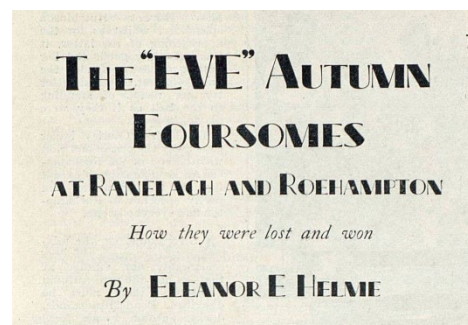


From the Archives – 29 June

Ladies Golf at Roehampton Club – Personalities in the Eve Foursomes

The previous edition of the *Recorder* newsletter highlighted the origins of the popular Autumn Foursomes event in the 1920's sponsored by the *Britannia and Eve* magazine played initially at two venues – the Ranelagh Club in Barnes and Roehampton Club.

Author, journalist, and single-figure golfer Eleanor Helme played a significant role in promoting the event and its subsequent reporting in the magazine in which she was editor for women's golf. She also features her recollections of the competition and her affection for Roehampton Club in her book *After the Ball – the story of forty six championships and other golfing occasions pursued with Clubs, Notebook and Pencil*. Initial comparisons with the hosting of the event between the two clubs were extremely favourable towards Roehampton Club in its ability to generate an informal and well-organised experience for those taking part.



Reference was also made to the tradition of providing high-quality chocolates to the participants and to notable spectators such as Alexander the starter at St Andrews, the great JH Taylor from Royal Mid-Surrey and the peacock at Ranelagh all of whom according to Eleanor Helme have been known to accept a chocolate. In one of the many illustrations contained in the book by Charles Ambrose, JH Taylor is captured enjoying the confectionery.



The great J. H. Taylor

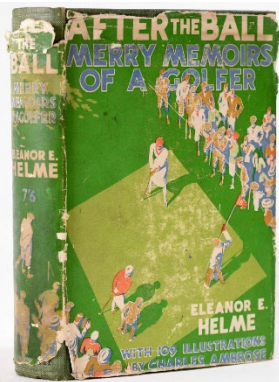
The distinguished players of the day were the first pairings to appear on the trophy such as Miss Wethered, Mrs Hambro, Miss Hartill and Miss Cotgrave, Mrs Macbeth and Miss Chambers, Mrs Gavin and Miss Winn followed each other on the cups. It was not until 1927 that comparatively long handicaps fought their way onto the winners' podium when Mrs Heriot Glen and Mrs Clapham fought their way through to carry off the cup.

In the following year it was Lady Alness and Miss Leetham who had been runners up in 1927, climbed one rung higher to win giving a good many strokes on the way. Roehampton Club was regarded by Eleanor Helme as one of the reasons for the successful growth of the event when the competition reached a peak of 128 couples whose handicap allowances ranged from 18 to 30 and a waiting list of more than 50 couples hoping to participate.

The *Tatler* reported the event in 1929 in a two-page spread which included a photograph of the Roehampton Club winners Miss Hutchinson and Mrs Cowie and the runners up Mrs Chesterton and Mrs Stocks.



The Roehampton winners, Miss Hutchinson and Mrs. Cowie, with (right) Mrs. Chesterton and Mrs. Stocks, the runners-up. The Roehampton Foursomes, as well as the Autumn Foursomes at Ranelagh, had a tremendous entry



In her career as a journalist and author, Eleanor Helme took great interest in the organisation of the event. In her book, she provides a personal recollection of what goes on behind the scenes on the day before the event at Ranelagh and Roehampton Club. Up to that moment all seems to be in order.

The 512 boxes of chocolates, plus sundry extra ones to be consumed on the premises, the cups, replicas, and usual array of prizes await the players at both venues. A number of copies of the draw have been brought up to date with all changes of partner and handicaps shown. Members of the press have been advised to hold back from any reporting of the results until the start sheet has been updated with any last-minute changes to the playing order and any of the pairings deciding to scratch themselves from the competition and their places taken by those on the waiting list.



Before the arrival of the morning post, Eleanor Helme receives a telephone call; 'Is that Miss Helme? What about our getting into Roehampton Club, is there any hope? You know we are down to 33 on the wait list now. We were 35 when we entered, at least I think we were, weren't we? We do want to play so dreadfully. It was my fault that we didn't enter sooner but I thought you'd know we'd be sure to and that you would put our names down; we always have played every year. You will ring me up if there's a vacancy, won't you ...?' At this point there is a problem with the telephone line and the caller is cut off!

Story to be continued in the next edition of the *Recorder* newsletter.

Steve Riedlinger, Club Archivist