ARCHAEOLOGY

25,000 Yr. Old Corn Pollen

➤ THE OLDEST maize pollen grains ever found have been dug up about 240 feet below the surface of the dried lake bed on which Mexico City was built. They are at least 25,000 years old, possibly much older, dating back into glacial times, judged by the depth at which they were found.

"This discovery opens up the whole question of the origin of maize, or Indian corn, whose modern form is not known to live long without the aid of man," Dr. Paul B. Sears of Yale University told SCIENCE SERVICE. He revealed the find to scientists attending the Symposium on Climate Change in Boston.

"The discovery also adds interest to the problem of ancient man in Mexico," Dr. Sears stated. "Were the plants from which the pollen came wild or were there people in Mexico who were growing it? It is difficult to think that man may actually have been farming since we have previously considered him a hunter at that early stage."

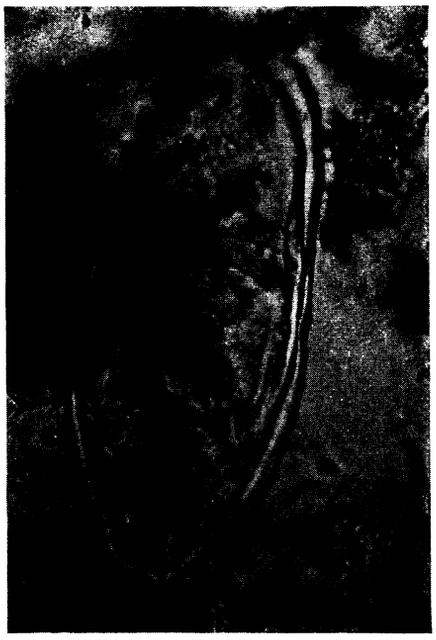
The maize pollen grains were buried in layers 230 to 250 feet deep. They were discovered and identified by Mrs. Kathryn H. Clisby, research associate in geology at Oberlin College, Ohio. Their identity has been confirmed by Drs. Elso Barghoorn and Miss Margaret Wolfe of Harvard University who have been collaborating with Dr. Paul Mangelsdorf in the study.

"We shall have to hunt the ancestors of Mexico man, as well as those of corn, much earlier than we had thought necessary," Dr. Sears said. "There is, however, increasing evidence, such as the recent findings of flint points in the same layers with elephant bones, that man lived in Mexico during the last of the Pleistocene Age."

The hunting weapons and bones have been judged by dating with the radioactive carbon calendar to be about 11,000 years years old.

Yale University, Oberlin College, Harvard University, the Geological Society of America and the Viking Fund jointly backed the research that led to the discovery of the 25,000 year-old maize pollen grains. Mexican scientists are collaborating in the search for remnants of ancient man in Mexico. The jeep used in the field work was donated by Willys-Overland.

Science News Letter, May 24, 1952



OLDEST MAIZE POLLEN—One of the maize pollen grains found buried 231 feet deep under Mexico City. Others of the same type were found in somewhat deeper layers. Width of the grain shown in the cut is just under 100 microns, about the size of thick human hair.

OCEANOGRAPHY

Gulf Stream Meanders With Seasons And Tides

➤ THE GULF Stream meanders probably as far south as the Florida Straits, three U. S. Navy oceanographers reported to the American Geophysical Union meeting in Washington.

Joseph E. O'Hare, Quick H. Carlson and William E. Tamblyn of the Navy's hydrographic office said that observations made with Loran to get the ship's exact position combined with meteorological data showed that the wanderings of the Gulf Stream are apparently related to seasonal and tidal cycles. The meanderings have previously been known to exist north of Cape Hatteras, off the North Carolina coast.

Science News Letter, May 24, 1952

● RADIO

Saturday, May 31, 1952, 3:15-3:30 p.m. EDT

"Adventures in Science," with Watson Davis, director of Science Service, over Columbia Broadcasting System.

Norris E. Dodd, director-general of the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization, discusses "Food of the World."

FORESTRY

Bulletwood May Be Easier On Office Girls' Nylons

➤ "OH, DARN! I've got a run in my stocking," may well become an outmoded refrain for career girls if the tropical wood, *Manilkara bidentata,* is used to make the legs of office furniture.

This wood, commonly known as bulletwood, is extremely durable and practically impervious to abrasions, thus furniture made of it would have none of the nasty scars and splinters that put runs in stockings.

Bulletwood is two and a half times as strong as white oak, the most widely-used North American hardwood, Prof. Frederick F. Wangaard of Yale University's Forestry School, New Haven, Conn., reports. Its wood is a dark red, but it is plain, not highly figured like mahogany, and can be machined to an extremely smooth finish.

Science News Letter, May 24, 1952