



British Wedding Customs and Superstitions:

Past and Present



The purposes of the project:

1. To learn more about new & old traditions & ceremonies of a marriage in Great Britain.
2. To study the world of the British folklore.
3. To transfer the perception of the topic through art translation of the English poems devoted to wedding traditions into Russian.
4. To pay attention to features of a marriage during the 2 World War.

The most important decisions in life

A lot of wedding traditions go back to folklore and used to protect marrying couples against bad luck and evil spirits.

In the years of different wars people always found reasons for holydays, lucky days & celebrations. For example such moments, which are very essential in people's lives, are weddings.



The decision to get married

**To change the
name and not the
letter
is to change for the
worse and not the
better**



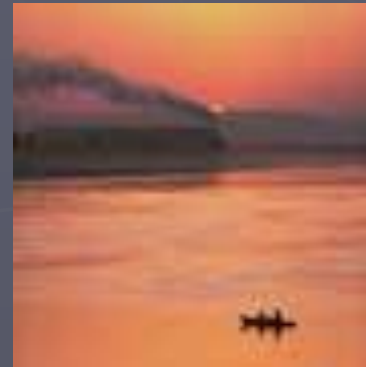
My translation...



**Выбирай себе ты мужа
по фамилии,
И при этом не должна
ты забывать,
Чтобы путь семейный
устилали лилии,
Букву первую должна
ты поменять.**

Old rhyme about choosing the right day for the wedding

**Monday for wealth,
Tuesday for health,
Wednesday the best day of all,
Thursday for losses,
Friday for crosses,
Saturday for no luck at all.**



My translation of this poem...

Женившись в понедельник, весь свой век
богатым будешь,

Во вторник под венец пойдёшь, все хвори
позабудешь,

А если свадьба в среду, жди со всех сторон
удачу,

Четверг несёт с собой потери и бессонницу в
придачу,

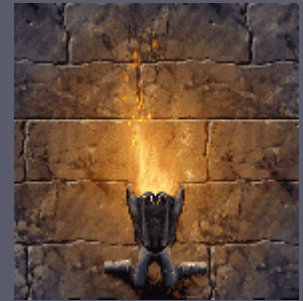
Поставишь крест на всём, коль в пятницу ты к
алтарю пойдёшь,

В субботнем браке счастья никогда ты не
найдёшь.

Another pagan rhyme tells us which time of year to marry...

Married when the year is new, he'll be loving, kind and true.
When February birds do mate, you wed nor dread your fate.
If you wed when March winds blow, joy and sorrow both you'll know.
Marry in April when you can, Joy for Maiden and for Man.
Marry in the month of May, and you'll surely rue the day.
Marry when June roses grow, over land and sea you'll go.
Those who in July do wed must labor for their daily bread.
Whoever wed in August be, many a change is sure to see
Marry in September's shrine, your living will be rich and fine.
If in October you do marry, love will come but riches tarry.
If you wed in bleak November, only joys will come, remember.
When December snows fall fast, marry and true love will last.
Marry in May and you'll live to rue the day

My translation:



Любимым будешь преданной любовью,
Коль женишься в начале года, в январе.
Женись – и будет брак обласкан твой судьбою -
Когда гнездятся птицы в феврале.
А свадьба в мартовскую непогоду,
приносит пополам и радость и невзгоду.
В апреле женишься – и счастье никогда ты не забудешь,
Коль свадьба в мае - только маятся ты будешь.
Лишь расцветут в июне розы, ты под венец веди невесту,
Тогда и бури, и морозы переживёте дружно вместе.
Июльская женитьба принесёт лишь
тяжкий труд за пропитание,
А август за собой ведёт сплошь впечатления и знания.
Женись в богатом сентябре, и будет жизнь богатой и
прекрасной,
Богатства не найдёшь, зато найдёшь любовь, коль женишься
октябрьским утром ясным.
Хоть холоден ноябрьский день, веселье рядом будет
бесконечно,
Коль в декабре ты под венец пойдёшь, любовь и счастье
будут длиться вечно...

A wedding dress

Anne of Brittany started the tradition of wearing a white wedding dress in 1499. This color was always associated with 'joy'.

During the war it was very difficult to buy new clothes in Britain, especially wedding dresses.



The color of the brides dress was described in another rhyme

Married in White, you have chosen right,
Married in Grey, you will go far away,
Married in **Black**, you will wish yourself back,
Married in **Red**, you will wish yourself dead,
Married in **Green**, ashamed to be seen,
Married in **Blue**, you will always be true,
Married in **Pearl**, you will live in a whirl,
Married in **Yellow**, ashamed of your fellow,
Married in **Brown**, you will live in the town,
Married in **Pink**, you spirit will sink.

& here is my translation...

В невинно-белом будешь настоящей ты невестой,
А в стильно сером, сразу видно, далеко пойдёшь,
Коль будешь в чёрном, знай, семье не будет места,
А в **красном** платье смерть себе найдёшь,
Ты опозоришься, скорее всего, в **зелёном** цвете,
А в **жёлтом** засмеёт тебя любимый и народ,
Коль будешь в **голубом**, не будет никого верней на свете,
Жемчужный цвет откроет всех страстей водоворот,
В **коричневых** одеждах свяжешь с городом свои надежды,
А если в **розовом** любимый к алтарю тебя ведёт,
То дух святой на брак ваш снизойдёт.

An altogether different matter:

**Something old, something new,
Something borrowed, something blue,
And a silver sixpence in your shoe.**



Translation...



Что-то старое найдите,
Что-то новое купите,
Кое-что чужое,
Что-то голубое,
А на счастье в
башмачок
Положите пяточок.

"Something old"

It's normally an old garter or a piece of antique family jewelry.



"Something new"

Represents the new life & the hope for success and good fortune.



"Something borrowed"

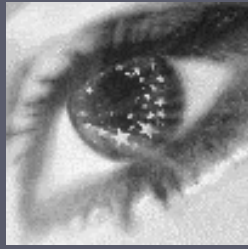
The borrowed object might be something such as a lace handkerchief.

"Something blue"

A blue ribbon in a bride's hair symbolize fidelity.

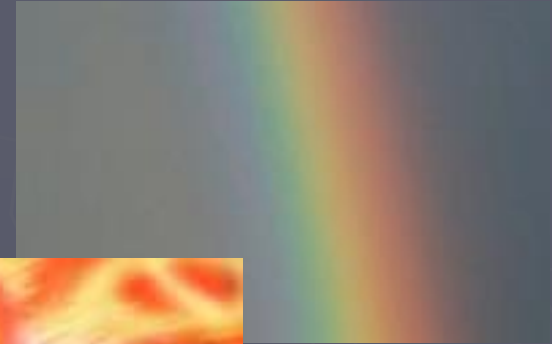


And a silver sixpence is considered as a lucky charm.



'Lucky omens'

- to see a rainbow
- to have the sunshine on your back
- to have a cat cross your path
- to be greeted by a chimney sweep





'Bad Omens'

- to see a pig, hare or lizard running across the road
- to see an open grave
- to see Monks or Nuns means barrenness and a life dependent on charity



Meaning of flowers 'color'



Apple blossom - good fortune

Aster - symbol of love

Bluebells - everlasting love

Blue Violets - faithfulness

Carnation White - honesty

Daisies White - loyalty

Forget-me-nots - true love

Gardenias - joy

Iris - wisdom

Ivy - fidelity

Lilies - purity

Lily of the Valley - happiness

Orange blossoms – fertility

Orchids - beauty

Red Rose - passion

Wedding cakes

Cakes have been associated with weddings throughout history.

In Britain early cakes were flat and round and contained fruit and nuts, which symbolize fertility.

Now wedding cakes have three tiers. The couple makes the first cut together to symbolize their shared future. The guest who found the ring in the piece of cake would be ensured happiness for the next year.



Different wedding cakes...



Ode by Harry Reeves to his Ann



In the beautiful county of Dorset
There's a giant that's carved in the hill
It was there in the war – 1940s
That a lovely young 'gal' said, "I will"
They had met at a dance in Cerne Abbas
Arranged for the troops, don't you know?
And soon they were dancing together
A quick step, a waltz or tango
He was a young lad in the army
And stationed up there on the hill
While she lived down there in the village
And taught in a school near the mill

Ode...

Война и боль вокруг,
Но только танцев круг,
Но только голос девичий звучит
неясно,

И слышит воин долгожданное:
«Согласна!»

Их познакомила война и не напрасно,
Ведь в графстве Дорсет всё
прекрасно...

Зелёный холм травой покрыт,
И на холме дивизия стоит,
В долине под холмом домишки спят,
И о любимой думает солдат,
А в памяти звучит тот вальс
прекрасный,

И голос нежный повторяет: «Я
согласна!»



The End

