

# Gouverneur Morris Papers

A Finding Aid to the Collection in the  
Library of Congress

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Revised by Patrick Kerwin and Lia Apodaca



Manuscript Division, Library of  
Congress

Washington, D.C.

2005

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

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Congress Manuscript Division, 2010

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# Collection Summary

Title: Gouverneur Morris Papers

Span Dates: 1771-1834

Bulk Dates: (bulk 1789-1816)

ID No.: MSS33571

Creator: Morris, Gouverneur, 1752-1816

Extent: 75 items; 25 containers plus 1 oversize; 5.8 linear feet; 6 microfilm reels

Language: Collection material in English

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

Abstract: Lawyer, diplomat, and senator from New York. Letterbooks, diaries, legal and financial papers, and miscellany relating to Morris's mission to London, 1790-1791, his service as minister to France, 1792-1794, and in the United States Senate, 1800-1803. Also includes material relating to social life in Paris, the French Revolution, Morris's New York estate, the War of 1812, the Hartford Convention, and other events of the period, and financial memoranda of his wife, Anne Cary Randolph Morris.

## 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

Carmichael, William, d. 1795--Correspondence.

Grenville, William Wyndham Grenville, Baron, 1759-1834--Correspondence.

Hamilton, Alexander, 1757-1804--Correspondence.

Humphreys, David, 1752-1818--Correspondence.

Jefferson, Thomas, 1743-1826--Correspondence.

Lafayette, Marie Adrienne de Noailles, marquise de, 1759-1807--Correspondence.

Lafayette, Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, marquis de, 1757-1834--Correspondence.

Leeds, Francis Godolphin Osborne, Duke of, 1751-1799--Correspondence.

Morris, Anne Cary Randolph, 1774-1837. Anne Cary Randolph Morris papers.

Morris, Gouverneur, 1752-1816.

Morris, Robert, 1734-1806--Correspondence.

Pinckney, Thomas, 1750-1828--Correspondence.

Short, William, 1759-1849--Correspondence.

Washington, George, 1732-1799--Correspondence.

### Organizations

Hartford Convention (1814-1815 : Hartford, Conn.)

### Subjects

Canals--New York (State)

Diplomatic and consular service, American--France.

Diplomatic and consular service, French.

Real property--New York (State).

States' rights (American politics)

### Places

Erie Canal (N.Y.)

France--Foreign relations--United States.

France--History--Reign of Terror, 1793-1794.

France--History--Revolution, 1789-1799.

Great Britain--Foreign relations--United States.  
Morrissania (N.Y. : Estate)  
Paris (France)--Social life and customs.  
United States--Foreign relations--France.  
United States--Foreign relations--Great Britain.  
United States--History--1783-1865.  
United States--History--War of 1812.

Occupations  
Diplomats.  
Lawyers.  
Senators, U.S. Congress--New York (State)

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The papers of Gouverneur Morris, lawyer, diplomat, and senator, came to the Library of Congress in 1937 as a bequest by Albert Percival Maundslay. Additional papers were acquired by purchase, 1920-1980.

### Processing History

The papers of Gouverneur Morris were processed and prepared for microfilming in 1967. The register was revised and material acquired subsequent to microfilming were added by Audrey Walker in 1978. In 2003 the finding aid was revised with the incorporation of two items that had previously been cataloged separately.

### Related Material

Letters received by Morris can be found in the Butler Library, Columbia University. Drafts and retained copies of letters to Morris, as well as letters from him, appear in other manuscript collections in the Library of Congress, including the papers of [Thomas Jefferson](#), Robert Morris, [William Short](#), and [George Washington](#).

### Copyright Status

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

### Access and Restrictions

The papers of Gouverneur 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 six reels. Consult reference staff 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 or reel number, Gouverneur Morris Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## Biographical Note

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1752, Jan. 31	Born, Morrisania, the family estate, located in the present Bronx, N.Y.
1768	A.B., King's College (now Columbia University), New York, N.Y.
1771	A.M., King's College, New York, N.Y. Admitted to the bar
1775	Member, Provincial Council of New York
1776	Member, New York Constitutional Convention
1778-1779	Member, Continental Congress
1779	Moved to Philadelphia, Pa.
1780	Published series of articles signed "An American" on finance in the <i>Pennsylvania Packet</i>
1781-1885	Assistant to Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris
1787	Member, Constitutional Convention Returned to New York
1789	In France on behalf of various American business enterprises
1790-1791	United States commissioner in England
1792-1794	United States minister to France
1794-1798	Traveled in Europe on behalf of various American business enterprises
1798	Returned to New York
1800-1803	Member, United States Senate
1809	Married Anne Cary Randolph
1810-1813	Chairman, Erie Canal Commission
1816, Nov. 6	Died, Morrisania, N.Y.

## Scope and Content Note

The papers from Gouverneur Morris (1752-1816) span the years 1771-1834 with the bulk of the material dating from 1789 to 1816. The collection includes his [diary](#), [letterbooks](#), notebooks, registers, ledgers, journals, and cash and account books.

The majority of the papers covers the period from 1789, when Morris left for France, to 1816, the year of his death. Earlier papers include a notebook, 1771-1772; register, 1772-1775; waste book,

1778; and a journal and ledger, 1778, all relating to his legal practice. A bank account book, 1782-1788, and a daybook and ledger relate to his estate Morrisania, in New York.

The diary begins on March 1, 1789, shortly after Morris's arrival in Paris and continues to October 19, 1816, the only break occurring between January 5, 1793, and October 12, 1794. It includes Morris's mission to London, 1790-1791, and his service as Minister to France, 1792-1794, and in the United States Senate, 1800-1803. Morris was the only foreign minister to remain at his post in Paris during the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror, and his diary entries chronicle these years.

Two letterbooks in the collection include Morris's official correspondence as minister to France and another his consular correspondence for this period. One volume of his private letterbooks relates to the same period, as do three of his commercial letterbooks. Although the correspondence is divided into various categories, all of the volumes contain material related to political and diplomatic topics. His correspondents included William Carmichael; William Wyndham Grenville, Baron Grenville; Alexander Hamilton; David Humphreys; Thomas Jefferson; Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, marquis de Lafayette; Marie Adrienne de Noailles, marquise de Lafayette; Robert Morris; Francis Godolphin Osborne, the Duke of Leeds; Thomas Pinckney; William Short; George Washington; various French ministers; and others.

Morris went to Europe originally as a business agent for Robert Morris, the Philadelphia financier who was not a member of the same Morris family. The business letters, accounts, and ledgers, along with material relating to the Morrisania estate which Morris purchased before he left for Europe, contain material related to economic and social history.

Upon his return from France, Morris settled at Morrisania. He was elected to the United States Senate to fill an unexpired term in 1800 but failed to be reelected in 1802 as a Federalist since the Aaron Burr Democratic-Republicans had gained control of the New York legislature. As time passed he became increasingly critical of the Democratic-Republican regimes of Jefferson and Madison. He opposed the embargo, disapproved of the War of 1812, and spoke in favor of the Hartford Convention. He was interested in the development of the Erie Canal and served as chairman of the canal commission. All of his activities and his reflections on, and reactions to, public affairs are covered in his papers.

A considerable portion of this collection has been published in Jared Sparks's *The Life of Gouverneur Morris, with Selections from his Correspondence* (3 vols., 1832); *Anne Cary Morris's The Diary and Letters of Gouverneur Morris* (2 vols., 1888); and *A Diary of the French Revolution, 1752-1816*, edited by Beatrix Cary Davenport (2 vols., 1939). There is only one letter received in this collection (in the unfiled addition).

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:

- [Diary, 1789-1816](#)
- [Letterbooks, 1789-1816](#)
- [Legal and Financial Papers, 1771-1834](#)
- [Correspondence and Miscellany, 1789-1814](#)
- [Addition, 1773-1813](#)
- [Oversize, 1778](#)

## Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2	<u>Diary, 1789-1816</u>  Diary. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 4-14 REEL 2-5	<u>Letterbooks, 1789-1816</u>  Official, consular, private, and commercial letterbooks. Arranged by type of communications and and therein chronologically.
BOX 15-23 REEL 5-6	<u>Legal and Financial Papers, 1771-1834</u>  Bank books, cash books, day books, journals, ledgers, and other legal and financial papers. Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.
BOX 24-25 REEL 6	<u>Correspondence and Miscellany, 1789-1814</u>  Correspondence, pamphlets, and an opinion by Alexander Hamilton on the constitutionality of a national bank. Arranged by type of material or topic.
BOX 25 not filmed	<u>Addition, 1773-1813</u>  Accounts, correspondence, notes, pamphlet, and waste book. Arranged alphabetically by type of material or topic.
BOX OV 1	<u>Oversize, 1778</u> Correspondence. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.

# Container List

Available on microfilm. Shelf no. 13,518

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 1-3 REEL 1-2	Diary, 1789-1816  Diary. Arranged chronologically.
BOX 1 REEL 1	1789, Mar. 1-1793, Jan. 5  (4 vols.)
BOX 2 REEL 1	1794, Oct. 12- 1800, Jan. 5  (4 vols.)
BOX 3 REEL 2	1800, Jan. 6-1816, Oct. 19  (5 vols.)
BOX 4-14 REEL 2-5	Letterbooks, 1789-1816  Official, consular, private, and commercial letterbooks. Arranged by type of communications and therein chronologically.
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BOX 4 REEL 2	1792, Aug. 8-1793, Apr. 8
BOX 5 REEL 2	1793, Apr. 8-1795, Jan. 2
BOX 6 REEL 2	Consular (communications to United States consuls and agents in France)
BOX 6 REEL 2	1792, June 22-1794, Sept. 2
BOX 7 REEL 3	Private
BOX 7 REEL 3	1789, July 31-1795, Aug. 23
BOX 7 REEL 3	1795, Aug. 29-1804, Feb. 27
BOX 7 REEL 3	1804, Dec. 28-1814, Mar. 13
BOX 7 REEL 3	1814, Mar. 22-1816, Oct. 1
BOX 8 REEL 3	Commercial (includes some non-commercial letters)
BOX 8 REEL 3	1789, Jan. 19-1790, Jan. 21

## Letterbooks, 1789-1816

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BOX 10	1791, June 8-1795, Nov. 29
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BOX 11	1795, Nov. 30-1800, June 12
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BOX 12	1800, June 13-1804, Aug. 14
REEL 5	
BOX 13	1804, Aug. 14-1809, July 16
REEL 5	
BOX 14	1809, July 20-1816, Oct. 11
REEL 5	
BOX 15-23	Legal and Financial Papers, 1771-1834
REEL 5-6	
	Bank books, cash books, day books, journals, ledgers, and other legal and financial papers. Arranged by type of material and therein chronologically.
BOX 15	Law entries, notebook of legal formulae and rules, circa 1771-1772
REEL 5	
BOX 15	Law register, record of cases handled by Morris, 1772, Sept. 9-1775, Sept. 15
REEL 5	
BOX 15	Waste book, 1788, Sept. 23-Nov. 15; 1804, June 10-13
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BOX 16	Journal, 1788, Sept. 23-Nov. 15; 1804, June 10-13
REEL 5	
BOX 16	Ledger 1788, Sept. 23-Nov. 15; 1804, June 10-13
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BOX 17	Journal, 1791, Jan. 1-1796, June 6; 1804, Mar. 12-1808, June 22
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BOX 18	Ledger, 1791, Jan. 1-1796, June 6; 1804, Mar. 12-1808, June 22
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BOX 18	Ledger, 1793, July 30-1795, Jan. 10; 1798, July 14-1799, Mar. 13
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BOX 19	Memorandum [account] book, 1791, Jan. 7-1793, July 22
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BOX 19	Cash books
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BOX 19	1795, June 14-Nov. 23
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BOX 19	1795, Nov. 23-1796, June 18
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BOX 19	1796, June 12-1798, Oct. 4
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BOX 20	Bank books
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BOX 20	Bank of North America, 1782, May 25-1788, Jan. 5

# Legal and Financial Papers, 1771-1834

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BOX 20	New York Branch of the First Bank of the United States, 1799, Feb.
REEL 5	13-1802, Sept. 6; 1806, Oct. 20-1810, Mar. 6
BOX 20	Bank book fragment, 1808, May 5-1812, Apr. 6
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BOX 20	Statement of account with Bank of New York, 1815, June 20-1816, Apr. 26
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BOX 21	Ledger, accounts of the Morrisania estate, 1788, May 15-Nov. 7
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BOX 22	1792, Oct. 1-1799, Jan. 1
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BOX 23	Canal, Benjamin Wright's survey of a line for an intended canal from Rome
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BOX 23	Financial memoranda, 1816-1827[?]
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BOX 23	Financial memoranda and receipts 1829[?]-1834
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BOX 24-25	Correspondence and Miscellany, 1789-1814
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	Correspondence, pamphlets, and an opinion by Alexander Hamilton on the
	constitutionality of a national bank.
	Arranged by type of material or topic.
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BOX 25	"Account of Balances from Book ending in 1787" and financial memoranda
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BOX 25	Account of the Martin house, 1792-1793
BOX 25	Correspondence, 1773-1813, undated <i><u>See also Oversize</u></i>

Addition, 1773-1813

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
BOX 25	<i>Project de L'Organisation du Pouvoir Judiciaire</i> pamphlet, 1789
BOX 25	Remarks on <i>Projet de L'Organisation de Pouvoir Judiciaire</i> , undated
BOX 25	Unidentified notes, 1805-1808
BOX 25	Waste book, 1791-1808
BOX OV 1	Oversize, 1778 Correspondence. Arranged and described according to the series, containers, and folders from which the items were removed.
BOX OV 1	Addition
BOX OV 1	Correspondence, 1778 (Container 25)