

MEMORIAL OF MARK CHANCE BANDY

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The death of Mark Chance Bandy on June 3, 1963 left a gap in the ranks of American mineralogists that will not soon be filled, for he was not only very well-known and a highly regarded scientist but his great love and enthusiasm for mineral specimens had won for him a host of friends amongst mineral collectors.

Mark Bandy was born on July 22, 1900 in Redfield, Iowa the only son of John L. and Hattie E. Bandy. He graduated from Redfield High School in 1918, and then received an A.B. degree in Chemistry from Drake University in 1922, an M.A. in geology from Columbia University in 1925, an E.M. from Columbia a year later, and a Ph.D. in mineralogy from Harvard University in 1938. In 1961 he received an Alumni Distinguished Service Award from Drake University. In 1962 he was made an honorary member of the the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain, and in that same year his home town of Redfield, Iowa inscribed his name on the Redfield Hall of Honor plaque and honored him with a "Mark Bandy Day."

In 1929 he married Jean Arney of Sioux City, Iowa, who survives him.

Almost all of Bandy's professional career was spent in foreign work in mining geology. His first job, in 1926, was with the Huasteca Petroleum Company in Tampico, Mexico. From then until his semi-retirement in 1957 he worked chiefly in South America, but also in Europe, Africa, and the United States. The following list of just a few of the areas in which he worked will serve to demonstrate his broad experience and hence his extraordinary knowledge of mineral deposits: Venezuela with the Bethlehem Steel Corporation; Chile with the Chile Exploration Company, and collecting minerals for the U. S. National Museum and Harvard University; Llalagua, Bolivia with Patiño Mines and Enterprises, where he became Chief Geologist and Chief Engineer; Europe and Africa with the Economic Cooperative Administration; Rhodesia, as General Manager, Rhodesia Copper Ventures, Ltd.; Lecturer in Geochemistry, the University, St. Andrews, Scotland; and Utah with the Utex Exploration Company.

That Bandy was an unusually well-rounded geologist is clearly shown by some of the titles of his many scientific contributions: The origin of lodestone; Lopezite, a new mineral; Geology and petrology of Easter Island; Mineralogy of three sulfate deposits of northern Chile; A theory of mineral sequence in hypogene ore deposits. In addition, he was a latin scholar and with his wife prepared a translation of Agricola's "De Natura



MARK CHANCE BANDY

Fossilium," published as Special Paper 63 of the Geological Society of America.

Among the minerals he collected in Chile in 1935 was a new hydrous copper borate chloride, named bandylite in his honor.

Bandy loved field work. In a letter to me dated July 31, 1957, from Asim-Akonfudi, Ghana, he wrote in his typical vivid, descriptive style:

"As you probably know I am in Ghana with Collison prospecting. You can imagine what the situation is. Jungle Bill has the situation well in hand, has taught all the girls in the booths in the lobby of the hotel in Accra to wolf whistle when he walks in and is getting the country organized along the lines of Philadelphia. For my part I spend most of my time back in the rain forest sinking pits for diamonds. There are a few principal roads and once you leave them you are on foot. I walk 7 to 14 miles a day along wet swampy trails cut thru the forest where everything drips, me most of all. It is really rugged but I wouldn't have missed it for anything as I have learned enough folklore to fill a book. I am astounded every day at something new. We are so busy sacrificing goats and carrying out ceremonies with gin to appease the evil spirits of the land and streams we have little time to sink pits."

This letter was written after he contracted the disease that eventually took his life.

Bandy left behind him significant contributions to his chosen profession, but he will be better remembered by a great host of friends the world over for his sparkling personality. He was a large man with a booming voice and a hearty laugh who enjoyed people and life to the utmost. He was a fine storyteller and his years of travel gave him a great fund of adventures to draw on. After his retirement to Wickenburg, Arizona in 1958 Bandy set up his fine mineral collection in a special building near his home, dubbed the "Ore House" by his friends. From then on his greatest pleasure was to have friends, or strangers who quickly became friends, stop by to look at his collection and talk minerals far into the night.

Another of Bandy's significant contributions to mineralogy was his great interest in mineral museums, in particular the U. S. National Museum and the Harvard Mineralogical Museum. He collected a vast amount of valuable research material for both of these institutions in his travels, and also lent his support in other ways. For example, he assisted the U. S. National Museum in acquiring the Kegel Collection of Tsumeb, South West Africa minerals and was instrumental in bringing the important Ahlfeld collection of Bolivian minerals to the United States, which was divided between the National Museum and Harvard.

Mark Bandy died of a lingering illness that for the last six years of his life put him through frequent periods of excruciating pain and hospitalized him numerous times for surgery. But this did not quench his spirit. To anyone who did not know, he was a picture of good health, high

spirits, and boundless energy. As an example of how he refused to let his poor health defeat him, let me quote from two of his letters to me:

June 21, 1962

"We have had one storm after another this summer and after each one it took me three days to clean the lawn before it could be mowed. I managed to get thru the first two and the last one—a week ago—but the first two did me in. I sort of came unstuck.

One evening I went to Newton, Iowa to give a talk to the Iowa Am. Assoc. of Mech. Eng. and had a tough time and the following night Jean had to rush me to the hospital for an emergency operation and it was a mess. The surgeon was at a country club party and I have never been in such agony or even imagined it. Before they could assemble the operating room crew I passed out, fortunately. Since the operation, the latter part of May, I have been so tired and sleepy and only this week the surgeon told me that after the operation my red corpuscle count was down from a normal 14.2 to 8, a loss of about half my blood. I only hope I can hold together until the next mineral show but I never know from one day to the next what is going to come up."

November 18, 1962

"Things began to get a little tough with me physically so the local MD started a week of injections this past week—2-a-day—and they about did me in. Tomorrow for some more tests. Last Wednesday when we were expecting you or a call from you I was in bed with a fever you could hang your hat on but then fevers come and go with me like phases of the moon."

He was also a very modest man, as shown by the following passage from a letter answering one in which I had congratulated him on being elected an Honorary Member of the Mineralogical Society of Great Britain.

"Thanks for the kind words about my honorary membership to the Min. Soc. Of course I have no right to the honour as everyone knows. As I wrote Claringbull, Miss Sweet, and others, there are at least 1000 mineralogists in the U. S. who deserve it more than I. . . . At the time I think they were expecting me to die shortly. . . . maybe that is the explanation for the honour."

This was Mark Chance Bandy, one of those splendid people that we meet all too seldom during a lifetime. Those of us fortunate to have known him will never forget him.

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