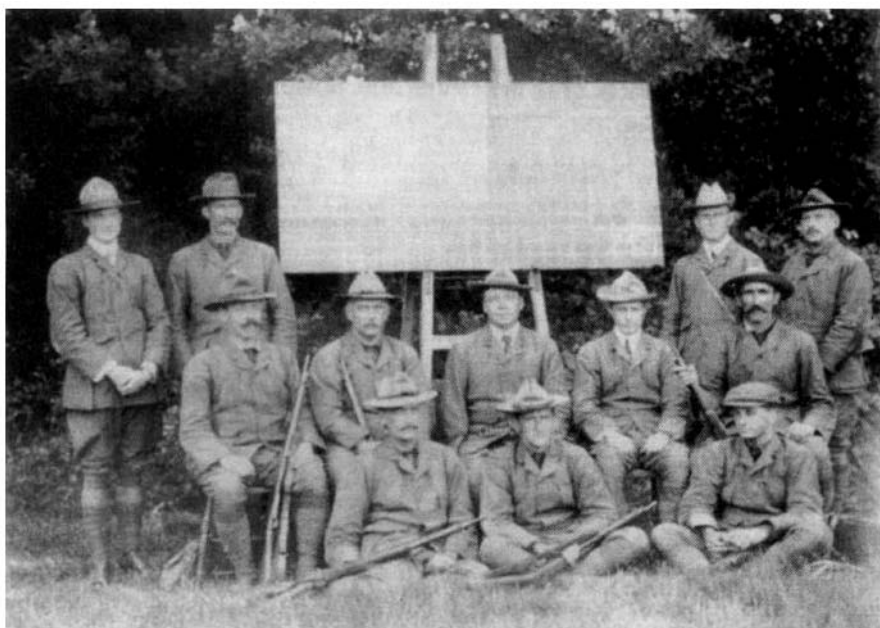


## WILLIAM LEUSHNER OLYMPIC SHOOTING CHAMPION 1908



D.C. by the Governor of New York State, the Mayor of New York City, and a committee of Government officials, prominent civilians and representatives of the National Guard. In the 1912 Olympics William LEUSHNER won a silver (team running deer shooting, single-shot) and two bronze (small-bore rifle teams 25 meters, small-bore rifle teams 50 meters) medals and as coach for small bore and running deer events, he coached American Frederick HIRD to a gold medal in the "small-bore rifle, prone" competition. LEUSHNER finished seventh in the same event. He also took part in the 1920 Olympics, but did not medal.

**The US-American shooting team**

Olympic rifle shooting champion William F. LEUSHNER was born in Cookstown, Ontario in 1864 and went to school in Parry Sound, Ontario. He moved to Buffalo, NY at age 16, and at 19 joined the old 74th Regiment of the national guard.

In 1908 Sergt. LEUSHNER won Olympic gold as a member of the U.S. military rifle team. Competing against top riflemen from Europe and his native Canada, LEUSHNER had the highest overall score, getting the best marks at the shorter distances; 200, 500, 600, 800 and 900 yards, and equaling fellow team member Maj. William MARTIN at 1000 yards. On returning to the U.S., the victorious rifle team was greeted in Washington

shed seventh in the same event. He also took part in the 1920 Olympics, but did not medal.

William LEUSHNER had an impressive military career. He served on the Mexican border with the 74th regiment, and in 1917 was promoted to Captain. During World War One he was an instructor in marks-manship at camp Parry and in 1919 was ordered to Coblenz, Germany where, accompanied by his wife Mrs. Frances Gehan LEUSHNER, he served a year with the American Army of Occupation. William LEUSHNER became superintendent of the 174th armory in 1920, and was later promoted to Lt. Colonel in the reserve corps.



William F. LEUSHNER passed away October 25, 1935 at age 71, in his home at 102 Tillinghast Place in Buffalo. The funeral and cremation were held with military services at Buffalo's Forest Lawn Cemetery, however, his remains are not at the cemetery. Leushner was survived by his widow, and several Canadian siblings. LEUSHNER was Buffalo's first Olympic gold winner, and his total of four Olympic medals is the most by any Western New York competitor.

#### **Sources**

- 1 *Buffalo News* 7-17-1908 'big reception for yankee marksmen' byline 'the news bureau' Washington, D.C.
- 2 *Buffalo News*, 10-26-1935 'W.F. Leushner, ill 10 days, dies', obituary, no author given.

- 3 *Buffalo News* 10-11-1930 'Buffalo athletes won many world honors in sportdom, byline Gene KORZELIUS.
- 4 Private e-mail to author of this web site by Forest Lawn Cemetery, Buffalo, NY.
- 5 *The Complete Book of the Olympics*, by David WALLECHINSKY.
- 6 U.S. shooting team Alumni Association web site at <http://www.usashooting.com/alumni/officials.html>.
- 7 *Buffalo Courier* 10-26-35 'noted soldier, Olympic star, taken by death', obituary, no byline.

*Timothy Evans*