

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

Accession # *83 M 13

Location 5h3

Title United States Works Progress Administration

Approximate inclusive dates 1934-1941

Date of receipt not known

Received from not known

Volume on arrival 1 container

Number of boxes (after reboxing) 1 F.B.

Condition Good

Restrictions

Description The Works Progress Administration of the federal government (also known as Work Projects Administration) was the major relief agency of Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal." Supplanting the Civil Works Administration (an emergency temporary work relief program, 1933-34), which was the original sponsor of a variety of state and municipal relief projects, the WPA employed over 2 million Americans before its liquidation in 1941. Projects sponsored by the New York Public and Queens Borough Public Libraries between 1933 and 1941 received all locations from both federal agencies under the supervision of the City of New York's Emergency Work (Relief) Bureau and later its Department of Public Welfare of the Works Division. The collection consists of typed, carbon copies and near-print copies of reports on the various projects sponsored by the New York Public Library and the Queens Borough Public Library for the completion of which relief workers were utilized. Two NYPL projects. An American History Bibliography (89-Fbs-180x) and an untitled project for "white collar" workers (89-FG-110x), were begun in 1934 as separate endeavors and as of July 31, 1935 were merged. Seven reports describe this work. Two reports summarize the work done in connection with project #165-97-6999 between July, 1936 and June 30, 1937, particularly designated for clerical & professional services, and include specific discussions of the Reference Department's divisions and the special libraries and branches of the Circulation Department. "To assist the [NYPL] in extending its services to the public" through "research work," "compilation of bibliographies" and other book preparation services project #465-97-3-66 was approved and reports for the period covering July, 1937 through December 31, 1938 provide details. (See Eighth, Ninth & Tenth Report.) Reports on project #65-97-290 describe relief workers' activities connected with scrapbooks, inventories, pamphlets, manuscripts, music and "general library

Special Formats Photographs Maps Audio Tapes Films Graphics (see attached)
 Artifacts Machine-readable records
 Other (list) reproductions of photographs in printed materials

Temporary catalog card added entries: Civil Works Administration; Federal Aid to Public Welfare; Library Reports - New York Public Library, 1934-41; Library Reports - Queens Borough Public Library, 1934-41; Libraries and the physically handicapped; New York (City) - Public Relief; New York (City) - Public Works research; New York Public Library; Queens Borough Library; United States - Economic Conditions, 1934-41; U.S. - Economic Planning; U.S. - History - Economic Aspects; U.S. - Accessioned by Genna Rae McNeil
History - "New Deal"; U. S. - Politics & Government - 1933-41;
Works Progress Administration

Date March 8, 1983

Description, contId.

service" from July 1, 1935 to June 30, 1936.* Reports prepared in 1940 describe work done in connection with Project #65-1-97-23-WP 13. Generally funds for this project were allocated for "Assistance to Public Libraries and Museums, Botanical and Zoological Gardens within New York City" and specifically for the "extension of technical and clerical services to the New York Public Library." Semi-annual reports for July-December 1939, January-June 1940 and July-December 1940 summarize the expansion of activities and services in both the Reference Department and Circulation Department. Three other reports covering the Bibliography of Dance Origins project, 1939 (dated January 1, 1940), the Library Theatre Phase project, 1934-(Jan.)1940 (date January 17 1940) and the History of Music project, (June)1933-1939 (dated January 1, 1940) provide detailed information about personnel and production. Additionally, for the New York Public Library this collection includes two reports on operations for April and June 1941 and one semi-annual progress report for the period covering January 1, 1941 through June 30, 1941 with respect to project #165-1-97-8, W.P. 13. For this project funds were authorized to extend technical and clerical services to the New York Public Library, the cooperating sponsor. The semi-annual report delineates the scope of the project and discusses the work proposed and completed in relation to the aim. Finally, memoranda from branch and division heads in 1939 are included.

The reports on activities of relief workers in the Queens Borough Public Library describe projects under the auspices of the federal government's Civil Works Administration and Civil Works Service and the City of New York's Emergency Work Bureau and its successor bureaus. These reports, January through April of 1934 provide information on the assignments of relief workers and building construction activities for the Queens Borough Public Library, the cooperating sponsor. Noteworthy is the cover illustration for the April report, "The Talking Book," which depicts the availability of library volumes for the blind in the form of the combination phonograph and radio machine.

Two final documents in this collection is the American Library Association's "Proposed Work Relief Projects for Individual Libraries or...State-wide..." (1935) and ALA's Committee on Administration's report to the Queens Library staff (1934).
*N.B. Project Report #165-97-6999 for July 1, 1936-December 30, 1936 states that funds for it were approved for the same purposes as described in project #65-97-290.