

Robert L. Parker and the International Mineralogical Association

Autor(en): **Fisher, Jerome**

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Robert L. Parker
and the International Mineralogical Association

A "Beilage" accompanying the first number of Volume 38 (1958) of this journal presented a Report on the Foundation of the International Mineralogical Association and included the Statutes and Bye-laws of this organization as adopted at the Madrid inaugural meeting April 8, 1958. On the following day Professor Parker was elected the first President of the I. M. A., to serve until the August 1960 meeting of the International Geological Congress. With his suave, diplomatic, polylingual abilities Professor Parker made an ideal chief executive to see that the infant association received the proper nourishment to gain wide acceptance in a minimum time.

In planning for the first general meeting of the I. M. A. held in Zürich in the late summer of 1959, Professor Parker realized that some changes were needed in the Constitution adopted at Madrid. Accordingly he called a meeting of the Council in Zürich in January 1959. Here he demonstrated his wise leadership in such careful fashion that a considerably revised Constitution was prepared which was adopted without dissent at the Zürich meeting. Since then the Association has operated under it successfully, with only very minor changes being required at the two subsequent general meetings (Copenhagen 1960 and Washington 1962).

With this groundwork laid, Professor Parker gave his full efforts to preparing for the Zürich meeting. Under his direction this came off without a hitch. It is safe to say that no baby association of scientists ever had a more successful, enjoyable, and profitable first gathering than that which well over a hundred mineralogists participated in at Zürich. Professor Parker not only lined up leaders for outstanding field trips following the meeting: he also got city officials, officers of industries, and others to work in harmonious fashion to ensure a happy end-result. When it was all done, he described the scientific gains made in Nature, December 19, 1959. The papers presented in the two symposia together with the proceedings of the Association were published by the Instituto Lucas Mallada of Madrid in May 1960.

Following the Zürich meeting Professor Parker immediately started planning for the second general meeting held in Copenhagen in August 1960, in conjunction with the International Geological Congress. Here the onerous task of preparing field trips was taken care of by the Congress. However of the two symposia held at Copenhagen, the one on feldspars was outstandingly successful: demand for the resulting publication (Instituto Lucas Mallada, September 1961) has been very large.

By this time the Association was a real going concern, so that planning for the Washington meeting could be carried out with full assurance that it would meet with success. It was a great disappointment to all of us that Professor and Mrs. Parker could not be in attendance.

Our prestige now is such that we have been able to arrange for a joint topic at the Rome assembly next September of the International Union of Crystallography. This will deal with crystal morphology in its relation to crystal structure, and Professor J. D. H. Donnay is the Convenor.

This will be succeeded by our fourth general meeting to be held in Madras early in December, 1964. This will involve a field trip of some five days in Southern India under the direction of Professor Naidu, followed by meetings at Madras which will terminate in time to reach New Delhi for the opening of the International Geological Congress in mid-December. Professor C. E. Tilley is serving as program chairman and he has already announced two symposia: (1) Zeolites, natural and synthetic, and (2) Carbonatites, kimberlites, and their minerals. In addition, as at the Washington meeting, there will be an open session.

Truly Professor Parker's baby, the I. M. A., has now reached the stature of a highly vigorous young adult. The four commissions with which it started have now become seven, and significant results have already been obtained by them. It is our hope that Professor and Mrs. Parker will have many good years ahead, and that we will see them in Madras, at which time Professor Parker will have completed his term on the Council as Past-president.

D. JEROME FISHER

University of Chicago, December 12, 1962

I. M. A. President, 1960—1964