|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
| **THE SILVER FLAGON****by Lindsay Davenport** |

 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|

|  |
| --- |
|  |

 |

 |

 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |

The Library at Sagamore Hill is filled with all sorts of fascinating objects! A personally curated collection, it features deliberately chosen objects that inspired and brought joy to Theodore Roosevelt as he worked or spent time with his family. One such object is a **Norwegian Flagon** on the mantle.The flagon, a ceremonial drinking cup, was presented to him in 1910 by King Haakon VII of Norway. It’s silver and features a number of engravings referencing Norse sagas as well as Theodore Roosevelt’s name along the lid. Sitting at the top is a Viking figure in full armor. Theodore, Edith, Kermit, and Ethel Roosevelt stopped in Norway during their 1910 tour of Europe. While there, they met the Royal Family of Norway, explored Christiania (now Oslo), and TR gave his acceptance lecture for his 1906 Nobel Prize. The flagon was presented to him on the day of the speech, May 5th. Theodore Roosevelt seemed to enjoy his time in Norway very much. He details his European trip in a long letter (over 100 pages!) to George Otto Trevelyan in 1911. He remarks that Norway is the “most genuinely democratic society to be found in Europe” and one of the closest to that of the United States that he had seen on this trip. Of the royal family – King Haakon VII, Queen Maud, and Prince Olav – he said they were “as simple and unpretentious as they were good and charming.” He appreciated that being hosted by them felt less formal and more friendly. Reading this letter though, one can tell his favorite part was spending time with the young Prince. Olav was seven at the time, and Theodore took to enthusiastically joining in his games. Even Kermit and Ethel joined in to play with him. (Olav would shortly after state that he wished he could marry Ethel.) Later that month, at the reception after the funeral of King Edward VII, he met Olav again who insisted that he play with him as he had done in his own home. Theodore of course obliged him and got down on the floor in the middle of Buckingham Palace to play!Ethel, too, noted how important this silver flagon had been to her father. In an oral history recorded with her in 1962, she elaborated on her memory of this gift and the friendship formed between King Haakon and Theodore Roosevelt. Her father was an avid reader and was especially interested in the folk stories of different cultures. The King was impressed to learn just how much Theodore knew of the Norse sagas and that he shared the stories with his children as they were growing up. According to Ethel, the gift of this flagon was a commemoration of that connection. She also shared further a bit of the history of these drinking vessels. They were kept in a piece of furniture called a “cup-board”, and when one wanted a drink he would ask for the cup to be brought to them. This word probably sounds familiar – this is the origin of the modern “cupboard”! A flagon like this one would be shared among those gathered, similar to a loving cup.Much like the rest of the Roosevelt family’s stay in Norway, the gift presented to him could be seen as more friendly than strictly ceremonial. It speaks volumes about the personal connection between this silver flagon and the memories tied to it that Theodore Roosevelt displayed it in a pride of place on his library mantle. He was clearly proud to own it, and it reminded him of time spent with family and friends – two things TR valued above all else. It probably also made him fondly remember getting caught play-fighting with a child on the floor of Buckingham Palace, bringing that famous grin to his face.Sources:Interview with Mrs. E.R. Derby by William Ingersoll, Historian at Edison, 4/17/1962. Letter from Theodore Roosevelt to George Otto Trevelyan, 1911-10-01 [TR Center - ImageViewer (theodorerooseveltcenter.org)](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001lpgVsgaqqhz3DX74MsTXDMtWNEauLs4xk5GOdJRR5vLxhVtVLrOrsgF3irU5q3HJuByum7UxD9pzalaQUYGY05vDPPKFdZ4RJEmXQzmpMvoiewl51IonIxE7aCd8TkkqK5DUKsW7JrGlxoyt6FFxj_IZnaWMOGtB5a1xXZrQ9dLPwtOnWbWIkGa7oVj4RyJdU4Dgj6XqmzB3cK7FKwrxqdmoA9Dwq7L9-_axN2Ldq0k7_O4BvBH5ByoccFXSeVkX4_3NHmKzS604HW2WnCZYNAWBMt6kJGJwjr66FVyv_RXnMqmCqWVB4Xy7cQUdOFFplsZaw6R_Xj77dIvfXcUk4ew79nCBp72KwAuYpMaEUSkxDgh8qxWYpwyrbI80i6H5IHDF8nJqHMksUxDyShYPJQrS8FFX3iSSKe1b-gXGNwWxZLTO2izh5K_k0gnFGFWa-q8Td1BuKnjgigb4qutPLbaUzbrZsYKMcmPMCGfpSfTz2Kxaf3Mfd8gg5zEJMLnedu02sOTCfbHhZb-tRmLdftZRkUUfyxITgHQhP4Cw-6dOl5rIEDdMHo_xWOB8lvbyBVqGw0RQSs7NbSQwQ3OFHZN_IbyAEsQVo3kjXhtAGzKaebsMXHFgJxGU6epyO8pQtCbMyLizEW_QHhXIDBG5RyFraqQJ2M4tNtk88MYJqOJ4YQXAGM_hbT_dOLe8Reyy-xrcTwjS9WpgrZQw3wn_y1Re8KICjzQLoaNxBmkWtRQ3QAMOIglBv9XcDxqfhHH3s2rQwLGUo9NAg2X_PM6sR4AsBGdmdyozJgwMevovQqZNYaMuJrViLK7Sa0ef8OkENrJgi2WzWGjvFwLZa3Lk8Q==&c=9RhvASwScsvmmGe1PL1deZSe6PjUefJD19BgyEcnbWcUpK_STVYdEA==&ch=N29SlUQMscYHiW8uSzhWuEHev_aWvWGZmIcc32rhuAow-4xhCZ-26w==).  [TR in Norway and Denmark, 1910 [1] | Library of Congress](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001lpgVsgaqqhz3DX74MsTXDMtWNEauLs4xk5GOdJRR5vLxhVtVLrOrsgF3irU5q3HJ133iKi3UT81-95GAkT8HXjelXHLKs0fTL0hoCWwko4PbcBwgKobiPz3ESE8v2XW3sRTVJPW9P6PKZG_xv-EM66geTkMNAdYE-o6IusqDXAFlamr7JU1COWwjteKJalVMtjdJ5dbhHXuJR-6-vnTT1tj6mmlAZSk-jUKKiVswVIKKwFINmEHosjMts1VcXPO-505aHg0IuHEqrgfQ0LcL_sB8OJkt9kHxb34biayFynF_lAcCPVgrMy1zqZOVndwUdsvlpJeq3yCAu3DGVEYV0EauTXaxrp-j7Ho9kfUBaS_Q1LL4LTtG15pmfKlIl16dVzLXyyysSGCDMq5_WajAXsyflORJ5L3d_rR71UPLYQ6hT5uZUeJUeWa2dCr9rwzVdaqsF0MwBQypxlLWQ5voAklqR6Xhe0SiW1kYJ-2ON26fJFTRWm18vuvwO2WxZAP7yIJAbLG63VwJ2s8umJQr4_K5D8IFijJsQkHTynSVNKmCrY9YizA46LIHk9EiPV8y4cFdJgYki5dvFQoFjxZHrj5J2eKp2CG1VfEBrvNt47NKqNwILlwh_yM-FbMqcI4Jtsgqs5bjn8IDJuwi82i94Nci0D-B7uIli0hixVwOOTvX7Kld-YaPBfp_3NWGfepXNvsVPjlsmcmQ3F9GCRLw_Q==&c=9RhvASwScsvmmGe1PL1deZSe6PjUefJD19BgyEcnbWcUpK_STVYdEA==&ch=N29SlUQMscYHiW8uSzhWuEHev_aWvWGZmIcc32rhuAow-4xhCZ-26w==) [(loc.gov)](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001lpgVsgaqqhz3DX74MsTXDMtWNEauLs4xk5GOdJRR5vLxhVtVLrOrsgF3irU5q3HJ133iKi3UT81-95GAkT8HXjelXHLKs0fTL0hoCWwko4PbcBwgKobiPz3ESE8v2XW3sRTVJPW9P6PKZG_xv-EM66geTkMNAdYE-o6IusqDXAFlamr7JU1COWwjteKJalVMtjdJ5dbhHXuJR-6-vnTT1tj6mmlAZSk-jUKKiVswVIKKwFINmEHosjMts1VcXPO-505aHg0IuHEqrgfQ0LcL_sB8OJkt9kHxb34biayFynF_lAcCPVgrMy1zqZOVndwUdsvlpJeq3yCAu3DGVEYV0EauTXaxrp-j7Ho9kfUBaS_Q1LL4LTtG15pmfKlIl16dVzLXyyysSGCDMq5_WajAXsyflORJ5L3d_rR71UPLYQ6hT5uZUeJUeWa2dCr9rwzVdaqsF0MwBQypxlLWQ5voAklqR6Xhe0SiW1kYJ-2ON26fJFTRWm18vuvwO2WxZAP7yIJAbLG63VwJ2s8umJQr4_K5D8IFijJsQkHTynSVNKmCrY9YizA46LIHk9EiPV8y4cFdJgYki5dvFQoFjxZHrj5J2eKp2CG1VfEBrvNt47NKqNwILlwh_yM-FbMqcI4Jtsgqs5bjn8IDJuwi82i94Nci0D-B7uIli0hixVwOOTvX7Kld-YaPBfp_3NWGfepXNvsVPjlsmcmQ3F9GCRLw_Q==&c=9RhvASwScsvmmGe1PL1deZSe6PjUefJD19BgyEcnbWcUpK_STVYdEA==&ch=N29SlUQMscYHiW8uSzhWuEHev_aWvWGZmIcc32rhuAow-4xhCZ-26w==).  |

 |