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## MS-071: Mamie Eisenhower Letters

Nicole M. Lenart  
*Gettysburg College*

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## MS-071: Mamie Eisenhower Letters

### **Description**

This collection primarily consists of the letters of Mamie Eisenhower to her friends, Dr. J. Holt McCracken and his wife Vivien of California from 1961-1979. Also included are miscellaneous photographs and newspaper articles. The collection does not contain any information on Mamie prior to 1961 or contain references to her years as First Lady.

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### **Keywords**

Mamie Eisenhower, Dwight D. Eisenhower, McCracken

### **Disciplines**

History | Social History | United States History

**Guide to the  
Mamie Eisenhower letters**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library  
Special Collections & College Archives**

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## **MS – 071: Mamie Eisenhower letters**

### **Correspondence of Mamie Eisenhower to the McCrackens**

#### **Biography:**

Mamie Geneva Doud Eisenhower was born on November 14, 1896 in Boone, Iowa to John and Elivera Doud. Her family moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa shortly after her birth and then to Pueblo and Colorado Springs, Colorado. In 1905, the family again moved to Denver, where her family lived until 1960. Mamie attended public schools in Denver and then went to an elite finishing school.

Mamie met Dwight David Eisenhower in 1915 while spending the winter at her family's home in San Antonio, Texas. Eisenhower was posted at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, and the two were introduced by a mutual friend. They began seeing each other immediately, were engaged within months, and married on July 1, 1916. Because of Ike's military career, the couple moved frequently. Mamie estimated that she lived in thirty-seven different houses in her life. The Eisenhower's first lived in Fort Sam Houston, but then the couple moved to Gettysburg where Eisenhower commanded Camp Colt, a World War One training camp located on the battlefield. During the summer the couple lived in the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity house on Washington Street, and when the college was in session, they lived in a home on Spring Street.

After living in Gettysburg, Eisenhower was transferred to Camp Meade in Maryland and then to Camp Gaillard in the Panama Canal Zone. Mamie found it difficult to live in the climate of Panama and became ill. Eisenhower was stationed in Panama from 1921-1924, during which time Mamie alternated living with him and living in Colorado with her parents. Eisenhower had various appointments in the United States during the 1920s, although the couple did live in Paris for a time when Eisenhower was assigned to revise World War One monuments in Europe. Mamie also lived with Eisenhower in the Philippines from 1936-1941.

When Ike was overseas in World War Two, Mamie lived in Washington, DC and saw her husband only once from 1942 to 1945. During the war, Mamie refused to attend parties and spent most of her time participating in volunteer work for the war effort. After the war, the couple lived in Washington, New York, and in Paris as Eisenhower changed assignments.

When Eisenhower campaigned for president in 1952 and again in 1956, Mamie traveled with him but rarely gave speeches, preferring instead that her husband be in the limelight. During Eisenhower's years in the White House (1953-1961), Mamie was known as a gracious First Lady and thoughtful host. She always remembered the birthdays of the staff members, and she often personally responded to letters sent to her by the public.

After the Eisenhowers left the White House, they lived on their farm in Gettysburg that they had purchased in 1949. Mamie was at Eisenhower's side when he died in 1969 at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC. After his death, Mamie continued to live in Gettysburg. She

traveled to see family and friends frequently and helped to support both the Eisenhower Medical Center and Eisenhower College. She also spent the winters in Georgia and California.

Mamie remained active until the end of her life, and she died in Walter Reed Hospital on November 1, 1979 following a stroke, although she suffered from various health problems throughout the late 1970s.

Mamie and Ike had two children together, Doud Dwight, known as Icky, and John Sheldon Doud. Icky was born in November 24, 1917 and died on January 2, 1921 from scarlet fever. Icky's death was a deep blow to both Mamie and Ike, who refused to speak about Icky or his death. John Sheldon was born on August 3, 1922 and married Barbara Jean Thompson in 1947. They had four children together, Dwight David II, Barbara Anne, Susan Elaine, and Mary Jean.

### **Scope and Content:**

This collection primarily consists of the letters of Mamie Eisenhower to her friends, Dr. J. Holt McCracken and his wife Vivien of California from 1961-1979. Also included are miscellaneous photographs and newspaper articles. The collection does not contain any information on Mamie prior to 1961 or contain references to her years as First Lady.

### **Series Description:**

Series I: Correspondence to the McCrackens

This series contains the personal correspondence of Mamie Eisenhower to the McCrackens from 1961 until 1979.

Series II: Miscellaneous

This series includes miscellaneous photographs, correspondence, and newspaper articles.

### **Box 1**

1-1: Inventory

1-2: Biographical Information

### **Series I: Correspondence with the McCrackens**

1-3: Letters sent—March 28, 1961-November 21, 1962

- March 28, 1961—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA.
- July 31, 1961—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- January 6, 1962—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mamie discusses her Christmas in California.
- February 37, 1962—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA.
- April 24, 1962—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA.

- July 6, 1962—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - November 21, 1962—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- 1-4: Letters sent—April 16, 1963-October 8, 1963
- April 16, 1963-Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions plans to visit California.
  - May 24, 1963—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - July 30, 1963—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - October 7, 1963—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- 1-5: Letters sent—February 16, 1964-November 22, 1964
- February 16, 1964—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken.
  - March 26, 1964-Easter card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken.
  - March 31, 1964—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - June 18, 1964—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - September 18, 1964—Letter to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions upcoming visit of McCrackens.
  - October 7, 1964—Card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Discusses visit of McCracken's to Gettysburg, mention of World's Fair.
  - October 27, 1964—Note to Mrs. McCracken that a package sent to Mamie Eisenhower at Gettysburg is being held.
  - November 21, 1964—Thank-you card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- 1-6: Letters sent—March 9, 1965-October 21, 1965
- March 9, 1965—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Scottsdale, AZ.
  - April 9, 1965—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Beach, CA. Mention of Ike's poor health.
  - April 14, 1965—Easter card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - July 1, 1965—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mention of the celebration of Ike's and Mamie's anniversary, Ike's check-ups.
  - August 9, 1965—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions their travels; Ike attends memorial service for President Hoover.
  - October 20, 1965—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions various travels.
- 1-7: Letters sent—February 16, 1966-December 17, 1966 and one undated.
- February 16, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA.
  - April 1, 1966—Easter card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from CA.

- June 2, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Sends photos from an April 28 visit to El Dorado, CA and mentions Ike's recent stay in the hospital.
  - September 30, 1966—Anniversary card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - October 6, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Eisenhowers want to go to California for the holidays, mention of Secret Service.
  - November 5, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Ike has a cold
  - November 16, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - December 14, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC. Discusses progress of Ike's illness.
  - December 17, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC.
  - 1966—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Exeter, NH. Mention grandson's David graduation.
- 1-8: Letters sent—February 8, 1967-December 16, 1967
- February 8, 1967—Valentine card from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Indio, CA.
  - February 23, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert CA.
  - April 11, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA. Mamie mentions many visitors seeing her and Ike.
  - May 16, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mention of Ike's illness, Eisenhower College.
  - June 19, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - July 6, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - August 15, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - November 16, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions Mamie's birthday celebration, preparation to go to California.
  - December 7, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Indio, CA.
  - December 16, 1967—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken.
- 1-9: Letters sent—January 19, 1968-November 26, 1968
- January 19, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Palm Desert, CA.
  - March 15, 1968—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Phoenix, AZ.
  - March 25, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC.
  - April 14, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken.
  - April 19, 1968—Letter from Mamie's secretary to Mrs. McCracken from Indio, CA.

- May 1, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken. Ike is in the hospital.
- June 21, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC. Mention of Ike's failing health.
- August 20, 1968—Letter from Mamie's secretary to Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC. Mamie could not respond because of Ike's illness.
- August 23, 1968—Letter from Mamie's secretary to Mrs. McCracken.
- October 2, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC.
- November 26, 1968—Letter to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Walter Reed Hospital, Washington, DC. Discusses recent visit by McCrackens.

## Box 2

2-1: Letters sent: January 7, 1969-December 17, 1969

- January 7, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions *White House Cook Book*, Mamie's illness, David's wedding. Ike is still in the hospital.
- February 4, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions her social life in Washington, DC.
- March 22, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- April 17, 1969—Letter from Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Thanks McCrackens for their sympathy telegram at Ike's death.
- May 8, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mamie prepares to go to Brussels.
- May 20, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Brussels. Mentions donation of McCracken's in the name of Ike.
- June 2, 1969—Postcard from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Brussels. Writes of plans for returning home.
- August 8, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg. Mentions watching the moon landing from the White House.
- August 30, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mamie mentions her recent stay in the hospital.
- November 11, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Writes of trips to Washington, DC.
- December 6, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Brussels.
- December 17, 1969—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Plans trip to Georgia soon.

2-2: Letters sent: March 27, 1970-August 13, 1971

- March 27, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA. Discusses a television broadcast about Ike.
- April 1, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA. Mentions visit by grandchildren.



- April 7, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions attending 1915 West Point reunion, cards sent to her in remembrance of her anniversary, and White House reception for Prince Charles and Princess Anne.
  - October 6, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mention of recent trip to Washington DC, granddaughter's debut.
  - November 20, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - December 12, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Plans to spend Christmas at the White House with the Nixons.
  - April 13, 1970—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions Easter at White House with the Nixons.
  - April 29, 1971—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mention of Bob Hope, groundbreaking of the Eisenhower US Army Hospital in Fort Gordon, riots at Eisenhower College.
  - July 7, 1971—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Discusses busy social schedule.
  - August 13, 1971—Air mail slip from Mamie addressed to Mrs. McCracken.
- 2-3: Letters sent: January 7, 1972- November 9, 1972
- January 7, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions Eisenhower Medical Center and her medical tests at Walter Reed.
  - Easter 1972—Easter card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - June 1, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions recent trip to Augusta.
  - June 30, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mention of Westmoreland's retirement dinner in Washington, DC.
  - October 13, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Discusses the Eisenhower Society in Gettysburg and activities on his birthday.
  - October 30, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions more check-ups at Walter Reed.
  - November 9, 1972—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions President Nixon's re-election.
- 2-4: Letters sent: February 2, 1973-November 14, 1973
- February 12, 1973—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA.
  - February 27, 1973—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA.
  - April 30, 1973—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions General Westmoreland, tests at Walter Reed, and ribbon-cutting at the Kennedy Center.
  - June 4, 1973—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
  - July 5, 1973—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Writes of feelings about her anniversary and Ike.

- October 4, 1973—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions visit to the Catoctin Mountains.
- November 14, 1973—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.

2-5: Letters sent: January 2, 1974-November 14, 1974

- January 2, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions health problems and Eisenhower Medical Center.
- February 5, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions health problems.
- March 11, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA. Mentions trip to Augusta.
- April 15, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA.
- May 28, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions heart condition, Eisenhower Medical Center cookbook, West Point's Eisenhower Hall.
- June 28, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions recent trips to Washington, DC.
- October 30, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions President Nixon.
- November 14, 1974—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken. Mentions plans for her birthday.
- December 13, 1974—Christmas card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken.

2-6: Letters sent: February 21, 1975-July 19, 1976

- February 2, 1975—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA.
- February 26, 1975—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- March 30, 1975—Easter card from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Augusta, GA.
- April 23, 1975—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Thank-you for letters from Mamie's hospitalization in Walter Reed and Fort Gordon.
- July 30, 1975—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions trip to Walter Reed.
- October 22, 1975—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions activities on Ike's birthday, USS Dwight David Eisenhower.
- April 13, 1976—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions stay in hospital, Dolores Hope.
- June 25, 1976—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions the White House dinner for Queen Elizabeth.
- July 19, 1976—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions health problems.
- September 21, 1976—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.

2-7: Letter sent: January 26, 1977-May 29, 1979

- January 26, 1977—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA
- June 24, 1977—Card from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions Eisenhower Hospital, Eisenhower College, Dolores Hope.
- September 13, 1977—Postcard from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions trip to Kansas.
- September 24, 1978—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA.
- October 25, 1978—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions upcoming winter in Washington, DC.
- May 29, 1979—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken from Gettysburg, PA. Mentions trip to Walter Reed.

## **Series II: Miscellaneous Correspondence, Photographs, and Articles**

2-8: Miscellaneous letters, photos, and articles.

- June 28, 1960—Letter from Mamie to Dolores Whitney from the White House.
- July 18, 1960—Letter from Mamie's secretary to Dolores Whitney from the White House.
- November 15, 1961—Letter from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. Leo Rottanzi from Gettysburg, PA.
- November 9, 1966—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. Leo Rottanzi from Gettysburg, PA.
- December 6, 1968—Letter from Mamie to Mrs. Leo Rottanzi from Walter Reed Hospital.
- Undated—Note card from Mamie to Mrs. McCracken
- April 28, 1966—Photograph of Mamie and Mrs. McCracken in Palm Desert, CA.
- April 28, 1966—Photograph of Mrs. McCracken and Eisenhower in Palm Desert, CA.
- April 28, 1966—Photograph of Mamie, Eisenhower, and Mrs. McCracken in Palm Desert, CA.
- April 5, 1968—Envelope to letter (missing) from Mamie to Dr. and Mrs. McCracken
- Photograph of Mamie, Eisenhower, and the Dodges from Detroit in Palm Springs, CA.
- Photograph of Mamie and Eisenhower in Palm Springs, CA.
- September 27, 1971—Photograph of Mamie and Dr. and Mrs. Richard Nixon on her birthday.
- Newspaper photograph of the Eisenhower family in Palm Desert, CA.
- Newspaper clipping about Dr. J.H. McCracken's invitation to the President's Conference on Occupational Safety on March 1-3, 1960.
- Newspaper clipping about Mamie Eisenhower's hospitalization.
- Newspaper clipping about Mamie's stay in Nassau.
- Newspaper clipping in 1978 about Dr. McCracken's invitation to the Occupational Safety conference.
- Miscellaneous photo doubles and negatives.

