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Tricia's Triumph

*'Like a Fantasy,' in
A Veil of Mist*

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Examiner Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON—Tricia Nixon, golden girl of American politics, and Edward Finch Cox, blueblood of American society, were wed yesterday in a tender White House ceremony made even more fantasy-like by the veil of mist and light drizzle.

The President's daughter clutched the steady hand of her "first and last love" firmly, as they pledged—in marriage vows they personally had chosen—to cherish one another as "equal" individuals.

Under a flower-bedecked white, wrought-iron gazebo standing just outside the President's Oval Room office, Cox placed a platinum band encrusted with 30 diamonds on the bride's finger and they were declared man and wife at 4:45 p.m.

Rain delayed the ceremony about a half hour, threatened at one point to force the wedding indoors, and dampened some of the guests.

As Alice Roosevelt Longworth, 87, herself a White House bride in 1906, observed when she took her place at the ceremony, "I feel like I'm sitting on a wet sponge."

But Tricia, the "quiet one" of the Nixon family with a mind of her own, clung tenaciously to her dream of an outdoor wedding, and, backed up by her father, she had it.

A two-hour rainfall preceded the ceremony and drizzle began to fall again just as it was ending. Some said the

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sixpence in her white silk shoe brought luck to Tricia—but the Rev. Billy Graham, a guest, added that he had been “summoning up all my powers.”

Throughout the speeded up ceremony, the bride and her father smiled with exuberant happiness — their dimples, in familiarly identical places, expressing their delight.

The groom was more solemn. Not until after he kissed his wife gently on the cheek after the final vows did his good-looking face give way to a shy smile.

Swathed in frothy white, with her silky hair rolled in a bun under a seed pearl tiara, Tricia looked more like a child's dream of a princess than an imminent housewife—even the housewife of a man from a wealthy, old-line family.

She made history by becoming the eighth President's daughter to be married in the Executive Mansion while her father was in office — but the first to be wed in the rose garden.

Punctuating his daughter's concern for realizing that unique position in history, President Nixon appeared in take place and said, “We do not want to move the wedding into the East Room if it can possibly be avoided. The East Room is a great room — but after all, it's just another great room.”

The damp but exquisite ceremony began at 4:30 — one half hour behind schedule, when the 400 guests filed quickly from the White House to the Rose Garden.

The ebullient Martha Mitchell, wife of the Attorney General, was dressed in a flouncy yellow and orange dress reminiscent of (as one fashion reporter called it) the 1830s, and she carried a lace trimmed yellow umbrella. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird remarked, “Everybody else checked their umbrellas, Martha.” She closed hers.

The assembled guests, many famous personages and some “just family and good friends,” sat in damp gilded chairs but arose as Mrs. Nixon walked quickly down a long, grassy center aisle carpeted in white.

Trumpets Signal Procession

As the trumpets sounded to signal the beginning of the procession, the guests all turned to watch the bridal party descend a curving stairway from the South Portico of the White House, pacing their movement to the measures of a 22-piece ensemble from the U.S. Army strings. Their path was bordered by garlands of blue wisteria, and topiary trees of white roses.

The ceremony was unique, and personally planned by Tricia and Ed. After a seven-year secret courtship, during which dramatic chances have occurred in the status of women and of marriage relationships, Tricia and Edward agreed to “love each other, but not make a bond of (your) love; stand together, but not too near together, just as the pillars of a temple stand apart yet stand together.”

Before they were to repeat those vows, Ed Cox was to go through a suspenseful few moments in his important nuptial day — watching the procession, ever looking over the heads of the guests for the bride he has loved for years.

Preceding the bride down the impressive aisle were Cox's eight groomsmen, all friends from his multiple Ivy League schooldays at Yale, Princeton and Harvard. Next came Tricia's two petite bridesmaids, her cousins Amy and Beth Nixon — and then her matron and maid of honor, ebullient Julie Nixon Eisenhower, 22, as matron,



Maurice Bonte, White House chef, was the last person to touch the wedding cake before Tricia cut the first slice. Here he put finishing touches on the seven-foot, six-inch concoction of sugar love birds and cherry blossoms.

—UPI Photo

and the groom's sister, 25-year-old socialite Mary Ann (Maisie).

The pretty attendants each wore long gowns made of four layers of silk organdy in mint green and lilac shades, with floppy picture hats to match, and carried bouquets of yellow sweetheart roses, stephanotis, lilac and pale pink Sweet William.

Excitement crescendoed as the Army strings began to play “Trumpet Voluntary,” the signal for the descent of the President and his diminutive 25-year-old daughter.

Standing at the altar, Ed Cos, 24, handsome and traditionally imperturbable, searched above the heads of the craning guests for his first glimpse, on this wedding day, of the pretty young woman he has known for nearly eight years and loved, secretly, for three.

For him, the wedding procession, which lasted nearly one-half hour, was a beautiful but suspenseful experience.

As the President and Patricia reached the altar, the guests picked up small white satin booklets tied with silver and white cord, a memento from the White House. In the books, they could follow the progress of the unique

A Bride of 65 Years Ago

WASHINGTON (AP) — Alice Roosevelt Longworth, a White House bride in 1906, said yesterday's wedding of Tricia Nixon and Edward F. Cox "couldn't have been prettier."

Mrs. Longworth, 87, widow of the longtime Speaker of the House, Nicholas Longworth, was a guest at the wedding.

Asked if it reminded her of her own, she replied: "Heavens, no. I was married 20 years before Hollywood. This is quite a production."

ceremony—a blend of Episcopal, Methodist and Catholic marriage rituals. Tricia is a Quaker, Edward is Episcopal and the minister is a Methodist.

No one but the officiating minister, Rev. Edward Latch, chaplain of the House of Representatives, could see the faces of the handsome bride and groom as he addressed the couple with the solemn advice, "that the future with its dreams and disappointments, its pleasures and sadnesses, its successes and failures, cannot be foreseen. Of course, these elements are found in every life, therefore, are to be anticipated in your own.

"And so, unaware of what definitely is before you, you accept one another. To love is to appreciate and cherish our beloved as a unique person, deep, extraordinary, exceptional. It is to visualize him or her as an equal—yet complementing—individual."

President Gives Away Bride

When the minister asked the traditional question, "Who giveth Patricia to be married to Edward?" the President of the United States moved swiftly to join Tricia's right hand with the right hand of her future husband.

Then the couple, in turn, repeated the traditional vow — "I, Edward, take thee, Patricia, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, to honor and to comfort, in sickness and in health, in sorrow and in joy, to love and to cherish from this day forth."

There was no promise to "obey."

At the close of the brief service, the 70-year-old minister spoke a quiet prayer before the kneeling couple:

Jubilant Return to White House

"This moment is the beginning of a new day. In the evening of their lives together, may they be able to look back and say how splendid the day has been. Amen."

But there was no time to think of that particular prospect, as the exuberant bride and groom hurried back down the aisle toward a White House wedding reception that would be almost as exciting as the wedding itself.

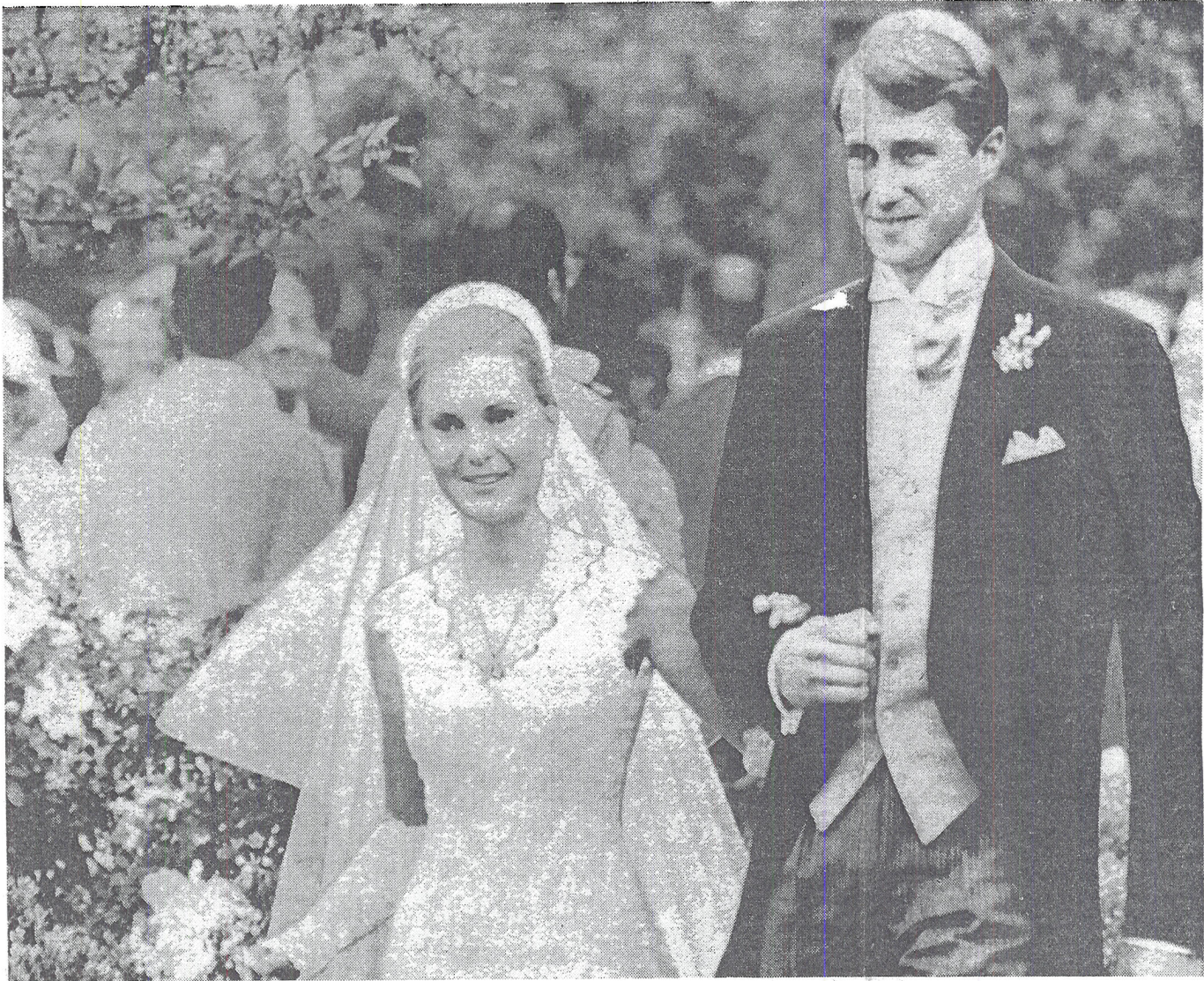
Led by the wedding party and the Nixon and Cox families, a jubilant recession to the White House followed immediately after the arborial ceremony.

And inside the White House, there were even more flowers than outside.

White, lavender and pink flowers were heaped on all the mantel - pieces, atop the torches and chandeliers and sconces.

While the bride and groom posed for official, post-wedding photographs, the 400 guests roamed through the first floor of the house, awed by the glittering beauty of the decorations — and the spectacular, six-tiered, 350-pound, lemon flavored, sugar - coated cake which stood six feet tall, five feet in diameter and was decorated with blown sugar love birds and the initials "PN" and "EC" on top.

And thus did Tricia Nixon Cox begin not only a new day in her life, but a new era in which she will be moving from the most famous mansion in America into, next September, \$180-a-month, third-floor walk-up apartment close to the Harvard University campus where her husband attends law school.



—AP Photo