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**MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Roll 347

May 1-15, 1871



**THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION**

Washington: 1964

United States and Mexican
CLAIMS COMMISSION,

No. 1412 H Street,

Dr. Jefferson



Copy sent to Willard at WASHINGTON, D. C. May 13 1871.
Quaymas - 15 May 1871 - with the six enclosures.
Van Hamilton Desk. H. K.

Secretary of State.

Sir:

As I have before advised the Department
there are pending before this Commission some
six claims by Mexican subjects, residing in
Lower California, for damages on account of
alleged taking and destruction of property
by William Harker and his co-expeditionists
who invaded that territory in 1853.

The aggregate damage claimed for these
injuries amount to \$5,544,110. Of course the
claims are grossly and fraudulently exag-
gerated.

It seems to me however, that it would
be prudent for the Government to make

the effort to obtain testimony tending to discredit the claims in whole or in part.

With this view I would respectfully suggest that directions be given to the nearest Consul or Consular Agent of the United States to obtain such depositions as are procurable touching such facts as may be deemed relevant to the defense of the United States. That defense on the point of damages would be either that the several claimants did not possess the amount of property alleged, or that the values are not correctly estimated. If it can be shown and that the claimants are not known as residents of the localities specified in the memorials at the time in question, that evidence would be important to discredit the claims.

The loco in quo, in each case, seems to be a district, as far as I can ascertain.

in the upper part of Lower California, near the
national boundary. I discover from the
official list of Consuls that we have a consul
at La Paz, which is near the extremity of the
territory, whether we have a nearer consul
ate to the scene of Walker's operations, I do
not know.

I transmit herewith a copy of the memo-
rial in each case, in order that the officer
requested to obtain the information which
I have indicated, if you deem it proper to
adopt my suggestion, may be advised of
the facts. On the back of each memorial
are indorsed the names of the witnesses
examined in each case.

I have the honor to be,

Very Respectfully

Your Obt. Serv't

J. Hubley Ashton