

# Wedding Belles & Beaux

Sixty Years of Wedding Costumes & Customs, 1869-1929

A Whole-House Exhibit at the Trail End State Historic Site, March 2009 - December 2009

When Clara Diana Cumming married Manville Kendrick in 1929, she followed many of the same customs and rituals followed by Ida Josephine Peeler - Manville's grandmother - when she married Charles William Wulfjen in 1869. Neither may have known why she was doing what she was doing, but since her mother and all her other relatives had done it, it was good enough for her!



“The most beautiful wedding ever imagined could be turned from sacrament to circus by the indecorous behavior of the groom and the bride.”

Emily Post, *Etiquette*, 1922

In addition to adhering to wedding traditions, each bride associated with Trail End – Eula Wulfjen Kendrick, Rosa-Maye Kendrick Harmon, Diana Cumming Kendrick, Lucy Booth Cumming, Eula Williams Cumming, Mattie Wulfjen Williams and Ida Peeler Wulfjen – also followed the etiquette and manners of her time, thus ensuring that her special day was filled with joy. By the time Diana and her sister-in-law Rosa-Maye Kendrick married in the 1920s, these points of etiquette had been codified by Emily Post in her seminal 1922 publication, *Etiquette*.

“Wedding Belles & Beaux” uses the experiences of the Kendrick family brides and others to show what weddings were like between 1869 and 1929. It examines traditions and customs through the ages, and why we follow certain routines on that most special of days: the wedding day.

## JOHN & EULA

Like many a western cowboy, John Kendrick was almost middle-aged by the time he married. The object of his affection was the teenaged daughter of his first employer, Charles William Wulfjen of Greeley, Colorado. Eula Wulfjen was the toast of Greeley society, a vivacious artist who was intrigued by the attentions of an older man.

As a young man, John Kendrick went to work for rancher Charles Wulfjen. Upon occasion he called upon the family at their ranch, at which time he made the acquaintance of young Eula Wulfjen, Charles' second child. As noted by Frances Parkinson Keyes in a 1931 article in *The Denver Post*, Eula was quite smitten with John:



*[As a child, Eula] became very fond of [John], climbing up into his lap whenever he had leisure to hold her, and announcing to anyone who would listen to her that when she grew up, she proposed to marry him. When Eula was 17, she began to realize she had ceased to think of him as merely a friend of her father's and to consider that her childish remarks about marrying him when she grew up had perhaps been prophetic, and he encouraged this viewpoint.*

### A Lonely Orphan Finds Love

John was thirty-four when the couple became engaged in 1890 – far older than the average first-time groom. But, as he told his sister, he felt the time was right to create a home for them both:

*Dear Sister Rose, The invitations sent to you will explain how I have at last yielded to the inevitable. For a long while I have realized how badly you needed a sister and feel real happy that I have at long last found one for you. To be sincere, neither you nor I have ever had a home in its truest sense, and among the happiest thoughts in connection with this change in my life is that I now have one to offer you.*

As orphaned children, John and Rose had been shuttled from one family member to another, never having a true home of their own. This lack of roots had long been on their minds, and Rose was happy that her brother was on the verge of settling down:

*Dearest Brother, The news of your marriage was indeed a surprise to me. I could hardly realize it all day, but rest assured you have the best wishes of my heart for a long time.*

*You know, Brother dear, I have often wished you had a home, because I knew you could be so happy in it, and when I saw Eula in her [parents'] home and saw how happy she made it there, I was glad she had been the choice of your heart.*

### **The Rocky Road to Love**

Unfortunately for John, Eula and Rose, the road to that happy home was not a smooth one. All couples have their difficulties; spats, separations and even broken engagements frequently precede a happy marriage, and John and Eula were no different. Although the details are unknown, it seems that between the time of their engagement and their wedding day, seventeen-year-old Eula Wulfjen committed some kind of act that put the prospects of marriage in doubt. In a letter written to her future sister-in-law five days before the wedding, Eula apologized for the unspecified actions, ones which had apparently offended Rose Kendrick:



*I hardly know how to write to you because I feel so much ashamed of myself for the way I have acted, but if you will forgive me and forget the past, I shall be so happy. I do hope you may think as much of your little wayward sister now as you did long time ago and I assure you that I love my dear Sister Rose as much, if not more, than I once did. I don't blame you for feeling hard against me, but I have truly repented and I hope I may receive just pardon.*

Fortunately, Rose was a forgiving woman; she immediately wrote to her brother and his young fiancée to let them know that all – whatever “all” might have been – was happily forgiven:

*How I grieved when I thought all was broken off between you. It was so sad to me, I could never bear to mention it to you again. God grant that you will love and appreciate each other all the more for the misunderstanding.*

In one final letter before the wedding, Eula again mentions the rift between herself and her future family:

*Dear Sister Rose, It does seem so funny when I try to realize how soon I will be Mrs. K. It has seemed that the fates were against us, and have done all they could to keep us apart, but we have defeated them and have at last decided for the “better or for the worse.” May God grant that it may always be for the better and that each succeeding year may find us happier than the last. However we shall only look for happiness in the future and I am sure we will not be disappointed.*

## The Wedding

On Tuesday, January 20, 1891, John Benjamin Kendrick and Eula Wulfjen were united in marriage at the Methodist Episcopal Church in Greeley, Colorado. Attended by her sister Mattie Wulfjen, and best friend Minnie Davis, Eula walked down the east aisle of the church while John and his groomsmen, Addison Spaug and George Bissell, went up the west aisle:

*Meeting at the altar [the couple] took upon themselves the solemn vows of matrimony as rendered by the beautiful service of the Methodist Episcopal faith, and they that were twain went forth as one flesh."*

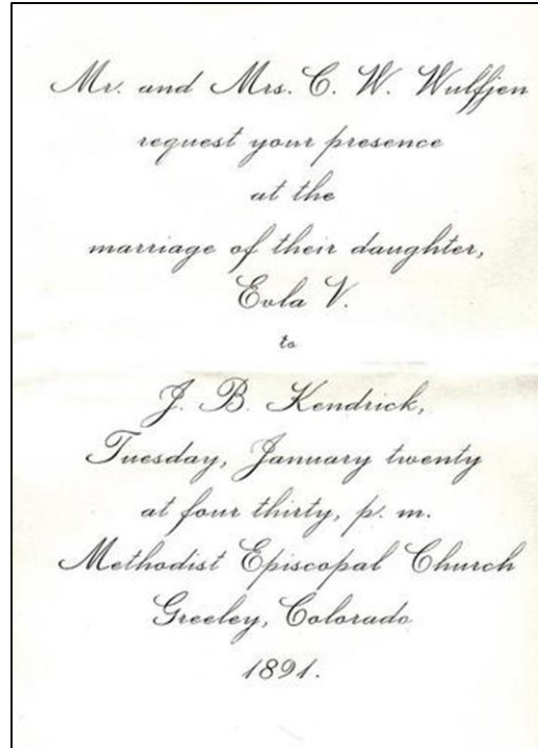
Following the style of the day, the church was decorated with flowers, evergreen boughs and that newest of decorating tools, the electric light:

*The bride and groom, making a perfect picture of beauty, [stood] under an arch of evergreens and flowers illuminated with colored electric lights. In the center hung a large bell of evergreens and flowers with an electric light suspended from the center. The altar was a scene of artistically arranged flowers, paintings and banners, exquisite taste being displayed by loving hands in the whole arrangement.*

After the service, the newlyweds received their friends in the pastor's study, then went to the Wulfjen residence for cake and "an elegantly prepared dinner" before taking the 5:50 train for New York.

## The Post-Wedding Journey

Following a lengthy honeymoon, John and Eula Kendrick were separated – not by lack of love, but by miles of open prairie. In 1889, John had established a ranch along Hanging Woman Creek in southeastern Montana. Although he had put up a few buildings, he felt that the ranch house was not yet suitable for habitation by his new bride. So he went to Montana and she to Colorado. These excerpts from his many letters show how keenly he felt her absence:



**March 17, 1891** *The long days spent alone on the road have given me ample time for reflection and memory has carried me many times over the scenes and incidents of our wedding journey.*

**March 21, 1891** *Do you miss your old man? Not one half so much as I miss 'the girl I left behind me.' Somehow the feeling of loneliness is unexplainable. Everything lacks interest – the scenes along the road, the different views of the snow peaks of the Big Horns, things that I used to enjoy so much.*

**April 7, 1891** *But for thinking of you all the while I could hardly realize that I am or was married. In fact there is little difference. I work harder, sit up later writing letters, but I [still] have to sweep out my office and make up my bed every day. Occasionally one of the men will ask me if I ain't gittin' awful anxious to see my wife!*

**April 16, 1891** *Although I have worked almost day & night through rain and sunshine since my return, preparations for your coming progress very slowly. If I thought you would be contented and happy with me here I would go down to Greeley and carry you up myself rather than leave you there, house or no house.*

**April 22, 1891** *What would I not give for just one look into your blue eyes tonight. You think that I do not love you? Well, perhaps not, but there is something very wrong for my heart has ached and ached and longed, and where life seemed lonely before I was married it is desolate now.*

**April 30, 1891** *The thought of being with you again in such a short time fairly makes my heart thump. I trust [that] in the happiness of your new life all of the most Sacred promises of our marriage will be fulfilled and that you will find it impossible to exist for any great length of time in any atmosphere that does not surround your old man. I will meet you when the flowers bloom in spring.*

**May 3, 1891** *We won't worry about expenses. If I find true companionship in my Little Wife my cup of happiness will be filled and I can make all of the money we will need. ... As ever, your Lonesome Ole Man.*

The "Lonesome Ole Man" and his "Little Wife" were reunited on May 20, 1891. They remained together until his death in 1933.

## COURTSHIP & DATING

As Emily Post noted, “love at first sight and marriage in a week is within the boundaries of possibility,” but more often than not, young ladies and gentlemen took the time to get to know each other a bit before they became linked together for life.

### The Sincerity of Man’s Nature

According to the rules of etiquette, a wise gentleman caller of the 1890s such as John Kendrick arrived in formal clothes and sat stiffly in the front parlor until the object of his affection made her appearance. He kept his hat in his hands and his hands to himself! He was both sincere in his intentions and worthy of her attentions. If the gentleman wasn’t wise, he and his lady friend could become the topic of unwanted gossip. In 1891, Mattie Wulfjen wrote to her sister Eula about the recent courtship and marriage scandals in Greeley, Colorado:

*Lilly H-----r was married last week to Mr. P-----n, a worthless good-for-nothing fellow. Her family knew nothing of it, until the ceremony had been performed. Carrie told me that they had no idea she was engaged, but they opposed the fellow from the first. They are heart-broken.*

*Tracy M-----h had to be married to a girl in Estes Park. He tried to get out of it, but they forced him to take her.*

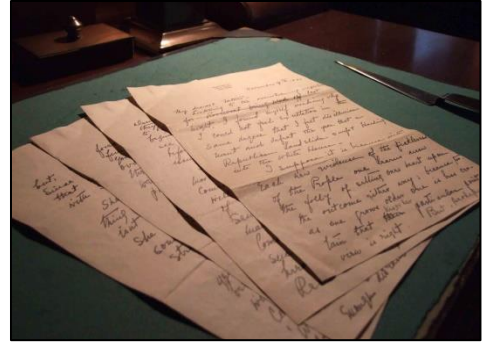
*Poor Minnie, she has got it bad. A-----n gave her every reason on earth to make her think he was in love with her, and even went so far as to tell her he intended to give her an elegant diamond ring ... Ask John if he thinks him sincere; Minnie has made up her mind to take him if he proposes.*

As Mattie noted, it was hard for young ladies to know if their callers were serious or just being flirtatious. “Oh,” she wrote, “if girls could only read the sincerity of man’s natures! But alas! We have to remain in oblivion!”

### Pre-Marital Communications

With no computers and few telephones, communication between belles and beaux had to take place either in person or by letter. Just as was the case with personal calls, very strict rules governed correspondence. Because letters were physical items that could be read by anyone other than the intended, discretion was key. The author could not be too intimate, too emotional or too casual, and every statement had to be couched in a good deal of very wordy prose. As one author noted:

*Remember that whatever you write is written evidence either of your good sense or your folly, your industry or carelessness, your self-control or impatience. What you have once put in the letterbox, may cost you lasting regret, or be equally important to your whole future welfare. And, for such grave reasons, think before you write, and think while you are writing.*



Because of the intimate nature of correspondence, it was essential, if a relationship ended or if either party married someone else, that all letters be returned to their author. In 1921, upon severing both their engagement and their relationship, Diana Cumming requested one of her beaux (initials H.L.W.) to return all her correspondence: “I hate to ask you this - tho’ after all, why should I? - so - will you please send me my letters? I’ll return yours when I get home, if you want them.”

The young man returned promptly returned dozens of Diana’s letters - but not all of them. In 1927, upon his own marriage, he sent the following lighthearted note along with a 1921 letter from Diana in which she demanded that, if he loved her, he needed to “prove it - by actions, not by words”:

*Dear Diana - As executor of the estate of H.L.W., bachelor, I am returning the last remaining evidence. Said guy died a cheerful death and expects to live happily forever after.*

### **Dating & Dancing**

By the time John and Eula’s children, Manville and Rosa-Maye Kendrick, began dating in the 1910s and 1920s, the “flock system” had come into play. As Emily Post described it, this type of dating allowed men and women to come to know each other in a more natural setting than that experienced by previous generations:

*A flock of young girls and a flock of young men form a little group of their own – everywhere they are together. In the country they visit the same houses ... they play golf in foursomes, and tennis in mixed doubles. In winter at balls they sit at the same table for supper, they have little dances at their own homes,*



*where scarcely any but themselves are invited; they play bridge, they have tea together, but whatever they do, they stay in the pack.*

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, nearly every wedding was followed by a dance in which the bride danced the first dance with her husband, the second with her father, and the rest with her male guests. Therefore, it was important that the bride and groom know how to dance. In fact, in the general scheme of things, it was important for everyone to know how to dance, because dancing was one of the most important social activities of the time. A girl's social well-being was sometimes attached to her ability to dance. Physical appearance, financial status and intelligence need not matter, said Emily Post, if a girl could master the most important steps to success – those executed on the dance floor:

*The girl who is beautiful and dances well is, of course, the ideal ballroom belle. But, all things being more or less equal, the girl who dances best has the most partners. Let a daughter of Venus or the heiress of Midas dance badly, and she might better stay at home. Also, conversational cleverness is of no account in a ballroom; some of the greatest belles ever known have been as stupid as sheep.*

Instead of attending public dance classes, most people learned to dance as children by partnering with older relatives at informal home dances such as those held at Trail End, out at the OW Ranch, and in small houses all over town. Brothers danced with sisters, nieces with uncles and cousins with cousins. Once the waltz, fox trot, schottische and two-step were mastered, young men and women were ready for any type of event at which dancing was featured – even a “small dance” at the White House, such as those attended by Manville and Diana Kendrick.

## **MANVILLE & DIANA**

Manville Kendrick and Diana Cumming had known each other for at least six years prior to their marriage. His parents lived just down the street from her parents, and in the small town that was Washington, D.C. in the 1920s, it was inevitable that the two would meet.

In 1923, Manville's cousin Eula Wulfjen married Diana's cousin Samuel Calvin Cumming. Three years after their cousins married, Manville Kendrick invited Diana Cumming to visit Wyoming. Those in the know recognized the significance of the visit. Hubert Harmon told Manville as much in 1928, upon announcement of their engagement:

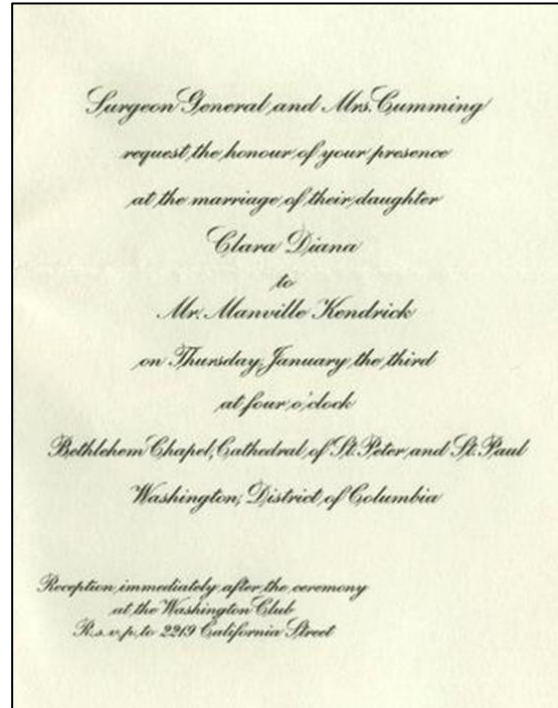
*As long ago as Diana's first visit to Sheridan I announced in private that sooner or later you and she would be joined in holy and delightful or I might say, wholly delightful bonds*



*of matrimony. To recall that prediction is simply to indicate how sincerely I approve of your choice. ... In Diana you have one of the finest America can produce – that means, the best in the world – so I know how complete must be your happiness.*

Manville and Diana's wedding on January 3, 1929 was a major social event in Washington. Newspapers from New York to Sheridan published stories, both before and after the vows were exchanged in the Bethlehem Chapel of the National Cathedral. The following account is from *The Washington Post* the day of the wedding:

*Mrs. Coolidge will attend the wedding this afternoon of Miss Diana Cumming, daughter of the Surgeon General of Public Health and Mrs. Hugh S. Cumming, to Mr. Manville Kendrick, son of Senator and Mrs. John B. Kendrick of Sheridan, Wyo. ... The arrangements for the wedding are charming in detail and a large and distinguished company will be in attendance at the chapel*



*and at the reception, which will follow immediately after the wedding service. Yellow roses will be used on the altar lighted with cathedral candles. ... The bride will be escorted to the altar by her father, who will give his daughter in marriage. Mrs. Reed, wife of Capt. Walter Reed, will be the matron of honor; Miss Eva Wise of New York, cousin of the bride, will be maid of honor. ... Mr. Harry R. Kay of Winetka, Ill., will be the best man and the ushers selected include Hugh Cumming Jr., brother of the bride. ... Following a reception in the Washington Club, where Christmas greens and gay colored flowers are used in profusion, Mr. Kendrick and his bride will leave for a wedding trip to the West Indies and Panama.*

### **Financial Arrangements**

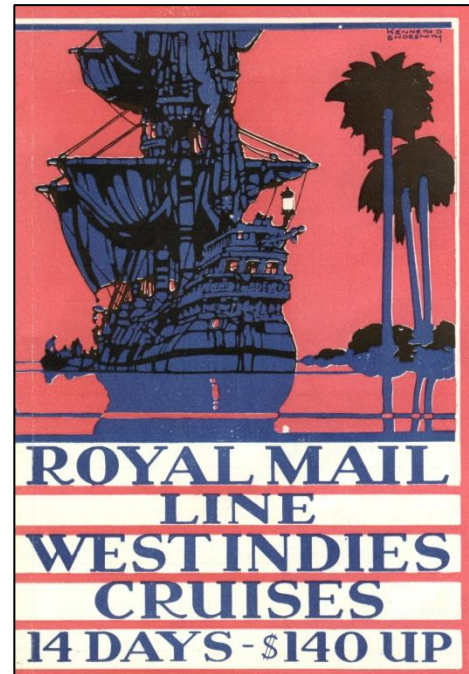
According to Emily Post, it was the groom's responsibility to plan and pay for the wedding trip:

*In order that the first days of their life together may be as perfect as possible, the groom must make preparations for the wedding trip long ahead of time, so that the best accommodations can be reserved. If their first stop is to be at a distance, then he must engage train seats or boat stateroom, and write to the hotel of the destination far*

*enough in advance to receive a written reply, so that he may be sure of the accommodations they will find.*

With plenty of input from Diana, Manville planned a cruise to the West Indies and from there to San Francisco via the Panama Canal. Traveling on the S. S. *Virginia*, the couple enjoyed a “spacious and comfortable” stateroom complete with “twin beds and hot and cold running water.” After a short time in San Francisco, the newlyweds boarded a train to the Grand Canyon, where they enjoyed a few more days of honey-mooning before heading north to their new home: Trail End.

When Emily Post codified all the various rules and regulations of “the modern wedding,” she paid quite a bit of attention to one major area of concern: the financial arrangements. All expenses associated with the wedding were paid for by either the groom or the bride’s family, and there were definite rules about who paid for what:



- *All the expenses of a wedding belong to the bride’s parents; the groom’s family are little more than ordinary guests. ... When a poor girl marries, her wedding must be in keeping with the [financial] means of her parents.*
- *With the exception of parasols, muffs or fans, which are occasionally carried in place of bouquets ... every article worn by the bridesmaids ... must be paid for by the wearers.*
- *[The Groom must provide gifts] for his best man and ushers, as well as their ties, gloves and boutonnières, a bouquet for his bride, and the fee for the clergyman.*
- *Convention has no rule more rigid than that the wedding trip shall be a responsibility of the groom. ... It is unthinkable for the bride to defray the least fraction of the cost of the wedding journey.*

Like most members of polite society, the Kendricks and their children were careful to follow these established rules of etiquette: Manville covered the expenses for Diana’s dream honeymoon to the West Indies, while John and Eula Kendrick paid for their daughter Rosa-May’s elaborate wedding to Hubert Harmon.

## ROSA-MAYE & HUBERT

After graduating from Goucher College, Rosa-Maye Kendrick lived with her parents in Washington, D. C. There, she led quite a busy life. She dated many young men, most of them military officers from the Army or Navy. It was a flyboy from the Army Air Corps, however, who ultimately won her heart.

### The Waiting Game

Hubert Harmon - known as "Doodle" to his friends - was the son of a prominent military family from Pennsylvania. A member of the Army Air Corps, he worked in the War Department and as a White House aide to President Calvin Coolidge. Following their 1922 meeting at the wedding of mutual friends, Hubert had pursued Rosa-Maye with the same relentlessness with which he pursued his military career. According to her diaries, he asked her to marry him on a fairly regular basis. Each time, her answer was either "No," "Not yet," or "Give me more time." Undaunted, Hubert just kept asking. On January 17, 1927, the situation came to a head. As Rosa-Maye wrote in her journal:



*I went for a little walk with Doodle in the late winter dusk - to the gates of the Zoo Park and back. He suddenly floored me by asking if I would go the Philippines with him, explaining that he was second on the foreign service list due to the increase in personnel there. As usual I asked for time to think but my heart was heavy and the world looked dark and empty.*

Rosa-Maye pondered the situation for several days. Then, the following Sunday, Hubert took her riding, and made a startling announcement:

*He confessed that the Philippine story was a hoax ... then quite simply [said], "No Baby! Truth is the General called me up to the office and asked me how I would like to take Major Tinker's job as Assistant Military Attaché in London." Then Doodle wondered why I cried for sheer relief and joy. ... A period of uncertainty [followed], during which I anticipated the anguish of parting and flirted with the delightful possibility of sharing with D. this interesting adventure of London.*

It was sink-or-swim time for the relationship. Either Rosa-Maye said yes and moved to London with him, or Hubert would relinquish all claim to her and sail east alone. She decided not to give him up:

*I approached Daddy and put the question bluntly: "Should I marry Doodle and go to London?" He was floored, and for a little could voice only his surprise and pain - but when D. had come he came into the Library in that determined way in which he has met life's crises - and facing Doodle squarely made his renunciation of "Little Sis," albeit with his voice husky with tenderness and with tears in his eyes.*

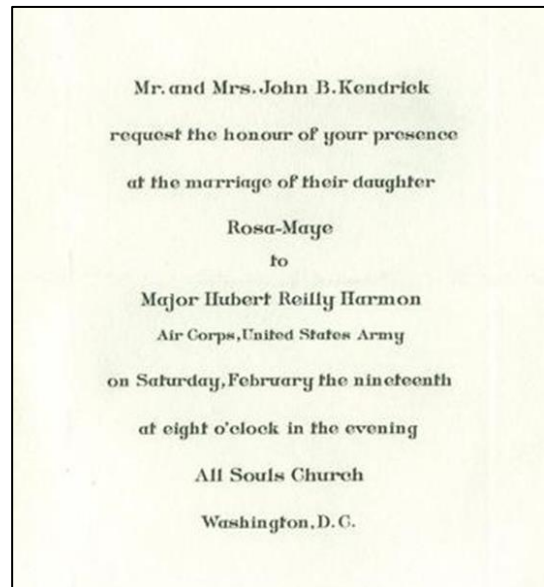
As soon as Rosa-Maye announced her engagement to her friends (at a luncheon for forty-six ladies at the Chevy Chase Club), the newspapers jumped on the story:

*Miss Kendrick and Major Harmon have been friends for years and for the past three years the major has been a summer guest of the Kendricks, but rumors of an engagement had been denied. Announcement of his appointment to an important station in London precipitated the announcement of the engagement. A typical Western girl, Miss Kendrick is an accomplished horsewoman and spends much time on the bridle paths of the Washington parks. She has been a leader in Washington social circles where the Kendricks have made their home for several years. ... Miss Kendrick is rather tall, slender, and a beautiful brunette.*

### Where Does The First Lady Sit?

Because of Hubert's position at the White House and John Kendrick's position in the Senate, the Harmon-Kendrick society wedding - put together in just a month - had some very important people on the guest list: The President and Mrs. Coolidge, the Vice President and Mrs. Dawes, members of the cabinet, diplomatic corps, and the Senate and House of Representatives, as well as members of official and resident society.

In order to comply with etiquette, Rosa-Maye contacted the White House Protocol Officer about how to handle the presence of Mrs. Coolidge. The response arrived three days before the event:



*It has been customary in the past for Mrs. Coolidge and the aide to sit in the front pew. They would leave the church after the bridal procession has passed, allowing a suitable*

*interval for it to get into motors, etc., but preceding the family. If the Vice President and Mrs. Dawes are both going, it would be usual to give them the next pew. If Mrs. Dawes goes alone, I think she would hardly expect to sit entirely by herself.*

## **Moving To London**

In addition to seating arrangements, Rosa-Maye also had to pack for her move to London, endure endless gown fittings, attend a bevy of parties, prepare for photographs, and decorate her parents' apartment for the reception. By the time of the wedding, she needed a nap:

*Saturday, February 19th began with rain, which turned to sleet which turned to snow. I was far too busy til late afternoon with my trunks, to notice or care greatly. At three the confusion of decorating cleared a little and I lay down for a few minutes. I was dressed in my lovely dress and waiting for my photographer at 6:00. First he photographed me without train or veil; later in the full regalia, not forgetting my bouquet of orchids and white lilacs with its lovely streamers of white satin ribbon and lilies of the valley. The girls, looking like orchids themselves in their crispy satin dresses be-ruffled and a-sheen, were prompt, so that we had a few minutes to visit with Daddy before going to the Church.*

Four days after the wedding, the Harmons set sail for England on the SS *Republic*. According to the ship's log, the newlyweds endured overcast skies, fog, rain, snow, high winds, and rough seas during the nine-day trip. In her first letter home, however, Rosa-Maye described the journey quite differently:

*Our trip over was all one could hope ... for three days a light fog lay on the ocean, smoothing it almost to glassiness, but after passing out of the fog area it has been delightful, cool, but never, cold, the sea a clear deep blue, curling white on the crest of the brisk but diminutive waves.*

Once in London, Rosa-Maye's life was a whirl of social activities, from "at homes" and teas to operas, garden parties, and a presentation to the King and Queen of England. Even so, she found a little time to be homesick:

*I thought I heard [a meadowlark] the other day and a wave of longing for home engulfed me. I couldn't get rid of it or the imagined smell of sage. ... England isn't Wyoming!*

## STARTING A NEW LIFE

It was not unusual for new brides to find themselves in unfamiliar surroundings soon after their marriage. Whether they were new immigrants, widowed brides or child brides, the challenges were almost endless.

### Matchmaker, Matchmaker, Make Me a Match

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a discrepancy in how men and women were spread about America; many single women lived in eastern cities while thousands of single men lived in western mining and ranching communities. The problem was getting the two groups together. To help in this endeavor, *The Matrimonial News*, a matchmaking newspaper, promoted “honorable matrimonial engagements and true conjugal felicities” for those willing to pay the price (starting out at \$1.50 per word). In their ads, prospective spouses could be as specific or as general as they liked:

- *Young lady of good family and education, considered handsome, would like to correspond with some gentleman of means, one who would be willing to take her without a dollar, as she has nothing to offer but herself.*
- *A bachelor of 40, good appearance and substantial means, wants a wife. She must be under 30, amiable and musical.*
- *I am 33 years of age, and as regards looks can average with most men. I am looking for a lady to make her my wife, as I am heartily tired of bachelor life. I desire a lady not over 28 or 30 years of age, not ugly, well-educated and musical. She must have at least \$20,000.*

Although some people found mates through such services, they often proved to be scams set up to separate lonely people from their hard-earned money. In 1919, *The New York Times* reported that *The Matrimonial News* was a fraud in which women were requested to pay “\$10 as a fee and \$1 monthly for life, or until she found a husband.”

### Marrying Strangers

At least one Wyoming bride found a husband through a matrimonial newspaper. In 1914, Elinor Pruitt Stewart wrote of a couple she encountered in southwest Wyoming:

*In a wobbly old buckboard sat a young couple completely engrossed by each other. That he was a Westerner we knew by his cowboy hat and boots; that she was an Easterner, by her not knowing how to dress for the ride across the desert. It came out that our young couple were bride and groom. They had never seen each other until the night*

*before, having met through a matrimonial paper. They were married that morning and the young husband was taking her away to Pinedale to his ranch.*

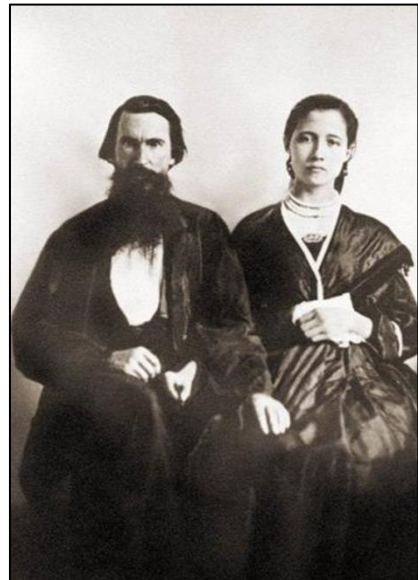


As important as it is to us, many 19th century couples married for reasons other than love. Social status, political connections, money or security were some of the reasons people married. Thousands of young women came to the United States to marry “contract husbands” who had previously emigrated from “The Old Country.” Like the woman on her way to Pinedale, they didn’t meet their future mates until the wedding day.

Most brides went into marriage hoping that love would “come later.” Elinor Stewart was a widow who came West seeking a better life for herself and her young daughter. She moved to Burnt Fork, Wyoming, in 1909 to take a job as housekeeper to a Scottish farmer whom she later married. They had only known each other a short time, but “the trend of events and ranch work,” she said, “seemed to require that we be married first and do our ‘sparking’ afterward. Although I married in haste, I have no cause to repent.”

## **Second Wives**

The hardships of childbirth claimed many a young bride in 19th Century America, leaving men with children to raise on their own. Oftentimes, second wives were sought simply as caregivers to children; if love was involved, it was a bonus. John B. Kendrick’s mother, Irish-born Anna Maye (possibly Mayo), was a second wife who, in addition to bearing two children of her own, took over care for the five children of her husband’s first marriage.



One of those five children, Samuel Smith Kendrick (John Kendrick’s half-brother), found himself in a situation similar to his father’s. His first wife, Missouri Florence, had died in 1882, leaving him with three children under the age of seven. To provide companionship for himself and childcare for his offspring, he married 24-year-old childless widow Celia Matilda Jackson Dooley in 1883. Celia not only raised Samuel’s three children, but bore nine more of her own between 1883 and 1900.

## BRIDAL GOWNS

In the late 18th Century, the introduction of machine-made fabrics and relatively inexpensive Indian muslin made white wedding dresses more affordable. Even so, they didn't become the standard until the late 19th Century.

Until the late 1800s, most brides wore dresses in a variety of colors other than white. During the American Revolution, for example, some brides donned red gowns to show their patriotism; during and after the Civil War, many chose to wear purple in remembrance of the honored dead; during the late Victorian era, brown, gray and blue were popular colors for wedding dresses. When preacher's daughter Ida Josephine Peeler married up-and-coming Texas cattleman Charles Wulfjen in 1869, she chose to wear a dark-colored dress in a fashionable style. Her daughter Eula made the same choice when she married John Kendrick.

### The White Wedding Dress

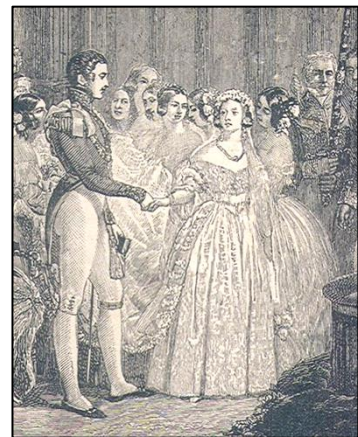
Contrary to popular legend, white was not chosen as a favorite color for weddings because it represented virginity (all brides were assumed to be virginal). Instead, white was symbolic of:

**Wealth** Very few women could afford to wear a dress only once or twice, so most chose dresses that could be used for future events. A bride with a white dress could easily be identified as coming from a well-to-do family.

**Youth** As far back as the ancient Greeks, white was the color of youth; thus older brides – virginal or otherwise – were discouraged from wearing it.

**Change in Status** Like baptisms, christenings, communions, debuts and graduations – all events in which white was traditionally worn – a wedding was a major life event, one in which the wearer's status was dramatically changed.

Although it existed long before her 1840 marriage to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg, England's Queen Victoria is often given credit for popularizing the white wedding dress. It wasn't every day that a reigning monarch married, so twenty-one year old Alexandrina Victoria's dress had to be impressive - and it was! It took two hundred seamstresses eight months to create the white silk gown, which included an 18-foot train and a white lace veil trimmed with orange blossoms. It was dripping with handmade Honiton lace made in Devonshire. After it was pictured and described in the popular press, the gown set the standard for wedding elegance for nearly 170 years.





Like other thrifty brides, Queen Victoria fully expected to wear this dress again. Indeed, she removed the lace overskirt and wore it several times after the wedding, decorating it with a royal sash.

### A Variety of Styles & Fabrics

The white “leg-o-mutton”-sleeved wedding dress worn by Virginia resident Lucy Booth at her wedding to Hugh Smith Cumming in 1896 is typical of the elaborate Victorian era wedding dress. The local newspaper described Lucy as follows:

*The bride wore a gown of brocaded oriental satin, en train, her veil caught with pearl ornaments, and carried in her hand only a prayer-book bound in white. Never did a handsomer, more queenly woman pass down the historic stairway of “Carter’s Grove.” [She] is a strikingly handsome brunette, not only a favorite in her own community, but well known in the society circles of Richmond, Norfolk, and other cities, North and South.*



While radically different, the fur-trimmed suit worn by Eula Wulfjen for her 1891 wedding in Greeley, Colorado, was also a typical Victorian era wedding dress. In the Wild West, such a suit was more practical than white silk. Eula was married in the winter and left on her honeymoon right after the wedding, leaving little time to change from a fancy gown into an appropriate traveling outfit:

*A brilliant wedding occurred at the Methodist Episcopal church in this city yesterday afternoon. ... The bride was arrayed in a traveling costume of mauve Henrietta and velvet, trimmed with silver otter fur and hat and gloves of the same. With diamonds sparkling from throat and ears she was a perfect picture of loveliness and grace. From the time of her social debut [Eula’s] acknowledged charm of person and manner ... won for her the proud social distinction of leader and favorite among the young society people of Greeley.*



When Eula Kendrick's older sister, Mattie Wulfjen, married engineer Francis Williams in Greeley in 1899, she dressed in the height of fashion in a long-sleeved white dress with high collar, veil and train. In turn, Mattie's daughter, Eula Severn Williams, wore a very stylish gown when she married Diana Kendrick's cousin, Army officer Samuel Calvin Cumming, in Washington in 1923. Rosa-Maye's 1927 dress was exceptionally fashionable, and Diana Cumming maintained the family's tradition of stylishness with her "strikingly effective costume" in 1929:



*Fashioned of ivory white satin, the bodice is made with a "V" neckline and long fitted sleeves which go into points over the wrists, and the skirt is long and full with graceful circular fullness at the sides that extend several inches below the hemline proper. The gown is devoid of trimming and a court train of rare old Brussels lace, which belonged to the bride's mother, falls over a satin foundation from the shoulders. The tulle veil will be arranged softly about her face and held by tiny clusters of orange blossoms. ... Her bouquet will be a shower effect of gardenias and lilies of the valley.*

During the first third of the 20th Century, wedding dress silhouettes changed dramatically – from long and fitted to short and loose, and back again. Throughout, most dresses were made from silk or satin, trimmed in lace, and topped off with the latest style of veil and plenty of flowers.

## THE GROOM

*Will anyone forget the bride?*

Writing for *Delineator Magazine* in May 1929, author Francis Parkinson Keyes asked the above question in regards to the Cumming-Kendrick wedding. The simple answer was "No!" No one forgot Diana! The wedding revolved around her, and countless words were written to describe Diana, her dress, her veil, her honeymoon, her ... her everything!

The real question was: "Will Anyone Remember the Groom?" In truth, the member of the wedding party most likely to be forgotten – or at least neglected by the press – was the groom. Once he popped the question, there was little left for him to do but show up on time and in the

proper attire. When John and Eula Kendrick were married in 1891, his attire was the only thing about John upon which the newspapers commented, saying: “The groom wore the conventional black.”

### **Formal Men’s Wear**

Formal men’s wear has remained pretty much the same throughout the years: black suits, white shirts, and ties. The main changes were in the details: jackets with or without “tails” (long extensions on the back), black tie or white, gray-striped trousers or black, and so forth. During World War One, many men married in their service uniforms rather than tuxedos. Military officers, such as Hubert Harmon, also wore their dress uniforms at their weddings.

According to Emily Post, each groom had to make sure he looked and acted his part appropriately. In 1922 she specified what the proper groom should wear to his wedding:

*If he does not already possess a well-fitting morning coat, he must order one. He must also have dark striped gray trousers. As to his tie, he may choose an “Ascot” of black and white or gray patterned silk. Or he may wear a “four-in-hand” ... But at every wedding, great or small, city or country, etiquette demands that the groom, best man, and ushers, all wear high silk hats, and that the groom carry a walking stick.*

While he didn’t carry a walking stick at his 1929 wedding, Manville Kendrick conformed to the requirements of etiquette in every other respect, including the high silk hat. Not only did custom demand he do so, his father absolutely insisted that he get a “cut-away suit with something in the way of modest striped trousers,” not only for the wedding but for events far in the future, when the proper attire was mandatory. As John Kendrick wrote in December 1928:

*A suit of that kind does not change in style materially over a long period of time ... and we do not wear such a suit very frequently. You wear that kind of a suit, ordinarily, on very important occasions and under such conditions you cannot afford to take any chances in the quality and the fit of your wearing apparel. You know as well as I do that I have no vanity in the matter of dress save and excepting that the man who can afford it should never be less than properly attired.*



### **A Husband Who Will “Wear Well”**

In *The Washington Post* article about his wedding – one that contained hundreds of words describing dresses (not just those worn by the bride and her attendants, but the two mothers

as well), decorations and a long list of guests – Manville was allotted a mere ten words: “The bridegroom is a graduate of Exeter and Harvard Universities.” Fortunately, his friends were more elaborate in their praise of the prospective groom, as shown in this 1929 letter from childhood companion Harry Henderson:

*Dear Bud – While your wife is floating airily around the picture moulding after knowing that I think she’s a peach, I might add that she rates heavy felicitations, for she has acquired a husband and companion that will “wear well” – a tribute that cannot be proffered promiscuously – and it fully eclipses the old expressions of “one of nature’s noblemen,” “the rat’s rubbers,” “a prince among men” and other expressions that mean so little.*

## FESTIVITIES

There are all sorts of festivities associated with weddings: engagement parties, bachelor dinners, bridal parties, showers and wedding receptions among them. When Manville and Diana married in 1929, they took advantage of all available opportunities for entertaining:

*Yesterday was full of festivity for the bridal party. The bride-elect and her attendants were entertained at luncheon at the Carlton. At the same time the bride-groom was entertaining the best man and ushers at Meridian Mansions, where his parents make their home. Sen. and Mrs. Kendrick gave a dinner for the bridal party last evening. Afterward Manville took the group to Club Chanticleer for dancing.*

*Senator and Mrs. Kendrick  
To Entertain Bridal Party.*

Senator and Mrs. John B. Kendrick and their son, Mr. Manville Kendrick, whose marriage to Miss Diana Cumming, daughter of Surgeon General and Mrs. Hugh S. Cumming, will take place Thursday, will entertain at dinner Wednesday evening at 2400 Sixteenth street, for the entire bridal party and the immediate members of the families.

Mr. Harry R. Kay, who will be best man at the wedding, and Mrs. Kay, of Chicago, are guests of Senator and Mrs. Kendrick. Other out-of-town guests, many of whom are in the bridal party, are Mr. Samuel A. Gayley, of Philadelphia and New York, and his sister, Miss Janet Gayley, Mr. Burton B. Brewster and Mr. Irving Alderson, of Birney, Mont.; Mrs. Francis C. Williams, of Sheridan, Wyo., sister of Mrs. Kendrick; Mr. Francis C. Williams 3d, of Sheridan, cousin of the bridegroom, and Mr. and Mrs. Allen S. Burrows, of Burlington, Iowa.

*Manville Post*

Manville’s pre-wedding party at the Club Chanticleer was probably pretty tame by today’s standards. Emily Post stated that the groom was required to host a “bachelor” dinner for his groomsmen, ushers, and other close friends. Even in the 1920s, such dinners had a reputation for wildness, but Post maintained that they were worse in thought than in deed:

*Popularly supposed to have been a frightful orgy, ... the groom’s farewell dinner is exactly like any other “man’s dinner,” the details depending upon the extravagance or*

*the frugality of the host, and upon whether his particular friends are staid citizens of sober years or mere boys full of the exuberance of youth.*

Two years earlier, when Rosa-Maye and Hubert were planning their wedding, they too attended many parties, teas and luncheons. Following their engagement announcement on January 20, the couple attended celebratory dinner parties on the 24th, 25th, 26th and 30th of January, plus the 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 9th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th of February. The only reason the parties stopped, apparently, was because the wedding was scheduled for the 19th!

One of the most delightful of their parties was a surprise “shower” given to Rosa-Maye and Hubert by a large group of friends:

*When we reached the club we found a large crowd of ... friends assembled. When we reached the table upstairs, very festive with its lovely flowers, we found a veritable shower about to pour upon us. A tiny suitcase lettered (one end) H.R.H. - (other end) R.M.K.H., filled to overflowing with little gifts done in tissue and ribbon, each with a clever little verse attached to lend pertinence and piquancy. ... Besides those enclosed in the suitcase, each guest had brought some tiny offering. Came home glowing still with excitement and the pleasure of being the center of attraction to many very kind and loving friends.*

## **Wedding Receptions**

As for wedding receptions, they came in all shapes and sizes. A morning wedding was often followed (or sometimes preceded) by a wedding breakfast, such as that enjoyed by Lucy Booth and Hugh Cumming in 1896:

*At noon, a handsome and substantial wedding breakfast was served to the immediate bridal party and the near friends and relatives of the contracting parties who had come from a distance to witness the marriage. The dining room ... was, like the hall, elaborately decorated with wreaths of holly and cedar, the tables being ornamented with crimson autumn leaves and bunches of mistletoe, preserving the harmony of the general decorative scheme.*

An afternoon wedding might feature just cake; an evening wedding could be followed by a formal wedding dinner and dance. According to Emily Post, however, there was only one “unalterable” rule concerning the wedding reception:

*No matter whether a wedding is to be large or tiny, there is one unalterable rule: the reception must be either at the house of the bride’s parents or grandparents or other*

*relative of hers, or else in assembly rooms rented by her family. Never under any circumstances should a wedding reception be given at the house of the groom's family. They may give a ball or as many entertainments of whatever description they choose for the young couple after they are married, but the wedding breakfast and the trousseau of the bride must be furnished by her own side of the house!*

When Rosa-Maye Kendrick married in 1927, friends and family met at her parents' home following the service to share in the cutting of the traditional wedding cake, which was done with her husband's father's military sword. According to one newspaper,

*A small reception followed the ceremony at the apartment of Senator and Mrs. Kendrick. The apartment was decorated with spring flowers and ferns, and on the table was a large*



*wedding cake with baskets of spring flowers.*

## Wedding Cakes

Although not always in a form we would recognize, wedding cake has been a part of the marriage ceremony for centuries. Ancient Romans, for example, served a small wheat cake which the groom – after taking a bite for himself – broke over the bride's head! This was supposed to ensure long life and many children.

In Colonial America, a time during which wedding feasts were elaborate affairs lasting two or more days, the wedding cake was a thick, rich and spicy concoction full of alcohol, dried fruit and nuts – similar to Christmas fruitcake. It received a thick white frosting that took hours to make:

*Take the whites of twelve eggs, and a pound of double-refined sugar pounded and sifted through a fine sieve. Mix them together in a deep earthen pan and beat it well for three hours with a strong wooden spoon till it looks white and thick. With a thin paste knife spread it all over the top and sides of your cake and ornament it with sweet nonpareils, or fruit paste, or sugar images, and put it in a cool oven to harden for one hour. You may perfume the icing with any sort of perfume you please.*

In some cultures, this cake has lived on in the form of the "groom's cake," which is served alongside the bride's cake. According to Emily Post, the presence of the groom's cake was

mandatory in 1922. As she stated, “There are at all weddings, near the front door so that the guests may each take one as they go home, little individual boxes of ... “black” fruitcake.”

Today’s light multi-tiered cake covered with white icing first appeared in America in the 1860s, made possible in part by the introduction of baking soda, baking powder and finely ground white flour. One source contends that, like the wedding dress, the color of the icing was an indication of wealth: white icing required the use of only the finest refined sugar, so the whiter the cake, the more affluent the bride’s family appeared.

### **The Chivaree**

Most of the maids who worked at Trail End in the 1910s, 20s and 30s were the teenaged daughters of coal miners who worked at the underground mines north of Sheridan. These mine families came from a variety of religious, ethnic and racial backgrounds, each one offering different wedding customs and traditions.

One popular custom brought over from Europe was the *chivaree*. This mock serenade involved plenty of noise and alcohol, and took place at the newlyweds’ home the night of the marriage. In one 1908 wedding at the Sheridan County mining town of Carneyville, things got a little out of hand. A Finnish miner, John Killinen, had been recently married:

*... and his fellow workmen had been having a merry time and free drinks at his expense ever since. Night after night they went to his house with bells, horns and other instruments, making night hideous until the groom came out and put up something to satisfy their appetites for cigars and drinks.*

After a few nights, the newlyweds refused to respond, at which point another miner climbed on top of the house and covered the chimney with a washtub, intending to smoke the honeymooners out. All he got in response was a shot in the leg from Killinen’s revolver! According to witnesses, the climber “came down off the house like a squirrel from a tree.” The chivaree spree ended and so did the honeymoon: the groom abandoned his bride and “took off for the hills” shortly after the shooting.

## **THE WEDDING TREASURE TROVE**

Every bride and groom dream of having their own home. Indeed, it was thought best for the newly married couple to live alone for at least the first year, free from in-laws, children, renters or other interlopers. As Margaret Sangster noted in her 1901 advice book, *Winsome Womanhood*:

*The first year presents many unforeseen difficulties, and is often rather trying to both, John discovering that Edith is not altogether angelic, Edith learning that John has human imperfections the existence of which she never suspected. They are lovers, they will remain so, but the everyday level of life will become that of comradeship, of friendship, and they will best accommodate themselves to the novel conditions, and in the end will be the more closely united if no one is near to criticize, comment or interfere.*

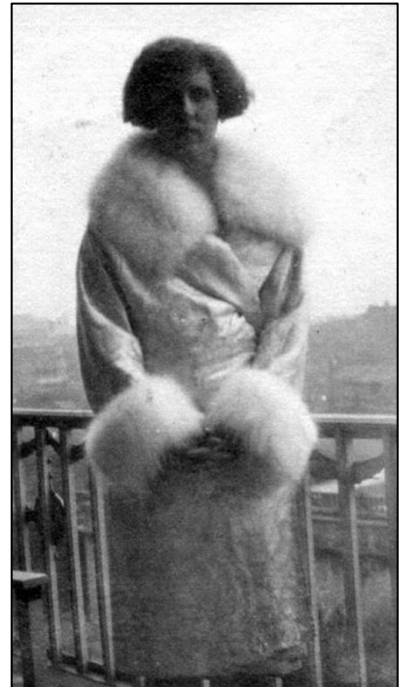
In this new home could be found a wide variety of new furnishings and accessories. Many were brought to the home by the bride, who in many cases had amassed a collection of household goods throughout her childhood years. *Winsome Womanhood* observed that others were gifts from well-wishers and family members, some not having the best of taste:

*Wonderful fascination is in the little home for two. ... How the wedding presents add a touch of elegance here, of harmony there. What fun over the disposition of the wedding gift which is palpably a misfit, the choice of wealth, but not of taste, or the tribute of some kind relative out of touch with modern and aesthetic ideas.*

## The Trousseau

Trousseau is a French word meaning “little bundle.” It was supposed to be those items which a bride took with her in order to set up her new household. A traditional trousseau – usually stored throughout childhood and adolescence in a hope chest – included jewelry, lingerie and toiletries, plus bed linens, bath towels and tablecloths. Many of the items in the trousseau were hand-sewn by female relatives (mother, aunt, grandmother, cousin) or the girl herself if she was skilled with needle and thread.

For many women, the trousseau also included brand new outfits to see her through her wedding, honeymoon and newlywed days. By the 1920s, well-to-do society brides such as Rosa-Maye Kendrick and Diana Cumming purchased their new clothing at upscale clothing stores such as Macy’s, Marshall Field and Neiman Marcus. When she married in 1927, Rosa-Maye and her mother went on a shopping spree, outfitting the bride in a variety of coats and dresses. Diana was similarly outfitted when she married Manville Kendrick in 1929. In her case, however, a great deal of the shopping was done at couture shops in Paris in the summer of 1928.





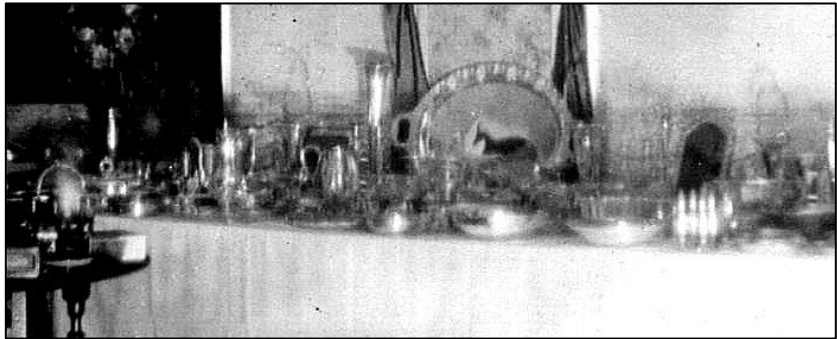
In addition to clothing, every bride had a few linens in her trousseau: towels, sheets, tablecloths, etc. Few could envision, however, the linens included in the trousseau outlined for the “daughter of the very rich” by author Emily Post. She described this “most lavish trousseau imaginable,” which would require “the services of a van to transport,” in her landmark book, *Etiquette*:

- **Linen Sheets** 12 to 72, embroidered, monogrammed
- **Linen Sheets** 12 to 72, plain, monogrammed
- **Linen Undersheets** 12 to 72, plain, monogrammed
- **Pillow Cases** 24 to 144 to match sheets
- **Silk Blanket Covers** 12 to 24, lace edged, washable
- **Blankets** 6 to 12
- **Quilts** 3 to 12, wool or down-filled
- **Face Towels** 24 to 120, extra large, monogrammed
- **Plain Towels** 60 to 120, monogrammed
- **Hand Towels** 60 to 120 to match plain towels
- **Large Bath Towels** 12 to 24, monogrammed
- **Hand Towels** 24 to 48, to match bath towels
- **Very Large Damask Tablecloth** monogrammed
- **Dinner Napkins** 36 to match very large tablecloth
- **Large Damask Tablecloth** monogrammed
- **Dinner Napkins** 24 to match large damask tablecloth
- **Medium Damask Tablecloths** 12 to 48, monogrammed
- **Dinner Napkins** 12 per medium tablecloth (from 144 to 576)
- **Medium Luncheon Tablecloths** 2-6, Italian lace
- **Luncheon Napkins** 12 per luncheon tablecloth (from 24 to 72)
- **Centerpieces** 2 to 6
- **Doilies** several per centerpiece
- **Lunch Napkins** several per centerpiece
- **Tea Cloths** 4 to 12, with Russian embroidery
- **Tea Napkins** 12 per tea cloth, monogrammed (from 48 to 144)
- **Plain Damask Tablecloths** 12 to 24, monogrammed
- **Napkins** 12 per plain damask tablecloth (from 144 to 288 napkins)
- **Kitchen Towels** 24 to 72
- **Pantry Towels** 24 to 72
- **Dishcloths** 24 to 72

In addition, this extravagant trousseau was to include dozens of additional sheets, pillowcases, blankets, quilts, towels, tablecloths and napkins - for use by the servants.

## Wedding Gifts

Along with items for her trousseau, brides expected to receive a number of wedding gifts to help furnish their new home. Naturally, the larger and more “high class” the wedding, the more gifts the bride received. Rosa-Maye



Kendrick, for example, received over 370 gifts celebrating her 1927 marriage to Hubert Harmon. Two years later, Diana Cumming was the recipient of nearly 600 gifts when she married Manville Kendrick. And, according to Emily Post, the giver of each of those gifts was due a handwritten thank you note in return. “Telephoning won’t do at all,” she directed, “and neither will a verbal thank you.”

Post felt strongly that the bride should be very careful about how she displayed her gifts (which was perfectly acceptable, by the way, even at the reception):

*Usually china is put on one table, silver on another ... A crudely designed piece of silverware should not be left among beautiful examples, but be put among china ornaments, or other articles that do not reveal its lack of fineness by too direct comparison. For the same reason imitation lace should not be put next to real ... To group duplicates is another unfortunate arrangement. Eighteen pairs of pepper pots or fourteen sauceboats in a row might as well be labeled: “Look at this stupidity! What can she do with all of us?” They are sure to make the givers feel at least a little chagrined at their choice.*

Among Diana Kendrick’s 500-plus wedding gifts were quite a few duplicate items, including seven cigarette boxes, ten assorted pitchers, twelve pairs of candlesticks, thirteen compotes (6 silver), 28 bonbon dishes (13 silver), 28 assorted bowls, 33 assorted vases (5 silver), and 36 nut dishes. Many of these duplicates, still carrying their gift registry stickers and gift cards, were packed away and never used.

While some types of gifts came in duplicates, others were one-of-a-kind. Unique gifts to Manville and Diana included an English riding crop, an antique Bohemian sweetmeat jar, a pair of grape scissors, a photograph of the Lincoln Memorial, a gallon-sized pail of Wyoming-made honey, and an antique Russian samovar. The most unusual gift given to the couple was a baby leopard skin, sent from Paris by a friend of the family.

The largest gift may also have been the most expensive. Diana Kendrick's father, Hugh Smith Cumming, was the Surgeon General of the United States. In honor of their boss's daughter's wedding, over 100 doctors associated with the U.S. Public Health Service contributed towards the purchase of a very large set of Tiffany silver flatware and matching coffee service. The pattern, *Faneuil*, was very simple and modern, just in line with Diana's tastes. The set contained twelve sets each of eleven different kinds of spoons, eight types of forks, and five kinds of knives. They were stored in a large wooden chest, along with a complete coffee service with coffee pot, tray, cream and sugar set - and a set of tongs.

Diana definitely had a thing for tableware. When she and Manville visited the Panama Canal on their honeymoon, Diana went on a spending spree at the duty-free store. In addition to assorted linens and glassware, she purchased three sets of china (Royal Doulton Old Leeds, Minton Princess and Minton H1935), plus a set of Minton demitasse cups and saucers rimmed in Cobalt blue and gold (pattern G6262). These delicate half-cups were used to serve espresso or other strong black coffees.



## WEDDING TRADITIONS

When our Trail End brides married, each no doubt pictured herself as the epitome of the modern young bride, with no idea that most of what she wore, carried, said and did was part of an ancient ritual handed down through time. From veils and flowers to bridesmaids and best men, everything related to marriage once had specific and significant meaning.

### Medieval & Feudal Customs

- **Giving Away The Bride** In olden times, when a woman had few personal rights, she was considered the property of her father. When the father of the bride gave his daughter's hand in marriage, he was literally transferring ownership of the woman from himself to the bridegroom.
- **Bridesmaids** In the days of feudal warfare and "captured" brides, female friends wore dresses similar to the bride's so that they would all look alike. This was to confuse people who might try to curse or even steal the bride; anyone wishing bad luck to the couple would hopefully curse the bridesmaid instead.
- **The Best Man** Another holdover from feudal days, the best man's job was to protect the groom-to-be as he went to a neighboring village to capture his bride. Of

course, the groom would choose the strongest or “best” man he knew for such a task. After the marriage, the best man would also serve as a sentry outside the newlyweds’ home.

- **Veils** Ancient Greeks and Romans thought a veil protected the bride from evil spirits. In the days of arranged marriages, it hid the face of the bride until after the marriage ceremony. Later, the veil was seen as a symbol of the bride’s purity.
- **Bouquets** The bride’s bouquet was originally made of strong herbs (thyme and garlic) rather than flowers in order to, once again, ward off those pesky evil spirits.
- **Boutonniere** The groom’s lapel flower was another nod to medieval times when a knight proudly wore his lady’s “colors” for all to see.

## Flowers

Once flowers replaced herbs in the bridal bouquet, flower lore began to assert itself. Each flower had a symbolic meaning, and bouquets were often constructed based on those meanings. Some popular wedding flowers include:

- **Rose** representing love
- **Lily-of-the-Valley** for happiness
- **Carnation** representing devotion
- **Calla Lily** for beauty
- **Tulip** representing passion
- **Chrysanthemum** for wealth
- **Gardenia** representing grace



Incorporating orange blossoms into the bride’s costume originated in ancient China where they were emblems of purity, chastity and innocence. Because the orange is one of the rare plants that blooms and bears fruit at the same time, it is symbolic of fruitfulness. When real orange blossoms were unavailable, wax replicas were used instead. These artificial blooms were often passed down from one generation to the next. When she married in 1896, Lucy Booth wore wax orange blossoms in her hair. These same flowers decorated her daughter Diana’s veil at her 1929 marriage.

## Rhymes That Ruled

*Something old, something new,  
Something borrowed, something blue,  
And a silver sixpence in her shoe*

This little rhyme has ruled over British and American weddings since it first appeared in the 19th century. Who knows why it is so popular, but here's what it all means:

- **Something Old** Symbolizes the link between the past and present. For many brides it is a piece of family jewelry or lace.
- **Something New** Represents the bride's hope for a bright future in her new life. The wedding gown is usually the new item.
- **Something Borrowed** This item should come from a happily married woman who "lends" the new bride some of her own marital bliss.
- **Something Blue** Represents purity, faithfulness and loyalty. Often the item is a blue garter, reminiscent of the blue trim worn by ancient Israeli brides.
- **Silver Sixpence** Represents wealth and the hope that the new bride will have a comfortable marriage free from financial woes.

According to another bit of Victorian verse, the day of the week upon which one got married would determine the success (or failure) of the marriage:

*Monday for Wealth, Tuesday for Health,  
Wednesday the Best Day of All;  
Thursday for Losses, Friday for Crosses,  
and Saturday, No Luck at All.*

Especially in the 1800s, some couples chose to marry on Sunday, a day when many of their friends and relations would already be at the church for weekly services. It was also a day when work would not prevent guests from attending.

Yet another old verse weighed the benefits of marrying in one particular month or another:

*Married when the year is new, he'll be loving, kind and true;  
When February birds do mate, you wed nor dread your fate;  
If you wed when March winds blow, joy and sorrow both you'll know;  
Marry in April when you can, joy for Maiden and for Man;  
Marry in the month of May, and you'll surely rue the day;  
Marry when June roses grow, over land and sea you will go;  
Those who in July do wed, must labor for their daily bread;  
Whoever wed in August be, many a change is sure to see;  
Marry in September's shrine, your living will be rich and fine;  
If in October you do marry, love will come but riches tarry;  
If you wed in bleak November, only joys will come, remember;  
When December snows fall fast, marry and true love will last.*

## Just For Luck

- **Over the Threshold** If a bride tripped or stumbled as she entered her new home, it was considered very bad luck; therefore, it became a duty for the groom to carry his bride over the threshold.
- **Good Luck for the Bride** If a bride married on the same day of the week that the groom was born, she would have good luck.
- **The Bride's Bad Luck** Unfortunate was the bride who cooked any of her own wedding supper or looked into a mirror while wearing her complete wedding outfit before her wedding day.
- **More Good Luck Omens** Rain; tears; ivy and/or myrtle in a wedding bouquet; seeing a rainbow; having the sun shine on the bride; meeting a black cat; meeting a chimney sweep on the wedding day; a spider found in a wedding dress.
- **Back Luck Omens** Rain; shopping for wedding rings on a Friday; May weddings; tears; seeing a pig, rabbit or lizard running across the road on the wedding day; dropping the ring during the ceremony (whoever dropped it would die first).
- **Luck for the Guests** In ancient times, guests would sometimes tear off a piece of the bride's dress as a good luck souvenir.

## Even More Wedding Trivia

- **The Bride** "Bride" is an old English word meaning "cook."
- **The Wedding** The word "wedding" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word "wed," referring to the financial settlement provided by the groom's family to the bride's family upon a betrothal.
- **Hair Rings** Early Celtic wedding rings were made of hair (their own) woven together by the bride and groom.
- **The Kiss** In ancient Rome, a kiss was seen as a legal bond that sealed all contracts, not just the marital sort.
- **Train Length** In the Middle Ages, the length of a bride's train indicated her rank in court; the longer her train, the closer she was to the King and Queen and the greater her influence.
- **Evil Spirits** A Danish bride and groom could confound the evil spirits by cross-dressing.
- **Invitations** Before the invention of the printing press in 1447, weddings were typically announced by means of a town crier; anyone within earshot became part of the celebration.
- **Sock Tossing** In long-ago England, friends of the groom would take off their socks and throw them; the first to hit the groom's nose would be the next to be married.

- **Cutting the Cake** Whoever had their hand on top during the cutting of the cake would rule the household.
- **Falling Asleep** The newlywed who fell asleep first on the wedding night would be the first of the pair to die.



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