



New York State Archives

**New York State Engineer and Surveyor Walters Act
Administrative Files B0236**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	These files document actions taken by the State Engineer and Surveyor to address contractors applying for assistance under the provisions of the Walters Act. The series includes correspondence, memorandums, journals, financial statements submitted by contractors, cost estimates, and inventories of construction materials. The card index to these files, Series B0241, provides name and subject access.
Creator:	New York (State). State Engineer and Surveyor
Title:	Walters Act administrative files
Quantity:	1 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1918-1919
Series:	B0236

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Arrangement

Correspondence files are numerical by number stamped on each letter, which is essentially a chronological filing system; other files are arranged by subject.

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Administrative History

The Walters Act was enacted in order to alleviate the certainty of heavy financial losses faced by contractors due to unusual economical conditions created by America's entry into World War I. The law empowered the Canal Board (of which the State Engineer and Surveyor was a member), to cancel and annul contracts in force at the time the law took effect (May 9, 1918), for the construction of the Barge Canal and its terminals entered into prior to April 6, 1917. The Canal Board could also cancel contracts if the State Engineer and Surveyor certified that the non-completion of a contract prior to April 6, 1917 was due to conditions and circumstances beyond the control of the contractor. If a contract was annulled, the law provided that a new contract could be entered into with the former contractor at actual cost expense, or that the

completion of any unfinished work could be accomplished under the terms of a new contract prepared and advertised in the usual manner.

A final option empowered the state to complete unfinished work with its own forces. If a contract was cancelled, the actual and necessary cost to the contractor was to be determined from April 6, 1917 to the date of annulment, and the contractor was to be paid that difference between such actual cost and expense and the amount he would have received for work performed at the prices established in his original contract. Thus, the intent of the law was to ensure that no additional profit should be allowed to the contractor for work performed between April 6, 1917 and the date of the cancellation of his contract, or for any future work performed before the date of cancellation in completing unfinished work on the original contract. According to the terms outlined in the law, the State Engineer and Surveyor assumed the burden of responsibility for its proper administration.

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Scope and Content Note

This series contains incoming and outgoing correspondence, memoranda, journals, financial statements, cost estimates, and inventories. The documents were directed to and generated by the State Engineer and Surveyor's office, pursuant to Chapter 585 of the Laws of 1918, also referred to as the Walters Act.

The bulk of the files consist of correspondence between the State Engineer and Surveyor and the contractors applying for contract annulments. There is also correspondence from various state engineers and the New York City auditing firm of Lybrand, Ross Brothers and Montgomery, who were hired to perform the necessary financial examinations. The files contain significant financial data on work performed by contractors engaged in Barge Canal construction projects.

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Related Information

Related Material

B0241Series B0241, Card Index to the Walters Act Administrative Files, indexes this series.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Container list is available at the repository.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this material.

Access Terms

- Contracting
- Financial records
- Canals--New York (State)
- Correspondence
- New York (State)
- Canals--Design and construction--Costs
- Constructing
- New York State Barge Canal System (N.Y.)
- Constructing canals
- New York (State). Department of Transportation