



New York State Archives

**New York State Secretary of State Applications for Land
Grants A0272**

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Table of Contents

Overview of the Records 3

Arrangement 3

Scope and Contents 3

Related Information 5

Other Finding Aids 5

Use of Records 6

Administrative Information 7

Access Terms 7

Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	The series consists of applications for grants of unappropriated land by letters patent from New York Colony and State. Along with the applications are related reports, surveys, maps, warrants for surveying lands and drafting of letters patent, objections to title, and letters.
Creator:	New York (State). Secretary of State
Title:	Applications for land grants
Quantity:	25.7 cubic feet
Quantity:	63 volume(s)
Quantity:	39 35mm microfilm roll(s)
Inclusive Date:	1642-1803
Series:	A0272

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Arrangement

The volumes in this series are arranged roughly chronologically. Note that certain documents were removed from the series for conservation and filed separately upon their return. These documents appear in their original location in the microfilm version of the series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Scope and Content Note

The series consists of applications for grants of unappropriated land by letters patent from New York Colony and State. Along with the applications are related reports, surveys, maps, warrants for surveying lands and drafting of letters patent, objections to title (caveats), and letters. The bulk of the series is an amalgam of two large pre- and post-revolutionary series held originally by the Office of Secretary of State. Each of these, the "Colonial Council Papers" (1668-1783) and the "Papers of the Land Office" (from 1784) are readily identifiable within the combined series and are described in brief below. Certain volumes in the series also contain smaller

groups of documents which were originally unique series; these were combined with the larger two groups to form the current series in 1819.

Colonial records. Most documents in this group concern original land grants made by the governor with approval of the colonial council. Documents found in the series to varying degrees include a petition for license to purchase land from the Indians; license to purchase land from the Indians; Indian deeds, in the form of a "bargain and sale" conveyance (sometimes marked with totems of Indians conveying the land); warrant of survey (governor's order to the surveyor general to survey land for a petitioner); return of survey (gives metes and bounds and acreage of the tract surveyed, but actual surveys are often lacking, especially before 1700); petition to the governor for a land grant by letters patent; a report of a council committee approving the grant; and warrant to prepare letters patent (order from the governor to the attorney general or the solicitor general to prepare a draft of the patent).

Also found in this group are caveats, or formal objections to granting letters patent because of a conflicting title; petitions for grants of land under water (often including the right to erect a wharf or pier); descriptions of town boundaries; petitions for licenses to operate ferries; and assorted notices, affidavits, and letters related to petitions for land grants.

Of special note are 17th century Dutch "deeds of confirmation" and petitions; land grants by courts in Kingston, Hurley, and Marbletown; petitions for remission of quit rents accruing during Queen Anne's War; the Schenectady patent; documents on Palatine German settlement on the Mohawk River; petitions for land grants to French and Indian War officers and soldiers (including affidavits or certificates of war service and returns of surveys) and additional petitions submitted by those veterans after the Revolutionary War; petitions and returns of survey (with maps) for tracts in what is now Vermont; and petitions for grants (most prior to 1681) on the west side of the Delaware River and Bay in what are now Delaware and Pennsylvania.

Post-revolution records. The series also contains applications for letters patent after the Revolutionary War. No original letters patent were issued by New York State for lands west of the 82nd milestone on the Pennsylvania border. Most post-revolutionary "land papers" relate to land grants in the new Military Tract in central New York. Records in this group include applicant's claim or petition to the Commissioners of the Land Office; order of the surveyor general to survey the tract; the resulting return of survey; certificate of location certifying the grant of land (described in detail); and assignments of certificates by veterans to others. Other documents relating to military land bounty rights include powers of attorney; state treasurer's receipts; and letters and affidavits in support of claims.

Documents associated with survey and sale of public lands include petitions for land grants, returns of survey, and certificates of locations similar to those for military grants; certificates of purchase at public vendue; proposals (bids) for purchase of lands, with correspondence; assignments of certificates of location; drafts of letters patent; caveats, or affidavits of claims to lands already granted; powers of attorney; and letters and reports concerning land grants. Special categories of records found after 1784 are applications for ferry licenses and petitions for grants of land under water, with attorney general reports; applications for surveys of new roads in central, northern, and western New York, with surveyor general reports; related road

surveys and maps; certificates of completion of roads; and a few petitions by Indians for land grants for Revolutionary War service.

Other record groups. Found among several volumes in the series are smaller groups of documents which were separate series before being combined into this series by the Office of Secretary of State. These include items relating to a land dispute between heirs of general John Bradstreet and the proprietors of the Hardenbergh Patent (1785); land grants to patriot refugees who left Canada and Nova Scotia during the Revolutionary War, including lists of refugees, petitions and claims for land grants, certificates as to the authenticity of claims, and related letters (1789-1790); the "Chemung Papers" concerning surveys and sales of land in what is now Tioga and Chemung counties (1788, 1793); and a few deeds or releases of property to the state (1794-1796).

A0272-19: This accretion consists of one map, referenced on page 11 in Mix's Catalog as Map #44 filed in the Secretary's Office.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Related Information

Related Material

A0447 Military patents contains the final land grants awarded to veterans who received military bounty lands, the applications for which may be found in this series.

12943, Letters Patent contains the final land grants awarded to veterans who received military bounty lands, the applications for which may be found in this series.

A4609 Original Indian Treaties and Deeds contains related documents.

A0448 Recorded Indian Treaties and Deeds contains related documents.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

"The Calendar of N.Y. Colonial Manuscripts Indorsed Land Papers; in the Office of the Secretary of State of New York, 1643-1803" (Albany: 1864) lists all documents in this first series of "Land Papers" as they were rearranged in 1819. There is an index to personal names and to land tract names or geographical locations at the back of the volume.

Series B1454, Inventories, receipts, and transfer documentation for assorted land records, [ca.1913-1973], includes an annotated copy showing documents in the "Calendar" found to be missing in 1928 and thereafter. The list of documents determined to be missing from series A0272 as of 1928 are also indicated in the reprint edition of "The Calendar of N.Y. Colonial Manuscripts Indorsed Land Papers; in the Office of the Secretary of State of New York, 1643-1803" (Harrison, NY: Harbor Hill Books, 1987).

Volumes in this series spanning 1785-1790 contain name indexes to claims of Revolutionary War veterans.

An extensive narrative description of the provenance, content, and indexing of this series is available, which includes a list of associated land records series and a review of subsequent recordkeeping responsibilities of various state agencies.

All of the earlier series from which the series was formed were listed (by bundle) in the "Annalium Thesaurus," an inventory made by the Office of the Secretary of State ca. 1819.

Maps found among the volumes are listed and indexed in David E.E. Mix's "Catalogue of Maps and Surveys..." (Albany: 1859), pp. 134-244.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Use of Records

Access Restrictions

A0272-19: Map is fragile and should be handled under the supervision of an archivist.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

Microfilm of this series, with the exception of Book 59, is available for use at the State Archives. Specifically, folios 127-184 (end of volume) were never filmed.

Alternate Formats Available

Items Online

High resolution images of selected original documents in this series are available in State Archives Digital Collections.

[Applications for land grants, 1642-1803](#)

Administrative Information

Custodial History

The series was created under direction of Secretary of State John Van Ness Yates in 1819 from an amalgam of documents taken from the "Colonial Council Papers," the "Papers of the Land Office," and several other small series that existed in the office at that time. Since the nineteenth century the series has been known as the "Land Papers" and is now referred to as "Land Papers - Series 1" to distinguish it from another series of early land-related documents bound by the State Engineer and Surveyor (series A4016).

The "Indian Deed Conveying to New Settlers Land Bordering the 'Mohawks' River, 1732" was removed from the series for exhibit purposes and subsequently stored separately.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

Access Terms

- Certificates
- New York (State)
- Maps (documents)
- Surveying
- United States--History--French and Indian War, 1755-1763--Veterans
- New York (Colony)
- Letters patent
- Land grants--New York (Colony)
- Land settlement--New York (State)
- Reports
- Warrants
- Indians of North America--Land tenure--New York (State)
- United States--History--Revolution, 1775-1783--Veterans
- Recording land grants
- New York (State)--Politics and government
- Land grants--Delaware
- New York (Colony)--Politics and government
- Land grants--Pennsylvania
- New York (State)--History--Colonial period, ca. 1600-1775
- Allotment of land
- Affidavits
- Letters patent
- Petitions
- Claims

- Issuing letters patent
- Land grants--Vermont
- Land grants--New York (State)
- Applications
- Surveys
- New York (State). Office of General Services. Bureau of Land Management
- New York (State). Surveyor General
- New York (State). Commissioners of the Land Office
- New York (Colony). Governor
- New York (State). Governor
- New York (State). Department of State