

The Happy Couple

Preparations

1	Thomas Morley: Arise, get up my dear	1
2	Michael East: A Song Upon the Marriage	6
3	Michael East: No haste but good	12
4	Thomas Weelkes: Tomorrow is the Marriage Day	18
5	A Pleasant New Song of the Rites and Ceremonies of Marriage	20
6	The Lovely Bride	22
7	The Happy Couple	24

Wooring and Wedding in Town and Country

8	Robin's Delight	26
9	The Wiltshire Wedding	28
10	Dicky's Loyalty	30
11	An Answer to the Wealthy Grasier	32
12	The Winchester Wedding	34
13	A Merry Wedding	36
14	The Happy Marriage	38
15	John Eccles: A Dialogue Sung on Hob's Wedding	40
16	Hob's Wedding – A Kissing Dance at a Country Wake	48

Epithalamia/The Wedding Night

17	Now is the Bridals of fair Choralis	49
18	Robert King: An Epithalamium	56
19	Henry Purcell: An Epithalamium	60
20	John Dowland: Welcome Black Night	63
21	John Dowland: Cease These False Sports	67
22	Thomas Farmer: A Marriage Song	71
23	The Joys of Virtuous Love/Joy to the Bridegroom	73
24	The Wedding Night	75
25	The Happy Bride	76

The Happy Couple

Wedding Music in Early Modern England

This collection is the first of two books of music associated with weddings, and consists of songs, madrigals, ballads, dance melodies, and theatre music, and covers the period from the late 16th to the early 18th Centuries.

While many of the wedding customs of the day were similar to those of today (bridesmaids, fine clothes, feasting with music and dancing), some are less familiar to us.

*I've chosen Hofnaegel's 'Wedding at Bermondsey' as the cover image as it shows many of the items associated with weddings in Early Modern England, including rosemary branches (a symbol of remembrance, carried at weddings, often gilded or tied with bride knots) and bridecakes (for fertility: the bride and groom might kiss over them, or the cakes might be broken over their heads). These and others are described in Morley's **Arise, get up my dear** and in the ballad **A Pleasant New Song of the Rites and Ceremonies of Marriage**, where the bridegroom goes to church with his companions, and the bride in the company of her "maidens", and her "brideboys" with rosemary tied to their arms with bride laces. The bride's way would be strewn with flowers: an account from 1607 says that borage, bugloss, violets and roses were the most popular.*

*A series of songs, which I've grouped together under the title 'wooing and wedding in town and country' give further details of the weddings of the time: the bridegroom's clothing "Roast-meat Cloaths, his Buck-Skin Breeches" described in **Dick's Loyalty**; throwing the stocking in the **Winchester Wedding**; the cutting up of the bridegroom's points and garters in **Arthur of Bradley**; feasts of frumenty, custard, mince pie, roast beef and mustard, with beer, ale, rhenish wine, and sack posset to drink; and of course, hours of ribald merrymaking, dancing, and music on violin and bagpipes. Examples of the wedding music played on these instruments come from the many dances from Playford's **Dancing Master** included in this book.*

*Once the main part of the wedding party was done, the bride and bridegroom would be escorted to their bedchamber – something done more publicly then than it is now. Epithalamia are songs written for the wedding night itself, with exquisite poetry and music. Dowland's **Welcome Black Night** is a particularly lovely example.*