

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY
ABILENE, KANSAS

ELSON, EDWARD L. R.: Papers, 1947-1992

Accession: A16-9
Processed by: VJA
Date Completed: April 2016

The papers of Edward L. R. Elson were deposited in the Eisenhower Library by Eleanor Elson Heginbotham in December 2015.

Linear feet:	0.3 feet
Approximate number of pages:	170

Eleanor Elson Heginbotham, Beverly Elson, Mary Faith Suarez, David Elson signed an instrument of gift for the papers on December 10, 2015. Literary rights in the unpublished writings of Edward L. R. Elson in this collection and in all other collections of papers received by the United States government have been donated to the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

The Reverend Dr. Edward L. R. Elson (1906-1993) was a Presbyterian minister and Chaplain of the United States Senate.

Elson was born in Monongahela, Pennsylvania. He studied at Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky, and went to University of Southern California where he received a master's degree in theology. He married Frances Sandys in 1929. He was ordained in 1930 and served at the La Jolla Presbyterian Church in La Jolla, California. He attended the American Seminar in Europe and Russia touring Europe in the summer of 1936. Shortly after returning he married Helen Chittick.

Prior to World War II he served with the chaplain reserves. In 1941 he resigned from his position with the church and went on active duty with the Army. He arrived in France in December 1944. He served as the personal representative of General Frank Wilburn at the execution by firing squad of Eddie Slovik. During the war he was also assigned to interview members of the clergy who had been imprisoned at Dachau. After the German surrender, he worked with the Consistory, a ruling body of the German Protestant church, in order to determine how the German Church would be rebuilt.

Following the end of the war he was named pastorate at the Covenant-First Presbyterian Church in Washington, D.C. He was pastor of the church in 1947 when it became the National Presbyterian Church. On February 1, 1953, Elson baptized President Dwight D. Eisenhower. In 1969 Elson was elected as Chaplain of the United States Senate. He retired in 1981.

Documents in this collection consist of original letters from Presidents Eisenhower, Truman, Johnson, Kennedy, Nixon, and Carter. In addition, there are letters from Mamie Eisenhower, John S. D. Eisenhower, and carbon copies of Elson's letters to various Presidents. Most of the correspondence relates to invitations and acceptances to attend services at his church, letters regarding sermons, invitations to luncheons, and other general social correspondence. One notable exception is a lengthy letter from Eisenhower regarding the Middle East dated July 31, 1958.

The collection is arranged chronologically by Presidential administration.

CONTENTS

<u>Box Nos.</u>	<u>Folder Title</u>
1	Harry Truman, 1947-1972
	Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1953-1968 (1)-(3)
	Mamie Eisenhower, 1954-1955
	John S. D. Eisenhower, 1964-1992
	John F. Kennedy, 1960
	Lyndon Johnson, 1967-1969
	Richard Nixon, 1948-1980
	Gerald Ford, 1973-1977
	Jimmy Carter, 1977
	Ronald Reagan, 1986

END OF CONTENTS