

Letter to Effie Loag from Emma Bray's roommate Nellie Bacon describing the quilt that Emma's Mills College schoolmates made for Emma's wedding (28 Feb 1884). Nellie also gives Effie a detailed description of the wedding.

March 2nd 1894

My dear Effie

How natural it seems to write that name and yet just a few months ago I should not have thought of doing so. I promised you a description of the quilt when finished and while the events of the last few days are freshest in my mind I will endeavor to give you a glimpse of them for I know you will be glad to hear.

The quilt was completed and sent over the 23rd going to Mrs. Templeton's there to await my coming. It is an elegant thing and equal to our greatest expectations. The center one with the monogram E.B. and a crackle work about it thusly [small sketch of design]. The other squares were each different and yet all handsome. Some in ribbon work, three painted, and most of the rest embroidered. Laura Requa's had a few bars of "Home Sweet Home", Julie's had circles of plush, and Mabel's blue fans, her monogram being on one of them.

Mine was a spray of ? and Golden Rod embroidered on pale blue moire silk. Some were edged with high colored plush, some were nearly all plush, and others had two or three shades of plush. The whole was edged with a six inch border of the plush that I enclose, lined with the silk and finally finished with a large cord exactly matching the plush. Of course it would look handsomer as a whole than in the sample. The quilt was nearly two yards square.

Emma spent the night of the 19th with me to my perfect delight and happiness as you may imagine. My father, mother, and brother all went out leaving us to have a quiet evening to ourselves and you may be sure it is one that will never be forgotten by me. I think Emma enjoyed the rest and quiet also. She left the next morning about half past ten and soon after the girls came by agreement to finish the making up of the quilt.

When she arrived Tues I was not at home and the quilt was on my bed. Fortunately my father remembered it and kept her downstairs until I came. Well Monday morning I went to Fruitvale and got the quilt and too it to Emma and Effie, every stitch that we put into that quilt paid. It was a joy to see the girl's delight in receiving it. She got down on the floor and discovered and deciphered everyone's name herself.

She screamed out "Effie" and thanked me over and over for asking you as I knew she would. She hugged and kissed me and we both laughed and cried. Julie and Allie Hussey were there also. She has spoken of it since and everybody who has seen it thinks it is so nice so I am more than glad that we thought of and carried it through. I thank you again and your sister for your ready response. Yours was one of the handsomest in it.

She never suspected it in the least so it was a complete surprise, making it all the more delightful. She was obliged to come to the city that day so we came together having another sweet visit, so as you see I have been favored. Thurs a.m. I again set out for Fruitvale this time to remain until Emma should become Mrs Alfred Henry Cohen. I was to stay at the Mrs. Templeton's with Mary and Mame ?.

The florist decorated the house, the girls waiting upon him and doing what we could to fill vases, baskets, etc. There were garlands of evergreens everywhere, these filled with flowers to about six feet from the ground. The mantel banked and flowers in every conceivable place. Emma stood in the parlor bay window, the marriage bell suspended over her head and flowers and evergreens about her.

About quarter of eight it was announced that she was dressed and I slipped into her room to have just one more kiss. Oh Effie if you could have seen her as she stood there, her lovely long white dress, simple but elegant in its simplicity and her veil falling over her face. I buttoned her gloves for her, having ripped the seams of the finger that was to receive that plain gold band which changed her life for ever, and then raised her veil and kissed her. She looked well better than for sometime and radiantly happy.

Alfred's present was a beautiful pair of earrings surrounded by little diamond to rest on her ears, these and the pin he gave her a year ago she wore. Mrs. Maddox present was a magnificent fan of large white ostrich feathers and a pearl stick. This Julie carried until after the ceremony. Julie and Mabel both looked pretty though the latter came from a sick bed to join in the festivities.

At promptly 8 they came down stairs and soon they were receiving the warm congratulations of the assembly. They spoke very low in responding (it being the Episcopal service) but so distinctly that every word could be heard. It was a lovely wedding in every way, everyone seemed to feel at home and though the house was very crowded all seemed friends.

I think the outside decorations almost surpassed those of the interior, for there were three hundred fifty Chinese lanterns suspended from the trees, on the lawn, and on the house and the fountain. Of course the supper was perfect in its way, the table looking most inviting. I did not go into the dining room to eat but sat with some of the girls at a small table outside in the sitting room.

At half past 11 Emma went upstairs to get ready to go to the city as all supposed, they having given everyone to understand that they were going to the Palace Hotel. Their destination the next day being a mystery. I went up with her and soon Mary and the others followed at precisely 12 they went out the back door and into the carriage and were driven away. From things that Emm told me in the afternoon and other things I observed, I inwardly decided that the new house was to be their abiding place for the night, but of course said nothing. Emma had told me before that she wanted to go there if it were not for being seen the next morning, so I supposed they thought to obviate that difficulty by keeping their own counsel. Wasn't it cute of them! They drove away the next

morning before anyone was out. I went to the house in the morning and Julie greeted me with the news, saying not one of them suspected it, Pauline alone being let in on the secret. I rather imagine Mary knew it, but had no opportunity to ask her as I did. We think they are at Monterey today and what lovely weather they have had, a warm and sunny week. I shall be anxious to see them in the new house.

It is a lovely house and looks already inhabited and homelike in every way. Of Emma's presents I cannot give any adequate description. They were numerous, elegant, and useful and it seemed as if there was nothing more to be asked for. I saw most of them but they were not displayed in accordance with Emma's good sense and shrinking from ostentation.

Now Effie have I given you any idea of this lovely occasion to which you would have been so gladly welcomed and whose absence was deeply regretted as that of any one. I know there are many questions you would like to have answered and perhaps among all the descriptions you will receive you may feel satisfied. I told Emma I had promised to write to you and she told me how anxious you were to hear and added "I am so glad that now Effie and you know each other." And so am I for it will be pleasant to talk of her whom we both love so dearly. It seems as if things could always remain the same between us as there is so little change outwardly in dear Emma's life, but alas a change in inevitable and thought the love is still there, other cares and other interests will push its manifestation to one side and she shall have to content ourselves with a memory. Only let us hope that the life that has opened so full of sunshine for them may extend far into the future without the clouds that sometimes darken every life.

Goodnight to friend Effie from her friend Nellie L Bacon