

Unique book BY DWIGHT EISENHOWER makes its way back TO K-STATE

BY SARAH MCGREER HOYT



Honored guest General Dwight Eisenhower salutes the flag at the 1948 homecoming parade as Milton Eisenhower looks on.

It might be difficult to think of a more thoughtful gift.

Late last year, alumnus and donor Richard D. Rees presented a book by Dwight D. Eisenhower to the university, K-State Libraries and Richard and Mary Jo Myers. Rees made the gift in memory of his late parents, Leonard and Beatrice Rees, who were also K-Staters.

Eisenhower wrote "Crusade in Europe" in 1948, a few years before he became president. Only 1,426 copies of the book were printed, and the first 25 copies were bound in leather and included a slipcase. Those volumes were reserved for Eisenhower to give to family and friends.

Rees gifted No. 7, which has a tremendous importance to K-State: It is the copy Eisenhower presented to Milton Eisenhower, his youngest brother and president of the university 1943-50.

Inside the book, which is now part of the Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections, Eisenhower wrote: "For Milton and Helen — In the realization that if I could have had the help of Milton in preparing this work its value, if any, would have been multiplied for every reader. With lasting devotion and affection from their brother. Ike."

"It's an extraordinary thing to hold this volume in one's hands and realize that the last time it was on this campus, it was likely in the same home that President Myers now lives in," said Cliff Hight, university archivist.

In addition to the book's provenance as a volume from Milton Eisenhower's personal library, its military subject matter and connection to Abilene also make the gift meaningful. "Crusade in Europe" chronicles Dwight Eisenhower's experiences in World War II, where the five-star general served as the supreme commander of the Allied expeditionary forces. Myers also enjoyed a distinguished military career as a four-star Air Force general and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Rees' parents and Mary Jo Myers are all from Abilene, the

Rees, who was born in Manhattan and earned degrees from K-State in 1961 and 1964, acquired the book from a rare books dealer in Pennsylvania. While presenting the book in President Myers' office, Rees said, "When I learned that the book had been in the possession of K-State's ninth president, I was determined to return the book to its original home."

Rees has been a generous K-State donor for years. He has given to the Libraries and to the Historic Costume and Textile Museum in the College of Human Ecology, in memory of his late wife, Janet, who died in 2010.



“ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSITY, I THANK DICK FOR THIS INCREDIBLY THOUGHTFUL GIFT. IT'S AN IRREPLACEABLE TREASURE.”

— PRESIDENT RICHARD MYERS

Eisenhower's hometown. And finally, Richard Myers and Milton Eisenhower are the only Kansas State University alumni to serve as president of the university.

"This book has such significance to Kansas State University," Myers said. "On behalf of the university, I thank Dick for this incredibly thoughtful gift. It's an irreplaceable treasure."

Fortunately, the book was protected by an archival storage box, so it did not suffer smoke damage in the fire. It will be stored offsite until materials return to Hale Library.