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BOLTON

BOLTON, ROBERT R. (OH-389) 110 pages Open

Acting Director of the Eisenhower Library, 1961-63; Associate director, 1963-67.

DESCRIPTION: Personal background: education, military service, move to Washington, D.C. to work in DRB (Departmental Records Branch, Army); 1952, sent to New York with Bill (Wilbur) Nigh to separate Eisenhower's official documents from his personal papers; papers in disorganized state and decision to initiate project to organize a file, create an index, and microfilm; Army received one copy of microfilm and Eisenhower retained papers and 2 copies of microfilm; file covered period of 1942-1952; Bolton's return to Washington DRB and consequent projects: organization of Gen. Robert Schultz's files, identification of photos and making of albums for Mrs. Eisenhower, filming albums for archival use, visiting Abilene in 1955 to go through museum photograph collection; 1956 move to general reference work in the office, Chief of Military History, on Sherrod East's recommendation (East, chief of DRB); Bolton's transfer by Dr. Wayne Grover (Archivist of U.S.) to National Archives to work with Federal Register on The Public Papers of the Presidents project as well as to serve as liaison with White House in terms of a possible future presidential library; work with Warren Reid and Mildred Berry; Bolton's responsibility to verify text of White House press releases with sound recordings; problems with Eisenhower syntax; assignment to Carl Trever (Special Assistant to Archivist for Presidential Libraries); 1955 general legislation for establishment of presidential libraries passed; work with Dr. L. Arthur Minnich in White House office to compile collection of President's activities; involvement with design and building of Eisenhower Library; groundbreaking ceremony, 1959; difficulties involved in gathering up bulk of administrative materials (White House Central Files vs. individual files in the separate offices); Bolton's assignment to unfinished Library, Abilene, January, 1961, as acting director with 3-member staff: Roland Doty, Delbert Bishop (archivists), Willie Scott (photographic technician); staff function to process materials and place in archival boxes; pre-Presidential papers, Ann Whitman's files (President's secretary), and other selective files sent to Gettysburg; first materials to arrive in Abilene made up of White House Central Files and files from various staff offices; packing of materials in Washington in four 40-foot trailers and sending to Ft. Riley under Marine guard; materials off-loaded at Library by staff; Clyde Yakle and maintenance; conditions in unfinished building; no secretarial help; use of local men to guard premises at night; shelving installed after dedication of building in May, 1962; problems connected with dedication ceremonies; Senator Darby's role; involvement of the Eisenhower Foundation and local people; addition of Mrs. Genevieve Inman and Mrs. Marie Bolton to Library staff; landscaping and grounds problems; Abilene's experiences with prior Eisenhower events and cooperation in handling dedication; Charley Case and the Eisenhower family; Eisenhower parents' involvement with Jehovah's Witnesses and pacifist activities, pre-WW I; the American Protective League; warning by district attorney for Kansas to Case that Eisenhower might be subject to arrest; further Jehovah's Witnesses involvement; contacts between Library and

Gettysburg office; Eisenhower's first indication of decision to be buried in Abilene on Library grounds; J. Earl Endacott, director of museum and home; limitations of Eisenhower Foundation and Eisenhower's interest in transferring house and museum to National Archives' control; Bolton's appointment as Associate Director under Dr. William Aeschbacher; Bolton's reassignment to Washington to Office of Presidential Libraries in 1967 by Robert H. Bahmer (Archivist of the U.S.); work on handbook of procedures to provide guidance for future presidential libraries.

[Dwight D. Eisenhower Library Oral History, interview by Dr. Maclyn P. Burg, October 15, 1971.]