

Preface

Meeting Robert C. Mackenzie

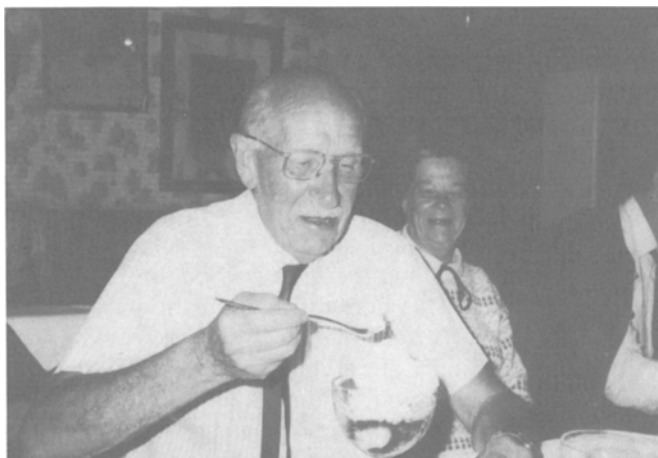
instead of a preface

Thirty years ago I came across the name Robert C. Mackenzie for the first time. It was in particular the book "The Differential Thermal Investigation of Clays" that arose my interest because of its wealth of stimulating data. During the following years I prowled around this famous scientist at several conferences, and hunted after his lectures and papers, but I did not dare to speak a single word to him. This admiration received its first dent shortly after the publication of my DTA book, when I read the review from Aberdeen. Quite angry, I visited my Ph.D. supervisor in Gottingen and told him about the unfairness of a certain reviewer (without mentioning his name). Professor C. W. Correns, the other pope of clay science, whom I greatly admired, guessed at once that the reviewer could only be his old friend RCM from Aberdeen. Prof. Correns spoke of a certain rivalry, but showed me (after having read the review) some hidden compliments and called Robert a typical Scotsman.

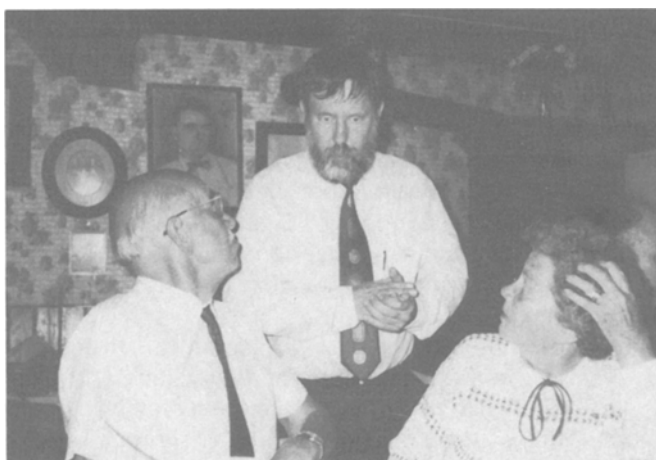
Two years later, in 1977, I got to know Robert personally in Trondheim, where we had been invited by the Nordic TA Society, together with David Dollimore and György Liptay. That marvellous conference marked the turning-point in our relationship. Everything started with the wildest and most beautiful party I have ever had at a conference: a dinner in a historical and stylish old inn. During the dinner Tommy Wadsten suddenly started singing and all the Swedish participants joined in. Then came the Norwegians, followed by the Danes and the Finns. Finally, there was a medieval competition of singing which went on for hours. That was the evening when my fondness for the cool, cool Scandinavians began. Eventually, I found myself sitting by the side of Robert, asking him silly questions about the TA behaviour of corrensite. Robert told me to wait until the next day, as the party had absolute priority at the time.

The next afternoon we went on a sightseeing tour through the beautiful Trondheim. It was in the middle of June and the lilacs and apple-trees were in blossom. The lovely Norwegian girls were enjoying the first nice day (15°C) of the summer, sitting on the quay with shrimps and (the extremely expensive) beer, performing gymnastics in the parks, laughing and generally behaving like Mediterraneans. We walked through the merry crowd, but –

while my eyes and heart were open wide after my living for one year in Arabia – Robert did not appear to notice anything of his environment. He was busy lecturing on his time in Gottingen, where Prof. Correns had introduced him into the mysteries of clays and clay mineralogy, and on the mineral corrensite, which was still puzzling him and other experts.



Robert and Hilda Mackenzie



Robert, Hilda and Werner Smykatz-Kloss



Robert, Hilda, Klaus Heide and Werner (from left)



Jean Rouquerol, Slade Warne, Charles Earnest and Mackenzies

All photos have been taken at the workshop of the 'Geoscience Committee' in Berghausen/Karlsruhe (1990) by A. M. Abdel Rehim.

Since that afternoon we have been friends (I hope that Robert regards this situation in the same way). I owe him very much. He has strongly supported the "Geoscience Committee", in spite of having been quite sceptical at the beginning as regards the aims and the success of our group. But the meetings so far and both our books (1991 and this one) may demonstrate that our efforts have not been in vain. Success has many parents, but most of them in our case exhibit the same dual scientific pattern, i.e. working in thermal analysis (of course) and in clays and clay mineralogy. This can easily be seen in the contributions of Charles Earnest, Mária Földvári, Klaus Heide, Anna Kuzniarowa, Dave Morgan, Joachim Schomburg, Leszek Stoch, Slade Warne or Shmuel Yariv. And it is particularly valid for the work of Robert Mackenzie. Consequently, this collection of papers is dedicated to Robert, the doyen of thermal analysis and clay science. The dedication is made with our deepest gratitude and with all our heart.

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