

Past Mistresses Of the White House.

Gossip About the Wives and Daughters of the Presidents.

St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

As is well known, Mrs. McKinley's two children, both daughters, died in infancy. Were the younger one living, she would be 22 years old, the age at which "Miss Betty," the third daughter of General Taylor, began her brilliant but brief career as mistress of the White House.

Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Fillmore, both of whom were physically infirm, as is Mrs. McKinley, were represented by their daughters. So was Mrs. Taylor, who never went into the White House in public, and John Tyler, whose wife had lately died, put forward his daughter-in-law, who had been an actress. Three of these were vice-presidents, and it is not noticed that no wife of a president ever acted in the capacity of mistress of the White House, except Tyler's second wife, and she for but a short time.

Abigail Fillmore was altogether different from Mrs. Patterson. She was proficient in the French, Italian, German and Spanish languages, and was progressing rapidly in sculpture when she died at 22. The recent death of a sister, together with impaired health, prevented Mrs. Fillmore from entering into the gaieties of social life in Washington, and the duties, therefore, that devolved upon her as the wife of the president were left almost entirely to her daughter.

General Taylor was in the presidential office but fourteen months, and during this short incumbency the hostilities at the White House were much curtailed. Mrs. Taylor, from disinclination, refused to accept the responsibilities of hostess, and transferred them to her daughter, Elizabeth, "Miss Betty," who, as the youngest daughter of any president who had honored the receptions with her presence, and quite a pretty one, too, was

of society in the little capital through the eight years of Jefferson's administration radiated from Mrs. Madison. She was wealthy, and did many generous acts, which endeared her to the people, but kept a very unpretentious house, because the president would not have it otherwise. Jefferson was very proud of her; he had loved and courted her mother, who married John Payne. When her husband became president, however, Mrs. Madison took the reins and re-established the views of two predecessors. She was then 37 years old. Her hospitalities were on a big scale, and she was called "the queen," and the White House "the palace." Society of the past were extremely gorgeous and elaborate, and she retained in portraits look rather odd. In 1817 she turned over the executive mansion to Mrs. Monroe, a handsome woman, whom Monroe married the day after her wedding, and she was a great attraction. She was Eliza Kortwright and a belle of New York. Hitherto it had been one of the duties of a president's wife to return calls, but Washington has become quite a town, and Mrs. Madison's custom, it was so inconvenient a custom, it was afterward revived by Mrs. Robert Tyler through the advice of Mrs. Madison.

During the last year of his term President Tyler married the daughter of his old friend, David Gardner, of New York. In a pleasure party given by the president on the 10th of May, near Princeton, a salute was fired in Massanut Mountain, when a gun burst, killing, among others, Mr. Gardner. His daughter Julia was one of the guests, and was overwhelmed at the death of her father, Tyler, who was coming to console her, fell in love with her, and she was the last until that of Mrs. Cleveland, in whom are revived the impressions made by Mrs. Robert Tyler, the most beautiful and accomplished mistress of the White House had ever seen.

Mrs. Cleveland has some knowledge of life in Washington, having presided there when her husband was vice-president of congress. But Mrs. William Harrison, as has been said, did not reach the capital, which, however, was owing to the death of her husband; and Mrs. Jackson, who was living when the general was elected, died before his inauguration. It will be noticed that the families of the military group of presidents—Jackson, Harrison and Taylor, within the twenty-two years, have been succeeded by each other, and he in return gave her the most attention. So when he became president Mrs. Patterson very naturally took the place of Mrs. Lincoln. And though but a plain woman from the mountains of Tennessee, she was not altogether unacquainted with the duties of the "first lady." She was a school girl in Georgetown when Polk was president, and became his frequent guest, spending most of her holidays in the executive mansion. After she became his mistress she labored more industriously possibly in its transformation than did Mrs. Harrison. The soldiers had left it in rather a sorry plight, and Mrs. Patterson, in the instance of the wife of a senator and a daughter of a president presiding over the White House, Jefferson's second daughter, Mrs. Epes, held a similar position, but she never was in charge of the mansion, and she never visited there during her short life after her father's election. Mrs. Patterson, it is said, was simple and very elegant in dress, and a most industrious woman, but with no taste whatever for art or literature.

It is almost a century from the time of Mrs. Cleveland's retirement back to Washington. The history of the White House began with the supervision of Mrs. Adams, and its first century will end and its second begin with that of Mrs. McKinley. Mrs. Adams was conspicuously uninteresting, and she had been a poor girl, and after marriage, following the example of her husband, became a diligent student. In the list of presidents and their wives there can not possibly be found any two who read and wrote as much as Mrs. Adams. When he was elected president she was 53 years old and had for eight years, as wife of the vice-president, been one of the leading ladies in the social life of that time; she had also spent several years in Europe, and was acquainted with the usages of courts. For some time after her husband's election, which antedates McKinley's an even hundred years, Mrs. Adams was ill at her home in Massachusetts, and she did not reach Philadelphia until after the abatement of the yellow fever in 1789. In the fall of 1800 she journeyed in a carriage over bad roads from Philadelphia to Washington. The latter place she refers to as "only a city name; and there almost without glass windows, and like a queen, with a coronet, dressed in diamonds in her hair. Mrs. McElroy's entertainments were exceedingly elegant. Like her brother, she was gifted with the social art.

He Tried to Be Sympathetic to the Lady, but She Would Not Have It. From the Cleveland Plain-Dealer. He was an angular man with gray whiskers. He gave up his seat in the crowded car with an alacrity that spoke well for the cheerfulness of his disposition. The lady who took the proffered seat was stout and haughty. She slipped into the vacant place without a word. The angular man looked at her thoughtfully. Then he stooped over and said: "I had an uncle, ma'am, that had just the same affliction. 'Sir!' said the stout lady, who had an insatiable love of the head, 'Yes,' continuing the singular man, 'he couldn't pronounce any word but ginning with 'th' to save his blessed neck. That's right. He'd stutter and stammer, and the best he could do would be to give it the sound of 'a.' It was a dreadful affliction, and the best son's name was Theophilus. He always called him 'Sophilus.' Had it long ma'am?" The stout lady was dark red from vexation. "You are insulting," she snorted. "Well I don't wonder if you hate to hear anybody refer to it," said the angular man with great cheerfulness. "But I couldn't help noticing it when you took my seat and wasn't able to say 'thank you.' I wouldn't have minded in the least if you had said 'yes, ma'am, do you get off here? Good day, ma'am—never mind the thanks' and the stout lady flounced down the street to take the next car.

SHERIFF'S SALES.

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