

The Making of a Collection: Mesoamerican Manuscripts at Princeton University

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The prominent Mesoamerican manuscript collection at the Princeton University Library is the result of the collecting activities of William Gates and Robert Garrett, whose vision was to make accessible a documentary collection that, long after their passing, would continue to uncover the indigenous heritage of Mexico and Central America. Gates (1863–1940), a Mayanist scholar, focused his collection on manuscripts written in Mayan languages. Garrett (1875–1961), a Princeton alumnus and banker, collected manuscripts produced on several continents, from ancient times to the twentieth century. Garrett's purchase of the Gates manuscripts in 1930, combined with his subsequent addition of similar texts during the following two decades, created one of the most prominent Mesoamerican manuscript collections in America, donated to the Princeton University Library in 1949.

One of the world's great collections of Mesoamerican manuscripts owes its existence to two extraordinary early-twentieth-century collectors. The Mesoamerican collection at the Princeton University Library is the result of a lifetime of collecting by William Gates and Robert Garrett. Gates's goal was to document the history, culture, and language of the native peoples of Mesoamerica, with emphasis on the Mayan linguistic family.¹ Garrett was an eclectic manuscript collector who acquired and built upon the corpus gathered by Gates with the goal of furthering scholarship in this field. These two inveterate collectors were responsible not only for the rich content of the Mesoamerican collection but also for its open accessibility to scholars.

Like many of the major manuscript collections at universities in the United States, the Mesoamerican collection was donated by a distinguished alumnus in the first half of the twentieth century. It was part of the growing number of international documentary resources available to academic institutions in the United States as a result of the collecting frenzy of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

In 1942 Princeton's president, Harold Willis Dodds, noted that "the past century has witnessed an incomparable growth in the richness and size of American libraries by the additions of some of the world's great artistic and literary treasures . . . [;] they will provide the opportunity for a richer scholarship in America and in the world at large."² William Gates and Robert Garrett were collectors whose vision from the outset was to make accessible a documentary collection that, long after their passing, would continue to uncover the indigenous heritage of Mexico and Central America.

William Gates and His Maya Collection

A self-educated Mayanist, William Gates dedicated his life to the acquisition, study, and publication of manuscripts relating to Mesoamerica. Gates was a collector of texts, which meant he was willing to accept facsimiles, reproductions, and copies when the original manuscripts could not be obtained. Gates collected thousands of Mayan and central Mexican manuscripts from around the world from which he printed translations, facsimiles, and transcriptions.

As a means to perpetuate his work, Gates had great hopes of establishing what he called a "prehistoric civilized American library." This collection would never be sold but rather left as a foundation for scholarly research.³ For this reason, Gates became a voracious collector not just of primary sources relating to his personal research but of all related materials (printed books, facsimiles, etc.) that would support a definitive library for Maya research. Although he was sidetracked by other projects along the way, he always remained dedicated to this goal.

Gates formed his extraordinary collection between 1898 and 1922. He acquired most of the manuscripts in native Mesoamerican languages during the latter part of this period, from 1912 to 1922.⁴ His original goal was to collect "with the idea of gathering and leaving as a permanent foundation for students everything possible bearing on the languages, history and archaeology of the Indian races of Middle America—particularly the Maya civilization of Guatemala and Yucatán."⁵ Although he managed to gather documents on a wide range of subjects, the strongest area of his collection was Mesoamerican linguistics, especially of the Mayan family. Gates personally carried out several document-hunting expeditions; he purchased other manuscripts through agents. Poring over published bibliographies and sales catalogs, he tracked down linguistic sources and acquired as many as he could, often making photographic copies of originals not available for purchase. Many of Gates's documents came from

Mexican libraries and were once owned by scholars and collectors such as José Fernando Ramírez, Agustín Fischer, and Nicolás León. According to Gates, as of 1924 his collection of texts in native Mesoamerican languages was exceeded only by that of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, surpassing those of Edward E. Ayer, Hubert H. Bancroft, John Carter Brown, Daniel G. Brinton, the Peabody Museum, and the Library of Congress.⁶

Mesoamerican Manuscript Collections

The dispersion of Mesoamerican manuscripts throughout the world began in the earliest phase of the Spanish conquest in 1519, when Hernán Cortés included pictorial manuscripts in the shipment of treasures he sent to Emperor Charles V shortly after landing in Veracruz.⁷ When the Spaniards disembarked in Mesoamerica they encountered a tradition of the production of written texts that was over two millennia old.⁸ While excessively zealous missionaries eradicated nearly all of the painted manuscripts from the pre-Hispanic period (only a dozen or so survived), indigenous scribes continued to produce documents in the native tradition, adapting their ancient writing system to the new social and cultural realities of colonial New Spain. Hundreds of these postconquest documents survived and constituted an invaluable corpus for research on native history and culture. A parallel development was the production of alphabetical texts in native languages. Mendicant friars, working with young Indians who lived and studied with them in their newly founded monasteries, developed fairly successful methods of representing Mesoamerican tongues in Latin script and created a massive corpus of alphabetical manuscripts.⁹

Over the centuries, individuals accumulated significant collections of Mesoamerican documents that eventually ended up in Mexican, European, and U.S. institutions or on the auction block, dispersed into private collections. In the second half of the eighteenth century Italian nobleman Lorenzo Boturini managed to form a major collection of central Mexican manuscripts in the native tradition. The Boturini collection was confiscated by the colonial authorities of New Spain. Many items slipped gradually into private hands through careless lending and theft. Some of these documents were brought to Berlin by Baron Alexander von Humboldt in the first decade of the nineteenth century and became part of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin. A rather large collection of Mesoamerican manuscripts, many of them from the Boturini collection, was formed by Joseph Marius Alexis Aubin, a French

schoolteacher and scholar who lived in Mexico City during the period following Mexican national independence in 1821. Aubin smuggled his collection out of Mexico in 1840; it ultimately became part of holdings of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.¹⁰ The remainder of the Boturini collection, an impressive corpus despite the losses, was eventually deposited in the Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City, where it is carefully conserved today.¹¹

Many Mesoamerican manuscripts were conserved in ecclesiastical libraries throughout the colonial era. With the expropriation of church properties during the mid-nineteenth century, many choice documents passed into private hands. One collector stands out: José Fernando Ramírez, one of the most prominent Mexican historians of the nineteenth century. As director of the National Museum and the incipient National Library, Ramírez put together a formidable collection of rare books and manuscripts. He also served as minister of relations and president of the Council under Emperor Maximilian I. As a member of Emperor Maximilian's government, he fled to Europe with his collection when Maximilian's ephemeral Mexican Empire began to crumble in 1866. When Ramírez died in Bonn, Germany, in 1871, his collection was shipped back to Mexico, where after some depletion it was sent back to Europe to be sold at auction in 1880.¹² Another notable Mexican collector of the late nineteenth century was Joaquín García Icazbalceta, whose rich collection of colonial manuscripts and Mexican incunabula was acquired by the University of Texas Library in 1937 and ultimately formed the core of the Rare Books and Manuscripts section of the Benson Latin American Collection.¹³

With the dispersion of Mesoamerican materials over the centuries, manuscript collectors in the United States with an interest in pre-Hispanic and colonial-era Mesoamerican history and culture were able to gather, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, large collections of important documents. Foremost among these were California businessman, publisher, and historical entrepreneur Hubert H. Bancroft, who sold his collection to the University of California at Berkeley on the condition that it be suitably housed and be called the Bancroft Library; railroad tycoon Edward E. Ayer, who donated his extraordinary collection to the Newberry Library in Chicago; and Mayanist scholar William Gates, who sold his Mesoamerican manuscripts to Robert Garrett in order to survive a personal financial crisis, although he insisted that the collection be kept intact and available to scholars.¹⁴ Each of these men had a unique perspective and motivation for forming his collection. Some, like Bancroft and Gates, were scholars; others, like Ayer and Garrett,



Figure 1. William Gates, ca. 1920, Mayanist scholar and collector. Courtesy of BYU Photo Archives, Perry Special Collections, Lee Library, Brigham Young University.

were collectors who took pleasure from owning these documents. All of them were conscious of the importance of their collections to present and future scholarship.

Gates's Interests in Language and Writing

William E. (Edmond) Gates, who preferred to be addressed as William Gates, was a printer by trade and a Maya linguist, epigrapher, and collector by avocation.¹⁵ Born in Atlanta, Georgia, on December 8, 1863, he obtained an A.B. degree in 1886 from Johns Hopkins University, where, among other subjects, he studied languages of the Near East and Asia. Although he was often referenced as Dr. William Gates, he never obtained a postgraduate degree. He attempted to study law at the University of Virginia but abandoned it for the printing business. As a printer in Cleveland, Ohio, at the turn of the century, Gates incorporated his personal interest in linguistics, and particularly Mayan languages, into his printing work.¹⁶ In 1900 he published a small run of *The Maya and Tzental Calendars*, printed more as a gift to interested persons than as a publication for general sale.¹⁷ To work for material gain would have gone against his newly adopted Theosophical beliefs. Those beliefs prompted his move

to Point Loma (near San Diego), California, to work as a printing expert with the School of Antiquity and the Aryan Theosophical Press. His personal convictions drew him to the religious and philosophical approach of Theosophy (“divine wisdom”).¹⁸

Gates continued to develop his interest in Maya culture and Mayan languages, referring to it only as an “intellectual pastime,” which was at best an understatement.¹⁹ In 1909 he published a reproduction of the Paris Codex, with the Maya graphs set in type, accompanied by a photographic facsimile and notes.²⁰ In 1910 he published his commentary on the latter manuscript.²¹ In 1911 he published a lavish photographic facsimile of the Madrid Codex.²² Gates also contributed articles on ancient Mesoamerican civilization to the magazine the *Theosophical Path*, published in Point Loma.²³

Gates developed a particular interest in the decipherment of the Maya writing system, found in codices and in ruins throughout eastern Mexico and western Central America. The ancient Maya civilization, which flowered in the first millennium A.D., was the only pre-Columbian civilization in the Western Hemisphere to create a writing system capable of registering spoken language in a relatively complete manner, thus providing the Maya with the means to create a written history.²⁴ Gates dedicated some thirty years of his life to understanding this system and, because of his printing interests, to designing and developing a font for reproducing ancient Maya texts.²⁵ Later in life Gates similarly developed an interest in the medicinal plants of Yucatán, translating every known Maya medicobotanical text he could locate. The bulk of his life, however, was dedicated to the collection and comparison of information concerning the philology of languages of the Mayan family, for which he coined the term “Mayance.”²⁶

Throughout the years Gates spent thousands of dollars in the pursuit of Mesoamerican manuscripts, believing it was within these original sources that he would find the answers to his linguistic questions concerning the decipherment of Maya writing. In 1914–15 Gates commissioned Frederic J. Smith to search for linguistic manuscripts in the Maya region of Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán (all Mexican states), and the Republic of Guatemala.²⁷ This is the core area of Maya civilization, with monumental ruins and abundant remains with ancient texts. Smith spent fifteen months there trailing linguistic manuscripts. Gates followed in 1917, his first independent collecting trip. He returned to the United States the following year with several manuscripts, particularly from Guatemala.²⁸ His collection grew from four manuscripts in 1912 to more than five hundred in 1918.

Gates himself commented on his collecting practices, including the pilfering of the Mexican archives. Although he wrote with the goal of selling his documental treasures and employed more than a touch of hyperbole, one may observe in his comments an attempt to justify his collecting activities:

The producers were nearly all of either the clerical or official classes; their writings were preserved . . . in a limited, known number of places, clerical and official archives, through the Colonial period. And then since Independence we have dispersions and total destructions of entire archives accompanied by individual collecting ending in nearly every case in a sale in Europe or New York, and the passage of the material to known locations. While in the lands of origin practically everything that has not been so saved to science and history in this latter fashion, has wholly disappeared. Stringent prohibitory laws are passed, and a great cry made about the foreigners who come to take away the country's antiquities; but the employees of the libraries sell the volumes; foreign consuls like Lehmann in Guatemala, or visitors like Dr. [Eduard Georg] Seler in Mexico (by the grace of the curator [Leopoldo] Batres), ship out cases on cases. And yet for all that, twenty times as much of this invaluable ancient literature has been burned and destroyed by Mexicans themselves in Mexico and Yucatan in the past fifty years, as all that exists in the world today.²⁹

Due to Gates's early background in the printing profession, he always took great pride in the way his publications were designed and printed. He stated in a letter to Messrs. Simmel & Company that "every issue, even the Quarterly, was printed on Fabriano handmade paper, sparing no expense."³⁰ Gates's early financial situation is uncertain, but it can only be assumed that he came by some means of affording the wealth of manuscripts he acquired in his initial years of collecting. Later in life, however, Gates seemed to struggle financially, for it was never his intention to turn a profit from his scholarly publishing ventures or his Maya research. He was simply interested in the spread of knowledge.³¹

Gates claimed that by 1914 he had acquired half of all the known manuscripts on Maya subjects and had photographed 95 percent of all that he did not own.³² As he amassed a collection (later to exceed seven thousand items), he made connections with the local Maya people, museums in the United States and abroad, and fellow scholars and collectors.

The following anecdote, written by Gates toward the end of his life, provides insight into Gates's motivations:

When Mr. [Edward E.] Ayer called on me in California about 1916 (my first meeting with him) and we were mutually "bragging," of course I had to tell him that if he had paid \$450.00 for his 64 page manuscriptlet of hymns in the Kekchí dialect, I could show him the ms. that was written to teach the Indians how to sing 'em. And brought out this, causing him to ask Mrs. Ayer, to "distract my attention a moment, would she not?"³³

On April 25, 1920, Gates presided over the establishment of the Maya Society in Philadelphia, together with W. H. Holmes, Marshal H. Saville, Herbert J. Spinden, Carl Guthe, and other scholars. The society did not really get off the ground, however, until its rebirth a decade later.³⁴ In 1921 Gates was named the director general of archaeology by the Guatemalan government when he traveled there with Sylvanus G. Morley of the Carnegie Institute of Washington to perform linguistic and archaeological research. He used his title and influence with the local government to secure the passage of a law protecting Guatemalan antiquities and establishing proper procedures for archaeological expeditions. He also had great hopes of converting the Guatemalan Palacio de Minerva into a museum to aid the work of all incoming expeditions.³⁵

While working in Guatemala, Gates began to catalog his non-Maya material, primarily letters, manuscripts, and other documents from Oaxaca and central Mexico, dating from the sixteenth century to the 1920s. These he later sold to finance his Maya research. As a part of his linguistic studies, in 1922 Gates returned to Baltimore with a native speaker of the K'iche' language from Guatemala. The linguist and his informant worked together at a farm Gates had purchased near Charlottesville, Virginia. In December of the same year the homesick informant returned to Guatemala.³⁶

When Gates returned to Guatemala, his relationship with Morley became quite strained; fundamental differences in methodology divided the two Mayanist scholars. Gates had promoted legislation in Guatemala to protect the nation's archaeological heritage, and he accused Morley of smuggling artifacts out of the country and exposing excavated structures to decay. Morley went over Gates's head and secured a permit to work in the Petén, ignoring Gates's authority. In 1923 Gates resigned his directorship in frustration and officially ended his partnership with Morley.

His plan to establish a Guatemalan museum unraveled, as disagreements with Morley and the Guatemalan government proved fatal to the project.³⁷

Upon Gates's return to the United States in 1923, he decided to dissolve the Maya Society and began raising money by selling the portion of his collection that was unrelated to the Maya culture. He contracted with the American Art Association to have this material sold at auction in New York from April 9 to 11, 1924. Two days before the sale a trustee of Tulane University in New Orleans, Sam "the Banana Man" Zemurray, former president and founder of the Cuyamel Fruit Company of Honduras, offered an endowment of \$300,000 along with the purchase of Gates's entire Mexicana collection with the proviso that Gates give his consent to organize and direct a Department of Middle American Research at the university.³⁸ The New York sale was canceled, and the American Art Association sent the William Gates Mexicana Collection to Tulane.³⁹

Gates went to New Orleans with the secret hope of establishing what he called a "University of Trans-Caribbea." He spent the next two years acquiring reference materials, printed books, and manuscripts to support scholarship within the newly formed department. He also employed Frans Ferdinand (Franz) Blom, an archaeologist, as his assistant to perform expeditions and Maya research. Gates claimed that upon his return from a buying trip in Mexico he found that Blom had convinced the president of Tulane University that Gates's plans were "foolishness" and that it would be better for the university to support a more archaeological approach.⁴⁰ Bitter over this betrayal, Gates left his position at Tulane and in the spring of 1926 returned to his farm in Virginia, leaving Blom to assume his post as director of the Department of Middle American Research.⁴¹

Gates Sells His Manuscript Collection

In 1930, as a means to recover from his ongoing financial difficulties, Gates sold his farm and moved to Baltimore. He also sold his Mesoamerican manuscript collection to Robert Garrett, a fellow resident of Baltimore.⁴² Although the relationship between Gates and Garrett was nothing more than professional, Gates considered Garrett a "brother collector" because both men shared a keen interest in linguistic manuscripts. He also trusted that Garrett would honor his wish to keep the collection together and that it would one day underlie university work and research. Within his correspondence to Garrett concerning the sale

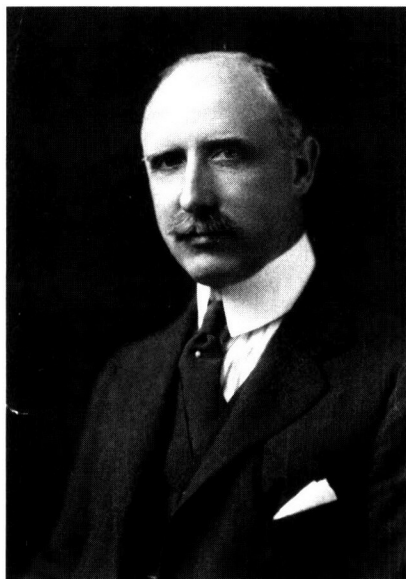


Figure 2. Robert Garrett, ca. 1930. Garrett purchased the major portion of William Gates's collection of Mesoamerican manuscripts in 1930 and later donated them to Princeton University. *Princeton University Library.*

transaction Gates stated, "The figure you offer for the mss. is very far indeed below a generally concurred valuation—but my whole viewpoint and desire is to make the collection serve research. Frankly, it hurts, to see such a collection, so personally associated, pass to any outside control. But in a dozen years or so, I shall not be here, which is—that. And the work, and department, I leave behind, will be."⁴³ The collection Garrett acquired was sometimes referred to as the Gates Collection of Mayance Manuscripts, having at one time formed part of the William Gates Collection of Middle American Literature, from which it was purchased by Garrett.

The collection contained 226 Mesoamerican manuscripts, chiefly written in Latin script. Mayan languages were well represented, predominantly Yucatec and K'iche' and to a lesser degree Ch'orti', Tzeltal, Tzotzil, Kaqchikel, Tz'utujil, Poqomam, Poqomchi', and Q'eqchi'.⁴⁴ In addition, there were several manuscripts in other Mesoamerican languages, including Zoque, Zapotec, Chinantec, and Nahuatl. Many of the manuscripts also contained Spanish and/or Latin devotional, liturgical, and other texts. The collection consisted of original manuscripts and transcriptions of texts dating from the time of the Spanish conquest

to the early twentieth century and included ritual incantations, several Chilam Balam books of prophecy from Yucatan, Caste War letters, Spanish translations of Christian doctrinal works, manuscript dictionaries of the native languages, histories, autograph letters, land documents, maps, and confraternity records.⁴⁵

Gates, with the sale of his Maya manuscript collection complete and by having himself (as research associate) and his society adopted by his alma mater, Johns Hopkins, was financially able to revive the Maya Society on July 21, 1930. He incorporated this association under a perpetual federal charter and donated what was left of his Maya collection in perpetual trust, with a controlling board selected with his approval.⁴⁶ It was at Johns Hopkins that he carried out some of his most important work, including the publication of the *Maya Society Quarterly*, the completion of his long-awaited study of Maya epigraphy entitled *An Outline Dictionary of Maya Glyphs* (1931), an annotated English translation of Fray Diego de Landa's classic description of Maya culture in sixteenth-century Yucatan (1937), and a grammar of Yucatec Maya (1938).⁴⁷ He also edited and printed an illustrated English translation of the 1552 *Libellus de Medicinalibus Indorum Herbis* (1939) and many other works.⁴⁸

Gates, who often felt he was not properly recognized as an academic, believed the completion of his Yucatec grammar and its publication had finally established him as a veritable Maya scholar. These statements were typical of Gates, who often displayed a heightened sense of importance that went beyond normal self-aggrandizement. In a letter to a Mr. Wilson on July 9, 1938, he wrote: "This grammar tops [my] Maya works; I have ended the past of contest and attacks. For one thing, this work, by universal comment has put the kibosh on these years of denying WG as a 'real scholar.' All that past ended on June 15, as the last pages came off the press."⁴⁹ This publication also marked the end of his relationship with Johns Hopkins, as administrative tensions between Gates and his alma mater were beginning to grow.

Gates had grandiose plans to move himself and the Maya Society into a new building either in Baltimore or in Washington, D.C., completely independent of the university. There was even some dialogue with Robert Garrett about moving his Maya Society to Princeton, New Jersey.⁵⁰ In a letter to Garrett dated April 29, 1938, Gates outlined his plans for the Maya Society and the prospective move: "Headquarters, and installation. This, in Princeton, you can estimate better than I. First temporary; later our own 'Maya Building.' If I had \$25,000.00 I'd put that up at once, in a model of the famous Labna 'beautiful gateway.' I have no doubt at all that within a few months we will leave the Hopkins,

taking everything with us, whether we move to Washington, accessible to the new Carnegie research building, to Princeton, or stay quietly and cheaply in Baltimore.”⁵¹

Gates described his Maya Society as being a “full-fledged and equipped Maya University, ready to open its doors.”⁵² The independent building for which Gates was hoping never materialized in Baltimore or Princeton, so he moved to Washington, D.C., where he continued his studies at the Library of Congress. Gates died a short time later in Baltimore on April 24, 1940, leaving incomplete his research on the decipherment of the Maya writing system.

The Collecting Life of Robert Garrett

Robert Garrett, who purchased a major portion of Gates’s Mesoamerican collection in 1930, donated over several years one of the most prominent and eclectic collections of manuscripts to the Princeton University Library. Garrett, Princeton class of 1897, was an Olympic athlete, investment banker, Princeton Charter trustee, and collector.⁵³ He eventually amassed a collection of more than eleven thousand volumes of Western and non-Western manuscripts, fragments, and scrolls. The items within the collection originated from Europe, the Near East, Africa, Asia, and Mesoamerica, dating from ca. 1340 B.C. to the twentieth century. Garrett’s collection included Mesoamerican pictorial and alphabetical manuscripts in sixteen indigenous languages of Mexico and Central America, most of them pertaining to the Mayan language family. His Mesoamerican material that eventually came to Princeton incorporated both the collection he purchased from Gates in 1930 and a significant number of documents he acquired by other means.⁵⁴

Garrett’s father, Thomas Harrison Garrett, a Baltimore banker, was a collector of Americana and natural history books, and it was he who sparked Robert’s initial interest in collecting. After the elder Garrett died suddenly in a yachting accident on June 9, 1888, Robert’s mother, Alice Whitridge, took him and his brothers, Horatio and John, on a two-year sojourn through Europe and the Near East, perhaps for a change of scene.⁵⁵ This trip included visits to Egypt, Palestine, and Syria, including a three-week trip on horseback between Damascus and Jerusalem. Garrett began his collecting “hobby,” as he called it, during these travels with his family; it was in Rome, in a store on the Piazza di Spagna that sold objets d’art, where he bought his first Western medieval manuscript, a French Book of Hours.⁵⁶

It was not, however, until Garrett and his family relocated to Princeton in 1891 that he encountered a work by Joseph Balthazar Silvestre entitled *Universal Palaeography*, which set him on his dedicated hunt for the international collection of manuscripts he later bestowed on the Princeton University Library.⁵⁷ He gathered his manuscript collection based on Silvestre's established paleographical compendium of scripts. Garrett explained that "at some time along the way I got hold of the monumental work . . . and then I was really off on my manuscript journey, determined to find examples of as many of the scripts illustrated in that publication as possible. I was not able to do the job systematically nor completely but by the time my efforts ended I had something like thirty-five different scripts, and naturally many more than that number of languages."⁵⁸

Over the next fifty years Garrett researched and acquired all types of Western and non-Western manuscripts and artifacts (including coins and stamps) while at the same time working as a financier in the family firm of Robert Garrett & Sons in Baltimore, Maryland.⁵⁹ He obtained manuscripts through varied means—while on personal and professional travels, at academic conferences, by scouting through dealer catalogs and storehouses (Bernard Quaritch in London was one of his favorites), and through simple serendipity.⁶⁰ Manuscript dealers everywhere came to know him as a charitable and intelligent collector.⁶¹

Garrett was known to be generous to scholars who needed travel money for research or long-term manuscript loans for detailed study. Garrett often had an ulterior motive in mind; he sponsored independent research projects by scholars in foreign lands in exchange for any available manuscripts they might be able to locate for him within their country of research. Garrett obtained most of his Ethiopic scrolls and some of his most precious Arabic manuscripts through a process he referred to as "manuscript hunting expeditions."⁶² He also "hunted" on his own, traveling, for example, to the eastern Mediterranean in 1899 and 1900 as a member of the American Archaeological Expedition to Syria, an excursion he helped organize and finance. While there, Garrett was able to locate more manuscripts, including several in Coptic and Syriac.⁶³

Garrett was more than an inveterate collector of manuscripts; he had a direct scholarly interest in the materials he acquired. It was his intention from the beginning to institutionalize his collections so that they would always be preserved and available for academic research. Garrett published a few short articles about his collecting practices, worked closely with subject specialists who researched his manuscripts, and, most importantly, worked with other relevant scholars to develop

an academic institutional setting for the promotion and use of his collections. So dedicated was Garrett to this endeavor that he was willing to sell off the high-end items within his collection that he considered “museum pieces” in order to purchase manuscripts with substantial intellectual content more suitable for teaching and research.⁶⁴

Through his manuscript collecting, Garrett ideally hoped to substantiate and stimulate the need for (and creation of) new academic departments at Princeton. After Garrett and his brother John purchased a collection of 2,400 bound Arabic manuscripts, Garrett realized that the size of the collection would cause storage concerns at home and decided to deposit the collection at Princeton University.⁶⁵ The university’s new Pyne Library, opened in 1898, had plenty of shelf space for a large collection such as this. Garrett considered this substantial deposit the catalyst for the development of the Department of Oriental Languages and Literatures at Princeton University. Through a thoughtful selection process Garrett was able to obtain pertinent manuscripts that served a variety of scholarly endeavors at Princeton. Ernest Cushing Richardson (1860–1939), director of Princeton University Library and professor of bibliography, stated in a letter to Garrett dated April 1, 1915, that “for my palaeography course this year in which I have eight men, we have been making a good deal of use of your manuscripts for illustrative purposes and several of them are being carefully and fully described as a sort of thesis work.”⁶⁶

In 1930, when Garrett acquired the collection of Mesoamerican manuscripts from William Gates, he hoped that the acquisition would substantiate the need for yet another academic department—one of Latin American studies. Some years after Garrett acquired these manuscripts, Sylvanus G. Morley of the Carnegie Institute of Washington said he considered the collection “the most important collection of its kind now to be found in any one place.”⁶⁷

After purchasing the Gates collection of Maya manuscripts in 1930, Garrett continued to acquire other Mesoamerican manuscripts. To complement the collection he chose to broaden the scope of his collecting to encompass all of Latin America. His supplementary collection contained eighteen manuscripts and documents from Mexico, Central America, and South America dating from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. The contents included pictorial manuscripts, maps, histories, catechisms, and land documents written in Nahuatl, Latin, and Spanish (Latin script predominates, but there are others in ancient Mesoamerican pictorial scripts). Some of these documents are original, others are copies, and one is evidently a falsification.⁶⁸

The Gates Collection and Princeton University

After Gates's death in 1940, responsibility for his collections and the Maya Society was given to his sister Edith Gates McComas of Baltimore, Maryland.⁶⁹ Robert Garrett maintained contact with McComas and at one time suggested to her that he might contribute his Mesoamerican manuscript collection, bought from Gates, to her collection of Maya materials. In a letter to Garrett from Edith McComas, dated October 4, 1940, she explains, "This was a secret wish of his [William Gates], that it might go all to-gether. In fact he said to me one time that we might perhaps buy them back from you, if we succeeded in getting a large enough price for the Collection. For you to voluntarily offer to give them is just one of those things which seem to good to be true."⁷⁰

For reasons unknown, Garrett eventually decided not to return the manuscripts to McComas; he did, however, decide to honor Gates's wish to have the collection remain intact and to be used for scholarly research, as this was a desire Garrett had for his own collection. In 1942 Robert Garrett presented his Gates Mesoamerican manuscripts to the Institute for Advanced Study, an independent research center at Princeton.⁷¹ At the same time he donated other parts of his manuscript collections to Princeton University.⁷²

Garrett deposited the Mesoamerican manuscripts at the Institute for Advanced Study with the condition that a Latin American studies department be established to complement the collection. So important was this concept that he included a reversionary condition that "if and when it should be determined that the Institute would not undertake this task, the Maya manuscripts would then be turned over to Princeton University and made part again of my manuscript collections."⁷³ Dr. Frank Aydelotte, director of the institute from 1939 to 1947, accepted this condition and also suggested that "if such developments should prove impossible [Mr. Garrett] empower[s] the Trustees of the Institute to transfer the entire collection to whatever institution may seem to them . . . most likely to be able to use these manuscripts to the best advantage for the advancement of Maya scholarship."⁷⁴ This proposal met with Garrett's approval, with the modification that the manuscripts should go to Princeton University should the institute find itself unable to make proper use of them.⁷⁵

By 1944 the institute had yet to establish a Latin American department; Garrett, therefore, requested the institute to consider giving the Mesoamerican manuscripts to Princeton University Library.⁷⁶ In 1949 Judith E. Sachs of the institute's library recommended the transfer of the Gates collection to Princeton:

The hope that the Institute might become a center of Latin American studies has not materialized. The Garrett collection has been stored, successively, in Dr. Aydelotte's and Prof. Merritt's offices and is now temporarily housed in a safe in the Newspaper room.

Occasional use by visiting scholars has been greatly hampered by the lack of personnel trained to give expert assistance and proper supervision in the use and handling of materials. . . .

In the interest of the Maya collection and its future usefulness it is suggested that—in accordance with Mr. Garrett's wishes—the material be transferred to Princeton University as to an institution better equipped to give expert care and make it accessible to scholars in the field.⁷⁷

When Garrett ultimately requested that the Gates manuscripts be moved from the Institute for Advanced Study to Princeton University Library, it was his intention to reunite the Mesoamerican manuscripts with his many other manuscript collections—what he referred to as his “humanistic collections.” Garrett coined the term “humanistic collections” in the 1930s and had been in negotiations with the Princeton University Library for over a decade to establish the Committee on Humanistic Collections. This committee would consist of trustees, members of the faculty, and alumni. According to Garrett's initial draft proposal, the committee would have “immediate supervision over all humanistic collections belonging to the University or deposited in its care and shall be charged with the housing and care of these collections and the adjustment of all matters having to do with the inter-relations of these collections; and also any other matters tending to benefit the collections or make them more useful.”⁷⁸

It was eventually determined that the committee would serve in an advisory capacity to the president of the university with respect to all the humanistic collections belonging to the university.⁷⁹ The committee would also promote the publication of scholarly works that relate to the collections and deal with any matters that would benefit their use.⁸⁰ The first official committee was formed in 1943, with Robert Garrett as chairman; members included other alumni manuscript collectors, such as Otto Von Kienbusch and William H. Scheide.⁸¹

One of the committee's duties was to discuss potential manuscript acquisitions. After Gates's sister Edith McComas put the remnants of the Gates collection up for sale in 1944, Robert Garrett called several meetings in early 1945 with the members of the Committee on Humanistic Collections, the librarian from the Institute for Advanced Study

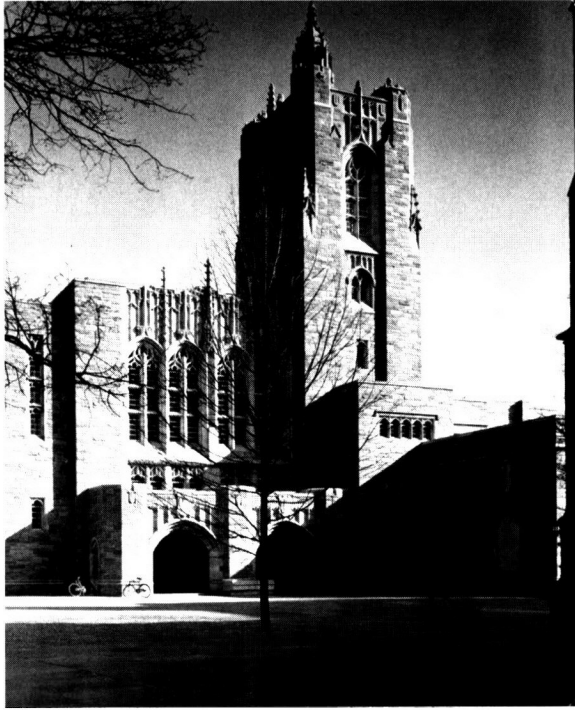


Figure 3. Harvey S. Firestone Memorial Library, Princeton University, ca. 1948. Robert Garrett's collection of Mesoamerican manuscripts was donated to the Firestone Library at Princeton University in June 1949. Princeton University Library.

(where the Gates manuscripts were located at the time), and Dr. Henry McComas, Edith's husband, to discuss funding possibilities for these additional materials.⁸² Garrett had hoped that Dr. and Mrs. McComas might consider Princeton an "heir" to the collection. The Institute for Advanced Study devised a plan in 1945 for an academic department that would be developed should the purchase of the additional Gates material be approved. The department would be called the Library of Ancient American Research, and it would continue the research and publishing ventures of the Maya Society. Within the proposed plan was a footnote stating that "by combining the Gates Collection with the Robert Garrett Collection of Original Maya Manuscripts, already deposited with the Institute, and adding these more recent publications of the 'General Library Collection,' the proposed 'Library of American Research' would become the second-ranking center in the world for this field of research, preceded only by the Peabody Museum of Harvard University."⁸³ This plan included the continuation of Gates's glyph studies and completion and

publication of the linguistic works left by Gates. Although the institute presented a thoughtful and well-documented plan, Garrett was unable to secure the funding for the remaining Gates collection. Instead, the original Gates manuscript collection was officially transferred in June 1949 from the Institute for Advanced Study to the incipient Harvey S. Firestone Memorial Library at Princeton University as a gift from Robert Garrett.⁸⁴ In 1946 the remnants of the Gates collection, “consisting of books, photographic copies, loose photographs, negatives, notes and correspondence,” were sold to Brigham Young University.⁸⁵

Following the donation of Garrett’s Mesoamerican manuscripts to Princeton University in 1949, seventeen additional manuscripts were added to the collection, including the *Doctrina Otomí*, a religious work written by a native scribe working with the priest and linguist Horacio Carocho in the Jesuit school at Tepotzotlán in central Mexico; two pictorial catechisms of Otomí origin; important manuscripts in Yucatec Maya, including the Book of Chilam Balam of Chumayel; manuscripts in Nahuatl with religious and legal content; and central Mexican pictorial manuscripts.⁸⁶ The collection also includes ancient Maya script on ceramic and shell supports, a bone with a pictorial inscription from Oaxaca, and a lone South American quipu, or register made from knotted cords.⁸⁷

In 2004 the collection of Mesoamerican manuscripts at Princeton was organized into three parts based on provenance: the Garrett-Gates Mesoamerican Manuscripts, consisting of the William Gates Collection, purchased by Robert Garrett in 1930 and donated to Princeton University in 1949; the Garrett Mesoamerican Manuscripts, with those items added by Garrett to the core Gates Collection, also donated to Princeton in 1949; and the Princeton Mesoamerican Manuscripts, acquired by Princeton University after 1949 through donation and purchase.⁸⁸

Conclusion

William Gates, who considered himself as much a scholar of Mayan linguistics as a collector, is best remembered and respected today for his prolific collecting practices. Robert Garrett, a more typical collector, is similarly noteworthy in his acquisition efforts and willingness to place his formidable collections at the disposition of researchers.

The manuscripts these two men procured and that now reside at Princeton—texts in indigenous languages, both originals and copies—provide evidence of the history and evolution of native languages under the influence of Spanish civilization during the period of Western

contact with the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The materials also illustrate how the Spanish culture affected all aspects of life in New Spain, from the practice of religion to the transfer of lands from the natives to the Spanish colonists. Continued use by scholars, who come to Princeton University year after year to research this collection assembled by Gates and Garrett, reinforces the steadfast belief these collectors shared, that the contextual value of these manuscript collections will continue to provide a foundation for academic research.

Notes

1. In this article the adjective “Mayan” is used to refer to the language family, while “Maya” is used in all other contexts.

2. H. W. Dodds, “The Garrett Collection of Manuscripts: Acceptance of the Collection by President,” *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 3, no. 4 (1942): 114.

3. William Gates to Mr. Wilkinson, July 16, 1911, box 1, folder 10a, William Gates, Central American Papers (MSS 279), L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as CAP).

4. The most complete description of Gates’s collecting methods, written by Gates himself, is found in the first sales catalog in two sections, “Résumé of the Collection” and “Linguistics,” the latter inserted between nos. 711 and 712 of the catalog. See William Gates, *The William Gates Collection: Manuscripts · Documents · Printed Literature, Relating to Mexico and Central America, with Special Significance to Linguistics, History, Politics and Economics, Covering the Five Centuries of Mexican Civilization from the Aztec Period to the Present Time* (New York: American Art Association, 1924). Both sections were published a second time, with slight changes, in *The Maya Society and Its Work* (Baltimore: Maya Society, 1937), 9–16.

5. Gates, *The William Gates Collection*, “Résumé of the Collection” section.

6. *Ibid.*, “Linguistics” section.

7. Hernán Cortés, *Cartas de relación*, 2nd ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1963), 22.

8. Mesoamerica (or Middle America) is a large culture area extending roughly from modern-day central Mexico to Central America. For a concise definition of Mesoamerica see Paul Kirchhoff, *Escritos selectos, estudios mesoamericanistas, volumen I, aspectos generales*, ed. Carlos García Mora, Linda Manzanilla, and Jesús Monjarás Ruiz (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Antropológicas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2002), 43–54.

9. For a general catalog of pre-Hispanic and colonial-era pictorial manuscripts in the native tradition see John B. Glass and Donald Robertson, “A Census of Native Middle American Pictorial Manuscripts,” in *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Three*, ed. Howard F. Cline, Charles Gibson, and Henry B. Nicholson, vol. 14 of *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), 81–252. For a partial treatment of alphabetical manuscripts in Mesoamerican languages see Charles Gibson and John B. Glass, “A Census of Middle American Prose Manuscripts in the Native Historical Tradition,” in *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Four*, ed. Howard F. Cline, Charles Gibson, and Henry B. Nicholson,

vol. 15 of *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1975), 322–400. Two forthcoming supplements to the *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources*, one on pictorial manuscripts and another on alphabetical manuscripts in native languages, will provide a more comprehensive and up-to-date catalog of Mesoamerican manuscripts.

10. John B. Glass, "The Boturini Collection," in Cline, Gibson, and Nicholson, *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Four*, 473–86. For an illustrated catalog of the Aubin collection see Eugène Boban, *Documents pour servir à l'histoire du Mexique, catalogue raisonné de la collection de M. E.-Eugène Goupil (ancienne collection J.-M.-A. Aubin), manuscrits figuratifs et autres sur papier indigène d'Agave mexicana et sur papier européen antérieurs et postérieurs à la conquête du Mexique (XVI^e. siècle)*, 2 vols. and *Atlas* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, Éditeur, 1891).

11. John B. Glass, *Catálogo de la colección de códices* (Mexico City: Museo Nacional de Antropología, Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1964).

12. Howard F. Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers on Ethnohistory," in *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Two*, ed. Howard F. Cline and John B. Glass, vol. 13 of *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1973), 370–427. See also the published auction catalog of the Ramírez collection: *Bibliotheca Mexicana, or a catalogue of the library of rare books and important manuscripts relating to Mexico and other parts of Spanish America, formed by the late señor don José Fernando Ramírez, president of the late emperor Maximilian's first ministry . . . to be sold by auction . . .* (London: Messrs. Puttick and Simpson, 1880).

13. Cline, "Selected Nineteenth-Century Mexican Writers," 383–86; Carlos E. Castañeda and Jack Autrey Dabbs, eds., *Guide to the Latin American Manuscripts in the University of Texas Library* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1939).

14. Howard F. Cline, "Hubert Howe Bancroft, 1832–1918," in Cline and Glass, in *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Two*, 326–47; John Frederick Schwaller, *Guías de manuscritos en náhuatl [Guides to Nahuatl Manuscripts (sic)], the Newberry Library (Chicago), the Latin American Library (Tulane University), the Bancroft Library (Berkeley)* (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1987), 51–73. For information on Ayer see Frank C. Lockwood, *The Life of Edward E. Ayer* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg & Company, 1929); Schwaller, *Guías de manuscritos*, 7–23; Ruth Lapham Butler, *A Check List of Manuscripts in the Edward E. Ayer Collection* (Chicago: Newberry Library, 1937); *The Newberry Library, Collections & Catalogue* (Chicago: Newberry Library), <http://www.newberry.org/nl/collections/collectionshome.html>, updated 2001, accessed September 19, 2002; David Wright, *Manuscritos otomíes en la Biblioteca Newberry y la Biblioteca de la Universidad de Princeton* (Guanajuato: Ediciones La Rana, 2006), 13–17.

15. For Gates's name preference see William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP.

16. For biographical data on William E. Gates see *The Gates Collection of Middle American Literature* (Baltimore: Henry C. McComas and Edith McComas[?], ca. 1940–44), sec. A, 5, 6; "Dr. William Gates Dies at Age of 76," *Baltimore Sun*, April 25, 1940, 7, 28; Gareth W. Lowe, *The Life Works of William E. Gates* (Provo, 1954); Gareth W. Lowe, *Register of the Biography of William E. Gates, 1863–1940, MSS 279* (Provo: L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, 2003), http://ead.lib.byu.edu:8080/Ead/ead_viewdoc.jsp?eadid=MSS279.xml, accessed December 3, 2006.

17. William Gates, *The Maya and Tzental Calendars: Comprising the Complete Series of Days, with Their Positions in the Month for Each One of the Fifty-two Years of the Cycle, According to Each System* (Cleveland, 1900).

18. Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

19. William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP.

20. *Codex Perez Maya-Tzental*, drawn by and ed. William Gates (Point Loma, 1909), cited in Ignacio Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía: Mesoamérica y Norte de México, 1514–1960* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1962), 322 (no. 7474); John B. Glass, "Annotated References," in Cline, Gibson, and Nicholson, *Guide to Ethnohistorical Sources, Part Four*, 611; Lowe, *The Life Works*, 3.

21. William Gates, *Commentary upon the Maya-Tzental Perez Codex with a Concluding Note upon the Linguistic Problem of the Maya Glyphs*, published simultaneously by the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, and the Aryan Theosophical Press, Point Loma, cited in Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía*, 327 (no. 7587); Glass, "Annotated References," 611.

22. *Madrid Codex: Photographed for William E. Gates*, cited in Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía*, 323. Glass describes this rare bibliographical jewel: "112 photographs of Codex Madrid mounted on both sides of a linen strip to form a 56-leaf screenfold facsimile; between boards, inlaid with shell and silver monogram of the name of the recipient of the copy" ("Annotated References," 611).

23. See Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía*, 385 (no. 9014), 489 (no. 11473); Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

24. The Maya writing system combines semasiographic signs (graphs expressing ideas) and glottographic signs (graphs expressing linguistic structures); the glottographic signs may be subdivided into logographic signs (expressing words or morphemes) and phonographic signs (expressing syllables, in this case). Combining these classes of graphs, a Maya scribe could represent verbal discourse in his or her language. Other Mesoamerican groups depended more on semasiographic signs, although they also employed glottographic signs, especially in personal and place-names. On the theory and terminology of writing systems see Geoffrey Sampson, *Writing Systems: A Linguistic Introduction* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985). On Maya writing see Michael D. Coe and Mark Van Stone, *Reading the Maya Glyphs* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001). On Mesoamerican writing systems in general see Joyce Marcus, *Mesoamerican Writing Systems: Propaganda, Myth, and History in Four Ancient Civilizations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

25. This font consisted of two thousand graphs and was used by Gates in publishing his codex facsimiles and studies of the ancient Maya script. For more information see Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

26. Gates's definition of Mayance was "the term given to the family of languages spoken at the time of the Conquest by those descended from the great monument and road builders of what is referred to as the Old Empire period, as distinct from the later separate kingdoms found by the Spaniards on their entry. The term is thus used as we do Romance for the five modern languages, each with their dialects, descended from the Latin" (William Gates, "The Mayance Nations," *Maya Society Quarterly* 1, no. 3 [1932]: [97]–106, quote on [97]).

27. *The Maya Society and Its Work*, 15.

28. By 1914 the Mexican Revolution was well under way, and many original manuscripts and documents were being destroyed and looted as a result. One of the main reasons Gates went on this manuscript-hunting expedition was to secure as many manuscripts as possible from ultimate destruction. See Gates, *The William Gates Collection*, "Résumé of the Collection" and "Linguistics" sections.

29. *Ibid.*

30. Gates is referring to his publication of the *Maya Society Quarterly* (Baltimore: Maya Society, Johns Hopkins University, 1931–33); see Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía*, 235 (no. 5609), 327 (nos. 7588–91, 7593, 7595), 375 (nos. 8780–82), 567 (no. 13488); William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP.

31. For anecdotal information concerning Gates's financial dealings see Charles P. Everitt, *The Adventures of a Treasure Hunter: A Rare Bookman in Search of American History* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951), 90–95.

32. Gates went to great expense in buying the latest photographic equipment and was known for his innovative techniques in the art of photographic reproductions of manuscripts. Some of these reproductions, handsomely bound, may be seen in the Ayer Collection of the Newberry Library in Chicago; others are held by the Peabody Museum Library, Harvard University; the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; and Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. See John B. Glass, "A Checklist of Institutional Holdings of Middle American Manuscripts in the Native Historical Tradition," in Cline, Gibson, and Nicholson, *Guide to Ethno-historical Sources, Part Four*, 459–62 (appendix A); John M. Weeks, *Mesoamerican Ethnohistory in United States Libraries: Reconstruction of the William E. Gates Collection of Historical and Linguistic Manuscripts* (Culver City: Labyrinthos, 1990); William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP.

33. William E. Gates, "Mayance and other manuscripts in the Gates Collection [*sic*]," photocopy of a typed ms., Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, unclassified, undated.

34. Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

35. *Ibid.*

36. *The Gates Collection of Middle American Literature*, sec. A, 6; "Dr. William Gates Dies"; Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

37. Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

38. William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP. Gates states in this letter that Tulane purchased his Mexicana collection for \$60,000.

39. William Gates to Mr. Adler, December 28, 1933, box 6, folder 11, CAP. For more information on Tulane see also Ross Parmenter, *The Identification of Lienzo A: A Tracing in the Latin American Library of Tulane University* (New Orleans: Middle American Research Institute, Tulane University, 1970).

40. William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP.

41. Now called the Middle American Research Institute (MARI). The initial focus was the archaeology, anthropology, and history of Mesoamerica. The scope was later broadened to cover most subject disciplines and all of Latin America and the Caribbean. See Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

42. *Ibid.* Gates probably came to know of Robert Garrett through Sylvanus G. Morley, who had an acquaintance with Garrett's brother-in-law Col. Gordon

Johnston, stationed in Mexico around 1930. See Sylvanus G. Morley to Col. Gordon Johnston, September 29, 1930, box 2, folder 4, Robert Garrett Papers (C0627), Princeton University Library.

43. William Gates to Robert Garrett, March 25, 1930, box 2, folder 4, Garrett Papers.

44. On the languages of the Mayan family see Lyle Campbell, *American Indian Languages: The Historical Linguistics of Native America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 162–66.

45. See *El libro de los libros de Chilam Balam*, 6th printing, trans. Alfredo Barrera Vázquez and Silvia Rendón (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1979); Teresa T. Basler, “Checklist of Mesoamerican Manuscripts,” Princeton University Library, <http://libweb5.princeton.edu/mssimages/index.html>, 2003, accessed December 3, 2006.

46. William Gates to Messrs. Simmel & Co., June 30, 1935, box 8, folder 4, CAP. See also *The Maya Society and Its Work*.

47. *Maya Society Quarterly*, 1931–33; William E. Gates, *An Outline Dictionary of Maya Glyphs: With a Concordance and Analysis of Their Relationships* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1931) (a facsimile edition, enhanced with Gates’s article “Glyph Studies” from the *Maya Society Quarterly* 1, no. 4 [September 1932], is more accessible than the original [New York: Dover Publications, 1978]); Diego de Landa, *Yucatan before and after the Conquest*, trans. William Gates (Baltimore: Maya Society, 1937) (the first edition consisted of just eighty copies, with hand-tinted illustrations; see also the Dover facsimile edition [New York: Dover Publications, 1978]); William Gates, *A Grammar of Maya* (Baltimore: Maya Society, 1938), cited in Norman A. McQuown, “History of Studies in Middle American Linguistics,” in *Linguistics*, ed. Norman A. McQuown, vol. 5 of *Handbook of Middle American Indians* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 5; William Bright, “Inventory of Descriptive Materials,” in McQuown, *Linguistics*, 25 (Bright states that Gates’s Yucatec Maya grammar “consists mostly of grammatically classified word lists”).

48. Gates published two versions of this codex, both in 1939. The first includes only a transcription of the Latin text and black-and-white line drawings of the botanical illustrations. The second presents an English translation of the Latin text with colored illustrations and a preface, study, and “Analytical Index” by Gates. A facsimile edition of the second version has been published by Dover: *An Aztec Herbal: The Classic Codex of 1552*, trans. and study by William Gates (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2000). See the introduction by Bruce Byland in the Dover edition and G. Somolinos d’Ardois, “Bibliografía de copias, traslados y ediciones,” in Martín de la Cruz, *Libellus de medicinalibus indorum herbis: manuscrito azteca de 1552, según traducción latina de Juan Badiano* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica/Instituto Mexicano del Seguro Social, 1991), 218, 219. Much of the editorial production of the Maya Society is registered in the following publications: Bernal, *Bibliografía de arqueología y etnografía*, 151 (no. 3598), 155 (no. 3674), 235 (no. 5609), 322 (no. 7470), 327 (nos. 7588–95), 375 (nos. 8780–82), 382 (no. 8974), 402 (no. 9479), 489 (nos. 11476–85), 567 (no. 13488); Glass, “Annotated References,” 611–13; Lowe, *Register of the Biography*.

49. William Gates to Mr. Wilson, July 9, 1938, box 9, folder 1, CAP.

50. Gates’s mother lived in Princeton for an unknown amount of time. Gates wrote a letter from his mother’s home in Princeton in 1912; see William Gates to Karl W. Hiersemann, Esq., March 15, 1912, box 2, folder 1, CAP.

51. William Gates to Robert Garrett, document, n.d., box 2, folder 6, Garrett Papers.

52. *Ibid.*

53. Robert Garrett graduated from Princeton with a bachelor of science degree. Garrett also took several graduate courses in 1900 at Johns Hopkins University in history and economics; however, this did not result in a graduate degree. See *Robert Garrett & Sons, Incorporated 1840-1965* (Baltimore, 1965). While in school, Garrett excelled in track and field athletics and was captain of the Princeton track team in his junior and senior years. In 1896 he competed in the first modern Olympic Games in Athens, Greece, where he won two first-place medals and two second-place medals. See Alexander Leitch, *A Princeton Companion* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), http://etcweb.princeton.edu/cgi-bin/mfs/05/Companion/garrett_robert.html, accessed December 3, 2006; Jonathan Shaw, "The Unexpected Olympians: How Harvard Dominated the First Modern Games—In Spite of Itself," *Harvard Magazine* 98, no. 6 (1996), <http://www.harvardmag.com/ja96/olympian.html>, accessed December 3, 2006. In 1905 Garrett was elected a life trustee of Princeton University (Leitch, *A Princeton Companion*).

54. Textual material in the Garrett collection includes Western medieval and Renaissance codices principally in Latin and Western European languages (also including Greek, Armenian, and Georgian manuscripts) as well as Hebrew, Old Church Slavonic, Islamic (chiefly Arabic, Persian, and Turkish), Syriac, Karshuni, Samaritan, papyrus (chiefly fragments in Greek from Roman and Byzantine Egypt), Coptic, Ethiopic, Chinese, Japanese, Javanese, Indic (including Sanskrit as well as a smaller number of Batak, Pali, Siamese, Singhalese, Tibetan, and other languages of South Asia), Manchu, Naxi/Moso/Nakhi, and Mesoamerican manuscripts. For more information on the manuscripts within the Robert Garrett Collection see Robert Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 10, no. 3 (1949): 108; Don C. Skemer, "The Garrett Collection Revisited," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 56, no. 3 (1995): 420-28.

55. The steam yacht *Gleam*, owned by Thomas Harrison Garrett, collided with the 130-foot side-wheel steamer *Joppa* near the Seven-Foot Knoll Light-house in the middle of Chesapeake Bay on June 9, 1888. The wreckage was raised the following day, and the body of T. Harrison Garrett was discovered approximately five days later; he was only thirty-nine. See the following articles from the *New York Times*: "Death Ended the Trip," June 9, 1888, 1; "Searching for the Body," June 10, 1888, 5; "The Gleam Party Raised," June 11, 1888, 1; "Mr. Garrett's Wrecked Yacht," June 12, 1888, 1; "To Prevent Collisions," June 24, 1888, 5; "To Blame for a Collision," July 31, 1888, 3. *New York Times* articles were consulted using *ProQuest Historical Newspapers*, <http://www.proquest.co.uk>, accessed March 2004.

56. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," 108, 103, 104.

57. Joseph Balthazar Silvestre, *Universal Palaeography: or, Fac-similes of Writing of All Nations and Periods*, trans. Sir Frederic Madden (London, 1849-50); Robert Garrett to John Work Garrett, December 29, 1924, box 1, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

58. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," 104. Garrett subsequently loaned this two-volume set to an acquaintance who never returned the books, but he could not remember to whom he had loaned them. He wrote a letter to his

brother John on December 29, 1924, in hopes that he had borrowed them, yet sadly he later entered a note in pencil on his draft copy of the letter, dated February 16, 1925: "Not found." See Robert Garrett to John Work Garrett, December 29, 1924, box 1, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

59. For more information on the Garrett family and the firm of Robert Garrett & Sons see *Robert Garrett & Sons*. Garrett became a partner in Robert Garrett & Sons in 1907. Under his leadership the bank was reorganized and began an expansion project. A new building was erected in 1913, and business continued to prosper throughout his lifetime and beyond.

60. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector."

61. For an anecdotal example of Garrett's dealings with a book dealer from New York see Wilfrid M. Voynich to Robert Garrett, July 22, 1924, box 1, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

62. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," 110.

63. *Ibid.*, 107, 108.

64. *Ibid.*, 114.

65. For a description of the manuscripts see *Catalogue d'une collection de manuscrits arabes et turcs appartenant à la maison E. J. Brill à Leide, rédigé par M. Th. Houtsma, dr.* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, ca. 1889).

66. Ernest Cushing Richardson to Robert Garrett, April 1, 1915, box 7, folder 6, Garrett Papers.

67. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," 115.

68. Basler, "Checklist of Mesoamerican Manuscripts."

69. Gates had given his sister Edith legal ownership of his Americana collections back in 1927. See William Gates to Mr. Pate, March 15, 1929, box 7, folder 10A, CAP. In 1930, after selling the choicest portion to Robert Garrett, he donated the remainder of his Maya collection as a trust foundation to the Maya Society (*The Maya Society and Its Work*, 3).

70. Edith McComas to Robert Garrett, October 4, 1940, box 2, Garrett Papers.

71. The Institute for Advanced Study is a private center of research and scholarship located in Princeton, New Jersey. Founded in 1930, it maintains an informal and symbiotic relationship with the university. See "Mission, History, Facilities, and Services," in *School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study*, <http://www.hs.ias.edu/introbrochure.htm>, accessed April 24, 2007.

72. While Garrett was in the process of finalizing the details of his donation to Princeton in 1942, a representative for the Walters Art Gallery, Philip B. Perlman, sent him a letter in which he expressed an interest in securing several of the Garrett medieval manuscripts for that institution, including an eleventh-century copy of Joannes Climacus's *Scala Paradisi* (in Greek). Several days later Garrett responded, expressing his commitment to Princeton University and explaining that "I have always been anxious to preserve the various individual manuscripts and collections as one great unit, rather than to scatter the different parts in any degree." See Philip B. Perlman to Robert Garrett, March 18, 23, 1942, box 2, folder 4, Garrett Papers.

73. Garrett, "Recollections of a Collector," 115.

74. Frank Aydelotte to Robert Garrett, February 28, 1942, box 2, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

75. Aydelotte to Robert Garrett, March 10, 1942, box 2, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

76. Robert Garrett to Julian P. Boyd, June 28, 1944, box 2, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

77. Judith E. Sachs to Dr. Robert J. Oppenheimer, May 23, 1949, box 2, folder 7, Garrett Papers.

78. Robert Garrett to Harold W. Dodds, concerning the proposed plan for the Committee on Humanistic Collections at Princeton, October 13, 1938, subseries 1, box 81, folder 11, Dodds Series 15, Office of the President Records: Jonathan Dickinson to Harold W. Dodds (AC no. 117), Princeton University Library (hereafter cited as OPR).

79. E. Baldwin Smith to Harold W. Dobbs, November 8, 1938, subseries 1, box 81, folder 11, OPR.

80. Several publications concerning Princeton collections were published under the auspices of the Committee for Humanistic Collections, including Donald D. Egbert, *Princeton Portraits* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1947). There was some discussion among committee members about a publication concerning the Gates Mesoamerican manuscripts collection, but this idea never came to fruition.

81. The first meeting was held at the Nassau Club in Princeton on May 8, 1943. First item on the agenda was planning a tour to inspect all the various collections owned by the university. See Robert Garrett, "Report to the President and the Board of Trustees of the Committee on Humanistic Collections," n.d., subseries 1, box 81, folder 11, OPR.

82. *The Gates Collection of Middle American Literature*; Robert Garrett to Professor Henry L. Savage, February 13, 1945, box 2, folder 4, Garrett Papers.

83. "Plan of a Suggested Library Department of Ancient American Linguistic, Historical, and Archaeological Research in the School of Humanistic Studies of the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, New Jersey," submitted by M. Wells Jakeman, dated September 1945, issued by the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton, folder: Humanistic Collections, Committee, Historical Subject Files (AC no. 109), Princeton University Library.

84. The Harvey S. Firestone Memorial Library was erected in 1948. Years prior to construction, the Committee on Humanistic Collections helped to raise funds for this library and worked with the library staff on the design and construction of appropriate housing units for the coin, cylinder seal, and clay tablet collections. See letter, n.d., subseries 1, box 81, folder 11, OPR. It is uncertain how long the Committee for Humanistic Collections remained active. It is likely that the committee was discharged in 1950 when Garrett's direct involvement with university affairs began to wane. Robert Garrett died on April 25, 1961, in Baltimore, Maryland. See Robert Garrett to Henry L. Savage, April 27, 1950, folder: Humanistic Collections, Committee, Historical Subject Files (AC no. 109).

85. Glass, "A Checklist of Institutional Holdings," 458-62; Lowe, *Register of the Biography*. In order to prepare for the sale of the remaining Gates material, by now stripped of the original manuscripts in native Mesoamerican languages that had formed the core of the Gates collection, Dr. McComas divided the William Gates Collection of Middle American Literature into seven sections: section A, "photographic reproductions of manuscripts dating from the time of the conquest, about A.D. 1520 down to the nineteenth century"; section B, "library of Middle American research; general works, special studies, history, geography, archaeol-

ogy, anthropology, economy, botany, medicine”; section C, “publications from 1900 to 1940, materials to be used for publication and for study”; section D, “old and rare books of the XVI, XVII, XVIII centuries”; section E, “a miscellany of documents covering the XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX centuries dealing with every phase of life in the Middle Americas”; section F, “art and archaeology; codices, maps, facsimiles of mural decoration after Indian drawing photographs [*sic*]”; section G, “a library of bibliographies; books, treatises, pamphlets and catalogs of American and foreign publication.” McComas stipulated in section A of the catalog his desire to sell the collection in its entirety and stated that “its efficiency would be ruined by scattering the Collection” (*The Gates Collection of Middle American Literature*, sec. A, 8). For a detailed description and history of the entire Gates Collection see Weeks, *Mesoamerican Ethnohistory*.

86. The provenance of the *Doctrina Otomí* is unclear; see Wright, *Manuscritos otomíes*, 120–35, and for the pictorial catechisms see 135–45; *Libro de Chilam Balam de Chumayel*, trans. Antonio Mediz Bolio (Mexico City: Dirección General de Publicaciones, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1973); Basler, “Checklist of Mesoamerican Manuscripts.”

87. Basler, “Checklist of Mesoamerican Manuscripts.”

88. *Ibid.*

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