

David Crossley 1934 – 2017

David Crossley, member of the founding steering committee and Council of the Society, died in December 2017. His academic career began in economic history, with his document-based first book *The Wealth of Britain, 1085-1966* being written with Sidney Pollard.¹ Indeed, the importance of manuscript sources remained a thread in his research, even which combined with and informed by material evidence, as seen with several influential studies.² However, David rapidly widened his interests to include material remains, though as with most post-medieval scholars of his generation he always looked to the written sources as part of his data set. He had already begun his directing career on excavations at several Iron Age and Roman sites in Wales

Two main topics attracted much of David Crossley's attention: the iron and glass industries. Glass-making technologies, often brought with immigrants from the Continent, could be considered from items surviving in collections. However, the archaeological dimension of examining the production sites attracted David, leading to two early and highly significant projects at Bagot's Park, Staffordshire³ and, with Alan Aberg, at Hutton and Rosedale, North Yorkshire.⁴ These case study researches fed into more synthetic and reflective publications spread over the decades of his career, indicating a longstanding commitment to understanding this industry⁵. The large-scale iron industry of the Weald was an early focus of his research, with documentary study linked to field survey and excavation.⁶ David's academic career was at the University of Sheffield, mainly as lecturer in extra-mural studies, using his classes to carry out fieldwork was necessarily a slow accumulation but in time led to the cataloguing and analysis of the water mills that provided power for the early industries on the rivers in and around Sheffield⁷. He also researched other aspects of Yorkshire's ferrous industries, notably at Rockley Smithies⁸ and Rockley blast furnace⁹. In 1981, his edited collection of contributions on the archaeology of medieval industry included many high medieval processes which persisted into the early modern period¹⁰.

David was a founding member of Council, then served as Vice-President for two years followed by being President for three from 1973; he then took on the role of joint Vice-President again for a further three years.¹¹ In 1975, the Department of the Environment (equivalent of today's Historic England) asked all the period societies for their priorities in survey, research, and excavation within their field. This was the forerunner of the research frameworks in use today and the first attempt to be strategic in the face of numerous threats to the historic environment. The Society's response was co-ordinated by David Crossley, who created various drafts of the proposals that helped cement the importance of post-medieval period remains within what was then termed rescue archaeology. This commitment to enhancing future research strategy through review of existing knowledge and planning priorities was maintained into the 21st century in his contribution to the research framework on archaeometallurgy¹². He also contributed in several ways to English Heritage's Monument Protection Programme¹³.

In 1978, David took on the role of editor for *Post-Medieval Archaeology*, which he maintained until 1988 (volumes 12-22). The compiling of research priorities, editing the journal, and continued university teaching all combined to give David the opportunity to assess the range of post-medieval archaeology beyond his own specialisms in which he excelled. This enabled him to write the first synthesis for British post-medieval archaeology, published in 1990.¹⁴ The importance of *Post-Medieval Archaeology in Britain* cannot be underestimated. Few scholars of David's generation wrote synthetic works, yet these were the books which affected the wider archaeological community and moved the subject beyond the particularism of case studies. Today such a volume

seems unexceptional, but this was ground-breaking and certainly helped make post-medieval archaeology acceptable within wider University teaching and on a par with other periods.

David was active in a number of other academic societies and special interest groups. Of greatest relevance to members of this Society was his role within the Association of Industrial Archaeologists. He acted as editor of the Association's journal for its first four issues, and he was elected Vice-President in 1993. He gave the Rolt Memorial Lecture for the Association of Industrial Archaeologists in 1995.¹⁵ He was chair of English Heritage's Industrial Archaeology Advisory Panel 1995-2011 and served on several museum trusts.

The Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology benefitted greatly from David's diligence and enthusiasm in its first decades, most notably in producing the first synthesis of our subject and in being the longest-serving editor of our journal. His contributions to industrial archaeology, most notably in glass and iron production, will remain standard works for many years to come, and his enthusiasm for sympathetically yet critically combining documentary, artefactual, excavation, standing building and landscape evidence together was a signature of his approach which was exemplary for its time but has not always adopted in some other countries where historical archaeology is practiced. However, in the British Isles today this holistic approach has been absorbed as best practice in research, and is part of David Crossley's legacy that continues and is well represented in this journal's pages.

Harold Mytum

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¹ Pollard and Crossley 1968

² Crossley 1972a, 1975, 1997

³ Crossley 1967

⁴ Crossley and Aberg 1972

⁵ Crossley 1972a, 1994, 2003

⁶ Crossley 1972b, 1975a, 1975b, 1979; Cleere and Crossley 1985

⁷ Crossley 1989

⁸ Crossley and Ashurst 1968

⁹ Crossley 1995

¹⁰ Crossley 1981

¹¹ Mytum 2016

¹² Bayley et al 2008

¹³ Crossley 2012

¹⁴ Crossley 1990.

¹⁵ Crossley 1997, 1967