

The Women in Barry

By FLORA RHETA SCHREIBER

WHEN A MAN suddenly finds himself being considered as a presidential possibility his whole world and the world of his family undergo a great change.

His family and his friends see him in a new light.

This is true even when, like Barry Goldwater, he has been a U. S. Senator and an internationally known public figure for many years.

In this political climate, the tightly knit Goldwater family suddenly feels a hush of consternation and expectation. Margaret Johnson Goldwater, the Senator's attractive and gracious wife, remarked to a friend, "I married a nice shopkeeper—and now look at him!"

"It all seems overpowering," Joanne Goldwater Ross, the eldest of the four Goldwater children, told me. "Mother is frightened. But I have no worries about her. I know that if she is ever called upon to be the First Lady, she will be just tremendous."

Then, talking of Josephine Williams Goldwater, the Senator's 88-year-old mother, Joanne added, "Grandma seems to stand off, looking on. She separates Barry Goldwater, the political figure, from her son. She never talks of him simply as 'my son' or, in talking to me, as 'your father.' Instead, she talks of him as Barry. Often she says quietly, 'He's such a great man.'"

The Senator's mother has always enjoyed a closeness with her son. He was her first-born, and she set high standards for him.

"My private values," Goldwater told me, "were learned largely at the knee of my mother. This wonderful woman filled my mind with ideas and



The Goldwaters: Joanne (left), sons Barry, Jr., and Michael, Mrs. Goldwater, and daughter Peggy.

ideals which I, in turn, have tried to pass on to my own children."

The archetype of the pioneer woman, Jo Goldwater set patriotism as one of those ideals. Regularly each evening she would drive Barry, his brother Bob, and his sister Carolyn to the Government school for Indians on the outskirts of Phoenix, Ariz., for the flag-lowering ceremony. The Indians never took the flag down until the Goldwaters got there.

As her children were growing up, she and they

established a keen fellowship. She played baseball, rode horseback, golfed with them, and taught them how to shoot. They even roughed it together on frequent camping trips.

On these expeditions, the Goldwater youngsters often were joined by the neighborhood children, who called Jo Goldwater "Mun" just as her own children did. The nickname was Barry's invention. As a baby, he had confused the housekeeper's name, which was Angie, with Mumsie, a name by which Baron, his father, often ad-



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ressed his wife. Mumsie plus Angie became Mungie—and then Mun.

The Goldwater children could be prankish. Once, all three of them joined a parade in their underwear. And there was the occasion when Barry chose evening-prayer time to experiment with his miniature cannon and hit the steeple of the Methodist Church across the street from the Goldwater home. When such things happened, Mun could turn disciplinarian. She would let Barry choose between going to bed without supper and a whipping. Harry Rosenzweig, a boyhood friend of Barry's, recalls that "Barry always chose the whipping because he had a tremendous appetite!"

Jo Goldwater, blonde, slender, always beautifully dressed in the latest New York fashions, was not one to submerge her life in her children; she had a vigorous life of her own. She smoked and drove an automobile before most other women. She was first woman's golf champion of Phoenix and later Southwest Champion. She read serious books and was a gracious hostess.

In Waco, Nebr., she had been the only girl on her home-town baseball team and was known as the Blue Racer. An intensely vital woman with a blunt, no-nonsense attitude, her energy was the more remarkable because it represented a second lease on life.

Six Months to Live

A trained nurse, she was working at Cook County Hospital in Chicago when doctors told her that she had tuberculosis and had no more than six months to live. She wrote her parents back home: "I'm going to travel out West to Arizona with a patient whose health requires that climate. A nurse never has any trouble finding a job, and I may decide to stay out there."

Her ticket and her money ran out in Ashfork, Ariz., 200 miles short of her destination, Phoe-

nix. She used railroad jargon she had learned from her brother, who was a railroad telegrapher, to persuade the agent at Ashfork to let her ride the caboose to Phoenix.

In Phoenix, she lived at first in a tent colony for "lungers." It wasn't long, however, before she was asked to work as a special-duty nurse at St. Joseph's Hospital. Her own illness seems miraculously to have been forgotten.

On New Year's Day, 1907, her health blooming, she married the town's most eligible bachelor, sophisticated, debonair Baron Goldwater, who ran the finest dry-goods store in the area. He had invited his fiancée to come to the store and select her trousseau. But, resolutely independent, she protested that, until she was Mrs. Goldwater, she would pay her own bills and buy where she chose!

Through the years, she and her husband shared a happy, giving life together. Then, on the morning of March 6, 1929, he died suddenly at the age of 63. Baron hadn't told her he suffered from angina pectoris, and his death came as a completely unexpected blow.

Mrs. Goldwater had been golfing that morning, when suddenly she told her caddy to put her clubs back in the locker room—and she hurried home with dark forebodings. There she found her husband writhing in pain. He died before the doctor could arrive.

Barry, who was then a freshman, quit college and entered the family business. He lived at home with Mun while Bob and Carolyn stayed away at school. During these lonely years after Baron was gone, the closeness between mother and son deepened and grew.

This closeness, however, never has been a sentimental one. As Col. J. Hunter Drum, a family friend, says:

"There is a pleasant kidding between Jo Goldwater and the Senator. She could always do ev-

erything her boys could do. She wanted their respect but not deference. The result is a healthy camaraderie between them."

Today, she maintains her rigorous independence by living in her own home rather than with her children. She still takes part in family clam-bakes, goes on trips with her children and grandchildren, and she travels East once a year.

When Barry married, he chose a woman who was both like his mother and different from her. Both women are forthright and determined. But as daughter Joanne puts it, "Grandma, whom I call Jo-Jo, is rugged. Mother is gentle. You might sum it up by saying Jo-Jo prefers a camping trip; Mother is happier at a resort."

Margaret Johnson, whose father was president of the Warner Gear Company and later executive vice president of Borg-Warner, grew up in a family that was prominent in the business and social life of Muncie, Ind. She was groomed for a gracious, quiet life. After becoming Mrs. Barry Goldwater, however, she molded herself in the more rugged tradition of the Goldwater family. Out of their dissimilarities, they fashioned a marriage of such harmony that friends call it "a sustained romance."

She Likes Big-City Excitement

Camping in the desert had no allure for Peggy Goldwater, but she learned to do it to please her husband and her children—Joanne 27; Barry, Jr., 25; Mike, 23; and Peggy, 19. As Harry Rosenzweig says:

"Peggy is happiest when she and her husband can go off to New York, check in at the Essex House, see the plays, go to the 21 Club, and generally live it up by themselves."

"There are not many women," the Senator told me, "who would put up with the life I've led. We were married in 1934. In 1940 I made a trip down the Colorado River; Peggy didn't

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Two pretty Midwestern girls went West: Jo hardy at 88, became Barry's mother; Peggy Johnson,



Williams, a strong-willed "invalid" who's still a gentle, artistic heiress, became his wife

