

## In Memoriam :

MR. ROBERT ANDERSON.

THE death of Mr. Robert Anderson on the 19th of December removes one to whom the Cairngorm Club has throughout its history owed much, and whose name will always be prominently associated with the topographical and outdoor literature of the north-east of Scotland. His professional life was passed as a journalist and, despite the exacting demands of a newspaper office, he found time for rambling and mountaineering, and for much writing on these subjects. He was a moving spirit in the Cairngorm Club: for a period its chairman, and for many years one of its vice-presidents, and the last eight years the Editor of its *Journal*. He has bequeathed his mountaineering books and maps to form the nucleus of a Club library, and while the older members of the Club who knew him personally, mourn him as a friend, the younger generation, to whom he was less familiar, may rightly remember him as a benefactor and warm promoter of mountaineering interests.

Mr. Anderson was curiously enough a Londoner by place of birth; otherwise he was an Aberdonian. His parents were Aberdeen people; he was brought to Aberdeen in early childhood; he was a pupil at Robert Gordon's Hospital, and his life was spent in Aberdeen. He began his career in the Sheriff Clerk's office, and it was no doubt there that he acquired the admirably clear handwriting which was the joy of printers and the envy of brother journalists, and which showed no deterioration even when he was over seventy. To this early training must also be attributed the orderliness and method which

were so characteristic of his newspaper work. Accuracy and exactness are out of favour with modern journalists. It sometimes seems as if the present-day public do not value such qualities : they prefer news with "snap" or "punch" in it. Mr. Anderson had other conceptions of journalism. His aim was to make everything that he handled accurate and reliable, and it is this note that was predominant in all his work, whether it was in the columns of the daily press, in the pages of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, or in the various volumes on local subjects which came from his industrious pen.

In 1873, Mr. Anderson joined the staff of the *Aberdeen Free Press*, just shortly after it had become a daily paper, and he acted as chief sub-editor for thirty years, until 1903, when he was appointed editor of the *Aberdeen Daily Journal*. This latter post he held until 1910 when he retired. His professional work, like that of every other journalist, lies buried in newspaper files. Suffice it to say that the *Free Press*, as it appeared to its readers every morning for many years, was largely his work—in the presentation of the news, in the admirable summaries of parliamentary and other events, and in the biographical notices of distinguished personages. Mr. Anderson was splendidly equipped in his knowledge both of local and of wider affairs, and he wrote rapidly and neatly upon any subject that called for fuller notice. During his time as chief sub-editor of the *Free Press*, a long succession of younger men passed through his hands, who became imbued with his spirit and not a few of whom have risen to high places in their profession. Four may be mentioned—Mr. David Hutcheon of the *Morning Post*, who wrote in the columns of that paper a notable memorial appreciation of Mr. Anderson; Mr. James Davidson of the *Glasgow Herald*; Dr. J. M. Bulloch of the *Graphic*; and Mr. C. I. Beattie of the *London Evening News*. It was Mr. Bulloch who in 1894 sent to the annual dinner of the Aberdeen and North of Scotland District of the Institute of Journalists a series of verses headed "Bobs," based on Rudyard Kipling's then

popular lines upon Lord Roberts. The verses are an informal jingle, reflecting the intimate life of a newspaper office, but they give an extraordinarily vivid impression of Mr. Anderson, as he was in the nineties, and that they were not displeasing to the subject himself is known to the present writer, for he received only a few years ago from Mr. Anderson a copy in his own faultless handwriting. So they are reproduced here.

There's a certain veteran "sub,"  
Which is Bobs.  
Every journalistic cub  
Knows o' Bobs.  
He's a man you can't forget,  
Though but only once you've met,  
So I'd like to silhouette  
Mr. Bobs.

CHORUS—

Here's to Bobs, journalistic,  
Little Bobs, Bobs, Bobs !  
He is far from Calvinistic—  
Yes, you are, Bobs, Bobs !  
You may search the world around,  
And a man will scarce be found  
With a head and heart as sound  
As our Bobs.

Could you possibly mistake  
Mr. Bobs ?  
With his good old wide-awake—  
Parson Bobs !  
And he's followed in his jog  
By a faithful collie dog,  
Which sets all the street agog  
After Bobs.

If you want to learn your trade,  
Follow Bobs !  
Though he'll call a spade a spade,  
Candid Bobs !  
But you needn't take offence  
When he tells you you are dense,  
For he's likely speaking sense—  
Ain't you, Bobs ?

*The Cairngorm Club Journal.*

We have heard you called a cynic,  
     Mr. Bobs ;  
 And you say you're Philistic—  
     Don't you, Bobs ?  
 But, although you make us smart,  
 We are sure you've got a heart ;  
 And you're not opposed to Art—  
     Are you, Bobs ?

Where's the subject 'neath the sun  
     Strange to Bobs ?  
 If a "leader's" to be done—  
     Look to Bobs !  
 He can rattle off a "par"  
 On the Matabele War,  
 Or the latest comic star—  
     Can't you, Bobs ?

Few the penmen that exist  
     Like our Bobs.  
 Every "comp" that knows his fist  
     Blesses Bobs.  
 Need I also further hint  
 That a single small misprint  
 Can't escape the eagle squint  
     Of our Bobs ?

He's the local Messrs. Cook—  
     Pilgrim Bobs !  
 He's a living tourist book  
     Is our Bobs.  
 He has mounted Bennachie,  
 He has visited Paris,  
 He's been down in Tennessee—  
     Yankee Bobs !

At each journalistic "shine,"  
     There is Bobs ;  
 And he sparkles in that line—  
     Don't you, Bobs ?  
 If forbidden to orate,  
 He will smoke his pipe in state,  
 And "developments await"—  
     Caustic Bobs !

For a rattling jolly chap,  
Give us Bobs,  
With his horror o' clap-trap—  
Honest Bobs!  
Every member o' the staff  
Knows his thund'ring hearty laugh,  
To say nothing o' the chaff  
Of our Bobs.

A perumbulating "dic"—  
That is Bobs.  
O, wherever could we pick  
Such a Bobs!  
He's a warm and hearty chum,  
He's a journalistic plum,  
And he's certain to become  
"Dr" Bobs!

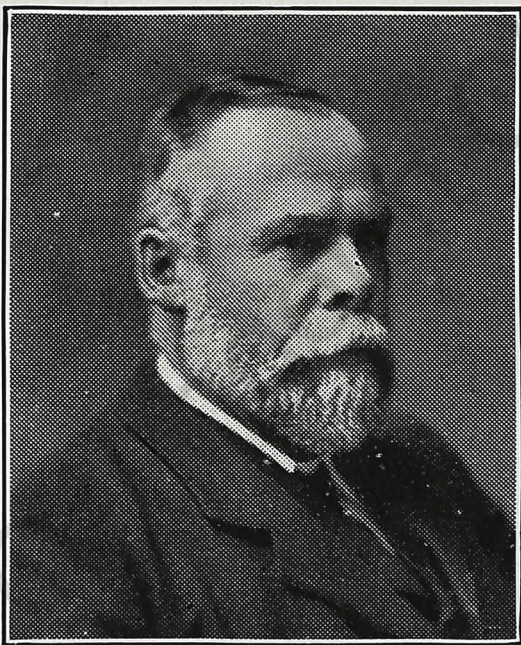
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Mr. Anderson's only relaxation outside his work was walking. He was not a golfer or an angler. Nor was he, in the modern technical sense, a mountaineer: he did not practice rock-climbing or snow-climbing. But he was an indefatigable walker and a lover of hills and rough country. His holidays, save the two or three which he spent in visits abroad and to his brother in America, were passed among the hills, and his Saturdays were devoted to such nearer excursions as could be comprised in a day from Aberdeen, for it has to be remembered that the journalist works on Sunday and there are no long week-ends for him. He knew Aberdeenshire thoroughly: he had covered it on foot, being not a cyclist, and motors being not yet in existence when he was doing the most of his rambling. Walking

is the only way, and remains the only way, to know a country, and Mr. Anderson had the true walker's spirit, which leads him out into the countryside, not after plants or birds or antiquities or any special interest but for some vague general blending of all these and of the open air and open sky. Not that he lacked an interest in more exact studies. Natural history, so far as I remember, did not appeal very much to him, but he was exceptionally well-versed in the direction of local history, whether of places or families, and a number of publications indicate this such as his volumes and pamphlets on Robert Gordon's Hospital, *Aberdeen in Bye-gone days*, and his papers on Fyvie Castle, Strichen, and Ellon as well as other contributions to *Scottish Notes and Queries*. His exact knowledge of north country names and people was of great value in the later years of his life when he assisted in the production of the *Aberdeen University Review*.

Upon the foundation of the Cairngorm Club in 1889 Mr. Anderson became an original member. He was chairman for three years, 1895-96-97; he was appointed a vice-president in 1900 and in 1916 he undertook the editorship of the Club *Journal*. Before that he had frequently contributed to its pages, and a glance through the first eight volumes shows articles, under his signature, on "Mount Battock and Clochnaben"; "Glen Feshie"; "Two Donside Hills: Coillebharr and Lord Arthur's Cairn"; "Ben Aigan"; "Glen Fiddich and Neighbourhood"; "A Night in the Larig"; "Foudland and Dunnideer"; "A Fortnight at Inverey"; "The Literature of Landscape"; "The Colorado Rockies"; "The Descent of the Grand Canyon"; "A Highland Tour in Poetry"; and "Delectable Days on Deeside." The volumes, since he became editor, contain further papers by Mr. Anderson, such as chatty accounts of Coutts' "Dictionary of Deeside" and Grierson's "Rambles among the Scottish Highlands" and in addition many varied and interesting reviews and notes upon mountaineering subjects. The first editor of the *Cairngorm Club*



[*Photograph by Morgan.*]

MR. ROBERT ANDERSON.

*Journal*, Mr. A. I. McConnochie laid its foundations well, the tradition was fully maintained by the editors who succeeded him, Mr. J. G. Kyd and the late Captain J. B. Gillies, and when Mr. Anderson with his ripe journalistic experience and his unique knowledge of the region took charge of the magazine it was still more firmly established as one of the best and most generally readable club journals in the country. If there are no purple patches in Mr. Anderson's articles and no apparent sentiment—for he carried his restraint of emotion into his writing as into his conversation—there are conspicuous everywhere the features of care, accuracy and finish. Everything he wrote was done well: his work was uniformly and consistently sound. With his writings in the *Cairngorm Club Journal* must be mentioned his "Walks round Aberdeen," reprinted from the *Free Press*, and notably his scholarly and admirable revision of Pratt's *Buchan*, prepared for the fourth edition of that classical local work. In these various ways and in his capacities as a journalist, editor and author, as well as a member of the New Spalding Club, the Aberdeen Philosophical Society and the Buchan Field Club, Mr. Anderson greatly promoted the topographical study of the north-east of Scotland, added to its literature, and encouraged and developed popular interest in the open country and in walking, the finest of all pastimes.

H. A.

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By his will Mr. Anderson bequeathed all his books, sketches and maps relating to mountaineering to the Cairngorm Club, the remainder of his library going to the Aberdeen Public Library. His directions are as follows:—

"I make this bequest in the hope that the Cairngorm Club may in the future institute a library in connection with the Club, for which the works mentioned may form a nucleus; pending the formation of such a library, the works to be at the service of the future editors of the 'Cairngorm Club Journal.'"



The idea of a library has long been cherished in the Cairngorm Club and Mr. Anderson's pious gift to the Club which he loved so well, now provides the definite start for such a collection. There are some 50 bound volumes and some 60 maps and drawings in the bequest. The bound volumes include complete sets of the *Cairngorm Club Journal*, and the *Scottish Mountaineering Club Journal* and a set of the *Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal*, down to 1921. There are also loose numbers of the journals of the Climbers' Club, Rucksack Club, Yorkshire Ramblers' Club, French Alpine Club and Scottish Ski Club. The other bound volumes include two older works of considerable value and interest, John Hill Burton's classic, "The Cairngorm Mountains," and Dr. John Longmuir's "Speyside: Its Picturesque Scenery and Antiquities," and among more recent books, Mr. G. Gordon Jenkins' "Hill Views from Aberdeen," and Mr. A. I. McConnochie's volumes on "Deeside" (1st and 2nd editions), "Bennachie," "Lochnagar," "Ben Muich Dhui," and "Strathspey."

To several of these volumes Mr. Anderson has added interesting notes of ascents, newspaper cuttings and other annotations. The collection is particularly rich in maps relating to the north-east of Scotland, comprising both the original and the revised Ordnance Surveys, while there are also various hill diagrams, topographical leaflets, and some maps in rolls. A volume of monographs and odd papers relating to the Cairngorm Club and group photographs of the Club taken on May 5th, 1895, on Sockaugh and on September 23rd, 1895, on the Buck of Cabrach must be mentioned.

#### MR. THOMAS JAMIESON.

Mr. Thomas Jamieson, late City Analyst for Aberdeen, was one of the earliest members of the Cairngorm Club and though over seventy at the time of his death, which took place on May 3rd, he retained to the last the keenest interest in the open countryside and a zest for the moors