



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

Guide to the

**Hulan Jack papers**

1941-1960

Sc MG 478

## Summary

**Creator:** Jack, Hulan E. (Hulan Edwin), 1906-1986

**Title:** Hulan Jack papers

**Date:** 1941-1960

**Size:** 18 linear feet

**Source:** Gift, Almira Jack, 1993 Gift, Almira Jack, 1993

**Abstract:** The Hulan E. Jack Papers document Jack's years in the New York State Assembly via his constituent correspondence, 1941-1947, 1949-1951 and 1953 and his tenure as borough president via correspondence and subject files, 1954-1960. For the most part the correspondence deals with routine matters: requests for employment, invitations to functions, his participation as an honorary member on committees of civic organizations, and requests from meetings with labor and other groups. Subject files include speeches, lists of African Americans in New York City government in the 1950's, information on his re-election campaign, a 1954 trip to Puerto Rico to attend a conference regarding migration of Puerto Ricans to New York, and public relations activities such as requests for donations of money. Other files discuss Jack's membership in the National Democratic Club and as an executive member of the New Deal Democratic Club. There is also a file on a political dispute between Jack and U.S. Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., 1958.

**Access:** Some collections held by the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture are held off-site and must be requested in advance. Please check the collection records in **the NYPL's online catalog** for detailed location information. To request access to materials in the Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, please visit: [http://archives.nypl.org/divisions/scm/request\\_access](http://archives.nypl.org/divisions/scm/request_access)

**Preferred citation:** [Item], Hulan Jack papers, Sc MG 478, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, The New York Public Library

## Creator History

Hulan Edwin Jack was most noted for being the first black borough president in New York City, representing Manhattan from 1954-1961. Born in the British West Indies in 1906, he immigrated to the

United States at age 16 and later attended New York University. A Democrat, Jack was elected to the New York State Assembly from 1940-1953 and 1968-1972. As an assemblyman Jack was known as a fighter for civil and human rights, successfully introducing legislation to end discrimination in employment in 1945 as well as discrimination in public and semi-public housing. He also introduced bills for the welfare of laborers, veterans and children. As borough president he helped secure funding for major improvements in highways and public transportation, as well as public works projects.

In 1959 Jack was indicted for accepting a \$4500 renovation on his apartment from a businessman who was doing business with the city, and resigned the borough presidency in 1960. And, in 1972 while an assemblyman, he was fined and convicted of conflict of interest charges. That same year he was defeated by a Harlem political opponent. Although Jack's political career as an elected official had ended, in 1980 he served on two committees to give further economic support to Africa: the National Democratic Policy Committee and the committee for a New Africa Policy. Hulan Jack died in 1986 in New York City.

## **Scope and Content Note**

The Hulan E. Jack Papers document Jack's years in the New York State Assembly via his constituent correspondence, 1941-1947, 1949-1951 and 1953 and his tenure as borough president via correspondence and subject files, 1954-1960. For the most part the correspondence deals with routine matters: requests for employment, invitations to functions, his participation as an honorary member on committees of civic organizations, and requests from meetings with labor and other groups. Subject files include speeches, lists of African Americans in New York City government in the 1950's, information on his re-election campaign, a 1954 trip to Puerto Rico to attend a conference regarding migration of Puerto Ricans to New York, and public relations activities such as requests for donations of money. Other files discuss Jack's membership in the National Democratic Club and as an executive member of the New Deal Democratic Club. There is also a file on a political dispute between Jack and U.S. Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., 1958.

The collection also includes Jack's appointment calendars from his terms as borough president, 1954-1960, and an extensive clipping file and scrapbooks of clippings. The latter cover every New York City development Jack was associated with between 1954 and 1958, including the razing of the Third Avenue El, the development of the Coliseum, street pavings, plans for building baseball stadiums and other city improvements.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

African American politicians -- New York (State) -- New York  
African Americans -- New York (State) -- New York  
Black author  
Political clubs -- New York (State) -- New York  
Puerto Ricans -- New York (State) -- New York  
West Indian Americans -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Geographic Names**

New York (N.Y.) -- Politics and government -- 1951-

### **Genre/Physical Characteristic**

Scrapbooks  
Speeches

**Names**

Jack, Hulan E. (Hulan Edwin), 1906-1986  
Powell, Adam Clayton, Jr., 1908-1972