

Chapter 62: Mum and Dad's (and Other) Weddings

At the start of this period, mum and dad were already engaged to be married, having got engaged on mum's birthday in 1954.¹ In February 1955, mum noted that she and dad had talked and they "decided to ask mummy & daddy if we could get married on June 2nd 1956". Mum also noted that she hoped they said yes. Presumably they did as mum and dad did get married on that day.

On 19 December 1955, mum must have asked Arthur Lofthouse if he would marry them as there is a letter from him, dated 28 December 1955, among mum's papers accepting that role.

My Dear Sheila,

Many thanks for your letter of the 19th. Yes! I will be very pleased to come & do the necessary for you & Roy on June 2nd. When, later on, you go to see Mr Howells to make arrangements tell him that you wish him to take part in the service but that you want me to actually marry you.

Dorothy will be writing later that she is ever so pleased you have asked her to be a bridesmaid. Ken should be home by then & we will be very pleased to accept the invitation you have extended to us all. I will be writing to your mummy a few times before then & we can arrange nearer the time about us coming. I have booked it in my diary & will take June 3rd for a holiday Sunday. You won't expect a wedding present that weekend will you? It won't be Quarterly meeting until the 6th, you know.

We were ever so pleased to hear of your dad's progress & we do hope that he will keep much better now, tell him Auntie Ella is very pleased to hear he is getting so domesticated.

We do hope that you have had a nice Christmas even if quieter than usual. It isn't quite the same on a Sunday, we made Monday our day but Mr & Mrs Gill had to go on the 4-5 bus, he had to be at work at 10pm. The Misses Smith were able to stay until the 5-5 yesterday. We expect my two sisters from Brotton on Friday & we are looking forward to their visit.

It is a dreadful night here, very high winds & heavy rain & we have had thunder too, at the height of the storm the electricity went off for about 5 mins. Poor Teddie has been frightened but seems more settled now, he hasn't liked high winds since the chimney pot blew off last year.

Dorothy thanks you very much for the present you sent her. We bought her a set of carvers (she got her mum a jumper & me a pullover).

Now I must wind up but I wanted you to know it was OK for June 2nd. All our love to you all & all good wishes for 1956

Tel: Stokesley 358.

The Manse,
North Road,
Stokesley,
Middlesbrough.

Rev. G. Arthur Lofthouse.

28th December 1955

My Dear Sheila,

Many thanks for your letter of the 19th. Yes! I will be very pleased to come & do the necessary for you & Roy on June 2nd. When, later on, you go to see Mr Howells to make arrangements tell him that you wish him to take part in the service but that you want me to actually marry you.

Dorothy will be writing later but she is ever so pleased you have asked her to be a bridesmaid. Ken should be home by then & we will be very pleased to accept the invitation you have extended to us all. I will be writing to your mummy a few times before then & we can arrange nearer the time about us coming. I have booked it in my diary & will take June 3rd for a holiday Sunday. You won't expect a wedding present that weekend will you? It won't be Quarterly meeting until the 6th, you know.

Letter from Arthur Lofthouse December 1956. I am not sure who all the people are, nor the meaning of the comment about a wedding present. Presumably, this is some kind of joke?

¹ See [Chapter 57](#)

In January 1956, mum noted that she had decided to ask Carole Holland to be her sixth bridesmaid. She did not record asking the other five but they were Marilyn Seville, Dorothy Lofthouse, Maureen and Janet Stark (dad's nieces) and Lynne Evans. That same month, grandma and mum went to see Mrs Booter, of Beulah Road, to see about making bridesmaids' dresses. In February 1956, mum went into Nottingham and got a sample and pattern for the bridesmaids' dresses. That same month, she went into Nottingham with grandma. They bought mum's going away dress and material for her dress. They "ordered bridesmaids" (presumably material) and "looked at Roy's" (suit?). They also got cake decorations.

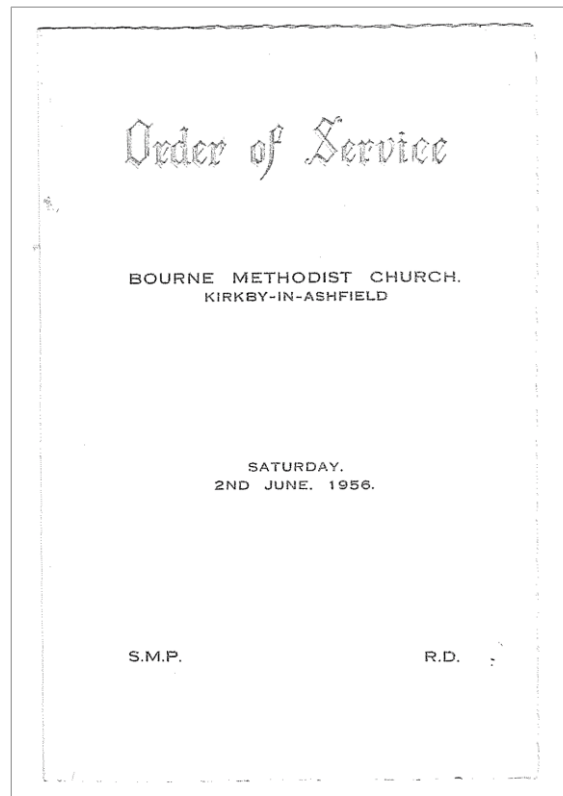
In March 1956, Dorothy visited in order to be measured for her bridesmaid's dress. That same month, both grandad and dad were measured for their suits, and grandma ordered her dress. At the end of that month, mum took Maureen and Janet to be measured. That same day, grandma and dad collected mum's white shoes from B&B.² The measuring continued into April with Lynne and Carole being measured on the 3rd and, on the 4th, mum went to Nottingham for lace. On the 7th, Marilyn visited to be measured. On the 15th, mum took Lynne for a fitting. Three days later, she bought presents for the bridesmaids and ties for dad, grandad, and Denis, dad's brother and best man. On the 21st, mum took Maureen and Janet for a fitting and on the 29th Marilyn visited for a fitting.

In May 1956, mum and dad bought each other watches and mum's wedding ring. Also, in May, on the 8th, and again on the 15th, mum went to Mrs Booter's to have her dress fitted. On 28 May, mum noted making lots of cake etc. She also noted that Ella Lofthouse arrived for the wedding on the 28th and Arthur on the 31st. Dorothy came on 1 June and, that night, mum noted going to chapel to put tables up.

Mum and dad got married at Bourne Methodist chapel on 2 June 1956 at 2.30pm. The wedding was officiated by the current minister, Rev Howells, and the former minister and family friend, Arthur Lofthouse. There were several copies of the order of service among mum's papers. According to these, the opening music was "[Antantino](#)" by [Edwin H Lemare](#). There were three hymns and the service included holy communion. The three hymns were "[The voice that breathed o'er Eden](#)", "[Be known to us in the breaking bread](#)" and "[O perfect love](#)". Other music included the bridal march "[Lohengrin](#)" by [Wagner](#), [Mendelssohn's wedding march](#) and [Handel's Largo](#), during the signing of the register.

Because of ill-health, grandad was unable to attend the wedding.³ This meant that mum was "given away" by grandma's brother, Bert. Ken Hodges⁴ sat with grandad during the wedding and Mr Pinchbeck, the pastor of the Full Gospel church, made an audio recording of the wedding for grandad to listen to

Order of service for mum and dad's wedding



² I am not sure what this refers to. In the 1941 Kelly's Directory, there is a shoe dealers called Betts and Broughton in Huthwaite. Could this be them?

³ See [Chapter 65](#).

⁴ I have assumed it is Ken Hodges but the diary just says Ken. Given that Arthur Lofthouse's letter mentions a Ken, it is possible this could be a different Ken.

later, which he did on Monday 4 June. Grandad commented that it was “very good”. He decided to invest in a reel-to-reel tape recorder, which I recall as a child, and Mr Pinchbeck brought a better recording of the wedding and made a copy for grandad’s own use.

The wedding was reported in the local newspaper. This noted⁵ some of the features of the ceremony, including that the organ was played by mum’s friend Hazel Munns and that the reception was held at the Bourne Methodist Schoolroom for around 100 guests.

After the wedding, mum and dad went for their honeymoon to Torquay, staying the first night at the Abbey Hotel in Kenilworth.⁶ When mum and dad got back from their honeymoon, mum cut up the wedding cake and, a couple of weeks later, packed away the wedding presents. At the beginning of July, mum got her wedding photos back.



*Above – grandma and Uncle Frank at mum and dad’s wedding
Above right – newspaper article relating to mum and dad’s wedding.*

⁵ It also misspelled the name of grandma and grandad’s house as “Elston”.

⁶ See [Chapter 66](#).



*Top – mum and Uncle Bert at mum and dad’s wedding
Above –back row – grandma (Drew), grandad (Drew), grandma (Parkin)
Middle row – Marilyn, Denis, dad, mum, Uncle Bert, Dorothy
Front row – Janet, Carole, Lynne, Maureen*



*Top row – mum and dad at their wedding
Above – these photos, including the one with granddad (right), were taken at a later date, in August 1956, when he was feeling better. These later photos were taken by Robert Ollerenshaw*

A number of mum's friends also got married during this period. On 26 March 1955, Betty Longden married John Dodsley. Mum noted that there was a "lovely dress & cake". In July 1955, grandad, grandma and grandad's sister, Eva, went to the wedding of Barbara Merry to Philip Binns in Stanton Hill. The Merrys appear to have been family friends of the Parkins living in Mansfield. They appear to have been particular friends of grandma's Auntie Bertha.⁷ On 8 October 1955, Barbara Spencer and Ron Rowe got married. Dad and Robert Ollerenshaw were ushers and mum noted that there were "games after".

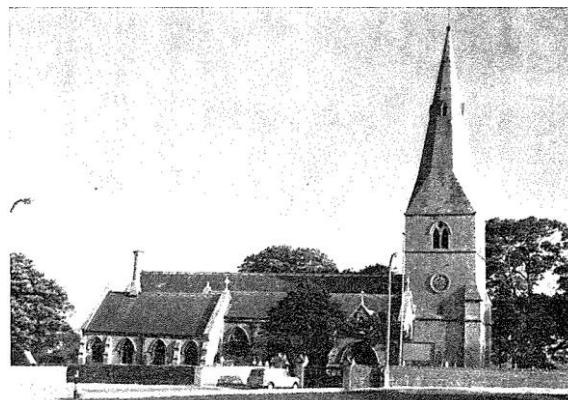
On 5 November 1955, mum's cousin Peter Cirket married Rita Ireton in Hastings. Mum, dad, Renie and Auntie Bertha went down by car the previous day. Mum was chief bridesmaid and wore pink. There were three other bridesmaids. They wore green. They included mum's other cousin and friend, Marilyn and Marilyn's sister, Jennifer. The third bridesmaid was a friend of either Peter or Rita's (or both) and was called Pamela. This wedding occurred at a time when both grandma and grandad were unwell and this explains why neither of them, especially grandma attended what was an important family wedding.



Peter Cirket's wedding
Top Left – Marilyn, unknown (possibly Marilyn's father), Pamela, Peter, Rita, mum, Jennifer
Above – Mum, Pamela, Jennifer, Marilyn – the bridesmaids
Left – Bert, Doris, Marilyn, unknown, Pamela, Peter, Rita, Mum, Jennifer, unknown x3 (presumably Rita's parents)

⁷ Prior to going out with dad, mum appears to have had a crush on David Merry (DM in her diaries)

In January 1956, mum and dad went to “*Harry & Shirley’s wedding at St Wilfrid’s⁸ then Waggon & Horses⁹ after*”. Initially, I thought this might be mum’s school friend Shirley Sadler but this wedding was in Kirkby and Shirley did not live there. Plus, she married someone called Les Vryenhoef in 1961. According to FreeBMD, there was a Shirley Doe and Harry Sheldon who married in Basford in this quarter. So, perhaps this is them. If so, I am not sure how they knew mum and dad, but perhaps through chapel.¹⁰



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Top left – postcard of St Wilfrid’s church in Kirkby from around 1913. It was sent to a Miss Gerry Rowells in Oxford by Peggy. It reads, “Dear Gerry. Arrived home quite safe about 2pm after a very pleasant journey. Mother thinks I am looking well. Will write later. Love to all. Peggy”.

Top right – picture of St Wilfrid’s church in the 1969 Kirkby Directory

Above – Waggon and Horses in Kirkby in 2009

⁸ St Wilfrid’s is [one of the Anglican churches](#) in Kirkby. It is described as the “mother church” in the book “*Kirkby & District from Old Photographs*” by Frank Ashley, Sylvia Sinfield and Gerald Lee (p6) and they also have a picture of the church in their other book “*Kirkby & District from Old Photographs*” (p35). In his book “*Kirkby-in-Ashfield: Yesterday Remembered*”, Gerald Lee dedicates a chapter (#19, pp97-103) to it as “A Church for All Seasons”. In 1907, the church was badly damaged by fire and images of this are captured in the book “*Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Annesley on Old Picture Postcards*” by David Ottewell (pictures 21 and 22). There is a detailed description of the church in the book “*Kirkby-in-Ashfield: An Interesting Township*” by Bill Clay-Dove (pp7-13). Some of its activities are advertised in the 1969 Kirkby Directory including bellringers, men’s fellowship, mothers’ union, young wives and youth club (pp33-35) and there is also a section giving basic information about the church (p55).

⁹ The [Waggon and Horses](#) was a pub in Kirkby. It closed in the 2000s and became a Boxing Club. It features in Gerald Lee’s book “*Kirkby-in-Ashfield Yesterday Remembered*” as a venue for sharing boxing recollections (see Chapter 17, p84) and it is also mentioned in Mark Ashfield’s book “*Horses, Herbs and a Cockatoo*” (p3). As of [August 2021](#), it appears to be boarded up.

¹⁰ Although it would be slightly odd that they then got married in an Anglican church

In February 1956, mum and dad went to chapel to see Annie Reynolds get married. According to FreeBMD, she appears to have married a Donald Wilson. In March 1956, mum and dad went to “Roy’s cousin’s (May) wedding”. This took place at St Thomas’s¹¹ and then the Miners Institute.¹² From FreeBMD, this may have been the wedding of May White and Ronald Horton but, if so, I am not sure how she was related to dad.

In 1957, a number of mum’s friends got married in quick succession. Joan Storer and Graham Hardy were married on 9 March at 8am with Margaret Varnam and Ken Roome following on the next week, the 16th, at 11am.

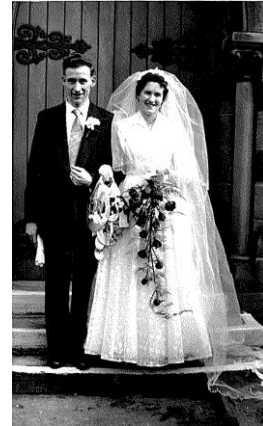


Top – wedding of Joan Storer and Graham Hardy. Top left shows Barrie Smith (best man), Mr Hardy, Graham, Joan, Mr & Mrs Storer
Above – wedding of Margaret Varnam and Ken Roome. Above left shows Mr & Mrs Roome, Betty Brimson, Bernard Roome (best man), Ken, Margaret, Mr Varnam, Maureen Hobbs (chief bridesmaid), Mrs Varnam

¹¹ See [Chapter 54](#).

¹² The Miners Institute in East Kirkby was [built in 1922](#). It was located on Low Moor Road between Alexandra Street and Edward Street, it was [demolished in 2010](#) and [the land](#) is currently unused. There are a number of discussion [threads](#) about the Miners’ Institute on the Kirkby Living Memory Facebook Group. There are photographs of the building in the books “*Kirkby & District: A Second Selection*” by Frank Ashley, Sylvia Sinfield and Gerald Lee (p42) and “*Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Annesley on Old Picture Postcards*” by David Ottewell (inside front cover). The first of these images was also posted on one of the Facebook groups to which I belong and I have therefor included in the web version of this chapter along with a photo taken inside the Institute.

That same month, on the 30th, Joy Munns and Alan Jones got married at 2.30pm. Her chief bridesmaid was her sister, Hazel Munns. According to a photo of mums, another of her bridesmaids was Kay Munns. She was Hazel and Joy's niece, the daughter of their older brother Alwyn and his wife Audrey.



*Wedding of Joy Munns and Alan Jones – above left – back row – best man, Mr Munns
Middle row – Janet Ridley, Alan, Joy, Hazel Munns (chief bridesmaid)
Front row – bridesmaid, Kay Munns, bridesmaid*

In March 1958, Margaret Bostock and Robert Ollerenshaw got married. Although mum has not named people in these photos, one of the bridesmaids appears to be Hazel Munns and the best man appears to be Richard Ward, Hazel's future husband. In April 1958, mum attended the wedding of Maureen Hobbs and John Smith at chapel. In July 1958, grandma helped Mrs Deakin with the catering for a wedding at St Wilfrid's. That same month, grandma, mum, dad, Renie and Jim all went to the wedding of a friend of Auntie Bertha's at [Farnsfield](#).

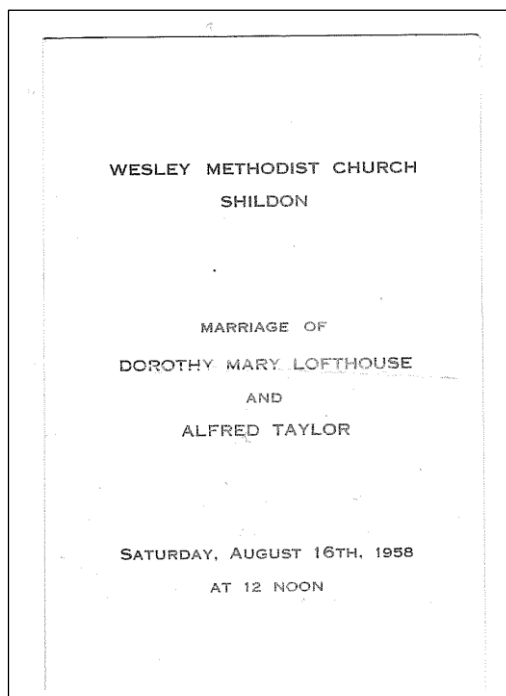


Wedding of Margaret Bostock and Robert Ollerenshaw

In January 1958, mum noted that Dorothy had written to her to ask her to be matron of honour at her wedding on 16 August. It is not clear whether mum accepted or not but it appears she did not attend, presumably because she had given birth to Tricia in the May. Dorothy did visit Kirkby in July, after Tricia was born, so presumably she and mum discussed it then. Regardless, it seems that grandma went to Dorothy's wedding in Shildon on her own, although grandad, mum and Tricia did take her to Derby.

According to mum’s notes with photos of the wedding, Dorothy was adopted but mum did not give details. According to a short news cutting among mum’s papers, Arthur officiated at the ceremony so Dorothy was “given away” by her uncle Mr H E Lofthouse.

Although Dorothy got married at a Methodist church in Shildon, mum was not sure which one it was. In her photo album, there are card photos of two Methodist churches in Shildon – one is referred to as the PM (Primitive Methodist) chapel and is on St John’s Street. The other was called the Wesleyan Church, Shildon. Mum noted that “Dorothy and Alf got married at one of these”. On balance, I suspect it was the one labelled Wesleyan Church. The order of service refers to the Wesley Methodist Church and one of the photos appears to have a pillar in the foreground. The newspaper article and photograph referred to the church being on Main Street.¹³



Top – Wedding of Dorothy Lofthouse and Alf Taylor
Above left – order of service
Above right – newspaper cutting related to the wedding

¹³ The [current](#) Methodist Church in [Shildon](#) is on Main Street but it is in a new building which [opened in 1976](#). There are more details of the Primitive Methodist chapel on St John’s Road on the My Primitive Methodists [website](#). Apparently, this building was demolished and replaced with houses.



The wedding took place at Shildon Main Street Methodist Church of Mr. A. Taylor, of Grangetown, and Miss Dorothy Mary Lofthouse, of Shildon.—[N.D.]



ST. JOHN'S ROAD AND P.M. CHAPEL, SHILDON.

9.

*Top – Newspaper photo of wedding of Dorothy Lofthouse and Alf Taylor
 Above and right– mum labelled these “Dorothy & Alf got married at one of these!” The one above is of St John’s Road and the Primitive Methodist chapel in Shildon. The one on the right is of the Wesleyan chapel in Shildon.*



WESLEYAN CHURCH, SHILDON.

18

On 20 June 1959, Hazel Munns and Richard Ward got married at 11am. According to grandad's diary, grandma went to help with catering and mum, dad and Tricia went as guests. From the photos, which are not labelled in detail, it appears that Robert and Margaret Ollerenshaw (nee Bostock) may have been best man and matron of honour, reciprocating roles played for them by Hazel and Richard at their wedding the previous year. The child bridesmaid appears to be Kay Munns, who played a similar role at Hazel's sister's wedding in 1958. It appears that there may have been a second matron of honour and this may have been Hazel's sister Joy.



*Wedding of
Hazel Munns and
Richard Ward*

During this period, there were celebrations of some major wedding anniversaries. In 1955, grandma and grandad celebrated their silver wedding having got married in 1930. Invitations were sent out in February and a party was held at Bourne Methodist Chapel on 19 March. Grandad noted the party but focused more on the fact that this meant that Ken and Pearl Hodges had had to look after the shop from 3pm. Mum gave more details of the party. About 90 people attended. She noted that she, dad, Ken and Pearl organised games. Presumably, Ken and Pearl did this once they had closed the shop! She noted that there were quite a few family members at the party. Grandma's brother (Bert) and family (Doris, Peter and Rita) had come up from the south coast. Grandma's aunt and uncle (Bertha and Frank) were there as were members of their family (Edie and Marilyn are mentioned specifically). In fact, there were so many that grandma, mum and Marilyn had to sleep next door at number 98.

In October 1956, Auntie Bertha and Uncle Frank celebrated their golden wedding, meaning they were married in 1906. Mum noted that the actual anniversary was on the 8th but the party was held on the 10th.¹⁴ Mum noted that she only got home at 1.30am after the party and that Marilyn, her sister Jennifer, and her parents Bert and Edie, stayed with them that night.

In July 1957, Arthur and Ella Lofthouse celebrated their silver wedding anniversary. Grandma went to Stokesley for a few days to celebrate this with them.



Auntie Bertha's and Uncle Frank's golden wedding with grandma far left. Also in the photo are Horace Seville (best man) and Mabel Cresswell one of the bridesmaids. Among mum's papers was a newspaper cutting featuring the same photo.

¹⁴ At Chesterfield Road South Methodist Church in Mansfield. The church is [still active](#) although the building looks [new](#). Apparently, the church was established in 1904. I found some details of a souvenir [programme](#) for opening of a new church in March 1967.

BRIDESMAIDS, BEST MAN, MADE RETURN TRIP



News cuttings related to Auntie Bertha and Uncle Frank's golden wedding celebrations

WEDDING PRINCIPALS WILL BE RE-UNITED

Two of the bridesmaids at a wedding at Bridge Street Methodist Church 50 years ago, and the best man, will be among guests at a family party to be held in celebration of the golden wedding, on Monday week, of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Edward Seville, of "Elstow," 22, Beech Hill Drive, Mansfield.

Mr. Seville and his wife, Mrs. Bertha M. Seville, who are 74 and 72 respectively, were married by the Rev. T. Naylor. The bridesmaids included Mrs. Mabel Cresswell, of West Bridgford, a sister of the groom, and Mrs. Ethel Parkin, of East Kirkby, the bride's niece, while the best man was Mr. Horace Seville (only surviving brother).

A native of Mansfield, Mr. Seville is a son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Josiah M. Seville, who lived in Welbeck Street. His father was a draper at Downham's, in the Market Place, but Mr. Seville himself, on leaving St. John's School at the age of 13, went to work at William Taylor's, the grocers, whose shop stood at the end of the "Black Boy" passage. During World War I he served with the Royal Horse Artillery for four years in France and Germany, and on demobilisation joined the staff of Mansfield Corporation's Electricity Department.

Mrs. Seville originates from the Bedfordshire village after which their house is named, but was only a small girl when she came to Mansfield to live with a married sister. At the age of 13 she obtained a job with W. and J. Linney's, operating a small treadle printing machine, and remained at the firm's Westgate printing works until a year before her marriage.

The elder of Mr. and Mrs. Seville's two sons, Bert, is a printer and stationer at Driffield; the younger, Frank, lives in Northfield Drive and is a switchboard operator at the East Midlands Electricity Board's Mansfield Depot. There are two granddaughters.

Nearly 50 members of the family and close friends, were guests at a party at Mansfield Chesterfield Road South Methodist Church yesterday week, to mark the Golden Wedding two days previously of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Edward Seville, of "Elstow," 22, Beech Hill Drive, Mansfield.

Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Seville's best man, Mr. H. Seville the only surviving brother of "the groom"; and the two bridesmaids, Mrs. Mabel Cresswell (Mr. Seville's sister) and Mrs. Ethel Parkin (Mrs. Seville's niece).

Mrs. Parkin's daughter, Mrs. Sheila Drew, recorded the event on a tape, and speeches of congratulation were given by Mr. Albert Edward Seville and Mr. Frank Seville, the two sons.

On view in a golden frame was a print of the wedding group 50 years ago.

Mansfield Couple Wed for 50 Years

An employee of Mansfield Corporation Electricity Department for 24 years until his retirement 11 years ago, Mr. Frank E. Seville (74), of Elstow, 22 Beech Hill Drive, Mansfield, and his wife, Mrs. Bertha M. Seville (72), will reach their golden wedding anniversary on Monday week.

The event is to be celebrated two days later, and among the guests will be three people who attended the couple at their wedding at Bridge Street Methodist Church — Mrs. Mabel Cresswell, of West Bridgford (Mr. Seville's sister) and Mrs. Ethel Parkin, of East Kirkby (Mrs. Seville's niece), who were bridesmaids; and Mr. Horace Seville, who has the best man. He is Mr. Frank Seville's only surviving brother.

Before obtaining a post with the Electricity Department, Mr. Seville served for four years in France and Germany with the Royal Horse Artillery in the first world war. Born at Mansfield, he was educated at St. John's School.

Mr. and Mrs. Seville have two sons and two granddaughters.



Ella and Arthur Lofthouse