

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY  
ABILENE, KANSAS

KANSAS GOVERNOR'S NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE EISENHOWER  
PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY AND THE EISENHOWER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY  
COMMISSION: Records, 1957-66

Pre-accession  
Processed by: TB  
Date completed: July 1992

The records of the Kansas Governor's National Committee for the Eisenhower Presidential Library and the Eisenhower Presidential Library Commission were deposited in the Eisenhower Library in 1961. Minor additions to the collection were made until 1966.

Linear feet of shelf space occupied: 24.8  
Approximate number of pages: 56,000  
Approximate number of items: 40,000

The Kansas Governor's National Committee for the Eisenhower Presidential Library and the Eisenhower Presidential Library Commission were official agencies of the State of Kansas. Literary rights to material created by the staffs of the Committee and the Commission are in the public domain.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

In 1954 President Dwight D. Eisenhower announced his intention of donating his papers to the government provided they could be stored near the Eisenhower Museum in Abilene, Kansas. To construct a suitable facility the Kansas State Legislature, in 1955, established the Eisenhower Presidential Library Commission to acquire the land for the library building. The Governor of Kansas appointed several leading citizens to the Commission. C.L. Brainard of Abilene was elected secretary and handled most of the work for acquiring the property.

In 1957 the enabling legislation was amended to permit the Commission to raise funds for the construction of the library. A special committee was established by the Commission to handle the fund-raising campaign. This committee was known as the Kansas Governor's National Committee for the Eisenhower Presidential Library. Benjamin Fairless, chairman of the board of U.S. Steel and a friend of President Eisenhower, was appointed chairman. Co-chairmen were Harry Darby of Kansas City and Kansas Governor George Docking.

The Committee opened an office on the second floor of the United Building at the northwest corner of Third and Cedar Streets in Abilene, Kansas. To head the fund-raising drive, the Committee hired Ellison Ketchum, a former coach at the University of Denver, as Executive Director. Mildred Nicholson of Abilene became office manager and took care of the paperwork.

The campaign was organized on a national basis, with a director appointed for each state. Most state directors were corporation executives who had experience in fund-raising work. Many were also friends of President Eisenhower. Ellison Ketchum traveled widely around the country and kept up an active correspondence with the state directors in order to coordinate their activities. The amount of money raised in each state depended largely on the dedication of the state directors. Some had little interest in the work and few donations were received from their states. Others, such as Harry Bullis of Minnesota and William E. Robinson of New York were quite active and raised large sums for the library.

Donations from each state were forwarded to the headquarters in Abilene. Mildred Nicholson and her staff would issue an official receipt to the donor. Periodically the accumulated money was sent to the Kansas State Treasurer in Topeka for deposit in a special Eisenhower Library Building Fund. The Kansas State Architect was responsible for designing the Library building and paying the contractors from the Fund. The ground breaking for the Library was held October 13, 1959. Construction was largely completed by early 1961 when President Eisenhower left office and his White House files arrived in Abilene for storage at the Library. The building was dedicated in May 1962.

Most of the work of the Committee took place between late 1957 and mid-1961. Ellison Ketchum died in late 1960 and Mildred Nicholson closed down the headquarters office and turned the files over to the Eisenhower Library in October 1961. The Commission, however, remained active and began work on a Place of Meditation which was built during 1965 and 1966.

Fund raising for this building was handled personally by Harry Darby and no Nation-wide fund raising effort was made as had been done for the Library. The few donations received for the Place of Meditation Fund were handled by Genevieve Inman of the Eisenhower Library staff. In December 1966, after completion of the Place of Meditation, the building was donated to the U.S. government, and the Commission went out of existence on July 1, 1967.

This collection consists primarily of the office files of the Committee which were maintained in the United Building in Abilene. The material is divided into four series. The first series contains Ellison Ketchum's correspondence with the state directors of the fund-raising campaign, and is arranged by state.

The second series consists of the administrative files of the Abilene office staff. The material includes reference files, correspondence with Committee and Commission executives and the general public, publicity for the work of the Committee, solicitation letters sent to major foundations and corporations, and a scrapbook on the work of the Committee compiled by Mildred Nicholson.

The third series consists of records of a special committee set up by the Commission in 1962 to make arrangements for the dedication of the Eisenhower Library. The material includes invitations, guest lists and seating charts for the dedication ceremonies in May 1962.

The fourth series consists of the financial records relating to donations to the Library and Place of Meditation funds. These include bank deposit forms, receipts, vouchers transmitting funds to the State Treasurer, and lists of donors.

Although this collection contains extensive information on the fund-raising activities of the Committee, there are very few references to the work of the Commission. There are no files on the acquisition of the Library site or the design of the building or the hiring of the contractors. Material on these subjects can probably be found among the papers of Commission members C.L. Brainard and Harry Darby at the Eisenhower Library (not processed as of July 1992.) Researchers should also consult the Governor's records in the Archives division of the Kansas State Historical Society in Topeka.

## SERIES DESCRIPTION

Box No.   Series

1-6    I.   State File. 6 boxes.

Correspondence of the Committee headquarters in Abilene with officials of the fund drives in the various states. Arranged of state.

7-18   II.   Subject File. 12 boxes.

Administrative files of the Committee headquarters in Abilene. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

19     III. Eisenhower Library Dedication Committee File. 1 box.

Records of a committee to plan social activities in connection with the dedication of the Eisenhower Library in May 1962. Arranged by subject.

20-54   IV. Financial File. 35 boxes.

Financial records relating to the fund raising campaign for the Eisenhower Library, including receipts, vouchers, transmittal forms, ledgers and lists of donors. Arranged by subject.

## CONTAINER LIST

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Series I: State File

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| 1 | Alabama-Eugene Munger                             |
|   | Alaska  |
|   | Arizona   |
|   | Arkansas  |
|   | California-James B. Black (1)(2)                  |
|   | Colorado-Dan Thornton, L.M. Pexton                |
|   | Connecticut-Payton A. Randolph                    |
|   | Delaware-Bayard Sharpe                            |
|   | District of Columbia-Robert V. Fleming (1)-(3)    |
|   | Florida   |
|   | Georgia-Alfred "Bill" Jones, Charles Yates (1)(2) |
|   | Hawaii  |
|   | Idaho [empty]                                     |
| 2 | Illinois-Curtiss E. Frank (1)-(4)                 |
|   | Indiana   |
|   | Iowa-Fred Bohlen                                  |
|   | Kansas-Jack Harris (1)-(6)                        |
|   | Kansas Kansas City Correspondence                 |

- 3 Kansas Topeka Correspondence (1)-(3)  
Kansas Wichita Correspondence  
Kentucky  
Louisiana  
Maine-James M. Acheson (1)-(2)  
Maryland  
Massachusetts-Harvey H. Bundy (1)-(4)  
Michigan (1)(2)
- 4 Minnesota-Harry A. Bullis (1)-(9)  
Mississippi  
Missouri-Arthur K. Atkinson (1)(2)
- 5 Montana  
Nebraska-J.M. McDonald, Jr.  
Nevada-Edmund C. Converse  
New Hampshire-Richard C. Carrick (1)-(3)  
New Jersey-Oliver Willits (1)-(3)  
New Mexico-Brig. Gen. Thomas D. Campbell  
New York-William E. Robinson (1)-(4)  
North Carolina
- 6 North Dakota-Barry and Crary  
Ohio-Harold Boeschstein

Oklahoma- K.S. Adams  
Oregon-Paul B. McKee  
Pennsylvania-Philip T. Sharples, Frank C. P. McGlenn (1)-(3)  
Rhode Island-Maurice A. Wolf  
South Carolina  
South Dakota-Bob Hipple  
Tennessee  
Texas-Amon G. Carter, Jr.  
Utah  
Vermont-Robert Gannet  
Virginia  
Washington-Frederick E. Baker  
West Virginia-Gov. Cecil H. Underwood  
Wisconsin (1)(2)  
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Series II: Subject File

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Abilene Fund Raising Program (1)(2)  
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Advertising  
Attorney General - John Anderson, Jr.  
Architects - John Brink (1)(2)

- Articles - Herman Kahn "The Presidential Library - A New Institution" March 1959
- Articles -Look Magazine - October 13, 1959
- Articles - Roy Roberts editorial - Kansas City Star January 15, 1961
- Articles - Kansas City Star March 25, 1962
- Charles L. Brainard - The Eisenhower Library Commission
- Central Office Service and Supply Clay Center, Kansas
- Correspondence re Contributions Since 10-1-61 (1)-(3)
- 8 Correspondence re Contributions since 10-1-61 (4)(5)
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- President Eisenhower, Letters to
- Eisenhower Foundation
- 10 Eisenhower Foundation Material (1)-(3)
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- Equipment Requests (1)-(5)
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- 11 Benjamin Fairless (1)(2)
  - Foundations-Ford Foundation
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  - Foundations, Companies, etc. Letters Not Sent
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- 12 Foundations, Companies, etc. Responses to Jan. 1961 Mailing (1)(2)
  - Ground Breaking Exercises October 13, 1959 (1)-(5)
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  - Important Documents - Telegram re Tax Deductions

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Kick-Off Luncheon - Addresses

Kick-Off Luncheon - Kenneth Olson's File (1)(2)

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Lists: Contributors in Ill

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  - Report to Mr. Lehman May 1959
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END OF CONTAINER LIST