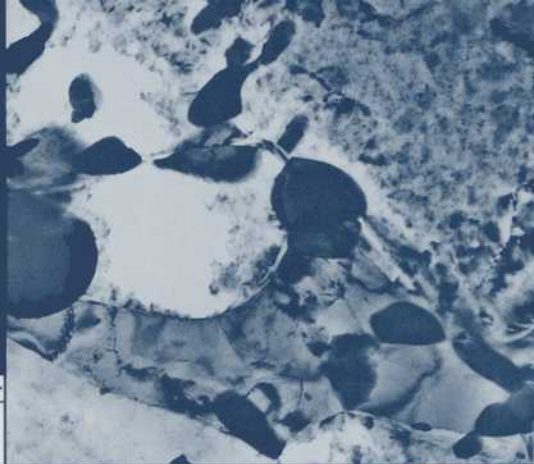




Effects of
RADIATION
on Materials

15TH INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

STOLLER, KUMAR, GELLES

EDITORS

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Roger E. Stoller, Arvind S. Kumar, and David S. Gelles, editors

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The quality of the papers in this publication reflects not only the obvious efforts of the authors and the technical editor(s), but also the work of these peer reviewers. The ASTM Committee on Publications acknowledges with appreciation their dedication and contribution to time and effort on behalf of ASTM.

Foreword

This publication, *Effects of Radiation on Materials: 15th International Symposium*, contains papers presented at the 15th International Symposium on the Effects of Radiation on Materials, which was held in Nashville, Tennessee, 19–21 June 1990. The symposium was sponsored by ASTM Committee E-10 on Nuclear Technology and Applications. Roger Stoller, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, was the symposium chairman. Arvind S. Kumar, University of Missouri-Rolla, and David S. Gelles, Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory, served as cochairmen.



Attendees at the 15th International Symposium on the Effects of Radium on Materials gather outside the Doubletree Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee, for a group photo.

Contents

Overview	xiii
-----------------	------

IRRADIATION FACILITIES

Calculated Production of High-Energy Neutrons by 800-MeV Protons— AYMAN I. HAWARI, ARVIND S. KUMAR, AND LAWRENCE R. GREENWOOD	3
The Design and Performance of High-Temperature Irradiation Capsules— DAVID L. GREENSLADE, R. CRAIG KNIGHT, AND AUGUST M. ERMI	12

COMMERCIAL REACTOR MATERIALS: DATA FROM SURVEILLANCE PROGRAMS

In-Service Evaluation of French Pressurized Water Reactor Vessel Steel— CHRISTIAN BRILLAUD AND FRANÇOIS HEDIN	23
Neutron Irradiation Embrittlement of Pressure Vessel Materials in Spanish Nuclear Power Reactors— JUAN BROS, ANTONIO BALLESTEROS, AND ANDRES LOPEZ	50
Evaluation of Tarapur Atomic Power Station Pressure Vessel Surveillance Results— S. ANANTHARAMAN, S. CHATTERJEE, AND K. S. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN	56
Mechanical Testing of Civil Advanced Gas-Cooled Reactor Tie Bars— PETER A. HITCHCOCK AND STANLEY B. FISHER	64
Reconstituted Impact Specimens with Small Inserts— EGON N. KLAUSNITZER AND GEORG HOFMANN	76

PRESSURE VESSEL STEELS: MICROSTRUCTURE AND MODEL MATERIALS

Investigations of Gundremmingen RPV Archive Material Irradiated in Light-Water and Heavy-Water Reactors— COLIN A. ENGLISH, WILL J. PHYTHIAN, JOHN T. BUSWELL, J. RUSSELL HAWTHORNE, AND PHILIP H. N. RAY	93
Evolution of the Microstructure of PWR Pressure Vessel Steels from the CHOOZ A Reactor Surveillance Program after Long-Term Irradiations— JEAN CLAUDE VAN DUYSSEN, JOSSELINE BOURGOIN, CHRISTIAN JANOT, AND J. M. PENISSON	117

The Structure and Hardening Mechanism of Copper Precipitation in Thermally Aged or Irradiated Fe-Cu and Fe-Cu-Ni Model Alloys— WILL J. PHYTHIAN, ALAN J. E. FOREMAN, COLIN A. ENGLISH, JOHN T. BUSWELL, MARK HETHERINGTON, KEVIN ROBERTS, AND STEPHANIA PIZZINI	131
The Effects of Metallurgical and Irradiation Variables on the Postirradiation Annealing Kinetics of Pressure Vessel Steels— ERIC MADER, GLENN E. LUCAS, AND G. ROBERT ODETTE	151
Irradiation Response and Annealing Behavior of Pressure Vessel Model Steels and Iron Ternary Alloys Measured with Positron Techniques— MATTI VALO, REINHARD KRAUSE, KIMMO SAARINEN, PEKKA HAUTOJARVI, AND J. RUSSELL HAWTHORNE	172
Further Microstructural Characterization of Submerged-Arc Weld Metals— KENNETH R. LAWLESS AND ARTHUR L. LOWE	186
 PRESSURE VESSEL STEELS: FRACTURE TOUGHNESS OF IRRADIATED MATERIALS	
Irradiation Response of the New IAEA Correlation Monitor Material JRQ Measured by Fracture Mechanical Properties— MATTI VALO, KIM WALLIN, KARI TORRONEN, AND RALF AHLSTRAND	203
An Alternative Approach for the Use of Surveillance Program Results— BERNARD HOUSSIN, YVES MEYZAUD, FRANÇOIS HEDIN, AND CHRISTIAN BRILLAUD	216
Application of Reference Toughness Curves to the HSST Fifth Irradiation Series— WAYNE A. PAVINICH, W. L. SERVER, AND R. K. NANSTAD	238
Effects of Irradiation on Crack-Arrest Toughness of Two High-Copper Welds— SHAFIK K. ISKANDER, WILLIAM R. CORWIN, AND RANDY K. NANSTAD	251
Statistical Analyses of Fracture Toughness Results for Two Irradiated High-Copper Welds— RANDY K. NANSTAD, DONALD E. MCCABE, FAHMY M. HAGGAG, KIMIKO O. BOWMAN, AND DARRYL J. DOWNING	270
Irradiation Characteristics of Weld Wire Heat Number 72105— ARTHUR L. LOWE, JR.	292

ZIRCONIUM ALLOYS

Mechanical Property Evaluation of Rajasthan Atomic Power Station Coolant Channel Components— SUBRATE CHATTERJEE, S. ANANTHARAMAN, AND K. S. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN	311
Rejuvenation of Fracture Properties of Irradiated Zr-2.5 Nb by Heat Treatment— CHRISTOPHER E. COLEMAN, PETER C. K. CHOW, CHARLES E. ELLS, MALCOLM GRIFFITHS, EDWARD F. IBRAHIM, AND STEFAN SAGAT	318

Impression Testing To Determine the Effects of Recrystallization and Radiation on the Deformation Anisotropy of Zircaloy TREX—SHEIKH T. MAHMOOD, SHERIEF A. HUSSEIN, PRASAD S. GODAVARTI, AND K. LINGA MURTY	337
Effects of Proton Irradiation on the Microstructural Evolution of Zircaloy-2 Tubing—JI-JUNG KAI, CHUEN-HORNG TSAI, AND WEN-FEI HSIEH	355
RADIATION DAMAGE FUNDAMENTALS I: PRIMARY DAMAGE PRODUCTION	
Cascade Collapse in Copper and Nickel—JOHN S. VETRANO, IAN M. ROBERTSON, ROBERT S. AVERBACK, AND MARQUIS A. KIRK	375
Cascade Damage in Alpha-Titanium—DUNCAN H. YELLEN, DAVID J. BACON, WILLIAM J. PHYTHIAN, AND COLIN A. ENGLISH	385
Radiation-Induced Order-Disorder Transformation and Recovery in Copper-Palladium—RALPH H. ZEE, MICHAEL W. GUINAN, AND GERALD L. KULCINSKI	406
Defect Production Efficiency in Neutron-Irradiated Iron—ADBERRAFI M. OUGOUAG, MUSA B. DANJAJI, JOHN G. WILLIAMS, JAMES F. STUBBINS, AND MAI A. GHALY	420
RADIATION DAMAGE FUNDAMENTALS II: FORMATION OF THE IRRADIATED MICROSTRUCTURE	
Instability of Spatially Homogenous Interstitial Solution and Interstitial Cluster Nucleation on Initial Stage of Irradiation—EDWARD A. KOPTILOV AND ALEXEY A. SEMENOV	437
The Interaction of Point Defects with Line Dislocations in HVEM Irradiated Fe-Ni-Cr Alloys—SIMON L. KING, MICHAEL L. JENKINS, MARQUIS A. KIRK, AND COLIN A. ENGLISH	448
Effects of Internal Hydrogen on the Vacancy Loop Formation Probability in Aluminum—THO X. BUI, E. SIROIS, IAN M. ROBERTSON, AND MARQUIS A. KIRK	463
Production and Annealing of Radiation Defects in Scandium-Doped Austenitic Fe-Cr-Ni Alloys—IVAN M. NEKLYUDOV, YUZI T. PETRUSENKO, AND ALEXIS N. SLEPTSOV	472
Early Stages of the Evolution of Bubbles in an Aluminum-40 At% Manganese Alloy During Argon Ion Irradiation—K. G. M. NAIR, M. VIJAYALAKSHMI, AND K. KRISHAN	486
Helium Bubbles in Titanium-Stabilized Austenitic Stainless Steels Investigated by Positron Annihilation Spectroscopy—B. VISWANATHAN, G. AMARENDRA, AND R. RAJARAMAN	495

Brittle Fracture of Material Due to Growing Pressurized Cracks— VLADIMIR A. BORODIN, VLADIMIR M. MANICHEV, AND ALEXANDER I. RYAZANOV	507
---	-----

THEORY OF IRRADIATION CREEP AND VOID SWELLING

A Theoretical Model of Accelerated Irradiation Creep at Low Temperatures by Transient Interstitial Absorption— ROGER E. STOLLER, MARTIN L. GROSSBECK, AND LOUIS K. MANSUR	517
Dislocation Core Microstructure and Its Effect on Irradiation Creep— VLADIMIR A. BORODIN AND ALEXANDER I. RYAZANOV	530
Irradiation Creep by Glide-Induced Transient Absorption— ALAN D. BRAILSFORD, WILLIAM A. COGHLAN, AND LOUIS K. MANSUR	540
Diffusion Growth Rate of Macrodefects in Ensembles— VITALY V. SLYOZOV AND PAVEL N. OSTAPCHUK	556
An Account of Point-Defect Recombination in the Theory of Void Swelling— J. V. KONOBEV AND S. I. GOLUBOV	569
Spatial Self-Organization of a Void System in Irradiated Metals— EDWARD A. KOPTELOV AND ALEXEY A. SEMENOV	583
Auto-Oscillation Process in Impure Crystals under Irradiation— P. A. SELISHCHEV AND V. I. SUGAKOV	594

RADIATION-INDUCED SOLUTE SEGREGATION

Radiation-Induced Segregation in 20Cr/25Ni/Nb Stainless Steel— DAVID I. R. NORRIS, CLIVE BAKER, COLIN TAYLOR, AND JOHN M. TITCHMARSH	603
Irradiation-Induced Microchemical Effects and IASCC Initiation— EDWARD P. SIMONEN, LARRY A. CHARLOT, AND STEPHEN M. BRUEMMER	621
Interfacial Segregation in Fast Reactor Irradiated 12% Chromium Martensitic Steel— TERENCE S. MORGAN, EDWARD A. LITTLE, ROY G. FAULKNER, AND JOHN M. TITCHMARSH	633
The Effect of Neutron Irradiation on Segregation to Grain Boundaries in Nimonic PE16— DAVID J. NETTLESHIP AND ROBERT K. WILD	645
Microstructural Characterization of Irradiated Nimonic PE16— STANLEY B. FISHER, VINCENT M. CALLEN, AND PATRICIA K. ROSE	667

Segregation of Tin in Zircaloy-2 under Proton Irradiation—ARTHUR T. MOTTA, CLÉMENT LEMAIGNAN, AND DONALD R. OLANDER	689
--	-----

X-Ray Analysis of the Surface Alloy Formed by High-Dose Implantation of Iron in Aluminum—VENKATESH K. ASUNDI	703
---	-----

Radiation-Modified Phase Diagrams of Binary Alloys—ALEXANDER S. BAKAI AND ANATOLE A. TURKIN	709
--	-----

RADIATION DAMAGE IN CERAMICS AND NUCLEAR FUELS

The Defect Structure of Ion and Neutron Irradiated $\text{YBa}_2\text{Cu}_3\text{O}_{7-\delta}$ Single Crystals—MARCUS C. FRISCHHERZ, MARQUIS A. KIRK, J. Z. LIU, J. P. ZHANG, AND HAROLD W. WEBER	733
--	-----

The Effect of Crystal Orientation on Damage Accumulation in Chromium- Implanted Al_2O_3—MICHAEL E. O'HERN, LAURENCE J. ROMANA, CARL J. MCHARGUE, JEFF C. MCCALLUM, AND CLARK W. WHITE	740
---	-----

Dislocation Loop Formation in Ion-Irradiated Polycrystalline Spinel and Alumina—STEVEN J. ZINKLE	749
---	-----

Radiation Damage in Fusion Window Materials Studied by Thermal Conductivity—MAGNUS ROHDE AND BRIGITTE SCHULZ	764
---	-----

Electrical Conductivity of Single Crystal α-Alumina under Neutron and γ-Ray Irradiation—TATSUO SHIKAMA, MINORU NARUI, AKIRA OCHIAI, HIDEO KAYANO, AND YASUICHI ENDO	776
--	-----

Effects of Neutron Irradiation on Ceramics Fiber-Reinforced Composites— AKIRA KOHYAMA, S. SATO, AND K. HAMADA	785
--	-----

Mechanistic Interpretation of an Observed Fission-Rate Dependence of Low- Temperature Swelling of Irradiated Uranium Silicide Dispersion Fuels— JEFFREY REST AND GERARD L. HOFMAN	797
--	-----

COPPER AND COPPER ALLOYS

A Brief Review of Radiation-Induced Cavity Swelling and Hardening in Copper and Copper Alloys—STEVEN J. ZINKLE	813
---	-----

Unusual Tensile and Fracture Behavior of Pure Copper at High Levels of Neutron- Induced Swelling—KEVIN R. ANDERSON, FRANK A. GARNER, AND JAMES F. STUBBINS	835
---	-----

Tensile Behavior of Cu-5Ni and Various Precipitation-Strengthened Copper Alloys after High-Fluence Irradiation—TATSUO SHIKAMA, FRANK A. GARNER, MARGARET L. HAMILTON, AND KEVIN R. ANDERSON	846
--	-----

Mechanical Property Changes and Microstructures of Dispersion-Strengthened Copper Alloys after Neutron Irradiation at 411, 414, and 529°C— KEVIN R. ANDERSON, FRANK A. GARNER, MARGARET L. HAMILTON, AND JAMES F. STUBBINS	854
Positron Lifetime Studies of Helium Bubble Kinetics in Alpha-Irradiated Copper— G. AMARENDRA, B. VISWANATHAN, R. RAJARAMAN, AND K. P. GOPINATHAN	875

VANADIUM-BASED ALLOYS

Relationship of Microstructure and Tensile Properties for Neutron-Irradiated Vanadium Alloys— BEN A. LOOMIS AND DALE L. SMITH	885
Vanadium Alloys with Improved Resistance to Helium Embrittlement— DAVID N. BRASKI	897
Effect of Helium and dpa's on Tensile Properties of V-5Ti and V-3Ti-1Si— W. VAN WITZENBURG AND E. DE VRIES	915
Large Swelling Observed in a V-5at%Fe Alloy after Irradiation in FFTF— HIDEKI MATSUI, DAVID S. GELLES, AND YUTAKA KOHNO	928

PROPERTIES OF LOW-ACTIVATION STEELS

A Contribution to the Phase Diagram of Fe-Mn-Cr Alloys— WOLFGANG SCHULE AND ECKART LANG	945
Microstructural Examination of Fe-Cr-Mn Alloys after Charged Particle Irradiation— YUTAKA KOHNO, AKIRA KOHYAMA, YUTAI KATOH, AND SHUNJI HIWATASHI	958
The Effects of Nickel on Microstructural Development and Microchemical Changes in Neutron-Irradiated Fe-Cr-Mn Based Steels— HEISHICHIRO TAKAHASHI, SOUMEI OHNUKI, FRANK A. GARNER, AND HU BEN-FU	969
Ion Irradiation Effects on a Martensitic Stainless Steel Designed for Reduced Long-Life Radioactivity— ROBIN D. GRIFFIN, STEVEN J. ZINKLE, RICHARD A. DODD, GERALD L. KULCINSKI, AND DAVID S. GELLES	979

AUSTENITIC STEELS: MICROSTRUCTURE

The Effect of Phosphorus on the Radiation-Induced Microstructure of Stabilized Austenitic Stainless Steels— PHILIPPE DUBUISSON, ARLETTE MAILLARD, CHRISTOPHE DELALANDE, DIDIER GILBON, AND JEAN-LOUIS SÉRAN	995
---	-----

The Influence of Nickel Content on Microstructures of Fe-Cr-Ni Austenitic Ternaries Irradiated with Fast Neutrons or Heavy Ions—TAKEO MUROGA, FRANK A. GARNER, JOHN M. MCCARTHY, AND NAOAKI YOSHIDA	1015
The Behavior of Irradiation-Produced Dislocation Loops under External Stress during Electron Irradiation—SHIRO JITSUKAWA, YOSHIO KATANO, KENSUKE SHIRAIISHI, AND FRANK A. GARNER	1034
Simulation Study of Low-Temperature Irradiation and a LOCA and the Resulting Microstructural Changes in 316 Stainless Steel—AKIRA KOHYAMA, KYOICHI ASANO, YUTAI KATOH, AND YUTAKA KOHNO	1051
Surface Modification of Austenitic 304 Stainless Steel by N₂⁺ and 11B⁺ Ion Implantation—ANIL K. GOEL, NIRANJAN D. SHARMA, RAJENDRA K. MOHINDRA, PRAKRITI K. GHOSH, AND MUKESH C. BHATNAGAR	1061
AUSTENITIC STEELS: MECHANICAL PROPERTIES	
Transient and Static Mechanical Properties of D9 Fuel Pin Cladding and Duct Material Irradiated to High Fluence—N. SCOTT CANNON, FRANK H. HUANG, AND MARGARET L. HAMILTON	1071
Effect of Hold Time and Frequency on the Fatigue Crack Growth Rate of Irradiated Cold-Worked Type 316 Stainless Steel—SHIRO JITSUKAWA, AKIRA UMINO, ISHIO TAKAHASHI, SHOZO IIDA, MAMORU ADACHI, KENJI SUZUKI, AND AKIMICHI HISHINUMA	1083
Comparison of Small-Scale Bending and Axial Fatigue Specimens—GOPAL R. RAO AND BRYAN A. CHIN	1095
Characterization of 316L Steel-Welded Joints Irradiated Between 15 and 41 dpa—ALI-ASGHAR TAVASSOLI	1103
Effect of Microalloying with Boron and Rare-Earth Metals on Swelling and Mechanical Properties of Fe-16Cr-15Ni Steels—VICTOR S. NEUSTROYEV, VALENTIN K. SHAMARDIN, ALEXANDER V. POVSTYANKO, VICTOR N. GOLOVANOV, AND NINA M. MITROFANOVA	1122
FERRITIC AND FERRITIC-MARTENSITIC STEELS: MICROSTRUCTURE	
Comparison of the Effects of Long-Term Thermal Aging and HFIR Irradiation on the Microstructural Evolution of 9Cr-1MoVNb Steel—PHILIP J. MAZIASZ AND RONALD L. KLUEH	1135
Radiation Damage Studies of the 10 to 13% Chromium-Containing Steels and Alloys Irradiated with Heavy Ions—OLEG V. BORODIN, VICTOR N. VOYEVDIN, VICTOR D. ZELENSKIJ, IVAN M. NEKLYUDOV, AND PAVEL V. PLATONOV	1157

A Comparison of Heavy Ion-Irradiated Ferritic and Austenitic Steels in the Early Stages of Damage—ANN WARD AND STANLEY FISHER	1167
The Effect of Neutron Irradiation on the Microstructure and Tensile Properties of 1Cr13Mo2NbVB Steel—A. M. DVORIASHIN, V. D. DMITRIEV, AND V. S. KHABAROV	1180
Precipitation Evolution in HT-9 Steel under Thermal Aging and Stress Rupture Conditions—RONG-NAN PAI AND ROY C. WILCOX	1190
 FERRITIC AND FERRITIC-MARTENSITIC STEELS: MECHANICAL PROPERTIES	
Behavior under Neutron Irradiation of the 15-15Ti and EM10 Steels Used as Standard Materials of the Phenix Fuel Subassembly—J. L. SÉRAN, V. LÉVY, P. DUBUISSON, D. GILBON, A. MAILLARD, A. FISSOLO, H. TOURON, R. CAUVIN, A. CHALONY, AND E. LE BOULBIN	1209
Postirradiation Strength and Deformation of Ferritic Fe-Cr Binary Alloys—MARGARET L. HAMILTON AND DAVID S. GELLES	1234
Ductility and Hardening of Neutron-Irradiated Fe-Cr and Fe-Cr-Ni Steels—NAOHIRO IGATA AND HIDEO KAYANO	1243
Irradiation Effects on Impact Behavior of 12Cr-1MoVW and 2¼Cr-1Mo Steels—R. L. KLUEH AND D. J. ALEXANDER	1256
Fracture Toughness and Tensile Properties of Alloy HT9 in Thin Sections under High Neutron Fluences—FRANK H. HUANG	1267
Evaluation of Irradiation Embrittlement of 2¼Cr-1Mo Steel in Terms of Elastic-Plastic Fracture Toughness—YUTAKA NISHIYAMA, KIYOSHI FUKAYA, MASAhide SUZUKI, TSUNEO KODAIRA, AND TATSUO OKU	1287
Effect of Neutron Irradiation on the Mechanical Properties of Microalloyed Steel for Reinforced Cement Concrete—CHAITANYAMOY GANGULY, SUNDARESAN ANANTHARAMAN, AND KARAI S. SIVARAMAKRISHNAN	1304
Indexes	1311

Overview

ASTM Committee E-10 on Nuclear Technology and Applications sponsors a biennial series of symposia on the effects of radiation on materials. The first symposium was held in 1960 and followed an earlier series begun in 1956 by E-10, then called the Committee on Radioisotopes and Radiation Effects. Since that first meeting, these symposia have continued to grow in importance as nuclear energy has provided an increasingly larger fraction of the world's electrical capacity. The meetings have become a major international forum for the presentation and discussion of research on the influence of radiation on the microstructure and mechanical properties of structural materials. The Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Symposium on the Effects of Radiation on Materials are published in this ASTM Special Technical Publication (STP) 1125. The Symposium was held in Nashville, Tennessee from 19 to 21 June 1990. In conjunction with the Symposium, an ASTM Standards Technology Training Course on Condition Assessment and Surveillance of Nuclear Reactor Pressure Vessel Steels was held on June 18.

The Fifteenth Symposium marked a milestone in international representation. It was the first symposium in this series to have more than one half of its papers presented by authors from outside the United States. Out of the 91 papers in this book, only 35 had primary authors from the United States. In addition, roughly 45% of the symposium registrants were from institutions located outside the United States. A high level of international collaboration can also be observed in the joint, multinational authorship of many of the papers. This cooperation has in part sprung from the many informal discussions that have taken place at earlier symposia. Thus, the broad international participation and collaboration are a reflection of the fact that materials problems do not respect national boundaries and emphasizes the value of such meetings to provide an opportunity to seek common solutions to these problems.

The 91 papers presented in this STP are arranged in seventeen sections that follow the general outline of the Symposium. The first section is comprised of two papers that describe irradiation facilities. A high-temperature irradiation capsule designed for use in the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF) is discussed in one of these papers. Potential applications for these capsules include irradiating fuels for advanced fission reactors and ceramic components for fusion. The second paper describes a set of neutronics calculations for a special-purpose neutron source that could be used to investigate the influence of very high-energy neutrons.

The papers in the next four sections are focused on current commercial power reactor systems. Three of the sections are concerned primarily with steels, and the fourth with zirconium alloys. The five papers in the first of these sections discuss data from operating reactor surveillance programs in several countries. Four of the papers are concerned with light water reactor pressure vessel embrittlement, while one paper reports on Nimonic PE16 tie bars used in advanced gas-cooled reactors. The research discussed in this section is relevant to issues such as nuclear plant life extension and the influence of composition on embrittlement. The need to extend and supplement existing surveillance programs provides some impetus for the research discussed in the last paper, which describes the fabrication and testing of reconstituted Charpy specimens. Both insert size and welding technique are examined.

Microstructural characterization of irradiated pressure vessel steels is the topic of the six papers in the next section. The work reported here includes the examination of both engineering and simple model materials. The major techniques used were transmission electron microscopy (TEM), small-angle neutron scattering (SANS), and positron annihilation. Infor-

mation is presented on materials examined prior to and following irradiation, as well as the results of postirradiation annealing studies. Correlation of the microstructure with the observed mechanical properties is a major focus of this work. The six papers in the final pressure vessel section deal with the effect of radiation on fracture toughness. In particular, several of these papers address the potential change in shape, as well as the temperature shift, of fracture toughness curves. The relationship between the temperature shift measured from a Charpy curve and the shift in the fracture toughness curve is also discussed.

The major uses of zirconium alloys in current power reactors are fuel cladding in light water reactors and pressure tubes in CANDU-type, heavy water reactors. The fracture and tensile properties of neutron-irradiated zirconium alloys are reported in three of the papers in this section. The first two papers describe the results of testing specimens fabricated from reactor components in service for up to ten years. Although a loss of ductility and fracture toughness are observed, postirradiation annealing led to substantial recovery of the mechanical properties. The last paper discusses proton-irradiated Zircaloy-2 and the influence of precipitation on corrosion resistance in this alloy. An additional paper describing precipitation in Zircaloy-2 under proton irradiation (Motta et al.) can be found in the section entitled Radiation-Induced Solute Segregation.

The next two sections deal with Radiation Damage Fundamentals, both Primary Damage Production and Formation of the Irradiated Microstructure. Three of the papers in the first section report on the examination of high-energy displacement cascades. The cascades were created by either 14-MeV neutron or charged particle irradiation. The influence of irradiation temperature and dose were explored. Interesting observations include athermal dislocation loop formation in copper and nickel and the influence of the replacement-to-displacement ratio on the order-disorder transformation in copper-palladium. The seven papers in the second section deal with the microstructure that evolves at relatively low doses. These papers are concerned with interstitial and vacancy loop nucleation, bubble formation, and the details of point-defect trapping by solutes and preexisting microstructural features. The final paper discusses the influence of either residual or transmutant gases on crack propagation.

Phenomena that occur at higher doses are the subject of the next section. Theoretical models of irradiation creep and void swelling are presented in seven papers. Three of the papers supplement our understanding of irradiation creep by examining previously unexplored mechanisms. Higher-than-expected irradiation creep has been observed at low temperatures, and it was demonstrated that a model of creep due to transient interstitial absorption could explain the observations. The fact that dislocation glide could give rise to local point-defect transients was shown to provide another possible mechanism of creep. Other authors examined the details of point-defect reactions with the dislocation core to explain the dependence of orientation on the dislocation climb velocity and the dose dependence of creep. The conventionally used rate theory of void swelling is examined and extended in the remaining papers in this section. The formation of self-organized or modulated microstructures is also investigated.

Radiation-induced solute segregation is another broadly observed phenomenon. Solute segregation is frequently correlated with void swelling, and it may promote intergranular stress corrosion cracking (IASCC). Seven of the eight papers in this section examine solute segregation in a range of materials: austenitic and ferritic steels, Nimonic PE16, Zircaloy-2, and aluminum. Models based on the inverse Kirkendall effect were generally shown to explain the segregation behavior of major alloying elements (Cr, Mo, Ni, Si) in the steels. A model of anodic dissolution of metal from crack tips was used to demonstrate that chromium segregation could promote crack initiation during IASCC. The final paper is a theoretical treatment of the influence of solute segregation on the precipitation of second phases in binary alloys.

Interest in radiation damage in ceramics has increased recently, partly as a result of the need for ceramic components to operate in high radiation fields in fusion reactors. The section on

Ceramics and Nuclear Fuels has five papers that reflect this interest. The properties of interest include: electrical conductivity for insulators, thermal conductivity for window materials, and mechanical stability for structural applications. The recent observations of radiation-induced conductivity in alumina may have significant implications for the design of fusion reactor insulators.

The demands of fusion reactors also fuel an interest in the materials discussed in the next three sections. The topics of these sections are: Copper and Copper Alloys, Vanadium-Based Alloys, and the Properties of Low-Activation Steels. Irradiation-produced microstructures and the relationship between microstructure and mechanical properties are emphasized. The materials discussed in the first section include pure copper, commercial precipitate-strengthened copper alloys, and various dispersion-strengthened alloys. Resistance to void swelling is required for these alloys to be successfully used in fusion reactors; therefore, the formation of helium bubbles and voids following either neutron irradiation or helium implantation is reported. The high level of retained oxygen in alloys strengthened by oxide dispersions was shown to enhance void swelling, and high levels of swelling reportedly were associated with unusual tensile behavior.

One of the attractive aspects of vanadium alloys for fusion applications is that neutron irradiation leads to fairly low levels of activation products with long half-lives. However, these materials are susceptible to radiation-induced embrittlement and swelling. A variety of vanadium-based alloys have been developed to mitigate these effects. Three of the papers in this section provide the results of extensive neutron irradiation experiments to investigate these alloys, the fourth discusses a helium effects experiment using the "tritium trick." High levels of swelling (up to 93%) were observed in one alloy after irradiation to 30 dpa. Tension tests revealed hardening and a loss of ductility in essentially all the alloys. In some cases, the authors believe that the loss of ductility is primarily due to helium embrittlement, while precipitates are implicated by other authors.

In order to minimize the problem of dealing with long-lived activation products, a number of so-called low-activation steels have been developed. These materials are discussed in the four papers in Properties of Low-Activation Steels. Typically, lower activation is achieved by replacing such elements as nickel, molybdenum, and niobium with manganese, tungsten, and vanadium. Although the Fe-Cr-Ni system has been well investigated, the desire to replace nickel with manganese in austenitic stainless steels has required more detailed research of the Fe-Cr-Mn phase diagram. Such work is discussed in the first paper in this section. The results of neutron and charged particle irradiations are reported in the other papers. In general, the response of the low-activation variants is similar to the conventional steels. The major trade-off involved in the switch from nickel to manganese appears to be a loss of austenite stability under certain irradiation conditions.

The last four sections of this STP deal with microstructure and mechanical properties of conventional austenitic and ferritic or ferritic-martensitic steels, respectively. The effects of irradiation with neutrons, heavy charged particles, and high-energy electrons are reported. In the austenitic microstructures section, two of the papers describe the influence of nickel and phosphorus. Phosphorus appears to reduce swelling by refining the microstructure. It is proposed that the influence of nickel on swelling is related to its affect on the dislocation bias. The microstructure and mechanical properties of austenitic stainless steel fuel cladding irradiated to high doses in a fast reactor is also discussed in one of the papers included in the section on the mechanical properties of ferritic-martensitic steels (Seran et al.). An interest in fusion is reflected in two of the austenitic mechanical property papers. In the first, a miniaturized fatigue test machine is described. The successful use of such testing devices would reduce the amount of irradiated material required for testing. The need for welds in fusion reactor first walls led to an investigation of the properties of welded joints in the European reference

316LN stainless steel. Both the swelling resistance and the mechanical properties of the welds compared unfavorably with the base metal following neutron irradiation. The final paper discusses the correlation of swelling and mechanical properties in austenitic steels alloyed with boron and various rare-earth elements.

Ferritic-martensitic steels are attractive materials for incore components in fast reactors and fusion reactor first walls due to their high strength and good swelling resistance under fast neutron irradiation. The papers presented here describe the stability of the as-fabricated microstructure under irradiation and thermal aging. Although neutron or charged particle irradiation leads to microstructures that are different than those observed under thermal aging, the effects of radiation are reduced relative to those observed in austenitic steels. Postirradiation testing of tensile and Charpy specimens fabricated from Phenix fuel ducts provide mechanical property data for alloy EM10 irradiated to high doses. Little swelling was observed in this material and the degradation of mechanical properties was modest. In contrast to these results, much greater embrittlement was observed in 12Cr-1MoVNb and a 2-1/4Cr-1Mo steel irradiated to low doses in the FFTF. The final paper discusses an irradiation and testing program for a high-strength, low-alloy ferritic steel intended for use as a reinforcing bar in concrete structures.

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