

PEACHES AND DADDY BROWNING

By Albert M. Rosenblatt

July 2025

Midway through the Roaring Twenties, when Henry Ford, Babe Ruth, Albert Einstein, Greta Garbo, Charlie Chaplin, Marie Curie, and Charles Lindbergh were household names, the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* asked their readers: “Who is the world’s most interesting person today?”

They reported the responses on April 19, 1926. Benito Mussolini and Henry Ford made the list. The runner-up was Peggy Joyce, whose fame grew from her having married often and briefly. The winner was Frances Belle Heenan Browning, age 15, who had married once and well. Her spouse was a multi-millionaire in his 50’s, who called her “Peaches.”



Frances Belle Heenan Browning, known as Peaches

His name was Edward West Browning, but when he won Peaches’ heart, he too gained a nickname that stuck: Daddy Browning.

The pair began as New York celebrities and went on to conquer the nation. The press followed Daddy’s peacock blue Rolls Royce around Manhattan, keeping the public up to date about the shopping sprees on which Daddy, accompanied by a six-person security detail, lavished Peaches with clothing and jewels. Daddy would give Peaches \$1000 a day of spending money.¹ That is worth about \$18,000 today.

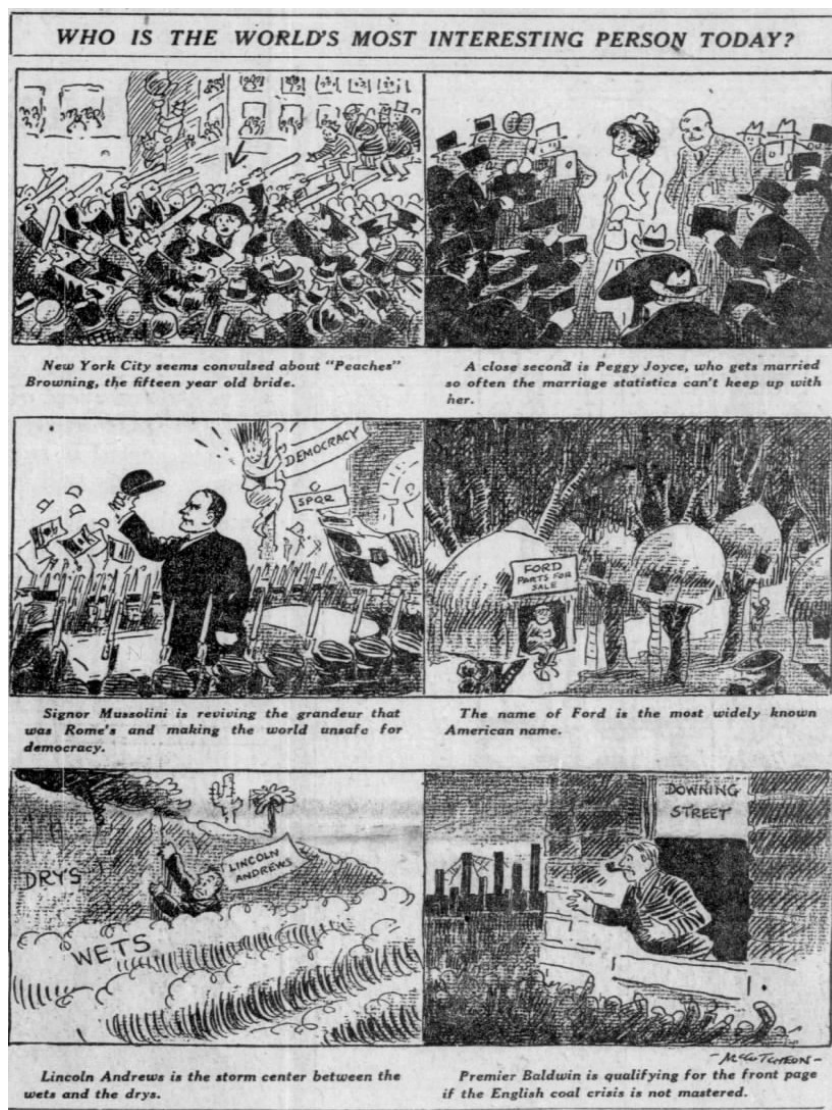
¹ Orlando (Fl.) Sentinel, April 18, 1926

When the newlyweds went dancing at exclusive Manhattan clubs, the press went with them. When Peaches appeared in Atlantic City in a thigh-baring one-piece bathing suit, the press snapped the photos that some newspaper readers were pleased to find shocking. When the couple moved to the Hotel Gramatan, so did intrepid reporters, whose typewriters could be heard in the hallways as they earnestly chronicled the doings of Peaches and Daddy.²

The romance began in March 1926; they were wed in April, and by October they were in court, each seeking a separation. The trial was one of the most, if not the most, sensational in the history of New York, if not the nation.



² <https://nymag.com/news/features/scandals/peaches-browning-2012-4/>



Chicago Tribune, April 19, 1926

Largely forgotten today, the saga included three principal players: Edward ("Daddy") Browning, Frances Belle Heenan, known to the world as "Peaches," and the American public, led by an insatiable press-corps.

As one reporter put it, in a world remembered by the jazz age, bathtub-gin, and "the Charleston," Peaches and Daddy Browning were a part of the era.³

³ Dayton, Ohio News) August 26, 1956; For a lengthy account of Browning's life and exploits, see Adelaide News, South Australia, Australia, April 22, 1954; see Inspiration: Peaches & Daddy Browning; See, generally, Dan P. Lee

Surprisingly, and dismayingly, the public riveted its attention on the relationship, but with little or no condemnation or disapproval, considering that by today's standards, Browning's conduct would be entirely inappropriate if not pedophilic and worthy of a jail sentence. Astonishingly, the press and public did not see the relationship as the exploitation of a girl by a grown man. Indeed, Browning had his cheering section, who would call Peaches a gold-digger and Browning a browbeaten victim.⁴

Up through 1925, and until their fateful meeting in 1926, Browning was known as Edward West Browning, E.W. Browning, Browning the millionaire real estate tycoon, or, occasionally, "Cinderella Man."

In American households, peaches, for the most part, were fruits one ate. That all changed when Peaches and Daddy entered the news, and the American vocabulary.

By 1928, Peaches was said to be "the most talked about girl in the world." After she and Daddy parted company, Peaches went on the road with a song and dance act.

Peaches: Who's Your Daddy? Online at <https://nymag.com/news/features/scandals/peaches-browning-2012-4/>; see also <https://thepoplarsschool.com/wp/2017/03/09/inspiration-peaches-daddy-browning/>. March 9, 2017

⁴ Brian Donovan, *American Gold Digger*, (2020) at 38.



PROCTOR'S
Arctic Air Currents Circulated Scientifically
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FRIDAY
SATURDAY

CONTINUOUS 1 TO 11 P. M.



"PEACHES" BROWNING
(IN PERSON)
Most Talked About Girl In The World

Mt. Vernon Argus, White Plains, NY July 18, 1928

LAST HALF

Thursday comes to Keith's, the girl whom you've been waiting to see, "Peaches Browning," called the most talked about girl in the world. Peaches has had more said and written about her than any other living girl. She will appear in person on the Keith stage and sing and dance for you, at the same time satisfying that curiosity that you've always had about her—what does she look like, is she pretty and how does she talk.

The international stars Al Tra-

The most talked about girl in the world. Dayton, Ohio Herald, December 9, 1928

The Peaches-Daddy romance began in April, 1927. By October, they were in court, exchanging charges and counter-charges, each seeking a separation from the other.

Daddy was sometimes associated with “Sugar Daddy”, which Webster’s defines as “a well-to-do usually older man who supports or spends lavishly on a mistress, girlfriend, or boyfriend.”

Interestingly, Webster’s states that its first use was in 1926. Then there is the Sammy Kaye song:

Hey, Daddy, I want a diamond ring, bracelets, everything
Daddy, you oughta get the best for me

This fits Browning to a T, as he lavished diamonds and sable on Peaches, in a public display. We do not know how the term “Daddy” Browning began, but it is entirely possible that “Peaches” herself helped coin it. In an article written for NEA (Newspaper Enterprise Association) a syndicated news service, Hortense Saunders quoted Frances Heenan as saying “Daddy—my husband--likes large hats. I must have 50 of them,” and the headline was about Peaches and “Daddy Browning” and so the coinage was by Peaches, Saunders, and possibly, the headline writer. As for “Peaches,” Browning likened her to “peaches and cream, and so the name stuck.”⁵

In January 1927, during the separation trial, newspapers carried word of the world’s first transatlantic phone call, and the spread of service to consumers. That month, Peaches and Daddy Browning sometimes outdid even those headlines.

Leave it to the incomparable Cole Porter to rhyme daddy with finnan haddie, in his 1938 musical *Leave it to Me*, in a song sung by Mary Martin:

When some good scout, invites me out
To dine on some fine finnan haddie
My baby's sure, his love is secure

⁵ New York Magazine online at <https://nymag.com/news/features/scandals/peaches-browning-2012-4/>, In early April, 1926, several days before the wedding, she had been called “Peaches” Heenan. See, Press of Atlantic City (NJ) April 2, 1927

Cause my heart belongs to daddy

Who were “Peaches” and “Daddy Browning”? Daddy was born in 1874 in New York City, where his parents resided in Manhattan.⁶ In 1862, Daddy’s father had gone into the clothing business with his brothers, under the firm name Browning King, which eventually became a prominent national clothing chain, generating enormous family wealth.⁷

By 1887, Browning King had become the largest clothing company in the United States, with outlets in New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Chicago, Kansas City, with a grand opening in Minneapolis in 1890.

⁶ Jersey Journal, October 12, 1934. For a biography put out by his trust fund see chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://wcf-ny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Edward-W.-Browning.pdf; see, also, <https://www.islesborohistorical.org/year/fam6377.html>; see also, online at https://www.nytimes.com/1971/10/27/archives/echo-from-20s-brownings-moral-uplift-grants.html?unlocked_article_code=1.KU8.uLIT.e25SzyHcVLxU&smid=em-share. His parents, residing in Manhattan at 54 W. 50th Street, were Edward Franklin Browning (1837-1912) and Lucy Albertina Richardson (c. 1847-c. 1904)

⁷ See, obituary, NY Times, May 19, 1912; See, also, Edward Franklin Browning, *The Brownings in America, 1621-1908*

THE TIMES-PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY MORNING, APRIL 23, 1887.

BROWNING, KING & CO.

**THE LEADING CLOTHING CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES,
AND SECOND LARGEST IN THE WORLD.**

NEW YORK, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO, ST. LOUIS, CINCINNATI, MILWAUKEE AND KANSAS CITY.



BROWNING, KING & CO. — COLOSSAL CLOTHING.
A Model House and Unsurpassed Management — The Largest Store Possible at This Great Manufacturing Establishment.





THE NEW YORK STORE OF BROWNING, KING & CO. IS THE LARGEST AND MOST COMPLETELY EQUIPPED IN THE CITY. IT IS THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN THE EAST. THE BUILDING IS A MONUMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE BUSINESS. THE STORE IS THE ONLY ONE OF ITS KIND IN THE EAST. THE BUILDING IS A MONUMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF THE BUSINESS.



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BROWNING, KING & CO.

NEW YORK, PHILADELPHIA, CHICAGO, ST. LOUIS, CINCINNATI, MILWAUKEE AND KANSAS CITY.

Philadelphia Times. April 23, 1887

That year, Edward Browning, long before he became “Daddy”, was 13 years old, growing accustomed to the enormous wealth that the family business generated.⁸

Peaches came from the other side of the tracks, the daughter of Caroline Chamberlain Heenan, and William Bernard Heenan from Zanesville, Ohio.⁹ Not much has been recorded about him. He and Caroline divorced in 1918, when Peaches was 8 years old.¹⁰ Long estranged from wife

⁸ “A walk through the blocks around 72d Street and Columbus Avenue may lead a pedestrian to think he is seeing a mirage or experiencing déjà vu — it is three identical white terra-cotta apartment buildings that Browning put up in 1915 within a block of one another.” NY Times March 15, 1998; For company opening in Minneapolis see Minneapolis Daily Times, August 31, 1890

⁹ Glens Falls (NY) Post Star April 3, 1926

¹⁰ Trial testimony of Caroline Heenan, Washington Herald, January 27, 1927

and daughter, he attended the wedding of Peaches and Daddy in 1926. In the scramble for inheritance after Daddy's death in 1934, Peaches' father popped up in 1947, seeking some money, several years after Peaches had gained a settlement from Daddy's estate:

"Peaches" Frances Heenan Willson's Papa Destitute

"I Haven't Heard from Her for Three Years," Writes William B. Heenan

SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 25 (AP)—A man who wrote that he was the father of Frances Heenan Willson, the "Peaches" Browning of the 20's, today sought her address to ask financial help in his old age.

"I have not heard from her in three years and wish to write to her. I am 70 years old and need some welfare from her if I can get her address," a letter to county Clerk Herman Van Der Zee said. It was signed William B. Heenan, East Hempstead, N. Y.

"Peaches," as she was known, when at 16 she married 51-year-old Edward W. (Daddy) Browning, New York millionaire, is now the wife of Ralph Willson, wealthy Ohio meat packer.

The Willsons now reside at San Carlos, Calif., but were reported wintering in Florida. Neither "Peaches" nor her husband was available for comment.

She received \$170,000 cash when she divorced Browning and undisclosed amounts when she divorced Bernard Hynes, Denver theater manager, and Joseph C. Crelli, San Francisco department store executive.

A few months before her daughter married Willson, "Peaches" mother, Mrs. Caroline Heenan noticed that "most of the other girls made the headlines in the 20's broke up. But Frances has all her money in real estate."

The Heenans were divorced long ago.

"Peaches" . . . Daddy Browning Was First of Four



Cumberland, Md Sunday Times, January 26, 1947

As a young man, Edward Browning toured Europe. As an artist, he drew cartoons and drawings as amusement for his friends and family. In the early 1900s he went into the real estate business with his father. In the early years of his business, he had built three white marble buildings on the Upper West Side, which sport his initials EWB and family crest in the corners.¹¹ His real estate holdings were vast, growing larger over the years.¹²

Browning first came to the attention of the public in 1912, as a 38-year-old bachelor. Word had it that he was confined to his home at 18 West Seventy-fifth Street, a fine five-story brownstone

¹¹ See, Michael Manion https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/3347/edward_west-browning

¹² For a listing and maps of his holdings in 1929, see online <https://newyorkwanderer.com/by-the-skin-of-his-teeth/>

building just off Central Park West, and that according to his last will and testament, he would devise a large fund for the advancement of research and learning.¹³

into six equal portions or shares and each such portion shall be devoted in each year as a prize for the best results achieved during such year in the six classes hereinafter specified and shall be paid to such man or woman throughout the world, or, in case it may so transpire, to such organization, as upon the decision of my said Trustees shall have accomplished preeminent results in each class. The six classes or purposes above referred to, and to be known as the Browning Prizes, are as follows

a: The prevention of cruelty to children or animals, or the promotion of peace and international harmony.

b: The spreading of the Gospel under Protestant auspices, either by distinguished example, effective teaching or exceptional personal service.

c: The uplifting of the moral condition of the world, either by some direct and positive service or example to that end, or by the introduction or furtherance of methods most successful in decreasing vice, gambling, intemperance; or dishonesty and corruption in government and politics.

d: The production of the most servicable invention or useful discovery; or architectural improvement in fireproofing and sanitation or otherwise; or the most important work of art in painting, sculpture or literature.

e: The most widely beneficial discovery or new method in medicine, surgery or in the prevention of disease.

f: The increased production or improvement of fish, birds or animals; the conservation of forests; the irrigation of arid lands; the increase or improvement of crops, flowers or plants.

If in any year the said Trustees shall deem it advisable to withhold the awarding of any prize on account of lack of preeminent merit in any class, or for any other reason, the share of income which would have been devoted to such class for such year shall be divided equally among the other classes or prizes for such year; and in any classes where two or more

Edward Browning's Last Will and Testament, December 20, 1912

¹³ New York Times, September 4, 1912

When contacted, he expressed surprise that it was discovered, saying it was premature to discuss it. This contrasts with what followed, in the years ahead, in which he thrived on the boundless publicity he generated.

When Peaches was born in 1910, Daddy Browning was 36 years old. In 1915, when Peaches was 5 years old, Daddy married his first wife, Adele (Nelle/Nellie) Lowen.¹⁴ This was very big news, considering the residence he built. Browning and Lowen had met as both their families belonged to Reverend Henry Stimson's Manhattan Congregational Church on 76th Street and Broadway in New York.¹⁵

Lowen had told Browning that she liked the idea of being in the country, but that she also liked the city. Given his flair, Browning was able to accomplish both. Money? No object. "I will bring the country to Adele, in the city." He built a large, countrified Babylonian-garden, on the rooftop of their Manhattan residence, the Orvista, apartment house at 35 W. 81st Street.¹⁶

¹⁴ The wedding was at the Manhattan Congregational Church in a ceremony performed by Rev. Henry Stimson. They move into 35 West 81st St NYC.

¹⁵ Benjamin Feldman, *Call me Daddy*, (2009) at 10

¹⁶ Feldman at 13

It has been said that King Nebuchadnezzar, in the 6th century BCE, built the Hanging Gardens as a gift to his Persian wife, Amytis, who missed the lush greenery of her former home. Browning, not to be outdone, took up the challenge: One might imagine the reaction of the engineers whom Browning engaged to match one of the wonders of the ancient world. You want *what*??

A flight of glass stairs led the way up from the drawing room, with each step producing a different color, emitting a musical note. There were 100,000 blooms and a thousand electric lights. Two tiny houses stood in decoration, one festooned with lilac blooming wisteria, the other with grapes of amber and purple glass, beside a miniature lake, large enough to hold a rowboat.¹⁷

Browning's office was at 110 W. 40th St, some 40 blocks from his palatial home. Tired of commuting by chauffeured limo he bought an airplane and designed landing spaces. Nellie Adele would fly with him.

**Wife to Fly With Him
From Home to Office**

Edward W. Browning to Use
the Roofs of Two Skyscrapers
for Aeroplane Stable.

NEW YORK—Edward West Browning, constructor of skyscrapers and self-confessed "nut on modernity," is shortly to fly to business and back daily. Frequently Mrs. Browning expects to fly with him.

Fancy, Mr. Browning as he lights his breakfast cigar, saying:

"James, is the flying machine ready?"

"Motor humming, thank you, sir."

Then James assists him into his potties and belted jacket, cap and goggles and he will go up to the roof of the twenty-story Orvis apartment house, No. 24 West Eighty-first street, where he lives and mount his winged carrier.

In about a minute's swooping—if everything goes well—he will land on the roof of the thirty-story World building of his construction at No. 110 West Fortieth street, and be busy at his desk within two minutes of the time of lighting his after-breakfast cigar a mile away.

LEASES A ROOF.

Of course considerable of a roof is required from which to get the proper scuttling start for the monoplane or biplane. He has a ten-year lease of the entire top floor of the Orvis and the roof too.

"Yes, sir," said Mr. Browning to a reporter. "That's exactly what I intend to do—fly to business and back every day. Why not? I can see no insuperable difficulties in the way."

"In the first place I have ample room for a safe starting point and the trip from my home to the World building roof would be almost entirely over Central park."

"The only thing in the way of an immediate beginning is that I shall wait until the weather becomes more pleasant and until I am more thoroughly trained in flying."

SHE'LL FLY WITH HIM.

"My wife, who is as enthusiastic as I am over the project, and I have been on several flights and have begun a course of instruction at the aviation field at Hempstead, L. I. and anyway, to ward off all objections to granting me a permit to ride my latest modern hobby as high in the air as I want to, I'll engage an expert aviator for chauffeur, if that is demanded."

Mr. Browning is the son of Edward Browning, founder of the firm of Browning, King & Co., who died in 1912. He severed his connection with the clothing firm some time ago and went into construction work. His most noteworthy effort was the erection of the tallest loft building in the world. It is thirty-six stories in height, at Nos. 141-42 West Thirty-sixth street. Mrs. Browning was Miss Adele Lowen, daughter of Charles H. Lowen.



EDWARD W. BROWNING

Mrs. EDWARD W. BROWNING

Idaho Statesman February 22, 1916

¹⁷ Albany (NY) Democrat, January 24, 1927.

The First Adoption

The pair gave dinner parties, entertaining New York society, which could only gasp at the couples' fairy tale life. Unable to have a child, they advertised, offering a life of wealth and privilege to the child lucky enough to be their adoptee. Their ad ran in the *New York Evening World* of April 13, 1918: "Prominent, wealthy old New York family of highest standing with palatial home and no children would like sweet little girl, about four years, who would have every advantage and care with privilege of adoption."

From among the vast number of applicants, they chose three-year-old Josephine Herbst, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Herbst of the Bronx, and named her Marjorie Gloria Browning. They gave her the life of a young princess, akin to Cinderella, showering her with clothes and toys.¹⁸



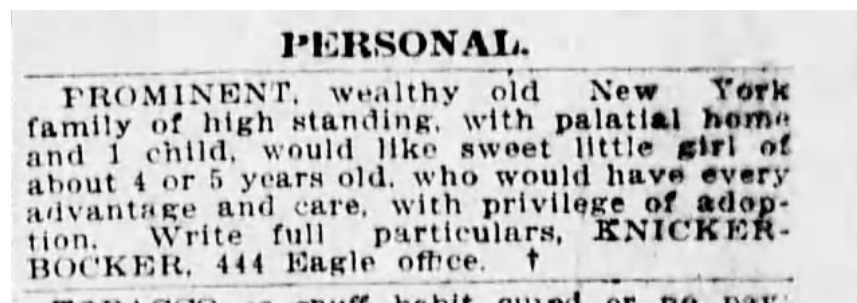
Kansas City (Mo.) Post, May 13, 1918

¹⁸ See Salt Lake Herald, May 26, 1918

Eighteen years later she would be among the contestants for a share of Browning's estate.¹⁹

It was an interesting time in the evolution of the American family. World War I had left many families destroyed or disarrayed, which increased adoptions. Newspapers all over the country carried the same article, with the Brownings at the center, pictured with their adopted child, bedecked in finery. The article described children escaping from a life of poverty to one of privilege and opportunity.²⁰ It also expanded the already considerable fame of the Brownings, whose lives were of intense interest to the American readership.

The public soon read about the Brownings' concern that their adopted child, Marjorie, had no sibling playmate, and of their advertising for a suitable sister for her. They ran another ad:



March 2, 1919 Brooklyn Eagle

Some twelve thousand applied, flooding the Browning apartment with letters, picturing him smilingly afloat in the process.²¹ Articles abounded, one describing the interview process of an unchosen candidate: “a poor little girl is child of the rich for just one day. She was driven in a limousine, ate all the ice cream she could, and played with more toys she ever thought existed.”²²

¹⁹ See New York Daily News, December 7, 1934

²⁰ See, e.g., St. Louis Star, May 28, 1918, Cleveland Press, May 24, 1918, and others.

²¹ Albany (NY) Democrat January 24, 1927

²² New York News, April 19, 1920



Browning in his “Letter Room” Library of Congress, 1929

The winning candidate was Dorothy Lane, of Newark, whom they named “Sunshine.”²³ The nation celebrated the choice of the five- year- old fluffy haired blond girl. ²⁴ In the 1920 census the Browning household listed three servants and a nurse.²⁵

Enter the Dentist

Life in this bubble of riches evidently proved inadequate for Nellie Adele Browning. In 1923, after some 8 years of marriage, Browning’s 39-year-old wife found a new love, her 28-year-old dentist, Charles J. Wilen. We do not know much about why she left Browning, but her mother later declared that Browning “should be horsewhipped before the eyes of the wide, wide, world,” calling him a despicable scoundrel, whom her daughter feared.²⁶

²³ New York Herald, April 25, 1920

²⁴ E.g. Fresno (Ca.) Herald July 7, 1920; Arizona Daily Star, July 11, 1920

²⁵ <https://ancestors.familysearch.org/9X21-99P/edward-west-browning-1874-1934>

²⁶ New York Daily News, July 28, 1923

The affair created two more love triangles on which the press feasted, with cartoons of Wilen romancing Mrs. Browning next to his dentist's chair, as people with toothaches and compresses waited in agony.²⁷

She ran off to Paris with the dentist, and Browning had detectives follow them.²⁸ His lawyers applied to court for an order to serve divorce papers on his wife at a Paris Hotel, where she had been staying with Wilen.²⁹

There was yet another triangle in the picture. When he ran off to Paris with Browning's wife, Wilen had been engaged to a young woman, Renee Shapiro, who appeared in headlines as seeking revenge against Wilen for jilting her for Mrs. Browning. She alleged that Wilen had asked her to join in a scheme to blackmail Mrs. Browning, but she refused.³⁰ She sued Wilen for breach of promise to marry.³¹



Wilen denied the charges. In a memorable retort, he averred: “My only relations with Mrs. Browning have been to install bridgework...

²⁷ Bartelsville, Okl Examiner-Enterprise, October 18, 1923

²⁸ Sacramento Union, August 12, 1923

²⁹ New York Times, July 21, 1923. The lawyers applied to New York judge John Ford.

³⁰ See, Buffalo Evening Times, July 28, 1923; New York Daily News, July 25, 1923; South Bend (In.) Tribune, August 12, 1923

³¹ New York Daily News, October 16, 1926

It is true,” he continued, “that we came together on the Olympic, but that is chiefly a coincidence. I was coming here for personal reasons and she was coming to get a quiet divorce in Paris without publicity.”³²

Wilén got into more trouble, indicted by federal authorities for having arranged for a phony passport for Mrs. Browning. He pleaded guilty to the crime in 1926.³³



The Day, New London, Ct., September 20, 1923

Renee Shapiro also sued Browning, in 1927, claiming that he harmed her reputation after the two had met, in 1923, commiserating, for having been abandoned by their mates.³⁴

³² New York Times, July 23, 1923; In December 1923, New York Supreme Court Justice Vernon Davis appointed a referee in the action between Edward Browning and Nellie Adele Browning.

³³ New York Times, October 26, 1926

³⁴ New York Daily News December 12, 1927

After leaving her husband, Nellie Adele Browning fades from the public record.³⁵

She surfaces after Browning's death, seeking a share of his estate as his wife, contending that she and Browning were never validly divorced.³⁶

At his death in 1934, Browning's estate was worth between six and seven million dollars, in the middle of the depression, when people were standing in line for an apple. In today's dollars it would amount to over 140 million dollars.

Wilen also departed from public record universe of the Brownings. He married another woman.³⁷

Thereafter, the press reported yet another amorous triangle with him and French tennis star Suzanne Lenglen.³⁸

When the first Mrs. Browning ran off with Wilen, she took Marjorie, while Sunshine stayed with Edward. For a time, Marjorie's whereabouts were unknown, and the newspapers carried articles about a cadre of detectives trying to her. She was with Adele's parents, who excoriated Edward for making life miserable for Adele.³⁹

In 1924, things quieted down for Browning; he declared himself finished with marriage and with women.⁴⁰ Turning his attention to Sunshine, he wanted a sister for her, and so he again advertised:

³⁵ Along with Marjorie, she evidently moved back in with her parents, Charles and Edward Lowen at 179th Street in the Bronx, according to the 1925 census. We find her in the 1940 census, living in New Rochelle with her daughter, Marjorie, and her husband, John McDonald, an investigator for the treasury department.

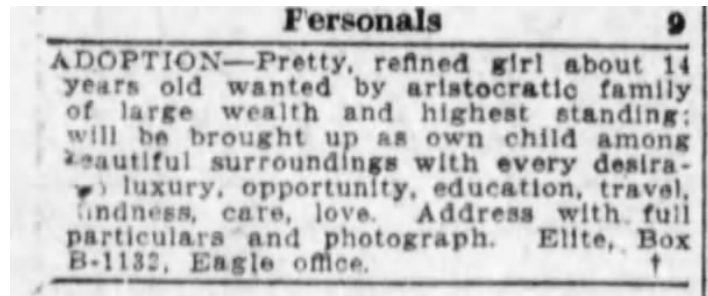
³⁶ New York Times November 30, 1934. There is conflicting evidence as to whether she had gone to Paris (with Wilen) to get a divorce with Browning's consent and approval, or that it was her own plan. NY Daily News October 26, 1926 · On his Marriage Certificate to Peaches Heenan in 1926, Browning states that he had been married once before but divorced (Paris March 24, 1924). He may have been mistaken as to the date of the divorce, which apparently took place in 1923.

³⁷ Brooklyn Daily Times. June 15, 1925

³⁸ New York Daily News October 14, 1926

³⁹ Buffalo (NY) Times, July 30, 1923; Brooklyn Times Union July 22, 1923

⁴⁰ Ogden (Ut) Standard Examiner, July 13, 2024



Brooklyn Eagle, July 5, 1925

The ad produced letters from applicants in seven languages, two in shorthand. Canada, Europe, China, and the Philippines all had their applicants. Among the candidates were an “Indian princess, a papoose, a Spanish señorita, a marathon runner, a juggler, and a woman who claimed she was double jointed all over,” and, from Kansas, an applicant who said she was six foot six, “but young and still growing.”⁴¹

The advertisement also attracted a criminal adventurer. Philip Siegel, a New York City typesetter, sent a letter to Browning threatening harm as part of an extortion scheme. With Browning’s cooperation, police sprung a trap on the would-be extortionist and arrested him, as reported nationwide.⁴² The press followed the proceedings in Manhattan’s West Side Court.⁴³

Browning was kind and fatherly to all whom he interviewed, and he sent them back to their homes in his automobile, with a chauffeur, and a footman to help them in and out of the coach, just like Cinderella. A little girl who didn't want to be adopted started crying, and after being driven home, said “That was the best ride I ever had.”⁴⁴

“The little girl I will select now,” Browning said, “I will take to my home for a month or six weeks. If she likes my home and proves an amiable companion to Dorothy, I will adopt

⁴¹ Scranton, Pa, Times-Tribune, August 4, 1925

⁴² Oregon Daily Journal, July 19, 1925; Boston Globe July 20, 1925

⁴³ Springfield Daily Republican, July 20, 1925. Magistrate Macready set bail on Siegel in the sum of \$25,000. In New York’s General Sessions Court, Siegel pleaded guilty to a much milder charge, as Browning, reportedly, did not want to press the matter (See, Buffalo News, May 26, 1926). Judge William Allen imposed a suspended sentence on Siegel, which reportedly displeased Browning, who wanted to set an example. See Brooklyn Times Union June 1, 1926. This is inconsistent with the earlier report; we do not know which is accurate. In the interim, between Siegel’s arrest in July 1925 and his sentence a year later, Browning married Peaches.

⁴⁴ Asheville (NC) Citizen-Times July 10, 1925

her...Dorothy, whom I adopted six years ago, has turned out to be a perfect prize...She is a very robust girl and rows, swims, and rides horseback. Not so long ago she had nothing, and the other day when I gave her a choice in automobiles, she selected a Rolls-Royce, and has even chosen the color of upholstery for her new town car.”⁴⁵

The Mary Spas Fiasco

Following through on his advertisement, in mid-July 1925, Browning provisionally adopted Mary Spas of Astoria, L. I., believing her to be 16-years-old, but forgiving her the extra two years. Her parents had been natives of Prague, Bohemia. She had read of his offer and resolved to present herself as a candidate. Slipping out of her home, she walked to Browning’s office, and sat down in a corner. Her smile created an impression on Browning, who placed her in a school for girls, with others whom he was considering for adoption.

⁴⁵ NY Times July 7, 1925



NEW YORK AGAIN PROVES ITSELF ONLY SMALL TOWN GROWN UP. When Edward W. Browning wanted to adopt (as who wouldn't?) a sixteen-year-old cutie for his very own, he felt that the affair was his own business, but the neighbors and town elders thought otherwise. You may be able to get away with that sort of thing in foreign parts, but not in New York or Dubuque, by heck!

46

She rode to and from school in Browning's Rolls-Royce and dined with him at the Hotel Belleclaire. To top it off, she spent a week at a large country house at Sound Beach, Conn., where she learned how to "ring once" for the butler and "three times" for a maid. Browning also promised to buy her a wardrobe of forty new frocks, a high-powered boat for the Hudson, and an airplane. On August 4, 1925, he adopted her formally.⁴⁷

Almost immediately, trouble started. Word circulated that she was a good deal older than 16. Meantime, the Queens District Attorney was concerned about whether money was changing hands.

⁴⁶ Ralph Barton illustrates Edward Browning's predicament in "adopting" Mary Louise Spas. (New Yorker Digital Archive) online at <https://newyorkerstateofmind.com/tag/edward-daddy-browning/>

⁴⁷ New York Times August 5, 1925

Hotel Belleclaire
Broadway and 77th Street,
New York.

Seventh Avenue, Amsterdam Ave. and West 130th St. Cars pass the door.

Absolutely FIREPROOF



Luxurious rooms for permanent and transient guests.

Restaurant a Feature. Exquisite Palm Room. Art Nouveau Cafe. Royal Hungarian Orchestra.

"Most Artistically Beautiful Hotel in the World." Can offer few single rooms, with bath, beautifully furnished, suitable for two people, \$60 per month.

TRANSIENT RATES:
 One Room, with bath.....\$2.50 per day
 Parlor, Bedroom, with bath, \$3 and \$5 per day
 Parlor, 2 Bedrooms, with bath, \$5 and \$7 per day
 Every improvement known to modern ingenuity.

Write for our magazine, "The Hotel Belleclaire World."

MILTON ROBLEE, Proprietor.

Queens County District Attorney Probes Adoption of Immigrant Girl By Wealthy New York Realtor

While sensational stories fill the metropolitan daily press about the adoption of Mary Louise Spas, daughter of Bohemian immigrants, who has been adopted by Edward A. Browning, millionaire real estate dealer of New York, her foster sister, Dorothy Sunshine Browning, also an adopted daughter, is enjoying a summer vacation at Camp Rayson in Barton. Miss Dorothy is nine years old and a very attractive young girl. Mr. Browning was recently in Barton to visit her at the May homestead. Miss Browning with a number of other New York girls, all daughters of wealthy parents, have been at the May homestead in Barton since early in June.

GROTON POND CONTROVERSY TO HIGHER COURT

Owners Who Brought Injunction Proceedings Held In Contempt

A interesting legal point, which will be taken to the supreme court for settlement, has been raised in the controversy between the owners of cottages at Groton Pond and E. Bertram Pike, receiver for the Vermont Public Utilities company, which has raised

Word has been received at Barton that Mary Louise, the newly adopted 16-year-old daughter, will come to Barton soon to join her adopted sister, Miss Browning is a student of Miss Coburn's private school on Riverside drive, New York. Miss Coburn established the summer camp at Barton for girls from her exclusive private school at New York.

Caledonian Record, St. Johnsbury, Vt, August 6, 1925

It turned out she was 21 years old, not 16, and the adoption was followed by its equally prompt vacatur, before Judge Daniel Noble of Queens County.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ New York Times December 29, 1927

[illegible]

Rochester, MN Post Bulletin, August 11, 1925

CINDERELLA LOSES HER PRINCE

Mary Louise Spas, daughter of poor Bohemian parents of New York, suddenly found herself adopted by a millionaire, E. W. Browning, and taken along Fifth Avenue to buy everything she wanted. However, the story's happy ending was spoiled by investigators who didn't like the way Browning paid for Mary Louise, now who believed that she was only 16 years old. Photo shows the girl readily taking the role of "jazz daughter" to Browning.

CINDERELLA LOSES HER GOLDEN SLIPPER: WOULD BECOME MONK

Adoption of Mary Louise Spas by Wealthy Realtor Is Annulled; Girl Fails in Effort to Enter Convent.

Newark, N. J., Aug. 11.—(AP)—The Newark Star-Eagle, in a copyright story, will announce that Mary Louise Spas, 21, Bohemian girl who unsuccessfully tried to become a modern Cinderella, spent the night and this morning in Newark in a vain effort to enter a convent and become a nun. "If I can not become a nun, I'm going to marry some poor boy and will work and have a nice home," the young woman sobbed.

Adoption Is Annulled.

New York, Aug. 11.—(AP)—Surrogate Noble, Queens county, annulled the adoption of Mary Louise Spas in Edward Browning, millionaire real estate operator, on the grounds the girl misrepresented her age. The age issue was the only one presented. Mary and Mr. Browning were present. The girl showed little emotion.

Mary and her parents agreed to the annulment, text representative providing the girl can not participate in any right as an heir to Browning's fortune. Relatives also bound themselves not to bring suits of any nature against Browning or his heirs.

Browning later gave Mary and her parents a "farewell dinner" at the Hotel Belvedere. Browning declared he made "no cash settlement whatever." The girl then returned home with her parents.

"JAZZ GIRL" AGAIN ON TRIAL FOR LIFE

Missoula, (Mont.) Sentinel August 11, 1925

Any Other New London Paper.

AUGUST 11, 1925

FOURTEEN PAGES

PRICE THREE CENTS

Cinderella Mary Anxious to Become a Nun; Makes Vain Attempt to Enter Convent

Mother Asks Return of Child



Acquaintances of Young Woman Say They Believe She Is Still Hunting for Newspaper Publicity

TIRED OF IT ALL, SHE TELLS NEWARK NUN

Her Adoption By Edward A. Browning, Rich Real-estate, Annulled By Surrogate of Queens County

New London (Ct) Day, August 11, 1925

The publicity provoked chorus girls who flocked to the famous Browning roof-top, asking that they be adopted.



Ottawa Citizen, August 18, 1925



Kew Gardens Inn (ca. 1939)

Reportedly, Spas tried to commit suicide and was placed under watch.⁴⁹ A year later, she sued Browning for \$500,000, alleging that she had gone to his apartment at Kew Gardens Inn, where,

⁴⁹ Shreveport (a.) Times, August 16, 1925

she said, he tried to attack her and, displaying a pistol, threatened to kill her and himself if she told any of this to the District Attorney. She said she was so terrorized that she drank part of a bottle of iodine, and that after the adoption had been canceled, Browning forced her to go to the Hotel Belleclaire and made her sign papers she did not understand. Browning's attorney said that Browning disputed the charge and would "fight it to the limit."⁵⁰ Spa's suit continued over the next two years.⁵¹ It was settled in 1931 for an undisclosed sum.⁵²

In the meantime, Spas married Henry Tverdy, a Queens dentist, whose former girlfriend then sued *him* for breach of promise to marry.⁵³ Lawsuits of that kind, and for alienation of affections, (so-called "heart-balm" actions) had existed in New York, but the legislature abolished them in 1935.⁵⁴

The Fateful Meeting of Peaches and Daddy Browning

Browning had formed connections with the Phi Lambda Tau sorority of the Textile High School, where Frances Belle Heenan was a student.⁵⁵ She worked at Bedell's Department Store on 34th Street and Fifth Avenue, for 12 or 15 dollars a week.

⁵⁰ Montreal, Canada Gazette, December 16, 1926; New York Times, December 17, 1926

⁵¹ Brooklyn Citizen, January 5, 1928, Brooklyn Eagle, November 26, 1929.

⁵² Guthrie (Ok) Daily Leader, October 5, 1931

⁵³ New York Daily News, September 24, 1930

⁵⁴ *Burtis v. Thompson*, 42 NY 246 (1870); *Fearon v. Treanor*, 272 N.Y. 268, 270 (1936)

⁵⁵ Pittsburgh Post, April 17, 1926; For Textile High School, see New York City Textile High School Author(s): W. H. Dooley Source: The School Review, Apr., 1922, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Apr., 1922), pp. 281-287 Published by: The University of Chicago Press Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1078099>

New York Styles

Now Ready for Spring & Summer

Every Woman Should See All the Wonderful New Style-Changes

NEW YORK—greater and more original than ever—is ready with her fascinating new fashions for Spring & Summer! Everything is new—radically different—more beautiful than ever before! To see New York's own favorite creations—and in complete varieties—see them as presented in exclusive array by Bedell!

Bedell Different From All Others

The famous New York house of Bedell is now a National Institution—with large retail stores in all principle cities! Bedell Styles are genuine New York Styles—New York's Best Styles—yours, whether you live in New York, or in any Bedell city, or in any community—always at the same great Money-Saving Prices!

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—or your money back! Comparisons welcomed! Bedell Buying Power and tailoring facilities explain! See prices above! No other like us!

Prices That Save You Money

This Fashion Catalog illustrates, describes, and gives prices on—

Coats . . . \$10 to \$50
Suits . . . \$15 to \$65
Dresses . . . \$5 to \$65
House
Dresses . . . \$2 to \$5
Waists . . . \$1 to \$15
Millinery . . . \$1 to \$20
Underwear . . . \$5 to \$10
Shoes . . . \$3 to \$15

Sixty-five Different Departments represented in this Great New York Style Book!

Why Pay More?



Catalogue of Styles FREE

Write for Your Copy—Today!

This beautiful catalog, fresh from the press, illustrates, describes and gives prices on all the styles well-dressed New York women will wear this season! There are many pages of beautiful color plates, showing all the Spring Shades in vogue. Revealing countless Economies and Style-Suggestions that cannot fail to interest you! A copy of this catalog is yours, free, if you write and ask for it! Send today—now!

Chicago { Los Angeles
Detroit { To Open—Atlantic City
Cleveland { (Buffalo)

"Bedell City"

The picture below shows how the Bedell stores would appear if grouped together—made from actual photographs. Equalling nearly five times the area of grounds occupied by the Capitol at Washington, D. C.

Bedell

34th Street—Fifth Avenue
NEW YORK CITY



At a sorority dance, he met her, and was smitten.⁵⁶ He swept her off her feet.

In an affidavit filed by Peaches in the litigations that followed, she wrote:

I had met Mr. Browning at a Sorority Dance at the Hotel McAlpin, New York City, on the evening of March 5th, 1926. I had learned that Mr. Browning frequently attended such dances of girls societies and that he was active in the organization of such societies for girls. At that time I was fifteen years of age and was to become sixteen years of age on June 23rd, 1926.

Mr. Browning immediately began to call upon me at my home 625 West 169th Street and to shower me with his attentions. He sent me gifts, beautiful flowers, and candy...

We can only speculate why Browning was visiting sorority dances of high school girls, looking, perhaps, for a daughter, a bride, or both. He said he merely happened to drop in on the sorority dance.⁵⁷ By one account, he had founded the sorority.⁵⁸



The Hotel McAlpine in New York

⁵⁶ New York Daily News, January 26, 1927; January 27, 1927

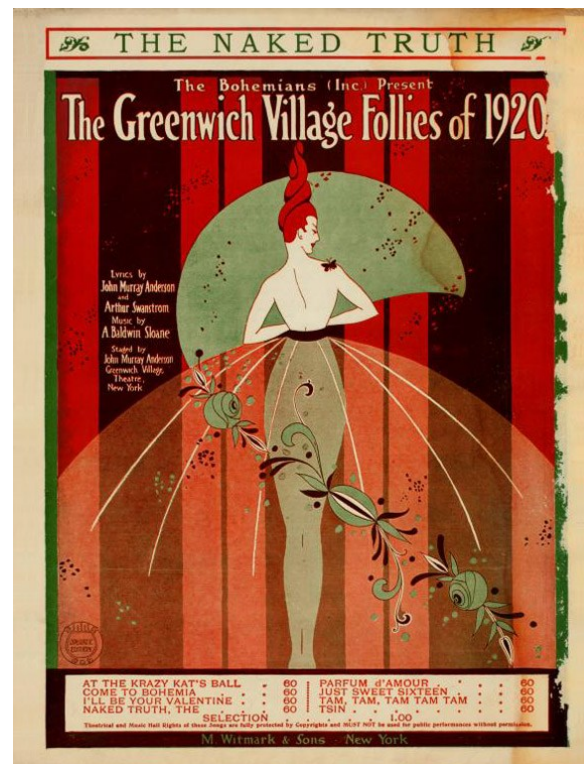
⁵⁷ Hazelton (Pa.) Plain Speaker April 3, 1926

⁵⁸ Blackwell, (Okl.) Morning tribune, April 2, 1926

After she had been introduced to Browning, she gave him her address, and ten days later he took her to dinner at the Everglades, a nightclub, and then to the Greenwich Village Follies.

I knew the first time I saw her that she was the girl of my dreams. I loved her. I saw the blazing reflection of my own love in her eyes. Here was my perfect mate! I could not trust myself alone with her. I was too overwhelmed with love. *Daddy on Peaches*⁵⁹

My other boyfriends were forgotten. I had glances for none save Mr. Browning, my silver-haired knight, his gentle caresses, his quiet dignity, his savoir faire. *Peaches on Daddy*⁶⁰



That first night he took her out, he bought her a bunch of orchids, two dozen roses, and carnations for her mother. He took her to the Plaza, on March 17, 1926, St. Patrick's Day, when

⁵⁹ Birmingham (Ala.) News, July 14, 1926

⁶⁰ Philadelphia Inquirer, January 19, 1960

he “seemed to have hundreds of green handkerchiefs in his pockets which he gave to the young ladies.” He took her to “A Night in Paris” and bought her a book of nude pictures, which he told her to take home with her.

He saw her nearly every day until she was “hurt,” as she called the burning of her face with acid on March 27. He visited her at her home in Washington Heights, where she lived with her mother, at 625 W. 169th Street.⁶¹ The acid-throwing culprit’s identity was never discovered, and the issue surfaced from time to time, including at the separation trial. One speculates that it was the act of a jealous suitor. The Sunday before, March 14, 1926, Browning had proposed to her and had sent his secretary first to ask her how old she was. She told Browning, she said, that they must wait until she was 16.⁶²

The press avidly followed their whirlwind courtship; California and Nebraska reporting in.⁶³ About a month after the pair met, Frances announced their engagement, and Browning announced that he was buying a 135-acre estate for their residence in Bellmore, Long Island.⁶⁴



San Francisco Bulletin, May 18, 1926

This all took place somewhat before the two were known as Peaches and Daddy. That Francis Heenan was just under 16, aroused the concerns of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to

⁶¹ Brooklyn Daily Times, April 2, 1926

⁶² New York Times, January 26, 1927

⁶³ Stockton (CA) Evening and Sunday Record, March 31, 1926; See, generally,

<https://www.nydailynews.com/2017/08/14/daddy-and-peaches-browning-the-scandalous-marriage-between-an-elderly-baron-and-a-15-year-old-schoolgirl/>

⁶⁴ Decatur (Ill.) Herald and Review April 3, 1926

Children, which brought a proceeding in New York City Children's Court to revoke the guardianship of the child bride's mother, as unfit.⁶⁵ Its superintendent, Vincent T. Pisarra, was outraged by the unseemly relationship between the Daddy-Peaches relationship. There were too many questions surrounding it, including the acid throwing episode injuring Peaches's face, her absences from Textile High School, which the Bureau of Attendance of the Board of Education was looking into.⁶⁶ Pisarra's was also suspicious about Browning's odd connection with a girl's sorority, at which he met Peaches.⁶⁷ There was also the death of Stella Lubin, a friend of Peaches, who died a week after a round of parties with Peaches and Daddy.⁶⁸ Pisarra was determined to take Peaches away from both her parents and from Daddy Browning.⁶⁹

The court ruled, however, that it had no jurisdiction to halt the wedding.⁷⁰

The Wedding

One could be excused for expecting the wedding to be held in Madison Square Garden or the Metropolitan Opera House, with a cast of thousands. Nothing like that happened. The couple went to the plumbing shop of Gilbert Forman, the town clerk in Cold Spring, New York, who issued a license, and from there to the home of Justice of the Peace Roy W. Christian, a taxi driver, who performed the ceremony. Forman not only issued the license, but as a plumber, he did repairs to the 15-room house in Cold Spring that Browning had rented.⁷¹ Peaches' parents were part of the wedding party. Parental consent was necessary owing to the bride's age.

⁶⁵ Franklin and Oil City News Herald, April 2, 1926; Press of Atlantic City, April 7, 1926; Chattanooga Daily Times, April 7, 1926

⁶⁶ St Albans, (Vt.) Daily Messenger, April 2, 1926

⁶⁷ Michael M. Greenburg, *Peaches and Daddy*, (2008) at 119; New York Daily News, April 2, 1926; Brooklyn Daily Times, April 2, 1926; Roanoke (Va.) Times, April 7, 1926;

⁶⁸ Brooklyn Eagle, April 2, 1926

⁶⁹ Pittsburgh Post, April 7, 1926; Des Moines Register, April 7, 1926

⁷⁰ New York Daily News. April 9, 1927. The proceedings were before Judge Franklin C. Hoyt, as elaborated upon by Michael M. Greenburg in his book, *Peaches and Daddy* (2008) at 125. The marriage apparently mooted the issue of revoking the guardianship of the bride's mother. See, Selma, Ala. Times Journal, April 11, 1926; Owensboro, Kentucky Messenger-Inquirer April 11, 1926

⁷¹ Brooklyn Eagle, April 11, 1926; The wedding was witnessed by John F. Ginslaw, Browning's driver, and Pearl Bayer. We do not know who these people were; perhaps associates, friends of the town officials, or two people who happened to be in the vicinity and were conscripted as witnesses.



NY Daily News April 11, 1926

The hasty marriage, as one press account had it, prevented any action by the New York Children's Aid Society to upset the girl's guardianship by her mother.⁷²

⁷² Tucson Citizen April 11, 1926

RECORD OF MARRIAGES

7

REGISTERED No. 13
Edward West Browning of **New York City**
 and State of New York, and **Francis Belle Heenan** of **Cold Spring**
 Putnam and State of New York at **Philipstown** this **Tenth** day of **April**
 nineteen hundred and **twenty six**
 (SEAL) **Gilbert Forman** Clerk

The following is a full and true abstract of all the facts disclosed by the above-named applicants in their verified statements presented to me upon their applications for the above license.

FROM THE GROOM			FROM THE BRIDE		
NAME	Edward West Browning	NO. OF MARRIAGES Second	NAME	Francis Belle Heenan	NO. OF MARRIAGES First
COLOR	White	RESIDENCE New York City	COLOR	White	RESIDENCE Cold Spring
AGE	51 yrs	OCCUPATION Real Estate	AGE	15 yrs	OCCUPATION None
BIRTHPLACE	New York City		BIRTHPLACE	Columbus, Ohio	
FATHER	Edward Franklin Browning	DECEASED yes	FATHER	William Bernard Heenan	DECEASED yes
BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	WHEN Mar. 24	BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	WHEN 1-24
MOTHER	Lucy Ann Richardson	WHERE Paris	MOTHER	Caroline Chamberlain	WHERE U.S.A.
BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.		BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE
 I, **Roy A. Christian** Justice of Peace at **Nelsonville** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York do hereby certify that I did on this **Tenth** day of **April** in the year A. D. 19 **26** at **Philipstown** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York solemnize the rites of matrimony between **Edward West Browning** of **New York City** in the county of **New York** and **Miss Francis Belle Heenan** of **Cold Spring** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York in the presence of **Pearl Bayer** and **John F. Ginchaw** as witnesses and the license therefor is hereto annexed. Witness my hand at **Philipstown** this **Tenth** day of **April** A. D. 19 **26**
Roy A. Christian
 Justice of Peace at **Nelsonville** Putnam Co.
 (Address of Justice of Peace)

STATE OF NEW YORK
 County of **Putnam**
 Town of **Philipstown**
Edward West Browning groom, and **Francis Belle Heenan** bride, applicants for a license for marriage, being severally sworn, depose and say, that to the best of their knowledge and belief the statements respectively signed by them is true, and that no legal impediment exists as to the right of the applicants to enter into the marriage state.

Edward West Browning Groom **Francis Belle Heenan** Bride
 Subscribed and sworn to before me this **10th** day of **April** 19 **26** **Gilbert Forman** Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT
 This is to certify that I, **Caroline M. Heenan** who have hereto subscribed my name, do hereby consent that **Francis Belle Heenan** my daughter (Name of Minor) who is under the age of **16** years, shall be united in marriage to **Edward West Browning** by any minister of the gospel or other person authorized by law to solemnize marriages. Witness my hand this **10** day of **April** A. D. 19 **26**
Caroline M. Heenan
 (Signature of Parent or Guardian)

REGISTERED No. **14**
Bertram Austin Bell of **Cold Spring**
 and State of New York, and **Gertrude Magdaline Schatzel** of **Cold Spring**
 Putnam and State of New York at **Cold Spring** this **Twenty ninth** day of **April**
 nineteen hundred and **twenty-six**
 (SEAL) **Gilbert Forman** Clerk

The following is a full and true abstract of all the facts disclosed by the above-named applicants in their verified statements presented to me upon their applications for the above license.

FROM THE GROOM			FROM THE BRIDE		
NAME	Bertram Austin Bell	NO. OF MARRIAGES One	NAME	Gertrude Magdaline Schatzel	NO. OF MARRIAGES One
COLOR	White	RESIDENCE Cold Spring	COLOR	White	RESIDENCE Cold Spring
AGE	24 yrs	OCCUPATION Salesman	AGE	26 yrs	OCCUPATION Home
BIRTHPLACE	Cold Spring		BIRTHPLACE	Beacon	
FATHER	James H. Bell	DECEASED yes	FATHER	Philip Schatzel	DECEASED yes
BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	WHEN U.S.A.	BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	WHEN U.S.A.
MOTHER	Laura M. Austin	WHERE U.S.A.	MOTHER	Mary Augusta Mitchell	WHERE U.S.A.
BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.		BIRTHPLACE	U.S.A.	

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE
 I, **Martin G. Mackey** Justice of Peace at **Cold Spring** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York do hereby certify that I did on this **1st** day of **May** in the year A. D. 19 **26** at **Cold Spring** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York solemnize the rites of matrimony between **Bertram Bell** of **Cold Spring** in the county of **Putnam** and **Gertrude Schatzel** of **Cold Spring** in the county of **Putnam** and State of New York in the presence of **John Scott** and **Dorothy Schatzel** as witnesses and the license therefor is hereto annexed. Witness my hand at **Cold Spring** this **1st** day of **May** A. D. 19 **26**
Martin G. Mackey
 Justice of Peace at **Cold Spring** Putnam Co.
 (Address of Justice of Peace)

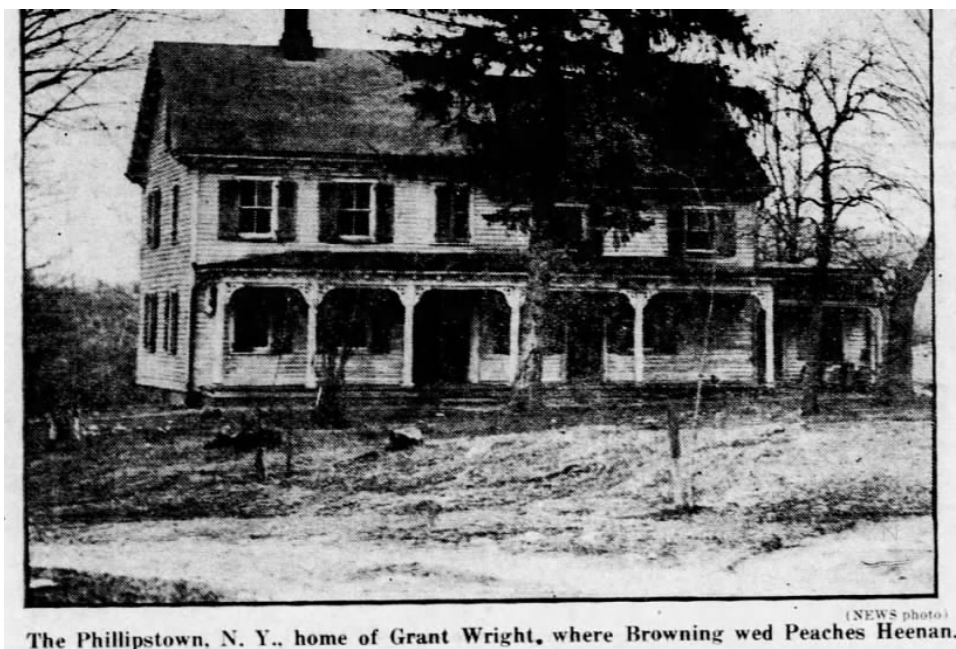
STATE OF NEW YORK
 County of **Putnam**
 Town of **Philipstown**
Bertram Austin Bell groom, and **Gertrude Magdaline Schatzel** bride, applicants for a license for marriage, being severally sworn, depose and say, that to the best of their knowledge and belief the statements respectively signed by them is true, and that no legal impediment exists as to the right of the applicants to enter into the marriage state.

Bertram Austin Bell Groom **Gertrude Magdaline Schatzel** Bride
 Subscribed and sworn to before me this **29th** day of **April** 19 **26** **Gilbert Forman** Clerk

CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT
 This is to certify that I, **Dorothy Schatzel** who have hereto subscribed my name, do hereby consent that **Bertram Austin Bell** my son (Name of Minor) who is under the age of **21** years, shall be united in marriage to **Gertrude Schatzel** by any minister of the gospel or other person authorized by law to solemnize marriages. Witness my hand this **29th** day of **April** A. D. 19 **26**
Dorothy Schatzel
 (Signature of Parent or Guardian)

Marriage License of Edward West Browning and Frances Belle Heenan, April 10, 1926⁷³

⁷³ Online at <https://ancestors.familysearch.org/9X21-99P/edward-west-browning-1874-1934>



The Phillipstown, N. Y., home of Grant Wright, where Browning wed Peaches Heenan.

New York Daily News April 12, 1926

Two days after the wedding, “while his wife was touring about, attracting no attention, Browning was besieged in his office at 153 West 72nd street by an army of women and girls, who wanted ‘only one glimpse’ of the famous Cinderella man.”⁷⁴ For a time, the two seemed to get along.

⁷⁴ Tom Miller, *Hypnotism by Mail Order!* Online at <https://www.landmarkwest.org/72crosstown/153-west-72nd-street/>

The **First Day**



He Gave
"Peaches" Browning
a Rolls Royce
Limousine

*—and after that—furs,
Paris frocks, platinum
rings, rare jewels—
everything that a lov-
ing Daddy would want
his Baby to have!!*

Read About It in

"Peaches" Browning's **Honeymoon Diary**

*Disclosing All the Thrills and Innermost
Secrets of Her Fervid Honeymoon*

Starts Next Monday in The

LOS ANGELES
Examiner



**15-YEAR-OLD BRIDE
CLEARED OF FRAUD
IN GETTING LICENSE**

One Shadow Lifted From Four-Day Honeymoon But Action Against Mother Still Pends in Court.

NEW YORK, April 14.—(AP)—Edward W. Browning, wealthy real estate operator, and his schoolgirl bride, Frances Heenan, who is his junior by 26 years, today were on the fourth daily round of what has turned out to be a "commuting honeymoon."

Much of their time is spent in traveling between New York and Cold Spring in a blue Rolls-Royce. Cold Spring, where they were married and have a new home, is on the Hudson, opposite West Point, 45 miles from New York.

Although they are still subject to what Browning has termed "painful publicity" with their every move chronicled, the legal shadows over their marriage have lifted somewhat. District Attorney Bailey of Putnam county, where they were married, has cleared the 15-year-old bride of any suspicion of violating the county law requiring a 6-month residence before obtaining a license.

The only other shadow at present is the action started before the marriage by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, to have the girl's mother removed as an improper guardian.

While the mother was visiting a lawyer yesterday the bridal couple went to the hotel Biltmore for the tea dance.

"I am very happy," the bride said as she entered her husband's car for a trip back to the honeymoon house in Cold Spring.

Browning, Fascinated by Girls; Reveals Story of His Own Life

Sought Friendship of the Adolescent Just to Have a Little Fun After Hard Business Career, He Declares.
Snaps at Question About Stella Lubin, Chum of "Peaches" Who Died After Night of Revelry.

With the "legal shadows disappearing" from their honeymoon, the following story of the life of Edward West Browning, as told in a recent issue of the New York World, will be interesting:

(Continued on page three.)

Butte, Mont. Daily Post April 14, 1926

On May 15, 1926, slightly more than a month after the ceremony, Peaches wrote:

To the most wonderful Prince Charming in all this world. You really are my Prince Charming, for you are a true Prince. I love you more than any thing else in this world. I love you for so many reasons. First, because you are just yourself. Next, because you are so good to me, you try to give me everything I want. I know my Daddy has so many business troubles and I will always try to make you forget your troubles and be happy. I'll always love my Daddy. Peaches.⁷⁵

Peaches described the relation differently at the separation litigation later that year. In her complaint for separation, she alleged that on the marital night, Browning compelled her to sit up on the bed naked, and in full view, compelled her to walk around the bedroom and exhibit herself. When she objected, he flew into a rage. She further alleged that on the wedding night he

⁷⁵ <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/news-photo/daddy-said-sit-down-and-write-me-a-love-letter-and-so-i-did-news-photo/97939649?adppopup=true>

forced her to have sexual intercourse, although she was not well, and that he forced her to use an instrument during sex.

In her complaint for separation, she put it this way:

We were married on the afternoon of April 10th, 1926, and immediately departed for the Hotel Gramatan, Bronxville, New York, where we spent our bridal night and a few days following. It was here that Mr. Browning's cruel treatment of me began and the shock was so great that it completely unnerved me. I was fifteen years of age and naturally did not know much about man or the ways of the world. Mr. Browning forced me to use an instrument after intercourse which I had never seen before nor knew the use of and which greatly shocked and unnerved me. Mr. Browning said that it would prevent motherhood and I had to use it. He subsequently purchased medicines and other means of contraception.

Apparently, she wanted to have children, but he did not. She added that he had sometimes been drunk, and threatening.⁷⁶

Either way—if the marriage was sour from the start or turned sour after a few weeks—things had grown bad enough for Peaches and her mother to leave the marital residence in early October 1926.

⁷⁶ See appendix for transcript of her complaint for separation.



New York Daily News. October 5, 1926

To get a comment from Daddy, reporters found him alone at the Hotel Emerson in New York City, looking rumpled, in pajamas.⁷⁷



⁷⁷ New York Daily News, October 5, 1926

If Daddy Browning knew how to generate publicity, Peaches took a page from his playbook, producing a sensational story—and getting paid \$1,000 for it.⁷⁸

Why I Left “Daddy” Browning
By “Peaches”



“Peaches” Browning.

After a search of four days, “Peaches,” the wife of Edward W. Browning, whose leaving her husband has attracted fully as much attention as her marriage, has been found living with a friend less than 100 miles from New York.

Her reasons for leaving him have been the subject of a great deal of conjecture and speculation ever since they separated a few days ago.

She emphatically declares she will never return to her husband and in a series of stories, which will appear exclusively in the Chronicle Telegraph, gives her reasons.

The First Installment Appears Today in the
PITTSBURGH CHRONICLE TELEGRAPH
Order your paper from your newsdealer or call Circulation Department, GRant 6500.

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, October 9, 1926

The separation trial would begin in January 1927. From the announcement of the breakup in early October, 1926, until the trial, the public was treated to almost three months of news analysis, and pre-trial charges by the litigants themselves.

⁷⁸ Camden Post, January 27, 1927

Cinderella Man Is Still Waiting With Open Arms For Return of Girl Wife

By the Associated Press.

NEW YORK, Oct. 6.—Edward W. Browning, 51-year-old wealthy real-estate operator and promoter, is still receiving bills for clothes bought by his school-girl bride just before she left him, but he has received no word from the girl.

The latest bill, for \$250, covering dresses which the 16-year-old wife bought and had charged to Browning was received by him today. Last Saturday he had received bills for \$6,000 representing frocks, wraps, silk stockings and other feminine apparel which were purchased on Friday by "Peaches", as Browning called his wife.

secretary said that "Peaches" had returned, presumably from New Jersey, to the home of her mother in West 157th street, Manhattan. The secretary said that this information was contained in a telegram received at Browning's office, but he did not say from whom the telegram was received.

At the same time the secretary gave out the following statement in behalf of Browning:

"Mr. Edward W. Browning is still maintaining apartments at the Kew Gardens Inn, (Long Island) for Mrs. Browning and himself.

"Mr. Browning is still maintaining a city home for Mrs. Browning and himself at the Hotel Emerson."

Anaconda (Mont.) Standard October 7, 1926

The publicity generated yet another lawsuit. The *NY Mirror* published an article entitled "Browning Unmasked", for which he sued the newspaper for libel.⁷⁹

Browning Sues New York Tabloid Paper in Libel; Objects to Picture

NEW YORK, Oct. 9.—While Edward W. Browning and his Cinderella girl-wife, "Peaches," issued statements from their respective camps indicating an unwillingness on the part of both to effect a reconciliation, the Daily Mirror, tabloid newspaper, announced that it had been served by Browning with a suit for libel, asking \$100,000.

The suit was filed as "an answer to the Daily Mirror's honest story of last Thursday, and the picture of 'Browning unmasked,'" the paper says.

The romantic realtor was quoted yesterday as saying he would make no overtures to close the domestic breach created when "Peaches" left his apartment in a huff. Mrs. Browning appeared equally reluctant to patch up things, claiming her millionaire husband never

spent a cent to find out how she got the acid burns on her face and asserting he never wanted her to leave the family apartment.

Regarding the libel suit, the Daily Mirror states that the summons has this to say of the picture which appeared on its front page:

"The face was a likeness of the face of the plaintiff, with certain features thereof, the lips and the lines and puffing under the eyes, exaggerated in such a manner as to depict any delineate dissipation, depravity, voluptuousness and lasciviousness." The summons also says, according to the newspaper, that the story in question conveys the idea that Browning was living a "life of falsehood, pretense and hypocrisy, which was being concealed by a mask of outward respectability and decency."

Harrisburg Evening News. October 9, 1926

⁷⁹ There does not appear to be a newspaper record as to where it had been filed, or how it turned out.

PEACHES BROWNING STRIKES BACK AT RICH HUSBAND NEW YORK, Oct. 18.—(U. P.) —“Peaches” Heenan Browning today struck back at her rich husband, Edward W. Browning, when she obtained an order in supreme court here appointing her mother as her guardian, preliminary to seeking a separation on the grounds of cruel and inhuman treatment. Browning is suing his 16-year-old wife for separation in Putnam county, charging desertion and has had a lawyer named her	the residence to St. Mary's church, thence to Green Mount cemetery Raymond Loehr Raymond Loehr, 11 years old, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Koska, of 310 Van Buren street, died on Monday morning at 3:35 o'clock, in St. Elizabeth's Hospital after a brief illness, following an attack of appendicitis. The deceased was born in Belleville January 31, 1915, a son of Mr. and Mrs. John Loehr. He leaves his mother and step-father, Mr. and Mrs. John Koska, and the following brothers and sisters: Edward, Lawrence, Alvin, Marie, Josephine and Florence Loehr. The funeral will be held Thurs-
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Belleville (ILL) Daily Advocate, October 18, 1926

'PEACHES' TO SUE BROWNING <i>Mother Appointed Guardian as Prelude to Action Charging Cinderella Man With Cruelty</i> NEW YORK, Oct. 18. (P)—The romance of Edward W. Browning has ended with a two-sided court litigation as its aftermath. Taking her first step to fight the court action instituted Saturday in Poughkeepsie by her 51-year-old wealthy husband, “Peaches,” as he called her during their six months of married life, today obtained the appointment of her mother as her guardian ad litem to bring separation action against Browning on the ground of cruelty. She now has two guardians, as Supreme Court Justice Morschauser in	ATTACK ON
--	-------------------------

Los Angeles Times October 19, 1926

Daddy Browning initiated the separation action by complaint dated October 20, 1926. As one might expect, much of it contained lawyerly phrases and jargon, but it also included language that the public could understand and was eagerly waiting to hear more about. He alleged that from April 15, 1926, onward, Peaches “refused to have any sexual relations” with him, and “still refuses to maintain such relations, thereby denying him his conjugal rights.”

This would seem to imply that the couple did have sexual relations from the date of the wedding, April 10, until the 15th. As Runyon might have put it, this implication was a matter as to which the public did not want to be kept in the dark and was very desirous of gaining more illumination.

In keeping with the norms of the day (Queen Victoria had been gone only since 1901, after reigning for 63 years) the newspapers were squeamish about their language. The phrase in Browning's complaint spoke of the denial of "sexual relations," but no newspaper used that term, even changing the quoted language to "marital relations."⁸⁰ This did not detract in the least from the public's thirst for details, as readers understood that in this context "marital relations" did not mean "dear, kindly bring me my pipe and my slippers."

For headline purposes, newspapers chose their words accordingly.



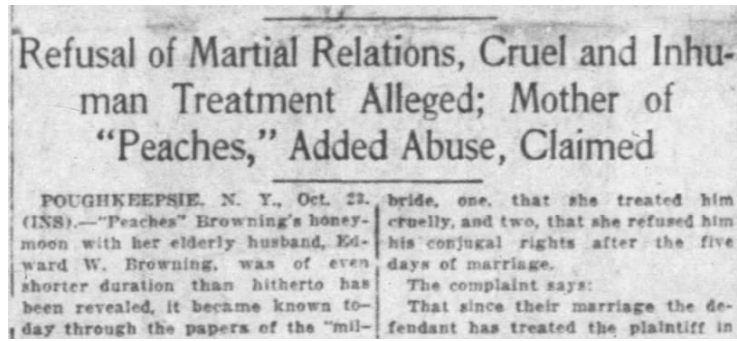
Daily Advocate, Greenville, Ohio January 26, 1927

America's great humorist commentator. Will Rogers chimed in:

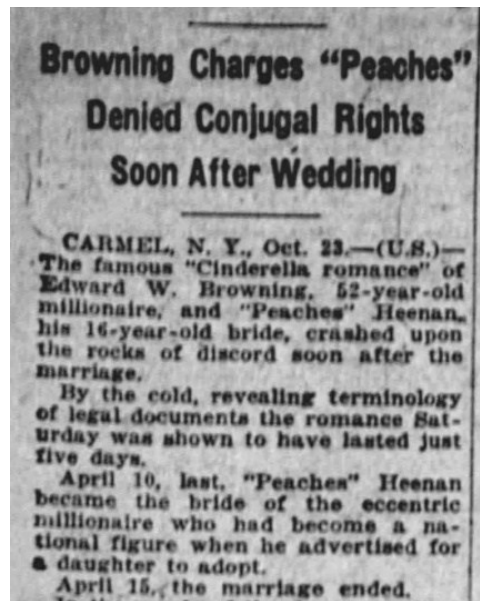
Browning and Peaches are suing for separation; we hope they will be happy. Now, if the newspapers will just get a divorce from both of them the whole of America will be happy. Yours for new cases, WILL ROGERS⁸¹

⁸⁰ Buffalo Times. October 24, 1926; Poughkeepsie Eagle-News. October 25, 1926; Tucson (Az) Citizen

⁸¹ NY Times October 20, 1926, online at <https://www.nytimes.com/1926/10/20/archives/mr-rogers-wants-a-divorce-from-the-browning-case.html?searchResultPosition=4>



Tucson (Az) Citizen October 24, 1926



Birmingham, (Ala) News, October 24, 1926

But Browning's name and his escapades had become so well-known that reporters joked about schoolchildren naming Daddy Browning when asked who is the father of this country.⁸²

The stories made fascinating reading, the more so when combined with Daddy's allegations that his mother-in-law carried much of the blame for the marriage's failure. The stories in the press were as abundant as during the courtship, but the split carried the prospect of lascivious details as to what went wrong, with glimpses, perhaps, into the bedroom

⁸² The Bee, Danville. Va. March 17, 1927; Brooklyn Daily Times, October 9, 1927

**Mother-in-Law Found Squalor
Where There Was Nothing
But Love, He Tells Public**

It was learned yesterday that "Peaches'" separation suit will be heard in White Plains, Nov. 11, while the trial of Browning's similar action has been deferred until Nov. 13 in Poughkeepsie.

Revering said he has delayed talk.

*"When 'Daddy' Turned
the Connubial Chamber
Into a Playground, He
Sealed Marital Doom"*

In his accompanying article, "The 'Child-Man' Plays at Love," Mark Brandeis, well-known personationist, reveals in his psychoanalysis of Edward, showing that the "child-maniac," who married Frances (Fosches) Hecates, now parted from him, is a typical case of what the scientists term "exhibitionistic infantilism." Brandeis will obtain from this analysis considerable light on the character of the man who is now in the limelight focused upon him since the crash of his latest romance.

By Mark Brandon

IF A MAN like Daddy Browning were to submit to an examination by a jury of psychoanalysts, the verdict would undoubtedly be: He presents the typical case of



and, for the time being, we are only concerned with his looks, but as to actual physical development, he not only shows his age, but as a man of fifty, he is muscularly in none too good a shape.

Nevertheless, he sends out for doublets to have the camera record what he considers his splendid physical development, which exists largely in his imagination. He talks "big" about healthful living, about abstaining from smoking, white cigars by the handfull protrude from his vest pockets. The fact that he overlooks hiding the damaging evidence is more proof that he is drinking to his own self, but, on the contrary, allows himself to drift and be swept away by the tide of self-admiration.

Other Characteristics

Having whetted his thirst for notoriety by giving out comparatively innocent statements on the adoption of mature and buxom girls, or young children with

'Wife in Name Only,' cision on Peaches's application for alimony and counsel fees. O, look who's got the mumps! Read Smitty on page 28 today.

Browning's Reply
At Court Hearing

The principals were absent, but considerable interest attended the opening episode in the Daddy Peaches separation suit yesterday in Supreme Court, White Plains.

In the same room that echoed testimony in the Stillman and Rhinelanders cases, attorneys for Edward West Browning, 52, and Frances Heenan Browning, 17, presented affidavits to the judge who presided at the Stillman and Rhinelanders trial. The judge, who was also presiding at the trial of the Stillman and Rhinelanders, was also presiding at the trial of the Stillman and Rhinelanders.

The affidavits submitted for Peaches charged Daddy with abnormalities in their marital relationship.

Because of these practices, Judge Morschauer reserved de- Near 50th St. August 1977.

cision on Peaches's application for alimony and counsel fees.

O, look who's got the mumps!
Read Smitty on page 28 today.

UPHOLSTERY & SLIP COVER SALE

Take Home on Approval

**100 FUR
COATS**
The finest
quality,
specially
priced
\$100

**BRIDAL
EVENING
DRESS**

KAVANAU'S
18 UNIONSQUARE
Corner 15 Street
"At The Traffic Signal Tower"

People could take sides, as they watched the public slugfest, a warm – up for the main event, the trial.

SUPREME COURT - PUTNAM COUNTY.

EDWARD W. BROWNING,

*Plaintiff**against*

FRANCES HEENAN BROWNING,

*Defendant*PLAINTIFF'S
Notice of Trial.

Please to take Notice, That the issue s..... in this action
will be brought to trial, and an Inquest taken therein, at a Special Term of the Supreme
Court,..... appointed to be held in and for the County
of Dutchess,..... at the County Courthouse in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.
on the 4th day of December 192 6 at 10:30 o'clock
in the forenoon of that day, or as soon thereafter as Counsel can be heard.

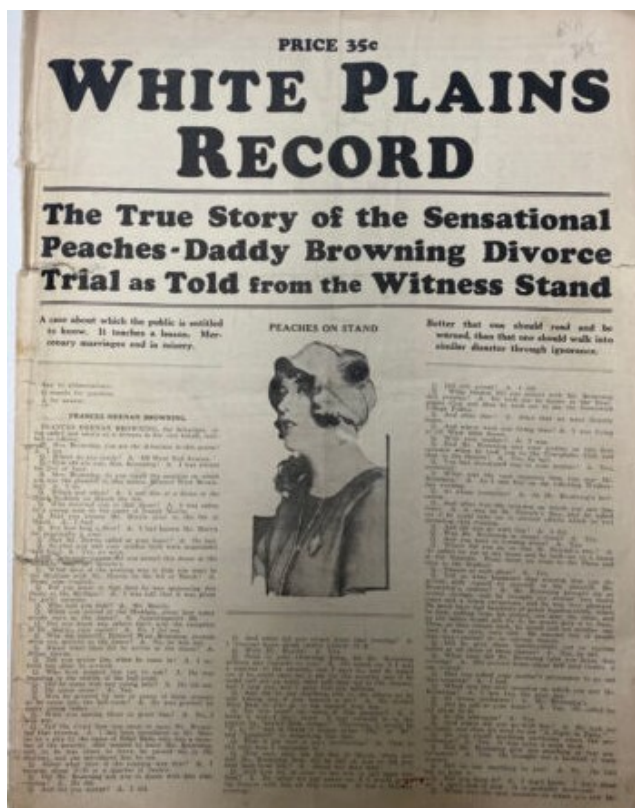
Dated the 11th day of November 192 6

To EPSTEIN & SMITH, Esq. S., } TOMPKINS & DALE,
Attorney for Defendant } *Attorneys for Plaintiff*
11 Broadway, } 27 Cedar Street,
New York City. } New York City

The trial opened in January 1927, and for the next three months the press and public were hanging on every word. There is no official trial transcript of the actual testimony. No doubt, a court stenographer took notes of the testimony, but there is no indication that they were ever typed up or printed. Both sides sought a separation, and that is what the court granted. Neither side would appeal the merits of that grant, and because both wanted it, there was no need to print up any record of the trial testimony. The only point raised on appeal was alimony and counsel fees. Browning claimed that the court improperly or excessively granted attorneys' fees to Peaches' lawyers.

The closest thing to a trial transcript was an unofficial publication called the *White Plains Record*, which, in 13 pages of tiny print, contains the direct examination and cross-examination

of Peaches Browning, Carolyn Heenan, Daddy Browning, George Blakeslee (a neurologist), and Roman Androsky (an ancillary witness). It may have been a single- issue publication.⁸³



Olean (NY) Times, January 24, 1927

⁸³ The Camden Morning Post of January 27, 1927, also carried “verbatim evidence introduced at trial.” In preparation for the trial, Judge Joseph L. Morschauer, with the consent of the parties, appointed Peaches’ mother as guardian, in place of Poughkeepsie attorney Nathaniel Otis Rockwood (1889-1942)

In breathless anticipation, the press and public awaited the start of the testimony, hoping to hear, as Damon Runyon put it, some dirt and paprika. In his incomparable style, he covered several sessions of the trial, from January 24, 1927, onward.⁸⁴ Runyon spoke of that “callous codger and his flapper wife,” appearing before a cadre of 100 reporters poised at their typewriters.

Browning, he said, “is what you might call a chick-chaser. That, he said, is the term for old guys who choose them very youthful... Old girls who like young men are called veal hunters. Thus, the English language is enriched every day,” he said in a parlance worthy of Sky Masterson of *Guys and Dolls*.

Browning rolled into Carmel, New York, in his blue Rolls-Royce, and entered the courtroom, his cheering section acknowledging him with applause, to the irritation of the judge, who did not want the trial to be any more of a circus than the facts warranted. He banged his gavel, stating that he would close the courtroom and conduct the trial in private, if the onlookers did not quiet down. The prospect of closing the court would have been enough to quell the noise to the level of a graveyard.

Peaches also had her cheering section, as she sat in court wearing a mink coat (it was a cold day). Her mother entered the courtroom and took a couple of glances at Daddy “that would have done him no good if glances were lethal weapons,” in Runyonesque language.

The opening day of testimony, carried not an iota of sensationalism. Lawyers’ talk, mostly. Browning put on two witness to establish—as a necessary part of his case—that Peaches left *him*. This proved uneventful, as the public had long been fully informed as to that. Edward Kearney, Browning’s driver, testified that he drove Peaches and her mother to the Kew Gardens residence, where they took two trunks of their belongings, and left the premises (and thus left Browning). The other witness, James Gorman, told of how Peaches’ mother shut down communications between Peaches and Daddy.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Runyon’s first installment appeared in a number of papers including the Bridgeport (Ct.) telegraph of January 24, 1927.

⁸⁵ Camden, (NJ Evening Courier, January 24, 1927

A deputy sheriff, mindful of the judge's admonition against demonstrations during the court sessions, waited until it was over, and kissed Browning's hand in continental fashion, saying "More power to you," for which Browning thanked him graciously.⁸⁶ A proceeding of this magnitude, with crowds of reporters, camera people, veteran court observers, and parents with baby carriages, proved too large for the courthouse in Carmel, and so Judge Albert H. F. Seeger ordered the trial to White Plains.⁸⁷



Judge Albert H. F. Seeger (1859-1945)

⁸⁶ Boston Globe, January 25, 1927

⁸⁷ Judge Albert Henry Frederick Seeger was born on February 20, 1859, in Stuttgart, Wurtemberg, Germany and came to the U.S. at a young age. He graduated from the Newburgh Free Academy in 1875 and studied law at the office of Colonel William D. Dickey, who would become a Supreme Court Justice. Seeger worked as a law clerk for that office from 1875 until 1886 and was admitted to the bar in 1880. Seeger served as Assistant District Attorney for Orange County from 1895 until 1903, and as District Attorney for the next two years. He took the bench in 1907 as a judge for Orange County, and in 1917, was elected to the Supreme Court for the Ninth Judicial District. Governor Alfred E. Smith designated him to the Appellate Division, Second Department in 1926.



Camden (NJ) Evening Courier, January 24, 1927

Judge Seeger said that he was not going to let the case become a “Hall-Mills sensation,” and he barred photographers in the courtroom.⁸⁸

The building and the courtroom were larger, but that only meant more people could attend, and they squeeze together on staircases and bannisters to get a glimpse of the couple.



NY Daily News, February 2, 1927

⁸⁸ NY Times, January 2, 1927



Oakland (Neb.) Sentinel February 18, 1927

6

'PEACHES' ON STAND BARES MARRIED LIFE

"Cinderella" Girl, in Witness Chair Entire Day, Collapses, but Continues After Recess

(Continued from Page One.)

that the Rhineland case of un-fragrant memory almost asphyx-ated the populace.

It was in another courtroom, however, than the one in which "Peaches" sat prattling away this afternoon when a recess was taken until tomorrow morning, and "Daddy" Browning went bounding down the court house steps to the cheers of the assembled citizens.

In this instance I think the cheers were inspired largely by a crafty newspaper photographer who de-sired to get some good action pic-tures of the multitude, and howled:

"Three cheers for 'Daddy'!"

I think few citizens can resist an impulse to cheer when properly ap-proached. Thus the White Plains welkin rang with a couple of strong yip-yips. The third was not so strong. Somebody said "Tiger" and I distinctly heard that unmistakable noise that you make with the tongue fluttered between the teeth. I believe it is technically known as "the raspberry."

But even a stout "raspberry" is a cheer to "Daddy" Browning, and he bowed in all directions. He was a little bit flustered on emerging from the court house after hours

THE SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER: WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 26, 1927

"Them Was the Happy Days!"

BUT TODAY! AH, TODAY! Well, anyway, as you can plainly see, we have here, left and then right, Mrs. Browning, known to the public as "Peaches"; "Daddy" Browning, Dorothy "Sunshine" Brown-ing, and Mrs. Heenan, mother of "Peaches."

San Francisco Examiner, January 26, 1927

In White Plains, the proceedings picked up a bit, with one-eye to the keyhole, as Runyon described it. Testimony centered on the diary that Peaches had kept, before her marriage. Browning was represented by Poughkeepsie's John Mack, and by Francis Dale, assisted by J. Bennett Southard (who also happened to be Putnam County Judge, but the rules were more relaxed then as to possible conflicts and appearances.)⁸⁹

Mack wanted the diary in evidence to show that Peaches had earlier boyfriends, with whom she "made love," although no one defined what that meant. Mack said he wanted to show that Peaches "was a woman of the world at the time of her marriage and was not innocent of the marriage act."⁹⁰ Peaches' lawyer objected to that line of questioning, giving fodder to the press, who could make a headline of it.

That day, the United States government was to abandon rights in China, an item that drew print of about the same size as the mention of Peaches's diary.

⁸⁹ John Mack was born in Poughkeepsie on June 10, 1874. After graduating from high school, he read law for three years in a Poughkeepsie law office and was admitted to the bar in 1896. By 1910 the Progressive "Bull Moose" schism had begun to show its effects in normally Republican Dutchess County, where Mr. Mack served two terms as District Attorney. With the backing of Mr. Mack and others, young Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to the State Senate. Mr. Mack was Democratic party county chairman in Dutchess County for almost ten years. When Mr. Roosevelt was elected Governor in 1928, Mr. Mack was regarded as one of his close advisers. Governor Roosevelt named him justice of the Ninth Judicial District, which comprised Putnam, Dutchess, Orange, Rockland and Westchester Counties.

Tall and courtly mannered, he spoke with a slight drawl and sometimes wore an old-fashioned string bow tie. He spent much of his time on his 1,000-acre farm, Clove Valley, near Poughkeepsie and liked to refer to himself as a "farmer who dabbled in the law." Mack retired in 1949. His wife, the former Wilhelmina B. Immekus, whom he married in 1899, died in 1954. He was survived by two sons, John E., Jr., of Holly Grove, Ark., and Edward J. Mack of Poughkeepsie, and two daughters, Mrs. John P. Donohoe of Garrison and Mrs. John C. Grissy of Poughkeepsie. NY Times, February 24, 1958

ROOSEVELT REVEALS HIS CHOICE OF MACK; Announces One of Advisers in Walker Case Will Nominate Him at Chicago. Long Governor Roosevelt's friend, Supreme Court Justice of Poughkeepsie Nominated Him for His First Office. NY Times, June 20, 1932

⁹⁰ Camden Courier- Post, January 27, 1927



Washington Herald, January 27, 1927

Peaches' side, represented by Henry Epstein and Maurice Smith, called Marion Tussey of New York, who testified that only recently Daddy asked her if, before the marriage, she hadn't taken Peaches on nude parties and hadn't chaperoned peaches to a doctor for an illegal operation—and that it would be worth her while if she could think something up along those lines—suggesting the he was advancing subornation of perjury for some financial reward. The witness denied that she and Peaches had done anything of the sort.

Another witness, Catherine Mayer, testified that on the wedding night of the couple she heard an argument and screaming between the two. Peaches' lawyer used this testimony, trying to show that, from the start, Daddy Browning was not the benevolent knight he claimed to be. Epstein called Arthur Le Duc, a newspaper reporter, who said Browning sent for him once, and asked him if Frances had not kissed him, and if he would not testify that she had. Le Duc said Mrs. Browning had never kissed him, and that he certainly would not testify that she had.⁹¹

Enter the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice

The trial caused consternation among the anti-vice forces. Judge Seeger received telegram from John S. Sumner, Secretary of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, protesting against making the trial public.

⁹¹ Camden, New Jersey Courier-Post, January 27, 1927

Your unfortunate decision to make a public show of the Browning trial, admitting the public and newspaper writers and photographers, has resulted, as was to be expected, in a flood of filthy published matter, including imaginary pictures to illustrate lewd incidents of the plaintiff's story, especially in the so-called tabloid press... These details are read by young and old and youth is debauched and depraved. Accordingly, we request that in the interests of public decency you immediately close the trial to the public and newspaper correspondents.

Justice Seeger declined to close the court. "The policy of our law is against secrecy, except in such cases as are definitely set forth in the law...Secrecy is likely to breed perjury," adding that he saw very little in the present case to differentiate it from other separation suits heard every day to which little, if any, attention is paid. "One of the causes of the publicity given to this case," he said, "was the publicity sought by the parties on both sides, and he did not feel that they could be harmed any more than they had been by their own published statements." The newspapers, in most cases, he said, had kept well within the limits of decency.

The Peaches trial, the Society for the Suppression of Vice, and the aftermath of the Scopes Monkey Trial were all contestants for the top news stories of the hour. The Scopes "monkey trial" was the name journalist H. L. Mencken applied to the 1925 prosecution of a criminal action brought by Tennessee against high school teacher John T. Scopes for teaching evolution in public schools. On January 27, 1927, a newspaper carried an unforgettable page, containing Peaches, Damon Runyon, and the Monkey Bill—a proposed law that would make it a crime to teach evolution in North Carolina.

Monkey Bill Is at Last Introduced In Assembly

Shares Interest With
Report of Education
Commission

House Has Flood Of State Measures

Governor Presents Re-
port of Commission;
Little Comment

Raleigh, N. C., Jan. 26.—(AP) An anti-evolution bill sponsored by the North Carolina Bible League outstood in spontaneous legislative interest today while report of the State Education Commission was given its scheduled attention.

Outside of these two high points, the sessions of both houses and committee meetings were more or less routine affairs.

Poolie Sponsor

The anti-evolutionary measure was introduced into the House by Representative David Scott Poolie, of Hoke County, who had offered one in 1925 which went down to defeat in committee but today's measure is the first offered by the league—the former militant "Committee of One Hundred"—provides for imposing of prison sentences on violators of the proposed law.

Length of the prison sentence would be left to the discretion of the court. Any teaching of evolution in State-supported schools or higher institutions in the State would bring fine or imprisonment or revocation of teaching certi-

Market Law Held Valid, Bank Stockholders Win In Supreme Court Rules

Decisions in Two Important Winston-Salem Cases
Handed Down in Yesterday's Batch; Court
Sympathizes With Meat-Dealers but
Finds City Within Rights

By BROCK BARKLEY
From The Journal's Raleigh Bureau
Raleigh, Jan. 26.—Winston-Salem's ordinance prohibiting the sale of meats and fish within a defined area of the city except at the city market is a "hardship" on the 21 complaining meat and fish dealers, but is a valid exercise of the municipality's police powers just today in affirming Forsyth County Superior Court in the meat market case.

Hardship Conceded

"It was a hardship on the plaintiffs," said Associate Justice Clarkson, who wrote the court's opinion, "but the law in this State, and the great weight of authorities in the nation, under the facts and circumstances of the case, are against the

plaintiffs. It is to be noted that the ordinance was passed on June 18, 1926. The Board of Aldermen, realizing the hardship on the plaintiffs, gave them time to close out their business as dealers in fresh meat and sea food so that if they desired they could rent places in the city market and sell fresh meat and sea food or rent places for their business outside the four-fifths of a mile area from the city market. We have taken time to consider thoroughly a so far-reaching and important matter affecting the rights of the plaintiffs. From a careful review of the decisions of this State, the United States decisions, and those of other States, and from the facts and circumstances of this case, the forum

(Continued On Page Seventeen)

Peaches and Her Allies Continue Attack of Mud

Distressed Bride Blushes
as She Admits Small
Lie on Stand
Hefty Petter

Listed Her Amorous Boy
Friends in Diary

By DAMON RUNYON
(Copyright, 1927, by Universal Service)
White Plains, N. Y., Jan. 26.—Our legal pulling and hauling here

Order Seizure Of Tombstone In Grave-Yard

Wilmington, N. C., Jan. 26.—(AP)—An unique order for seizure of property was received today by Constable Archie Marine of this city, and he executed it.

The order was by a court for seizure of a tombstone in a

Winston- Salem Journal, January 27, 1927

Henry Luce's Time Magazine issued a sharp rebuke at the tawdriness of it all.⁹²

What a month it was. In addition, it featured investigation into baseball's Chicago Black Sox scandal, and the world's first trans-Atlantic phone call. Big as those items were, the Peaches headlines sometimes eclipsed the others.

⁹² Time Magazine, February 7, 1927 online at <https://time.com/archive/6660212/the-press-orgy/>



Altoona (Pa.) Tribune, January 27, 1927

Damon Runyon observed that Daddy could be expected to counter Peaches' evidence and to proclaim himself the kindest 52-year-old "who ever joined hands in wedlock with a fifteen-year-old flapper."⁹³

Reporting on the testimony of Peaches' mother, the *New York Times* said that Mrs. Heenan waxed melodramatic at times and told with full dramatic effect of the days preceding the wedding and of the day when Browning left with her daughter for Cold Spring, where they were married. He gave orders to one of his assistants, she said, to "bring three good men with you, good enough to knock down any officer of the law who tries to stop you." This was just after the Children's Society had brought proceedings to take her daughter from her, she said.

She told of quarrels between her daughter and Browning after the wedding, one of which was over some newspaper clippings each wanted. Peaches had cut them from a newspaper—pictures of herself—and Daddy wanted to take them to the office. His wife wanted to keep them, and finally she gave them to him, but then he threw them on the floor and said he didn't want them after all. This also brought the information that Daddy Browning insured all his clippings, so much did he value the thousands he had collected on his own activities, most of them with girls. After one quarrel, Mrs. Heenan said, Peaches went to him and pleaded:

⁹³ Winston-Salem, (NC) Journal, January 27, 1927

“Oh, Daddy”—she always called him Daddy—“why can’t you be happy?” And then he threatened her as the thought of a separation suit came up, saying, according to Mrs. Heenan:

“No Judge in the world would believe your daughter. They buy lunches for me while I freeze poor people out. Every newspaper will put me on the front page and you will be down in the dirt with the first Mrs. Browning.”⁹⁴

On Peaches’ behalf, Epstein called Dr. George Blakeslee as an expert witness, and posed to him a lengthy hypothetical, the thrust of which was that peaches’ living environment, with Daddy Browning, was detrimental to her health.⁹⁵ He also called Leslie Fullenweider, of Famous Features Syndicate, to testified that he interviewed Peaches, who told him that Browning was unbearable, he also stated that Peaches did herself not write the feature article *Why I Left Daddy Browning*; that it was written for her, but that she went over the story and approved it.⁹⁶

After Epstein concluded the case for Peaches, John Mack told the court that he planned to present 12 former boyfriends of Peaches to show her unchaste character.⁹⁷

That line of testimony began when Mack called to the stand James P. Mixon, who testified that he spent a night in the same room with Peaches before she married Browning. Hearing this, Peaches jumped up and called him a liar.



Marion (Ohio) Chronicle Tribune, January 31, 1927

⁹⁴ New York Times, January 27, 1927

⁹⁵ Abilene, (Tx) Reporter-News, February 2, 1927

⁹⁶ Streator, (Ill.) Times, January 31, 1927

⁹⁷ Jersey Journal, January 28, 1927

Mack called Elizabeth Farney, a friend of the Browning couple, who testified that the couple were affectionate to one another.⁹⁸ The same for two other women that testified on Browning's behalf, Emma Steiner and Margaret MacDonald.⁹⁹

Then came the moment everyone was waiting for, when Browning himself took the stand. To no one's surprise, he denied all allegations of cruelty and presented himself as a doting husband.



Freeport, Ill. Journal, February 1, 1927¹⁰⁰

Mack asked Daddy to describe the wedding night. He said they had sat on the bed together; Peaches wearing a nightgown. He said he told Peaches to act as a wife, at which “she repulsed me, screamed and jumped up.” At that point, Peaches’ mother ran into the room and explained that Peaches was “very young and very virtuous.”¹⁰¹ Under cross examination by Epstein, Browning hedged on whether he ever told reporters that Peaches denied him marital relations, but finally stated that Peaches “always refused me.”¹⁰²

⁹⁸ Parsons (Kansas) Daily Sun, February 1, 1927.

⁹⁹ Witchata Falls (Tx) Record News, February 2, 1927

¹⁰⁰ See, also, Trenton (NJ) Times, February 1, 1927; See, also Indiana (Pa.) Gazette February 2, 1927

¹⁰¹ Nashville Banner, February 1, 1927

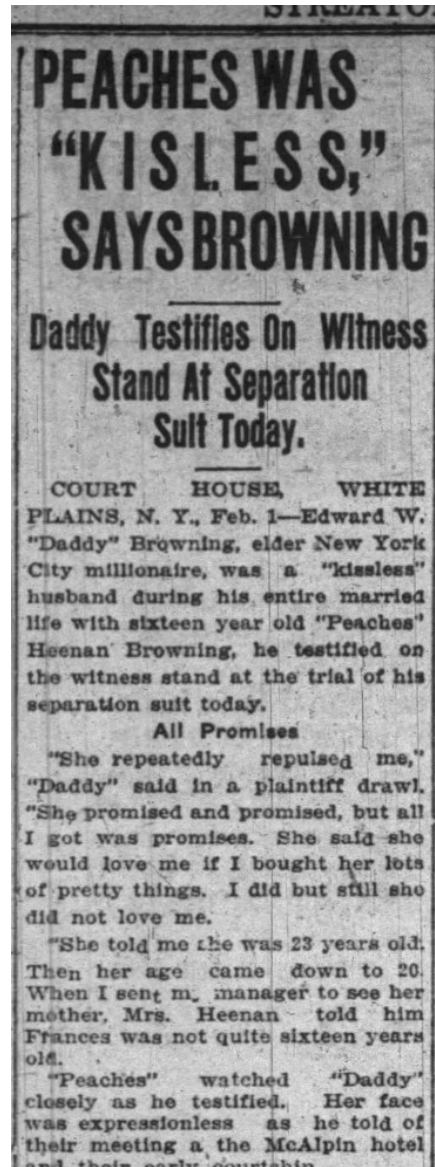
¹⁰² Trenton Times, February 1, 1927



Winnipeg, Canada Free Press Evening Bulletin, February 1, 1927

After Peaches testified, "your correspondent's manly cheeks are still suffused with blushes as he sits down to write of a few peeks into the bridal chamber of dear old 'Daddy' Browning and his 'Peaches,'" wrote Damon Runyon, "Daddy wanted her to parade around in the nude, she testified, and eat breakfast without any clothes on." "Absolutely not!" said Daddy, regarding these allegations. "It was very cold. It would have been foolish to ask her."¹⁰³

¹⁰³Palm Beach (Fl) Post, January 26, 1927



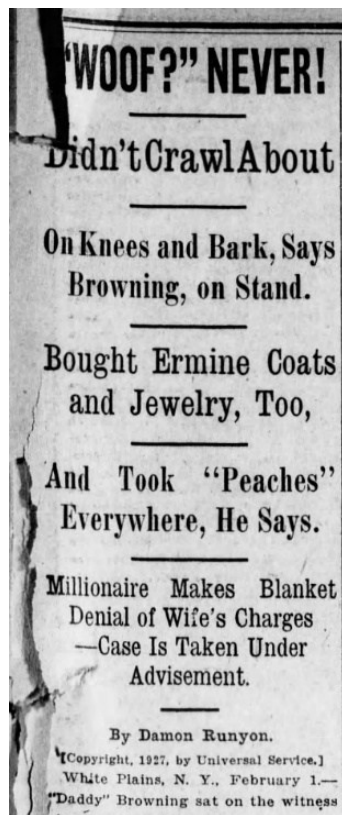
Streator. II. Times. February 1, 1927

In 1927, the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice took publisher Emile H. Gauvreau and co. to court for alleged violations of NY Penal Law Section 1141 in their stories about Daddy and Peaches. The NYSSV objected in particular to the ‘composographs’ (“outrageous staged photos with cheeky captions and speech bubbles”), one of which featured a negligee-clad Peaches, a bumbling Daddy, and the Honking African Gander cavorting in the bedroom.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ Online at <https://thepoplarsschool.com/wp/2017/03/09/inspiration-peaches-daddy-browning/>

Attorney Max Steuer conceded that Gauvreau and others had published the matter in question, but that the statute violated free speech protections of the Constitution.¹⁰⁵

The three-judge Court agreed. Judges Healey, McInerney, and Voorhies dismissed the complaint, stating that while the content may be objectionable and even disgusting, it did not violate Penal Law Sec, 1141, which provided that: “A person who sells * * * or has in his possession with intent to sell, * * * any obscene, lewd, lascivious, filthy, indecent or disgusting book * * * is guilty of a misdemeanor.”



Cincinnati Enquirer, February 2, 1927

Browning’s attorney John Mack produced a note from Peaches to Daddy, saying “You are the idle of my dreams,” for which Damon Runyon gave Peaches only about 89 in spelling.¹⁰⁶ After the trial ended, people may have thought that they would, for a few days, perhaps, give up their habit of reading about Peaches and Daddy Browning.

¹⁰⁵ NY Times, June 16, 1927

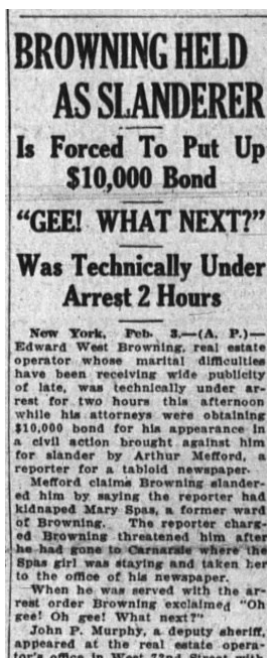
¹⁰⁶ Palm Beach Post, February 2, 1927

A headline proclaimed as much: *You Won't Hear About It For a Month – Maybe!*



New York Daily News February 6, 1927

But no sooner did the testimony end than Browning was in another bizarre situation, held “under arrest” in connection with a suit against him by a reporter who claimed that Browning defamed him in connection with the Spas case.¹⁰⁷

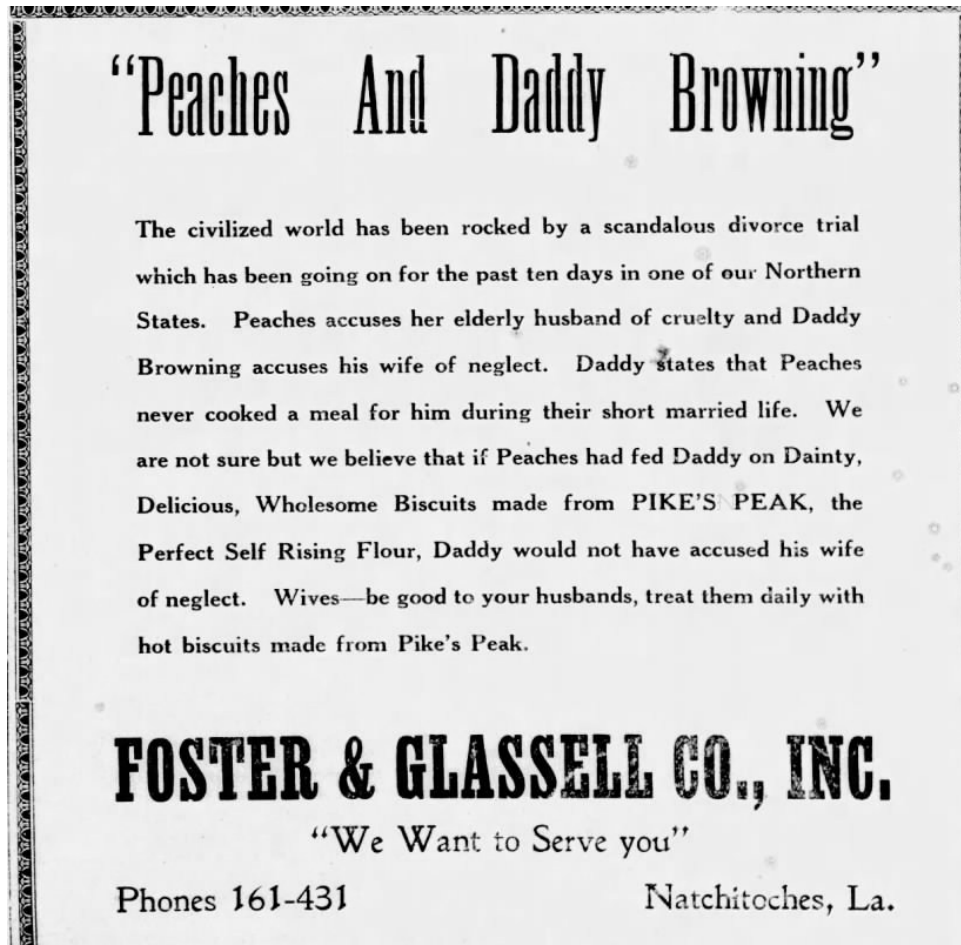


Poughkeepsie (NY) Eagle News, February 4, 1927

¹⁰⁷ Poughkeepsie (NY) Eagle News, February 4, 1927

Meanwhile, as Daddy Browning was trying to be released from custody, Peaches was on her way to Bermuda.¹⁰⁸

Becoming household names is generally figurative, but just as the trial testimony ended, Peaches and Daddy entered the kitchens of the readers, in an ad for wholesome biscuits in Louisiana:



“Peaches And Daddy Browning”

The civilized world has been rocked by a scandalous divorce trial which has been going on for the past ten days in one of our Northern States. Peaches accuses her elderly husband of cruelty and Daddy Browning accuses his wife of neglect. Daddy states that Peaches never cooked a meal for him during their short married life. We are not sure but we believe that if Peaches had fed Daddy on Dainty, Delicious, Wholesome Biscuits made from PIKE'S PEAK, the Perfect Self Rising Flour, Daddy would not have accused his wife of neglect. Wives—be good to your husbands, treat them daily with hot biscuits made from Pike's Peak.

FOSTER & GLASSELL CO., INC.

“We Want to Serve you”

Phones 161-431 Natchitoches, La.

Natchitoches, (Louisiana) Enterprise, February 10, 1927

And on the tennis court in California:

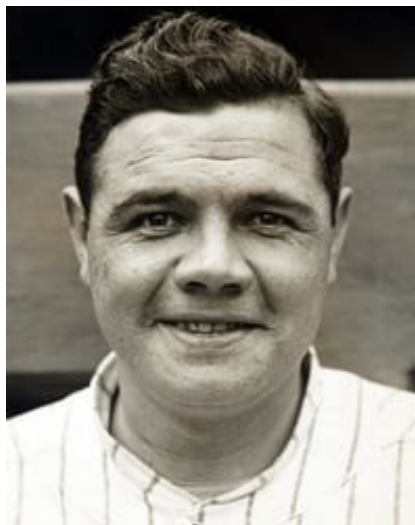
¹⁰⁸ New York Daily News, February 9, 1927

**FOR THE MIXED DOUBLES
WOULD SUGGEST "PEACHES"
AND "DADDY" BROWNING. THEY
WOULD HAVE TO COMPETE UN-
DER A HEAVY HANDICAP.**

Bakersfield, (Ca) Morning Echo, February 13, 1927

As is and was typical, a judge in a non-jury trial will take the matter under advisement, and in due course will render a decision, with the length of time varying, depending on the complexity of the case. Judge Seeger made his ruling in late March, finding for Browning. Both sides sought a separation, but because Browning prevailed, he was relieved of paying alimony.

As the public waited for Judge Seeger's decision, the Brownings did not gain all the headlines.



George Herman (Babe) Ruth (1895-1948)

On March 4, 1927, Babe Ruth became the highest paid player in baseball history, signing a 3-year, \$70,000 per season contract with the New York Yankees. His yearly income was surpassed by Daddy Browning. Several months after the Browning trial, the Babe hit his 60th record-breaking home run for the season.

In his March 21, 1927 decision, the judge cited the controlling law, that a husband or wife could bring an action for separation against the other, based on:

1. Cruel and inhuman treatment of the spouse by the other spouse
2. Conduct on the part of one spouse towards the other as may render it unsafe and improper for the former to cohabit with the latter.
3. Abandonment of one spouse by the other

Daddy's action was based upon a claim of abandonment. Peaches's counterclaim was based upon improper conduct as above. Judge Seeger pointed out under New York law, a wife is not bound to reside with her husband, when his treatment of her is such as to impair her health, safety and peace of mind, and if under such circumstances she leaves his house and refuses to reside or cohabit with him, it does not constitute abandonment.

The judge found no evidence to sustain Peaches' charges "except her own testimony, and some slight corroboration by her mother and another woman friend who testified to a single transaction alleged to have occurred at the Cold Spring House shortly after the marriage...

The conduct of the parties during their married life, he said, and [Daddy's] generosity toward [Peaches] and her mother successfully contradict the false charges of penuriousness made against [Daddy] and his alleged failure to provide necessary medical treatment for [Peaches]. He paid large sums of money for medical treatment to numerous physicians both before and after the marriage. He paid [Peaches's] mother a sum larger than her earnings before the marriage for remaining at home and nursing her daughter as well as providing food and other necessities and paying room rent.

The judge found it "true that he permitted photographs of himself and wife to be taken, but I am constrained to the belief that she did not object thereto and that she enjoyed the foolish publicity as much as he did, and also that under the circumstances the ingenuity and persistence of the photographers and reporters was the principal cause of the publicity."

Continuing, the judge ruled that [Peaches's] claim that she was annoyed by [Daddy's] conduct in permitting her to be photographed and having their marriage and married life made the subject of publicity is negated by the fact that before she left [Daddy] she was in communication with a news syndicate and as soon as she left she permitted herself to be photographed and her reasons for leaving her husband to be published for a small monetary consideration."

"I am satisfied," he said, " that the immediate cause of [her] leaving [him] was because she and her mother conspired to compel [him] purchase or lease a large apartment for the occupancy of the family, including the mother, as well as to procure an automobile for [Peaches's] personal use which automobile was wholly unnecessary as she rode daily with [Daddy] and also to procure additional and unnecessary clothing, and that the act of leaving was a trick to that end; or that she became tired of her aged husband and preferred alimony to his society."

Browning, represented by Peter Smith, appealed against paying additional fees to his wife's counsel, and when the Appellate Division affirmed the order, he appealed to the Court of Appeals, which on February 24, 1928, affirmed the lower court order of the Special Term which directed him to pay an additional \$1,844.44 for disbursements upon the trial, together with \$2,500 counsel fees. *Browning v. Browning* 247 NY 579 Feb. 24, 1928) Henry Epstein, counsel for Mrs. Browning, obtained \$8,500 for counsel fees and reserved the right to make claim for additional allowance.

BABE RUTH BREAKS HOME RUN RECORD

Eight Thousand Watch
Yank Slugger Slam His
60th Clout of Season.

NEW YORK, Sept. 30. (AP)—Babe Ruth cracked his own season record for home runs today, when he belted his 60th high up into the right field bleachers in the eighth inning of the game with Washington. The clout was made off Zachary and came with one on to break a 2-2 tie. Ruth's record of 59 homers was made in 1921.

About 8000 fans were in the stands to see the Yankee slugging king smash the record experts believed would stand for all time. As the Bambino circled the bases, he was forced to doff his hat continually to the fans' cheers. The celebration continued for several minutes after Ruth disappeared into the dugout.

Most of the Yankee team were at the plate to shake the big fellow's hand as he trotted over the platter. He was nearly mobbed by his admirers as he made his way to the clubhouse.

Spokane (Wa.) Chronicle, September 30, 1927

ALLENTOWN, PA., TUESDAY MORNING, MARCH 22, 1927

LOSES SUIT



Mrs. Frances Heenan (Peaches) Browning, loses all claim upon her husband, "Daddy" Browning, by virtue of decision by N. Y. Supreme Court Justice Seeger.

**'SLAIN' GIRL TURNS UP,
REVEALS 'TRAVESTY' ON
KENTUCKY JUSTICE**

Jealous Woman's Perjured

'DADDY' BROWNING WINS HIS SUIT FOR SEPARATION FROM 'PEACHES'

Justice Seeger Says He Fails to Find Young Wife's
Charges of Cruelty Supported by Evidence.
\$300 Week Alimony Automatically Stops

Carmel, N. Y., March 21 (AP)—Less than a year since her hurried run-away marriage with Edward West Browning, her "Cinderella Man," the former Frances "Peaches" Heenan today saw her romance crash, without compensation, upon the unpromising fact of a court decision, giving legal separation to her husband.

Supreme Court Justice A. H. Seeger, who presided at the trial, here and at White Plains, said, in the decision, that he failed to find Mrs. Browning's sensational charges of cruelty supportable by the evidence. Mrs. Browning's alimony of \$300 a week, which began in November, is automatically discontinued and her only claim to continued support is to return to her husband, should he desire to take her back.

The real-estate man, whose 53 years tended to make married life a nervous experience for the young woman, Mrs. Browning testified, was absolved by Justice Seeger of charges ranging from miserliness to abnormality.

The justice, viewing the case as a whole, however, took the occasion to criticize both sides of the separation suit—once Mrs. Browning's side for an "attempt to palm off an expur-

gated diary" as evidence, and again, Mr. Browning's side, for the testimony of two male witnesses, who, the judge said, "ought now to be prosecuted."

Justice Seeger granted Browning the separation—he began the suit—on the ground of abandonment, dismissing the real-estate man's first cause of action of alleged cruelty.

Mrs. Browning, the justice held, failed to justify her conduct in leaving her husband.

Her counter-claim, that she was forced to leave because she could "no longer stand" the company of her husband, was dismissed.

The only point of peculiarity which, said Justice Seeger, he could find in the elderly real-estate man was the fact that he married so young a woman. Even so, he said he believed Browning's "intentions were good."

If Mrs. Browning was not, as she testified, interested in her husband's money and was merely seeking her freedom, she should, he advised, petition for an annulment on the ground that she was too young at the time of her marriage.

On the April day when the two were married in the little town of Cold Spring, across the county west (Continued on Page Twelve)

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Mamaroneck Daily Times, January 24, 1982, in a retrospective of the episode

When Peaches went out on her own, newspapers carried articles about her doing “repair” work on her body, including thinning her “piano legs.”



Washington DC Herald, April 10, 1927

The Next Chapter: Peaches, On Her Own

After Judge Seeger's March 1927 decision, the pair were separated. This left Daddy with his wealth, but the court denied alimony to Peaches. Presumably she had accumulated wealth, in the form of Daddy's gifts, but she was determined to strike out on her own. The first we hear of her in that setting is with a dancing partner, Leslie Conillard in a Chicago cabaret. Mann's Million Dollar Rainbo Room.¹⁰⁹



Above from Washington DC Herald, April 15, 1927

She had a companion, Al Mann, the cabaret owner's son, with whom she was arrested for disorderly conduct after police stopped them, while driving.¹¹⁰ Peaches also had medical surgery done in connection with the earlier scarring. The operation drew national attention:

¹⁰⁹ Tacoma (Wa.) Daily Ledger, May 8, 1927

¹¹⁰ Brooklyn Times Union April 27, 1927



Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser, June 5, 1927

Tracking Daddy, we learn that he had a different color Rolls-Royce.



Springfield, Ma. Morning Union, May 11, 1927

Also, the press learned that he was still trying to disentangle himself from the Spas suit.¹¹¹ News of it came to the Polish speaking community in Buffalo, NY.

¹¹¹ Buffalo Courier Express. December 27, 1927

BROWNING ZAMIERZA OCZYSZCZIĆ SIĘ Z ZARZUTÓW

NEW YORK. wtorek. — Edward West Browning, milioner realnościowiec, który nabrał rozgłosu wskutek różnych zawikłań romansowych i adoptowań, poczyni odpowiedni kroki, by zupełnie oczyścić się z nieprzyjemności w jakie popadł po adoptowaniu swej córki, panny L. Spas w roku 1925.

Jeżeli wyjdzie zwycięsko, zwolniony on będzie z wszelkich starych zawikłań miłosnych, prócz jednej, a to z panią Frances Heenen (Peaches) Browning, z którą się ożenił. Adwokat milionera we środę ma rozpocząć odpowiedni kroki, by wyrzucić ze sądu sprawę panny Spas, która żąda \$500,000 odszkodowania za rzekome pobicie i niewłaściwe więzienia.

Dziennik Dla Wszystkich, December 27, 1927

"Peaches" Browning is Here



"PEACHES" BROWNING

Capitol theater is "Peaches" (Frances) Browning, "the most talked of girl of today." With her company, she presents a song and dance revue.

Closing the vaudeville bill are the Ishikawa Japs, a quartet of entertainers who do the seemingly impossible in an easy manner which shows the remarkable tal-

Jackson, Miss. Citizen Patriot December 4, 1927

In Orion, Illinois, the American Legion produced a comedy, a home talent play, entitled *A Trip to Paris* featuring actors playing Peaches and her mother, as well as Gloria Swanson, Sherlock Holmes, Harold Lloyd, Clara Bow, and Jack Dempsey. Mr. Holmes was played by Chester Gustafson.¹¹²

In 1929, Peaches established her dower rights, as she was separated from Daddy, but they were still married and undivorced, entitling her to one third of Dadd's real estate holdings.¹¹³



Allentown, (Pa.) Morning Call, August 17, 1929

¹¹² Moline, Illinois Dispatch, December 5, 1927

¹¹³ Peaches was represented by former Justice Daniel F. Cohalan, in the action before Judge Curtis A. Peters. Daddy was represented by Henry B. Goulston.

In August of 1929, Peaches acquired a settlement order from New York Supreme Court Judge Curtis A. Peters in her suit against Daddy for her dower interest in fifteen parcels of real estate on Manhattan, Bronx and Long Island, transferred by Browning to the Edbro Realty Corporation on April 10, 1926, after their marriage.

Peaches' mother, who brought the action because her daughter was still below legal age to sue, and her attorney, former Supreme Court Justice Daniel F. Cohalan, said in affidavits that they had accomplished "substantially" all they asked by "negotiation rather than litigation."

Under the agreement, whenever any parcel of the realty is sold an application will be made to the court to determine the value of Mrs. Browning's dower interest, and she will then give a release of her rights. The settlement of the suit lifts the liens against the property filed when the action was brought in June, 1928.¹¹⁴

Peaches filed suit for divorce against Daddy in late 1930. To get a divorce, one needed grounds, such as adultery. In her suit, Peaches alleged that a detective in her pay followed Browning's limousine into a lover's lane in Central Park where he took up with an underage female. She also sought \$50,000 a year alimony.¹¹⁵

Telephone, District 8278 THE WASHINGTON HERALD—An American Paper for the American People—SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1930 Telephone, District 8278 8

3 Loves Laid to Browning as "Peaches" Opens Her Suit

'DADDY' WOODED SCHOOL GIRLS, WIFE CHARGES

Tryets in Auto Told by Sleuth and Mother of Magnate's Mate in Battle for a Divorce

NEW YORK, Dec. 27 (U.P.).—Divorce proceedings started today in supreme court by Frances (Peaches) Browning against Edward Wood (Daddy) Browning, charged the elderly millionaire real estate operator has been showing more than fatherly attention to three girls younger than "Peaches."

Browning will contest strenuously it was indicated when a detective served him with a summons after waiting three hours.

Sues "Daddy"



FRANCES (PEACHES) BROWNING, who has filed suit for divorce in New York against Edward (Daddy) Browning, charging him with having clandestine affairs with young girls.

NORRIS FLAYS SPLENDOR AT DOHERTY FETE

Hoover Concerned by Report of Hurley's Attendance; Nebraskan Hits Inequality

By International News Service

Official circles in the Nation's Capital were just as satiated as society matrons last night over the "million-dollar" party given by Henry L. Doherty, utility magnate, to his celebrated daughter, Miss Dee-Lee Doherty, here last night.

While Senator George W. Norris denounced the luxurious affair as illustrating the "monopoly in American society."

...over had it that President Hoover was showing concern over a report that Secretary of War Patrick J. Hurley had attended the party.

Richest Heiress Married



John Cygon, "Permitted" to Resign After Discovery of His Electrical Experiments

BALTIMORE, Dec. 27.—Out of the Naval Academy, by request, and already turning hopeful eyes toward West Point, John Armstrong Cygon walked freely and with apparent amusement today of the remarkable electrical experiments that ended his naval career almost before it had started.

Cygon was "permitted" to resign from the Academy at Annapolis when an inspector discovered an intricate system of wiring which he had from his room to the

OUSTED MIDDY SEEKING TERM AT WEST POINT

John Cygon, "Permitted" to Resign After Discovery of His Electrical Experiments

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Lt. Maitland Soon to Wed Texas Woman

Filer and Mrs. Kathleen McDermott File Notice of Intent



ALFRED MOND, BRITISH GIANT IN TRADE, DIES

Lord Melchett Succumbs When Blood Clots in Veins; Had Fortune Near \$250,000,000

LONDON, Dec. 27 (U.P.).—Lord Melchett, 61, industrial giant and one of the richest men in the empire, died today after a short illness due to phlebitis, a disease which clogs the blood in the veins.

There was considerable secrecy concerning the fact of his death, presumably due to the possible effect on the stock market, but at 9 p. m., the household announced he "died peacefully, this afternoon."

FAMILY AT BESIDE

A later announcement said Lord Melchett died at 4:30 p. m. after

Washington (DC) Herald, December 28, 1930

¹¹⁴ NY Times August 18, 1929

¹¹⁵ See Columbia (SC) Record, December 28, 1930; see, also, Victoria (Canada) Daily Times, December 27, 1930

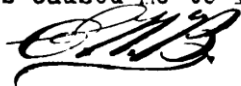
In the interim. Browning, on August 26, 1930, revised the will that he had written in 1912. He disinherited Frances (Peaches) Heenan:

WHEREAS I have heretofore married Frances Heenan Browning, and whereas our marital relationship has been unhappy, and she having left me and by her acts caused me to lose all my love and affection for her and causing me great mental distress and worries, and the said Frances Heenan Browning having also caused me humiliation, embarrassment and unwarranted and unnecessary expense of money in the defense and prosecution of legal actions caused through the conduct of my said wife, Frances Heenan Browning; and whereas after a protracted trial of the issues in the Supreme Court of Westchester County, New York, I was fully vindicated by the decision entirely in my favor because of my said wife's abandonment of me, it is now my wish that my said wife shall not share in any of my personalty or other estate; and because of her conduct as herein described toward me, I disinherit her from any of the benefits of my estate, except such interest as the law provides for her at the date of this Codicil.

I have added this Codicil to my said last Will and Testament because of the fact that my marriage to my said wife Frances Heenan Browning was subsequent to the date of my said Last Will and Testament, and in order that the terms and provisions of my said Last Will and Testament should not through operation of law become invalid or unenforceable because of said marriage.

He also disinherited his first wife, Nellie Adele Lowen.

AND WHEREAS by reason of my former wife, Nellie Adele Lowen Browning, having left me and by her acts caused me to lose all my love and affection

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to be "E. H. B.", is written over the text of the second paragraph.

Page 2, Article 1 to Last Will and Testament of Edward W. Browning, August 26, 1930

for her and causing me great mental distress and anguish, it is now my wish that my said former wife, Nellie Adele Lowen Browning, shall not share or benefit in any of my personalty or other estate, except only by reason of the provision having already been made for my former wife, Nellie Adele Browning, under agreement dated December 24th 1923, and which was (and is) in lieu of all dower and thirds in my estate, no further provision is made for said Nellie Adele Lowen Browning.

He saw to it that of the two daughters, Margerie and Sunshine, nothing was to go to Margerie and everything to Sunshine.

Furthermore, I am under no obligation to provide for the child known as Margarie Browning, as I have no affection for said child and she never had any affection for me. I wish it publicly known that said Margarie Browning was never adopted by me, legally or otherwise, and it is my wish that she shall not share in any of my personalty or other estate. Margarie Browning was adopted by said Nellie Adele Lowen Browning and was taken away and voluntarily left with said Nellie Adele Lowen Browning at the time of my divorce from said Nellie Adele Lowen Browning.

In the event that I should predecease my child, Dorothy Browning, I direct that the trustees named in said Will shall set apart out of my residuary estate sufficient thereof to provide an income of Ten thousand (\$10,000.) Dollars per annum until said Dorothy Browning shall have reached the age of twenty-one years and the sum of Twenty-five (\$25,000.) Thousand Dollars per annum during the remainder of her life.

I bequeath to my child, Dorothy Browning, all my personal belongings, jewelry and effects, automobiles and all pictures, silverware, furniture and furnishings of any kind which may be contained in any apartment or dwelling used or occupied by me at the time of my death.

The divorce trial started a year later in December 1931 before Judge John L. Walsh in Manhattan.¹¹⁶ Browning was represented by James D. C. Murray,¹¹⁷ and Peaches by Daniel F. Cohalan.¹¹⁸ The proof fell far short of adultery, as two of the women—in their early twenties—testified that they rode around with Daddy Browning, who acted as a “perfect gentleman.”

If the public was expecting something salacious, the young women, Marion Jenis, a dancing hall hostess, and her sister, Evelyn, disappointed any such expectations, saying that Browning spoke chiefly not about sex or romance, but of the value of eating lettuce.

Dialectics v. Diatetics

News accounts varied as to whether the conversation turned to *diatetics* or to *dialectics*. Portland and Boston, below, reported *dialectics*, whereas New Jersey and Nebraska reported *diatetics*.



Portland (Maine) Press Herald, December 18, 1931 (Dialectics)

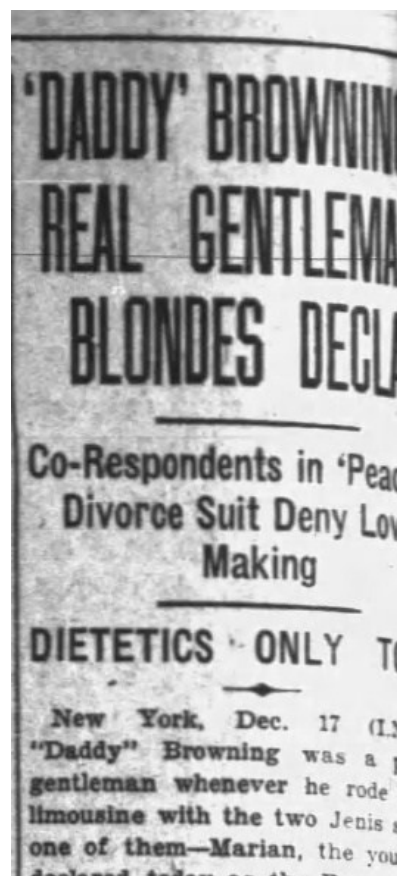
¹¹⁶ NY Daily News December 15, 1931

¹¹⁷ Indianapolis News, December 17, 1931

¹¹⁸ Yonkers Statesman, December 17, 1931



Boston Globe, December 18, 1931 (Dialectics)



Camden, NJ Evening Courier, December 17, 1931 (Diatetics)

on either side," the girl testified. "He was a gentleman at all times."

"Did you at any time sit on his lap?" queried Attorney Murray.

"No."

"Did your sister Evelyn?"

"No."

"Were you or your sister guilty of any improprieties?"

"No."

In fact, it was not love at all that drew Miss Jenis and Browning together, she said. It was a plain case of diatetics. When the girls first met "Daddy" Marian was suffering from indigestion. Browning is a raw food enthusiast, so he tried to convert the 20-year-old girl to his health doctrine, she averred.

Omaha Evening Bee News, December 17, 1931 (Diatetics)

Personally, I come down(strongly) on the diatetics team, considering that the discussion was in the context of indigestion, and of Browning's advocacy for raw foods. Be that as it may, even the most passionate advocacy for lettuce would not qualify as satisfying the standard for adulterous behavior. The judge ruled in favor of Daddy, and denied Peaches' bid for divorce.

Peaches Browning Loses Divorce Suit

MORGAN & CO. FOREIGN LOANS TOTAL BILLION

Lamont Tells of Financing \$1,705,398,000—Borrowers Paid \$73,612,950

WASHINGTON, Dec. 18 (UPI).—J. P. Morgan and Company, giants of the money world, have floated loans to sixteen foreign governments, foreign municipalities and concerns totaling \$1,705,398,000 as their part in the post-war international financing. Thomas W. Lamont told the Senate Finance Committee today.

Lamont is a partner in the Morgan company.

The cost to the borrowers of floating these loans was estimated at something in excess of \$73,612,950.

Profits to syndicates and others who handled the financing remained to be revealed.

SECURITIES EXPLAINED

Senator Johnson, Rep., Cal., brought out that in at least one instance profits to the participants in the loan were secured in this manner.

Morgan & Co. and the National City Company floated an Argentine loan. Morgan buying the bonds at 92. They turned a syndicate of 20 members and, turned the bonds to the syndicate—should have increased of \$1.50 on each \$100 of the loan. The syndicate then sold the bonds to the public at 94, or an addition increase of \$2.50 on each \$100 of the loan.

Today's Racing Results

JEFFERSON PARK

FIRST RACE—Three-quarters of a mile. Jockeys. St. Pl. Sh.

Polyth, 112 R. G. Cooper 18.40 6.50 5.40

Delia Del, 107 Elmer 3.50 1.20 1.20

One Grand, 113 H. West 5.50

Also ran—Dick Chevelly, Bayamo, Trycobel, Sonny Basil, Fleeting Gold, Tuffnut, West Virginia.

SECOND RACE—Three-quarters of a mile. Jockeys. St. Pl. Sh.

Clearance, M. 107 Elmer 8.50 4.40 2.50

My Jewel, 112 Bobbe 3.50 2.50 2.50

Wise Susan, 107 Russell 4.50

Also ran—Harry Kuhn, Lad's Run, Molly Hogan, Orvin, Beige Nose, Fraz, Cabbag.

THIRD RACE—Mile and one-sixteenth. Jockeys. St. Pl. Sh.

Typhoon, 106 Lewis 7.40 2.40 2.20

Spanglow, 109 J. Neal 5.40 3.50 3.50

Hold Hard, 109 Watson 2.50

Also ran—Gold Mist, Delmonico, Adalor T. Corbett, Prickly Heat.

FOURTH RACE—Three-quarter mile. Jockeys. St. Pl. Sh.

Adrian, 94 Lewis 8.40 3.50 3.20

Righter, 110 H. R. Riley 9.40 7.50 4.50

Scandal Sheet, 104 H. Carroll 4.50

Also ran—Bullfinch, Loyal Prince, Bonnie L. Sparks, Gold Throat, Our Sandy, Array, Chatterbox, Intruder.

FIFTH RACE—One mile. Jockeys. St. Pl. Sh.

1—THUNDERSTONE 2—LAW FRANCES 3—BEAUTY SECRET 4—JACK B.

5—SANDWACK 6—BEAVER 7—FRIEDMANN 8—DONNA DEAR

Will Wynne's selections and tomorrow's entries on Page 11.

JUDGE WALSH FINDS CHARGES NOT SUSTAINED

Witnesses Failed to Show Browning Violated Marriage Vow

Peaches Browning was denied a divorce from Daddy Browning this afternoon when Justice Walsh dismissed the suit with the following statement:

"The court has listened attentively to the testimony. Nothing can change my conclusion on facts presented. My findings are in favor of the defendant."

Daddy Browning was elated, as were Evelyn and Marion Jenis, whose appearance in court was in the light of co-respondents. It was these two young women, according to Peaches' claim, who accompanied Daddy Browning on a trip in his Rolls-Royce which included grounds for divorce. It was pointed out by Browning's counsel that no witness had declared they had seen an act which would be the only grounds for divorce in this state.

An important witness this afternoon was Val O'Farrell, private detective, who had taken over the job of getting Peaches' divorce grounds. He said that Edgar Allen, former booking agent for Peaches vaudeville tour, whose wife later sued Peaches for alienation of affection, came to his office tonight and said he wanted to marry Peaches and that if O'Farrell would get the evidence there would be quite a few. Allen further said, according to O'Farrell, "I want a cut on the fee."

Seabury Loses Plea to Jail Doyle on Contempt Charge



JACK (LEGS) DIAMOND

Brooklyn Times- Union, December 18, 1931

The Appellate Division ruled only on additional counsel fees for Peaches' attorneys, reducing the amount granted.¹¹⁹

1932-1933

1932 and 1933 saw Peaches working the entertainment circuit, doing a song and dance routine, and giving advice on how to lose weight. She was still billed as "the most talked of woman in the world, "but people were talking less, and some news articles would ask "Do you remember Peaches Browning." By 1933, she was in her mid-20s, and no longer the child bride of a multi-millionaire.

¹¹⁹ *Browning v Browning* 233 AD 670. 233 AD 710(1st Dept 1931) ; The Appellate Division ruled only on additional counsel fees for Peaches Browning's attorneys, reducing the amount granted, either to \$ 2500 or to \$250 - see *Browning v Browning* 233 AD 670; 233 AD 710(1st Dept 1931); *See, also*, : Charles B. McLaughlin, J. In re Estate of Browning, 162 Misc. 244, 247-246 (January 6, 1937) *affd* 250 App Div 712, (February 26, 1937): *affd* 274 N.Y. 508, 510 (May 25, 1937) as to codicils

Peaches Browning At Orpheum Theater

**"Hip! Hip! Hooray Girls!"
With Show Starting
Tomorrow.**

Peaches Browning, the little girl who has been front page news matter for the past number of years, will be at the Orpheum theater, throughout the week beginning tomorrow. And women-folk from throughout the entire section are planning theater parties to see her. The real reason for this apparently lies in the fact that all want to see just what plastic surgery has done for this little ladies legs.

One of the finest burlesk performances playing the country today, is the "Hip Hip! Hooray Girls," who are coming to the Orpheum theater, tomorrow. And they will stay throughout the week.

Those who have seen this com work, know that he is about the best in the country. Besides his regular stuff, Hap is a monologist that is hot stuff. He is supported wonderfully well by Al Ferris, who has won his spurs in his own right.

The feminine charmers are Doris Birmingham, Marie Collins, Gabby Fields, Lucile Carroll and Dolly Glen. And what a bevy of beauties they are! There is one reason for the fact that the management of the Orpheum theater can obtain the services of this type of performer and that is the depression is still on.

In addition to this array of artists, there are Sid Fields and Frank McConville; two straight men, who are both singers and actors who are versatile to the extreme.

Monday night is country store night. And this particular country store night includes the giving away of a radio, and a white go wrist-watch. In addition to this there will be fully fifty-eight other gifts of a value representing more than the admission fee given away free of charge.

At The Orpheum



Patterson, NJ Morning Call, March 1932

"Peaches" Browning Reduces—and HOW!

* * *

The Girl Wife of New York's Famous "Daddy" Tells the Inside Details of How She Dieted Herself Right Out of the "Roly-Poly" Class of Young Matrons.

PEACHES
in
1926

AN ORANGE
"OUT"
BREAKFAST

FOLLOWED
by
EXERCISES

"Peaches" Browning dropped thirty-five pounds in one year. She got tired of having newspaper men refer to her as the "chubby" young wife of Edward W. Browning, New York's most famous "Daddy." But almost every one the former Frances Heenan consulted about the matter prescribed heavy gymnasium work. "Peaches" couldn't see this, so she started dieting. An orange, or a glass of orange juice and black coffee comprised her breakfast. For lunch she ate tomato juice, or grapefruit juice cocktail, a dressing-less salad and coffee, or tea, and a few slices of Malba toast, unbuttered. Dinner was the big meal of the day, but not too big: a clear soup, roast meat, baked potato, lettuce salad and a fruit dessert. Pine, cake, and ice cream were off her menus. She never lost more than three ounces a day. But it counted up in the end. If you don't believe it, just glance at the pictures of "Peaches" shown above. Before and after might well be the caption for that layout! "Peaches" now says she feels better than she ever has before. She's fit for the front line of a Broadway musical show, or to model for a fashionable gown shop. Though she didn't go in for heavy athletics she found that light calisthenics greatly aided her quest for slimmest. Here's her measurements: height, 5 feet, seven inches; waist, 28 inches; hips, 36 inches; ankle, 8 inches; wrist, 6 inches and neck, 13 inches. Doesn't sound like chubby "Peaches" at all, does it?

NEW YORK August 8 Daily News

Kane (Pa.) Republican August 9, 1932

GAYETY--BURLESK

NOW PLAYING

"PEACHES" BROWNING

(In Person)

**The Most Talked-Of
Woman in the World**

2—Summer Concession Coupons—2

A \$1 Orchestra Seat for 50c
A 50c Orchestra Seat for 25c
(Plus Government Tax)

Clip out and exchange this coupon at box office. No phone reservations accepted. This is Positive.

Washington (DC) Herald, May 22, 1933

In 1934, the Brownings were back in the news. Years had passed since the peak of their newsworthiness; age had taken its toll on Daddy, but the public well remembered Sunshine, whom he adopted 14 years earlier. She was now herself a bride at age 18, marrying a 26-year-old man from North Carolina.



Bend (Ore.) Bulletin, February 12, 1934

Browning reached age 60, when he took ill, and died, in 1934. He had been estranged from his ex-wives, Nellie Adele Lowen and Peaches, but Sunshine was at his bedside.¹²⁰ An especially good biography of Daddy Browning is in the *Brooklyn Times Union* of October 12, 1934.

NEWS, THURSDAY, AUGUST 23, 1934 21

Daddy Browning Gravely Ill After Relapse at Hospital

Edward West (Daddy) Browning, ill since June 24, in the Hospital for Joint Diseases, took a turn for the worse last night and was reported in critical condition.

The man who earned millions in real estate and won international notoriety from his marriage to buxom Frances Heenan (Peaches) Browning, was stricken with a cerebral hemorrhage in his suite in the Hotel Westover on June 22. Complete paralysis of his left side followed.

He was taken to the hospital and remained seriously ill for several days. His condition improved and he was said to be doing nicely. At the hospital last night however, his condition again became critical and officials said "he is a very sick man."

At the hospital, Browning's age was given as 63, but sometime ago he said he was born Oct. 16, 1874.

Until he was stricken last June, Browning seemed to be in the best of health. He went regularly from his hotel at 253 W. 72d St. to his offices at 1860 Broadway. On the day he became ill, his chauffeur found him unconscious. Dr. J. B. Weighart of 137 W. 69th St., Browning's personal physician was called and attended him in his suite until his condition was such that it was thought best to remove him to a hospital.

NAVAL AVIATOR IS LOST AT SEA

Norfolk, Va., Aug. 22 (AP).—Lieut. J. S. Graff, attached to the Aircraft Carrier Saratoga, was lost at sea today when the Navy scouting plane he was piloting was forced down twenty-four miles east of Winter Quarter Light.

New York Daily News, August 23, 1934

Obituary

Daddy Browning Dies, 'Sunshine' Girl at Bedside

Edward West (Daddy) Browning, 60-year-old real estate millionaire who flaunted his life, loves and eccentricities to the public—his marriage to the plump Frances (Peaches) Heenan marked a hilarious highlight—died at 10:30 A. M. yesterday in an estate at 40 Birchall Drive, Scarsdale. He had gone there a month ago to recuperate from a cerebral hemorrhage.



The late Edward West Browning

Of the numerous young women

NY Daily News October 13, 1934

¹²⁰ See, NY Times. October 13, 1934 for lengthy account of his life.

The Battle for Inheritance

Daddy Browning left a large estate, with instructions in his final will as to who gets what. He made some charitable bequests and left \$25,000 a year to Sunshine (Dorothy Sunshine Browning Hood, represented by Daniel A. Shirk). He cut out both of his former wives, Nellie Adele and Peaches. Peaches, however, had earlier acquired dower rights, and Nellie Adele a \$6,000 a year stipend as part of the divorce settlement.

Adele's attorney, N. Henry Josephs, claimed that Browning and Nellie Adele were never validly divorced.¹²¹ The disputants, each making their claims before New York County Surrogate James A. Delehanty, were Nellie Adele (Browning's first wife), Dorothy Sunshine Browning Hood (Browning's "adopted" daughter) and Peaches. Nellie Adele asserted that her divorce from Browning was invalid, making her the rightful widow.

***Daddy Browning
Disinherits Widow
In His Final Will***

**Peaches Gets Only Dower
Right, But \$25,000 a Year
Goes to Dot Sunshine**

NEW YORK, Oct. 27.—The late Edward W. (Daddy) Browning disinherited his widow, "Peaches" Browning, in his last will and testament, but left Dorothy Sunshine Hood \$25,000 a year for life, the Evening Journal said in an exclusive story today.

Out of his ten-million-dollar estate, the Journal added, Browning also left a prize of \$250 a year to be paid to the man or woman who does the utmost annually to improve world morals.

In addition, the Journal said, Browning decreed that a trust of \$100,000 be established for treatment of crippled children.

Peaches will receive dower rights due her as Browning's widow. By settlement several years ago she was given first call on unincorporated Browning real estate, then valued at three millions.

Browning also cut off his first wife, Nellie Adele Lowen Browning, but she will continue to receive an annuity of \$6,000 from a trust he set up for her in lieu of dower at the time of her divorce, the Journal said. There were various charitable and other bequests.

Benefactor



DADDY BROWNING

***Elephant Happy
As Dentist Calls***

Edmonton (Canada) Bulletin October 27, 1934

¹²¹ NY Times, November 20, 1934



Chicago Tribune, November 16, 1934

In three decisions, in November and December 1934, *Estate of Browning* 153 Misc 564, Surrogate Delahanty ruled that:

- 1) The judgment in the matrimonial action, which determined that Peaches had abandoned Daddy, barred Peaches from receiving a distributive share in intestacy under Section 87 of the Decedent Estate Law.
- 2) The court noted that the adoption of Marjorie Browning was conducted solely by Nellie Adele Browning, the first wife of the deceased, and that Daddy only provided consent to the adoption. The court held that Marjorie Browning was not Daddy's adopted child and was not entitled to share in the estate.
- 3) The court held that Nellie Adele Lowen Browning, Daddy's first wife, was barred from participating in Daddy's estate due to the terms of the marriage settlement and separation agreements. Her appearance in the probate proceeding was stricken from the record. The court declined to address the validity of the Paris divorce decree

ADOPTED GIRL DENIED SHARE OF DADDY'S WEALTH

The list of contestants for the millions left by the late Edward West (Daddy) Browning, eccentric real estate operator, was reduced yesterday when Surrogate James A. Delehanty ruled out the claim of Marjorie Browning, adopted daughter of Mrs. Nellie Adele Browning, Browning's first wife. Delehanty declared that Browning had not been a party to the adoption, merely consenting to it.

The first Mrs. Browning filed a memorandum yesterday declaring Browning's marriage to Frances (Peaches) Heenan Browning, his second wife, was invalid, since his Paris divorce was not valid.

NY Daily News, December 7, 1934

Way Cleared for Browning's Adopted Daughter to Sue

Mrs. Dorothy Hood to press \$5,000,000 claim
against large estate.

New York, Dec. 8 (AP)—The way was cleared today for Mrs. Dorothy Hood, the former Sunshine Browning, to press her \$5,000,000 claim against the estate of her foster father, Edward W. (Daddy) Browning, Broadway figure and multimillionaire real estate man.

Surrogate James A. Delehanty denied the claim of Mrs. Nellie Adele Lowen Browning that she be a beneficiary in his estate, which has an estimated value of \$7,000,000. She was Browning's first wife. He had divorced her in Paris in 1923.

Previously the surrogate had ordered the appearance of Mrs. Frances Heenan (Peaches) Browning, the second wife, stricken from the record. Her estranged husband bequeathed her only what the law requires, the income from one-third of his personal realty, which is small. Her estimated share is \$5,000 a year.

Mrs. Hood, a resident of Dunn, N. C., was left, under terms of the will, \$10,000 annually until she is 21 years old, and \$25,000 a year thereafter. She is now eighteen.

The first Mrs. Browning's right

to collect \$6,000 a year from a trust fund set up by her former husband in 1923 for her benefit was not disturbed by Surrogate Delehanty's ruling.

Mrs. Browning had waged her contest for a share of the estate on the claim that the Paris divorce Browning obtained on the ground of abandonment would not be recognized by the New York courts, and that, therefore, she was entitled to share in his estate as his real widow.

The claims of Marjorie Browning, an adopted daughter of the first Mrs. Browning, also have been ruled out by the surrogate. He held that she was not legally adopted by Browning.

It was considered likely that Mrs. Nellie Browning would bring a special proceeding in the supreme court concerning her divorce. But lawyers said that the 1923 separation agreement she signed with Browning, in which she waived all claims, including dower rights against Browning's estate, would make reinstatement of her claims unlikely.

Buffalo Courier, December 9, 1934

"PEACHES" BROWNING WEDS.

**Denver Theater Manager Marries
Widow of "Daddy."**

New York — Frances (Peaches) Browning and Bernard J. Hynes, Denver theater manager, were married Monday by a justice of the peace in Eastchester, a Westchester County suburb.

The actress, whose girlhood marriage to the late Edward W. (Daddy) Browning precipitated a lengthy legal fight ending in separation, announced her engagement to the Denver man several weeks ago.

Kansas City (Mo.) Star December 26, 1934

PEACHES TAKES ANOTHER MATE



"Peaches" Browning

Bernard Hynes

Frances (Peaches) Browning, the 16-year-old girl who was skyrocketed to the nation's spotlight when she married Edward (Daddy) Browning in 1926, is shown with her new husband.

Bernard Hynes, theatrical man, in New York City. Disinherited by the late millionaire realtor, Peaches and Hynes were married in a surprise ceremony at Tuckahoe, N. Y.

Kingsport, TN Times, December 28, 1934

Several months after the marriage, the July 18, 1935, issue of the *New York Times*, reported on a ruling by New York Surrogate James A. Delehanty, admitting Daddy Browning's will, which established the Edward W. Browning Foundation for improving the welfare of humanity, with the codicil which cut off Peaches, and denied probate to a second codicil that bequeathed about \$300,000 of his \$7,000,000 estate to relatives, hospital attachés, and employees.

The Surrogate held that Mr. Browning was unfit mentally and physically when the instrument was drawn eleven days before his death. The decision said that Victor K. Ross, attorney for Mr. Browning's real estate enterprises, had drafted the codicil twenty days after Mr. Browning had been declared mentally incompetent by physicians of the Hospital for Joint Diseases, which received \$100,000 under it.

The court said that as a result of the rejection of the second codicil the adopted daughter, Mrs. Dorothy (Sunshine) Browning Hood, would receive far more of his property than his written word intended she should have.

The genuine codicil, he added, was executed when Mr. Browning was in full health, "and was designed merely to exclude the possibility that his youthful wife, from whom he was separated, might have any participation in his estate." This codicil provided an income of \$10,000 for the adopted daughter (Dorothy Sunshine Browning Hood) until she reached maturity and \$25,000 a year thereafter, and gave her all his personal belongings.

Anticipating that she stood to gain from Daddy Browning's will, she asked the court for an advance.¹²⁴

In a codicil, Browning left \$ 100,000 to his sister Mrs. Florence Biggs, but the court rejected it, declaring that Browning, at the time, was not mentally fit.¹²⁵

¹²⁴ In the NY County Surrogate Court records a document of the Title Guarantee and Trust Co., executor of Browning's will, reciting that pursuant to a settlement, Dorothy Browning Hill received a total of \$ 52, 233.33 by way of final accounting.

¹²⁵ See, also: Charles B. McLaughlin, J. In re Estate of Browning, 162 Misc. 244, 247-246 (January 6, 1937) aff'd 250 App Div 712, (February 26, 1937): *aff'd* 274 N.Y. 508, 510 (May 25, 1937) as to codicils



Seeks Millions

Marjorie Browning, 21 (above), Columbia University student, has entered the legal squabble over the millions left by the late Edward (Daddy) Browning. Until recently Marjorie believed she was Browning's real daughter but now learns she was adopted by Mrs. Adele Browning. If Browning was a party to the adoption, she may share in the estate.

Marjorie Browning, White Plains (NY) Daily Reporter, May 28, 1937

In 1937 the Court of Appeals affirmed an order of a lower court upholding the divorce of Edward Browning from Adele, clearing the way for Peaches to get dower rights.¹²⁶

¹²⁶ NY Times March 25, 1937 reported at 273 NY 612

Browning Estate Set 6 Years After Death

NEW YORK, March 7.—(INS)
—It took six years to total the estate of the late Edward West (Daddy) Browning, but the job was completed today and the figure of \$2,851,307 assigned as gross estate.

Mrs. Dorothy (Sunshine) Browning Hood, now of Dunn, N. C., was named chief beneficiary in Browning's will, but he set aside a fund of almost \$2,000,000 "for the welfare of humanity" and other costs have shrunk the estate. Two wives, Frances Heenan (Peaches) Browning and Nellie Adele Browning, were not remembered in Browning's will.

Detroit Evening times March 7, 1941

Following her divorce from Hynes, she married Joseph S. Civelli, a merchandising manager in San Francisco and the father of four daughters by a previous marriage.¹²⁷ They were married in 1941 in Nevada.

¹²⁷ San Mateo (Ca.) Times, March 17, 1936

Peaches Browning Is Married Third Time

Mrs. Frances Heenan Hynes, the former "Peaches" Browning, and Joseph S. Civelli, merchandising manager of a San Francisco department store, were married at Minden, Nev., last night.

Mrs. Hynes was divorced from her

second husband, Bernard J. Hynes, Denver theatre manager, November 9, 1937. Her first husband was the late Edward W. (Daddy) Browning, millionaire New York real estate man.

Mrs. Hynes recently has been living in Beverly Hills, Cal.

When she was still "Peaches" Browning, Mrs. Civelli appeared at the Club Madrid, on the Freeland road, during a visit to this region.

Above from Hazelton (Pa.) Standard-Speaker, July 31, 1941

In February 1946, Peaches divorced Civelli and, in April, married Ralph Willson of Columbus, Ohio.

'Mate Wonderful,' Says 'Peaches,' but Takes Her Divorce



'PEACHES' CIVELLI

By United Press

RENO, Nev., Feb. 2. — Mrs. Frances Heenan Browning Hynes Civelli, the former "Peaches" Browning, today divorced San Francisco department store executive, Joseph C. Civelli.

"Peaches," whose marriage in 1926 to elderly, eccentric New York millionaire Edward W. (Daddy) Browning created a sensation across the nation, charged mental cruelty.

She married Civelli in Gardnerville, Nev., July 29, 1941. A sealed property agreement settled property rights.

In 1937 she divorced Bernard Hynes, wealthy Denver, Colo., theater magnate, here.

Mrs. Civelli said all her ex-husbands were "darlings."

"I think Mr. Civelli is simply wonderful," she said. "But sometimes men have to be more than just wonderful."

Weds For Fourth Time



DAYTON, Nev., April 22—Mrs. Frances Civelli, the former "Peaches" Browning, holds hands with Ralph Willson of Columbus, Ohio, her fourth husband, just after their marriage yesterday at the home of Richard Conklin, here. Mrs. Willson lived and attended school in Zanesville, Ohio, her mother, Mrs. Heenan, residing on Maple avenue. She is also a niece of the late Mrs. William M. Bateman, of this city.

Zanesville, Ohio Times Recorder April 23, 1946

Her marriage to Willson lasted three years. They were divorced in 1949. During the 1940s, the newspapers did not write much about Peaches, except when she married or divorced. After her divorce from Willson, she said she would never remarry, but it appears that she may have married again.

Oft-Wed Peaches Gets Last Divorce

REDWOOD CITY, Calif., April 9 (P)—No more matrimony for her, says the oft-wed Frances (Peaches) Browning.

Superior Judge Edmund Scott yesterday awarded her a divorce from her fourth husband, Ralph N. Willson, of Nevada.

Any chance of another marriage? a reporter asked.

"No—never—never again," said Peaches.

She was swept into the nation's headlines in 1926 when, as a 15-year-old showgirl, she married Edward (Daddy) Browning, 51, wealthy New York real estate dealer.

Her second marriage was to Bernard J. Hyne, Denver theater man. Her third was to Joseph Civelli, San Francisco store executive.

She is living now with her mother, Mrs. Carolyn Heenan, at nearby San Carlos.

Columbia, (Mo.) Daily Tribune April 9, 1949

Peaches, Now 40, Wed to Fifth Mate

SAN CARLOS, April 18 (P)—Frances (Peaches) Heenan — headline-grabbing child-bride of "Daddy" Browning 25 years ago — has a new husband—her fifth.

Her mother, Mrs. Carolyn Heenan, said the 40-year-old Peaches was married six weeks ago at Reno to Al Kelly, heir to a Pittsburgh (Pa.) casket business. She said they will live here.

Peaches, then 15, married New York Millionaire Edward Browning in 1926. Other husbands were Bernard J. Hynes, Denver; Joseph Civelli, San Francisco, and Ralph N. Willson of Columbus, O. Divorces separated her from each.

April 19, 1951, Los Angeles Times

Peaches announced that she is interested in a new career in television, and, by the way, was also in the market for a new millionaire. If so, what became of her marriage to Al Kelly, reported above? In an article reporting her death in 1956, the *Oakland Tribune* obituary of August 26, 1956, noted that her friends said the report was erroneous and that “there was no Kelly in the matrimonial chain.” But after her death, in an article dealing with her estate, his name does appear as her husband.¹²⁸ This seems inaccurate. In the probate proceedings following her death, she is referred to as Francis B. Willson.



Wichita, Kansas Beacon, December 3, 1953

¹²⁸ Cincinnati Enquirer, September 29, 1957

Peaches Browning In Market For Millionaire

By ALINE MOSBY

HOLLYWOOD (UP)— Peaches Browning, that famous blonde who is staging a comeback on television, announced today she's also in the market for another millionaire.

Back in the '20s she was an early day Marilyn Monroe, or, rather, the blonde Marilyn plays in "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" and "How to Marry a Millionaire."

Peaches was 15 when she wed "Daddy" Brown, 52. Later she sang in nightclubs and added and subtracted three other wealthy gentlemen from the husband list. Now, at 43, she's been told by friends she's just the thing for TV panel shows and is also available, she says, for weddings, the dis-

Everett, Washington Daily Herald, December 3, 1953

For several years after Daddy's death, Peaches did vaudeville. People would hear he sing, but the draw was to actually see this wonder of the roaring 1920s. In her act, she sang songs like "Everything is Peaches with Me" and "It's Great to be Single Again".¹²⁹

By 1954, Peaches was no longer a household personality, but news editors were able to refresh memories with retrospectives, like this one in the *Chicago Tribune*, along with pictures of Jazz Age flappers, which Peaches personified.

¹²⁹ Columbia, (Mo.) Daily Tribune, November 30, 1953

OCTOBER 30, 1954.

do you
"Remember
Peaches
Browning?"



FAMOUS CHILD BRIDE
PLANS NEW CAREER!

an EXCLUSIVE story
in this SUNDAY'S

Chicago Tribune
MAGAZINE



Her elopement with "Daddy" was the most shocking marital venture of the Roaring '20s! For an intimate and up-to-date glimpse of the famous blonde who caused the sen-

"I WAS A COUNTERSPY FOR THE FBI"

One minute, she thoughtless remark—and she was finished! A daring Chicago girl describes the endless fear, suspicion, and almost danger she experienced while posing as a Communist for 1½ years! Don't miss her thrilling, true story in this Sunday's CHICAGO TRIBUNE MAGAZINE!



This is the flapper era style in women's wear which Christian Dior, world-famous Parisian fashion leader, is reviving. In the 1920s feminine curves were taboo. Picture is of "Peaches" Browning in typical "Jazz Age" attire.

In 1955, there was talk of her finishing her memoirs.¹³⁰ If she ever did, she did not get to do the rounds for book sales and the like. She died on August 23, 1956, at age 46.¹³¹

Peaches Browning, Child Bride Of Roaring 20s, Dies From Injury



"Peaches" Browning, who died in New York City yesterday at the age of 46, is shown as a teen-age bride in 1926 with her first husband, Edward W. "Daddy" Browning. Chin patch covered acid scars resulting from a courtship incident. She had since married three times. She was divorced from her fourth husband, Ralph N. Willson, a short time after their marriage in 1946. (AP Wirephoto)

New York, Aug. 24. (AP) — The \$1,000 a day on his young bride former Peaches Browning, the but that he remained an un-kissed

Hazelton, Pa. Plain Speaker, August 24, 1956

By 1957 stories about Peaches were less about Mrs. Browning than they were about growing, canning, or slicing peaches, or how to put them in pies.

¹³⁰ NY Daily News. May 27, 1955; She is said to have had an affair with Milton Berle somewhere along the way: <https://www.nytimes.com/1974/10/06/archives/milton-berle-an-autobiography-by-milton-berle-with-haskel-frankel.html>

¹³¹ See, New York Times Obituary online at <https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1956/08/24/86687016.html?pageNumber=19>



Peaches, Daddy Symbolized Those Wacky 20's

NEW YORK (AP) — Peaches Browning, perhaps more than any single person, was a symbol of the wacky, free-wheeling 1920's. Now she is dead.

Her 1926 marriage at the age of 15 to Edward W. (Daddy) Browning, an eccentric millionaire more than three times her age, was lavishly chronicled in the newspapers in a fashion hard to imagine now, 30 years later.

The sensation-seeking newspapers of the day lapped up everything they could get on Peaches and Daddy Browning during the 14 months the marriage lasted, and for years afterward they followed the endless litigation that resulted.

Then times changed, the depression came, and people no longer were interested in the antics of a spoiled teenager. Peaches Browning always lived in the shadow of her brief, newspaper-bred fame. She made money touring in vaudeville after her marriage to Browning.

Peaches put much of her money in property holdings. Reputedly she was an astute manager of her business affairs.

Peaches was born Frances Heenan. She was 13, she weighed a hefty 165 pounds, but had a pretty face. Browning met her at a high school dance. He liked to attend teen-age affairs. In fact, he liked teenagers.

He showered money and attention on the girl, who lived with her parents in a five-flight apartment. Soon she was being driven to school in Browning's limousine.

When their engagement was announced, the Children's Society tried to stop the marriage on the part of Mrs. Heenan. Browning outwitted the society by getting the consent of both parents and marrying his child bride before the court action came up. The Heenans later separated.

Then Peaches was at the height of her glory. For months she toured the best stores, with daddy and his fat wallet in devoted attendance. He boasted about his house in the nude and that he spent \$1,000 a day on his desire for Peaches to join her, and it only made him love her the more.

Browning was not averse to publicity, and actually helped to spread the tale of his antics with Peaches.

Peaches Browning and her aging sugar daddy soon became as much a part of the road show as bathtub gin, raccoon coats, the flapper and revell from the Victorian moral code.

After 14 months, however, the marriage was on the rocks. Browning got a legal separation, but soon petitioned out. Peaches, 1945.

It was the fact that she never was divorced from Browning that formed the basis of Peaches' later claims on Browning's estate.

Peaches lost a countersuit for \$200,000 sum from him at the time.

Before he died she used to establish her dower rights in his estate. She reportedly got a \$200,000 sum from him at the time.

After he died in 1934, she continued her efforts and finally in 1938 got another settlement, the size of which was not disclosed. She was named as a co-respondent in a divorce suit against her theatrical manager, Edgar Allen.

Shortly after Browning died, Peaches married Bernard J. Hynes, a theater manager. They were divorced three years later. In 1941 she eloped with the late Joseph C. C. then president of the vaudeville billings, which netted her as much as \$41,000 a year. They were divorced in 1945.

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DADDY BROWNING
A Lush Love

Long Beach Ca Press Telegram, August 26, 1956

Peaches died in 1956. It was news, but for many, it recalled an era before they were born.



Peaches Browning, Dead at 46, A Symbol of Free-Wheeling Era

By GEOFFREY GOULD

NEW YORK, August 26 — Peaches Browning, perhaps more than any single person, was a symbol of the wacky, free-wheeling 1920's. Now she is dead.

Her 1926 marriage at the age of 15 to Edward W. (Daddy) Browning, an eccentric millionaire more than three times her age, was lavishly chronicled in the newspapers in a fashion hard to imagine now, 30 years later.

The sensation-seeking newspapers of the day lapped up everything they could get on Peaches and Daddy Browning during the 14 months the marriage lasted, and for years afterward they followed the endless litigation that resulted.

Then times changed, the depression came, and people no longer were interested in the antics of a spoiled teenager. Peaches Browning always lived in the shadow of her brief, newspaper-bred fame. She made money touring in vaudeville after her marriage to Browning.

Peaches put much of her money in property holdings. Reputedly she was an astute manager of her business affairs.

Peaches was born Frances Heenan. She was 13, she weighed a hefty 165 pounds, but had a pretty face. Browning met her at a high school dance. He liked to attend teen-age affairs. In fact, he liked teenagers.

He showered money and attention on the girl, who lived with her parents in a five-flight apartment. Soon she was being driven to school in Browning's limousine.

When their engagement was announced, the Children's Society tried to stop the marriage on the part of Mrs. Heenan. Browning outwitted the society by getting the consent of both parents and marrying his child bride before the court action came up. The Heenans later separated.

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Shortly after Browning died, Peaches married Bernard J. Hynes, a theater manager. They were divorced three years later. In 1941 she eloped with the late Joseph C. C. then president of the vaudeville billings, which netted her as much as \$41,000 a year. They were divorced in 1945.

Zanesville, (Ohio) Times Signal August 26, 1956

Peaches Browning Estate to Mother

Peaches Browning, one of the most colorful figures of the roaring twenties, left her entire estate to her mother, Mrs. Carolyn M. Heenan of San Carlos, according to a final distribution of her estate approved by Superior Judge Louis B. Dematteis.

Peaches, known as Frances B. Willson at the time of her death in August, 1956, left an estate of \$16,002. She reportedly made millions of dollars in her heyday, through four marriages to wealthy scions and as a vaudeville singer.

Her estate consisted of joint ownership of her mother's home at 335 Hillcrest Dr., San Carlos, two cars, and some jewelry.

Her last husband was Ralph N. Willson, member of a wealthy Ohio meat packing firm. She divorced him in 1949.

She first gained fame as the "child bride" of Edward (Daddy) Browning in the 1920s.

Redwood City, Ca. Tribune, September 27, 1957

Peaches' estate went to her mother, who survived her. It is difficult to account for the small size of the estate, considering that, as part of an earlier settlement, Peaches acquired an interest in valuable New York real estate properties. By one account she owned, at the death, five or six apartment buildings in New York City.¹³²

¹³² Lynn Peril. Planet of Peril, November 19, 2019 Online at <https://www.hilobrow.com/2019/11/19/planet-of-peril-44/>

CASH

Bank of America, San Mateo Office	\$ 87.15
Fremont Savings and Loan	100.00

STOCK

50 Shares of Broadhurst Realty Company, Inc., a New York corporation	Appraised at	\$ 15,000.00
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MISCELLANEOUS

1 DeSoto 1946 Coupe	Appraised at	\$ 25.00
1 Cadillac 1950 2-Door Sedan.	Appraised at	\$ 500.00
1 White Metal Red Cross pin	Appraised at	\$ 5.00
2 White metal wedding rings with clear white stones	Appraised at	\$ 200.00
1 White Metal wedding ring	Appraised at	\$ 5.00
1 Yellow Metal ring with one large square topaz colored stone, a clear white stone, and six red stones	Appraised at	\$ 75.00
1 St. Anthony's Medal	Appraised at	\$ 5.00
Total	Probate	\$ 16,002.15

REAL PROPERTY (Joint Tenancy)

The following real property was held by decedent in joint tenancy with CAROLYN M. HEENAN, her mother, to-wit:

Lot number Thirteen (13) in Block numbered 8, "Re-Subdivision of Tract 1, and a portion of tract 3, of the property of San Carlos Park Syndicate, San Mateo County, California: per map thereof filed September 28, 1912, in the office of the Recorder of San Mateo County, California, and recorded in Book 8 of Maps at page 24 in the records of said County.

And is inserted for appraisal purposes only.

Appraised at	\$ 19,500.00
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Peaches Browning Dies of Injuries After Fall

Schoolgirl Marriage at 15 to Realty Tycoon Provided Sensation of 1920s

NEW YORK, Aug. 23 (U.P.)—Mrs. Ralph (Peaches) Willson, 46, whose marriage at the age of 15 to real estate tycoon Edward W. (Daddy) Browning was a sensation of the 1920s, died today in a hospital.

Mrs. Willson was admitted to the hospital Sunday morning after being injured in a fall in the bathroom of a three-room apartment which she shared with her mother. She died without regaining consciousness.

Found Unconscious



Los Angeles Times, August 24, 1956

Just before Peaches' 40th birthday in 1950, columnist Earl Wilson asked her if she would do it all again if she could live her life over, and she said she would. "It's funny how your mind works when you're 15 or 16," she told Wilson. "All I could think of was taking that Rolls-Royce to school and not having to ride the subway." Browning was "a very good-looking man" and "no dope. Today I'd like him." Asked near the end of her life if she had been in love with Daddy Browning, Frances candidly answered that she had not. Pressed for the reason why she married him, she confessed that she hadn't "the faintest idea. How can you account for the actions of a 15-year-old?"¹³³ We might ask another question: How could the public abide the actions of the middle-aged man at the center of it all?

¹³³ <https://www.hilobrow.com/2019/11/19/planet-of-peril-44/>

Appendix One

(a) That the plaintiff compelled the defendant on the marital night and repeatedly since that time to sit up on the bed in full view of the plaintiff in a nude state; that the defendant was compelled by the plaintiff to walk around the bedroom and exhibit herself in a nude state be

shock and hysterical condition of the defendant; that upon refusal or objection to said requests and orders of the plaintiff, the plaintiff became very angry and flew into a towering rage causing defendant fear of harm and resulting in severe shock to her nervous system creating a feeling of physical repulsion towards the plaintiff.

(b) Upon the bridal night plaintiff tried to force the defendant to have intercourse with him although defendant was at that time physically unwell and in such physical condition that it was impossible and dangerous to her health to have intercourse with plaintiff, and although plaintiff knew and defendant told him of this fact plaintiff despite defendant's protests fought with and tried during the night to have intercourse with the defendant, against defendant's protests and to the shame, hurt, anguish, embarrassment, and physical and nervous shock and nausea of the defendant; that repeatedly thereafter plaintiff tried to compel defendant to have intercourse while unwell producing a state of physical and mental anguish and hysteria. That within a very short time thereafter and upon the first occasion upon which plaintiff and defendant had intercourse that plaintiff forced the defendant to use a large instrument theretofore unknown and unseen by the defendant to her shame, anguish, embarrassment and nervous shock of the defendant. That plaintiff refused to permit conception by the defendant.

(c) Within three or four days after marriage to the plaintiff and after returning to Cold Spring, New York, from a short trip and upon retiring on said evening, plaintiff demanded that the defendant sit up on the bed in a

threw the defendant bodily from the bed upon the floor causing the defendant to shriek for help and to suffer severe nervous and mental disorder resulting in hysterics; that defendant's mother and a friend Mrs. Mayer responded to defendant's call and after a long period of time persuaded defendant to return to the plaintiff's bed. That for the rest of said night plaintiff remained awake pacing the floor and smoking and defendant was unable to rest for constant fear of plaintiff.

(d) Upon the return of plaintiff and defendant from Cold Spring, New York to the Hotel Gramatan in Bronxville, New York, plaintiff gave a story to the Press that the defendant had proposed to the plaintiff and that it was not the plaintiff who had requested the marriage, but the defendant. That this report was given out while plaintiff and defendant were living and cohabiting together as man and wife; that the story was false and untrue and was done to cause anguish to the defendant, and hold the defendant up to public ridicule and shame, causing the defendant embarrassment, anguish, and humiliation.

(e) During a short trip for about two weeks in the latter part of July, 1926, plaintiff persistently repeated demands hereinbefore enumerated that the defendant display herself in a nude state before the plaintiff and upon her refusal made threats and became intensely irritated, causing fear, embarrassment and shame to the defendant, ending in complete nervous collapse.

(f) Within a short time after marriage upon a return to New York City before the trip in July, 1926, to take up residence at the Fairfield on 72nd Street, the plaintiff repeatedly brought home with him to the

sisted upon displaying these to the defendant despite defendant's objections and protests; and likewise many copies of vulgar and salacious French magazines, with pictures sexually suggestive, forcing them upon defendant's view in the evenings and being very irritated and angry upon the defendant's refusal and earnest request not to see them; - all to the extreme embarrassment, humiliation, shame and mental anguish of the defendant.

(g) The plaintiff, upon the return to New York from the two weeks trip heretofore referred to in paragraph "(e)" engaged newspaper reporters, upon information and belief from the Famous Features Syndicate, to write up a fictitious diary of daily incidents and events supposedly from the defendant's private life prior to and during the marriage state with the plaintiff and compelled defendant to pose for illustrations, all over vigorous protests and objections from the defendant, and plaintiff authorized over objection and protest of the defendant the publication of these false and fictitious narratives, and the sensual photographs which he forced her to pose for, holding the defendant up to the public ridicule and shame and causing humiliation and anguish to the defendant.

(h) Throughout the months of May, June, July, August and September, 1926, whenever the plaintiff purchased clothes and other garments for the defendant plaintiff at once thereafter insisted upon newspaper reporters photographing the defendant and plaintiff upon such occasions, in spite of protests of the defendant, causing the defendant to be held up to public ridicule and making it impossible for defendant to go out alone in the streets without being made an object to public ridicule and gossip

defendant and causing her to become nervous and ill.

(i) In addition to forcing the defendant to be photographed upon occasions when the plaintiff had made purchases for the defendant and whenever plaintiff and defendant appeared in public, the plaintiff deliberately forced the defendant to pose with him in sensual attitudes for the benefit of reporters and photographers and newspapers, upon one occasion making the defendant lie down upon a couch while the plaintiff leaned over her in voluptuous pose; that these pictures subsequently appeared in the newspapers to the intense pain and mortification of the defendant, holding her up to ridicule and humiliating her before the world and making the private life of the plaintiff and the defendant public property and a public joke leading to nervous and physical collapse of the defendant.

(j) Although the plaintiff had promised to provide medical treatment for the burns and scars upon the defendant's face and neck caused a short time prior to defendant's marriage with the plaintiff by acid having been placed upon the defendant while she was asleep at her home, and although defendant had repeatedly requested the plaintiff so to do, the plaintiff neglected, declined and refused to employ physicians adequately to treat the scars and burns of the defendant. Upon information and belief that such failure of treatment will cause defendant's injuries and scars to remain hideous and permanent.

(k) In the early part of August, 1926, plaintiff and defendant removed to apartments at Kew Gardens Inn, Long Island, where one evening after having been excited and angry plaintiff refused to permit the defendant to go to sleep upon defendant attempting to sleep plaintiff repeatedly awak-

cease this torture plaintiff threw telephone books across the room and acted in a manner to cause the defendant to faint and to become hysterical and placing her in fear of bodily harm, during all of which time the plaintiff laughed aloud at defendant's protests and tears; that upon such an occasion the defendant's mother was called upon the telephone by a neighbor and hurried out to Kew Gardens to find the defendant in a complete state of physical collapse.

(l) Upon another occasion during the same period of time referred to in the foregoing paragraph "k" hereof, the exact date of which the defendant cannot recall, the plaintiff, while the defendant was in a state of hysteria caused by the constant strain upon her of plaintiff's cruel and inhuman treatment, summoned defendant's mother and told her in defendant's presence that the defendant, his wife, would not live much longer.

(m) One evening in the latter part of September, 1926, the plaintiff came home from New York City to the residence of plaintiff and defendant in Kew Gardens Inn, Long Island, in a terrific rage and temper and exhibiting to the defendant a bottle which he had with him, plaintiff told the defendant he was drunk; that at said time and without any provocation and in the presence of defendant's mother, defendant being then unwell, plaintiff said "Peaches, I am going to kill you and myself too"; that defendant was terrified and defendant's mother immediately went to the telephone intending to call the Police whereupon the plaintiff immediately begged forgiveness and promised that he would not make such threat again; that despite this promise, on another occasion while plaintiff and defendant were alone in their bedroom, plaintiff threatened to kill the

horrified and in fear of bodily harm, that upon defendant becoming hysterical plaintiff directed the defendant to sleep in an adjoining room which defendant on this occasion did; that upon another occasion at Kew Gardens the plaintiff locked the defendant in a room alone for several hours without cause or justification.

(n) On several occasions in their short marital life plaintiff awakened the defendant from sleep with noises made in imitation of animals and upon these occasions the plaintiff assumed unnatural poses, to the sudden shock and anguish of the defendant upon awakening from sleep, causing an hysterical condition of the defendant, at which times plaintiff seemed to obtain great pleasure from defendant's reaction to his torture.

(o) Upon numerous occasions the plaintiff exhibited to the defendant unnatural and abnormal sexual desires, causing the defendant anguish, making the defendant sick, nervous, hysterical, and eventually resulting in nervous and physical collapse, rendering it impossible, improper and dangerous for the defendant to cohabit and live with the plaintiff any longer.

12: That the cumulative effect of the foregoing acts and conduct of the plaintiff toward the defendant produced upon the defendant an hysterical, nervous condition, causing the defendant to faint repeatedly, to lose sleep, to be unable to sleep, to be unable to appear in the open air without becoming an object of public ridicule and jest, to suffer physical and nervous collapse, rendering further and continued life and cohabitation with the plaintiff impossible, improper and dangerous to the life and health of the defendant.

plaintiff, disregarding his duties as husband and without defendant's consent and against the defendant's good health and peace of mind, has wilfully, wrongfully and continuously since their marriage so conducted himself as to render further cohabitation and life with the plaintiff dangerous to the health and well being of the defendant, thereby forcing the defendant to leave the plaintiff's residence on October 2nd, 1926.

14: Upon information and belief, plaintiff is suffering from a form of sexual abnormality rendering cohabitation by the defendant with the plaintiff improper and dangerous to the health and well being of the defendant.

15: That the plaintiff is a man possessed of great wealth and that his income is upwards of \$300,000.00 per year and his properties are of a value of several millions of dollars.

WHEREFORE defendant demands judgment against the plaintiff that the complaint of the plaintiff be dismissed and that a decree be entered decreeing unto the defendant her permanent separation from the bed and board of the plaintiff and further directing and decreeing that the plaintiff make suitable provision for the defendant's maintenance, support and education during the rest of her natural life proportionate with the means and station in life of the plaintiff, and for further sums necessary for expenses for the medical attention and treatment of the defendant and for such other and further relief as to the Court may seem just and proper in the premises together with the costs and disbursements of this action.

EPSTEIN & SMITH,
Attorneys for Defendant

Appendix Two: Chronology

October 14, 1874	Edward West (Daddy) Browning, born in New York, son of Edward Franklin Browning and Lucy Richardson.
June 23, 1910	Frances Belle Heenan (Peaches), born in Columbus, Ohio, daughter of Caroline Chamberlain Heenan and William Bernard Heenan.
April 15, 1915	Browning marries Nelle Adele Lowen of New York City at the Manhattan Congregational Church by Rev. Henry Stimson. They move into 35 West 81 st St NYC, where he builds rooftop garden.
April 13, 1918	Brownings place an ad to adopt a daughter.
May 1918	Brownings adopt Josephine Herbst, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Herbst, and named her Margery/Marjorie.
March 2, 1919	Brownings place an ad to adopt a second daughter.
July 1920	Brownings adopt Dorothy Sunshine as sister to Marjorie.
July 1923	Nellie Adele Browning leaves Edward Browning; goes off to Paris with dentist Henry Willen.
December 1923	New York Supreme Court Justice Vernon Davis appoints referee in the action between Edward Browning and Nellie Adele Browning.
July 5, 1925	Browning advertises for 14-year-old girl to be raised with Dorothy Sunshine.
August 4, 1925	Browning adopts Mary Louise Spas. He has adoption nullified within days, after learning that she was 21. (Queens Surrogate Noble)
March 5, 1926	Daddy and Peaches meet at Hotel McAlpin at a sorority dance.
April 10, 1926	Daddy and Peaches wed in Cold Spring, NY.
October 2, 1926	Peaches and her mother leave Browning's estate.
October 21, 1926	Browning initiates separation action against Peaches.
January 24, 1927	Separation trial opens in Carmel, NY, in Peaches v. Daddy Browning, before Judge Albert Seeger.

- March 21, 1927** Browning wins separation decree. He appeals against paying \$4,344 additional fees to his wife's counsel The Appellate Division affirmed on July 1, 1927 (221 App. Div. 801 [2d Dept 1927]).
- October 7, 1927** Appellate Division Second Dept grants Browning leave to appeal to the Court of Appeals on the issue of counsel fees.
- February 24, 1928** Court of Appeals affirms, *Browning v Browning*, 247 NY 579.
- December 27, 1920** Peaches starts divorce action against Daddy
- 1931** Mary Spas Tvrdy claimed that Daddy Browning had spanked her, for which she sued him for \$500,000 in damages. (Noble, J. in Queens)
- December 12, 1934** Death of Daddy Browning.
- August 23, 1956** Death of Peaches Heenan Browning.