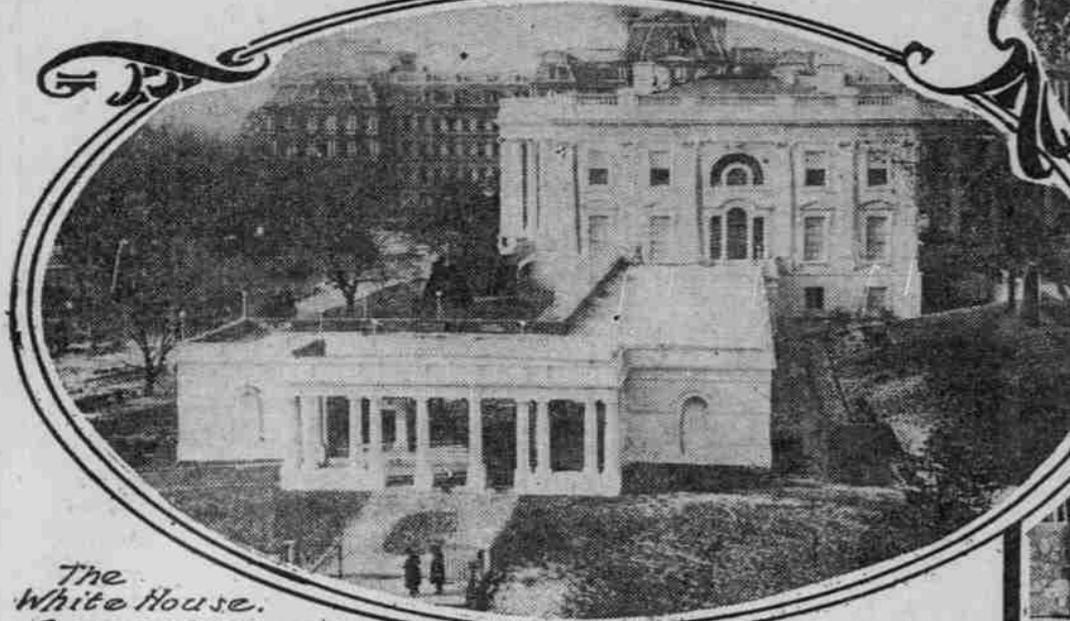


# Gaiety To Reign In White House ~

Washington Society Awaits Season of Festivities Which President's Bride Will Dominate.



The White House.  
Public Entrance  
in Foreground.

BY RENE BACH.

**WASHINGTON.**—The coming winter promises to be the gayest social season Washington has known since the Roosevelts were in the White House. Last winter no entertainments were given there, the Wilsons being in mourning, and this circumstance had a depressing effect upon the fashionable circles of the Capital. But, if report errs not, the President's bride-to-be intends to signalize her advent by a brilliant series of entertainments; and it goes without saying that everybody will be eager to meet, and, if possible, to know her.

Of course, every one is saying that she is a wonderfully lucky woman. True, but the business of the President's wife is not so easy and enjoyable as most people imagine. It involves a great deal of very hard work and much responsibility. The "first lady in the land" has but little time that she can call her own, or to devote to mere amusement.

There are, however, many compensations. Chief among them is the pleasure derivable from occupying so distinguished and enviable a position. No woman could fail to find delight in that. But, to mention only one minor advantage, the mistress of the White House has a housekeeping allowance of \$25,000 a year from the Government, besides what her husband gives her for domestic expenses.

For another advantage, she has no calls to make. Everybody calls upon her, but etiquette does not require her to return visits. To this rule there are one or two exceptions. If an ex-President's wife comes to Washington, she will go to call upon Mrs. Wilson, and Mrs. Wilson will return the call. The same course of procedure would be followed in the case of newly-arrived foreign royalty.

Mrs. Wilson's invitations sent out from the White House will be in effect commands. No "previous engagement" can be alleged as a reason for non-acceptance. A card from the President's palace (as the mansion was called a century ago) renders all other engagements void. Illness, death or absence from the city are the only excuses deemed acceptable, and the recipient of the invitation must in his reply state briefly the circumstance compelling his declination.

Where the sending of invitations is concerned, Mrs. Wilson will have no trouble at all, beyond supervising the list of people to be asked. All the rest of the work will be done by a clerk specially appointed for the purpose, assisted by a couple of expert men transferred from the departments to the White House staff temporarily during the social season. For each of the great public receptions there are some thousands of engraved cards to be filled in, and envelopes to be written—delivery of the cards, in Washington, being made not by mail, but by one of the President's own messengers.

Mrs. Wilson will have no housekeeping worries. Her butler (known officially as the steward) is paid by the Government, his wages being \$1800 a year. He will do all the marketing, buy the wines and cigars, and exercise a general control over the food supply and purchasing department. Provisions, groceries, etc., are purchased by him in the ordinary way, but always with the understanding that if any dealer ventures to use the White House patronage as an advertisement, it will be withdrawn.

There is also an official housekeeper, a woman, paid by Uncle Sam, but appointed or discharged by the President's wife. Mrs. Wilson will find it necessary to employ a "social secretary," mainly to help her with her personal correspondence. This young lady, as well as the ordinary servants, about a dozen in number, will draw her pay from the President's own pocket.

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required for the proper and comfortable management of the establishment. Thus, to start with, all responsibility for the upkeep of the White House and the safety of its occupants rests with an engineer officer of the Army, Col. William W. Harts, who looks after the lighting and heating of the mansion, attends to its repairs, and sees that it is adequately policed. This officer is called the "military aid" of the President.

There is also a "naval aid," who is called upon for duty when the President goes voyaging. But of greater interest to Mrs. Wilson will be the President's "personal aid"—usually an officer of the Army. She will probably pick him out herself, because, although his chief business is supposed to be to look after Mr. Wilson, the lady of the White House claims most of his services, as "gentleman in waiting" and factotum. This was the post Archibald Butt held, and from which he was removed by the tragedy of the Titanic.

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The east room was originally designed as the "banqueting hall" of the White House; yet, strange to say, no President until Mr. Roosevelt seems to have thought of using it for state dinners. Mrs. Wilson and her husband will give three such dinners this winter—the first one to the members of the Cabinet and their wives, the second to the diplomatic corps, and the third to the Supreme Court. At the diplomatic dinner, which is the largest, 80 or 90 guests will sit down.

A very rigid and meticulous etiquette governs these affairs. Let us suppose the case of Baron A——, of the Utopian Legation, who, with his wife, attends the diplomatic banquet. Entering the east wing of the White House—an extension of the mansion—only one staircase lined with gilded pineapples for hats and coats. Here he and the Baroness receive a check for their wraps, and are presently ushered into the dressing-room provided for gentlemen and ladies respectively.

The Baron finds on a table in the dressing-room a small envelope addressed to himself, unsealed, with an eagle in gold stamped on the flap. It contains a gilt-edged card which bears a diagram of the dining-table

at which he will presently sit. Written across the diagram is the name of the lady he is to take in to dinner; and the seats are indicated by numbers, two of which are struck out with a pen, indicating the ones that are to be occupied by the Baron and his partner.

The entrance to the dining-room is shown on the plan, and the words "The President" mark the chair of the host.

Presently the Baron joins the Baroness (who has meanwhile found out who her dining partner is to be), and ascending a broad flight of stairs to the main floor of the White House, they cross the great vestibule to the blue room. There the guests are all expected to be assembled when, at exactly 8 o'clock, the President and Mrs. Wilson come down stairs together. Entering the blue room, they exchange a few greetings with the guests, and then Mr. Wilson gives his right arm to the wife of the ranking diplomat present—i. e., the Ambassador of longest continuous service in Washington. The Ambassador offers his arm to Mrs. Wilson, and the others follow two by two, like the animals coming out of the ark, in order of rank.

The dining table is a huge affair. It may be U-shaped, T-shaped, or of some other form. If uncovered, it would be found to be a built-in affair of planks, mounted on trestles and overlaid with damask beneath the tablecloth. Decorated with similes and fables, cut flowers, and huge "made pieces" of hothouse blooms, however,

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Mrs. Wilson will doubtless give during the winter a number of smaller dinners, for 25 to 35 guests. They will be jolly and very enjoyable affairs, with most of the stiffness of the state banquets removed. Such a dinner can be prepared and served very nicely by the White House staff, whereas for a state dinner a caterer must be employed, bringing his own food supplies, with additional cooks, waiters and dish-washers, and utilizing the White House plant. Mrs. Wilson will find at her disposal kitchens that vie in size and perfection of equipment with those of a first-class hotel.

Conspicuous on all occasions of lighter festivity at the President's palace will be the so-called "social aids" of whom in the winter time there are usually half a dozen assigned to duty which the above term fairly well describes. These social aids are young officers of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps, picked for good looks, good breeding, and drawing-room accomplishments. It is necessary that they shall be bachelors, and they must be first-rate dancers.

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