



Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Correspondence and Memoranda, 1877-1896

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Correspondence and Memoranda
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 54
<b>Date:</b>	1877-1896
<b>Extent:</b>	2.50 cu. ft. (5 document boxes)
<b>Creator::</b>	Smithsonian Institution. Assistant Secretary in charge of the United States National Museum
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 54, Smithsonian Institution, Assistant Secretary in charge of the United States National Museum, Correspondence and Memoranda

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## Historical Note

The history of the office of Assistant Secretary can be traced to January 26, 1847 when the Smithsonian Board of Regents approved the nomination of Charles C. Jewett, of Brown University, for the position of Assistant Secretary, acting as Librarian. On July 5, 1850 the Board resolved ". . . that the Secretary be authorized to appoint an assistant secretary in the department of natural history, to take charge of the museum, and to render such other assistance as the Secretary may require . . ." Shortly thereafter, Spencer F. Baird was appointed to the position. During various periods of time, the Assistant Secretary was also in charge of publications, exchanges, and other areas.

George Brown Goode's (1851-1896) association with the Smithsonian Institution began in 1872 when Spencer F. Baird invited him to work as a volunteer collector for the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries. Goode accepted and became Baird's chief pupil and assistant. In 1873, he was appointed Assistant Curator in the United States National Museum (USNM), a position he retained until 1877 when his title was changed to Curator. In 1881, when the new museum building was completed and the USNM really organized, Goode was appointed Assistant Director. In that year he prepared his famous Circular No. 1 of the National Museum, which proposed a comprehensive scheme of administration for the museum. On January 12, 1887, Goode was appointed Assistant Secretary, in charge of the National Museum and until his death in 1896 he remained the head administrative officer of the museum. After receiving appointment in the USNM, Goode continued to serve the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries (USCFF) in various capacities. He acted as statistical expert for the Halifax Fishery Arbitration Commission, 1877-1878; chief of the Fisheries Division of the Tenth Census, 1879-1880; and U. S. Commissioner at the Fishery Exhibition in Berlin, 1880 and in London, 1883. On the death of Spencer F. Baird in 1887, Goode assumed the position of Fish Commissioner until January, 1888.

## Descriptive Entry

This record unit consists of incoming and outgoing correspondence compiled by George Brown Goode and concerns both the USNM and USCFF. Descriptions of the records are included as part of the series descriptions.

For other records of George Brown Goode see Record Units 70, 189, 201, and 7050.

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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:

- Ichthyology
- Museums -- Administration
- Museums -- Collection management

Types of Materials:

- Letterpress copybooks
- Manuscripts
- Microfilms

Names:

- Baird, Spencer Fullerton, 1823-1887
- Berlin International Fisheries Exposition (1880: Berlin, Germany)
- Goode, G. Brown (George Brown), 1851-1896
- Halifax Fishery Arbitration Commission
- London International Fisheries Exposition (1883)
- United States Fish Commission
- United States National Museum

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE SECRETARY, 1883-1896

This series consists mostly of incoming correspondence from the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution (Spencer F. Baird, 1883-1887 and Samuel P. Langley, 1887-1896) to the Assistant Secretary (or Acting Assistant Secretary), in charge of the United States National Museum. Most of the correspondence is routine, and deals with administrative policy, USNM staff, museum publications, and exhibits. Materials of special interest include reports on SI involvement at expositions, data on important accessions, and plans for museum reorganization. Most of the correspondence from Baird is directed to the Acting Assistant Director of the USNM (Frederick William True), who assumed administrative responsibility while George Brown Goode was absent from the museum. The Langley correspondence is directed exclusively to Goode, and is both official and confidential in nature. The records in this series are chronologically arranged.

#### Box 1

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 1 July, 1883.   |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 2 August, 1883. Includes several letters from Spencer F. Baird to Frederick William True regarding the Louisville Exposition (1883).  |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 3 September, 1883.  |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 4 October, 1883 - November, 1883.   |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 5 July, 1884 - December, 1884.  |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 6 January, 1885 - July 1885.  |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 7 July, 1886 - December, 1886. Included is a voluminous amount of material concerning a controversy between the USNM and Louis H. Ayme over proposed ethnological collecting in Mexico. |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 8 January, 1887 - December, 1887. Contains correspondence of both Spencer F. Baird and Samuel P. Langley.   |
| Box 1 of 5 | Folder 9 January, 1888 - December, 1888.   |

#### Box 2

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| Box 2 of 5 | Folder 1 January, 1889 - June, 1889. Includes a letter of 7 February, from Samuel P. Langley to George Brown Goode concerning a major reorganization of the Department of Geology, USNM. The letter also contains |
|------------|---|

Langley's opinions on offering the curatorship of the Department of Reptiles to Edward Drinker Cope.

- Box 2 of 5 Folder 2 July, 1889 - December, 1889. Includes the letters of 27 July, 29 July, and 5 September, from Langley to Goode concerning the possible acquisition of the Riggs Collection of Armor by the USNM.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 3 January, 1890 - December, 1890.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 4 January, 1891 - April, 1891.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 5 May, 1891 - December, 1891. Includes a letter of 29 June, from Langley to Goode which contains Langley's views on possible candidates for the position of Superintendent of the National Zoological Park.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 6 January, 1892 - June, 1892.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 7 July, 1892 - December, 1892. Includes several letters regarding the Hodgkins Fund.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 8 February, 1893 - July, 1893.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 9 August, 1893 - December, 1893.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 10 January, 1894 - May, 1894. Includes a letter of 29 May, from Langley to Goode concerning a controversy between the USNM and Edward Drinker Cope over the completion of a projected manuscript on the Reptilia of North America.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 11 July, 1894 - December, 1894.
- Box 2 of 5 Folder 12 January, 1895 - January, 1896.

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## Series 2: OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE AND MEMORANDA, MOSTLY WITH THE SECRETARY, 1887-1896, 5 BOUND LETTERPRESS BOOKS.

This series consists of bound letterpress books containing copies of outgoing correspondence mostly from the Assistant Secretary (or Acting Assistant Secretary), in charge of the United States National Museum to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. The bulk of the material is directed to Samuel P. Langley, with lesser amounts to various museum officials and other correspondents. Again, as in Series 1, much of the correspondence is routine and administrative in nature, and in many cases is in response to letters found in the incoming file. Materials of special interest are similar to those of Series 1 and include a voluminous amount of correspondence regarding a controversy between the USNM and Edward Drinker Cope over a projected manuscript on the Reptilia of North America. Since the dates of the letterpress books overlap, a strict chronological arrangement can not be achieved. Each volume is indexed alphabetically.

### Box 3

Box 3 of 5                      Volume 1 November 17, 1887 - April 27, 1894.

Box 3 of 5                      Volume 2 February 5, 1889 - September 13, 1892. Pages 148-181 concern a controversy between the USNM and Edward Drinker Cope over a projected manuscript on the Reptilia of North America.

Box 3 of 5                      Volume 3 March 4, 1892 - February 14, 1896.

### Box 4

Box 4 of 5                      Volume 4 February 26, 1896 - July 3, 1896.

Box 4 of 5                      Volume 5 Memoranda from George Brown Goode to Samuel P. Langley, April 24, 1894 - December 18, 1896.

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## Series 3: INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE, MOSTLY CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES COMMISSION OF FISH AND FISHERIES, 1877-1895.

This series consists of incoming correspondence mostly concerning the United States Commission of Fish and Fisheries, and to a lesser degree the United States National Museum. Most of the correspondence is directed to George Brown Goode, with smaller amounts to Spencer F. Baird. The letters addressed to Baird are usually referred to Goode for response.

Materials of special interest include correspondence from Fish Commission staff members and collectors, ichthyological reports and observations, and accounts of USCFF and SI involvement at expositions. A small amount of confidential correspondence is contained in this series, particularly with George P. Merrill and Richard Rathbun. The records in this series are arranged alphabetically.

### Box 5

Box 5 of 5	Folder 1 Ackerman - Bullock
Box 5 of 5	Folder 2 Campbell - Dury
Box 5 of 5	Folder 3 Earll - French
Box 5 of 5	Folder 4 Gardiner - Hyams
Box 5 of 5	Folder 5 International Fisheries Exhibition (London) - Ludworth
Box 5 of 5	Folder 6 McDonald - Murphey
Box 5 of 5	Folder 7 National University
Box 5 of 5	Folder 8 Nehrling - Ryer
Box 5 of 5	Folder 9 Schmidt - Strickler
Box 5 of 5	Folder 10 Taylor - Umlauff
Box 5 of 5	Folder 11 Walker - Yeates

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