

Guide to MS-291: Thomas P. Wolf Political Papers



Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections and College Archives

Carly Jensen '24, Diane Werley Smith Intern
June 2022

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Size

4 boxes, .75 cubic feet

Location

Special Collections

Dates

Inclusive: 1952-1995

Bulk: 1974-76

Provenance

Donation of Tom Wolf, a friend of Janet Riggs, 14th President of Gettysburg College (2009-2019).

Biographical Note

Thomas P. Wolf was born in Hamburg, Germany on August 23, 1927. Both of his parents were born in Germany but obtained United States citizenship. He moved permanently to New York in 1936 following his father's death. He attended Berkshire School in Sheffield, Massachusetts, where he learned how to fly as part of a unique cadet program developed at the school. Wolf then attended Princeton University in the fall of 1944 until his call to service in the Army Air Force in 1945. He was sent to Germany and transferred to the Air Force Counterintelligence Corps because he could speak German. He was honorably discharged and returned to Princeton to finish his schooling. He married his wife, Marian, in 1951.

He went on to work for a direct mail firm in New York called Hodes Daniel. He became involved in business operations with the Young Industry for Eisenhower (later Citizens for Eisenhower) by selling them stationary and printing services. Wolf became a member of the Young Republicans of New York City group through his connections with an old friend at Princeton. He continued to partner with politicians while at Hodes Daniel, and he did the mailing for John Lindsay's mayoral campaign. He worked there until 1967 when he left to start his own business until it failed in 1972.

In 1973, he went on to work at the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to help shut it down as the Acting Director of Administration. He moved departments to work in General Services Administration (GSA), where he dealt with issues such as reorganizing the items from the foreign gifts act. He eventually became involved in investigating Nixon's papers after the Watergate Scandal. Wolf oversaw the move and organization of the documents and dealt directly with Special Prosecutors and Nixon's lawyers who wanted access to them.

Wolf stayed connected to Nixon through the February Group, an association of people who worked for Nixon. He moved from Washington DC to Carroll Valley, Pennsylvania, where he worked as a sales agent for Sites Realty Inc.

Historical Note

Watergate was a major scandal during the Nixon Administration that eventually led to President Nixon's resignation. It began after police caught several men, part of the effort to re-elect President

Nixon breaking into the Democrat Party Headquarters in the Watergate Complex. Nixon and his administration attempted to cover up the break-in, and he won re-election. However, after investigators gained access to Nixon's Oval Office recordings, it was clear that Nixon was guilty. He chose to resign rather than face impeachment. Gerald Ford later pardoned him. However, several government officials did serve jail time for their involvement in the scandal.

The location of President Nixon's papers was also controversial. Although Nixon signed an agreement with the GSA to gain control of his materials after his presidency, Congress and President Ford signed the 1974 Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act which put them under the care of the National Archives and Records Association (NARA). As part of the act, NARA would process and release tapes and documents to the public, and Watergate documents would take priority. Nara separated them into categories: "private-personal" and "private-political." The definition of these categories and the processing regulations were also controversial and challenged in court several times.

Nixon sued because he believed that the seizure of his documents was an illegal search and seizure. The Supreme Court upheld that the government was lawful in taking his materials, but they declared that he deserved compensation. The suit was settled in 1998, and the Nixon estate received \$16 million. There was another lawsuit against NARA in 1991 after a watchdog group called Public Citizen and historian Stanley Kutler sued because NARA was not following regulations for processing and releasing tapes.

In 2004, Congress repealed the provision in the Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act that stipulated that all Nixon presidential materials had to remain in Washington D.C. The Nixon Library merged with the National Archives presidential library system in 2007. All of President Nixon's materials are now available at the Nixon Library.

Scope and Content Note

The Tom Wolf Political Papers contains two very different sets of papers. Wolf donated Box One in 2008, and it has several autographed photos addressed to Wolf from Presidents Nixon, Ford, and Bush. Two letters thank Wolf for his dedication to Nixon and his papers. Additionally, there is a signed copy of the book *John Chancellor Makes Me Cry* by Anne Rivers Siddons.

There are also three boxes of papers relating to Nixon's legal issues. Wolf donated these after he visited Special Collections in 1995. These papers are vastly different; they are mostly court documents relating to the Watergate Scandal. There are several copies of Congressional Reports relating to Watergate and the location of Nixon's Presidential papers. These include briefs, transcriptions of court hearings, memorandums, and newspaper clippings. Wolf has highlighted and annotated the documents. This collection is useful for anyone interested in Nixon and the Watergate scandal.

Subjects

Richard Nixon
Dwight D. Eisenhower
Watergate Scandal
Gerald Ford
Supreme Court
Presidential Papers

Series Description

This collection is divided into 6 Series. **Series 1:** Eisenhower, **Series 2:** Nixon, **Series 3:** Ford, **Series 4:** Bush, **Series 5:** Clinton, **Series 6:** Misc., **Series 7:** Nixon Legal Issues

Box list

Box 1

Series I: Eisenhower

1-0 Finding Aid and Research Materials

1-1 Eisenhower Telegram

-Telegram from Dwight D. Eisenhower to Tom Wolf, October 25th, 1952 (reproduction)

Series II: Nixon

1-2 Letter from Charles F. C. Ruff to Tom Wolf, June 29th, 1976

1-3 Autographed photo of Richard Nixon, September 29th, 1976

1-4 Letter from Tricia Nixon Cox to Tom Wolf, June 7th, 1994

Series III: Ford

1-5 Autographed photo of Gerald Ford, no date

1-6 Photo of Gerald Ford and Tom Wolf; Autographed Photo of Gerald Ford and Tom Wolf, September 19th, 1974

1-7 Autographed photo of Betty Ford and Tom Wolf, September 19th, 1974

1-8 Autographed photo of Philip Buchan, June 26th, 1975

Series IV: Bush

1-9 Autographed photo of George Bush, no date

Series V: Clinton

1-10 "Announcing the Death of Richard Nixon." Letter to the People of the United States from William J. Clinton, April 22nd, 1994

Series VI: Misc.

1-11 Book, *John Chancellor Makes Me Cry* by Anne Rivers Siddons, 1975

-Signed by the author and John Chancellor

Box 2

Series VII: Nixon Legal Issues

2-0 Original Container Listing, Gift Agreement, and Note

2-1 White House Press Releases of September 8, 1974

2-2 Report to Congress on Title I Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act: PL 93-526.
GSA, March 1975

2-3 Public Access Regulations [to] Presidential Recordings and Materials Preservation Act: PL 93-526.

Oct 15, 1975

2-4 Public Access Regulations [to] Presidential Recording and Materials Preservation Act: PL 93-526.

April 13, 1976

2-5 A Study of the Relationship Between the General Services Administration and National Archives and Records Service by Bruce F. Adams, September 2, 1976

2-6 Draft for Consideration by Records Commission. (Public Hearing Background Memorandum).
National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials

2-7 Final Report on the National Study Commission on Records and Documents of Federal Officials
March 31, 1977

2-8 Correspondence and GSA Orders
January 1975-February 1980

2-9 Plaintiff's Brief: Nixon vs. GSA
August 19, 1975

Box 3

[Series VII: Nixon Legal Issues](#) continued

3-10 Plaintiff's Evidentiary Submission: Nixon vs. GSA
July 3, 1975

3-11 Defendant's Brief: Nixon vs. GSA
September 9, 1975

3-12 Joint Memorandum of Intervenor-Defendants: Nixon vs. GSA
September 10, 1975

3-13 Plaintiff's Brief: Nixon vs. GSA
September 15, 1975

3-14 District Court Opinion: Nixon vs. GSA
Includes Wolf's notes
January 7, 1976

Box 4

[Series VII: Nixon Legal Issues](#) continued

4-15 "Items Pending" file of Thomas P. Wolf (split into two folders)
June 28, 1976

4-16 Supreme Court Briefs: Nixon vs. GSA
October term, 1976

4-17 Nixon's Deposition
Includes Wolf's notes

4-18 Transcript of Hearing Before Subcommittee on Criminal Justice
January 30, 1975

4-19 Transcript of Wolf's Testimony: Nixon vs. Sampson
February 4, 1975

4-20 Transcript of Proceedings 9/22/1975: Nixon vs. GSA

4-21 Court of Appeals and Supreme Court Motions
June 4-July 21, 1976

4-22 Miscellaneous District Court Material
March 1969-January 1976

4-23 Newspaper Clippings

4-24 Printed Briefs: Supreme Court of the United States (case 75-1605)

- a. Jurisdictional Statement
- b. Brief for Appellant (Nixon)

- c. Brief for Appellees (Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, et al)
- d. Brief for Appellee (Jack Anderson)
- e. Motion to Affirm (by Reporters Committee...)
- f. Appellant's Reply Brief
- g. Appellants Reply to the Motion to Affirm

Sources

["Nixon's Library Now a Part of Nara"](#)

[Thomas Wolf Interview](#)

Related Collections

MS-157: [Donald C. Brett Collection of Eisenhower Memorabilia](#)

MS-201: [Hauser Collection of Eisenhower Political Ephemera](#)

MS-266: Michael Birkner Collection of Political Ephemera

Contact Information

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