

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS
PAMPHLET DESCRIBING M465

**Despatches From
United States Consuls in
Tahiti, Society Islands
French Oceania
1836-1906**



NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON: 1974

RICHARD NIXON

President of the United States

ARTHUR F. SAMPSON

Administrator of General Services

JAMES B. RHOADS

Archivist of the United States

The records reproduced in the microfilm publication

are from

General Records of the Department of State

Record Group 59

in the National Archives Building

DESPATCHES FROM UNITED STATES CONSULS IN
TAHITI, SOCIETY ISLANDS, FRENCH OCEANIA
1836-1906

On the 5 rolls of this microfilm publication are reproduced 10 volumes that contain mainly despatches, with enclosures, addressed to the Department of State from U.S. consular officials at Tahiti, Society Islands, French Oceania, between January 11, 1836, and July 16, 1906.

The despatches, with few exceptions, are arranged in chronological order. At the beginning of Roll 1 are reproduced selected pages from 17 State Department registers of correspondence that constitute a register of despatches from Tahiti between January 11, 1836, and July 16, 1906.

Interspersed throughout the series are such documents as occasional memoranda prepared by other State Department officials and letters from private citizens of the United States.

A consulate was established at Papeete, Tahiti, on January 13, 1835, when J. A. Moerenhout was designated as the first consul. Samuel R. Blackler was given a recess appointment as consul on July 27, 1837, with final confirmation on October 4, 1837. Several consuls served at the post until William F. Doty was given a recess appointment on July 31, 1902, with final confirmation on December 11, 1902.

Some of the subjects to which the despatches relate are the arrival of the West Indies Surveying & Exploring Squadron, 1839; wrecks; desertions, mutinies, and other disturbances aboard U.S. vessels; the gradual establishment of French colonial rule on the Society Islands, 1841-95; difficulties in securing and retaining possession of the consulate property and buildings; hurricanes and tidal waves; the discriminatory treatment of U.S. missionaries; epidemics; secession activities by U.S. citizens; raid by Spanish squadron on Callao, Peru, and Valparaíso, Chile, 1866; the establishment of a Tahitian steamship line to San Francisco, Calif.; and the contracting of Polynesian natives as laborers in Peru.

Many despatches are covering letters for enclosures of a routine nature forwarded by consular officials to the Department of State, such as reports on consular fees received and on trade. In accordance with departmental policy adopted in 1870 most statistical enclosures were removed from their covering letters and distributed among other records of the Department of State or sent to other departments of the Government.

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

In the same record group are several series of volumes containing additional documents on relations between Tahiti and the United States. Complementary to the despatches are instructions to the consuls. There are copies of instructions from the Department of State to U.S. Ministers to France, 1829-1906 (Rolls 54-64 of Microcopy 77); notes to the French Legation in the United States from the Department, 1834-1906 (Rolls 21-26 of Microcopy 99); despatches from U.S. Ministers to France to the Department, 1789-1906 (Microcopy 34); notes from the French Legation in the United States to the Department, 1789-1906 (Microcopy 53); and notes from the foreign mission of Tahiti in the United States to the Department, December 31, 1836 (Roll 4 of Microcopy T-953).

The method of arranging the consular and diplomatic series cited above was discontinued in 1906, when the Department of State adopted the practice of filing incoming and outgoing correspondence, memoranda, and other documents by subject.

In Record Group 84, Records of the Foreign Services Posts of the Department of State, in the National Archives, are records originally kept at U.S. diplomatic and consular posts. Among them are records of the diplomatic post in France, 1788-1935, and of the consular post at Tahiti, 1836-1943.

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

CONTENTS

The volumes of despatches addressed to the Department of State by U.S. consular officials at Tahiti between January 11, 1836, and July 16, 1906, are distributed on the rolls of this microfilm publication as follows:

<u>Roll</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Inclusive Dates</u>
1	Register	Jan. 11, 1836-July 16, 1906
	1	Jan. 11, 1836-June 5, 1841
2	2	July 2, 1841-Dec. 31, 1850
	3	June 30, 1851-Dec. 31, 1857
	4	Jan. 9, 1858-Dec. 31, 1860
3	5	Jan. 25, 1861-Dec. 16, 1868
	6	Jan. 27, 1869-Dec. 31, 1874
4	7	Jan. 31, 1875-Dec. 31, 1886
	8	Jan. 14, 1887-June 10, 1897
5	9	July 3, 1897-July 25, 1903
	10	Aug. 27, 1903-July 16, 1906