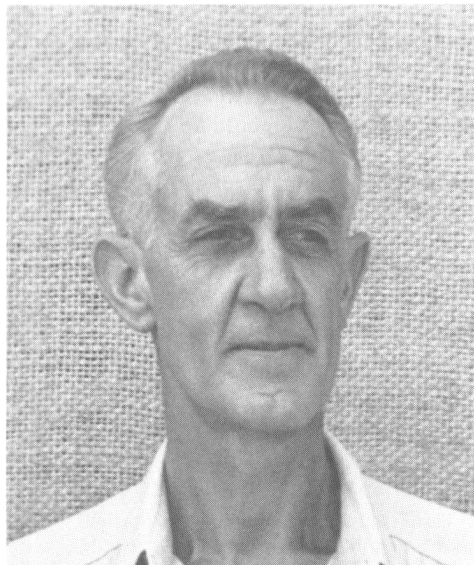


HARRY EVELYN DORR POLLOCK, 1901-1982



Harry E. D. Pollock, one of the country's leading Maya archaeologists, and, especially, an authority on Maya architecture of international reknown, died on March 15, 1982, in Boston, Massachusetts.

Harry Pollock, the son of James Albert and Evelyn Prince (Dorr) Pollock, was born June 24, 1900, in Salt Lake City, Utah, where his father had mining interests. He lived with his family there, in Missouri, and in Pasadena, California, attending the Thatcher School in Ojai, California, before coming east to Hill School, in Pottstown, Pennsylvania. After graduating, he entered Harvard, receiving the A.B. degree with the Class of 1923.

After five years in business in New York City, Pollock came into archaeology after a single trip with the Carnegie Institution group then working in the Guatemalan Peten. He joined the Carnegie staff in 1928 and also began graduate work that year in anthropology and archaeology at Harvard,

under the tutelage of Alfred M. Tozzer, receiving an A.M. in 1930 and a Ph.D. in 1936. In 1950 he succeeded A. V. Kidder as Director of the Carnegie Institution's Department of Archaeology and continued in that post until 1958 when the Institution discontinued its archaeology program. Midway through his career with Carnegie he served with the U.S. Army Air Corps from 1942-1945, in the European theater and was discharged with the rank of Major. After the close of the Carnegie program, in 1958, Pollock joined the staff of the Peabody Museum at Harvard as Curator of Maya Archaeology, continuing in that capacity until 1968 when he retired with the title of Honorary Curator.

In the field his Maya explorations were extensive. With J. E. S. Thompson and Jean Charlot, he coauthored *A Preliminary Study of the Ruins of Coba* (1932). His doctoral dissertation, also published by the Carnegie, was *Round Structures of Aboriginal Middle America* (1936). He was the field director of the Carnegie's last major field project, which resulted in the major monograph, *Mayapan, Yucatan, Mexico* (1962), authored jointly by Pollock, R. L. Roys, T. Proskouriakoff, and A. L. Smith. Prior to the Mayapan Program, which began in 1950, Pollock had spent several seasons surveying Puuc sites in Yucatan. This Puuc research was to occupy the last years of his career, devoted mainly to the writing of the impressive volume, *The Puuc: An Architectural Survey of the Hill Country of Yucatan and Northern Campeche, Mexico* (1980). This work, drawing into it Pollock's encyclopedic knowledge of the subject, his comparative perspective on Maya regions and varieties of architecture, and the painstaking care that the author gave to all of his research, is a scholarly accomplishment with few parallels. It stands as a major resource for Mayanists who will follow him.

In his planning of the Mayapan Program, Harry Pollock was one of the first Maya archaeologists to recognize the importance of settlement pattern study and to follow up on this recognition with a major field survey and excavation operation. Although extraordinarily cautious as a scholar, Pollock was willing to venture out into realms of unconventional ideas. As far back as the early 1950s, when accepted opinion held that Toltec Chichen Itza was wholly later than the Puuc sites, Pollock expressed skepticism with this interpretation, arguing, instead, for a significant

chronological overlap between the two. He was unwilling to see Chichen as virtually the only site of consequence in the entire northern lowlands for the duration of the Early Postclassic period. The question has still not been finally settled, but Pollock's position on this has found considerable support in the early 1980s.

In his career, Harry Pollock could be described as an "archaeologist's archaeologist," a professional of professionals, firmly dedicated to no-nonsense standards, never moving even in the slightest degree toward anything smacking of vulgar popularization. At the same time, Harry was a secret romantic. I say this even though I know he would cringe at my characterization, although I see no necessary contradiction between scientific pursuits and romantic initial motivations for them. I had the good fortune to be Harry's close personal friend, and I remember his story about how he first became attracted to Maya archaeology. As noted, he had, after college, gone to New York to enter into the bond business, an eminently suitable profession for a young man of his background and training up to that time. With the self-discipline that characterized Harry to the last, he stayed on the job although, in his own words, "he hated every minute of it." The, one warm June evening, after leaving the office, he walked uptown to the Harvard Club, before dinner, and there, in the bar, met an old Harvard buddy and fellow Fly Club member, Ledyard Smith. Ledyard had only recently returned from the Carnegie's first season at Uaxactun. His enthusiasm for the jungle and for archaeology infected Harry. So, after almost five years as a denizen of Wall Street, Harry resigned from the brokerage firm and shipped out for Central America and a look at the ruins of the ancient Maya.

In those days, entrance into the Guatemalan jungles of the Peten was by a rather roundabout journey. One took a freighter or fruit boat from New Orleans to Belize, in British Honduras. From there one went up the Belize River to its headwaters, near the Guatemalan border, in a still smaller boat. These picturesque rivercraft had passenger accommodations of a sort, usually with hammocks strung on the decks for sleeping. Harry told me about his first morning's awakening on the deck of the little river steamer. It was, in his mind, like the awakening of the young protagonist in Joseph Conrad's story, "Youth," with the soft dawn light over the dark river, the enshrouding trees, the calls of strange birds, and all the sights, sounds, and odors of the mysterious jungle. I do not doubt, from the way Harry described it, that from that time on he was captivated by the romantic lure of exploring the remains of an ancient civilization in such a setting.

Harry Pollock was, in the full meaning of those terms, "a gentleman and a scholar," and these qualities were of a piece. The same gentlemanliness that he expressed in his consideration of the opinions of other scholars was manifested further in his unfailing good manners at all times, in his essential kindness. His was always the address of a man respectful of the integrity and personal dignity of others. Those of us who were his friends were well aware of this, but it was an attitude not reserved for us alone. I can remember it many times in Central America, whether in the governmental palaces or with river boatmen out in the bush. These manners, together with his constant and gentle good humor, made him the most delightful of traveling companions under any conditions.

Harry is survived by his wife of many years, Katherine (Winslow) Pollock, by their son, Harry Pollock, Jr., by stepdaughters and a stepson, by several grandchildren, and by those of us who were his colleagues and friends in Maya archaeology and who remember him with great affection.

GORDON R. WILLEY

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