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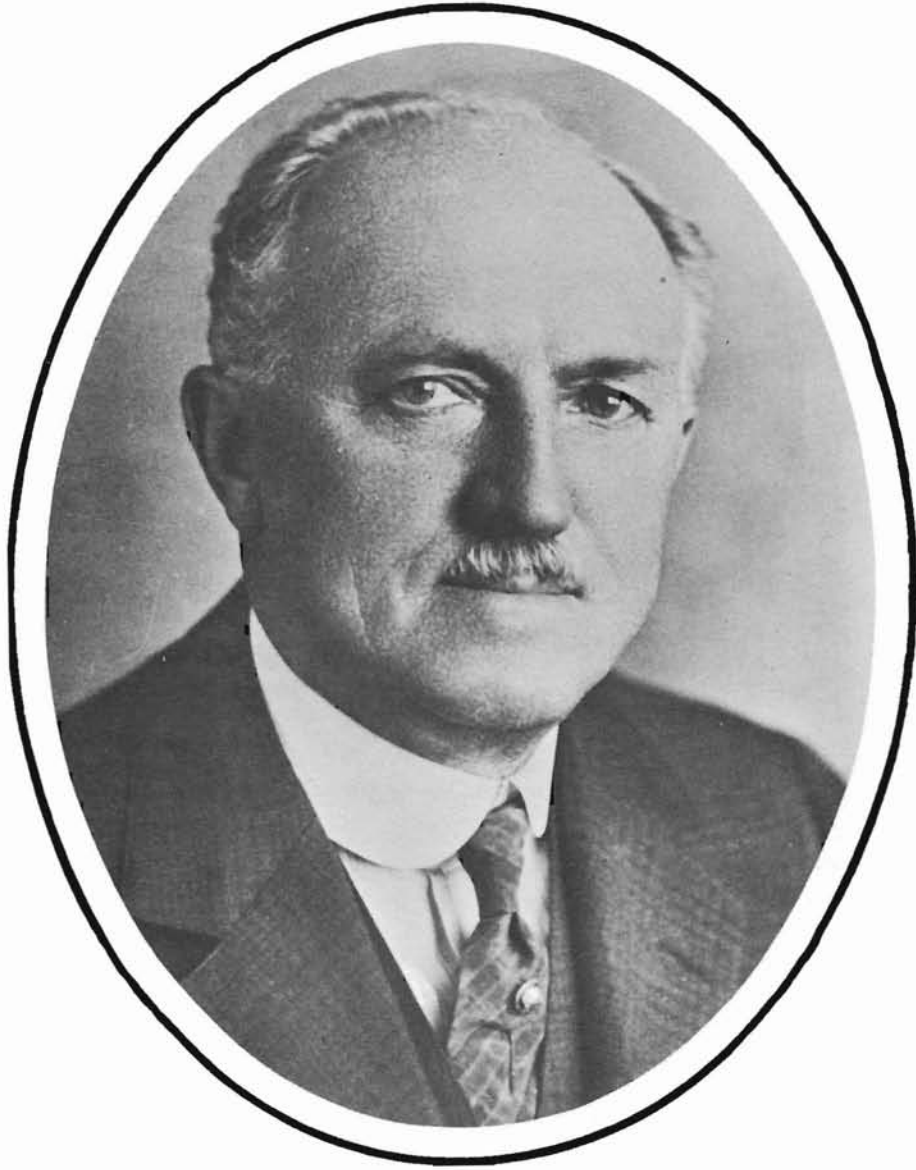


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## CONTENTS

VOLUME FIVE — NUMBER FOUR  
WINTER 1963

- Dedication to EDGAR LEE HEWETT  
*by Robert C. Euler* 287
- FOLKLORE AND THE AMERICAN WEST  
*by Mario S. De Pillis* 291
- THE MULE AS A FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE SOUTHWEST  
*by Floyd F. Ewing, Jr.* 315
- THE PLAN OF SAN DIEGO  
Unrest on the Texas Border in 1915  
*by William M. Hager* 327
- THE MESILLA TIMES  
A Journal of Confederate Arizona  
*by Martin Hardwick Hall* 337
- AN APACHE'S EPITAPH  
The Last Legal Hanging in Arizona — 1936  
*edited and annotated by Douglas D. Martin* 352



A DEDICATION  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
EDGAR LEE HEWETT

1865-1946

*by* ROBERT C. EULER  
*Arizona State College*

IN 1896 there entered upon the field of American archaeology a man who in half a century of effort was to make significant and, at the time, often unnoticed contributions. These were to make for him a host of friends — and an equivalent number of detractors. Ironically and paradoxically these contributions, perhaps not so much in scholarly books and learned papers as in other accomplished acts, were later to be and even now are taken for granted by individuals unmindful of their originator, or are overlooked by egotistical scholars. This man was Edgar Lee Hewett. In the light of contemporary efforts in prehistory, his accomplishments were basic and illuminating, and frequently fulgent. Had social scientists built more vigorously upon them, their disciplines would be the stronger today. An immense vitality and penchant for simultaneous involvement in many activities characterized Hewett's professional career. He was at once concerned with the establishment of academic departments of anthropology, directing museums and exhibits, and leading field expeditions.

Born in Illinois in 1865 and educated in the Midwest for the pedagogy, he turned only in the closing decade of the nineteenth century to the discipline wherein he should most be remembered. In 1896 in New Mexico he began excavating ruins of the Pajarito Plateau and at Pecos. For more than thirty years thereafter he either led or participated in important field explorations in Chaco Canyon and on the Mesa Verde in the American Southwest, in the Maya region of Guatemala, and in North Africa. He also was a member of the Yale University Babylonian expedition which probed the ruins of ancient civilizations in Palestine, Syria, Arabia, and Mesopotamia.

With great foresight Hewett worked assiduously to protect the more significant ruins in the Southwest. In 1906 his concern led him to aid Congressman J. F. Lacey of Iowa in the formulation of the federal act for the preservation

of American antiquities—in theory a most important conservation and protection measure. Similarly, Hewett was directly responsible for the establishment of Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado and the national monuments of Bandelier and Chaco Canyon in New Mexico, as well as the New Mexico state park system.

Hewett early recognized the need for organization in American archaeology and science. In 1898 he established the Archaeological Society of New Mexico. In 1906, two years before the University of Geneva awarded him a doctorate in science, he was appointed Director of American Research by the Archaeological Institute of America. Three years later, in Santa Fé, he founded and became the director of the Museum of New Mexico and the School of American Archaeology (later the School of American Research). These positions he held throughout his life. In the second decade of this century, Hewett not only supervised and directed the exhibits in science and art at the Panama ██████████ Exposition in San Diego, but founded the San Diego Museum of Man and was its initial director. Before that decade ended, he also aided in the establishment of the Southwestern Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, before the parent body of which he had presented a scientific paper as early as 1901.

Hewett also made significant academic contributions to the field of anthropology. In 1898, while serving as the first president of what is now New Mexico Highlands University at Las Vegas, he taught courses in archaeology at that institution. He also had the unique distinction of founding three major departments of anthropology. He originated anthropological curricula at San Diego State College in 1917, the University of New Mexico in 1927, and the University of Southern California in 1932. The renowned University of New Mexico archaeological field school at Chaco Canyon was also a product of Hewett's scholarly administration in the 1930s. In fact, he developed the first archaeological field school in the Southwest when he was excavating on the Pajarito Plateau. These strenuous efforts amply demonstrated his firm belief in the dictum he had pronounced before the turn of the century: "Research is a vital factor in all education." Hewett not only was an archaeologist, but also an educational philosopher. In training his students, he prescribed a program that deemphasized the sentimentality of the romantic school, yet at the same time stressed a broader perspective than that held by the specialized technicians.

Yet Hewett considered classroom instruction and field research, by themselves, insufficient. That he was early aware of the necessity for publication and publishing media is exemplified by his founding in 1913 of *El Palacio*, the journal of the Museum of New Mexico, and in 1925 of *Art and Archaeology*, a publication of the Archaeological Institute of America. More significant is the fact that Hewett also was responsible for launching the University of New Mexico Press.

Less well-known are other important activities in Hewett's professional life. By 1905, for example, he already had published in the *American Anthropologist* two papers suggesting the relationships between education and anthropology. The importance of the interaction between these disciplines only recently has been "rediscovered" by some contemporary anthropologists and educators. More-

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over, from a theoretical view, to Hewett must go credit for being one of the first to use the "direct historical method" in archaeology. For example, during his pioneering field work on the Pajarito Plateau northwest of Santa Fé, he attempted to work back through time by using local Tewa Indian informants to explain facets of their prehistory as it was uncovered.

Hewett also developed one of the first cogent syntheses of Southwestern prehistory in his doctoral dissertation, *Les communautés anciennes dans le désert américain*, accepted at the University of Geneva in 1908. He perhaps was influenced by Gustav Nordenskiöld whose classic *The Cliff Dwellers of the Mesa Verde*, published in Stockholm in 1893, attempted a three fold geographic classification of Southwestern cultures. Hewett, in his thesis, defined and expanded the culture area concept as it pertained to this vast region. "Cultural regions," he stated in translation from the French, is "a term that we use to designate a region where there is one dominant culture, and to which all other cultures are subordinate, but which cannot be overlooked..." He divided the Southwestern archeological region into five zones—the San Juan, the Little Colorado, the Gila, the Rio Grande, and the Chihuahua—and thirty-nine subzones. This pioneering concept unfortunately was generally overlooked in the United States, as his dissertation was published abroad and not widely distributed in this country. Hewett was the first anthropologist actually to employ this organizational concept which did not gain wide acceptance until two decades later. Even today many prehistorians of the Southwest are unaware of this contribution.

Those who would criticize Hewett, who died at Albuquerque on December 31, 1946, because of his seeming pre-occupation with the scholarly popularization of prehistoric remains would do well to think upon his monuments: the founding of three academic departments, two anthropological journals, a university press, an archaeological field school, two museums, and two learned societies. He sought also to protect and preserve a heritage through the Antiquities Act, three national monuments, and a national park. He developed important archaeological concepts, made field explorations on four continents, and authored numerous books and more than two hundred articles. Indeed, many would profit from a re-examination of the enduring contributions made by Edgar Lee Hewett to the knowledge of prehistory.

## NOTE

A complete bibliography of Hewett's writings, 1893–1944, was compiled by Leslie V. Murphey and privately printed in Santa Fé in 1944; later editions included articles he published in 1945 and 1946. For a convenient list of Hewett's anthropological writings, see the *American Anthropologist*, XLIX (April-June 1947), 260–71.

SELECTED LIST OF THE WORKS  
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