

# Blazing the Way: The WPA Library Service Demonstration Project in South Carolina

*Robert M. Gorman*

In 1935 the Works Progress Administration (WPA) began sponsoring nationwide library demonstration projects designed to encourage the development of library service to underserved populations while simultaneously providing temporary work for the unemployed. This paper reviews the WPA's statewide library program in South Carolina and analyzes the impact it had on public library development in the state. Prior to the WPA, South Carolina had no funded state library agency and only three of forty-six counties had countywide library service. Although the statewide library demonstration project was not entirely successful in all of its activities, the WPA project greatly improved public library conditions in the state. Libraries were started or expanded, bookmobile service was initiated, and library service to rural and African-American citizens was enhanced. When the project ended in 1943, South Carolina had twelve publicly funded county libraries, one regional library, and a funded state library agency.

The Works Progress Administration, later renamed the Work Projects Administration, was the largest emergency work relief program in the history of the United States. Created by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1935 at the height of the Great Depression, the WPA, a program steeped in controversy from the very beginning, was designed to provide temporary work for millions of Americans left unemployed by the nation's economic collapse. Both men and women were employed in hundreds of projects ranging from road and building construction to education, art, and music programs. Of direct benefit to libraries was a series of library demonstration projects sponsored by the WPA. The nature of these projects varied from state to state, but most were concerned with extending library service to rural and other underserved populations and with providing library workers for clerical, cataloging, indexing, circulation, book binding and repair, and bookmobile activities. Although small in comparison to other WPA activities, the library demonstration projects had an enormous impact on libraries.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps in no case was this truer than in the South, especially in South Carolina.

The South, traditionally one of the poorest regions of the country, was devastated by the Great Depression. Referred to by President Roosevelt as "the nation's No. 1 economic problem," the predominantly rural and agricultural South saw its per capita income decline to \$252 in 1933, the lowest in the nation. The economic conditions were aggravated by deep racial divisions in the region. Nearly two-thirds of all African Americans lived in the South, comprising nearly a third of the population of the region. Customs, practices, and laws dictating separate, but not equal, facilities and services for Blacks and Whites placed additional financial burdens on an area with very limited economic resources.<sup>2</sup>

The status of libraries in the South reflected these conditions. A 1935 study found that two-thirds of the population in the thirteen southern states had no public library service. Expenditures for southern libraries averaged eight cents per capita, compared to a national average of thirty-seven cents. Library conditions in South Carolina were among the worst in the nation. At the beginning of the Depression, the state ranked forty-sixth nationally in library development. A 1933 report on South Carolina libraries revealed that of the state's forty-six counties, only three, Greenville, Richland (Columbia), and Charleston, had libraries that came even close to providing countywide service.<sup>3</sup>

Service for the state's African-American citizens was almost nonexistent. Of the fifty-six public libraries in South Carolina, only four offered service to Blacks. Although private activities such as the Faith Cabin library movement, which created a number of small libraries comprised of donated books, attempted to address these gross inequalities, only 15 percent of the state's African-American population received any type of library service. One critic contended that these library inequities "nullif[ied] the Negro's full civil rights which the Fourteenth Amendment attempted to guarantee him."<sup>4</sup>

As daunting as library conditions were in South Carolina prior to 1935 when the WPA library demonstration project began in the state, there were some positive signs for the development of public library service. Beginning in 1915 the South Carolina General Assembly passed a series of library acts that eventually enabled the creation of countywide and regional (multicounty) library systems. A related act in 1929 created the South Carolina State Public Library Association, governed by a five-member state library board appointed by the governor. South Carolina was the last of the southern states to create such a state library agency. Sadly, the general assembly did not fund the new agency, the only southern state other than Alabama not to do so.<sup>5</sup>

In 1930 money was secured from a private educational foundation, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, to hire Parmalee Cheves, a professional librarian, as the first South Carolina state library field agent. Cheves served

in this capacity, promoting public library development throughout the state, until funding ended in March 1932. She worked with Winthrop College professor and library advocate Mary Frayser to conduct a survey of school and public libraries. The resulting report provided the first accurate picture of the deplorable status of library resources in the state. This document also served as the basis for future library development.<sup>6</sup>

Other events in the state lay the foundation for the significant library development that would occur under the WPA. In 1929 the Julius Rosenwald Fund, as part of its commitment to educational development for both Blacks and Whites in the South, funded eleven public library demonstration projects in seven southern states. These projects were to extend library service to Black as well as White citizens. Two counties in South Carolina, Richland (Columbia) and Charleston, received funding under this project. The two projects in South Carolina were of limited success but did demonstrate the need and desire for expanded public library service in the state and did increase service for African Americans.<sup>7</sup>

Public sentiment in favor of public library development in the state was growing. A Citizens' Library Association was formed in 1930 to stimulate interest and support for public libraries. In early 1934 Clemson College president Dr. E. W. Sikes, the state library board, and the South Carolina Library Association convened the first Citizen's Conference to discuss the status of libraries in the state. The conferees were unsuccessful in their primary objective of securing public funding for the state library agency, but they did serve as a core of library advocates and leaders within South Carolina.<sup>8</sup>

By 1935, then, the stage was set for a significant improvement in the status of public library service in South Carolina. All that was needed was a galvanizing force that could provide funds and central leadership. That force would come from the WPA.

## **The Organization of the WPA**

Although it was the largest and most significant of the New Deal work relief efforts, the WPA was not the first federal program to impact library development and extension. Early Roosevelt relief programs such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Civil Works Service (CWS) provided limited funding of library projects. These hastily planned and executed programs did not result in significant public library development, but they established the precedent of federal funding of library activities. They paved the way for the WPA, a much better organized and longer

term program, and aroused the library community to the possibilities of federal involvement with libraries.<sup>9</sup>

By 1934 it became abundantly clear to many in the Roosevelt administration that stop-gap work relief programs such as FERA, CWA, and CWS were insufficient to meet the economic crisis. Many believed public assistance would need to continue indefinitely. As a result, more durable solutions had to be found.<sup>10</sup> The creation of the WPA was a partial answer to these concerns.

Administratively, the WPA functioned at four levels: the central administration in Washington, regional offices throughout the nation, state administrations, and district offices within each state. The head of the WPA was the Commissioner of Work Projects. Within the central administration were a number of divisions concerned with such WPA operations as training, employment, construction projects, and service projects. The state offices were responsible for the overall supervision and administration of the WPA program within the state and for securing federal approval and funding for work projects within the state. The state district offices were responsible for direct management and oversight of WPA projects and for working with local sponsors.

All work projects receiving WPA funding had to be formally proposed and sponsored by a public agency. Although many projects were sponsored by state agencies, the majority were sponsored by county or city governments and their agencies. Sponsors agreed to pay a portion of project costs and to complete a project if for any reason it was not completed by the WPA. All completed projects belonged to the sponsor.

### **The National Library Service Program**

The WPA's Division of Service Projects, originally called the Division of Women's and Professional Projects, was responsible for work projects employing clerical, professional, white-collar, and women workers. The national library service project was part of this division. Initially, there was no formal "unit" or "section," or official administrator at the national level to coordinate and direct library projects under the WPA. The WPA did bring in two librarians as temporary advisors on library projects and sought the advice of the American Library Association concerning activities appropriate for funding.<sup>11</sup> Edward Chapman, who became director of what was to be the Library Service Section, observed that during this early stage, library projects were "a multitude of separate and unrelated local projects approved only for the purpose of giving employment to needy people and without specific reference to acceptable operating plans."<sup>12</sup>

By 1938 it was apparent that a more defined structure and organization was needed to better coordinate library activities and to ensure greater efficiency and effectiveness. In February 1938 the Library Service Section was set up under the Division of Service Projects. Chapman, who had been the assistant librarian at the Indiana State Library, was appointed the first, and only, director of this section.

The primary functions of the Library Service Section, according to Chapman, included "coordination of all WPA project activity in libraries; the designation of governing objectives and policies[;] and the preparation of official operating instructions and technical procedures." Furthermore, the section's field services provided a "supply of professional advice and interpretation of administrative requirements to project supervisors, sponsors and other qualified persons participating in project operation."<sup>13</sup>

Even under this more formalized structure, the various state library projects remained autonomous. As long as the states met WPA guidelines and requirements governing employment, expenditures, and related matters, the states were free to define their own library service activities. The numerous statewide library projects "adapt[ed] policies and procedures set forth by the Library Service Section, at the Federal level," Chapman wrote, "not as operating controls *per se* but as uniform approaches to a common job with common problems and objectives."<sup>14</sup>

Library projects funded under the WPA had two overriding and often conflicting goals. First and foremost, library projects, as with all WPA-funded activities, had to provide work for the unemployed. Any gains in library service achieved as a result of these projects, Chapman surmised, "had to be by-products of employing people as a primary function."<sup>15</sup> Over 90 percent of the workers, mostly semi-skilled and unskilled laborers, had to come from the public relief rolls. Only 5 percent of all employees on library projects could be professional supervisory personnel not on relief.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, most workers supplied by the WPA did not have a formal library education. Even with the on-the-job training provided by the WPA, these workers would never be able to provide the level and quality of service that could be provided by professional librarians. They were unfamiliar with library operations and untrained in the principles of librarianship. From a library development perspective, this requirement was one of the weakest aspects of the WPA library demonstration project.

After providing employment, the secondary goal of the library projects was to demonstrate "logical plans of service over wide areas to the end that permanent development, through the stimulation of local and state funds for library service, [would] result."<sup>17</sup> To achieve this end, projects

were first to extend library services, primarily to rural areas, and then to enhance existing services and resources.<sup>18</sup>

As was the case with the Rosenwald program, WPA library projects were to be “demonstration” in nature. They were not to be a substitution for permanent library service funded by local and state sources. Chapman believed the “project demonstration unit merely was a device, strictly temporary in nature, to stimulate local responsibility for the demonstrated service.”<sup>19</sup> Nor were they to compete with existing programs and services. “The statewide service project is a means to an end and not the end itself. There is no desire on the part of the state Works Project [sic] Administrations,” Chapman argued, “to set up an independent or rival system of service . . .”<sup>20</sup>

### **The South Carolina Library Service Demonstration Project**

The heart and soul of WPA library activities were the multitude of statewide library service demonstration projects throughout the country. By the end of 1939 forty such projects were in operation. Two more came into existence before the WPA ceased activities in 1943. Only Maine, Delaware, Utah, Nevada, New Mexico, and Idaho failed to initiate statewide projects.<sup>21</sup>

Although in most cases WPA library project funds were distributed in proportion to the total population of the individual states, South Carolina actually received far greater project assistance than it would have received based strictly on its population.<sup>22</sup> This distribution, however, was not based on the library needs of the individual states, with those states with the most need getting the greater proportion of the funding. In fact, when viewed regionally, the Southeast received only a fourth of total library assistance provided by the WPA, even though more than a third of the nation’s unserved population resided in this region. Based on a “Suggested Federal Grants” for libraries formula developed in 1938, the Southeast received nearly \$5,000,000 less than it should have under the formula, while the Midwest received over \$4,000,000 more, and the Northeast nearly \$2,000,000 more. Although the distribution of assistance was inequitable from a library need perspective, it did reflect the work relief mission of the WPA. Like other WPA projects, assistance under the library demonstration project was distributed mainly on differences in population and work relief loads.<sup>23</sup>

The WPA began operations in South Carolina on 31 August 1935, when thirty-one projects employing 1,734 persons were initiated under the direction of Lawrence M. Pinckney, South Carolina WPA State Administrator. Within six months, 36,531 persons were employed on WPA projects, 96.6 percent of whom were from the public relief rolls.<sup>24</sup>

While most South Carolinians seemed to readily accept WPA assistance in the state,<sup>25</sup> such was not always the case in other areas of the South. In Georgia, for example, many residents viewed New Deal programs like the WPA with suspicion, seeing them as a threat to states' rights and the racial conventions of the region. This opposition was most pronounced during the governorship of Eugene Talmadge (1933–1937, 1941–1943), a virulent racist and vocal opponent of Franklin Roosevelt. Even some southern librarians, in spite of their philosophical support of federal aid, resented the intrusion of outsiders into their domains or feared the new federal library program might somehow damage the hard-won gains they had so recently achieved in their states. To assuage these concerns, WPA library officials attempted to work closely with state library agencies and with local library leaders.<sup>26</sup>

Columbia was the site of state headquarters for WPA operations in South Carolina. Pinckney divided the state into four districts: Charleston, covering nine counties; Columbia, with fourteen counties; Florence, encompassing nine counties; and Greenville, comprising fourteen counties. Each district was supervised by a district manager. Initially, Pinckney created four divisions within the state office in the areas of operations, finance, employment, and women's work. Margaret Davies was appointed head of the Women's and Professional Projects Division, the unit responsible for library and other service and professional projects. Each of the district offices also had the same divisions.<sup>27</sup>

State library leaders immediately began to lobby for projects under the WPA. Shortly after her appointment as head of the Women's Division, Davies was contacted by Fanny Taber, librarian at the Greenville Public Library and then president of the South Carolina Library Association, about possible WPA funding for library activities. Davies, being favorably disposed toward the idea, asked Taber to recommend someone to organize and help initiate library projects throughout the state. Taber suggested Ida Belle Entrekin, a professional member of the Greenville Public Library staff.<sup>28</sup> Entrekin, noted for "her tact, professional ability, and her sympathy for WPA objectives,"<sup>29</sup> traveled throughout the state, visiting with county leaders and influential citizens and organizing citizens library organizations. Within six weeks of her appointment in the fall of 1935, she had established her office and laid the foundation for library projects across the state.

The primary goals of the library service demonstration project were established early on, remaining essentially the same throughout the existence of the program. First, according to Entrekin, the project was "to extend the service of school and public libraries already established." Second, the project was "to give demonstrations of books service in areas hitherto unprovided for with the expectation that such areas will

continue the service with adequate financial support." And finally, the project was "to crystalize library sentiment in the state and to develop the individual workers on the projects."<sup>30</sup>

Public support on behalf of the WPA's library efforts was essential if the library service demonstration project was to achieve its most important goal, the creation of permanent, publicly funded county libraries in South Carolina. "Thus the purpose of the demonstration," Edward Chapman concluded,

is to so prove the need and value of library service to local taxpayers that at the end of the demonstration period they will vote to retain the demonstrated service as a permanent, local, public utility; the demonstration is to help people to decide whether or not library service has a place in their everyday living.<sup>31</sup>

To this end, the WPA staff worked tirelessly in arousing public interest and creating citizens' library organizations.

Typically, project staff visited the counties to determine whether interest and support existed for new or expanded library service. Local librarians, organizations, and other interested individuals were contacted. If there was interest in a project, a sponsor was found and plans were developed. All WPA-funded projects had to have public sponsors who agreed to share some of the costs involved. Since South Carolina lacked a funded state library agency, local county boards of education often sponsored the projects under the authority of the State Department of Education. Other local sponsors included local library boards and organizations such as the Grange, the Farm Women's Council, women's clubs, citizens' library committees, and other civic clubs.<sup>32</sup>

A contractual agreement was written outlining the responsibilities and obligations of the parties involved. The WPA supplied personnel and some books; the sponsors provided suitable quarters for the service, supplies and equipment, and funds for the purchase of books and magazines. Other items such as the rental of bookmobiles might also be part of the agreement. Usually the agreement was for a specified period of time, often one year.<sup>33</sup>

WPA personnel also assisted with the formation of citizens' library associations within the counties. These groups were not designed to replace local friends of the library organizations. Rather, Chapman directed, they were formed to

recognize and publicize the need for adequate and permanent library service; be temporarily responsible for the partial financial support of the demonstration and make a concentrated effort



toward securing local tax support; and further assist by expressing and representing particular community library service needs, and by securing community participation.<sup>34</sup>

A second Citizens' Conference on the Library Needs of South Carolina, held at the University of South Carolina on 8 January 1936, complemented the work of WPA personnel in arousing public interest in library development. Private citizens, educators, and librarians gathered together to discuss library conditions within the state, the activities of the WPA library service demonstration project, and steps needed to improve library service. The conference concluded with a resolution urging the general assembly to provide the state library board with funds "sufficient for it to carry out its purpose of stimulating public library service for all of the people of the state."<sup>35</sup> Although the resolution did not result in state funding for the state library board, the conference did help keep the issue of library development before the public.

By 1 March 1936, \$188,000 was secured from the WPA for book binding and library extension work in South Carolina. Sponsors provided \$15,275 in cash in addition to in-kind contributions. Because the Department of Education was the state's official sponsor of the library demonstration project, much of this and future funding was used for school library projects as well as public library projects.<sup>36</sup> Although many of the early projects involved the repair and binding of school textbooks and library books, a concerted effort was made to initiate countywide library service throughout the state. By early 1936 public, subscription, and private libraries in twenty-two counties were sharing books, magazines, and other materials as the first step toward full county service.<sup>37</sup>

The backbone of countywide service in South Carolina was the library bookmobile, a truck converted to carry library materials to rural residents of the state. The WPA agreed early on to rent cabs and chassis for a county if the local project sponsor supplied the body. This rental agreement was usually for no more than one year, after which the county was expected to assume the full cost of the truck. These trucks traveled across the back roads of the state. They would leave books at deposit drops, usually a school, or stop at crossroads, community centers, grocery stores, filling stations, and other gathering spots. By mid-1937 the WPA library project's twenty-three bookmobiles stopped at over 1,200 stations.<sup>38</sup> It was unquestionably one of the most popular features of the library service demonstration project.

By early 1936, 734 women were employed by the WPA in various library-related projects ranging from book binding and repair to assisting with circulation services, staffing longer library hours, compiling bibliographies and lists of special materials, and organizing story hours for

*On May 18, 1937, Daisy Browning, driver (l), and LaVerne McLane, bookmobile librarian (r), prepare for the maiden journey of the WPA-funded Chester County Library bookmobile. Courtesy of Nichols' Studio of Chester and the Chester County Library.*

children. These women were sometimes assigned duties such as opening and staffing branch reading rooms.<sup>39</sup>

One of the more important programs initiated in the early days of the library demonstration project was a cooperative cataloging service for school libraries. The service was begun in early 1936 in order to help the high schools of the state meet accreditation standards mandated by the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges, the regional accrediting body. South Carolina high schools were directed to have their library collections cataloged by 1941. A cataloging unit was set up at the University of South Carolina under the direction of professionally trained staff. The State Department of Education supplied the materials; the WPA funded the staff.<sup>40</sup>

Titles cataloged were limited to specific standard lists approved by the State Department of Education. This requirement had the effect of forcing schools to weed their collections of outdated and questionable materials and to purchase materials recognized for their quality. The unit maintained a catalog of all items processed, listing on the back of each card the school or schools owning that item. Thus the nucleus of a union catalog for the state was developed. Libraries unable to answer reference questions locally sent them to this unit to be handled.<sup>41</sup>

This service was so well organized and executed that it served as an example for other states wishing to develop their own cataloging project. In fact, the South Carolina experience was the basis for a technical circular on centralized cataloging services issued by the Library Service Section in Washington.<sup>42</sup>

The cataloging unit also was responsible for processing books purchased by the state WPA for demonstration purposes. These books formed a core collection of materials used by the library service demonstration project to stimulate interest in and support for local library collections. When a project was begun in a county, a portion of these books was loaned to the county on a temporary basis. They were not a substitute for local collections; rather, they were to capture the public's imagination on the importance and need for good library collections. These materials were moved from county to county as the local community either began funding libraries on their own or letting the project expire. By 1943 there were over 25,000 books in this collection.<sup>43</sup>

### **Restructuring the Library Project**

On 1 January 1938 all the WPA-funded library projects were brought together administratively into one statewide project. Prior to this date, projects operated on the county level with little concern for duplication of effort. It quickly became apparent that a more formal structure and tighter organization at the state level was needed to maximize efficiency and effectiveness and to provide a better sense of direction and purpose. Emphasis was placed on worker training and the development of statewide standards of service.

Under the new statewide structure, the state library supervisor was administratively and technically responsible for all aspects of the project and for the worker training program. Agnes Crawford was the state library supervisor when the restructuring took place. Crawford, who earlier had conducted a survey on library work with African Americans in South Carolina, had been appointed state supervisor when Ida Belle Entekin resigned in mid-1937. Crawford was assisted by the four district supervisors who were administratively responsible for library activities within their districts. Each district had four assistant district supervisors who handled the technical aspects of book repair and binding, publicity, extension service, and training workers in the use of library materials and resources. Each county was headed by a unit supervisor, later called area supervisor, administratively responsible for the county activities. The assistant district supervisors and the unit supervisors were directly

responsible for the individual worker. Because of restrictions on the number of non-relief personnel allowed, many of these supervisory positions were either unfilled, or the same individual served in two positions at once.<sup>44</sup> Consequently, the statewide project was limited in the amount of supervision and direction it could provide the local operations.

To improve the skills and work habits of WPA library employees, most of them unskilled or semi-skilled female workers, and to help prepare them for eventual private employment, the statewide library project mandated formal monthly training courses. According to Crawford, these training courses were designed

first to improve his [the worker's] moral[e], that is to teach self-assurance and self-reliance; second, to teach thriftiness in the use of tools and in the use of free and inexpensive material; third, to teach the correct use of tools used in daily work; and lastly, simple hygiene or neatness in person and work.<sup>45</sup>

Library topics included arrangement and classification, circulation systems, basic reference tools, the card catalog, publicity, bookmobile service and operation, and the mending and binding of all types of library materials.<sup>46</sup> Since the library projects were dependent upon these workers, training them was a perennial concern. In counties with existing programs, many of these individuals worked under the supervision of a trained librarian. In counties without a librarian, these women worked under the direction of library project personnel. In no case were these workers to replace existing employees.<sup>47</sup>

According to reports from the field, these training courses did result in improved skills and a greater satisfaction with the individual worker. Because the WPA limited employment to eighteen months in most cases, the constant turnover in workers resulted in some inefficiency and loss of continuity that the training program helped address. The library project had only limited success in placing workers in private employment.<sup>48</sup>

### **Patterns of Library Development**

By 1938 the basic structure and direction of the South Carolina library service demonstration project was set. The orientation was toward countywide library service for every county in the state. By mid-year, thirty-two countywide projects were in operation. Bookmobiles were making nearly 1,900 stops serving 62,529 borrowers. Circulation from these trucks was nearly one million items, averaging over fifteen books per patron. The bookmobile experiment was so successful that nineteen of

the twenty-eight counties using the service assumed full funding for the trucks.<sup>49</sup>

In counties with existing libraries, the WPA supplied workers to extend service to the entire county and to free permanent staff from more routine duties. These workers were used to extend hours, to assist with clerical duties, to help with bookmobile operations, and to perform other support duties. In Charleston, for example, WPA workers were used to open new branch libraries that were later run by employees of the Charleston Free Library. The project also maintained a mending unit to repair books for the public and school libraries of Charleston, as it did with many other county library projects throughout the state.<sup>50</sup> WPA employees were used in a similar capacity in many school libraries.

In counties with little or no existing public library service, the WPA assistance was more basic. WPA library-trained workers often performed the many functions usually handled by professional librarians. A case in point was in Chesterfield County in the northeastern part of the state. The Chesterfield County Board of Commissioners and the local Council of Farm Women sponsored the demonstration project which began operation in 1937. A bookmobile was rented with WPA assistance, and reading rooms were established in the towns of Chesterfield, Cheraw, Pageland, McBee, Ruby, and Jefferson. In 1938 the county assumed full operation of the bookmobile.<sup>51</sup>

At the same time, the town of Cheraw in Chesterfield County asked for assistance in opening its own public library. A small subscription library, which had closed in July 1938 due to lack of funding, served as the basis for the new public library. The building in which it was housed was in need of repair, the books were worn and damaged, and there were few furnishings. Two civic organizations agreed to establish a book fund, the town council provided money for the repair of the books and building and provided equipment and furnishings, and the WPA supplied a deposit from its own book collection, cleaned and repaired the existing collection, processed the new books, and assigned two workers to run the library. The Cheraw Public Library opened its doors on 4 November 1938. Within a short period, the library registered over 700 borrowers and circulated over 2,000 volumes a month.<sup>52</sup>

A third pattern of library development in South Carolina emerged in early 1937 when libraries in Colleton and Dorchester counties combined to share library services, thus becoming the first regional library system in the state. This event underscored the growing realization among library leaders that it made better financial and administrative sense for small counties in a poor rural state like South Carolina to share limited resources rather than attempt to maintain individual county libraries.

Although a relatively new concept of library governance, the regional library idea was not unknown in South Carolina or the South as a whole. An American Library Association preconference meeting of southern library leaders in New Orleans in 1932 endorsed the regional library structure, and Tommie Dora Barker, the ALA's southern field representative, was active in promoting the concept. In the mid-1930s, regional libraries were created in Tennessee under the aegis of the Tennessee Valley Authority and the direction of Mary Rothrock, the TVA library coordinator. These projects were a good example of the regional concept in practice. In fact, by the mid-1930s ten of thirteen southern state library plans, including South Carolina's, supported the creation of regional libraries.<sup>53</sup> South Carolina had made legal provision for regional libraries with a change in the state library law in 1934. All of these events were part of a national trend that began earlier in the century with a move away from municipal libraries to countywide libraries as more effective and efficient. Regional libraries were the next logical step in this development. Still, the county form of government was near and dear to the hearts of most southerners.<sup>54</sup> As a result, regional libraries that crossed county lines would be more the exception than the rule, at least for the time being.

The Colleton-Dorchester library was governed by an eight-person board comprised of four representatives from each county. Bookmobile service was begun in April 1938 when the WPA loaned the system a confiscated automobile. It initially made stops at fifty stations in the two counties. With the assistance of the WPA, a regular bookmobile was acquired in late 1939.<sup>55</sup> Service to African-American citizens in the two counties was begun for the first time as a result of WPA support and the donation of 5,000 books in late 1938 and early 1939 by Harvey D. Kelsey, a Black philanthropist from Washington, D.C. The WPA processed the materials and made them available through the Black schools in the bicounty area.<sup>56</sup>

This first state experiment in regional library service was never adequately supported by the local communities. In 1939 each county appropriated only \$300 for library services. When WPA funding ceased, Dorchester County withdrew from the system. Although the regional library system did not survive, it did serve as an early example of how smaller counties could share limited resources and funds.<sup>57</sup>

A second, better planned multicounty system began in November 1940 when the counties of Georgetown, Horry, and Marion formed a tricounty regional library. A tricounty library board was created, and a formal agreement between the WPA and the three counties was drafted. The counties agreed to share existing library resources, to provide \$1,000 each for the purchase of books, and to work toward the development of

permanent regional library service. The WPA lent the project 1,200 books, provided a trained librarian to supervise the regional library, employed workers, and assisted with the rental of a third bookmobile to serve the three counties.<sup>58</sup>

Unfortunately, this second experiment in regional library service did not survive either. The project suffered greatly when Margaret D. Hedbring, the WPA-funded librarian in charge of the regional library, resigned in June 1941. Because a 37 percent reduction in the quota of WPA workers in the statewide library project had been implemented, a replacement could not be secured. Eventually the system was dissolved when the WPA ceased funding in 1942.<sup>59</sup>

A third, ultimately successful regional system was begun in March 1941 when Allendale, Hampton, and Barnwell counties agreed to institute cooperative library service. The WPA supplied workers, books, and a bookmobile. When WPA funding ceased the following year, Barnwell County withdrew from the system. However, Allendale and Hampton continued to work together, mainly on the strength of a small appropriation from each county and the dedication and volunteer help of interested citizens in the area. In 1947 Jasper County joined with Allendale and Hampton to form a tricounty regional library. Thus, one of the three attempts by the WPA to develop regional library service did eventually become permanent.<sup>60</sup>

Finally, in addition to supporting the development of county and regional library service, the WPA in South Carolina made a concerted, if limited, effort to provide expanded service to Black residents. Early in the project, the WPA trained and placed African-American workers as library aides in a number of Black schools in the state. In 1937 it funded the first bookmobile to provide direct service entirely to Blacks. Operating in Greenville County, this truck was stocked with books loaned by the WPA. A second WPA-funded bookmobile served Blacks in Calhoun County through deposits left at Black schools and other sites throughout the county. This service was supplemented by an African-American teacher who delivered books in her car. By mid-1938 the WPA reported a circulation of 158,528 books to 5,819 African-Americans.<sup>61</sup>

The WPA also established separate libraries and branches of White public libraries to serve African Americans. Agnes Crawford found the WPA's efforts in this arena to be "hard up-hill work in South Carolina. It is not only because of the high percentage of illiterates within this race, but also due to lack of real leadership within the communities that can afford a library."<sup>62</sup> In other words, most Whites were not interested in funding efforts to expand library service to Blacks. In spite of these roadblocks, by 1939 the WPA supported twenty-nine separate libraries, most in Black schools which also served the general Black public.

African-American library workers operated twenty-four of these libraries. Out of a bookstock of 32,238 titles available for use by Blacks (as compared to 252,387 titles for Whites), 20,022 African Americans borrowed 157,110 items.<sup>63</sup> By early 1940 thirty WPA-funded libraries made 42,893 titles available to Blacks, an increase of 10,000 titles over the previous year. Unfortunately, quota reductions in the number of WPA workers allowed reduced the number of libraries to nineteen later in 1940.<sup>64</sup>

In no sense were WPA library activities in support of Blacks equivalent to that provided to Whites. The number of book titles available was considerably smaller, and the number of projects funded significantly fewer. In some cases, as with the Tri-County Regional Library experiment in Horry, Marion, and Georgetown counties, the WPA avoided the issue of library service for Blacks because of White opposition.<sup>65</sup> Still, library service for Blacks under the WPA was a considerable improvement over what had existed previously, and WPA efforts did pave the way for future development.

### **Activities of the State Library Board**

Because the South Carolina State Library Board was not funded, the WPA statewide library service demonstration project during its existence was to all intents and purposes *the* state library agency for South Carolina. Only it had the financial resources and staffing to carry out the duties performed by library agencies in other states. This situation did not mean, however, that the state library board was inactive.

Marion Wright, attorney and chair of the state library board, and library activists such as Mary Frayser sacrificed time and money to promote public libraries. They were active in speaking to civic and educational organizations and in lobbying the general assembly for state funding for public libraries. In late 1938 the board secured a grant from the state to hire Dr. Helen Stewart, a renowned Canadian librarian and acting director of the library school at Louisiana State University, to assist in the reorganization of the Citizens' Library Association formed in 1930.

The impetus for Dr. Stewart's consultation was a series of reports issued by President Roosevelt's Advisory Committee on Education. These reports covered all aspects of education, including library service, and focused on the need for federal aid to education. As a result, several bills for federal aid to schools and libraries were introduced in the U.S. Congress in 1938. One aspect of this proposed legislation was that a state would receive federal aid for libraries only if it had a funded state library agency. Thus, Dr. Stewart's visit was designed to achieve this end by arousing public support through the Citizens' Library Association.<sup>66</sup>



The state library board organized a meeting on 16 November 1938 to discuss the status of libraries in the state, the role of the Citizens' Library Association in library development, and the possible goals and activities of a funded state library board. Dr. Stewart spoke at this meeting. The Citizens' Library Association was reorganized with a state committee at the head. Committees at the county and local levels were also created to involve as many local citizens as possible. Dr. Stewart was charged with visiting each county in the state to help organize these county committees. She assisted in the development of twenty-eight county citizens' library organizations.<sup>67</sup> Mary Frayser identified the goals of the Citizens' Library Association as being threefold: "to arouse and mobilize public opinion in support of a state-wide program sponsored by the State; to take advantage of the opportunity for federal aid; to work out with the State Board, plans for each local district."<sup>68</sup>

As a consultant, Dr. Stewart advocated *regional* tax-supported public libraries as the most cost effective and efficient structure, an indication of the growing recognition that in the mostly rural South a multicounty structure was a more financially viable alternative for many of the smaller counties. She recommended that the state library board, if funded, should perform three functions initially. First, it should acquire a collection of books which would be loaned to local libraries to supplement their collections. Second, the state library board should create a union catalog of the library resources in the state to allow libraries to locate and lend books to each other. Finally, the board should assist local libraries through grants and library planning.<sup>69</sup>

Unfortunately, none of the proposed federal aid for education and libraries was funded by Congress. Nor was the South Carolina Citizens' Library Association successful in securing funding for the state library board. Dr. Stewart's ideas would not be implemented until a state-supported library board was created years later. In the meantime, interested parties such as the Citizens' Library Association continued to serve as advocates for public library development.

### **Zenith of the Statewide Library Project**

In 1939 Agnes Crawford was appointed as an assistant director of the Library Service Section in Washington, D.C. Roberta O'Hear Bonnoit, a librarian at the Charleston Free Library, was selected as her successor to head the South Carolina statewide library service demonstration project. By this time, the project had achieved some very real successes. Six former WPA county demonstration projects (Aiken, Darlington, Greenwood, Lancaster, Orangeburg, and Sumter counties) now had permanent tax-supported county libraries, bringing the total number of

county library systems to ten. In addition, the statewide project was providing assistance in all but four of the state's forty-six counties. The cooperative cataloging service had cataloged thousands of school library books in its effort to help the high schools meet accreditation standards. Seventy high schools had availed themselves of this service. The number of registered borrowers had reached 189,040, nearly twice the number as had registered the year before. These patrons borrowed over 4,000,000 books, accounting for an average circulation of 20.6 items per borrower.<sup>70</sup>

Although library service in South Carolina continued to rank among the lowest in the country, a committee of educators appointed to review WPA education programs statewide found the library service demonstration project to be one of the most successful WPA activities being conducted in the state. "Probably no other project of the W.P.A. will, in the long run, be of so much benefit in raising the educational and cultural level of so many people as the Statewide library project," the committee concluded. "These effects promise to a great extent to be enduring." The committee found that the WPA had "blazed the way" in demonstrating the importance and effectiveness of countywide public library service in South Carolina.<sup>71</sup>

Early 1940 saw the statewide project at its height. Nancy C. Blair, head of the county department of the Richland County Public Library, was appointed state supervisor of the project when Roberta Bonnoit resigned to become a WPA district supervisor in charge of extension services. Blair remained as supervisor until 1943, when the WPA ceased operations. Seven professional librarians and thirteen district and assistant district supervisors provided supervision and training throughout the state. There were also up to twenty unit or area supervisors in charge at the county level. Manuals on library procedures, extension services, publicity, and book repair had been written to ensure uniformity of service and policies.<sup>72</sup> There were now eleven counties with permanent publicly funded county library systems. The WPA funded twenty-five projects in the remaining thirty-five counties. Cash contributions from sponsors had reached a high of \$66,367, over four times what it had been in 1936. Thirty-one bookmobiles were totally owned by the counties; the statewide project assisted in the rental of just two.<sup>73</sup>

In addition to its cataloging service, in February 1940 the statewide project began offering a book selection service for libraries throughout the state. Interested librarians indicated the amount of funds they wanted to spend for books and how they wanted it allocated between fiction and non-fiction and adult and children's books. The project prepared a list of appropriate titles chosen from various standard book

*Nancy Blair, state supervisor of the South Carolina library project (1940-1943), inspects a model of the bookmobile used to provide countywide library service in South Carolina. Courtesy of the South Carolina State Library.*

selection aids. The requesting library used the lists to assist with book selection. In its first six months, the project compiled lists for eleven public libraries.<sup>74</sup>

The statewide project in South Carolina gained attention within the library profession in mid-1940 when an exhibit on its activities and progress was prepared and displayed at the American Library Association annual conference held in Cincinnati, Ohio. "W.P.A. Rural Library Service in South Carolina," a motion picture about project activities and services in the state, and a miniature bookmobile were included in the exhibit. The film was later loaned to other states.<sup>75</sup>

## **End of the WPA**

By 1940 the WPA nationwide was beginning its final phase. A growing improvement in the U.S. economy resulted in reduced appropriations for WPA activities and a drastic reduction in worker quotas. At the same time, the nation became more concerned with national defense issues as war in Europe and Asia broke out. The WPA began a shift toward defense-related projects. South Carolina was not immune to these changes.

By June 1941, 63.4 percent of all WPA employment in the state was for national defense projects.<sup>76</sup>

Reductions in the number of WPA workers allowed had a direct impact on the statewide library service demonstration project. The project responded by curtailing some activities and consolidating some of its operations. Book repair and binding services were centralized in the counties to reduce duplication and improve the quality of work performed. In most counties there was now only one mending unit; in some cases a unit served more than one county.<sup>77</sup>

A visit by Agnes Crawford, in her capacity as an assistant director of the Library Service Section, resulted in a recommendation for further consolidation and centralization of the statewide library project. Crawford found the project to be "hampered by the lack of professional supervisors on a district level" and by a reduction in WPA library workers. To address these reductions, Crawford recommended a reorganization of the statewide library project administrative structure so that the project would require fewer supervisors, a further centralization of the book repair program so that there would be just one unit per district, and "the culmination of a few of the areawide demonstration systems now being operated by the project."<sup>78</sup>

America's entry into the World War II marked the beginning of the end of the WPA. With the economy booming because of war-related industrial expansion, thousands of men being drafted into the military, and federal funds being directed toward defense activities, the WPA's funding and reasons for existence disappeared. Although the WPA continued to fund library activities, most of its projects from 1942 onward were redirected toward the war effort. The national WPA library program was absorbed into a larger consolidated project known as War Services. In South Carolina only those libraries in defense areas, such as those with military bases, received WPA support. Demonstration projects in seventeen counties were discontinued.<sup>79</sup>

Finally, on 4 December 1942 President Roosevelt gave the WPA an "honorable discharge," decreeing that WPA activities would cease as of 30 June 1943.<sup>80</sup> When word came from Washington that the South Carolina statewide library project would end operations on 1 March 1943, state library leaders worried about the future of the library programs begun under the WPA. South Carolina had become very dependent upon the WPA for funding and directing basic library operations. When the project came to a close, South Carolina was the only southern state and one of just two states nationwide without a state-funded library agency. Unless this situation changed, the progress and success in library service achieved under the WPA would disappear.

## Funding the State Library Board

With the end of the WPA in sight, library advocates in South Carolina redoubled their efforts to secure funding for the state library board. Throughout the winter of 1942–1943, individuals and state organizations such as the Federation of Women’s Clubs, the Congress of Parent-Teachers, and the Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs, contacted and met with public officials responsible for appropriating state funds. Early in 1943 their efforts paid off. The State Budget Commission allocated \$1,000 for the extension work of the state library board. At the same time, the general assembly approved \$2,000 from the State Emergency Fund to support the state library board through the remainder of the fiscal year ending 30 June 1943. Finally in the spring of 1943, the general assembly appropriated \$15,000 for use by the state library board during fiscal year 1943–1944. The board itself was reorganized with Mary Frayser appointed chair. At long last, South Carolina had a fully constituted and publicly funded state library agency.<sup>81</sup>

The amount initially appropriated was certainly minuscule in comparison to amounts expended in neighboring states. Georgia, for example, allocated \$100,000 for library services, and North Carolina received \$250,000 in state funds. It was considerably less than the \$480,000 expended by the WPA for South Carolina libraries during the previous fiscal year. Regardless of the amount, it was the first real commitment by the state government to support statewide library development.<sup>82</sup>

When the WPA statewide library project ended, there were twelve publicly funded county libraries in the state under the supervision of professional librarians. There were fourteen other WPA demonstration county libraries and one regional system not permanently established operating under the supervision of former WPA-trained library workers. Four other counties maintained libraries at the county seat but could not afford to continue bookmobile service to the rest of the county. Residents of these counties, however, were permitted to come to the library itself. The remaining fourteen counties were unable to continue county library service in any form. Thus, the state library board’s first goal was to devise a system to support and encourage the continued development of countywide and regional library service throughout the state.<sup>83</sup>

One of the first acts of the state library board was to hire Nancy Blair, the former WPA statewide library supervisor, as executive secretary and field representative of the board. Her job was to assist the board in organizing a plan for state aid to the counties and to oversee the continued development of countywide and regional library systems. Based

on Dr. Stewart's earlier recommendations, a formal framework for state aid was developed.

First, a central collection of books was established in Columbia to be loaned to libraries and individuals throughout the state. The core of this collection was the nearly 26,000 WPA-owned books which had been turned over to the state library board by the state board of education. During its first full year of operation, the state library board added 3,677 more books.<sup>84</sup>

To encourage the development of countywide and regional library systems, the board set aside funds to be used by these systems for book purchases. To qualify for this aid, a county had to have a county library board which agreed to work toward increased support for the library, to provide countywide service, and to hire a professional librarian as quickly as possible. In return, the county could submit book orders to the board totaling \$200. In actuality, because many counties did not meet state requirements the first year, each that did qualify received \$300 worth of books. The board ordered, processed, and returned the books to the qualifying county. The board retained ownership of these books in the event the county stopped supporting the library system. Counties combining to form a regional system would receive a bonus of \$50 per county for book purchases. During the first year, twenty-three counties and two regional systems, Allendale-Hampton and Abbeville-Greenwood, shared in this state aid.<sup>85</sup> In addition, the board provided counties with advice and consultation in planning and developing library services. It held conferences in thirty-seven counties the first year and provided assistance with preparing book orders, weeding collections, cataloging, and budget preparation.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, by the end of its first full year of operation, the state library board had established itself as the leader in public library development in South Carolina. Even with limited funds, it had successfully replaced the WPA statewide project as the primary agent in extending library service to all residents of the state. The course was set; there would be no turning back.

## Conclusions

The WPA was one of the most controversial programs of the Roosevelt administration. Critics often characterized it as a giant boondoggle, an agency dedicated to wasting taxpayer money on useless projects. One common image advanced by detractors was that of the lazy ditch digger lounging on the side of the road: "Here we stand asleep all day/While F.D. shoos the flies away/We just wake up to get our pay/What for? For leaning on a shovel!"<sup>87</sup>

Undoubtedly, some WPA projects were poorly conceived and executed. The WPA was, after all, a program begun quickly to address the most harrowing economic crisis in the history of the United States. However, it was successful in putting millions of Americans back to work and in injecting billions of dollars into an ailing economy. Many of its projects continued to have an impact long after the demise of the agency.

The South Carolina library service demonstration project was a prime example of the WPA at its best. Prior to 1935, there were only three countywide library systems in the state. The remainder of libraries were local operations serving a limited number of residents. By the end of the WPA project, four times as many countywide and one struggling bicounty system had been created, and an equal number of counties were well on their way to permanently establishing their county libraries. Much remained to be done, but the WPA had forced a quantum leap in the development of library service in the state.

This is not to say the South Carolina project was perfect. One critic faulted the statewide program for attempting to demonstrate service in all counties rather than putting its limited resources into a few select county or regional projects. Consequently, many counties that began projects with WPA funding could not afford to continue countywide library services once federal funding was withdrawn. In these counties the WPA failed "to provide a strong basis for a permanent, efficient, independent library system."<sup>88</sup> However valid this criticism may be, the social and political realities dictated the form the project would take. With the state's library advocates oriented toward developing countywide service for every county in the state, with the South's general orientation toward the county as the most appropriate form of local government, with no central direction from an active state library agency, and with local politicians and citizens actively lobbying for all the WPA aid they could get, it was inevitable that the statewide project would attempt to serve every county. Eventually, library leaders recognized that the small counties could not sustain a county system and began encouraging the development of regional systems in which limited resources were shared. Furthermore, dependence on unskilled labor diminished the impact of the demonstration projects. These workers, no matter how enthusiastic or willing to learn, were not adequate substitutes for professional librarians. The quality of the services suffered as a result.

Nonetheless, during its existence the WPA statewide project was the state library agency for South Carolina. It supplied the leadership and direction necessary to demonstrate the importance, need, and demand for better public libraries. The growth in borrowers, circulation, services, and collections provided a testimony to its success. Without the WPA's example, it is doubtful that the state library board would have been

funded so early. Public pressure and concern over the loss of library service initiated under the WPA forced the state to assume responsibility for funding a state library agency. The state library board, once permanently funded, used the WPA experience to build its program of state aid to libraries.

Finally, the WPA library project did have limited success in addressing the library needs of Black South Carolinians. In the opinion of Edward Chapman, national director of the WPA's Library Service Section, among the southern states South Carolina was second only to North Carolina in expanding services to Blacks.<sup>89</sup> New library programs were started for African Americans, although certainly not at the level of service offered to Whites. Racism and the desire to avoid conflict over racial issues predetermined that the project would not accomplish as much in this area. It would be years before Blacks were allowed equal access to resources and services.

If not for the WPA, statewide library service in South Carolina probably would have been delayed until well after World War II. The WPA statewide library project had indeed "blazed the way" for the rapid development of public library service in the state.

## Notes

1. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report on the WPA Program, 1935-1943* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1947; reprint, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), iii, 7, 52, 62, 67. Also, a good overview of the library demonstration projects is found in Edward B. Stanford, *Library Extension Under the WPA: An Appraisal of an Experiment in Federal Aid* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1944).

2. Louis R. Wilson and Edward A. Wight, *County Library Service in the South: A Study of the Rosenwald County Library Demonstration* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1935), 5-15; National Emergency Council, *Report on Economic Conditions in the South* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1938), 1.

3. Tommie D. Barker, *Libraries of the South: A Report on Developments 1930-1935* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1936), 88-90; Louis R. Wilson, *The Geography of Reading: A Study of the Distribution and Status of Libraries in the United States* (Chicago: American Library Association and the University of Chicago Press, 1938), 186; Mary E. Frayser, *The Libraries of South Carolina* (Clemson College: South Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station, 1933), 7-12, 23-6.

4. Eliza A. Gleason, *The Southern Negro and the Public Library: A Study of the Government and Administration of Public Library Service to Negroes in the South* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1941), 18-24, 185-6; Wilson, *Geography of Reading*, 33; Dan R. Lee, "Faith Cabin Libraries: A Study of an Alternative Library Service in the Segregated South, 1932-1960," *Libraries & Culture: A Journal of Library History* 26 (Winter 1991): 172-3. Because of the racial conditions in the South, service figures are in question. In her survey of South Carolina libraries, Mary Frayser stated that 688,757 residents had access to public library service.



Dr. Gleason points out that Black residents were often included in public library service figures even though they received no service. Dr. Gleason's service figures found on pages 95-7 seem more accurate.

5. Frayser, *Libraries of South Carolina*, 19-21; South Carolina, *Acts and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina Passed at the Regular Session of 1929, Statutes at Large of South Carolina* 36 (1929): 261-2; "Revised Library Law," *Library Journal*, 15 December 1935, 979; South Carolina, *Acts and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina Passed at the Regular Session of 1934, Statutes at Large South Carolina* 38 (1934): 1480-3; Mary E. Anders, "The Development of Public Library Service in the Southeastern States, 1895-1950," Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1958, 166.

6. The Rosenwald Fund, founded in Illinois in 1917 by Julius Rosenwald, philanthropist and president of Sears, Roebuck, and Company, was concerned primarily with the educational, social, and medical needs of African Americans. See Edwin R. Embree and Julia Waxman, *Investment in People: the Story of the Julius Rosenwald Fund* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949); Parmelee Cheves, Untitled report on goals and activities, typewritten document by Cheves as State Library Field Agent, November 1930, [1-2], Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.; Mary E. Frayser, "The State Library Board," Typewritten document, April 1939, [1], Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.

7. Wilson and Wight, *County Library Service*, v-vi, 37-41, 92-101, 200-2; "Voted Permanent Support," *Wilson Bulletin for Librarians*, November 1934, 147. An excellent analysis of the problems confronting the Rosenwald projects is found in James V. Carmichael, "Tommie Dora Barker and Southern Librarianship," Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1988, 283-326.

8. Barker, *Libraries of the South*, 9-10; "Citizens Library Plan for South Carolina," *School and Society*, 17 February 1934, 205; E. W. Sikes, "Why the Citizens' Library Conference," *Library Journal*, 1 June 1934, 464; Marion Wright, "Some Social and Political Trends and Their Implications for Libraries," *Library Journal*, July 1934, 559; Frayser, *Libraries of South Carolina*, 34; "Citizens Library Plan," 205.

9. "Library Projects Under Public Works, Civil Works, and Relief Administrations," *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, December 1933, 539-40; "The Month at Random," *Wilson Bulletin for Librarians*, May 1937, 620; Stanford, *Library Extension*, 30-2.

10. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report of the WPA Program*, 6.

11. Stanford, *Library Extension*, 36-7.

12. Edward A. Chapman, *Work Projects Administration Library Service Assistance Program: A Record of Organization, Administration and Operation Submitted to the Administrator as a Closing Report Upon the Liquidation of the Administration, June 30, 1943* (Washington, D.C.: Division of Service Projects, Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, 1943), 1.

13. *Ibid.*, 136.

14. *Ibid.*, 137.

15. *Ibid.*, 13-4.

16. *Ibid.*, 17.

17. Edward A. Chapman, "Theory and Practice in the Organization and Operation of WPA Library Service Projects," *National Association of State Libraries Papers and Proceedings* 42 (1939): 25.

18. Chapman, *Library Program*, 14.
19. *Ibid.*, 55.
20. Chapman, "Theory and Practice," 24.
21. Chapman, *Library Program*, 12.
22. Such was not the case for WPA expenditures as a whole. Many Southerners resented the fact that other regions of the country received a far greater share of relief assistance than the South did. U.S. Senator James Byrnes of South Carolina pointed out that through early 1938, WPA expenditures in New York totaled over \$737,000,000 while the thirteen Southern states received only \$600,000,000 even though the region's population was over twice the size of New York's. See Stanford, *Library Extension*, 54-5; Jack I. Hayes, "South Carolina and the New Deal, 1932-1938," Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1972, 137-8.
23. Stanford, *Library Expenditures*, 79-86.
24. Lawrence M. Pinckney, *The Story of the WPA in South Carolina: Permanent Achievements Through the State's Sponsors* (Columbia, S.C.: The Information Service, South Carolina Works Progress Administration, 1936), [1].
25. Although there was political opposition in South Carolina to the New Deal, especially after 1936, the state's politicians generally supported New Deal legislation like the CWA, FERA, and the Social Security Act. In 1935, for example, South Carolina's Senator James Byrnes was instrumental in securing passage of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, the legislation that created the WPA among other things. All members of the South Carolina delegation supported the act. Most average South Carolinians regarded Roosevelt as a savior even though they might disagree with a particular policy of his. For a thorough analysis of the New Deal in South Carolina, see Hayes, "South Carolina and the New Deal," especially pages 83-5, 115-7, 134-51, 173-215, 232-63, 463-522.
26. Robert M. Willingham, "Bookish Bureaucracy: the Work of the American Imprints Inventory in Georgia, 1937-1941," *The Georgia Librarian*, August 1982, 3-6; Carmichael, "Tommie Dora Barker," 333-4; Anders, "The Development of Public Library Service," 132-3.
27. Lawrence M. Pinckney, "Final report on the South Carolina Work Projects Administration, 5 March 1943," 2-3, 10, in *Archives of the Work Projects Administration and Predecessors, 1933- 1943: Series One: the Final State Reports* (Sussex, England: Harvester Microform, 1987), reel 6.
28. Fanny T. Taber, "Looking a Gift Horse in the Mouth," *Library Journal*, 15 December 1936, 939; "Second Citizens Conference on Library Needs of State," *Columbia (S.C.) State*, 17 February 1936, 6.
29. Taber, "Looking a Gift Horse," 939.
30. Ida B. Entrekin, "W.P.A. Library Projects in South Carolina," Typewritten document, 1 March 1936, [1], Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.
31. Chapman, *Library Program*, 69-70.
32. Entrekin, "W.P.A. Library Projects," [1-2].
33. Chapman, *Library Program*, 75-7.
34. *Ibid.*, 73-4.
35. "Second Citizens Conference," 6.
36. Entrekin, "W.P.A. Library Projects," [1]; Nancy C. Blair, *Statewide Library Project Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, 1940), [20].
37. Pinckney, *Story of the WPA*, [10]; Entrekin, "W.P.A. Library Projects," [1].

38. Agnes D. Crawford, "Report of WPA Library Projects in South Carolina as of July 1, 1937," Typewritten document, 1 July 1937, [1, 4], Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.

39. Entreklin, "W.P.A. Library Projects," [3]; Crawford, "Report of WPA Library Projects," [1].

40. Entreklin, "W.P.A. Library Projects," [3]; Agnes D. Crawford, *Annual Report Statewide Library Project July 1938- July 1939* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina Works Progress Administration, 1939), [11].

41. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [12].

42. Chapman, *Library Program*, 101-2.

43. Blair, *Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940*, 6; Chapman, *Library Program*, 85-6; James H. Hope, Columbia, South Carolina, to Mary E. Frayser, Rock Hill, South Carolina, signed letter, 19 March 1943, Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.

44. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [1]; Stanford, *Library Extension*, 157.

45. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [5].

46. *Ibid.*, [2-4].

47. Blair, *Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940*, 4-5.

48. *Ibid.*, 5.

49. Agnes D. Crawford, *Annual Report Statewide Library Project July 1937- July 1938* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina Works Progress Administration, 1938), 6. The library profession as a whole did not embrace the concept of countywide library service until the beginning of this century. As late as 1923, the American Library Association passed a resolution advocating the county as "a logical unit of library service for most parts of the United States." Only later did the profession see the potential of regional libraries as perhaps more suitable to the conditions of smaller counties. See "Proceedings," *ALA Bulletin*, July 1923, 153; Anders, "The Development of Public Library Service," 183-92; Louis R. Wilson, "The County Library: An Agency to Promote General Reading," *The American City*, April 1919, 340-2; Carleton B. Joeckel, "The Library and Its Relationship to Government in the South," *Papers and Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Southeastern Library Association and the Southwestern Library Association*, October 1934, 13-24.

50. Charleston District Office, South Carolina Writer's Project, "State Wide Library Project," news release, 24 April 1940, 1-3, Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.

51. WPA Statewide Library Project, *Recent Library Development in South Carolina* (n.p., [1940]), [15].

52. *Ibid.*, [15]; Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [22-3].

53. Carmichael, "Tommie Dora Barker," 335-41, 354-5, 368-9; Tommie D. Barker, "A Summary of Progress in State Planning in the South," *Papers and Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Southeastern Library Association and the Southwestern Library Association*, October 1934, 58-66.

54. Charlotte Templeton, "County Libraries for Southern Conditions," *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, December 1921, 5.

55. WPA Statewide Library Project, *Recent Library Development*, [15]; Crawford, *Annual Report July 1937- July 1938*, 6; Estellene Walker, ed., "So Good and Necessary a Work": *the Public Library in South Carolina 1698- 1980* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina State Library, 1981), 21.

56. WPA Statewide Library Project, *Recent Library Development*, [15]; Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [24-6].

57. WPA Statewide Library Project, *Recent Library Development*, [15]; Walker, "So Good and Necessary," 21.
58. "Monthly Narrative Report Statewide Library Project: June Report," typewritten document, June 1941, 4-5, 10; WPA Central Files: State 1935-1944, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
59. *Ibid.*, 1.
60. Walker, "So Good and Necessary," 6.
61. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1937- July 1938*, 8-9.
62. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [24].
63. *Ibid.*, [24, 28].
64. Blair, *Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940*, 12.
65. Stanford, *Library Extension*, 177-8.
66. Frayser, "State Library Board," 2-3.
67. *Ibid.*, 3.
68. *Ibid.*
69. *Ibid.*, 4.
70. Crawford, *Annual Report July 1938- July 1939*, [9, 11, 28].
71. State of South Carolina, U.S. Community Improvement Appraisal, *Report of the State Appraisal Committee* (Columbia, S.C.: Works Progress Administration, 1938), [11-2].
72. Blair, *Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940*, 4.
73. *Ibid.*, 6, [20], 22.
74. *Ibid.*, 8.
75. *Ibid.*, 13
76. Lawrence M. Pinckney, *A Statistical Summary of WPA Operations in South Carolina* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina Work Projects Administration, Federal Works Agency, 1941), 16; Chapman, *Library Program*, 2-3.
77. Blair, *Annual Report July 1, 1939- June 30, 1940*, 5, 9.
78. Agnes D. Crawford, "Report of Visit to South Carolina, April 21-2, 1941," typewritten document, 1 May 1941, [1-3], WPA Central Files: General 1935-42, Record Group 69, National Archives, Washington, D.C.
79. Chapman, *Library Program*, 2-3; Mary E. Frayser, "Talking Points for a State Appropriation for Libraries and Federal Aid to Education Including Aid to Libraries," typewritten letter, [28 November 1942], Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.
80. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report on the WPA Program*, v.
81. Mary E. Frayser, letter to county librarians, typewritten letter by Frayser as Chairman of the South Carolina State Library Board, 20 March 1943, Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.; South Carolina State Library Board, *First Annual Report July 1, 1943- June 30, 1944* (n.p., 1944), 1-2.
82. State Library Board, *First Annual Report*, 3; Mary E. Frayser, Letter to Friends of Libraries, typewritten letter by Frayser as Chairman of the South Carolina State Library Board, 27 February 1943, Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.
83. State Library Board, *First Annual Report*, 2.
84. *Ibid.*, 5.
85. *Ibid.*, 4; Nancy C. Blair, Columbia, South Carolina, to Mary E. Frayser, Columbia, South Carolina, typewritten letter, 11 August 1944, Mary E. Frayser Papers, Archives, Ida Jane Dacus Library, Winthrop University, Rock Hill, S.C.; South Carolina State Library Board, *State Aid for South Carolina Libraries 1943-1944* (Columbia, S.C.: South Carolina State Library Board, [1943]), [1-2].

86. State Library Board, *First Annual Report*, 5.
87. John LaTouche, "Leaning on a Shovel," in *Roosevelt: His Life and Times: An Encyclopedic View*, ed. Otis L. Graham and Meghan R. Wander (Boston: G. K. Hall and Company, 1985), 462.
88. Stanford, *Library Extension*, 194.
89. Anders, "The Development of Public Library Service," 140.