

# Hubble, Edwin P Encyclopedia Article

## Hubble, Edwin P

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# Hubble, Edwin P

## American Astronomer 1889-1953

American astronomer Edwin Powell Hubble's (1889-1953) key discovery was his finding that the universe is expanding.\* Hubble received undergraduate degrees in math and astronomy from the University of Chicago.

Edwin P. Hubble is best known for his determination that the more distant the galaxy, the quicker it moves away from Earth. This implied that the universe was expanding and led the way to the Big Bang theory.

Upon graduation, he was awarded a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University, where he studied law. After some time as a lawyer and teacher, he returned to the University of Chicago to pursue a doctorate in astronomy. During his studies, World War I (1914-1918) began. Hubble enlisted in the army and rose to the rank of major.

After the war, Hubble worked at Mount Wilson Observatory, California, which then contained the largest telescope in the world. In the early 1920s, scientists knew about our own **galaxy**, the Milky Way, but they did not know if anything was outside of it. Some had conjectured that **nebulae**, faint cloudy features in the night sky, were actually "island universes" or other galaxies. Hubble measured the distance to some of these nebulas and found that they indeed lay far outside the Milky Way. In further studies, he showed that these nebulas are actually other galaxies, and he went on to classify them.

**\*NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, launched in 1990, bears this noted astronomer's name.**

## See Also

Astronomy, History of (Volume 2); Astronomy, Kinds of (Volume 2); Galaxies (Volume 2); Hubble Constant (Volume 2); Hubble Space Telescope (Volume 2).

## Bibliography

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Sharov, Alexander S., and Igor D. Novikov. *Edwin Hubble: The Discoverer of the Big Bang Universe*, trans. Vitalie Kisin. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993.