

**MEMOIRS OF THE PEABODY MUSEUM OF  
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
ETHNOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY. VOL. I.  
NO. 1. PREHISTORIC RUINS OF COPAN,  
HONDURAS. A PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE  
EXPLORATIONS BY THE MUSEUM, 1891-1895**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649427536

Memoirs of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University. Vol. I. No. 1. Prehistoric Ruins of Copan, Honduras. A Preliminary Report of the Explorations by the Museum, 1891-1895 by Various

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**VARIOUS**

**MEMOIRS OF THE PEABODY MUSEUM OF  
AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
ETHNOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY. VOL. I.  
NO. 1. PREHISTORIC RUINS OF COPAN,  
HONDURAS. A PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE  
EXPLORATIONS BY THE MUSEUM, 1891-1895**



*Copyright, 1896-1897,  
By PEABODY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
ETHNOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.*

*Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology,  
Cambridge, Mass.  
1897.  
S-174 (1723)  
L. Q. H. S. J. L.*

UNIVERSITY PRESS:  
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

57 L. 05

H. t

F. 12

DEC 16 1918

MEMOIRS

OF THE

PEABODY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND  
ETHNOLOGY, HARVARD UNIVERSITY.

VOL. I.—No. I.

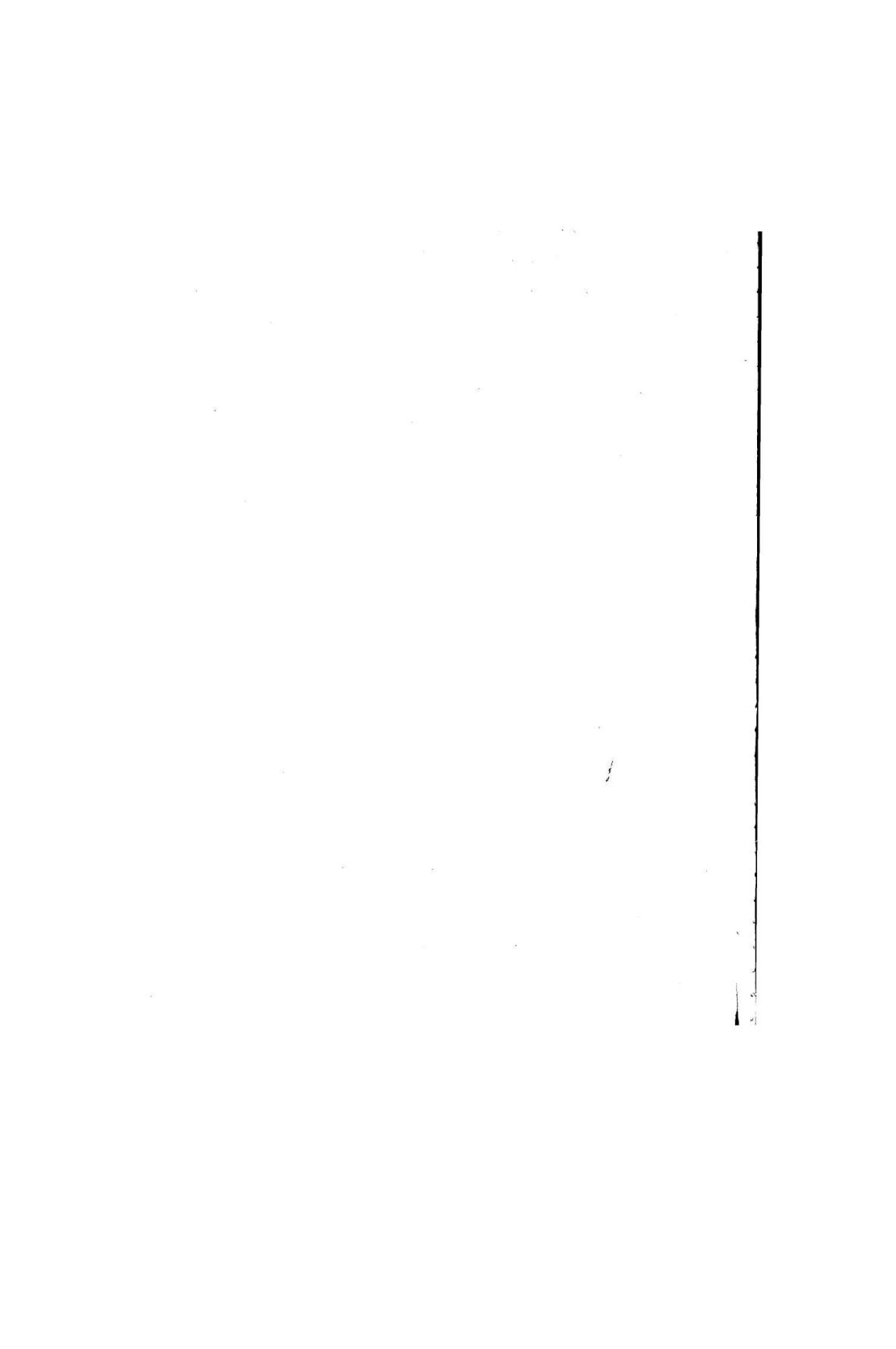
---

PREHISTORIC RUINS OF COPAN,  
HONDURAS.

A PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE EXPLORATIONS BY THE MUSEUM,  
1891—1895.

---

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.:  
PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM.  
1896.



## CONTENTS

NOTE.—The paging of the volume, except in first memoir, is at bottom of page.

### I. PREHISTORIC RUINS OF COPAN, HONDURAS. 1896. A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON EXPLORATIONS, 1891-95.

	PAGE
Editorial Note by F. W. Putnam . . . . .	iii
Subscribers to the Museum Expeditions . . . . .	iv
General Description of the Site . . . . .	1
Historical Sketch . . . . .	3
Plan of Operations . . . . .	8
Detailed Description of the Ruins . . . . .	9
The Monolithic Monuments . . . . .	23
Appendix, Letter of Palacio, 1576 (Spanish) . . . . .	45
Translation of Palacio's Letter . . . . .	47
Description of the Plan of Ruins, giving Location of Mounds, Sculptures, Monuments, and Altars . . . . .	49

### II. CAVE OF LOLTUN, YUCATAN. BY EDWARD H. THOMPSON, 1897.

Editorial Note by F. W. Putnam . . . . .	51
Subscribers to the Museum Explorations . . . . .	52
Report of Expedition of 1888-89 . . . . .	53
Report of Expedition of 1890-91 . . . . .	65

### III. THE CHULTUNES OF LABNÁ, YUCATAN. BY EDWARD H. THOMPSON, 1897.

Editorial Note by F. W. Putnam . . . . .	75
Subscribers to Museum Expeditions in Yucatan . . . . .	76
Reports of Expeditions of 1888-91, The Chultunes of Labná . . . . .	77

### IV. RESEARCHES IN THE ULÓA VALLEY, HONDURAS. BY GEORGE BYRON GORDON, 1898.

Editorial Note by F. W. Putnam . . . . .	93
Subscribers to the Museum Explorations in Honduras . . . . .	96
Report on the 1896-97 Expedition to Ulúa Valley . . . . .	97
Objects from the Excavations in the Ulúa Valley . . . . .	110
Painted Decorations on Pottery from the Ulúa Valley . . . . .	119
Summary and Conclusions, Researches in Ulúa Valley . . . . .	126

419826

CONTENTS

V. CAVERNS OF COPAN, HONDURAS. BY GEORGE BYRON GORDON, 1898.	PAGE
Report of Expedition, 1896-97 . . . . .	139
Contents of Cave Pottery . . . . .	147
Note on the Formation of Stalagmite . . . . .	147
VI. THE HIEROGLYPHIC STAIRWAY, RUINS OF COPAN. BY GEORGE BYRON GORDON, 1902.	
Editorial Note by F. W. Putnam . . . . .	151
Subscribers to the Fund for the Encouragement of Central American Research . . . . .	152
The Hieroglyphic Stairway: Architecture . . . . .	153
The Inscription . . . . .	168

ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

	Page
Sculptures from Terrace east of Great Plaza, Copan . . . . .	2
Gargoyle, serpent's head, from debris of Temple . . . . .	7
Restoration of sculpture on a step of the Hieroglyphic Stairway . . . . .	8
Excavation under inclined plane, eastern side of Mound 9 . . . . .	20
Cross section of tomb 2 . . . . .	30
Human teeth fitted and ornamented with jadeite . . . . .	32
Vault under Stela M . . . . .	36
Cross section of Stela C, showing vault and stonework at base . . . . .	37
Vault under Stela C . . . . .	38
Stela I and Altar, showing position . . . . .	39
Altar, side of Stela I . . . . .	40
Altar of Stela C with fallen stela . . . . .	40
Front of Sculpture Z . . . . .	41
Back of Sculpture Z . . . . .	41
Side of Sculpture Z . . . . .	42
Side of Sculpture Z . . . . .	42
Altar of Stela D . . . . .	43
Sculpture on step of Hieroglyphic Stairway . . . . .	46
Teracotta vase, Wolf's head . . . . .	48
Map of ancient cities in Yucatan . . . . .	53
Vertical section in Cave of Loltun showing terraces . . . . .	55
Plan of longitudinal section in Cave of Loltun . . . . .	56
Plan of inscription Chamber in Cave of Loltun . . . . .	57
Vertical section of Inscription Chamber in Cave of Loltun . . . . .	58
Vertical section showing layers in Cave of Loltun . . . . .	60
Halton or water-trough in Cave of Loltun . . . . .	63
Rock carvings in . . . . .	64
Rock carvings in . . . . .	65
Shell ornaments from . . . . .	66
" " " " 2 figs . . . . .	66
Carved stone pendant from . . . . .	67
Bone needles from . . . . .	68
Flint human teeth from . . . . .	68
Rock pendant from . . . . .	69
Segment of a whistle from . . . . .	70
Bead of iron pyrites from . . . . .	70
Circular pavement around entrance to Chultun, Labna . . . . .	77
Vertical section through . . . . .	78
Teracotta dolls from . . . . .	82
Engaved shell disk from . . . . .	82
Chipped implement of chalcedony from . . . . .	83
Flint knife from . . . . .	83
Stone implement used in preparing agave fibre from Chultun, Labna . . . . .	84
Chipped implement of flint from Chultun, Labna . . . . .	84
Flint from . . . . .	85
Chalcedony knife from . . . . .	89
Chipped implement of flint from . . . . .	89
" " " " . . . . .	90
Metate with four feet . . . . .	91
Form of bed of Uloa River . . . . .	99
Section of bed of Uloa River . . . . .	99
Plan of ruins east of Uloa River . . . . .	103



ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

	PAGE
Stone idol in the air . . . . .	1
Cross section of mound in the ruins . . . . .	104
Ornament of stone found in the ruins . . . . .	105
Potsherd, with serpent head, from Enchanted Pool . . . . .	107
Obsidian flake-knife, Uloa . . . . .	110
Green stone eel, Uloa . . . . .	110
Bark-pounder, Uloa . . . . .	111
Pottery vessel with human face and glyphs, Uloa . . . . .	111
" " " " " Guatemala . . . . .	111
Terra-cotta whistle, Uloa . . . . .	112
" " " with glyphs, Copan . . . . .	114
" " " with human figures, two views . . . . .	114, 115
" mask, Uloa . . . . .	115
" head, portion of whistle, Uloa . . . . .	115
" stamp and whistle, Uloa . . . . .	116
" cylindrical stamp, Uloa . . . . .	117
" ornamentation, Uloa . . . . .	117
" implement, Uloa . . . . .	117
Head carved in exulte, Uloa . . . . .	118
Design on fragment of terra-cotta figure, Uloa . . . . .	118
" on painted vase, Uloa . . . . .	120
" " " " " . . . . .	121
" bowl " " " . . . . .	122
" " " " " . . . . .	123
" " " " " . . . . .	124
Animal design painted on fragment of pottery, Uloa . . . . .	124
Painted design on rim of jar, Uloa . . . . .	125
Ceramic object of clay, Uloa . . . . .	125
Token piece of clay, Uloa . . . . .	126
Map of the Copan Valley . . . . .	140
Woolen handle from Cave 3, Copan . . . . .	142
Plan of Mound 26, showing position of Hieroglyphic Stairway, Copan . . . . .	153
Cross section of Mound 26, showing Balustrade and Hieroglyphic Stairway . . . . .	157
Plan of lower part of Hieroglyphic Stairway, with other . . . . .	158
Cross section through lower portion of Hieroglyphic Stairway . . . . .	158
Sexted figure on Hieroglyphic Stairway . . . . .	160
Details of balustrade " (restored) . . . . .	161
Crouched human figure " . . . . .	162
Serpent ornament " . . . . .	163
Serpent heads " . . . . .	167
Glyphs, showing dates, Copan . . . . .	169
" " " . . . . .	170
" " " . . . . .	172
" " " . . . . .	173
" " " . . . . .	174
" " " . . . . .	176
" on Temple of the Sun, Palenque . . . . .	176
" showing date, Copan . . . . .	176
" " " . . . . .	181
Inscription on small stone tablet, Copan . . . . .	181
Hieroglyphic bands at base of Stela N, Copan . . . . .	182
Plan of " " " " " . . . . .	183
Glyph, showing date, Copan . . . . .	185
Inscription on small stone pillar, Copan . . . . .	186