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Compiled by Arthur Lane

# THE ALAN MULLIN STORY

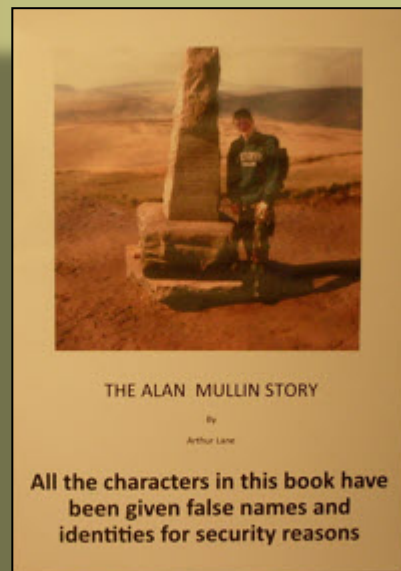
From a British soldier to one of Scotland's greatest mountain climbers.  
The story of a young man who took his own life at the peak of his career.

RELEASE DATE  
JAN 2011

**PAGES 350**

**RETAIL PRICE £20.00**

**ISBN: 978-1-897666-97-7**



## About the Book

This is a story depicting life in the raw and written in the rough Scots language - warts and all. In three winter seasons around the turn of the millennium - Alan Mullin, a previously unknown climber, burst onto the scene and became the most daring and accomplished performer in one of the toughest forms of mountaineering - Scottish winter climbing. Despite the flaws in his approach, Mullin could not be ignored. "*The impact of his routes on the Scottish winter climbing scene was electric*", the climbing pioneer Simon Richardson wrote.

As someone new to the Scottish winter game, Alan was encumbered by the weight of history and almost unknowingly smashed his way through many psychological barriers. Other climbers began to note the advantages of an intensive training regime and average climbing standards rose a grade amongst the leading pack of winter activists.

Remarkably, Mullin had come to winter climbing after being invalided out of the British Army with a spinal injury aged 24. He had served eight years with the 2nd Battalion Royal Green Jackets.

Tragically Alan committed suicide in 2007 whilst still in his thirties. This is his story - compiled by Arthur Lane from Alan's own unedited manuscript. A story of physical and mental tribulation and achievement against the odds.



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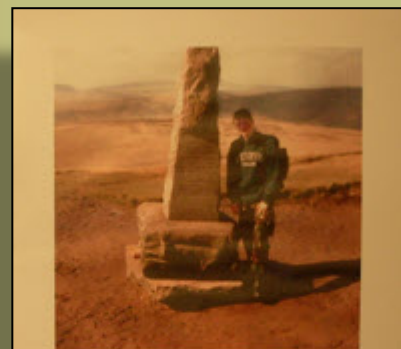
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## About Alan Mullin

The efforts of critics to throw brick-bats at the fiery Scot's escapades only seemed to encourage him to try even more desperate climbs. In winter 2001 Mullin flung himself, solo, at one of the most iconic of Scottish rock climbs, Ben Nevis's Centurion, finally climbing the line in his third attempt over a period of two days at the grade of VIII 8. The fact that he abseiled off the line in between attempts, and employed such Californian big-wall tactics as hammering swaged copper-headed blocks into cracks while his crampons scraped up this most hallowed of classic traditional summer Scottish rock climbs brought the expected (and possibly hoped for) howls of opprobrium. Other ground breaking solo climbs included After Dark (VII 7) climbed at night with head torch, and Migrant Direct (VIII 7).

Not all successes [had] come easily. After Mullin finally succeeded on a project to subdue a short, fiercely overhanging line in Coire an Lochain, The Demon Direct (IX 9), following attempts spread over three winters, he remained perversely unsatisfied by the outcome. "I spent three years on The Demon" he said, "Think of other things I could have done instead of spending 20-30 hours on 30 metres!"

It was a sentiment which presaged a temporary change in direction towards Alpine climbing when Mullin visited Patagonia in 2000 with Kevin Thaw, making the first free ascent of the difficult Czech route on Fitzroy's West Face.

By 2002 he was back in the thick of hard Scottish climbing, making a winter ascent of the extreme E3 Lochnagar rock climb, Crazy Sorrow, at the barrier-smashing grade of X 11 to produce Frozen Sorrow, then the hardest



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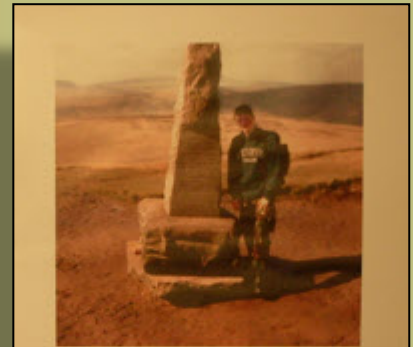
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## Excerpts

\*\*\*

Calum was fuckin cool, mad as hell, but fuckin cool, I would have to show a strength of presence here, with these bastards. Crucial, if I were to have any hope of maybe not being killed, or driven insane by these scum bags from hell. Clearly violence has a minimal effect with these wankers, my time with them was pushing me closer and closer to the edge of my very sanity. What, with me having already been to court already no risk could be taken to go again. Calum, my younger brother turned up next day and he said it could indeed be sorted. A strategy was needed, did he reckon doing them in proper, would do?

\*\*\*

We had been out of the army for just four months, there was a total feeling of emptiness in my life. At twenty three, with no education, or experience of any, or work related experience, I felt useless. I had been taught how



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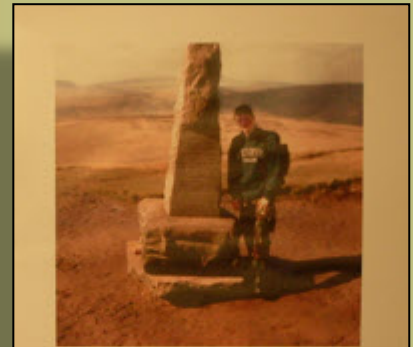
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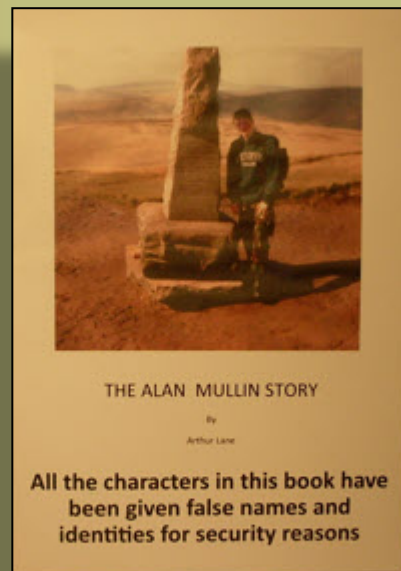
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