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Despatches from  
United States Ministers  
to Brazil  
1809-1906



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to the pamphlet issued in 1954.

DESPATCHES FROM  
UNITED STATES MINISTERS TO BRAZIL  
1809-1906

On the 74 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced 74 volumes that consist mainly of despatches addressed to the Department of State by U.S. diplomatic representatives to Brazil between April 3, 1809, and August 10, 1906. On the first roll are reproduced selected pages from 13 State Department registers of correspondence, which, taken as a unit, comprise a register of despatches from Brazil from April 3, 1809, through December 4, 1906.

Most of the communications are original despatches, and many of them are accompanied by enclosures. These despatches relate to such matters as Brazilian political and economic conditions and events, cases of alleged mistreatment of United States citizens in Brazil, claims of these citizens against the Brazilian Government, slavery and the slave trade in Brazil, operations of United States naval vessels in the South Atlantic, violations of Brazilian neutrality during the Civil War in the United States, trade between Brazil and the United States, and the appointment, qualification, and conduct of United States consular officials in Brazil. Many of the enclosures are copies of notes to or from officials of the Brazilian foreign office. Such notes, in turn, often transmit enclosures, such as copies of complaints or claims by United States citizens, and various kinds of information concerning Brazil requested by United States diplomatic representatives. Other enclosures relate to other activities of United States citizens or officials. Pamphlets, issues of newspapers, and other printed materials are sometimes enclosed.

Apart from numbered despatches and enclosures, these volumes contain many unnumbered communications, some of which are marked "Private" or "Confidential." These unnumbered communications, more informal than despatches, may report official matters requiring secrecy or not fully covered in the despatches or may convey personal news, acknowledgments of appointment, announcements of arrival or departure, and bills of official expenses. The volumes also contain occasional telegrams or cables, which are not numbered, communications from private citizens and White House officials, and memorandums prepared by State Department officials.

From March 7, 1809, the date of the appointment of Thomas Sumter, Jr., as Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States to the court of the Prince Regent of Portugal in Brazil, until August 6, 1820, when Sumter's successor, John Graham, died, the ranking United States official in Brazil held the rank of Minister Plenipotentiary. In April 1821 the Portuguese court left Brazil for Portugal, and the communications from United States diplomatic representatives in Brazil cease on July 12, 1821. It will be noted that there is a gap in the series from that date until December 11, 1824. From March 9, 1825, the date of the appointment of Condé Raguet as Chargé d'Affaires of the United States in Brazil, until September 13, 1841, the chief of the United States diplomatic mission in Brazil held the title of Chargé d'Affaires. From September 13, 1841, the date of the appointment of William Hunter as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, until January 13, 1905, the head of the mission to Brazil held this title. Since January

13, 1905, the date of the appointment of David E. Thompson as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, the title of the head of the mission has been that of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

An index by names of authors follows this introduction, giving the author's title, if any, inclusive dates of communications written by him, and the numbers of the rolls on which the communications are filmed. The following abbreviations for titles have been used: MP, Minister Plenipotentiary; EE and EP, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary; and AE and P, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

The records reproduced in this microcopy are part of a body of records in the National Archives designated as General Records of the Department of State, Record Group 59.

In the same record group in the National Archives are several series of volumes containing additional material on the relations between Brazil and the United States. Complementary to the diplomatic despatches are instructions to United States Ministers to Brazil, 1833-1906 (reproduced as M77, rolls 23-26). Also related to these are notes from the Brazilian Legation in the United States to the Department of State, 1824-1906 (M49), notes from the Department of State to the Brazilian Legation, 1834-1906 (M99, roll 9), despatches from United States consular officials in Bahia (Salvador), 1850-1906, Maranhão (São Luiz), 1818-76, Pará, 1831-1906 (including despatches from Minas, 1881-82, Maranhão, 1876-77, and Parnahiba, 1867-72), Pernambuco (Recife), 1817-1906, Rio Grande, 1817-1906, and Santos, 1831-1906; and instructions to these consuls. All these series were discontinued on August 14, 1906, when the Department of State adopted the practice of filing incoming and outgoing correspondence by subject.

There are related records in other record groups in the National Archives. Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the Department of State, Record Group 84, includes the records of the United States Legation in Brazil, 1809-1935, as well as those of various consular posts in that country. In the Naval Records Collection of the Office of Naval Records and Library, Record Group 45, are the Letters Received by the Secretary of the Navy from Commanding Officers of the Brazil, 1841-61, and South Atlantic, 1865-85, squadrons, (M89, rolls 14-30 and 207-227).

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