



*New York State Archives*

**New York State Engineer and Surveyor Records of Surveys  
and Maps of State Lands A4016**

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## Table of Contents

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Overview of the Records .....	3
Arrangement .....	3
Administrative History .....	3
Scope and Contents .....	4
Related Information .....	5
Other Finding Aids .....	5
Use of Records .....	6
Access Terms .....	6

## Overview of the Records

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<b>Repository:</b>	New York State Archives
<b>Summary:</b>	This series contains the miscellaneous filed papers of the New York State Surveyor General and the State Engineer and Surveyor. The series documents the role of the Surveyor General and State Engineer and Surveyor in establishing the boundaries of public and private lands, and in planning the development of the State's transportation system. A number of volumes contain documents relating to the sale of Loyalist lands by the Commissioners of Forfeitures during and after the Revolutionary War.
<b>Creator:</b>	New York (State). State Engineer and Surveyor
<b>Title:</b>	Records of surveys and maps of state lands
<b>Quantity:</b>	51.6 cubic feet
<b>Quantity:</b>	29 disbound volumes
<b>Quantity:</b>	29 volume(s)
<b>Inclusive Date:</b>	1686-1892
<b>Series:</b>	A4016

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Arrangement

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Certain records in the series are grouped by subject. For example, records relating to state roads are found in Volume 1; material on town boundaries appears in Volumes 3 and 4; and documents relating to the sale of Loyalist lands by the Commissioners of Forfeitures are found in Volumes 7, 8, 9, 10, and 17.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Administrative History

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New York's revolutionary government began seizing the personal and real property of suspected Loyalists in the summer of 1776. Statutes of 1779 and 1784 authorized the forfeiture

and sale of real property of "persons who have adhered to the enemies of this State." An individual's real property became forfeit to the state when he was adjudged guilty of treason, either by an act of attainder passed by the State Legislature, or by trial and conviction in the Supreme Court of Judicature. Commissioners of Forfeitures were appointed to manage, sell at public auction, and convey by deed the lands forfeited to the state.

The Commissioners of Forfeitures operated in four districts: Western District (Albany, and Tryon/Montgomery Counties); Eastern District (Charlotte, Cumberland, and Gloucester Counties); Middle District (Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster Counties); and Southern District (New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties).

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Scope and Content Note

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This series, commonly referred to as "Land Papers, 2nd series," contains the miscellaneous filed papers of the New York State Surveyor General and the State Engineer and Surveyor. The series documents the role of the Surveyor General and State Engineer and Surveyor in establishing the boundaries of public and private lands, and in planning the development of the State's transportation system. A number of volumes contain documents relating to the sale of Loyalist lands by the Commissioners of Forfeitures during and after the Revolutionary War.

The series contains records of land surveys undertaken for applicants for land grants; for landholders; to resolve disputes over property lines; and in preparation for land use by the State. A wide variety of document types are present: survey descriptions and measurements; survey diagrams; survey maps showing lots and numbers, name of town, names of landholders, property lines, route and length of roads, and waterways; small proofs of maps used in compiling David H. Burr's atlas of New York State in 1829; appraisals of the value of various tracts or lots; surveyors' certifications that land had been surveyed; correspondence and maps relating to errors in and corrections to previous surveys and maps; instructions to surveyors directing them to survey various lands; correspondence from surveyors discussing work they had done; petitions for land, often from soldiers; and Surveyor General's responses to petitions for lands or for resolution of property line disputes.

Volumes 7-10 and 17 of the series consist entirely or partly of documents relating to the sale of lands of Loyalists. These documents include contracts of sale by the Commissioners of Forfeitures; drafts or copies of deeds issued by the Commissioners of Forfeitures (up to 1788) and the Surveyor General (1788 and later); formal "locations" of lands by applicants to purchase; descriptions and surveys of those lands; and appraisals of the value of those lands. Occasionally other documents including correspondence, copies of judgments of attainder, and additional land title documentation are included. The series contains documents pertaining to forfeited lands in all sections of the state except for the Southern District (New York, Kings, Queens, Richmond, Suffolk, and Westchester Counties). Most records concern lands located in the Western District (Albany and Tryon/Montgomery Counties).

NOTE: The name index referenced in this finding aid pertains only to two very specific subsets of the series - 1. Records pertaining to loyalists and/or the sale of land confiscated from loyalists during and after the Revolutionary War; 2. Applications for land grants submitted by veterans of British regiments that served in the American colonies during the Seven Years' War. Researchers interested in other portions of the series must consult the paper indexes available onsite.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Related Information

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### Related Material

A1816 New York State Assembly Petitions, Correspondence, and Reports Relating to Forfeited Estates, contains related information.

B1858 Card file Index to Records of Surveys and Maps of State Lands, indexes this series

A4024 Indexes to Maps and Land Records (Volume 3), is the preferred index.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Other Finding Aids

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### Available at Repository

Each volume is indexed alphabetically by county, town, name or location of tract or patent, name of landholder, and name of surveyor. The series is also indexed by Series B1858, Card File Index to Records of Surveys and Maps of State Lands and Volume 3 of Series A4024, Indexes to Maps and Land Records.

### Online Index

The [index to series A4016](#) contains 2563 entries. Each entry includes the individual's name and role. Some entries include the geographic locations referenced in the records. Each entry also provides a pointer to the location within the record series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Use of Records

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### Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this series.

### Alternate Formats Available

A4016-77: Photostat use copies are available at the New York State Archives.

Scanned records relating to Loyalist Robert Leake are available at the New York State Archives.

### Alternate Formats Available

#### Items Online

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

Portions of the series are digitized and are available to New York State residents for free on Ancestry.com New York. You must sign up for a free account to access these records without a paid subscription.

To learn how to create the free account, go to [How to Use Ancestry.com New York](#).

[Records of surveys and maps of state lands on Ancestry.com](#)

[Records of surveys and maps of state lands, 1686-1892 in Digital Collections](#)

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## Access Terms

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- Land surveys
- Surveying
- American loyalists
- Surveying land
- Real property
- Field notes
- New York (State)
- Maps (documents)
- New York (State). Department of Transportation
- New York (State). Surveyor General

- **New York (State). Commissioners of Forfeitures**