

Memorial of Martin L. Ehrmann August 9, 1903—May 18, 1972

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The death of Martin L. Ehrmann in Los Angeles, California, on May 18, 1972, ended the life of a remarkable man, a man who had a varied and highly successful career in business and in military service, and whose considerable contributions to the science of mineralogy were of a quite different nature from those usually recorded for Fellows of the Mineralogical Society of America.

Martin Ehrmann was born on August 9, 1903. He was raised and educated in Kiel, Germany, where he lived until in 1923 he emigrated to the United States. Martin had acquired a keen interest in mineralogy early in life. In New York City in the early

1930's he established a mineral and gem business which, with the exception of a break for military service during World War II, was to be the main thrust of his career.

Martin had received no formal training in mineralogy but nevertheless became a knowledgeable and skilled mineralogist. In such matters as sight identification, and judgment of quality and value of mineral specimens and gems, he had no equal. He set as his primary goal that of helping museums in the United States and abroad in acquiring outstanding mineral specimens for display, as well as less exotic material for research.

Many times Martin was able to further his goal through the purchase and distribution of mineral collections. One of the earliest of these purchases, and probably the most important of his entire career, was the Calvert Collection. Made by John Frederick Calvert (1811–1897), Martin unearthed it in a warehouse in London in 1936, purchased it, and shipped it to New York. I first met Martin the following year when I was a graduate student at Harvard, and at the time he was making piecemeal disposition of the Calvert Collection. I have a vivid memory of an encounter between Martin and Charles Palaché at the 1938 GSA meeting in New York. There was great excitement on both sides when Martin handed Professor Palache a treasure he had found in the Calvert Collection, a finger-size crystal of jeremejevite, the first specimen of this rare aluminum borate ever to find its way to the United States. Martin had not recognized the crystal when he had unpacked it, and had placed it in a tray of beryl crystals, which it closely resembled, priced at two dollars each. It had been recognized by Frederick H. Pough, then Curator of the American Museum of Natural History, on a visit to Martin's shop shortly before the meeting. And Pough was only able to identify it because three years earlier he had seen a crystal in the Vesignie collection in Paris. When Palache was told what it was, no price mentioned,

he snapped, "I'll give you five hundred dollars for it," and the sale was made. It was moments like this that Martin relished and made life for him an exciting adventure.

Martin became interested in artificial coloration of diamonds in 1940. During that period he and Harry Berman conducted experiments with the Harvard cyclotron. After the war he continued his experiments at the University of California (Berkeley) with Joseph E. Hamilton and Thomas M. Putnam of the Crocker Laboratory. The results of their work, "Effect of heavy charged particle and fast neutron irradiation on diamonds," was published in *The American Mineralogist* in 1952.

In early 1942 Martin volunteered for service in the United States Army. He received a direct commission as Captain and rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel. He was assigned to the Bomb Disposal School at Aberdeen, Maryland, and eventually became commanding officer of the school. Because he was fluent in German he was from time to time detailed to the Intelligence Service for special assignments. Because of his knowledge of mineralogy, one of these assignments was, in 1944, to go into German-occupied France and bring out several tons of Madagascar tourmaline urgently needed for piezoelectric plates for making pressure gauges. Shortly before V-E Day he was assigned to a team whose mission it was to interrogate German scientists and get them into the American sector. Upon his discharge he was decorated with the Legion of Merit.

Upon his return to civilian life Martin moved to Los Angeles and went into the wholesale diamond business. However, this highly competitive business was not to his liking and he returned once more to dealing in minerals. He travelled the world over countless times in the ensuing years, seeking out important specimens, buying or exchanging for individual pieces or entire collections. The best of these he offered to the museums he was dedicated to serve. The balance he would dispose of as quickly as possible to other dealers, meanwhile planning his next trip.

Martin also had an uncanny ability to judge the value of gemstones, both finished gems and rough. This made it possible for him to find financial backers for his travels and purchases. Some of his trips were primarily to buy gems and gem rough. But always, even on these trips, he managed to ferret out many choice mineral specimens, and in this he found his greatest pleasure.

Martin Ehrmann had a great zest for life. He loved what he was doing. He had an infectious outgoing personality, was a great raconteur, and a gracious host. Many of you reading this account will remember the parties he gave at the many GSA meetings he attended, given not with any thought of business gain, but because these were his friends and he liked to have them around him. He was indeed a remarkable man and will be sorely missed by his countless friends all over the world.

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Memorial of Harry Hammond Hess May 24, 1906—August 25, 1969

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Harry Hammond Hess was born in New York City on May 24, 1906, the son of Julian B. and Elizabeth E. Hess, and suffered a fatal heart attack on August 25, 1969, while chairing a committee of

the Space Science Board of the National Academy of Sciences. Between these two dates Harry Hess lived one of the most diverse, interesting, and successful lives in the earth sciences. After graduating