

## John Boynton Kaiser Papers (Librarians) ca. 1940s-1950s



Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center  
The Newark Public Library  
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**Title:** John Boynton Kaiser Papers (Librarians)  
**Dates:** 1940s-1950s  
**Location:** Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center – NHA 3  
**Extent:** 9 boxes, 2 linear feet  
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**Formats:** Textual materials  
**Subjects:** Libraries -- Administration  
**Language:** English

### Restrictions on Access

#### Access Restrictions

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#### Preferred Citation

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### Biographical Note:

John Boynton Kaiser (1887-1973) was the Director of the Newark Public Library from 1943 to 1958.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1887, Kaiser was educated at Western Reserve University (B.A., 1908) and New York State Library School in Albany, N.Y. (B.L.S., 1910 and M.L.S., 1917). He began his career at the New York State Law Library and became the assistant state librarian in charge of legislative services at the Texas State Library in 1910-11. From 1911 until 1914 he was departmental librarian in economics and sociology at the University of Illinois.

In 1914 the Tacoma Public Library recruited him as librarian and he remained in that position until 1924, although during World War I he served as the camp librarian at Camp Knox in Kentucky and Camp Upton in New York (1918-1919). He left the public library field to accept a position as the director of libraries at Iowa State University, where he also directed the Library School. In 1927 he returned to the public library field as the director of the Oakland Public Library. In this position, he was also responsible for the Oakland Public Museum, the Snow Museum, and the Oakland Art Gallery.

In 1942 the Trustees of the Newark Public Library selected Kaiser as its fourth librarian to modernize management policies and procedures, especially in terms of personnel issues. He was instrumental in securing approval for the implementation of two reports, "Personnel Classification and Pay Plan" and "Work Simplification Survey." He was known for his formal, impersonal, studious, and objective approach to administrative problems. His assistant director, James E. "Ned" Bryan, managed many of the day-to-day issues relating to the library (see his papers for further information about the library during these years).

Kaiser was active in a number of regional and national professional organizations: Pacific Northwest Library Association, New Jersey Library Association, American Library Association, Trustees' Advisory Committee to the School of Library Service at Columbia University, among others. Following his retirement from the Newark Public Library in 1958, he served as the executive secretary of the American Documentary Institute from 1960 to 1963.

**Scope and Content:**

The collection consists of biographical and bibliographical information, including the reproduction of some of his essays and articles, plus his working papers on such topic as air raid procedures for World War II, censorship issues during the 1950s, personnel issues, correspondence with the City of Newark, newspapers and periodicals, staff training, etc...

The cumulative reports (as opposed to annual reports) – *The Power of Print: 1942-1945*, *More Power: 1946-1952*, and *At Your Service: 1943-1957* – are all important documents, and they are included here and elsewhere. A great deal of information about his administration is also included in the papers of his assistant director, James E. "Ned" Bryan, who succeeded him as director in 1958.

**Container List:**

Box	Subject Folder
1	Bibliography – 1958 with 1967 revisions Biography – NPL News – 1958 includes An Annotated Bibliography published upon his retirement Biography – Dictionary of American Library Biography – ca.1970s Biography – Obituary – 1973 written by James E. Bryan Biography – Resume – ca.1973 Dinner – 5/13/1943 A Librarian's Faith – 1943 (a short statement of principles) Library Report – 1942-1945 – correspondence, drafts, statistics re: <i>The Power of Print</i> Reports: The Power of Print, 1942-1945 More Power, 1946-1952 At Your Service, 1943-1957 Writings: Kaiser, American Municipal Documents (1913) Kaiser, The Civics Room (1915) Kaiser, The Comprachicos (1913)

	<p>Kaiser, Law, Legislative and Municipal Libraries (1914) – Reviews                  Kaiser, Review of <i>The Unvarnished West</i> by J. M. Pollock (1911)                  Kaiser, The Special Library and the Library School (1912)</p>
2	<p>Subject Headings:                  Air Raid – Branches – 1941-42                  Air Raid – Equipment – 1941-46                  Air Raid – Instructions – Addition – 1942-44                  Air Raid – Instructions – General – 1941-43                  Air Raid – Instructions – Lending – 1941-44                  Air Raid – Instructions – Maintenance Force – 1942                  Air Raid – Miscellaneous – 1941-43                  American Red Cross – 1942-48                  Armed Forces – Service – 1952                  Authors Letters – 1952                  Awards – 1940s                  Award – Community Chest – 1950                  Binding Bids – 1947                  Camp Kilmer – 1944-45                  Central Planning Board / Citizens Advisory Board – 1945-47                  Central Planning Board – Post-War Library Building – 1943-47                  Club of Printing House Craftsmen – 1944-46                  Coal – Bids and Correspondence – 1943-44                  Coal – Bids and Correspondence – 1944-45</p>
3	<p>Committee on Standards for the Selection of Children's Books – 1949-1951                  *Regarding a controversy over the stereotypes of racial minorities, especially African-Americans, in children's literature.                  Complaints (letters from patrons) – 1945-1947                  Compliments – 1943-1944                  Conference Room – 1956-57                  Context Questions – 1948                  Dana Centennial – Kaiser/Vanderbilt Correspondence – 1956                  Department Heads Group – 1943                  Dumbarton Oaks – 1945                  Education – 1946-48                  Employees' Union – 1940s                  Exhibits – 1945-46                  Galt, Alexander, Librarian at Buffalo Public Library – Correspondence – 1945-48</p>
4	<p>Gifts – 1944-49                  In Service Training – 1950s                  Library Journal – 1944-47                  Merchant Marine Library – 1944-45                  New Employee Handbook – 1951                  New Jersey Citizen's Conference – 1947                  New Jersey College for Women – Summer Workshop – 1946-47                  New Jersey Department of Public and School Libraries – 1943-47                  New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce – Project – 1952                  Newark, City of – Correspondence – 1943-1947                  Newark, City of – Correspondence with Mayor Murphy – 1943-1949</p>
5	<p>Newark Museum – 1943-44 (correspondence between Kaiser and Winsler)                  Newark Newspapers – 1955 (legal size)                  Newspapers – Holdings I &amp; II – ca.1940s                  Newspapers – Current – ca.1950s                  Newspapers – Extra – ca.1950s                  Orientation and Tours – ca.1950s and 1960s                  Periodicals – 1927, 1938, 1947                  Periodicals – Bids – 1948                  Personnel – Assignments – ca.1950s and 1960s                  Personnel – Classification – 1944-51                  Personnel – Issues – ca.19040s-1970s                  Personnel – Requirement and Regulation – ca. 1950s</p>

	Personnel – Survey – 1943-44 Personnel – Survey – Letter to Staff – 1947 Physical Changes in the Library – 1931-1945
6 (half-box):	Power of Print – 1947 (7 folders)
Box 6B (full box):	Power of Print – Acknowledgements – 1947 Power of Print – Correspondence – 1947 (4 folders)
7	Procedures & Queries – 1943-44 Public Relations News – 1951-1959 Registration Division – Manual – 1950s Reorganization of Administration – 1944 Salaries – 1950s-1970s (legal size) Service Flag – World War II – 1940-1945 Special Investigator – 1950s Staff Handbook – v.3 (1950) Staff Handbook – v.4 (1946) Staff Training – ca.1940s (legal size) Statistics – Accumulated Circulation – 1940-46 Study of Time Distribution and Work Load – 1948 Victory Book Campaign – 1943-44 Visitors – 1945-47 War Manpower Conference – 1942 Window Cleaning Bids – 1940-45 Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) – 1943-48
8 (legal-size):	Newark Newspapers – ca.1950s Salaries – ca. 1950s-1970s Staff Training – ca.1940s