



FINDING CONGRESSIONAL JOURNALS IN THE U.S. SERIAL SET

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Abstract—Congressional journals are the only government publications mandated by the Constitution of the United States. Unfortunately, they are often overlooked in favor of the sometimes more complete *Congressional Record* and its predecessors. From the beginning of the Serial Set in 1817 until 1952 the *Journals* were printed as a part of that collection. The attached list may be used as a finding tool for those needing to use the *Journals* included in the Serial Set. Copyright © 1997 Elsevier Science Ltd

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The congressional *Journals* comprise an important set of congressional publications that are frequently overlooked. The *Journals* of the Senate and House of Representatives are the only publications mandated by the Constitution of the United States. In Article I, Section 5 the following paragraph appears[1]:

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

The constitutional requirement for publication of a roll call is of particular importance in the early Congresses where this information is not always attainable in other sources. The alternatives to the *Journals* are the *Annals of Congress* (1789–1833), the *Congressional Globe* (1833–1873), and the *Congressional Record* (1873–present). Each of these publications has its own peculiarities and eccentricities, while the *Journals* offer a fairly consistent format.

The *Journals* were always the responsibility of the respective clerks of the Senate and House while the *Annals* and the *Globe* were private enterprises. The *Congressional Record* was the first “official” publication of the debates of Congress other than the *Journals*. One of the interesting features of the *Journals* is the similarity of the modern edition to that of the first. Over the years, the *Journals* have remained fairly consistent in content and quality of material.

The *Journals* are only a summary of the day’s proceedings, but they do contain a summary of all bills, and are usually well indexed. This summary nature of the *Journals* can

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also be useful when a full verbatim record is not required. The Standing Rules of the Senate state that "The proceedings of the Senate shall be briefly and accurately stated on the *Journal*. Messages of the President in full: titles of bills and resolutions, and such parts as shall be affected by proposed amendments: every vote, and a brief statement of the contents of each petition, or paper presented in the Senate, shall be entered"[2]. In *Jefferson's Manual* the rules of the House state: "The *Journal* and not the *Congressional Record* is the official record of the proceedings of the House"[3].

The *Journals* are available for the first 14 Congresses in several microform and reprint editions[4]. One of the best is the 1977 Michael Glazier reprint edition. The index is much more complete for this edition than that found in some of the microform editions. If the researcher is using a microform edition, securing an interlibrary loan of the index of the reprint will make the microforms much easier to use.

Beginning with the fifteenth Congress, the *Journals* are available in the Congressional Serial Set. Volume one of the Serial Set is the *Senate Journal*. A good description of the Serial Set and its value to historical researchers can be found in the Summer 1994 *Western Historical Quarterly*[5]. The *Journals* were published in the Serial Set from 1817–1952. Beginning with the 83rd Congress, the *Journals* were given the Superintendent of Documents Classification numbers of XJS and XJH, and will be found in most libraries under those numbers. The following list will aid the researcher in finding the congressional *Journals* within the Serial Set in a minimum of time.

NOTES

1. *U. S. Constitution*, article 1, section 5.
2. U. S. Senate, *Senate Manual* (S. Doc. 103-1) 1993, Rule 4.1c.
3. U. S. House, *Constitution Jefferson's Manual and Rules of the House of Representatives* (House Doc. 100-248) 1988, Section 69.
4. Both the Readex Microprint and the CIS editions of the Serial Set contain the *Journals*. Selected volumes are also found in the Shaw Shoemaker *Early American Imprints*. Some other editions are cited below: *Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States* (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, Inc., 1977), reprint, with material added; *Journal of the Senate, Including the Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate* (Wilmington, DE: M. Glazier, Inc., 1977), reprint, with material added; *Journal of the House of Representatives, 1st–29th Congress, 1789–1846* (Washington, DC: Brookhaven Press, 1978), microfiche.
5. Rodney A. Ross, "Field Notes: Using the U. S. Congressional Serial Set for the Study of Western History," *Western Historical Quarterly* 25 (Summer 1994):208–13.
6. U. S. Congress, *Congressional Directory, 1993–94*, 103rd Cong. (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993).

Senate and House Journals in the U.S. Serial Set

Congress	Session	Beginning Date [6]	Adjournment Date	Senate Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set	House Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set
15th	1	December 1, 1817	April 20, 1818	1	4
	2	November 16, 1818	March 3, 1819	13	16
16th	1	December 6, 1819	May 15, 1820	25	30
	2	November 13, 1820	March 3, 1821	41	47
17th	1	December 3, 1821	May 8, 1822	58	62
	2	December 2, 1822	March 3, 1823	72	75
18th	1	December 1, 1823	May 27, 1824	88	92
	2	December 6, 1824	March 3, 1825	107	112
19th	S. Special	March 4, 1825	March 9, 1825	107	
	1	December 5, 1825	May 22, 1826	124	130
	2	December 4, 1826	March 3, 1827	143	147
20th	1	December 3, 1827	May 26, 1828	162	168
	2	December 1, 1828	March 3, 1829	180	183
21st	S. Special	March 4, 1829	March 17, 1829	180	
	1	December 7, 1829	May 31, 1830	191	194
	2	December 6, 1830	March 3, 1831	202	205
22nd	1	December 5, 1831	July 16, 1832	211	215
	2	December 3, 1832	March 2, 1833	229	232
23rd	1	December 2, 1833	June 30, 1834	237	253
	2	December 1, 1834	March 3, 1835	265	270
24th	1	December 7, 1835	July 4, 1836	278	285
	2	December 5, 1836	March 3, 1837	296	300
25th	S. Special	March 4, 1837	March 10, 1837	296	
	1	September 4, 1837	October 16, 1837	308	310
	2	December 4, 1837	July 9, 1838	313	320
	3	December 3, 1838	March 3, 1839	337	343
26th	1	December 2, 1839	July 21, 1840	353	362
	2	December 7, 1840	March 3, 1841	374	381
27th	S. Special	March 4, 1841	March 15, 1841	374	
	1	May 31, 1841	September 13, 1841	389	391
	2	December 6, 1841	August 31, 1842	394	400
	3	December 5, 1842	March 3, 1843	412	417
28th	1	December 4, 1843	June 17, 1844	430	438
	2	December 2, 1844	March 3, 1845	448	462
29th	S. Special	March 4, 1845	March 20, 1845	448	
	1	December 1, 1845	August 10, 1846	469	479
	2	December 7, 1846	March 3, 1847	492	496
30th	1	December 6, 1847	August 14, 1848	502	513
	2	December 4, 1848	March 3, 1849	528	536
31st	S. Special	March 5, 1849	March 23, 1849	528	
	1	December 3, 1849	September 30, 1850	548	566
	2	December 2, 1850	March 3, 1851	586	594

Senate and House Journals in the U.S. Serial Set

Congress	Session	Beginning Date [6]	Adjournment Date	Senate Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set	House Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set
32nd	S. Special	March 4, 1851	March 13, 1851	586	
		December 1, 1851	August 31, 1852	610	632
		December 6, 1852	March 3, 1853	657	672
33rd	S. Special	March 4, 1853	April 11, 1853	657	
		December 5, 1853	August 7, 1854	689	709
		December 4, 1854	March 3, 1855	745	776
34th	1	December 3, 1855	August 18, 1856	809	838
		August 21, 1856	August 30, 1856	809	839
		December 1, 1856	March 3, 1857	873	892
35th	S. Special	March 4, 1857	March 14, 1857	873	
		December 7, 1857	June 14, 1858	917	940
	S. Special	June 15, 1858	June 16, 1858	917	
		December 6, 1858	March 3, 1859	973	995
36th	S. Special	March 4, 1859	March 10, 1859	973	
		December 5, 1859	June 25, 1860	1022	1041 1042
	S. Special	June 26, 1860	June 28, 1860	1022	
		December 3, 1860	March 3, 1861	1077	1091
37th	S. Special	March 4, 1861	March 28, 1861	1077	
		July 4, 1861	August 6, 1861	1111	1113
		December 2, 1861	July 17, 1862	1116	1126
		December 1, 1862	March 3, 1863	1148	1155
38th	S. Special	March 4, 1863	March 14, 1863	1148	
		December 7, 1863	July 4, 1864	1175	1179
		December 5, 1864	March 3, 1865	1208	1215
39th	S. Special	March 4, 1865	March 11, 1865	1208	
		December 4, 1865	July 28, 1866	1236	1243
		December 3, 1866	March 3, 1867	1275	1280
40th	S. Special	March 4, 1867	March 30, 1867	1307	1310
		April 1, 1867	April 20, 1867	1307	
		July 3, 1867	July 20, 1867	1307	1310
		November 21, 1867	December 1, 1867	1307	1310
		December 2, 1867	July 27, 1868	1315	1321
		September 21, 1868	September 21, 1868	1315	1321
		October 16, 1868	October 16, 1868	1315	1321
		November 10, 1868	November 10, 1868	1315	1321
		December 7, 1868	March 3, 1869	1359	1363
		41st	S. Special	March 4, 1869	April 10, 1869
April 12, 1869	April 22, 1869			1392	
December 6, 1869	July 15, 1870			1404	1410
December 5, 1870	March 3, 1871			1439	1444
42nd	S. Special	March 4, 1871	April 20, 1871	1465	1469
		May 10, 1871	May 27, 1871	1465	
		December 4, 1871	June 10, 1872	1477	1501
	3	December 2, 1872	March 3, 1873	1544	1551
43rd	S. Special	March 4, 1873	March 26, 1873	1544	
		December 1, 1873	June 23, 1874	1579	1593
		December 7, 1874	March 3, 1875	1628	1633

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Congress	Session	Beginning Date [6]	Adjournment Date	Senate Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set	House Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set
44th	S. Special	March 5, 1875	March 24, 1875	1628	
		December 6, 1875	August 15, 1876	1663	1671
		December 4, 1876	March 3, 1877	1717	1740
45th	S. Special	March 5, 1877	March 17, 1877	1717	
		October 15, 1877	December 3, 1877	1771	1772
		December 3, 1877	June 20, 1878	1779	1792
		December 2, 1878	March 3, 1879	1827	1841
46th		March 18, 1879	July 1, 1879	1868	1874
		December 1, 1879	June 16, 1880	1881	1901
		December 6, 1880	March 3, 1881	1940	1950
47th	S. Special	March 4, 1881	May 20, 1881	1940	
		October 10, 1881	October 29, 1881	1984	
48th		December 5, 1881	August 8, 1882	1984	2008
		December 4, 1882	March 3, 1883	2072	2089
		December 3, 1883	July 7, 1884	2161	2180
		December 1, 1884	March 3, 1885	2260	2275
49th	S. Special	March 4, 1885	April 2, 1885	2260	
		December 7, 1885	August 5, 1886	2332	2366 2367
		December 6, 1886	March 3, 1887	2447	2459
50th		December 5, 1887	October 20, 1888	2503	2529 2530
		December 3, 1888	March 3, 1889	2609	2625
51st	S. Special	March 4, 1889	April 2, 1889	2609	
		December 2, 1889	October 1, 1890	2677	2713
		December 1, 1890	March 3, 1891	2817	2829
52nd		December 7, 1891	August 5, 1892	2891	2919
		December 5, 1892	March 3, 1893	3054	3075
53rd	S. Special	March 4, 1893	April 15, 1893	3054	
		August 7, 1893	November 3, 1893	3143	3149
		December 4, 1893	August 28, 1894	3159	3196
		December 3, 1894	March 3, 1895	3274	3291
54th		December 2, 1895	June 11, 1896	3346a	3367a
		December 7, 1896	March 3, 1897	3466a	3476a
55th	S. Special	March 4, 1897	March 10, 1897	3466a	
		March 15, 1897	July 24, 1897	3557a	3570a
		December 6, 1897	July 8, 1898	3589	3628
		December 5, 1898	March 3, 1899	3724	3742
56th		December 4, 1899	June 7, 1900	3842	3897
		December 3, 1900	March 3, 1901	4028	4068
57th	S. Special	March 4, 1901	March 9, 1901	4028	
		December 2, 1901	July 1, 1902	4218	4267
		December 1, 1902	March 4, 1903	4408	4409
58th	S. Special	March 5, 1903	March 19, 1903	4408	
		November 9, 1903	December 7, 1903	4560	4561
		December 7, 1903	April 28, 1904	4568	4569
		December 5, 1904	March 3, 1905	4753	4754

Senate and House Journals in the U.S. Serial Set

Congress	Session	Beginning Date [6]	Adjournment Date	Senate Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set	House Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set
59th	S. Special	March 4, 1905	March 18, 1905	4753	
		December 4, 1905	June 30, 1906	4902	4903
		December 3, 1906	March 3, 1907	5058	5059
60th	1	December 2, 1907	May 30, 1908	5216	5217
		December 7, 1908	March 3, 1909	5378	5379
61st	S. Special	March 4, 1909	March 6, 1909	5378	
		March 15, 1909	August 5, 1909	5562	5563
		December 6, 1909	June 25, 1910	5580	5581
		December 5, 1910	March 3, 1911	5838	5839
62nd	1	April 4, 1911	August 22, 1911	6075	6076
		December 4, 1911	August 26, 1912	6118	6119
		December 2, 1912	March 3, 1913	6328	6329
63rd	S. Special	March 4, 1913	March 17, 1913	6328	
		April 7, 1913	December 1, 1913	6508	6509
		December 1, 1913	October 24, 1914	6550	6551
		December 7, 1914	March 3, 1915	6760	6761
64th	1	December 6, 1915	September 8, 1916	6895	6896
		December 4, 1916	March 3, 1917	7104	7105
65th	S. Special	March 5, 1917	March 16, 1917	7104	
		April 2, 1917	October 6, 1917	7247	7248
		December 3, 1917	November 21, 1918	7302	7303
66th	1	December 2, 1918	March 3, 1919	7450	7451
		March 19, 1919	November 19, 1919	7588	7589
		December 1, 1919	June 5, 1920	7647	7648
67th	S. Special	December 6, 1920	March 3, 1921	7772	7773
		March 4, 1921	March 15, 1921	7916	
		April 11, 1921	November 23, 1921	7916	7917
68th	1	December 5, 1921	September 22, 1922	7948	7949
		December 5, 1921	September 22, 1922	7948	7949
		November 20, 1922	December 4, 1922	8153	8154
		December 4, 1922	March 3, 1923	8153	8154
69th	S. Special	December 3, 1923	June 7, 1924	8218	8219
		December 1, 1924	March 3, 1925	8386	8387
70th	1	March 4, 1925	March 18, 1925	8386	
		December 7, 1925	July 3, 1926	8522	8523
		December 6, 1926	March 4, 1927	8683	8684
71st	S. Special	December 5, 1927	May 29, 1928	8827	8828
		December 3, 1928	March 3, 1929	8975	8976
72nd	1	March 4, 1929	March 5, 1929	9116	
		April 15, 1929	November 22, 1929	9116	9117
		December 2, 1929	July 3, 1930	9183	9184
		July 7, 1930	July 21, 1930	9183	9184
73rd	S. Special	December 1, 1930	March 3, 1931	9321	9322
		December 1, 1930	March 3, 1931	9321	9322
74th	1	December 7, 1931	July 16, 1932	9485	9486
		December 5, 1932	March 3, 1933	9645	9646

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Congress	Session	Beginning Date [6]	Adjournment Date	Senate Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set	House Journal Vol. No. in Serial Set
73rd	S. Special	March 4, 1933	March 6, 1933	9738	
	1	March 9, 1933	June 15, 1933	9738	9739
	2	January 3, 1934	June 18, 1934	9767	9768
74th	1	January 3, 1935	August 26, 1935	9876	9877
	2	January 3, 1936	June 20, 1936	9981	9982
75th	1	January 5, 1937	August 21, 1937	10074	10075
	2	November 15, 1937	December 21, 1937	10227	10228
	3	January 3, 1938	June 16, 1938	10227	10228
76th	1	January 3, 1939	August 5, 1939	10286	10287
	2	September 21, 1939	November 3, 1939	10426	10427
	3	January 3, 1940	January 3, 1941	10426	10427
77th	1	January 3, 1941	January 2, 1942	10541	10542
	2	January 5, 1942	December 16, 1942	10653	10654
78th	1	January 6, 1943	December 21, 1943	10753	10754
	2	January 10, 1944	December 19, 1944	10837	10838
79th	1	January 3, 1945	December 21, 1945	10923	10924
	2	January 14, 1946	August 2, 1946	11012	11013
80th	1	January 3, 1947	December 19, 1947	11112	11113
	2	January 6, 1948	December 31, 1948	11203	11204
81st	1	January 3, 1949	October 19, 1949	11289	11290
	2	January 3, 1950	January 2, 1951	11365	11366
82nd	1	January 3, 1951	October 20, 1951	11484	11485
	2	January 8, 1952	July 7, 1952	11564	11565