

## "LOST" PECOS CHURCH

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### INTRODUCTION

IN 1881, ADOLPH BANDELIER (2: p. 88),<sup>†</sup> writing on the ruins of Pecos Pueblo, stated: "About one-quarter mile east of the Building A, on a bare sunny and grassy level, are, quite alone, the foundations of a singular ruin. They run N. and S., consist of three rows of stones laid aside of each other longitudinally, and have the shape shown in Pl. V, Fig. 10.

"Its length from N. to S. is 25 m.—82 ft.,—and its width about 10m.—33 ft. From its form I suspect it to have been a Christian chapel, erected, or perhaps only in process of erection, before 1680. Not only is it completely razed, but even the material of the superstructure seems to have been carried off. Stones are scattered about the premises, but I found neither obsidian nor pottery. It stands protected from the north by the extremely rocky ledge terminating the *mesilla* towards the east, and appears without the least connection with the Indian pueblo proper."

About 1915, when A. V. Kidder was beginning his long term study of the Pecos ruins, he had Mr. Singleton P. Moorehead make a sketch plan of the above mentioned structure. In 1956, Kidder requested the staff at the Laboratory of Anthropology to re-locate the structure and check one plan against the other, as they were not in agreement. The structure was found, but is to the north-northeast instead of east. It is located 1,000' N. N. E. of the N. E. corner of the North Quadrangle of Pecos Pueblo. The grassy level of Bandelier's time is now covered with a growth of piñon and juniper trees, but the rocky ledge still protects it on the north. Since tree-ring samples obtained from living trees adjacent to the structure yielded not more than fifty rings, the 1881 description could well be accurate.

On the basis of our preliminary investigation, we felt it would be

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<sup>†</sup>See numbered references at the conclusion of this article.

most worth while to conduct test excavations on the site, both to prepare a more accurate ground plan of the structure, and to determine if possible the age of construction and use. We had the generous coöperation of Mr. W. W. Fogelson, owner of the property, who granted us permission to dig. The work was carried out during the first part of June, 1956. Staff members in charge of the work were Stanley Stubbs, Bruce T. Ellis, and Alfred E. Dittert, Jr.; labor assistance was provided through an anonymous grant to the Laboratory of Anthropology. Special thanks are due Terah L. Smiley and Marvin Stokes, of the Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research, University of Arizona, for their assistance in checking all tree-ring material. Unfortunately, very little material of this nature was found, so that we have no actual dates to work from.

The following report is presented in sections: "Excavation and Architecture," by Stanley Stubbs; "Speculative Review of Documentary and Other Data," by Bruce T. Ellis; and "Indian Shrine Near the Church Structure," by Alfred E. Dittert, Jr.

#### EXCAVATION AND ARCHITECTURE

Before actual excavation was started, a thorough search was made over the entire surface of the site and the immediately surrounding area to pick up all pottery fragments and any artifacts that might occur. Sherds were scarce, and no object of European origin was found.

Since the outline of the foundations was quite clear, there was no difficulty in following the walls. Excavation was carried out across the inside of the structure just inside the main front entrance; in a trench from wall to wall across the sanctuary; the sacristy; the "buttresses"; and all exterior corners of the building. Within the structure, excavation was carried down to the adobe floor, with test pits sunk through the floor to determine original ground level. Exterior excavations were carried down to the base of the foundations (Fig. 1).

The building is located about 35' west of the edge of a low *mesilla* of westward dipping sandstone. This surface slope required deeper foundations on the west side of the building. Those of the main structure averaged about 3'6" in width, and from 18" to 4'

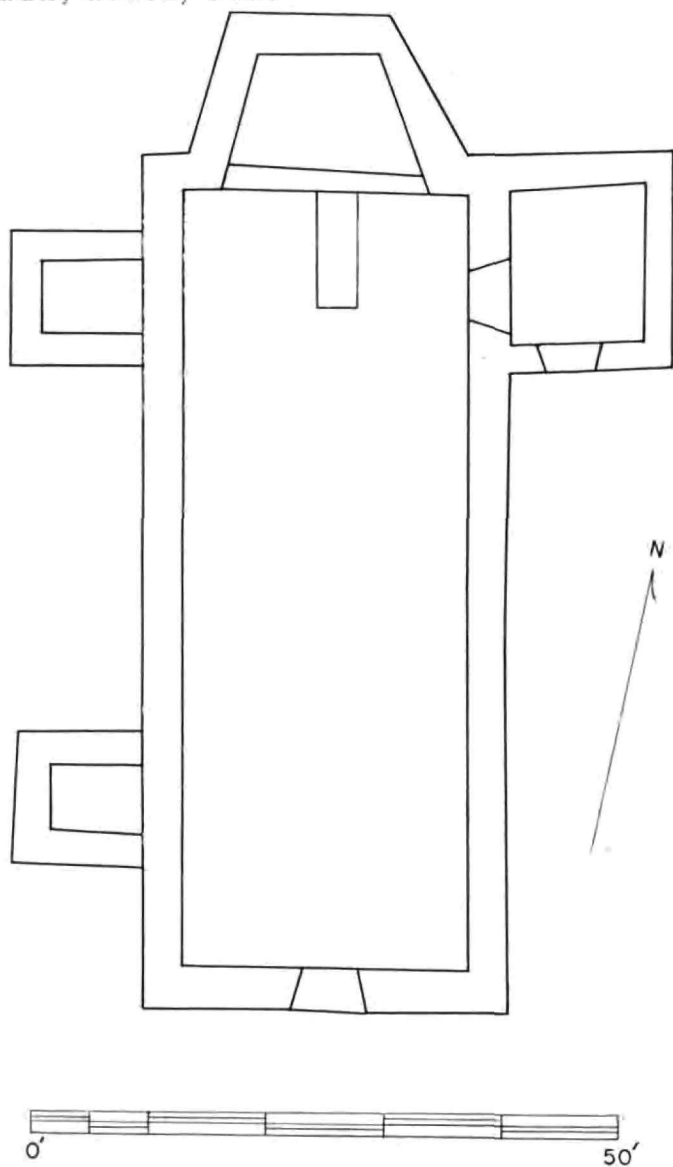


Fig. 1. Basic ground plan of "lost" Pecos Church.

in depth below the present ground surface. They were of irregularly shaped stone set in an adobe mortar, with liberal use of small stone spalls. Trenches had been dug to hold the lower portion of the foundation walls, which were carried to a height of about 18" above the original ground surface. The foundation walls of the sacristy were slightly narrower. On top of them, mold-made adobe bricks were laid. At points in the north half of the chapel, some of these adobe bricks were still in place, showing the method of laying. Where still in place, the distinctive dark red adobe mortar exhibited a striking contrast to the lighter colored bricks. The bricks themselves averaged 20"×9"×2¾". About 1" of mortar was used between all bricks, both in the horizontal courses and in the side-by-side separation (Fig. 4b).

The tapered sanctuary area was cut off from the main portion of the chapel by a wall of adobe bricks. The wall was a retainer, for the artificial fill was used to build the floor of the sanctuary up to a higher level than the nave. The front of this wall retained traces of adobe plaster, while the back was very irregular and unfinished. The original hard level of the sanctuary, later built up with artificial fill to some 3' above the nave floor, was not a level surface; it sloped from the front up toward the back, and from the center up toward the sides. This provided, in effect, a drainage for the area. At the junction of the slopes with the adobe retaining wall was a hole carefully built through the wall into the nave. When the later filling of the sanctuary occurred, this hole was plugged shut and hidden by the ramp-like structure described later. This opening was originally about 6" in diameter.

The floor of the nave and the sacristy was hard-packed adobe, from 1" to 3" in thickness, laid directly on the original ground surface or on artificial fill used to level up the slope of the hill.

In front of the sanctuary was a badly eroded feature which, for lack of a better description, we have called a ramp. It was centered in the nave, and sloped up to and abutted the above mentioned retaining wall. It was 3'6" wide and 11' long. Since there were no steps from the nave to the sanctuary, this ramp-like incline could well have served as the access to the sanctuary (Figs. 1 and 3).

Both exterior and interior walls of the chapel retained good traces of a finish coat of adobe plaster.

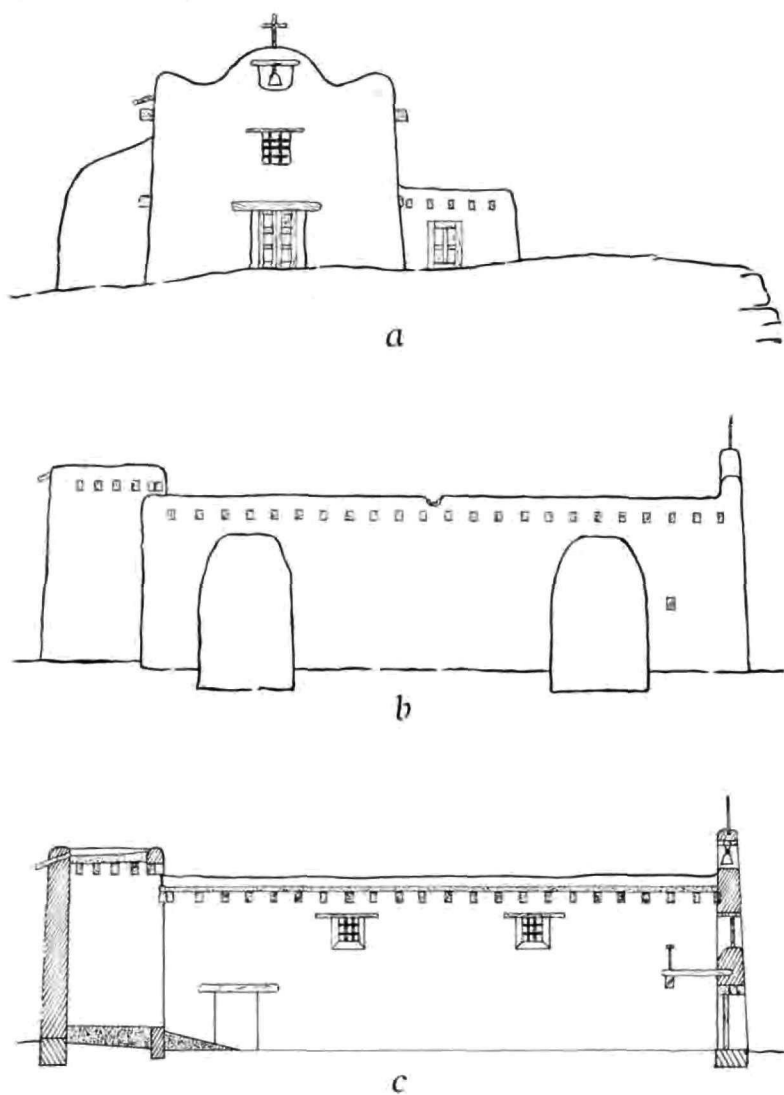


Fig. 2. Hypothetical restoration drawings: a. front elevation from the south; b. side elevation from the west; c. section through center of the church.

The three doorways in the building are typical, with their beveled plan.

The fill in the nave of the church was made up largely of fragments of broken adobe bricks, the distinctive red mortar, fragments of dark adobe with pole and brush imprints fallen from the roof, and consolidated adobe due to water action on the mass of the fill.

The sacristy was devoid of any special construction feature visible on the floor, but was of unusual interest in another way: excavation disclosed that at some time the room had been used to store adobe bricks, carefully stacked in five rows, each brick set on edge, the row nearest the north wall being two-high (Fig. 4). The same

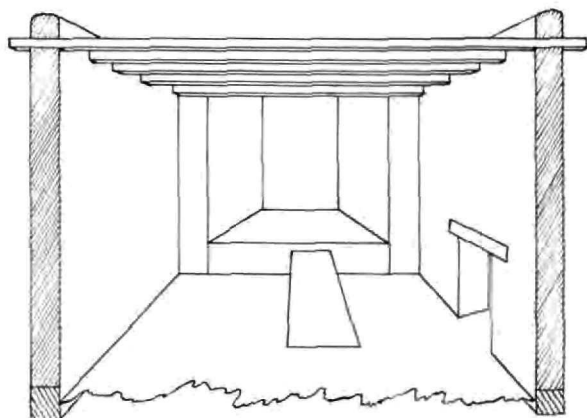


Fig. 3. *Hypothetical perspective within the church.*

method of stacking is still used today to cure and store adobes. It was estimated that there were approximately 250 adobes stacked in this room. Some of them showed traces of mortar as if they had been removed from a wall, while others were just as clean as if they had just been taken from the mold. These bricks were identical with those found still in place in the walls. They were generally light yellowish in color, and the adobe had not been mixed with straw, grass, or any fiber.

The sides of the bricks almost all showed the imprint of smoothly-finished wood forms, and the upper surfaces often retained hand

marks of the makers. One brick had two well-defined kid or lamb hoof prints on its surface. Many of the broken fragments of adobe, as well as a number of the whole bricks, were broken up in a search for sherds or other datable material.

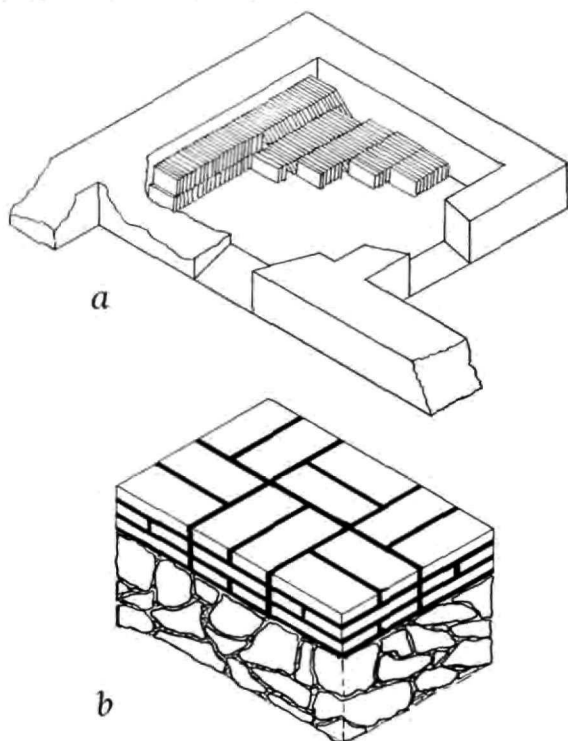


Fig. 4. a. *Method of stacking adobes in sacristy;*  
b. *method of laying adobes in wall building.*

The two square appendages on the western side of the building were probably buttresses. Their foundations were identical in construction with those of the church, but they abutted the main west wall. The interior walls of these features had not been plastered, and the fill had all the appearance of being deliberate. The exterior wall of the church had been finished with a thin layer of adobe

plaster. This was continuous along the west wall; the buttress structures had been added later.

Sherd material was scarce on the surface of the site, and even more so in the fill. The following sherd types have been identified as coming from the excavation: Santa Fe Black-on-white; Galisteo Black-on-white; Rowe Black-on-white; Rio Grande Glaze Polychrome I red, I yellow, III, IV, V; Sankawi Black-on-cream; and one small sherd from the Zuñi-Acoma glaze series. The identification of the Rio Grande Glaze types follows Kidder's sequence from Pecos (8) rather than Mera's (10). Kidder believes that Glaze V was the type being made when the first Spaniards entered New Mexico.

As might be expected, surface sherds from the site and immediately surrounding area showed a slightly greater time range. In addition to the above types, Glaze II and VI, and Tewa polished red were found (only one sherd of each).

On the basis of identifiable rim sherds of Rio Grande Glaze from the excavation, 40% were Glaze V. On the basis of all Glaze sherds found in the excavation, 75% were sand-tempered — in other words, locally made. There was very little evidence of trade in the late Glaze pottery; half of the Glaze I was imported.

The absence of Glaze VI would indicate that the structure was built before that period, while the other sherds only show that the structure was built during Glaze V times. Unfortunately, we have no exact date for this period. Only a few bits of rotten wood and a few small pieces of charcoal were found, none of which could be dated. No object or fragment of European origin was found.

The evidence presented from our work can be briefly summarized. The structure is definitely of European origin, without doubt a chapel or church. It had been completed, as witness the fallen roof imprints in adobe found in the fill, and the adobe plaster on exterior and interior walls. The church was in use long enough to require the addition of buttresses on the western, down-hill side, or else the rising height of the wall during construction indicated their need. The original appearance of the building is strictly conjectural; however, hypothetical restoration drawings are included (Fig. 2a, b, c) to show possibilities based upon similarly shaped chapels in the Southwest. No wall remained standing to a height sufficient even to guess at features more than 1½' above the floor.

That the abandoned church structure was used as a possible shelter and temporary camp is indicated by two fire pits or hearths found within the building. The first was just above the floor in the southwest corner of the sacristy. There was practically no burning or smoking of the adjacent wall, but there was a roughly circular, basin-shaped deposit of white wood ash and bits of charcoal. The second pit, much better shaped of adobe, rested just below the present ground surface on top of the adobe wall in front of the sanctuary. No datable charcoal was obtained from either hearth.

There was absolutely no trace of fire in the building. It had not been burned; it was definitely razed and the wall bricks and roofing vigas and poles removed for possible use elsewhere. (See following section: adobe bricks used to floor a late kiva in the Pecos Pueblo; squared roof [ ? ] beams used as roof supports in this same kiva.)

No outlying structures were found near the church. The shallow soil, in many places the bedrock forming the surface, almost eliminates the possibility of a cemetery in front of the church. Below the edge of the *mesilla*, and a few hundred feet to the east, is an irregular cluster of large sandstone boulders forming a rough circle. Concentrated around this area were numerous sherds. Types represented were Galisteo Black-on-white; Rowe Black-on-white; Rio Grande Glaze Polychrome I, II, III, IV, V; and Tewa Polychrome. The series is the same as that found in the chapel excavation, with the exception of the Tewa Polychrome. There is a time gap between the Glaze and the Tewa. This could be explained on the basis of later use of the area for farming after the abandonment of the chapel and shelter area. Also, nearby these boulders were faint outlines of rock, possibly remains of a shelter wall, though only excavation could prove the validity of this guess. The boulders could have served as part of a crude brush shelter erected by the priest as a temporary place of abode while the church was being built.

#### SPECULATIVE REVIEW OF DOCUMENTARY AND OTHER DATA

This section may be summed up as being little more than a variation upon Bandelier's theme of 1881 — his suspicion that the "lost" church was a "Christian chapel, erected, or perhaps only in process of erection, before 1680" (2: p. 88).

Most of the few extant references to pre-Revolt missionary activities at Pecos are well known. None contains data which can be applied unmistakably to our "lost" church.

According to these references, Fray Luis de Escalona (or Ubeda), a Franciscan lay brother, remained at Pecos after the return of Coronado's army to Mexico in 1542. He had with him some sheep, a few tools, and probably some trinkets to help gain the good graces of the Indians. At least one and possibly several Mexican Indians, and possibly also two negroes, one with a family, stayed with him. As a lay brother, not qualified to say Mass, he would have possessed a minimal amount of church equipment. Although he could have built a church or chapel, in the absence of an ordained priest the structure could not have been duly consecrated.

Mota Padilla, writing in 1740, says that Fray Luis lived at Pecos in a hut or cave, where the Indians ministered to him. Early sources as well as later historians agree that since nothing further was ever heard of Fray Luis, he probably was soon killed by the Indians. Espejo, whose little band reached Pecos in 1583, makes no report of finding a church structure there, although he does mention seeing a "bold and audacious Mexican Indian who had been with Coronado's expedition" (5: pp. 335-6). Apparently this man was not questioned about Fray Luis' fate.<sup>1</sup> Neither does Castaño de Sosa mention a church structure. His party stayed five or six days in Pecos in 1590, observing aspects of pueblo life in some detail. If a church had been there at the time, it probably would have been noticed — unless, already razed, its foundations were hidden under the December snows, out of sight of the pueblo in the rocky *rincón* northeast of the then occupied North House.

Espejo carried back with him to Mexico a Pecos Indian who later received instruction from the Franciscans in Tlanepantla, and died there under the name of Don Pedro Oroz.<sup>2</sup> From this convert,

1. As several historians have pointed out, the unhappy details of Coronado's expedition seem to have dropped temporarily out of public knowledge soon after 1542. Espejo knew of the three priests who remained in New Mexico after the Rodríguez-Chamuscado entry of 1581, but neither he nor Sosa, a few years later, seem to have heard of Fray Luis.

2. Fray Pedro Oroz was a Spanish-born Franciscan friar and chronicler of some repute in Mexico at that time. He died in Santiago Tlatelolco in 1597 (10: pp. 12-15). Following a custom later used in New Mexico, the Pecos convert may have been given the priest's name upon baptism.

apparently, a Mexican Indian *donado* attached to the Franciscans — one Juan de Dios — learned the Pecos tongue at Tlanepantla.

The sketchy accounts of the Humaña and Leyva expedition, based on the report of an Indian survivor, note only that this ill-starred party seems to have passed through Pecos about 1593. No details are given about the pueblo.

The next notice of missionary activity at Pecos is in records of Oñate's colonization of New Mexico. In 1598 Fray Francisco de San Miguel was assigned to the large eastern area of the province, with Pecos as his headquarters, and arrived at the pueblo in September of that year. He was accompanied by the *donado* Juan de Dios, noted above, to act as interpreter. Just how long Fray Francisco stayed at Pecos is uncertain. He is reported as being the guardian of the church and convent at San Ildefonso in 1601 (13: V. XIX, p. 328), and apparently left for Mexico with the deserters from Oñate's capital later in that year (1: p. 152, nn. 7 and 8). What happened to Juan de Dios is unknown.

Records for the next few years are scanty. Bandelier wrote (2: p. 120) that the large church at Pecos was built after 1629.<sup>3</sup> Since his time, however, documents have come to light which show that a church — although not necessarily the one he describes — had been built at Pecos before that date.

As noted by Scholes and Bloom, there were only two or three Franciscan friars left in New Mexico by the end of 1609. They and their few former confreres had confined most of their missionary activities to the Tewa and Rio Grande Keres districts. It was only in the next two decades, when friar personnel was greatly enlarged by several successive deputations from Mexico, that such activities were extended to the frontier pueblos, including Pecos (13: V. XIX, pp. 329 *et seq.*, and also 12: p. 145).

The same authors state (13: V. XX, p. 66) that the permanent mission at Pecos was founded as early as 1619, with Fray Pedro Zambrano Ortiz as guardian. Fray Pedro de Ortega followed him as guardian in 1621, and Fray Andrés Suárez (or Juárez) the next

3. Not in 1617, as quoted by Kubler (8: p. 85). In his notes on the Ayer translation of the 1630 Benavides Memorial, Hodge lists Pecos among the ten pueblos having churches in 1617, but omits Pecos in his revised notes on the Revised Memorial of 1634.

year, staying until 1633. They further note that although Benavides gives Suárez chief credit for building the church and convent, there is evidence that the church was under construction as early as 1621, when Ortega was in charge. In a letter dated October 2, 1622, Suárez hopes that the church will be finished the next year, and asks the viceroy for a *retablo*, a statue of the child Jesus, and the advocacy of the mission.

That the church — or a church — may have been in existence even earlier than 1621 is further suggested by another reference in Scholes (12: p. 169, n. 15). Testifying in 1626, a Santa Fe *alcalde* said that in 1621 he had gone to Pecos and found Fray Pedro de Ortega greatly disturbed by the efforts of one "Maçayo" to persuade the Indians not to go to Church, telling them that Governor Eulate had ordered that they should not go to Mass nor to instruction, nor assist at prayers, nor obey the minister. This could imply that a building and a religious program already were well established at that date.

As regards the nature of this church building, historians have laid much stress upon Benavides' (1634) reference to the "*convento* and church of peculiar construction and beauty, very spacious, with room for all the people of the pueblo,"<sup>4</sup> and also upon Vetancurt's (1697) description of a "magnificent temple, adorned with six towers, three on each side," etc. Later writers, also, dwell upon the splendor and great size of the Pecos church.

That none of these descriptions may apply to the 1621 (or earlier) church is possibly suggested by another reference noted by Scholes (11: pp. 45-58) as being connected with the Zárate Salmerón *Relacion* of 1626. In a list of the missions existing at that time, the various establishments are characterized as being "ordinary," "fair," "good," "very good," "very fine," "excellent," "splendid," "handsome," and "most handsome." Acoma is "most handsome," Jémez "splendid," Chilili and Isleta "very fine." Along with the churches at Santa Fe, San Ildefonso, Nambé, Cuarac, Picuris, and others, the Pecos church is given only a "very good" rating.

4. His statement about the church's capacity must be taken with caution; even the big church at Pecos would not have accommodated all the inhabitants of the pueblo at that time. As Kubler notes (8: pp. 73-76) an equivalent of the *atrio* or open-air chapel, as was commonly used in seventeenth-century Mexico, might have been employed for public worship.

Again, in this list, although *conventos* are specified in connection with the churches at Santa Fe, Santa Clara, Santo Domingo, Galisteo, San Marcos (unfinished), Jémez, Abó, and over a dozen others, no *convento* is attributed to Pecos.

Including our "lost" church, it now appears that there were three separate church edifices built successively at Pecos. The roofless walls of the longest-lived, and largest, still form the most noticeable feature of the entire pueblo ruin. Until very recently it was thought to be the only Pecos church of historical reference — the one noted by Benavides and the one presumed to have been standing and damaged during the Revolt of 1680. With the publication in early 1956 of the Domínguez Report of 1776 (4), however, doubt is thrown upon the pre-Revolt building date of this edifice and especially upon its existence in Benavides' time. Domínguez records seeing, in 1776, the remains of an older church abutting the large structure, joined to the latter at the southwest section of the big church's nave and extending to the south. Its western wall formed the east wall of the two-storied, cloistered *convento*, built in the form of an open square and noted by Domínguez as being in bad condition, apparently through age, when he saw it. The north wall of this *convento*, extending some distance west from what would have been the southwest tower of the big church's façade, formed the south side of the nearly square cemetery in front of the large building.

If Domínguez' placement and quite circumstantial description of all of these joined structures is correct, it is evident today that both the older church and the *convento* subsequently underwent great alteration, previous to their complete ruination by 1846. Emory's well-known drawing of that year shows two walls still standing south of and apparently joined to the south nave wall of the big church, which might be identified as the ruined east and south walls of the older building. The *convento* as described by Domínguez, however, is almost completely missing, although other two-storied structures are shown farther to the south. And by 1881, when Bandelier surveyed the scene, all evidence of the older church had vanished. His rough plan of the *convento*, then reduced to a "rectangular terrace of red earth," places it due south instead of southwest of the big church, separated from it by a long passageway

about thirteen feet wide which he surmises to have been covered at one time. The *convento* mound extends hardly at all west of the big church's façade, and shows no wall-line which definitely can be identified as a remnant of Domínguez' older building.

In 1939, excavations were conducted in the *convento* by the Museum of New Mexico. The plan and fragmentary notes which survive from this project also place the *convento* structure due south of the big church, and bear out, roughly, Bandelier's plan made from surface observations fifty years earlier. The 1939 plan shows that a few wall-traces were found extending to the west of what is taken to be the main *convento* assemblage, but the surviving notes do not cover this westerly section. At no point in the excavation, evidently, was any sub-floor digging done to pick up stone footings. No walls are shown which can be fitted with certainty into Domínguez' older church.

I give this extended notice to Domínguez' description in order to suggest a possible sequence in the building-dates of his two structures and that of our third, "lost," church, making this "lost" church the first and Domínguez' older church the second in the succession of the three churches built at Pecos. This sequence-linkage is at best tenuous and wholly inferential, as the following notes will show.

1. Although both the "lost" church and the historic church-*convento* are located well outside of the pueblo enclosure, the "lost" church is slightly closer to the great North House, the section of the pueblo intensively occupied during the Sixteenth and probably the Seventeenth Centuries. Kubler has well discussed the possible reasons why some of the early missions were isolated from their pueblos (8: pp. 18-19). These include (a) Pueblo hostility to the friars, (b) the friars' mistrust of the Pueblos, (c) secondary functioning of the massive church buildings as forts, for external defense of the pueblos, and (d) the need for ample land, for development of the mission buildings, fields, and corrals.

Concerning Pecos, the location of the "lost" church could be accounted for by either or both of the first two reasons, but certainly not by the last two. It was most precariously placed from the standpoint of nomad enemy attack from the east; vulnerable itself, it could offer no protection to the pueblo. Also its immediate terrain

was poor in respect to the need for sufficient land for full mission expansion and also to a necessity not noted by Kubler — the simple but fundamental requirements of a cemetery. The church itself was built almost upon bedrock; in particular, the area right in front of it — the usual location of a church cemetery — was probably then, as it is today, almost devoid of soil.

It might be said, of course, that the first two reasons could also account for the location of Domínguez' two churches, even farther from the North House than was the "lost" church. The site of these buildings, however, can be justified on the other two counts as well. Located athwart the narrow southern neck of the long *mesita* on which the pueblo itself was built — at the point where the *mesita's* rocky escarpments dwindle off into level or gently sloping fields to the south — the mission structures served to plug the weakest point in the pueblo's entire perimeter. Furthermore, the site offered all the usable land that the mission required.

Considered in respect to location alone, therefore, it might appear that the "lost" church was erected as a trial effort, at a time when the friars were experiencing hostility from their prospective charges (and were a bit wary of those charges themselves), and were not yet familiar with the constant Apache menace at Pecos. It can even be surmised that the building's restricted and stony site was the choice of a tyro in mission establishment — a skilled workman, but a man unused to over-all planning. It might appear also that the church was abandoned, perhaps before full completion, when the faults of its site became apparent either to its original builder or to his more practical-minded successor. By this time the Pecos Indians, impressed by the fort-like quality of what their visitors called a "church," may have suggested a new location — still outside the pueblo but of excellent strategic value as far as they and the Apaches were concerned. The friars, no doubt caring less about the Apaches than about sufficient soil in which to plant their crops and bury their converts, would have been happy to make the move.

2. Domínguez makes no mention of the "lost" church, which therefore must have been either completely razed and forgotten at his time, or not yet built. That the "lost" church had been built (and razed) long before his time seems likely, from the archaeological evidence. There is nothing in this evidence, nor in the many deeds,

grants, and other documents on Pecos Pueblo land matters which I have checked, to suggest that the "lost" church could have been built after 1776, when Domínguez made his inspection.

3. Domínguez does not state whether his older church was cruciform in plan (like the later big church) or of the continuous-nave style (like the "lost" church). Clarification of this point, which might have a slight bearing on the time-relationships of all three structures, must await sub-floor excavation. Kubler states (8: p. 132) that although sixteenth-century Mexican churches rarely were provided with transepts, "in New Mexico the cruciform church . . . is common during the first generation of colonization." While this latter statement may be correct for the flourishing Franciscan mission-building period *circa* and following the Zárate Salmerón report of 1626, it cannot be applied with certainty to the very first churches built in New Mexico. None of these, whether pre- or post-Oñate, has been identified beyond doubt. The three foundations thus far excavated which might fit into this class — the problematical Spanish structure of "Bandelier's Puaray," the separate foundation underlying the present Chapel of San Miguel, and now our "lost" church at Pecos — all lack transepts.

4. As excavation of the "lost" church revealed neither any woodwork nor evidence that its woodwork had been burned in place, it can be assumed that the roof-beams, lintels, altar steps, and furnishings (if any) had been removed when the church was demolished, probably for use elsewhere. In this respect, it is interesting that the nave of the "lost" church and both the nave and transept of the church in use in 1776 are of the same width — approximately twenty-five feet — and that Domínguez states that his older church was "of a size to fit into the nave" of the newer one.<sup>5</sup> Roof-beams from the "lost" church thus could have been transferred to either of the other two.

5. This statement must be checked against Domínguez' other remark that the older church was "falling down" at the time he inspected it. If it was in ruinous and littered condition, it would have been difficult for him to estimate its size correctly in relation to the clean and impressive nave of the other building. He is in error, incidentally, in his measurements of this nave of the newer church; whereas he states it to be ninety-nine feet long, its actual length is only seventy-five feet. His figure on its width, however, is correct — about twenty-five feet.

It is also interesting, in view of the complete lack of any adobe altars, steps, or other adobe fittings found in the "lost" church, to note that all the important furniture in Domínguez' big church, as described by him, was of wood. This included the five sanctuary steps made of wrought beams,<sup>6</sup> the "movable" main altar table on a dais of boards, two wooden altar tables in the north transept, a wooden pulpit, wooden confessional, great wooden table with five drawers in the sacristy, wooden wash-stand, etc. Alone of all Pueblo groups, the natives of Pecos receive notice by both Benavides (in 1634) and Domínguez on their skill in carpentry, the former stating that "their minister brought masters of this craft to teach them" (3: p. 67).

I am not wholly convinced that the adobe bricks found cached in the sacristy of the "lost" church, as noted in the previous section, were salvaged from demolition of the church's walls. It is true that some of them had layers and flakes of hard mortar-like adobe clinging to their surface. Many others, however, came from the two-tiered stack entirely free of any encrustations, with edges and corners as sharp and surfaces as clean as though they had just come from the mold. I believe it possible that the "mortar" attached to some was formed of liquefied mud washed down from the mixed fill covering the stack, which had seeped between adjoining bricks and solidified.

Again, why would salvaged bricks have been stacked as these were — slanting on edge, in just the way that new bricks are stacked near adobe-pits today, for drying? And would the sacristy have been left roofed as a storage room for bricks being taken from other parts of the structure, and then later have been unroofed, leaving those carefully saved bricks open to the weather? When found, the fill above them consisted of the same kind of rubble that lay above floor level in the rest of the church — broken bricks, mortar and roof-clay, bits of the last showing prints of the poles

6. The Museum of New Mexico excavation of 1939 revealed remnants of what was taken to be an adobe altar, with five wooden steps leading up to it, in a room in the north section of the *convento* mound. Its location as given in the excavation plan would place it in the north end of Domínguez' older church — an area which (if his notes are correct) seems to have been completely rebuilt and cut up into small rooms and passageways after his time.

and twigs on which it had been laid. And as a final point, although the interior wall-surfaces of the nave, the south face of the chancel retaining-wall, and even part of the exterior foundation surfaces were found to be plastered, no plaster was found on the interior wall-surfaces of the sacristy.

All in all, I suspect that the bricks stacked in the sacristy were new bricks, stored there in the yet unfinished room while work was still progressing in other parts of the church. That they were never used, and that the sacristy remained unfinished, would indicate that the church itself never found use — a condition which would agree with the non-recovery of any European material during our excavation.

Use by the Indians of some of the "lost" church bricks, whether new or salvaged, may be indicated by the fact that Kiva 7 (Kidder's designation) at the north end of the North Plaza in the pueblo has a floor of bricks of exactly the same type and size, made without straw. Fragments of two squared beams used as roof supports were also found in this kiva, but unfortunately neither one yielded a tree-ring date. Bandelier notes (2: p. 72) the presence of adobes containing straw, and also of squared beams, in repaired sections of the west wing of the North House, which material he assumes to have been taken from the Revolt-damaged church and *convento*. The Museum of New Mexico *convento* excavation notes fail to specify whether or not straw was present in any of the bricks found in the walls and flooring. Whether adobes of the "lost" church type found pueblo use other than in Kiva 7 is not yet known.

From all the above, it might be inferred that having been stripped of its woodwork for re-use in a new, better-located structure, the never-finished "lost" church was left as an empty, roofless shell, its adobes at the disposal of the Indians. That much of the wall-fabric was demolished at the time the wood was taken out seems probable, judging from the amount of mixed roof and wall material on the floor. And that the remaining wall-stubs were leveled at an early date, before the Pecos Indians acquired much livestock, also seems probable. The walled enclosure would have made an excellent corral — yet no dung was found at any level in the fill.

5. Another bit of evidence on the age of the church might lie in the construction of its stone foundation. Wherever exposed, by

trenching, these proved to be of careful workmanship, laid up painstakingly with an eye for flat surfacing and sharp, true corners. In particular, and as a point which Kubler (8: p. 139) includes as being diagnostic of the better workmanship of the Seventeenth Century as compared with that of the Eighteenth, the interior surfaces of all the foundations were neatly chinked with small stone spalls set in mortar in the interstices between the building stones. This was so whether the surface was later plastered, as in the nave, or left unplastered and destined to be covered with fill, as in the raised sanctuary base and in the hollow, square footings of the two probable buttresses on the west side.

\* \* \*

In conclusion, it is obvious that the above framework of little fact and much theory is not strong enough to support a statement that the "lost" church was built by Fray Luis de Escalona, *ca.* 1542. Neither can it certainly be said that Fray Francisco de San Miguel and the *donado* Juan de Dios had anything to do with it — although it is tempting to assign its honest workmanship and deplorable situation to the latter. That it was built, found faulty, and destroyed before either of Domínguez' two churches were erected seems probable — but just when the earlier (or in fact either) of these was built is not yet surely known. Benavides' statement in 1634 that Suárez (*ca.* 1622) erected a "convent and church" cannot refer to the "lost" church, which had no *convento*. It would seem that he means, therefore, the earlier of the two churches to the south. If so, and if my inferences that the "lost" church was still earlier are valid, it would place the building-date of the "lost" church not later than in the first two decades of the 1600's. Beyond that, it is probably unwise at present to hazard any further guesses.

#### A PUEBLO INDIAN SHRINE NEAR THE "LOST" PECOS CHURCH

Prior to excavations at the "lost" Pecos church, a reconnaissance was made of the immediate surroundings. The purposes were to become familiar with the ecological setting, to locate possible sources of construction material, and to observe the occupation range and extent near the church. During these investigations, a concentration of foreign rocks was noticed on a small bench.

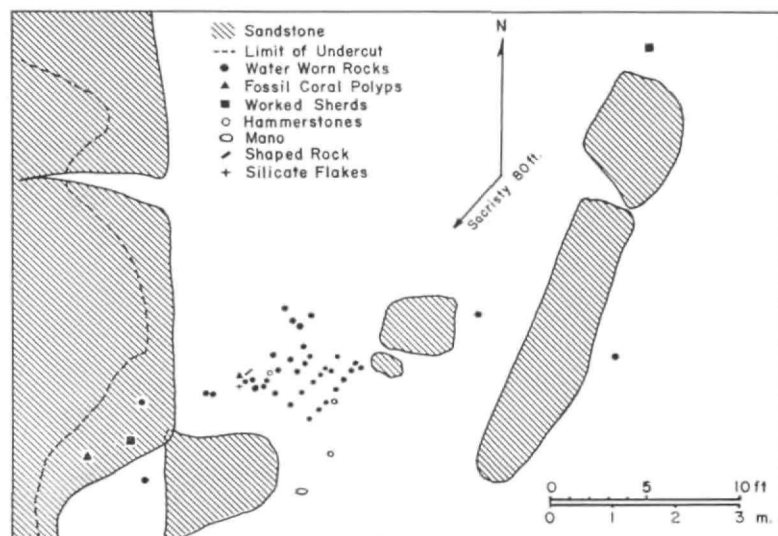


Fig. 5. Plan of shrine (above) and view of shrine looking northwest (below).



Further examination revealed a correspondence between these specimens and shrine objects found by A. V. Kidder at Pecos Pueblo (6: Fig. 63, p. 87). It was considered desirable to record the manifestation because of its proximity to the "lost" Pecos church and as another example of a Pueblo Indian shrine which could be used in future syntheses.

#### SITUATION

The strata of the *mesilla* on which the "lost" Pecos church is located have a gentle dip to the west. Whereas the surface on the west side grades into a *rincón* drainage, the east side of the *mesilla* is marked by a sandstone and clay outcrop approximately 700' long and 20' to 30' high. Most of the east edge is sharp with a dissected clay talus. About midway between the north and south ends of the outcrop, 80' northeast of the church sacristy, a small, clay-floored bench was formed between the outcrop and remnant sandstone boulders. The shrine objects were concentrated on this bench and under the outcrop where erosion of the clay bed had undercut the sandstone stratum (Fig. 5).

#### SHRINE OBJECTS

Objects found at the shrine may be divided into seven groups, four of which are integral parts of the shrine. Two groups probably are intrusive, while one group may be considered intrusive in part.

##### *Water-worn Rocks*

In the nearby Pecos River, amphibolite to granitic rocks occur which have been washed from exposures upstream. Water and silts have abraded these rocks into fanciful combinations of ridges, reniform or lobed areas, pitted surfaces, and concavities due to varying crystalline structure, differential resistance, or veins of quartz and feldspar in the rocks. A single example of a light-colored mica schist had been worn to a smooth celt shape. No specimen exhibited human modification.

These rocks formed the largest group, with thirty-eight examples. Two additional pieces were found 30' north of the concentration.

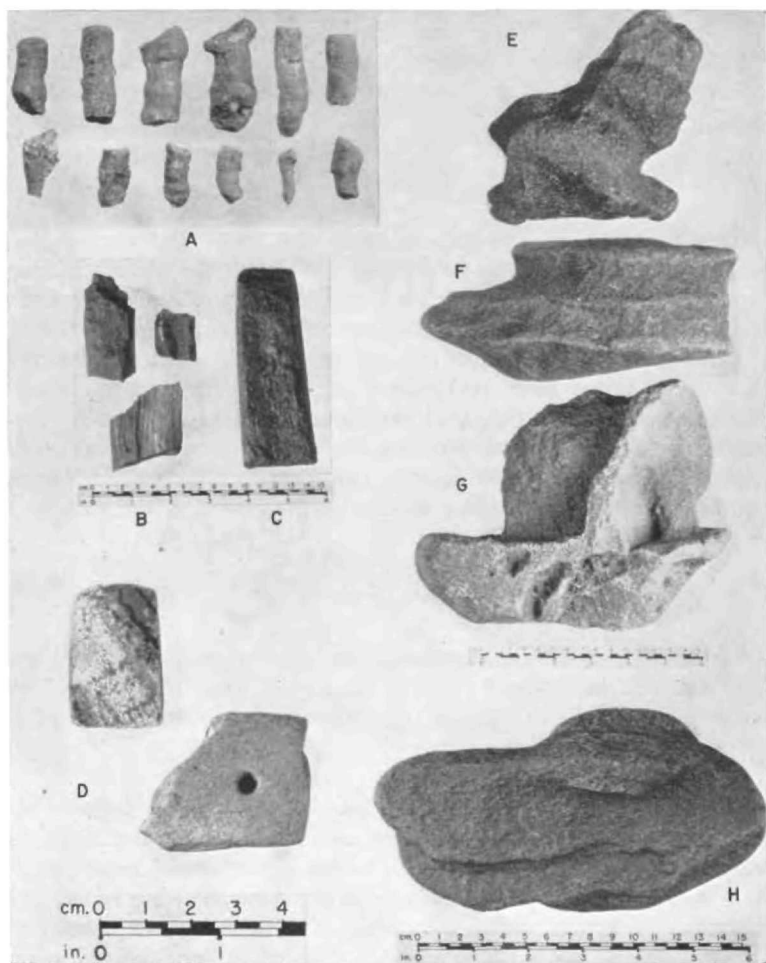


Fig. 6. *Representative artifacts from the shrine: a. fossil corals; b. petrified wood; c. worked piece of phyllite; d. worked sherds; e-h. water-worn rocks.*

They ranged in size from small spheroids with a maximum diameter of 3½", to large, asymmetrical forms 12" long and 6" in diameter (Fig. 6). Kidder found similar examples in almost every collection of ceremonial objects, but very few in the refuse. He feels, therefore, that some special reverence was attached to them (6: p. 104).

### *Fossil Corals*

Twelve specimens were found grouped on the west side of the concentration. A single example occurred under the overhang, and two others were found beyond the limits of the bench. None showed modification but were deposited in the same form as they occur at outcrops of the Pennsylvanian Magdalena limestones nearby (Fig. 6).

Kidder records quantities of fossils in the refuse and some examples in "medicine outfits," but he thinks that many were just curiosity pieces (6: p. 110). However, the mode of occurrence would indicate that they were ceremonial objects in this instance.

### *Worked Sherds*

In addition to a single water-worn rock and one fossil coral under the overhang, there was a rectangular-shaped Glaze V sherd. The latter was ground on all four edges, but the faces were unmodified. A second worked sherd of Abiquiú Black-on-grey was found on the northeast edge of the bench. This was also rectangular but was incomplete. Grinding occurred on three edges, while the fourth edge was broken after the object was made. The exterior surface had a conical drill hole .24" deep. There was no evidence of a connection hole beginning on the interior (Fig. 6). While both examples appear to be associated with the shrine, Kidder found no examples of worked sherds in any of the numerous cult caches (6: p. 155).

### *Hammerstones*

Three quartzite hammerstones were found on the bench in and near the concentration of shrine objects. One had been flaked to a discoidal shape; the other two were modified predominantly by use. This group is considered to be included accidentally in the

shrine assemblage. Similar examples occur along the entire edge of the *mesilla* and on its surface.

### *Mano*

A single, oval-shaped, one-hand mano was found three feet south of the concentration of shrine objects. Like the hammerstone, it is considered to be intrusive because of the distribution of similar artifacts along the edge and surface of the *mesilla*.

### *Shaped Rock*

When tests were made below the surface, a fragment of worked phyllite was uncovered immediately below the fossil coral group. It was an elongated, rectangular stone with two faces that were ground and polished. The two ends and two sides were cleavage faces (Fig. 6). Kidder illustrates a number of "presumably ceremonial" objects of phyllite, but, since the object in question was not complete, it is difficult to equate it with examples (6: p. 94).

### *Silicate Flakes*

Along with the shaped phyllite were three small fragments of petrified wood of a variety found in the Galisteo Basin. They did not appear to have been worked, but were probably deposited in the same form as they were found. Similar pieces occurred in ceremonial caches at Pecos (Fig. 6) (6: p. 111).

Flakes of quartzite were scattered on the bench, but these did not appear to be a part of the shrine assemblage. Like the hammerstones and mano, silicate flakes were found along the entire knoll edge and surface.

## DISCUSSION

After the specimens were mapped, a little excavation and sifting were done. This procedure did not uncover beads, turquoise, or fetishes. It did, however, locate the fragments of petrified wood and the worked phyllite. Also, it revealed that the shrine had no cultural depth lower than materials exposed on the surface.

Since the artifacts were not widespread, it appeared that natural

forces had not altered the shrine arrangement extensively. The objects were not placed upright when found, but it may be postulated that the water-worn rocks had originally formed a semi-circular cluster on the east side of the fossil corral, petrified wood, and worked phyllite nucleus. Finer details are not apparent.

With the exception of the two worked sherds, nothing was found in the shrine that would date it. However, a provisional period may be assigned to the shrine through use of evidence which Kidder obtained, and acceptance of the possibility that the worked sherds belong to the shrine assemblage. At the Forked Lightning Ruin, Kidder found a shrine of water-worn rocks which had been deposited long after the site was abandoned (6: p. 195). He makes no mention of water-worn rocks in shrines at Forked Lightning Ruin during the time it was occupied. This would suppose that such shrines were confined to the Glaze Ware periods. Of the groups he mentions at Pecos, most are in a situation that would imply a period toward the end of the glazes rather than near the beginning of the glaze types. If the worked sherds are integral parts of the assemblage, then the shrine cannot be earlier than Glaze V but might be later. This would fit closely with the postulated building time of the "lost" Pecos church.

If the shrine and the "lost" Pecos church are considered as belonging to the same period, then the reasons for their proximity may fall into one of three possibilities. First, the church was built at its location because the place was one already sacred to the Indians. Second, the shrine was built later to counteract the influence of the church. Third, the proximity of the two was purely coincidental. At present, there appears to be no way of satisfactorily resolving the issue.

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