

## Memorial of Earl V. Shannon 1895-1981

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The death of Earl V. Shannon in Hampton, Virginia on October 23, 1981, marked the passing of one of the more talented and energetic mineralogists of the early part of this century. Earl Shannon was born in Idaho on February 16, 1895, and resided in Kellogg, Idaho for most of his youth. His interest in minerals developed early in life, as evidenced by his collecting in the Couer d'Alene mining district between 1908 and 1913. In 1917, he moved to New Haven, Connecticut, where, with a brief interruption of military service, he was enrolled at Yale University. He was a "special student", a category of admission for those interested in pursuing a discipline without the objective of obtaining a degree. Following his studies there, he was appointed an assistant curator of geology at the U. S. National Museum in Washington, D. C. He remained at the National Museum from 1919 until his hospitalization for several illnesses in 1929. Little is known of his life since then inasmuch as he was hospitalized for psychiatric care for the last 52 years of his life and thus removed from interaction with the mineralogic community.

Earl Shannon's interests were in descriptive and chemical mineralogy and he applied himself with vigor to both of these endeavors. In spite of the brevity of his professional career, he contributed, within a 17-year period, 115 papers to the literature and numerous chemical analyses to studies authored by others. His name is closely associated with the investigations of many famous American mineral localities, including Franklin, New Jersey, and the phosphate deposits near Fairfield, Utah. His interests were broad, as evidenced by the wide range of mineralogical problems he investigated. In addition to the papers noted above, he also authored several monographs including one on the *Minerals of Idaho* (Shannon, 1926), and one on the mineralogy and petrology of intrusive Triassic diabase at Goose Creek, Loudoun County, Virginia (Shannon, 1924). A review of his contributions provides the reader with a sense of a mineralogist/chemist, of extraordinary diversity of interests, who applied himself with vigor and enthusiasm to the problems he encountered. Although best known for his chemical analyses, he also was a highly skilled goniometrician and his description of the datolite crystals from Westfield, Massachusetts, is superb. Earl Shannon was a skilled writer; there is a tension and aliveness in his prose which makes his papers very interesting to read. In his day, much emphasis was placed on specimen descriptions, and Shannon's are among the best ever done.

Earl Shannon was a Charter Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America, and one of the most productive mineralogists of his time. A new mineral has recently been named *earlshannonite* in his honor.

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<sup>1</sup> To receive a copy of the complete bibliography, order document AM-84-252 from the Business Office, Mineralogical Society of America, 2000 Florida Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20009. Please remit \$5.00 in advance for the microfiche.

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