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GPO DIGITIZES HISTORIC CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORIES FROM THE 1800S

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) is digitizing historic volumes of the Congressional Directory from the 19th and 20th centuries. The first release includes Directories from 1869–1888, as well as 1993. Additional digitized historic Congressional Directories will be released on GovInfo as they are completed.

Historically, the Congressional Directory has been one of the most comprehensive and detailed resources for identifying the components of the three branches of the Federal Government. It includes short biographies of each member of the Senate and House, as well as terms of service and contact information for members of Congress. In addition, it provides descriptions of various Executive branch departments and Judiciary information.

The public can now access these historic Congressional Directories on GPO’s GovInfo, the one-stop site to authentic information published by the Federal Government, free of charge. <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/CDIR>

“The digitization of these historic Congressional Directories represents another step toward GPO realizing its vision of an *America Informed*,” said GPO Director Hugh Nathaniel Halpern. “This information on past members of Congress is vital to our democracy, and I congratulate our team on their hard work ensuring these historic directories are made available digitally.”

A few notable people featured in these volumes are:

- Joseph Hayne Rainey (June 21, 1832 – August 1, 1887), the first black person to serve in the United States House of Representatives.
- Robert Smalls (April 5, 1839 – February 23, 1915), a politician who freed himself, his crew, and their families during the Civil War by sailing a ship from Confederate-controlled waters to Union-controlled waters.

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- Romualdo Pacheco (October 31, 1831 – January 23, 1899), the first Hispanic person to chair a standing committee in Congress and the only Hispanic person to serve as the Governor of California.

The Congressional Directory serves as the official handbook for Congress and is also widely used by Federal Agency officials and the general public.

GPO is the Federal Government’s resource for publishing trusted information for the Federal Government to the American people. The GPO is responsible for the production and distribution of information products and services for all three branches of the Federal Government, including U.S. passports for the Department of State as well as the official publications of Congress, the White House, and other Federal agencies in digital and print formats. GPO provides for permanent public access to Federal Government information at no charge through www.GovInfo.gov and partnerships with approximately 1,100 libraries nationwide participating in the Federal Depository Library Program. For more information, please visit www.gpo.gov.

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