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Astronaut Brings Home Unknown Substance

Cape Kennedy Air Force Station, Fla.

When the Gemini 4 spacecraft landed this week there was more than just the successful space walk to talk about. On board the massive ship was a very small piece of matter. This tiny rock like substance was captured, floating through space, and brought in by Lt Col Edward White as he recorded the United States' first ever venture outside of a spacecraft. The space rock, which is being called the White-rock (named after its

discoverer), is unlike anything found on earth and to this point scientists are still unsure of its make-up. The use of a scanning electron microscope (Cambridge Scientific Instrument Co.'s new "Stereoscan") has revealed that the White-rock is not a pure substance; in fact the results of the scan would suggest it is heterogeneous. In an attempt to determine the mixture of elements found within the White-rock, chemists ran tests with both hydrofluoric and sulphuric acids, hoping

that these solvents would break down the rock, allowing the resulting solution to be further tested. Unfortunately the White-rock did not act as a functional solute to either acid. The next step in determining the properties of this new material will be to make a mixture of ground dust from the White-rock and water, hoping that the two will bond and produce a homogeneous substance that may be studied to determine the usefulness of this space material.

