



National Archives and Records Administration

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Employees of the Department of State in the Official Register of the United States, 1817–1925

The *Official Register of the United States* was first published in 1816 as the *Register of Officials and Agents* and published every other year thereafter. During the 19th century, the *Official Register* listed almost all Federal Government employees.

Arrangement of Employee Information

From 1817 to 1905, the *Official Register* organized information in a tabular format, arranged by branch of government, and then by department. Bureau, agency, and commission listings appeared separately under each department and often changed over the years.

From 1907 to 1921, the *Official Register* employed a directory format consisting of one-line entries for all Federal employees arranged alphabetically by surname. The entries used an extensive system of abbreviations to list employee information. Additional tabular entries identified the principal officials of each department, providing in more compact form an overall statement of departmental organization.

After 1921 the *Official Register* removed the all-name directory, reverting to lists in table format of administrators and supervisors in each executive and judicial department of the Federal Government and the District of Columbia, whose salaries were paid directly by the U.S. Treasury.

Department of State Employees

Within the *Official Register of the United States*, the Department of State is listed at the beginning of the Executive Branch. Employee information can include the individual's name; state or country where born; residence (at time of appointment); when appointed; duty station; and compensation. The *Official Register* listed employees of the various bureaus and divisions of the Department, including Accounts, Appointments, Consular, Diplomatic, Foreign Commerce, Home, Indexes and Archives, Passports, and Rolls and Libraries. Department of State employees in Washington, DC, held positions such as:

- Advisor
- Agent (passport/dispatch)
- Ceremonial Officer
- Chief Clerk
- Clerk
- Elevator Conductor
- Engineer
- Fireman
- Interpreter/Translator
- Librarian/Historian
- Lithographer
- Marshal
- Messenger
- Packer
- Solicitor
- Superintendent
- Telegraph Operator
- Watchman

The *Register* also listed individuals appointed to positions in foreign countries. Early volumes do not list the countries in alphabetical order, but beginning in the late 19th century, the *Register* lists countries alphabetically. Positions can include:

- Ambassador & Minister
- Secretary, Charge d' Affaires, and Other Embassy & Legation Staff
- Commercial Agent
- Commissioner to International Conferences
- Consul-General, Consul, Vice Consul, Deputy Consul
- Interpreter
- Marshal to Consular Courts

Also, the following offices and commissions have been under the Department of State:

- Intercontinental Conferences, Congresses, and Expositions
- International Commissions
- United States Mission to the United Nations (1949–1950 *Official Register*)
- Bureau of Inter-American Affairs

Finding the *Official Register*

The *Official Register* is available at the National Archives Building, Washington, DC. This set, however, is incomplete; early volumes from 1817 to 1830 are missing. Most U.S. Government depository libraries also carry sets of the *Official Register*, as well as many large universities and public libraries. To identify a local depository library, go to the Government Printing Office web site at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/FDLPdir.jsp> and select the link to “FDLP Public Page.” Some volumes of the *Official Register* (1883–1893) are published in the U.S. Congressional Serial Set. See Serial Set volumes 2214–2215, 2410–2411, 2567–2568, 2764–2765, 2985–2986, and 3230–3231.

For more information, see the following reference reports:

- *State Department and Foreign Service Personnel: Appointment Records, 1797–1968*
- *State Department and Foreign Service Personnel: Personnel Lists and Official Personnel Files (OPFs), 1778–1990*

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