



History of "The Rose Cup"

In the heyday of croquet, long before lawn tennis was introduced and Wimbledon was a cow pasture, the Fogelbys, Elizabeth and Charles held garden parties at their home outside London each year for friends and some of Mr. Fogelby's business associates to celebrate their daughter's birthday. Over the years Victoria, their daughter became a bit of a "tom boy" constantly outside, horseback, hunting, scrapping with the boys. Mrs. Fogelby had introduced croquet to the family and often set up a court in rose garden to encourage Victoria to dress and participate and a more socially appropriate pastime for a young girl.

On the eve of the party while Charles and Elizabeth were dining, the conversation drifted to what they should give poor Victoria for her 13th birthday. Mrs. Fogelby had dozens of ideas while Charles remained mostly silent, with an occasional "um" between chews. Finally Elizabeth became annoyed and pronounced, "Charles! You haven't said a thing. All you care about is yourself and your damn rugby club. There is more to life than rugby and silver trophies. It's about time you started thinking of others. You choose the present for our daughter this year!" and she stamped out of the dining room.

Fogelby finished his meal, poured another glass of Claret and stared across the table. "Yes", he thought to himself, "what are my rugby chaps doing tonight? Will we win the championship again this year?"

Martha, the Fogelby's maid came in with a pot tea. "Shall I pour you some tea, Sir?". "No. No. More Claret." Martha refilled his glass and left the silver tea pot on the table to the right of Mr. Fogelby's place setting. His eyes were drawn to the silver as the candlelight flickered across the flower blooms on the pot, an Italian piece they had picked up during a Fall trip to Venice before Victoria was born.

"More to life than rugby trophies" he smirked to himself. Then it came to him. "Of course there is! Yes, there are Croquet Trophies. Brilliant!" he shouted out loud. Martha came running in from the pantry, door swinging behind her. "What is it Sir?"

Fogelby turned and ordered, "Martha, polish this teapot!"

"But Sir," she pleaded, "I did before dinner."

"Well," Fogelby sputtered, "Do it again! Will have this as shiny as a Rugby Trophy if it takes all night! Make it so!"

The birthday was a smashing success as always. Fogelby kept the "Rose Trophy" a secret till the croquet match. The croquet game was played with the usual players and watchers on. Victoria's game had improved greatly from last year and she handily beat her doubles partner, old Aunt Alice in the final Two Ball Cut Throat match of the day.

Fogelby was delighted. Then he strode out to the middle of the court, Martha timidly behind him carrying a blue velvet bag. With all eyes on him he began, "For some time now you all have been coming to our daughters' birthday. This year as you all know, young Victoria turns 13 and becomes a Lady. And as we all have witnessed today, a brilliant croquet player too! Now, Martha, come here", he ordered. Fogelby snatched the bag from her hand, opened the draw string and pulled out the silver tea pot. "To the Champion! The Rose Garden Cup" He held the trophy high in his left hand for all to see. "Come, dear." Victoria came running up to her father. "For you dear, the winner of the Rose Cup!" They shook hands; a peck on the cheek. "Well done!"

Excerpt from the Annals of Croquet, Lord Worcestershire Volume I