

# PASTMASTER GERALD DEREK LOCKETT, MBE, MA.

**PAST MASTER SIR BERNARD LOVELL WRITES:-** Derek Lockett, who died on April 16th 1993, was a devoted and long-serving member of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. At the time of his death he was fourth in seniority having been clothed with the Livery on 15th October 1935. He was a member of the Court of Assistants from 13th October 1953 until his retirement and appointment as Honorary Assistant on 13th July, 1983. He was Treasurer of the Company for 17 years.

Derek Lockett was installed as Master of the Company on 2nd November 1965. His term as Master was distinguished by the special function and banquet at Fishmongers' Hall on 12th July 1966, at which the Honorary Freedom of the Company was conferred on Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. This was a regal occasion attended by HRH Princess Marina Duchess of Kent who had been an Honorary Freeman of the Company for some years. The arrangements for the evening were symbolic of the perfection for which the Master strove. The arrival of Her Majesty was announced by a fanfare by the Kneller Hall Trumpeters with a pair of silver trumpets bearing the Chester mark and carrying banners with the coat of arms of John Lockett a former High Sheriff of Denbigh. The procession of the trumpeters preceding Her Majesty and the Master into the Banqueting Hall was a memorable event. The distinguished guests included Sir John Barbirolli on whom the Freedom of the Company had been conferred earlier that evening. Sir John had arranged the music for the evening in which he and Lady Barbirolli performed.

Derek Lockett was born in Liverpool on 7th July 1909, the second and younger son of the three children of R.C. Lockett and Beatrice (née Bell) of London. His father ran the family firm of William and John Lockett, a prominent Liverpool shipping firm founded about 1800. This firm continued to occupy offices and warehouses in Liverpool until they were destroyed by enemy action in 1942. Although Derek moved to London with his parents in 1921, his attachment to Liverpool and to the ships of his childhood remained throughout his life. In his later years he assembled models, paintings and artefacts of the Lockett sailing ships.

Derek Lockett was educated at Harrow and then became a stockbroker and member of the London Stock Exchange. On 20th November 1937 he married the distinguished mezzo-soprano Betty Bannerman and until her death in 1992



*Derek Lockett.*

their household, first in High Wycombe and later in Cheshire, became a remarkable nucleus for the assembly of eminent musicians, Derek's career as stockbroker was interrupted by the war in which he was commissioned in the Army, serving as a Deputy Assistant Provost Marshal in North Africa and Italy. He was appointed MBE for his war service. Although he resumed his career as stockbroker at the end of the war his interest and activity in that occupation did not long survive his move to Cheshire in 1949.

Derek Lockett had a deep sense of history, evinced in his pre-war acquisition of the home of his ancestors, Clonterbrook House, in Swettenham, Cheshire. In a most handsome volume, printed for private circulation, his father had traced the ancestry of the Locketts in Cheshire to the 14th century. In this research he was able to establish the residence of the Locketts in Swettenham since 1528 and specifically in Clonterbrook House since 1678. His ancestors lived in Clonterbrook for four generations and the house was then sold. When Derek succeeded in acquiring the property, although the ancient features had survived, Clonterbrook was a somewhat dilapidated farmhouse. The restoration became a major occupation for Derek in the post-war years in which he used his great artistic skills to the full. After making the house habitable he turned his attention to the adjacent shippon, which in a few years he converted into a magnificent music room with stage pillars, regency moulds, chandeliers and furnishings appropriate to the early 19th century. This splendid

interior with its excellent acoustics, although extensively used by Betty for teaching and study, could be converted to seat about 100 and the regular sequence of concerts which attracted many famous artists became a significant feature of Cheshire life.

In the restoration of the house and conversion of the shippon, Derek had made use of considerable quantities of stone and woodwork which he acquired when several historic country houses were demolished, or reduced in size, in the post-war era. It was his skilful use of this material which gave the house and music room an unique distinction. He then used these same qualities of design to convert a nearby barn into an art gallery.

Apart from his shipping interests Derek Lockett's father was a significant numismatist who had built up one of the country's great collections of ancient coins. After his father's death, the inevitable dispersal of this collection enabled Derek to assemble an important collection of 18th and 19th century water-colours and drawings in this converted barn with his maritime exhibition in the lower part. In this sparse rural community it was a remarkable feature to find such erudition in the world of art and music in adjacent buildings. Derek's long support and association with the Whitworth Art Gallery was recognised by the award of the honorary degree of Master of Arts by the University of Manchester.

Derek Lockett's return in 1949 to his ancestral home in Swettenham marked the beginning of a deep spiritual attachment to the Parish Church of St. Peter's. He served as Churchwarden and Diocesan Reader for many years. The restoration of the Church tower in 1957 and of the Church interior in 1963-64 was largely his inspiration, and he stimulated the rebuilding of the organ in 1964 by Noel Mander. His great artistry and the munificence of the Lockett family are commemorated by the carving of the names on the oak panelling in the porch.

The Company has lost a Pastmaster of rare and eclectic gifts. He was intolerant of many musical trends – indeed he once remarked that he never listened to music later than Handel, although this did not hinder his appreciation of the music of the distinguished composers who were his contemporaries on the Court. Through his sons Jeffery (Master 1990-91) and Richard and his grandson William, the association of Derek with the Company will be perpetuated into the 21st century.