
Good manners were important to the people who lived in the 19th century. Daily life was guided by rules of etiquette that instructed one how to properly go about every aspect of life. Here are a few examples:

- Gentleman always walk on the outside of the street, ladies on the inside.
- Never laugh at your own remarks.
- When a lady visits another for the first time, her visit should be returned within a week.
- Never sing more than one or two songs consecutively.

Not surprisingly, the rules of etiquette also applied to letters and sealing wax. Here are a few important ones to follow if you were sending a letter in the 1840's:



- Men should use red.
- Ladies should use gilt, rose, and other colors.
- When in mourning use black seals.
- When writing to someone in mourning, use black edged paper and a black seal.
- Using red sealing wax when writing to someone in mourning is considered rudeness or ignorance.
- Large seals are considered bad taste.
- The smaller and glossier the better.
- A small letter gets one seal, a larger letter two.
- If using a person to carry a letter as a favor, it is rude to add more than one seal.
- If your letter is folded in a manner that partly opened it at the end, its contents being able to be read, then it is impolite to put a little wax upon the edges. Only when sent by post or by domestic is this acceptable.
- When not using an envelope and the third part of the letter is written upon, you should leave a small blank space where the seal is to be put so as to not cover over any words of the letter.
- When staying overnight, and so as to not trouble your hostess, always carry a well furnished paper-case, pens, pencil, India-rubber, wafers, sealing-wax, and seals.