

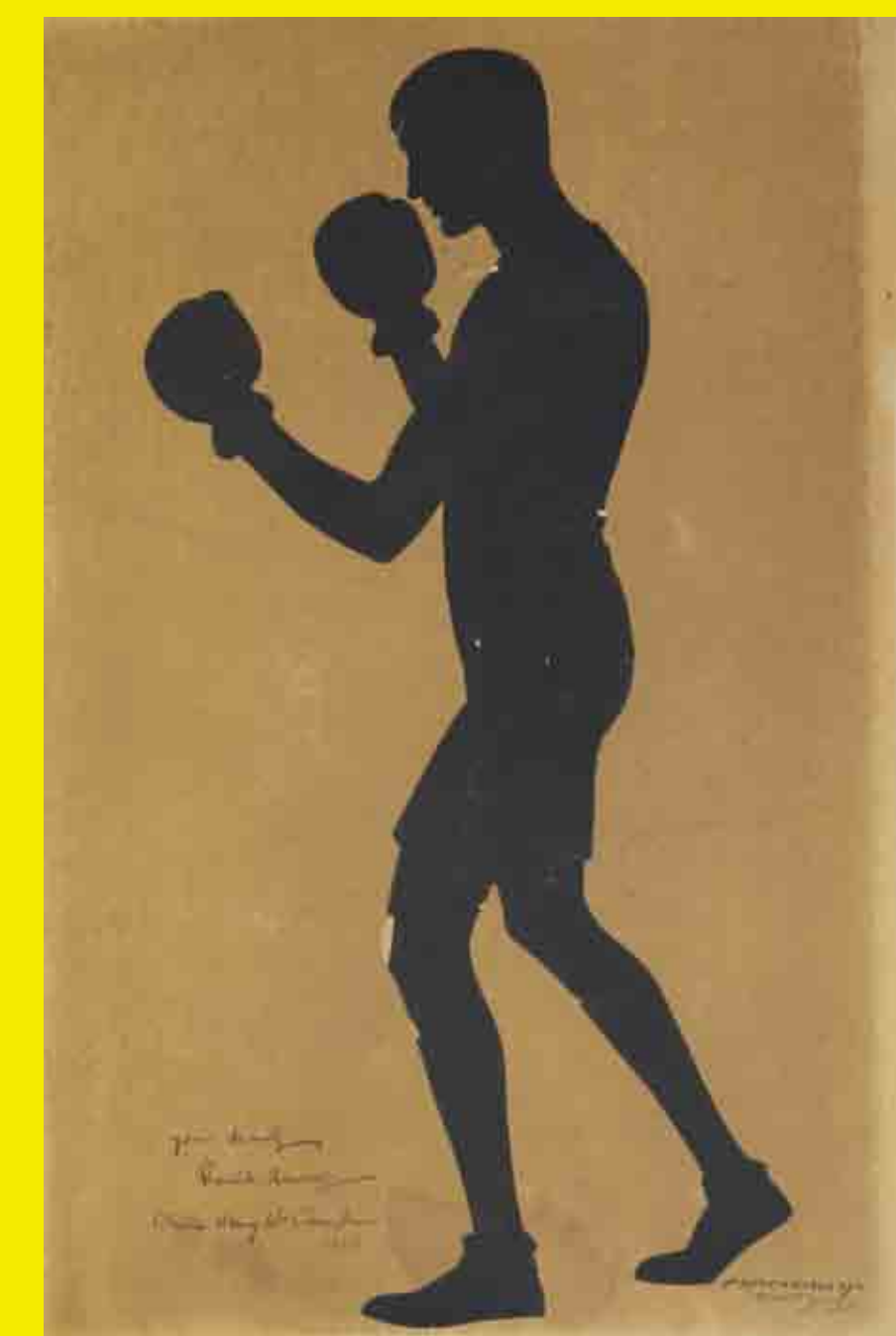
POLYTECHNIC BOXING CLUB



The Polytechnic Boxing Club was formed in 1888. Many of the first members came from the gymnasts, and the Club gave an annual gymnastic display and 'Assault-at-Arms' in Regent Street. As well as numerous successes at a national level, the Boxing Club produced several Olympic champions. At the 1908 Olympics the Club had boxers competing at every weight, including two heavyweights. The Poly's Charlie Morris won silver in the featherweights, whilst Frank Parks achieved bronze in the heavyweight category.

After World War I Ronald Rawson Rawson was to have a huge impact on the Polytechnic Boxing Club. Rawson, a recently demobbed soldier who had been awarded the Military Cross with two bars, took gold at the 1920 Antwerp Olympics despite having only won his first competition 11 months previously. Rawson's example helped to raise the Poly Boxing Club's membership to 700 by 1923, during which year they were honoured by a visit from HRH the Prince of Wales. The following year, Harry Mitchell won gold at the Paris Olympics. The Poly's final Olympic boxing medal was the silver achieved by John A Wright at the 1948 London Olympics, although the Club continued to be called upon for Olympic referees for many years afterwards.

Images from top: Harry Mitchell, Olympic Light-Heavyweight Champion (bottom left) with Pat O'Hanaran, A H Beavis, J Elliot, and their trainer, C W Morris; Frank Parks, five times ABA Heavyweight Champion and Olympic bronze medallist; A silhouette of Ronald Rawson Rawson who became Olympic Heavyweight Champion a year after joining the Polytechnic Boxing Club.



westminster.ac.uk/archives