

# GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS COLLECTION GUIDES

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## Guide to United States government documents



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The British Library has a large collection of U.S government publications, the result of over a century of acquisition by means of international exchange and purchase. Our holdings, though by no means complete, have a wide date range: Federal government material dates back to the late 18th century, and we hold States material from New England from the late 17th century.

The bulk of this documentation is in printed format. However, from 1982 much of what we receive is in microform or - with the advent of electronic publishing - in digital formats. A large, and growing, amount of material is now available free online in full text. Links to the home pages of these important resources and to agency and departmental web sites are given in this guide.

The guide also outlines the main categories of material available, the extent of our holdings; indexes and bibliographies in our stock; and the arrangement of the collections within the Library, with shelfmarks for some of the most important series. Shelfmarks for material which is on open access in the Social Science Reading Room are given in **Bold**.

As well as print and microform holdings, the Library has subscription-based access to a world class collection of digitised historical full text compilations, including the *American state papers*, the *Congressional serial set* from 1817 to 1994, *Congressional committee hearings digital collection*, 1823-1979 and the *Congressional record* and its predecessors. These are all available to on site users at St Pancras and our Yorkshire reading room at Boston Spa. Registered St Pancras Reader pass holders can also access Readex's *Foreign Information Broadcast Services (FBIS)*, and *Congressional serial set* from our Remote Resources Access service at:

<https://eresources.remote.bl.uk:2443/login>

### 1.1. Free Online Resources

The US Federal Government is now moving away from depositing its publications with libraries at home or abroad in print or microfiche and favours electronic access. The USGPO has developed the Govinfo system at:<https://www.govinfo.gov/>

This provides free public online access to information submitted by Congress, federal executive agencies and the judicial branch of government and aims to ensure its preservation as technology changes. Collections available on GovInfo include:

- *Budget of the US Government, 1996-*
- *Code of federal regulations, 1996-*
- *Compilation of presidential documents, 1993-*
- *Congressional bills. 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, 1993/94-*
- *Congressional calendars, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96-*
- *Congressional directories, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96-*
- *Committee prints and hearings, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96-*
- *Congressional documents and reports, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96-*
- *The Congressional record*
- *Economic indicators, 1995-*
- *Economic report of the President, 1995- Federal register, 1936-*

- *GAO reports, 1994-2008*
- *Government manual, 1995-*
- *History of bills, 1983-*
- *Public and private laws, 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96-*
- *Public papers of the presidents, 1991-2013*
- *Statutes at large, 1951-2011*
- *The US code, 1994-*

In the 21st century, the Internet is and will remain the main means of access to current US federal and state government material. It is possible to browse the collections on GovInfo by date series title, category, Committee or government author or to search by topic, SuDoc class number, title and government author.

Provided by the Library of Congress, [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov/) is the official website for U.S. federal legislative information. The site provides access to accurate, timely, and complete legislative information for Members of Congress, legislative agencies, and the public at: <https://www.congress.gov/>

The Congressional Budget Office provides current and historic US budget data and analysis at: <http://www.cbo.gov/>

The House of Representatives has its own website, offering information about committee activities and biographies of Representatives at: [www.house.gov/](http://www.house.gov/)

The Senate also has its own site with similar information: [www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/)

The White House has its own website, providing news and press briefings, major speeches and the latest on current issues of concern: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

The State and Local Government Internet directory provides convenient one-stop access to the websites of thousands of state agencies and city and county governments: [www.statelocalgov.net/](http://www.statelocalgov.net/)

GOVENGINE.com also offers access to Federal, State and local government sites on the Internet: <https://www.govengine.com/>

US government web portal, US.GOV, is an online guide to government information and services for the citizen and includes an A-Z list of federal agencies with links: <https://www.usa.gov/>

You can also access over 155,000 individual US federal government and Congressional documents online in full text from our catalogue, *Explore the British Library*. Just click on the link to the digital item under the 'I want this' tab for immediate connection

## 1.2. Printed materials at The British Library

You can find shelfmarks for series and individual documents issued by the US Federal Government executive agencies and acquired in hard copy at the British Library over time in a variety of ways. Unlike non-official material (which you can usually find in Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]) older official publications – many of them complicated series – are either not listed in the online catalogue or can be better identified in the British Library's collections by using the printed catalogues. The two main printed sources are the pre-1975 British Library Catalogue published in book form by Saur and the photocopies of acquisitions records at **OPL index**. US Federal Government publications are listed in volumes 333-334 of the Library's catalogue; indexes by title and government body are available to make finding records easier. However, to make the process simpler, this guide gives British Library shelfmarks for most of the material you will need. This material is stored off site and will normally take 48 hours to arrive. You can order it through the Automated Book Request System (ABRS). You can order materials not found in the online catalogue using the Request Other items tab on the home page of Explore the British Library.

The photocopies of serial acquisitions records provide a snapshot of the series coming into the Library in 1975 and 1985. They are arranged in alphabetical order of serial title and provide shelfmarks for the runs but no information on the extent of our holdings.

## 1.3. The Depository Set On Microfiche

In 1982 the British Library became a US federal government depository library and started receiving a complete set of its publications on microfiche from the USGPO. All publications in the microfiche set are given a distinguishing code number as they are issued. These numbers are called SuDocs numbers. The Depository Set is shelved in SuDocs number order and it is necessary to quote these numbers when ordering. You can find the SuDocs number for the particular publication you require by using the *MarciveWeb Docs* online index (on the internet terminals in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras) or the printed CIS Index at **OPL.973.0043**. Shelfmarks are made up of the prefix SPR.Mic.AS + the SuDocs number. For example, *the Iran-Contra investigation: joint hearings before the House Select Committee to investigate covert arms transactions with Iran and the Senate Select Committee on secret military assistance to Iran and the Nicaraguan opposition*, 100th Congress, first session carries the SuDocs number Y 4. In 8/20: 100-6 and is at shelfmark SPR.Mic.A.S Y 4. In 8/20: 100-6. Please then place your order by filling in a paper request ticket. These documents cannot be ordered online using *the Automated Book Request System (ABRS)*.

## 1.4. Holdings of the Bodleian Libraries at the University of Oxford

The guide also includes the holdings of the Bodleian Libraries at the University of Oxford, with which we work in partnership. The Vere Harmsworth Library (VHL) houses the University's principal research collection relating to the history of the United States,

including the Bodleian Libraries' collection of US government publications. More information about the Bodleian's collections of US Government papers in print and electronic forms is available in their guide at: <http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/vhl/finding-resources/collections>

Information about United States Government Documents available through the Vere Harmsworth Library, or the Bodleian Law Library, will appear throughout this guide in italics, and in a box.

## 2. CONGRESSIONAL REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

### 2.1. The Historic Congressional Serial Set

#### 2.1.1. What is it?

Reports and documents produced by and presented to Congress make up a large part of the published Federal output from the early 19th century onwards. These are organised into the Congressional serial set which is the equivalent of the UK Parliamentary papers. Within it you will find such material as the Congressional journals (to 1953), administrative reports and reports on bills, surveys, statistical publications, and the annual reports of certain non-governmental organisations. You will not, however, find other materials pertinent to the work of Congress such as Committee Hearings, or the Congressional Record (details of the British Library holdings of these 'excluded' publications are given below). Some material was originally included in the Set and subsequently excluded, for example, Census Report.

The serial set is made up of six series:

**House of Representatives Documents** – This set comprises House executive documents, and after the 53rd Congress, 3rd session also includes House miscellaneous documents.

**House of Representatives Miscellaneous Documents** – When the Senate began its reports series in 1847 (see below) both Houses distinguished between executive documents and miscellaneous documents (until 1895).

**House of Representatives Reports and Miscellaneous Reports** – In 1819 committee reports were separated from the Document series. .

**Senate Documents** – This class includes Senate executive documents, and after the 53rd Congress, 3rd session also includes Senate miscellaneous documents.

#### **Senate Miscellaneous Documents**

**Senate Reports** – In 1847 committee reports were separated from the document series.

Papers within the *Serial set* bear up to four complementary sets of numbers:

- Reports and documents are currently allocated SuDocs numbers beginning Y1.1
- Each House's report and document series has its own internal numbering scheme. All publications in these series carry unique individual document or report numbers assigned sequentially within a Congress or session, e.g., *Illicit introduction of slaves, document from Treasury Department 16th Congress, 1st Session, House document no 42*

- Bound volumes for each publication series are numbered sequentially within a Congressional session. Thus sessional volume numbers group together all volumes of a given series for a given session.
- The serial numbers from which the Set gets its popular name were devised by Dr John G. Ames, Superintendent of Documents in the Government Printing Office. Starting with serial number 1, assigned to the *Senate Journal* for the 15th Congress, 1st session, every item in the set was given a running number, called the serial number, according to its shelf position when arranged by Congress, session and volume number. Thus *our House document* on the illicit introduction of slaves bears the *Serial set* number 33. Today, the Serial set number appears on the binding of each volume.

### 2.1.2. What is freely available online?

Current House and Senate reports and documents from the mid-1990s to the present are available on GovInfo as follows:

Senate and House documents are available from 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96 at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/cdoc/94/hdoc>

Senate and House reports on bills and certain matters under investigation are also available from 104th Congress 1995/96 at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/crpt/115>

Congress.gov at <https://www.congress.gov/> is the official website for U.S. federal legislative information which is designed to help trace the progress of bills through Congress. It includes links to Congressional Committee reports on bills.

You can also access Congressional reports and documents online in full text from our catalogue, Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]. Just click on the link to the digital item under the 'I want this' tab for immediate connection.

### 2.1.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Online

The Library has acquired the Readex Congressional Serial Set Digital edition, which offers online access to the full text of all materials from 1817 to 1994. The database is available via the Internet terminals in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras and the Boston Spa reading room in Yorkshire. Registered readers can access it remotely via our Remote Eresources Access service at: <https://eresources.remote.bl.uk:2443/login>

#### Print

The Library has an incomplete printed set from the 15th Congress 1817/18 to 1979/80. Because the material is so complicated, you can only order it by completing a paper request ticket. When ordering a report or document from the printed version of the Serial set at the British Library, you will need to quote Congress, session, publication

series number, sessional volume number and serial set number. See below for details of Indexes and Guides available.

### **House of Representatives Documents**

Shelfmark: A.S.10

Holdings: 15th Cong, 1st sess-96th Cong, 2nd sess, 1817/18-1979/80

In addition at this shelfmark are four volumes of Congressional publications covering the 14th Congress 1815/16, which are strictly part of the American State Papers.

### **House of Representatives Miscellaneous Documents**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/3

Holdings: 30th Cong, 1st sess, -53rd Cong, 3rd sess 1847/48-1894/95

### **House of Representatives Reports and Miscellaneous Reports**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/2

Holdings: 16th Cong, 1st sess,-96th Cong, 2nd sess, 1819/20-1979/80.

In addition at this shelfmark is one volume of Congressional documents of the 15th Congress, 2nd session, covering 9 December 1817 to 16 April 1818.

### **Senate Documents**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/4

Holdings: 15th Cong, 1st sess, - 96th Cong, 2nd sess, 1817/18-1979/80

### **Senate Miscellaneous Documents**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/6

Holdings: 30th Cong, 1st sess, - 53rd Cong, 3rd sess, 1847/48-1894/95.

After 1894/95 included with the executive documents at A.S.10/4.

### **Senate Reports**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/5

Holdings: 30th Cong, 1st sess, - 96th Cong, 2nd sess, 1847/48-1979/80

### **United States Congressional Serial Set**

Shelfmark: A.S.10/7

Holdings: From 97th Cong, 1st sess, 1981-

Received as bound volumes from the GPO at the end of each current session. These volumes are arranged in serial number order and are easily retrieved when this number is quoted on the request ticket.

### **Holdings of the Bodleian Libraries in Oxford**

The Vere Harmsworth Library has the following holdings:

#### **House of Representatives Documents**

13th Congress, 2nd session - 49th Congress, 1st session, 1813-1886 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.16

#### **House of Representatives Miscellaneous Documents**

30th - 49th Congress, 1st session, 1848-1886 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.17

#### **House of Representatives Reports and Miscellaneous Reports**

30th - 49th Congress, 1st session, 1848-1886 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.17

#### **Senate Documents**

14th - 48th Congress, 1815-1885 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.15

**Senate Miscellaneous Documents**

30th - 48th Congress, 1848-1885 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.22

**Senate Reports**

30th - 48th Congress, 1848-1885 at shelfmark VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.21

**Microform**

The depository set of US federal government publications on microfiche received from the USGPO since 1982 includes Congressional reports and documents, committee hearings and bills. Please remember that the depository set is shelved in SuDocs number order and it is necessary to quote these numbers when ordering. You can find the SuDocs number for the particular publication you require by using the *MarciveWeb Docs* online index (on the internet terminals in the Reading Room) or the printed CIS Index at **OPL.973.0043**. Shelfmarks are made up of the prefix SPR.Mic.AS + the SuDocs number. Material can only be delivered to the social sciences reading room at St Pancras and you must order using a paper request ticket.

The *Congressional Information Service (United States) microfiche library* is published by the Congressional Information Service. It includes all publications of Congress (except the *Congressional record*). It is fully indexed by the *CIS index*, 1970- which is available in the Social Sciences Reading Room at **OPL 973.0043**. The collection itself is held by the British Library's Document Supply Centre (DSC) at shelfmarks 3267.638F and 3267.636F and can be ordered via Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]. This set supplements the material held in the reference collections, and items missing from these can sometimes be found in it. Please note however, that DSC stopped subscribing to this set in 1995. By this time much of the material had become available online and can now be accessed via the USGPO's GovInfo System at <https://www.govinfo.gov/>. However, individual documents may be purchased for DSC customers on receipt of a loan request

**2.1.4. What indexes and guides can I use?****CIS US serial set index, 1789-1969**Shelfmark: **OPL 973.0043**

The most comprehensive and useful index to the historic Serial set. Available on the open shelves, this provides all of the information you will need to order a document or report. You can search by subject terms drawn from the titles of the documents. The alphabetical index then refers you to a finding list which details Congress, session, series, number within series, and serial set number.

You can find other indexes for, or including the historic Serial Set volumes in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras:

**Cumulative subject index to the Monthly catalog of US Government publications 1895-1971**Shelfmark: **OPL 973.0043**

The Vere Harmsworth Library also holds this set at Amlnst VHL OpenShelf Bib. xZ 1223 .A182 1973

**Monthly catalog of United States government publications, 1941- (Formerly Catalog of the public documents, 1893-1940)**

Shelfmark: **OPL 973.0043**

Now partly replaced at the British Library by the MarciveWeb Docs online index which covers publications from 1979 onwards, with links to full text where available on the Internet. A free online version of the *Catalog of US Federal Government publications* is available via GovInfo from 1976 at <https://catalog.gpo.gov/>. Users can search by authoring agency, title, subject, and general keywords.

The Vere Harmsworth Library also holds this title incomplete from Jan. 1951 at Amlnst VHL OpenShelf Bib. Z 1223 .A18

## 2.2. American State Papers

### 2.2.1. What is it?

The collection known as the *American state papers* covers the period 1789 to 1838. A retrospective republication of approximately 6280 numbered publications, largely Congressional but also containing Executive Department materials, the *American state paper* volumes, issued from 1832-1861, were published in ten classes in a total of 38 folio volumes. The classes into which the publications were assembled and printed and the number of volumes they occupy are: I: Foreign Relations in six volumes; II: Indian Affairs in two volumes; III: Finance in five volumes; IV: Commerce and Navigation in two volumes; V: Military Affairs in seven volumes; VI: Naval Affairs in four volumes; VII: Post-office Department in one volume; VIII: Public Lands in eight volumes; IX: Claims in one volume; and X: Miscellaneous in two volumes. The GPO designated the papers included retrospectively as items 001-038 in the Serial Set.

### 2.2.2. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Online

The Readex digitised version of American State Papers is available online in full text on the Internet terminals in the reading rooms at St Pancras and Boston Spa.

#### Print

The shelfmark for the collection is A.S.8. In addition, at A.S.10 [1](1)-A.S.10[14](57) are fifty-seven rare Congressional documents published between 1792 and 1817. These are all individually catalogued and may be found in Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ].

At the Vere Harmsworth Library, the American State Papers are shelved at VHL Stack 300.233 s.2-

### 3. JOURNALS, RECORDS AND PROCEEDINGS OF CONGRESS

These are held virtually complete by the British Library in print, in microform, online or on CD-ROM.

#### 3.1. Journals of the Congress

##### 3.1.1. What is it?

The House and Senate each publish a *Journal* for each session of Congress. It has been published as a separate series (1789-1815 and 1953-present), and published as part of the *Congressional Serial Set* (1817-1952). The *Journals* contain a list of bills and resolutions introduced each day by number and title. The text of bills, except parts affected by amendments, and debate on bills are not included. They also contain titles of memorials and petitions to Congress, the annual messages of the President, veto messages, and other communications to the respective house. The *Journal of the Senate* contains proceedings of impeachment trials in the Senate. The section called *History of Bills and Resolutions* is found in the appendix of each *Journal*. It contains a complete numerical list of all Senate and House bills and resolutions for the session arranged separately. There is a subject index to this section of bills and resolutions, and to the *Journal* itself.

*The Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate* consists of lists of nominations for office, armed services promotions, and other messages conveyed to the Senate by the President, together with confirmations and decisions made by the Senate sitting in executive session.

##### 3.1.2. What is freely available online?

The Journals of both the House and the Senate, and the *Senate Executive Journal*, 1789-1875, are available via American Memory at <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>

The GovInfo website gives online access to the Journal of the House of Representatives from 1992-2015 and the Journal of the Senate from the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress : <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/hjournal> and <https://www.govinfo.gov/collection/senate-journal>

##### 3.1.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

###### Online and digital

The Journals of the Congress are available 1817-1952 via the online Congressional serial set database on the Internet terminals in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras and the Boston Spa reading room in Yorkshire. Registered readers can access it remotely via our Remote Eresources Access service at: <https://eresources.remote.bl.uk:2443/login>

Also, the **Journal of the House of Representatives** is available on CD-ROM:

Shelfmark: SPR..CD.AS.155

Holdings: 102nd Cong., 1991-

### **Print**

#### **Journal of the Senate**

Shelfmark: A.S.15

Holdings: 1st Cong., 1st sess. - 97th Cong., 1st sess. 1789-1981; 2002, 111th Cong, 2009/10-

Shelfmark: A.S.13

Holdings: 1st-13th Cong., 1789-1815. 5 vols

Senate Journals for 1st - 50th Congress, 1789-1887 and 88th - 95th Congress, 1964-1978 are held by the Vere Harmsworth Library at VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.20 and VHL: XKF 45 .A22

#### **Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate**

Shelfmark: A.S.14

Holdings: 1901-2008, vol.33-150 (incomplete)

#### **Journal of the House of Representatives**

Shelfmark: A.S.11

Holdings: 1789-1815. 9 vols., pub 1826.

Shelfmark: A.S.12

Holdings: 1789-1981. (incomplete to 1813).

### **Microform**

#### **Journal of the Senate**

Shelfmark: SPR.Mic.AS.XJS: (Congress no./pt no.)

Holdings: 96th Cong., 1st sess., 1979- 112th Congress, 1st sess, 2011. (microfiche)

#### **Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate**

Shelfmark: SPR Mic A.131.

Holdings: 1789-1965, vol.1 -107-2. (microfilm)

#### **Journal of the House of Representatives**

Shelfmark: SPR Mic. AS.XJH: (Congress no./pt.no)

Holdings: 96th Cong., 1st sess., 1979-112th Cong., 1st sess., 2011. (microfiche)

## 3.2. Records and proceedings of the Congress

### 3.2.1. What is it?

The Congressional equivalent of the British Hansard, the following titles give mostly verbatim accounts of debates in both the houses. The earliest records are unofficial and include:

**Annals of the Congress, 1789-1824**

**Register of debates, 1824-1837**

**Congressional globe, 1833-1873**

The official record started on March 4 1873:

**The Congressional record: proceedings and debates of the ...Congress**

This is published daily when Congress is in session. It consists of four sections:

- Daily Digest. Digest page begins with the letter D and appears in the format D1234.
- House section. Pages are number sequentially throughout the session of Congress. Each House page begins with the letter H and appears in the format H1234
- Senate section. Pages are number sequentially throughout the session of Congress. Each Senate page begins with the letter S and appears in the format S1234
- Extension of Remarks. Pages are number sequentially throughout the session of Congress. Each Extensions page begins with the letter E and appears in the format E1234

### 3.2.2. What is freely available online?

Historic debates, 1789-1875 can be found on *American Memory*:

<http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html>

Bound and daily versions of the *Congressional record* are available on Govinfo from 1999-2001, 2005-13 (bound) and 1994 to date (daily) with indexes from 1983 to the present:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/crecb> (Bound)

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CREC> (Daily)

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/crindex> (Index)

The daily version of the *Congressional record* is also found on [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov) from 104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1995/96 to the present. You can browse by date, search or browse the index, or search by keyword. There are also links to the *Congressional record* from the bill histories on the site.

### 3.2.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Online

We have subscribed access to the *Congressional record permanent digital collection* produced by Proquest. This collection consists of the *Annals of Congress*, 1789-1824, *Register of debates*, 1824-1837, *Congressional globe*, 1833-1873, and *Congressional record* 1873-1997. The resource is available for on-site use in the London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire reading rooms.

#### Print

##### **Annals of the Congress**

Shelfmark: A.S.16

Holdings: 1789-1824

Vere Harmsworth holdings: 1789-1824 Vere Harmsworth shelfmark: VHL Stack: 300.233 r.6 and VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.26

##### **Register of debates**

Shelfmark: AS.17

Holdings: 1824-1837

Vere Harmsworth holdings: 1824-1837 Vere Harmsworth shelfmark: VHL Stack: Per. 2333 d.28

##### **Congressional globe**

Shelfmark: AS.18

Holdings: 1833-1873

Vere Harmsworth Library: 1833-1873 Vere Harmsworth shelfmark: VHL Stack: 300.233 s.1

##### **The Congressional record: proceedings and debates of the ...Congress**

The British Library holds the permanent bound edition (often referred to as the 'red' edition from the colour of its cover) and its sessional indexes.

Shelfmark: AS.19

Holdings: 43rd Cong, 1st session, vol 2, 1873/74-

The daily (unbound), unedited edition is also held:

Shelfmark: A.S.19/3

Holdings: 81st Cong., 1st session, vol.96, 1950 - 100th Cong., 1st session, vol.133, no.21, 1987

The Vere Harmsworth Library holds the Congressional record for the 43rd - 97th Congress, 1874-1982 in print at shelfmark VHL Stack: 300.333 s.1 and 94th Congress, 1975-76, 97th - 101st Congress, 1981-1990 in microform at : Micr. USA 237

## Microform

### **The Congressional record: proceedings and debates of the ...Congress**

Shelfmark: SPR Mic AS.X and SPR.Mic.AS.X1.1

Holdings: 96th Cong., 1979, vol 125 – 112th Cong., 2011, vol.157. (microfiche)

Please note index volumes are also available (there are indexes and a daily digest volume for each session):

Shelfmark: SPR Mic AS.X: Cong./sess.nos. + ind and SPR.Mic.AS.X1.1: Cong./sess.nos + ind

The daily (unbound), unedited edition is also held.

Shelfmark: SPR Mic AS.X/A: (Cong./sess. nos) and SPR.Mic.AS.X1.1/A

Holdings: 98th Cong.1st sess, 1983-. (microfiche)

## **4. CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE PUBLICATIONS**

These are published by the committees themselves rather than by Congress although they can appear later in revised form as Congressional documents. There are two forms of these publications: 'Hearings' which contain the testimony of witnesses, and 'Prints' which are reports of research commissioned and published by the committee.

### **4.1. Committee Hearings**

#### **4.1.1. What is it?**

A hearing is a meeting or session of a Senate, House, joint, or special committee of Congress, usually open to the public, to obtain information and opinions on proposed legislation, conduct an investigation, or evaluate/oversee the activities of a government department or the implementation of a Federal law. In addition, hearings may also be purely exploratory in nature, providing testimony and data about topics of current interest. Most congressional hearings are published two months to two years after they are held.

Reports of Congressional Committees are published as Senate or House reports and then appear as part of the Congressional Serial Set. The evidence, documents, statements, and questioning of witnesses appearing before Congressional Committees are published as "Hearings". Exceptionally, in the nineteenth century, a few Hearings of special importance were published as Serial Set items by Congress, but Hearings and Committee prints are normally published by the Committees themselves.

#### **4.1.2. What is freely available online?**

News about the Committees of the House of Representatives can be accessed on the House website at: <http://www.house.gov/committees/>

Information about the Committees of the Senate is available at:

[http://www.senate.gov/committees/committees\\_home.htm](http://www.senate.gov/committees/committees_home.htm)

Hearings released to the GPO by the committees themselves are available in full text free of charge on GovInfo. The site contains selected House and Senate Hearings from the 87th Congress 1961-62 onwards: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CHRG>

You can also access Congressional committee hearings available free online in full text from our catalogue, *Explore the British Library* [<http://explore.bl.uk>]. Just click on the link to the digital item under the 'I want this' tab for immediate connection.

#### 4.1.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

The British Library has extensive collections of these publications, acquired in various formats.

##### Online

Full text of all Senate and House published and unpublished committee hearings, 1823-1979 is available online in the British Library Reading Rooms at St Pancras and Boston Spa, Yorkshire via the *Congressional Hearings Digital Collection*.

##### Print

The British Library did not acquire Hearings in hardcopy format extensively before the 1950s when they were included in the exchange/depository arrangements for the first time. The catalogue includes details of any Hearings we hold which were published before then, sometimes as an individual entry, e.g. the *Joint Committee on the investigation of the Pearl Harbour attack*, or as an open serial entry, e.g. for the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

It is advisable to check the exact bibliographical details and date of a Hearing before trying to find if the British Library holds the document you need (see below under *What indexes and guides can I use?* for further details). *Explore the British Library* [<http://explore.bl.uk/>] includes open series entries for the hearings of some committees or you can check the printed edition of the catalogue under United States Congress, Senate or House of Representatives and the name of the committee, e.g. Senate, Committee on Banking and Currency. However, hearings of many Committees are not catalogued. You can find the shelfmark assigned to each Committee, Sub-Committee, Joint Committee or Special Committee using of the photocopies of Kardex (serial acquisitions) records kept at **OPL Index**. (see below under *What indexes and guides can I use?* for further details) and order uncatalogued hearings online via ABRS by following the Request Other Items link from the home page of *Explore the British Library*, but details of the dates etc. of a Hearing must be included in your request to enable the correct volume to be selected from the stacks.

The Vere Harmsworth Library has a large collection of printed reports from Congressional committee hearings from the mid-20th century, many of which are not

recorded on the Bodleian Library's online catalogue. They are in the stack arranged by their SuDoc reference number. The collection is not comprehensive. The SuDoc reference numbers can be traced using the CIS US Congressional Committee Hearing Index, 1833-1969, shelfmark VHL Bib. xZ 1223 .Z7 C67 1981.

### Microforms

Shelfmarks for these sets can be found by consulting the *Official Microforms Card Catalogue* in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras. Individual documents within each collection must be identified using the accompanying guides and indexes which are kept in the reading room. It is always necessary to quote a reel number (for microfilm) or a document code number (for microfiche) to enable the item you need to be retrieved. Because the material is so complex it can only be ordered using paper request tickets and delivered to the social sciences reading room.

Since 1982, Congressional Hearings have been included in the set of Federal publications deposited on microfiche. The microfiches are filed in SuDocs number order at SPR.Mic.A.S. Y4 etc., and the SuDocs numbers may be obtained from the *MarciveWeb Docs* online index and the CIS bibliographies. For example, the entry for the hearings before the Senate Special Committee on Aging in August 1986 on *Health care for older Americans* appears in *Marcive Web Docs* with the SuDocs number Y4.Ag4:S.hrg.99-991 The shelfmark of the microfiches would therefore be SPR.Mic.E.A.S.Y4.Ag4:S.hrg.99-991.

In addition to the incomplete set of the Hearings held in print and in the depository microfiche set, they are held comprehensively in the following purchased microfiche collections:

**CIS Unpublished Senate Committee Hearings**, 18th Congress-96th Congress, 1823-1980. Microfiche held at SPR Mic E.621, indexes at **OPL 973.0043**. The index volumes include full bibliographic descriptions and indexes by subject, organizations, issuing committees, personal names, titles and bill numbers. Each Hearing transcript is assigned an accession number based on the Congress number and committee name. This accession number must be quoted when ordering the transcript.

**CIS Unpublished House Committee Hearings**, 1833-1954; 1969-1972. Microfiches are held at Mic.F.647; indexes at **OPL 973.0043**. Indexes are constructed as for the Senate Committee Hearings above.

**CIS U.S. Congressional Committee Hearings**, 23rd to 91st Congress, 1833-1969 at SPR Mic C.11 and SPR Mic E.323. The CIS indexes to the Hearings are held at **OPL 973.0043**, together with the earlier, superseded Greenwood Press indexes. Microfiche Groups 1-3 are held, incomplete, at SPR Mic C.11 and Group 4 is at SPR Mic E.323. In order to obtain the microfiches it is necessary to quote the accession numbers given in the indexes.

The **CIS Congressional Publications on Microfiche** collection includes hearings. It is held by the British Library's Document Supply Centre (DSC) at shelfmarks 3267.638F and 3267.636F for the years 1970-1995. Hearings for those years can be ordered via

Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ], but you must cite the code number assigned to each document. Consult the *CIS Index, 1970-* at **OPL.973.0043** in the social sciences reading room to find this.

With the exception of those in the *CIS Congressional Publications on Microfiche* collection, hearings in microform cannot be ordered via the ABRs but must be requested using a paper request ticket. They must be consulted in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras and cannot be delivered elsewhere.

#### 4.1.4. What indexes and guides can I use?

To find the exact bibliographical details and date of a Hearing, check the *Monthly catalog of United States government publications, 1941-* at **OPL 973.0043**. This has been partly replaced at the British Library by the *MarciveWeb Docs* online index which covers publications from 1979 onwards, with links to full text where available on the Internet. . A free online version of the *Catalog of US Federal Government publications, July 1976-* is available via GovInfo at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/F> . Users can search by authoring agency, title, subject, and general keywords.

You can find the shelfmark assigned to each Committee, Sub-Committee, Joint Committee or Special Committee in the United States volume of the photocopies of Kardex (serial acquisitions) records kept at **OPL Index**.

A useful source for identifying earlier committees and their output is *Congressional committees, 1789-1982: a checklist* compiled by Walter Stubbs which is on the open shelves in the Social Sciences Reading Room at **OPL 973.0043**.

## 4.2. Committee Prints

### 4.2.1. What is it?

Congressional Committee Prints are publications issued by Congressional Committees that include topics related to their legislative or research activities, as well as other matters such as memorial tributes. The prints are an excellent resource for statistical and historical information, and for legislative analysis. The subjects of the Committee Prints vary greatly due to the different concerns and actions of each committee. Some basic categories of Congressional Committee Prints are: draft reports and bills, directories, statistical materials, investigative reports, historical reports, situational studies, confidential staff reports, hearings, and legislative analyses. They are not consistently issued for public use and sometimes form the draft for a document subsequently presented formally at a Hearing.

#### 4.2.2. What is freely available online?

GovInfo gives access to Congressional committee prints from the 94th Congress, 1975/76 onwards at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CPRT>

You can also access Congressional committee prints available free online in full text from our catalogue, Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]. Just click on the link to the digital item under the 'I want this' tab for immediate connection.

#### 4.2.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

##### Online

The *Congressional Research Documents Collection, 2004-11* offers full text of Congressional Committee prints. This is a subscription service and is available via the Internet terminals in the London and Boston Spa, Yorkshire, reading rooms.

##### Print

The British Library has quite extensive holdings of Committee prints in hard copy. They can be located by checking Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ] or the printed edition of the catalogue under United States Congress, Senate or House of Representatives and the name of the committee, e.g. Senate, Committee on Banking and Currency. Shelfmarks are also available in the photocopied acquisition record (the 'Kardex') available at **OPL Index**. The heading is Committee Print followed by the name of the Committee. You can order uncatalogued hearings online via ABRS by following the Request Other Items link, but details of the title, date etc. of a print must be included in your request to enable the correct volume to be selected from the stacks.

##### Microform

**CIS US Congressional Committee Prints** from the earliest publications through 1969 is the most comprehensive collection in the British Library. It includes more than 15,000 Committee prints issued from the mid 1800s to 1969. Microfiche are kept at SPR Mic E.181, with index volumes at **OPL 973.0043**. Committee prints in this collection cannot be ordered via the ABRS but must be requested using a paper request ticket. They must be consulted in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras and cannot be delivered elsewhere.

The **CIS Congressional Publications on Microfiche** collection includes committee prints. It is held by the British Library's Document Supply Centre (DSC) at shelfmarks 3267.638F and 3267.636F for the years 1970-1995. Prints for those years can be ordered via Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ], but you must cite the code number assigned to each document. Consult the *CIS Index, 1970-* at **OPL.973.0043** in the social sciences reading room to find this.

Committee prints are also included in the depository collection of US federal government materials on microfiche, 1982-, arranged ocs number.

#### 4.2.4. What indexes and guides can I use?

To identify committee prints, you can check the *Monthly catalog of United States government publications*, 1941- at **OPL 973.0043**. This has been partly replaced at the British Library by the *MarciveWeb Docs* online index which covers publications from 1979 onwards, with links to full text available free on the Internet. A free online version of the *Catalog of US Government publications* is available on GovInfo at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/F>. Users can search by authoring agency, title, subject, and general keywords.

## 5. CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORIES

### 5.1. What is freely available online?

The Congressional Directory is the official directory of the U.S. Congress, prepared by the Joint Committee on Printing (JCP). It presents:

- Short biographies of each member of the Senate and House, listed by state or district.
- Committee memberships, terms of service, administrative assistants and/or secretaries, and room and telephone numbers for Members of Congress.
- Lists officials of the courts, military establishments, and other Federal departments and agencies, including D.C. government officials, governors of states and territories, foreign diplomats, and members of the press, radio, and television galleries.

It is available online via the GovInfo portal from 105th Congress, 1997/98 onwards at: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CDIR>

### 5.2. What does the British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

The back run of *The [Official] Congressional directory* is held at the British Library from 1816, 14th Congress, 2nd session, to date, with some gaps at A.S.25, and the latest edition is at **OPL 973.0061** in the social sciences reading room. It is particularly useful for its biographical section, and for lists of Congressional committees: Senate, House and Joint.

The Vere Harmsworth Library has 1871, 2nd ed.; 1872; 1875, 2nd ed.; 1883; 1891; 1908; 1919; 1925- at shelfmark VHL Stack 300.43 r. 10 and VHL OpenShelf JK 1012 .U55.

## 6. PRESIDENTIAL PUBLICATIONS

### 6.1. What is it?

The President is the administrative head of the Executive Branch of the US government. Presidential documents include statements, addresses and remarks, messages to Congress, proclamations, executive orders and notices.

### 6.2. What is freely available online?

The Weekly compilation of Presidential documents is available from 1993 on GovInfo. The Daily compilation of Presidential documents replaced the weekly compilation as of January 20<sup>th</sup> 2009, and is also available in full on GovInfo:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CPD>

One of the most important Presidential documents is the annual Economic report of the President, issued since 1947. Online access is available via GovInfo since 1995:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/ERP>

Unofficial versions of the reports from 1947 to the present are available via the Federal Reserve Archival System for Economic Research (FRASER):

<http://fraser.stlouisfed.org/publications/ERP/>

The public papers of Presidents Clinton, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush and Obama are also available on GovInfo:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/PPP>

The Public Papers of President Reagan, as well as those of Presidents Clinton, George H.W. Bush, George W. Bush and Obama, can be found on the Federal Register website at:

<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/publications/presidential-papers.html#about>

### 6.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

#### **The Weekly compilation of Presidential documents**

Shelfmark: AS.288/47

Holdings: 1965 to 19th January 2009

This series is cumulated by the Public papers of the Presidents of the United States (see below), which started publication in 1945 with the papers of Harry S Truman.

#### **Public papers of the Presidents of the United States**

Shelfmark: A.S 288/34

Holdings: 1945 onwards

They are held at VHL OpenShelf J 80 .A283 at the Vere Harmsworth Library

**Economic Report of the President**

Shelfmark: A.S.402/10

Holdings: 1947-1969; 1971; 1973-1975; 1978-1979; 1981-1983; 1993; 1996-1997; 2002-2003; 2005; 2010-

**Other Presidential Papers**

The papers of Herbert Hoover, 1929-33 are located at British Library shelfmark 012295.c.6 and Franklyn D. Roosevelt's papers were published privately as *Public papers and addresses of Franklyn D Roosevelt*, 1938-50 (British Library shelfmark 012296.e.4) and *Franklyn D. Roosevelt and foreign affairs*, 1969 (British Library shelfmark X.0702/111).

The Vere Harmsworth Library holds Public papers and addresses of Franklyn D Roosevelt, 1938-50 at shelfmark VHL OpenShelf J 80 .A283

**Microform****The Weekly compilation of Presidential documents** (depository set microfiche)

Shelfmark: SPR Mic A.S.GS.4.114, later AS.AE.2.109

Holdings: 1983 to 1990

Papers of earlier Presidents can be found in selected published editions of letters etc. and in the *Presidential papers series*, a major archival microfilm collection covering 1789-1929 held at the British Library at SPR Mic.B4/1-30 with hard copy guides which are kept on open access at **OPL 973.041** to **OPL 973.0914**. Shelfmarks for these sets can be found by consulting the Official Microforms Card Catalogue in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras. Individual documents within each collection must be identified using the accompanying guides and indexes. It is always necessary to quote a reel number to enable the item you need to be retrieved. Because the material is so complex it can only be ordered using paper request tickets and delivered to the social sciences reading room.

**Economic Report of the President**

From 1983-2004 the Economic Report of the President is kept in microfiche in the depository set. For example, George W. Bush's 2004 report is at SPR.Mic.AS.PR.43.9.

**6.4. What indexes and guides can I use?**

The full list of agencies in the Executive Office of the President can be found in the *United States government manual*. The latest edition at the is on open access at **OPL 973.0061**; earlier editions at AS.985. It is also available online via the GovInfo portal from 1995/96 onwards: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/GOVMAN>

The Vere Harmsworth Library has 1945-1948, 1951-2000/01, 2005/06 at shelfmark VHL JK 421 .A3 (Latest issue Ref.).

The *CIS index to Presidential executive orders & proclamations* [1789-1983] is kept at **OPL 973.0043** in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras. The accompanying

microfiche collection is not held, but many of the documents indexed are held in hardcopy, and the Library's shelfmarks have been written into the Descriptive List of source record groups in the user guide printed at the front of some of the volumes. Many of the executive orders appear in title 3 of the *Code of federal regulations*, and some proclamations are found in the *Statutes at large*.

## 7. EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS

### 7.1. What is it?

The publications of the executive branch of the United States government were often included with the publications of the legislative branch in the *Congressional serial set* in the 19th century. In the 20th and 21st centuries the majority were and continue to be published as non-Congressional documents, and even if included in the *Congressional serial set*, are also usually issued in non-Congressional format as well. The US GPO publishes most U.S Federal documents but many are now published directly by the Departments and Agencies.

### 7.2. What is freely available online?

All of the agencies have websites. You can access them directly, or through portals such as the US Government's official web portal at: <http://www.usa.gov/>

You can also access federal government publications available free online in full text from our catalogue, Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]. Just click on the link to the digital item under the 'I want this' tab for immediate connection.

The Census Department has a web presence at and supplies online access to the Statistical Abstract of the United States 1878-2012 at: [http://www.census.gov/library/publications/time-series/statistical\\_abstracts.html](http://www.census.gov/library/publications/time-series/statistical_abstracts.html)

The U.S. Census Bureau terminated the collection of data for the Statistical Compendium programme which included the *Statistical Abstract* effective October 1, 2011. To access the most current data, refer to the organizations cited in the source notes for each table of the Statistical Abstract.

### 7.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

You can find shelfmarks for series and individual documents issued by the US Federal Government executive agencies and acquired in hard copy at the British Library over time in a variety of ways. Older official publications – many of them complicated series – are either not listed in the online catalogue or can be better identified in the Library's collections by using the printed catalogues. The two main printed sources are the pre-1975 British Library Catalogue published in book form by Saur and the photocopies of acquisitions records at **OPL index**. US Federal Government publications are listed in

volumes 333-334 of the catalogue; indexes by title and government body are available to make finding records easier

### Microform

The British Library formerly received many of these publications on microfiche as part of the depository set. However, the number of executive branch publications available to depository libraries has been drastically reduced since the mid-1990s. There is also a non-depository set of executive branch material published by Readex and held on micro card from 1975-1980 at SPR Mic E 150.

For other microform holdings, check the Card Catalogue of Official Microforms in the social sciences reading room at St Pancras under the name of the department. Individual documents within each collection must be identified using the accompanying guides and indexes. It is always necessary to quote a reel number to enable the item you need to be retrieved. Because the material is so complex it can only be ordered using paper request tickets and delivered to the social sciences reading room.

## 7.4. What indexes and guides can I use?

Details of Departmental publications are to be found in the series of indexes kept in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras at **OPL 973.0043**:

**Monthly catalog of United States government publications, 1940 (Formerly Catalog of the public documents, 1893-1940)**

**Cumulative subject index to the Monthly catalog of United States government publications, 1900-1971**

**Guide to US government publications** (Andriot), an annual index of published series

The Vere Harmsworth Library also holds a series of indexes giving details of Departmental publications

**MarciveWeb Docs**, 1979- , is available at the social science reading room terminals at St Pancras and provides links to full text when found free on the Internet.

**The Catalog of United States government publications** is also available free online via GovInfo at: <http://catalog.gpo.gov/F>

For further information about the activities – including publishing activities - of the Executive Departments you can also consult the *United States government manual* held from 1936 at the British Library at A.S.985 (most recent edition at **OPL 973.0061**) and the guides and bibliographies produced by the Departments themselves such as the *Bureau of the Census catalog of publications 1946-1972* kept at **OPL 973.00212**.

## 8. UNITED STATES FEDERAL LAW AND PUBLICATIONS OF THE JUDICIARY

This guide does not aim to give detailed coverage of the sources of United States law, either of the publications, or of how to use them. However, the most important titles held by the British Library, the Vere Harmsworth Library and the Bodleian Law Library are noted and their shelfmarks given.

### 8.1. U.S. Constitution

#### 8.1.1. What is freely available online?

This is available online in numerous places, including at The Constitution of the United States: <http://constitutionus.com/>

And at US Constitution Online: <http://www.usconstitution.net/>

It is also available on GovInfo: <https://www.govinfo.gov/collection/constitution-annotated>

And through the JUSTIA website: [www.justia.com](http://www.justia.com)

The Library of Congress *Guide to law online* gives access to full text of the Constitution: [www.loc.gov/law/help/guide.html](http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide.html)

#### 8.1.2. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

##### Print

The U.S. Constitution is available in *Constitutions of the United States: National and State* at shelfmark ZL.9.a.134.

The Bodleian Law Library holds a print copy at : LAW Main Libr USA 510 C726.6b
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### 8.2. Bills

#### 8.2.1. What is it?

Congressional bills are legislative proposals from the House of Representatives and Senate within the United States Congress. There are eight different types of bills.

- House bills (H.R.) and Senate bills (S.) require the approval of both chambers (ie House and Senate) and the signature of the President to become law.
- House Joint Resolutions (H.J. Res.) and Senate Joint Resolutions (S.J. Res.) require the approval of both chambers and the signature of the President. Joint resolutions generally are used for limited matters, such as a single appropriation for a specific purpose and to propose amendments to the Constitution.

- House Concurrent Resolutions (H. Con. Res.) and Senate Concurrent Resolutions (S. Con. Res.) require the approval of both chambers but do not require the signature of the President and do not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions generally are used to make or amend rules that apply to both chambers.
- House Simple Resolutions (H. Res.) and Senate Simple Resolutions (S. Res.) address matters entirely within the prerogative of one chamber or the other. They do not require the approval of the other chamber or the signature of the President, and they do not have the force of law

### 8.2.2. What is freely available online?

*Congress.gov* gives full text of bills from the 93rd Congress, 1973/74 onwards. It includes legislative histories and links to Committee reports on bills:

<https://www.congress.gov/>

GovInfo contains all published versions of bills from the 103rd Congress (1993-94) onwards: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/BILLS>

The *History of bills* lists legislative actions on bills that are reported in the *Congressional record*, which has been published since 1874. In print it is part of the *Congressional record index*, but it is also available as a collection on GovInfo from 98th Congress, 1983/84 to the present: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/hob>

### 8.2.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

The Library holds incomplete collections of historic Senate Bills, 1826-1863/64 at AS.23 and House Bills, 1796-1985 at AS.24.

#### Microform

Congressional Bills, Resolutions and Amendments were deposited at the British Library in microfiche from the 97th Congress, 2nd sessions 1982 to the 101st Congress 1989 and are kept at SPR Mic.AS.Y1.4/1-9 + Congress and bill numbers. Bill numbers, etc., may be found in the *Congressional record*, the *Federal index*, (not current, in the stacks at P.971/298) and the *Congressional quarterly: weekly report* at **OPL 328.73**. The latter cites bill numbers and included a section giving the status of major legislation passing through Congress up to the end of 2015. It cumulates as the *Congressional Quarterly Almanac (later CQ Almanac Plus, 2001-2006 and CQ Almanac, 2007)*, which the Library holds from 1978 at ZA.9.b.2240. The current issue is in the reading room at **OPL 328.73**.

The British Library Document Supply Centre holds Bills from 90th Congress 1967-104th Congress, 1995 as part of the *Congressional Information Service microfiche library* at 3267.638F and 3267.636F. Individual bills can be ordered using the ABRS, but you must cite the code number assigned to each document. The *CIS Index* to the collection is

available in the social sciences reading room at **OPL.973.0043**. It includes legislative histories and indexes by subject, title and bill number.

### 8.3. Laws

#### 8.3.1. What is It?

After the President signs a bill into law, it is delivered to the Office of the Federal Register (OFR), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) where it is assigned a law number, legal statutory citation (public laws only), and prepared for publication as a slip law. At the end of each session of Congress, the slip laws are compiled into bound volumes called the Statutes at Large, and they are known as "session laws." The Statutes at Large present a chronological arrangement of the laws in the exact order that they have been enacted.

Every six years, public laws are incorporated into the United States Code, which is a codification of all general and permanent laws of the United States. A supplement to the United States Code is published during each interim year until the next comprehensive volume is published. The U.S. Code is arranged by subject matter, and it shows the present status of laws with amendments already incorporated in the text that have been amended on one or more occasions.

#### 8.3.2 What is freely available online?

Public and Private laws from the 104th Congress, 1995/96 to the present can be found on GovInfo: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/PLAW>

The legislative histories in Congress.gov also include links to the full text of the law as passed: <http://www.congress.gov/>

*The United States statutes at large* - a chronological compilation of Federal public and private laws - is available on GovInfo for the period 1951-2011. This publication also includes concurrent resolutions enacted during each session of Congress, reorganization plans, proposed and ratified amendments to the constitution, and proclamations by the President: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/STATUTE>

Historical collections of Statutes at Large online covering vol.1-64, 1789-1950 and vol. 1-18, 1789-1875 are available courtesy of the Law Library of Congress at: <http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal/uscode.php>

The Constitution Society has also published a complete collection online covering 1789- at: <http://www.constitution.org/uslaw/sal/sal.htm>

*The United States code* with its annual, cumulative supplements is published every six years. It presents federal laws by subject in 53 chapters or titles. Only the general and permanent laws are included, not temporary, local or private laws. The United States

code can be used as an index to the United States statutes. You can find the text of the US code online: <http://uscode.house.gov/>

Or via GovInfo (offers the bonus of historic versions of the code back to 1994):  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/USCODE>

Or from the the Library of Congress:  
<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal/uscode.php>

Or via the JUSTIA website: [www.justia.com](http://www.justia.com)

And courtesy of Cornell University Law School:  
<http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text>

### 8.3.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

A pamphlet print of every public and private law is made a few days after the bill becomes law. These printings are known as the *slip laws* and were not obtained in hardcopy by the British Library. However, they are also printed in the *U.S Code*, *Congressional and administrative news*. The slip laws are printed here with the *Statutes at large* page numbers that will be their permanent citation in future Statutes volumes together with marginal notes and citations (including to the *U.S.Code*). Annual cumulations of the *U.S Code*, *Congressional and administrative news* are held in the Social Sciences Reading Room at St Pancras at **OPL 344.7302**, 1975-1977, 1980 to date. Earlier volumes for 1941-1974 are in the St Pancras basement storage at ZD.9.a.1057. The series includes Public laws, Legislative histories, Proclamations, Executive orders, and President's messages. It has a subject index, and a list of popular names of acts.

*The United States statutes at large* is held at A.S.411. Prior to 1950 this publication included executive agreements and treaties.

The latest edition of *The United States code* is kept at **OPL 344.7304** on open access at the British Library. The 1982 edition was not deposited at the British Library in hard copy, but is available on microfiche (see below).

The latest edition is kept at LAW Main Libr USA 030 at the Bodleian Law Library.

In addition, extensive historic collections of Laws and Statutes are held at the British Library. They can be found in the printed British Library catalogue under 'United States of America' (where they are easier to browse than in Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk> ]). They are entered under the subheading 'Laws and Statutes: I General collections, II Collections of Laws on Special subjects, III Separate laws and IV Abridgements and Indexes'. Having identified material of interest, you can order it online through the catalogue.

#### Microform

The *slip laws* are included in the depository microfiche collections, and are held at SPR Mic. A.S. GS4.100:[Public law] 96-468 to G.S.4.110/4:[Private law] 97-10 and SPR Mic. A.S.AE2.110[Public law] 99-8 onwards; however deposit ceased with the laws of the 101st Congress 1989/1990. You can trace the SuDocs number in the usual way via *MarciveWeb Docs* online and order using a paper request ticket

The 1982 edition of *The United States code* is available on microfiche at SPR Mic.A.S.Y 1.2/5:982. There is a subject bibliography at SPR Mic A.S.GP3.22/2:197/988-2.

## 8.4. Federal Subordinate Legislation

### 8.4.1. What is it?

Prior to the passing of the *Federal Register Act* in 1935 there was no central system for the publication of U.S government regulations. This Act set up the Federal Register system of publication which consists of two publications, the daily *Federal register* and the annually revised *Code of federal regulations*. Since 1936 the *Federal register* has been published daily and contains Presidential orders or proclamations, Rules and regulations codified as they are to appear in the *Code of federal regulations*, Proposed rules (for comment) and Notices (miscellaneous government announcements).

The *Code of federal regulations* is a codification of the current general and permanent regulations of the various federal agencies. It is divided into 50 titles which represent broad subject areas. Each title is broken down into chapters, chapters into parts, and parts into sections.

### 8.4.2. What is freely available online?

The Federal register is available online at GovInfo from 1936:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/FR>

Federal Register.gov is an unofficial web edition (also known as "Federal Register 2.0 or "FR2), which was built to be easier to read and navigate than the Federal Register in print and covers 1994-present. It also includes links to related material:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/>

The *Code of federal regulations* is also available freely online. Given the complexity of this material and the fact that the Library's microfiche set is not complete it is recommended that the online version offered by Cornell University is preferred:

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text>

Versions of the *Code of federal regulations* from 1996 onwards are also available on GovInfo: <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CFR>

The Electronic *Code of federal regulations* is a regularly updated, unofficial and non-legal version: <https://gov.ecfr.io/cgi-bin/ECFR>

The *Code of Federal Regulations* is also available at: [www.justia.com](http://www.justia.com)

Links to various versions of the *Code of federal regulations* and the *Federal register* are available at: [www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal/usexec.html](http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide/federal/usexec.html)

For help with tracing federal regulations, consult the Law Library of Congress guide: <http://blogs.loc.gov/law/2014/11/how-to-trace-federal-regulations-a-research-guide/>

#### **8.4.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?**

##### **Print**

The print version of the *Federal register* is held at A.S.288/4 at the British Library from 1936 to date. There are monthly and annual indexes.

It is held at VHL 300.431 s.2 at the Vere Harmsworth Library from 1949 to 1977

The *Code of federal regulations* is held up to 1983 in hardcopy at the British Library at A.S.288/6.

##### **Microform**

The *Federal register* is held almost complete in hard copy at the British Library, and since 1983 it has been supplemented by the depository microfiche kept at SPR Mic AS.GS.107 from 1983 to 1984, and from 1985 to 1990 at SPR Mic AS.AE.2.106.

The Vere Harmsworth Library also has a microform set covering 1936-1948 and 1979-1991 at shelfmark VHL Micr. USA 207.

Since 1983, the *Code of federal regulations* has been received on depository microfiche, 1983-1985 at SPR Mic AS.GS4.108 and from 1985 at SPR Mic.AS.AE.2.106/3: title chapter, part number.

#### **8.4.4. What indexes and guides can I use?**

The 2001 *CIS Index to the Code of Federal Regulations* is on the open shelves in the Social Sciences Reading Room at **OPL 344.7304**; it has unfortunately ceased publication.

### **8.5. Law Reports**

#### **8.5.1. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?**

##### **Print**

Hard copy American law reports are not held very extensively at the British Library. For example, the *United States reports* are held from vol.1-440, 1790-1979 at 6622.pp.1, and *Cases decided in the U.S Court of Claims* are held from vol.1-224,1855-July 1980 at A.S.169-170.

The very extensive case law holdings of the Bodleian Law Library are not described in this guide.

## Microform

Law reports published by the US government were included in the depository microfiche set in 1982, but were subsequently dropped so that the collection is patchy and not up to date. For example, the *United States reports* are held from vol. 449, 1980-vol.510, 1993 on microfiche kept at SPR Mic A.S.Ju.6.8, and *Cases decided in the U.S Court of Claims* are held from vol.225, August 1980 – vol.231, 1983 on microfiche kept at SPR Mic A.S.Ju.3.9. Many special subject law reports from administrative agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Internal Revenue Service were deposited on microfiche up to the mid-1990s and the SuDocs numbers can be found in *Andriot*, *MarciveWeb Docs*, and other reference books.

### 8.5.2. What indexes and guides can I use?

The best guide to holdings is the *Union list of United States legal literature*, held at **OPQ 340.01631**. This copy is annotated with British Library shelfmarks.

## 8.6. Case law

### 8.6.1. What is freely available online?

#### Supreme Court

There are many free sources of Supreme Court decisions on the Internet, including Open Jurist, offering United States reports vol 1 (1790) onwards:

<http://openjurist.org/browse-open-jurist>

Justia Supreme Court Centre at: <http://supreme.justia.com/index.html>

OYEZ Project – Supreme Court Media, which includes opinions, dockets, transcripts and podcasts of hearings and other content: [www.oyez.org/](http://www.oyez.org/)

Supreme Court at: [www.supremecourtus.gov/](http://www.supremecourtus.gov/)

Cornell's Legal Information Institute, which provides access to decisions from 1990 to the present, slip opinions, filings, rules and more: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/>

Findlaw Supreme Court decisions at: <http://lp.findlaw.com>

#### General

Free online sources of general case law include:

Open Jurist, which offers the Federal Reporter, including 2nd and 3rd editions and United States Reports (Supreme Court): <http://openjurist.org/browse-open-jurist>

JUSTIA at: [www.justia.com](http://www.justia.com)

FindLaw, aimed at legal professionals: [www.findlaw.com/](http://www.findlaw.com/)

Cornell Legal Information Institute at: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/>

The Law Library of Congress Guide to the Law Online at:  
<http://www.loc.gov/law/help/guide.php>

Public Library of Law at: [www.plol.org/Pages/Search.aspx](http://www.plol.org/Pages/Search.aspx)

Google Scholar added a very substantial body of US federal and state case law in November 2009, claiming that it covers 'all US Supreme Court opinions, Federal Appeals opinions since 1924, and many Federal District Court opinions from F Supp. Opinions from all 50 states are included since 1950': <http://scholar.google.co.uk/>

## 9. PUBLICATIONS OF THE STATES

### 9.1. What is it?

The British Library has good holdings of early 17th and 18th century publications of the American colonies, later the eastern states of the United States of America, especially of Connecticut, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Virginia. Some rare and interesting imprints are held, for example works printed by Benjamin Franklin. These early imprints are augmented by microfilms acquired to improve further the coverage of this early period. There are good holdings of the individual constitutions of the colonies, and later of the states.

Collections of state law, and the proceedings and documents of state legislatures are held for most states. The 19th century coverage is very good, many volumes having been obtained in the mid 19th century are not even kept in the state of origin. Publications held include the interesting imprints from Reading and Harrisburg of Pennsylvania laws, Senate proceedings, etc., in German.

The state publications collected most comprehensively in the 20th century are those of Illinois, New York and Louisiana which we obtained through exchange agreements. Such publications are no longer being received through this route due to cutbacks in publishing budgets.

### 9.2. What is freely available online?

A substantial amount of material is now being made available by the states online. See the State and Local Government on the Net portal which gives access to current publications of all the American states: <http://www.statelocalgov.net/>

Internet resources on state law include those provided by the Cornell Legal Information Institute. This resource gives links to laws by state, and includes material such as constitutions and legislative documents, judicial opinions, regulations and Agency material as well as links to other collections of state legal resources at: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/states/listing.html>

Recent decisions in some state courts are available on Findlaw:

<http://caselaw.findlaw.com/>

### 9.3. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Print

Many publications of the American Continental Congress are held, including editions of its Journals, located at AS.1, AS.1/2 and a variety of other shelfmarks; all of which are to be found in Explore the British Library [ <http://explore.bl.uk/> ]

**Legislative publications:** The great strength of the British Library holdings of states publications remain the valuable collections of legislative material dating from the 17th century. For example the run of the *Journals of the House of Assembly of the State of New York* at A.S.N.223 starts with the volume for the first session held on 10 September 1777. The signature of David Gelston is on the title page. These valuable early volumes, often with signatures and annotations, were mainly acquired by the British Museum Library in the middle of the 19th century. More recently, volumes were acquired by gift from libraries in the United States to fill gaps in the holdings of some of this legislative material, especially for the late 19th and early 20th centuries. For example the *Legislative reports of New Hampshire* are held from 1801-1915, A.S.N.78, and many of these volumes were presented to the Library.

The British Library has good holdings of the publications of the Confederate States. They are entered in the printed catalogue under United States of America and the sub heading Southern Confederacy 1861-65. The official history of the American civil war, *The war of the rebellion; a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies* in 128 volumes, produced by the War Records Office of the US Department of War, 1880-1902, is held at A.S.574. The General Index volume is held at **OPL 973.07**, and the Atlas is in the Maps Library at Maps 9c11,12.

Some annual collections of acts are held very comprehensively including the *Acts of Assembly for Virginia* at AS.V.44 and the *Laws of New York* at AS.N.227.

#### Microform

A microfiche collection of *State constitutional conventions: [records of constitutional conventions, commissions, and amendments, 1776-1978]* published by the Greenwood Press and Congressional Information Service, is held at SPR Mic C.3. The printed guides and indexes to this collection are at **OPL 973.90043**.

The state laws are supplemented by the State session laws published by W.S Hein on microfiche which start at varying dates between 1977 and 1979 and cease at varying dates in the 1990s. These are kept in alphabetical order of state and then in sessional order at SPR Mic.E.304.

## 9.4. What indexes and guides can I use?

You can most easily find the publications of the Federal Convention of the Colonies, kept at a wide variety of shelfmarks, by browsing the printed catalogue under the heading United States of America with the subheading Convention for Framing the Constitution. Other early documents published prior to the meeting of the first Congress of the United States in 1789 are also most easily found in the printed catalogue under the subheading Constitutional documents.

British Library printed holdings of state law reports – it has very few- can also be checked on the marked up *Institute of Advanced legal Studies Union List* at **OPQ 340.01631**.

## 10. U.S. ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

### 10.1. What does The British Library hold, and how can I access it?

#### Online

The Library holds one major subscription-based full text online collection of archival material:

**Digital National Security Archive** - The database includes more than 650,000 of the most important declassified documents regarding critical U.S. foreign policy decisions. There are over 40 complete collections, each offering specialized insights, including coverage of the Iran-Contra Affair, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the War on Terror.

Various modules of the **Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS)** are available, covering 1941-1960 and 1974-1996. FBIS is US government operation which translates the text of daily broadcasts, government statements, and select news stories from non-English sources. It covers: All regions, 1941-1960; Middle East & [North] Africa, 1974-1987; Near East & South Asia, 1987-1996; South Asia, 1980-1987; Sub-Saharan Africa, 1974-1996; China, 1974-1996; Asia & the Pacific, 1974-1987; East Asia, 1987-1996; Eastern Europe, 1974-1996, Soviet Union, 1974-1996.

#### Microform

A considerable number of US archival collections have been acquired in microform. Most of this material appears in the British Library catalogues (print and online), but in the case of major collections the contents are not noted separately, so it is necessary to use the special guides to microforms and the published indexes to such collections.

There is a card index in the Social Sciences Reading Room of microform collections of official publications. The existence of a hardcopy guide is noted on the card. Some notable collections have already been referred to in this guide, for example the *Presidential papers* series, SPR Mic B4/1-30, and *the State constitutional conventions*, SPR Mic C.3. Major microform collections issued by the US National Archives are held, and details of the various sets are gathered in the US official records guides to microform collections boxes at **OPL 973.0076**. Also at this shelfmark are the *Catalog of*

*National Archives microfilm publications*, 1974, and *Microfilm resources for research*, 1986, both of which are annotated with the shelfmarks for collections held. Microfilms accessible through these guides (reel numbers are included) include a selection of the despatches from the U.S. Ministers at overseas posts, SPR Mic.B.21, and from the U.S. Consuls, SPR Mic B.22. Other important Department of State holdings are the *Records of the Department of State relating to the internal affairs of China, 1910-1929*, 227 reels, SPR Mic.B.119, and *Records of the Department of State relating to World War I and its termination 1914-29*, 518 reels, SPR Mic.A.190. Details of the microfilm holdings of the *Federal decennial population census schedules* are noted in *Federal population censuses, 1790-1890: a catalog of microfilm copies of the schedules* shelved at **OPL 973.00212**. Many of the declassified files which have been published in microfilm by University Publications of America are held, for example the *Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff 1942-60*, SPR Mic A.168 and *O.S.S./State Department intelligence and research reports* at SPR Mic A.182. The Declassified Documents Reference System is held 1984-2006 at SPR.Mic.E.876 with indexes shelved at **OPL.973.0043**. The retrospective collection 1975-1983 is held at the Document Supply Centre at 3537.8F. This is a collection of U.S. official and governmental reports/papers, once classified, but which have now been made available in the public domain. Items include CIA reports on U2 spy plane activities/flights against Cuba and China.