



New York State Archives

Sing Sing Prison Admission Registers B0143

New York State Archives
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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series consists of information on each incarcerated individual received at the prison. The early volumes provide information such as: admission date; alias; county from which received; age; birthplace; marital and family status; residence; height; weight; complexion; eye and hair color; other physical characteristics; if they could read or write; language spoken; religion; habits (drinking, smoking); occupation; date convicted; crime; term of sentence; and judge. Later volumes were modified several times to include additional information.
Creator:	Sing Sing Prison
Title:	Sing Sing Prison admission registers
Quantity:	76.1 cubic feet
Quantity:	149 volume(s)
Inclusive Date:	1842-1852, 1865-1965, 1970-1971
Bulk Date:	1865-1971
Series:	B0143

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Arrangement

B0143-80: Chronological. Note that there is a gap in this accretion. No records are available for incarcerated individuals with consecutive numbers ranging from 135700 (circa May 1965) to 146922 (ca. October 1970).

B0143-98: Arranged by gender, then alphabetical by last name and chronological therein.

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Scope and Content Note

B0143-80: Bound volumes record information on all individuals received at the prison. The Correction Law required daily reports of incarcerated individuals received, including name, county tried in, crime, and other information. The early volumes (volumes 1-5 and 8 are missing) are entirely handwritten and provide the following information: date of admission; alias, county from which received; age; place of birth; marital and family status; residence; height; weight; complexion; eye and hair color; other physical characteristics (e.g. scars); if they could read or write (later: education); language spoken; religion; habits (drinking, smoking); occupation; date convicted; crime; term of sentence; and judge.

In 1908, a new printed form for the pages added the following information: grade (A, B, or C; later: classification); color; hat and shoe size; description of forehead, ears, eyebrows, nose, mouth, lips, teeth, and general features; previous terms in other institutions; and a certification by the incarcerated individual that the information was accurate.

In 1914, a new printed form, titled "Receiving Blotter", added the following categories: plea; parents' place of birth; if a U.S. citizen; date arrived in New York; port; and steamship. This form was revised the following year, omitting the information on arrival in New York and adding when the term was up by commutation, expiration of sentence, or parole.

In 1926, the form was again revised to include jail time; when eligible for parole (omitting information on when term was up by commutation or expiration); regularity of church attendance; length of time since last regular attendance; weekly salary; length of residence at present location; length of residence in state; to what criminal act was attributed (e.g. drunkenness); military service; and articles taken when received. The detailed description of the incarcerated individual's physical features was omitted.

In 1931, the form was expanded to include lost time (i.e. extra time served due to misbehavior in prison); criminal act (brief description); city or town where crime was committed; value of goods or money involved in crime; if recovered; names and locations of accomplices; if friendly with accomplices; mental age and diagnosis (usually left blank); date and port of entry to U.S.; and employment record (last three employers). This form remained standard with only a few revisions, mostly in structure.

Beginning in 1964, a smaller form was used, and the information was typed in. There is a considerable gap in the admission registers near the end of accretion B0143-80. No admission records are included for individuals with consecutive numbers 135700 (ay 1965) to 146922 (October 1970).

B0143-98: This accretion is one bound volume providing name, place of birth, age, occupation, color, height, crime, place of conviction, date sentenced, and length of sentence for male and female incarcerated individuals entering Sing Sing; almost all of whom entered the prison between 1842 and 1852, with a few entering as early as 1831 and as late as 1862. The keeper

of the register is recorded (at the fore of the volume) as Jesse Jessup. The volume measures 6 x 4 x 3/4 inches and has a cardboard simulated leather cover with a flap enclosure.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

B0143-98: Access to original volume is restricted; digitized version and photocopy are first-use copies.

Alternate Formats AvailableAlternate Formats Available

B0143-98: Photocopy; 1 volume.

Alternate Formats Available

Items Online

The original volume covering the years 1842-1852 (B0143-98) has been digitized and is 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](#).

[Sing Sing Prison Admission Registers, 1865-1939 on Ancestry.com](#)

[Inmate Admission Registers, 1842-1852, in Digital Collections](#)

Administrative Information

Custodial History

B0143-98: The register had been in custody of a private citizen who obtained it at a garage sale in Orange County, New York. In 1994, the state stopped the planned auction of the document and was granted an injunction against its sale or transfer until ownership was

resolved. On December 4, 1998, in a pre-trial settlement, an agreement was reached that the State Archives was the rightful repository for the document.

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Access Terms

- Registers (Lists)
- Correctional institutions--New York (State)
- Prisons--New York (State)
- Admitting
- New York (State)
- Ossining (N.Y.)
- New York (State). Prison Department
- Sing Sing Correctional Facility
- Ossining Correctional Facility
- New York (State). Department of Correction
- New York (State). Department of Correctional Services