

Robert Morris Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



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

2011

Revised 2014 August

Contact information:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mss.contact>

Additional search options available at:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms011193>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lcn.loc.gov/mm78033605>

Prepared by Manuscript Division Staff

Collection Summary

Title: Robert Morris Papers

Span Dates: 1734-1839

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1775-1784)

ID No.: MSS33605

Creator: Morris, Robert, 1734-1806

Extent: 3,200 items ; 18 containers plus 1 oversize ; 4 linear feet ; 12 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

Summary: Superintendent of finance for the Continental Congress during the Revolution, merchant, land speculator, and statesman. Correspondence, letterbooks, journals and proceedings of the Continental Congress, accounts, and other papers relating to the financing of the American government and its forces during the Revolution and to Morris's private business affairs.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

People

Beaumarchais, Pierre Augustin Caron de, 1732-1799.

Morris, Robert, 1734-1806.

Willing, Thomas, 1731-1821.

Organizations

United States. Continental Army.

United States. Continental Congress.

Willing, Morris & Company--Correspondence.

Subjects

Finance, Public--United States--History--To 1789.

Places

Pennsylvania--Commerce.

Philadelphia (Pa.)--Commerce.

United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Finance.

Occupations

Land speculators.

Merchants.

Public officials.

Statesmen.

Administrative Information

Provenance

The papers of Robert Morris, superintendent of finance for the Continental Congress during the Revolution, merchant, land speculator, and statesman, were acquired by purchase from 1901-1997. An addition was given by Lawrence M. C. Smith in 1976.

Processing History

The papers of Robert Morris were processed in preparation for microfilming in 1976. The finding aid was revised in 2011.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Robert Morris is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Robert Morris 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 part of these papers is available on twelve 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 as available.

Preferred Citation

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

Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1734, Jan. 31	Born, Liverpool, England
1769	Married Mary White
1747	Immigrated to Maryland
1754-1779	Partner in firm of Willing, Morris & Company
1765	Signed non-importation agreement
1775	Member, Pennsylvania Council of Safety
1775-1778	Member, Continental Congress
1776	Signer of the Declaration of Independence
1778-1781	Member, Pennsylvania state assembly
1781-1784	National superintendent of finance
1785-1787	Member, Pennsylvania state assembly
1787	Delegate to the Constitutional Convention
1789-1795	United States senator from Pennsylvania
1798-1801	Imprisoned for debt
1806, May 8	Died, Philadelphia, Pa.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Robert Morris (1734-1806) span the years 1734-1839, with the bulk of the material concentrated in the period 1775-1784. The collection consists of correspondence, letterbooks, journals and proceedings of the Continental Congress, business and financial accounts, and other papers. Most of the public papers relate to the financing of the American government and its forces during the Revolution. Included in the collection are the account rendered by Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais to Congress in 1782, copies of Morris's official letters, and his private business papers such as correspondence of Willing, Morris & Company, the Philadelphia shipping firm owned by Morris and Thomas Willing. The papers are organized into seven series: [Diary, Office of Finance](#); [Official Letterbooks](#), [Private Letterbooks](#); [Congressional Proceedings](#); [Miscellaneous Unbound Papers](#); [Addition](#); and [Oversize](#).

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in seven series:

- [Diary, Office of Finance, 1781-1784](#)
- [Official Letterbooks, 1781-1784](#)
- [Private Letterbooks, 1794-1798](#)
- [Congressional Proceedings, 1782-1784](#)
- [Miscellaneous Unbound Papers, 1776-1829](#)
- [Addition, 1734-1839](#)
- [Oversize, 1776-1782](#)

Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2	<u>Diary, Office of Finance, 1781-1784</u> Bound diaries. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 4-10 REEL 3-8	<u>Official Letterbooks, 1781-1784</u> Copies of official letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 11-15 REEL 9-10	<u>Private Letterbooks, 1794-1798</u> Copies of private business letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 16 REEL 11	<u>Congressional Proceedings, 1782-1784</u> Bound volumes of the proceedings of the Continental Congress. Arranged chronologically
BOX 17 REEL 12	<u>Miscellaneous Unbound Papers, 1776-1829</u> Correspondence, reports, and miscellaneous material. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 18 not filmed	<u>Addition, 1734-1839</u> Originals and reproductions of correspondence and miscellaneous material, wills, printed matter, and other items. Arranged by type of material.
BOX OV 1 not filmed	<u>Oversize, 1776-1782</u> Miscellaneous correspondence. Described according to the series from which its was removed and arranged chronologically.

Container List

Microfilm shelf no. 13,219 (negative shelf no. 8,765)

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2	Diary, Office of Finance, 1781-1784 Bound diaries. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1 REEL 1	Vol. 1, 1781, Feb. 7-1782, Mar. 5
BOX 2 REEL 1	Vol. 2, 1782, Mar. 8-1782, May 21
BOX 3 REEL 2	Vol. 3, 1783, May 22-1784, Sept. 20
BOX 4-10 REEL 3-8	Official Letterbooks, 1781-1784 Copies of official letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 4 REEL 3	Vol. A, 1781, Mar. 13-1781, Sept. 29
BOX 5 REEL 4	Vol. B, 1781, Sept. 28-1782, Feb. 12
BOX 6 REEL 5	Vol. C, 1782, Jan. 2-1782, July 2
BOX 7 REEL 6	Vol. D, 1782, July 2-1782, Dec. 12
BOX 8 REEL 7	Vol. E, 1782, Dec. 12-1783, July 28
BOX 9 REEL 8	Vol. F, 1783, July 28-1784, Feb. 17
BOX 10 REEL 8	Vol. G, 1784, Feb. 17-1784, Nov. 1
BOX 11-15 REEL 9-10	Private Letterbooks, 1794-1798 Copies of private business letters sent. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 11 REEL 9	Vol. 1, part 1, 1794, Dec. 22-1795, July 24
BOX 12 REEL 9	Vol. 1, part 2, 1795, July 25-1796, May 20
BOX 13 REEL 10	Vol. 2, part 1, 1796, May 21-1797, Mar. 30
BOX 14	Vol. 2, part 2, 1797, April 1-1797, Oct. 24

Private Letterbooks, 1794-1798

Container

Contents

REEL 10
BOX 15
REEL 10

Vol. 3, 1797, Oct. 16-1798, Mar. 25

BOX 16
REEL 11

Congressional Proceedings, 1782-1784

Bound volumes of the proceedings of the Continental Congress.
Arranged chronologically

BOX 16
REEL 11

Vol. 14, 1782, Jan. 25-1783, Feb. 10

BOX 16
REEL 11

Vol. 15, 1783, Feb. 18-1784, May 11

BOX 17
REEL 12

Miscellaneous Unbound Papers, 1776-1829

Correspondence, reports, and miscellaneous material.
Arranged chronologically.

BOX 17
REEL 12

1776-1829, undated *See also Oversize*

BOX 18
not filmed

Addition, 1734-1839

Originals and reproductions of correspondence and miscellaneous material, wills, printed matter, and other items.
Arranged by type of material.

BOX 18
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BOX 18

Original correspondence and miscellaneous material, 1777-1839

Reproductions of correspondence and miscellaneous material, 1734-1801, undated

Wills, notebook

Morris, Robert

Morris, Mary

Nixon, Maria

Nixon, Hetty

Printed material

Deed Account of Morris's property

Land title

Lists and indexes of Morris's papers while owned by General Meredith Read

BOX OV 1
not filmed

Oversize, 1776-1782

Miscellaneous correspondence.
Described according to the series from which its was removed and arranged chronologically.

BOX OV 1
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BOX OV 1

Miscellaneous Unbound Papers (Container 17)

1776-1782, Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais to Morris, and statements of accounts (letter dated 1782, June 3)

1776, Mar. 6, miscellaneous letters sent from Philadelphia, Pa.

Oversize, 1776-1782

Container

Contents

BOX OV 1	1777, Jan. 23, Livingston, Abram, to Morris
BOX OV 1	1780, Sept. 2, Elbridge Gerry to Morris,
BOX OV 1	1780 1781, June 15, draft of letter intended for Morris but not sent
BOX OV 1	1782, Aug 2, William Durer to Morris, 1782, Aug. 2