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PRINCESS IRA WEDS

Could a more romantic setting than Venice be imagined for any wedding? From the Palazzo Brandolini 31-year-old Prince Alfonso Hohenlohe, accompanied by his mother, went by the Grand Canal to the church of San Sebastiano. More than an hour late came the lovely Princess Ira Fuerstenberg. She is only 15, as all the world has heard, and coming of one of the noblest houses in Europe she was now the chief figure in a romance perhaps unequalled even in fiction. The Princess was escorted by her father. It was wrong for company to break in, but when the bride's hairdresser and a girl photographer fell in the Grand Canal dignity went overboard too.

The proper atmosphere was quickly restored. And what more wonderful way to be taken to her wedding could any bride desire. The little church of San Sebastiano held only about 300, but they represented most of the ancient Continental aristocracy. In addition to the congregation there was a small multitude of cameramen and at times the voice of Monsignor Strachwitz, the officiating Austrian Abbot, could not be heard a few yards away. He conducted the marriage in German, after the reading of a telegram of Benediction from the Pope. Wedding rings were placed on the right hands of both bride and groom. Princess Ira had promised to honour, love and obey and they were now pronounced man and wife.

Many of the princely families are now impoverished but not this one, the bride's mother's family largely owning the Fiat Motor Works.

The eyes of all Venice were on the newly-weds as they sailed back to the Palace. There they and more than 500 people were the guests of Count Brando Brandolini. The bride's gown was an exquisite creation in billowing white tulle and Valenciennes lace, with a double train and long veil. She wore a small white crown on her chestnut hair.

It will be a long time indeed before any wedding stirs the imagination of millions, as did the marriage of Prince Alfonso Hohenlohe and Princess Ira.