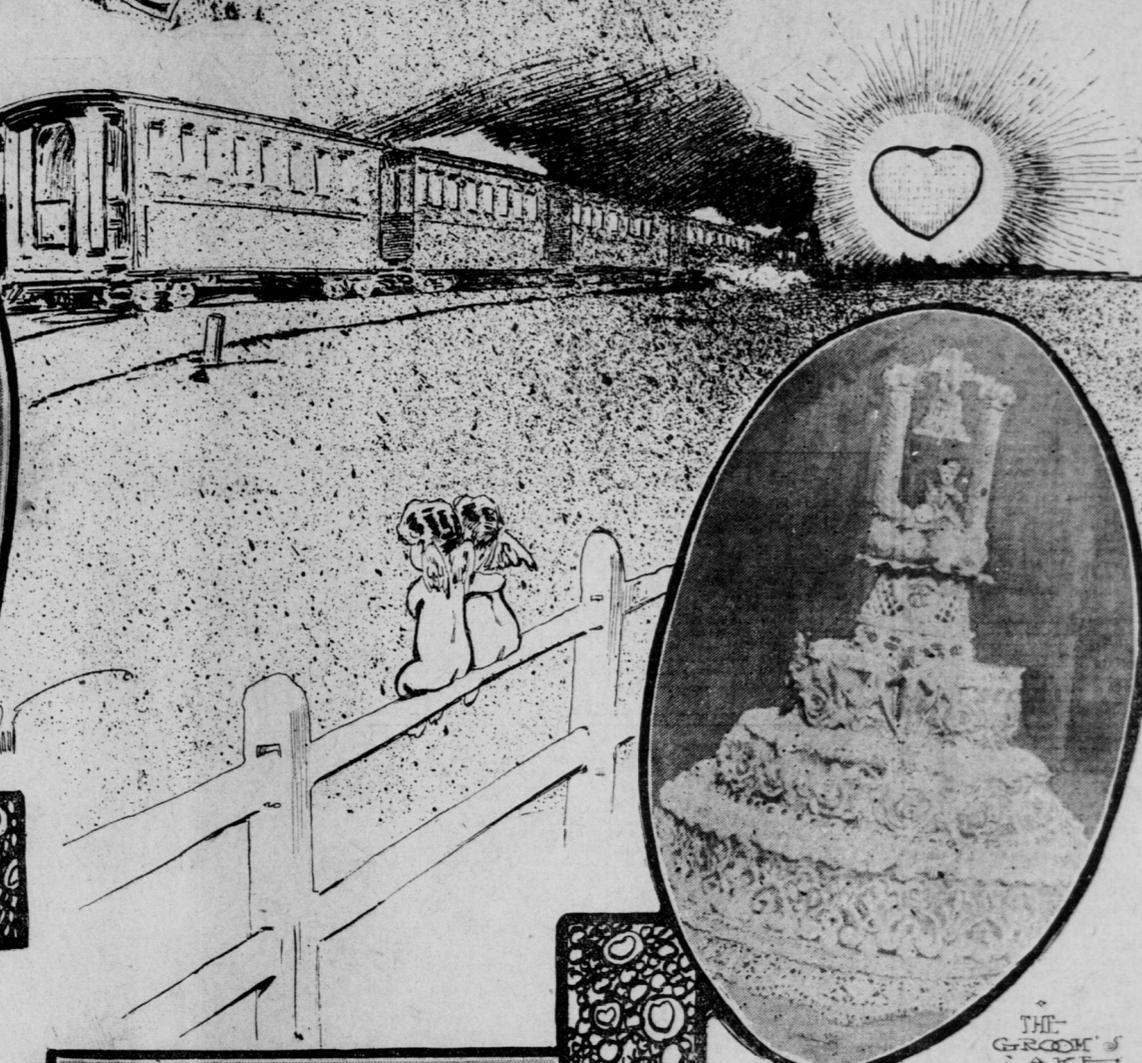


THE WEDDING CAKE SPECIAL



THE wedding cake special is the latest innovation to be injected into the gigantic problem of modern railroading.

In a few years, perhaps, it will be found puzzling the Interstate Commerce Commission along with the refrigerator car of the private lines. And if it does the commission must be prepared for the flight of its life against the god of love, armed with his bow and quiver in defense.

The wedding cake special is of most recent origin and has established for itself a record that sets railroad officials seriously thinking. Chicago sent a special train, making almost a record in making run over 400 miles, to carry a wedding cake—the bride's cake and incidentally the groom's cake—to Mackinac and the Chicago society summer settlement in time for the wedding of Vincent J. Walsh and Miss Julia Camilla Cudahy.

The "Wedding Cake Special," as it has been appropriately designated in the railroad world, flew through the northern woods at top speed—while inside the special car, guarding his cakes, was the patissier, and awaiting him was the manager of the catering company which prepared a wedding feast in Chicago and served it on Mackinac Island as easily and with as little fuss as if the wedding guests had been seated in the dining-room of a restaurant adjoining the kitchen regions where the magnificent feast was prepared.

It required a steamboat, a car loaded with silver and cutglass, and the "Wedding Cake Special" to serve the wedding breakfast, but it was served, and the nineteen men, waiters, cooks, managers and the patissier—who accomplished the feat and returned to Chicago triumphant—and ready to cater to weddings at summer cottages in New Hampshire or the Rockies.

Thus, Chicago, independent of Harry Lehr and the traditions of Newport, has given to the world of society the first "Wedding Cake Special," with wide open right of way and a clear

track to the altar. The special train which cleared from the La Salle-street station for Mackinac, Mich., bearing the precious freight of two pyramidal cakes for the Walsh-Cudahy marriage at "The Pines" may have set no record for speed, but it broke all records of the "fast set" in the social world.

The necessity for the "Wedding Cake Special" grew out of the fact that Miss Cudahy of Chicago was to be married to Walsh of Chicago at "The Pines," the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. John Cudahy at Mackinac. It was to be a morning ceremony and a wedding breakfast was to follow it. Mackinac bakeries are not equal to the demands of such an occasion. Only Chicago could rise to the requirements for two cakes, thirty-eight inches high, plastered, gargoyled, and otherwise facaded in pink confections, with primary colored contrasts in relief. Moreover, some wedding cake needs to be fresh when cut.

Thus the "Wedding Cake Special" took its place on the time schedules of the train dispatcher for at least a social record run.

Building a pyramidal pair of pink cakes, thirty-eight inches high, from a pastry base in proportion, is something exclusively for the art of the French pastry expert. But doing all night between two such cakes on a record social run of 400 odd miles, occupying

a trunk scarred baggage-car that is careening and bumping at forty miles an hour over lumber woods roadbeds of former times, distinctly is a novelty to the patissier under whose hands the creation grew to pink proportions.

To preserve these proportions against the impact of the midnight switch engines, the stub switch of the main street crossings of half a hundred Michigan towns en route had commanded a force of expert packers in advance of the coming of the sleepy patissier to the train sheds. A granulated sugar gargoyled on the conical surface of a bride's cake is a thing of fragile beauty. The Venus de Milo in strong relief, with her two arms purposefully broken off in the making, still would be a further disfigured thing after such a run were it not for the pastry packer for the patissier.

Furlongs of filmy tissue paper were required, with hours of time at the hands of the shippers, to prepare the two cakes for the Wedding Cake Special. In the formation of the cakes themselves an old law of physics had been observed. Pyramidal in form and resting on their own bases, unpacked, it was impossible short of a head-on collision that the "line of direction" should fall outside the base and thus topple them over. But packed and boxed, with the capitalizing warning in half understood English, "This side up with care," it is not to be wondered that the sleepy French patissier—sentinel between the towering cake for the bride and the towering cake for the groom—possessed his nervous Gallic soul in impatience for 400 dark, bumpy miles.

At South Bend the Wedding Cake Special hit one that bent a little top far

French. At Elkhart several sugar objects—spelled with an "e" thrown into the last syllable of the place—threatened to loosen from the cakes when the engineer suddenly decided to take a siding after all. At Grand Rapids a dinky little switch engine hit the special on the rear bumper, displacing the patissier by one meter from the dead center of his sentinel position, exploding a "Mon Dieu!" thirty-six hours in advance of the Mayor's Fourth of July proclamation. Then a new monster engine hit the car a whack at the blind baggage end forward and the patissier let off a "Le diable" as the impact reared him the meter of displacement, with several centimeters to spare.

Then the tracks cleared for the straightaway for Mackinac.

Alone in a trunkless baggage car at midnight with only a coal oil lamp smelking in front of a tin reflector, lar'd and star'd, makes the mule and blind baggage passenger next the engine tender a reserved seat by comparison. In the same baggageless car, alone with two fragile wedding cakes that are likely to settle and "squash" all out of plumb, when it is known to the sleepy French patissier that the manager and chef of his catering company probably are sitting up all night in the Mackinac station waiting for him and for his exhibits A and B—here is a situation to pale the Dreyfus case into Gallic insignificance!

In stern reality a baggage car with male end is a course, unresponsive receptacle for two cakes of bride and groom gender. It is bad enough when it is the mere storage place for the be-ribboned trunks, grips and hat boxes of the bride and groom who are in the stateroom of the palatial sleeper in the rear of the vestibule train. Given the two cakes, the clammy atmosphere of a lovely baggage car that smells of smoky kerosene at midnight, and an engineer and fireman in greasy jumpers hitting it up regardless, even a stoic ought to appreciate the feelings of the French patissier who is trying to "keep this side up with care" for 400 jelling miles from Chicago to breakfast!

No locomotive foreman, switchman or yardman ever cared for cake, anyhow. He wouldn't spit out a chew of Tar-plug for all the confectionery that ever was patissiered. He never saw much use of a floral "Gates Ajar" in a funeral train, and the fact that it was considerably more ajar at the end of a

run never kept him awake a minute after he got his overalls off and washed up. Under these statements of coarse, unsympathetic facts it may be believed that knowledge of having to keep to schedule with merely two curly-cued wedding cakes of pink confection left the French patissier on sentinel to the black pit of emotional fears and hysterical premonitions.

The settings for his trip had been ominous enough in all conscience. Four days before his Wedding Cake Special cleared from the La Salle-street station in Chicago sixteen men under the catering shop's manager of linens, china and plate, had shipped by boat for Mackinac with several thousand pounds of delicate tableware and cut glass. There was rain and a head wind off the four-mile crib at starting and goodness only could know what might have happened already at sea.

Two days after the boat the manager in chief of the company, with chef-in-chief and head-waiter-in-chief had departed by rail in lower berths in order to be at the wharf for the unloading of the boat's breakfast cargo four miles from "The Pines."

The boat, according to schedule, should have arrived eighteen to twenty-four hours ahead of the best that was in the Wedding Cake Special's locomotive steam chest. A few dozen broken china dishes and cut glass finger bowls unloading to the nervous manager-in-chief at the Mackinac wharf under those conditions must leave to the patissier in the baggage car a tornado of Gallic displeasure and punishment if even a pink abrasion should happen to one or the other of his confections.

All wedding cake looks alike after a sentimental young witness to the marriage ceremony has slept with it under her pillow for a few nights. But until the cake itself has been set upon its pedestal at breakfast and waded into by some one with a cake knife in search of the piece that has the ring in it that cake must represent the patissier's Frenchiest art and tout ensemble.

According to a telegram from Mackinac on the morning of the Wedding Cake Special's arrival both these particular cakes had escaped without a scratch. The apex of each was on straight and little settling had resulted from either the social or the railroad record run. From Mackinac railway station a teamster had taken the two

packages and the patissier aboard an extemporized log wagon and started for The Pines on a jog trot of dusty sand. For the first time on the trip the patissier snored as only the Frenchman with an interloper's soft palate can snore when he is tired out.

The run of the first Wedding Cake Special had proved a success!

Wedding cakes frequently have been shipped by express without the schedule trimmings of a special train. They have been long distances out of Chicago, especially when a pyramidal apex had not to be considered as right side up. One of the well-known caterers of the north side shipped a forty-pounder to Paris to be cut at the wedding breakfast in honor of the marriage of a sister of Chauncey Blair and, being a fruit cake, it was found improved in ripened flavor from the long shipment.

The first receptacle for this particular cake was a hermetically soldered tin box of glove-fitting construction. This box was reinforced by tissue paper in certain places, and carted to the regular, according to a regular time card, to the Atlantic liner's pier in North River in New York.

One of the disadvantages of the wedding cake of the past is that no matter how extravagant the bride's trousseau—how costly the ring and the groom's gift to the bride—how big the fee paid the minister officiating—the tent of the wedding cake itself may be listed at no more than the same old price of \$1 a pound. To bring the cake up in price to the preservation of the millionaire until an enormously big wedding is prepared. But there are such limitations to the size of ovens as to make this procedure not worth while.

Wines at \$8 a pint would make even a boulder cake at \$1 a pound appear insignificant. Just at this point of the dilemma the Chicago innovation of the Wedding Cake Special is brought out with éclat as the solution of a great social embarrassment to the "large wedding" of a leafy June or of winter resort December. For in either month the routing of the Wedding Cake Special may be depended upon to bring the cake cost up to something like:

Sixteen men in a boat, for even a lake trip with the dishes likely to make a hole in the employees' list of anything but the biggest catering establishments. Then a manager-in-chief, a chef-in-chief and head waiter-in-chief booked for a lower berth trip on a limited train, become a wedding cake, et cetera, of no mean pocket-book proportions. When to these is added the Wedding Cake Special, as we have reason to believe that special train must evolve, society has reason for anticipating that in the future all other details of the extravagance indicating the "large wedding" of the present, are to give way to the possibilities that lie in the Wedding Cake Special, regardless of the cake itself.

The wedding itself, one of the most brilliant in the annals of Chicago society, paled into insignificance by the feats of the caterers. People get married almost every day—in fact every day—but never before has a wedding cake been honored by a special train.

The ceremony that made Miss Cudahy the bride of Vincent J. Walsh was the event of the season at Mackinac. The ceremony was performed in quaint old St. Anne's Church, and was attended by many of the society leaders of Chicago.

The trains that were side tracked to let the Wedding Cake Special pass northward bore many of the belles and beaux of Chicago, friends of the groom, who is one of the best known young men in north side social circles.

Miss Cudahy has been prominent in social and charitable functions of Chi-

cago since her debut and she was one of the central figures in the last Kirmess. Among the debutantes of her season she was a favorite and when her engagement to Vincent Walsh was announced it was declared to be one of the best matches of the season.

It was arranged that they should be married in July—and July in Chicago is not the ideal month for society weddings, but at beautiful Mackinac, a few hundred miles northward, July is the month of roses rather than June; and besides Miss Cudahy had arranged to pass the summer at the beautiful Cudahy cottage.

So it was decided that the wedding should take place on Mackinac—the ideal spot for lovers—and perhaps, at least so it is hinted—the young couple had other and tenderer thoughts in selecting Mackinac as their wedding place, for it is whispered that the courtship began there and that it was on one of the beautiful tree clad bluffs overlooking the straits that—anyhow, their friends in Chicago society to attend the wedding there.

Just who got the ring from the bride's cake only those who were guests at the wedding breakfast know, but it is hinted that she is one of the younger debutantes, and that perhaps another Wedding Cake Special may be run through the northern pines at the beginning of the next summer season—or maybe even before that.

The cakes, still under the charge of the faithful patissier, arrived at the straits without a rose leaf broken, without a sugar heart disturbed, and, escorted by the faithful patissier, assisted by the chef, the sub-chef, the corps of waiters and other dignitaries, they were hauled up the bluff and placed in triumph upon the bride's table.

The trip of the special was ended—and the car which had been raised to such high dignity came back to Chicago not as the "Wedding Cake Special," but labeled "an empty."

It is a certainty at the present moment that the next Wedding Cake Special will not be confined in make-up to a locomotive, a bare baggage car of mule ends and a sleepy patissier who yawns in French. The possibilities of such rolling stock are too limited. Even a refrigerator car with a \$45 icing bill would be an improvement over this.

All the history of railroading points irrevocably to a magnificent cake car, electric lighted, sided with heavy plate glass and provided with a central ornamental cake pedestal on which the cake itself shall rest firmly in the open, save as a polished glass cabinet, silver trimmed, protects it from dust particles.

Manifestly in such a car as this no sleepy French patissier, moaning over his skilled artifice, will suffice. Especially in the case of two cakes—bride and groom—in designation—social ethics will call for social chaperonage. No woman chaperon will sit alone in a Wedding Cake Special for such a run, and to attempt a bachelor's companion as a solution of the difficulty is alike impossible. A mixed social gathering as a social gendarmierie patissier, with sideboard perquisites and stateroom accommodations according to distance and numbers, at once become fitting necessities as well as essentially becoming and attractive social accessories. If as guests at the wedding more than the prescribed gendarmierie patissier are desired, the difficulty is alike impossible. A cake car must become an integral part of the Wedding Cake Special until the cake item in the "large wedding" of the future may promise to outdo Lucullus himself.

So far in this contemplation of the evolved Wedding Cake Special nothing has been ventured further than the rolling stock, the passenger list and the sugared freight. Under pressure of the speed mania an almost unlimited fund opens for time cards. With the ensemble of equipment and speed possible in the coming new order of nuptial things the report of the up-to-date marriage in summer resort June or winter resort December gives promise of complete overturning in its new features.

When Woman Forgets Her Latch Key

Tiny spurts of light and muffled exclamations from the darkness of a vestibule in a side street near Jefferson square made the policeman smile knowingly as he clicked the gate and went up the steps.

"Please don't arrest me, Mr. Policeman," protested a feminine voice. "Appearances may be against me, but I am not a female thief. You see, I've forgotten my latch key."

Then she began groping wildly about the tessellated floor.

"You lookin' for somethin'?" said the policeman.

"You see, I forgot mine," she explained, "and I phoned my roommate at her office to leave hers under the mat when she went in. You see there isn't any mat here, so how can I look under it? I'm afraid to wake up the landlady, she's so unpleasant, and besides I couldn't wake her, anyway. Large lives three flights up. I tried to throw stones, but it's too far. Besides, she sleeps like a polar bear."

The policeman grinned understandingly and took out a matchbox. The first light showed him a tiny key in the very middle of the top step. The girl pounced upon it with a cry of joy.

"Miraculously as he joined the curious man on the sidewalk. "Most of them women latch keys cry, and the men swear."

"Latch keys, I call 'em, and the complaint is as common as measles. I get 'em on an average of eight or ten a week."

"The men get chesky and try to climb in a window, but a man isn't allowed to climb in even his own window, unless he knows the cop on his beat. Any man trying to sneak in a window is a second story man to me, until he is proved to be a law abider."

"Only last week I had a fellow by the leg in one of the houses in this block. Caught him just as he was getting in. He said he lived there, but it wasn't up to me to admit it."

"Frove it," said I, "and come down until you do."

"Just then there was a yelping inside and the man swore. A dog had him by the ower leg."

home from out of town unexpected, and ain't got no key. Expects to find his wife waiting on the doorstep for him at 5 in the morning. I found one the other night it was just coming at the second-story window."

"He'd have tried climbing, but the windows were locked. I used the night stick and banged the bell until half the neighborhood was awake and advising on it of the front windows. Finally a woman came down in one of them Japanese wrappers, you know, and John said:

"I'm back."

"And she said: "Oh, John, how lovely you've come! Just like an' d' walked in soft, instead of being assisted by the police force. Some folks ain't got no sense of the fitness of things."

"But women's the worst when they come home with their young men."

"I hauled a fellow down from a wistaria vine not long ago and told him it didn't look good to me."

"I think it was just sweet of him," said the girl, and then she cried.

"That's the trouble with women, they always cry; and then it's up to me to get 'em in or take 'em to a hotel."

"I don't know my new trousers," said the man.

"If your pup thinks you don't live here," says I, "it ain't for me to contradict him."

"While he was arguing and cussing, somebody in curl paper knobs opened the door and looked at him, stuck in the window."

"Again, John?" she says, sorrowful, and I felt him explaining.

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trunk scarred baggage-car that is careening and bumping at forty miles an hour over lumber woods roadbeds of former times, distinctly is a novelty to the patissier under whose hands the creation grew to pink proportions.

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