

FAMSI © 2008: Elizabeth Graham

Lamanai Historic Monuments Conservation Project: Recording and Consolidation of New Church Architectural Features at Lamanai, Belize

With contributions by: Claude Belanger



Research Year: 2007

Culture: Maya

Chronology: Colonial, Mid-16th to Early 17th Century

Location: Indian Church, Orange Walk District, Belize

Site: Lamanai

Table of Contents

[Abstract](#)

[Resumen](#)

[Introduction](#)

[The Spanish missions at Lamanai and Tipu](#)

[Past research at Lamanai](#)

[Discoveries](#)

[Yglesias de Lamanai I, Str. N12-11, the first church at Lamanai](#)

["Tulum" \(Terminal Postclassic\) structure over which YDL I was built](#)

[Yglesias de Lamanai II, Str. N12-13, the second church at Lamanai](#)

[Summary](#)

[Acknowledgments](#)

[List of Figures](#)

[Sources Cited](#)

Submitted 10/18/2007 by:

Elizabeth Graham

Institute of Archaeology

e.graham@ucl.ac.uk

Abstract

Archaeological investigations at Lamanai, situated along the New River Lagoon in northern Belize, have revealed two highly important churches from the Spanish Colonial period. During excavations and survey otherwise focused on tourism development in 2003 and 2004, new features of the earlier church were uncovered. In 2007, the National Institute for Culture and History in Belize (NICH)—through the Belize Institute of Archaeology (IoA) and under the direction of Jaime Awe and John Morris as part of the Lamanai Historic Monuments Conservation Project (LHMCP)—began consolidation and partial reconstruction of Spanish and British colonial period structures at Lamanai. Support was provided by the U.S. State Department's Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation. Expertise from the Institute was also provided by Brian Woodye, George Thompson, and Jorge Can, all of whom played pivotal roles in the coordination, execution and ultimate success of the project. The project's focus included the two Spanish churches as well as the 19th century British sugar mill. The emergency funds received from FAMSI facilitated expanded investigation and recording of the new church features under the direction of Claude Belanger, which complemented the Belize government's consolidation program at the site. Results comprise the discovery of a new courtyard or *atrio* associated with the first church along with caches dating to the colonial period. In addition, discovery of holes for posts supporting the perishable nave of the second church—the evidence for which has thus far been elusive—provided us with the dimensions of the original colonial structure.

Resumen

Investigaciones arqueológicas en el sitio de Lamanai, situado al lado de la Laguna Río Nuevo en la parte septentrional del país de Belice, han revelado dos iglesias de suma importancia del período Hispanocolonial. En el curso de excavaciones y exploraciones enfocadas primariamente en desarrollo turístico durante los años 2003 y 2004, se descubrieron nuevos elementos de la iglesia más temprana. En el año 2007, el Instituto Nacional para Cultura e Historia en Belice (NICH), por medio del Instituto Beliceño de Arqueología (IoA) y dirigido bajo la dirección de los Drs. Jaime Awe y John Morris, empezó la consolidación y la reconstrucción parcial de estructuras hispanocoloniales y britanocoloniales en Lamanai, apoyado por el Fondo del Embajador para Preservación Cultural del Departamento de Estado de los EE.UU. Conocimientos expertos provenientes del Instituto fueron proveídos también por los Srs. Brian Woodye, George Thompson, y Jorge Can, todos de los cuales jugaron papeles fundamentales en cuanto a la coordinación, la ejecución, y ultimadamente el éxito del proyecto. El enfoque del proyecto abarcaba las dos iglesias hispánicas igual como el trapiche británico del siglo XIX. Los fondos de emergencia proveídos por FAMSI facilitaron una investigación ampliada y la planificación de nuevos elementos de las iglesias, dirigido por el Sr. Claude Bélanger, un esfuerzo que complementó el programa de consolidación del gobierno de Belice en el sitio. Los resultados el

trabajo comprenden el descubrimiento de un atrio nuevo, asociado con la primera iglesia, junto con ofrendas que datan del período colonial. Fuera de esto, el descubrimiento de hoyos que indican las posiciones de los postes que sostuvieron el techo perecedero de la nave de la segunda iglesia—evidencia de los cuales ha quedado hasta ahora esquiva—nos ha proveído con las dimensiones de la estructura colonial original.

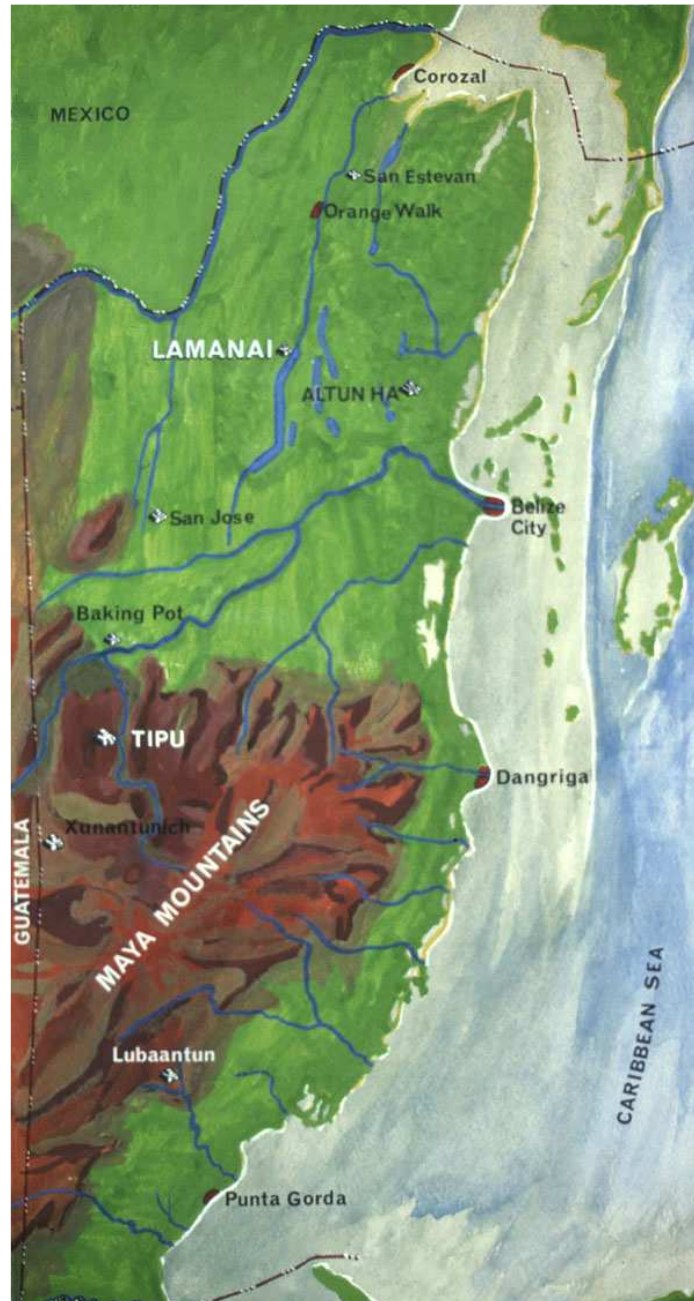


Figure 1. Map of Belize showing Lamanai and Tipu.

Introduction

Evidence for colonial-period occupation of Maya sites in Belize is apt to be overlooked, both because late occupation is believed to be rare and because detection requires approaches that differ from those used in the excavation of Classic or even Postclassic Maya sites (Pendergast et al. 1993). Partly as the result of the excavation discoveries at the Spanish colonial-period sites of Tipu and Lamanai ([Figure 1](#)), and partly owing to Grant Jones's (1989, 1998) synthesis of documentary information on the Maya of Belize and Petén, archaeological investigations are turning toward the historic Maya, and projects in recent years have included recognition of the presence of historic components (e.g., Oland and Masson 2005; Morandi, 2005; Yaeger et al. 2005).



Figure 2. Ruins of the British 19th century sugar mill.

The interest of both local Belizeans and foreign tourists in the remains of the colonial period in Belize is also increasing. The efforts of the Belize Institute of Archaeology (IoA) to clear and consolidate the ruins of the British 19th century sugar mill ([Figure 2](#)) as well as the two Spanish colonial-period churches at Lamanai ([Figure 3](#)) reflects this rise in interest in phenomena that bridge the Maya past and present. The work undertaken in 2007 was part of the Belize Institute of Archaeology's (IoA) Lamanai Historic Monuments Conservation Project, directed by Jaime Awe and John Morris with support from the U.S. State Department's Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation. Brian Woodye and George Thompson played an important role in the project's execution, and Jorge Can coordinated consolidation and excavation efforts in the field along with Claude Belanger. Research funds from FAMSI permitted extensive recording of a

suite of features of the two churches that were first revealed during clearing operations of an earlier tourism development project. Further information from the "rectory" adjoining the second church was also recorded. The results have added significantly to our knowledge of the colonial encounter at Lamanai (Awe 2007: 24-28).



Figure 3. Ruins of the two Spanish churches. The stone chancel-chapel of YDL II is in the background. In the foreground is the central part of YDL I. Visible are the south stair of YDL I, the razed Tulum-style temple over which YDL I was built; and to the right, the steps leading up to the altar/sanctuary. The photo looks north-northeast.

The Spanish missions at Lamanai and Tipu

Lamanai and Tipu were among the Maya communities in which missions established in the humid lowlands of Yucatán and Belize by Spanish religious proselytizers based in Mérida. The plans of the churches of both communities conform to the medieval Christian norm in which the altar lies at the east end. The church at Tipu and the later of the two churches at Lamanai (YDL or Yglesias de Lamanai II) also conform to the norm by having 'rectories' or residences abutting them on their north sides at the altar (east) ends ([Figure 4](#), [Figure 9](#)).



Figure 4. "Rectory," Str. N12-12, with the stone chancel-chapel of YDL II in the background (upper right). The photo looks southeast.



Figure 5. YDL I. The photo looks southeast. Steps leading up to the sanctuary can be seen in the photo's upper left. Also visible are the line of stones on which the (portable) altar pedestal and altar stone were once placed. This line of stones abuts a wall—the only remaining course of the wall can be seen in the photo—that divided the sanctuary from the sacristy.



Figure 6. Stone chancel-chapel of YDL II. Not too far from the entrance into the sanctuary stands a stela that was erected in the nave sometime after 1641. The photo looks southeast.

YDL I, the first and earlier church at Lamanai, was constructed sometime between 1544 and 1550; it was built over a razed Precolumbian structure similar to many of the temples at Tulum ([Figure 5](#)). YDL II, the second and larger church, was probably built in the 1560s or possibly as late as the early 17th century ([Figure 6](#)). It had a masonry chancel-chapel—which enclosed the sanctuary, sacristy, and probably baptistry—and a perishable nave. The church at Tipu could have been built at any point between 1550 and the 1560s ([Figure 7](#)). It was built in stages and seems to have been used for an extended period.



Figure 7. The church at Tipu. The photo looks northeast.

Although church plans show common themes, particularly in the case of the early churches, Lamanai's town plan differs from that of Tipu. Perhaps not surprisingly, the Lamanai community was strung out along the edge of the lagoon. The churches were built on a ridge overlooking the lagoon, with the colonial residential structures (e.g., Str. N11-18) lying about 350-400m north of the church zone ([Figure 8](#)), whereas Tipu's plan was more concentrated with the church bordering one of the sides of the community's main plaza ([Figure 9](#)).

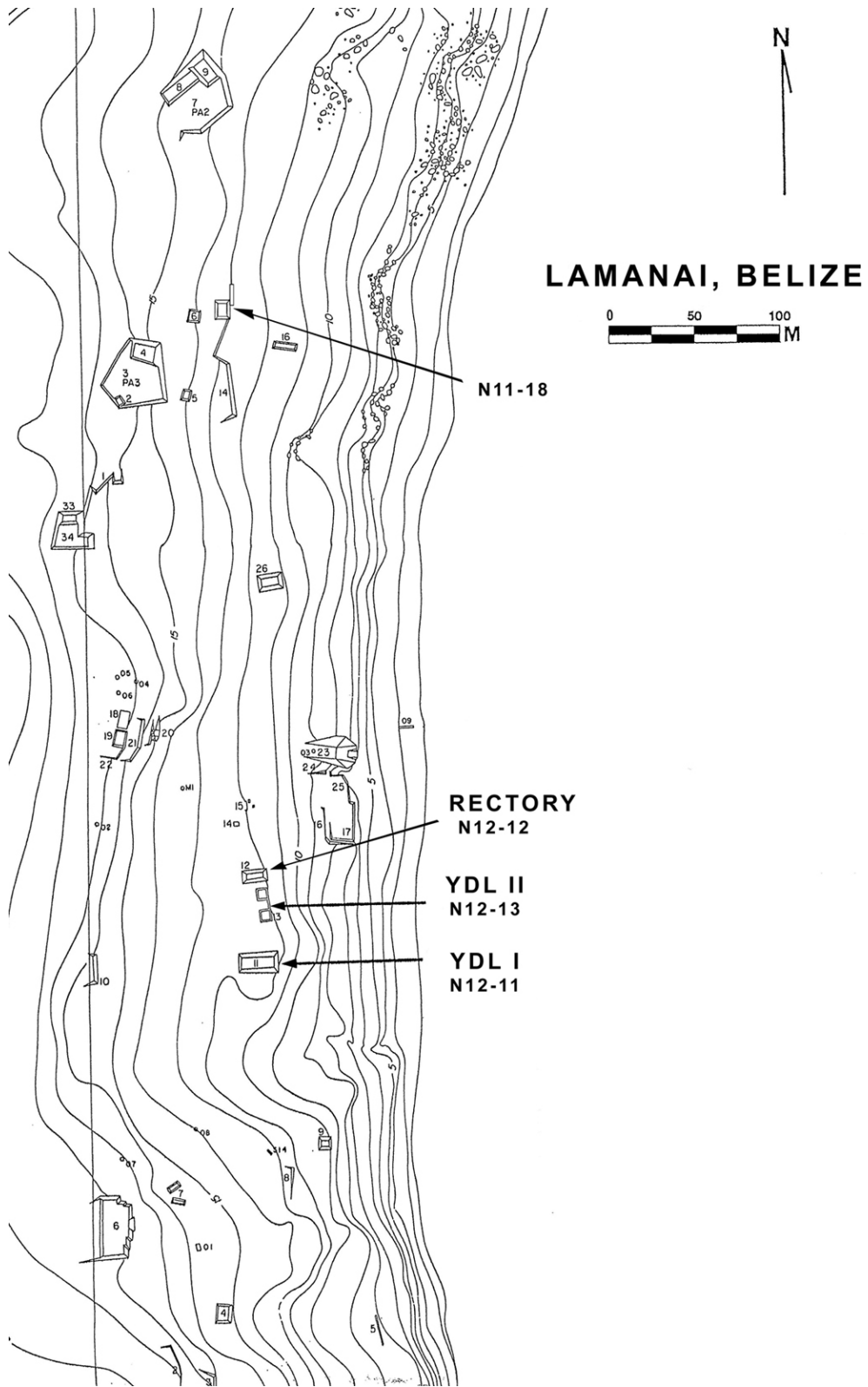


Figure 8. Map of church zone and colonial residential structure to the north of the church zone at Lamanai (see Str. N11-18).



Figure 9. Reconstruction of Tipu's community center. (Painting by Marianna Huston.) Looks south-southeast.

Past research at Lamanai

The excavations at Lamanai were directed by David Pendergast of the Royal Ontario Museum from 1974 to 1986 (Pendergast 1981, 1982a&b, 1986, 1988, 1991, 1993, 2002) and by me from 1998 onward (Graham 2004, 2006). In 2003, Scott Simmons, who is directing the Lamanai Archaeometallurgy Project, became co-Principal Investigator at Lamanai.

I first joined the research team at Lamanai in 1980. From 1983 to 1986 I collaborated with Pendergast on excavations of the Spanish colonial community centre (Graham 1987; Pendergast and Graham 1993), which included the two mission churches as well as a residential structure that yielded European artifacts and evidence of Maya metallurgy (Simmons 2005). British colonial-period remains were also recovered from one of the Spanish churches.

In 1997 I began a new program of excavations at Lamanai, and in 2003 we completed investigations of a Classic-period palace-courtyard group that bridged the time of the Maya collapse and yielded evidence of use during the Spanish

colonial period (Graham 2004). Nearby, our excavations of a massive midden abutting an abandoned temple also revealed a late component that bridges the Terminal Postclassic and colonial periods. In addition to these unexpected discoveries of colonial remains, we investigated a structure which adjoins the second Spanish-period church, and which probably served as the administrative and residential locus for those who ministered to the Maya communities in and around Lamanai in the 16th and early 17th centuries (the "Rectory"). The same structure also produced evidence dating to the British colonial period. Thus the picture of colonial interaction has gradually become increasingly complex and multi-faceted.

As it turns out, Lamanai's evidence of colonial occupation is both a blessing and a curse. The positive aspect is our increased knowledge of Maya history in Belize. The negative aspect is that later occupation invariably disturbed evidence of earlier occupation. Because British activity intruded extensively upon the area where the churches stood (the masonry chancel-chapel of the second church was used as a smithy, and a small camp was plunked down amidst the remains of the patio-*atrio* south of YDL I), masonry walls were dismantled, stones were borrowed, and evidence for Spanish colonial occupation was generally heavily disturbed and often obscured.

In addition to the enigmas presented by mixed Spanish and British colonial remains, there is the fact that we did not really know what a Maya community of the Spanish colonial period would have looked like in Belize. The demands of maintaining a Christian community among the Maya in Yucatán, for example, were not the same as those in a Christian community in the highlands of Central México. Not only is Yucatán much wetter than Central México, but the Maya reacted to the European presence in rather different ways than did the Mexica and other Central Mexican groups. For one thing, the Maya were inclined to flee to remote forests in areas outside of Spanish control (Jones 1989). Also, by the 17th century, and indeed by the late 16th century, heavy demands were placed on a relatively small number of religious personnel in Yucatán. When we consider Belize, we find that conditions were even more challenging in Spanish eyes than conditions in Yucatán. Belize is even more humid and tropical, and as resources and personnel became stretched in the north, Belize missions were moved to the peripheries of people's vision.

These conditions, along with the minimal documentary evidence on Belize in comparison with other regions under Spanish control, suggested that we should expect a rather skeletal framework for Spanish operations, and our excavations over the years have seemed to confirm this expectation. Both at Lamanai and at Tipu, the original focus comprised the Spanish churches (e.g., Graham 1991; Graham et al. 1989; Pendergast 1991, 1993; Pendergast and Graham 1993). Excavations eventually expanded to include parts of the historic residential community, but the full extent of the historic communities has not yet been determined at either site. In addition, the church buildings were originally

excavated as if they stood alone as the instruments of Christian conversion. However, evidence from the final year of excavation at Tipu of a churchyard or patio lying north of the church, as well as comparison with Christianization efforts in México and Yucatán, suggests that the church was only part of a larger religious complex that could have included a churchyard (or courtyard), an *atrio* or plaza, a cemetery, and smaller and often localized features (thatched platform areas, *pozos* or small chapel-like features) that served as foci of religious festivals and processions. Masses were indeed held inside churches but many activities conveniently expanded into the outdoors.

As a result, when clearing that was related to landscaping for tourism development in 2003 and 2004 revealed more evidence of the eastern limits of the first church at Lamanai, as well as lines of stone extending south of the church, it became clear that we probably had a more extensive church complex at Lamanai. The Belize IoA's Historic Monument and Conservation Project at Lamanai (2006-2007) provided a unique opportunity to explore these features.

Discoveries

The leading discoveries that resulted from the 2006-2007 cooperative effort between the Belize government and FAMSI-sponsored investigations can be itemized as follows:

Yglesias de Lamanai I, Str. N12-11, the first church at Lamanai

- 1) *Apsidal/polygonal east end of church:* Very little collapse debris from the partial-height stone walls of the church superstructure remained. However, a polygonal section forming the base of the wall was recovered at the northeast "corner" ([Figure 10](#), [Figure 11](#)). A remnant of the wall had been cleared in earlier years by Pendergast on the south side of the church, west of the entrance approached by the south side stair ([Figure 10](#), [Figure 11](#)). It is not clear whether the church superstructure at Lamanai had a polygonal west end. The church at Tipu was polygonal at both its east and west ends ([Figure 12](#)).
- 2) *Blind sanctuary?* At Tipu, the remains of full-height masonry walls were uncovered at the church's east end, thus confirming the presence of a blind sanctuary, consistent with Franciscan ideals of a primitive, apostolic church ([Figure 13](#)). At Lamanai, the bajo mud used for the platform core on the church's east side was far too unstable to support full-height masonry walls at the east end (refer to plan in [Figure 11](#)). In this respect, the first church at Lamanai differed from that at Tipu in having partial-height masonry walls on all sides. However, it is probable that the east or sanctuary end had solid pole walls set into

the masonry base, although the remainder of the church walls could have been open, as suggested for Tipu (Figure 13), to allow ventilation. Because church paraphernalia would have been kept in the sacristy and used in the sanctuary during mass, and also because very strong breezes blow off the New River Lagoon from the east, it is likely that YDL I's east end would have been built with full-height walls (lower part stone, upper part poles).

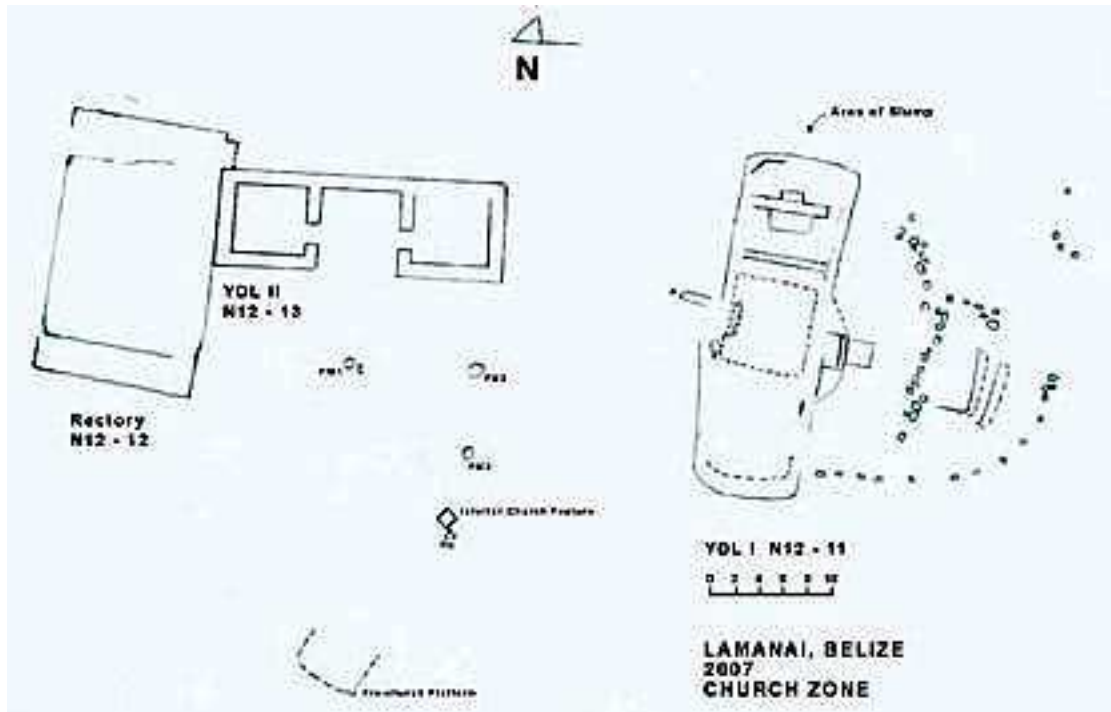


Figure 10. Plan of church zone.



Figure 11. Plan of YDL I and part of the patio-atrio to the south.

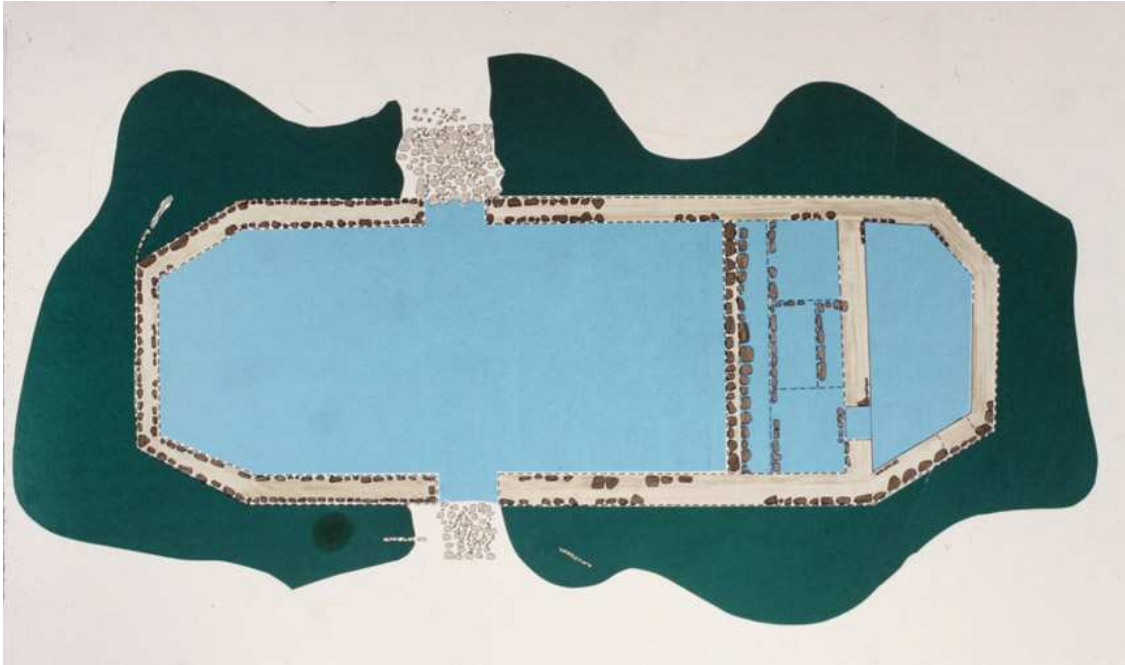


Figure 12. Plan of the church at Tipu. East is to the viewer's right.



Figure 13. Reconstruction of the Tipu church, looking north-northeast. The blind sanctuary is at the east end. (Painting and reconstruction by Claude and Louise Belanger.)

- 3) *YDL I a very early construction effort:* Clearing of the YDL I platform and partial-height masonry walls of the nave revealed that problems must have arisen as the church was being built. Lines are not straight, and the builders were forced to make adjustments to alignment ([Figure 11](#)). This strongly suggests that YDL I was an early attempt at cooperation between European (probably Franciscan) supervisors and builders, some of whom may not have been from Lamanai. YDL I could have been built as early as initial contact in 1544 (Jones 1989), but probably no later than 1550, when administration of many communities was regularized in Belize and Yucatán (Chamberlain 1948: 317-329).

- 4) *Bad planning by Franciscans?* Clearing on the east side of YDL I revealed considerable slumping and instability of the church platform and walls at this end—so much so that the platform faces had repeatedly to be shored up by the Maya on this side ([Figure 14](#), [Figure 15](#)). If local advice had been provided concerning the limits of the limestone bedrock that would satisfactorily have supported the church's foundations, then this advice was ignored by the Spaniards.

The stone chancel-chapel of YDL II was situated largely on supporting bedrock, but its north end also stood over bajo mud. However, the north wall of the stone chancel-chapel on this end was supported by the remains of a Precolumbian platform (used as the foundations for the Rectoría), which added stability, but there was nonetheless some slumping in the area of the nave on the north side.



Figure 14. East end of YDL I showing a section of the shoring of slumping platform face on this side. The photo looks north.



Figure 15. East end of YDL I, looking west, showing part of the remaining platform face on this side and the shoring to the viewer's left.



Figure 16. East end of YDL I, looking west. The space at this end defines what was probably the sacristy—a small room entered through a door in the rear wall of the sanctuary. The rectangular low stone bench (just touched by the tree shadow) abuts the remains of the wall that once divided the sacristy from the sanctuary. In the upper part of the photo can be seen the uppermost line of steps leading to the sanctuary from the nave. The stones that define where the portable altar was placed are more easily seen in [Figure 5](#), in the upper left of the photo.

- 5) *Identities with Tipu church*: Full clearing of the altar and sanctuary end of YDL I revealed that it was almost identical to the altar and sanctuary of the Tipu church:
 - a. A single room existed to the east of the sanctuary and probably served as the sacristy ([Figure 16](#)).
 - b. Lines of stone abutting the wall that divided the sanctuary from the sacristy served to guide the placement of what was probably a wooden and portable altar ([Figure 11](#)).
 - c. The doorway leading from the sanctuary into the sacristy was south of the altar.
 - d. Excavation of the east end of the YDL I platform revealed evidence of a polygonal form, suggesting that the platform that supported the church was also polygonal (as was the church superstructure itself) at its east end ([Figure 17](#), [Figure 18](#)).



Figure 17. North and east sides of church platform showing the remains of the polygonal facet.



Figure 18. Same view as [Figure 17](#) with more exposure of the east end, showing the remains of the polygonal facet of the church platform.



Figure 19. Clearing the south stair of YDL I. The photo looks west.



Figure 20. Burial in stone crypt at the junction of the west stairside of the south stair and the church platform. Photo looks northeast.

- 6) Clearing of the areas around YDL I revealed the full extent of the stair on the south side ([Figure 19](#)), and that a burial (of an adult) had been placed in a stone-lined unit abutting the stair at the junction between the west stairside and the church platform face ([Figure 20](#)). The burial was left in situ.
- 7) Just inside the south entrance, slightly to one's left as one enters the church, stood a small, low stone feature, possibly a platform, about 1.5m on a side ([Figure 11](#); see also [Figure 19](#)). It originally would have stood higher than the level of the church floor. Three adult and one infant burial—laid out with head to the west in Christian fashion—were found beneath the feature, but they covered an area larger than the feature and are not clearly associated with it. They do indicate, however, that the feature was built after the burials were in place. The feature could have supported a font or a statue or internal church furniture of some kind.
- 8) Clearing of the area south of YDL I revealed a series of low, broad, stone-bordered, descending terraces that formed a patio or *atrio* ([Figure 21](#), [Figure 10](#), [Figure 11](#)). This patio-*atrio* was probably the site for fiestas, masses and other rituals and ceremonies related to the church (McAndrew 1965: 202-231). It would also have been the area used for teaching Christian doctrine or catechism to converts. Patios were sometimes set at different levels to facilitate teaching, with trees planted to shade those who listened, usually groups of children (McAndrew 1965: 211). People would also come to the patios to pray and would kneel there in front of the church door in rows (McAndrew 1965: 209-210 from Mendieta, Tomo III, 156-157). Presumably the friar or priest would stand on the highest level, at the church door.
- 9) There is also evidence of low, curved platforms faced with single lines of stone that stood to either side of the southside stair and served to connect the stairsides to the church platform. The low platform west of the stairside is better preserved ([Figure 10](#), [Figure 11](#), [Figure 21](#)).
- 10) A cache of an effigy vessel (Cache N12-11/3 [LA 3035/1]) was encountered 1.10m north of the NE corner of the north stair of YDL I ([Figure 10](#), A). The effigy—a centipede or lobster-like creature—is hollow and stoppered and has a forked tail. There is a human head inside the creature's mouth. The vessel contained 2 small chert bifaces or points with rounded bases (LA 3035/2,3); a stingray spine in two fragments (LA 3035/4,5); and 3 shark teeth (LA 3035/5,6,7). The effigy is 21 cm in length; the fired clay is reddish in color and has traces of grey-blue stucco paint ([Figure 22a](#), [Figure 22b](#), [Figure 22c](#), [Figure 22d](#)).



Figure 21. Patio-atrio on the south side of YDL I. The photo looks east toward the lagoon.



Figure 22a. Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. Effigy in situ just north of the north stair of YDL I, head to the north. The trowel points south.



**Figure 22b. Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy.
Effigy from the side, ca. 21 cm in length.**



**Figure 22c. Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy.
View from the top.**

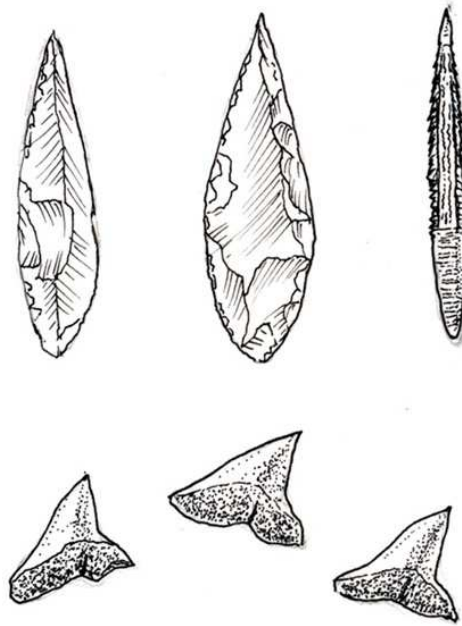


Figure 22d. Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. Effigy contents of chert points, stingray spine and shark's teeth.

"Tulum" (Terminal Postclassic) structure over which YDL I was built

- 1) A figurine was found which represents a male perforating his penis (LA 3048/1) ([Figure 23a](#), [Figure 23b](#)). It was recovered from the west end of the north side of the platform of the Tulum-like structure that had been razed for the construction of YDL I ([Figure 10](#), B). The head is missing. The figurine's deposition probably dates to the pre-church period.



Figure 23a. Figurine in situ.



Figure 23b. Figurine reconstructed, minus the head.

Yglesias de Lamanai II, Str. N12-13, the second church at Lamanai

- 1) Clearing in the area of the nave (west of the stone chancel-chapel) revealed three postholes. One represents a post that supported the thatched roof on the church's south side ([Figure 10](#), P.H. 2); one is for a centerline post ([Figure 10](#), P.H. 1); and one supported the roof at the southwest corner ([Figure 10](#), P.H. 3). Based on post locations, the dimensions of the church nave are projected at 17m x 19m ([Figure 10](#), [Figure 24a](#), [Figure 24b](#), [Figure 24c](#)).
- 2) Also uncovered was a rectangular feature, a small platform, approximately 1m on a side. It was found in what would have been the southwest corner of the interior of the nave ([Figure 10](#), [Figure 24c](#)). The platform comprises some sort of church element and could have supported something like a holy water font or saint's image. One majolica fragment was recovered from the feature.

- 3) Fragments of a Precolumbian-style censer were found associated with the centerline posthole (see P.H. No. 1, [Figure 10](#); [Figure 25](#)), about 20 cm below the surface. The censer is believed to have been deposited after the church had fallen into disuse, probably after the rebellion of 1638-41.
- 4) A larger platform-like feature, ca. 2m on a side, was found ca. 22m west of the stone chancel-chapel (about 16m due west of the central posthole, P.H. No. 1) ([Figure 10](#)). This feature is believed to pre-date the construction of the church and may well be associated with the Precolumbian structures that were either built over (in the case of YDL I) or intruded upon (in the case of YDL II) by the churches.



Figure 24a. YDL II, clearing the nave. The photo looks south.



Figure 24b. YDL II, center-line posthole. Stone chancel/sanctuary is at the top of the photo. The photo looks east-northeast.



Figure 24c. YDL II, view of the nave looking east. The center-line posthole can be seen at the photo's top left, just west of the entranceway to the stone chancel-chapel; the south-line posthole is in the top right of the photo just west of the corner of the stone chancel-chapel; the platform feature that once stood inside the nave at its southwest corner is in the bottom right of the photo.



Figure 25. Censer fragments found in the fill of the centerline posthole of YDL II.

Summary

The impact of the discoveries made in 2007 remains to be completely assessed. The Lamanai Spanish colonial community comes across, however, not as the result of a one-shot attempt at Christianization but as having received repeated, if intermittent, input over time. Both churches display features that were probably additions over time, and the patio-*atrio* found south of YDL I suggests that the building may have continued in use, even after YDL II was built, as the focus for open-air gatherings, catechism lessons, and possibly fiestas. Given the size of the church zone and the orientation of the buildings and the patio-*atrio*, it is likely that much of the community active during the Spanish colonial period remains to be discovered south of the church zone. It also became clear that the area to the east of the church zone, extending down to the lagoon shore, must have been kept clear of vegetation, and that the churches were visible from the lagoon. There are features along this slope that remain to be investigated that suggest the existence of a shrine or church-related features of some kind. Unfortunately, the British in the 19th century made heavy use of the church zone and the slope extending to the lagoon, and much has been disturbed. Belanger has concluded in fact that the present state of the masonry chancel-chapel of YDL II reflects British modification of the then-standing stone walls to support a thatched roof, whereas the original roof was vaulted.

Future investigation of both the Spanish colonial and British colonial occupation at Lamanai would undoubtedly reveal unexpected and exciting developments. Perhaps most important of all is the continuity with the past that it reveals.

Acknowledgments

Our thanks go to the Belize Institute of Archaeology for supporting work at Lamanai by enabling the excavations and by providing logistical and moral support. We are indebted to Dr. Jaime Awe, Director of the Institute of Archaeology; Dr. John Morris, IoA Associate Director, Research and Education; and Sherilyne Jones, Research and Education Officer. In addition to the input of Dr. Awe and Dr. Morris, the LHMCP project would not have run so smoothly and effectively without the efforts and expertise of Brian Woodye, IoA Associate Director, Parks Management; George Thompson, IoA Associate Director of Planning, Policy & Marketing; and Jorge Can, Conservation Technician. We are also indebted to Fernando Obando and Liston Armstrong, the Park Rangers on the ground at Lamanai, and to the people of Indian Church for their support.

Field research at Lamanai over the years has been funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Royal Ontario Museum, the National Geographic Society and the British Academy. Special projects have been supported by FAMSI; York University (Canada); University College London through the Institute of Archaeology and the Graduate School; and the Lamanai Field Research Center (LFRC). Development funding has come from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives (CFLI) and the British High Commission's Small Grants Scheme.

List of Figures

[Figure 1.](#) Map of Belize showing Lamanai and Tipu.

[Figure 2.](#) Ruins of the British 19th century sugar mill.

[Figure 3.](#) Ruins of the two Spanish churches. The stone chancel-chapel of YDL II is in the background. In the foreground is the central part of YDL I. Visible are the south stair of YDL I, the razed Tulum-style temple over which YDL I was built; and to the right, the steps leading up to the altar/sanctuary. The photo looks north-northeast.

[Figure 4.](#) "Rectory," Str. N12-12, with the stone chancel-chapel of YDL II in the background (upper right). The photo looks southeast.

[Figure 5](#). YDL I. The photo looks southeast. Steps leading up to the sanctuary can be seen in the photo's upper left. Also visible are the line of stones on which the (portable) altar pedestal and altar stone were once placed. This line of stones abuts a wall—the only remaining course of the wall can be seen in the photo—that divided the sanctuary from the sacristy.

[Figure 6](#). Stone chancel-chapel of YDL II. Not too far from the entrance into the sanctuary stands a stela that was erected in the nave sometime after 1641. The photo looks southeast.

[Figure 7](#). The church at Tipu. The photo looks northeast.

[Figure 8](#). Map of church zone and colonial residential structure to the north of the church zone at Lamanai (see Str. N11-18).

[Figure 9](#). Reconstruction of Tipu's community center. (Painting by Marianna Huston.) Looks south-southeast.

[Figure 10](#). Plan of church zone.

[Figure 11](#). Plan of YDL I and part of the patio-*atrio* to the south.

[Figure 12](#). Plan of the church at Tipu. East is to the viewer's right.

[Figure 13](#). Reconstruction of the Tipu church, looking north-northeast. The blind sanctuary is at the east end. (Painting and reconstruction by Claude and Louise Belanger.)

[Figure 14](#). East end of YDL I showing a section of the shoring of slumping platform face on this side. The photo looks north.

[Figure 15](#). East end of YDL I, looking west, showing part of the remaining platform face on this side and the shoring to the viewer's left.

[Figure 16](#). East end of YDL I, looking west. The space at this end defines what was probably the sacristy—a small room entered through a door in the rear wall of the sanctuary. The rectangular low stone bench (just touched by the tree shadow) abuts the remains of the wall that once divided the sacristy from the sanctuary. In the upper part of the photo can be seen the uppermost line of steps leading to the sanctuary from the nave. The stones that define where the portable altar was placed are more easily seen in [Figure 5](#), in the upper left of the photo.

[Figure 17](#). North and east sides of church platform showing the remains of the polygonal facet.

[Figure 18](#). Same view as [Figure 17](#) with more exposure of the east end, showing the remains of the polygonal facet of the church platform.

[Figure 19](#). Clearing the south stair of YDL I. The photo looks west.

[Figure 20](#). Burial in stone crypt at the junction of the west stairside of the south stair and the church platform. Photo looks northeast.

[Figure 21](#). Patio-*atrio* on the south side of YDL I. The photo looks east toward the lagoon.

[Figure 22a](#). Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. Effigy in situ just north of the north stair of YDL I, head to the north. The trowel points south.

[Figure 22b](#). Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. Effigy from the side, ca. 21 cm in length.

[Figure 22c](#). Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. View from the top.

[Figure 22d](#). Cache N12-11/3, ceramic centipede-lobster effigy. Effigy contents of chert points, stingray spine and shark's teeth.

[Figure 23a](#). Figurine in situ.

[Figure 23b](#). Figurine reconstructed, minus the head.

[Figure 24a](#). YDL II, clearing the nave. The photo looks south.

[Figure 24b](#). YDL II, center-line posthole. Stone chancel/sanctuary is at the top of the photo. The photo looks east-northeast.

[Figure 24c](#). YDL II, view of the nave looking east. The center-line posthole can be seen at the photo's top left, just west of the entranceway to the stone chancel-chapel; the south-line posthole is in the top right of the photo just west of the corner of the stone chancel-chapel; the platform feature that once stood inside the nave at its southwest corner is in the bottom right of the photo.

[Figure 25](#). Censer fragments found in the fill of the centerline posthole of YDL II.

Sources Cited

Awe, Jaime

2007 Of Burnt Churches and a Buried Sugar Mill: The Lamanai Historic Monuments Conservation Project. *BelizeToday.org* 3 (17) (March/April): 24-28.

Chamberlain, Robert S.

1948 *The Conquest and Colonization of Yucatán, 1517-1550*. Publication 582. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Washington, D.C.

Graham, Elizabeth

1987 Terminal Classic to Historic-Period Vessel Forms from Belize. In *Maya Ceramics: Papers from the 1985 Maya Ceramic Conference*, ed. Prudence M. Rice and Robert J. Sharer, pp. 73-98. BAR International Series 345(i):73-98.

1991 Archeological Insights into Colonial Period Maya Life at Tipu, Belize. In *Columbian Consequences Volume 3: The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*, ed. David H. Thomas, pp. 319-335. Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

2004 Lamanai Reloaded: Alive and Well in the Early Postclassic. In *Archaeological Investigations in the Eastern Maya Lowlands*, ed. Jaime Awe, John Morris, and Sherilyne Jones, pp.223-241. Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology, Volume 1. Institute of Archaeology, NICH, Belize.

2006 An Ethnicity to Know. In *Maya Ethnicity: The Construction of Ethnic Identity from Preclassic to Modern Times*, ed. Frauke Sachse, pp. 109-124. *Acta Mesoamerica*, Vol. 19. Verlag Anton Saurwein, Markt Schwaben.

Graham, Elizabeth, David M. Pendergast, and Grant D. Jones

1989 On the Fringes of Conquest: Maya-Spanish Contact in Early Belize. *Science* 246:1254-1259.

Jones, Grant D.

1989 *Maya Resistance to Spanish Rule*. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

1998 *The Conquest of the Last Maya Kingdom*. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

McAndrew, John

1965 *The Open-Air Churches of Sixteenth-Century México*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Morandi, Steven

2005 Investigating the Spanish Colonial Frontier in the Sibun River Valley. In *Archaeological Investigations in the Eastern Maya Lowlands: Papers of the 2004 Belize Archaeology Symposium*, ed. by Jaime Awe, John Morris, Sherilyne Jones and Christophe Helmke, pp. 241-246. Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology Volume 2. Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Oland, Maxine H. and Marilyn A. Masson

2005 Late Postclassic-Colonial Period Maya Settlement on the West Shore of Progresso Lagoon. In *Archaeological Investigations in the Eastern Maya Lowlands: Papers of the 2004 Belize Archaeology Symposium*, ed. by Jaime Awe, John Morris, Sherilyne Jones and Christophe Helmke, pp. 223-230. Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology Volume 2. Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Pendergast, David M.

1981 Lamanai, Belize: Summary of Excavation Results, 1974-1980. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 8:29-53.

1982a Lamanai, Belice, durante el Post-Clásico. *Estudios de Cultura Maya* XIV:19-58.

1982b The 19th-Century Sugar Mill at Indian Church, Belize. *Industrial Archaeology* 8(1):57-66.

1986 Stability through Change: Lamanai, Belize, from the Ninth to the Seventeenth Century. In *Late Lowland Maya Civilization: Classic to Postclassic*, ed. Jeremy .A. Sabloff and E. Wyllys Andrews V, pp. 223-249. University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque.

1988 Lamanai Stela 9: The Archaeological Context. *Research Reports on Ancient Maya Writing* 20. Center for Maya Research, Washington, D.C.

1991 The Southern Maya Lowlands Contact Experience: The View from Lamanai, Belize. In *Columbian Consequences Volume 3: The Spanish Borderlands in Pan-American Perspective*, ed. David H. Thomas, pp. 336-354. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.

- 1993 Worlds in Collision: The Maya/Spanish Encounter in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Belize. In *The Meeting of Two Worlds: Europe and the Americas, 1492-1650*, ed. Warwick Bray, pp. 105-143. Proceedings of the British Academy No. 81. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- 2002 Intercessions with the Gods: Caches and Their Significance at Altun Ha and Lamanai, Belize. In *The Sowing and the Dawning: Termination, Dedication, and Transformation in the Archaeological and Ethnographic Record of Mesoamerica*, ed. S.B. Mock, pp. 55-63.

Pendergast, David M. and Elizabeth Graham

- 1993 La Mezcla de Arqueología y Etnohistoria: El Estudio del Período Hispánico en los Sitios de Tipu y Lamanai, Belice. In *Perspectivas Antropológicas en el Mundo Maya*, ed. María Josefa Iglesias Ponce de León y Francesc Ligorred Perramon, pp. 331-353. Sociedad Española de Estudios Mayas e Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, Madrid.

Pendergast, David M., Grant D. Jones and Elizabeth Graham

- 1993 Locating Spanish Colonial Towns in the Maya Lowlands: A Case Study from Belize. *Latin American Antiquity* 4:59-73.

Simmons, Scott E.

- 2005 Investigations in the Church Zone: Maya Archaeometallurgy at Spanish Colonial Lamanai, Belize. In *Archaeological Investigations in the Eastern Maya Lowlands: Papers of the 2004 Belize Archaeology Symposium*, ed. by Jaime Awe, John Morris, Sherilyne Jones and Christophe Helmke, pp. 231-239. Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology Volume 2. Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.

Yaeger, Jason, Minette C. Church, Jennifer Dornan and Richard M. Leventhal.

- 2005 Investigating Historic Households: The 2003 Season of the San Pedro Maya Project. In *Archaeological Investigations in the Eastern Maya Lowlands: Papers of the 2004 Belize Archaeology Symposium*, ed. by Jaime Awe, John Morris, Sherilyne Jones and Christophe Helmke, pp. 257-267. Research Reports in Belizean Archaeology Volume 2. Institute of Archaeology, National Institute of Culture and History, Belmopan, Belize.