A6-second: Reconstructed plan and Basic Elevations; Stucco-as material; Stucco Decoration of Upper Zone-General Remarks; Stucco details; Areas A8-1; A8-2; and B-9; Band B; and doorways.

The photograph portion of the series begins with the Field Catalogues from the expedition. The photographs are identified by number, location, date, and description. All from 1950, the list contains "series V", "series K" and "series P", of various sizes. Many of the photographs were originally mounted on paper with staples and have roll and print numbers. The staples were removed whenever possible. Some smaller photos were placed in acid-free envelopes. A group of miscellaneous photographs from Benque Viejo and Cahal Pech originally were stapled to a thin paper backing. The staples were removed whenever possible. A hand-made album titled "Benque Viejo, Selected Photos" remains intact despite stapling. Another dual photo mounted on heavier paper with notes by Dr. Satterthwaite was left as-is. A drawing of Structure A6-second using a portion of a photo to construct a composite of the reconstructed East facade also remains as Satterthwaite made it. The remaining photos depict Cayo X, Baking Pot, and the native peoples. The Maps series contains a combination of commercial and hand-drawn maps, some issued by the government of British Honduras. The geography, rainfall, geological divisions, vegetation, lights and lighthouses, and alienated land in British Honduras are highlighted. A hand-drawn map labeled

as a "copy print of F.D. plan 215" is folded and brittle and may need conservation assessment. Another map shows part of the "Cayo District showing License Areas nos. 29/43 and 1/44." There is also an Archaeological Map of the Maya Area. A group of miscellaneous drawings and maps, some oversized, is on heavy paper and folded into smaller size. There are hand-written directions about scale, suggesting that the data was in process for publication. The press coverage in the final series includes articles from the University Bulletin, Archaeology Newsletter, and Archaeology with coverage of the important finds by The Caribbean Quarterly, The Daily Clarion, British Honduras Monthly Magazine, Caldwell Press (N.J.), and the Monthly Bulletin (British Honduras).

Administrative Information

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December, 2009

Finding aid prepared by Jody Rodgers.

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Controlled Access Headings

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Field notes
- Maps
- Photographs
- Site plans

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- Belize

- Cahal Pech site (Belize)
- Caracol site (Belize)

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Anderson, A. Hamilton
- Beidler, Paul H., 1906-1998
- Satterthwaite, Linton, 1897-1978

SUBJECT(S)

- Belize antiquities

Collection Inventory

EXPEDITION MATERIALS, 1949-1953.

	Box
Preliminary Data 1949-1953 (1 of 2).	1
Preliminary Data 1949-1953 (2 of 2).	1
Accounts, Budget 1951-1953.	1
Satterthwaite Notebooks 1950-1951.	1
Cayo X Notes 1950.	1
Benque Viejo Fieldnotes 1950-1953 (1 of 2).	1
Benque Viejo Fieldnotes 1950-1953 (2 of 2).	1
Bag Study Sheets, Catalogue 1950.	1
Progress Reports, memos, field diaries 1950-1952.	1
Benque Viejo Logs, additional sites 1951.	1

PU-MU.1151. PUBLICATION DATA, PHOTOGRAPHS, 1950-1970.

Box

Communication (Cahal Pech) 1966.	2
Structure A6, Notes from Linton Satterthwaite 1970.	2
Structure A6, Publication materials 1966-1970.	2
Benque Viejo manuscript material, publications 1966-1970.	2
Benque Viejo field photograph catalogue 1950 (1 of 3).	2
Benque Viejo field photograph catalogue 1950 (2 of 3).	2
Benque Viejo field photograph catalogue 1950 (3 of 3).	2
1950 Slides negative list.	2
1950 photographs (1 of 3).	2
1950 photographs (2 of 3).	2
1950 photographs (3 of 3).	2
1950 Miscellaneous photographs.	2
1950 Photo checklists.	2

MAPS, PRESS COVERAGE, 1949-1966.

	Box
Press coverage, publications 1950-1954.	3
Site Maps 1950-1953.	3

