

THE PICTURE

It's in black and white and it is my favourite picture. There they are, sitting next to each other in the back of a car, gazing out at the viewer. The photographer has come in really close to them, he or she (but I am sure it was a "he" in those days) is crouching down and looking slightly up at them through the door of the car, so that all you see is their top halves and part of the door frame. Their gaze is direct, both of them looking straight at the camera, at us, as they embark on their future together. They have big smiles on their faces. On their clothes and their hair, a scattering of fairy dust, confetti which they have not yet had time to brush off. I know that the date is the 6th December, so it could even be snow.

My mother is further from the door and leans across my father and towards the photographer, with her confetti crown, and a small corsage of freesias pinned to the lapel of her coat. My father's coat lies on his lap. He only has his suit on and must be cold, but he doesn't feel it, he smiles with his mouth, with his eyes.

Their faces are young, unlined. Only 24 and 25, they have no idea what life will bring them – the children, the struggles with money, the jobs, the little niggles, the joys and the sorrows. There is nothing but unalloyed happiness, a knowledge that they have made the right decision and that, united, they will face the world and step out into the future.

Now they are no longer with us, they have moved into the past. They lie side by side for eternity in the Woodland Burial Park. But I have that photo and it is all I need. I can see the joy, optimism and happiness. I can see the love.