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- Is he running away from his wife?
 - Is he broke even while making millions?
 - Did he move to Switzerland to dodge taxes?
- Even Hollywood insiders couldn't answer these questions—until now*

WILLIAM HOLDEN and his wife Ardis—former actress Brenda Marshall—have been married 19 years. There have been long separations, though—professional ones while Bill was on location.

The Hollywood gossips, however, question how "professional" these really were. Always skeptical of what seems to be a happy marriage, the gossips say Bill eagerly sought out long movie-making junkets to get away from domestic trouble; that the only reasons the Holdens didn't divorce were their three children—two sons of their own and a daughter by Mrs. Holden's first marriage.

Bill's own reason for not adding to Hollywood's divorce statistics? He and Ardis simply like being married to each other. His traveling? Well, not entirely professional, he admits—he's addicted to globe-trotting as some people are addicted to gambling.

Traveling became a fever in 1952 when Holden flew to Korea for the Hollywood Coordinating Committee to survey the effectiveness of GI entertainment by movie stars. He was captivated by the exotic life in Tokyo and Hong Kong and wanted to see what other great cities of the world offered.

"I was fascinated by the Japanese approach to democracy, by the situation in Hong Kong, by differences between East and West, which I believe no longer exist," he says. "Traveling opened up vast areas of human behavior to me which I'm naturally interested in as an actor."

I'm inclined to take Bill at his word when he explains his long separations from Ardis and his family. There is a quiet but deep affection between the two that is obvious to anybody who really knows them. Ardis is a perfect counterpart to Bill in temperament and behavior. Her willingness to adjust her life to his needs has developed a mature love that has grown rather than diminished over many difficult years.

True, their marriage got off to an inauspicious start. They were both working when they became engaged, not long after Ardis was divorced. Because separate location trips threatened to keep them apart for some time, Ardis and Bill decided to get married quickly. One Saturday night after work, they chartered a plane and flew to Las Vegas with Brian and Marjorie Donlevy.

When they reached Las Vegas, they found the regular landing strip closed and had to land on a distant airstrip. They walked half an hour to a phone, then waited two more hours for a cab. By the time they reached the county recorder's office to pick up their marriage license, it was 2 in the morning—and the night recorder had gone to eat. The wedding party searched 11 restaurants before locating her.

When they reached the Congregational Church, the chaplain—who expected them at midnight—had left. They found him waiting for them in their hotel. The room clerk, however, had decided they weren't coming and had given the bridal suite to another couple. When the ceremony finally was performed, it was so late they had breakfast and promptly flew home.

That night Bill became ill. Before he recovered, Ardis had to leave for Canada on location. Gone four weeks, she arrived home on a Friday afternoon—five hours after her husband had left for Carson City, Nev., to finish his



On Bill Holden's world travels, his wife Ardis sometimes goes along. She was a film star under the name of Brenda Marshall.

picture. He came home with appendicitis and was rushed to the hospital for an operation. While visiting him in the hospital, Ardis began to complain of pains in her right side. Two hours later, her appendix was removed.

"To sum it up," Holden says, "we were married in July of 1941, but it was two-and-a-half months before we could live as husband and wife."

As a matter of fact, they didn't see much of each other afterward, either. The war started in December, and Bill enlisted the following April.

WHEN BILL started traveling again after the war, Ardis would have liked to join him, but she stayed behind because the children needed at least one parent's supervision. Now that they are older and attending a full-time boarding school in Switzerland, she accompanies Bill on every trip.

Ardis always has been a tremendous help to Bill. When they were first married, she was making five times as much as he. Yet she gave up her career to look after her husband and family—and to avoid possible career jealousies.

Ardis told me that she also had reached the point where she could no longer stand the fuss of being a glamour girl. But when she and Bill found themselves deeply in debt after his discharge from the Army, she just as readily went back to work to help out with the family finances.

Ardis is right for Bill in many respects. For instance, he has a reputation for holding onto his dollars—a tendency I didn't notice when we were together. Ardis herself is a very thrifty woman and knows how to stretch a budget. Just a few weeks ago, she hesitated going to the better-known dress houses in Paris because she felt she couldn't afford them—which may come as a shock to anyone who thinks