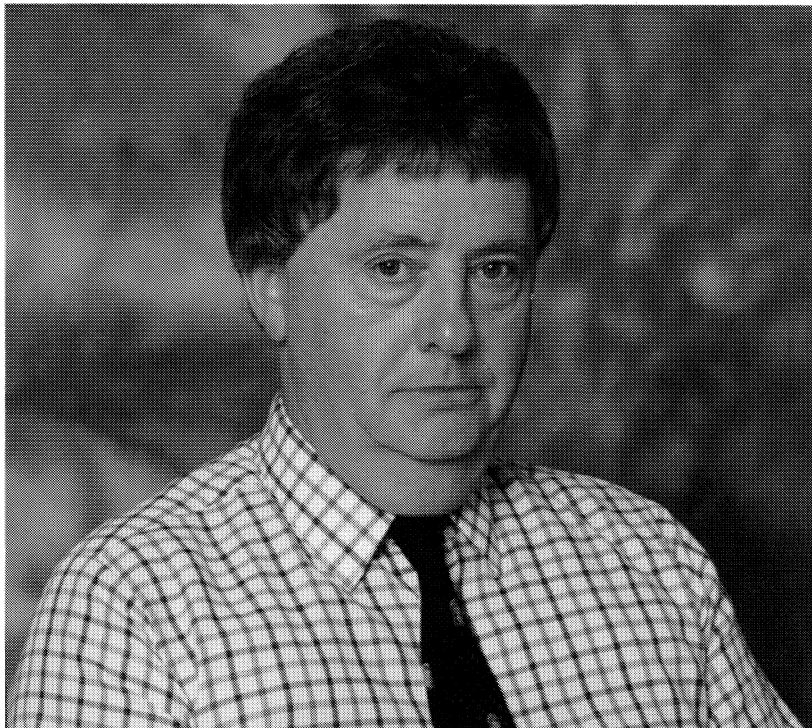


## Obituary



Danny Williams, who died suddenly on 25 November 1998, was a valued member of this Society. He served on the Committee for a quarter of a century, edited *Transactions* for fifteen years and on ceasing to be Editor became one of our Vice-Presidents. Danny was born 30 September 1937 at Farnham in Surrey. A Welshman by origin, he went, after National Service in the R.A.F., to the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth to read history. There he specialised in the medieval period at both undergraduate and graduate levels. His doctorate was awarded for a study of Boniface of Savoy, the thirteenth century Archbishop of Canterbury. He also gained a Diploma in Palaeography .

Danny's connection with Leicester began in 1966 when he was appointed to a post at the University of Leicester. By 1973 he had been elected to the Society's Committee and in the same year he succeeded James Crompton as Editor. In his long tenure of the office he was responsible for the publication of fourteen volumes (49 - 63) of *Transactions*. His work was not confined to editorship, for he contributed a number of his own articles: 'Fortified manor houses' (originally communicated to the Society as a lecture); 'The hastily drawn-up will of William Catesby Esquire, 25 August 1485' (this was the Catesby executed at Leicester immediately after the Battle of Bosworth), 'From Towton to Bosworth: the Leicestershire community and the Wars of the Roses 1461 to 1485'; 'William Burton's 1642 revised edition of the *Description of*

*Leicestershire*'; and 'Witchcraft Mania in seventeenth century Leicestershire'. Dr. Williams was also an active member of the East Midlands Symposium which is held annually at Harlaxton (Lincolnshire): he not only contributed papers over a wide range of medieval topics but himself edited three of the annual volumes of their proceedings. The range of his historical interests was well demonstrated by the volume of essays he edited for Leicestershire Museums in 1980: entitled *The Adaptation of Change*, it covered a broad sweep through aspects of 19th century Leicester and Leicestershire.

In spite of all of this it may well be that Dr. Williams will be best remembered for his connection with a project related to one specific historical event, the Battle of Bosworth. In 1972, after it had been decided to establish a Visitors Centre at Bosworth Field, the Leicestershire County Council invited him to be the Historical Adviser for the project. This was a daunting task. Advice was required on a wide variety of topics, ranging not only from details of costume, arms, armour and equipment but to fundamental and controversial issues about the very siting of the battle, the troop dispositions and the course of the fighting. Williams devoted a great deal of time in the following years to providing scholarly and carefully argued answers to these questions. The character of the Battlefield Site and Interpretative Centre owes a great deal to his historical acumen. His interpretation is succinctly expressed in his booklet, 'The Battle of Bosworth Field', first published in 1973 and reissued in an enlarged form in 1996.

The death of Danny Williams was not only sudden but grievously premature. It has robbed us of those fuller historical studies that he was contemplating and deprived the Society of a distinguished member.

R. H. Evans