

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

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LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE  
SECRETARY OF WAR,  
UNREGISTERED SERIES  
1789-1861



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LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE SECRETARY OF WAR  
UNREGISTERED SERIES  
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On the 34 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced letters, with their enclosures, that were received by the Secretary of War during the period 1789-1861 but, for one reason or another, not registered. Included are some documents of earlier and later dates: one in 1777, two in 1788, and one in 1864. There are no documents dated 1854, 1859, or 1860.

The Department of War was created by an act of Congress of August 7, 1789, and the Secretary of War was made responsible for all matters relating to military and naval affairs, including supervision of Indian affairs, military pensions, and the granting of bounty lands for military service. Naval affairs were removed from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of War when the Department of the Navy was created on April 30, 1798.

As the responsibilities of the Secretary of War became too great for direct administration by one office, various subordinate bureaus or staff departments were established to assume direct supervision of and responsibility for specific functions of the War Department. Among those established by 1825 were the Quartermaster's Department, the Ordnance Department, the Adjutant General's Office, the Office of the Surgeon General, the Inspector General's Department, the Office of the Chief of Engineers, the Pay Department, the Office of the Commissary General of Subsistence, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In 1849 the Bureau of Indian Affairs was transferred to the newly created Department of the Interior. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the Secretary of War and his office have been more concerned with the policy and general administration of the War Department.

The letters and enclosures reproduced in this microcopy were received from officers of subordinate bureaus of the War Department, Army officers in the field, Governors of States and Territories, civilian agents in the field, the President, Members of Congress, officials of other executive departments, and private persons. They relate to such topics as Indian affairs, fortifications for the defense of the country's coasts and frontiers, military campaigns against the British and the Indians, the constructing and opening of military roads, the organization and strength of the Army, the granting of pensions, the furnishing of subsistence for armies in the field, and the assignment and activities of military personnel.

These unregistered letters were received from the same classes of correspondents and relate to the same subjects as the letters received by the Secretary of War that were registered. Few of them are dated earlier than November 8, 1800, when a fire swept through the Secretary's office. There are also relatively few unregistered letters for the last 25 years of the period covered by the series.

The letters are arranged by year and thereunder alphabetically--most by the initial letter of the surname or office of the writer, but a few by the initial letter of the subject. Some letters in the series are incomplete, and some enclosures have become separated from the transmittal letters. Such enclosures were usually filed under the name of the writer, or, if no writer was given, by the initial letter of the subject of the document. Letters received from anonymous correspondents were frequently filed under "A."

The series is a part of Record Group 107, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War.

In the same record group are other related records. Among them are Letters Received by the Secretary of War, Registered Series, 1801-70 (Microcopy 221); Registers of Letters Received by the Office of the Secretary of War, 1800-70 (Microcopy 22); Letters Sent Relating to Military Affairs, 1800-89 (Microcopy 6); Confidential and Unofficial Letters Sent by the Secretary of War, 1814-47 (Microcopy 7); Letters Sent to the President, 1800-63 (Microcopy 127); Reports to Congress, 1803-70 (Microcopy 220); and Miscellaneous Letters Sent by the Secretary, 1800-1809 (Microcopy 370).

In Record Group 15, Records of the Veterans Administration, are papers relating to military-pension and bounty-land matters for the period when those matters were under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of War.

In Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, are 6 volumes of Letters Sent by the Secretary of War Relating to Indian Affairs, 1800-24 (reproduced as Microcopy 15). There is also a series of Letters Received by the Office of the Secretary of War Relating to Indian Affairs, 1800-23 (Microcopy 271). These records were transferred to the Interior Department in 1849 when the Bureau of Indian Affairs became part of that Department.

In Record Group 203, Records of the Office of the Chief of Finance (Army), are the "Letters to the Secretary of the Treasury." This Office became the centralized agency responsible for handling the finances of the War Department.

CONTENTS OF MICROCOPY 222

The letters received by the Secretary of War during the period 1789 to 1861, which were not registered at the time of their receipt, are distributed on the rolls of this microfilm publication as listed below. The letters in parentheses indicate the initial letters of the surnames or offices of the writers or of the subject of the document.

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>	<u>Price</u>
1	1789 - 1804	\$ 6
2	1805-7	6
3	1808	5
4	1809-11	6
5	1812 (A - K)	3
6	1812 (L - W)	3
7	1813 (A - G)	4
8	1813 (H - O)	5
9	1813 (P - W)	5
10	1814 (A - C)	4
11	1814 (C - H)	5
12	1814 (I - M)	5
13	1814 (N - R)	4
14	1814 (S - Z)	4
15	1815 (A - G)	6
16	1815 (H - L)	5
17	1815 (M - R)	5
18	1815 (S - W)	3
19	1816-17	6
20	1818	4
21	1819; 1820 (A - M)	5
22	1820 (N - Y); 1821	3
23	1822-25	6
24	1826-28	6
25	1829 (A - H)	7
26	1829 (I - Z)	6
27	1830 (A - K)	4
28	1830 (L - Y)	4
29	1831 (A - K)	4
30	1831 (L - W)	3
31	1832-33	6
32	1834-40	3
33	1841-44	6
34	1845-61	8
Total		\$165