

**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://lcn.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://lcn.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, -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--1878-1967.  
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

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

## 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

Container	Series
BOX 1	<p><b><u>Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1776-1892</u></b></p> <p>Diaries and other items. Arranged alphabetically by name of family member.</p>
BOX 2-3	<p><b><u>Family Correspondence, 1864-1941</u></b></p> <p>Correspondence among members of the Shepherd family, mainly letters sent to Grace Shepherd Merchant. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 4	<p><b><u>General Correspondence, 1847-1943</u></b></p> <p>Primarily letters received by Alexander R. Shepherd supplemented by a small group of letters sent and received by Grace Shepherd Merchant. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 5-10	<p><b><u>Scrapbooks, 1865-1939</u></b></p> <p>Newspaper clippings and miscellaneous items relating generally to Alexander R. Shepherd. Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 11-16	<p><b><u>Miscellany, circa 1870-1945</u></b></p> <p>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.</p>
BOX VA 1	<p><b><u>Artifact, 1900</u></b></p> <p>Commemorative coin.</p>
BOX OV 1	<p><b><u>Oversize, 1871-1896</u></b></p> <p>Scrapbooks. Organized and described according to the series and box from which the items were removed.</p>

# Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	<b>Diaries and Notebooks, circa 1776-1892</b> 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	<b>Family Correspondence, 1864-1941</b> 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	<b>General Correspondence, 1847-1943</b> 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	<b>Scrapbooks, 1865-1939</b> 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 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 7	1874-1896 <i>See Oversize</i>
BOX 8	1887
BOX 9	1887-1895
BOX 10	1895-1899
BOX 11-16	<b>Miscellany, circa 1870-1945</b> 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.

## Miscellany, circa 1870-1945

Container	Contents
	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	(1 folder)
BOX 16	Cards and invitations
BOX 16	Miscellany <i>See also Commemorative coin</i>
BOX VA 1	<b>Artifact, 1900</b> Commemorative coin.
BOX VA 1	Miscellany
BOX VA 1	Miscellany
BOX VA 1	Commemorative coin, 1900 (Container 16)
BOX OV 1	<b>Oversize, 1871-1896</b> 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)