

Dorking and Leatherhead Advertiser - Saturday 21 February 1903

The marriage arranged between Mr. F. R. S. Bircham, only son of Mr. Samuel Bircham, of Beech Hill, Woking, and Miss Agnes Bruce, second daughter of the late Mr. Alexander Bruce and of Mrs. Bruce, of Reepham, Norfolk, will take place at Reepham, Norfolk, on Tuesday, April 14th.

Eastern Daily Press - Wednesday 15 April 1903 - & Norfolk News - Saturday 18 April 1903

FASHIONABLE WEDDING AT REEPHAM. It is nearly half century since what is generally known as a fashionable wedding took place in little town of Reepham. The spell was broken when was solemnised the marriage of Miss Agnes St. Clair Bruce Bruce with Mr. Francis Richard Samuel Bircham.

The event created great interest in the neighbourhood, and the townsfolk, to show their goodwill towards the bride and bridegroom, bedecked their houses with flags and other decorative devices. Above the road leading to the church hung festoons, and at various points triumphal arches had been erected, upon which were lettered the following good wishes:- "Long life and happiness", "Good luck to them," Bright and happy may their future be." Over the entrance to the churchyard appeared the words "Health and happiness to the bride and bridegroom." The path leading to the porch was covered with a red carpet strewn with primroses.

Long before 12.15, the hour fixed for the ceremony, the church of St. Mary - which had been charmingly decorated - was crowded with a congregation which included friends of the contracting parties from far and near.

Among those thus assembled were:- Mr. and Mrs. S. Bircham (father and mother of the bridegroom, Mrs. Bruce (mother of the bride), Mr. and Mrs. Edward Halsey, Major and Mrs. Dalrymple, Mr. and Mrs. Willan, Judge and Mrs. Roberts, Mrs. Murray Downton, Mr. and Mrs. Parmeter, Miss Story, Miss King, Mrs. Vulliamy, Mr. Bertram O. Bircham. Mr. Lawrence E. Halsey, Captain Cordeaux, Admiral F. Vandermeulen, Mr. Restler, Mr. Christie, Mr. Simms, Mrs. A. Ricardo, Master Jack Scudamore, Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Bircham, and others.

At the church door, the bride leaning on the arm of her cousin, Captain Pirie, R.N., who gave her away, was met by the six bridesmaids:- Miss Bruce, Miss Wilson, Miss Howland Roberts, Miss Vulliamy. Miss Nellie Ricardo, and Miss Dorothy Bruce. The bride wore a lovely dress of white oyster satin, trimmed with velvet embroidery and silver, made by Mms. Lacey, of Bond Street, London. The bridesmaids were in white, with forget-me-not toques, the four small children wearing white hats. Each carried a lily of the valley bouquet, and wore silver buckles and buttons - presents from the bridegroom, who was supported by Mr. Oswald as best man.

The officiating clergy were Canon Wilkinson and (the Rev. B. Wilian, uncle of the bride). Before the service, the hymn. "O perfect love" was sung, and as the bride and bridegroom proceeded from the chancel steps to the altar Psalm 87 (The Deus) was chanted to Barnby in E. Before the final prayers the hymn " Now thank we all our God" was sung with heart and voice by the choir and congregation. Miss Wilkinson presided at the organ, and, while the congregation awaited the the arrival of the bridal party, played Bennett's " Barcarolle in E", the Bridal March from Wagner's Lohengrin and other pieces. Mendelssohn's Wedding March was played at the conclusion the service.

As the happy couple drove to the Old Brewery House the bells pealed out a merry chime, and the usual quietude of the town was disturbed by the booming of guns. The Market Place presented a very animated appearance, and filled with crowds of townspeople, evidently on holiday bent. After the wedding party had been photographed by Mr. Wilkinson of the Royal Arcade, Norwich, a recherche breakfast, provided by Messrs. Snelling of Rampant Horse Street, Norwich, and served under the personal direction of Mr. Arthur Snelling, was partaken of in a spacious marquee erected by Messrs. Holborn & Co. of Norwich.

During the breakfast and the at home, which followed, the Band of the 4th B.N.R., under the conductorship of Bandmaster A. Mace, played the following selection of music ...

In the afternoon the bride and bridegroom left the town amid a salvo of cheers, in a fine new motor car, built by the bridegroom, in which they intend touring through the country during the next few weeks. The bride's going away dress was a fawn coloured motor suit.

At three o'clock a reception was held Mrs. S. Bircham and Mrs. Bruce, to which the following, among numerous others, were invited:- Canon and Mrs. Wilkinson and party, the Rev. W.H. and Mrs. Freeman and party, the Rev. J. and Mrs. Armstrong and party, the Rev. and the Misses Blofeld, the Rev. Theo. Marsh, Miss Holley. Miss Pask, Miss Elwin, Captain and Mrs. Kennedy, the Rev. C. and Mrs. Lillington, Rev. W. Elwin, Miss Collyer, Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Collyer, Rev. E. and Mrs. Morton, Captain O. Gwyn, and Mr. Walter Hansell.

In the evening a servants and tradesmen's dance was held at Hackford old schoolroom.

On Monday afternoon at five o'clock a tea was given to 300 children of Reepham, Kerdistone, Hackford and Whitwell, by Mr. and Mrs. Bircham. The youngsters were afterwards amused by Professor Lindrea's performance.

Two further cuttings about the wedding :-

Norwich Mercury Sat. April 18 1903

REEPHAM.

**MARRIAGE OF MR. F. R. BIRCHAM AND
MISS N. BRUCE.**

On Tuesday afternoon the wedding took place in St. Mary's Church, Hackford, next Reepham, the parties being Mr. F. R. Bircham, of Beech Hill, Mayford, Surrey, and Miss Nan Bruce, of the Brewery House, Reepham. The village was gay with bunting, and the route between Brewery House and St. Mary's presented a particularly bright spectacle. About 12 o'clock the bridegroom arrived, supported by Mr. W. D. Oswald. Shortly afterwards the bride, dressed in white as in, walked down the aisle leaning on the arm of Capt. Pirie, R.N. The bridesmaids were Miss Daisy Bruce, Miss Wilson, Miss Dolly Bruce, Miss Neil Ricardo, Miss Winifred Roberts, Miss Mabel Vulliamy, all being dressed in white, and carrying bouquets of lilies of the valley, with blue streamers. The Rev. Canon Wilkinson performed the ceremony, assisted by the Rev. R. Willan and Rev. W. H. Freeman. During the ceremony Miss Wilkinson presided at the organ. The service was choral, and an excellent wedding breakfast was served up in a large marquee adjoining the house. In the afternoon the happy pair started out for their honeymoon trip on a motor-car. On Monday afternoon the school children of Hackford, Whitwell, Reepham, and Kerdistone were entertained to tea in their respective schools by Mrs. Bircham. A ventriloquial and conjuring entertainment was also provided for the children in the old schoolroom, Hackford. On Tuesday a dance was given in the Hackford old schoolroom by Mr. and Mrs. Bircham.

MARRIAGE OF MR. F. R. S. BIRCHAM.

A MOTOR CAR HONEYMOON.

There were great rejoicings at Reepham, Norfolk, on the occasion of the marriage of Miss Agnes Katharine St. Claire Bruce, second daughter of the late Mr. Alexander Bruce, of the Isle of Man, and Mrs. Bruce, of Reepham, to Mr. Francis Richard Samuel Bircham, only son of Mr. Sam Bircham, solicitor to the London and South Western Railway Company, and Mrs. Bircham, of Reepham and Beech Hill, Woking, which was solemnised at St. Mary's Church, Reepham, on Tuesday, under the happiest of auspices. The hour of 12.15 had been fixed for the ceremony, but long before then the church was filled by guests, and the more humble well-wishers of the contracting parties, in whose nuptials general interest was evinced by the inhabitants of the district. The officiating clergy were the Rev. Canon Wilkinson, Rector of Reepham, and the Rev. R. Willan, uncle of the bride, and the service was fully choral, Miss Geraldine Wilkinson, daughter of the Rector, presiding at the organ and playing Bennett's "Harcourle" in F, and the "Bridal March" from Wagner's "Lohengrin," whilst awaiting the arrival of the bride, and Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" as the happy couple left the church. The bride, who was given away by her cousin, Captain Pirie, R.N., was charmingly attired in a gown of oyster satin, trimmed with silver and velvet embroidery, and wore a lace veil. Attending her as bridesmaids were Miss Bruce, Miss Dorothy Bruce, Miss Winnie Wilson, Miss Vulliamy, Miss Roberts, and Miss Nellie Ricardo. The four smaller bridesmaids wore white silk dresses and white hats, and the two elder were attired in serge coats and skirts and forget-me-not toques. They all carried bouquets of white roses and lilies of the valley, and wore silver buttons and buckles, given by the bridegroom. Mr. Oswald acted as best man.

At the wedding breakfast, which took place immediately after the ceremony, the invited guests, most of whom were present, were Mrs. E. Halsey, Major and Mrs. Dairymple, the Rev. R. and Mrs. Willan, Judge and Miss Roberts, Mrs. Murray Downton, Mr. and Mrs. B. E. Bircham, Mr. and Mrs. F. Parneter, Miss Story, Miss King, Mrs. Vulliamy, Mr. B. O. Bircham, Mr. Laurence Halsey, Major Cordeaux, Admiral Vander Menlen, Captain and Mrs. Pirie, Mr. Restler, Mr. Christie, Mr. Simms, Mrs. Arthur Ricardo, and many more. During the afternoon Mrs. Bircham and Mrs. Bruce entertained their neighbours at a party, and the newly-married couple left for the Lakes—where the honeymoon is being spent—in a 40 horse-power motor car, built by Messrs. Dennis, of Guildford, to the bridegroom's designs. The bride's travelling dress consisted of a covert coating motor costume. At night Mr. and Mrs. Sam Bircham and Mrs. Bruce gave a ball to about 200 of the tradesmen and servants, etc., at Reepham. On Monday afternoon all the school children of Hackford and Whitwell, Reepham and Kerdston were entertained at tea, and afterwards were amused by a conjuror, whilst the old people in the villages were given some meat.

THE PRESENTS.