



Smithsonian Institution

Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

The Memoirs of Ma 1925-1926

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THE MEMOIRS OF MA
30 June 1925

When dawn broke clouds broke also, and we woke up to wonder whether we would be married out under the trees as we had hoped and planned, or on the porch as we feared we might. We had planned for the whole ceremony and reception to be on the lawn, and had electric lights strung among the trees, lights that gleamed through red paper lanterns adorned with gold "double-happiness" characters. The rain stopped only to start again shortly afterwards. The bamboos for the setting of the stage were delivered. Caroline and Eleanor got flowers for bouquets and set about preparing them. The many angel food cakes had to be iced, and I gave some attention to helping with them and to the icing of the Glen Ellyn wedding cake. By the early afternoon it was apparent that whatever was done about the ceremony, the reception would have to be held indoors because the grass would be too wet for the guests' feet. By the middle of the afternoon we decided to try to have our ceremony on the lawn, and Dorothy and I went out to see what we could do with the bamboo. With a little figuring, some rope, and the help of a couple servants, we soon had a screen of the young bamboo trees between the Phoenix Tree and the neighboring Elm some fifteen feet or so away. The screen was made of two panels joined to their respective trees at one end and meeting each other at an angle of ninety degrees at the other. Three lanterns hung from a wire between the trees, and the low thick-leaved branches of the phoenix tree made a canopy to a fitting bower. This much done we adjourned to the house to make preparations there. Most of the furniture had to be removed from the downstairs rooms, and flowers had to be put around, and lights and decorations had to be arranged. Among the decorations were two pairs of scrolls, one pair composed and written by my friend Fu in Peking, giving us joy in Nanking and Hangchow, the other by Dr. Rowe's teacher giving us good wedding weather and wishes. Then there was a great red silk banner with our names and "double happiness" in gilt letters, and another scroll with a song about us composed and written by the younger Fu in Peking.

The house ready we, Dorothy and I, went upstairs to rest a bit and get ourselves ready for the

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