



ALEXANDER NEWTON WINCHELL

1874-1958

MEMORIAL OF ALEXANDER NEWTON WINCHELL

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Alexander Newton Winchell, Emeritus Professor of geology, died in New Haven, Connecticut on Saturday, June 7, after a short illness. He was 84 years old. He was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on March 2, 1874, the son of a distinguished geologist, N. H. Winchell. He received his B.S. degree in 1896 and his M.S. degree in 1897 from the University of Minnesota, and his D.Sc. from the University of Paris in 1900.

Professor Winchell served as Professor of Mineralogy and Petrology at the Montana School of Mines from 1900 to 1907, and as Professor of Geology at the University of Wisconsin from 1907 till his retirement in 1944. He was chairman of the Department of Geology from 1935 to 1940. He was associated with the U. S. Geological Survey from 1901 to 1910. After his retirement he served as Visiting Professor of Mineralogy at the University of Virginia 1948-49 and at Columbia University 1949-50. He served for three years as resident mineral consultant at the Stamford laboratory of the American Cyanamid Company.

Professor Winchell was a fellow of the Geological Society of America, the Mineralogical Society of America, the Society of Economic Geologists, the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Wisconsin Academy of Science. He was councillor of the Mineralogical Society of America from 1927 to 1930 and was president in 1932. He was awarded the Roebling medal of the Society in 1955 for meritorious achievement.

Professor Winchell was best known for his books on optical mineralogy which have served the science eminently for many years. The first edition was written jointly by him and his father, and the last, fourth, edition was written in collaboration with his son, Horace. These books appeared in three volumes,—volume 1 being devoted to optical crystallographic theory, volume 2 a very thorough compilation of published data on the optical properties of mineral materials including many charts of his own design on mineral properties, and volume 3, a set of exhaustive tables for the identification of minerals by their properties. His volumes 2 and 3 are unexcelled in any language in their thoroughness and value to the laboratory worker. They appeared also in a Russian edition of 15,000 copies. Immediately prior to his death, he visited Moscow, as is required by Russia, in relation to the royalties on the Russian edition.

In addition to his textbooks on optical mineralogy Professor Winchell compiled a text on the optical properties of artificial minerals and one on organic crystals. He also compiled a textbook on mineralogy.

The major research activity of Professor Winchell is embodied in a

considerable list of published papers on the correlation of the optical properties of crystalline materials and their chemical composition. The graphical representation of these findings will long be a serviceable monument to his devotion to these studies.

During his long teaching career, Professor Winchell made many friends among students who will recall the thoroughness of his training and who recognize the role that his influence has played in their professional accomplishment. His absences from the national meetings were rare and inevitably evoked inquiries on his welfare.

Professor Winchell is survived by his wife, Florence S. Winchell, his two sisters, Mrs. A. W. Grant of St. Charles, Ill., and Mrs. B. J. Denman of Minneapolis, Minn., and by four of his five children—Mrs. R. E. Rettger of Dallas, Texas., Dr. A. V. Winchell of Rochester, N. Y., Mrs. R. J. Lund of Columbus, Ohio, and Professor Horace Winchell of New Haven, Conn. A memorial service was held at Spring Glen Congregational Church in Hamden on Tuesday, June 10.

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- In addition to these there are several unpublished mining reports. He also cooperated with N. H. Winchell in the publication of a genealogy of the Winchell family.