

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS DIVISION
ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 85 M 36

Location 13-bb-2/5

13-aa-5 (L)

Title Women's Prison Association Records

-cc-2/5

-bb-2/5 (L)

-dd-2/6

-cc-2/5 (L)

-ee-2/5

-dd-2/5 (L)

Approximate inclusive dates

-ee-2/5 (L)

Date of receipt April 3, 1985

Received from Women's Prison Association

Volume on arrival 75 cartons

Number of boxes (after reboxing) 14 half AB; 39 AB; 95 RC 118 linear feet

Condition Some pre-1930s records suffering serious acidity problems as well as water and mold damage.

Restrictions portions of the collection are closed; see attached terms of access

Description

see attached sheets

Special Formats ☒ Photographs ☐ Maps ☐ Audio Tapes ☐ Films ☐ Graphics
☐ Artifacts ☐ Machine-readable records
☐ Other (list) _____

Temporary catalog card added entries: Abigail M. Gibbons; Women prisoners
Prison reformers; Rehabilitation of criminals;
Social work with delinquents and criminals;
Reformatories for women- New York State

Accessioned by

George Tselos

Date

Jan 30, 1987

RECORDS OF THE WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION

TERMS OF ACCESS

Records less than 70 years old containing information about WPA clients in which they are personally identified will be closed to researchers. Administrative records of the WPA which do not contain such client data will be open for research after 15 years. Printed materials in the collection will be available for research without restriction.

The officers of the WPA, and their designated representatives will have access to the closed records with appropriate written notification and identification presented to the Curator of Manuscripts. Researchers may petition in writing for exceptions to be made to these restrictions.

Based upon an examination of the files in their current box locations, and upon the rule that the entire contents of a box must be unrestricted for any of it to be available, the following designations apply as of the date of this agreement. An annual review of these designations will be made so as to open boxes which have passed the closure period.

Administrative and Case Files Open for Research Without Restriction

Boxes 1-3, 5-16, 18, 21, 32-33, 40-43, 45, 48-54

Administrative and Case Files Closed as of 1987

Boxes 4, 17, 19-20, 22-31, 34-39, 44, 46-47, 55-148

Approved for the WPA

NAME _____

DATE _____

Approved for the Library

NAME _____

DATE _____

The Women's Prison Association (WPA), founded in 1854, promotes improvements in the treatment of women prisoners in New York and offers rehabilitation assistance to ex-offenders. The WPA has operated the Isaac T. Hopper Home since the mid-19th century, making it the oldest women's "halfway house" in the United States.

The Association originated as the "Female Department" of the Prison Association of New York which was established in 1844. The "Female Section" undertook to provide a shelter for inmates upon their release along with an educational and domestic training program. In 1854, an amicable separation occurred with the formal incorporation of the WPA. After 1874, the WPA's shelter was located at 110 Second Avenue in the Isaac T. Hopper Home where it remains today, Hopper having been one of the leading figures in establishing the WPA.

For more than the first half century, the Hopper Home served primarily older alcoholic women. The Association also promoted various reforms in the criminal justice system for women. They monitored the treatment of women prisoners and proposed a series of important bills after 1880 arising from their investigations. In part because of the lobbying efforts of the WPA, a bill was passed in 1888 requiring the hiring of police matrons to deal with female prisoners; between 1892 and 1901 the WPA promoted the establishment of a separate state reformatory for women and in 1908 the establishment of a State Farm colony for women which opened in 1914. Starting in 1894, the WPA employed a full time "prison visitor" to undertake its investigations and expanded lobbying role.

The clientele of the WPA began to change after World War One from older alcoholic women to increasing numbers of younger women convicted of a variety of offenses including prostitution and theft. After the war, the WPA, along with other social service organizations increasingly began to utilize the "case work" approach to its clients coupled with a movement away from the old style rehabilitation through "domestic training". As well as professionalizing its staff, the position of the Association "agent" who visited prisons and carried out legislative liason was upgraded to that of Executive Secretary in 1918. The job now carried formal responsibility for day to day operations including field work, legislative lobbying, recommendations for public appointments, and fulfilling conference and speaking engagements as the Association's representative. By the 1930s, the Association even paid the salaries of case workers and part-time psychologists at the prisons who conducted exit interviews with those released to determine which ones could best be served by the Association's program.

In recent years, the WPA has broadened the scope of its activities even further. In the late 1960s, it undertook to assist drug addicts in a major way for the first time, a group which it had long considered as being beyond its rehabilitative capabilities. During the 1970s, it also developed the "Children of Offenders" formal program to assist the minor children of its adult clients. The WPA "court diversion" program, begun in 1972, offered, with Court approval, a community based rehabilitation

program rather than prison for selected offenders. Participants lived in Hopper Home and received professional and peer counseling and job training and placement. The educational and counseling work was also expanded and developed in two grant funded programs of the mid-1970s and the early 1980s. The first was the "Open Door" program and later the "Learning Center" program.

Scope and Content

The records of the Women's Prison Association span the years from 1845 to the early 1980s, though there are significant gaps in most series. The records include minutes, both incoming and outgoing correspondence, reports, legislative bills, project files, client case files, financial records, printed materials and photographs.

The records fall into two primary categories: administrative records and client case records. Within the administrative records, there are Executive Committee / Board of Directors Minutes spanning the years 1888-1979. There is, however, a complete absence of minutes between 1907 and 1917 and only sketchy minutes from 1918 to 1925. There are also gaps in the years 1962-63 and in 1970. The Correspondence and Reports by the Directors and Staff covering the years 1845 to 1983 are grouped for convenience into four chronological sub-divisions: 1845-1890; 1890-1917; 1918-1945; and post 1945. There is very little from the first period and in the post-1945 period, the years between 1945 and 1960 are almost entirely lacking in primary documentation. Rounding out the administrative records are fundraising records covering the period 1933 to 1973; very incomplete records of the Treasurer beginning in 1869 and running to 1977; and a relatively complete set of Auditor's Report from 1929 to 1977. Administrative files for all the major projects of the 1970s also exist. Finally, there is a fairly complete set of Annual Reports beginning in 1859.

The Client Case Records are the larger of the two main record categories, comprising about three-quarters of the volume of the entire collection. This group includes case books, rolls, and registration cards which often include data recorded by standardized categories and samples of daily reports on the residents of the Hopper Home.

The case files for individual clients, however, form by far the largest element of the client records. There is a single large alphabetical run comprising 48 record cartons containing closed cases from the 1920s to the mid-1960s. The remainder are various other grouping tentatively identified from among those obtained from the WPA basement storage area. All the other groupings go back no further than the 1930s and the majority of these are post-1960s. In most cases it is not entirely clear what the basis was for the different groupings. Some of them, however, clearly represent files of participants in particular programs and projects in the 1970s mentioned earlier.

WOMEN'S PRISON ASSOCIATION RECORDS

Box

Contents

Administrative Records

Executive Committee/Board of Directors Minutes, 1888-1979

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1 | 1888-1907 |
| 2 | 1918-1940 |
| 3 | 1940-1961 |
| 4 | 1964-1969; 1971-1979 |

Directors' and Staff Correspondence and Reports, 1845-1983

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 5 | Correspondence and Reports, 1845-1890 |
| | Isaac T. Hopper House Female Department |
| | PANY - WPA Separation |
| | Prison Visit Reports |
| | First Director Abigail M. Gibbons |
| | - incoming correspondence, 1860-1890 |
| | Correspondence and Reports, 1890-1917 |
| | First Director Sara M. Emerson Papers |
| 6 | 1893-1905 |
| 7 | 1906-1913 |
| 8 | 1914-1916 and miscellaneous |
| 9 | Miscellaneous correspondence, papers, and clippings |
| | Agent Alice Woodbridge ("Prison Visitor") |
| 10 | Correspondence, 1890-1917 |
| 11 | Correspondence, undated; Superintendent of
Hopper House, Miss Miriam Atkinson, incoming
correspondence, 1916-17 |
| 12 | Prison Visitor Reports, 1896-1900 |
| 13 | Prison Visitor Reports, 1901-1902; 1909-15 |
| 14-15 | Legislative Acts and Bills |

Correspondence and Reports, 1918-1945

- 16 First Directors' Papers
A.S. Daniel, 1919-21; 1925-26
Rachel H. Powell, 1937-47; "Negro Child Study", 1925-29
- Executive Secretaries' Papers
- 17 Mary V. Clark, 1918-21
- 18 Mary V. Clark: Minutes of the National Committee
on Mental Hygiene, 1920; Clippings
- 19 Margaret B. Steinmetz, 1925-28
E. Mebane Hunt, 1930-45
- 20 Field Secretary Reports, 1930s
- 21 Directors' and Staff Correspondence on Scholarships
and other topics, 1927-44

Correspondence and Reports, post-1945

General Board and Staff correspondence and reports

- 22 1960-71
- 23 1966-73
- 24 1971-73
- 25 1971-79
- 26 1974-79
- 27 1975-77
- 28 1980-83
- 29 Caseworker correspondence with clients, 1960s
Hopper House Recreation activity reports, 1961-62
- 30 Hopper House Staff and Day Logs, 1968, 1977, 1982
- 31 Women's Prison Association Personnel files, 1948-63
- 32 Guest Registration Books

Project Files

- 33 "A Study in Neglect: A Report on Women Prisoners," 1972
- 34-35 "Children of Offenders" Project, 1971-73
- 36 "Court Diversion" Program, 1972-73
- 37-39 "Open Door" Program, 1974-77

Fund Raising, 1933-73

40 1933-64
41 1964-66
42 1966-69
43 1967-69
44 1967-73

Treasurer's Office, 1869-1977

45 1869-87; 1924-25; 1946-59
46 1963-77

Auditors' Reports, 1929-77

47 1929-65; 1974-77
48 1931-59; Investment Reports, 1948-65

49 Mailing Lists on index card files

Printed Materials and Photographs

50-52 Annual Reports, 1859-1981
53 Photographs and other printed materials

Client Case Records

Case Books, Rolls, Registrations, Statistics and Hopper
House "Census"

54-55 Case Descriptions and Rolls, 1845-1923
56 Case Registration Cards, late 1920s-mid-1960s: A-L
57 Case Registration Cards: Mc; S-Z; Unassigned and Unsorted
Annual Case Books with Data Categories
58 1931-43
59 1943-45
60 1946-55
61 1955-56; 1962-64
62 Hopper House Daily "Census", 1971-72; 1980-82

Case Files

Cases, late 1920s- mid-1960s, "closed"

63	A-Ar
64	As-Bat
65	Bau-Bay
66	Be-Ble
67	Bo-Brog
68	Broo-Bur
69	But-Cav
70	Ce
71	Chad-Char
72	Chas-Com
73	Con-Dale
74	Dall-De
75	Di-Ec
76	Ed-Fa
77	Fe-Fl
78	Fo-Gar
79	Gas-Gor
80	Gos-Hai
81	Hal-Harr
82	Hart-Hob
83	Hoc-I
84	Jab-Jak
85	Jam-Job
86	Jol-Kelly, H.
87	Kelly, I.-Ky
88	La-Lev
89	Lew-MacCl

90	MacCo-Maj
91	Mal-Mel
92	Men-Mon
93	Moo-My
94	Na-Oc
95	Od-Pea
96	Pec-Pri
97	Pro-Rei
98	Rel-Roc
99	Rod-Rusk
100	Russ-Sch
101	Sci-Sea
102	Seh-Sma
103	Smi-Spa
104	Spe-Su
105	Sv-Th
106	Ti-Va
107	Ve-Wa
108	We-Williams, C.
109	Williams, E.-Wom
110	Woo-Z

"Minor Service" Cases, 1930s-1960s (bulk 1930s-1940s)

111	A-C
112	H-O
113	P-Z

Case Files, 1940s-1950s

114	A-C
115	D-E
116	F-J; M-P

117 Q-T

118 U-W; "Preliminaries

119 Cases, 1930s-1950s, "closed": Caputo-Carrothers

120 Cases, 1930s-1950s, "closed"; Curran-Czado

Cases "unassigned" as of early 1960s

121 A-J

122 Joffrey-McMillan

123 M-W

Case Files, 1970s

124 F-H

125 H-K

126 L-M

127 N-T

Small Case File Groups

128 Cases "closed" early 1960s: A-Z
Cases "opened" early 1970s: A-Z

129 Short term cases opened and closed in 1970s: A-Z

130 Referrals to Hopper House, 1959-66

131 Hopper House residents, 1970s

132 Hopper House residents, opened early 1970s

133 Client: Angel Barrett, 1972

134 Cases, 1960s-early 1970s: H-M and miscellaneous

135 Cases, mid-1960s-1970s: miscellaneous

Program Case Files

136-37 "Children of Offenders," early 1970s: A-M; N-W

138 "Court Diversion" Project, 1972-73

139-41 "Learning Center" Program, late 1970s-early 1980s

142-47 "Open Door" Project, 1974-76 (file tabs bear case numbers,
not names, though names are in files; the files are
not in either numerical or alphabetical order.)

148 Miscellaneous administrative and case files