



# Smithsonian Institution Archives

## Records, circa 1950-1969

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., <a href="mailto:osiaref@si.edu">osiaref@si.edu</a>
<b>Title:</b>	Records
<b>Identifier:</b>	Record Unit 252
<b>Date:</b>	circa 1950-1969
<b>Extent:</b>	3 cu. ft. (6 document boxes)
<b>Creator::</b>	National Museum of History and Technology. Division of Political History
<b>Language:</b>	English

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## Administrative Information

### Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 252, National Museum of History and Technology. Division of Political History, Records

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## Historical Note

Some of the earliest objects in the Smithsonian documenting American political history came to the United States National Museum (USNM) from the United States Patent Office in 1883. These objects consisted of a collection of George Washington relics originally purchased by the United States Congress as well as Washingtoniana exhibited at and transferred from the Patent Office.

These objects were the responsibility of various divisions in the USNM until 1949 when the Division of Civil History, Department of History, assumed curatorial responsibility. When the Museum of History and Technology (MHT) was set up in 1957, the Division of Political History, Department of Civil History, became responsible for the objects. In 1969 MHT was renamed the National Museum of History and Technology, and the Division of Political History became part of the Department of National and Military History.

From 1950 to 1969, curators in the Division of Political History and its predecessor, the Division of Civil History, included Margaret B. Klapthor, assistant curator, 1949-1951, and associate curator, 1952- ; Charles G. Dorman, assistant curator, 1957-1960; Anne W. Murray, assistant curator, 1957-1964, and associate curator, 1965-1967; Herbert R. Collins, assistant curator, 1961- ; Wilcomb E. Washburn, curator, 1965; Keith E. Melder, associate curator, 1965- ; and Claudia B. Kidwell, assistant curator, 1965-1967.

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## Descriptive Entry

These records consist of general correspondence, primarily public inquiries, particularly concerning the First Ladies' Hall and objects associated with presidents and other prominent figures; administrative files pertaining to exhibits and the operation of the Department of Civil History and MHT; annual reports of the Divisions of Civil History and Political History; curators' research reports; and examinations and reports concerning objects submitted to the Division for historical authentication.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- First ladies
- Museum curators
- Politics and culture
- Presidents -- United States

Types of Materials:

- Manuscripts

Names:

- Belote, Theodore T.
- Clark, A. Howard
- Collins, Herbert Ridgeway, 1932-
- Dorman, Charles G.
- Growth of the United States (Exhibition)
- Kidwell, Claudia Brush
- Klapthor, Margaret Brown
- Melder, Keith E.
- Murray, Anne Wood
- Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Department of Civil History
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Civil History
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Division of Cultural History
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). First Ladies Hall
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Hall of American Costume
- National Museum of History and Technology (U.S.). Section of American Costume
- United States National Museum. Section of Historical Relics
- Washburn, Wilcomb E.

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## Container Listing

### Series 1: ADMINISTRATIVE FILES, 1964-1969.

These files consist of correspondence and memoranda with the Director of the Museum of History and Technology and the Chairman of the Department of Civil History, and other internal memoranda concerning policies and administration of the Museum and the Division and routine exhibit matters.

#### Box 1

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Box 1 of 6 | Folders 1-3 Correspondence with the Chairman's Office, FY 1967-FY 1969.  |
| Box 1 of 6 | Folders 4-6 Correspondence with Office of the Director, FY 1966-FY 1968. |
| Box 1 of 6 | Folders 7-10 Exhibit Memoranda and Requests, FY 1965-FY 1968.            |
| Box 1 of 6 | Folders 11-14 Memoranda within the Museum, FY 1965-FY 1968.              |
| Box 1 of 6 | Folder 15 Mineral Brooch, 1968.  |

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**Series 2: GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE, 1964-1968.**

This series consists primarily of outgoing correspondence responding to public inquiries concerning the collections of the Division, particularly the First Ladies' gowns and items associated with presidents and other prominent individuals. Also included are requests for pamphlets and photographs of objects in the national collection. Correspondence is arranged according to fiscal year.

**Box 1**

Box 1 of 6                      Folders 16-24 A - I, 1964-1965. Includes correspondence with Lindley Beckworth.

**Box 2**

Box 2 of 6                      Folders 1-16 J - Z, 1964-1965. Includes correspondence with James Ketchum, Helen MacLachlen, Charles E. Mason, Irwin Richman, and Homer T. Rosenberger.

Box 2 of 6                      Folders 17-25 A - I, 1965-1966. Includes correspondence with W. D. Aeschbacher, Lindley Beckworth, George A. Billias, Lucile Clay, F. B. Esty, David H. Fowler, Robert R. Garvey, Jr., and Frederick Haviland.

**Box 3**

Box 3 of 6                      Folders 1-16 J - Z, 1965-1966. Includes correspondence with James Ketchum, Katharine Morrison McClinton, Helen MacLachlen, Watt P. Marchman, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Oliver A. Quayle, III, Irwin Richman, Joan Severa, Kenneth W. Shipps, Clement M. Silvestro, J. George Stewart, Mrs. Harry S. Truman, Charles van Ravenswaay, Louise Wade, Daniel Walden, and James S. Watson.

Box 3 of 6                      Folders 17-23 A - G, 1966-1967. Includes correspondence with N. Carl Barefoot, Jr., Lindley Beckworth, D. E. Brewster, L. H. Butterfield, Lucile Clay, Mrs. Dwight D. Eisenhower, and Robert G. Gunderson.

**Box 4**

Box 4 of 6                      Folders 1-19 H - Z, 1966-1967. Correspondents include Edward T. James, C. R. Jones, James Ketchum, Stanley King, Thomas W. Leavitt, Mrs. Ralph A. Leftwich, Gerda Lerner, Martha Lindsey, Nina Fletcher Little, Katharine Morrison McClinton, Watt P. Marchman, Charles E. Mason, William J. Moore, Denton E. Morrison, Rowland Polk Norton, John N. Pearce, Norman Holmes Pearson, Milton F. Perry, William E. Pyne, Oliver A. Quayle, III, Irwin Richman, Homer T. Rosenberger, Kenneth W. Shipps, Wendell Tripp, Reginald V. Truitt, Caroline Wallace, Mrs. Clarence A. Whelchel, and Peter L. Winkelstein.

Box 4 of 6                      Folders 20-24 B - F, 1967-1968. Correspondents include Letitia Baldrige, Caroline Homes Bivins, Philip C. Brooks, G. M. Carrier, Elizabeth B. Drewry, and Melinda Frazier.

**Box 5**

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Folders 1-19 G - Z, 1967-1968. Includes correspondence with Robert G. Gunderson, Richard P. Hartung, Frederick Haviland, Ellen C. Herman, Richard Jacobs, Edward T. James, Stanley King, Thomas W. Leavitt, Gerda Lerner, Nina Fletcher Little, Katharine Morrison McClinton, Helen MacLachlen, Watt P. Marchman, Charles E. Mason, John N. Pearce, Norman Holmes Pearson, Irwin Richman, Homer T. Rosenberger, Joan Severa, Clement M. Silvestro, S. K. Stevens, William E. Story, James L. Whitehead, John E. Wickman, and Lawrence E. Wikander.

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## Series 3: ANNUAL REPORTS, 1950-1968.

### Box 5

Box 5 of 6                      Folders 20-27 Annual Reports, Division of Civil History, FY 1950-FY 1957.

Box 5 of 6                      Folders 28-30 Annual Reports, Division of Political History, FY 1958-FY 1960.

### Box 6

Box 6 of 6                      Folders 1-8 Annual Reports, Division of Political History, FY 1961-FY 1968.

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## Series 4: RESEARCH REPORTS, 1957-1968.

This series consists of reports submitted by curators detailing the status and nature of their research. Some reports include the objective, methods of procedure, principal findings, and titles of publications resulting from research projects.

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Folders 9-19 Research Reports, FY 1957-FY 1968.

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## Series 5: EXAMINATIONS AND REPORTS, 1956-1968.

This series consists of correspondence, memoranda, and reports concerning items submitted by the public to the Division for documentation of historical importance. Within each folder the material is arranged alphabetically.

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Folders 20-22 Examinations and Reports, FY 1957-FY 1968.

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