

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY  
ABILENE, KANSAS

DARBY, HARRY: Papers, 1925-1987

Accession: A75-17, A75-17/A, A75-17/2, A76-14, A90-10, A94-3, A15-4

Processed by: VJA

Date Completed: March 2018 (portions still unprocessed)

The papers of Harry Darby were deposited in the Eisenhower Library by between November 1974 and November 1975; by the Darby Corporation on February 5, 1990 and November 10, 1993; and by Susan Edwards Miller on April 2, 2015.

Linear feet: 642

Approximate number of pages: 1.4 million (approximately)

Harry Darby signed an instrument of gift for the papers on October 14, 1967. Portions of the Darby's personal papers formerly housed in the Darby Corporation Papers at the Kansas State Historical Society were transferred to the Eisenhower Library under an instrument of gift signed by the corporation on January 23, 1990.

Literary rights in the unpublished writings of Harry Darby in this collection and in all other collections of papers received by the United States government have been donated to the public. Under terms of the instrument of gift, the following classes of items are withheld from research use:

1. Papers which constitute an invasion of personal privacy or a libel of a living person.
2. Papers which are required to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy, and are properly classified.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

I. Harry Darby, Jr. was born in Kansas City, on January 23, 1895 to Harry and Isabelle Smith Darby. He received a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Illinois in 1917. During the First World War served in the 3rd Regular Army Division in the 314<sup>th</sup> and 104<sup>th</sup> Engineers from 1917 to 1919, attaining the rank of captain. He later served as a major in the United States Army Reserves and a lieutenant colonel in the Kansas National Guard.

After the war Darby took over The Missouri Boiler Works Company, a business founded by his father. In December 1927 the name was changed to The Darby "Products of Steel Plate" Corporation as the scope of the business had grown beyond constructing boilers. The Darby Corporation built steel plate items including farm equipment, railroad cars, and locomotives. In World War II they also produced bombs and landing craft. Darby's other business interests included banking, insurance, retail sales, and utility companies.

During the Depression he worked with numerous local and state agencies to combat unemployment. These included the Governor's Emergency Committee on Unemployment (1930), the Kansas City, Kansas Employment Stabilization Committee (1930-31), President's Emergency Committee for Employment (1930-31), the Governor's Committee for Employment (1931-1932), and the Kansas Federal Relief Committee (1932-1937). He was chairman of the Kansas State Highway Commission from 1933 through 1937.

Darby was active in local and state Republican Party activities. On December 2, 1949, upon the death of Senator Clyde M. Reed, Darby was appointed to serve the remainder of the Reed's term in the U. S. Senate and served from December 2, 1949, to November 28, 1950. Darby was not a candidate for election to fill the vacancy and returned to Kansas City to resume his business and political activities

He maintained a 1,500 farm in Wyandotte County, Kansas and played a major role in the America Royal Livestock and Horse Show. His personal admiration for Dwight D. Eisenhower was manifested in Darby's encouragement of Eisenhower's campaign for President, raising money to support the Eisenhower Foundation and construct the Eisenhower Library, and the addition of the Eisenhower statue on the grounds of the Eisenhower Library and Museum in Abilene.

### **Series within the Darby Papers**

An initial survey and preliminary arrangement of the records conducted in 2006 yielded the following tentative list of series. This information may change as work progresses.

#### Open for research

Early Correspondence Files, 1924-1937

Annual Correspondence Files, 1938-1979 (partially processed)

#### Unprocessed

Republican National Committee Files

Speeches

Trip Files

Social Series

Special Organizations

Print Materials and Newspaper Clippings

Personal Financial Records

Scrapbooks and Memorabilia  
Christmas Cards  
Farm Files  
Memberships  
Organizations

#### **Related Collections**

**Eisenhower Presidential Library:**

Darby Corporation Records, 1925-1985. 168 cubic feet. Closed pending processing.

**Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Kansas**

Darby Corporation Records, 1928-1989. 493 cubic feet. Box list available online.

**University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas**

Harry Darby Collection, 1878-2008. 18 linear feet. Finding aid available online.