



Smithsonian  
*National Museum of Natural History*

## Portraits of John Wesley Powell, circa 1890

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2015

National Anthropological Archives  
Museum Support Center  
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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Anthropological Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Portraits of John Wesley Powell
<b>Identifier:</b>	NAA.PhotoLot.68
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1890
<b>Extent:</b>	5 Prints (albumen, silver gelatin, and platinum)
<b>Language:</b>	Undetermined .

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## Administrative Information

### Location of Other Archival Materials

Additional portraits of Powell held in National Anthropological Archives Photo Lot 33 and Photo Lot 39.

### Location of Other Archival Materials

The National Anthropological Archives also holds Powell's journals, 1869-1872 (MS 1795ab), his honors, 1869-1904 (MS 7249), his monthly and annual reports as director of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1894-1897 (MS 4735), and other manuscript collections relating to Powell's ethnological research and his work with the BAE.

### Preferred Citation

Photo lot 68, Portraits of John Wesley Powell, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

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## Biographical Note

John Wesley Powell (1834-1902) was born in Mount Morris, New York. In 1838, he moved with his family to Southern Ohio, where he was mentored by amateur naturalist George Crookham. The family again moved, this time to Wisconsin, before finally settling in Illinois in 1851. There, Powell worked as a schoolteacher and attended several colleges, though he never received a degree. He also collected

fossils and studied geology during trips to areas along the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Powell enlisted in the army at the start of the Civil War. His right arm was amputated after he sustained an injury at the Battle of Shiloh. Powell was promoted to second lieutenant and later to major during his army tenure. At the end of the war, Powell taught natural sciences at Illinois Wesleyan University and Illinois State Normal University. He became curator of the Illinois Natural History Society Museum in 1867. During this time, Powell continued to organize expeditions, including studies of the Colorado River and the Native American tribes of the region (in 1869 and in 1871-1872). With government funding, his second expedition produced the first reliable maps of the river. As a result, Powell published a book, *Exploration of the Colorado River of the West and Its Tributaries: Explored in 1869, 1870, 1871, and 1872 Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution (1875)*, which was reprinted as *Canyons of the Colorado* in 1895. Powell was appointed director of the Bureau of American Ethnology at its inception in 1879, a position he held until his death. He also served as director of the US Geological Survey from 1881-1894.

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## Scope and Contents

Enlarged prints made from studio portraits of John Wesley Powell. One of the portraits is by Charles Parker of Washington, D. C.

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## Local Call Number(s)

NAA Photo Lot 68

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## Names and Subject Terms

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

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

Parker, Charles

Powell, John Wesley, 1834-1902