

# You are cordially invited...

June is a month that is commonly associated with weddings and celebrations. With this in mind, we present to you today an assortment of unique and interesting wedding certificates found in the Eastern Regional Branch of the Washington State Archives. No—there's no reception, no dancing, no pomp and circumstance. But you also don't have to bring a gift. Just enjoy these fun examples as you peek into celebrations of the past. What else can you find hidden in the Archives? Visit the Digital Archives and discover for yourself!

Let's begin with this [Treasure from the Archives](#), Gordon Hirabayashi's Quaker Wedding

STATE OF WASHINGTON, }  
COUNTY OF SPOKANE. } ss. **FILED** **65641 A**  
**JUL 31 1944** **MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE**  
**ROBT. A. WILSON, Clerk**  
**SPOKANE COUNTY.**

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, that the undersigned, a duly authorized officiating representative of the University Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, Seattle, by authority of a License bearing date the 10th day of July, A. D. 1944

and issued by the County Auditor of the County of Spokane did, on the 29th day of July, A. D. 1944 at Spokane, in the County and State aforesaid, join

IN LAWFUL WEDLOCK Gordon Hirabayashi

of Spokane, State of Washington

and Esther Schmoe, of Seattle

State of Washington, with their mutual assent, in the presence of

and duly authorized officials. witnesses, ourselves

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, witness the signatures of the parties to said ceremony, the witnesses and myself,

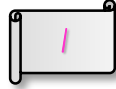
this 29th day of July, A. D. 1944

WITNESSES	PARTIES	OFFICIATING CLERGYMAN OR OFFICER
<u>P. J. Matt</u>	<u>Gordon Hirabayashi</u> Groom	<u>B. A. Darling</u>
<u>Eric Schell</u>	<u>Esther Hirabayashi</u> Bride	<u>Benjamin A. Darling</u> 3959 - 15th N.E. P. O. Address Seattle, Wash. Washington

This Certificate must be filled out and filed with the County Clerk of the County where the ceremony is performed, within 30 days after the ceremony. See Chapter 172, Laws of Washington of 1927.

Failure to make and deliver Certificate to the County Clerk within 30 days is punishable by a fine of not less than \$25.00 or more than \$300.00. See Pierce's Code, Sec. 3714.

Spokane County marriage certificate of Gordon Hirabayashi and Esther Schmoe who married July 29, 1944, Marriage Records, Spokane County Auditor, Marriage Records, 1880-2013, Washington State Archives, Digital Archives, <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov>.



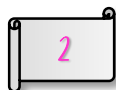
"Japanese-American and White Girl Wed" [proclaimed the newspapers](#) after receiving word that activist Gordon Hirabayashi married his college sweetheart, Esther Schmoe, in a small Quaker ceremony on July 29, 1944. This wasn't Hirabayashi's first time in the news, nor would it be his last.

When America and Japan went to war in December of 1941, Japanese-Americans found themselves subject to special restrictions, including curfews and even forced [relocation to internment camps](#). Some resisted. In 1943, Hirabayashi, an American citizen born in Seattle, intentionally broke curfew and refused to register for relocation to an internment camp, hoping to become a Supreme Court test case. Awaiting the outcome of his case, Hirabayashi moved to Spokane, taking up work with the Quaker-run American Friends Service Committee. He was convicted June 21, 1943. Since he was Japanese-American, Hirabayashi couldn't serve his sentence inside the internment zones set up along the West Coast. So he hitchhiked his way down to Tucson, where he served his 90-day sentence alongside other pacifists and conscientious objectors.

Upon his return to Spokane, he faced new charges after refusing to fill out the "Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry" (Selective Service Form 304A), used to determine Nikkei loyalty and draft eligibility. Knowing he would soon be in prison, Hirabayashi and Schmoe decided to get married quickly, while Hirabayashi was out on a \$1000 bond.

As Hirabayashi explained to the [New York Times](#), "I felt that the Constitution, as I understood it, gave me certain protections as a citizen under martial law." In 1985, Hirabayashi was able to overturn the charges against him on appeal, and has received several national honors including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

At the Digital Archives, you can find Hirabayashi and Schmoe's [1944 wedding certificate](#). For more information about Gordon Hirabayashi please visit [Historylink.org](#) or pick up [a copy of his autobiography](#). For more on Japanese relocation during WWII, please visit this [National Archives page](#).



Our second gem is an 1889 Certificate of Marriage between Mr. Bloch and Miss Kaminzky in Cheney, Washington. What is unusual about this certificate is that it is first written in Hebrew and then in English. You can view the record at the Digital Archives [here](#).



למזאטוב

[illegible]

That on this 27 day of the month of January in the Year 1882 corresponding to the Jewish date of Sunday the 25 day of Shebat in the year 5642 in the presence of the witnesses signed, I united in lawful marriage, at Cheney  
Mr. Henry Bloch and Miss Estab Raminster  
with their free consent, and according to the laws of the State and customs of Israel.

Henry Bloch

Minister of Congregation

R. H. Grahamson

all *Edward* Witnesses:

25555: William B. H. H.

And last, but certainly not least we have the marriage of [King Corn and Queen Alfalfa in 1913](#). Lorraine McConaghy's book *New Land, North of the Columbia: Historic Documents that Tell the Story of Washington State from Territory to Today* ([featured in the June/July 2014 edition of Out of the Archives](#)) tells the following story about this record:

"This Spokane certificate of marriage might easily be passed over as just another public record, one of thousands. However, Certificate No. 16087 acknowledged the solemn nuptials on September 23, 1913, of the groom King Corn and his bride Queen Alfalfa. She was born in Yakima of Asian parents, while he was from Spokane, born of parents from Illinois and Iowa. King Corn was white; his bride, green. His occupation was building up the community, and hers was helping him to do so.

This document formalized a stunt to publicize the alternate planting of corn and alfalfa to enrich the soil. At the time Spokane was hosting the Interstate Fair, and enthusiastic proponents of alfalfa had arrived, hoping to introduce Washington State farmers to the alfalfa gospel.

September 24, 1913, was declared Alfalfa Day, and Spokane's *Daily Chronicle* reported the evening banquet at which the wedding ceremony took place. G.W. Stocker, one of the certificate's witnesses, stood before the gathering and declared that King Corn had ruined the soil of the Midwest, but 'it is said a good woman can reform a bad man and Queen Alfalfa has the virtues and the powers to refertilize and rehabilitate the soil, and to assist King Corn to be more productive.'" (p. 52)

County Form No. 51 When Ceremony is performed fill this blank and within 5 days return to  
COUNTY AUDITOR, SPOKANE, WASH.

County of Spokane **CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE** License No. A **Nº 16087**

Team of Spokane PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

GROOM		BRIDE	
Full Name	<u>King, Corn</u>	Full Name	<u>Queen Alfalfa</u>
Residence	<u>Spokane, Wash</u>	Residence	<u>Yakima, Wash</u>
Age at last Birthday	<u>17</u> years	Age at last Birthday	<u>16</u> years
Color or Race	<u>White</u>	Color or Race	<u>Green</u>
Single, Widowed or Divorced	<u>Single</u>	Single, Widowed or Divorced	<u>Single</u>
Number of Marriage		Number of Marriage	
Birthplace (State or Country)	<u>Spokane</u>	Birthplace (State or Country)	<u>Yakima</u>
Occupation	<u>Building up the community</u>	Occupation	<u>Helping King Corn</u>
Name of Father	<u>Old King Corn</u>	Name of Father	<u>Father Alfalfa</u>
Birthplace of Father (State or Country)	<u>Ill</u>	Birthplace of Father (State or Country)	<u>India</u>
Maiden Name of Mother	<u>Mother Corn</u>	Maiden Name of Mother	<u>Mamma Alfalfa</u>
Birthplace of Mother (State or Country)	<u>Iowa</u>	Birthplace of Mother (State or Country)	<u>India</u>
Maiden name of Bride, if she was previously married			
I, the groom and bride named in this certificate, hereby certify that the information given herein is correct, to the best of our knowledge and belief.			
<u>King Corn</u> Groom		<u>Queen Alfalfa</u> Bride	
<b>CERTIFICATE OF PERSON PERFORMING CEREMONY</b>			
I HEREBY CERTIFY that <u>King Corn</u> and <u>Queen Alfalfa</u> were joined in Marriage by me			
In accordance with the laws of the state of Washington, at this <u>23</u> day of <u>September</u> , 191 <u>3</u>			
Signature of Witnesses to marriage		Signature of person performing the ceremony	
<u>G.W. Stocker</u>		<u>G.W. Stocker</u>	
RESIDENCE		OFFICIAL STATION	
<u>SEP 24 1913</u>		<u>Spokane</u>	

MARGIN RESERVED FOR BINDING  
WRITE PLAINLY WITH UNFADING INK--THIS IS A PERMANENT RECORD