

### 33. GASES IN BASALTS FROM THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA, DEEP SEA DRILLING PROJECT LEG 65, HOLES 482B, 482C, 482D, 482F, 483, 483B, 483C, AND 485A<sup>1</sup>

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#### INTRODUCTION

Basalts from different structural provinces in the ocean basins, such as mid-ocean ridges, island arcs, and oceanic plateaus, show marked differences in major and minor element composition stemming from differences in magma source. In addition, there are variations even within individual provinces, based on such processes as crystal fractionation, secondary alteration, and hydrothermal alteration. It is also known that hydrothermal processes can cause changes in the gas composition of submarine basalts. For example, Zolotarev et al. (1978) have established that hydrothermal alteration frequently causes an increase in the CO<sub>2</sub> content of basalts. If the homogeneity in composition and concentration of organic gases in oceanic basalts is associated with degassing during epimagmatic alteration, it would be interesting to investigate the relative abundance of gas phases in young basalts from midoceanic ridges.

This chapter deals with the distribution of organic gases and CO<sub>2</sub> in young basalts recovered on Leg 65 from the Gulf of California. Our aim was to establish the relationship between gas composition and degree of alteration.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Using standard analytical techniques, we studied the natural gas content of 85 basalt samples. (The distribution of samples is presented in Table 1.) Gas extractions were obtained from powdered 2-g samples in hermetically sealed steel chambers filled with argon. The gases were analyzed using an HL-108 gas chromatograph equipped with an oxygen-flame ionization detector. The threshold of sensitivity for individual hydrocarbons was 10<sup>-5</sup>% by volume, and analytical error was ± 5% of the measured value. The sensitivity of the catarometer used to measure the low boiling-point gas content was 10<sup>-3</sup>% by volume for He; 10<sup>-3</sup>% for H<sub>2</sub>; 10<sup>-1</sup>% for CO<sub>2</sub>; and 10<sup>-1</sup>% for N<sub>2</sub>. The analytical error was, again, ± 5% of the measured value.

The measured gas contents are identical in many respects to those in basalts of the Kuril-Kamchatka Island arc (Voitov et al., 1970), the islands of the south-

western Pacific (Zolotarev et al., 1976), Iceland (Zolotarev et al., 1977), and also to those from the Mid-Atlantic Ridge obtained during DSDP Legs 45 and 49 (Zolotarev et al., 1978). In particular, all of the samples contain hydrogen and gaseous hydrocarbons.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, there are differences among gases from the different samples, as follows.

First, the CO<sub>2</sub> content in the samples we studied is always lower than the threshold response of the catarometer. Second, in most of the samples from Holes 482B and 483, the He content is anomalously high (up to 24.5 cm<sup>3</sup>/kg). In fact, these values are higher than those observed in granite and crystalline basement rocks containing more uranium. Third, the total hydrogen content is 2–4 times higher than that in basalts recovered from the Mid-Atlantic Ridge on DSDP Legs 45 and 49.

Components ranging from methane to propane compose the hydrocarbons in these samples. The spectrum of hydrocarbons from basalts from Hole 482B is broader, however, in that these rocks typically contain butane, with normal butane being much more common than isobutane (Fig. 1). In terms of their relative amounts, the hydrocarbons in basalts we studied are similar to those associated with oil deposits.

We should also emphasize that the basalts from Hole 482B, which is situated near the intersection of the Tamayo Fracture Zone and the central paleomagnetic anomaly, also contained the highest concentrations of hydrocarbons, hydrogen, and helium.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The gases in basalts from the Gulf of California do not differ markedly from those from other areas of the ocean basins. Therefore, there appears to be no correlation between gas content and primary basalt composition. At the same time, the spectrum of hydrocarbons in basalts from Site 482 was wider than was that from other holes examined.

Since CO<sub>2</sub> content is extremely low at all sites, we conclude that hydrothermal alteration has been minimal. The relatively high concentration of hydrogen in the basalts from Hole 482B suggests that the hydrothermal solutions at this site may have been weakly mineralized and reducing.

<sup>1</sup> Lewis, B. T. R., Robinson, P., et al., *Init. Repts. DSDP, 65: Washington (U.S. Govt. Printing Office)*.

<sup>2</sup> The nitrogen shown in Tables 1 and 2 is due to atmospheric contamination.

Table 1. Average chemical composition of gases in basalts from Holes 482B, 482C, 482D, 482F, 483, 483B, 483C, and 485A; Leg 65.

Hole	Number of Samples	CH <sub>4</sub>	Total of Heavy Gases			Organic Gases Calculated on 100%							
			He	H <sub>2</sub>	N <sub>2</sub>	CH <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	
482B	21	0.175	0.029	7.822	9.324	82.65	82.88	9.11	0.96	3.68	0.55	0.69	1.48
		0.087	0.015	3.880	4.620	40.95							
482C	8	0.153	0.019	—	4.729	95.10	89.02	7.27	0.73	2.32	0.09	—	0.58
		0.079	0.010		2.440	49.06							
482D	8	0.182	0.018	—	5.106	94.69	91.12	6.34	0.57	1.82	0.07	—	0.08
		0.086	0.008		2.410	44.69							
482F	1	0.223	0.026	—	5.968	93.78	89.68	7.43	0.89	1.95	—	—	—
		0.065	0.008		1.750	27.50							
483	11	0.136	0.030	3.415	2.357	94.06	82.64	4.99	1.61	10.63	—	—	0.15
		0.073	0.016	1.840	1.270	50.68							
483B	13	0.125	0.019	—	3.587	96.27	87.20	6.17	0.53	5.75	—	—	0.35
		0.078	0.012		2.250	60.38							
483C	1	0.176	0.015	—	5.929	93.88	92.02	5.84	0.44	1.70	—	—	—
		0.089	0.008		3.00	47.50							
485A	22	0.159	0.018	—	5.717	94.11	89.66	4.88	0.89	3.22	—	—	1.37
		0.071	0.008		2.560	42.14							

Note: Chemical composition of gases: numerator = average content, vol.%; denominator = average content, cm<sup>3</sup>/kg. Dash = "not present."

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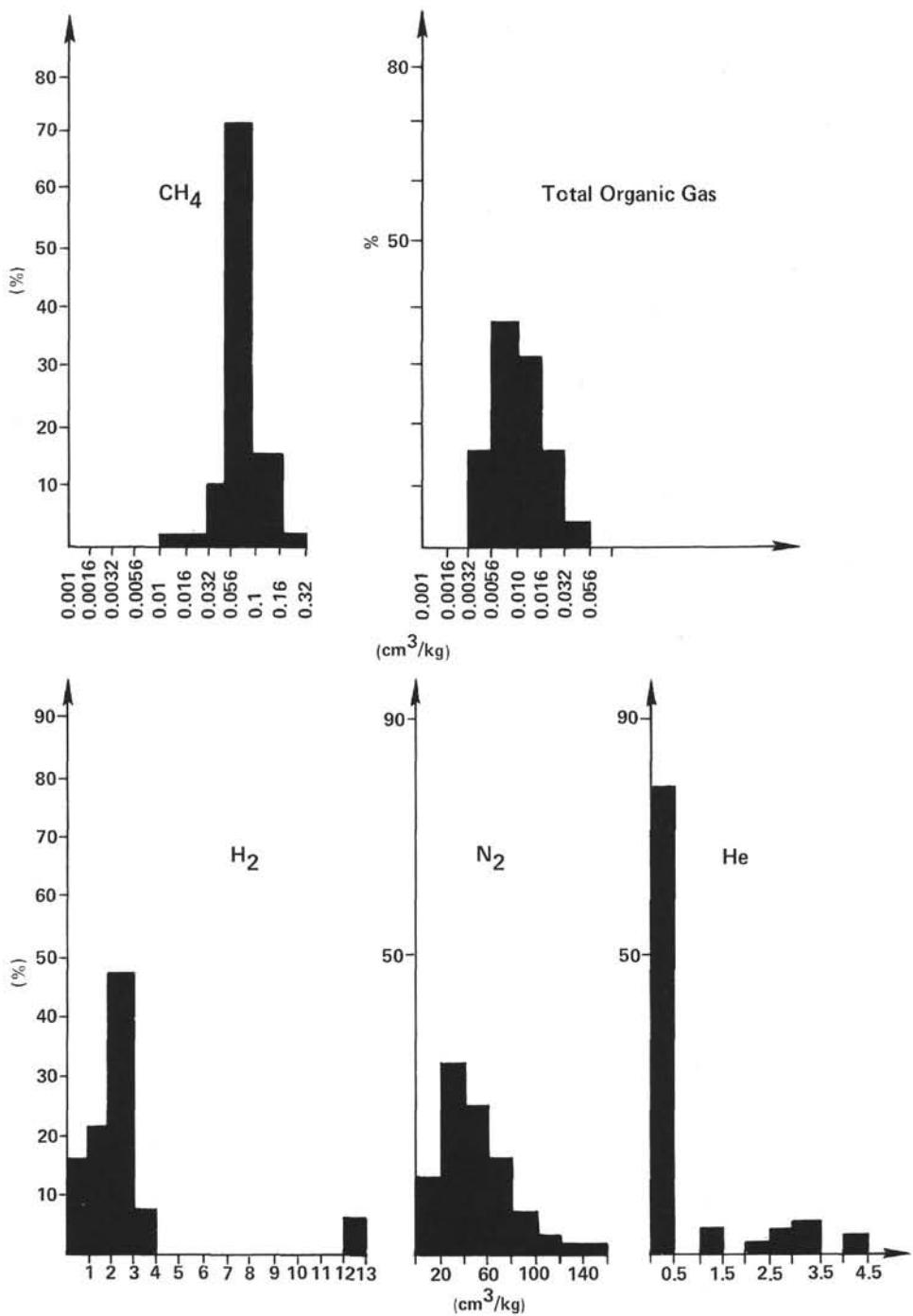


Figure 1. Histograms of gas content in basalt. Percentage of samples vs. content by volume (n = 85).

Table 2. Chemical composition of gases in basalts from Holes 482B, 482C, 482D, 482F, 483, 483B, 483C, and 485A; Leg 65.

Note: A—chemical composition of gases: numerator = average content, vol. %; denominator = average content, cm<sup>3</sup>/kg; organic gases, cm<sup>3</sup>/kg. B—Organic gases calculated on 100%. Dash = "not present."

Table 2. (Continued).

Table 2. (Continued).

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole	482D												482F				483			
	9-1 59-68		9-2 130-139		10-1 133-139		11-1 110-118		12-1 80-87		12-3 104-108		13-1 59-70		5-1 100-108		14-1 13-21		15-1 121-130	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.067 0.072	90.99 0.061	0.092 0.069	91.96 0.069	0.685 0.115	90.64 0.106	0.229 0.106	89.93 0.106	4.037 0.066	91.05 0.066	0.095 0.109	92.50 0.065	0.321 0.065	91.82 0.065	0.223 0.065	89.68 0.102	0.195 0.073	71.68 0.073	0.219 —	81.28 —
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	6.38	5.86	6.63	6.56	6.33	6.56	6.73	5.47	6.09	7.43	5.59	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3.05	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	0.54	0.64	0.56	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.93	0.59	0.36	0.89	10.52	0.22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	2.09	1.54	2.17	2.25	1.06	1.44	1.73	1.95	—	—	11.61	15.45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.007	—	0.005	—	0.007	—	0.013	0.59	0.010	—	0.005	—	0.010	—	0.008	—	0.040	tr	0.017	
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.43	0.24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.59	—	—	
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
He	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.20	6.80	—	
H <sub>2</sub>	1.64 1.75	2.62 1.75	24.81 2.50	4.51 2.25	95.57 2.50	—	3.22 2.25	—	11.07 3.75	5.97 1.75	2.86 1.50	—	—	—	—	—	3.25 0.75	2.25 0.75		
N <sub>2</sub>	98.29	97.28	74.43	95.22	—	—	96.68	88.58	93.78	90.66	90.66	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
CO <sub>2</sub>	105.00	65.00	7.50	47.50	—	—	67.50	30.00	27.50	47.50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole	483												483B				483B			
	16-1 71-83		17-2 120-128		20-1 118-127		21-2 43-51		22-4 117-127		23-2 92-103		25-1 48-58		26-2 140-149		26-3 98-108		4-5 13-23	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.864 0.078	83.38 0.074	0.206 0.057	85.08 0.057	0.074 0.055	83.35 0.055	0.074 0.062	85.12 0.080	1.609 0.078	87.39 0.078	0.101 0.078	82.31 0.078	0.156 0.060	86.84 0.060	0.069 0.085	81.30 0.085	0.149 0.058	81.55 0.058	0.065 79.81	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	5.61	6.23	5.67	5.40	3.87	5.17	4.76	4.74	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5.07	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	0.69	0.74	0.95	1.00	0.92	0.67	0.72	0.88	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.41	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	10.32	7.95	10.04	8.48	7.82	11.29	7.68	13.08	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15.12	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.016	—	0.013	—	0.010	—	0.009	—	0.017	—	0.012	—	0.014	—	0.019	—	0.015	—	—	
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	tr	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	tr	—	—	—	—	
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
He	7.77 3.25	7.62 2.75	1.94 1.50	1.68 1.25	71.98 2.75	4.10 3.25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
H <sub>2</sub>	2.39 1.00	2.08 0.75	0.97 0.75	1.01 0.75	26.17 1.00	1.26 1.00	4.99 2.50	2.02 1.75	—	—	3.93 2.25	1.68 1.50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
N <sub>2</sub>	89.62 37.50	90.06 32.50	97.00 75.00	97.23 72.50	—	94.52 75.00	94.83 47.50	97.90 85.00	95.89 55.00	95.89 55.00	95.89 55.00	98.23 87.50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
CO <sub>2</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole	483B												483B				483B			
	7-2 8-19		8-3 26-35		12-1 40-46		13-3 64-74		17-1 138-146		19-2 21-30		22-2 13-23		25-1 103-114		27-2 10-21		27-3 15-25	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.085 0.076	80.13 0.077	0.072 0.082	76.27 0.079	0.131 0.079	77.94 0.072	0.132 0.072	90.90 0.073	0.131 0.073	90.31 0.073	0.188 0.073	91.06 0.073	0.136 0.069	90.43 0.069	0.111 0.068	91.63 0.068	0.142 0.076	92.25 0.076	0.138 91.80	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	6.15	5.81	6.33	6.71	6.33	6.84	6.31	6.21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6.38	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	0.68	0.65	1.24	0.49	0.53	0.82	0.37	0.27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.88	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	13.04	16.43	14.49	1.89	1.79	1.28	2.17	1.89	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.11	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.019	0.024	0.023	—	0.008	—	0.008	—	0.007	—	0.011	—	0.006	—	0.006	—	0.007	—	—	
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	0.84	—	—	—	—	1.03	—	—	—	0.72	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.33	
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
He	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
H <sub>2</sub>	1.96 1.75	1.64 1.75	3.61 2.25	3.76 2.25	4.54 2.50	2.59 1.00	4.28 3.25	4.28 2.25	2.59 3.00	2.59 3.00	2.65 2.25	6.24 3.00	2.65 2.25	2.65 3.00	2.65 3.00	6.24 2.25	4.10 2.25	—	—	
N <sub>2</sub>	97.94	98.27	96.22	96.09	95.32	97.20	95.57	97.26	95.57	97.26	93.61	95.75	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
CO <sub>2</sub>	87.50	105.00	60.00	57.50	52.50	37.50	72.50	82.50	45.00	45.00	52.50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole Core/Section (Interval in cm)	483B				483C				485A											
	32-1 110-119		32-3 33-40		4-3 3-14		11-3 140-148		11-1 13-26		12-1 21-33		13-1 35-42		14-1 43-56		18-1 9-20		23-1 66-76	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.283 0.086	89.88	1.258 0.101	91.23	0.176 0.089	92.02	0.208 0.110	80.58	0.209 0.084	87.16	0.161 0.061	92.90	0.142 0.090	91.60	0.154 0.106	91.27	0.183 0.097	84.85	0.118 0.053	91.90
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	6.68	—	5.60	—	5.84	—	4.84	—	5.86	—	4.71	—	5.95	—	5.38	—	5.85	—	5.29	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	0.44	—	0.58	—	0.44	—	0.47	—	4.41	—	0.65	—	0.43	—	0.73	—	0.37	—	0.58	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	2.13	—	1.84	—	1.70	—	13.50	—	1.71	—	0.91	—	1.45	—	2.14	—	1.79	—	2.24	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.010	—	0.010	—	0.008	—	0.027	—	0.012	—	0.008	—	0.008	—	0.010	—	0.017	—	0.006	
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	0.86	—	0.74	—	—	—	0.60	—	0.86	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
He	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
H <sub>2</sub>	5.87 2.50	—	36.99 3.00	—	5.93 3.00	—	5.65 3.00	—	6.24 2.50	—	7.88 3.00	—	1.57 1.00	—	4.75 3.25	—	5.65 3.00	—	3.93 2.25	
N <sub>2</sub>	93.99 40.00	—	61.64 45.00	—	93.88 47.50	—	94.09 50.00	—	93.53 37.50	—	91.95 35.00	—	98.27 62.50	—	95.08 65.00	—	94.14 50.00	—	95.95 55.00	
CO <sub>2</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole Core/Section (Interval in cm)	485A																			
	23-2 38-50		23-3 60-72		24-2 77-87		25-1 63-74		29-3 118-130		30-1 121-134		30-2 116-129		31-1 98-119		34-2 78-89		35-1 21-31	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.150 0.071	92.58	0.308 0.089	85.65	0.067 0.067	89.01	0.466 0.059	94.58	0.122 0.052	95.60	0.347 0.087	89.39	0.250 0.055	93.21	0.246 0.062	92.76	0.146 0.099	91.61	0.074 0.063	92.95
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	5.57	—	4.32	—	6.25	—	3.44	—	3.61	—	5.81	—	4.65	—	4.39	—	5.01	—	4.02	
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	—	—	0.41	—	1.44	—	tr	—	0.79	—	0.44	—	0.73	—	tr	—	0.60	—	—	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	1.86	—	2.39	—	2.21	—	1.98	—	tr	—	3.80	—	1.41	—	2.48	—	2.28	—	3.02	
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.006	—	0.015	—	0.008	—	0.003	—	0.002	—	0.010	—	0.004	—	0.005	—	0.009	—	0.005	
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	7.23	—	1.10	—	—	—	—	—	0.57	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.51	—	—
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
He	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
H <sub>2</sub>	4.75 2.25	—	12.99 3.75	—	2.50 2.50	—	19.90 2.50	—	5.32 2.25	—	9.96 2.50	—	8.02 1.75	—	9.97 2.50	—	4.75 3.25	—	2.94 2.50	
N <sub>2</sub>	95.08 45.00	—	86.64 25.00	—	97.43 97.50	—	79.61 10.00	—	94.55 40.00	—	89.65 2.25	—	91.71 20.00	—	89.76 2.25	—	95.09 65.00	—	96.98 82.50	
CO <sub>2</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Table 2. (Continued).

Hole Core/Section (Interval in cm)	485A							
	35-5 48-62		38-2 104-119		39-3 47-57		39-4 105-115	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
CH <sub>4</sub>	0.236 0.084	93.80	0.390 0.059	93.03	0.157 0.072	91.81	0.059 0.048	92.84
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	—	4.36	—	4.63	—	4.99	—	4.88
C <sub>2</sub> H <sub>4</sub>	—	tr	—	1.03	—	1.09	—	0.82
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	1.84	—	1.31	—	2.11	—	1.45
C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>6</sub>	0.006	—	0.004	—	0.006	—	0.004	—
i-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
n-C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>10</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
C <sub>4</sub> H <sub>8</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
He	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
H <sub>2</sub>	8.43 3.00	—	16.60 2.50	—	6.58 3.00	—	2.14 1.75	—
N <sub>2</sub>	91.32 32.50	—	82.98 12.50	—	93.25 42.50	—	97.79 80.00	—
CO <sub>2</sub>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—