

Bicentennial Love Story... The Wedding Day

Every year is a special one for brides, but this year has a significance all its own — it's America's Bicentennial. A look back into our history to see what brides and weddings were like in Revolutionary times provides some fascinating information.

The American colonists brought most of their social customs with them from England, of course, and generally what was fashionable in England was her too.

The Puritan tradition (beginning with Cromwell in the mid-1600's) had frowned on big wedding celebrations, and on merriment of any kind — as a result, a small, quiet marriage at home was the rule.

In fact, in America, home weddings remained the fashion until 1850 or so. However, they were not necessarily small and quiet. In any but the strictest homes there was dancing after a wedding, sometimes far into the night, just as there is today. In rural areas, a wedding was

an occasion for several days' worth of partying.

The typical wedding ceremony was fairly simple, in the Protestant tradition (most Americans being Protestant) — there were prayers, a short sermon, the marriage vows, and some hymns. The guests would then drink the "posset," a kind of hot punch — as a signal that the wedding was over and the party could begin.

In early New England the couple's attendants would scramble not for the bride's bouquet, but for her garter — the win-

ner, like the modern bridesmaid who catches the bouquet, was supposed to be the next to marry.

Sometimes the wedding guests would put the bride and groom to bed on their wedding night, drinking toasts and offering prayers in the bridal chamber. Then the new couple would be left alone — if they were lucky!

City brides and grooms kept open house the day after the wedding, receiving visits from friends. Rural couples made visits to neighboring towns or plantations. But the honeymoon as we know it didn't develop until well into the 19th century.

A particularly colorful custom in Revolutionary times was known as "Coming Out Bride" — when bride, groom, and guests would put on all their bridal finery and parade into church on the Sunday, or sometimes for four Sundays, after the wedding.

Early churches were segregated, with men seated on one side and women on the other — but wedding groups would all sit together, "like a pride of peacocks," as one historian put it. At a certain point in the services the newlyweds would rise and turn slowly around, displaying their fine clothes for the

congregation!

And of course, men's fashions in the 1700's were as splendid as women's — men, too, wore silks, satins, damasks and velvets.

Though times have changed since America was born, the wedding

day remains the same in spirit — a very special celebration, shared in by bride and groom and those who love them. So whether your wedding will be old-fashioned or newfangled, you're part of a long and wonderful tradition.

Appliances? Think Twice

Now that you're making plans to furnish a home for the first time, here's some timely advice: think about your future needs when you buy kitchen appliances, especially a refrigerator or a dishwasher.

For example, your immediate needs may call for only a moderate-size refrigerator. But you should consider the many

advantages of a unit which has freezer space adequate to your future needs as your family grows.

Another appliance for which you should keep future needs in mind is the dishwasher. Many top-point models move easily on wheels, making them convenient for apartment use, or where kitchen space is at a premium.



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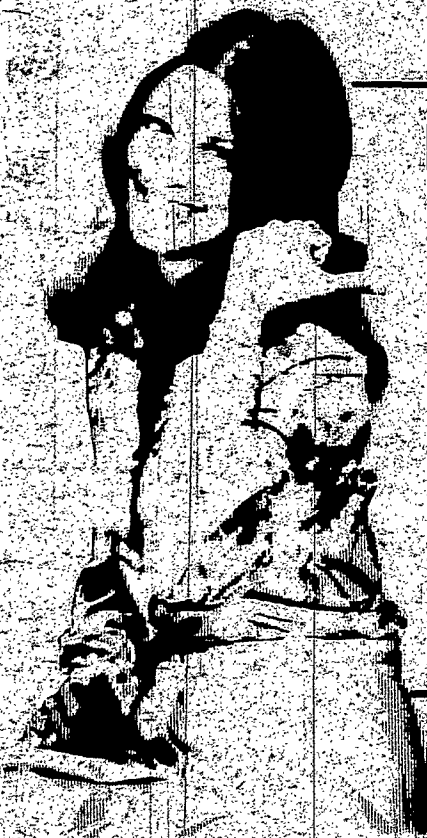
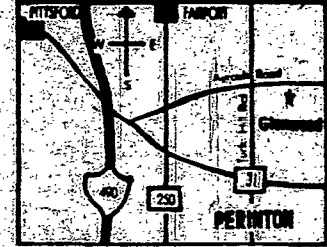
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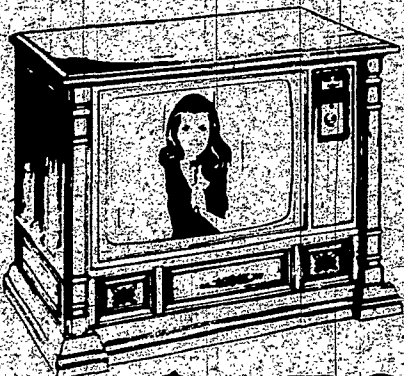
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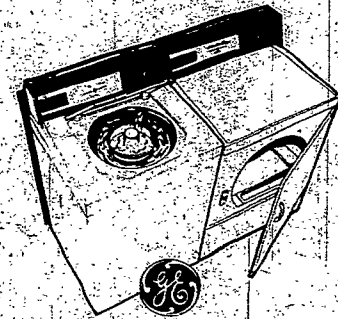
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