

## What happened to Harriet's wedding Dress?

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In my recent article I told you about Harriet Hill's marriage to James Francis Sam of West Wyalong. What I didn't tell you was the saga of her wedding dress. Harriet and James became engaged in 1918, probably after they met at James's brother Henry's wedding to Ethel Kirby in Grantham England - Harriet lived close to Ethel.

Harriet was recognised by the Repatriation Department as an official fiancée and granted a passage to Australia in the autumn of 1920. She sent her heavy luggage, stickered with AIF labels and containing her wedding trousseau, via the Midland Railway to Tilbury Docks. There it stayed - Harriet boarded the SS Wahebe but the luggage didn't. She found this out when they reached Cape Town and frantic telegrams were exchanged between the ship, the Repatriation Department in Sydney and the Australian High Commission in London. Eventually it was located and sent on the SS Bahia Costello in December, reaching Australia on 15 February 1921, 5 weeks after Harriet and James were married in Sydney. I wonder what she wore on her wedding day? And I now have a photo of Harriet and James with their first child!