



New York State Archives

**New York State Comptroller's Office Audited Accounts of
Payments Made by Overseers of the Poor for Support of
Children Born to Slaves A0827**

New York State Archives
222 Madison Avenue
Albany, NY 12230
archref@nysed.gov
URL: <http://www.archives.nysed.gov/>

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	Abandoned children of slaves were to be supported at the state's expense by the local overseers of the poor. This series contains accounts of expenses of overseers of the poor for the maintenance of children of slaves. The accounts include the name of the town and county; names of overseers of the poor; name of master; name and birth date of child; time period for which child was maintained; amount spent and date.
Creator:	New York (State). Comptroller's Office
Title:	Audited accounts of payments made by overseers of the poor for support of children born to slaves
Quantity:	0.2 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1799-1820
Series:	A0827

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Arrangement

Alphabetical by town.

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Administrative History

Chapter 62 of the Laws of 1799, entitled "An Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery" stated that any child born to an enslaved person in New York State after July 4, 1799, would be free but would remain the servant of their mother's enslaver until, if male, he reached his 28th birthday; if female, her 25th birthday. Within a year of the child's birth, the enslaver had the right to abandon all claims to his service by filing a certificate of abandonment with the town clerk. Abandoned children of enslaved parents were to be supported at the state's expense by the local overseers of the poor.

Two overseers of the poor were elected for each town in the State. They could bind out their wards to service as an apprentice or servant. Funding from the State would go to their care while in service. Children of enslaved people were often bound out by overseers of the poor to the enslaver that abandoned them.

The relief and funding for the care of children of enslaved children outlined in Chapter 62 of 1799 was amended multiple times through legislation, with the last change being made as part of Chapter 137 of the Laws of 1817, entitled "An Act Relative to Slaves and Servants."

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Scope and Content Note

This series contains accounts of expenses of overseers of the poor for the maintenance of children born to enslaved people that were abandoned by their enslavers. Town Justices of the Peace, supervisors, and clerks examined these expense accounts and certified their accuracy. The accounts include the name of the town and county; names of overseers of the poor; name of the enslaver; name and birth date of child; date of abandonment; time period for which child was maintained; amount spent and date. On some documents the name of the child's mother is included. The series mostly contains records from downstate New York, in the present day five boroughs of New York City, Westchester, and Long Island.

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Related Information

Related Material

B1718Series B1718, Payment authorization to treasurer for support and maintenance of children born to slaves, authorized payments recorded in this series.

A3211Series A3211, Register of Payments to Overseers of Abandoned Children of Slaves

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

Original documents are fragile. Digital images are first use copies.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

This series has been digitized and is available online in its entirety.

Access Terms

- Slavery--United States
- Slave records--New York (State)
- Accounting
- Assisting children
- Auditing
- Slaves--New York (State)
- Accounts
- New York (State)
- Child welfare
- New York (State). Auditor General