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David Dollimore at 70![1]

In 1956 I met David Dollimore; I was an undergraduate, he had joined the Royal College of Advanced Technology, Salford, as a Senior Lecturer from St Andrew's University. David had gained his first degree of B.Sc. at Exeter University in 1949, followed by Ph.D. in 1953. After carrying out further research with Dr S.J. Gregg at Exeter, he moved to St Andrew's in 1954. His enthusiasm and vigour had an immediate impact on the undergraduates and his staff colleagues.

In late 1957 David Nicholson and I had become his first full time research students and things began to gather pace. High vacuum adsorption lines, thermobalances and modulus of rupture apparatus were designed and made. This pushed the resources of the laboratory to breaking point. Professor Rammage, Head of the Department, would exclaim, in his rich Geordie accent, "What am I going to do with this fellow Dollimore, he will be in the corridors next." Well not quite, but when Roger Heal and Dave Griffiths joined as research students, expansion into a laboratory across the corridor and then appropriately into the basement of Joule House occurred and, together with John Dollimore, who was a member of the physics staff, we became known as "the late night cellar brigade".

David was always good at getting people to work together in a common cause. One illustration was when seven of us spent two days carrying out hindered settling experiments on powders for data to be presented at a conference on adhesion at the end of that week. Many good memories remain of those days; Roger Heal using his electronic skills to automate the hand built thermobalances when David conjured up the money from somewhere! His, and my, first international conference was in Paris, where the conference language was French; yes we struggled, but we enjoyed the Follies!

By the late 1960's David's reputation for tackling research topics related to interfacial forces, coupled with his interest in thermal work to generate active solids, was receiving wide recognition. His interest and appreciation of the vital contacts with industry were always evident. He and his students researched applied areas that were an anathema to some of his academic colleagues, and he was therefore able to enjoy the collaboration of a rich vein of talent outside academia. It was from industry and research associations, at this time, that his lasting and fruitful collaboration with Fred Wilburn, Cyril Keattch, Robert Mackenzie, Alan Turner and Tom Niclin started. By now, a group of his first research students were beginning to establish careers in academic life and David was instrumental in encouraging them and collaborating with them through visits, joint ventures or just advice.

By the end of the decade David Nicholson at Imperial College, Derek Nowell at Hatfield, John Dawson at UMIST, Jack Pearce at Liverpool, Ken Tongue at Robert Gordons and Dave Griffiths and Roger Heal at Salford, were putting to good use the guidance, knowledge and friendship they had experienced and gained from David's tutelage. Others from that era were beginning careers in industry including Frank King at ICI, now Chairman of the Catalyst Club of ICI and Visiting Professor at Liverpool University, and Fred Jones who started his successful MCA consultancy company on surface adsorption and powder technology, followed by Pete Clough with the Gas

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Council and Rahman Mangabhai at the Cement Research Association.

David's work on thermal analysis was recognized early and he became Chairman of the Thermal Methods Group of the Analytical Division of the Royal Society of Chemistry from 1968 to 1971. The seventies was a period of intense activity and progress for David. By this time he had a large group of research students both full- and part-time and he was in demand as a lecturer at conferences at home and abroad. It was his idea to try to establish a European Symposium of Thermal Analysis to complement the Triennial ICTA (now ICTAC) Conferences. With the help of colleagues on the TMG; the first ESTA Conference was held at Salford in 1976. As well as being chairman of the scientific committee he edited the proceedings and then began planning a second ESTA, held at Aberdeen University in 1980, the proceedings of which he also edited.

It was largely through his leadership during those years that the ESTA conferences became well established and successful. His contributions to the literature continued at a prolific rate, and he was awarded his D.Sc. by the University of London in 1976 for work on surface chemistry and the heat treatment of solids. In 1975 ''Introduction to Thermogravimetry'', written with coauthor Cyril Keattch, was published. Then came the much praised and required ''Reactions of the Solid State'' written with Andrew Galwey and Michael Brown, in the Comprehensive Chemical Kinetics book series, perhaps the most comprehensive volume on the inorganic solid state since W.E. Garner's book in 1955.

David Dollimore's work has led him into many areas of research but his main interests have been in the surface properties of solids, the thermal treatment of solids and industrial processes involving solids. His achievements have been recognized by the Mettler Award in 1979 and the ICTA DuPont award in 1988 for his work in the thermal analysis field. He has also been honoured with the Silver Medal awarded by ''IL CEMENTO'' in 1980 for publications in cement technology, as well as the Eitel award for Excellence in Silicate Science in 1985.

Following the golden years of the sixties and seventies in teaching and research in universities and polytechnics in the UK, cuts in the funding of science teaching and research in the eighties took their toll. This presented David with new challenges and in 1982 he moved to the USA as Professor and Chairman of the Chemistry Department of the College of Arts and Science at the University of Toledo, OH, a post he relinquished in 1985 to pursue his teaching and research. As he remarked at the time, ''All this internal administration and reporting is bringing research to a halt'', a view echoed in many other departments. However, he was soon back on track.

A group of research students from the UK accompanied David to the USA and have made their careers there including Asif Bhatty and Javed Bhatty. Fred Wilburn, his most regular visitor, points out that it is like joining an international university as he attracts students from across the world. In addition to being a Professor in the Chemistry and Pharmacy Departments of the University, he lectures widely in other universities and at conferences world-wide. He has arranged international exchange schemes for students at undergraduate and postgraduate level between Toledo and the Universities of Salford and Hertfordshire.

The pace does not appear to slacken or the enthusiasm diminish. A fellow of NATAS for many years, David was the programme chairman for the NATAS Conference in Cleveland in 1998, and the President Elect. In 1999 he became President, a rather unique record, having been chairman of the TMG (UK) and now NATAS in America. At a time when most of his contemporaries and many of his early research students are taking life at a reduced pace, David is still very active. The field of his work is still varied and extensive, ranging from the production of active carbons from rags, the dissolution of aspirin and vaporization from perfumes.

On a personal note, many students and colleagues have been able to enjoy the hospitality and good company of David and his wife, Joyce, wherever they have lived. From the early days in Hale Barns (''Come in time for the Archers'') to his home in Toledo; the welcome has been warm, the discussions and humour embracing and always one new project at least to engage and stimulate.

Many students and colleagues have been associated with David over the years and this appreciation has mentioned just a few. I am sure that everyone will wish him well for the future wherever it may take him.

Derek Nowell