Alexander Robey Shepherd Papers
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress

Manuscript Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2023

Contact information: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact

Catalog Record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78039719

Additional search options available at: https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms008004

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2008
Revised 2023 July
Collection Summary
Title: Alexander Robey Shepherd Papers
Inclusive Dates: 1776-1945
Bulk Dates: 1868-1900
ID No.: MSS39719
Creator: Shepherd, Alexander Robey, 1835-1902
Extent: 1,950 items
Extent: 16 containers plus 1 in vault and 1 oversize
Extent: 7.2 linear feet
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm78039719
Summary: Territorial governor. Correspondence, diaries, notebooks, scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, photographs, clippings, printed matter, and memorabilia relating to Shepherd's career as a political official in Washington, D.C.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Babcock, Orville Elias, 1835-1884--Correspondence.
Cameron, Simon, 1799-1889--Correspondence.
Chase, Salmon P. (Salmon Portland), 1808-1873--Correspondence.
Conkling, Roscoe, 1829-1888--Correspondence.
Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881--Correspondence.
Grant, Ulysses S. (Ulysses Simpson), 1822-1885.
Grice, Joseph.
Morrill, Justin S. (Justin Smith), 1810-1898--Correspondence.
Morton, Levi P. (Levi Parsons), 1824-1920--Correspondence.
Porter, Horace, 1837-1921--Correspondence.
Quintard, May Shepherd, 1864--
Shepherd family.
Shepherd, Alexander Robey, 1835-1902.
Shepherd, Mary Grice Young, 1830-1930--Correspondence.
Sherman, John, 1823-1900--Correspondence.

Organizations
Batopilas Mining Company.

Subjects
Public works--Washington (D.C.)
Silver mines and mining--Mexico.

Places
Mexico--Description and travel.
United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Personal narratives.
United States--Politics and government--1869-1877.
Washington (D.C.)--Politics and government--To 1878.

Occupations
Businessmen.
Governors--Washington (D.C.)
Acquisition Information

The papers of Alexander Robey Shepherd, territorial governor of the District of Columbia, were given to the Library of Congress in 1947 by Shepherd's daughter, Grace Shepherd Merchant (Mrs. Francis D. Merchant). A few items received as a deposit from the Public Library of the District of Columbia in 1940 were converted to a gift in 1950.

Processing History

The papers of Alexander Robey Shepherd were arranged and described by Frank Tusa in 1969. The finding aid was revised in 1996 and 2008 by Brian McGuire. The finding aid was updated in 2023 by Maria Farmer as part of a division-wide remediation project by the Inclusive Description Working Group.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Alexander Robey Shepherd is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Alexander Robey Shepherd are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Alexander Robey Shepherd Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1835, Jan. 31</td>
<td>Born, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1864</td>
<td>Member, Washington, D.C., Common Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>Married Mary Grice Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>Became part owner, Washington Evening Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867-1869</td>
<td>Appointed to Levy Court, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>Member, Board of Aldermen, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>President, Citizen's Reform Association, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>Appointed to Board of Public Works, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>Appointed governor, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Appointed Commissioner, Washington, D.C., but not confirmed by the Senate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Moved to Batopilas, Chihuahua, Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902, Sept. 12</td>
<td>Died, Batopilas, Chihuahua, Mexico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Alexander Robey Shepherd (1835-1902) span the years 1776-1945, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the years 1868-1900. The collection consists primarily of correspondence and scrapbooks supplemented by
diaries, notebooks, printed matter, newspaper clippings, and miscellaneous material organized in seven series: Diaries and Notebooks, Family Correspondence, General Correspondence, Scrapbooks, Miscellany, Artifact, and Oversize.

Shepherd's career as a public official in Washington, D.C., is the central theme of the General Correspondence and the Scrapbooks series for the years before 1875. Both sources provide useful, if limited, information concerning Shepherd's various programs to improve public facilities in the capital during the administration of Ulysses S. Grant. The correspondence includes one or more letters from several prominent political figures, including Orville E. Babcock, Simon Cameron, Salmon P. Chase, Roscoe Conkling, James A. Garfield, Justin S. Morrill, Levi P. Morton, and John Sherman. Shepherd's activities generated considerable public debate, and the scrapbooks help to elucidate the nature and source of the controversy. Biographical material, newspaper clippings, and memorial addresses in the Miscellany series also clarify Shepherd's crucial role in the physical renewal of the nation's capital in the late nineteenth century.

Shepherd's energies after 1880 in a silver mining enterprise in Mexico are amply documented in the collection. The Family Correspondence series, consisting primarily of letters written by Shepherd and his wife Mary to their daughters, is a particularly good source for descriptions of the daily routine at the busy mining site and for family matters, as are the diaries of Mary Shepherd and her daughter May Shepherd.

Other items of interest in the collection include a partial diary of Joseph Grice, Mary Shepherd's paternal great-grandfather, dealing mainly with his experiences in the Revolutionary War.

**Arrangement of the Papers**

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1776-1892
- Family Correspondence, 1864-1941
- General Correspondence, 1847-1943
- Scrapbooks, 1865-1939
- Miscellany, circa 1870-1945
- Artifact, 1900
- Oversize, 1871-1896
### Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOX 1</td>
<td><strong>Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1776-1892</strong></td>
<td>Diaries and other items. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 2-3</td>
<td><strong>Family Correspondence, 1864-1941</strong></td>
<td>Correspondence among members of the Shepherd family, mainly letters sent to Grace Shepherd Merchant. Arranged chronologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 4</td>
<td><strong>General Correspondence, 1847-1943</strong></td>
<td>Primarily letters received by Alexander R. Shepherd supplemented by a small group of letters sent and received by Grace Shepherd Merchant. Arranged chronologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 5-10</td>
<td><strong>Scrapbooks, 1865-1939</strong></td>
<td>Newspaper clippings and miscellaneous items relating generally to Alexander R. Shepherd. Arranged chronologically.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX 11-16</td>
<td><strong>Miscellany, circa 1870-1945</strong></td>
<td>Autograph signatures, biographical notes concerning Alexander R. Shepherd, printed matter, memorial addresses the death of Alexander R. Shepherd, addresses and correspondence relating to the ceremonies at the unveiling of the Shepherd Memorial, photographs, newspaper clippings, and miscellaneous items. Arranged by type of material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX VA 1</td>
<td><strong>Artifact, 1900</strong></td>
<td>Commemorative coin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOX OV 1</td>
<td><strong>Oversize, 1871-1896</strong></td>
<td>Scrapbooks. Organized and described according to the series and box from which the items were removed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1     | **Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1776-1892**  
            | *Diaries and other items.*  
            | *Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.* |
| BOX 1     | Grice, Joseph, diary, circa 1776 |
| BOX 1     | Shepherd, Alexander R., church subscription book, 1868 |
| BOX 1     | Shepherd, Grace, notebook, 1892 |
| BOX 1     | Shepherd, Mary, diary, 1880-1892 |
| BOX 1,    | Shepherd, May, diary, 1880-1884 |

| BOX 2-3   | **Family Correspondence, 1864-1941**  
            | *Correspondence among members of the Shepherd family, mainly letters sent to Grace Shepherd Merchant.*  
            | *Arranged chronologically.* |
| BOX 2     | 1864-1894 |
| BOX 3     | 1895-1941, undated |

| BOX 4     | **General Correspondence, 1847-1943**  
            | *Primarily letters received by Alexander R. Shepherd supplemented by a small group of letters sent and received by Grace Shepherd Merchant.*  
            | *Arranged chronologically.* |
| BOX 4     | 1847-1943, undated |

| BOX 5-10  | **Scrapbooks, 1865-1939**  
            | *Newspaper clippings and miscellaneous items relating generally to Alexander R. Shepherd.*  
            | *Arranged chronologically.* |
| BOX 5     | 1865-1885 |
| BOX 5     | 1866-1885 |
| BOX 6     | 1871-1885 |
| BOX 7     | 1874-1885, 1939 |
| BOX 7     | 1871-1891 *See Oversize* |
| BOX 7     | 1874-1896 *See Oversize* |
| BOX 8     | 1887 |
| BOX 9     | 1887-1895 |
| BOX 10    | 1895-1899 |

| BOX 11-16 | **Miscellany, circa 1870-1945**  
            | *Autograph signatures, biographical notes concerning Alexander R. Shepherd, printed matter, memorial addresses the death of Alexander R. Shepherd, addresses and correspondence relating to the ceremonies at the unveiling of the Shepherd Memorial, photographs, newspaper clippings, and miscellaneous items.* |
Arranged by type of material.

BOX 11  Autograph collection
BOX 11  Biographical material
BOX 11  Memorial, 1903-1909, undated
BOX 12  Printed matter
BOX 13  Printed matter
BOX 14  Photographs
BOX 15  Newspaper clippings
       (1 folder)
BOX 16  Cards and invitations
BOX 16  Miscellany See also Commemorative coin

BOX VA 1  Artifact, 1900
       Commemorative coin.
BOX VA 1  Miscellany
BOX VA 1  Miscellany
BOX VA 1  Commemorative coin, 1900 (Container 16)

BOX OV 1  Oversize, 1871-1896
       Scrapbooks.
       Organized and described according to the series and box from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1  1871-1891 (Container 7)
BOX OV 1  1874-1896 (Container 7)