

No Stampede for That Gown

By BERNADINE MORRIS

It was possible yesterday to buy a reasonably accurate facsimile of the sleeveless, V-necked dress Tricia Nixon wore at her White House wedding June 12 to Edward Finch Cox, but prospective brides weren't exactly knocking down the doors.

Rose Marie Carfora was enchanted with it however. "I passed by the window at Arnold Constable at 8 o'clock this morning on my way to work, and it hit me," she said. Miss Carfora, who is a clerk at Family Circle magazine's offices on Madison Avenue, thought about the dress all day, and after work went to the store, tried it on and bought it. She was the only one. She will be married next March to George Milhaven, a steamfitter.

Not every girl was taken with the idea of looking like Mrs. Cox, however.

Young Girl Shopping

"Let Tricia be Tricia, I want to be myself," said a young girl shopping at the store with her mother. She pointedly turned away as the replica of the scalloped lace and organza dress was being modeled, but later she asked a salesgirl how much it cost.

The price at Arnold Constable for the version by Alfred Angelo was \$170, which included a choice of gauntlets like the ones Tricia wore or lace sleeves. The headdress, a lace cap set on a frame and worn back on the head, and a veil, brought the price up another \$65.

At Macy's, the price tag

was \$160 for the same dress or \$225 with the headdress and veil. The dress, which had been received the night before, was not yet on display.

"I heard about the dress, but I didn't see the wedding on television—I gave it up for a Met game," said Diane Belasco, who was looking for "a simple A-line wedding dress."

"With bell sleeves," added her mother, Mrs. George Belasco. "We're so busy with our weddings, we're not interested in President Nixon's."

The store buyers were more enthusiastic about the style than their customers.

"The trend has been to this type of dress again, the formal look," said Mrs. Florence Jansen of Arnold Constable, who included the style in a bridal fashion show for 1,100 people at the Commodore Hotel Monday night and displayed it in a Fifth Avenue window.

"We're crying for a new look in necklines and this one has it with its scallops and its low V," said Mrs. Jean Badalamenti of Macy's. She said she had received some calls last week from girls asking if she had anything like Tricia's dress in stock. "Now I can call them back and tell them I do," she added.

The manufacturer, Alfred Angelo, gingerly calls its dress "an interpretation," rather than a copy. Its hang tags say, "an interpretation of the White House wedding dress." The company, which also made swift versions of

Mrs. Patrick J. Nugent's (Luci Baines Johnson) wedding dress and Mrs. Charles S. Hobbs's (Lynda Bird Johnson), began shipping its latest adaptation to 500 stores last week, a spokesman said.

Priscilla of Boston, which made the dress Tricia wore, as well as her sister, Julie Eisenhower's wedding dress and that of Mrs. Nugent, is not reproducing the gown now. But it is doing the headdress and veil for \$275, and may include a version of the dress for next summer's brides in its October show on Seventh Avenue.

"An Ordinary Dress"

Other bridal manufacturers are not exactly ardent admirers of the dress nor of the influence it might have.

"I saw the wedding dress three times on television and in the magazines and it's an ordinary dress," said Nathan Mantell of Pandora. "There's nothing to it, nothing to the neckline, nothing to the bodice. I was surprised Tricia Nixon would select such a design. She should have a newer look."

Would he reproduce her dress?

"What's to copy?" he asked. "I copied Queen Elizabeth's dress when she got married. I had it out 24 hours later. Now, that was a dress. We had it in 40 stores and we got \$1,400 for it."

Christos, who designs bridal dresses for Galina fashions said "The skirt was beautiful, but the top is too old and too naked." No, he wasn't going to make anything like it.



The New York Times/Bill Aller

Alfred Angelo's version of dress Tricia Nixon wore at her wedding to Edward Finch Cox is \$170 at Arnold Constable. Macy's also has gown.