Preface

In 1978, while researching a book on post-World War II politics at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library in Abilene, Kansas, I came across a fascinating exchange of letters between Eisenhower and an old boyhood friend, Everett E. ("Swede") Hazlett. The letters had been open to scholars for only a few years, and few historians had examined them or cited them in their books. I remember thinking at the time how interesting it would be to edit them for publication, and in fact, I returned home with a thick stack of xeroxed copies. In the years that followed, I drew heavily on the Eisenhower-Hazlett correspondence in my own work, especially in a long article entitled "Dwight D. Eisenhower and the Corporate Commonwealth," which appeared in the American Historical Review (February 1982); and when the University Press of Kansas indicated an interest in publishing the letters, I naturally leapt at the opportunity.

The letters are located in one of the Eisenhower Library's most important collections, the so-called Ann Whitman file, which was maintained by Eisenhower's private secretary and which contains the nearly quarter of a million documents that received his closest attention. The correspondence consists of more than 150 letters exchanged between the two men between 1941 and 1958. They had occasionally written to one another before 1941, but none of these early letters seem to have survived. Almost all of the existing correspondence is open to the public. The only exception to this is a brief passage in Eisenhower's letter to Swede on 18 November 1957, which remains closed in accordance with restrictions placed upon the collection by the Eisenhower family, and in keeping with a recommendation by the National Security Council to the effect that the release of this material could constitute an unwarranted
invasion of the privacy of a foreign citizen. Although a few of Eisenhower's letters to Hazlett have been previously published in the authoritative multivolume *Papers of Dwight D. Eisenhower*, whose nine volumes carry the future president from the beginning of World War II through 1947, the great majority of them appear here for the first time.

Most of Eisenhower's letters appear to have been dictated, not written, a fact that may help to explain occasional awkward phrasings, as well as lapses in grammar and syntax. In editing the letters, I have tried to be as unobtrusive as possible, occasionally using brackets to more fully identify people whose names are mentioned or quietly correcting more or less obvious typographical errors. I have attempted to place each letter in its historical context through headnotes, but have tried to keep footnotes and other scholarly encumbrances to an absolute minimum. For the most part, I have tried to let Eisenhower and Swede tell their own story.

Scholarship is almost always a collective enterprise, and in the preparation of this collection I have accumulated more than a few obligations. I owe a very special debt of gratitude to Dr. John E. Wickman and the fine staff of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library, without whose assistance this project would never have been possible. Thomas Branigar, an Eisenhower Library archivist and volunteer at the Dickinson County Historical Society, was also helpful in providing information about Abilene and its citizens. I would especially like to thank Burton I. Kaufman and others who read and commented on the manuscript; the American Philosophical Society, which helped make possible my original trip to Abilene; Mrs. Barbara Einfurer and the staff of the University of Massachusetts History Department; and, as always, my family—Barbara, Matthew, and Jonathan. Finally, I would like to affectionately dedicate this volume to my colleagues at the University of Massachusetts, most of whom never "liked Ike," and to my students, almost none of whom are old enough to remember him.

Robert Griffith

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