



Norman Cochran

R. Goldsmith

Dr. NORMAN COCHRAN

A tragic accident to Dr. Norman J. Cochran on Les Ecrins in the Dauphinée, on the 25th July, 1959, robbed the M.A.M. of one of its most distinguished and beloved members. Feeling his loss so deeply ourselves, we extend our heartfelt sympathy to his wife Diana, and his sons Malcolm and Robin, with whom he shared such an active and a happy life.

Norman contributed greatly, and in an open hearted manner, to the activities of the M.A.M. Annually since 1949 he led the Easter meets at Fort William, and what occasions of jollity and endeavour those were ! Tiger and beginner, new and familiar faces, all were welcomed and knitted together, and climbed in the fairest and foulest of weather on Norman's home ground ; he was also a member of the Lochaber section of the J.M.C.S. These meets were indeed a fine contribution to the health and success of the club and will always be remembered by the many who enjoyed them.

His Presidency of the Club (1955-1957) was a period of invigoration, marked by his encouragement of new members and of the young, his energetic and regular attendance of climbing meets, his leadership of a guideless and strenuous meet at Courmayeur and Chamonix, and above all by his friendliness.

He was elected to the Alpine Club in 1951, and visited the Alps annually, achieving a large number of magnificent guideless climbs, including some fine traverses of the higher mountains. His catholic tastes and inquisitiveness led him to most of the main climbing areas, but he was drawn to an increasing extent by the greatness and beauty of the Italian side of the great mountains, coupled with a love of the Italian people, and by the wildness of the Dauphinée.

Those who joined him on his expeditions were many, and they will remember his steadfast friendship, his calm and fortitude in adversity, and his joy at being in the mountains. He was a fine and steady leader, at home on ice and rock, and would always make the most of the weather. Many have been outraged at being dragged out in the wet darkness of a most unpromising morning, and subsequently have been delighted at being in the only party on the summit on what developed after all into a fine day. On the other hand he would not press on dangerously if bad conditions persisted.

During his visits to Fort William Norman led a number of rescue parties on Ben Nevis. Some of these were highly dramatic,

and he not only led the rescuers efficiently, but undertook the more hazardous duties, treated the patients, and did far more than his share of stretcher carrying. In the Alps he effected at least two successful rescues before the official rescue parties had arrived on the scene.

A visit to the Himalayas was a great ambition, and he had recently been preparing for an expedition to the Karakoram in 1961.

Dr. Norman Cochran was an Orkney man, born in 1910, and followed his parents into the medical profession, which he served with distinction and striking humanity. He qualified at Edinburgh University in 1933 and, among other activities, he ran and played rugby for the University, and while in Edinburgh was a Group Scout Master. He had for a long time been in practice in Burton-upon-Trent, and his patients will remember not only his highly skilled attention but also the generosity and help which he and his wife extended to those in distress and need.

His activities in Burton seem also as numerous as his mountain ascents. Among other things he was Founder-President of the Caledonian Society of Burton, a Founder of the Burton Branch of the British Medical Association, a member of the Burton Executive Council for the Administration of National Health, and a lecturer and examiner for the Red Cross & St. John Ambulance Association. During the last war he was a Major in the Burton-upon-Trent Home Guard and was awarded an M.B.E. for his services as well as a Coronation Medal.

Education provided him with a lively and active interest which led him to be Chairman of the Burton-upon-Trent Education and Finance Committee, and of the Standing Committee of the West Midland Advisory Council for Advanced Education, and to the distinction of becoming Vice-President of the North Staffordshire University College.

With all these activities he still found time to give help to local youth organisations and climbing clubs, to be President of the local Cricket and Football Clubs, and to give many lectures on mountaineering, illustrated by his own excellent slides. He was always prepared to go to a good party and stimulate it with his humour.

Both Norman and Diana were enthusiastic drivers of fast motor-cars, and in 1956 during a week-end, with Diana doing the driving part, he made ascents of Ben Nevis, Scawfell, and Snowdon in a single day.

Norman was indeed a man of many parts, all of them inspired by courage and humanity. His death has left a great gap in the hearts of many people; they will retain for ever memories of happy and strenuous days and of his splendid generosity.

Edwin Lloyd.