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PVN OP 183 Excavation Report

Edward M. Schortman
Kenyon College

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Site 183

Site 183 consists of 19 surface-visible platforms that define four plazas distributed in a rough southwest-northeast line covering ca. 17,000m² of relatively even terrain. The largest platforms are grouped around the south-central patio which, like two of the remaining three plazas, is open to the east. The fourth patio is surrounded on all sides by architecture. The ground here does slope up gradually from north to south, rising approximately 1m over 100m in that direction. La Sierra is about 2.2km to the northeast while Site 218 lies ca. 370m to the east. L. True and T. Neff oversaw the excavation of eight buildings at Site 183 from June 14-22, 1988. Over the course of this work 75m² were cleared. In most cases, digging was restricted to 1m-wide trenches dug against one side or, in some cases, completely across a building. Structure 183-2, however, was completely cleared.

Structure 183-1

Structure 183-1, which defines the west side of the northwestern-most plaza, is 5m west-southwest of Str. 183-2 and 3m north of Str. 183-18. Digging here, conducted in Subop. 183G and K, uncovered 12.9m² in the process of cutting across the entirety of the platform running east-west. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.92m and 0.8m below modern ground surface within and outside construction, respectively. One major construction phase was revealed in the course of this work which was supervised by T. Neff and L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.2	-	LCLII?
2	Str. 183-1-Sub1	U.1	-	-	LCLII/III
3	Str. 183-1-1st	U.2-12	-	-	LCLIII/II
4	Str. 183-1-1st	-	-	F.1	LCLIII?
5	-	-	S.1	F.2	

Time Span 1

Some portion of S.2, a fine-textured, soft-compacted, brown soil, was laid down at this point. Stratum 2 underlies TS.3 construction (U.2 and 8, the basal east and west facings) by at least 0.12m; it was not directly associated with U.1 but that sole representative of TS.2 architecture sits 0.27m above the top of S.2 where the layer is exposed east of the platform. It seems fairly clear, therefore, that, minimally, the lower revealed segments of S.2 accumulated, most likely by natural means, prior to the advent of known construction associated with Str. 183-1. The recovery of artifacts from lower S.2 indicates a human presence in the area during this

earliest known interval.

Time Span 2

Unit 1, the only fragment of Str. 183-1-Sub1 exposed in our excavations, is a ca. 0.1m-high wall fashioned of unmodified river cobbles that runs approximately east-west from beneath U.8, stopping 0.86m west of U.6. The architectural significance of U.1 is unclear. It sits high enough above S.2 (0.27m) to suggest that the wall originally rested atop a low platform; possibly U.1 was a foundation for that putative earlier building's superstructure. Unit 1 is at approximately the same level as Str. 183-1-1st's second ascending eastern terrace (U.3). Consequently, U.1 is treated as the enigmatic remains of a structure that predates Str. 183-1-1st and whose relation to that later building remains poorly defined.

Time Span 3

Structure 183-1-1st is a stone-faced platform that is ascended by five stone-faced terraces (U.2-6) on the east, patio-facing side. Unit 2, the basal riser, stands 0.29m high, projecting 0.12m above the top of S.2.; its tread is 0.38m wide and is surfaced with stone. Unit 3 rises 0.22m above U.2 and measures 0.51m across; the tread is covered with a mix of stones and earth. The next ascending riser, U.4, stands 0.19m high; its tread, covering 0.7m, is surfaced with stone and earth. Unit 5 is a scant 0.12m high but encompasses 1.1m across. As with its lower counterparts, U.5's tread is surfaced with stones and earth. Unit 6, the highest ascent in the sequence, is also low (0.1m high) and broad (2.26m wide). This extensive tread was apparently fashioned exclusively of earth. The summit is demarcated by U.7 and 8 on the east and west, respectively. These tall, broad walls (0.85-0.9m high by 0.82-0.88m across) apparently bounded the platform's core against which the aforementioned terraces were built. Unit 7 stands an estimated 0.44m above U.6's tread whereas U.8 rises 0.92m in a single ascent to the summit from ancient ground surface. The summit was apparently surfaced with earth and measures 3.3m across east-west (calculated from the interior faces of U.7 and 8). No built-in furniture was recorded atop Str. 183-1-1st though such constructions may well have lain outside the 1m-wide swath cut across the superstructure. The platform's core fill, delimited by U.7 and 8, consists of small to medium-size cobbles; in the lower exposed 0.36m of the hearting the matrix is a hard-compacted light brown soil (U.11) while in the upper 0.33m the soil is more loosely consolidated and dark brown (U.12). The fill backing the eastern terraces was exposed in a probe extending 1.34m east of U.7. Here a loosely compacted tan colored sand (U.10) was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.21m overlying U.1 and running under U.7. On top of U.10 is a 0.41m-thick deposit of hard-compacted, light brown soil in which small pebbles are found (U.9).

All told, Str. 183-1-1st is a stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platform that stood 1.19m and 0.92m high on the east and west, respectively, measured 10m across east-west, and was oriented roughly north-south (the discrepancy in heights between the east and west sides is due to an apparent 0.27m rise in ancient ground surface from east to west over the 10m width of the building). The east flank was faced by five terraces whose low heights suggest that they afforded relatively easy access to the summit. The considerable width of the highest two treads (1.1m and 2.26m across) provided ample space for the conduct of activities above ground level and, possibly, under the eaves of the superstructure. The latter encompasses 3.3m east-west and

was surfaced with earth. How, if at all, this space was divided and furnished is unknown. It is likely that the core retaining walls that defined the summit's eastern and western limits also served as foundations for the superstructure's perishable upper walls.

Time Span 4

Sometime late in Str. 183-1-1st's occupation history a fill composed of small to medium-size cobbles set in a loosely compacted, fine-textured, brown soil matrix (F.1) was appended to the platform's west face. Feature 1 is 0.22-0.33m thick, increasing in depth as it approaches U.8, the western basal facing, and extends at least 1.86m to the west (its limit in this direction was not found). The architectural significance of F.1 is uncertain; it may have been fill backing a facing located beyond excavation limits to the west. What sets F.1 apart from the fallen debris comprising F.2 is the general horizontal disposition of its component rocks as opposed to the downward, westward tilt of the later debris.

It may be, therefore, that Str. 183-1-1st was enlarged near the end of its use-life by the construction of an earth-and-stone-filled terrace built off its west flank. If so, the ascent to the summit (still marked by that portion of U.8 projecting above F.1) would have been ca. 0.46m.

Time Span 5

Following Str. 183-1-1st's abandonment, all but the highest surviving architecture was blanketed by the natural deposition of S.1, a loosely consolidated, root-rich, dark brown soil that is 0.14-0.4m thick. Embedded in S.1 is a light to moderately dense concentration of rocks fallen from final-phase architecture (F.2). Feature 2 is densest west of U.8, the western summit wall, where it extends for at least 1.4m away to the west from that construction. Many fewer tumbled rocks are recorded on the summit or overlying and extending out from the eastern terraces.

Structure 183-2

Structure 183-2, together with Str. 182-3, 4m to the east, closes off the north side of the northwestern-most plaza. Structures 183-2 and 183-3 are linked by a low stone construction, or saddle. Lying 7m to the south across the plaza is Str. 183-4 whereas Str. 183-1 is 5m to the west-southwest. Excavations conducted within Subop. 183 H and J cleared the entirety of Str. 183-2, uncovering 28m² in the process. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.8m and 1.14m within and outside construction, respectively. One major building phase was revealed in the course of this work which was overseen by L. True and T. Neff.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.2- 4	-	LCLII?
2	Str. 183-2-1st	U.1-11	-	-	LCLIII/II
3	Str. 183-2-1st	U.12	-	F.1	LCLIII/II

Time Span 1

Strata 2 and 3 are two sequentially deposited soil layers underlying TS.2 architecture. They were uncovered in a probe sunk into Str. 183-2-1st's summit. Stratum 3 is a moderately coarse-textured, hard-compacted, light brown soil that contains many small white inclusions. This layer was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.07m, its base lying beyond our excavation limits. Overlying S.3 by 0.17-0.19m is a fine-textured, loosely compacted, brown soil (S.2). Scattered throughout S.2 are numerous small fragments of *bajareque*, or burnt clay. Stratum 4, which underlies Str. 183-2-1st's north basal wall (U.1) by at least 0.41m, is a fine-textured tan clay; the base of this layer was not encountered. The recovery of artifacts from S.2 and 4 points to a human presence in the immediate vicinity prior to the erection of Str. 183-2-1st.

Time Span 2

Structure 183-2-1st is a stone-faced platform bounded by single, direct ascents from ground surface to the summit on all sides (U.1-4). The ground appears to rise 0.73m from north to south over the 3.77m width of the building. Consequently, the northern basal wall (U.1) higher than its southern counterpart (U.4), 0.7m and 0.3m respectively. Structure 183-2-1st's basal walls are 0.3-0.74m wide and, in addition to retaining the platform's moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown earth fill (U.12), likely also served as foundations for perishable upper walls. Running east-west across the approximate center of the summit is U.5, a 0.16m- and 0.34m-high, on the south and north, respectively, stone wall that is 0.7m wide. Unit 5 is a footing that divides the superstructure into two adjoining, parallel rooms that measure 0.82x4.3m on the north and 0.75x4.3m on the south; the northern summit room sits approximately 0.18m below that of the southern enclosure. The northern enclosure is divided into two spaces by U.6, a low, 0.3m-wide stone wall that projects 0.4m north of U.5. The area east of U.6 measures 0.82x1.1m while the space on the west covers 0.82x2.9m; the 0.42m-wide gap between U.6 and U.1 created a door linking the western and eastern enclosures. A burnt earth floor (U.9) covers an area 0.82m north-south by 2.2m east-west near the center of the northern room (it intrudes 0.55m into the northeast enclosure). Two discontinuous segments of stone flooring (U.7 and 8) were recorded in the southern compartment. Both of these surfaces run the full north-south width of that room and measure 0.62m across east-west; U.7 fills the western end of the room while U.8 takes up the eastern end.

A 0.5m-wide, low stone wall (U.10) projects at least 0.3m east from near the center of U.3, Str. 183-2-1st's east basal facing. Though the eastern end of this construction was not encountered, it likely represents the south side of a saddle linking this platform with its eastern neighbor, Str. 183-3. There is no sign of the putative saddle's northern face.

By the conclusion of TS. 2, Str. 183-2-1st was an earth-filled, stone-faced platform that stood 0.3-0.7m high, measured 3.77x5.3m, and was aligned roughly 103 degrees. The building is delimited by basal walls that rise directly to the summit which itself is divided into two principal rooms set in a north-south line. The northern compartment covers 3.5m² while its southern neighbor encompasses 3.2m². The former room was divided into two spaces of unequal size, a compartment covering 0.9m² on the east and a larger enclosure measuring 2.4m²

to the west. A 0.42m-wide door connects these spaces. A burnt earth floor covers 1.8m² near the northern room's center while two stone floors, each measuring 0.5m², are found in the southern room, one each in the enclosure's eastern and western ends. No formal entryway was noted for Str. 183-2-1st, though the relatively low height of the southern facing (0.3m tall) suggests that this, the plaza-facing side, was the primary means for entering the superstructure. Structure 183-2-1st may well have been linked to Str. 183-3 ca. 4m to the west by at least one low, stone wall.

Time Span 3

The next major period of construction at Str. 183-2-1st involved appending a 0.26-0.32m high stone-faced and -surfaced platform (U.10) to the building's northwest corner. Unit 10 projects 1.2m north of Str.183-2-1st's north basal wall (U.1), abutting that facing 1.5m east of its northwest corner with U.2, the western basal wall. On the west, U.10 extends 1.5m away from U.2 and joins that basal wall 1.05m south of its junction with U.1. Along its maximum dimensions, U.10 encompasses 2m north-south by, minimally, 3.05m east-west; its western margin was not encountered. A circular gap in U.10's summit pavement measures 0.6m in diameter and is situated 0.1m northwest of Str. 183-2-1st's northwest corner. A 0.2m-high pile of flat-laid cobbles (F.1) was noted sitting atop U.10 along its east edge. Feature 1 measures 0.36m across north-south. The architectural significance of this stack is unclear; the rocks were apparently purposefully placed but do not seem to have been part of any summit architecture.

By the end of TS. 3, Str. 183-2-1st retained most of its original dimensions and orientation. The primary difference is that a 0.26-0.32m-high stone-faced and -paved platform had been appended to the edifice's northwest corner. This addition covered at least 5.3m² and did not apparently support a substantial superstructure. A hole, 0.6m in diameter, was found near the construction's center, possibly suggesting the position of a central support for the roof. A 0.2m-high pile of cobbles was recorded along the unit's east edge. In general, it appears that the stone platform was added to increase the working and living area associated with Str. 183-2-1st and was left open along its sides, though the summit was likely roofed.

Time Span 4

After occupation ceased on and around Str. 183-2-1st the edifice was blanketed by the natural deposition of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, gray-brown, root-rich soil (S.1). Stratum 1 accumulated to depths of 0.03-0.37m over extant architecture, obscuring all but the upper-most stones of U.4. Scattered throughout S.1 is a very light concentration of rocks fallen from final-phase architecture (F.2). The paucity of stones in F.2 implies that this material was not extensively used in fashioning Str. 183-2-1st's superstructure walls.

Structure 183-4

Structure 183-4 bounds the south side of the northwestern-most plaza. Structure 183-2 is 7m to the north and across the patio while Str. 183-1 and 183-18 are 10m and 13m to the

northeast and east, respectively. Excavations in and around Str. 183-4 uncovered 6.08m² within Subop. 183I, a trench dug against the edifice's west side. Digging was pursued to maximum depths of 0.52m and 0.98m within and beyond construction, respectively. These investigations, directed by L. True and T. Neff, revealed one building phase.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.1	-	LCLI
2	Str. 183-4-1 st	U.1-5	-	-	LCLII, III
3	-	-	S.1	F.1	

Time Span 1

Approximately 0.46m of earth (S.1) was deposited prior to the erection of Str. 183-4-1st. Unfortunately, records of the soil's characteristics have been lost resulting in our inability to convey these features in detail. Recovery of artifacts from the lower portions of S.1 does, however, signal a human presence in the area prior to TS.2.

Time Span 2

Structure 184-4-1st is a stone-faced platform ascended on the west by a terrace standing 0.37m high and measuring 0.44m across (U.1). The tread is surfaced with stone and gives way on the east to U.2, the step-up to the summit. Unit 2 rises 0.58m above U.1, is 0.77m thick, and retains an earthen fill in which a few small cobbles are found (U.5). Located 0.52m east of U.2 is a wall 0.87m wide (U.3) that rises a scant 0.03m above the level of U.2 and the U.5 fill. Unit 3 was followed down for 0.54m on its west side, excavation ceasing before the base was encountered. On the east, U.3 steps out 0.15m to the east 0.24m below the wall's preserved top. Given U.3's considerable breadth and, relative to the platform's size, height, it is likely that the wall served as the western core wall against which the western terrace was erected. Unit 4 rests at the same level as, and abuts, U.3 on the east. Unit 4 runs at least 1.3m eastward before exiting our trench. Unit 4 stands at least 0.3m high though it may have originally risen to 0.4m, nearly as tall as U.3. The architectural significance of U.4 is unclear. It may, with U.3, define the south and west sides of a summit room, the two constructions serving, in part, as foundations for the superstructure's perishable upper walls. Unit 4 may also be a segment of the core's south wall. In either case, it seems likely that the space delimited by these constructions was filled with earth (a continuation of U.5); by the final construction phase, only the upper-most portions of U.3 and 4 protruded above that fill.

In general, Str. 183-4-1st was a stone-faced, earth-filled platform running roughly north-south that rose 0.95m on the west where it was faced with one terrace and one step-up to the summit. That summit was surfaced with earth and measured at least 3.53m east-west; the eastern limits of the summit and platform were not revealed. The southwest corner of what may

have been a room was uncovered in Subop. 183I. This putative enclosure is delimited by stone walls of relatively great height, though all but their highest segments were probably obscured by fill during TS. 2. The room covers, minimally, 1.3m east-west. It may be that the putative superstructure's south and west walls (U.3 and 4) were part of an earlier building that was largely obscured by later additions (including U.1 and 2) that constituted Str. 183-4-1st. All stone constructions on Str. 184-4-1st consist of river cobbles set in a brown earth mortar; one faced rock was noted in U.2.

Time Span 3

Following abandonment, all but the highest surviving elements of U.2 and 3 were covered by natural deposition of S.1. Embedded within this earth layer is a moderately dense concentration of stones apparently dislodged from TS.2 architecture (F.1). Feature 1 is densest west of U.1 from which it extends for 1.3m; a few scattered tumbled rocks were noted spread across the basal western terrace and the platform's summit.

Structure 183-8

Structure 183-8 occupies the south side of the southeastern-most plaza. Lying 2m to the west is Str. 183-9 which closes off the plaza's southwest corner while Str. 183- 7 is 16m to the north on the opposite side of the patio. Excavation of Subop. 183B uncovered 3.96m² in the course of revealing a 1m-wide swath of the platform's west basal facing. Digging was conducted to maximum depths of 0.9m and 1.24m below modern ground surface outside and within construction, respectively. One construction phase was revealed in the course of this work overseen by T. Neff and L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.3	-	
2	Str. 183-8-1 st	U.1, 2	-	F.1	LCLIII/II
3	-	-	S.1, 2	F.2	

Time Span 1

Stratum 3, a coarse-textured sand lacking any cultural remains, underlies TS.2 construction. This layer was revealed to a maximum thickness of 0.52m, its base lying outside our excavation limits.

Time Span 2

Unit 1 rises a total of 0.81m, standing 0.7m above the top of S.3, and is the western basal

wall of Str. 183-8-1st. This construction is 0.82m wide and gives way immediately on the east to what appears to be the poorly preserved remains of a second ascending terrace (F.1). Feature 1 was in a sufficiently deranged state at the time of excavation that it could not be securely identified as construction. Examining the section, however, reveals that its component rocks are flat-laid and convey the strong impression of a terrace facing rising 0.37m above U.1 and running back at least 0.69m to the east (F.1's eastern boundary was not uncovered). The treads of both U.1 and F.1 are surfaced with a mix of stone and earth. The fill contained by U.1 and F.1 is a moderately fine-textured, light gray-brown soil that includes a moderately dense concentration of small to medium-size cobbles (U.2).

Overall, Str. 183-8-1st is a stone-faced, stone-and-earth-filled platform that runs roughly north-south and is faced on the west by two stone-faced risers. These ascents reach a total height of 1.07m, though it is possible that additional, uncovered steps lead to the summit on the east. Unit 1 and Feature 1 are made of unmodified river cobbles set in a brown mud mortar.

Time Span 3

After Str. 183-8-1st was abandoned as much as 0.7m of S.2, a moderately fine-textured, light gray-brown soil, accumulated against the platform's western face and covered F.1 to within 0.12m of its estimated top. Stratum 2, in turn, was blanketed by a loosely compacted, moderately fine-textured, dark brown, root-rich soil (S.1). Stratum 1 collected to thicknesses of 0.17-0.21m and hid U.1, 2, and F.1 from view. Included in S.1 and 2 is a variably dense concentration of stones displaced from final-phase architecture (F.2). The F.2 rocks are densely packed for a distance 2.12m west of U.1; the stones recorded here are also fairly large, measuring 0.2-0.48m across. Upslope and overlying U.1 and F.1 there are fewer, and smaller, fallen rocks.

Structure 183-11

Structure 183-11 lies between the southeastern-most plaza and the patio immediately to the northwest. Str. 183-9 is 3m to the east whereas Str. 183-13 is 25m to the west. Suboperation 183C was dug completely across Str. 183-11 from east-to-west, uncovering 8m² of prehistoric deposits in the process. Digging was pursued to a maximum depth of 1.16m below modern ground surface within and outside construction. One major construction phase was identified in the course of this work directed by L. True and T. Neff.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.2, 3	-	LCL III/II
2	Str. 183-11-1 st	U.1-4	-	-	LCL III/II
3	Str. 183-11-1 st	-	S.2	F.1, 2	LCLIII?

Time Span 1

The earliest activity attested to in Str. 183-11-1st's environs was the deposition of S.3, a tan sand that accumulated to a maximum observed thickness of 0.34m (its base was not encountered). Stratum 3 runs relatively flat for the 2.12m it was revealed extending east-west. A few artifacts found within S.3 may point to at least a slight human presence in the area prior to Str. 123-11-1st's erection.

Stratum 3 was only found west of Str. 183-11-1st. On the east, approximately 0.17m of S.2, a moderately fine-textured, loosely compacted, brown soil, was introduced prior to TS.2. It is not possible at this point to distinguish artifacts that derived from the lower portion of S.2 and those that came from further up within the layer and pertains to later periods. It may well be that S.2 contains some cultural material that predates TS.2, though this point cannot be established with the data in hand.

Time Span 2

Structure 183-11-1st is faced on the east and west with tall, thick walls that rise in single ascents to the summit. Unit 1, the western basal facing, is 1m high by 0.87m across at its widest point while its eastern counterpart, U.2, rises 1.14m and measures 0.87m wide. The 0.14m discrepancy in height may be due to a slight natural rise in the ancient ground surface from east-to-west. This putative upward slope possibly accounts for the absence of S.3 on the east despite excavations in both areas reaching comparable depths. Both U.1 and 2 step out about half way up their total heights; 0.5m from the top of U.1 the walls projects out 0.28m to the west while 0.8m down from the estimated top of U.2 that wall steps out 0.36m to the east. The fill retained by U.1 and 2 mostly consists of a moderately fine-textured soil with considerable amounts of sand mixed in along with a few small rocks (U.3). Overlaying U.3 by 0.34-0.38m is a loosely compacted dark brown soil that incorporates a moderately dense concentration of medium to small cobbles (U.4).

By the conclusion of TS. 2, Str. 183-11-1st was a stone-faced, earth-and-stone-filled platform that stood 1-1.14m high, measured 4.23m east-west, and was oriented roughly north-south. The earthen-floored summit covered 2.48m east-west, calculated from the inner facings of the east and west basal facings. The latter constructions likely doubled as foundations for perishable superstructure walls. No built-in furniture was recorded in our 1m-wide exposure of the summit. Units 1 and 2 were both fashioned using unmodified river cobbles set in a brown earth mortar.

Time Span 3

The significance of events transpiring in this interval is unclear. Apparently, a casually constructed stone-faced terrace (F.1) was appended to Str. 183-11-1st's east side sometime during TS.3. The facing rose an estimated 0.38m and ran back 0.95m where it intersected U.2 at the level of its eastern step-out. In preparation for raising F.1, as much as 0.28m of S.2 (see TS. 1) was set against U.2. Stratum 2 here slopes up 0.24m over 0.95m from east-to-west, this earth apparently being used as fill for the eastern terrace.

On the west, a layer of flat-laid small to medium-size cobbles (F.2) extends in that direction at least 2.07m from U.1 (its western margin was not revealed). Feature 2 rests directly on S.3 and was covered by S.2. The latter is 0.26-0.58m thick and slopes up 0.29m over 2.4m west-to-east. Stratum 2 not only covers F.2 but blankets all but the upper-most 0.38m of U.1. The architectural significance of F.2 and the western portion of S.2 is unclear. It may be that the former at one point served as a rough floor, though its component rocks are not uniformly distributed across its exposed extent. In any case, probably near the end of TS. 3, F.2 was covered by S.2. Whether this earth was introduced by cultural or natural means remains unclear.

By the end of TS. 3, therefore, Str. 183-11-1st retained its earlier height and alignment but now measured 5.18m (with F.1 but without F.2) or 6.25m (with F.1 and 2) across east-west. On the east the platform was now faced with one 0.38m-high by 0.95m-wide terrace that gave way to a 0.8m-high ascent (U.2) to the summit. The opposite side of the building may have been fronted by a casual stone pavement that did not appreciably reduce the visible height of the western basal wall (U.1). The 0.26-0.58m of earth that submerged this putative pavement may have been fill for a late construction that was never completed or the result of natural processes of soil accumulation following the building's abandonment.

Time Span 4

Definitely post-dating Str. 183-11-1st's abandonment is the deposition of 0.24-0.48m of a loosely compacted, root-rich, dark brown soil (S.1). Included in this topsoil is a moderately dense concentration of stones fallen from final phase architecture (F.3). Feature 3 extends for an observed 2m west of U.1 and 0.5m east of F.1; the stones comprising F.3 are densest off the platform's east and west flanks and lighter across the summit.

Structure 183-13

Structure 183-13 defines the south side of the central patio. It is 25m west of Str. 183-11 and 2m east of Str. 183-14 which closes off the plaza's west side. Digging here was limited to exposing 4m² in the course of investigating the platform's south side (Subop. 183D). Excavation was pursued to a maximum depth of 1.42m below modern ground surface outside construction; structural fill was not probed. One building phase was identified in the course of this research which was directed by T. Neff and L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.2, 3	-	LCL I, II
2	Str. 183-13-1 st	U.1	-	-	LCL III/II
3	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

Deposition of a coarse-textured sand (S.3) is the first activity identified in Str. 183-13-1st's vicinity. Stratum 3 was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.34m (its base was not encountered) and slopes up 0.24m over 3.42m from south-to-north. Some cultural material was found within S.3 possibly indicating a human presence in the area before Str. 183-13-1st was raised.

The lower 0.27m of S.2, a moderately hard-compacted, moderately fine-textured, brown soil, was deposited during TS.1. This segment of S.2 overlies S.3 and runs beneath TS.2 architecture. Artifacts retrieved from lower S.2 also point to a human presence in the immediate vicinity of what would become Str. 183-13-1st prior to the platform's erection.

Time Span 2

The only portion of Str. 183-13-1st revealed in Subop. 183D is that building's east-west-running, 0.86m-high, southern basal facing (U.1). Unit 1 was found tilting out to the south and seems to have been backed by a tread composed of stones and earth extending north for at least 0.49m (the northern limit of the construction was not uncovered. At least one faced block was incorporated in this tread. Aside from that piece of masonry, U.1 was made of unmodified river cobbles set in a brown mud mortar.

Time Span 3

Following Str. 183-13-1st's abandonment, deposition of S.2 resumed. This soil now covered all but the upper 0.26m of U.1, sloping up 0.69m over 3.22m south-to-north towards the building. Blanketing S.2 by 0.36-0.5m is a loosely compacted, root-rich, dark brown soil (S.1). Scattered throughout S.1 is a moderately dense concentration of rocks apparently dislodged from TS.2 architecture (F.1). Feature 1 is densest off the platform's south flank where it extends for 1.14m in that direction from U.1. Fewer, smaller stones were noted proceeding upslope towards the summit.

Structure 183-14

Structure 183-14 seals off the west side of the central patio. It lies 2m west of Str. 183-13 and 1.5m west/southwest of Str. 183-16 which defines the patio's north side. Digging here, conducted within Subop. 183E, uncovered 6.2m² in the course of exposing a 1m-wide swath of the platform's west flank. Excavation was pursued to maximum depths of 1.16m and 0.56m below modern ground surface outside and within construction, respectively. One building phase was recognized in the course of this work supervised by L. True and T. Neff.

Time Spans

<u>Time</u> <u>Span</u>	<u>Construction</u> <u>Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
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1	-	-	S.3	-	
2	Str. 183-14-1 st	U.1-3	-	-	LCL II/III
3	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

Deposition of a coarse-textured sand (S.3) was the first activity identified in Str. 183-14-1st's environs. Stratum 3 was revealed to a maximum thickness of 0.3m (its base eluding detection beyond excavation limits) and was seen to rise 0.26m over 3.1m west-to-east. No cultural material was found in this layer, implying that there was, at best, a sparse human presence in the immediate area when this soil was laid down.

Time Span 2

Structure 183-14-1st rose in at least two stone-faced ascents towards the building's summit. The basal terrace (U.1) stood 0.78m tall and ran back 2.18m to the east. The U.1 riser itself is 1.04m wide while the tread that backs it on the east is surfaced primarily with earth. Standing 0.32m above U.1's tread is the next ascending riser (U.2). Unit 2 is 0.54m wide and fronts an earthen surface that heads east for, minimally, an additional 0.29m; the next step-up towards the summit, if there is any, was not cleared. The fill retained by U.1 and 2 is a moderately hard-compacted, moderately fine-textured, brown soil (U.3). Only the upper 0.12m of U.3 was exposed.

Overall, Str. 183-14-1st ran approximately north-south, rose at least 1.1m, and was ascended on the west by, minimally, two stone-faced and earthen-floored terraces. The lowest, most fully exposed of these units is fairly wide, measuring 2.18m across. Units 1 and 2 were made of unmodified river cobbles set in a brown earth mortar.

Time Span 3

Soon after occupation and maintenance of Str. 183-14-1st ceased, 0.34-0.58m of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown soil (S.2) was laid down. Stratum 2 covers S.3 and all but the upper-most 0.19m of U.1. Blanketing S.2 is 0.18-0.34m of S.1, a loosely compacted, root-rich, dark brown soil. Embedded in S.1 and 2 is a moderately dense concentration of rocks dislodged from final-phase architecture (F.1). Feature 1 extends for 2.76m west of Str. 183-14-1st's basal wall (U.1) and its stones are found scattered above U.1 and 2 heading up to the summit.

Structure 183-16

Structure 183-16 closes off the north side of the central patio. Its nearest neighbor, Str. 183-14, is 1.5m to the west/southwest while Str. 183-13 lies 8m south, and across the plaza, from Str. 183-16. Digging in Subop. 183F exposed a 1m-wide portion of the building's south, plaza-facing side in the process of uncovering 6m². Excavations were pursued to maximum depths of

1m and 0.99m below modern ground surface within and outside construction, respectively. One major building phase was uncovered in the course of this investigation which was directed by T. Neff and L. True.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	-	-	S.2, 3	-	LCL II?
2	Str. 183-16-1 st	U.1-4	-	-	LCL II/III?
3	Str. 183-16-1 st	-	-	F.1	LCL III/II?
4	-	-	S.1, 2	F.2	

Time Span 1

Deposition of a coarse-textured, tan sand (S.3) initiated the known sequence of activities revealed in the environs of Str. 183-16-1st. Stratum 3 was exposed to a maximum thickness of 0.31m (its base was not found) and sloped up 0.14m over the 0.85m it was uncovered running south-to-north. The absence of cultural material recovered from S.3 points to, at best, a sparse human presence in the area when the soil was being laid down.

The lower 0.32m of S.2, a moderately hard-compacted brown soil containing medium to small pebbles, was deposited now. This segment of S.2 underlies TS.2 architecture (U.1) and yielded a few artifacts. While some of this cultural material may have been insinuated from further up in the layer, it is probable that several of the items are contemporary with the deposition of lower S.2. There was, therefore, most likely a human presence in the area when lower S.2 was introduced.

Time Span 2

Structure 183-16-1st, during this interval, was bounded on the south by a 0.65m-high stone-faced riser (U.1) that fronted a 0.73m-wide terrace surfaced with a combination of stones and earth. Unit 2 succeeds U.1 on the north where it rises 0.31m above the latter's tread. Measuring 0.65m across, U.2 is abutted on the north by U.3. The latter runs perpendicular to U.2, extending at least 2.17m to the north before leaving our excavations. The bases of U.2 on the north and U.3 were not found; they stand, minimally, 0.92m high. Most likely, U.2 and 3 define the south and west sides of the platform's core against which terraces, such as U.1, were built. Units 2 and 3 contained a fill (U.4) a description of which has not been found. The tops of these two walls also probably served as foundations for the perishable walls that delimited Str. 183-16-1st's superstructure.

Structure 183-16-1st was a stone-faced platform that ran, roughly, east-west, stood 0.96m high on the south, and was faced by a stone-faced terrace and step-up leading to the earthen-floored summit. The building was centered on a core bounded by substantial stone

walls that likely doubled as foundations for perishable superstructure constructions. Structure 183-16-1st's summit measures at least 2.17m north-south (measured from the interior, north, face of U.2 to the excavation limits). Units 1-3 were fashioned of unmodified river cobbles set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 3

A very casual stone construction (F.1), most likely a floor, was appended to Str. 183-16-1st's south side sometime late in its occupation history. Feature 1 consists of small to medium-size, flat-laid cobbles that rest on lower S.2 and abut U.1, extending 1.58m south from that basal terrace.

Time Span 4

After occupation ceased at Str. 183-16-1st deposition of S.2 resumed. This soil now covered the lower 0.32m of U.1. Overlying S.2 is 0.22-0.37m of a loosely compacted, root-rich, dark brown soil (S.1). Included in S.1 and 2 is a relatively light scatter of rocks fallen from final phase architecture (F.2). Feature 2 extends for, minimally, 2.38m south of U.1 and continues onto and over the summit.

Chronological Summary

The first sign of occupation at Site 183 pertains to Late Classic I. A few diagnostics of this span were found in strata underlying Str. 183-4-1st and 183-13-1st. Use of the area seemingly intensified during Late Classic II; Str. 183-4-1st may have been raised now and there are hints of occupation, if not construction, in the vicinities of Strs. 183-1-1st, 183-2-1st, 183-13-1st, and 183-16-1st. Most of the investigated buildings were erected at some point either late in Late Classic II or early in Late Classic III and continued in use into the latter period (all excavated platforms save Str. 183-4-1st, which may have been built during Late Classic II but occupied into Late Classic III). Occupation of Site 183 likely ended sometime during Late Classic III; very little construction can be specifically dated to the end of this last interval except, perhaps, the casual additions made to Str. 183-1-1st, 183-11-1st, and 183-16-1st. No evidence of Postclassic settlement was found here.