



considered pertinent questions, having studied the war news on the train, and would ask, "How does the General say the war is going?"

"Oh," she'd answer, "he says it's cold. I'm sending him some heavier socks!"

So, I repeat, the campaigns, the strategy, the politics of the war were not discussed by the generals' wives. Their concern was for their husbands, and to mask their anxiety they would sing popular songs, with Mamie at the piano.

After a game of mahjong they would eat a cold meat loaf (in order to stretch their ration points). Mamie, incidentally, had nothing in her larder that other housewives didn't have, except possibly a jar of powdered coffee and a few extra packs of cigarettes from the Army PX. Mamie used neither herself—they were there for the convenience of her friends. Those Army wives are the same ones with whom she still spends her Saturday afternoons (when she gets one to herself) in the White House.

Once when I called Mamie from New York and

asked if I could use the spare room, she demurred gracefully. I was somewhat perturbed as she had always been insistent that I stay with her on my Washington visits rather than at a hotel. It wasn't until long afterward that I learned I had called during a secret 10-day leave which General Eisenhower managed to spend with his wife between North Africa and the move to England.

An amusing incident occurred during this leave which Ike himself told me about after the war. It seems he put his feet up on a newly upholstered sofa and was politely ordered by his wife to remove them. He laughed and said, "I may have been Supreme Allied Commander in Europe—but I sure knew who was boss at home!"

When Ike returned in 1945, I met him for the first time. He greeted me with his famous grin and said, "I'm so glad to know you, Maggie. Mamie's letters have mentioned you often."

That I was charmed goes without saying but, more significantly, I noted that Ike accepted me

completely because I was Mamie's friend. I realized then the complete trust and dependence these two have in each other. Anyone who might think otherwise hasn't seen them together.

After the war, Ike became chief of staff, and he and Mamie settled down in Quarters No. 1 at Fort Myers, Arlington, Va. Although Ike had become an international hero, they resumed the normal course of their long marriage with Mamie in the role she plays so easily, that of devoted wife and mother. My own husband had returned from the war, and now when we visited, we were four.

In due course, Ike became president of Columbia University, and they moved into the big house, freshly redecorated for them, on Morningside Drive in New York City. We saw them more often during this period since we had all become New Yorkers. Mamie loved the big new house, though she confessed that she hated to leave Fort Myers and her comfortable old house there.

This is characteristic. Moving from place to place and house to house is the customary lot of an Army wife. Mamie was always able to make each new house homey and comfortable, but leaving the established home was always a wrench. She became so fond of the big Columbia house that she actually cried when she had to leave it to move into the White House. Through her tears she said, "Nearly every woman in this country has a home she can consider her own. I have always had to live in places *not* my own!"

It seemed a pathetic sentiment from one about to move into the White House as our First Lady, but I haven't the slightest doubt she will have pangs of regret when she has to leave there. Of course, the Gettysburg Farm, where Ike and Mamie will retire, has particular significance for them. It is the first home they have ever owned!

At Morningside Drive, their favorite spot was the top floor, a big glassed-in sun porch. Here we would be invited to what she called "kitchen supper"—a buffet of casserole dishes—and it was always very informal and great fun.

On one occasion, a Sunday afternoon, we called on them and were greeted warmly as usual. Mamie was in a pink negligee and Ike was in an old sweater and slacks, having spent the day painting. We were discussing the somewhat unexpected news that Gov. Thomas Dewey had just announced that he was endorsing General Eisenhower for President! (Dewey's statement was startling because Ike had consistently denied that he wanted to run.) Our conversation wasn't many minutes old before Sergeant Moaney appeared. (Moaney had been Ike's orderly during the war and still is his personal valet in the White House.) The Sergeant announced that reporters were at the door asking for the General's reaction to Dewey's statement. Ike said, "Oh, tell them I'm not dressed."

Mamie quickly amended, "No, Moaney. Tell them we have company."

Apparently Moaney delivered both messages because later, on the radio at home, we heard an announcer speculating as to who the guests could be if the Eisenhowers weren't dressed!

On another occasion, I was chatting with Mamie on the phone. It was early November, and I mentioned that my sister Agnes de Mille, with whom we usually shared our Thanksgiving celebration, was away. Mamie responded instantly, "Come eat Thanksgiving dinner with us."

(Continued)