

Carrie Chenoweth - Stoddard Jess Wedding in 1879

It was quite an event when Carrie H. Chenoweth, 23, was married to Stoddard Jess, 22, in her parents' elegant home in Monroe on Wednesday evening, January 15, 1879. The wedding ceremony was private and conducted by Rev. J. E. Irish, of the M. E. Church. Only members of the family, and Irish and his wife, were present. Due to the illness of the groom's mother, his parents were unable to attend from Waupun. I'll quote much of what was written in the Monroe Sentinel the following week to show how they reported 140 years ago.

Ben and Rosannah Ludlow Chenoweth entertained at a reception in their home a little after 9:00 that evening. It "was a very sociable and pleasant affair, as well as being noted for the elegance and lavish expense with which the arrangements were made and carried out.

"The blustering snow storm without, made the comfort and good cheer within seem all the brighter by contrast, as the guests began to arrive and prepare for the formal congratulations of bride and groom."



Carrie Chenoweth married Stoddard Jess in her parents' home, which was located on the northeast corner of what is now 8th Street and 19th Avenue in 1879. According to Bricks, Brackets and Carpenter's Lace, the home was built in 1857. However, according to the Monroe Sentinel of May 18, 1859, Chenoweth's house was in the process of being built in Tallman's Addition.

About 150 guests had congregated shortly after nine in the spacious hall on the second floor and in the parlors below. When the Monroe Cornet Band struck up an inspiring march, the company began to file into the main hall and pass into the north parlor where the newlyweds were stationed. Before reaching the young couple, every visitor saluted the bride's parents, "who stood at the end of the hall to welcome their guests with genuine hospitality and courteous dignity.

"The music echoing through the house, the glow of the lights, and warmth of bright embers in the grates; the mingling of old and young, silver gray and golden locks, bright youth and rinkled [sic] age, all happy, gorgeously dressed and plainly dressed; friends, relatives, and acquaintances, all best on wishing

the new voyagers a safe and pleasant journey through life; made up a scene not be forgotten by those who participated.

“The bride was attired in a rich wine-colored silk, with point lace and brocaded velvet trimmings, with cameo ornaments. She appeared at her best, and made her guests perfectly at ease, and joyful. Of course the groom was happy and well he might be. He was appropriately dressed for the occasion and took a manly part in the hand shaking and conversation.”

The large, sliding doors, which separated the east room from the dining hall were thrown back at 10:30. “Mountains and hills, valleys and plains of fruit, cakes and other refreshments were awaiting the bosom of destruction. The odor of coffee, the flavor of hot oyster pie, etc. etc., were not unwelcome. This part of the reception, like all the rest, was an assured success. The ladies who managed the refractory were born for success and they fulfilled their destiny with the aid of the Chenoweth purse and larder. Three large tables were set, and the motto was: ‘three times three,’ and an extra one for the band who had kept up the waves of harmony during the evening making even conversation tuneful. At eleven the guests began the exodus; and wishing the Chenoweths and their new son-in-law good night; hoping that the going out of the guests into the storm of the night, might not be typical of the life of Mr. and Mrs. Jess. All sought their own homes with the desire to make them happier and brighter for the children that today are with us, but tomorrow, are starting out into new paths with new duties and responsibilities crowding upon them.”

The young couple left on the early train the next morning for Chicago and returned to Waupun early the following week. They were accorded a magnificent reception the next week at their future home.

The newspaper writeup included a list of gifts given by some of the guests. Included in the list, it showed that the groom gave the bride a solitaire diamond ring. To his daughter, Mr. Chenoweth gave a check of an unpublished amount. Mrs. Chenoweth gave the couple a complete set of decorated china and a large, illustrated Bible. Frank Chenoweth, the bride’s brother, gave them \$100 and a dozen nut-picks and crackers. The couple received a silver tea set, castor, and butter dish from the groom’s parents. From uncle Arabut Ludlow they got a silver water service, tankard, and a cup and bowl. Many other gifts were listed, including two books of poems, napkin rings, a card receiver, a complete set of Shakespeare’s works in six volumes, and many more.

The couple made their home on Carrington Street in Waupun, where they lived for an undetermined amount of time. He was working as a cashier in a bank the following year. Their daughter, Jennie, was born in November 1880 and a son, George B., was born on Christmas Day 1881. Unfortunately, Jennie passed away in 1886. It is unknown when the family moved to California, but it was probably before Jennie’s death since the entire family, including George’s wife, is buried in Pomona Valley Memorial Park. They were living in Los Angeles in 1900 where Stoddard was still working as a banker. The 1920 census indicated that he was serving as a bank president. However, he passed away February first of that year and Carrie passed away later that year, on September 19.