

## NOTES AND NEWS

## TOURMALINE—BEARING QUARTZ FROM AMELIA, VIRGINIA

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On a recent collecting-trip several large quartz crystals were obtained from an abandoned prospect pit which had been opened a few years ago on the outcrop of one of the famous Amelia (formerly known as Amelia Courthouse) pegmatites. These crystals were of typical, although rather light colored, smoky quartz. The largest weighed about five pounds. When cleaned of the adhering clay they seemed to be rather good specimens of "rutilated quartz," and as such were shipped to the laboratory.

A more detailed examination under the binoculars disclosed the fact that the numerous hair-like inclusions were darker than is the usual case, being a brownish black rather than the red-brown of ordinary rutile. A fragment filled with a net work of these inclusions was broken from the base of one of the crystals and tested for titanium with entirely negative results.

A further search revealed several small acicular crystals of what appeared to be black tourmaline, although they were too small for close examination. When tested these needles reacted strongly for boron. A similar test was then run on several portions of the more typical "rutilated" material, decisive tests being obtained in every case. Evidently all of the "rutile" was tourmaline.

Since these crystals simulated so perfectly the appearance of rutilated quartz, the question arises; may not some of the specimens in our museums and laboratories now labelled "Rutilated Quartz" be in reality "tourmalinated" rather than "rutilated?"

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The use of andalusite (and more recently of andalusite and dumortierite) in the manufacture of porcelain for spark plugs has been frequently recorded in the literature. These same minerals are now being used in the manufacture of what commercially is known as "sillimanite" laboratory ware, including beakers, casseroles, combustion tubes, crucibles, evaporating dishes, funnels, etc. Some of the advantages of the "sillimanite" ware over ordinary chemical porcelain are its higher thermal conductivity, thus shortening the time required for evaporation, and its much greater resistance to shock, reducing breakage about 25 to 30 per cent.

Dr. Robert B. Sosman has resigned from the Geophysical Laboratory of the Carnegie Institution of Washington and has accepted a position in the recently established research laboratory of the United States Steel Corporation at Kearny, New Jersey.

Professor John T. Lonsdale of the Bureau of Economic Geology, University of Texas, has accepted the position as head of the department of geology at the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas.

Professor E. Wiechert, director of the Geophysical Institute and professor at the University of Göttingen, recently died, aged sixty-seven years.

Dr. Andrew C. Lawson, professor of geology and at one time dean of the College of Mining of the University of California, retired in July, after thirty-eight years of service on the faculty. He becomes emeritus professor of geology and mineralogy.