

**That's the consensus
about the hulking actor
who became a TV and movie
favorite by just being himself.**

father the same day when he married Lois Clarke, mother of an eight-year-old daughter, Kimberly, by a previous marriage. Their own child, Greta Scott, was born last January.

The Garners met at a party and were married after a courtship of less than two weeks. Comments Jim, "I had gone with some girls for as long as a year and a half and still didn't know them! I knew I was in love with Lois right away."

TODAY, the fellow who once got a thrill evading cops trying to catch him for drag racing on Mulholland Boulevard, is happy barbecuing steaks in the garage. "There's less of a smoke problem than if I do it in the back yard where it might bother neighbors," he says thoughtfully.

His most strenuous exercise is a round of golf, often with Kimberly, whom he has taught to play a pretty fair game.

He used to be an enthusiastic rider, but now gets his fill of it in his "Maverick" TV show. "Until I was 16, I spent as much time in the saddle as I did on the ground," he recalls.

Garner is a fairly strict father, probably because of his own upbringing. "I got whipped only three times in my life," he recalls. "I got my worst beating when my father caught me arguing with my stepmother. He didn't care whether I was right or wrong; it wasn't my place to argue with her, he said. I should have known that, of course. My father has always been a strong believer in authority. He let me roam around at will, but when he spoke, it was law. There was no talking back."

Jim gave Kimberly her first and only spanking shortly after he married Lois. His new role as stepfather was not an easy one because when he first met the child, she had just been released from the hospital after a severe bout with polio. For a long time she had difficulty walking, and it took a lot of readjustment to get her well. Jim had gone through a similar experience with his brother Jack, and he knew that because of Kimberly's physical condition he might be too lenient.

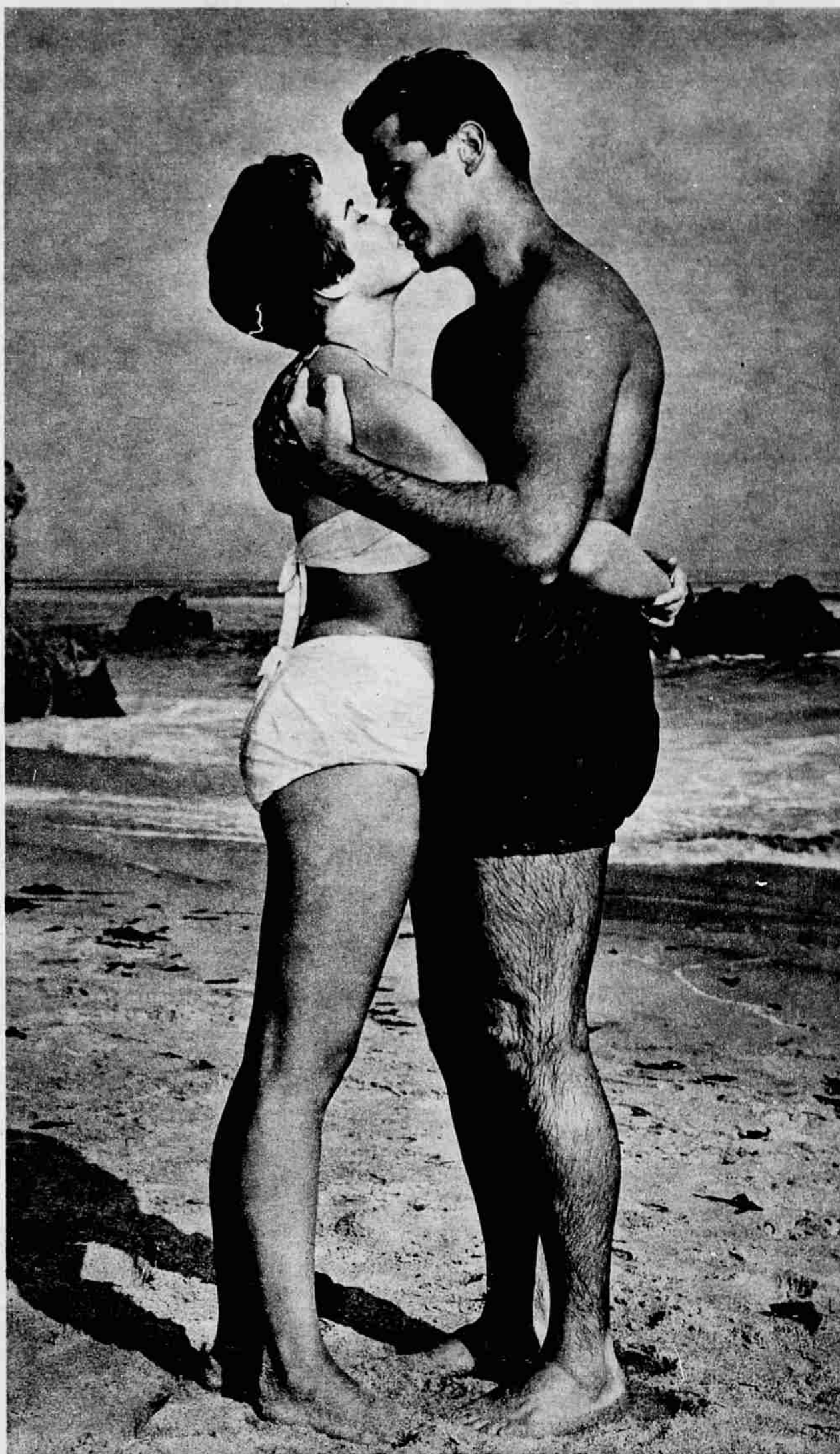
This particular incident was the result of a school problem she refused to discuss. Jim finally burst out: "I don't care whether you are right or wrong, just say something." When she stubbornly remained silent, he spanked the child.

There were tears, lots of them. But once Kimberly regained her composure, her whole attitude changed. In fact, she was so proud of being spanked that she told all the neighbors about it!

Today, Jim's biggest problem is his temper. When he was younger, his size alone would get him into trouble every once in a while, when others goaded him to fight. Now he gets mad only at himself.

"Like when I blow a line, or miss a hole when I play golf. Stupid things like that. Just the other day I got so mad that I tossed a golf club on the green and broke it to bits. But even that's an improvement. I used to bust things with my right hand so hard, I'd break my knuckles."

However, he really doesn't have to worry what people might think or say when he does lose his temper occasionally, because what John Hodiak said still holds true today: 99 out of 100 people like Jim Garner, on screen or off, just as he is.



Hollywood likes to cast him as a tough war hero. With Andra Martin, he's now starring in "Up Periscope."