

Beatrice Winser Papers (Librarianiana) (1910-1944)



Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center
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- Title:** Beatrice Winser Papers (Librarianiana)
- Dates:** 1910-1944
- Location:** Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center – Main Stacks
- Extent:** 11 boxes; 4 linear feet
- Processed:** William A. Peniston, Ph.D., 2014
- Formats:** Graphics; Photographic materials; Textual materials
- Subjects:** Winser, Beatrice, 1869-1947; Dana, John Cotton, 1856-1929 – Friends and associates; MacLeish, Archibald, 1892-1982 – Career in library science; Newark Public Library – Administration; Newark Public Library – Biography; Newark Museum – Administration; Newark Museum – Biography; Librarians – New Jersey – Newark – Biography; Libraries -- Administration; Museums -- Administration
- Time Period:** 20th century
- Language:** English
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- Access policy:** Open for research

Restrictions on Access

Access Restrictions

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Preferred Citation

Beatrice Winser Papers, Charles F. Cummings New Jersey Information Center, Newark Public

Library.

Biographical Note:

Beatrice Winser, the eldest daughter of Henry J. Winser and Edith Cox Winser, was born in Newark in 1869 and educated in Germany, where she became fluent in French and German. She attended Columbia University's Library School and studied with Melvil Dewey. She came to the Newark Public Library in 1889, became Assistant Librarian in 1894 at the age of 25, and served as Acting Librarian briefly in 1901. When John Cotton Dana (1856-1929) came to lead the library in 1902, she soon became his trusted Assistant Librarian, helping to administer both the Library and Newark Museum (founded in 1909). In 1915, with Dana's support, Winser was appointed as the first woman member of the Newark Board of Education. She also served as president of the New Jersey Library Association, twice, in 1907-1908 and 1921-1922.

After Dana's death in 1929, she became Librarian of the Newark Public Library, serving in that position until 1942. She also became the Director of the Newark Museum, serving in that position from 1929 to 1947. During the Depression, she served as Chairman of the New Jersey Sub-Committee, Works Progress Administration (WPA), Federal Art Projects, and she wrote the preface to *The WPA Guide to New Jersey*, which was overseen by the Federal Writers Project. She resigned from the Newark Public Library in 1942 and retired from the Newark Museum in 1947. She died in Newark, of heart disease, on September 14, 1947.

Scope and Content:

These papers consist of general and specific correspondence, 1935-1944, as well as information on federal aid to libraries, 1935-1939; on John Cotton Dana Day in 1935; on the appointment of Archibald MacLeish as Librarian of Congress, 1939; on various personnel problems in the early 1940s, and on her resignation in 1942.

The general and specific correspondence include letters to and from Winser, the bulk of which is professional in nature, including her views on the roles of women in libraries (1918); letters regarding her term on Board of the American Library Association (1930-1935); reference queries to Winser and Dana (1925-1928); material on the death of John Cotton Dana as well as correspondence with the Schoolmen's Club regarding a tablet erected in Dana's honor; a "memorandum" book with notes and a few photographs (ca. 1925); and a bookplate designed for Beatrice Winser by John Cotton Dana.

Three folders of correspondence, reports, and statements exist regarding federal aid to libraries (1935-1939), which Winser opposed; and one folder of correspondence (1940) exists regarding library assistants assigned to the Newark Public Library through the WPA.

"John Cotton Dana Day" was celebrated on October 6, 1935, and Winser was actively involved in its planning. Her papers contain correspondence, addresses, programs, invitations, etc...

In 1939 President Roosevelt appointed Archibald McLeish, the poet, as the Librarian of Congress. Winser vehemently opposed this appointment on the grounds that he lacked any library experience. Included in these papers are correspondence, clippings, statements, etc..., as well as copies of her open letter to the President.

A significant portion of this collection is related to Winser's abrupt resignation from the Newark Public Library in 1942, after 53 years of employment. Her resignation was due to a dispute with the Board of Trustees regarding various personnel issues. Publicly, Winser's rationale for her resignation was summed up by the question: "Does the Librarian or the Board of Trustees manage the staff of the Library?" Privately, she stated that "religion and politics [had] entered the doors of the Public Library of Newark ... The Catholic Church is no longer a religion but a powerful political body and is getting an strangle-hold on the United States." (BW to the

Right Rev. Beverley D. Tucker, Jr., Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Ohio, September 12, 1942.) Marguerite L. Gates, a librarian and an assistant to Winsor, resigned at the same time. At the time of Winsor's resignation, Dr. Samuel L. Hamilton of 240 Montclair Avenue, a Professor of Education at New York University, was chairman of the Library's Board of Trustees.

Materials relating to the resignation of Miss Winsor in 1942 include correspondence to and from Winsor and library staff, Newark school librarians, and librarians and friends from across the country; resolutions and statements from NPL staff and staff associations; and press releases, letters to the editor, etc...

Container List:

| Box | Subject Folder |
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| 1 | Correspondence --general, undated – general, 1918 --general, 1930-1940 Re: general reference inquiries, 1925-28 Re: Dana's death, 1929 Re: Schoolmen's Club's Dana Tablet, 1930 Re: ALA, 1930-35 – general, 1935-39 – general, 1935-1946 with Malcolm Stone, 1942 |
| 1 | Subject files: Art Art – Engraving Battin, Ada Douglass – Inheritance and Will – 1928 Book Fund Booklist: The Troubled World, 1938 CBS Broadcast by Dorothy Thompson, 1941 Comparative Statistical Picture of Four Cities, 1940 Exhibit: The American Library, 1937 Fiftieth Anniversary, 1939 History (NPL) – 1937-1939 Johnson, Hazel – Article on Dana for Library Quarterly, 1934-37 Kingdon, Dr. Frank, 1935-38 Kohut Lectures – “Man Against Himself,” “Man Against the World,” etc..., 1937 |
| 2 | Box 2: Subject files: Adult Education – 1937-48 Adult Education – Report by Miss Curtis – 1938-39 Annex (WPA project report and correspondence) – 1936 Art Art – Engraving Astrology Books – 1931-32 Battin, Ada Douglass – Inheritance and Will – 1928 Bernays, Edward – “Speak up for Democracy” – Correspondence – 1941 Bookcases – 1900, 1923-1938 Book Fund Bookkeeping Department – Routines – 1933 Booklist: The Troubled World, 1938 Bookmobile – Book Truck – 1930 Books – Bids – Correspondence – Miss Askew – 1937 Books – Bids – Dealers – Correspondence – 1937-38 Books – Bids – History – 1937-38 |

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| | <p>Books – Bids – Letters from other libraries – 1937 Books – Bids – Miscellaneous Notes – 1937 Booksellers Division – Retail Code – 1934 Bronzes – 1905, 1940</p> |
| 3 | <p>Subject Files: CBS Broadcast by Dorothy Thompson, 1941 Chamber of Commerce, City of Newark – 1929-1942 Cincinnati Survey – Correspondence and Findings – 1939 Cincinnati Survey – Newark / Cincinnati Comparison (2 folders) Comparative Statistical Picture of Four Cities, 1940 Constitution Sesquicentennial – 1937 Depression Economies – 1933-36 Dioramas – 1936 Exhibit: The American Library, 1937 Exhibit – Printing – 1940 Exhibit – Textbook – 1935 Exhibit – Textbook – Story by Munroe – 1935 Fiftieth Anniversary – 1939 Gas Consumer's Association – 1940 Guerne Elevator Co. – 1930 History (NPL) – 1937-1939 Hygienic Phone Service of NY – 1941 Information Files – ca.1930s Inventory – 1916, 1939-42 Janitors – Petitions to the Board – 1918-1943 Johnson, Hazel – Article on Dana for Library Quarterly, 1934-37</p> |
| 4 | <p>Subject files: Kingdon, Dr. Frank, 1935-38 Kohut Lectures – “Man Against Himself,” “Man Against the World,” etc..., 1937 Library Growth – 1922-1936 Library of Congress – 1939-1947 Library Trustees Association – 1936-1945 Memorandum, 1925 Miller-Tydings Act – 1937 – re: Fair Trade National Defense – Sources of Information – 1941 National Defense – Sources of Information – Supplement – 1941 New Jersey Assembly Bill #53 re: Municipal Libraries – 1936 New Jersey State Department of Public and School Libraries – 1938-1945 Newark Art Commission – 1930s Newark Centennial – 1936</p> |
| 5 | <p>Subject Files: Newark, City of – Correspondence 1932-1939 1939-1940 (Department of Revenue and Finance for Department of Labor) 1939-1942 Newark on Parade – 1935 Newark – Parquet Floors – 1935-36 Newark Public Library – Statements – ca.1930s Newarker – Correspondence – 1936-38 Newspapers I, II, III – ca.1930s Notes – ca.1930s</p> |
| 6 | <p>Subject Files: Occupational Index – 1935 Order Department – 1939-42 Otis Elevator – Correspondence – 1932-42 Paterson Public Library – 1935 Philadelphia Bibliographic Center – Union Library Catalog – 1941</p> |

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| | <p>Plaques – 1930 Post Office – 1939 Printing Printing – BW Bookplate Public Works of Art Project –1934 Publicity – 1930-1935 Publicity Reports – 1929-1943 Reader Record Project – 1937 Reader Record Project – 1938-39 Registration Department Overdue Book Week – 1932-1941 Remington Rand Visible Index – 1930-1940 Reader Record Index – 1938-1944 Repair Department – Manual – ca.1930s Report by Mrs. Gould to Mr. Anderson Re: Growth of NPL – 1932 Resolution re: Library, 1938 Rudge, William – Bookplate – Correspondence – 1940</p> |
| 7 | <p>Subject Files: Salary Schedule – 1939-42 Saturday Opening – 1938, 1942 Schurman Construction Co. – Agreement – 1929 (legal size) Services, Expansion of – 1932-37 Special Investigator – 1930s Storage Warehouse – 1936-37 Survey of Non-Administrative Positions – 1941 Thefts, mutilations, etc... – ca.1930s Title to Library Property, 1939 Traffic Club – 1941-42 Welfare Federation of Newark – 1938-1947 Western Union Book Collection Service – 1933-36 Wilson, H.W., & Co. – 1925-1941 Young Friends of NPL & TNM – 1934</p> |
| 8 | <p>Federal Aid, 1935-40: Federal Aid, 1935 Federal Aid, 1936 Federal Aid, 1939 Federal Works Agency – State Library Project – Miss Askew's Correspondence, 1940</p> |
| 9 | <p>John Cotton Dana Day, 1935 Acknowledgements (2nd pamphlet) Correspondence, 1935 Beatrice Winsor to H.W. Kent, re: paper on John Cotton Dana, 10/26/35 Beatrice Winsor to H.W. Kent, re: paper on John Cotton Dana, 10/17/35 H.W. Kent to Beatrice Winsor, re: paper on John Cotton Dana, 10/18/35 Invitations – In Honor of John Cotton Dana Junior Museum – memoranda and notes Manuscripts “The Exercise for John Cotton Dana Day,” typed with handwritten portions, report of celebration held at The Newark Museum, and other correspondence attached, 11/22/35 Kent, H.W. “John Cotton Dana Day” type written paper, 10/6/35 Menu Miscellaneous (3 folders) including Proclamation of the mayor, Meyer C. Ellenstein, 9/26/35 Newark Educational Council – Meetings – 1935-36 Notices, releases, etc Pamphlet: An Account of the Celebration of John Cotton Dana Day at The</p> |

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| | <p>Newark Museum, Held Under the Sponsorship of the Newark Educational Council, Oct 6, 1935 Pamphlet: An Address by Frank Kingdon, given over station WOR on John Cotton Dana Day, 10/6/35 Printing A Radio Address by Dr. Frank Kingdon – Acknowledgements (2 folders) Receipts Receipts re: publication: "Celebration of John Cotton Dana Day" by various librarians Trustees, 1935</p> |
| <p>10</p> | <p>MacLeish Controversy, 1939 MacLeish – Articles on MacLeish (2 folders) MacLeish – Correspondence, acknowledgements, etc., A-H MacLeish – Correspondence, acknowledgements, etc., J-W MacLeish – Correspondence – American Library Association Bulletin, Wilson Bulletin MacLeish – Correspondence – Library Journal MacLeish – Correspondence – Protests to Senators. MacLeish – List of possible candidates, political appointments, correspondence, MacLeish – Mailing List, original manuscripts, etc. MacLeish – Publicity</p> <p>Personnel Problems, 1940-42 Re: Miss Nerney, 1940-42 Re: Others (Miss Osborn, Miss Rice, Miss Wenman)</p> |
| <p>11</p> | <p>Resignation, 1942 Correspondence – general – personal – very personal – Dept. Heads, etc... – Library Staff – Non-professional Dr. Hammilton's Correspondence Miss Winser's Letter to the Staff Gifts from the Staff Press Releases Resolution – United Staff Association</p> |