

five days later in the 400 m – narrowly beaten by the American Charles Reidpath.

As family tradition demanded, Hanns Braun thereafter devoted himself to his academic education. He completed his studies at the Munich Academy of Arts; then he moved to Berlin to study architecture. He married and was also active as an author.

At the beginning of the First World War he was a lieutenant of the reserves and signed on as a volunteer. Whether he was as enthusiastic as many others is unknown. He was probably not the type for effusive emotions. Braun was called up to the Bavarian Air Corps, where he was trained as an aircraft observer. Later, when the newly formed fighting squadrons took on a greater role, without ever decisively influencing the course of the war, he was appointed as a flying teacher. Those who got to know him in that job described him as a quiet but cheerful young man, whose polite and diffident appearance seemed very "aristocratic".

At the start of October 1918 the states who had been allied with Germany collapsed one after another, whereupon the Supreme Army Command offered US President Woodrow Wilson an armistice, to attain a "just peace". On that 9 October 1918 Hanns Braun was stationed with the "Jagdstaffel" ("Jasta" – hunting team) 34b on a field airstrip near Cambrai in the Channel zone of Guise–St. Quentin. About 11 o'clock he took off from there on a reconnaissance flight but met with a fatal crash. For unknown reasons his aircraft collided with a plane from his own group, flown by a non-commissioned officer called Ulm. Both pilots were killed – one month later the war would have been over for them.

Braun's accident was later recast by the German sports ideologues as a "hero's death" on the "Feindflug" ("enemy flight"). In the German Stadium in Berlin, where in 1916 the Games of the VI Olympiad

were due to be celebrated, "Sports to Honour the Fallen" were organised from 1920, with a "Hanns Braun Memorial Relay" over 50 x 300 metres as the climax. In 1921 the South German Athletics Federation presented a "Hanns Braun Memorial Prize", which after the Nazi years was restored in 1951 in the Federal Republic and is still awarded to this date by the German Athletics Federation (DLV) as a prize for deserving officials.

In 1987 the Munich Hanns Braun Memorial Games had finally ended after several attempts to revive them, so little remains to remind us of the greatest German runner of those early years. His work as a sculptor was all destroyed during the Second World War in a bombing raid on the Berlin flat of his widow, the future Frau von Greim⁸.

In 1936 a street bearing his name appeared at the Berlin Olympic Park. He is also commemorated by a sports ground. In the Munich Olympic Park there is a bridge which bears his name. In the old north graveyard of the city a bronze plaque on the family grave remembers him. He himself however lies in West Flanders in the German military cemetery of Diksmuide–Vladslo.⁹

Elite as a Belgian water-polo player and as a soldier

By Roland Renson and Roger Vanmeerbeek

Herman Donners was born on 5 August 1888 at Schildersstraat 53 in Antwerp. He was originally a member of the Otter Club, founded in 1902, but he moved to the Antwerpse Zwemclub (founded 1895). He was national champion over 100 m freestyle and 200 m freestyle in 1910 and 100 m freestyle in 1911.

He selected for the Belgian national water polo team on ten occasions, and won the silver medal during the 1908 Olympic Games in London and the bronze in 1912 in Stockholm. One of his best known team mates was Victor Boin (1886–1974) who would become the very first

Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death
RUSSIA				
Akimov, Andrei	FTB	1912	1916	unknown
Baumann, Georg	WRE	1912	1914	unknown
Kynin, Nikolai	FTB	1912	1916	unknown
Knyashevich, Dmitri	FEN	1912	1918	unknown
Leparsky, Feliks	FEN	1912	10 JAN 1917	Dubruya
Nikitin, Grigori	FTB	1912	1917	unknown
SERBIA				
Tomašević, Dragutin	ATH	1912	MAY 1915	Rašanać
SOUTH AFRICA				
Keeley, Ernest	SHO	1912	23 JUL 1918	Flanders

Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death
USA				
Lyshon, William	WRE	1912	13 OCT 1918	France
Wear, Arthur	TEN	1904	6 NOV 1918	Pouilly
*Died of the consequences of wounds.				
In the references to countries the historical names have been used.				
Abbreviations: ATH – Athletics, BOX – Boxing, CYC – Cycling, DIV – Diving, EQU – Equestrian, FEN – Fencing, GYM – Gymnastics, HOK – Hockey, MPA – Modern Pentathlon, POL – Polo, RAC – Racquets, ROW – Rowing, SAI – Sailing, SHO – Shooting, SWI – Swimming, TEN – Tennis, TOW – Tug-Of-War, WAP – Water Polo, WLT – Weightlifting, WRE – Wrestling				



The 1908 Belgian Olympic water polo team which lost in the final to the United Kingdom. Victor Boin can be seen standing on the left hand side and Herman Donners standing on the right hand side.

athlete in to take the Olympic Oath at the opening of the Antwerp Olympics in 1920.

Both men volunteered for active service in 1914. Donners fought as a soldier 2nd class in the 1st Regiment of the Grenadiers 2/3, 7th company. The Grenadiers were an elite force in which men were required to be at least 1.72 m tall. He was severely wounded on 11 May 1915 and moved to Ambulance Depage in Calais, France, founded by the Belgian Red Cross, where he died three days later at 1 o'clock.

Donners, who was unmarried and was first buried at the Belgian Military Cemetery in Calais (Section 1, Row 6, Grave No. 28). His remains were seven years later moved to the Antwerp City Cemetery, where he was reinterred on August 30, 1922.



Contradictory memorials in the Olympic city of Sarajevo: at a street corner opposite the Lateiner Bridge two stone footprints remind us that Gavrilo Princip fired two shots at this spot, which changed the world. As a model the slippers were used that were worn by the assassin during his detention in Theresienstadt. The memorial plaque behind it was changed in 1992.

Photo: Wikipedia

Five days after his death the war was over

By Bill Mallon

The USA entered in the war in April 1917. That changed the balance of power in Europe decisively in favor of the Entente. But this victory had a high price. Of approximately two million U.S. soldiers, who fought on the Western Front in the summer of 1918, 126,000 were killed. Among them was the bronze medallist of 1904, Arthur Yancey Wear.

At Yale, Wear was a member of the freshman, college, and university baseball teams, but was not noted as a lawn tennis player. But for the doubles event at the 1904 Olympics he teamed up with Clarence Gamble and they lost to the winners, Beals Wright and Edgar Leonard, in the semi-finals. His older brother, Joseph, also won a bronze medal at the 1904 Olympics. After graduating from Yale, Wear joined the family dry goods business in St. Louis in 1903 and remained with the firm until the outbreak of World War I.

Arthur Wear commanded an infantry company in the battle of St. Michiel and, although not actually wounded, his health suffered badly; as a result of refusing to obtain proper treatment for a probable perforated duodenal ulcer, he died, still commanding his battalion, during the Meuse-Argonne fighting on 6 November 1918. Five days later the war was over. ■



The American Arthur Wear. At St. Louis in 1904, he had won a bronze medal in tennis doubles. He died five days before the end of the war in France as the commander of a battalion.

Photo: Hilary Evans Archive

- 1 Jean Bouin, André Glarner, *Comment on devient champion de course à pied*, P. Lafitte, Paris 1912.
- 2 *The Fifth Olympiad, The Official Report of Stockholm 1912*, issued by the Swedish Olympic Committee, Wahlström & Widstrand, Stockholm 1913, p. 368.
- 3 Nurmi reached on the 7 October 1928 at the Meeting of the SC Charlottenburg in Berlin 19,210 metres.
- 4 Mont Sec is a 377 metre high hill. As you can overlook from the summit the valley of the Meuse, it had a decisive strategic significance. On the hill is the American Monument (Butte de Montsec), which is a reminder of the American offensive of the 12-16 September 1918.
- 5 Another Australian, Frederick Septimus Kelly, a talented musician and a student at Oxford University, was a member of the Leander crew which won a gold medal for Great Britain in the rowing eights in the 1908 London Olympics; he was decorated for bravery at Gallipoli, and killed in action in France in 1916. A New Zealand member of the 1912 Australasian team in Stockholm, the tennis bronze medallist Anthony Wilding, was killed in action in France in 1915
- 6 Colin Shields; Arnold Black, *The Past is a Foreign County*, in: *A History of Scottish Athletics*, Scottish Association of Track Statisticians, ISBN: 978-0-9502476-8-7.
- 7 Correspondence of the author with the nephew of Hanns Braun, the Munich portrait painter Richard Braun, 10 November 1983.
- 8 The widow married Braun's squad captain Robert Ritter von Greim, who was awarded the distinction of the Bavarian Military Max-Josef Order shortly before the end of the war, which was connected to his being raised to the personal rank of nobility. Their son Hubert Greim was a fighter pilot in the Second World War and was shot down over Tunisia in 1942. After Hitler, on 23 April 1945, had removed Hermann Göring from all his offices, he named Greim, who had already been involved on 9 November 1923 in Munich in the Hitler putsch, as his successor as Supreme Commander of the Luftwaffe and General Field Marshall. Three days later Greim appeared along with the pilot Hanna Reitsch in Hitler's bunker to fly him out, which Hitler however declined. Griem then became an American prisoner of war and took his own life on 24 May 1945 in Salzburg.
- 9 German Military Cemetery Dixmuide-Vladslo, Houtlandstraat, Block 3, Grave 2170.