

## ANSEL FRANKLIN HALL, 1894-1962

WATSON SMITH

THE DEATH of Ansel Franklin Hall at his home in Denver on March 28, 1962, brought to an end the active career of a man who contributed in an unusual manner to the promotion of archaeology in the American Southwest. Although he was neither a professional nor an amateur archaeologist, he cherished a deep and enduring interest in Nature and in man's relationship to it, and he gave generously of his very considerable organizing and executive abilities in furthering the pursuit of the natural and behavioral sciences by working professionals and interested students.

Ansel Hall was born May 6, 1894, at Oakland, California, the son of Charles and Laura (Crocker) Hall. He graduated in 1917 from the University of California, where he received a degree in Forestry in the first class to be graduated in that field. His interest in Nature led him into the National Park Service, where he began as a ranger at Sequoia National Park, and after service as a forester with the Corps of Engineers in France during the First World War, he was from 1920 to 1923 Park Naturalist at Yosemite National Park. He rose rapidly and was Chief Naturalist of the National Park Service from 1923 to 1930, Senior Naturalist and Chief Forester from 1930 to 1933, and Chief of the Field Division from 1933 to 1937.

In 1923 he was sent to Europe by the American Association of Museums to study European museums and parks. During this period, on January 19, 1924, he married June Alexander at a chateau near Bordeaux, and returned to the United States later that year after further travels. Mr. and Mrs. Hall became the parents of six children, all of whom survive.

His concern for the establishment of museums led him to interest the Laura Spellman Rockefeller Foundation, which provided funds for the establishment of a museum in the Yosemite. He continued effectively to foster the development of museums and educational programs in the western parks. Through his knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm he was able during the depression years to contribute greatly to the National Parks' educational and conservation efforts.

Ansel Hall was a rare combination of romantic idealist and practical business man. He

was an instinctive teacher and had a deep feeling for youth as well as for Nature. During the late 1920's and early 1930's he raised funds from private sources and organized several summer field parties in the national parks for Eagle Scouts, for which he recruited competent scientists as counselors. Dr. Harvey M. Stork was his Field Director. Although at first his interest did not extend to archaeology, he later made it possible for two of his protégés to go to Palestine for archaeological work with William Badé, and in the 1930's he put a small group into the field to assist Gila Pueblo in its archaeological survey of the Grand Canyon area. It was during this period that a group of young men under Dr. Stork's direction did archaeological and botanical work in Costa Rica.

At this time Ansel conceived the idea of expanding these summer trips into a more ambitious and permanent program to study all phases of the natural history of some large, varied, and comparatively little-known area. He discussed the project with many scientific friends and university administrators, and in 1933 the Rainbow Bridge-Monument Valley Expedition was formed. It was later incorporated as American Exploration Society, a nonprofit-making organization. It took its name from the area chosen for study, the remote, colorful northwestern part of the Navaho Reservation that includes Monument Valley, Kayenta, Tsegi Canyon, Black Mesa, and Navaho Mountain. The list of sponsors was a distinguished one, and included Horace M. Albright, former Director of the National Park Service; Harold S. Colton, Director of the Museum of Northern Arizona; Alfred L. Kroeber, anthropologist at the University of California; Jesse L. Nusbaum, archaeologist of the United States Department of the Interior; Wallace Atwood, President of Clark University; Herbert E. Gregory, geologist and Director of the Bishop Museum; Knowles Ryerison, Director of the United States Bureau of Plant Industry, and others.

The purpose of the expedition was twofold: first, to provide the means for college students in the natural and behavioral sciences to acquire direct field experience under the guidance of competent teachers and research scientists; and second, to make a lasting contribution to sci-

entific knowledge through original investigation and the publication of its results.

Through Ansel's indefatigable energies funds were raised from various private sources and the collaboration of about a dozen universities and museums was enlisted. The Ford Motor Company contributed several trucks and station wagons, and from other sources summer stipends were provided for university professors in the fields of geology, palaeontology, botany, engineering, zoology, ethnology, and archaeology. For six summers, 1933 through 1938, large groups were in the field, and active work was carried out in all these specialties. The personnel varied from about 30 to as many as 75, and it is hardly necessary to stress the awesome problems of organization, financing, and logistics entailed. Ansel accomplished it, but his official duties in the National Park Service denied him the reward that leisurely visits to the field camps would have afforded. After the first season, the field director was Charles D. Winning of New York University, to whose devotion, patience, wisdom, and humor much of the expedition's success was due.

Although much was accomplished in all fields, only the work in archaeology is of paramount interest here. The base of supply for the expedition was always at the trading post of John Wetherill and Clyde Colville at Kayenta, Arizona, and John's son, Ben Wetherill, doubled in brass as Assistant Field Director and member of the archaeological staff. During the first summer, Lyndon L. Hargrave and a party of 14 men carried out an archaeological reconnaissance of parts of Skeleton Mesa, Rainbow Plateau, Navaho Mountain, Monument Valley, and the lower Chinle Valley. In later years permanent or semi-permanent camps were established in widely separated places, and a supply system was set up using Wetherill pack mules and Navaho packers. Work was extended to Black Mesa, the Kaiparowits Plateau, and other areas, where a coherent program of survey and excavation was pursued and much solid information was added to our knowledge of the archaeology of the region. It represents the only systematic work ever done in certain areas.

Most of this work was subsequently reported in published form in a series of bulletins and books, and a contour map of the Tsegi Canyon

was made with all archaeological sites accurately located on it. All materials were cataloged and stored at the Museum of Northern Arizona and at the Department of Anthropology of the University of California at Los Angeles. During these six summers some 40 young men participated in archaeological work, and at least five or six went on to become professionals. On the staff at various times were six or seven men already known in the field.

In 1937 Ansel resigned from the National Park Service to take over operation of the various concessions in Mesa Verde National Park through a corporation known as the Mesa Verde Company, and later as Mesa Verde Enterprises, a smaller company with facilities outside the entrance of the Park. He remained president and manager of these operations until his death. His son, Roger Hall, now carries on in his place. Even during this period, however, he continued to organize summer camps for boys, this time of high-school age, and they carried out further archaeological work in southwestern Colorado, notably at a large Pueblo III site on Cahone Mesa.

Ansel Hall was not an archaeologist, but he had an abiding conviction of the value of archaeology. He was sincerely interested in young people and in providing them with the beneficent influences of a sympathetic understanding of Nature and of Man. Although he published no personal contributions to archaeology, he assisted others in doing so by providing means for field work and research as well as channels of publication. He was an enormously creative person, and while he sometimes sought to operate on a scale beyond that of his own vast capacities, he had the faculty of getting things done by selecting people, persuading them, putting them to work, providing them with facilities, and letting them alone. He was utterly loyal to those who worked for him, and he held the affections of many. His contributions to American archaeology are indirect, but they are considerable, and many of us owe him a debt for the opportunity, the encouragement, and the confidence that he gave so freely.

PEABODY MUSEUM WEST OF THE PECOS  
Tucson, Arizona  
April, 1963