

PRIVATE IAN MALCOLM McLAREN.

Killed in action, 7th October, 1916.



Sometimes the ever-increasing list of "Roll of Honour" fatalities seems to blunt one's susceptibilities, but now and then a dear friend falls, and the terror of the times is brought home. Such was the feeling I experienced when the sad news came that Ian McLaren had fallen. His association with the Club dates from 1906, but even

before he actually joined the Club he knew and loved the mountains. In his youthful days he was a keen naturalist, and the pursuit of his hobby led him among the glens and the hills. He organised many excursions to the hills around Aberdeen during the years before he left for California in 1911, and to a large circle of friends these excursions will always be a happy memory.

In July, 1906, he climbed Ben Uarn Mhor with the Club, and also attended some of the Saturday afternoon excursions; but his principal climbing excursions were made with small parties of friends. In June, 1907, he climbed Braeriach, and later he climbed Ben Nevis in a week-end from Aberdeen. His great feat of climbing the six Cairngorms in one day (in June, 1908) is

chronicled in Volume VI. of the *C.C.J.* The summer of 1907 found him in Switzerland, where he climbed several of the peaks around Zermatt. In 1908 he had a strenuous season's climbing in Scotland, and in that winter and the following one he was in the Bernese Oberland for ski-running.

So far as I can recollect, my first climb with McLaren was Clochnaben in April, 1906, and after that date we were frequently together. When I look back upon my many climbs with him, however, there is one which stands out more clearly in my memory than any of the others. We were together in Ballater one week-end in February, 1910. Early in the morning we drove up Glen Muick in one of those clear, crisp days that we sometimes get in the Highlands in winter. We strapped on our ski at Alltnaguibsach, and ascended Lochnagar in the most perfect day of glorious winter sunshine that it has ever been my good fortune to enjoy. Both of us were overjoyed, and McLaren, who had just returned from Switzerland, agreed that he had seen nothing more beautiful than we saw that day. The memory of such a day as that will last throughout life; and now that my companion has climbed his last summit, the recollection of these hours is very precious. Just before McLaren left for California he gave me his copy of Hill Burton's "The Cairngorm Mountains," a book he loved dearly and often referred to in his rambles. His companionship in the mountains was sincere, and I shall never find one who will quite fill his place.

He came back to this country in March last year and joined the London Scottish as a private. He fell on October 7th, while charging with his regiment on the Somme battlefield. He was buried in a valley between the hills around Les Boeufs, where so many of his gallant friends have lain down their lives for us.

JAMES GRAY KYD.