

Choice as Hickel's Successor

Rogers Clark Ballard Morton

By RICHARD D. LYONS

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 26— Until yesterday Rogers C. B. Morton had almost everything a man could want: a distinguished lineage, a Yale degree, three homes, a happy marriage, success, looks, poise, money and, as a Congressman and chairman of the Republican

Man
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National Committee, excellent political connections. But one thing that had eluded Mr. Morton, the thing he had longed for for a number of years, was being Secretary of the Interior, following in the footsteps of Caleb B. Smith, Columbus Delano, Zachariah Chandler, Lucius Q. C. Lamar and Walter J. Hickel.

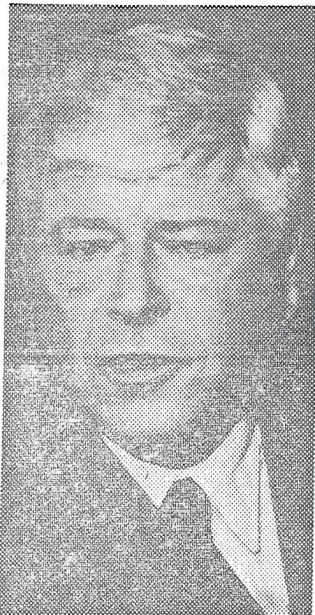
"It's certainly because of his love for the outdoors," said his brother, former Senator Thruston B. Morton of Kentucky. "My brother was a hell of a good boatman at the age of eight."

"I can remember when we were kids that he was always missing at lunch and our mother would send me out to find him," he went on. "I never had to look very far because he would always be down at the pond fishing, and if I didn't get him, he'd fish right through lunch."

Politics and Outdoors

The outdoor life has always held a special fascination for Rogers Clark Ballard Morton, a descendant of Gen. George Rogers Clark, an explorer of the West and Revolutionary War hero. The Secretary-designate swims, sails, snorkels, hikes and hunts.

With the announcement yesterday that he would replace the discharged Mr. Hickel as Interior Secretary,



Outdoor life has always fascinated him.

Mr. Morton will now be able to combine his special interest in the outdoors with his other great avocation, politics.

He became interested in the latter while running political campaigns for his elder brother in Kentucky after World War II. In the early nineteen fifties after the family feed and baking business was sold to the Pillsbury company, Mr. Morton moved with his family from Kentucky to the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where he bought a 1,000-acre farm complete with an old, 14-room house named Presqu'île.

For half a dozen years he farmed and raised cattle and built a second house in the Bahamas. Then he entered politics, again managing a Congressional campaign in Maryland in 1960. The cam-

paigned for Edward T. Miller was unsuccessful.

In the next Congressional campaign Mr. Morton himself ran and won the first of five straight races for the House of Representatives. Earlier this month he was re-elected by one of the largest margins in the country.

Nixon's Floor Manager

He became increasingly active in the higher echelons of the Republican party after the Presidential bid of Barry Goldwater in 1964. Mr. Morton stumped the country after the debacle, pulling the party together and wound up as Richard M. Nixon's floor manager at the 1968 Republican National Convention in Miami Beach.

After the election Mr. Morton openly courted the job as Secretary of the Interior. But Mr. Nixon explained that he intended to make good a campaign pledge to appoint a Western Governor and Mr. Morton accepted the disappointment in good grace.

After the Inauguration, he accepted the post as Republican National Chairman, one that was held by his brother in the late nineteen-fifties and early nineteen-sixties. Associates say his tact, dedication and energies have been enormously helpful in welding the party together.

Mr. Morton served on the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs and, as a member, was particularly interested in enlarging the national parks and the problems of pollution and the environment.

While in Congress, where he was extremely popular with his colleagues, Mr. Morton was influential in having Assateague Island, a 33-mile strip off Maryland's Eastern Shore, declared a national seashore.

Mr. Morton, who was ob-

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erving Thanksgiving in London, issued a statement through his staff in Baltimore that said: "I know that the resources of the nation, the problems of air and water pollution and the conservation of our lands are problems of national magnitude. This is a great responsibility, one of insuring that each American has a piece of the action in cleaning up the environment."

Mr. Morton was born in Louisville on Sept. 19, 1914, graduated from Yale and briefly attended the College of Physicians and Surgeons

at Columbia University. During World War II, he served in the field artillery in Europe, rising from private to captain. He and his wife, the former Anne Prather Jones, have a son who is an architect in Brooklyn, and a married daughter.

There was a family joke when his older brother was a Senator that the younger Mr. Morton could never be overshadowed by his then more well-known brother. Thruston Morton is 6 feet, 2 inches tall. The future secretary is 6 feet 6½ and weighs 250 pounds.