1997 Mineralogical Society — Schlumberger Award

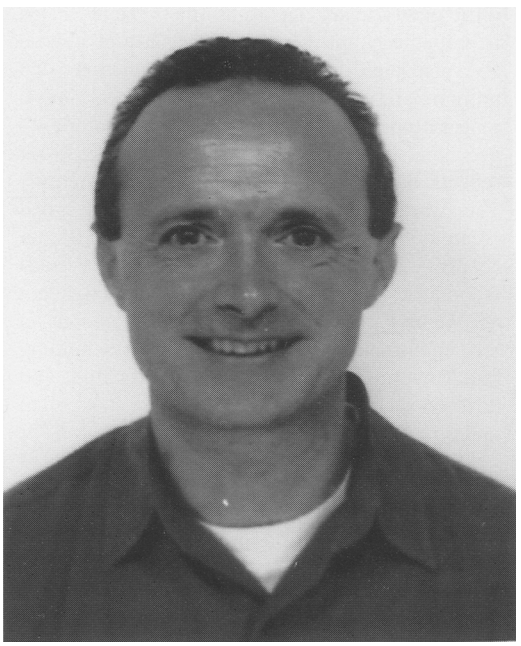
Presentation by the President, Professor A. H. Rankin, to Professor A. E. Fallick, at the Annual Winter Conference Dinner, 8 January 1998

The Schlumberger Medal, instigated in 1990, is the Society's Senior Award. It is awarded to an individual in recognition of scientific excellence in mineralogy and its applications, particularly through evidence of published work. The recipient this year is Professor Tony Fallick, whose tally of scientific, papers, published in refereed journals, and conference volumes is well in excess of 150. By my calculations this represents a publication rate approaching something like 20 papers per year over the past 5 years, which is more than many of us can hope to publish in a lifetime and certainly the papers are of sufficient quality to fill at least an entire issue of *Mineral Magazine* per year.

Despite his strong affinity with Scotland, and more than a hint of a Glaswegian accent, Tony is a Kentish lad by birth. He studied Natural Philosophy at Glasgow University where he was awarded his BSc in 1971 and his PhD in Chemistry in 1975, specialising in Mass Spectrometry. From 1975 to 1978 he began his metamorphosis into a true geoscientist with a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Geology at McMaster University in Canada. This was followed by two years at the University of Cambridge, initially within the Department of Mineralogy and Petrology and subsequently in the Department of Earth Sciences. In 1980 he moved to the Isotope Geology Unit of the Scottish Universities Research and Reactor Centre at East Kilbride, initially on a Postdoctoral Fellowship. This Fellowship was supported by the Geological Survey of Sweden. He became a full-time member of Academic Staff within the Reactor Centre following this Fellowship. He was promoted to Senior Lecturer in 1988, to Reader in 1990, and to a Personal Chair in 1996. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, as well as a member of the Mineralogical Society and former member of the Clay Minerals Group Committee. He is is currently Head of the Isotope Geosciences Unit at SURRC, a position he has held since 1986.

Tony's current research interests stem from his early training in Mass Spectrometry. He has been involved in the application of isotope geochemistry to an amazing variety of problems within the Earth and Planetary Sciences.

His early work with Abell, McNaughton, Pillinger and others on lunar soils and meteorites provided important insights into early planetary processes. Subsequently he moved 'back to earth' and collaborated on a series of isotope studies related to crustal processes with a number of equally eminent geoscientists, both within the UK and abroad. By the mid 1980s Tony had further developed his interests in the application of stable isotope geochemistry to problems of hydrothermal ore genesis with seminal publications on



Prof. A. E. Fallick

the origin of agate, lead and zinc mineralisation in limestone, tin-tungsten mineralisation in granites and epigenetic gold mineralisation. By the 1990s his research interests had broadened yet again to encompass isotopic studies in relation to problems in sedimentary diagenesis and surficial processes. This included studying problems related to environmental pollution and petroleum reservoirs.

The key feature that links all these studies is that they are based on Tony's acknowledged world expertise in the field of stable isotope geochemistry. Tony is the epitomy of the modern geoscientist, equally at home in the field and laboratory, and fully aware that geochemical data are only of use if the results are based on well constrained samples whose mineralogy, petrology and geological settings are well constrained. This requires teamwork, collaboration and leaders — qualities that all of us who have worked with Tony, I am sure will confirm he is able to provide to great effect.

Tony, in recognition of the excellence of your research on the application of isotopic geochemistry to the earth, planetary and environmental sciences, I have the greatest honour in presenting to you the Society's Schlumberger Medal for 1997. Many congratulations.

Acceptance Speech by A. E. Fallick for the Schlumberger Medal for 1997

Mr President and colleagues, thank you very much for the honour you have bestowed on me through the award of the Schlumberger Medal for 1997; I would particularly like to thank those associated with my nomination and selection for their recognition of my style of science.

Being selected for a prestigious award like this can only make one think humbly about the research endeavour and one's own part in it. As Burns said (and you can find a Burns' quotation to suit every occasion): "Oh wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us, to see oursels as others see us". This is particularly apt in my case, because in a sense I've just been doing my job. My function is to promote and enable collaborative research involving isotope — and especially stable isotope — geochemistry. The breadth of my published work reflects the span of my collaborators' interests. The award, then, in a very real sense is to a broad community of people, and especially incudes my academic and technical colleagues in the various laboratories where I've worked. Let me single out no one by name — there are too many — but let me emphasise the technical support: nothing much would happen without dedicated and dextrous technicians, and they are too often under-rewarded and overlooked.

I am employed in a research centre which has been cooperatively funded by a consortium of Scottish Universities since the 1960s. My personal conviction is that this collaborative operation is a wonderfully stimulating and cost-effective way to do research. Our colleagues in the Universities gain by having access to the best equipment, well-maintained and calibrated, and to specialist expertise. Our graduate students gain through shared and diverse supervision. And we gain: by being encouraged to develop the new methods and techniques that will be required in the future, and by being presented with opportunities to work collaboratively with experts on a wide range of fascinating scientific research. It is a team effort: everyone gains — and it is fun. If it is not fun, something is wrong.

However, in the new world order introduced by the last government and continued by the present one, the shared ideal of collaboration is under serious threat. To me, this implies that science is under threat. We now have structures, such as the Research Assessment Exercise, whose logical consequence — whether intended or not — is to put Universities and Departments into competition with each other: competitive advantage is replacing the bonus of collaboration in the minds of (some) senior managers. So ultimately, that is why I am sincerely and intensely proud of the presentation tonight of the Schlumberger Medal; in my personal interpretation, the senior award of the Mineralogical Society in 1997 is given in recognition of the benefits to all, of collaborative research. Thank you.