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FAMILY IN WASHINGTON

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The new Vice-President and his wife talk frankly about their 25-year marriage, their children and the difficult period they weathered that helped to strengthen them all

BY TRUDE B. FELDMAN

Elizabeth and Gerald Ford have been happily married for more than 25 years, but there has been one problem. "Jerry keeps telling me," Betty Ford says, "that if he ever gets a heart attack, it won't be because of long hours or hard work but because I'm always late."

A close friend of the Vice-President's for more than 20 years, William Whyte, recalls an incident when the two families were on a vacation together: "Betty was late for dinner. We were all sitting in the dining room, waiting for her, wondering where she was. After a time a long cigarette holder appeared in the doorway, one leg emerged from around the door, then we saw an eye winking at us from under a big artificial eyelash. Betty, wearing a wig and decked out like Mata Hari, made her entrance singing, in a deep throaty voice, 'Whatever Lola Wants, Lola Gets.' Now can you picture that?"

If Betty Ford's stratagem for disarming her husband's annoyance sounds like something out of an old "Father Knows Best" episode, the impression is not far off the mark. The Fords do have a marked resemblance to those happy, wholesome families that populate the television series. To trick his wife into being on time, Gerald Ford has resorted to such situation-comedy devices as telling her that an eight-o'clock dinner appointment was scheduled for seven o'clock.

"I don't know why he complains so much," Betty Ford says, defending her chronic lateness with mock innocence. "After all, heaven knows he was late for our own wedding. As a matter of fact, he was so late that I'd just about decided that if he didn't show up soon, I might as well go down and marry the best man. When Jerry did appear, he apologized profusely—he had been out campaigning for Congress in a farming area. We finally bowed our heads to take the vows, and it was then I noticed that with his neat gray-flannel suit he was wearing dusty brown shoes. He had been in such a hurry to change his suit that he had simply forgotten to change his shoes."

That was on October 15, 1948. Last year, only a few days before the Fords were to celebrate their 25th anniversary, Richard Nixon appeared on television at a White House

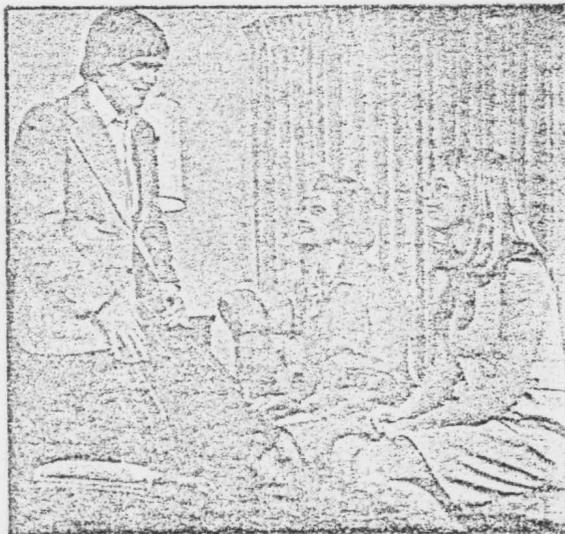
gathering of Congressional leaders and proposed that Gerald R. Ford be confirmed as the 40th Vice-President of the United States. Less than two months later, on December sixth, he was sworn into that office.

Gerald Ford's sudden elevation to a position one step away from the Presidency has the makings of a personal drama unparalleled in American history. He is the first Vice-President to enter office without the months of preparation that normally intervene between the time of a national convention and the eventual inauguration of a new administration. In addition, coming as it does at a time of great debate about the possible resignation or impeachment of President Nixon, the appointment puts him under heavy pressure to maintain his own independence and integrity while rendering the loyalty that is traditionally expected of a Vice-President toward the man in the White House. It was a tribute to Gerald Ford's personal qualities that both President Nixon and an overwhelming majority of both houses of Congress felt that he was the best man to undertake those responsibilities.

Betty Ford has no doubt that her husband will be able to support the President and still be his own man. "Jerry wouldn't hesitate," she says, "to make an appointment with the President and walk right in and say, 'I think you're off the beam' on this or that. I think that's why the President wanted him. He wanted someone with whom he agreed philosophically, yet someone he knew well enough so that he could sit down and talk to him and say, 'Well, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe it should be done a different way.'"

"Jerry and the President haven't always agreed. Jerry voted against bills the President wanted put through. Because he's always been his own man." Betty is certain that no amount of pressure will cause her husband to change. "He's a very humble person—none of this can possibly go to his head."

At the start of his Vice-Presidency, Ford has certainly tried to resist changes in his home-life. After a family vote, in which their four children were unanimous, the Fords elected to remain in the four-bedroom house they built 20 years ago in Alexandria, Virginia. When the Secret / turn to page 138



Mrs. Ford with Steven, 17, and Susan, 16.

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McCall's May 1974



NSP080901-8/9/74- GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.: (FILE): Two big events took place in the life of Gerald R. Ford in the autumn of 1948. He got married and he got elected to Congress. Here President Ford leaves Grace Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids October 15, 1948 with his new wife, the former Elizabeth (Betty) Bloomer.
UPI FILE dk/FILE

prominent American men and women who have been

at 44 per 100 marriages, second highest in the world.

Wash. Post
10/26/75

The Divorce Boom Keeps Booming

by Charles Peterson

NSP080901-8/9/74- GRAND RAPIDS, MICH.: (FILE): Two big events
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He got married and he got elected to Congress. Here President
Ford leaves Grace Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids October 15,
1948 with his new wife, the former Elizabeth (Betty) Bloomer.
UPI FILE dk/FILE

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BIRTHDAY-8/2/48- BIRTHDAY BIRTHDAY' MICH': (BYE): TWO MRS BIRTHDAY

Divorces make history

'Happy' endured gossip for 'man she loves'

By Wauhillau La Hay

Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — For the first time in U.S. history, the first and second ladies of the land will be women who were

years, partly the result of his presidential aspirations.

The first Mrs. Nelson A. Rockefeller was Philadelphia socialite Mary Todhunter Clark. They were married for some 31 years. About the mid-

—UPI Telephoto



byterian minister who married them was officially rebuked by his superiors and the divorce dogged — many believed denied — Rockefeller's presidential ambitions.

The public also reacted

ed their time among their huge double duplex apartment on Fifth Avenue; their estate at Pocantico Hills; a big modern house at Seal Harbor, Maine, where other members of the family have summer homes;

at Seal Harbor, which is where "Happy" met her future husband. The Murphys were offered land at Pocantico for a summer home. They built the home and thereafter the Murphys and Rockefellers

First Lady's First
Husband Still Friend
Of The First Family

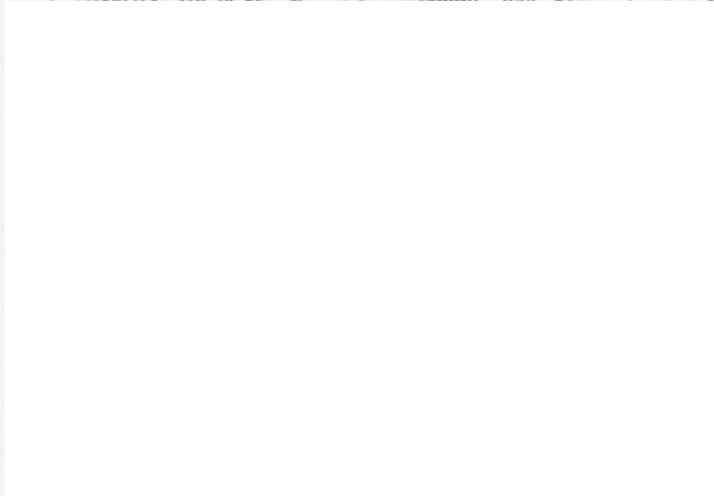
6-15-74

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI) — The new First Lady's first husband says he still is a good

Daily News - 8/15/74

Betty Ford's 1st Mate Talks

San Francisco, Aug. 14 (UPI)—William C. Warren, a prosperous furniture and lamp salesman, has talked with Betty Ford about her first husband's life.



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FORMER GOVERNOR AND MRS. NELSON ROCKEFELLER

'Happy' Rockefeller Exudes Enthusiasm For Her 'Rocky'

By WAHULLAU LA HAY
Scripps-Howard Staff
WASHINGTON — For the

THEN IT became known that he was deeply in love with "Happy" Murphy, wife of Dr. James Slater "Robin"

children went back to New York City while Melinda, then 3, remained with her mother and stepfather.

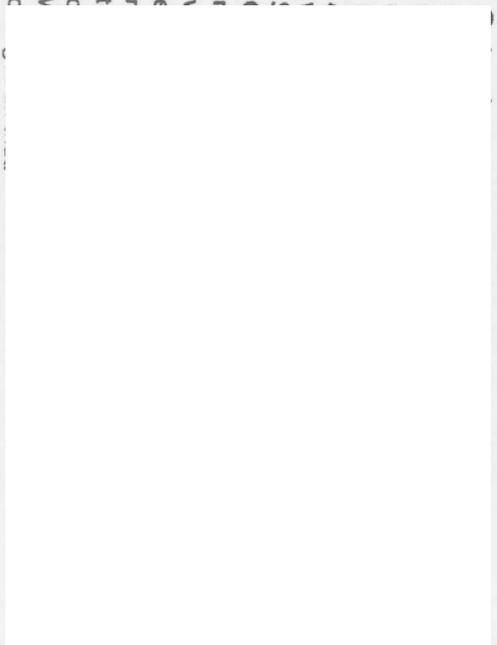


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P

Q. Once and for all, can you tell us how much Sen.



Ford, Rockefeller Wives Are Both Divorcees

By WAUHILLAU La HAY
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — For the first time in U.S. history, the first and second ladies of the land will be women who were

result of his presidential aspirations.

The first Mrs. Nelson A. Rockefeller was Philadelphia socialite Mary Todhunter Clark. They were married for

children. The four Rockefeller children were fully grown. One, Michael, died in 1961 on an expedition to New Guinea to collect art.

The wedding of Margareta

afterward the three older children went back to New York City while Melinda, then 3, remained with her mother and stepfather.

The suit eventually was

Observatory are ready for them.

"Happy" is a member of an old, rich and socially impeccable Philadelphia Main

the home and thereafter the Murphys and Rockefellers were together frequently.

"Happy" threw herself into the Rockefeller Presidential

WALTER SCOTT'S Personality Parade

Want the facts? Want to learn the truth about prominent personalities? Want informed opinion? Write Walter Scott, 733 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Your full name will be used unless otherwise requested. Volume of mail received is



Q. Can you tell us anything about Joe Albritton who has bought into The Washington Star-News?—Peter Lord, Arlington, Va.

A. Joe Lewis Albritton, 49, is a Texas lawyer and banker who runs the Houston Citizens Trust Com-

A. They were "long after" Ford as a court asked the Seci for a few days

PRESIDENT

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A. The f Lady was ineering of the U.S. Ohio, in the wealt eloped v months

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THE SUNDAY
NEWSPAPER MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 22, 1974.

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Mrs. Rockefeller Open, Friendly

By WAUHILLAU LA HAY
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

For the first time in U.S. history, the First and Second ladies of the land will be divorced.

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were together frequently. "Happy" threw herself into the Rockefeller Presidential camapign in 1960. She has said often that she enjoys politics and since marrying

Divorce is no burden to Betty and Happy

By WAUHILLAU LA HAY
Scripps-Howard Writer

ended in divorce on the grounds of mental cruelty and incompatibility. Mrs. Ford received a total settlement of \$1.

some 31 years. About the middle of his first term of governor it became apparent to their friends, and then general knowledge in the New York area,

The marriage to William C. Warren

Hubert Clark. They were married for

Turn to Page C 1.

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Dear P/L

Husbands First Nonelective Team

First, Second Ladies Will Be Divorcees

Wash

By Wauhillau La Hay
Scripps-Howard Staff Writer

WASHINGTON — For the first time in U.S. history, the first and second ladies of the land will be women who were divorced before marrying their husbands, who also will

to Republican gatherings, conventions and state affairs.

"Happy" Rockefeller's sparkling -brown eyes, her shining chestnut hair which she wears long and casually, her impeccable taste in clothes and her erect carriage



Black Star
Jan. Sherkley
10/26/75



Wide World

PRESIDENT FORD
"A late bloomer"

Why did Gerald Ford wait until he was 35 to marry? "I was always so busy, I never really had enough time to get involved, and I was concentrating on my career. And second, I had only one serious romance, other than the one I had with Betty, with this girl from Connecticut College . . . very superior girl—but it didn't work out. So I just forgot being too much interested in marriage. Then I met Betty, and she was very attractive. She added a sense of stability and serenity. By the time I was 35, I was pretty well on course and wasn't preoccupied. I knew where I was going—at least where I wanted to try to go. And so our lives sort of fitted at that stage. She has done a super job.

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DIVORCES SURPRISE TO MANY IN CAPITAL

Betty Ford's first marriage to William Warren came as a surprise to many in Washington after Ford's nomination as vice president. None of Ford's biographical records ever mentioned it — nor the fact that his mother had been divorced when he was an infant. It was not a secret among their Grand Rapids friends, many of whom attended both weddings.

Betty Ford obtained a divorce from Warren on Sept. 22, 1947, on grounds of incompatibility. She and Warren had no children. She was given a token settlement of \$1 and the furnishings of their Grand Rapids apartment. The couple had been separated for about a year at the time of the divorce.

Warren later married the daughter of a former Mexican diplomat and moved to San Francisco. The Warrens and the Fords in 1974 termed their relationship as "amicable." Mrs. Ford said "Jerry and I recently ran into my former husband at the airport in Dallas. There's never been any ill feeling or anything like that."

Warren has been quoted as saying that they "still have many mutual friends" in Grand Rapids.

Daily News - 9/15/74

Betty Ford's 1st Mate Talks

San Francisco, Aug. 14 (UPI)—William C. Warren, a prosperous furniture and lamp salesman, has become an instant celebrity. He is the first husband of the nation's new first lady, Betty Ford.

But Warren, hardly enthusiastic about his new status, does not say much more about Mrs. Ford other than that "she's a nice person."

Warren and the former Betty Bloomer were married in Grand Rapids, Mich., for five years and divorced when Mrs. Ford was 29. She married Ford when she was 30.

Warren was a bit irritated at a recent quote attributed to Mrs. Ford that she had no idea where he was.

"I know Jerry Ford," he said. "We're still good friends."

Warren, who represents some Grand Rapids firms, lives on Russian Hill with his wife of 20 years, Mayo, in a plush block of Lombard St., known to tourists as "the crookedest street in the world."

The couple moves with locally socially prominent people, and jets frequently to Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, where the Warrens also are active on the social scene. Mrs. Warren, an interior designer, is half Mexican and speaks Spanish fluently.

of marriage



Nobody

MAY 08 1974

Ever

Asked

Her

By Betty Beale

Star-News Staff Writer

The item in Time magazine revealing that Betty Ford was a divorcee when she married Gerald Ford years ago was news to many in Washington, but certainly raised no eyebrows.

"No one had ever bothered to ask if I had been married previously," Betty explained. "All our friends knew about it (some attended both weddings) and there was no reason to advertise it . . .

"I suppose the Secret Service found out when