

# THE CANADIAN MINERALOGIST

Journal of the Mineralogical Association of Canada

Volume 24

DECEMBER 1986

Part 4

*Canadian Mineralogist*  
Vol. 24, pp. 597-598 (1986)

## SPECIAL ISSUE DEDICATED TO ROBERT BURY FERGUSON

### PREFACE

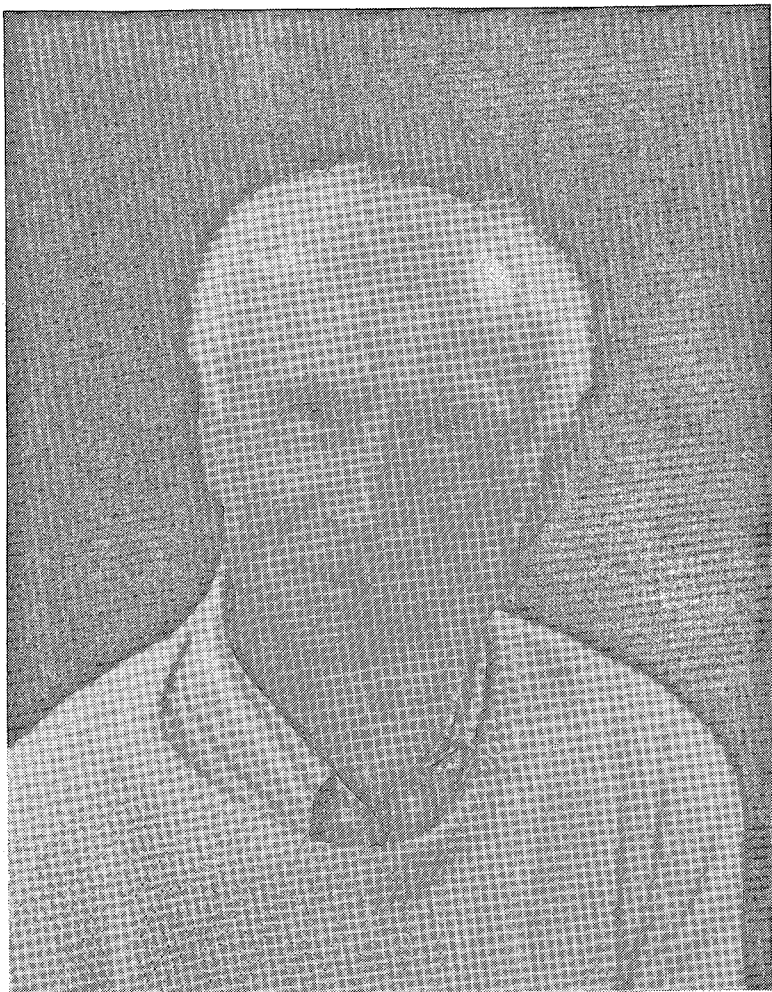
It is a great pleasure to be able to write the preface to this particular issue of *The Canadian Mineralogist*, dedicated to R.B. Ferguson to commemorate his 65th birthday and his retirement from teaching at the University of Manitoba.

Robert Bury Ferguson was born on February 5, 1920; in the depths of Ontario. He attended the University of Toronto, receiving a B.A. in 1942, an M.A. in 1943, and a Ph.D. in 1948. Bob's Ph.D. thesis dealt with the crystallography and mineralogy of the alumino-fluoride minerals of the cryolite deposit at Ivigtut, Greenland, under the direction of M.A. Peacock. Upon graduation, he moved to the University of Manitoba to be responsible for the teaching of crystallography and mineralogy. In 1950-51, Bob spent a sabbatical year at Cambridge University, where he worked on the structure of albite with W.H. Taylor; this was a seminal experience for Bob, starting his long interest in the crystallography of the alkali feldspars. At Cambridge, he began friendships with other young scientists - S.W. Bailey, Helen Megaw, J.V. Smith - who were to become luminaries in crystallography, and who have contributed to this commemorative volume. Bob has continued his work on feldspars with a series of students and associates - Bob Traill, Lowell Trembath, Norma Tweedy Bristol, Subbu Subbarao, Bob Gait, Josef Macek, Cathy McGregor and Neil Ball - and is even more active in this area since his retirement. He has always been ready to cooperate with students and staff members from other departments or disciplines, and has a series of publications on the crystallography of inorganic and organometallic compounds.

Bob's work was recognized early with promotion

to Full Professor at the age of 39 and election to the Royal Society of Canada in 1961 at the early age of 41. In 1968, Dr. Petr Černý arrived from Prague as a Post-Doctoral Fellow, interested in the mineralogy and petrology of pegmatites. This signified the start of a new interest in Bob's career, the crystallography and mineralogy of pegmatite minerals. Petr's and Bob's work culminated in the Tanco issue of *The Canadian Mineralogist*, consisting completely of their group's work on all aspects of the Tanco pegmatite at Bernic Lake, Manitoba. Bob's interest in this area was also continued with students - Iva Černa, Joel Grice - working on crystallographic aspects of pegmatite minerals. Bob's efforts to establish a centre of crystallography and mineralogy took a big step forward when Petr Černý was hired on as a faculty member. In 1973, Dr. Frank Hawthorne arrived from McMaster University as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in crystallography and mineralogy, and co-operated with Bob in a wide range of crystallographic topics. Through Bob's efforts over a long period, this too resulted in an addition to the staff in the area of crystallography-mineralogy. In 1981, Bob's work was recognized by the award of the Hawley Medal of the Mineralogical Association of Canada for the best paper in Vol. 18 of *The Canadian Mineralogist*; in 1982 Bob was elected Distinguished Professor of the University of Manitoba, and in 1986 he was elected Professor Emeritus of the University.

This outline of Bob's research activity does not do full justice to his academic activities. Bob is a superb teacher, and has attracted many students to crystallography, not only in geology, but also in chemistry and biochemistry - Mike James, Carol



ROBERT BURY FERGUSON

Huber, Louis Delbaere. In this way, he has had an important influence on the development of crystallography-mineralogy in Canada. Bob has also been active in our association. He is a founder member of MAC, was president in 1977 and has served on numerous MAC committees. He is also a fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America, and a member of the Mineralogical Society of London and the American Crystallographic Association.

To interject a personal note, Bob Ferguson has had a major effect on my own career. At a time when

there was no prospect of employment in crystallography in Canada, he gave me both financial and moral support, and encouraged me to do my own work in these circumstances. I hope that this volume, published with the financial help of the Geological Survey of Canada, can in some small way repay him for the help and support he has given freely to me and to many others.

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Winnipeg, June 18, 1986.