

## IN MEMORIAM

Alfred Lee Rowell

1894—1963

**I**N 1939 the Department of Anthropology decided to install a new hall, the exhibits of which would illuminate the various prehistoric Indian cultures of the New World. We decided among other things to use dioramas to vivify certain aspects of some cultures.

In 1940, I visited the museum at Mesa Verde National Park and was struck with the beauty, precision, and artistic qualities of the five dioramas on display. They represented in reality that which we had dreamed of having on display. Upon inquiry I learned that they had been created by Mr. Lee Rowell, artist, who was then employed in San Diego as a civilian engineer in the Army. My colleagues and I decided that Rowell was the artist we had been searching for. After a delay of several months, Mr. Rowell joined our staff on April 21, 1941. Never has there been a better or happier selection of a staff member. Never have we regretted our decision, for until the day of his death Mr. Rowell was a valued member of our staff.

In twenty-two years he created 16 dioramas for the Department of Anthropology. It is impossible for me to say which of these is the "best." My favorites are Cliff House Village in Mummy Cave, northeastern Arizona (his first one) (Hall 4); the Inca Village, Urumbamba Valley, southern Peru (Hall 4); Chichen-Itza, Yucatan, Mexico, an ancient Maya city (Hall 4); and the Aztec Market at Tlatelolco, Mexico (Hall 8).

At the time of his death, Mr. Rowell was creating a scene representing one of the villages on Palau, Micronesia, South Pacific area.

Alfred Lee Rowell was born in Cedar-edge, western Colorado, in 1894. He attended Union College, Lincoln, Nebraska, for two years, majoring in art and music. His formal education was interrupted at the end of his second year by serious illness that impaired his sight. In the years following, Mr. Rowell gained experience and non-academic training



Alfred Lee Rowell

from the various jobs he held—farming, drafting and map-making, carpentering, construction work on houses, surveying, sign painting and commercial art. Chance took him to Mesa Verde National Park, where he finally found the work he had always wanted to do—the creation of dioramas or models, in three dimensions, of scenes showing accurate representations of the daily lives of primitive peoples. His work was unique in that he could execute an entire diorama scene—foreground, trees, houses, people, artifacts and the painted background.

As a dioramist Mr. Rowell was unsurpassed; as a person he was incomparable—gentle, kind, alert, forgiving, generous in thought and action. He had only praise and warmth for his fellows. As a person he deserves and has earned our highest esteem.

**PAUL S. MARTIN**

## FIELD ASSOCIATE APPOINTED

**M**R. JAMES R. GETZ, Chicago businessman and resident of Metawa, Illinois, has been appointed a Field Associate in the Museum's Department of Anthropology.

With George I. Quimby, Curator of North American Archaeology and Ethnology, Mr. Getz is responsible for the recent discovery of stone materials that reveal a new flint-chipping technique used by Indians of the northern Lake Michigan region from 1000 to 1600 A.D. This discovery is described elsewhere in this month's BULLETIN.

Mr. Getz' long-time interest in American archaeology and history has led him to accompany Quimby on many field trips to the Upper Great Lakes and lower Mississippi Valley regions, where they have explored sites representing the last 10,000 years of Indian life, from prehistoric to historic times.

It is in recognition of his contributions to the Museum's archaeological field research that Mr. Getz' appointment as Field Associate has been made.

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*Cover photograph by*

*John Bayalis and Homer V. Holdren*



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To all Members of the Museum  
the Board of Trustees and Staff  
send greetings of the Season  
and best wishes for a healthful and prosperous  
New Year





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