



The New York Public Library  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture,  
Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division

Guide to the

**Nautilus Insurance Company Slavery Era Ledgers**

1845-2002 [bulk 1845-1888 ()]

Sc MG 715

## Summary

**Creator:** Nautilus Insurance Company

**Title:** Nautilus Insurance Company Slavery Era Ledgers

**Date:** 1845-2002 [bulk 1845-1888 ()]

**Size:** 12 linear feet (6 flat boxes)

**Source:** Gift, New York Life Insurance Company

**Abstract:** The Nautilus Insurance Company (predecessor of the New York Life Insurance Company) was one of several insurance companies that sold policies to slaveholders to insure their slaves against damages or death. The company sold these policies for approximately two and a half years from 1845 until 1848, at which time the board of trustees voted to end the sale of such policies. The Nautilus Insurance Company slavery era ledgers consist of a total of eight volumes: four policy registers; a death claim book; a volume listing losses for death benefits paid; as well as two indices containing names of all insurance applicants. The policy registers contain names of persons, including slaves, who were insured between 1845 and 1848. There are also lists prepared in 2001 and 2002, one of which is a printout from a database developed by the California Department of Insurance entitled "Slavery Era Insurance Policies Registry," that contains information from documents submitted by the New York Life Insurance company as well as other insurance companies that had insured slaves.

**Conditions Governing Use:** Photocopying of ledgers not permitted

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## Creator History

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## Scope and Content Note

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## Key Terms

### Subjects

African Americans -- Reparations  
Insurance companies -- New York (State) -- New York -- History  
Insurance companies -- United States -- History  
Slave records -- United States  
Slaveholders -- United States -- Registers  
Slavery -- United States -- History -- Sources  
Slaves -- United States -- Registers

### Genre/Physical Characteristic

Ledgers  
Slave records

### Names

Nautilus Insurance Company  
Nautilus Insurance Company  
New York Life Insurance Company