

Mr. LEONARD H. MOTTRAM

Tribute by a colleague

THE following tribute is paid by a schoolmaster friend of Mr. Leonard H. Mottram, of 14, King Street, Wimborne, who died at his home on Wednesday.

Mr. Mottram was married, with three children. The funeral is at Bournemouth Crematorium on Monday.

WIMBORNE is a poorer place since Wednesday afternoon, for it was then that Leonard H. Mottram ("Motty" to his numerous friends), left it for the last time.

For over 40 years he had been at the heart of all the cultural activities of the town, and young and old soon fell under his influence, disarmed and encouraged by his faintly mocking, faintly Edwardian, but plainly inimitable charm of manner.

35 YEARS' TEACHING

Born in Lancashire, he came to Wimborne after working at the Japanese Embassy. He took a post at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Wimborne, where he remained from 1917 until 1952, teaching various subjects including art, geography and biology, but really teaching boys to think and look and imagine and develop interest they didn't know they had.

He started a dramatic society and produced a long series of fine plays by Shakespeare, Shaw, Galsworthy, Priestley and others. He painted the scenery, designed the costumes, acted the most difficult parts and, if need be, wrote the play.

The pupils responded to his infectious enthusiasm and retained a lifelong (and a few a professional) interest in drama. Richard Todd and Lionel Jefferies were two of his pupils who made names in the world of the theatre.

After he retired he retained his interest in and influence upon the school, for old boys flocked to see him whenever they returned to Wimborne.

For years he was secretary to the Old Boys Association, and a much-loved figure at all their functions. The

sympathy of all these old boys goes to his widow, Violet, who entertained them all so readily.

As in the school, so in the town. He gave himself generously to all social and cultural activities, and never failed to respond to a demand for a talk or a lecture.

WIDE RANGING

Widely read, with an active and curious mind to the end, there were few matters upon which he could not arouse interest. His subjects ranged from Chinese ceramics or Elizabethan drama to the history of Wimborne or growing unusual plants.

He was a skilled gardener, and to watch him planting a rose or a lily was an object lesson in patient devotion.

He founded the Wimborne Dramatic Society, trained actors, actresses and producers and was responsible for many fine productions.

He was himself a talented actor. Only last season, in his 80th year, he produced Barrie's Dear Brutus.

But to his many friends it is as the most genial of companions that "Motty" will be remembered. He warmed to company, worshipped words, and poured them forth with reckless profusion, not only witty himself, but the cause of wit in others.

In words which he would know so well, he was a man, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again.

MOTTRAM (Mottie) peacefully on September 23 at his home, 14 Kings Street, Wimborne, Leonard Hay Mottram, dearly-loved husband of Cicely and father of Peter, Pam and Joe and Grandpa of Richard and David. Funeral service Bournemouth Crematorium on Monday, September 28, at 10.40 am. No flowers, please. Further inquiries to Charles Small & Son, Funeral Directors Tel. Wimborne 2372.