

Nixon Attributes His Survival to Wife

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WASHINGTON, April 20 — Former President Richard M. Nixon "might not have survived" major surgery last year without the reassurances of his wife Pat, he said in a tribute to Mrs. Nixon made public today.

"Pat's devotion kept me alive — I doubt I would have made it without her," Mr. Nixon was quoted in an article in the May issue of McCall's magazine, which goes into circulation tomorrow.

According to the article, Mrs. Nixon confided to a friend soon after her husband's resignation from the Presidency that he should have destroyed the White House tape recordings that led to his downfall.

"They're like a private diary," Mrs. Nixon reportedly said. "I wish he had burned them."

The article by Trude B. Feldman, who has written about the Nixon family, evidently drew on conversations with the former President who has been secluded at his home in San Clemente, Calif., since he resigned the Presidency last August.

Although the McCall's account did not refer specifically to an interview with Mr. Nixon, the article described the condition of his San Clemente estate — weeds on the golf course, a volleyball net across a former helipad — and it referred to "an obvious glow of pride emanating from Richard Nixon" as he spoke of his wife of nearly 35 years.

"The best decision I ever made was choosing Pat to be

my wife, my partner in life," Mr. Nixon was quoted as saying. "I've had prestige, power and even at times, some money. Those things come and go — as they have with me. But Pat has stood by my side during good and bad times alike. What more could any man ask.

The article said that "by his own account" Mr. Nixon underwent severe physical and emotional stress after being forced from the White House by the Watergate scandals and

that Mrs. Nixon's devotion and attentiveness were largely responsible for the former President's survival.

Mrs. Nixon's devotion was illustrated in the article.

"I love my husband, I believe in him and I think he has been a great President," she was quoted as saying. "Like everyone else he has probably made mistakes — no one is infallible. But he was done many good things for our country and the world."