



Inscribed photo dates friendship to 1943.

Next Friday the President and Mrs. Eisenhower celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary; here is an intimate glimpse of the First Lady by someone near and dear to her

My Friend MAMMIE

By MARGARET DE MILLE



Acquaintance with people like Clement Attlee and Sir Winston Churchill never lets Mamie forget old friends.



Prominent in the fashion merchandising world for 20 years, Margaret de Mille is a niece of the late film producer-director Cecil B. de Mille and is the sister of famed choreographer Agnes de Mille. She has been a personal friend of Mamie Eisenhower since they first met in wartime Washington in 1943. Twice a grandmother, Miss de Mille lives with her husband in New Rochelle, N. Y.

I MET MY FRIEND MAMIE during the war, just after General Eisenhower had gone overseas to launch the attack on North Africa. A girl I knew, Kitty, was staying at the Eisenhower apartment in the Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, and she invited me down for a weekend.

She also invited me to shop for bedspreads and curtains which, due to wartime shortages, were more plentiful in New York than in the District of Columbia. I arrived on a Friday evening in June, 1943, lugging my bulky package of curtains.

Kitty greeted me and introduced me to Mamie, and I noticed for the first time those clear blue eyes that sparkle with friendship.

It is hard to do Mamie justice either by words or photographs. Nothing can convey the freshness of her complexion, the delicacy of her coloring, or her feminine daintiness—nor can any still picture convey her vitality or her healthy animation which is as powerful as an electric current.

My first weekend in Washington was a quiet one.

It was fiercely hot (those were the days before air conditioning). The curtains I had brought down proved to be too long for Mamie's windows, so we sat hemming them up and chatting in our nightgowns! It was a completely relaxed and intimate two days.

My wartime job was in the New York office of the OPA (Office of Price Administration), and every time I had to go to the national office in Washington I stayed with Mamie in her spare room (Kitty had returned to her home in New Jersey).

Mamie lived quietly during the war years, staying in her apartment most of the time. I soon learned it was the gathering place for the wives of other generals who were overseas. The women met in the evening to play mahjong, to talk, to share news, and to comfort one another, though the war, as such, was rarely discussed.

It was at this time that I learned that everything in Mamie's life is placed on a very personal basis. I would hustle in from New York, full of what