

# White House Romance

## Patricia Nixon

By NAN ROBERTSON

She has been called the "mystery princess" of the White House, a real-live but "waxen Debbie Reynolds doll," all wrapped up in white lace with pastel ribbon sashes.

Whether it means anything or not, her first party at the White House was a masked ball. At any rate, Tricia Nixon has been known all her life as "the quiet one" of the two Nixon daughters, while her irrepressible, bubbling, merry kid sister Julie has been dubbed "the noisy one."

Julie speaks out, always, on virtually any subject. Tricia seems never to have revealed her inner life and thoughts, even to childhood friends.

The President's 24-year-old elder daughter, whose engagement was announced yesterday, has pulled a vanishing act at some of the White House's most memorable nights, such as the evenings that starred Pearl Bailey, Johnny Cash and Nicol Williamson—all electric personalities.

Yet she appeared before millions of Americans last May as hostess in a televised tour of the family quarters upstairs at the executive mansion. One reviewer echoed the sentiments of many when he called her "charming, lively and poised," with qualities of "spontaneous vivacity and humor that never came to the fore so clearly in prior newsreel glimpses."

### Compared to Mrs. Kennedy

Others found her much more appealing on that program than Mrs. John F. Kennedy, another mysterious figure, who took the nation on a televised visit around the renovated public rooms downstairs at the White House in 1962.

Until recently, at least, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, who is two and a half years younger than Tricia, has been the dominant, more visible sister.

A schoolmate at Sidwell Friends, a private day school here attended by both Nixon girls during their father's final years as Vice President, contrasted the two at the ages of 12 and 14:

"Julie was pretty, cute and bouncy. The kids elected her president of her class in seventh grade and everyone conceded it was because of her and not her father. Tricia was regarded by almost everybody as very quiet and scared. She never smiled. She was just a plain girl with a funny nose; if she hadn't been Nixon's daughter nobody would have noticed her."

### Likes Pink and Frills

Tricia has since blossomed into almost a beauty—a fragile, gray-eyed blonde with thick tresses tumbling to her shoulders, about 5 feet 3 inches tall and weighing just under 100 pounds.

She favors pink and frills—a pink, French provincial bedroom in the Presidential mansion; pink, white and pastel dresses with nipped waistlines. She collects Dresden and Meissen porcelains.

Her mother sometimes calls her Tut-Wut. C. G. (Bebe) Rebozo, a close Nixon friend in Key Biscayne, Fla., calls her "a little doll and a little lady."

Tricia "is more shy than Julie is," he said. She "does a lot more reading and doesn't get out in the sun as much. Julie's more athletic."

As for politics, Tricia's brother-in-law, David Eisenhower, once described himself as standing right of his wife, Julie, and left of Tricia.

Of Vice President Agnew, Tricia said this year: "The Vice President is incredible. I feel I should write him a letter. He's amazing what he has done to the media, helping it to reform itself."

"I'm a close watcher of newspapers and TV. I think they've taken a second look. You can't underestimate the power of fear. They're afraid if they don't shape up."

### Advice for Maddox

She now regrets a letter she wrote years ago to Lester G. Maddox in Georgia, before he became Governor, during his fight against serving black people in his restaurant. She suggested then that he make it a private club.

This year, Tricia struck out on her own on the campaign trail, spending much of October in 11 states.

Tricia's full name is Patricia Nixon. She has no middle name. She was born in Whittier, Calif., Feb. 21, 1946. Her mother, who now signs everything Patricia Nixon, is not really named Patricia. She is really Thelma Catherine Ryan Nixon and was nicknamed "Pat" by her father because she was born on the evening of St. Patrick's Day.

Tricia was graduated from Finch College in New York in 1968.

Since returning to Washington as the President's daughter she has spent much of her time answering mail and tutoring poor pupils.

Still, her personal life remains largely private.

When a teen-aged visitor at the White House asked Mrs. Nixon, "Where's Tricia?" The first lady replied, "If you can find out, you're better than I am!"

## Edward R. F. Cox

By ROBERT McG. THOMAS Jr.

"Fast Eddie" was his nickname in the days when he was lugging his bulging briefcase from one extracurricular activity to another at the Trinity School here. But Edward Ridley Finch Cox has been "just good friends" with Tricia Nixon for six years.

The slow-moving romance has kept gossip columnists busy trying to monitor the couple's weekend and holiday visits at the White House, Camp David, San Clemente and Key Biscayne and at least one hand-holding meal at 21, the New York restaurant.

The romance dates to 1964. That was the year Mr. Nixon moved his family from California to establish a power base in the New York world of establishment lawyers, bankers and businessmen.

It was the world into which Mr. Cox, now a 24-year-old Harvard Law School student, was born. His father is Howard Ellis Cox, senior partner of the law firm of Cox, Treanor & Shaughnessy here. His grandfather was the late Judge Edward Ridley Finch, who served on the State Court of Appeals.

But it was his mother, the former Anne Crewe Delafield Finch, who was responsible for getting things going with Tricia. She is the chairman of the International Debutante Ball and when Miss Nixon was presented at the 1964 ball, it seemed only natural that her son, then a Princeton freshman, serve as escort.

The couple had met at a Chapin school dance a month or so before, but "it was at the ball that the magnetism really started working," recalled a man who was there.

### Nader Report Author

Between Princeton and law school, where he is in his second year, Mr. Cox attended the Yale School of Architecture.

He served as an intern on the New Republic and was one of the original Nader's Raiders, the seven graduate students who worked as Ralph Nader's operatives at the Federal Trade Commission in 1968. Mr. Cox was listed as one of the three authors of the Nader report "On the Federal Trade Commission," which accused the agency of being operated in the manner of a Southern courthouse by the remnants of the Memphis Crump machine.

There were perhaps other reasons than Mr. Cox's busy schedule for the extended courtship. For one thing, President and Mrs. Nixon were reported as less than enchanted with the prospect of losing Tricia, described as "their treasure, their pet," to the tall, blond society figure whose hair always seemed longer than the White House military social aides and whose political position was somewhere to the left of the "silent majority."

He doesn't wear a beard, but it's not for lack of trying. "I grew one when I was at Yale," he said, "but it wasn't a very good one, so I shaved it off."

Reports of the romance were routinely denied but always in such a way as to avoid a Presidential endorsement of Mr. Cox. "I approve of all her friends," said Mrs. Nixon after one such rumor hit the gossip columns.

In high school, Mr. Cox was known as a good student but not a particularly good athlete or "big wheel" despite the fact that he was prominent in just about every activity there was.

He played varsity football for three years, tennis for four (he's been a regular on the White House courts), sang in the glee club, played in the band, was in the drama club, served on the yearbook staff, edited the school newspaper and was captain of the chess team.

### A 'Straight' Student

He said his Trinity nickname, "Fast Eddie," was picked up from "The Hustler," the film about pool playing, by the school's humorists who used it as a sarcastic reference to his "straight" ways. "I wasn't involved in all the beer drinking," Mr. Cox recalled.

Mr. Cox was recently described as "not as liberal as he used to be" and he described himself as "not political."

Mr. Cox grew up in a five-story Victorian townhouse on East End Avenue, which his mother bought for \$65,000 shortly before her wedding in 1943, and at Ann-How-Ten, the house in the family's 10-acre compound on Quantuck Bay in Westhampton Beach, L.I., where Tricia has been a visitor.

He was born on Oct. 2, 1946, making him about eight months younger than Tricia. He has an elder sister, Mary Ann Delafield Cox (known as Mazie) and an older brother, Howard Jr., who lives in Washington.

When the rumors of the impending engagement began circulating Christmas Eve, Mr. Cox, who was with his family on Long Island, was a hard man to reach. But he explained: "I was out cutting down a Christmas tree."