



# THE VICTORIAN ETIQUETTE

*In the Victorian era, social etiquette rules were taken a bit too seriously. If you would like to travel back in time; here is some good advice to keep in mind for your travels.*



- I. After introductions, *visits* or “calls” came next
- II. Visiting or *calling hours* were limited (between 3-6 PM)
- III. At the *first call*, stay only 15 minutes
- IV. If it becomes crowded or hard to talk, leave, or at least *relinquish your place* close to the hostess



V. *Tea* is generally served

VI. Visitor, *who came early*, refused the offer of tea that was made especially for them (*unseasonable hour*, it made a great deal of trouble)

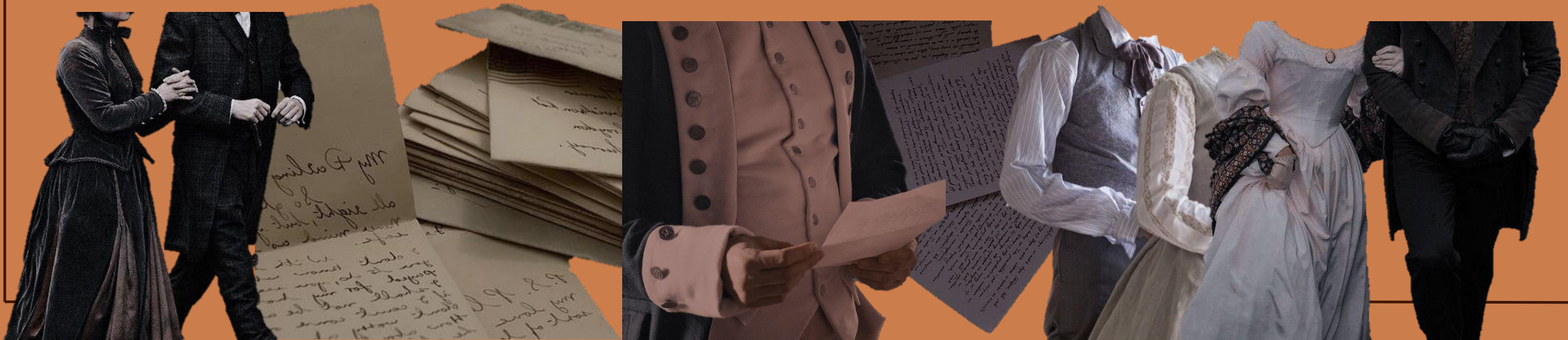


VII. Visitor placed their *card* in a convenient place in the hall, or on a tray, the servant held out, and then *mentioned their name to the manservant*, if there was one

IX. Ladies who drove when they paid visits usually had a very *heavy wrap* on in cold weather, which they then would leave in the carriage. But when walking in a thick jacket, it was *allowable to take it off in the hall*.

VIII. Servants usually took the card on a tray and stood holding the curtains aside, for the visitor to enter, *speaking their name audibly* at the same time

X. A *gentleman* did the same as a woman, except that he *took off his overcoat*, if he wore one, in the hall. He would also *deposit his hat and stick outside* that always stayed together. The drawing-room was no place for such things!



XI. Gentleman *must be asked to call* before he could venture to do so

XII. He would then *call as soon as possible* after the invitation was given

XIII. If it was a family who entertained often and if his visit had been agreeable, he would *receive an invitation to dinner.*



XIV. After, he would call again within a week, and then he would become an “*acquaintance*” who could be summoned for informal occasions (This rule was *not for young girls*, whose mothers would be required to do the asking.)



XV. There was really *no excuse for men's delinquencies*, especially, if they had accepted invitations or favours of any sort from ladies.

XVII. On an *ordinary weekday*, he was permitted to call in a brown, blue or any coloured coat, *fancy waistcoat*, and *derby hat*, and could be admitted *up to six o'clock*

XVI. He was *then obliged to find half an hour* out of the week or *visit on Sunday* (few houses were closed to visitors Sunday afternoons)



XVIII. The *receiving party* was always a woman

XIX. Gentlemen could receive visits from men at *their club* or *their offices*, and there was a *distinct etiquette* for these ceremonies

XX. Formal visiting *among married men* was never done at their houses, it was always the *wife* who *received*, not the husband

XXI. When a *gentleman*, no matter if he was married, *received hospitality at a lady's hands*, he was quite capable of paying a visit *to show* his personal *appreciation* (It was not necessary for a man to relegate all the visiting to his wife.)



XXII. Nothing could excuse a delay in returning the first visit within a few days, excluding going out of town or an illness (nothing could exempt one from a call after a dinner, a luncheon, a supper, or theatre party, unless, as said before, a person was ill or out of town. In these circumstances, a card would be sent with a word of regret)

XXII. It was always better to overdo the polite than to underdo it

XXIII. A call after each act of civility was still deemed a necessary courtesy for a woman to pay, and a responsibility for a man.





*There's been a bit of change in terms of social queues in the past years.  
Though one might think this was for the worse, yet it lightened and made  
day to day communication easier.*

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