



Guide to the Mayor John B. Hynes collection

0243.001

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Boston City Archives

201 Rivermoor St.
West Roxbury, MA 02132
archives@boston.gov

URL: <https://www.boston.gov/departments/archives-and-records-management>

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Summary Information

Repository:	Boston City Archives
Creator:	Hynes, John B., 1897-1970
Title:	Mayor John B. Hynes collection
ID:	0243.001
Date [inclusive]:	1891-1893, 1915-1966, undated
Physical Description:	1.5 Cubic feet
Language of the Material:	English

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Biographical / Historical

John Bernard Hynes was the son of Irish immigrants, born in the South End of Boston on September 22, 1897. After service in the Air Corps in World War I, he began his city employment as a Health Department clerk. He went to the Auditing Department and then as chief clerk in Mayor Curley's office. He went to law school nights and won a law degree from Suffolk University in 1927. Two years later he became assistant city clerk and after service in World War II as a lieutenant colonel, became city clerk in 1945.

John Hynes first experienced the responsibilities of mayor for five months in 1947, when, as city clerk he was designated to fill in as "temporary mayor" for Mayor James Curley who had been sentenced to a federal institution. A chance remark by Mr. Curley upon his return to City Hall set the stage for John Hynes challenging him and winning the next mayoral election in 1949. He became the forty-third mayor of Boston and served three terms: 1950-1951, 1952-1955, and 1956-1959.

Using powers of the new charter, Mayor Hynes during his tenure reduced the number of city departments from thirty-eight to twenty-six, and reorganized the Assessing, Fire, Library, Welfare, and Planning Departments. He also coordinated inspections among the Building, Fire, and Health Departments and established the Auditorium Commission and Government Center Commission to plan and erect a new City Hall. In urban renewal he inaugurated a pilot rehabilitation project in Dorchester and saw the start of the New York streets commercial renewal development, South End, and the West End residential redevelopment. As mayor, he served the longest continuous period in the office in Boston's history. As a "dean" of big city mayors, he was recognized in Washington on his trips for federal aid and as national president of the mayors' organization. He was also named the Democratic national committeeman for Massachusetts.

After leaving old City Hall, Mayor Hynes set up his law office a short distance away at 73 Tremont Street. He was shortly afterward named state Commissioner of Banks and Banking, and was elected a life trustee and treasurer of Suffolk University. He lived in Dorchester with his wife Marion and their five children: John "Jack" Jr., Richard, Barry, Marie, and Nancie. After his death in January 1970, the former mayor was given his city's tribute with the naming of the John B. Hynes Memorial Auditorium at Prudential Center.

Source: "Boston's 45 Mayors from John Phillips to Kevin H. White", City Record Office, 1979.

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Scope and Contents

The Mayor John B. Hynes collection contains personal papers of the former mayor collected after his time in office. The papers include personal correspondence, employment and military service records, and various forms of personal memorabilia including certificates, awards, diplomas, poetry and writings, photographs, newspaper clippings, and multiple scrapbooks. The scrapbooks contain newspaper clippings and articles from Hynes's early tenure as mayor in 1950 and 1951.

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Administrative Information

Publication Statement

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Controlled Access Headings

- Mayors -- Massachusetts -- Boston
- Scrapbooks
- Photographs
- Municipal officials and employees
- Hynes, John B., 1897-1970

- Boston (Mass.). Office of the Mayor

Collection Inventory

Correspondence

Title/Description	Instances	
General correspondence, 1957-1966, undated	Box 1	Folder 1
Relating to John F. Kennedy, 1952-1964	Box 1	Folder 2

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Employment and military service records

Title/Description	Instances	
City of Boston, 1950s-1960s	Box 1	Folder 3
Military service records, 1918-1945	Box 1	Folder 4

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Memorabilia

Title/Description	Instances	
Certificates, awards, and diplomas, 1915-1961	Box 1	Folder 5
Miscellaneous personal and family, 1891-1893, 1941-1963, undated	Box 1	Folder 6
Newspaper clippings, 1963-1965, undated	Box 1	Folder 7
Photographs, 1953, undated	Box 1	Folder 8
Poetry and writings, 1963, undated	Box 1	Folder 9
Scrapbooks	Box 2	
1950 February - March	Box 2	
1950 April - May	Box 2	
1950 November - 1951 February	Box 2	
1951 February - May	Box 2	
1951 July - October	Box 2	
1951 October - November	Box 2	