

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS**

Pamphlet Accompanying  
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**LETTERS SENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:  
GENERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS  
1818-1904**



**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
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LETTERS SENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE:  
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On the 81 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced 91 volumes (general and miscellaneous letter books) containing copies of letters sent by the Office of the Attorney General, 1818-70, and by its successor, the Department of Justice, 1870-1904. They are addressed to the President, officers and Members of Congress, Federal departments, judges, district attorneys, marshals, clerks of courts, State officials, and private citizens. The letters sent by the Office of the Attorney General are part of the series of Attorney General's Papers, 1790-1870 (only a few items earlier than 1818).

The Department of Justice was established by an act of Congress approved June 22, 1870. The act continued and expanded in the new Department the legal and administrative duties of the Office of the Attorney General, which had been created under the Judiciary Act of September 24, 1789, with the original duties of conducting suits in the Supreme Court and of giving opinions upon questions of law at the request of the President or heads of departments. To the Department was given general supervision of U.S. attorneys and marshals, and to it were transferred the Solicitor of the Treasury and the law officers of the State and Navy Departments and of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. To it were also transferred, from the Department of the Interior, the supervision of accounts of district attorneys, marshals, clerks, and officers of the courts, and the control of the judiciary fund from which the expenses of the courts and the safekeeping of prisoners were paid. The Department also inherited some other duties from the Office of the Attorney General, and additional duties were assigned to it from time to time by later legislation.

Until 1867 most letters sent were copied into the general letter books; the remainder were copied into Opinion Books, 1817-1934, and into a book of letters sent to the Solicitor of the Treasury, 1830-42. There are several gaps in the general letter books, and there are no letter books for the period between October 1, 1850, and May 25, 1857. Drafts of some of the missing letters, 1839, 1842-49, and 1851-70, are available in the series of Attorney General's Papers, 1790-1870. Between 1867 and 1874 the establishment of separate series of letter books for specific groups of correspondents led to the general series becoming limited to letters sent to private citizens and to its eventual designation as "Miscellaneous Letter Books."

The letters are arranged chronologically, but a few are out of order at the ends of volumes. Pages are numbered consecutively within each volume, but the blank numbered pages have not been filmed. The letters consist of fair copies through April 30, 1890, and of carbon copies thereafter. Beginning in May 1885 many copies show the file numbers of letters-received subject or case files of the Department

of Justice. The volumes are identified as follows: on Rolls 1-3, numbers A1-A3; Rolls 4-7, numbers B1-B5; Rolls 8-14, letters C-I; Rolls 15-25, letters K-V; Roll 26, numbers 1 and 1A; Roll 27, numbers 2 and 2A; and Rolls 28-31, numbers 3-62. At the front of each volume (except for volumes A3, B3, B4, and B5) is an index that is arranged alphabetically by office or name of addressee. The index includes subject, date, and page number of each letter sent, and file number (if any) of the letters-received subject or case file of the Department of Justice.

The records reproduced in this microfilm publication are part of the records in the National Archives designated as Record Group 60, General Records of the Department of Justice.

Related records in the same record group include several series of letters sent; departmental indexes; the Attorney General's Papers, 1790-1870; and letters received. During the period 1867-1904 copies of letters sent to different classes of persons were entered in various series of letter books, which resulted in the distribution of letters relating to the same subject among several series as follows: General and Miscellaneous Letters, 1818-1904 (reproduced in this microcopy); Letters Concerning Judiciary Expenses, 1849-84 (Microcopy 700); Instructions to United States Attorneys and Marshals, 1867-1904 (Microcopy 701); Letters to Executive Officers and to Members of Congress, 1871-1904 (Microcopy 702); and Letters to Judges and Clerks, 1874-1904 (Microcopy 703). Since 1904 carbon copies of letters sent have been filed with the related incoming correspondence in numerically designated subject or case files.

Related letters received are in the series of Attorney General's Papers, 1790-1870, and in two series of the Department of Justice records--the "Source-Chronological Files," 1870-84, and the "Year Files," 1884-1904. The Attorney General's Papers and the Source-Chronological Files are arranged by the source from which the communication was received and thereunder chronologically. Sources include the President, departments of the Federal Government, the Senate, the House of Representatives, and U.S. judicial districts. The Year Files, which consist of letters received from all these sources, are letters-received subject or case files arranged numerically by file number.

The records reproduced in this microcopy were prepared for filming by Norman D. Moore, who also wrote these introductory remarks and provided the other editorial material.

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3	A3	Mar. 19, 1857-May 12, 1859	3
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5	B2	July 19, 1858-July 11, 1861	5
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7	B5	Feb. 1, 1862-Apr. 9, 1863	2
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<u>Roll</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Price</u>
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80	61	Feb. 13-Apr. 12, 1904	5
81	62	Apr. 13-June 30, 1904	5
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$400</b>