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PVC Op 13, 14, 2018 Field Season Excavation Report

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Operations PVC13 and 14, 2018 Field Season

Operations PVC13 and 14 are in the far southwest corner of the site of El Coyote, set against the steep escarpments that border the settlement on the west. Investigations conducted within Op. PVC14 during the 2000 field season concentrated on structures located away and below the western slopes. During the course of these excavations, dense deposits of large pottery sherds were recorded west of Strs. 20-23. The quantity of ceramics that were found here and their location up and away from surface-visible buildings suggested that there might have been a pottery workshop upslope and west of these materials. Potters possibly chose this location because the prevailing northeast-southwest winds would blow smoke and heat generated by ceramic manufacture away from residences. We, therefore, conducted excavations at and around four structures in this area from April 2-13, 2018 in search of ceramic samples for Instrumental Neutron Activation, X-Ray Fluorescence, and petrographic analyses. These tests were designed to help reconstruct the modes of manufacturing and distributing pottery vessels that were fashioned in different workshops in the neighboring Naco, middle Chamelecon, and lower Cacaupala valleys during the Late and Terminal Classic (CE 600-800 and 800-1000). We also took this opportunity to try and locate the facilities used in the fabrication of pottery containers. Three of the investigated buildings (Strs. 13, 345, and 346) appeared on ground surface to have been terraces built into the lower slopes of the western hills. We had not tested this architectural form in previous field seasons. Structure 14, lying downslope and 40m southwest from Str. 13, was also tested because of its proximity to a dense sherd deposit that was uncovered in 2000. We also dug a test pit (Subop. 14AC) at a point 7m northwest of Str. 20. The latter's northwest side had been buried beneath a dense deposit of ceramic fragments when it was excavated in 2000. We hoped, therefore, that digging Subop. 14AC would reveal the source of that pottery or would at least allow us to sample ceramics derived from the workshop that generated these sherds. In all, 85m² was cleared in the course of this work.

Structure 13

Structure 13 is 9m southwest of Str. 345, both buildings clinging to the lower slopes of the western hills. The building sits on a shelf of relatively flat land to which the ground rises gradually from the southwest and northeast, and more steeply from the southeast. The ascent of the western escarpments begins immediately to the northwest. Excavations here were conducted within Subop. 14AA and exposed 36m². All of the building's northwest side was exposed along with portions of its northeast and southwest flank. The southeast facing had suffered from considerable erosion downslope and was not investigated. Digging reached a maximum depth of 0.58m below modern ground surface outside construction. One major building episode was identified in the course of this work.

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	-	
2	Str. 13-1 st	U.1-15	-	-	TCL?
3	Str. 13-1 st	U.16-19	-	-	TCL

4	Str. 13-Sub1	U.20-23	-	-	TCL
5	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

During this interval, at least 0.14m of a fine-textured, hard-compacted, dark brown soil (S.2) was laid down (its base was not encountered). Stratum 2 is mottled with white inclusions made up in part of small white pebbles less than 0.1m in diameter. As S.2 resumed deposition following Str. 13-1st's abandonment, it is hard to say how much of this soil was introduced now. The figure given here is an estimate based on how much of S.2 would need to have been in place to support TS.2 architecture.

Time Span 2

The surviving portion of Str. 13-1st consists of a platform that is bordered by substantial stone walls on the southwest and northeast (U.1 and 2, respectively). Unit 1 is 0.72m wide by at least 0.4m high while its counterpart on the northeast, U.2, is 0.52m thick by, minimally, 0.3m tall. The full heights of U.1 and 2 were obscured by architecture that was built against these walls and which we lacked the time to selectively remove. We surmise that these constructions defined the southwest and northeast sides of the core platform. Unit 3, on the upslope northwest flank, was not nearly so substantial, standing at most 0.2m tall by 0.15m wide. As this side of Str. 13-1st was built into the western hill, U.3 did not have to serve as a bulwark against erosion and apparently functioned to formally mark the building's northwest flank. As noted, the southeast side of Str. 13-1st was so heavily damaged by erosion down this steep drop-off that we did not think that trying to locate architecture here would repay the effort.

Structure 13-1st was fronted by stone-faced terraces on the northeast and southwest. On the former side, a riser (U.15) standing an estimated 0.7m tall projected 0.65m northeast from U.2. It, too, was obscured by later construction (U.16) and we are not certain if U.15 rose in one ascent to 0.7m or if there was a lower terrace located to the northeast that was buried within U.16. The situation on the southwest is somewhat clearer. Here a sequence of three stone facings (U.4-6) were noted extending southwest of U.1. Unit 4 is as tall as U.1, its construction apparently extending the summit 0.6m to the southwest. Once in place, U.4 would have hidden U.1 largely from view beneath the fill of densely packed rocks set in a dark brown soil matrix that backs U.4 to the northeast (all included in U.4). The addition of U.5 subsequently expanded the summit an additional 0.5m to the southwest, covering its predecessor (U.4) with the same sort of fill that backs U.4. Unit 6, in turn, is a 0.25m-high stone riser that fronts a terrace that extends 0.95m southwest of U.5. The end result of these additions was to create a platform the core of which ultimately measured 5.15m across northeast-southwest, that building standing 0.5m tall on the southwest and 0.8m high on the northeast. It was fronted on the southwest by a 0.25m-tall by 0.95m-wide (southwest-northeast) stone-faced terrace. A 0.7m-high by 0.65m-wide terrace runs along the platform's northeast side.

The full size of Str. 13-1st's superstructure is unknown as we are uncertain how much of it was lost to the inexorable pull of gravity off the building's southeast flank. The portion that is preserved consists of a room the hard-packed earthen floor of which is bounded by stone foundations (U.7-10) that are 0.1-0.25m tall by 0.2-0.6m wide. The compartment's interior measures 1.55m on a side and was entered from the northwest by stepping across U.3 and through a 1.2m-wide doorway. The threshold of this portal is paved with two faced stone slabs

(U.14) that together cover 0.6m northeast-southwest by 0.8m. The northeastern member of the pair is white, probably limestone, and evinced numerous cracks in its surface. Its southwestern counterpart is of equal size and consists of a more resistant yellow-brown tuff with no evidence of fragmenting. The hard-packed, brown earth in which these stones were set showed signs of having been burnt orange, that localized conflagration possibly resulting in the cracking observed in the northeastern rock. Two stone shelves (U.12 and 13) were built into the room's south and east corners. Unit 12, in the south, stands 0.25m high and encompasses 0.28m wide northeast-southwest by 0.5m long. Unit 13 in the enclosure's eastern corner is 0.12m high, 0.32m wide northeast-southwest, by 0.5m long. A 0.22m-high by 0.35m-wide (northwest-southeast) stone block (U.11) projects 0.35m southwest from its abutment with the superstructure's northwest foundation (U.8). Unit 11 intersects U.8 at a point 0.35m southeast of the latter's northwest end, joining the U.14 threshold on the latter's northeast side. The architectural significance of U.11 is unclear. If it marked the northeast side of the doorway, it is offset 0.25m southeast of the entryway's southwest margin.

As TS.2 drew to a close, Str. 13-1st was a stone-faced platform the core of which encompassed 5.15m northeast-southwest by at least 3.5m, stood 0.5m and 0.8m tall on the northeast and southwest, and was aligned ca. 50 degrees. It was built into a pronounced southeast-to-northwest rise, the platform's northwest side rising no more than 0.2m above ground surface on this, the upslope flank; how high it stood on the southeast is unknown. A 0.25m-high by 0.95m-wide terrace fronted the building's southwest side while a riser standing 0.7m tall and encompassing 0.65m across ran along the edifice's northeast side. In all, therefore, Str. 13-1st encompassed 6.75m northeast-southwest including these terraces. The building's superstructure consisted of at least one earthen-floored room that covers 2.3m² and is bordered by stone foundations that are 0.1-0.25m tall by 0.2-0.6m wide. A 1.2m-wide doorway in the compartment's northwest wall provided access to the enclosure's interior. That portal is marked by two faced stone slabs set flush with the room's earthen floor and that cover 0.6m by 0.8m southeast-northwest. Fires were apparently localized atop these slabs, burning the earth in which they were set orange and cracking the northeastern stone of the pair. Two stone shelves were built into the compartment's south and east corners. The southern example (U.12) is 0.25m high, 0.28m wide, by 0.5m long. Its eastern counterpart (U.13) is 0.22m high, 0.32m wide, and 0.5m long. A 0.22m-tall by 0.35m-wide stone block projects 0.35m into the room from the northeast foundation in line with the stone threshold's southeast edge. This construction is 0.27m northwest of the U.13 bench and may mark the northeast side of the doorway. A space encompassing 1.2m northeast-southwest by at least 2.6m lies north of the aforementioned room. This area was possibly surfaced with stones and was apparently left open.

All constructions raised now were made primarily from cobbles the flatter aspects of which were directed outwards. All of the rocks are set in a mud mortar. The one exception to this pattern was the U.14 threshold which was made of faced stone slabs.

Time Span 3

Structure 13-1st's core remained largely untouched during this interval, most of the observed renovations being visited on the edifice's northeast side. Here, a 0.21m-tall construction (U.16) composed of tightly packed stones set on end now extends 1.56m northeast of the U.15 terrace. Unit 16's summit rises 0.17m over 0.85m before leveling out further to the southwest. Unit 17, a 0.18m-high by 0.3m-wide construction, lies 0.4m northeast of U.16, its

base roughly equivalent to that of the latter. Unit 17 runs for 0.7m northwest-southeast, paralleling the course of U.16.

At some point late in TS.3, a 0.15m-tall by 0.3m-wide wall (U.18) was appended to U.15's west corner. Unit 18 extends 0.26m northeast of U.16 where it encounters U.19 at a point 0.2m northwest of the latter's southeast end. Unit 19 is 0.12m high by 0.22m wide and was traced for 1m to the northwest at which point it disappears beneath U.20. Units 18 and 19 were erected atop the stones backing U.16 to the southwest. We did not excavate northwest of U.20 to determine if U.19 continued further in this direction. Together, U.18 and 19 might have been foundations that delimited the southeast and northeast sides of a compartment that was built against U.15's northwest side. The full dimensions of this construction and whether the room these foundations contained was open on the southwest and northwest remain unknown.

By the conclusion of TS. 3, Str. 13-1st measured 8.3m northeast-southwest, its northeast flank now being fronted by a 0.21m-to-0.38m-tall by 1.56m-wide northeast-southwest block (U.16) composed mostly of rocks set on end. This construction measures at least 2.1m northwest-southeast; its termini in both of these directions not being clearly marked in our excavations. A 0.18m-tall by 0.3m-wide wall is located near, and 0.4m northeast of, U.16's approximate center. The architectural significance of this 0.7m-long wall is uncertain. What may have been the foundations for a small room were laid down late in this sequence atop U.16 and off the west corner of the northeast terrace (U.15). These walls, 0.12-0.15m tall by 0.22-0.3m wide, possibly defined the southeast and northeast sides of this putative enclosure which may have been open on the northwest and southwest. The dimensions of said construction were not determined.

All architectural elements that were raised now were fashioned primarily of cobbles the flatter faces of which were generally directed outwards. All of the rocks are set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 4

By this period, it appears that Str. 13-1st was abandoned. The building and its environs were, however, still being used, those activities transpiring on portions of the edifice that were still exposed. The constructions raised and used at this time are glossed as Str. 13-Sub1.

Most of units assigned to TS.4 are small earthen constructions (U.21-23), all of which were heavily burnt to the point of vitrifying the earth of which they were composed. Located 1m northeast of U.16, U.21 is a rectangular earthen construction that was set on ground surface. Its walls are 0.04-0.1m thick by as much as 0.2m tall. Unit 21 covers an area of 0.75m northeast-southwest by 0.46m. Unit 21's burnt interior encompasses 0.25m by 0.49m northeast-southwest. A flat-laid cobble, on which some burnt earth still adhered when cleared, defines U.21's northeast side; the construction may have been open on this flank. Scattered fragments of charred soil were found extending up to 0.3m east and west of this construction.

Unit 22 was found on Str. 13-1st's summit, 0.45m back (southwest) from the southeasternmost exposed limit of U.2, 0.6m southeast of the superstructure room's east corner. Resting on stones that may have been part of a summit pavement, this earthen construction consists of a wall fragment that is 0.2m high, 0.32m wide, and 0.45m long (northeast-southwest), aligned very roughly 20 degrees. The remainder of U.22 likely has long since toppled over the southeastern slope atop which Str. 13-1st is perched.

Unit 23 is the least well-preserved of these constructions. Located on the surviving southeastern end of U.16, atop that construction's northeast edge, U.23 appeared during excavations as an oval concentration of intensely burnt earth measuring 0.11m by 0.18m northwest-southeast.

Unit 20 is the only stone construction that was raised during TS.4. It is a gently curving wall, its concave side open to the northwest, that runs over U.19. Unit 20 is 0.18m tall by 0.4m wide, the distance between its northeast and southwest ends across its concave site measuring 2.2m. The arc's depth near its center is 0.2m northwest-southeast. Unit 20 was built using cobbles, the flatter aspects of which were directed outwards. All of the stones are set in a mud mortar. The architectural significance of this wall is uncertain. At present it looks like it was intended to be free-standing, possibly designed to slow erosion down the northwest-to-southeast slope in this area.

By the conclusion of TS.4, Str. 13-Sub1 appears to have been a complex composed of several small earthen firing facilities of which three are well enough preserved to recognize in the area's archaeological record. Those using these ovens or furnaces apparently took advantage of portions of Str. 13-1st that were still visible to set their constructions in elevated areas (U.22 and 23). Unit 21, built on ground level, may have been sheltered from the effects of downslope erosion from the northwest by the creation of a stone wall to the northwest (U.20). The bulk of Str. 13-1st to the southwest may have also served to protect the activities conducted on and around U.21 while leaving the northeast side open. If the burning that occurred within this furnace benefited from air pushed into it by the prevailing winds coming from the northeast, such an arrangement would have been advantageous.

Time Span 5

Following the abandonment of Str. 13-1st and 13-Sub1, the deposition of S.2 resumed. This soil eventually reached a maximum exposed thickness of 0.42m covering much of the architecture dating to TS.2-4. A moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown humus horizon subsequently formed to a thickness of 0.11-0.21m atop S.2. Embedded in S.1 and 2 was a moderately dense concentration of rocks (F.1) that likely fell from final-phase architecture. Feature 1's stones were heavily concentrated within 1.4m of U.15, overlying U.16 off Str. 13-1st's northeast side. Why these rocks are found in such numbers here is unclear; they may be remnants of a late construction, possibly contemporary with U.20, that was so poorly preserved that we did not recognize it when clearing the building's northeast flank.

Structure 13-Sub2

Structure 13-Sub2 was revealed in the course of clearing what appeared on ground surface to have been a sizable terrace lying 1.5m northeast of Str. 13-1st. Digging here within Subop. 14AE confirmed the reality of that terrace but also revealed the existence of a structure situated beneath that construction. Rather than trying to include the description of these materials within the section dealing with Str. 13, we decided to treat them as parts of a separate entity, distinct but related to the latter building. The surface-visible terrace (U.10) is roughly contemporary with TS.2 in Str. 13's occupation history and was probably in use through TS.4 in that sequence. The remaining constructions predate the earliest occupation attested to at Str. 13. Excavations conducted within Subop. 14AE cleared 16m², digging reaching a maximum depth of 0.8m below modern ground surface (12.8m³ excavated in all). Two major building phases were identified in the course of this work.

Time Spans

Time	Construction
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Span	Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Dates
1	Str. 13-Sub2-2nd	U.1-5, 9	-	-	TCL
2	Str. 13-Sub2-2 nd	U.6-8, 12	-	-	TCL
3	Str. 13-Sub2-1 st	U.10-11	-	-	TCL
4	-	-	S.1	F.1	

Note: A few sherds diagnostic of the Middle Preclassic were among the analyzed examples retrieved from Str. 13-Sub2.

Time Span 1

Structure 13-Sub2-2nd is a platform that is bordered on the south and east by stone facings (U.1 and 2) that are 0.13m tall. The construction was traced for 1.3m to the west and for 4m to the north from its southeast corner over which it was aligned ca. 9 degrees. The building's west and north edges were not uncovered. The eastern facing (U.2) does not define a straight line over its exposed extent. At a point 1m north of the building's southeast corner, U.2 steps out (east) for 0.25m after which it continues north for 0.75m. It is here that U.2 bows out to the east, its exterior forming an arc that covers 1.55m north-south and bows out, maximally, 0.45m to the east as measured at the arc's center. Subsequently, U.2 resumes its northward course for 0.65m at which point it left our excavations. A niche (U.9) was built against U.2's east side, that indentation being bordered by U.2 on the west and north and a 0.14m-tall wall on the south (that wall is included in U.9). The latter wall is 0.25m thick and intersects U.2 at a point 0.45m north of the building's southeast corner. Overall, U.9's earthen floored interior encompasses 0.35m north-south by 0.28m deep and is open to the east.

This diminutive platform supported two known constructions during TS.1. One of these is a 'L-shaped' wall (U.3). Unit 3 is 0.2m-tall by 0.4m-wide, its 'stem' (U.3) running at least 0.95m east-west while its shorter 'leg' (U.4) projects 0.3m north from U.3's east end (the west edge of U.3 was not encountered). Units 3 and 4 are 0.3m north and the same distance west of U.1 and 2, respectively. Lying within 0.1m of U.3's north side is a set of two connected stone arcs (U.5) that together traverse 1.8m southwest-northeast, their concave sides directed to the northwest. The southwestern-most of these curved constructions encompasses 0.8m northeast-southwest, its open, concave side spanning 0.62m and measuring 0.1m deep northwest-southeast. This arc's successor to the northeast covers 1m northeast-southwest, its northwest-facing, concave side measuring 0.8m across by 0.12m deep northwest-southeast. The walls comprising U.5 are 0.1m high by 0.1-0.32m thick. Fragments of pottery and burnt earth were found within the earthen-floored interiors delimited by these low stone walls; not enough of U.5 was exposed to determine if its component arcs ever resolved into complete circles.

Structure 13-Sub2-2nd was, by the end of TS.1, a 0.13m-tall stone-faced platform that encompassed at least 1.3m by 4m and was aligned approximately 9 degrees. An earthen-floored niche measuring 0.28x0.35m and open on the east was built against the platform's east wall at a point 0.45m north of the platform's southeast corner. The building's summit was sheltered on the south by a 'L-shaped' wall that stood 0.2m tall and measured 0.4m across. This construction was likely a footing for a perishable upper wall. Lying immediately north of this construction

were two, conjoined arcs that were defined by stone walls that stood 0.1m high and measured 0.1-0.32m across. Together, these curving constructions covered 1.8m northeast-southwest, their open, concave, northwestern sides encompassing 0.62m and 1m northeast-southwest by 0.1-0.12m deep northwest-southeast. Lying on the earthen floor that was bordered by these curving walls on the southeast were pieces of ceramics and burnt earth. All constructions raised now were made primarily of river cobbles the flatter aspects of which were directed outwards. Unit 4 does, however, contain one faced block. The rocks are set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 2

Structure 13-Sub2-2nd retained its basic form and dimensions from TS.1 though the summit north of U.3 was now covered by 0.1m of a fine-textured, hard-compacted, brown soil that is mottled with white staining (U.12). Unit 12 buries U.5 and provides the foundation for constructing two new stone arcs (U.6 and 7). As was the case with U.5, U.6 and 7 comprise two connected, curving walls arranged in a northeast-southwest line, their concave sides facing northwest. In each case, the walls comprising these constructions are 0.16-0.28m tall by 0.26-0.35m wide. The southern member of the pair, U.6, covers 1.5m northeast-southwest, its open northwest side measuring at least 1.3m across by at least 0.05m deep northwest-southeast. Unit 7 extends 1.15m northeast of its intersection with U.6, its concave northwest face covering 0.8m northeast-southwest by 0.2m deep northwest-southeast. The northwest sides of U.6 and 7 were not uncovered.

It may have been at about this time that a 0.13m-high by 0.1m-wide wall (U.8) was raised 0.1-0.2m east of U.2's northernmost exposed end. Unit 8 was uncovered for 1m over which distance it was oriented roughly 40 degrees; the wall's northeast end likely lies beyond our excavations. Unit 8 may have been a foundation that was incorporated within a surface-level building raised near Str. 13-Sub2-1st. Not enough of U.8 was revealed to test this inference.

All constructions raised now were made mostly of river cobbles that are set in a mud mortar. The northernmost exposed stone in U.7 looks to have been purposefully shaped. All of the rocks are set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 3

Structure 13-Sub2-2nd was now covered by 0.07-0.24m of a fine-textured, hard-compacted, brown soil that is mottled with white inclusions (U.11). Unit 11 seems to have been deposited as a mound of earth that slopes up 0.4m across 1.15m from southeast-to-northwest and 0.32m across 0.5m from southwest-to-northeast (the putative mound's northeast side was not uncovered). Unit 10, the sole piece of stone architecture constituting Str. 13-Sub2-1st, runs at an angle of 15 degrees across this mound, riding up and over its southwestern flank and along its summit. It is 0.4m high by 0.85m wide and was exposed for 4.65m; its termini in both directions were not exposed. Because of the southwest-to-northeast ascent over U.11, U.10's base is at the same level as the bases of U.1 and 2 on the southwest, the wall rising to a height of 0.72m here and thus maintaining a more-or-less even top to the terrace facing. The U.10 stones in the area of the descent consistently slant down from northeast-to-southwest as they ride atop the aforementioned slope. Ultimately, U.10 apparently served to preserve the integrity of the terrain above which Str. 13-1st was raised.

Unit 10 was made primarily of medium to large river cobbles that were laid flat and set in a mud mortar. The flatter aspects of these stones were directed outwards.

Time Span 4

Following Str. 13-Sub2-1st's abandonment, a fine-textured, moderately soft-compacted, dark brown humus level (S.1) formed atop U.11 and covered all but the top of U.10. Embedded in S.1 is a moderately light concentration of rocks (F.1) that probably fell from TS.3 constructions. The relative paucity of the F.1 rocks suggests that U.10 never stood much higher than the 0.4m that was exposed within Subop. 14AE.

Structure 14

Structure 14 is downslope and 40m southwest of Str. 13. This building was chosen for study because of its proximity to the extensive deposit of pottery sherds that was uncovered during the 2000 field season. In addition, features noted on the building's surface tentatively suggested that it might have had a circular form reminiscent of the shape of pottery kilns uncovered at the sites of La Sierra in the Naco Valley and Las Canoas (PVN 200) in the Middle Chamelecon valley. Structure 14 was investigated by digging a 1m wide by 4.16m long (east-west) trench (Subop. 13BA) into the building's east side along its inferred center line. It rapidly became clear that, in addition to not being circular, Str. 14 was poorly preserved and had little to do with ceramic manufacture. Work here was terminated after two days during which time excavations reached maximum depths of 0.3m and 0.4m below modern ground surface within and beyond architecture, respectively. One building phase was identified in the course of this work.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	Str. 14-1 st	U.1-4	-	-	TCL
2	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Time Span 1

Structure 14-1st is a platform that is ascended by at least for stone-faced risers that mount towards its summit from the east, the building being oriented due north-south. The basal riser, U.1, stands 0.12m high and projects 0.28m east from U.2. Unit 1 was apparently an outset step that runs back (west) to join U.2 at a point 0.5m north of the south trench wall. Unit 2 extends down behind U.1, projects 0.19m above it, and is 1.25m wide east-west. Unlike U.1, U.2 spanned the entire north-south width of Subop. 13BA; it likely constitutes Str. 14-1st's eastern basal terrace. Unit 3 stands an estimated 0.3m above U.2's tread and runs back 0.57m to the west where it is succeeded by U.4. This poorly preserved construction is estimated to have risen 0.13m above U.3 and was at least 0.5m wide; its western limit was not exposed. Given Str. 14-1st's height as observed on ground surface, it is likely that there was at least one more riser that we did not uncover and which leads to the summit.

In all, therefore, the excavated portion of Str. 14-1st's east side was aligned roughly north-south, stood at least 0.74m tall, and was fronted by three stone-faced terraces that were 0.57m and 1.25m wide. These risers, in turn, were fronted by an outset step that stood 0.12m tall and

was 0.28m wide. All constructions raised now were fashioned of cobbles the flatter aspects of which were directed outwards. The rocks were set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 2

Following Str. 14-1st's abandonment, at least 0.17m of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, dark brown soil (S.2; its base was not revealed) was laid down. Scattered throughout S.2 are small (3mm or less in diameter) white flecks. Subsequently, 0.07-0.15m of a moderately fine-textured, soft-compacted, dark brown humus horizon (S.) formed over S.2. White flecking was also noted within S.1. Embedded in S.1 and (mostly) S.2 is a moderately dense concentration of stones (F.1) that likely tumbled from final-phase architecture. Mixed in with these rocks were at least two, faced blocks, though from whence they came on the building is unknown

Structures 345 and 346

Structure 345 appeared on the surface to be a platform built into the western hillslope, a low terrace (Str. 346) projecting to the north. Structure 13 is 9m to the southwest while the uppermost terrace (U.3) exposed in Str. 345-Sub1 is 5m to the southeast. After clearing ca. 20m² within Subop. 14AB, it became apparent that what was glossed as Str. 345 and 346 comprised a complex of constructions that did not define a coherent platform and its associated terrace. Digging to maximum depths of 0.55m and 1.15m below modern ground surface beyond and with construction, respectively, revealed three building episodes that resulted in the observed overlapping architectural elements.

Time Spans

<u>Time Span</u>	<u>Construction Phase</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>Strata</u>	<u>Features</u>	<u>Dates</u>
1	-	-	S.3, 4	-	LCL?
2	Str. 345-1 st	U.1-6, 13, 17, 19	-	F.2-4	LCL
3	Str. 345-1 st	U.7-9, 15	-	-	TCL
4	Str. 345-Sub2	U.10-12, 14, 16, 18	-	-	TCL
5	-	-	S.1, 2	F.1	

Note: A few sherds diagnostic of the Middle Preclassic (800-400BCE) were noted among the analyzed ceramics recovered from Str. 345.

Time Span 1

Structure 345-1st is built over limestone bedrock (S.3) that ascends 0.46m over 6m from southeast-to-northwest and 0.2m over 1m from northeast to southwest. Also predating TS.2 architecture was the deposition of at least 0.22m of a moderately fine-textured, hard-compacted, brown soil that is mottled with white inclusions (S.4; its base was not located). Stratum 4 presumably overlies S.3, the latter being the source of S.4's white inclusions. This presumed stratigraphic relation between the two strata was not established. The recovery of artifacts from S.4 points to a human occupation in the immediate vicinity prior to the construction of Str. 345-1st.

Time Span 2

Structure 345-1st's architectural elements are arranged around and lie northeast and southwest of a substantial stone wall (U.1) that measures 0.91m across and runs for 5.5m upslope (southeast-northwest) at an angle of ca. 304 degrees. Unit 1's top remains flat throughout this length, its height declining from 0.6m on the southeast to 0.14m at its northwest end as the wall's base ascends the limestone promontory. Unit 1 ends in a 0.4m-tall up-thrust of the underlying limestone on the northwest.

Over the northwestern-most 1.2m of U.1 a second wall (U.2) was raised 0.1-0.25m southwest of U.1's northeast face. Unit 2 rests on U.1 and is 0.43m tall by 0.8m wide northeast-southwest, its northwest terminus coinciding with that of U.1. The orientations of U.1 and 2 differ slightly, the latter being aligned roughly 291 degrees.

Unit 2's construction is apparently related to the digging of a pit (U.19) into the limestone bedrock immediately northeast of U.1. Unit 19 projects maximally 1.4m northeast of U.1 and describes an arc that curves around and intersects U.1 at a point 0.35m southeast of the latter's northwest end. The distance between the two exposed ends of this arc is 1.8m and its maximum depth (north-south) is 0.4m. The pit so defined is 0.32m deep, its northeast wall dropping 0.3m over 0.4m northeast-southwest after which the declivity's base seems to run relatively flat to where it is bordered by the 0.14m-high step-up formed by U.1 on the southwest. A, maximally, 0.05m-thick deposit of red-brown earth that contains numerous orange flecks and small sherds (F.3) covers the pit's base, pinching out against U.19's northeast wall. Feature 3's distinctive color and inclusions appear to have resulted from its being burnt. Located 0.55m southeast of U.19's northwest margin is a 0.21m-tall by 0.35m-long (northeast-southwest) block of stones capped with a shaped piece of masonry (U.13). This entity encompasses at least 0.2m northwest-southeast (its southeast side was not uncovered). Unit 13 does not run across the full exposed northwest-southeast extent of U.19 and its total dimensions and purpose are unknown. Another deposit of burnt earth (F.2) extends for 0.43m southeast of U.2. Feature 2 is 0.21m thick, rests atop U.1, and ends precipitously on the southeast, dropping 0.21m over 0.13m from northwest to southeast.

In general, U.1, 2, 13, and 19, together with F.2 and 3 were part of an oven or a firing facility for ceramics that was built against U.1's northeast side near the latter's northwest end. A fragment from what seems to have been a potstand was retrieved from this construction. Potstands were implements used to support pottery containers while they were being shaped and heated. This discovery tentatively suggests that the investigated construction was a place where ceramic vessels were fired. At the center of the complex is a 0.32m-deep pit (U.19) dug into the limestone bedrock. The declivity's steep earthen walls describe an arc that intersects U.1 at a point 0.35m southeast of the latter's northwest end and curves round to where its last exposed point is 1.4m northeast of U.1 and 2. The latter two constructions together border U.19's southwest side, U.1 standing 0.14m high and projecting 0.1-0.25m northeast from the

0.43m-high vertical ascent formed by U.2 on the southwest. A 0.21m-tall by 0.35m-long (northeast-southwest) block of stones (U.13) is located near what we infer was the pit's southeast edge. Unit 13, at least 0.2m wide, is capped with a faced masonry block, and rests on U.19's base. A 0.05m-thick burnt earth layer coats the base of U.19 while a similar soil was recorded extending 0.43m southeast of U.2. In all, this construction encompasses (maximally) 1.65m northeast-southwest by 1.95m (including F.2). Units 1, 2, and most of 13 were fashioned of cobbles that were carefully chosen for their flat faces, the latter being consistently oriented outwards. One of the river-rounded stones on U.1's northwest margin seemed to have been artificially modified to create a vertical face. Unit 13 was, as noted, topped with a shaped masonry block, possibly consisting of tuff. All of the rocks are set in a mud mortar.

Built off U.1's southeast edge, against that wall's northeast face is a complex of stone walls (U.3-5) that are 0.1-0.22m high by 0.1-0.3m wide (usually one rock high and wide). Two of these constructions (U.3 and 4) define broad, shallow arcs. Unit 3 joins U.1 at the latter's east corner, extending 1.65m north of that junction. The curve described by U.3 creates a concave side on the east, that opening measuring 1.43m across north-south by maximally 0.5m deep (east-west) near the center. Unit 4 is as close as 0.42m east of U.3. Unit 4 curves in such a way that its concave face looks to the west towards U.3, the whole construction covering 1.4m north-south. Its open, concave side encompasses 1m north-south by 0.35m deep (east-west). Unit 4 does not join U.1 but seems to terminate on the south in a dense packing of rocks (U.17) that extends for at least 1m southeast of U.1. Unit 17 does not appear to have been part of U.1 and may be what remains of a construction that has long since succumbed to gravity's siren call as it fell down the northwest-to-southeast drop-off below U.1. The area contained within U.3 and 4's two overlapping curves encompasses 0.9m by 1.4m and consists of a moderately hard-compacted, moderately fine-textured, brown earth that is mottled with white inclusions. There are no signs that this soil was modified, say by firing. Lying as close as 0.2m east of U.4, U.5 is a wall that runs straight at an angle of ca. 10 degrees for at least 1.05m (its north and south ends were not uncovered). Unit 5 may have been part of a terrace that was used to stabilize the terrain that supports U.3 and 4 to the west. Units 3-5 were built of river cobbles, all set in a mud mortar. In the case of U.3 and 4, the stones were chosen for their flat faces which were generally oriented to look into the areas defined by their concave sides. Comparable care was not noted in choosing the stones used to make U.5.

The situation southwest of U.1 is less clear than is the case for constructions set against that wall's northeast flank. A broad (1.2m across) by 0.52m-tall wall (U.6) seems to have been a robust terrace designed to slow erosions over the northeast-to-southwest descent on which Str. 345-1st was built. Unit 6 consists of tightly packed cobbles the flatter aspects of which are directed outwards; all of the rocks are set in a mud mortar. This riser is 2.4m southwest of U.1 and is oriented approximately 315 degrees. The significant amount of labor invested in building U.6 suggests that the threat of downslope erosion here was significant. As such, we surmise that this terrace was raised early in Str. 345-1st's history.

Our understanding of what was going on to the northeast of U.6 is a bit fuzzier. Against U.1's southwest face a layer of hard-compacted, moderately fine-textured, brown soil (F.4) was laid down before or soon after the introduction of U.6. In addition to containing white flecks, fragments of burned earth that are 0.01m or less in diameter are embedded in this soil. Feature 4 was observed to ascend 0.14m over 1.65m from southeast-to-northwest, its full extent not being revealed in Subop. 14AB. Though evidence of burning here is not as pronounced as was the case for F.2 and 3, it does appear that the F.4 soil had been subjected to high temperatures that charred it to a thickness of at least 0.07m (its base was not found). There are no signs that

F.4 was associated with any constructions that might have contained these fires as was the case for U.19.

Feature 4's top may have been part of the ancient ground level into which U.1 was set and above which it rode from southeast-to-northwest. Eventually covered by U.15 during TS.3, F.4 is equivalent in depth to a point 0.22m above the base of U.6's southwest exterior face. How, if at all, U.6 and F.4 are related is unclear. It may be that U.6 simply protected the terrain to the northeast from erosion, that land being selectively burnt over that part of its extent that immediately borders U.1.

By the end of TS.2, therefore, Str. 345-1st was a complex of variably interconnected constructions that covered roughly 7.5m northwest-southeast by 6.5m. A substantial terrace (U.6) bordered this area on the southwest while 2.5m to the northeast a free-standing wall (U.1) that measured 0.91m across was raised. The latter construction ran for 5.5m at an angle of approximately 304 degrees, its height dropping from 0.6m on the southeast to 0.14m on the northwest as its base rode atop a southeast-to-northwest ascent. A pit was dug into the limestone bedrock next to U.1's northeast flank, that construction being subject to high heat. Another area that was burnt consists of what was likely the natural southeast-to-northwest rise adjoining U.1 on the southwest. Two curved walls are set against U.1's northeast face near that wall's east corner. The western example's (U.3) concave side looks east towards its western counterpart (U.4) the concave side of which is directed eastward. Together, U.3 and 4 delimit an earthen-floored oval that covers 0.9x1.4m, there being no signs of burning or other modifications to this soil. A 0.22m-high wall (U.5) lying 0.22m east of U.4 might have been part of a terrace built to protect this flank from erosion down the northwest-to-southeast drop that begins immediately to the east. Structure 345-Sub1, described in the next section, probably served a similar function.

Time Span 3

Most of the changes made to Str. 345-1st at this time took place southwest of U.1; the constructions built off that wall's northeast side remained much as they were described in TS.2.

Unit 6, the putative southwest terrace, remained in place but was now backed on the northeast by as much as 0.2m of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown soil that is mottled with small white inclusions (U.15). Built atop U.15, 0.1m northeast of U.6, is a block of stones (U.7) that stands 0.16m high. Unit 7 runs for 0.64m northeast-southwest by 0.17m. The cobbles used in its constructions were arranged so that their flatter faces looked northwest.

Situated 1.2m northeast of U.6, and built against U.1's southwest face near the top of that wall, is another gently curving construction (U.8) defined by walls that are 0.1-0.16m high. Unit 8 encompasses 2.6m northwest-southeast, its concave side being open to the southwest. The width of that southwest opening is 1.6m while the depth of the arc is 0.55m southwest-northeast near its center. Most of the arc described by U.8 consists of a wall that is 0.16m (one stone) wide, the flatter aspects of its constituent cobbles being directed into the earthen floored space that U.8 borders on the northeast. This curve ends on the southeast in a circle composed of tightly packed cobbles, that figure having a diameter of 0.73m and a height of 0.14m (included in U.8). The U.8 wall thickens to as much as 0.45m across in the area 0.6m immediately northeast of the circle. Unit 8's base ascends 0.12m over its full southeast-to-northwest extent, suggesting that the U.15 fill was not level but also sloped up in this direction.

Lying within 0.1m southeast of U.8 is another curved wall (U.9), its concave side facing to the southeast. Unit 9's wall is 0.4m wide by 0.2m high, the area it encompasses on the

southeast being filled with rocks. It appears that at least part of U.9 was lost to erosion down the steep slope immediately to the southeast. The preserved segment of the arc's southeast face measures 1.15m northeast-southwest by 0.2m deep (northwest-southeast) near its center. A large fragment of what seems to have been burnt earth (0.14x0.25m) was found within the arc defined by U.9. Unit 9 was made with medium-size cobbles, set in a mud mortar, and with their flatter aspects directed outward to the northwest towards U.8. Unit 9's base is 0.18m below that of U.8's northwestern-most stone. This observation tends to confirm the observation made for U.8; i.e., that the U.15 fill rose from southeast to northwest in the area lying northeast of the U.6 terrace.

There was a subtle indication that the U.1 wall was repaired at some point during this interval. In particular, it was noted that the stones comprising this wall were in the process of separating, the rocks comprising U.1's southeastern-most 1.94m tilting down and away from the remainder of the construction to the northwest. Nonetheless, the medium to large cobbles that capped the southeastern wall segment were set flat, as though they had been adjusted to retain the wall's level upper surface even as the lower rocks were shifting out of place. The crack in U.1 at this point is 0.08m wide at the top of the wall, the fissure extending 0.31m into the body of the construction. The remaining 0.25m of U.1 below the crack was not apparently harmed. It seems, therefore, that U.1 might have been repaired to maintain its structural integrity for the duration of TS.3. That the restoration work was necessary speaks to the threat that erosion posed to Str. 345-1st in general.

Structure 345-1st retained its overall dimensions and form during this interval. The U.1 wall continued as the construction's core though now the 2.4m lying between it and the U.6 terrace to the southwest was raised through the introduction of as much as 0.2m of earthen fill. Raised atop that elevated surface, and against U.1, was another curved wall (U.8), its concave face directed to the southwest. This construction, in turn, was bordered by another stone arc (U.9), the concave side of which looked to the southeast. There are slight hints of burning in the latter construction's interior. Unit 1 was apparently repaired during TS.3, efforts being directed to fixing a crack that had formed in the wall as its southeastern end began to slide away to the southeast and downhill from the bulk of the construction.

Time Span 4

The events that transpired during TS.4 probably took place after Str. 345-1st was abandoned. Most of these activities occurred off U.1's northeast face, near that wall's northwest edge. The U.19 pit was now filled with two different kinds of material, a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown soil with white inclusions (U.18) northeast of U.13 and a similar soil that contains numerous small to medium-size cobbles (U.14) southwest of that stone block, covering U.1 and 2 on the southwest. Unit 16, a fill deposit that is identical to U.18, covers U.1's northeast side southeast of U.19.

Raised atop U.14, 16, and 18 are two late constructions. Unit 10 is a 0.25m-tall by 0.25m-wide cobble wall that intersects the still visible top of U.2 near the latter's southeast edge. This wall projects 1.2m northeast of that intersection, running at an angle of approximately 37 degrees. The two constructions form the southeast and southwest foundations for an earthen-floored building that was erected over the filled-in remains of U.19. Overall, this edifice's interior measures 1m by 1.15m northwest-southeast; it may have been open on the northwest while we did not dig enough to ascertain if the building had a foundation that marked its northeast side.

Located 1.45m southeast and downslope from U.10 is a 0.17m-high stone-faced terrace (U.11) that was traced for 1.1m at an angle of ca. 43 degrees. Unit 11 sits on 0.08m of U.16 above the U.1 wall. Though we located the terrace's southwest edge, the construction continued beyond excavation limits to the northeast. Unit 11 was likely raised to slow erosion down the northwest-to-southeast slope and thus to protect the surface-level building composed of U.10 and 2 from the deleterious effects of gravity.

A stone block (U.12) was recorded resting atop the U.17 fill and may have overlapped U.1's southeast end (this portion of U.1 was poorly preserved, due in large part to downslope erosion, and so relations between it and U.12 are unclear). As best as we can tell, U.12 covers 0.65m by 1m northwest-southeast and stands 0.2m tall. It intersects U.9 on the southeast, the latter curved wall probably still being visible at this time. Unit 8 is 0.2m to the southwest. The flat faces of U.12's cobbles are directed to the southwest towards U.9.

Structure 345-Sub2 consists of the remnants that were formerly parts of modest surface-level constructions that were raised after largely burying just about all of the architecture associated with Str. 345-1st. What was apparently an earthen-floored room bounded by stone foundations was built over the U.19 pit against U.2's northeast face. A low stone terrace was raised southeast and downslope of this edifice presumably to slow erosion across the hillslope on which the aforementioned room was perched. A stone block was also raised off what was likely the deteriorating remains of U.1's southeast edge. What activities occurred on and around these constructions is unclear.

Time Span 5

After Str. 345-Sub2 was abandoned, as much as 0.42m of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown soil that contains numerous small white inclusions was laid down (S.2). Stratum 2 covered much of the architecture pertaining to TS.2-4. A very similar soil that contains a great many more small roots (S.1) constitutes the humus horizon that formed to a thickness of 0.07-0.17m atop S.2. Embedded in S.1 and 2 is a variably dense concentration of rocks (F.1) that likely tumbled from TS.2-4 architecture. In general, F.1 stones are not frequent save in the area upslope and northwest from U.1. In this case we cannot rule out the possibility that the building(s) from which these rocks derived was located further uphill to the northwest.

Structure 345-Sub1

Structure 345-Sub1 is a series of three stone-faced terraces that ascend the southeast-to-northwest slope 5m southeast and below Str. 345. These constructions only became visible on ground surface when this area was cleared of vegetation in April, 2018. Even then, their reality was open to question. Excavations within Subop. 14AD, a 1m by 5.94m-long (northwest-southeast) trench, were designed to test the reality of these initial inferences. Digging here reached a maximum depth of 0.6m below modern ground surface within and beyond construction. One building phase was tentatively identified in the course of this work.

Time Spans

Time Span	Construction Phase	Units	Strata	Features	Date
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1	-	-	S.2-5	-	TCL?
2	Str. 345-Sub1-1 st	U.1-3	-	-	TCL
3	-	-	S.1	F.1	

Time Span 1

Excavations within Subop. 14AD revealed that the rise over which Str. 345-Sub1 was built is underlain by limestone bedrock (designated S.4 here). Stratum 4 rises 1.18m over 5.94m from southeast-to-northwest. In some areas, S.4 is replaced by a coarse-textured, soft-compacted, yellow tan soil (S.3) that seems to represent weathered segments of the underlying limestone. Stratum 3 was especially marked where it ran under U.1 and 2, ascending 0.5m over 1.14m from southeast-to-northwest. Stratum 3 was maximally 0.18m thick in this area (its base was not revealed) and is succeeded by a continuation of S.4 further upslope.

A moderately coarse-textured, hard-compacted brown soil that is mottled with white inclusions (S.2) eventually covers S.3 and 4, southeast of U.2. Stratum 2 is 0.15-0.25m thick and contains a few artifacts. Upslope and northwest of U.2, S.2 is replaced by a coarse-textured, soft-compacted, brown earth that contains numerous small (less than 0.01m in diameter) pebbles (S.5). There is some white mottling within S.5 as well. It was into S.2 and 5 that Str. 345-Sub1-1st was built.

Time Span 2

The three terraces comprising Str. 345-Sub1-1st were poorly preserved. Based on the remnants that were uncovered in Subop. 14AD, the basal riser (U.1) stood 0.29m tall, its earthen tread extending 1.5m to the northwest. Here it was succeeded by U.2, a 0.29m-tall riser that gives way on the northwest to a tread that encompasses 0.8m northwest-southeast. Unit 3 ascends 0.28m above that earthen tread and extends at least 2.47m to the northwest, its summit surfaced with earth. We suspect that at least one more terrace lies in this direction though excavation ceased before we had tested that proposition. The whole construction is aligned ca. 20 degrees, its uncovered segments reaching a total height of 0.86m. All of the terrace facings were made from cobbles, the flatter aspects of those stones comprising U.1 and 3 oriented outwards. The rocks making up U.2 were not so carefully placed. All of the rocks were set in a mud mortar.

Time Span 3

A 0.1-0.15m-thick humus horizon (S.1) eventually formed atop S.2 after Str. 345-Sub1-1st was abandoned. Stratum 1 consists of a moderately coarse-textured, softly compacted, brown soil that contains fewer white inclusions than does S.2. A very few rocks (F.1) that probably fell from TS.2 architecture were embedded in S.1. Their paucity suggests that these terraces were never much higher than they were when uncovered in 2018.

Test Pit

Suboperation 14AC is a 'L-shaped' trench that covers 3m², digging within it reaching 0.92-1.2m below modern ground surface. It was excavated 7m northwest of Str. 20, a platform

whose northwest flank was largely covered by a deposit composed of large ceramic fragments when excavated in 2000. It was hoped that digging here might reveal a pottery workshop that was the source of those sherds. Remnants of a building (Str. 14-Sub1) were located, that construction being associated with sizable quantities of ceramics. Nonetheless, there was no other evidence to suggest that Str. 14-Sub1 was part of a facility devoted to the fashioning of ceramic vessels.

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	-	LCL?
2	Str. 14-Sub1	U.1-3	-	-	TCL
3	-	-	S.1, 2	-	TCL?

Note: A few sherds diagnostic of the Middle Preclassic were among the analyzed examples retrieved from Subop. 14AC.

Time Span 1

The earliest activity attested to in Subop. 14AC was the deposition of at least 0.14m of a hard-compacted, light brown soil that was mottled with white inclusions (S.3; its base was not encountered). Over the 1m S.3 was revealed running north-south, it retained a level upper surface.

Time Span 2

Structure 14-Sub1 was built on the ground surface defined by the top of S.3. The most clearly preserved segment of this building that we uncovered is a 0.25m-high by 0.48m-thick wall (U.1) that likely formed the northwest basal facing of a platform (Str. 14-Sub1). Unit 1 was traced for 2m over which distance it was oriented ca. 25 degrees. The wall runs southwest from the northeast trench margin for 1m at which point it steps out 0.4m to the northwest before turning once again to head southwest. Unit 1 leaves Subop. 14AC 1m further to the southwest. The fill retained by U.1 on the southeast is a moderately fine-textured, hard-compacted brown clay that contains white inclusions (U.3). Unit 3 is identical to S.2 (see TS.3). Immediately backing U.1 on the southeast is a block of stones that forms an arc the open, concave side of which looks to the southeast (U.2). Unit 2 is 0.2-0.6m thick, its arc measuring 0.65m across northeast-southwest by 0.25m deep northwest-southeast. This construction borders U.1's northeastern-most exposed 0.75m and likely continued beyond excavation limits to the northeast. There are no signs that the curve U.2 defines was much larger nor does it seem to have been part of a complete circle. The earthen surface delimited by U.2 showed no signs of modification, such as burning. Units 1 and 2 were fashioned of river cobbles that are embedded in a mud mortar. The rocks composing U.1's northwest-facing exterior were carefully chosen for their flatter aspects, the latter being directed outwards. The same cannot be said for U.2.

Time Span 3

Following Str. 14-Sub1's abandonment, 0.7-1m of a moderately fine-textured, moderately hard-compacted, brown soil (S.2) was laid down. Stratum 2 was heavily mottled with white flecks each one of which was less than 0.01m in diameter. Subsequently, a moderately fine-textured, soft-compacted, brown humus horizon (S.1) formed to a thickness of 0.12-0.19m atop S.2. Stratum 1 contains fewer white inclusions than does S.2.