

Malcolm Laurie, B.A., D.Sc., F.L.S.

My brother Malcolm was born in Edinburgh in 1866, and educated at the Edinburgh Academy. He developed a keen interest in Biology while still a schoolboy, and I remember well a dead snake which he obtained from a travelling menagerie and concealed in a cupboard. The snake gave rise to considerable trouble, until the source of the appalling odour was discovered and the concealed treasure removed.

From the Edinburgh Academy he went to the University of Edinburgh, taking his B.Sc. degree in Biology, and subsequently in 1894 he obtained his D.Sc. degree, the subject of his thesis being "Studies in Arachnid Morphology." He entered as a student at King's College, Cambridge, in 1889, obtaining a second class in the Science Tripos, part 2, in 1892. He also spent some time studying Biology in Tübingen University. He was appointed Professor of Biology in St Mungo's Medical College, Glasgow, in 1894, and resigned on leaving Glasgow for Edinburgh, where he was appointed Lecturer on Biology in the Edinburgh School of Medicine of the Royal College, and held the appointment until he resigned on account of ill-health in 1918. He was also appointed part-time Lecturer in the Church of Scotland Training College and afterwards the Provincial Training College, and lectured in the Heriot-Watt College on Zoology. He held these appointments up to 1918.

He then went to live at Harpenden near Rothamsted, and undertook some research work on Wire-worms at the Experimental Station, but soon had to give it up owing to eye-strain and continued ill-health.

He was a Fellow of the Linnean Society, and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and a member of the original committee of the Scottish Marine Biological Station, in which he took the greatest interest.

Like so many Edinburgh students my brother could not resist the lure of Geology, and naturally took up the palæontological side of the subject. Professor Geikie once said to me that if the Almighty had consulted him at the Creation as to the construction of an area for geological research, he could not have suggested any improvements on the district within a twenty-mile radius of Edinburgh.

The rare Eurypterids of the Pentland Hills had for my brother an absorbing fascination, and many laborious days were spent searching for them among the Silurian Shales.

He was, I believe, the first to publish sections of these fossils revealing the internal organs. They were rubbed down on plate glass with fine emery powder, and each layer photographed. The photographs were then thrown on a screen and the details drawn for publication. From these again he built up models, one of which was shown at the British Association Meeting at Glasgow. The exact thickness of each layer removed was controlled by a specially constructed piece of apparatus on the principle of the microtome.

Never very robust in health, he suffered like so many others from the extra strain of war work in addition to carrying on his teaching, and so was compelled to give up his work and live a quiet life at Harpenden. He had the genius for research, and accomplished what he did in spite of poor health and laborious work as a teacher.

He was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1894, and published several papers in its *Transactions*, 1891, 1893, 1899; other papers appearing in *Quart. Journ. Micr. Sci.*, 1889, 1890, 1891; *Zool. Anz.*, 1892; *Journ. Linn. Soc.*, 1894; *Brit. Assoc. Report*, 1893, 1894, 1912; *Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist.*, 1896; *Proc. Roy. Phys. Soc. Edin.*, 1897; and *Nature*, 1911. He was one of the Editors of *Fauna, Flora, and Geology of the Clyde Area*, published by the British Association in 1901, and contributed the article "Actinozoa."

He died on 16th July 1932.

A. P. L.