

From Bonn to Athens – Single and Return

**The Diary of John Pius Boland,
Olympic Champion Athens 1896**

Edited by Heiner Gillmeister, Author of *Olympisches Tennis* and *Tennis, A Cultural History*

2008. 322 pp. 217 Illustrations, B&W and Coloured. € 48.00.
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In the fiftieth anniversary year of the Irishman's death – on St Patrick's Day, 1958 – John Pius Boland's diary will appear in print at last. It had surfaced unexpectedly in 1994. The present book is the First Edition, based on intensive research in archives of Dublin, Athens, London and Bonn.

Boland, a student at Christ Church, Oxford, after continuing his legal studies at the University of Bonn in the winter term 1895-1896, set out on his journey to Athens. Having been invited to compete in the Olympic lawn tennis event, he became Olympic champion in the men's singles and, partnered by Friedrich Adolf Traun, a Senator's son from Hamburg, also in the doubles.

Apart from shedding new light on the first Olympics of the modern era, the Irishman, having joined the Catholic students' corporation Bavaria soon after his arrival in Bonn, gives a graphic account of German university life under the Kaiser, and of contemporary politics against the backdrop of Anglo-German imperialist antagonism. In addition, he recounts his difficulties in everyday situations with a great deal of self-irony, fully aware of grappling awkwardly with the German language.

Contents:

- *An introductory essay dealing with the life and times of John Pius Boland, BA (Lond), MA (Oxon), LLD (NUI), and later MP, KSG*
- *The annotated text of the Boland diary*
- *Appendix of short biographies of Heinrich Borgass, Alfred Pazolt, Boland's companion, and Dr Georgios von Streit, attaché to the German team and Boland's benefactor in the Greek metropolis.*



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