

# Finding Aid for the New York State Adjutant General's Office War of 1812 Certificates of Claim and Related Records series.

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Finding Aid Publication Date: Jan 9th, 2018

**Online Finding Aid Record:**

<http://iarchives.nysed.gov/xtf/view?docId=ead/findingaids/A0020.xml>

## Overview of Records

**Repository:**

New York State Archives

**Summary:**

This series consists mostly of affidavits documenting a claimant's right to reimbursement from War of 1812 service in a New York militia or volunteer unit, as well as certificates issued to claimants after the Adjutant General's Office reviewed and adjusted their claims. The bulk of the series documents in-state claimants.

**Creator:**

New York (State). Adjutant General's Office

**Title:**

War of 1812 certificates of claim and related records

**Inclusive Dates:**

circa 1858-1876

**Series Number:**

A0020

## **Arrangement:**

Organized into five subseries: 1. Claims correspondence (ca. 1860-1876), arranged alphabetically by sender's last name; 2. Certificates of claim and supporting documentation (ca. 1860s-1870s, bulk 1869-1875), arranged numerically by claim number; 3. Lists of New York State claimants and related correspondence (ca. 1859-1875), arranged alphabetically by name of town, village, or city; 4. Lists of out-of-state claimants and related correspondence (ca. 1859-1875), arranged alphabetically by state and therein alphabetically by name of town, village, or city; 5. Books of certificates of claim (ca. 1858-1861), arranged by claim number.

Alphabetical by sender's last name.

Numerical by claim number.

Alphabetical by name of town, village, or city.

Alphabetical by state and therein alphabetical by name of town, village, or city.

Arranged by claim number.

## **Administrative History:**

New York militiamen and volunteers who served during the War of 1812 became eligible to receive reimbursement for supplies, clothing, and equipment furnished for the war effort by the Laws of 1818, Chapter 270 and Laws of 1819, Chapter 117. It was not until 1857, however, that the State of New York created an administrative "board of commissioners," consisting of the Adjutant General and Inspector General, to examine and approve claims submitted by War of 1812 veterans, their widows, or other legal claimants (L. 1857, Ch. 597). Legislation passed two years later (L. 1859, Ch. 176) amended the previous law, and authorized the board of commissioners to issue certificates to claimants stating "the amount which [the commissioners] shall have found to be due." Under the 1859 law, 17,228 claims were audited and approved, and an additional 44 claims were approved in 1872.

Claims totaling \$2,250,000 were eventually reviewed by the board, and certificates for about that amount were issued to the claimants by the State of New York. Despite the large sum of money owed to claimants, the State Legislature was only able to appropriate a total of \$250,000 to redeem the certificates (L. 1869, Ch. 470; L. 1870, Ch. 524; L. 1874, Ch. 350), leaving a balance of about \$2,000,000 to be paid. Probably as a result of the shortage of funds, the 1869 legislation provided that the Comptroller's Office make payments on certificates held by New York State residents only, pro rata, in the following order, until the federal government appropriated funds to pay off the remaining balance (State statute dating back to 1819 held

that the federal government was ultimately liable to appropriate funds to pay these claims.): (1) principal on certificates held by surviving War of 1812 veterans; (2) accumulated interest due upon the certificates held by surviving veterans; (3) principal on certificates held by surviving widows of veterans; (4) accumulated interest due on certificates held by surviving widows of veterans; and (5) certificates held by legal representatives of veterans.

According to two reports, one published by the New York Assembly Ways and Means Committee (1885), cited below, and the other by the State Agent for War of 1812 Claims (1905), the State of New York never received any monies from the federal government to pay the outstanding claims. Research conducted by the Comptroller's Office as late as 1987 also confirms that funds were never received to satisfy these claims.

Citation: New York State Assembly, "Committee of Ways and Means Relative to Contingent Expenses of Volunteers and Militia of the State Called into Service of the U.S. in the War of 1812," Assembly Document No. 146, 1885.

### **Scope and Contact Note:**

This series is one of two that extensively document the War of 1812 claims application and settlement process. The primary difference between the two is that records in this series (A0020) consist mostly of affidavits documenting a claimant's right to reimbursement from War of 1812 service in a New York militia or volunteer unit, as well as certificates issued to claimants after the Adjutant General's Office reviewed and adjusted their claims. Because of an 1869 law that restricted payment on War of 1812 claims to residents of New York State, the bulk of the series documents in-state claimants. By contrast, records in related series A3352, Claim applications for service in the War of 1812, were submitted to the Adjutant General's Office by, or on behalf of, War of 1812 veterans who served in New York militia or volunteer units as the first step in applying for a claim. These applications, which authenticated a veteran's military service and "expenses incurred" for the war effort (L. 1859, Ch. 176), were submitted by claimants who resided in New York State and in other states before the 1869 law restricted payment to in-state claimants only.

This series consists of claims certificates issued to veterans of the War of 1812, their widows, or other legal representatives by the Adjutant General's Office; supporting documentation pertinent to claims reviewed by the Adjutant General, such as affidavits relating to a veteran's military service; and correspondence and other records concerning the submission and processing of claims. The series is organized into five subseries. This subseries concerns such

subjects as the issuance of certificates of claim, requests for information about laws relating to the claims process, and payment of claims. The bulk of the letters were sent to the Adjutant General's Office and Comptroller's Office by both claimants and claimants' attorneys residing in New York State and outside of the state. This subseries contains certificates, affidavits, and related documentation pertinent to each claim submitted to the Adjutant General's Office. The certificates provide the claim number, name of claimant, claimant's attorney, and amount of claim, while the affidavits provide the following information about the claimant: name, residence (town, county, and state), length of time claimant has resided in town and in New York State, age, certificate number, length of service in War of 1812, location where soldier served during the war, and name of commanding officer during the war. The affidavits also include the claimant's signature, attesting to the validity of the information provided; statement of the justice of the peace, indicating that the claimant has testified before him; and sometimes a statement by the county clerk, attesting to the genuineness of the justice of the peace. Affidavits in this subseries exclusively document claimants who were residents of New York State, likely because Chapter 470 of the Laws of 1869 (and subsequent claims legislation of 1872 and 1874) restricted payment on claims certificates to New York State residents only. Documentation of out-of-state claimants generally takes the form of handwritten correspondence to the New York State government without any accompanying certificate or affidavit. Most of the correspondence, both from in-state and out-of-state claimants, is written by War of 1812 veterans, veterans' widows, administrators of estates, or attorneys representing the claimants. This subseries includes various lists of claimants submitted to the Adjutant General's Office, often grouped by a specific attorney, as well as correspondence written by claimants and their attorneys to the Comptroller and Adjutant General, most often to inquire when certificates will be mailed and claims paid. The amount of information on the lists varies, but most lists include the claimant's name, claim number, and claim amount. Box 17, Folder 4 is noteworthy, as it contains lists of military claims of Indians who fought in the War of 1812-for the Allegany, Cattaraugus, and Tonawanda Reservations of the Seneca Nation; Cornplanter's Reservation; Onondaga Nation; Oneida Nation; and Tuscarora Nation. Each chart includes the warrior's name, claim number, and claimant's name. This subseries is virtually identical to subseries 3, but this subseries contains lists of claimants and related correspondence sent by non-New York State claimants and their attorneys to the Comptroller and Adjutant General. Documents were sent to the New York State government from individuals residing in the following states: Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Wisconsin. This subseries consists of bound volumes containing claims certificates, copies of claims certificates, and stubs. These volumes seemingly document the processing and mailing of certificates to claimants by the Adjutant General's Office. Stubs generally include the claim number, claimant's name, amount of claim, date, and often the claimant's residence.

## Use of Records:

### Access Restrictions:

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

## Related Information:

### Related Materials:

Series A1182, Index to War of 1812 claim certificates, indexes this series

Series A3352, Claim applications for service in the War of 1812

Series A1303, Record of certificates and affidavits of veterans of the War of 1812 (1869-1870)

Series A1183, Opinion of state agent for War of 1812 claims

Series B0810, War of 1812 abstracts of payrolls for New York State militia

Series B0811, Transcriptions of War of 1812 payrolls for New York State Militia units.

### Other Finding Aids:

Index of Awards on Claims of the Soldiers of the War of 1812 (Comptroller's Office: 1860; rev. 1969). This work has been digitized and is searchable in Ancestry.com New York.

Folder list available.

## Access Terms:

Subjects:

- Onondaga Indians
- Indians of North America--Military service--New York (State)
- Tuscarora Indians
- Veterans
- Seneca Indians
- Soldiers--New York (State)
- Claims
- Oneida Indians

Corporate Names:

- New York (State). Adjutant General's Office
- New York State Archives
- New York (State). Militia
- New York (State). Division of Military and Naval Affairs
- New York (State). Comptroller's Office

Genres:

- Certificates
- Affidavits
- Military records
- Correspondence

Geographic Names:

- United States--History--War of 1812--Claims
- New York (State)--History--War of 1812--Claims
- New York (State)

Functions:

- Reviewing claims
- Auditing

**Detailed Description:**

Contact repository for copy with container list information.