

ROBERT HUNT MELDRUM (1858-1933)

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This is one in a series of articles about prominent British and Irish field-bryologists of the past. The author would be very pleased to learn of any information which supplements its content.

A Social and Biographical History of British and Irish Field-bryologists is also available on-line at <http://britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk/>

Bryological career

Meldrum was a keen mountaineer as well as bryologist, and published his bryological findings from expeditions to the hills of Perthshire in the *Proceedings of the Perthshire Society of Natural Science*. He found *Anomodon attenuatus* at Elcho, Perthshire in 1900. He was a founding member of the Moss Exchange Club in 1896, a referee in 1899, and still served the Club in that capacity in 1914.

He bequeathed his Perthshire bryophytes to the Perthshire Society of Natural Science, and about 700 of his specimens collected between 1880 and 1920 are at Perth Museum and Art Gallery, along with related correspondence. He also made a herbarium of European species, which he bequeathed to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh. Further of his plants are in the Department of Botany at Edinburgh University and at Cardiff.

Family background and biography

Robert Hunt Meldrum was born on November 23rd 1858 at Tibbermore, Perthshire, a younger son of Thomas Meldrum (1828-1886) and Catherine (*née* Henderson, 1827/8). A Meldrum was minister at Tibbermore in 1718, so the family was evidently longstanding in the parish, but Thomas (Robert's father) was born in Ceres, Fife. He worked as a ploughman at Rhynd, Perthshire in 1861, and as a domestic coachman in 1881. Catherine was born in Liff and Benvie, Forfarshire (Angus), and was a cook. Thomas and Catherine's eldest son, David, was born at Dunbarney, Perthshire in 1850/51. In 1861, the Meldrums lived at Elcho Cottage, Rhynd, Perthshire.

Robert married Marjory (surname unknown), who was born in Sweden in 1864/5. They had four children: Robert (born in Edinburgh in 1893/4), Annie P. (born in Perth, 1894/5), Kate (born 1895/6, Perth), and Thomas (born 1897/8, Tibbermore).

Robert trained as a teacher in Edinburgh. By 1881 he was an assistant teacher at Cherrybank School, and lived with his parents at Woodlands, near Perth. Subsequently

he taught at several schools in Perth. In the mid-1890s he returned to his home town of Tibbermore, where he became headmaster at the elementary school. He retired in 1917, and died in June 1933.