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ANALOGY OF HYDRATED CALCIUM SILICOALUMINATES AND HEXACALCIUM ALUMINATE TO HYDRATED CAL-CIUM SULFOALUMINATES

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ABSTRACT

Two hydrated calcium silicoaluminates were prepared, which appear to be the silica analogs of the hydrated calcium sulfoaluminates. The low-silica compound has the formula, 3CaO. Al₂O₃. CaSiO₃. 12H₂O. It occurs as hexagonal plates, is uniaxial negative, and has the indices of refraction, $\omega = 1.538$, $\epsilon = 1.523$. The other compound occurs as needle-shaped prisms and is uniaxial negative; $\omega = 1.487$, $\epsilon = 1.479$. It was not obtained in pure form but, by analogy with other calcium aluminate complex salts, was tentatively assigned the formula, 3CaO. Al₂O₃. 3CaSiO₃. 3O-32H₂O. The low-silica compound is slowly converted to the high-silica silicoaluminate on standing in contact with lime solutions. The highsilica compound was identified in mixtures of β -2CaO. SiO₂ and 4CaO. Al₂O₃. Fe₂O₃; β -2CaO. SiO₂ and 3CaO. Al₂O₃; and 3CaO. Al₂O₃. 33H₂O, was prepared. It occurs as long, needle-like prisms, is uniaxial negative, and $\omega = 1.475$, $\epsilon = 1.466$. Its formula may be written as 3CaO. Al₂O₃. 3Ca(OH)₂. 3OH₂O, which indicates that it is the compound formed when the CaSO₄ in the high-sulfate sulfoaluminate is completely replaced by Ca(OH)₂.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The high-sulfate form of calcium sulfoaluminate, 3CaO. Al₂O₃. 3CaSO_4 . $31\text{H}_2\text{O}$, is a constituent of hydrated portland cement and is also produced by the action of sulfate waters on concrete [1].¹ Another compound, 3CaO. Al₂O₃. CaSO₄. $12\text{H}_2\text{O}$, discovered by Lerch, Ashton, and Bogue [2], and known as the low-sulfate form of calcium sulfo aluminate, has not been identified in hydrated portland cement. Numerous other calcium aluminate complex salts have been synthesized in which the SO⁻/₄ radical of both the high- and low-sulfate forms is completely replaced by various acid radicals. A list of the compounds that have been prepared is given in table 1.

Done

¹ Figures in brackets indicate literature references at the end of this paper.

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[2O 19O
10H ₂ O
D2)2.8H2O
0
20
0H ₂ O 0H ₂ O
1

 TABLE 1.—Calcium aluminate complex salts that have been synthesized by various investigators [3]

¹ General formula: $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3CaX.30-32H_2O$ or $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3CaY_2.30-32H_2O$, where X is a bivalent and Y a univalent acid radical. ² General formula: $3CaO.Al_2O_3.CaX.8-12H_2O$ or $3CaO.Al_2O_3.CaY_2.8-12H_2O$, where X is a bivalent, and Y a univalent acid radical.

In spite of the fact that silica is the most abundant acidic oxide in portland cement, no previous attempts have been made to prepare the analogs of the calcium sulfoaluminates which would contain the silicic acid radical, $SiO_{\overline{a}}^{-}$. The present paper is a preliminary report on attempts to synthesize such compounds and also to obtain a replacement of CaSO₄ in the high-sulfate calcium sulfoaluminate by Ca(OH)₂. The data are presented at this time because it is anticipated that the completion of a more extensive study of these compounds may be somewhat delayed.

II. EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE AND RESULTS

1. PREPARATION OF HYDRATED CALCIUM SILICOALUMINATES

The silicoaluminate precipitates were made by a modification of a method that has been commonly used in preparing other complex salts of the calcium aluminates. This method consisted in mixing solutions of calcium silicate and aluminate in the desired proportions and in adding various amounts of solid calcium oxide.

A 20-liter volume of calcium silicate solution was prepared, according to a method described previously [4], by boiling purified silica gel with dilute calcium hydroxide solution (0.1 g of CaO per liter) for about 18 hours and removing the undissolved residue by filtration. The filtrate contained 0.0303 g of CaO and 0.387 g of SiO₂ per liter. A quantity of calcium aluminate extract was obtained by shaking 200 g of low-sulfate calcium aluminate cement (0.03 per cent of SO₃) with 4 liters of distilled water for 3 hours, filtering, and diluting the extract to 12 liters. The resulting solution contained 0.400 g of CaO and 0.581 g of Al₂O₃ per liter.²

² It has been shown [9] that calcium aluminate solutions prepared from commercial calcium aluminate cements are practically free of iron. More recent studies have revealed that the quantity of silica extracted is so small that for the purpose at hand it may be neglected. The concentration of alkalies in the solution should have been too low to be a factor of moment because: first, a low-alkali cement was used in their preparation: second, a very high water-cement ratio was maintained; and, third, the solutions were subsequently diluted.

Hydrated Calcium Silicoaluminates

As shown in table 2, mixtures of the calcium aluminate and silicate solutions were prepared in which the molar ratios of silica to alumina varied between 1 and 4. Quantities of solid calcium oxide were then immediately added to the mixtures in amounts sufficient to saturate the solutions with calcium hydroxide (1.15 g of CaO per liter) and in addition to provide molar ratios of total lime to alumina (CaO/Al₂O₃+ $CaSiO_3/Al_2O_3$) varying between three and seven in the precipitates. The precipitate in experiment 1, table 2, had the typical "silken" appearance of suspensions of the hexagonal hydrated calcium alumi-This characteristic was exhibited in diminishing degree by nates. the precipitates in experiments 2, 3, and 4 and not at all by those in experiments 5 and 6. The mixtures, in well-stoppered flasks, were shaken for 15 minutes to disperse the added lime and thereafter at hourly intervals during the first day. The flasks were stored in the laboratory and subsequently shaken once daily in the course of the first month, after which they were allowed to stand without shaking. Samples of the precipitates were withdrawn at intervals for microscopical examination.

	Composition of mixture		Elapsed time	Molar ratios in precipitate						
Experi- ment	Calcium			before analysis of sam-	Calculated		By analysis			CaO con- tent
number	alumi- nate solu- tion 1 solu- tion 2		Solid ples of CaO precipi- tate and solution		$\frac{CaO}{Al_2O_3}$	$\frac{\rm CaSiO_3}{\rm Al_2O_3}$	$\frac{CaO}{Al_2O_3}$	$\frac{\text{CaSiO}_3}{\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3}$	$\frac{\mathrm{H}_{2}\mathrm{O}^{3}}{\mathrm{Al}_{2}\mathrm{O}_{3}}$	of solu- tion
1 2 3 4 5 6	$ml \\ 2,000 \\ 1,000 \\ 1,000 \\ 1,000 \\ 1,000 \\ 500$	ml 1,769 1,769 1,769 1,769 2,654 1,769	<i>g</i> 6. 04 3. 69 4. 33 4. 65 5. 64 3. 47	Days 27 60 59 60 198	31 34 33 3	$ \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 2 \\ 3 \\ 4 \end{array} $	2.95 2.00 3.00 3.70 	1. 05 2. 09 2. 05 2. 15 4. 27	12.3 12.3 13.5 14.8 	g/liter 1. 14 0. 53 1. 11 1. 24

TABLE 2.—Preparation	r of	hydrated	calcium	silicoa	luminates
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 Contained 0.581 g of Al₂O₃, 0.400 g of CaO per liter.
 Contained 0.387 g of SiO₂, 0.0303 g of CaO per liter.
 Determined after washing precipitate with alcohol and ether, and drying to constant weight in a desiccator over calcium chloride.

The precipitate from experiment 1 became uniform in index of refraction within about 1 week. Although very finely divided, it appeared to be entirely composed of very small hexagonal plates, frequently occurring in spherulitic groups. The crystals are uniaxial negative and have the refractive indices, $\omega = 1.538 \pm 0.003$, $\epsilon = 1.523 \pm$ Chemical analyses of the precipitate, after it had stood in 0.003.contact with solution for 27 days, gave the molar ratios shown in table 2, which correspond to the formula 3CaO.Al₂O₃.CaSiO₃.12H₂O. The X-ray diffraction pattern of the preparation is similar to those of 3CaO.Al₂O₃.CaSO₄.12H₂O and of 4CaO.Al₂O₃.13H₂O (or 3CaO.- $Al_2O_3.Ca(OH)_2.12H_2O)$, with a closer relationship to $4CaO.Al_2O_3$. 13H,O.

In experiment 2, table 2, the preparation which contained CaO, Al₂O₃, and CaSiO₃ in the molar ratios 1:1:2 took up lime from solution and gave molar ratios of 2:1:2 in the precipitate. The molar ratios of the other analyzed precipitates agreed approximately with the calculated values. All of the preparations listed in table 2, except that of experiment 1, contained considerable finely divided or amorphous material as well as hexagonal plate crystals having the optical properties of $3CaO.Al_2O_3.CaSiO_3.12H_2O$. Their X-ray diffraction patterns corresponded with that of this compound. It was concluded, therefore, that the only silicoaluminate formed in these mixtures is the compound $3CaO.Al_2O_3.CaSiO_3.12H_2O$.

After these determinations, the mixtures were allowed to stand for an additional 3 years and samples of the precipitates were again withdrawn for microscopical examinations. A new phase was then observed in the precipitates. It appeared usually as long, thin, needlelike prisms. In some preparations where the crystals had a greater width, the prisms appeared to possess a hexagonal crosssection. They are uniaxial negative, $\omega = 1.487 \pm 0.003$, $\epsilon = 1.479 \pm$ 0.003. The crystals have parallel extinction and negative elongation.

Table 3 shows the approximate proportions of these crystals in the various precipitates. In each precipitate the more abundant phase consisted of the hexagonal plate form of silicoaluminate. No isometric crystals were found, thus indicating the absence of members of the garnet-hydrogarnet series [10].

TABLE 3.—Formation of needle crystals of calcium silicoaluminate in preparations of table 2, after standing for 3 years in contact with lime solutions

Experiment		nate molar precipitate	Approximate proportion of needle	CaO in solution	
number		CaSiOs AlgOs	crystals in precipitate		
1	3	1	% 20	g/liter 0. 530 . 344	
3	13	2	30 40	. 344	
4	4	2	40	. 905	
5	3	3	40	. 663	
6	3	4	5	. 541	

The needle crystals are believed to be a high-silica calcium silicoaluminate, $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3CaSiO_3.XH_2O$. The habit of these crystals and the measured optical properties, except indices of refraction, are identical with those of the high-sulfate calcium sulfoaluminate, $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3CaSO_4.31H_2O$. A water content of 30 to 32 moles is tentatively assigned to the silicate compound by analogy with the various similar calcium aluminate complex salts which have been prepared.

The behavior of the low-silica form of calcium silicoaluminate in converting slowly to the high-silica form is entirely similar to the relations exhibited by the calcium sulfoaluminates. Thus, in the preparation of the high-sulfate calcium sulfoaluminate, Lerch, Ashton, and Bogue [2] observed that the low-sulfate compound was usually obtained as an intermediate product, despite the presence of an excess of CaSO₄. The conversion to the more stable sulfoaluminate is usually complete in about a week, whereas the corresponding transformation, in the case of the silicoaluminate compounds, is incomplete after 3 years, even in experiment 5, where CaO, Al₂O₃, and SiO₂ were in the proper proportions to form the high-silica product. The precipitates in experiments 4 and 5 of table 3 gave the X-ray diffraction pattern of $3CaO.Al_2O_3.CaSiO_3.12H_2O$, together with additional lines. Because of the obscuring effect of the stronger pattern it was not possible to determine whether these additional lines indicated an X-ray diffraction pattern similar to that of the high-sulfate calcium sulfoaluminate.

The lime contents of the solutions after 3 years' contact with the silicoaluminate precipitates are shown in the last column of table 3. These values indicate that the high-silica calcium silicoaluminate will form in the presence of solutions containing between 0.3 and 0.9 g of CaO per liter.

2. FORMATION OF HIGH-SILICA CALCIUM SILICOALUMINATE FROM MIXTURES OF CEMENT COMPOUNDS

In order to determine if hydrated calcium silicoaluminate will form from mixtures of the various cement compounds in saturated lime solution, the combinations of anhydrous calcium aluminates and silicates shown in table 4 were prepared. The mixtures, which contained the compounds in equimolar proportions, were added to 1-liter portions of saturated lime solution (1.15 g of CaO per liter) and placed in tightly stoppered flasks, which were allowed to stand for 3 years with occasional shaking. Samples were then withdrawn for microscopical examination.

Experiment number	Mixture ¹	Weight of mixture per volume of lime solution	Approximate proportion of needle form of silicoaluminate in product	CaO in solution
1 2 3 4	$\begin{array}{l} \beta\text{-}2\text{CaO.SiO}_2\text{+}4\text{CaO.Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{,}\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3\\ \beta\text{-}2\text{CaO.SiO}_2\text{+}3\text{CaO.Al}_2\text{O}_3\\ 3\text{CaO.SiO}_2\text{+}4\text{CaO.Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{,}\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3\\ 3\text{CaO.SiO}_2\text{+}4\text{CaO.Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{.}\end{array}$	g/liter 18 10 10 10	% 10 30 15 0	g/liter 1.02 1.11 1.08 1.15

TABLE 4.—Formation of needle crystals of calcium silicoaluminate in mixtures of cement compounds placed in saturated lime solution (1.15 g CaO per liter) and allowed to stand for 3 years

¹ The mixtures contained equimolar proportions of the compounds.

As shown in table 4, all of the products, except that from the mixture of tricalcium aluminate and tricalcium silicate, contained appreciable amounts of the high-silica calcium silicoaluminate, which appeared as well-developed needle-like prisms. Hexagonal plate crystals were also present in the materials. No attempt was made to identify the crystalline phases which made up the balance of the products.

The lime contents of the solutions given in the last column of table 4, in conjunction with similar data in table 3, indicate that the highsilica silicoaluminate can form in contact with solutions containing calcium hydroxide in amounts between 0.3 g of CaO per liter and saturation.

3. PREPARATION OF HYDRATED HEXACALCIUM ALUMINATE

Assarsson [5] observed the precipitation of needle-shaped hexagonal prisms from extracts of monocalcium aluminate and high-alumina cements. He assigned to this material the formula 5CaO.Al₂O₃.34H₂O₇,

but stated, in his discussion of a paper by Bessey [6], that it seems to be impossible to prepare the compound without any trace of sulfate. Wells, Clarke, and McMurdie [7] failed to find such an aluminate in the system CaO-Al₂O₃-H₂O at 21° and 90° C, and suggested that it may exist in the quaternary system CaO-Al₂O₃-CaSO₄-H₂O as a metastable phase. Bessey [6] expressed the opinion that the compound may be related in structure to the high-sulfate form of calcium sulfoaluminate.

The preparation of such an aluminate was attempted in order to determine if the calcium sulfate in $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3CaSO_4.31H_2O$ can be completely replaced by calcium hydroxide. It was anticipated that the highly basic compound which might result from such replacement would only be stable in contact with solutions containing high concentrations of calcium hydroxide.

Accordingly, an excess of calcium oxide was added to 500 ml of a 10-percent sugar solution, the mixture shaken for 3 hours, and filtered. The filtrate contained 17 g of CaO per liter. A calcium aluminate extract was prepared by shaking 50 g of calcium aluminate cement (containing 0.03 percent of SO_3) with 500 ml of water for 3 hours and filtering. This extract contained 1.8 g of Al_2O_3 and 1.2 g of CaO per filtering. The solutions were mixed and allowed to stand. Formation liter. of a precipitate began within a few hours. After 5 days, samples of the precipitate and solution were withdrawn. Titration of the solution with standard acid showed a lime content of 9.06 g of CaO per The sample of precipitate was placed in a flask with 100 ml of liter. absolute alcohol and the mixture shaken for 1 hour to remove any sugar from mother liquor adhering to the particles. The solid material was then filtered off, washed with alcohol and ether, and dried in air overnight.

Microscopical examination showed that the preparation consisted of needle-like prisms entirely similar in appearance to crystals of the high-sulfate form of calcium sulfoaluminate. The crystals are uniaxial negative; $\omega = 1.475 \pm 0.003$ and $\epsilon = 1.466 \pm 0.003$. They have parallel extinction and negative elongation.

Analysis of the preparation gave the following composition:

CaO	% 32. 38
Al ₂ O ₃	9.84 57.46
Total	99.68

This corresponds to molar ratios of 5.98CaO: $1Al_2O_3$: $33H_2O$. Accordingly, the compound may be assigned the formula, 6CaO. Al_2O_3 . $33H_2O$ or 3CaO. Al_2O_3 . $3Ca(OH)_2$. $30H_2O$. Its X-ray diffraction pattern is almost indistinguishable from that of 3CaO. Al_2O_3 . $3CaSO_4$. $31H_2O$.

It is believed that this compound and Assarsson's pentacalcium aluminate hydrate are fundamentally the same and that the lower CaO/Al_2O_3 ratio of Assarsson's compound is caused by partial hydrolysis.

Although qualitative tests of the $3CaO.Al_2O_3.3Ca(OH)_2.30H_2O$ indicated the absence of sulfate, it seemed desirable to prepare it from starting materials in which this constituent was entirely absent.

Hydrated Calcium Silicoaluminates

Accordingly, a calcium aluminate extract was made from sulfate-free $3CaO.5Al_2O_3$ and added to a lime-sugar solution prepared as before. The resulting crystalline precipitate was identical in all respects with that which resulted from mixing the extract of calcium aluminate cement with lime-sugar solution.

III. SUMMARY

Two calcium silicoaluminates, apparently analogs of the high- and low-sulfate forms of calcium sulfoaluminate, were investigated. The low-silica silicoaluminate has the formula, 3CaO.Al₂O₃.CaSiO₃.12H₂O, and occurs as thin hexagonal plates. In contact with lime solutions, it is slowly converted to long needle-like prisms whose habit and optical properties are very similar to those of 3CaO.Al₂O₃.3CaSO₄.31H₂O. The needle-form of the silicoaluminate has not yet been prepared in a pure state but, by analogy with other similar calcium aluminate complex salts, it has tentatively been assigned the formula, 3CaO. Al₂O₃.3CaSiO₃.30-32H₂O. It was also found in the following mixtures of cement compounds, which had stood in contact with approximately saturated lime solutions for 3 years: β -2CaO.SiO₂ and 4CaO.Al₂O₃. Fe₂O₃; β-2CaO.SiO₂ and 3CaO.Al₂O₃; and 3CaO.SiO₂ and 4CaO. Al_2O_3 . Fe₂O₃. The role of the silicoaluminates in the setting and hardening of cements warrants further study. The close analogy between the silico- and sulfoaluminates suggests the possible existence of a solid-solution series between these compounds with the formation of sulfo-silicoaluminates, somewhat similar to those reported by Lafuma [8].

A hexacalcium aluminate hydrate was prepared that appears to be the analog of the high-sulfate form of calcium sulfoaluminate in which calcium sulfate is completely replaced by calcium hydroxide. Its formula may be written as 3CaO.Al₂O₃.3Ca(OH)₂.30H₂O. This compound would probably not form as a direct hydration product of portland cement but might appear, under some conditions, as a solid solution in the high-sulfate form of calcium sulfoaluminate.

The authors are indebted to H. F. McMurdie for making the X-ray diffraction patterns of the preparations.

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5.00 to 10.00	. 01	12

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