

Shepard, Charles Biddle ^[1]

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by Gertrude S. Carraway, 1994

5 Dec. 1807–24 Oct. 1843



A miniature portrait of Charles Biddle Shepard.
Image courtesy of Tryon Palace.

^[2]Charles Biddle Shepard, state legislator and congressman, was the son of William and Mary Williams Blount Shepard of New Bern. An older brother, [William Biddle](#) ^[3], was a congressman and state senator from [Pasquotank County](#) ^[4]. Charles Shepard was named for his uncle, Captain Charles Biddle of Philadelphia, who on 25 Nov. 1778 at Beaufort had married Hannah Shepard, the daughter of merchant Jacob Shepard. Among the Biddles' children were Commodore James Biddle, U.S. Navy, and Nicholas Biddle (1786–1844), president of the U.S. Bank. After studying at private schools in his native New Bern, Charles Shepard was graduated from [The University of North Carolina](#) ^[5] in 1827. The next year he was admitted to the bar and began practicing law in New Bern.

In 1831, when Charles George Spaight, the youngest of the three sons of Governor [Richard Dobbs Spaight](#) ^[6], Sr., died before taking his seat in the North Carolina House of Commons, Shepard was named to fill the vacancy; he subsequently won reelection. As a [Democrat](#) ^[7] he served in Congress from 4 Mar. 1837 to 3 Mar. 1841, then resumed the practice of law in New Bern until his death. Following the funeral from Christ Episcopal Church, his remains were interred in Cedar Grove Cemetery, New Bern.

On 20 Dec. 1830 he married Lydia G. Jones, of New Bern, the daughter of [Frederick Jones](#) ^[8]. She died on 24 Nov. 1833, leaving a son. On 24 Mar. 1840 he married Mary Spaight Donnell (28 Sept. 1817–30 Apr. 1883), the daughter of Judge John Robert (1789–1864) and Margaret Elizabeth Spaight Donnell (1800–1831) and the granddaughter of Governor Richard Dobbs Spaight, Sr.

One of their daughters, Mary Spaight Shepard (18 Mar. 1843–1 Jan. 1892), married [James Augustus Bryan](#) ^[9] (13 Sept. 1839–30 Jan. 1923) of New Bern; they were the parents of Colonel [Charles Shepard Bryan](#) ^[10] (1865–1956). The other Shepard daughter, Margaret Donnell Shepard, married Samuel Steward Nelson. All were buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery, New Bern.



A miniature portrait of William Shepard (1765-1810), father of James Biddle Shepard and Charles Biddle Shepard. Image courtesy of Tryon Palace.

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