



Dwight David Eisenhower had wanted a piece of land to call his own since his boyhood in the wide expanse of midwestern America. A lifetime of public service and 38 years of marriage later, he and wife Mamie found their home in the foothills of Pennsylvania's South Mountains.

Eisenhower came as no stranger to Pennsylvania. Generations of his family had settled in the Susquehanna River Valley before grandfather Jacob left in 1878 to search for more fertile western farmland. "Ike" was born in Texas in 1890 and reared in Abilene, Kansas, but ties to his ancestral home remained strong throughout his life.

As a young husband and father recently graduated from West Point, Eisenhower moved to Pennsylvania in 1918. He assumed the first independent command of his illustrious military career at Camp Colt, training center for the infant Tank Corps located in Gettysburg just a few score miles from Jacob Eisenhower's first farm. Residence in Gettysburg was brief, but Ike and Mamie remembered the experience as pleasurable and significant. The impression was lasting.

Eisenhower's military service after World War I included tours in Panama and the Philippines. His rise was steady but unspectacular. It was the overwhelming effort by Western powers during World War II, coupled with Ike's highly developed organizational skill, which propelled him to the forefront of leadership. In 1944, as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe, General Eisenhower engineered the decisive invasion of Normandy which triggered an end for Axis powers and the war. He returned home the next year to a hero's welcome. Following retirement from the Army in 1948, Eisenhower accepted the presidency of Columbia University in New York City.

While in New York, the Eisenhowers frequently discussed the sort of permanent home they desired—"... an escape from concrete into the countryside." A longtime friend, George Allen, suggested a farm near his own in Gettysburg. The small, historic Pennsylvania town evoked many memories for the couple and seemed an ideal choice. Thus in 1950, looking forward to retirement from public life, Eisenhower purchased the Allan Redding farm on the edge of the famous Civil War battlefield.

But retirement was delayed for a decade. At the request of President Truman, Ike took a leave of absence from Columbia to command the armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. While headquartered in Paris, he was encouraged by Republican Party leaders to campaign as Truman's successor to the Presidency. "I Like Ike" was the irresistible slogan as Eisenhower won a sweeping victory.



Even the heavy responsibilities acquired as 34th President of the United States (1952-1960) did not dampen Eisenhower's enthusiasm for the "only home we ever owned" in Gettysburg. He and Mamie closely supervised its development. Surrounding a century-old brick farmhouse were 189 acres of land cut by small streams and swales. Ike thought the soil to be in poor condition but considered this a challenge to his farming skills. Careful practice of soil conservation and crop rotation would give the midwesterner an opportunity to "... leave the place better than I found it."

The Eisenhowers planned to modify the farmhouse to suit their needs, while retaining as much of the original building as possible. They found, however, that the brick structure was supported in part by the remains of an ancient wooden house, whose moldy, worm-eaten logs testified to its likely construction by the farm's first owner nearly two centuries earlier.

Undaunted, Mamie ordered a new house built around the south portion of the early house, and a section of original wall containing the old fireplace and Dutch oven. Following her step-by-step instructions, architect Milton Osborne of Pennsylvania State University drew up a design for a modified Georgian farmhouse. Charles Tompkins was then contracted to undertake construction of the house and landscaping of the grounds. "Mamie's House" was completed in 1955, giving the First Family a refuge from the pressures of Washington.

Upon purchase of the Redding property, Eisenhower became owner of an active dairy farm operation which included a score of Holstein cattle and several hundred chickens. An Army associate, retired General Arthur Nevins, assumed management of the farm. Ike noted that many farm buildings and much of the equipment needed repair. He ordered improvements such as fence and building maintenance, modern equipment, and introduced soil testing and fertilization.

Eisenhower was aware that his stony, thin-soiled land could be best utilized as pasture for livestock. The dairy operation, however, proved marginal and was eventually sold. To protect the privacy of the Eisenhowers, two farms on either side were purchased in 1954-1955 by his friend Alton Jones. He and Ike soon became partners in the business of raising purebred Angus cattle on their combined pastures. After Jones' death in 1962, Eisenhower gradually lost interest in this business and discontinued it in favor of developing feeder cattle for sale.



ADMINISTRATION

Eisenhower National Historic Site is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A superintendent, whose address is Gettysburg, PA 17325, is in immediate charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural resources. This includes fostering the wisest use of our land and water resources, protecting our fish and wildlife, preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places, and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to assure that their development is in the best interests of all our people. The Department also has a major responsibility for the American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in Island Territories under U.S. administration.

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

LIFE AT THE FARM

From the beginning the Eisenhowers enjoyed their home in Gettysburg and used it as a retreat and showplace. It was here in 1952 that Ike tested his chances for the Presidency before a large gathering of Pennsylvania Republicans. Following his first heart attack in 1955, President Eisenhower recuperated here and conducted the nation's business from his farm and nearby town office. With son John and his wife Barbara living near the farm, the Eisenhowers could also take pleasure in the company of their four grandchildren.



Eisenhower delighted in showing his farm to visitors and escorted scores of dignitaries on special tours. Heads of state who were received included India's Nehru, Adenauer of West Germany, Khrushchev of the USSR, DeGaulle of France and Britain's great wartime leader, Winston Churchill.

On January 20, 1961, Ike completed his second and final presidential term of office. He and Mamie "motored . . . to Gettysburg where a small family reunion awaited us and our new life would begin." Retirement for "the General" involved considerable activity as he continued to work in his office at nearby Gettysburg College. Hosts of delegations arrived to honor or seek advice from the elder statesman. During this period, Eisenhower closely supervised his farm operation. He also worked on his memoirs and found time for hunting, fishing, and golf. In quiet moments on his sun-filled porch, Eisenhower cultivated his interest in oil painting.

In 1967, the Eisenhowers donated their Gettysburg farm properties to the United States Department of the Interior. Dwight D. Eisenhower—soldier-hero, patriot, statesman—died at Walter Reed Hospital on March 28, 1969. Mamie Eisenhower continued to reside at the farm until her own death on November 1, 1979.

SELF-GUIDING TOUR

A visit to Eisenhower National Historic Site is best accomplished by use of the tour information provided below. Please follow paths designated by the tour signs. Room tour information will be available as you enter the Eisenhower home.

Reception Center Area - You may begin your tour of the site immediately upon arrival, following the signed pathways. Information, exhibits, and publications are available at the nearby Reception Center, either before or after your tour.

1. The Barn - This bank-type barn is typical of those of central Pennsylvania. Hay and straw were stored on the upper floor, facing you. The lower level, with access on the opposite side, contained stanchions and stalls for cattle and a room for dairy equipment. Two quarter horses, two Arabians, and ponies were also stabled here in the mid-1950's for use of the Eisenhower grandchildren.

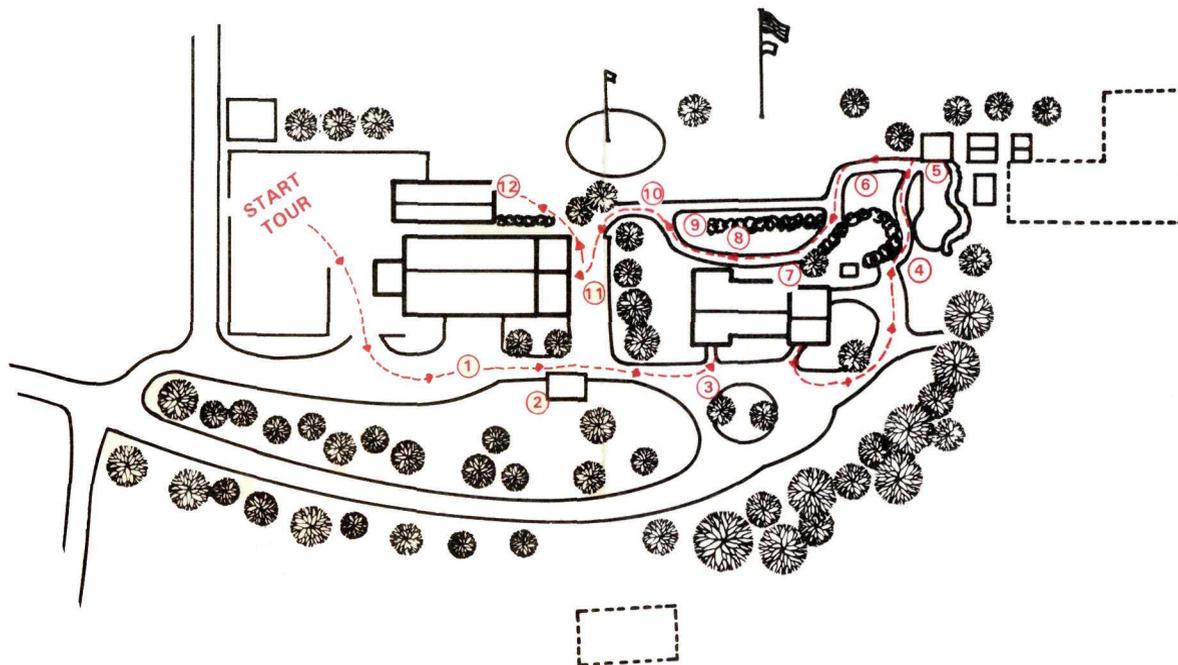
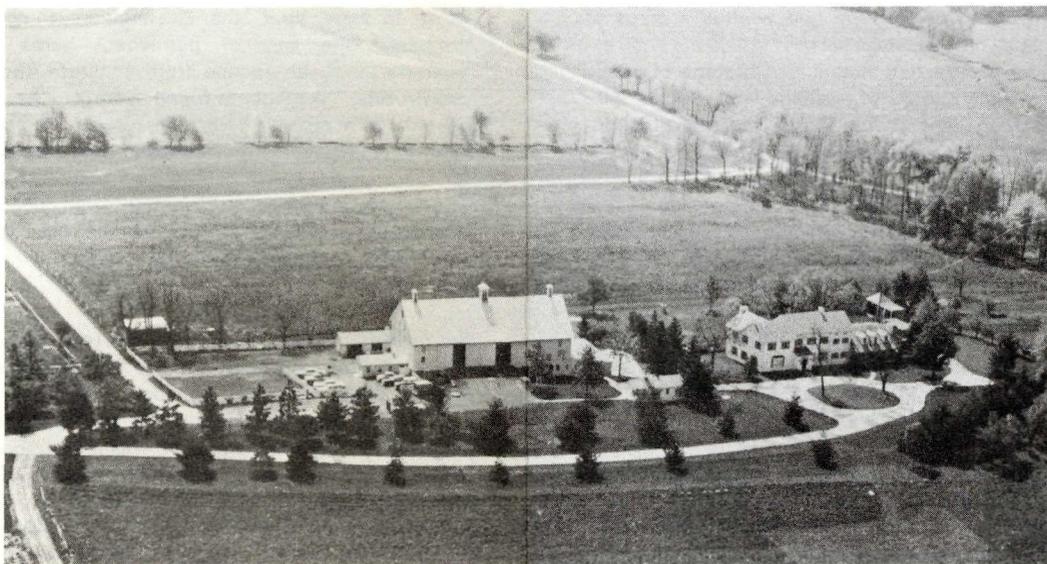
Originally red in color, the barn was painted to harmonize with the main house. The distinctive grey-green color is a mixture of paints developed personally by Eisenhower.

2. Guest House - (Not open to visitors). Sometimes referred to as "The Little House," this attractive two-room cottage was remodeled from a garage. Farm guests were occasionally housed here, and young David Eisenhower lived in the cottage during the summer he worked for his grandfather as a farm hand.

The unusual porch railing is from Mrs. Eisenhower's girlhood home in Denver, Colorado. The bell and belfry formerly stood atop an old school house which was located nearby.

A portion of the field to your right, as you walk toward the farmhouse, was laid out as a site for the official helicopters used by President Eisenhower and guests traveling to Gettysburg from Washington, D.C. or Camp David.

3. Main House - After entering the home, you will be greeted by Park Rangers who will provide a room-guide brochure and information. Your tour of the grounds will resume when you exit the house.



4. Windmill - The picturesque, but now non-functioning, windmill was retained by the Eisenhowers from the original Redding property.

5. Teahouse/Barbecue - This area served as an outdoor recreation center for the Eisenhower family and friends. At the brick barbecue, Ike demonstrated his talent for broiling steak. A serpentine wall shields the large flagstone patio. Behind the ivy-covered teahouse are two greenhouses in which an assortment of bedding plants and flowers were grown. Located nearby was a vegetable garden supplying such family favorites as green beans, okra, asparagus, corn and squash.

6. Boxwood Hedge - The circular hedge bounded a large flower garden during the early years of the Eisenhower occupancy. From the ancient water pump in the center, rows of colorful flowers radiated to the hedge, lending a formal appearance to the yard.

7. Porch - The attraction of this large and pleasant room overlooking the east grounds was summed up simply by Mrs. Eisenhower: "We lived on the porch."

Glass-enclosed and furnished informally for family use, the porch was filled with personal memorabilia. The Eisenhowers and their friends frequently gathered around the card table for a relaxing game of bridge. Often, after a special tour of the farm, Ike would bring his guests back to the porch for refreshments and conversation.

Welcoming the farm visitor is a set of inscribed door-mats - one of numerous gifts received by the Eisenhowers from well-wishers and friends.

8. Flagpole - The aluminum pole, topped with a gilded eagle and weather vane, supported an American flag when any member of the Eisenhower family was residing at the Gettysburg farm. From 1955 to 1961, a Presidential standard was flown on a separate lanyard to indicate that Eisenhower himself was in residence. Reinstated by Congress as General of the Army following his retirement from the Presidency, Eisenhower proudly displayed the 5-star flag you see today.

9. 'Frisco Bell - Handsome brass bells once adorned old coal and oil burning locomotive engines on the San Francisco Railroad. This bell presented to President Eisenhower by the St. Louis - San Francisco Railway Company, is inscribed with the emblem of the President of the United States. According to Mrs. Eisenhower, the grandchildren ". . . loved to ring the bell, and I was always afraid the people of Gettysburg would think there was a fire!"

Groundsmen were employed continuously by President Eisenhower to care for the lawn, putting green, plantings and farm lanes. Dogwoods, magnolias, white birches, crabapples, elms, rose bushes and a small orchard of cherry trees are scattered within the grounds. Landscaping at the Gettysburg farm was at one time elaborate but became less formal after the Eisenhowers returned to Gettysburg as private citizens.

10. Putting Green - One of Ike's favorite forms of recreation and relaxation was golf. This green, complete with sand trap, was presented to the President by the Professional Golfer's Association of America in recognition of his active participation in the sport.

11. Garage - Originally the chicken house, the converted garage contained stalls and a walk-in cooler for meat storage. Also located here was an apartment for the Chauffeur.

In stall #3 is the Crosley runabout, a modern "surrey with the fringe on top" personalized for the Eisenhowers' use. It was a popular and practical form of transportation around the farm.

Above the garage at the top of the barn is a large strobe light which served as a beacon for President Eisenhower's helicopter pilot. It could be seen as far away as Camp David in Maryland's Catoctin Mountains.

12. Reception Center - Exhibits of the Eisenhower family and their life at Gettysburg are displayed here. Park Rangers will provide assistance and information. Books and other educational materials are available for those wishing to learn more about Eisenhower and his era.

The Reception Center serves as a point of departure for buses enroute to the National Park Service Visitor Center.