



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of Natural History*

Albert Samuel Gatschet papers, 1828-1906

National Anthropological Archives  
Museum Support Center  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Anthropological Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Albert Samuel Gatschet papers
<b>Date:</b>	1828-1906
<b>Identifier:</b>	NAA.2006-15
<b>Creator:</b>	Gatschet, Albert S. (Albert Samuel), 1832-1907
<b>Extent:</b>	11 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	Collection material is in English, German, French, Klamath, Tuscarora, Wyandot, Seneca, Caughnawaga, and Samoan.

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## Administrative Information

### Related Materials

Most of Gatschet's scientific papers are among the collection of numbered manuscripts in the National Anthropological Archives.

### Processing Information

The collection is unprocessed. Contact the repository for more information.

### Preferred Citation

Albert S. Gatschet papers, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

Access to the Albert S. Gatschet papers requires an appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

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## Biographical / Historical

Educated in his native Switzerland and in Germany (University of Bern; University of Berlin, Ph.D., 1892), early in his career Albert S. Gatschet pursued antiquarian research in European museums and wrote scientific articles. Among his projects was the study of the etymology of place names in Switzerland. After coming to the United States in 1869, he worked on the American Indian vocabularies collected by Oscar Loew of the United States Geographical Survey West of the 100th Meridian (Wheeler Survey). Eventually he was employed as an ethnologist with the United States Geographical and Geological Survey of the Rocky Mountain Regions (Powell Survey). He joined the staff of the Bureau of American Ethnology when it was founded in 1879 and continued there until he retired in 1905.

For the Powell Survey, Gatschet carried out research among the Klamath in Oregon and the Modoc in Oklahoma. He came to be used to collect material and investigate special problems for the classification of Indian languages of North America north of Mexico, working on languages of the Southeast, including groups settled in the southern Plains. In connection with this, he not only visited well known tribes but also

searched out and studied small groups like, for example, the Biloxi and Tunica. He also worked with the Natchez, Tonkawa, Chitimacha, and Atakapa in the United States and the Comecrudo and several other small groups in northern Mexico. Through library research, he studied the Timucua, Karankara, and Beothuk. During the last part of his career, Gatschet was assigned the task of preparing a comparative work on all the Algonquian languages. Although the project was never completed, he did collect considerable material in the field on many of the languages, including especially Peoria, Miami, and Shawnee. In addition, he worked with members of diverse tribes of the eastern United States.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection is composed mainly of corrected proofs of the dictionary and texts including in Gatschet's *The Klamath Indians of Southwestern Oregon*, 1890, and correct proof and copy of *Orts-etymologische Forschungen als Beiträge zu einer Toponymastik der Schweiz*. Few of the corrections were incorporated in the final printing of these works. In addition, there is a copy of Powell's *Introduction to the Study of Indian Languages* with the schedule partially completed with Tuscarora, Wyandot, Seneca, and Caughnawaga and a tapa-cloth-bound dictionary of Samoan, not in Gatschet's hand.

In addition there are several certificates and other such formal documents from Bern, visiting cards, and two letters. Most of these documents seem to pertain to members of Gatschet's family in Switzerland. Most are in German script.

A small photographic collection includes a portrait of Gatschet dated 1906. Most of the other images are of Apache, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Dakota, Kiowa, and Navaho Indians by J.N. Choate and C.C. Stotz. There are also prints from negatives in the archives' glass negative collection that include Mandan, Miami, Osage, and Shoshoni. Some of the photographs are annotated by Gatschet and James Mooney.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Language and languages

Places:

North America