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NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

**Pamphlet Accompanying**

**Microcopy No. 204**

**INTERIOR DEPARTMENT TERRITORIAL PAPERS**

**WYOMING, 1870-90**



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**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
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This pamphlet is intended to serve as a guide for users of this microfilm publication as well as for those desiring information on its contents prior to acquisition.

INTERIOR DEPARTMENT TERRITORIAL PAPERS  
WYOMING, 1870-90

The act establishing the Territory of Wyoming was approved July 25, 1868 (15 Stat. 178). Wyoming was admitted into the Union as a State by an act approved July 10, 1890 (26 Stat. 222).

From the earliest days of the Republic until 1873 the Department of State was responsible for the supervision of Territorial governments and Territorial affairs in general. An act approved March 1, 1873 (17 Stat. 484), transferred this responsibility to the Department of the Interior, where it has since remained.

During the period covered by this microcopy the Secretary of the Interior did not delegate the responsibility for supervising Territorial affairs to a bureau but kept it within his own office. There Territorial business was ordinarily referred to the Patents and Miscellaneous Division, which conducted most of the correspondence with the Territories. Correspondence pertaining to appointments of Territorial officials was handled by the Appointments Division of the Office of the Secretary.

On the six rolls of this microcopy are reproduced records of the Patents and Miscellaneous Division relating to Wyoming Territory. They include:

(1) Transcripts of executive proceedings of the Governors of the Territory, January 1, 1878 - August 7, 1890. These were transmitted semiannually by the Secretary of the Territory to either the President of the United States or the Secretary of the Interior. Those transmitted to the President were customarily referred to the Secretary of the Interior. The proceedings are a record of official acts of the Governor and include copies of proclamations, extradition orders, certificates of reapportionment, writs for special elections and lists of appointments of Notaries Public, Commissioners of Deeds, Live Stock Commissioners, Commissioners of the Insane Asylum, and other officials. No copies of the executive proceedings prior to January 1878 or for the period July-October 1878 are among these records.

(2) Copies of official correspondence of the Governors of the Territory with Federal and Territorial officials and with private individuals, June 21, 1878 - October 13, 1890, except for the periods July 1878 - January 1879 and July 1881 - February 1882. These copies were also transmitted semiannually by the Secretary of the Territory to either the President of the United States or the Secretary of the Interior.

(3) Letters received, June 4, 1870 - September 25, 1890. These consist of communications relating to Territorial matters prior to 1873, December 20, 1870 - May 14, 1873; communications relating to the penitentiary at Laramie, June 4, 1870 - January 1, 1878, and April 22, 1886 - May 2, 1890; and communications relating to miscellaneous subjects, January 17, 1876 - September 25, 1890.

Before 1881 the incoming correspondence of the Patents and Miscellaneous Division was grouped in one series under a number of subject headings. By 1881, however, the system of assigning numbers to correspondence according to the date of receipt had been fully developed, and from that year to 1907 most of the communications received were filed in a single chronological series. At an undetermined date the records reproduced in this microcopy were withdrawn from these two series and arranged in a separate subject series. Copies of the outgoing correspondence of the Patents and Miscellaneous Division relating to Wyoming Territory are scattered through a series of volumes of letters sent. The outgoing correspondence is not included in this microcopy.

The records reproduced in this microcopy are part of a body of records in the National Archives designated as Record Group 48, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

In the same record group in the National Archives are other records relating to Wyoming Territory. Among these are the records of the Appointments Division, which include copies of nominations and commissions of many of the Governors and Secretaries of the Territory, letters of recommendation for Territorial appointments, correspondence relating to complaints and charges against Territorial officials, and applications for leave of absence.

There are related records in other record groups. In Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, are Territorial papers for Wyoming, 1868-73 (reproduced as Microcopy 85), and papers relating to the appointments of Territorial officials. In Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, are records of the Wyoming Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1869-70. Other related material is in Record Group 46, Records of the United States Senate; Record Group 60, General Records of the Department of Justice; Record Group 98, Records of United States Army Commands; Record Group 107, Records of the Office of the Secretary of War; and Record Group 233, Records of the United States House of Representatives.