Bertha Adkins papers
0.5 linear feet; 1 half-manuscript box
1950-2004, bulk 1950-1956

Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland
Finding aid written by Hallie Kroll, February 2015.

Accession Number: 1998.003
Creator: Bertha Adkins
Acquisition: The Bertha Adkins papers were donated to the Nabb Research Center by Winifred Helmes and Henrietta Moore between 1998 and 2015.
Language: Material entirely in English.
Use: Records are open for research. Copyright, including literary rights, belongs to the author(s) or their legal heirs.
Citation Style: “Item, Bertha Adkins papers, Box [#], Folder [#], Edward H. Nabb Research Center for Delmarva History and Culture, Salisbury University, Salisbury, Maryland.”
Related Materials: E.S. Adkins Company records, 2012.115
Henry Shipley Parker papers, 2012.199
Separated Materials: Oversize materials have been housed in the Nabb Research Center’s flat file system.
Library materials have been cataloged and housed with the Nabb Research Center’s non-circulating collection.
Artifacts have been transferred to object storage.
Biographical History: On August 24, 1906, Bertha Sheppard Adkins was born in Salisbury, Maryland and remained there throughout her childhood. Adkins graduated from Wicomico High School in Salisbury, Maryland. Per her parents’ suggestion, she attended preparatory school at the Baldwin School in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. After graduation she attended Wellesley College where she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1924. She later received a Master of Arts degree from Columbia University. After completing college, Adkins attained the position of Dean of Women at Western Maryland College, known today as McDaniel College. Adkins then became the Dean of Residence at Bradford Junior College in Massachusetts. She returned to Salisbury in 1946, becoming a prominent Republican Party member. In 1948, she was elected as Maryland’s Republican National Committeewoman. Two years later, she became the Executive Director of the Women’s Division of the Republican National Committee and then the Assistant Chairman of the National Committee. In 1958, Adkins achieved the position of Under Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, making her the first woman to be appointed to the position. She remained Under Secretary until 1961, after which she left national politics and became the Headmistress of Foxcroft School in Middleburg, Virginia. Adkins received honorary degrees later in life from Hood, Salisbury State, Western Maryland, Wheaton, and Wilson Colleges. She served as the Chairman of the Board of her family’s business E.S. Adkins & Co. from 1982 until her death, January 14, 1983.

Citation: Helmes, Winifred G. Orchids in the Icebox: The Story of Bertha Adkins and Other Influential Women in the Eisenhower Administration. 2002.

Scope and Content Note: Bertha Adkins papers document the political life of Bertha Sheppard Adkins, originally from Salisbury, Maryland, 1950-1990. The bulk of the material encompasses Ms. Adkins political career when she attended the 1956 Republican National Convention in San Francisco, California. Materials include photographs of Ms. Adkins and noted politicians, newspaper clippings, magazines, and ephemera. Also included are promotional materials from the family business, E.S. Adkins & Company and printed materials about Ms. Adkins.
**Arrangement Statement:** Folders are listed by their location in each box; any given subject may be dispersed throughout the entirety of the collection.

**Subject Terms:**

**General Terms**
- Government
- Politics
- Politicians
- Public Administration

**Corporate Names**
- Bradford Junior College
- E.S. Adkins and Company
- Foxcroft School
- National Republican Convention
- Republican Party

**Personal Names**
- Adkins, Bertha Shepard
- Adkins, Fred P.
- Eisenhower, Dwight D.
- Eisenhower, Mamie Doud
- Fleming, Arthur
- Kotlowski, Dean
Box 1
1. Photographs, Bertha Adkins, 1950-1960
2. Photograph, Mamie Eisenhower and Bertha Adkins, circa 1956
3. Cartoon, From Margaret Young to Bertha Adkins, undated
4. Ephemera, National Republican Convention, 1956
7. Promotional Materials, E.S. Adkins and Company, undated
9. Article, The Last Lonely Shore, Dean Kotlowski, 2004
11. Booklets, History of the Founding and Development of the National Federation of Republican Women, 1963
13. List, Officers, Executive Committee and Members, Republican National Committee, 1948-1960

Oversize
1. Photograph, Bertha Adkins with her father Arthur Fleming, 1958 August 19
2. Photograph, Bertha Adkins, undated

Library Materials
1. Orchards in the Ice Box, Winifred G. Helmes, 2002

Artifacts
1. Political pins, 1998.003.001