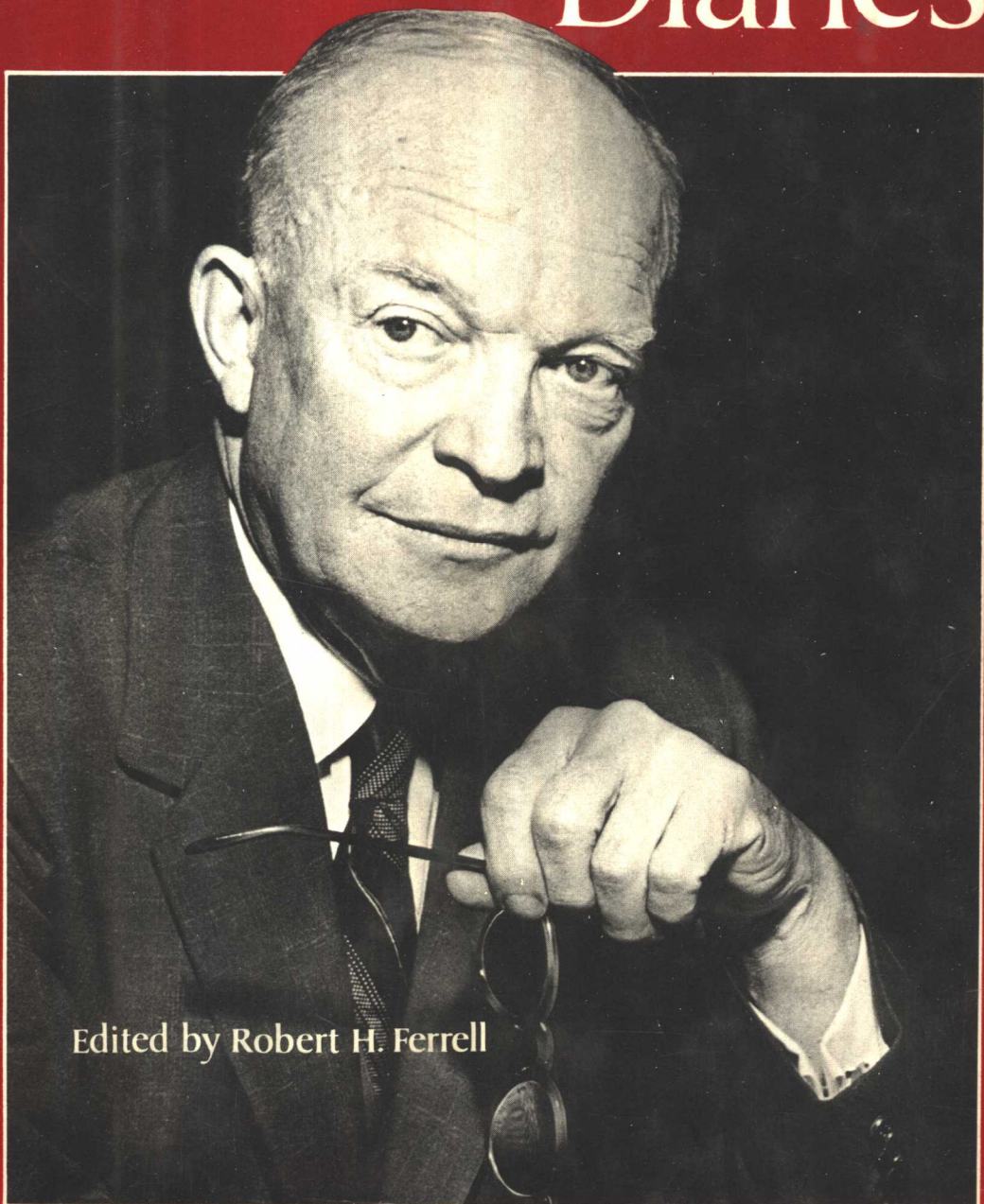


The EISENHOWER Diaries



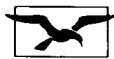
Edited by Robert H. Ferrell

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THE EISENHOWER DIARIES

EDITED BY

ROBERT H. FERRELL



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As for the putting together of the book, I have many people to thank. My copy editor at W.W. Norton, Sue Lowe, caught most of my errors with a tactful query or glancing comment that took any possible sting out of the point. Jim Mairs, friend and editor, asked questions with his customary directness, which didn’t sting either. John M. Hollingsworth was the able cartographer, and Antonina Krass designed with imagination and skill. I am again grateful to Donald S. Lamm, the president of Norton. Of course, once more, a thank you to Lila and Carolyn.

EDITORIAL NOTE

The habit of editors is to explain the obvious, and in introductions to the various parts of *The Eisenhower Diaries*—to the main sections, as well as in headnotes, footnotes, and occasional summaries—I have tried to present the issues as simply as possible. Where the diary does not stand by itself I have sought to explain without relating too much. My comments appear in a contrasting, oblique typeface.

The same practice has been applied to the style of the text. Styling changes have been kept to a minimum, but where necessary they have been made without fuss—without brackets or “sics.” A special problem in regard to the editing is Eisenhower’s somewhat prim use of dashes in place of full expletives, as in d---. Occasionally, he wrote out the words. I have retained this inconsistency. Eisenhower was an excellent speller, so there was little to correct; the very occasional lapses have been corrected without notice, on the theory that the diarist was in a hurry and deserves consideration from posterity. Likewise, Eisenhower’s tendency to use dashes for commas. Eisenhower had a military habit of capping nouns, and these now appear lowcapped. The considerable number of exclamation marks and underlinings, which are mostly unnecessary and would distract the attention of present-day readers, have been reduced. I have also spelled out the many abbreviations which would otherwise have required an overabundance of footnotes. And, finally, I have replaced the few instances of illegible handwriting with ellipses.

INTRODUCTION

The diaries of the late Dwight D. Eisenhower are unique documents, in that they alone, in the mass of Ike's prose, reveal the innermost thoughts of the soldier-statesman. In his books—the memoir of the Second World War, the two large volumes on the presidency, the incomplete autobiography written near the end of his life—Eisenhower related the course of events over the years, with descriptive detail and frequently with humor, but he usually stayed away from analysis. In his many private letters to friends and acquaintances, some of which have been published, he was more frank, but he still held back. And the public record of his military career and of his presidency does not reflect many open, frank statements, proofs that the soldier-president thought long and deeply about issues, personal or public; it has given substance to the speculation by many of his contemporaries and by some later students of Eisenhower that he was essentially a public relations man and that his life was all outward—an expression of assent and agreement or at least of forbearance, of a man who never had an idea or, if he did, would quickly chase it out of sight. Ike had advanced in the military because he exhibited the proper feelings toward his fellow officers—he was ambitious, but not overambitious, and always thoughtful about his friends. He was companionable and conciliatory. When he had any spare time in the military he devoted it to bridge and to reading “Westerns”; as a politician, he also took up golf. Eisenhower was the friend of everyone—the man of judgment amid men of passion, the American from Abilene who somehow had risen high in the army and had done the same thing in politics and who, therefore, wanted people everywhere to get along with each other rather than oppose and quarrel and fight. To the American people he seemed a boyish, enthusiastic figure and no militaristic army officer. But in the diaries another Eisenhower appears—a man who carefully masked his shrewdness, his purposes. The general-president knew what

he was doing. Contrary to the critics who said that what seemed thoughtlessness was indeed so, there was an active mind at work, not shuffling through issues and crises but determined to get to the essentials; it is this analytical mind that presents itself in the diaries.

If the diaries have a second quality, apart from the writer's ability to analyze, that quality might well be described as a quiet ambition—this despite the army's feeling that its officers should not be overambitious. The army's accepted system of behavior undoubtedly played down ambition among its inner membership—the West Pointers and such of the outlanders as George C. Marshall, who although he attended Virginia Military Institute was admitted to the inner circle. But the playing down was largely a matter of form rather than reality. In Eisenhower's case, the hardworking officer in the Philippines—the diaries begin in 1935, when Ike was under the thumb of the imperious Douglas MacArthur, trying to organize a Philippine army—dearly wanted to do well and gain authority, as would anyone in any other walk of life, or almost all the other walks of life. Throughout the diaries we see Eisenhower looking for tasks that would challenge him.

A third quality so evident in the diary entries of the years after 1945 is that Eisenhower saw himself not merely as a conciliator and mover of men but, to use the word, a politician. He believed that anyone who made it to the top in the United States Army could handle men politically. It seems a quaint belief, for the work of being a politician involved so many more activities than were necessary in the army. But Eisenhower believed that he possessed all the qualities necessary to analyze American political life. Involved in his new political being was the need to reevaluate his political philosophy, for it was well known (or so the successful general appears to have convinced himself) that political leaders could articulate their beliefs. The general decided that he was in favor of free enterprise and balanced federal budgets. Also necessary was the need to know your enemy, in this case communism, and Ike made some elementary attempts to understand the philosophy of the people in Moscow; his speculations on the nature of communism would not have been impressive to any professional student of the subject, but they were impressive to the Republicans of his day who, after a few Eisenhower extrapolations, were willing to believe that if the general mentioned the word communism, he had been studying it. And lastly Ike, as a politician, sought to enlist the good will of the businessmen of the country, the controllers of enterprise, who had been under a cloud ever since the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929. Eisenhower sensed that the businessmen of his time were different individuals from the speculators and bankers of the earlier era, the supporters of Herbert Hoover in the late 1920s. He had seen businessmen patriotically at work during the war, enlarging their factories in miraculous ways and making the country the great arsenal of democracy. Businessmen seemed devoted to the national welfare, and Ike believed they could be marshalled in politics; given half a chance, they could turn the Republican party into an instrument for the national good.

The diaries thus show that Eisenhower could be frank with himself, that he

was attracted to power, and that he saw himself as a politician. The last point is of special interest and raises a question of reality—did the general-president really master politics? Or was he deluded, as so many men (generals perhaps least) have been deluded, by the heady notice, attention, publicity, that comes to both good and bad politicians—the hero worship that comes to anyone who reaches high public office—especially the office of president of the United States?

Here it is necessary to say that Eisenhower proved himself a marvelous politician. He not merely wanted to move men politically but he showed he could do it. As the years of the presidency wore on, and somewhat against his will he served a second term—by 1956 his policies were not yet achieved, not yet secure, and no other member of the Republican party had begun to approach his vote-getting abilities—he sometimes remarked modestly that he was a better politician than the professionals. There is every reason to believe this statement, for the president's popularity was ineradicable, invincible, simply not subject to the erosions or buffetings that have knocked down so many American political reputations throughout the country's history. Eisenhower was a success, in the largest possible way, in American politics; no politician of his time did nearly as well. The professionals were dazzled by his virtuosity. If the philosophy of free enterprise and balanced budgets did not find universal approval and met the guffaws of the sophisticated of his time, it did appeal to the masses of Americans; it would not have encountered guffaws among the chastened sophisticates of the stagflation 1980s. Eisenhower's views on communism perhaps were simplistic, but they were as good as those many of his contemporaries produced. As for his political effort to enlist the businessmen of the United States in upholding the best qualities of the capitalistic system, no rational American of the 1980s would disagree either with the goal or with many of Eisenhower's methods, which if they did not produce miracles, were at least as miraculous as the economic wonderworks of the 1960s and 1970s.

Eisenhower was a phenomenon in American politics, and there never has been anything quite like him. No American today can fail to take his presidency seriously. And many Americans are now looking back to the Eisenhower fifties, as they are called, with a feeling of real nostalgia, a sense that here was a time that one would like to relive, if it were only possible.

In looking at Eisenhower's career it is a fascinating task to compare the qualities—the capacity for high public office—of the two leading political personalities of the period after the Second World War, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Harry S. Truman. As Richard Rovere pointed out many years ago, here were two individuals who came from very much the same backgrounds, small towns of the Middle West, actually two small towns that were less than two hundred miles apart. Truman as a young bank clerk just after the turn of the century lived for a short time in a rooming house in Kansas City with another young man named Arthur Eisenhower—Ike's brother. If circumstances had been slightly different for Truman, he would have been a graduate of West Point. (He tried hard to get in and failed because of poor eyesight.) Similarly, Eisenhower might have followed the paths of his brothers into banking or into agricultural education and

eventually have become vice-president of some Western big city bank or president of one of the Midwestern colleges.

There were other points of similarity. Both men were scrupulously honest. Truman was never grazed by the Pendergast machine, and after he served in public office for fifteen years including a term as United States senator he was still so poor that he could not raise the money to save his mother's farm from foreclosure. In the first years after his presidency and despite the writing of his memoirs, his expenses ran ahead of income, and he kept his head above water only by selling off acreage from his mother's inheritance to a developer who wanted to build a shopping center, now known as Truman Corners. Likewise, Eisenhower never profited greatly from what must have been many opportunities. He was scrupulous about small matters; in one of his diary entries in 1938 he remarked that he had taken Mamie with him on a trip to the East—the American East—and paid for all her accommodations and avoided staying in better-than-average places. After the war he managed to come into more than four hundred thousand dollars of tax-free royalties from his book, *Crusade in Europe*, because of a special tax deal negotiated with federal authorities. But in extenuation one has to point out that the arrangement was entirely open and public and seemed in a sense a gift from the American people to a great military figure who otherwise, before the book came out, could hardly make ends meet on his military salary. The responsibilities of large public figures are many; they are expected to contribute to worthy causes and undertake other public duties and keep up their correspondence, whatever the cost. Eventually, Eisenhower, as a general of the army, received a federal stipend that allowed him a staff and clerical help, and some years later Truman as an ex-president received a similar arrangement. But both men could have gone into private industry or accepted corporation directorships or taken on lucrative literary arrangements like—in the 1970s and 1980s—former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger, or even have fixed up deals whereby they could endorse this or that. They could have become hugely rich. Neither chose to do so.

In the backgrounds of the two men were similarities, but there the resemblance ended. Eisenhower fitted into the mold of the army, the mold of team play, of no intruding, or at least apparent, ambition; whereas Truman from the outset was a boisterous, openhearted man who did what was necessary to get ahead and made no bones about it. Eisenhower became smooth in human relationships, able to say the right thing in an innocuous way. He looked for ways to finesse problems, to smother them in good humor or good spirits or maybe it was team play. Truman could become scrappy and irritable and pointed. In private Truman was a straightshooter, just as in public. The politics of the two men went different ways almost at the outset. Truman had to be a Democrat to get elected to any public office in Missouri, and his whole family background was Democratic; whereas Eisenhower, as an inhabitant of the Kansas farm belt, drifted easily toward Republicanism. Truman found it easy to take interest in the problems of cities, for Independence was next door, and increasingly so, to Kansas City. Eisenhower never appears to have liked cities; his army experience drew him

away; the social problems of cities were almost foreign to him.

One interesting aspect of the Eisenhower diaries is the devotion that Ike evidenced toward his wife, Mamie. This point needs emphasis at a time when many Americans are willing to believe that their public leaders often are dissolute, two-faced in public and private. The assertions of Eisenhower's automobile driver in the European theater during the Second World War, the late Kay Summersby Morgan, have been so explicit (*Past Forgetting: My Love Affair with Dwight D. Eisenhower*), and the rumors that ran through American politics for so many years so plausible, that it has become a matter of belief that Eisenhower and Mamie were incompatible, at least during their later years. Mamie's obvious trouble with her physical balance, the result of a malady of the inner ear, was attributed to alcohol, and likewise her trouble with an asthmatic condition. Her visits to a Western health spa were quietly defined as efforts to dry herself out. Nothing in the diaries supports these allegations.

Eisenhower wrote most of his diaries by hand. For a time or two, notably when the business machine magnate Thomas J. Watson gave him a new IBM typewriter in 1949, he tried to type the entries, but his typing was not up to the task and he abandoned the machine. The handwriting has a tendency to scrawl, but even at worst it is approximately readable. The presidential years allowed the secretarial services of Mrs. Ann C. Whitman, who usually typed up the handwritten diary entries in a single copy and destroyed the originals. The president also dictated entries to Mrs. Whitman. Occasionally he would dictate memoranda of conversations, "Memoranda for the Record" as he entitled them, which he would then put into the diaries.

The coverage of the diaries is, unfortunately, sporadic—sometimes for several years Eisenhower did not keep a diary. Entries for the Philippine tour began in December 1935 and are quite detailed into 1936 and 1937 and for part of 1938. The diary-keeping then stops until January 1942, when it continues until July. About three-fourths of this 1942 diary was published in Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., ed., *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: The War Years*, volume I.* Chandler was unable to find the rest of the diary—which in fact had been removed by its author, Eisenhower, who sensed that he had written too frankly. The existence of an unexpurgated version of the diary for January–July 1942 came to light in 1979 when Francis L. Loewenheim of Rice University obtained a copy from the Eisenhower Library and quoted a few selections from it in two articles in the *Houston Chronicle*. The gist of his articles was picked up by newspapers and magazines around the country. Loewenheim found interesting items about General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Ernest J. King—entries in which Eisenhower expressed deep concern over President Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision in February 1942 to order MacArthur out of the Philippines and also opined

*The project to publish Eisenhower's papers is a large one and perhaps will total twenty volumes or more. The war years required five volumes. A sixth volume on the occupation of Germany in 1945 was edited jointly by Chandler and his successor editor, Louis P. Galambos, who has followed with three volumes on Eisenhower's term as army chief of staff in 1945–1948 (Baltimore, 1979).

offhandedly that (because of King's bullying behavior) one thing that might help win the European war during those dismal months of defeat was to get someone to shoot the admiral. The entire diary for January–July 1942 is published in the present book for the first time. From the summer of 1942 through late 1944, General Eisenhower dictated occasional diary accounts for his friend Captain Harry C. Butcher, USNR, who kept a headquarters diary. After the war, Butcher published part of his own diary under the title of *My Three Years with Eisenhower*, but did not include Ike's entries, which appeared in Chandler's volumes published in 1970. Those entries are republished in the present book, together with one entry that Chandler missed. The entries for 1942–1944 that appear in Chandler constitute the only portion of Eisenhower's diaries that has been published to date (with one very minor exception—several paragraphs for 1946 and 1947 that appear in Kevin McCann, *Man from Abilene*, pp. 156–60). After a gap for the period from December 1944 until December 1945, during which time Eisenhower was helping to end the war in Europe and involved in the occupation of Germany, the entries pick up when Ike became chief of staff. They continue through the years when he was president of Columbia University and commander of NATO forces, until the spring of 1952, when the work of gaining the Republican presidential nomination and later the election appears to have made diary keeping impossible. After the election the diaries resume and cover the first administration in detail. The second administration has less coverage, perhaps because the president was not in the best of health; he suffered his first heart attack in 1955, an attack of a digestive disorder from which he long had suffered, known as ileitis, in 1956, and a stroke in 1957.* The diaries as presently published have only a few entries for the post-presidential period, between 1961 and 1969. The papers in Abilene for this era have been closed. Eisenhower's few years of retirement, however, were afflicted by illness, and surely the ex-president found it very difficult to write much more than about matters concerning his health.†

*At the present writing (1981) some diary entries for the presidential years remain closed, mostly for reasons of security, a few because their release would violate the donor's deed of gift. Withdrawals for security reasons can be lifted only after special request to the Washington agency of origin. Withdrawals under the donor's deed can be appealed. There is every reason to believe, however, that for the presidential years little from the Eisenhower diary has been withheld. Withdrawn items often are short, seldom more than a page. Withdrawal sheets in the archival boxes usually give the subject of closed items, and it is evident that some entries were withheld because they dealt with personalities. In the withdrawal sheets a total of thirty-two diary entries are listed.

†The processing of Eisenhower's post-presidential papers in the library in Abilene has begun, but it will be a long time indeed, almost an incalculable time, before all of them will be available to students of the era. The papers are in the order they were kept at Gettysburg and elsewhere and will have to be organized by the archivists so as to exclude anything with a security classification or anything that is donor-restricted. This is a tedious process, as the post-presidential papers are full of classified or donor-restricted material. Classified items will have to be declassified, a tedious business in the extreme. Despite presidential efforts of recent years to hurry declassification there has been foot dragging in the lower echelons, and many classified papers also require interagency scrutiny. The State Department, the national security council, and the military agencies are all reluctant to release papers. Students may ask for declassification of individual classified items through requests for

Here, then, is no massive daily accounting that takes its subject from morning to night, month by month, year by year. But the Eisenhower diaries have much to offer. They extend through all the major portions of Eisenhower's adult life in a way that no other contemporary documents could have done. The keeping of diaries as a record of introspection, as a measure of the moment, a calculation of the future, is of course a unique way of holding one's life to the glass. In the case of a man whose life turns into public importance and reaches the pinnacle of military and political renown, diaries are precious documents, for they not merely are the personal measure of their writer but they explain our own past.

"mandatory review" under the presidential orders, but the requests move slowly. As for donor-restricted material in the post-presidential files, much of it will remain closed until Eisenhower's contemporaries pass from the scene.

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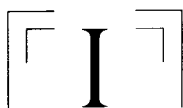
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THE
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THE PHILIPPINES

By the time that Major Dwight D. Eisenhower, in October 1935, arrived in the Philippines for duty with the special mission headed by General Douglas MacArthur, the future president of the United States must have thought that the United States Army might not be taking his lifetime hopes in any clearly discernible direction and that, generally speaking, life was not going to hold too many surprises and certainly no large future. In the mid-1930s about all he could look forward to was retirement, probably as a full colonel. This after years of duty as a football coach, an aide to then Brigadier General Fox Conner, and, in 1935, an aide to General MacArthur. No war in Europe or Asia beckoned; in the Far East the Japanese had taken Manchuria away from China in the early 1930s but momentarily seemed to be satisfied; in Europe the new ruler of Germany, Chancellor Adolf Hitler, was speaking loudly to his fellow Germans and to his fellow Austrians about the importance of the new Germany, which he was pleased to call the Third Reich, but his actions thus far had been much less strenuous than his words. Only in Africa, where the Italians invaded Ethiopia in the summer of 1935, did war threaten, but it was a kind of tribal war on the side of the Ethiopians and not much of a conflict from the point of view of the Italians—one could draw few lessons from it in the year 1935. And so for Eisenhower, a military man since his entrance into West Point in 1911, no war seemed imminent. And not much of fascinating interest was going to happen to him in the Philippines; he could be sure of that. If anything happened in the Philippines that would add cubits to his military stature, all the credit would promptly be taken by his chief, the imperious MacArthur.

For Dwight Eisenhower the assignment to duty in the Philippines came in mid-career, and it was cause for reflection. In his mind's eye he might have gone back over the years to his birth in Denison, Texas, October 14, 1890, to his