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Yet Another Bandelier Story: A Research Note

ELIZABETH M. LANGE, CHARLES H. LANGE,
AND CARROLL L. RILEY

In the late summer of 1980, we were nearing the end of our project of more than twenty years editing and annotating the four volumes of *The Southwestern Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier*. We had come to believe that we had gained a familiarity with details regarding Adolph Bandelier's life that would allow for few additional surprises. Subsequently, it was demonstrated all over again that this feeling was premature and no more than an illusion.

In September 1980, the Langes visited "The Gilded Age" exhibit at the Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe. The entire exhibit proved to be very interesting; we were particularly intrigued in finding a bust of Adolph F. Bandelier displayed along with other bits of Bandelieriana.

From our years of research on the *Southwestern Journals* of Bandelier, we could recall no mention, either by Bandelier or by anyone

Elizabeth M. Lange, co-editor of *The Southwestern Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier*, died in Albuquerque, April 15, 1986. She took the lead in preparing this paper. Charles H. Lange, co-editor of *The Southwestern Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier*, retired from the Department of Anthropology, Northern Illinois University, in 1980 and now lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Carroll L. Riley, co-editor of *The Southwestern Journals of Adolph F. Bandelier*, retired from the Department of Anthropology, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, in 1987 and now lives in Las Vegas, New Mexico. The three co-editors of the journals have subsequently been writing a biography of Bandelier, to have been completed by the end of 1987.

else, of such a bust. Our inquiries concerning the bust in conversations with several museum staff members brought no satisfaction—a fact that only served to increase our interest.

Occupied with the completion of the final volume of Bandelier's *Southwestern Journals*, we merely made a mental note of the bust's existence and turned our attention to more urgent matters. We did mention the matter from time to time but did not succeed in learning anything further about it.

In attempting to clarify a point relevant to the biographical sketch of Bandelier to be included in the fourth volume of the *Southwestern Journals*, we began to re-read the entries for the post-southwestern years and especially those for the years when the Bandeliers were living in New York City following their return from South America in September 1903.

In so doing, much to our surprise and delight, there were the following comments in the entry of January 23, 1906: "Went down, with Fanny [Bandelier's wife], to Borglum in the forenoon.—Spent a very pleasant time. Bust progressing very well." Subsequent entries contained additional mentions: February 6, 1906: "bust seems to become very good." March 31, 1906: "Went to Borglum, the bust is progressing finely." And on April 24, 1906, Bandelier went to Borglum and posed. Borglum's name was mentioned in other entries of 1906 and the first half of 1907, but there was nothing regarding the bust in any of these comments.

The name of Gutzon Borglum was, of course, long familiar to us from his panoramic, outdoor sculptures at Stone Mountain, Georgia, and Mount Rushmore, South Dakota. We then read a bit on Borglum, hoping for a possible mention of Bandelier. This proved to be futile and resulted in a further complication—namely, there had been two Borglums—brothers, Gutzon (1871–1941) and Solon (1868–1922), and they were both sculptors. Now we had a new problem: which of the Borglum brothers had done the bust of Bandelier?

Gutzon Borglum had come to New York City in 1904 and seemed a likely prospect for having interacted with Bandelier. But we could not be certain of this. Knowing that Riley would soon be back in Santa Fe to wind up our editing of the fourth volume of Bandelier's *Southwestern Journals*, we waited for his arrival before going to look more closely at the bust (the "Gilded Age" exhibit having been dismantled in the meantime and the components returned to museum storage). In our examination of the bust, "G. Borglum" was found cut into the sculpture at the base of the neckline. The mystery had finally been solved.



Sculpture of Adolph Bandelier. Courtesy Museum of New Mexico.

In reporting our findings to the Museum of New Mexico administrators, further questions were raised: had there been additional copies, and had castings been made from the original sculpture? The specimen in possession of the Museum of New Mexico was simply of plaster of Paris and it had been painted a flat black. Never having met Bandelier in person, we could not be certain, but the bust appeared to be something less than life size. A further question had to do with how the bust had come into the possession of the Museum of New Mexico. The museum acquisition card was no help—it simply recorded the fact of its being a bust of Bandelier.

In research on the later years of Bandelier's career for the more popular biography of this most fascinating person that we are in the process of writing, Riley visited the American Museum of Natural History in New York and the office of the Hispanic Society of America, also in New York, in the spring of 1984. At the latter institution, he found in the files a brief letter from Fanny R. Bandelier. This was written from Nashville, Tennessee, shortly before her death, and was seemingly a response to an inquiry from the Society concerning the bust. Fanny's letter read in part:

In answer to your favor of June 13th I beg to state that my husband's bust was started by our friend Gutzon Borglum around the end of 1905 and finished some time in the early part of the following year—I don't remember the exact date off-hand. I might find it in my records perhaps.

I don't know of any copies in bronze. I am sure Mr. Borglum could tell you.

In Fanny Bandelier's will, dated March 27, 1933, at Nashville, Tennessee, a paragraph near the bottom of page one contained this provision:

All pictures of my late husband, and myself, his bust, his books (written by him), and his and my personal documents, I bequeath to the Research Library of Anthropology (Museum) at Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Suggestions that casts of more durable material be made from the plaster bust have been weighed against the possibility of damage to the original. At the moment, the decision of the Museum of New Mexico rests on the point of view that this specimen from a time very early in the career of Gutzon Borglum is of greater value than the fact that the subject was Adolph F. Bandelier. At least there is now a bit more known about this most interesting piece of Bandelieriana.