

When a journalist once wrote to him asking for the correct spelling, he received a courteous reply showing how the name was spelt, but unfortunately it was impossible to detect whether the signature ended with a final 'e' or a flourish of the pen! However, the mystery was finally resolved by examination of his birth certificate which definitely includes the final 'e', stating he was born in London on 30th March, 1882.

Promoted to Captain in September 1911, he gained command of his company, he was soon in action with his regiment in France when the First World War started. He was wounded on 12th March, 1915, in the fighting around Neuve-Chapelle but, as soon as doctors allowed, he returned to the 1st Battalion, Highland Light Infantry, in the front line. Halswelle wrote an account of the fighting for the HLI regimental magazine. "I called on the men to get over the parapet," he wrote. "There is a great difficulty in getting out of a trench, especially for small men laden with a pack, rifle and perhaps 50 rounds in the pouch, and a bandolier of 50 rounds hung around them, and perhaps four feet of slippery clay perpendicular wall with sandbags on the top. I got about three men hit actually on the top of the parapet. I made a dash at the parapet and fell back. The Jocks then heaved me up and I jumped into a ditch – an old trench filled with liquid mud – which took me some time to get out of." His men gained 15 yards and dug in for over three hours before retreating to where they had started from. 79 men were lost in the struggle.

Just nineteen days later he was mortally wounded by a sniper's bullet and died at just thirty-two years of age. The contemporary regimental bulletin described the scene: "Everything was quiet and peaceful as the dawn broke on the morning of March 31st, when Captain Halswelle, passing a part of the trench that had suffered from the shelling of the previous night, dropped from a bullet wound in the head. Four men carried his body back some 300 yards behind the line

for burial near a farm." After the Armistice, his body was lifted from his temporary grave and re-interred with full military honours, in the Royal Irish Rifles Graveyard at Laventie, 7 miles south of Armentieres, in the Pas-de-Calais, administered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

His fellow Scottish Olympian from 1906, William Anderson, was killed in action the following month, while serving as a private with the Canadian contingent. In the space of a month, Scotland had lost two of their first three Olympic athletes, less than 10 years after the Games, and both before their 35th birthdays.

Halswelle's reputation lived on in the annals of Scottish athletics and the Wyndham Halswelle Memorial trophy was presented after the Second World War for award to the winner of the Scottish national junior (under-20) 440 yards/400 metres championship. It was a colourful tradition that an officer of the Highland regiment, in full dress uniform, attended the championships to present the trophy to the successful athlete.

Lightfooted runner, sculptor and flying teacher

By Volker Kluge

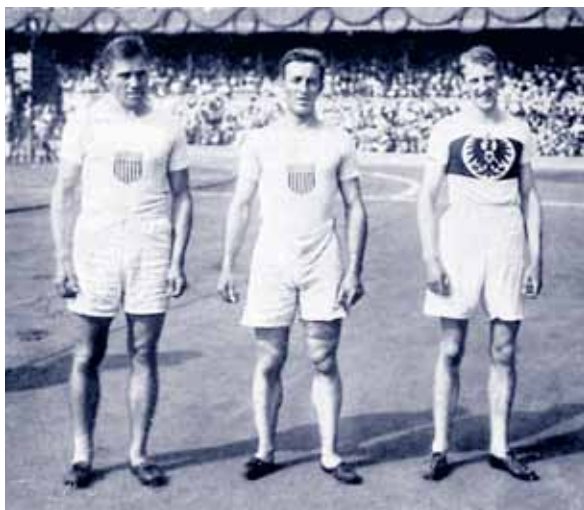
The most popular German sportsman before the First World War was the middle distance runner Hanns Braun. He was the first German athlete of true world class. On the photos however we see a gaunt, ascetic type with narrow shoulders, who did not look like a sportsman. Yet the opposite was true: with a height of 1.80 m and weighing 60 kg he had an ideal runner's build, combined with a natural talent. His lightfooted running style brought him the nickname "the soundless one".

Johannes "Hanns" Braun was born on 26 October 1886 in the castle of Wernfels in Middle Franconia. His father Louis Braun had acquired the castle in 1882 and

Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death	Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death
Macintosh, Henry	ATH	1912	26 JUL 1918	Albert	Robinson, John	HOK	1908	23 AUG 1916	Roehampton*
Mackinnon, Duncan	ROW	1908	9 OCT 1917	Ypres	Roche, Patrick	ATH	1908	7 JUN 1917	France
Maclagan, Gilchrist	ROW	1908	25 OCT 1915	Pilckem Ridge, Ypres	Sanderson, Ronald	ROW	1908	17 APR 1918	Gommecourt
Nash, Edward	EQU	1912	21 FEB 1915	unknown	Somers-Smith, Robert	ROW	1908	1 JUL 1916	Gommecourt
Ommundsen, Harcourt	SHO	1908-12	19 SEP 1915	Ypres	Vigurs, Charles	GYM	1908-12	22 FEB 1917	France
Patterson, Alan	ATH	1908-12	14 MAR 1916	Vermelles	Wilde, Arthur	SHO	1908	21 JAN 1916	Arras
Philo, William	BOX	1908	7 JUL 1916	Albert	Williams, Edward	ROW	1908	12 AUG 1915	France
Powell, Kenneth	ATH/ TEN	1908-12	18 FEB 1915	Ypres	Wilson, Harold	ATH	1908	1916	France
Pridmore, Reginald	HOK	1908	13 MAR 1918	Piave River	Wilson, Herbert	Polo	1908	11 APR 1917	Ypres
Raddall, Thomas	SHO	1908	9 AUG 1918	Méharicourt	Yorke, Richard	ATH	1908-12	22 DEC 1914	France

thus saved it from ruin. Father Braun was well-off, and between 1864 and 1871 had as "illustrative journalist" accompanied the three great wars conducted by Prussia in sequence against Denmark, Austria and France, and provided several newspapers and magazines with illustrations of battle scenes.

That secured for him the reputation of being the most famous German "battle artist", to which his enormous panorama pictures contributed especially. For these gigantic rotundas had to be built so that they could be exhibited. His first panorama picture, "The Battle of Sedan", was 122 metres long and 15 metres high. It could be seen in Frankfurt am Main, where it attracted an average of 20,000 viewers per month over a period of four years.



In 1889 the father received a professorship at the Royal Academy of Arts in Munich, and passed on his enthusiasm to his sons Richard ("Radi"), Adolf ("Dolfi") and Hanns ("Beb"). The youngest trained from an early age as a sculptor. Later Hanns Braun would create remarkable busts in marble.⁷

As a 15 year old Gymnasium pupil he joined the Münchener Sport-Club (MSC) in 1902, where to start with he played field hockey. When an athletics section was founded, it was an English club member who pointed the sinewy outside right from 1905 to the running events. Between 1907 and 1912 Braun set no fewer than 15 German records – these ranged from 100 metres (where he recorded a time of 10.8 seconds in 1910 in Sopot) to the 1500 m. He achieved his first record on 28 May 1908 in Leipzig over 800 m with 1:57.4, thus qualifying for the Olympic Games in London. There he came third behind the American Melvin Sheppard and the Italian Emilio Lunghi.

Hanns Braun became popular through his three victories at the English Championships in Stamford Bridge, run on a grass track. Along with the USA, Britain was then the leading athletics nation. To that extent it was a sensation when he won the championship over a half-mile (880 yards) clocking a time of 1:57.6 min on 3 July 1909 in the "Lion's Den". He repeated that success in 1911 and 1912 – eight days before the Olympic Games in Stockholm in the presence of the US runners, who could study his running style from the stands. Probably that was his mistake, as Braun for the previous four weeks had been trying to bring himself up to Olympic form with hard handicap races – that it was possible to "overtrain" was not known at that time.

Eight men took part in the 800 m final in Stockholm: six Americans and a Canadian who took turns in the lead. Three of them – Ted Meredith, Melvin Sheppard and Ira Davenport – formed a wide front on the straights, so that Braun would have first had to run round them to be able to seize the race out of the fire with his feared finishing sprint. Three tenths of a second behind the Olympic champion Meredith, who ran a world record of 1:51.9, Braun finished fourth. The general disappointment in the German team was somewhat mollified when he won the silver medal



The Munich runner Hanns Braun was not born to be a soldier. The youngest son of the well known "battle artist" Louis Braun, Hanns studied at the Academy of Arts and became a sculptor. He served for four years as an aircraft observer and pilot. He died exactly a month before the German Kaiser abdicated. The photo shows Braun in the uniform of a Bavarian lieutenant. Left: Hanns Braun after winning the Olympic silver medal in the 400 m in 1912 in Stockholm.

Photo: Volker Kluge Archive

Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death
GREECE				
Tsiklitis, Kostas	ATH	1906–12	10 FEB 1913	Bizani
HUNGARY				
Békessy, Béla	FEN	1912	6 JUL 1916	Volyn-Podilsk
Demján, Oszkár	SWI	1912	4 SEP 1914	Sianki
Fóti, Samu	ATH/ GYM	1912	17 JUN 1916	Zsemlékes
Gönczy, Lajos	ATH	1900–06	4 DEC 1915	Doberdob
Gregurich, Amon	FEN	1900	28 JUN 1915	Munkatsch
Hauler, László	SHO	1912	12 SEP 1914	Janów
Las-Torres, Béla	SWI	1908–12	13 OCT 1915	Herceg Novi
Mudin, Imre	ATH	1912	23 OCT 1918	Monte Grappa
Mudin, István	ATH	1906–08	22 JUL 1918	unknown

Name	Sport	Olympic Games	Date of death	Place of death
Pédery, Árpád	GYM	1912	21 OCT 1914	Luzsek
Szarvassy, György	FEN	1900	1914	unknown
Zuławski, Béla	FEN	1908–12	24 OCT 1914	Sarajevo
ITALY				
Capitani, Otello	GYM	1908	20 SEP 1912	Misratah
Legat, Manlio	ATH	1912	18 SEP 1915	unknown
Romano, Guido	GYM	1912	18 JUN 1916	Vincenza
NEW ZEALAND				
Rowland, Albert	ATH	1908	23 JUL 1918	Marfaux
Wilding, Anthony	TEN	1912	9 MAY 1915	Neuve-Chapelle

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				