

## *Victor J. Lissack*

Victor Lissack, who died on 20 December 1981 at the age of 51, was one of the best-known and most colourful of London solicitors specialising in criminal law.

He was a wholly memorable man with a rock-like integrity, a large, warm personality and a host of friends inside and outside the legal profession, a profession to which he devoted himself with immense vigour and enthusiasm. His ability as a defence lawyer was outstanding. He never spared himself in making sure that his instructions to counsel were as comprehensible and reliable as his own work and integrity could make them. His practice in Bow Street attracted some of the most notable 'spy', murder and fraud cases of the day. His life, after his family, was indeed the law; and his long memory for detail of almost all his cases verged on the phenomenal.

He became one of the first solicitors to be appointed a Recorder of the Crown Court and he sat frequently trying criminal cases. His influence as a reformer of criminal law was considerable. He was a member of the Donovan Committee on the Court of Criminal Appeal in 1964-65 and the James Committee on the Distribution of Criminal Business 1974-75. He was a prominent member of the Society of Conservative Lawyers and played important roles as a member of the Gardner Committee on penal reform and juvenile crime.

He was secretary of the London Criminal Courts Solicitors' Association from 1970-74 and was president of the Association from 1974-76. From 1964 he sat on the Southern Area Council of the British Boxing Board of Control, and frequently appeared on appeals before the Board.

In 1954 he married 'Toni' Antoinette Rose, by whom he had two sons, Richard and Charles.

His association with the Metropolitan Police was well known, and hardly a Friday night passed without his being in one Q-car or another for the 6-2 shift! His understanding of the way police forces worked, and the unselfish and unstinting way the officers gave themselves to that work, added an extra dimension to both his practice and his judicial role.

He was a vigorous and highly successful private prosecutor for the British Transport Police, and was entrusted with the conduct of some extremely serious cases on their behalf by the Director of Public Prosecutions.

His admiration for the police in general, and the Metropolitan and BTP forces in particular, knew no bounds, which is why his widow - now Mrs Jerrold Assersohn - chose the Victor Lissack Memorial Prize as a way of perpetuating his memory, knowing how much pleasure it would have given him.