

1939

College Books

University of New Mexico Press

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

Recommended Citation

University of New Mexico Press. "College Books." *New Mexico Quarterly* 9, 4 (1939). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol9/iss4/16>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in New Mexico Quarterly by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

College Books

Mr. Cibber of Drury Lane—Richard Hindry Barker—Columbia University Press, 1939.

Of all the actors who ever trod the boards of an English theater Colley Cibber perhaps left behind him the most interesting life. He was born at the very height of the Restoration in 1671 and lived through the great period of Dryden, Congreve, Pope, Swift, Fielding, and Richardson. His personal history sums up the history of the rise of the English theater with the comedy of manners, its luxurious period embellished by the beginnings of English and Italian opera, and its decline amid the confusion of ballad opera, farce, and burlesque.

During his lifetime Cibber; his son, Theophilus Cibber; and his daughter, Mrs. Charlotte Charke, constituted the Barrymores of the age, the royal family of the English green-room. Quite apart from his acting Colley Cibber was noteworthy and notorious as a man of fashion and as a gambler, and his son and daughter upheld a family reputation for willfulness and curious disregard for public opinion, by engaging in as many exploits off the stage as within the guileless sanctuary of its precincts. The Cibbers could brave public opinion because of an uncanny ability to satisfy public taste, and the brazen way in which father and son crammed amusements into the eyes and ears of the public was one of the scandals and absurdities of a licentious and chaotic time. Of course, Colley Cibber is well known today in England and America, and in every part of the civilized globe, because he and Sir Richard Steele introduced a new type of drama. Cibber's *Careless Husband* is a monument in the early history of sentimental comedy. In their drama of sensibility Steele and Cibber were satisfying the public demand for plays of greater refinement, a change of heart occasioned by Jeremy Collier's *Short View of the Prophaneness of the English Stage*, which appeared in 1698. Their

248.] *The NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY*

dramatic invention has been accurately characterized as the moral-immoral drama. They, perhaps for the first time, discovered that a playwright could describe sin in all of its lusciousness for almost five acts and still provide moral edification to the public if only in the last scene of the play his likable libertines could be made to smile tearfully in repentance or to stand roundly condemned.

In the field of non-dramatic poetry Cibber has an ample but not enviable position. As poet laureate he is the worst of a long line of English writers chosen by English politicians to be official national bards. The foremost announcement of his distinctive dullness in this capacity came from the immortal pen of Henry Fielding, whose judgment of his contemporary can be confirmed today by a single glance at any one of Cibber's official odes. In prose, however, Cibber has left one of the great biographies of all time. *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Esquire* is a fascinating account of Cibber, the actor, the playwright, the manager, and the man about town. Here, said Fielding, the Muse almost achieved the impossible; she at last made Colley Cibber write English. The autobiography contains enough of interest to sustain any number of subsequent books on the Life and Times of Colley Cibber. Ten years ago Dorothy Senior wrote a book under this title, which serves as an adequate supplement to the already-supplemented *Apology*. Now Mr. Richard Barker comes forward with *Mr. Cibber of Drury Lane*. In the pages of Mr. Barker's book Colley Cibber again lives the life of an individualist who was also a friend of the great. The events of his life are told over again by generous excerpts from Cibber's *Apology* and with whatever new information Mr. Barker can collect from unworked contemporary documents and current periodicals. This present volume is the final round-up of all Cibberania. Comment hitherto scattered or ignored Mr. Barker has arranged and phrased about the traditional figure of Cibber, without great alteration or enhancement. Here, published under a recent date, is a competent and adequate life of Cibber which will

serve the useful purpose of directing the modern reader to the famous *Apology*.

DANE FARNSWORTH SMITH

*University of New Mexico,
Albuquerque.*

Pajarito Plateau and Its Ancient People—Edgar L. Hewett—The University of New Mexico Press, 1938—\$4.00.

Professor Hewett has done much to popularize southwestern archaeology. His later works are valuable not as full documentations of cultural particulars but rather as *his* interpretation of cultural wholes established by *his* synthesis of archaeologic and related ethnologic data from the Pueblos. It is unfortunate that the private views of Dr. Hewett on certain aspects of aboriginal southwestern culture are not fully congruous with current general anthropological opinion. It would be most fortunate if some of his imaginativeness, his aesthetic appreciation, could invade more of general anthropological activity. He has not—a number of southwestern archaeologists have—as Professor Hooton put it, “sold his heritage for a mess of potsherds.”

This third volume of the *Handbooks of Archaeological History* is, in part, a popular revision of a number of papers on investigations in the Pajarito Plateau of north central New Mexico which appeared in technical serials between 1904 and 1917. Part One, *History in Storage*, is an interesting statement of the field and task of archaeology in the Southwest. Part Two, *Mesas, Canyons, and Ruins*, is a catalogue of ruins on the Pajarito Plateau. Excepting the initial and closing paragraphs the general reader may pass over this part without loss. Parts Three, *Pick, Trowel, and Spade*, and Four, *The Debris of Pajaritan Culture*, give data and generalizations from the early excavations of Dr. Hewett and his co-laborers. Appendix I, *Pajaritan Pictography*, is a revision with illustrations added of Mr. Kenneth M. Chapman's 1917 paper. Appendix II, *From the Archives*, is notes on the Rito de los Frijoles in the Spanish archives written a number of years ago by Dr. Sylvanus G.

250] *The NEW MEXICO QUARTERLY*

Morley. Appendix III, *Preservation of American Antiquities*, is "a reprint of some of the most important documents in the movement for the preservation of American antiquities (in which Dr. Hewett has held a very important rôle) which resulted in our present federal and state regulations."

Why is it that certain significant advances made in southwestern archaeology since 1910 find no place in Dr. Hewett's present volume? Perhaps most serious is the lack of tree ring dates. Mr. W. S. Stallings, Jr. published in 1937 dates for Tyúonyi (1423+X-1513), Puyé (1507-1565±3), Poshu (1391-1415+X) and other sites mentioned by Dr. Hewett (but *cf.* pp. 31, 57, 58).

A few of the rather too numerous statements which might confuse the general reader of the report are: His use of the term *tufa* is unfortunate; it is preferable to employ *tuff* (as did Mr. Chapman in Appendix I, p. 139) when rocks made of pyroclastic material are meant and to restrict *tufa* to calcium carbonate formed by spring deposition. Spanish *potrero* ("pasture ground," etc.) is not an equivalent of Spanish *mesa*. Earthquake violence (p. 29) and radical climatic change (p. 32) are of an order of magnitude greater than that required for an explanation of the phenomena considered. His "clan" means "ceremonial group." Defense as a factor in village location is probably overemphasized. Tyúonyi is both four (p. 54) and three (p. 94) stories high. The canyon of El Rito de los Frijoles is considerably longer than six miles (p. 57). Tewa residence is not regularly matrilineal (p. 64). Balls used in southwestern *pelota* games were seemingly of native rubber (p. 85). Kivas do have ventilators and sometimes side entrances (pp. 95-6). The main constituent of glaze paint is lead (p. 111).

In this book Dr. Hewett has sought to emphasize his conception of archaeology. To one not concerned with the technicalities and minutiae of southwestern archaeology his manner of emphasis will prove of interest.

Albuquerque, New Mexico.

NORMAN SPUHLER