

Introduction: The Contributions of Malcolm J. Rogers to the Development of California Archaeology

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Abstract

The early surveys and excavations, publications, manuscripts, and collections of Malcolm J. Rogers were a critical starting point for scientific archaeology in southern California, as well as the southern Great Basin, western Arizona, and Baja California. Some of his interpretations were controversial at the time when they were proposed and have since been superseded. However, they did much to open the discussion of regional prehistory, and they still frequently define the terms in which it is analyzed. The articles in this issue explore various aspects of Rogers' contributions and his influence.

Introduction

This double-issue of the *Pacific Coast Archaeological Society Quarterly* emerged from a symposium on "The Contributions of Malcolm J. Rogers to the Development of California Archaeology," presented at the 46th Annual Meeting of the Society for California Archaeology, held in 2012 at San Diego. The symposium discussed many aspects of Rogers' contributions to the development of prehistoric archaeology in the Far West and attempted to assess how well the work of this pioneering investigator has withstood the tests of time.

This *Quarterly* double-issue contains assessments by specialized experts of Rogers' contributions to various geographical fields and topical issues. In addition to the papers presented here, the symposium included discussions by Micah Hale on Rogers' work at coastal San Diego sites, by Richard Carrico on the C. W. Harris site, by G. Timothy Gross on Rogers' influence

within the wider area of western North America, and by Jeanne Binning on his views of lithic tools and technologies.

To provide an element of unity, the contributors were asked to consider several questions: How influential has Rogers' work been in subsequent interpretations of the region's prehistory? Have his interpretations been superseded, or are they still important? Did he demonstrate an ability to accurately interpret and construct prehistory despite the lack of data from more extensive and intensive investigations that we now have? Since he was working prior to the advent of radiocarbon dating and the emergence of an absolute chronological framework, is his reconstruction of prehistory relevant today?

Malcolm J. Rogers, 1890–1960

In the first article, Hanna provides an overview of Malcolm Rogers' life and the distinctive paradigm within which his career in archaeology unfolded. In addition to that sketch, readers may obtain additional biographical details in obituaries by Ezell (1961) and Hayden (1961), in the foreword to *Ancient Hunters of the Far West* by Richard F. Pourade (1966), and in Hanna's 1982 Master's thesis. Very briefly, Rogers (Figure 1) was born in New York in 1890 and educated as a geologist. In 1919 he moved west

and took up avocado growing in Escondido, San Diego County. That same year saw the beginning of his investigations of local archaeology. Between 1919 and 1945 Rogers was affiliated with the San Diego Museum of Man, undertaking wide-ranging archaeological investigations. He resumed his research intermittently during the period between 1945 and his death in 1960.

According to his colleague and friend Julian Hayden (1961:1324), Rogers brought to his work “a unique combination of physical stamina, endurance, dogged persistence and an intellectual curiosity which searched out and followed every aspect of the prob-

lems at hand.” His studies “were characterized by a passion for simplicity and an emphasis upon broad patterns, supported by an intuitive genius for arriving at the heart of a problem.”

Rogers was one of a handful of pioneers in the development of a scientific, chronologically minded archaeology in southern California. He was a contemporary of such other regional figures as David Banks Rogers, Elizabeth W. Crozier Campbell, and Mark R. Harrington. During much of Rogers’ career, museum-based archaeology was only a poor stepchild within California anthropology, subordinate to university-based salvage ethnography. Rogers faced significant obstacles to his

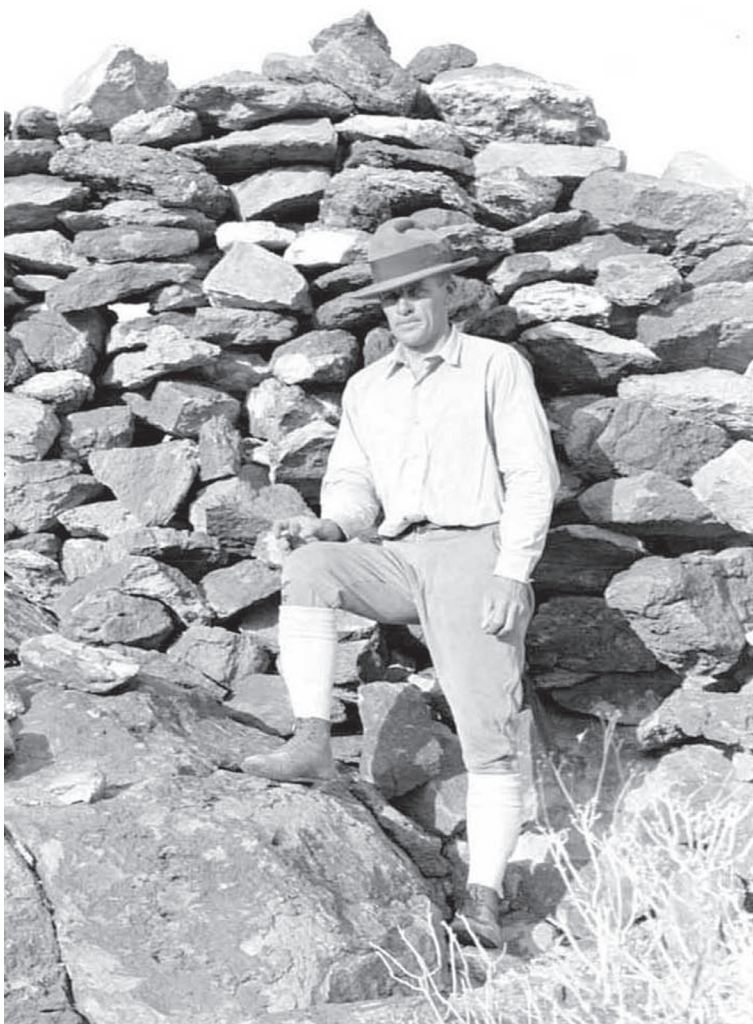


Figure 1. Malcolm J. Rogers at La Forteleza (Museum of Man Site A-64), Gila Bend, Arizona. Copyright San Diego Museum of Man.

work, including limited funding, few peers with whom to collaborate, and the lack of such modern amenities as an extensive network of paved roads, all-terrain vehicles for reaching areas beyond that network, large-scale topographic mapping, global positioning system technology, and radiocarbon dating (until the final phase of his work). On the other hand, the remoteness and still-limited development in many of the areas he studied meant that he had a comparatively pristine archaeological record to examine, as well as relatively few bureaucratic obstacles or distractions. Suffice it to say that it would be impossible to duplicate Rogers' fieldwork today and that our understanding of regional prehistory is still heavily dependent on his irreplaceable data and strongly influenced by his ideas.

Sources for Research: Rogers' Publications, Notebooks, Correspondence, and Collections

The list of Rogers' professional publications is not a long one. Table 1 includes 14 items. Much additional work was documented in unpublished reports and notebooks containing site records and field notes (Table 2). In addition, the San Diego Museum of Man and some individual researchers have copies of correspondence to and from Rogers and between others concerning his research. Substantial numbers of photographs are also on file. Most importantly, to this documentary record must be added the Museum's extensive assemblage of artifacts from Rogers' surface collections and excavations.

Table 1. Monographs and Articles by Malcolm J. Rogers (based on Hanna 1982).

Year	Title	Publication
1928	Remarks on the Archaeology of the Gila River Drainage	<i>Arizona Museum Journal</i> 1(1):21–24
1928	A Question of Scumming	<i>Arizona Old and New</i> 1(2):5, 18, 20–21
1929	<i>Report of an Archaeological Reconnaissance in the Mohave Sink Region</i>	San Diego Museum Papers No. 1
1929	The Stone Art of the San Dieguito Plateau	<i>American Anthropologist</i> 31(3):454–467
1933	The Aborigines of the Desert	In <i>The California Deserts</i> , by Edmund C. Jaeger, pp. 116–129. Stanford University Press, Palo Alto, California
1936	<i>Yuman Pottery Making</i>	San Diego Museum Papers No. 2
1938	Archaeological and Geological Investigations of the Cultural Levels in an Old Channel of San Dieguito Valley	<i>Carnegie Institution of Washington Yearbook</i> 37:344–345
1939	<i>Early Lithic Industries of the Lower Basin of the Colorado River and Adjacent Desert Areas</i>	San Diego Museum Papers No. 3
1941	Aboriginal Culture Relations between Southern California and the Southwest	<i>San Diego Museum Bulletin</i> 5(3):1–6
1941	The Role of the Museum in Science and Social Culture	<i>San Diego Museum Bulletin</i> 5(4):9–12
1945	An Outline of Yuman Prehistory	<i>Southwestern Journal of Anthropology</i> 1(2):167–198
1958	San Dieguito Implements from the Terraces of the Rincon-Pantano and Rillito Drainage System	<i>The Kiva</i> 24(1):1–23
1966	<i>Ancient Hunters of the Far West</i>	Edited by Richard F. Pourade. Union-Tribune Publishing, San Diego.
1978	Indian Night Stories	<i>The Kiva</i> 44(1):51–64

Table 2. Malcolm J. Rogers' Notebooks and Unpublished Documents at the San Diego Museum of Man (based on Hanna 1982).

Type of Document	Subject
Unpublished Documents	Diary of a Trip from San Diego to Santa Fe, 1926
	Preliminary Report of Archaeological Work on Pacific Coast Shell-Middens during 1929
	Field Research of the San Diego Museum in 1929
	An Archaeological Project in San Diego County, California
	Prospectus of Archaeological Investigations in Pacific Coast Shell-Middens for 1930
	Report of Archaeological Investigations on the Mohave Desert Region during 1930
	Report of the Archaeological Field Work of the San Diego Museum for the Year 1931
	Report to the College Art Association on the Archaeological Research Work of the San Diego Museum
	Report of the Archaeological Field Work of the San Diego Museum for the Year 1933
	Journal of a Geo-Archaeological Survey of Southeastern Arizona, April-May 1958
	Findings in Mohave and Colorado deserts, Spring 1959
	Journal of an Archaeological Reconnaissance from San Diego to Southeastern Arizona and Return, April 1959
Site Record Notebooks	Arizona
	Colorado Desert (two notebooks)
	Lower California (two notebooks)
	Nevada (two notebooks)
	Utah
	Western San Diego County (six notebooks)
Field Notes	Arizona
	Colorado Desert Region
	Lower California
	Mojave Desert Region
	Nevada and Utah
	Western Region
	1929 San Diego-Smithsonian Expedition
	1930 Expedition to San Nicolas Island
Miscellaneous Notebooks	Harris Site (W-198), 1938
	Journal and Field Notes of the San Dieguito Project, Summer of 1938
	Catalog of Artifacts from San Dieguito River Valley Fill (W-198), Summer of 1938
	Ethnological, Anthropological and Archaeological Data Gathered between 1939 and 1945
	Miscellaneous Ethnographic and Archaeological Notes

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