

A CHRISTMAS WEDDING

"A Christmas wedding is rather an unusual thing. At Christmas-tide everybody's mind is set on something other than weddings, and to have one then seems almost like an interruption of the just mirth which reigns the world over," writes Muriel Falkland in the Housekeeper. The writer goes on to describe how the idea of a Christmas wedding was prettily carried out in favor of one of a group of twelve girl friends who had planned to have distinctive celebrations of this greatest event of their lives.

"The ceremony was a home one, of course, and as Katherine has a host of brothers and sisters and another host of young nephews and nieces, there was every reason for as genial a time as the occasion and the season warranted.

"It must be a real Christmas wedding, all white and scarlet, and with plenty of evergreen," was Elizabeth's first impulse, and we all agreed with her. Katherine was fully in union with our idea, and we found nothing but help all along the line, since she was the last of a large family, each of whom wished to help celebrate her nuptials as joyously as possible.

Our first move, when we arrived to get things in order, was to cover every floor in the house with crash.

This gave the white background we had wished and afforded besides a splendid facility for the luxurious evergreen trimming which we had planned to make the spirit of Christmas generally felt. Every picture and every doorway and window frame was outlined with evergreen, the spicy odors filling the house, ere we were half through. Holly we used only to wreath the chandeliers and bank the window sills and mantel pieces. Long garlands of evergreen were hung in festoons along the upper side of the wall from the ceiling, twined around the balustrade and put in loops and circles wherever wall space offered. At each window a beautiful holly wreath, tied with floating streamers of scarlet ribbon, was hung, and on the end of each of the chandeliers hung a great ball of poinsetta, mingled with a few feathery green ferns and tied with scarlet.

This was in the halls and chambers. In the drawing room, where the ceremony would be performed, a beautiful archway of ferns and poinsetta was erected by the florists under Elizabeth's direction, and from the middle of the arch a cluster of bells, also of scarlet, was hung in position like a chime. Baskets of scarlet, with ferns trailing from them, hung in the door-

ways between the drawing room and dining room and were set on the little tables and cabinets which filled the room.

In the dining room the table was laid for the guests and bridal party under a great cluster of scarlet which hung from the chandelier, and on the table were arranged several clusters of lights, in silver candlesticks, shaded with scarlet and wreathed with holly and the pure white frost berries, which looked like pellets of glistening snow. Each plate was encircled by holly and at each chair a branch of it was tied with scarlet ribbon. The centerpiece on the table was a mound of holly from which a broad red ribbon was carried to each plate, ending in a small bunch which hung down over the edge of the table.

The wedding was planned to occur at half past seven, and just at a quarter past the chimes of the church at the corner began their hour of music, so that we had this sweet accompaniment to the ceremony.

Promptly at half-past seven we emerged from the room upstairs where we had been dressing, since the early five o'clock dinner, and we could see for ourselves as we went slowly down the broad stairway that the scene was a beautiful one. First in the procession walked the four smallest nephews and nieces of the bride, two by two, the girls wearing frocks of white with scarlet ribbon in their hair and carrying baskets of holly, the boys in red, each with a branch of evergreen. Then went Katherine, dressed in white gleaming satin, with a bunch of mistletoe fastening her veil, and a white vellum prayer book in her hand. Then we girls, six of us, walked, two by two, each dressed in white, but wearing crowns of frosted holly and carrying a great armful of poinsetta blossoms from which long streamers of scarlet ribbon hung to the edge of our gowns.

From the foot of the stairs to the sides of the archway two other nieces, also dressed in white and scarlet, stretched lines of glistening white satin ribbon, in which small bunches of holly were knotted at intervals, and through this enclosed pathway the bride walked to the improvised altar, leaning on her brother's arm. During the ceremony the sound of an organ playing the sweet old Christmas hymn, "Adeste Fideles," penetrated the room, and continued while the solemn words of the marriage service were spoken, making a most beautiful accompaniment for the scene.

When it was over there was a mer-

ry clash of bells, apparently coming from the very air about us, and when we looked in astonishment to see the reason, we found that an older boy had begged and borrowed all the bells he could, of every kind, and had set them going in the various rooms of the house, as soon as the ceremony was finished and the merry congratulations had begun.

The newly wedded pair did not intend to leave the city that night, so the gayest of Christmas wedding parties was in full progress within a few moments after the marriage words concluded.

Supper was served first, and the merriment enhanced by the fact that in the bunches of holly composing the centerpiece, which the bridesmaids drew to our plates at the conclusion of the meal, we found each an exquisite little locket showing a branch of holly, with green enameled gold leaves and bits of coral for berries, as souvenirs from our bride.

Dancing came next, to the music of a stringed orchestra stationed somewhere out of sight, and through the drawing room, halls and dining room we whirled, counting the moments only by our flying footsteps.

It was half-past eleven before we stopped, and then only at a signal from the band. This was no less than a march—or rather, the Christmas hymn played in march time, and stopping our waltz suddenly, we wondered what it meant, until Katherine and her husband, taking the lead, beckoned us to follow in procession. Wondering a little, we did so, and found ourselves led through the hall across to the library doors, which had been religiously closed all evening, rather to our surprise, since we needed the extra dancing place. Katherine flung open the doors and a moment of amazed silence ensued. There in the middle of the room stood a magnificent Christmas tree, hung from roof to top with glittering emblems of the season and aglow with myriads of tapers fastened to its branches. At a signal from Katherine's brother, the electric lights in the hall and dining room went out and we found ourselves with nothing to detract from the radiant splendor of the symbolic tree.

After the distribution of the many pretty gifts, the bride and bridegroom led the way to the dining room, where a bountiful supper was served including all the favorite Christmas goodies. Thus was brought to a close one of the pleasantest and prettiest weddings that any of the assembled guests had ever seen.

Burning the Yule-Log.

The ancient Christmas ceremony of the burning of the Yule-log is one that has been transmitted to us from our Scandinavian ancestors, who, at their feast of Yul, at the winter solstice used to kindle large bonfires in honor of their god to set on fire.

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The sight must be a pleasing one to women: a caponized rooster made drunk on whisky, and sitting on eggs like an old hen.

Rest and Sleep.

Few escape those miseries of winter—a bad cold, a distressing cough. Many remedies are recommended, but the one quickest and best of all is Simmon's Cough Syrup. Soothing and healing to the lungs and bronchial passages, it stops the cough at once and gives you welcome rest and peaceful sleep.

Some men manage to strike the iron while it is hot, and some others don't seem to know a hot iron when they see it.

Christmas Stockings

Hang up the Christmas stockings,
Leave not a dear one out,
And wake on Christmas morning
With ringing song and shout,
For in the silent midnight
Shall Santa Claus appear,
And crown with gifts of gladness
The love-time of the year.

Hang up the baby's stocking;
The cunning little elf
Is still too very tiny
To do it for herself,
And hang the mother's stocking
Oh, very plain in sight;
Some one must think for mother,
Or she'll forget it quite.

Hang father's sturdy stocking
Right here between the boys';
And give him books and papers,
As he gives the children toys,
Let Santa Claus be careful
About the politics;
For father has a conscience
That to the right side sticks.

Hang up the old folks' stockings,
Hang up the little girl's;
Dear grandma with her silver hair,
Sweet Flossy with her curls,
Will both be very happy
When dawn, in roseate cheer,
The Merry Christmas morning,
The love-time of the year.
—Ethel Bridges in Royal Neighbor.

