

Literature Silver Medal

Sir Theodore Andrea Cook GBR
(*1867 †1928)

Theodore Andrea COOK was the winner of the silver medal, a prolific journalist and sports administrator. COOK was a member of the IOC from 1909 to 1915 and editor of the *Official Report* of the London Olympic Games of 1908.

An active sportsman from his schooldays, at Radley where he had been captain of the football and rowing team. In 1889 he rowed for Oxford, was captain of the British fencing team (in 1903 and 1906) and led the team to the Second International Olympic Games in Athens. He wrote about his experiences in *The Cruise of the Branwen*. This was just a small part of his prodigious literary output. Other publications include *"Ice Sports"* (1901), *"An Anthology of Humorous Verse"*, *"Turner's Water-Colours in the National Gallery"*, *"Art and Science of the Oar"* to *"Leonardo da Vinci, Sculptor"*. In 1910 he wrote *"International Sport"*, and the Catalogue of the British Museum notes other sporting: *"The last lap"* (1916), *"The sunlit hours"*, *"A record of sport and life"* (1925) and *"Character and sportsmanship"* (1927).

Intimately involved with the organisation of Henley Royal Regatta, he edited the *Amateur Rowing Association handbook* was a correspondent for the *Daily Telegraph* and later Editor in Chief of *The Field* (a magazine about country pursuits). He was knighted in 1916. In 1905 on the foundation of the *British Olympic Association*, he was invited by DESBOROUGH to become a member and was subsequently part of the organising committee for the 1908 Olympic Games in London.

One might assume that the poem which was awarded the silver medal in Antwerp was a poetic description of the topical Olympic Games. But it is a rather sophisticated ode in the style of PINDAR. This cryptic poem is completely different from other odes glorifying different aspects of sport. It is an extremely sombre and angry work reflecting the scarcely finished "Great War", the terrible traces of which were visible in the Olympic Stadium. (PB/BK)