

regularly been his advanced base. He was a friend of Mrs Gruer at Thistle Cottage until she died in 1909, and for the next thirty years he was a close buddy of the indefatigable Maggie Gruer, who acquired an almost legendary fame for her hospitality to climbers. She held court seated on a chair by her fireside, and following her death Hugh Welsh acquired this chair. He has now presented it to the Club, and it is being used to-night for the first time as the president's chair on a formal occasion.

When he retired from the presidency in 1946, it was said of Hugh Welsh by his successor: 'If he has no first ascents to his credit, he has certainly done more towards spreading an interest in hill walking and mountaineering into a widening community than has anyone in the Club since its inception.' This was said over twenty years ago but it is still true. No Club function is complete without him and I trust that he may long be spared to encourage and inspire us with his unrivalled knowledge and experience and to delight us with his company. Quite uniquely, he personifies all that the Club stands for.

The toast was honoured by the company with enthusiasm, and Hugh Welsh then replied in reminiscent vein. His humorous sallies, his apt quotations, and his lyrical descriptions of some of the moments during his long experience on the hills which lingered in his memory combined to set the seal on a memorable evening.

Unfortunately our honorary president was not long spared after this function. In his will he bequeathed to the Club Maggie Gruer's chair and such of his books and lantern slides as would be of interest to the Club. In fact he had presented the chair and many of his books and slides to the Club during his lifetime and these now form an important part of the Club library.

JAMES GRAY KYD, C.B.E., F.F.A., F.R.S.E.

As briefly reported in the last issue of the *Journal*, J. G. Kyd, the senior member of the Club, died in Sussex on 25 June 1968, aged eighty-five. Born in Aberdeen, he was with the Northern Assurance Co. Ltd. there until about 1912. He then held actuarial posts in Ireland and London and he was Registrar-General for Scotland from 1937 to 1948, when he retired and went to live in England. He rose to the top of his profession and was president of the Faculty of Actuaries in 1944-46. It was at his instigation that the mammoth task of preparing the Third Statistical Account of Scotland was undertaken. The First Statistical Account was prepared between 1791 and 1798 and the Second between 1834 and 1845; he suggested that the middle of the twentieth century was a suitable time for putting on record a further comprehensive study

at a local level of traditions and conditions throughout the country. Most of the local reports were prepared by ministers and he used to remark humorously that, as Convener of the Church of Scotland's Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund, he was in a strong position to put pressure on any minister who might be dilatory in submitting his report!

His interests covered a wide field: he was chairman of the Scots Ancestry Research Society, a member of the Council of the National Trust for Scotland, and a director of the Scottish Rights of Way Society Ltd.

He joined the Cairngorm Club in 1901 and was secretary of the Club and editor of the *Journal* from 1910 to 1912. To mark the Club's coming-of-age he contributed an article entitled 'Twenty-one Years of our Club' in the issue of January 1910 (vol. vi, no. 34).

One of the pioneers of ski-ing in Britain, he also retained his interest in hill-walking throughout his life. In 1958 he published a booklet on *The Drove Roads and Bridle Paths around Braemar* and dedicated it to the Cairngorm Club 'through which I first learned the wonder of the hills more than sixty years ago'. In a concluding chapter on the changing character of Braemar, he wrote that there was one feature which could never change and that was the strength of the everlasting hills, which had been the greatest inspiration in his life. The booklet, which ran to three editions, contains a great deal of interesting information about the various passes through the Cairngorms and many walks in the Braemar area. Times are given for each walk 'but the fact that they are those taken by the author after attaining sixty-five years suggests that they probably overstate the times which would be required by the young and vigorous'.

GEORGE A. ROBERTS

George Arthur Roberts strove for complete proficiency in everything he did. Of his varied and sometimes conflicting interests, that in the Scottish hills took pride of place. The war interrupted his climbing shortly after he joined the Club in 1939, but on his return to the family furnishing business he was soon back in the Cairngorms. He took up serious rock-climbing and in 1947, with his brother Ian, made a new route from Raeburn's Gully to the Tough-Brown Ridge of Lochnagar, at a time when the interest of most climbers was in established routes. His experience widened to include winter and summer climbing in many areas, particularly on Skye rock. He was elected to the Scottish Mountaineering Club in 1958 and, in the following year, was entrusted