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First Ladies: Mamie Geneva Doud
Eisenhower

Lead: Through the years of lonely separation and worry that are part of the life of a military spouse, Mamie Geneva Doud Eisenhower never liked it but loved her Kansas farm boy and was there for the long haul.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: Dwight Eisenhower was a second lieutenant fresh from West Point when he first laid eyes on Mamie Geneva Doud, daughter of a wealthy Denver family who wintered

in San Antonio. She was standing on the porch of the Officer's Club at Fort Sam Houston when as Officer of the Day he walked by on his rounds. She thought he was the most handsome male she had ever seen; he was struck with her vivacious personality and attractive, saucy looks. They were married in the summer of 1916.

Life was not easy for the Eisenhowers. They were in almost constant motion, from one assignment to the other, enduring frequent separations, frustrated with a career path that seemed to move Ike much too slowly upward. They lost their first child to scarlet fever and almost lost their marriage in the depressing

months that followed, but slowly made their way back to a steadily strengthening marriage that lasted over five decades. Even rumors of Ike's alleged affair with his English driver during World War II, Kay Somersby, could not dislodge Mamie's affection and respect.

Mrs. Eisenhower ran the White House like a military post and she was the five-star general, but she was generous with her praise when events went off well and took a personal interest in the employees. Very much a person of tradition, she had a hard time understanding the feminist movement. She saw her role as that of dutiful wife, dedicated to keeping her husband happy, protecting his back

from those who would seek him ill, and advancing his career. Mamie Doud Eisenhower enjoyed a decade of rich, comfortable retirement until the President's death in 1969 and even then could not go for even part of a day without thinking of Ike.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/firstladies/me34.html>

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