

CYRIL LANDER

Cyril Lander, who died in 1989, was born and bred in Birmingham, living most of his eighty-five years in or near Moseley.

He was a man of some intellect, his interests spanning the arts - music, literature, drama, architecture, painting, sculpture and languages all falling naturally within his orbit. He loved music, particularly lieder, and was a member of the Birmingham Chamber Music Society for many years. He composed some thirty songs, all of which were recorded on open-band tape by the late Gordon Clinton and Della Jones with Ruth Gerald at the piano. These recordings were made in 1967-8 when Della Jones was a student studying with Gordon Clinton at the Birmingham School of Music.

He was well-travelled, going round Europe as a teenager with his father who had an export business. Being a Jew he had many friends and relations in Europe to visit, which helped to stimulate his interest in travel. Later in life he extended his travels world-wide to China, Japan, India, South America, Mexico, U.S.A., Canada and Spain, taking a great interest in the architecture, culture and art of these countries. He made a point of visiting most of the art galleries to see the paintings and sculptures of the great masters, and he became quite an authority on them. He kept a remarkably well-indexed collection of slides, postcards and prints of most of the great paintings of the masters, along with pictures and photographs of buildings of architectural merit.

Of all the countries which he visited, Spain was his great love, particularly its language. He translated into English several Spanish poems and a complete play, which, it is to be hoped, may one day be performed.

He was educated at King Edward's Grammar School, Five Ways, Birmingham and, after a brief spell in his father's business, became a librarian at Birmingham University. He had intended to go to university, but a crisis in the family business prevented this. Undaunted, he continued his studies and was eventually rewarded with an external B.A. degree from London University.

In 1935 he became secretary to the Head of Research in the recently formed Mond Nickel Company's Development and Research Laboratory in Birmingham, a post which he held until 1941 when he joined the forces. After the war he rejoined the research laboratory as a translator, and remained until his retirement. He was much thought of and regarded with affection by all his colleagues and friends.

Everything that Cyril did was carried out with a great sense of purpose and vigour which characterised him. His interest in the arts and sciences - he kept abreast of the latest technology - made him stimulating company. His last home was at 40 Chantry Road, Moseley. The Chantry Road Residents' Association was fortunate in having him as its Secretary for several years. He took a lasting interest in this association to the end. He was always helpful and willing to give advice as all his friends and neighbours will testify. It was a privilege to know him.

Gordon Sproston

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