

## THE BIOGRAPHIES OF ALL IOC-MEMBERS PART II

The idea to print the typescript of Ian Buchanan and Wolf Lyberg as a sequel series was warmly welcomed and we received many approving comments. We would like to thank Roland Renson for pointing out a mistake: The photograph of Félix Ernest Callot printed on page 50 in JOH 17(1) is in fact the Belgian count Edouard de Laveleye (as described on p. 36 of Robert Renson's centennial history of the BOIC). The wrongly named photograph was taken from the book IOC (ed.), *Biographies*, Lausanne, ca. 1989.

Unfortunately, we do not have any correct photograph of Félix Ernest Callot, who can help? We are also always interested in better photographs of other IOC-members, please do not hesitate to send them to us (contact details on page 3)!

On the following pages you will find the biographies of IOC member No. 17, Reverend Robert Stuart de Courcy Laffan, until member No. 35, Count Gonzalo de Figueroa, Marquess de Villamejor Mejjorada del Campo. Enjoy the reading!

*Karl Lennartz    Tony Bijkerk    Stephan Wassong*



Edouard de Laveleye, NOT Félix Ernest Callot

## 17. REVEREND ROBERT STUART DE Courcy Laffan

### GBR

**Born:** 18 January 1853, London

**Died:** 16 January 1927, Hampstead, London

**IOC member:** No. 17

**Co-opted:** October 1897

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 18 **Absent:** 2

*Picture: p. 39*

The son of the Governor-General of Bermuda, he had been at school in France and Switzerland before entering Winchester College in England. Having failed to get into the College of his choice at Oxford University he spent three years in the Indian Civil Service and on his return he belatedly entered Oxford University where showed an unexpected ability as an oarsman by stroking the Merton College eight. On graduating with honours from Oxford University he became a schoolmaster firstly at Derby School and then as Headmaster of King Edward VI School, Stratford-upon-Avon and during his time there he was ordained into the Anglican Church in 1882. The following year he married the widow of Surgeon-General A. Leith Adams and under her maiden name of Bertha Jane Grundy she was a well known dramatist and novelist and was the author of the Scouts Song. In 1895 Laffan was appointed Principal of Cheltenham College but his wife was uneasy at the new school and after an enquiry into her behaviour by the school's Governing Council Laffan resigned in 1899. He then became Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook and in World War I he was Chaplain to the British forces.

As a delegate from the British Headmasters' Conference at the Olympic Congress at Le Havre in 1897 Laffan made a speech in perfect French which so impressed Coubertin that he was quickly invited to join the IOC. It was an inspired choice as the new British member proved to be one of the more distinguished of the earlier IOC members. At the IOC Session at Lausanne in 1913 his motion that members who had not been present for three consecutive sessions should be declared *demissionnaire* was duly carried.

At home, he was a founder member and the first Honorary Secretary of the British Olympic Association (1905-1920) after which he served as Chairman (1920-1922). As Secretary of the British Olympic Council he shared with Lord Desborough the major part of the work in organising the 1908 Games.

The family surname was Laffan but on leaving Oxford he raised his forename of 'de Courcy' to the status of a surname to become de Courcy Laffan. This affectation had the effect of implying an elevated social status which would certainly have made him more welcome in the IOC.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 18. COUNT EUGENIO Brunetta d'USSEAUX-BRUSASCO

### ITA

**Born:** 14 December 1857, Vercelli

**Died:** 8 January 1919, Monte Carlo, France

**IOC member:** No. 18

**Co-opted:** February 1897

**Secretary General IOC:** 1908\* – 1919

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 13 **Absent:** 0

*\* At the 1910 Session in Luxembourg he expressed a wish to resign stating that he had been Secretary-General for 10 years. This indicates that he was appointed Secretary General circa 1900 which is incorrect.*

*Picture: p. 39*

His family could trace their history back to the year 1250, were of French origin from Clermont-Ferrand and settled in Piemonte, Italy in the 17th century. In 1882 Count Brunetta married Caterina di Zeyffart, the 20-year-old daughter of a captain in the Tsar's Hussars and Jelena di Sinelkov whose mother's family owned 150 million (sic) hectares in the Dnepr region of Russia. From being merely wealthy, Brunetta suddenly became an incredibly rich man and bought a castle, built in 1010, just outside Turin where he housed his impressive library of some 6,000 volumes of European classics and scientific works. However, for much of the time the family lived in considerable style in their Paris residence on the fashionable Bois de Boulogne.

After bearing three sons and a daughter the Countess suddenly died in 1897 at the early age of 35 and in her memory Brunetta built a huge mausoleum 16 metres in height. As a widower, Brunetta devoted himself to Olympic affairs, automobile racing and engineering while still retaining an active interest in rowing. His most notable invention was a floating ambulance for use of the soldiers on the River Po and Lake Como and he received a Grand Prix at the World Exhibition of 1900.

However, his major interest at this time was automobile racing and he represented the Automobile Club de France in the first *Giro d'Italia* before finishing second in the Torino-Pinerolo-Avigliano race. His greatest success was to finish third in a race for the 25 best drivers in Italy beating, among others, Vicenze Lanzia and Giovanni Agnelli who both later became famous constructors. Brunetta gave considerable financial backing to many of these constructors but all the ventures were commercial failures and he lost a large part of his fortune. These losses, compounded by his gambling debts, placed him in a precarious financial position and towards the end of his life he tried to raise money from his wife's family. He visited the Ukraine only to find that the estates had been confiscated following the Revolution and the family had completely disappeared. Returning empty-handed and facing bankruptcy, Brunetta himself then 'disappeared' and

was so successful in going into hiding that the efforts of IOC member, General Montu, to trace him were in vain. A tragic and broken man, Brunetta committed suicide and, although he had been honoured by the Vatican, he was, having taken his own life, denied a Catholic burial and two of his sons took his body to the family tomb in Pinerolo. For a man who had once been such a prominent figure in many walks of life and was better known in France than he was in Italy his death passed virtually unnoticed and only *La laterna di Pinerolo*, a small newspaper in Piemonte, carried a brief obituary.

Despite his unfortunate life, Brunetta never wavered in his enthusiasm for Olympism. He first met Coubertin in 1889 when he was sent to the World Exhibition as a delegate of the Italian Government and after Brunetta had been co-opted onto the IOC in 1897 the two became close friends and Brunetta was one of the few who enjoyed Coubertin's intimate confidences.

Brunetta donated two handsome Challenge Cups for rowing and swimming at the 1908 Games and was appointed Secretary-General of the IOC that year. He followed Dorando Pietri in the Olympic marathon in his 80hp Fiat and when Coubertin was unable to attend the 1908 Autumn Games in London it was Brunetta who was received by King Edward VII at Buckingham Palace. He had strong ties with Argentina, where some of the family members now live, and is said to have brought the disgraced Manuel Quintana, Jr. into the IOC.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## References

COLASANTE, Gianfranco, *La nascita del movimento olimpico in Italia dal Conte Brunetta d'Usseaux alla costituzione del CONI (1894-1914)*, CONI, Rome 1996.

## 19. BARON FREDERIK WILLEM CHRISTIAAN HENDRIK

VAN **Tuyll** VAN **Seroosenkerken**

**NED**

**Born:** 27 March 1851, The Hague

**Died:** 13 February 1924, The Hague

**IOC member:** No. 19

**Co-opted:** February 1898

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 12 **Absent:** 5

*Picture: p. 39*

In 1875, at the age of 24, he became President of the Netherlands Hunting Society 'Nimrod', a society which also organized trap-shooting competitions and greyhound races. Involved in many sporting activities, he was an early IOC member (1898) and supported the first Dutch Olympic participation in 1900. He organised the 1907 IOC Session in The Hague where he sat on the Commission which studied the rules for the equestrian events. The same year he took the initiative in bringing



Robert Stuart de Courcy Laffan *ISOH Archive*



Count Eugenio Brunetta d'Usseaux *ISOH Archive*



Baron Christiaan van Tuyll van Seroosenkerken *ISOH Archive*

together all the Dutch sporting organizations to set up the 'Netherlands Committee for the Olympic Games in London 1908' which ensured adequate representation at the London Games. Later in 1908 he established and became the first President of the Netherlands Association for Physical Education but when the Association failed to live up to his expectations he resigned and on 11 September 1912 established the Netherlands Olympic Committee serving as its first President until his death in 1924

He was President of the Organizing Committee for the National Olympic Games of 1916 held in Amsterdam to commemorate the Berlin Games which were cancelled because of World War I. After the war he was the driving force behind the Netherlands' bid to host the Olympic Games. Initially, he tried to get the 1920 Games for Amsterdam and as early as October 1921 he formed a provisional Organizing Committee for the 1928 Games but unfortunately didn't live to see his dream fulfilled. He was Honorary Chamberlain to HM Queen Wilhelmina.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 20. COUNT ARCHAMBAULD ANATOLE DE Talleyrand-Périgord

**GER**

**Born:** 25 March 1845, Florence, Italy

**Died:** 18 April 1918, Lausanne, Switzerland

**IOC member:** No. 20

**Co-opted:** September 1899 **Resigned:** January 1903

*New 2nd member.*

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 1 **Absent:** 0

*Picture: –*

As a result of his close friendship with the Coubertin family he was invited to become a member of the IOC. Although he was a member of the Committee for the participation of Germany in the 1900 Olympic Games, his main recreational interest was reflected in his founding of the German Automobile Club and the Berlin Motor show. He only accepted IOC membership on a provisional basis and tendered his resignation in a letter dated 18 February 1902 but this was not accepted until he had found a suitable successor. Almost one year passed before such a replacement was found.

His family had substantial land holdings in Silesia and he chose to follow a military career. He joined the Royal Prussian Army in 1864 and in 1900 he was promoted to Lieutenant-General.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 21. NIELS VILHELM SOPHUS Holbeck

**DEN**

**Born:** 22 September 1857, Copenhagen

**Died:** 12 November 1937, Copenhagen

**IOC member:** No. 21

**Co-opted:** November 1899 **Resigned:** 31 December 1906.

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 0 **Absent:** 4

*Picture: p. 41*

He followed a military career which ended in 1930 when he was Colonel in Chief of the 2nd Field Artillery Regiment. He had earlier served as head of the Army Military Academy. As President of the Danish Sports Association (1899-1901) he did much to promote Nordic co-operation in the field of sport.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 22. PRINCE GEORGES GH. Bibesco

**ROM**

**Born:** 14 March 1834, Bucharest

**Died:** 22 May 1902, Constantinople, Turkey

**IOC member:** No. 22

**Co-opted:** November 1899

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 0 **Absent:** 1

*Picture: p. 41*

The son of George Dimitrie Bibesco, Prince of Walachia, and Zoe Mavrocordat, Princess Basarab Braneoveanu, he was brought up entirely in France where his father was living in voluntary exile. Educated at the St. Cyr Military Academy, he served with the French army during the Mexican expedition of 1862 and after a posting to Algeria in 1867 he fought in the Franco-German war of 1870 during which he was interned as a prisoner of war at Koblenz.

As his military career drew to a close he began to concentrate on writing which resulted in a prolific output on a wide range of subjects. It took him 10 years to complete his five volume work of military history describing all the campaigns in which he had taken part, he also wrote of Romanian historical and political problems and, with the Duke of Escalands, he published a book giving advice on how to conduct a duel with sword or pistol. In 1889 he was in charge of the Romanian Pavilion at the World Exhibition in Paris and wrote two pamphlets on the subject. Despite his catholic tastes in subject matter, his writings must have had a certain quality as he was admitted as a correspondent member of the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences in 1891 and six years later he became a Fellow of the Institute of Sciences of France.

He was also well-known as a philanthropist and

administered the Brancoveanu Trust which had been established by his wife's family.

Bibesco's favourite sports were pistol shooting and fencing and while he was living in Paris he became well acquainted with Coubertin which led to an invitation to join the IOC. He became a member in 1899 at the age of 65 but he died two years later. The circumstances of his death are among the most unusual in the annals of the IOC. He died of a heart attack in his carriage while returning from an audience with the Sultan of Turkey and there were strong rumours that he had been poisoned by the Grand Vizier.

After a scandal which held the attention of European newspapers for many months, Prince Bibescu married Marie-Henriette Valentine, Countess of Caraman in a civil ceremony in Berlin in 1875. Her marriage to Prince Paul Bauffremont, a fellow officer of Bibesco in the French army, had been dissolved the previous year. Their son, George Valentin Bibesco, was the first President of the Romanian Olympic Committee on its formation in 1914.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### 23. BARON GODEFROY DE Blonay

**SUI**

**Born:** 25 July 1869, Wiederschöthal

**Died:** 14 February 1937, Biskra, Algeria

**IOC member:** No. 23

**Co-opted:** November 1899

*IOC Treasurer (1909-1923). Interim President (1916-1919).*

*Executive Board member No. 1.*

**President:** 06.06.1921

**Vice President:** 1925

**Re-elected Vice President:** 23.04.1927

**Re-elected Vice-President:** 24.04.1931

**Re-elected Vice-President:** 01.03.1935-14.02.1937

**Attendance at meetings**

**Present:** 20 **Absent:** 8

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 21 **Absent:** 0

*Picture: p. 41*

Treasurer of the IOC (1909-1923) and the first President of the Swiss Olympic Committee (1912-1915), he gave invaluable assistance to Coubertin in establishing the headquarters of the IOC in Lausanne. During the latter part of World War 1 Coubertin, who had enlisted in the French army, stood aside as IOC President as he felt that it would be inappropriate for a military man to head what was ostensibly a peaceful organisation. Blonay filled the breach between 1916 and 1919 when Coubertin again became an active President. However, after the war and after Coubertin's return, Blonay was not completely deprived of authority as in 1921 he was appointed President of the first Executive Committee (restyled the



Niels Vilhelm Sophius Holbeck *ISOH Archive*



Prince Georges Bibesco *ISOH Archive*



Baron Godefroy de Blonay *ISOH Archive*

Executive Board in 1955). Surprisingly, Blonay did not attend the first meeting of the Committee held in Paris in November 1921 but he quickly used his position to exercise authority which Coubertin felt was rightly his and a serious and long-lasting rift developed between the two.. Thwarted in his ambition to assume greater power through the Executive Committee, Blonay ran for President of the IOC in 1925 but lost the election to Baillet-Latour by a significant margin. When Baillet-Latour stood for re-election in 1933, Blonay again mounted a challenge but this time he received just a single vote.

A member of one of the oldest Vaudois aristocratic families, Blonay was a wealthy man and spent much of his time following his passion for Egyptology. He lived in Paris for many years but eventually returned to the country of his birth where he took up a teaching appointment at the University of Neuchâtel.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 24. COUNT ALEXANDRE Mercati

### GRE

**Born:** October 1874, Zante, Greek Islands

**Died:** 5 April 1947, Athens

**IOC member:** No. 24

**Co-opted:** November 1899     **Resigned:** 26 May 1925

*Replacing Demetrios Vikelas*

### Attendance at Sessions

**Present:** 8 **Absent:** 10

*Picture: p. 43*

On resigning from the IOC in June 1899, Demetrios Vikelas proposed a gentleman by the name of Negroponte as his successor but Coubertin preferred Count Mercati and, as usual, Coubertin had his way.

The Mercati family dates back to 1605 and draws its origin from the San Miniato of Florence and after migrating to Greece they were enobled in 1788.

Count Mercati was an important figure in the revival of the Olympic Games. He introduced Coubertin to his childhood friend, Crown Prince Constantine, and the Royal support for Coubertin's Olympic concept was a vital factor in staging the 1896 Games for which Mercati served as Joint Secretary-General of the Organizing Committee.

Although not a noted active sportsman, Mercati was a founding member and President of the Tennis Club of Athens and he was also a member of the Compiegne Club near Paris. When the 1900 Olympic golf tournament was played over the club course he was one of the 12 entrants but he only managed to place 11th.

The son of the Director of the Bank of Athens, he was Court Chamberlain to several Kings of Greece holding the appointment of Grand Marshall to the Royal Court of Greece and he was secretary to the Empress of Austria. Because of his close Royal connections he narrowly escaped being executed following the socialist revolution

led by Sophocles Venizelos. Instead he was exiled to the island of Zante where he had been born and where he was to stay for some 10 years. During that time his political enemies confiscated all his correspondence with the IOC and twice appointed new IOC members but, of course, Coubertin would have nothing to do with the attempted *coup* and informed the Greeks that 'NOCs had no say in such matters. These unsatisfactory developments were discussed at the 1920 Session in Antwerp although Mercati himself was not present at the Session.

He was an active supporter of the Intercalated Games and in 1901 he informed the Brussels Congress that a Committee for the Olympic Games at Athens had been formed with the intention of staging the Games in Athens every four years, beginning in 1906. He was appointed President of the Organizing Committee for these 1906 Games and as a result of their success he was placed in charge of the second celebration in this cycle scheduled to take place at Athens in 1910 but for a host of complex reasons the 1910 Games were cancelled.

He spoke on a wide range of issues at the IOC Sessions and at Lausanne in 1921 his proposal that it became mandatory for the host city to place inscribed plaques, with the names of the winners, on the walls of the Olympic Stadium was duly approved. This new provision retroactively embraced Stockholm (1912) and Antwerp (1920) but it was not until 1966 that the Swedish NOC took the appropriate action and the Belgians never did inscribe the names of the 1920 winners on the Beerschot stadium.

Count Mercati was twice married and both his wives were American. His first wife, the former Harriette Wright of Cleveland, left him for the Austrian diplomat, Baron Emerich von Pflugl, whom she subsequently married. Mercati later married the widow of Newbold Leroy Edgar of New York. From his first marriage there was a son and two daughters, one of whom, Atalanta, married the highly successful British novelist Michael Arlen.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

## 25. THEODORE Stanton

### USA

**Born:** 10 February 1851, Seneca Falls, New York

**Died:** 1 March 1925, New Brunswick, N.J.

**IOC member:** No. 25

**Co-opted:** October 1900     **Resigned:** 31 December 1904  
*New 2nd.seat.*

### Attendance at Sessions

**Present:** 1 **Absent:** 0

*Picture: –*

The son of Henry Stanton, the editor of the *New York Sun*, and his wife Elizabeth, the pioneer of the suffragette movement in America. He was a lineal descendant of Thomas Stanton who arrived in America in 1638 as crown interpreter-general of the Indian dialects. After

graduating from Cornell University in 1874 he settled in Paris where he stayed for more than 50 years working as a publisher's representative and as a journalist for Associated Press and the *New York Tribune*. He was one of the first to advocate the inclusion of women's sport in the Olympics and although Coubertin certainly didn't share his views on the matter the two remained close friends. In 1925 he returned to America to open the library at Rutgers's College which he had founded in his mother's memory but he died shortly before the opening ceremony took place.

He was living in Paris when the disgraced James Hazen Hyde arrived in the city and it is thought that Hyde's appointment to the IOC prompted Stanton's resignation. However, as Stanton didn't submit his resignation until Hyde had been an IOC member for almost two years there must be some doubt about this supposition

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### References

LUCAS, John A., "Four "Mysterious" Citizens of the United States that Served On the International Olympic Committee During the Period 1900-1917: Theodore Stanton; James Hazen Hyde; Allison Vincent Armour and Evert Jansen Wendell", in: WAMSLEY, Kevin et. al. (ed.), *Bridging Three Centuries. Intellectual Crossroads and the Modern Olympic Movement, Fifth International Symposium For Olympic Research*. London/Ontario, Canada, 2000, pp. 195-206.

## 26. CASPAR Whitney

### USA

**Born:** 2 September 1861

**Died:** 18 January 1929, New York

**IOC member:** No. 26

**Co-opted:** October 1900      **Resigned:** 31 December 1904

*New 3rd seat.*

**Attendance at Sessions Present:** 0 **Absent:** 1

*Picture: p. 43*

Born into a middle class Boston family, he passed the Harvard University entrance exam at the age of 15 but he chose to attend St. Matthews's College in California where he captained the football, baseball and lacrosse teams. After graduation in 1879 he travelled widely as an explorer in North and South America, the West Indies and the Far East. He founded a small New York paper devoted to amateur sports but in 1888 he joined *Harper's Weekly*, first as a sports columnist and then as editor, before purchasing in 1900, *Outing*, a monthly magazine which catered to all his interests: sport, adventure, travel and country life. Whitney's career as America's most influential sports writer was twice interrupted by assignments as a war correspondent: in 1898 he reported on the Spanish-American War for *Harpers* and he covered World War I for the *New York Tribune*.

Initially, he was a great supporter of Coubertin but before too long he substantially revised his opinion and in a personal letter (31 July 1908) to Lord Desborough (GB) he



Count Alexandre Mercati *ISOH Archive*



Caspar Whitney *ISOH Archive*



Hery Hébard de Villeneuve *ISOH Archive*

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referred to Coubertin as a 'a fussy and incompetent little Frenchman' and labelled the IOC as a 'ridiculous organization'. He goes on to tell Desborough that when he complained to Coubertin that the question of St. Louis, instead of Chicago, hosting the 1904 Games was never referred to the IOC, Coubertin's only response was to cross Whitney's name from the list of IOC members. In the same revealing letter he tells Desborough of his plans to start a completely new Olympic Organization and he invites the English aristocrat to serve as the first President. Despite his disenchantment with Coubertin and the IOC, Whitney remained an enthusiast for the Olympic concept and served as President of the USOC from 1906-1910. He was twice married, firstly to Cora Chase in 1897 and after they were divorced in 1908 he married Florence Canfield the following year. There were two daughters by the second marriage.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

#### References

LUCAS, John A., "Four "Mysterious" Citizens of the United States that Served On the International Olympic Committee During the Period 1900-1917: Theodore Stanton; James Hazen Hyde; Allison Vincent Armour and Evert Jansen Wendell", in: WAMSLEY, Kevin et. al. (ed.), *Bridging Three Centuries. Intellectual Crossroads and the Modern Olympic Movement, Fifth International Symposium For Olympic Research*. London/Ontario, Canada, 2000, pp. 195-206.

### 27. HENRI Hébrard DE Villeneuve

**FRA**

**Born:** 10 September 1848, Riom [Puy-de-Dôme]

**Died:** 2 March 1925, Paris

**IOC member:** No. 27

**Co-opted:** November 1900 **Resigned:** 27 February 1911

*New 3rd seat.*

**Attendance at Sessions Present:** 1 **Absent:** 7

*Picture: p. 43*

After studies with the priests in his native city he qualified as a lawyer in Paris in 1869 after which he entered politics. He played a major but very discreet part in the re-establishment of relations with the Holy See and, more publicly, he was dedicated to improving the lot of orphans who had been placed in State care.

As President of the Sporting Fencing Club he presided over this sport at the 1900 Games and became a member of the IOC that year. A member of the NOC from 1894, he was elected a Vice-President in 1907 but in 1911, because of his commitments as a State Counsellor, he resigned from all his sporting offices, including the IOC. He became a Commander of the Legion d'Honneur in 1908 and was made a member of the Academy of Sciences, Morals and Politics in 1920. In addition to his *Treatise of Fencing* he wrote numerous articles and reviews. In 1897 he married Marguerite Bapst.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### 28. PRINCE SERGUEI

### Beliosselsky DE Beliozersk

**RUS**

**Born:** 13 July 1867, St.Petersburg

**Died:** 20 April 1951, Tonbridge, Kent, England

**IOC member:** No. 28

**Co-opted:** November 1900 **Resigned:** 30 April 1908

*New 2nd seat.*

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 0 **Absent:** 5

*Picture: -*

As a child he was a page at the Imperial Court and after being commissioned into the cavalry he served as aide-de-camp to Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovitch. He served throughout World War I and in 1916 commanded the Caucasian Cavalry Division on the Persian front, taking part in the attempt to relieve General Townsend at Kut.

A keen horseman, he was in charge of the Russian Officers at the Olympia Horse Show in London in 1911 and having been introduced to the game of polo while on a hunting holiday in France he founded the first Russian polo club on his return to St.Petersburg.

After the Russian Revolution in 1917 he initially went to stay with his old friend Field Marshall Mannerheim in Finland and then spent two years in Sweden before settling in England. He was well-known and well-liked in London and he had been a member of the Russian delegation at the Coronation of King George V. For some years he was active in the anti-Bolshevik movement but he became less involved when he moved to Tonbridge, a town some 40 miles south of London, in 1921. His wife, the former Susan Whittier of the prominent Boston family, died in Tonbridge in 1934 after a long illness and is buried in the local cemetery. A well-known society beauty, she was the daughter of the Civil War general, Charles A. Whittier, and the sister of Polly Whittier who won the silver medal in the Ladies' golf tournament at the 1900 Olympics. His own funeral in Tonbridge church in 1951 was a unique occasion. As the Russian Orthodox Church was in communion with the Church of England, the Bishop of Rochester gave special permission for a Russian funeral service to be held and this was conducted by Archbishop Savva of Grodno and Novogrudok. A large number of exiled Russian noblemen attended the service and the mourners, all holding a lighted candle, filed past the open coffin for more than an hour. Memorial Services were also held in London, Paris and New York.

In marked contrast to his early privileged years, the Prince ended his days living in a small flat above a grocery shop and his reduced circumstances prompted him to remark that he 'lived the life of a cabbage'.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*



## 29. COUNT GEORGES IVANOVITCH DE Ribeaupierre

### RUS

**Born:** 15 August 1854, St. Petersburg

**Died:** 4 June 1916, Moscow

**IOC member:** No. 29

**Co-opted:** November 1900    **Resigned:** 31 December 1913

*New 3rd seat.*

### Attendance at Sessions

**Present:** 0 **Absent:** 11

*Picture: p. 45*

Although he never attended a single IOC Session, he did not hesitate to write to Coubertin complaining about certain decisions made at those Sessions. The first incident which incurred his anger was the election in 1908 of Baron Reinhold von Willebrand as the first Finnish member of the IOC. Ribeaupierre claimed that Finland, although autonomous, was part of Russia and hence not entitled to IOC membership. There is no doubt that, from a political viewpoint, this claim was correct but around this time the IOC was faced with many problems of this nature, particularly with disputes over sovereignty in Central Europe, and the admission of Finland to the IOC was not inconsistent with other decisions.

Relationships between Ribeaupierre and Coubertin continued to deteriorate and on 1 May 1910 the Russian wrote to Coubertin saying that he was not sure whether to remain a member of the IOC or not. Coubertin evidently did nothing to encourage Ribeaupierre to prolong his membership even though he had not nominated his successor which was the customary practice at the time. Duperron was waiting in the wings and Ribeaupierre did his utmost to stop his accession and wrote to Coubertin saying to represent his country on the IOC it is not only necessary to be interested in sports but also to be a man of the world'. In Ribeaupierre's eyes Duperron failed to meet the latter requirement but he certainly had a greater interest in sport than his adversary. Ribeaupierre's sole sporting interests were horse racing and trotting and he owned two large studs at Charkov and Simbirsk.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### References

N.N.: "Briefe an Coubertin erhellen unbekannte Seiten unserer olympischen Bewegung", in: *Olympisches Panorama* (1990)1, pp. 34-39.

## 30. COUNT CLARENCE VON Rosen

### SWE

**Born:** 12 May 1867, Djursholm

**Died:** 19 August 1955, Djursholm

**IOC member:** No. 30

**Co-opted:** December 1900    **Resigned:** 29 January 1948

*New 2nd seat.*



Count Georges Ivanovitch de Ribeaupierre *ISOH Archive*



Count Clarence von Rosen *ISOH Archive*



Prince Eduard Max Salm-Horstmar *ISOH Archive*

*Doyen of the IOC (1943-1948). Honorary member from 1949.*

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present: 22 Absent: 9**

*Picture: p. 45*

A man of wide sporting interests, he helped found—often with Viktor Balck—the National Federations for rowing, football, skating, bandy and tennis. Coubertin’s description of him as ‘impetuously zealous’ was, no doubt, well deserved. He was a brilliant jockey, winning races all over Europe and his son won bronze medals in show jumping and the 3-day-event at the 1932 Games.

He was the doyen of the IOC from 1943 until his retirement in 1948 at the age of 81 after which he was appointed an Honorary Member in accordance with the new provision in the Olympic Charter. The first three Honorary Members were elected at 1949 Session in Rome: Ricardo Aldao (Argentina) was the first, von Rosen the second and the third was Ernst Kroggius (Finland).

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

**31. PRINCE EDUARD MAX VOLLRATH FRIEDRICH OF Salm-Horstmar**

**GER**

**Born:** 22 August 1841, Castle Varlar near Coesfeld

**Died:** 23 December 1923, Potsdam

**IOC member:** No. 31

**Co-opted:** 1 April 1901

**Resigned:** 28 April 1905

*New 3rd seat.*

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present: 0 Absent: 3**

*Picture: p. 45*

Having served as Vice-President of the Committee for German participation in the 1900 Games in Paris he then became the President of the Committee for the 1904 Games. On his resignation from the IOC in 1905 he nominated General von der Asseburg as his successor.

An officer in the Prussian Cavalry from 1858, he was a socially prominent figure and was a member of the prestigious Union Club of Berlin and the German Automobile Club. In 1873 he married Countess Sophie von Schimmelmänn and before his retirement from the Army with the rank of General in 1919 he served as an Imperial and Royal aide-de-camp and President of the General Staff Decorations Commission (1895-1910).

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

**32. ROBERT Reyntiens**

**BEL**

**Born:** 1853 Sint-Joost-ten-Node

**Died:** 13 October 1913 Waterloo

**IOC member:** No. 31

**Co-opted:** 24 January 1901 **Resigned:** Spring 1902

*Replacing Count Maxime de Bousies.*

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present: 0 Absent: 0**

*No sessions were held during his mandate.*

*Picture: p. 47*

After the resignation of the first Belgian IOC member, Count Maxime de Bousies (1865-1942) on December 31 1900, he was succeeded by Robert Reyntiens, who was co-opted on January 24 1901 and thus became IOC member nr. 32. There has been some confusion about Robert Reyntiens’ short-lived IOC career which lasted only eighteen months; moreover, his son Guy Reyntiens has mistakenly been considered to have been the second Belgian IOC member (Renson & Vanmeerbeek 1999).

Robert Florent Joseph Nicolas Ghislain Reyntiens was born as the son of Nicolas Jean Ghislain Reyntiens and Florence-Antoinette Neyt on October 1853 in Sint-Joost-ten-Node (Brussels). He graduated from the artillery section of the Military Academy in Brussels as lieutenant junior grade of the 38<sup>th</sup> promotion (1872-1877). He was promoted to lieutenant on December 24 1877. His military file revealed that he was sentenced by the Criminal Court of Brussels to eight days of imprisonment and a fine of 150 Francs because he had assisted as secundant in a duel. However, this seems not to have hampered his military career. As a 32 year old lieutenant in the artillery and as an avid fencer, he became the first commander of the Ecole Militaire d’Escrime when this school was established in Brussels on December 22 1885. It opened its doors on January 12 1886. Only three months later, he already submitted his resignation as director of the school (Henrion 1911; Delheye 2003). Reyntiens was appointed as ‘attaché à la Maison militaire du Roi’ on July 8 1888, which gives proof of his excellent connections with the ‘higher circles’ of the Belgian Kingdom. The very same year he was promoted to ‘capitaine en second de 1er class’ and in 1891 to captain-commander. The *Almanach Royal* of 1890-1898 mentions the following honorific titles of artillery captain Robert Reyntjens [sic]: knight of the Order of St. Anne of Russia (3rd class); knight of the Order of Gregorius the Great; knight 3rd class of the Order the Royal Crown of Prussia; and officer of the Order of the Oak Crown. He appeared on a gouache painting by Frédéric Regamey, representing a group portrait of the ‘fine fleur’ of the Belgian fencers in

1891, which was later reprinted in *L'escrime française et les sports illustrés* (1894, 6 (112) Janvier) (Renson & Vanmeerbeek 1999).

Robert Reyntiens was not only a reputed fencer, but also one of the soccer pioneers in the Belgian capital, where he became the founding president of the soccer section of the Leopold Club de Bruxelles, established on February 11 1893. His two sons from his marriage with Ana Erazu were also club members (Guillon 1948). After his first wife had died, he married Lady Alice Josephine Bertie, daughter of Montagu Arthur Bertie, 7<sup>th</sup> earl of Abington and Caroline Theresa Townley, on 5 October 1897. They had one daughter, Priscilla Cecilia Maria Worsthorne Reyntiens.

Reyntiens resigned from the army on November 7 1898 and became IOC member on January 24 1901, [some sources mention June 24 1901]. His 'passage olympique' lasted only until the spring of 1902 and he would be replaced by Count Henri de Baillet-Latour on January 1903. King Leopold II had promised Pierre de Coubertin, during a visit to Paris on December 15 1901, to organize the Olympic Congress of 1904 in Brussels. Coubertin mentioned, however, that the congress had to be postponed to 1905, due to the resignation of Robert Reyntiens in the spring of 1902, who -according to Coubertin was "... scared by the responsibility of organizing the congress ..." (Coubertin 1909: 165; 1931: 73). Coubertin also mentioned that the "mayor of Brussels, M. de Max" [actually Emile De Mot (1835-1909)], had refused to host the congress in his famous town hall, but that "M. de Baillet" [sic] managed to accommodate the congress in the Palais des Académies, which was after all better located and more suitable. The quarrel between Coubertin and Reyntiens culminated in fierce conflict and Coubertin wrote in his *Mémoires* that the abrupt resignation of Reyntiens almost lead to a 'rencontre' (i.e. a duel), which was luckily prevented by the spontaneous intervention of a French diplomat, who was a friend of the IOC (Coubertin 1931: 74). One can only speculate how the future of the Olympic Movement would have looked like if Coubertin would have fought in the duel. Coubertin, although a keen fencer himself, (Navacelle 1986: 41). was certainly no match against the skillful Belgian military swordsman.

After his tumultuous Olympic adventure, Reyntiens took up again his military career in 1903. He was promoted to reserve major in 1908 and ended his army career on January 6 1913. One of his two sons from his first marriage, Guy Reyntiens (1880-1932), followed in the military footsteps of his father. He too got entangled in a duel in 1900: ... so father, so son! Reyntiens Jr. competed in the 1912 Stockholm Olympics with his horse 'Beau Soleil' in the team and individual military equestrian events and in the individual jumping event. He was severely wounded during the German invasion of Belgium in 1914 and retired early from the army. He died on 24 June 1932 (Thielemans 1999). Robert Reyntiens has several times



Robert Reyntiens first published in Delheye 2003 (see references on p. 48)



Sir Charles Howard Vincent ISOH Archive



Count Gonzalo de Figueroa, Marquess de Villamejor Mejorada del Campo ISOH Archive

been mixed up with his son Guy as Belgian IOC member, but the latter never had any IOC connections.

Roland Renson

(Attendance Statistics: Buchanan/Lyberg)

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### 33. SIR CHARLES HOWARD Vincent

**GBR**

**Born:** 31 May 1849, Slinfold, Sussex

**Died:** 7 April 1908, Menton, France

**IOC member:** No. 33

**Co-opted:** March 1901

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 3 **Absent:** 1

*Picture: p. 47*

An immensely talented individual who distinguished himself in many fields. After attending Westminster School and the Royal Military Academy, he followed a career in the Army during which he qualified as a barrister. After 10 years service he left the Army and in 1877 covered the Russo-Turkish conflict as a war correspondent. The following year he was appointed the first head of Scotland Yard Criminal Investigation Department but he resigned in 1884 and became a Member of Parliament from 1885 until his death. He also served as aide-de-camp to King Edward VII in addition to being a prolific author on a variety of subjects. In May 1905 he chaired the meeting which led to the foundation of the British Olympic Association and he was one of the most influential figures in the early years of Olympism in Britain. He

was knighted in 1896 and he died of a heart attack while on holiday in the South of France.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### 34. MIGUEL A. DE Beistegui

**MEX**

**Born:** 16 December 1861, Paris

**Died:** 6 November 1931, Brussels

**IOC member:** No. 34

**Co-opted:** 25 May 1901

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 4 **Absent:** 20

*Picture: -*

A career diplomat, he served as First Secretary at the Mexican delegation in Brussels and by 1908 he had been posted to London. He first met Coubertin during his appointment in Brussels and Coubertin looked to him to establish Olympism in Latin America but as Beistegui was a permanent resident in Europe he had no realistic chance of succeeding in his mission.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*

### 35. COUNT GONZALO DE FIGUEROA, MARQUESS DE Villamejor Mejorada DEL Campo

**ESP**

**Born:** 18 August 1861, Madrid

**Died:** 5 June 1921, Lausanne, Switzerland

**IOC member:** No. 35

**Co-opted:** 21 January 1902

**Attendance at Sessions**

**Present:** 3 **Absent:** 10

*Picture: p. 47*

A mining industrialist and a respected politician, he was Mayor of Madrid in 1908 and in 1909 he was invited by the Infanta Don Carlos to become the second President of the Spanish Olympic Committee and he gave generous financial support to the organization. A prominent figure in Spanish Society, he was also President of the Spanish Riding Society and was granted the title of Marquis de Villamejor in 1911.

Many sources state that he competed as an archer at the 1900 Games but this is not correct. The Game Shooting event usually referred to was actually a 'non-olympic' Clay Pigeon Shooting competition and the Spanish competitor who finished second was, in fact, Don Pedro y Bernado de Quirels, Marquis de Villaviciosa. Presumably, at some stage the name 'Villaviciosa' became confused with 'Villamejor'.

*Buchanan/Lyberg*