

Maplelawn Farmstead: The Lee-Scott wedding

Part III of a series

Last week we dropped in on several parties given by and for Fairy Rose Scott, only daughter of Alfred Elroy and Elmira Moore Scott, owners of Maplelawn Farm. The first party announced her engagement and approaching marriage to Ralph H. Lee.

As is often the case, when we review what some may consider frivolous articles from the past, we learn another little piece of Zionsville history. Since our town was known as the “dahlia city” in the

late 1920s and early ‘30s, and Fred Gresh didn’t buy the property on which he grew his prize-winning dahlias until 1928, it was easy to assume that the popularity of that flower was later than that date, rather than sooner. In fact, his prime local competitor at dahlia shows, Jennie Tudor, was still teaching school in 1920. Her Tudor Gardens came after that career ended in an illness for which the doctor prescribed drinking goat’s milk and working in the dirt.

I was thrilled to read that dahlias were used in profusion to decorate for Fairy Scott’s engagement party in 1914, as a table centerpiece and filling vases in each of the downstairs rooms. I checked with Altum Gardens and learned that dahlias bloom until the first frost. So, perhaps the flowers used in the decorations came from the

Maplelawn garden.

An equally charming picture is created in the article reviewing Fairy’s wedding. She and Ralph Henley Lee of Carmel were married at Maplelawn on the evening of Nov. 25, 1914. The following review of that ceremony (unedited, except to break one long paragraph for easier reading) appeared in *The Zionsville Times* of Dec. 3.

Unfortunately, the first eight or nine lines of that article were cut from the paper that was later micro-filmed for the P.H. Sullivan Museum’s

archives. History tells us the guilty party probably was Bernard Clayton who used such material during his years as editor of the paper to recreate cameos of the past for his readers.

Headlined “Lee-Scott Wedding,” and the subhead offers this information: “Ceremony Witnessed by Immediate Relatives and Friends Wednesday Evening, November 25.”

The good news is that we already know the names of the bride and bridegroom and the bride’s parents. We pick up with the words “of the West Washington M.E. church, Indianapolis, and was very impressive in its simplicity.

“The ceremony took place under an arch of smilax formed in the bay window, with palms and ferns as a background.

“Tracy Morris acted as best man, and as the groom and best man descended the

stairs, preceded by Rev. Weston, Mrs. Mayme Breedlove, pianist, played the ‘Bride’s Chorus’ of Lohengrin. The bride entered alone and was met at the entrance of the drawing room by the groom.

“During the ceremony the pianist played softly, ‘Call Me Thine Own.’ The single ring ceremony was used.

“The bride wore a gown of chiffon over crepe meteor. Her veil was caught with a band of pearls and she carried a small white prayer book. After the ceremony, ‘Mendelssohn’s Wedding March’ was played while Rev. Weston introduced Mr. and Mrs. Lee to those present.

“The bridal party then proceeded to the dining room, where dainty refreshments were served. The decorations of pink and white were carried out on the bride’s table.

“Mr. and Mrs. Lee will be at home after December first, near Carmel, to their many friends.”

(Many of you are wondering, just as I was, “What is crepe meteor?” A textile book reveals that crepe meteor is a soft, lustrous material, woven with two up, two down, or two up, one down twill on the back, and a satin face.)

The evening of the wedding was far from over for some of the guests when the ceremony ended.

Next week we’ll return to the *Times* for the description of “A Lucky Accident.”

Editor’s note: Joan Lyons is a member of the Zionsville Historical Society’s committee to preserve the Maplelawn Farmstead.

PAST TIMES

Joan P. Lyons



Photo submitted

The above wedding photo is of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Lee. and appeared in the Genealogies of the Moore and Brunnes Families at the P.H. Sullivan Museum Library.