

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY
ABILENE, KANSAS

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION:
Records re Eisenhower Library site acquisition, 1956-82

Accession 96-3
Processed by: TB
Date Completed: September 2001

The records of the General Services Administration relating to the acquisition of the site of the Eisenhower Library were donated to the Eisenhower Library in July 1995 by the Kansas City, Missouri, branch office (Region 6) of the General Services Administration.

Linear feet:	-1
Approximate number of pages:	1200
Approximate number of items:	600

No restrictions were placed on the records. Copyright in the official records of the General Services Administration is in the public domain. These records were reviewed in accordance with the general restrictions on access to government records as set forth by the National Archives and Records Administration.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The General Services Administration (GSA) is a U.S. government agency that handles a wide variety of administrative services for other government agencies. One such function is documenting federal ownership of real estate. When the Eisenhower Center in Abilene, Kansas, was donated to the federal government in the 1960s, the Kansas City office (Region 6) of GSA was responsible for documenting the transfer of the property, even though the Eisenhower Center was managed by the National Archives. The Kansas City office of GSA has custody of the government's copy of the deed to the site. However, the administrative correspondence relating to the transfer of the property was declared surplus in 1995 and was donated to the Eisenhower Library.

The Eisenhower Center was developed on six square blocks of land in the south part of Abilene, Kansas. The legal description of the property was blocks 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 in J.M. Fisher's Addition to the City of Abilene. A strip of land along the south edge of blocks 10, 11 and 12, which originally belonged to the Rock Island Railroad, also became part of the Center.

The U.S. government acquired this land from three main sources. The south half of the Center, comprising blocks 10, 11 and 12, and the Rock Island property, was acquired from the Eisenhower Presidential Library Commission, an agency of the State of Kansas, in 1966 and 1967. This contained the Library, the Service Building, and the Place of Meditation. The Commission had been established in 1955 to develop an archives to hold Dwight D. Eisenhower's personal papers and White House files. Information on the work of the Commission is available in the papers of C.L. Brainard, the secretary of the Commission, at the Eisenhower Library. A history of the Commission, compiled by J. Earl Endacott, is also available at the Eisenhower Library.

The northeast part of the Center, comprising blocks 8 and 9, was acquired from the Eisenhower Foundation in 1966. This contained the Eisenhower family home and the Museum. The Foundation had been created in 1945 to honor Dwight D. Eisenhower. It acquired the family home following the death of Ida Eisenhower and opened it to the public in 1947. The Foundation also built the Museum in 1954. The Foundation has retained custody of its records, but an extensive history of the Foundation, compiled by J. Earl Endacott, is available at the Eisenhower Library. This gives a detailed account of the development of the Home and the Museum.

The northwest corner of the Center, comprising block 7, was the site of the Lincoln Grade School. The original school, which Dwight D. Eisenhower had attended as a child, was destroyed by fire in 1914. The new school building, which was built following the fire, was closed at the end of the 1972-73 school year and the Abilene school district sold the land to the government so it could be incorporated into the Eisenhower Center. This became the site of the Visitor's Center.

This collection contains material collected by the Kansas City, Missouri, office of GSA documenting the transfer of the land to the U.S. government. The material includes correspondence, reports, newspaper clippings, and duplicate copies of deeds and bills of sale. Most of the material concerns the certification of the titles to the land and the preparation and

registration of the deeds. Of particular importance is a copy of the abstract of title to the Eisenhower family home, which lists the owners of the site back to the original grant of land from the government in 1862.

CONTAINER LIST

Box No. Contents

1 Acquisition (1)-(5)

Acquisition – Additional Land [acquisition of Lincoln School property; construction of Visitors Center]

Acquisition – Additional Land, Management

Acquisition – Additional Land, Title Evidence

Acquisition – Additional Land, Parcel No. 1 (1) (2)

Acquisition – Additional Land, Parcel No. 1, Relocation Assistance Unified School Dist. No. 435

Acquisition – Additional Land, Parcel No. 2 [vacation of city streets]

Correspondence 1960-64 (1)-(4)

Correspondence 1965-82 (1) (2)

2 Correspondence 1965-82 (3) (4)

Documents, Plats, Abstract & Notes (1)-(6) [copy of abstract of title for Eisenhower family home]

END OF CONTAINER LIST