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In Passing: Albert H. Schroeder, 1914-1993

JOSEPH P. SÁNCHEZ

Quoting one of Albert H. Schroeder's colleagues in 1985, Charlie R. Steen, a renowned Southwest archaeologist, wrote, "You may not agree with everything Al says, but you can be sure that his mind is constantly at work on some anthropological problem--it's always at work."¹ In many ways the statement is epitaphic. Those of us who had the honor to work with Al Schroeder were always impressed with his ability to read between the lines of an historical document, test it in the field, and present a new and fresh idea or hypothesis that would challenge an accepted notion. Aside from having published nearly 200 articles, monographs, reports and reviews, Schroeder was very active in the Historical Society of New Mexico, the Santa Fe Westerner's Corral, the School of American Research, the Governor of New Mexico's Cultural Properties Review Committee and the Archaeological Society of New Mexico where he served as editor of their annual publication for many years.²

Schroeder was born on 23 March 1914 in Brooklyn, New York. In 1938 he received his B.A., and his Master of Arts in 1940 from the University of Arizona (Tucson). During World War II, he served in the Army; and, while stationed at Ft. Lewis, Washington, he met and married Ella Margaret Krienke of Olympia, Washington, who survives him, as do his three children, Stephen, Christine and Scott. Following the war, in 1946, he began his 30-year career with the National Park Service (NPS) serving in a variety of research assignments and administrative positions throughout the NPS' Southwest Region. His distinguished career with the National Park Service earned him the De-

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1. Charlie R. Steen, "Albert Henry Schroeder—Always Working," in Charles H. Lange, ed., *Southwestern Culture History: Collected Papers in Honor of Albert H. Schroeder* (Santa Fe: Ancient City Press, 1985), 1.

2. *The Indian Trader*, August 1993, 21.



Albert H. Schroeder, 1914-1993. Photograph courtesy of National Park Service.

partment of the Interior Meritorious Award in 1956, and the Distinguished Service Award in 1976.

As an archaeologist, Schroeder began his career with the Museum of Northern Arizona (Flagstaff) in 1938. For over a year, 1938-1939, he was the archaeological foreman on the W.P.A. Project sponsored by the University of Arizona. And, in 1940-41, he had been a field archaeologist for the U.S. National Museum Field Expedition in Coahuila, Mexico. Soon after began the first phase of his association with the National Park Service. Between August and December 1941, Schroeder worked as junior archaeologist at Lake Wupatki National Monument. His earlier work with the National Park Service was an extension of his Master's thesis in the Salt River Valley, a survey of the lower Colorado River and excavation of sites below Hoover Dam, which forged his professional dedication to research and preservation. From these studies, Schroeder published several papers on pre-Columbian cultures of the western portion of the Southwest.

During the 1950s and 1960, Schroeder served as an expert witness for the Justice Department in Indian Land Claims filed by various western Apache tribes before the Indian Claims Commission. As a result of his work, he prepared a series of anthropological and ethnohistorical research papers on the Chiricahua, Mescalero and Tonto Apaches.

Throughout his career, Schroeder's scholarly work frequently turned toward research of early Spanish *entradas* into the Southwest. His interest resulted in a number of papers including his classic translation with Don Matson, *A Colony on the Move: Gaspar Castaño de Sosa's Journal, 1590-91* (Santa Fe: School of American Research, 1965). A regular contributor to the *New Mexico Historical Review*, one of his most influential articles regarding the Spanish period was "Shifting for Survival in the Spanish Southwest," *NMHR*, XLIII "The Locale of Coronado's 'Bridge'" in which he presented his hypothesis that the river bridged by the expedition of Francisco Vázquez de Coronado in 1541 was not the Pecos River but the Canadian River.

His distinguished career as archaeologist in the Southwest earned him much recognition. In 1981 he was awarded an honorary doctorate of laws by New Mexico State University. His most recent professional acknowledgment was the Paul A.F. Walter Award for his distinguished service to the Historical Society of New Mexico. The award was presented to him by his longtime friend and associate, former state archivist and historian Myra Ellen Jenkins, who passed away in June 1993 at age 76. Cremation and interment services for Albert H. Schroeder took place at the Santa Fe National Cemetery on 23 July 1993.

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