

# Pierre de Coubertin - Life and Work of a Humanist



Pierre at the age of six

- 1863** - January 1<sup>st</sup> - Pierre de Coubertin was born in Paris as fourth and youngest child of a wealthy aristocratic family
- 1864-80** - carefree childhood in a Parisian town house and at Castle Mirville in Normandy
- Jesuits' school in Paris, A-levels equivalent
- 1880** - played the piano, was a talented musician and an enthusiastic sportsman and attached to nature
- 1880-83** - refused a military career that was planned for him
- studied Jurisprudence and Political Sciences in Paris
- 1883-90** - Coubertin was more and more engaged in social issues, fought for a pedagogical reform in France
- he considered sport to be an appropriate medium in the education of youth and supported the introduction of pupils' physical education
- several study trips to England, Canada and USA
- numerous publications on pedagogical and historic topics
- devoted himself to the founding of pupils' sports clubs and the leadership of organisations at a national level
- 1892** - lecture at the Parisian Sorbonne: Announcement of the revival of the Olympic Games
- 1894** - Founding of the IOC, Coubertin took over the post of first secretary
- 1895** - marriage to Marie Rothan
- 1896** - 1<sup>st</sup> Olympic Games in Athens; Coubertin became IOC- president
- birth of his son Jacques
- 1897** - 1<sup>st</sup> Olympic Congress in Le Havre under the leadership of Coubertin
- several trips through Europe in order to study the political situation and to disseminate the Olympic idea
- 1900** - Olympic Games in Paris; Coubertin is disappointed, because these were overshadowed by the World Fair
- 1902** - birth of his daughter Renée
- 1906** - revolutionary at his time: Coubertin founded a society for workers' sports
- intended to introduce universities for workers
- numerous publications and essays on physical education and pedagogics
- 1912** - Coubertin introduced the Modern Pentathlon at the Olympic Games in Stockholm and opened the "Pentathlon of Muses" (art competitions)
- he himself won a gold medal for his "Ode to sport"
- 1915** - changed the IOC's headquarters to Lausanne
- 1925** - resigned from his function as IOC- president;
- was appointed to lifetime honorary president
- founding of the Universal Pedagogical Union
- 1926-27** - publication of his four-volume World History
- lived until his death in Switzerland; bequeathed his fortune so that his ideas could be made real
- 1937** - had a cardiac arrest during a walk in Geneva on September 2<sup>nd</sup>



Coubertin with his wife Marie Rothan



Castle Mirville (Normandy) - here Coubertin spent most of his childhood