



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Photographs of baskets in the Charles P. Wilcomb collection, circa 1900

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Table of Contents

Collection Overview	1
Administrative Information	1
Local Call Number(s).....	2
Scope and Contents note.....	2
Biographical/Historical note.....	1
Bibliography.....	2
Names and Subjects	2
Container Listing	

Collection Overview

Repository:	National Anthropological Archives
Title:	Photographs of baskets in the Charles P. Wilcomb collection
Date:	circa 1900
Identifier:	NAA.PhotoLot.73-26F
Extent:	18 Negatives (glass)
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Provenance

Transferred from the Smithsonian's central photographic laboratory in 1973.

Location of Other Archival Materials

Additional photographs of Wilcomb's collection of baskets are held in National Anthropological Archives Photo Lot 24.

Location of Other Archival Materials

The National Anthropological Archives also holds letters from Wilcomb to Otis Tufton Mason regarding baskets (Department of Anthropology records, Manuscript and Pamphlet File) and Mason's papers.

Available Formats

Modern reference prints from the negatives are available in the collection.

Preferred Citation

Photo lot 73-26F, Photographs of baskets in the Charles P. Wilcomb collection, 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.

Biographical Note

Charles Presby Wilcomb (1865-1915) was an amateur anthropologist and store owner in New Hampshire and California. Born in The Weirs, New Hampshire, he opened a store in nearby Laconia in 1884, selling both general merchandise and antiques and curios. Four years later, Wilcomb opened two stores in Visalia, California, the latter of which was named Visalia Museum of Curiosities and Nanscawen & C., props. Wilcomb's routine was to summer in New Hampshire, where he collected Colonial artifacts, and winter

in California, where he collected artifacts from the California tribes. During this time, he also interviewed Indigenous California people about their traditions and collected representational examples, particularly baskets. Wilcomb became the first curator of the Golden Gate Park Memorial Museum (later the M.H. de Young Museum) when it opened in 1895. He loaned many of his baskets to the museum for its collections, where they remained until the Park commissioners requested their removal in 1904. Unable to convince the commissioners to purchase his "Indian collection," Wilcomb was forced to sell it to Robert Calvin Hall in 1905. No longer with the de Young Museum, Wilcomb curated Hall's entire collection until his death in 1915.

Scope and Contents

Photographs of baskets in the collection of Charles P. Wilcomb. They include Pomo baskets and baskets of the people of Tulare County. The photographs may have been made by a Smithsonian photographer.

Bibliography

Photographs published in Otis Tufton Mason, "Aboriginal American Basketry," Report of the United States National Museum, 1902.

Local Call Number(s)

NAA Photo Lot 73-26F

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Baskets
Indians of North America -- California

Cultures:

Indians of North America -- California

Types of Materials:

Photographs

Names:

M.H. de Young Memorial Museum
Wilcomb, Charles P., 1865-1915