

**Alexander Hamilton Stephens Papers**  
**A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress**



**Manuscript Division, Library of Congress**  
**Washington, D.C.**  
**2009**

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

Catalog Record: <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78041335>

Prepared by R. Preston

Finding aid encoded by Library of Congress Manuscript Division, 2010  
Revised 2020 December

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Alexander Hamilton Stephens Papers

**Span Dates:** 1784-1886

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1850-1883)

**ID No.:** MSS41335

**Creator:** Stephens, Alexander Hamilton, 1812-1883

**Extent:** 27,000 items

**Extent:** 116 containers

**Extent:** 29 linear feet

**Extent:** 57 microfilm reels

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**LC Catalog record:** <https://lcn.loc.gov/mm78041335>

**Summary:** Lawyer, journalist, governor of Georgia, member of both houses of Congress, and vice president of the Confederate States of America. Correspondence, telegrams, memoranda, legal documents, clippings, and an autobiography and journal reflecting Stephens's career in government and politics.

**Online Content:** The papers of Alexander Hamilton Stephens are available on the Library of Congress Web site at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000028>.

## 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

Blair, Francis Preston, 1791-1876--Correspondence.

Brown, Joseph E. (Joseph Emerson), 1821-1894--Correspondence.

Byrdsall, Fitzwilliam, 1810-1875?--Correspondence.

Cleveland, Henry--Correspondence.

Cobb, Howell, 1815-1868--Correspondence.

Garland, A. H. (Augustus Hill), 1832-1899--Correspondence.

Gordon, John Brown, 1832-1904--Correspondence.

Hayne, Paul Hamilton, 1830-1886--Correspondence.

Hidell, William H.--Correspondence.

Jackson, Henry R. (Henry Rootes), 1820-1898--Correspondence.

Johnson, Herschel V. (Herschel Vespasian), 1812-1880--Correspondence.

Johnston, Richard Malcolm, 1822-1898--Correspondence.

Lamar, L. Q. C. (Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus), 1825-1893--Correspondence.

Randall, James Ryder, 1839-1908--Correspondence.

Scott, Dred, 1809-1858--Trials, litigation, etc.

Smith, J. Henley, 1829- --Correspondence.

Stephens, Alexander H. (Alexander Hamilton), 1812-1883.

Toombs, Robert Augustus, 1810-1885--Correspondence.

Waddell, James I. (James Iredell), 1824-1886--Correspondence.

Wright, Ambrose R. (Ambrose Ransom), 1826-1872--Correspondence.

### Organizations

American Party.

Confederate States of America.

Democratic Party (U.S.)

Republican Party (U.S. : 1854- )

United States. Kansas-Nebraska Act.

Whig Party (U.S.)

## **Subjects**

American literature--19th century.  
Charities.  
Compromise of 1850.  
Education--United States.  
Elections--United States--1876.  
Indians of North America--Government relations.  
Plantations--Georgia.  
Political parties--United States.  
Reconstruction (U.S. history, 1865-1877)  
Secession.  
Slavery--Georgia.  
Slavery--Law and legislation--United States.  
Slaves--Georgia--Correspondence.  
States' rights (American politics)  
Tariff--United States.  
Transportation--United States.

## **Places**

Confederate States of America--History.  
Confederate States of America--Politics and government.  
Georgia--History--1775-1865.  
Georgia--History--1865-  
Georgia--Politics and government--1775-1865.  
Georgia--Politics and government--1865-1950.  
Southern States--History--1865-1877.  
Texas--Annexation to the United States.  
United States--Economic conditions.  
United States--History--1865-1898.  
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865.  
United States--Politics and government--19th century.  
United States--Social conditions.  
United States--Territorial expansion.

## **Titles**

*Alexander Hamilton Stephens Papers at the Library of Congress*

## **Occupations**

Governors--Georgia.  
Journalists.  
Lawyers.  
Representatives, U.S. Congress--Georgia.  
Senators, U.S. Congress--Georgia.  
Vice-Presidents--Confederate States of America.

## **Provenance**

The papers of Alexander Hamilton Stephens, lawyer, journalist, governor of Georgia, member of both houses of Congress, and vice president of the Confederate States of America, were received by the Library of Congress through various gifts and purchases, 1900-1938.

## Processing History

The Stephens Papers were processed in 1971, and the finding aid was revised in 2009. The collection was described in the *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress* (1937): 1.

## Copyright Status

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

## Access and Restrictions

The papers of Alexander Hamilton Stephens 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.

## Microfilm

A microfilm edition of these papers is available on fifty-seven reels. Consult a reference librarian in the Manuscript Division concerning availability for purchase or interlibrary loan. To promote preservation of the originals, researchers are required to consult the microfilm edition.

## Online Content

The papers of Alexander Hamilton Stephens are available on the Library of Congress Web site at <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/collmss.ms000028>.

## Preferred Citation

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

## Biographical Note

Date	Event
1812, Feb. 11	Born near Crawfordsville, Wilkes County (now Taliaferro County), Ga.
1832	Graduated, University of Georgia, Athens, Ga.
1834	Admitted to the bar, Crawfordsville, Ga.
1836-1842	Served in the Georgia house and senate
1843-1859	Served in U.S. House of Representatives
1861	Member, Georgia secession convention; elected to congress of the Confederate States of America
1861-1865	Vice president, Confederate States of America
1865	Headed unsuccessful Confederate Peace Commission at Hampton Roads, Va., with President Abraham Lincoln
	Arrested and confined at Fort Warren in Boston Harbor, Boston, Mass.
	Paroled
1866	Elected U.S. senator from Georgia, but did not present his credentials
1871	Became part owner and editor, Atlanta <i>Southern Sun</i>
1872	Unsuccessful candidate for U.S. Senate
1873-1882	Served in U.S. House of Representatives
1882-1883	Governor of Georgia
1883, Mar. 4	Died, Atlanta, Ga.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Alexander Hamilton Stephens (1812-1883) span the years 1784-1886, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1850-1883. The collection consists primarily of correspondence, supplemented by an autobiography and journal and miscellaneous memoranda, legal documents, and clippings. The papers are organized in [General Correspondence](#), [Letters from Servants](#), and [Autobiography and Journal](#) series.

The correspondence, mainly letters received, touches on virtually all aspects of Stephens's private and public life, focusing on the divisive issues leading to the Civil War, the operation of the Confederate government, and postwar problems and issues in the South. Specific topics discussed include plantation management, slavery, Texas annexation, territorial expansion, political parties, states' rights, the compromise of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision, secession, formation of the Confederate government, the conduct of the Civil War, Reconstruction in the South, and the disputed election of 1876. Broader subjects include transportation, the tariff, education, and social, economic, and literary matters.

Prominent correspondents include Francis Preston Blair (1791-1876), Joseph E. Brown, Fitzwilliam Byrdsall, Henry Cleveland, Howell Cobb, Martin Crawford, A. H. Garland, John. B. Gordon, Paul Hamilton Hayne, William H. Hidell, Henry R. Jackson, Herschel V. Johnson, Richard Malcolm Johnson, L. Q. C. Lamar, James Ryder Randall, J. Henley Smith, Robert Augustus Toombs, James Iredell Waddell, and Ambrose R. Wright.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in three series:

- [General Correspondence, 1784-1886](#)
- [Letters from Servants, 1857-1883](#)
- [Autobiography and Journal, 1834-1837](#)

## Description of Series

Container	Series
BOX 1-114 REEL 1-57	<p><b><u>General Correspondence, 1784-1886</u></b></p> <p>Letters received and occasional letters sent supplemented by memoranda, legal documents, and clippings.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically with undated material arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.</p>
BOX 115 REEL 57	<p><b><u>Letters from Servants, 1857-1883</u></b></p> <p>Bound volume of letters.</p> <p>Arranged chronologically.</p>
BOX 116 REEL 57	<p><b><u>Autobiography and Journal, 1834-1837</u></b></p> <p>Bound volume of an autobiographical writing and journal.</p>

# Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 15,135

<b>Container</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>BOX 1-114 REEL 1-57</b>	<b>General Correspondence, 1784-1886</b> Letters received and occasional letters sent supplemented by memoranda, legal documents, and clippings. Arranged chronologically with undated material arranged alphabetically by name of correspondent.
<b>BOX 1 REEL 1</b>	1784, May 17-1846, Aug. 18 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 2 REEL 1</b>	1846, Aug. 29-1852, Sept. 17 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 3 REEL 2</b>	1852, Oct. 15-1855, Dec. 27 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 4 REEL 2</b>	1855, Dec. 28-1857, Aug. 3 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 5 REEL 3</b>	1857, Aug. 7-1858, Dec. 4 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 6 REEL 3</b>	1858, Dec. 11-1859, July 15 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 7 REEL 4</b>	1859, July 17-Oct. 24 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 8 REEL 4</b>	1859, Oct. 25-1860, Mar. 4 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 9 REEL 5</b>	1860, Mar. 6-June 21 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 10 REEL 5</b>	1860, June 23-Sept. 19 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 11 REEL 6</b>	1860, Sept. 20-Dec. 6 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 12 REEL 6</b>	1860, Dec. 7-1861, Jan. 9 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 13 REEL 7</b>	1861, Jan. 10-Feb. 14 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 14 REEL 7</b>	1861, Feb. 15-Mar. 5 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 15 REEL 8</b>	1861, Mar. 6-31 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 16 REEL 8</b>	1861, Apr. 1-27 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 17 REEL 9</b>	1861, Apr. 28-June 5 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
<b>BOX 18 REEL 9</b>	1861, June 6-July 17 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>

## General Correspondence, 1784-1886

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BOX 19 REEL 10	1861, July 18-Aug. 8 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 20 REEL 10	1861, Aug. 9-Sept. 3 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 21 REEL 11	1861, Sept. 4-20 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 22 REEL 11	1861, Sept. 21-Oct. 19 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 23 REEL 12	1882, Oct. 20-Nov. 19 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 24 REEL 12	1861, Nov. 20-Dec. 27 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 25 REEL 13	1861, Dec. 28-1862, Feb. 1 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 26 REEL 13	1862, Feb. 2-23 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 27 REEL 14	1862, Feb. 24-Mar. 28 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 28 REEL 14	1862, Mar. 29-Apr. 29 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 29 REEL 15	1862, Apr. 30-June 18 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 30 REEL 15	1862, June 19-Sept. 8 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 31 REEL 16	1862, Sept. 10-1863, Feb. 17 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 32 REEL 16	1863, Feb. 28-July 17 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 33 REEL 17	1863, July 18-Oct. 31 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 34 REEL 17	1863, Nov. 3-1864, Apr. 7 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 35 REEL 18	1864, Apr. 8-Aug. 18 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 36 REEL 18	1864, Aug. 22-1865, May 25 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 37 REEL 19	1865, June 20-Dec. 26 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 38 REEL 19	1865, Dec. 28-1866, May 16 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 39 REEL 20	1866, May 17-Sept. 19 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 40 REEL 20	1866, Sept. 21-1867, Jan. 8 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 41 REEL 21	1867, Jan. 9-May 10 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 42 REEL 21	1867, May 14-Dec. 4 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>

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BOX 48 REEL 24	1869, May 20-July 30 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 49 REEL 25	1869, Aug. 1-Oct. 13 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 51 REEL 26	1870, Jan. 1-Feb. 24 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 52 REEL 26	1870, Feb. 27-Apr. 26 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 53 REEL 27	1870, Apr. 27-June 13 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 54 REEL 27	1870, June 14-July 7 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 58 REEL 29	1870, Oct. 15-Nov. 28 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 59 REEL 30	1870, Nov. 29-1871, Jan. 7 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 60 REEL 30	1871, Jan. 9-Feb. 14 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 65 REEL 33	1871, Sept. 17-Oct. 19 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 76 REEL 38	1873, Apr. 8-June 13 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 77 REEL 39	1873, June 14-Aug. 22 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 78 REEL 39	1873, Aug. 25-Oct. 22 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 79 REEL 40	1873, Oct. 23-Dec. 15 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 81 REEL 41	1874, Jan. 19-Feb. 9 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 95 REEL 48	1875, Nov. 11-1876, Jan. 21 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 103 REEL 52	1879, Feb. 15-June 25 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 104 REEL 52	1879, July 1-1880, Jan. 26 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 106 REEL 53	1880, Dec. 13-1881, July 27 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 111 REEL 56	1883, Jan. 6-Feb. 6 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
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BOX 114 REEL 57	Unidentified <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 114 REEL 57	Miscellaneous <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 115 REEL 57	<b>Letters from Servants, 1857-1883</b> Bound volume of letters. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 115 REEL 57	Bound vol., 1857-1883, undated <a href="#">Digital content available</a>
BOX 116 REEL 57	<b>Autobiography and Journal, 1834-1837</b> Bound volume of an autobiographical writing and journal.
BOX 116 REEL 57	Bound vol., 1834, Apr. 14-1837, Jan. 26 <a href="#">Digital content available</a>