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Overview of the Records

Repository: New York State Archives

Summary: This series consists of minute books which serve as a chronological record of the proceedings in the Court of Chancery, including cases initiated by complaint or by petition. The minutes contain summaries or full texts of motions, orders, decretal orders, and final decrees, as well as entries of other actions by the court. Series includes, for various time ranges, rough minutes, final minutes, engrossed minutes, and some loose sheets of minutes. The minutes were created and maintained by the Register.

Creator: New York (State). Court of Chancery

Title: Chancery Register's minute books

Quantity: 9.4 cubic feet

Quantity: 50 volumes; 47 microfilm rolls 35mm

Inclusive Date: 1781-1799, 1806-1829

Series: J0059

Arrangement

Chronological by date of court sessions. Minute books starting May 1798 and engrossed minute books for period April 1802-September 1812 were numbered sequentially.

Scope and Content Note

This series consists of minute books which serve as a chronological record of the proceedings in the Court of Chancery, including cases initiated by complaint or by petition. The minutes contain summaries or full texts of motions, orders, decretal orders, and final decrees, as well as entries of other actions by the court. Series includes, for various time ranges, rough minutes,
final minutes, engrossed minutes, and some loose sheets of minutes. The minutes were
created and maintained by the Register.

The date, location, and name of the Chancellor are given for each session of the court. The
names of the parties and their attorneys, summaries of motions and arguments and documents
read or submitted, and actions taken by the court are recorded for cases heard at the session.
The minutes include the texts or summaries of Chancellor’s orders in matters before the
court, including procedural orders and final determinations. Also included are the minutes of
proceedings in which court officials were appointed, attorneys admitted to practice, court rules
adopted, court terms scheduled, and other court business not related to cases was conducted.
These minutes give a fairly detailed account of business transacted in court.

The minutes for 1781-1783 record the proceedings of Court of Chancery held in New York City
with the Royal Governor acting as Chancellor. After 1779 that court co-existed with the State
Court of Chancery established by the Constitution of 1777. The minutes were transferred to the
Register of the State Court of Chancery in 1789 and were maintained with the later minutes of
that court. There are no minutes for the state Court of Chancery for the years 1778-1783.

Series consists of loose sheets (1784-1786) and thereafter volumes. The minute books contain
rough minutes, with many insertions and strikeouts (1787-1799, 1806-1808), final texts of
minutes in uniform handwriting (1799-1829), and engrossed minutes (1802-1812). State
Archives staff have disbound most of the bound volumes for the purpose of microfilming.

J0059-82: Volumes contain guardianship proceedings. Those found in volumes 1 (1781-1783),
1A (1784), 13 (1796), and 19 (Sept. 1806-Jan. 1808) are abstracted and indexed in Kenneth
Scott, "Records of the Chancery Court Province and State of New York: Guardianships
1691-1815" (New York: 1971).
Series JN319, Register's and Assistant Register's minute books
Series JN321, Clerk's registers of causes
Series JN322, Assistant Register's rough minute books.

Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Alphabetical index by name of complainant or petitioner in almost volumes.
Volume list and microfilm roll list are available at the repository.

Use of Records

Access Restrictions

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

Alternate Formats Available

J0059-82: Microfilmed by New York State Archives in 1989. Microfilm starts with minutes for 1784; volume for 1781-1783 was not filmed. Microfilm copies are available at the Archives and through interlibrary loan. Minute book labeled "No. III," containing entries between Dec. 3, 1799 and Feb. 12, 1801, was microfilmed by the New York County Clerk's Office in 1958 and is not available for interlibrary loan.

J0059-17: Microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah in 1953. The microfilm includes images of original bindings and labels that were discarded before the minute books were microfilmed by the State Archives. The GSU microfilm has been partly digitized, and the images can be accessed online at Family Search Affiliate Libraries (including the New York State Archives and New York State Library). The GSU microfilm and digital images are cataloged under the author "New York Chancery Court," microfilm roll numbers 17418-17438. Microfilm is not available for interlibrary loan.
Administrative Information

Custodial History

J0059-82: Assembled and organized by staff of the Court of Appeals, which maintained records of the Register of the Court of Chancery after the court was abolished effective July 1, 1847. The Court of Appeals placed these records on deposit at the Historical Documents Collection, Queens College, from about 1966 to 1982.

Processing Information

Engrossed minute books numbered 3, 4, and 5 were formerly cataloged as series J1059. They have been returned to series J0059, where engrossed minute books numbers 1 and 2 are filed.

J0059-82: Minute book labeled "No. III," transferred by Unified Court System in 2017, has been determined to be part of this series and was added to this accretion.

Access Terms

- Adjudicating
- Courts
- Equity
- New York (State)
- Minutes (administrative records)
- New York (State). Court of Appeals