

ORNL Zero-Power Reactor Experiment (ZPRE) Design

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contents

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1 Introduction

The reactor described herein (ZPRE) was built under the auspices of the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) as part of the Aircraft Nuclear Propulsion (ANP) program and the circulating-fuel reactor program at the Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Company (PWAC). It was to serve as a full-scale mockup of the core and reflector of the Pratt and Whitney Aircraft Reactor No. 1 (PWAR-1). This

document is meant to be a comprehensive overview of the design, dimensions and material specifications outlined in ORNL-2536 for the purpose of creating an accurate CAD model of the reactor to be used as the geometry for neutronics simulations in OpenMC.

Care is taken to give proper references to the original data, figures, tables, etc. Likewise, any quantity or feature lacking documentation or reference not yet found will be estimated or extrapolated from available information.

2 Reactor Assembly

Core

The primary components of the ZPRE core assembly are shown in Figure 1. ORNL-2536 page iii states "The mockup consisted of a 8.1-in.-dia cylindrical beryllium central region surrounded by a fuel annulus contained between two Hastelloy X core shells. The inner shell was 8.5 in. in diameter and 0.125 in. thick. The outer one varied from 21.4 in. diameter and 0.156 in. in thickness at the midplane to 14.8 in. in diameter and 0.25 in. in thickness at the ends. This core shell assembly was covered by a 13-in.-thick beryllium reflector. Coolant passages, but not the coolant, were mocked up in both beryllium regions." Further detail regarding core configuration is outlined on page 4: "The fuel was contained in the annulus formed by the inner and outer Hastelloy X core shells ... The central moderator column, or the island, consisted of beryllium through which longitudinal holes 0.250 in. in diameter were drilled to mock up coolant passages... An annular void 0.125 in, in average thickness was located between the inner core shell and the island beryllium to mock up a coolant passage. Because of engineering and operational complications, none of the coolant passages contained sodium as they would in the power reactor itself. ...

The reflector was built up around the core shell assembly, ... , with 4-in.-thick beryllium rings ... Holes 0.250 in. in diameter were drilled

through these slabs to approximate the probable distribution of coolant passages in the reflector of the power reactor... Again no sodium was contained within these coolant passages; however, a helium atmosphere was maintained in the reactor tank ... to protect the Beryllium"

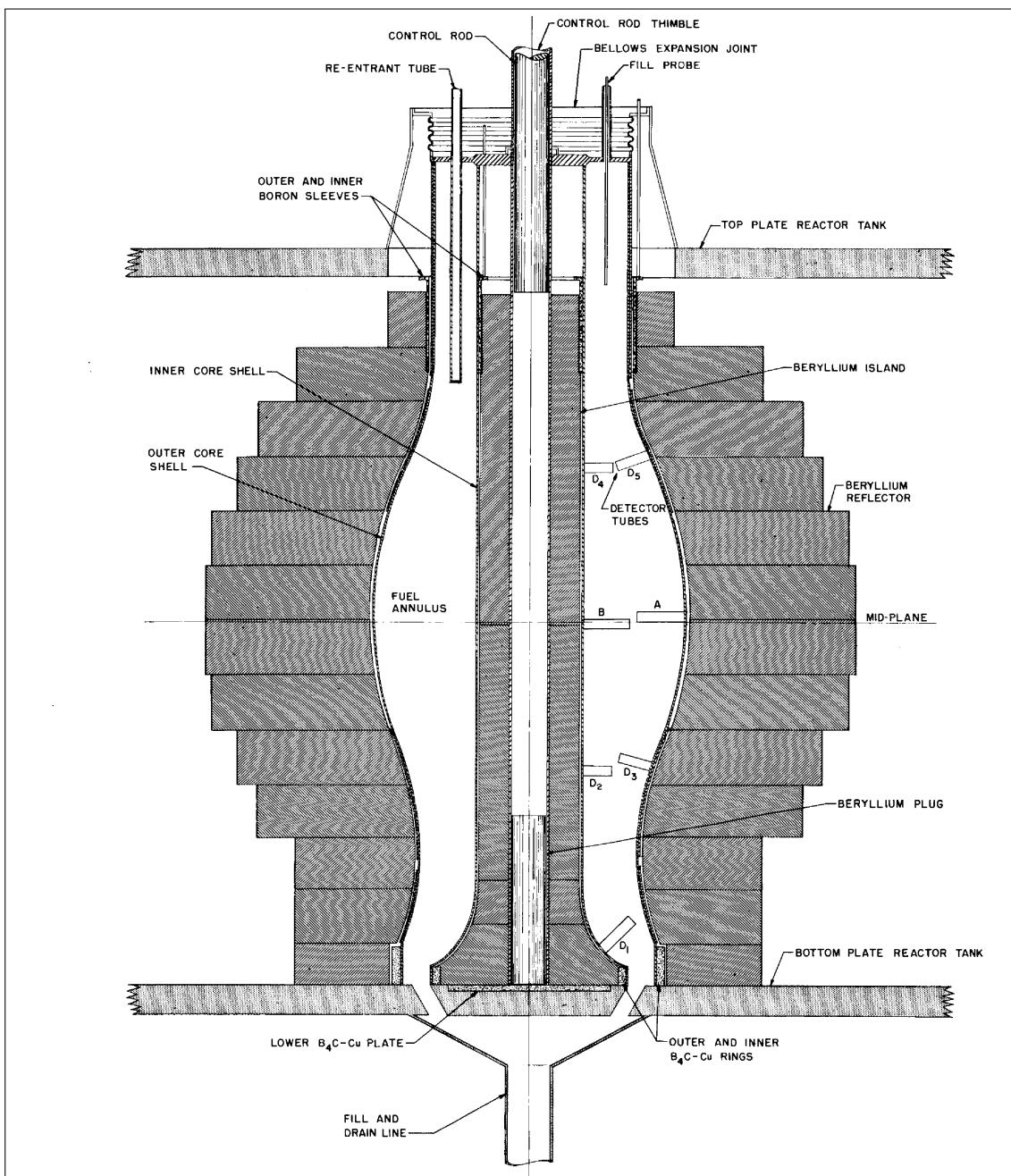


figure 1: zpre assembly (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 1)

Figure 2 shows the primary dimensions of the core assembly, with values given in Table 1.

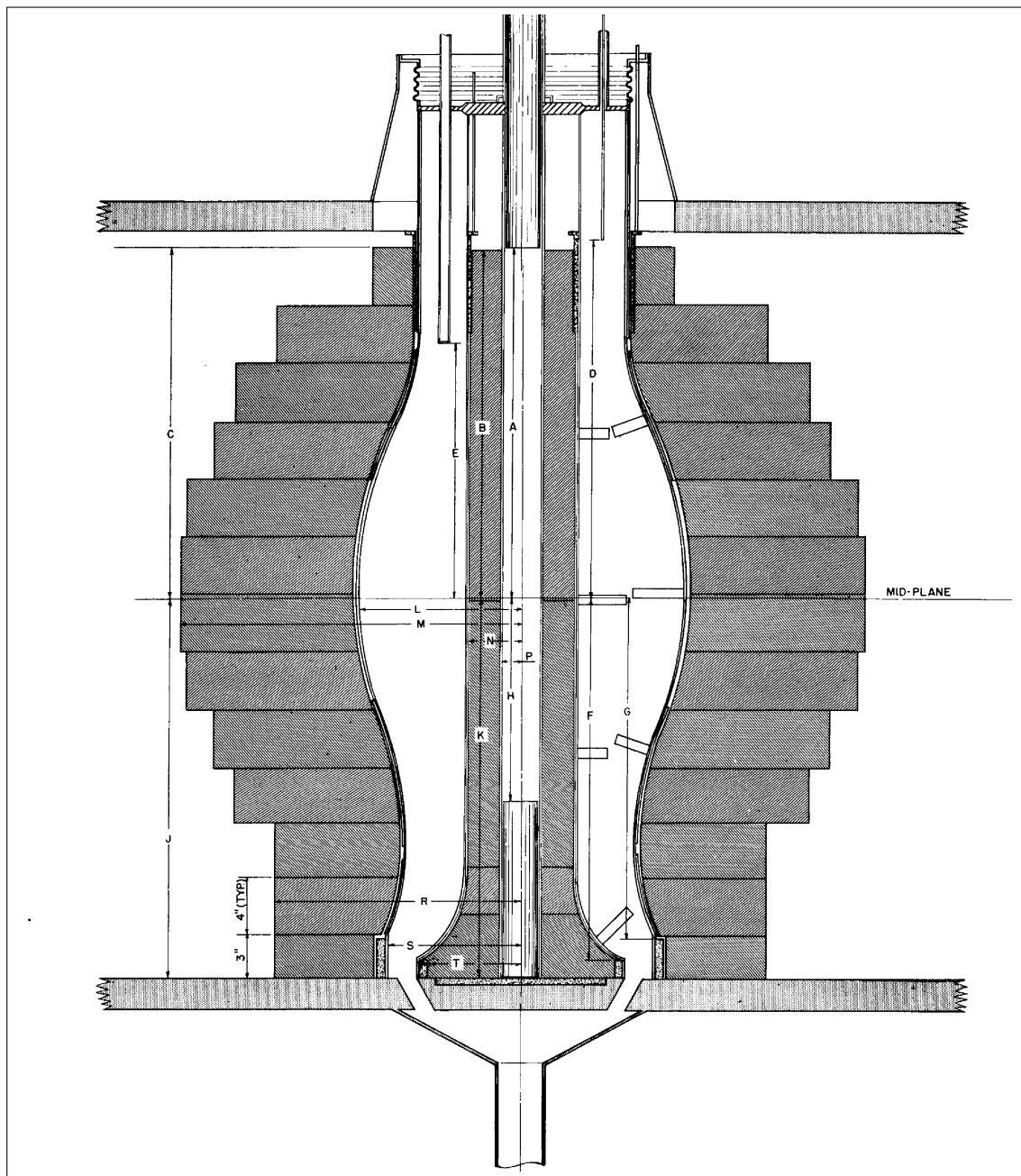


figure 2: zpre assembly dimensions (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 8).

| Designation ^a | Cold (in.) | Hot (in.) | Description |
|--------------------------|---------------|--------------|---|
| A | 23.906 | 24.155 | Control rod zero |
| B | 23.855 | 24.155 | Midplane to top of island beryllium |
| C | 24.250 | 24.553 | Midplane to top of reflector beryllium |
| D | - | 25.527 | Midplane to top of fuel, fill probe on |
| E | 17.737 | 17.924 | Midplane to lower limit of longitudinal power traverse |
| F | 25.649 | 25.927 | Midplane to top of inner B ₄ C-Cu ring inside lower end duct |
| G | 23.750 | 24.028 | Midplane to top of outer B ₄ C-Cu ring around lower end duct |
| H | 14.812 | 14.949 | Midplane to top of beryllium plug in lower portion of control rod thimble |
| J | 26.750 | 27.028 | Midplane to base of reflector beryllium |
| K | 27.149 | 27.427 | Midplane to base of island beryllium |
| L ^b | 10.529 | 10.639 | Maximum inside radius of the outer core shell |
| M | 24.000 | 24.274 | Radius of reflector (slab G) |
| N | 4.000 | 4.046 | Radius of island beryllium |
| P | 1.318 | 1.332 | Radius of control rod thimble |
| R | 16.000 | 16.182 | Radius of reflector (slab B) |
| S | 8.920 | 9.013 | Radius of outer core shell in lower end duct |
| T | 7.250 | 7.325 | Radius of inner core shell in lower end duct |

table 1: zpre assembly dimensions (Scott et al. 1958, Table 4).

The partial reflector assembly in Figure 3 shows the aforementioned coolant channels, the distributions of which are given in Table 2.

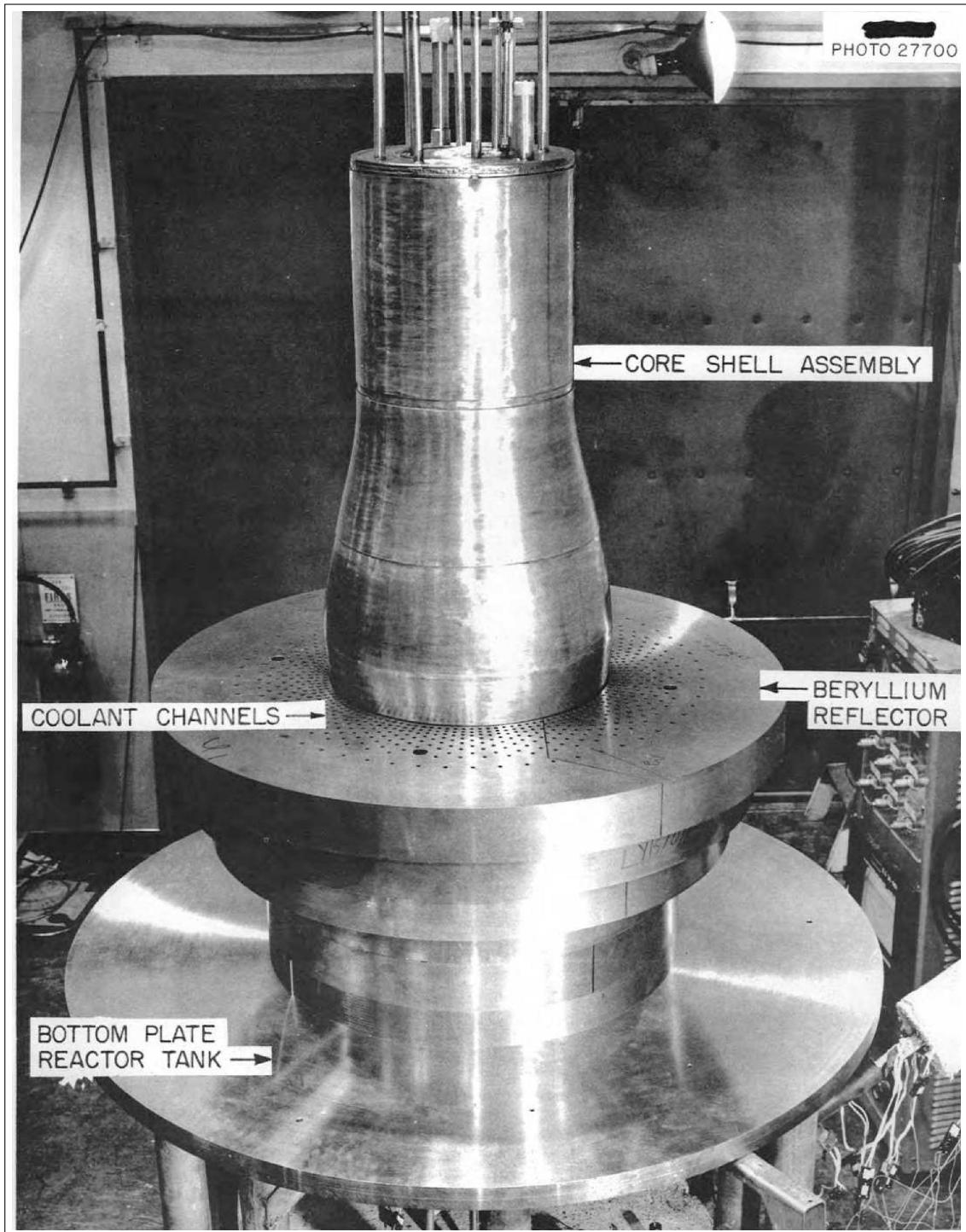


figure 3: partial reflector assembly (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 3).

Table 3. Distribution of Holes^a in the Reflector and Moderator

| In Reflector | | | | In Island at All Elevations | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| 16 in. Above and Below Midplane | | 8 in. Above and Below Midplane | | At Midplane | | | |
| Radius (in.) ^b | No. of Holes | Radius (in.) ^b | No. of Holes | Radius (in.) ^b | No. of Holes | Radius (in.) ^b | No. of Holes |
| 8.123 | 120 | 9.897 | 120 | 11.134 | 120 | 1.787 | 16 |
| 8.626 | 60 | 10.400 | 60 | 11.637 | 60 | 2.137 | 16 |
| 8.710 | 60 | 10.484 | 60 | 11.721 | 60 | 2.687 | 32 |
| 9.162 | 60 | 10.900 | 60 | 12.137 | 60 | 3.287 | 32 |
| 9.234 | 60 | -11.067 | 60 | 12.304 | 60 | 3.687 | 32 |
| 9.793 | 60 | -11.567 | 60 | 12.804 | 60 | | |
| 10.126 | 60 | 11.900 | 60 | 13.137 | 60 | | |
| 10.626 | 60 | -12.400 | 60 | 13.637 | 60 | | |
| 11.126 | 60 | -12.900 | 60 | 14.137 | 60 | | |
| 11.626 | 60 | 13.400 | 60 | 14.637 | 60 | | |
| 12.293 | 60 | 14.067 | 60 | 15.304 | 60 | | |
| 12.960 | 60 | -14.734 | 60 | 15.971 | 60 | | |
| 14.626 | 60 | 16.400 | 60 | 17.637 | 60 | | |

a. All holes were 0.250 in. in diameter and were distributed equally around 360 deg at the given radius.

b. The radii given apply only at the indicated elevations since these are continuous holes which roughly follow the outer core shell contour. Straight lines between corresponding

table 2: coolant channel distribution (Scott et al. 1958,
Table 3).

Table 3 gives the composition and weights of the Beryllium reflector and island parts (refer to Figure 5).

| Piece ^a | P and W Dwg. No. | Composition ^b | | | | | | | | | | Density (g/cc) | Weight (kg) |
|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|-----|-------------------|----------------|
| | | Be | BeO | wt% | Fe | Al | Mn | Li | ppm | Co | Ni | Cd | |
| Reflector | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| A | T 291496 | 98.29 | 1.72 | 0.15 | 0.025 | 90 | < 0.3 | 5 | 190 | < 0.2 | 1.1 | 1.843 | 47.2 |
| B | T 291497 | 99.20 | 1.18 | 0.12 | 0.041 | 80 | < 0.3 | 5-10 | 150 | < 0.2 | 0.8 | 1.840 | 64.8 |
| C | T 291498 | 98.85 | 1.38 | 0.15 | 0.038 | 80 | < 0.3 | 3 | 190 | < 0.2 | 0.1 | 1.840 | 68.2 |
| D | T 291499 | 98.90 | 1.54 | 0.16 | 0.057 | 70 | < 0.3 | 20 | 400 | < 0.2 | 0.8 | 1.846 | 118.4 |
| E | T 291500 | 98.50 | 1.62 | 0.15 | 0.019 | 120 | < 0.3 | 3 | 260 | < 0.2 | 0.2 | 1.853 | 139.2 |
| F | T 291501 | 98.90 | 1.46 | 0.10 | 0.025 | 120 | < 0.3 | 4 | 160 | < 0.2 | 1.3 | 1.852 | 167.8 |
| G | T 291502 | 98.90 | 1.50 | 0.14 | 0.020 | 130 | < 0.3 | 4 | 200 | < 0.2 | 1.3 | 1.850 | 175.8 |
| H | T 291503 | 98.60 | 1.81 | 0.12 | 0.026 | 130 | < 0.3 | 4 | 160 | < 0.2 | 1.8 | 1.849 | 172.5 |
| I | T 291504 | 98.60 | 1.78 | 0.14 | 0.013 | 130 | < 0.3 | 4 | 180 | < 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.849 | 168.6 |
| J | T 291505 | 98.60 | 1.61 | 0.15 | 0.019 | 120 | < 0.3 | 3 | 260 | < 0.2 | 2.0 | 1.853 | 140.6 |
| K | T 291506 | 98.90 | 1.39 | 0.14 | 0.041 | 80 | < 0.3 | 6 | 230 | < 0.2 | 1.1 | 1.856 | 118.8 |
| L | T 291507 | 98.67 | 1.46 | 0.15 | 0.028 | 100 | < 0.3 | 4 | 210 | < 0.2 | c | 1.845 | 69.3 |
| M | T 291508 | 98.40 | 1.48 | 0.14 | 0.046 | 80 | < 0.3 | 1 | 160 | < 0.2 | 1.1 | 1.847 | 66.9 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | TOTAL | 1518.1 |
| Island | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | T 291509 | 98.38 | 1.70 | 0.12 | 0.041 | 80 | < 0.3 | 1 | 90 | < 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.860 | 13.46 |
| 2 | T 291510 | 98.30 | 1.81 | 0.15 | 0.035 | 90 | < 0.3 | 2 | 240 | < 0.2 | c | 1.854 | 5.83 |
| 3 | T 291511 | 98.80 | 1.40 | 0.15 | 0.025 | 90 | < 0.3 | 5 | 270 | < 0.2 | 1.4 | 1.860 | 26.83 |
| 4 | T 291512 | 98.40 | 1.64 | 0.13 | 0.031 | 80 | < 0.3 | 2 | 150 | < 0.2 | c | 1.857 | 20.33 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | TOTAL | 66.45 |

table 3: Beryllium Reflector Composition (Scott et al. 1958, Table 24).

For the sake of simplicity, each reflector part was assumed to have uniform composition defined as the weighted average of those listed above.

Reactor Tank & Sump Tank

ORNL-2536 page 3 describes the tank assembly: "The reactor assembly was mounted within the reactor tank in a helium, atmosphere. The sump tank, located under the reactor tank, contained the fuel when it was not in the reactor core. Helium pressure was used to transfer the fuel from the sump tank through a fill and drain line to the reactor core." Material detail is given in Appendix A on page 53: "The reactor tank was constructed of Inconel and served to contain the entire reactor assembly ..."

The exterior of the reactor tank was insulated with 4-in.-thick blocks of calcined diatomaceous silica, and the tank assembly was mounted about 5ft above floor level on a stainless steel stand."

Details on the sump tank are also given in Appendix A starting on page 53:
"The sump tank, also constructed of Inconel, had a capacity of 287 liters at operating temperature. It was suspended from a tripod stand located below the reactor tank ... and connected to the core region of the reactor through a vertical 3.5-in.-OD Inconel fill and drain line (0.216-in.-thick wall)."

Figure 4 shows a photo labelling major components of the reactor assembly.

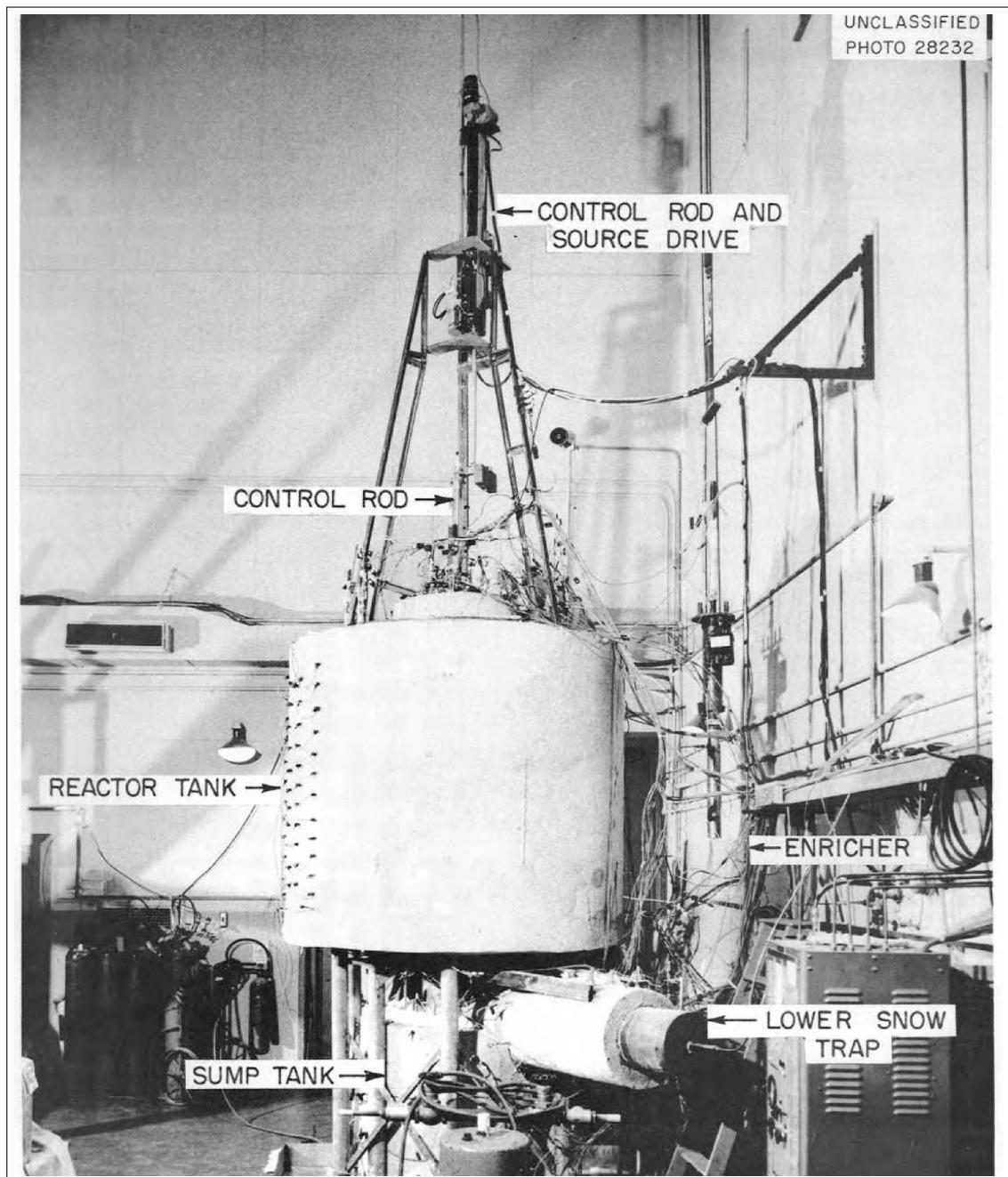


figure 4: full assembly photo(Scott et al. 1958, Figure 6).

A schematic of this assembly with dimensions is shown in Figure 5

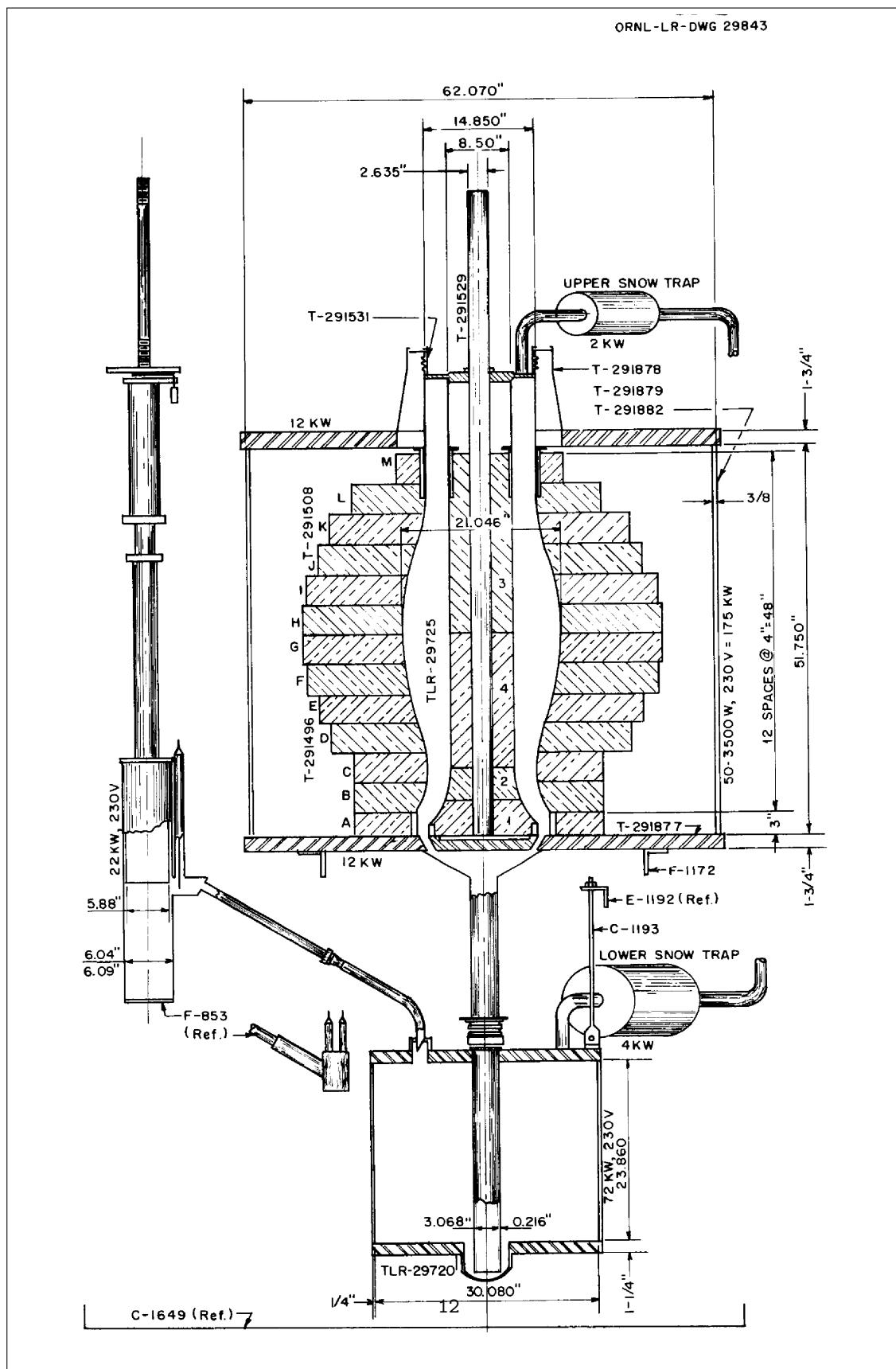
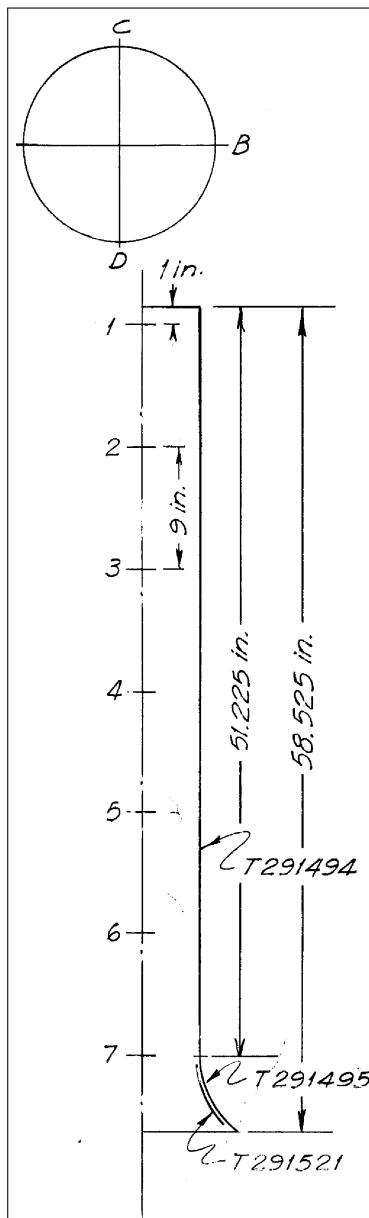


figure 5: full assembly (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 23).

3 Core Shells

ORNL-2536 page 4 states "The fuel was contained in the annulus formed by the inner and outer Hastelloy X core shells ... The outer shell was 0.156 in. thick in the region of the midplane (cross section at maximum core diameter) and 0.250 in. thick in regions further than $7\frac{3}{4}$ in. above and below midplane. The inner core shell was uniformly 0.125 in. thick except in the lower end duct where its thickness increased to 0.250 in. Due to difficulties encountered in the fabrication of these shells, variations in the wall thickness of ± 0.025 in., as well as out-of-roundness and departures from designed contour, occurred." Tables 4 and 5 detail respectively the final shapes and thickness of the inner and outer core shells.



A. Liner Section T 291494

| Station | Outside Diameter (in.) | |
|---------|---------------------------|-------|
| | A B | C D |
| 1 | 8.554 | 8.473 |
| 2 | 8.542 | 8.485 |
| 3 | 8.533 | 8.478 |
| 4 | 8.545 | 8.430 |
| 5 | 8.543 | 8.435 |
| 6 | 8.537 | 8.486 |
| 7 | 8.523 | 8.508 |

B. Liner Section T 291495

| Distance from Small End (in.) | Inside Radii (in.) | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|
| | Design | Actual |
| 0 | 4.125 | 4.125 |
| 1 | 4.170 | 4.170 |
| 2 | 4.280 | 4.300 |
| 3 | 4.520 | 4.550 |
| 4 | 4.840 | 4.910 |
| 5 | 5.280 | 5.340 |
| 6 | 5.875 | 5.935 |
| 6.5 | 6.260 | 6.320 |
| 7 | 6.700 | 6.730 |
| 7.3 | 7.050 | 7.050 |

- a. T numbers are Pratt and Whitney drawing numbers corresponding to the sections being described.
- b. The wall thickness for each of the three sections of the inner core shell (liners T 291494 and T 291495 and stiffener T 291521) was 0.125 in. \pm 0.005 in.
- c. All dimensions are for room temperature.

table 4: inner core shell dimensions (Scott et al. 1958, Table 19).

| Station (2 in. Apart) | Inside Diameter (in.) | | Measured Deviation in Inside Diameter ^b (in.) | Measured Average Wall Thickness (in.) | Maximum Deviation in Wall Thickness (in.) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------|--|---|---|
| | Mean Design | Measured | | | |
| 1 | 14.850 | 14.765 | 0.121 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 2 | 14.850 | 14.775 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 3 | 14.850 | 14.779 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 4 | 14.850 | 14.795 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 5 | 14.850 | 14.805 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 6 | 14.850 | 14.815 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 7 | 14.850 | 14.815 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 8 | 14.850 | 14.912 | 0.012 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 9 | 15.038 | 15.106 | 0.020 | 0.166 | 0.020 |
| 10 | 15.576 | 15.646 | 0.014 | 0.165 | 0.016 |
| 11 | 16.400 | 16.470 | 0.022 | 0.160 | 0.017 |
| 12 | 17.414 | 17.485 | 0.136 | 0.157 | 0.010 |
| 13 | 18.482 | 18.481 | 0.064 | 0.164 | 0.004 |
| 14 | 19.494 | 19.464 | 0.016 | 0.150 | 0.013 |
| 15 | 20.320 | 20.270 | 0.016 | 0.151 | 0.008 |
| 16 | 20.858 | 20.829 | 0.020 | 0.154 | 0.005 |
| 17 | 21.046 | 21.058 | 0.010 | 0.148 | 0.007 |
| 18 | 20.858 | 20.840 | 0.026 | 0.145 | 0.013 |
| 19 | 20.320 | 20.288 | 0.038 | 0.147 | 0.012 |
| 20 | 19.994 | 19.478 | 0.240 | 0.153 | 0.012 |
| 21 | 18.482 | 18.494 | 0.034 | 0.154 | 0.012 |
| 22 | 17.414 | 17.488 | 0.036 | 0.149 | 0.011 |
| 23 | 16.400 | 16.466 | 0.010 | 0.152 | 0.011 |
| 24 | 15.576 | 15.632 | 0.024 | 0.155 | 0.011 |
| 25 | 15.038 | 15.112 | 0.010 | 0.158 | 0.016 |
| 26 | 14.850 | 14.932 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 27 | | 15.042 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |
| 28 | | 15.713 | 0.156 | 0.156 | 0.010 |

B. Average Wall Thickness for Each Section

| Section ^c | Average Wall Thickness (in.) | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Liners ^d | Stiffeners ^d |
| T 291489 | 0.156 ± 0.005 | |
| T 291488 (upper) | 0.158 ± 0.005 | |
| T 291488 (lower) | 0.151 ± 0.005 | |
| T 291490 | 0.156 ± 0.005 | |
| | | T 291491 0.094 ± 0.005 |
| | | T 291492 (upper) 0.094 ± 0.005 |
| | | T 291492 (lower) 0.094 ± 0.005 |
| | | T 291493 0.094 ± 0.005 |

- a. All dimensions are for room temperature.
- b. I.e., the difference between two perpendicular diameters.
- c. T numbers are Pratt and Whitney drawing numbers corresponding to the sections being described.
- d. Gaps between stiffeners and liners = 0 to 0.020 in.

table 5: outer core shell dimensions (Scott et al. 1958, Table 20).

Table 6 gives the material composition of the core shells (refer to Tables 4

and 5)

| Piece ^a | P and W Dug. No. | Composition | | | | | | | | | | Weight (kg) | | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------|-------|------|------|----|------|----|--------------|---|----------------|------------------------|----|----|-------|
| | | Mo | Fe | Cr | wt% | Co | Mn | W | Ni | In | B | Dy | ppm ^b Cd | Bu | Sm | Gd |
| Outer Core Shell | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Top liner | T291489 | 9.41 | 17.2 | 23.36 | 1.45 | 0.70 | - | bal. | c | 0.001-0.0001 | c | | | | | 15.12 |
| Middle liner ^d | T291488 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Upper, A | | 8.52 | 20.8 | 22.9 | 1.71 | 0.71 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 22.53 |
| Upper, B | | 7.4 | 17.6 | 23.0 | 1.69 | 0.96 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | |
| Lower, C | | 8.5 | 19.5 | 18.4 | 1.27 | 0.58 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 21.95 |
| Lower, D | | 8.5 | 17.3 | 22.5 | 1.55 | 0.48 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | |
| Top stiffener | T291491 | 7.91 | 17.0 | 21.7 | 1.74 | 0.67 | - | bal. | c | 0.001-0.0001 | c | | | | | 9.13 |
| Middle stiffener | T291492 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Upper | | 8.55 | 17.8 | 20.1 | - | 0.92 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 7.44 |
| Lower | | 6.76 | 16.8 | 21.6 | 1.42 | 0.61 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 7.42 |
| Bottom liner | T291490 | 10.2 | 17.1 | 22.5 | 1.19 | 0.56 | - | bal. | c | 0.001-0.0001 | c | | | | | 10.81 |
| Bottom stiffener | T291493 | 8.69 | 17.2 | 22.9 | 1.21 | 0.56 | - | bal. | c | 0.001-0.0001 | c | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | | | | 94.40 |
| Inner Core Shell | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Top liner | T291494 | 7.50 | 17.3 | 24.5 | 1.61 | 0.72 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 23.04 |
| Bottom liner | T291495 | 7.66 | 16.9 | 23.3 | 1.12 | 1.21 | - | bal. | - | - | 5 | - | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5.84 |
| Bottom stiffener | T291521 | 7.50 | 15.0 | 24.5 | 2.14 | 0.62 | - | bal. | c | 0.001-0.0001 | c | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Total | | | | 28.68 |

table 6: Core Shell Composition (Scott et al. 1958, Table 25).

For the sake of simplicity, the core shells were assumed to have uniform composition defined as the weighted average of those listed above.

4 Upper & Lower End Ducts

ORNL-2536 page 13 states "Natural boron carbide-copper plates, which simulated boron-containing regions on the PWAR-1 design, surrounded the lower end duct. A boron carbide-copper plate was also placed at the bottom of the island to limit fissioning to the core region. The areal density of boron carbide in these plates was 0.35 g/cm².

Sleeves containing elemental B¹⁰ power packed to a density of 1.5 g/cc in an annulus 0.060 in. thick surrounded the upper end duct. These sleeves, which acted as neutron shields, could be moved from a position of complete retraction to their fully inserted position about 6 in. below the top of the beryllium by actuating rods protruding from the top of the reactor through gastight fittings. Longitudinally through the end duct annulus, in the neighborhood of these shields, a re-entrant tube was provided in which fission

rate measurements were made for various positions of the boron shields." Figure 6 shows the design of the boron sleeves.

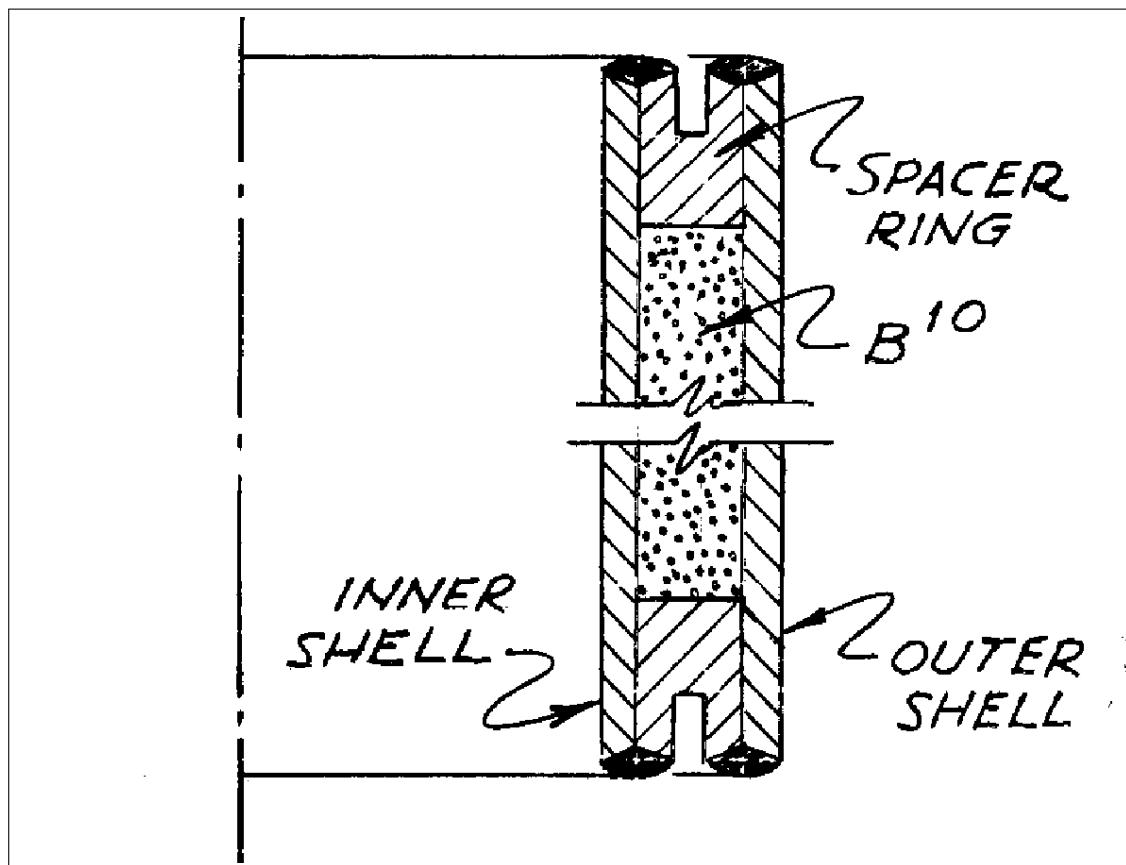


figure 6: full assembly (Scott et al. 1958).

ORNL-2536 page 72 details some design adjustments to the boron plates in the lower end duct; "Boron-containing neutron shields in the lower hemisphere of the reactor were designed to be a B₄C-Cu cement clad in stainless steel.* Unfortunately, efforts to fabricate one of these shields, the largest piece, failed. Because of this difficulty the shields were redesigned as Inconel cans containing boron carbide powder."

There were also minor modifications to the design of the boron sleeves described above. Page 72 details "It was extremely difficult to maintain the continuity of the plated surfaces due to scratching during the boron packing process. The following design changes were therefore made. Type 410 stainless

steel, which contains no nickel, was substituted for the Hastelloy X ... The boron annulus thickness was accordingly decreased to 0.062 in. ... "

Table 7 gives the composition of the B¹⁰ pieces

Table 21. Composition of B¹⁰ Pieces

| Material | wt% |
|-----------------|------|
| Total Boron | 94 |
| B ¹⁰ | 92 |
| Iron | 0.23 |
| Oxygen | ~6 |

table 7: B¹⁰ Component Composition (Scott et al. 1958, Table 21).

5 Control Rod & Po-Be Source

Page 4 of ORNL-2536 states "The control rod, which also served as a safety rod, consisted of a 2.430-in.-OD x 2.000-in.-ID annulus of 70% Ni, 30% Lindsay Mix* cement 36 in. long (see Appendix A). This annulus was physically contained in a 0.035-in.-thick Inconel jacket ...

A 4.3×10^6 neutrons/sec (Jan. 31, 1957) Po-Be source rode longitudinally down through the center of the annular control rod into the control rod thimble to its normal position which, during multiplication measurements and startups, was a little below the reactor midplane."

The footnote on page 4 gives the composition of Lindsay Mix: "Lindsay mix is a rare earth oxide mixture consisting of 63.8 wt% Sm, 26.3 wt% Gd, 4.8 wt%

Dy, and 0.9 wt% Nd."

Table 8 gives the composition of the cement in the control rod

| Material | wt% |
|---|------|
| Nickel | 70 |
| Lindsay Mix ^a (Rare Earth Oxides) | 30 |
| Sm (b) | 63.8 |
| Cd (b) | 26.3 |
| Dy (b) | 4.8 |
| Nd (b) | 0.9 |
| Misc. (b) | 4.2 |

table 8: Control Rod Cement Composition (Scott et al.
1958, Table 22).

Figure 7 shows the control rod design and dimensions

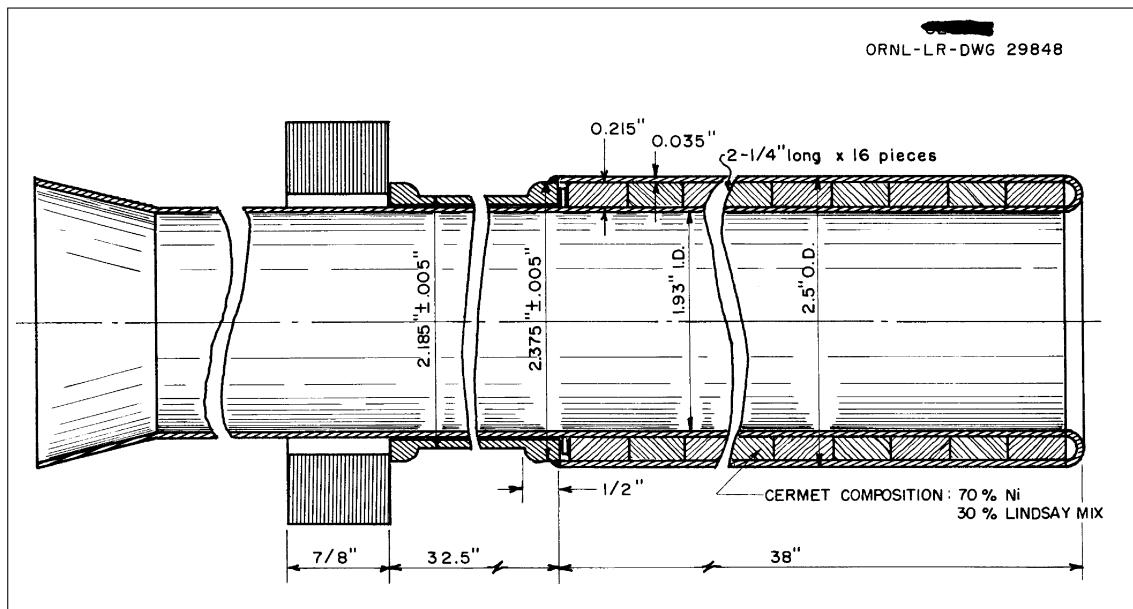


figure 7: Control Rod (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 28).

6 Fuel

The summary on ORNL-2536 page iii states "The fuel was a mixture of the fused fluoride salts of sodium, zirconium, and uranium. The critical concentration of the clean reactor was 10.22 wt% U²³⁵ at 1258°F." Table 9 details the initial critical concentration

| Uranium (wt%) | | UF ₄ (wt%) | | NaF (wt%) | | ZrF ₄ (wt%) | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| By Analysis | By Inventory | By Analysis | By Inventory | By Analysis | By Inventory | By Analysis | By Inventory |
| 10.97 | 10.963 | 14.514 | 14.501 | 20.082 | 20.152 | 65.416 | 65.343 |

table 9: Critical Fuel Composition (Scott et al. 1958, Table 1).

As described on page 4, "The clean critical uranium concentration is defined as that concentration of uranium in weight percent of a specified fuel for which, at a specified temperature, the experiment was critical with the control rod and B¹⁰ sleeves completely withdrawn."

7 Scintillation Counter

The scintillation counter setup is described on ORNL-2536 page 35: "The relative effectiveness of each of several arrangements of the B¹⁰ sleeves in the upper end duct in the reduction of the leakage of fast neutrons from that region of the reactor was measured. A fast-neutron scintillation counter sensitive only to neutrons with energies above 1 Mev, and similar to the one developed by Hornyak,³ was secured to the top of the reactor tank for this purpose. The scintillator, a 2-in.-dia, 1/4-in.-thick ZnS-Lucite disk, was viewed by a DuMont 6292 photomultiplier tube, and both were mounted in a water-cooled brass can. A water flow rate of about 1 liter/min was sufficient to hold the photomultiplier temperature near 68°F when the ambient temperature outside the can was 110°F." Figure 8 shows the location of the detector with respect to the reactor assembly.

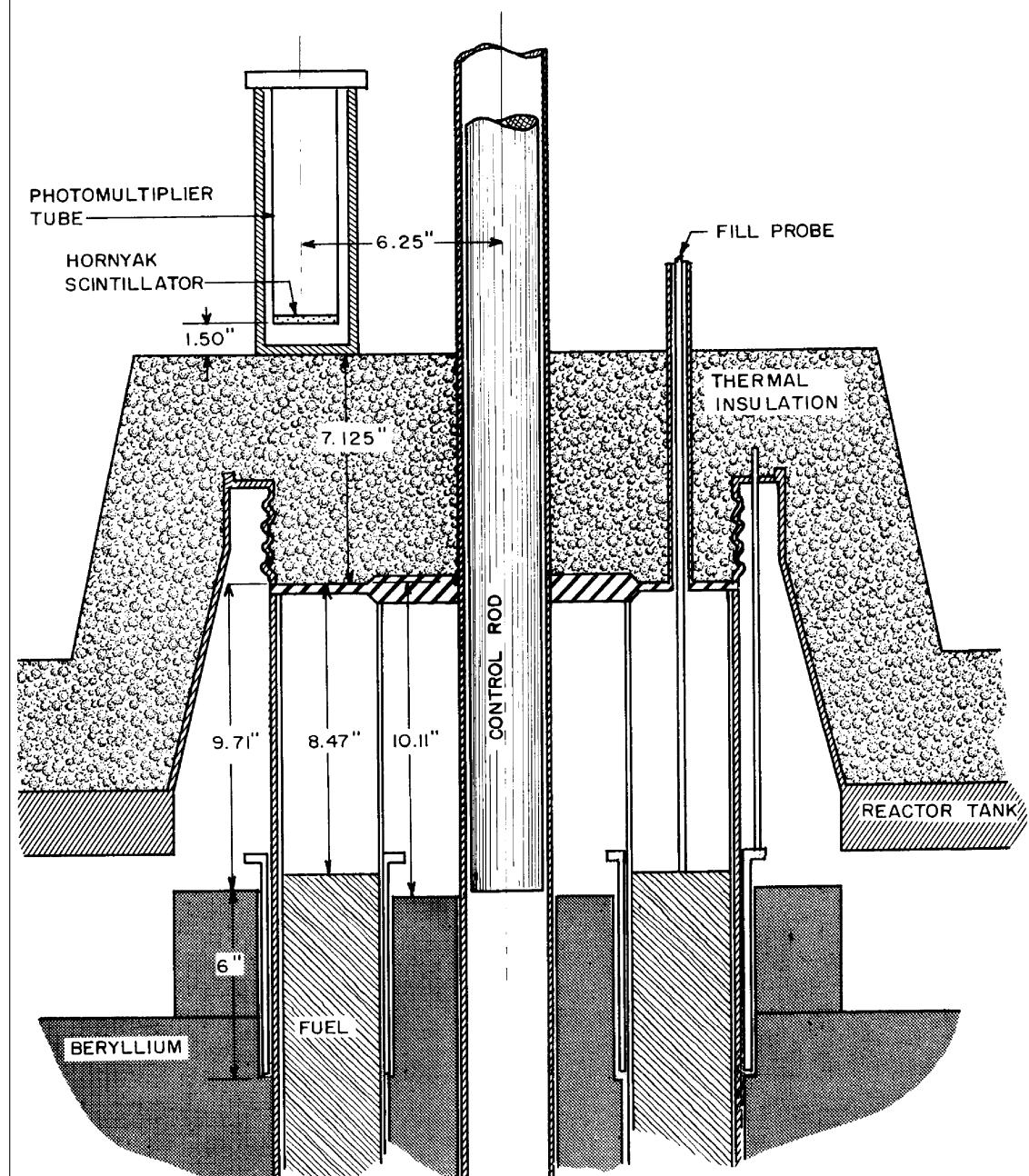


figure 8: Neutron Leakage Detector (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 16).

8 Detector Tubes

The summary on ORNL-2536 page iii states "The power distribution through the fuel region was measured by counting the fission fragment gamma-ray activity in small uranium disks positioned in the fuel annulus throughout the experiment."

Inconel tubes containing uranium foils - "detector tubes" - were welded to the inside of the core shells to measure radial fission rate distribution in the core. ORNL-2536 page 39 describes "Sixty-one foils were arranged in each of six detector tubes. A representative number of these foils were within a narrow weight range for counting purposes and the others were selected to give the correct average density. The detector tubes consisted of 7/8-in.-OD Inconel tubing with a 0.035-in.-thick wall and 0.076-in.-thick end caps. The calcium fluoride spacers were made cup-like to isolate the uranium from the Inconel, thereby preventing intermetallic diffusion at operating temperature. In addition, aluminum oxide spacers were placed at the ends of the tubes where welds were made since the stability of calcium fluoride at the welding temperature was in doubt." Continuing on page 43, it is described "The detector tubes were welded to the core shells and remained in the reactor during the entire period of operation. The detector tubes consisted of 7/8-in.-OD Inconel tubing with a 0.035-in.-thick wall and 0.035-in.-thick end caps. The tube lengths varied with their positions in the assembly. The uranium foils inside the tubes were separated with calcium fluoride spacers ... ". The physical arrangement of material in the detector tubes is shown (for tube D₁) in Figure 9.

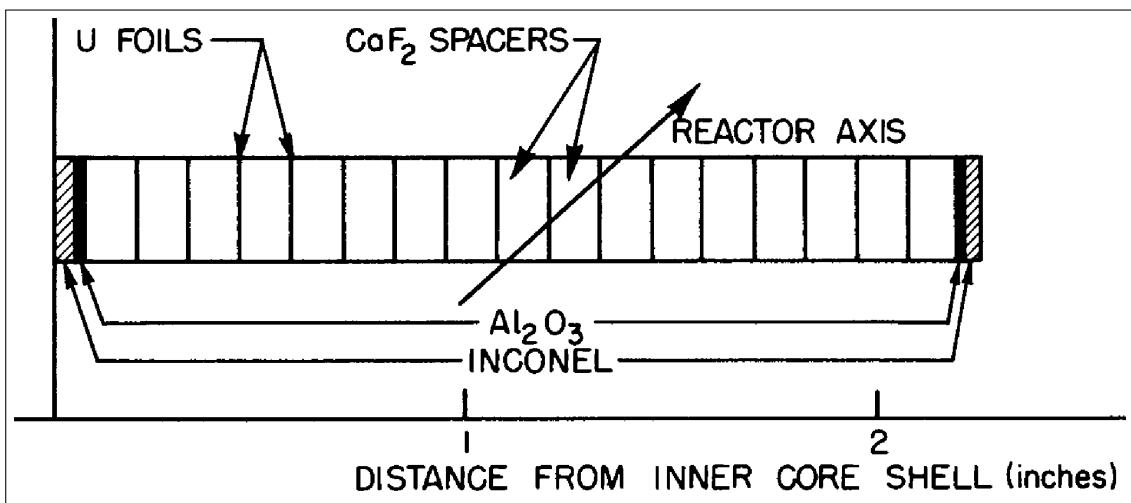


figure 9: Detector Tube (Scott et al. 1958, Figure 21).

Table 10 lists their positions.

| Tube Designation | Distance from Reactor Midplane at Point of Attachment (in.) | | Core Shell to Which Attached | Angle of Tube Axis to Reactor Axis (deg) |
|-----------------------|---|-----------------|------------------------------|--|
| | In Cold Assembly | In Hot Assembly | | |
| Above Midplane | | | | |
| D ₅ | 11.00 | 11.11 | Outer | 76 |
| D ₄ | 10.06 | 10.17 | Inner | 90 |
| At Midplane | | | | |
| A | 0 | 0 | Outer | 90 |
| B | 0.07 | 0.07 | Inner | 90 |
| Below Midplane | | | | |
| D ₃ | 11.00 | 11.11 | Outer | 104 |
| D ₂ | 11.44 | 11.56 | Inner | 90 |
| D ₁ * | 24.32 | 24.57 | Inner | 41 |

* In lower end duct.

table 10: Detector Tube Positions (Scott et al. 1958, Table 15).

One detector tube, when drawn in CAD as described above, can be over 20 parts even after a boolean operation on the calcium fluoride. With all seven detector tubes drawn as described, the model becomes cumbersome. Additionally,

the fact that the uranium foils are enclosed, together with their very small size with respect to other reactor dimensions, creates meshing challenges. It was therefore decided to approximate the contents of the detector tubes as single volumes with material composition defined as the weighted average of their constituent parts.

9 Gold Foils

As described on ORNL-2536 page 50, "Gold foils were used to measure the neutron flux distribution in the beryllium reflector at three nominal elevations: the midplane, 8 in. below the midplane, and 16 in. below the midplane." Table 11 gives the heights of the gold foil placement.

| Nominal Position | Distance from Midplane (in.) | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| | In Cold Assembly | In Hot Assembly |
| At midplane | 0.03 (below) | 0.03 (below) |
| 8 in. below midplane | 8.03 | 8.09 |
| 16 in. below midplane | 16.03 | 16.16 |

table 11: Gold Foil Positions (Scott et al. 1958, Table 17).

Page 50 continues "The gold foils 5/16 in. in diameter and 2 mils thick. They were held in covered beryllium oxide cups and placed in slots on the beryllium slabs which were then placed in the reflector. The foils remained in the reflector throughout the period of operation." The beryllium oxide "cups" were assumed to be of the same composition as the reflector, and thus were not modelled separately. Table 12 gives the radial positions of the foils at each height along with their activity relative to the foil used for normalization.

| Distance from Inner Surface of Beryllium Reflector (in.) | Relative Activity | | |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| | At Midplane | 8 in. Below Midplane | 16 in. Below Midplane |
| 0.190 | 0.473 | 0.478 | 0.217 |
| 1.125 | 0.687 | 0.826 | 0.414 |
| 2.125 | 0.866 | 0.998 | 0.412 |
| 2.875 | | | 0.600 |
| 3.125 | 1.000 ^a | 1.008 | |
| 3.625 | | | 0.613 |
| 3.875 | 0.998 | 0.951 | |
| 4.375 | | | 0.559 |
| 4.625 | 0.947 | 0.841 | |
| 5.375 | 0.855 | 0.847 | |
| 6.375 | 0.739 | 0.711 | |
| 6.500 | | | 0.350 |
| 7.375 | 0.595 | 0.610 | |
| 7.935 | | | 0.122 |
| 8.875 | 0.450 | 0.420 | |
| 10.375 | 0.269 | 0.257 | |
| 11.710 | | 0.095 | |
| 13.010 | 0.063 | | |

a. This foil used for normalization.

table 12: Gold Foil Radial Positions (Scott et al. 1958,
Table 18).

Bibliography

Scott, D. et al. (1958). "A Zero Power Reflector-Moderated Reactor Experiment at Elevated Temperature". In: oak ridge national laboratory ornl-2536.