

The Judge's Cat

Letter from Emily Bradshaw to Baroness Margaret Halkett

12 South Bailey
Durham
12 April 1875

Dearest Grandmama

If only you could have been with us for Mabel's Wedding to Henry Daniell, our joy would have been complete! I thought of you all day. I know how thrilled Mabel was with your Wedding present. It was so very generous of you to send the Baroque silver tea service presented to Grandpapa by his Regiment. It will surely take pride of place in her London home. Family heirlooms are to be treasured far above the newly purchased, are they not?

The entire Daniell family, which is very large, descended on Durham for the Wedding and took up all the available accommodation. The day of the ceremony was fair and the walk from our house to Durham Cathedral is but a few yards. Mabel had all her sisters as attendants as well as two Daniell children, who found great amusement in slipping and sliding over the cobbled stones in their best satin shoes. It was a grand occasion and Thomas's generosity made all of us proud. Mabel's dress was made in Paris. Although we made but one visit for measurements, it fitted perfectly. How skilful the French are! The dress was à la mode, white silk festooned with ruffles and frills, and the dressmaker's art of heavy ruching was much in evidence on the skirt. It featured a magnificent train with plaited chiffon borders, so heavy that it *almost* brought her to a halt halfway down the aisle. There was lace in abundance, she wore little bows at her wrists and on her shoes, and there were orange blossoms under her veil, which was edged with the finest lace. The groom's present of a diamond pendant sparkled at her neck, and tucked under her white glove was the pearl and diamond engagement ring. She carried a cascade of white flowers and ivy tied with tulle streamers. Everyone agreed she presented the perfect picture of a fashionable Bride. Thomas graciously said Mama should be invited and you will be pleased to know that she came and behaved in quite a seemly fashion – although she cried all the way through the service. She declined to stay with us, for which I was thankful. Maggie Halkett did not attend. She sent an ornate claret jug. Two of her three daughters did come, but left after the Church service.

The Wedding breakfast was held in the garden and our Matilda excelled herself with the traditional three Wedding