

DETERMINATION NOT TO BE REFORMER IS CHARACTERISTIC OF MRS. HARDING

President in Own Home Circle Is Called "Warren" or "Sonny." While His Wife Is "The Duchess"; Writer Relates What Goes on Around Fireside in White House.



A personal guest of Mrs. Harding's.

That's what you can be today.

With Kate Marcia Forbes, the author of this intimate article, you can go into rooms in the White House from which the outside public is barred; you can sit within the President's own family circle and discover the secret of his wonderfully happy home life; you can see, through the eyes of Mrs. Harding's old friend, a true picture of the real "First Lady of the Land," who for 30 years has been her husband's "pal."

She calls the President "Sonny."

And he has nicknamed her "The Duchess."

Nor has the grandeur of the executive mansion dulled the President's fondness for homemade fudge and popcorn balls.

Mrs. Forbes, who has known Mrs. Harding as a personal friend since the time years ago when the Hardings were her guests in the Hawaiian Islands, gives such a remarkably clear close-up of this intensely "human couple" as only one close to them can give.

Other equally familiar articles about the White House home life will follow from time to time.

BY KATE MARCIA FORBES.

I WAS walking with Mrs. Harding one day in one of the corridors of the White House when her attention was attracted by a large set of hinges, inset in a tiling, evidently some door stop arrangement. In half-inch block letters was the name of the manufacturer. "Look at that," she said. "That is coming out. No one has the right to use the White House to advertise his wares." Isn't she right in that?

I am acquainted with her former residence as I am with the private apartments in this, her official home. She could have had the blue ribbon for housewifery in the first, and is equally zealous for the White House. If there is any one thing which is more strongly characteristic of Mrs. Harding than another it is her determination not to be a reformer, or to be quoted as liking this and that, or being unalterably opposed to this and that. She is quite convinced that her present business is the wife's part of her husband's official position. That is his helpmate, just as she has been his "pal" and partner in the 30 years they have lived together elsewhere.

Don't think for a moment that living in the White House has made its occupants less "human." Because he is the president himself, changed Warren G. Harding's liking for fudge and popcorn balls. The enforcement of the Volstead law or the anti-cigarette crusade has not caused Mrs. Harding the slightest bit of personal perturbation.

Don't you suppose, when the last guest has departed from some function, Mr. and Mrs. President sit down, breathless with relief and say, "Well, that's over." And I know where they sit when they talk it over too.

Drawn up before the fireplace in their room is the coziest divanport. Don't you like that—"their room?" I do, though modern writing seems to deal only with "his room" or "her room" where husband and wife ceremoniously wait until maid or valet announces them to the partner of their bosom. In his own home circle the

president is "Warren" or "Sonny." Mrs. Harding is "The Duchess." The president and Mrs. Harding occupy the large, south-west corner room, immediately adjoining the west parlor. A large, sunny, airy, cheerful room, a reflection in a marked degree of the cheery nature of its occupants. The color scheme is blue. There are twin beds here. Above the beds is a "crown piece" (or gilt cornice), from which blue satin damask draperies hang. Under this formerly toilet Lincoln's massive bed (made to order for him on account of his great height). Lincoln occupied this room during his lifetime in the White House.

On the fireplace mantel are miniature portraits of the President's mother, his wife and himself. Mrs. Harding has a penchant for knick-knacks featuring the elephant. She has them in ivory, bronze and brass, not only in her room, but in her parlor as well. So fond of them is she that she often wears a string of ivory beads, also corals, in which tiny elephants alternate with beads. She also has the very pretty articles of Indian bead work.

In one corner of her room is her private desk, with its phone, baskets and racks piled full of letters requiring her personal attention. Like the widow's cruse, this desk is but emptied to be refilled.

In another corner is a cabinet, whose glass doors are blue silk covered, but the side panels reveal rows of dainty footware, slippers, pumps, etc., to match every gown she wears. Mrs. Harding is always well-gowned, though she cares not for hats and shoes than perhaps any other article of dress.

Mrs. Harding buys her own clothes in the United States, which ought to be a fair indication that she thinks American styles perfectly satisfactory as compared with other fashion centers.

As to the length of skirts, or rather their shortness, or the paucity of material in a waist, she feels the adult woman can settle that for herself, and that for the young girl the mother should be the judge.

The day following recent reception in a family gathering the president complimented her on her appearance the previous evening and told her that of all the ladies present she had pleased him most. She blushed

like a young girl and her eyes sparkled. Show me the real woman who doesn't appreciate a genuine compliment from her husband more than one from any other source.

One thing I most admire in our president and his wife is the devotion they have for each other. When Warren G. Harding was making his upward climb in life, his wife was right beside him all the way. Mrs. Harding has no wish to be in the foreground only so far as it affects her own sphere in the White House. Her husband's interests are still paramount with her.

One of President Harding's campaign promises was economy in national affairs. Neither the president nor his wife has so far had anything charged up to the national treasury to pay for new things or articles either for public or private use in the White House. Both are scrupulously carrying out here their ideas of cutting down expenses.

Mrs. Harding courted on horseback. Since the president is taking up horseback riding, Mrs. Harding is intending also to ride again. Horseback riding was a part of the courtship of Warren Harding and Florence Kling. One of her childhood friends told me that she used to be a wonderful horsewoman. She said to me, "Florence was the loveliest figure on horse that I have ever seen. She could, any horse, even when it tried to walk on its hind feet."

Riding today, though, cannot have for them the same delights as for young people. Even by putting on a crowd, I often feel like saying, "Poor Mr. and Mrs. Harding." Never can they go any place, outside their own apartments, but that secret service men guard them every step. Unobtrusively, of course, but, if they are in the parlor, men are on duty in the corridor. If they drive alone or with a party, men sit with the chauffeur. If they call on a friend, they go to the theater, to play golf, to dine with friends, to deliver an address, take a trip by rail or in the yacht, omnipresent is the plain clothes guard.

Mrs. Harding receives through her mail so many suggestions on how to run the government, the president herself, the White House, that some-

times she gets away from it all, takes a ride through some scenic landscape in the car and thanks her good fortune that she neither has to talk or listen, for a short period, anyway.

How I wish the women of this country could know Mrs. Harding as I know her. Not only the women, but the men. Ladies, she understands your problems. She has experienced most of them. She has had vicissitudes of fortune, she has run the gamut of circumstances and experiences that happen to people, only to broaden them.

Gentlemen, she knows your business perplexities. She has been through them. She knows what competition means. She understands what you are up against and what you have to fight against to maintain your "place in the sun," your deposit in the bank, your children in school and your standing in the community. She has that double vision or visual acumen that makes her a woman pre-eminently to be imitated.

Successfully, by her husband's side in the house and in the office, have they built up home, business. She has combated and overcome invalidism, criticism. She has done this because her foundation was strong character. There is no "slings and arrows" type about Mrs. Harding. There is nothing "wishy-washy" about any of the president's family, either. They all have rare, good sense.

"First Lady's" Likes Noted. Mrs. Harding likes directness. If you have a request to make of her, or word to send her about anything, don't go around Robin Hood's barn to get it to her. A story loses nothing in its telling, you know, and "out with it," short, sharp and to the point, is Mrs. Harding's method. She makes quick decisions. Like any other person, sometimes she has had reason to regret a particular one. As quickly as she made the original statement or decision, just as quickly will she frankly say, "I made an error; I'm sorry; was wrong; you were right. Please forget it, and let's have no misunderstanding."

The "divinity" that hedges about a king" has no place in Mrs. Harding's makeup. One night I saw a youngster take a slide across the polished floor of a White House parlor and deliberately land most unceremoniously in Mrs. Harding's lap, while she was grabbing around the neck in an outburst of childish enthusiasm. You know the kind, spontaneous, and with no thought of results, whether it's a chocolate smear, sticky fingers, or a mussed gown. Being admonished, the child showed embarrassment.

"Pshaw," said Mrs. Harding. "What's a wrinkled dress in comparison with all those bushels of affection?" Mrs. Harding abhors "loadyngs." She extremely dislikes "gush" and flattery. She has had the blessed good fortune of growing up in a small town, where she first learned humanism, then values and afterwards, peoples. She can fit the three together in the nicest degree. She is expert in analysis and appraisement of the individual.

(Copyright, 1931, by The Twenty-first Century Press.) Next week I shall tell some more of my personal experiences with the president and his wife. Near anecdotes about Mrs. Harding's husband, the president, and the lights on the president's religion and other matters close to his heart.

French Peasant Ingenious in Hiding Money.

Fifteen Hundred Francs Secreted in Shotgun Barrels Fired at Rabbit by Neighbor.

PARIS, Dec. 31.—The ingenuity of French peasants in hiding money has surpassed itself in the case of a man near Lorient who needed 1000-franc note and a 500-franc note in payment for produce. He hid them in the muzzles of his double-barreled shotgun, believing that would be the last place thieves would search for money.

He made a mistake, however, in not taking his wife into the secret. A neighbor called a few days later, in the absence of the man of the house, and asked for the loan of the gun to get a hare.

The hare escaped and when the peasant came to get his gun, his wife remarked that the neighbor must be a very bad shot.

"Why?" the peasant asked.

"Because he had shot both barrels of your gun on a hare without hitting it."

"My shotgun?" inquired the peasant with a gasp at the same time making for the corner where the weapon hung.

The civil court of the department of Morbihan will have to decide the delicate point of law whether the neighbor is responsible for the loss of the 1500 francs.

Grandmother and Two Sons Go to College.

Flame of Desire for Education Burns 35 Years With Unfaltering Determination.

LIBERTY, Mo., Dec. 31.—Mrs. Mary A. Church, a grandmother, has entered Liberty after a long fight for a college education had burned with unfaltering determination for more than 35 years.

James M. Church, 19, a grandchild, George W. Church, 15, a grandchild, and Mrs. Church, 64, attend school in Neosho.

Finishing high school in Detroit, Mich., in 1885, Mrs. Church, then a girl in her teens, longed for further education. Continuous illness in her family made it compulsory for her to help support her family following her graduation.

But it was not long before more important responsibilities claimed her time, the girl marrying Dr. Frank Church, a young Baptist minister.

When the children came the young mother was too busy caring for them to be active in efforts to obtain the college education.

The mother and her two sons entered college here as freshmen this year.

Southern Hospitality Is Shown.

Everybody's. When Savannah, Ga., was making bid for the Shriner's convention, she had no more enthusiastic supporter than Judge Peter W. Meldrim. Chief Justice Taft's successor as president of the American Bar association. An Atlanta supporter protested.

"Why you know, Judge," said he, "Savannah couldn't take care of the crowds. Even by putting on a crowd, I often feel like saying, 'Poor Mr. and Mrs. Harding.' Never can they go any place, outside their own apartments, but that secret service men guard them every step. Unobtrusively, of course, but, if they are in the parlor, men are on duty in the corridor. If they drive alone or with a party, men sit with the chauffeur. If they call on a friend, they go to the theater, to play golf, to dine with friends, to deliver an address, take a trip by rail or in the yacht, omnipresent is the plain clothes guard."

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WOMAN WHO WAS U. S. GOLF CHAMPION FOR THREE YEARS ENTERS BUSINESS CAREER

Lady Greenwood, Wife of Sir Hamar, Gets Pen Used to Sign British-Irish Peace Treaty as Present From Lloyd George—Mrs. Gouverneur Morris Popular.



MISS ALEXA W. STIRLING, who held the woman's golf championship of the United States for three years, has taken up a business career and has joined the staff of S. W. Strauss & Co., bond department. She is the daughter of a prominent physician of Atlanta, Ga.

Lady Greenwood is the wife of Sir Hamar Greenwood, secretary of the Irish free state peace treaty. Following the signing of the Irish free state peace treaty between the negotiators in London, Premier Lloyd George presented her with the pen used at the ceremony and complimented Sir Greenwood and Lady Greenwood upon their conduct in Ireland, which had much to do with bringing about peace.

Mrs. Gouverneur Morris is a prominent society woman. She is at the head of the famous Primrose beauty

salon of New York and is very popular, having a wide circle of friends.

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the king and make the jack before the suit is trumped. A won with king, and foreseeing that if he cannot discard his losing heart still another heart trick will be won against him, instead of at once leading trumps—as many would do—at

Trick 4 he put the dummy in with the king of spades, and at

Trick 5 led dummy's king of clubs. This gave him the desired opportunity to discard the heart.

Trick 6—the lead a small diamond from the dummy hand. Note: He led a small card, not the jack. If, with the ace, queen and jack he also held 10 or 9, the correct lead would be jack. Lacking either 10 or 9, the small card is the proper lead, as it is desirable to take the finesse in the hand which contains ace and queen or ace and jack, as the case may be, rather than in the other hand.

A put up queen and Y, who holding the king guarded is bound to win a trick in the suit under any conditions, while with king, Y then found himself in a dilemma as to what to lead, but, deeming it well to weaken declarer's trump suit, he led a heart. Having noticed declarer's heart discard, he knew he would be forced to trump or yield the trick.

Trick 7—Declarer trumped, and at Trick 8 came out with the ace of trumps, following at

Trick 9 with small trump, which dummy won with jack. At Trick 10 dummy made his good club, and at

Trick 11 his 13th heart. Tricks 12 and 13 went to declarer with the ace of spades and the remaining trump.