GEOLOGIC MAP OF THE MILL CREEK AND McCLURE QUADRANGLES, ALEXANDER AND UNION COUNTIES, ILLINOIS

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Photorevised 1990

VERTICAL EXAGGERATION 2X

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CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET

DOTTED LINES REPRESENT 10-FOOT CONTOURS NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

UTM GRID AND 1990 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

is sharp but apparently conformable in neighboring areas. S Intergrading sandstone and siltstone are light to medium gray, greenish to brownish gray, argillaceous, and laminated to thinly bedded. They are quartzose and partly cal-

edrioasteroids, and a few trilobites. The lower contact is gradational.

DESCRIPTION

A Alluvial and lacustrine deposits of massive to crudely stratified clay, silt, and sand and gravel were mapped on floodplains but not examined in detail. The lower contact is B Gravel is light gray to nearly black, rounded, polished chert pebbles, most smaller than

2 inches, mixed with occasional granules and small pebbles of quartz and jasper. The

deposits are locally cemented by silica and iron oxide; the matrix is quartz and chert sand. Little of this material is in place; most gravel has slumped downhill from its original posi-

red, orange, and brown, fine to coarse grained, and poorly sorted. It is composed of

quartz with minor lithic fragments, mica, and dark minerals in a clay matrix. Most of the sand is massive to poorly stratified. Gravel is mostly light to medium gray, subangular to well rounded chert pebbles up to about 6 inches in diameter and in a sand matrix. It oc-

curs as stringers and lenses in sand. Silt and clay are light to dark gray and sandy, occur-

ring as irregular pockets and veins in sand. Light gray, partly lithified, siliceous siltstone

lieved to be silcrete or silicified paleosol. Sandstone is white, very fine to medium grained quartz arenite with rounded and frosted grains. It is crossbedded to massive and lacks fossils. Sandstone occurs only as float in boulders up to 20 feet across. Conglomerate is

composed of chert gravel, as above, with a quartz sand matrix and cement of silica and iron oxide; it occurs mainly as float. Wilcox (?) and Tuscaloosa (?) lithologies occur locally in areas mapped as McNairy. The lower contact is unconformable on Paleozoic rocks but

D Gravel and conglomerate. Gravel is white, light gray and medium gray, subangular to

ic; much of it is probably derived locally. Conglomerate is gravel (as above), in places

cemented with silica or iron oxide. Assignment to the Tuscaloosa Formation is debatable.

E Limestone is light yellowish to brownish gray, fine to coarse, light brown echinoderm

fragments in a matrix of dull white bryozoan fragments. This speckled rock is laminate

and has common planar crossbedding. Light gray ovoid chert nodules occur in the lower part. Near the base the limestone becomes darker, finer grained, glauconitic, and slightly

F Dolomitic limestone and bedded chert. Carbonate rock is medium to dark gray, olive to brownish gray, glauconitic, highly siliceous dolomitic lime mudstone that contains up to 30% dark chert in highly irregular, angular nodules intricately intergrown with the lime

stone. Layering is thin, planar to slightly irregular, and indistinct in fresh exposures but

ganister. Bedded chert ("Hartline chert" of previous authors) is brownish gray, slightly vitreous, and vesicular; it weathers to jagged surfaces. Ganister is a granular, pelletal. very porous form of silica that is commonly reddish orange to dark brown but locally white

G Siltstone and shale. Most of the unit is greenish to bluish gray, blocky to slightly fissile

silty *shale* and *siltstone* in very thin irregular, lenticular beds. This partly calcareous rock

contains occasional burrows and trails, but no body fossils. The unit coarsens upward.

rock (commonly called "calico rock") that is light gray with magenta, pink, and orange

brown bands and mottles. It occurs in tabular beds 4 to 18 inches thick and separated by thinner intervals of ripple-laminated siliceous shale. The lower contact is disconformable

dominates. The unit is poorly exposed and known mainly from records of wells in the

eastern part of the Mill Creek and adjacent Dongola Quadrangle. The New Albany Shale is missing in places because of erosion at the base of the Springville Shale. The lower

I Limestone, dolomite, siltstone, and shale. Carbonate rocks are mostly medium to dar

constitute as much as 30% of the rock. Siltstone and shale are light to dark gray, olive gray and brownish gray, calcareous, and dolomitic. They have well developed planar and wavy

laminations and common burrows and escape structures. Some siltstone approaches very fine sandstone. The Rendleman Oolite Bed is a thin but widespread layer of light gray oolitic and crinoidal packstone or grainstone near the middle of the St. Laurent. Where

altered, the St. Laurent is mostly light gray, very porous siliceous rock of low density and in

very thin tabular layers that contain common dark gray to brown, vitreous chert nodules.

Portions are variegated and resemble "calico rock" derived from altered Springville Shale Exposures of St. Laurent are small and discontinuous. The lower contact is sharp, and at

J Sandstone, minor limestone, chert, and clay. The Grand Tower is represented largely

by the basal Dutch Creek Sandstone Member, which is white (weathering dark gray), fine

to medium grained, well sorted quartz arenite composed of rounded, frosted grains, Molds of corals, brachiopods, and other fossils are locally abundant but not ubiquitous.

iron oxides. No limestone of the Grand Tower crops out; but thin, light gray, sandy crinoi-

dal *limestone* overlies the Dutch Creek in wells near the eastern edge of the study area. A

thin interval of light gray *chert* fragments in a sticky *clay* matrix was observed in outcrops; it may be insoluble residuum of the limestone. The lower contact is sharp and at least

K Chert, microcrystalline silica, and minor limestone. Chert (largely silicified limestone is a dull to semivitreous white with orange- and red-stained zones. Bedding is thin and

wavy to tabular; red clay partings are common. The chert is mainly porous to microporous

but some is dense. Brecciated chert occurs locally near tops of ridges. Ledge-forming

chert occurs sporadically in the unit: its occurrence appears to be partially fault-controll Chert is gently folded and highly fractured in most places. Microcrystalline silica is white

to very light gray, orange- and red-stained, and relatively soft and friable; it has indisting

pedded lime mudstone. Fossils are abundant in upper part of unit, including the trilobites Dalmanites pratteni, Odontochile sp., Leonanaspis sp., Phacops cristata, and Cordania sp., and the brachiopods Eodevonaria arcuata, Strophostylus cancellatus, and Amphi

genia curta along with abundant spiriferid and strophenmenid brachiopods and pel-

and large domichnia cavities. Gray chert containing abundant spiriferid brachiopods and crinoid columnals at the base of the unit may represent the Backbone Limestone. The

L Chert and microcrystalline silica. Chert is white to very light gray with gray, yellow, and

prange stains. Typically, it is dense, novaculitic, and medium to thick bedded. Fossils are

rare. Brecciated chert occurs throughout the unit but is most common at the top. Below the upper breccia zone is an interval of very porous, popcorn-textured chert riddled with what appears to be horizontal burrows. The Grassy Knob contains less clay and more

silica is similar to that in the overlying unit, but it generally occurs in thinner layers and

M Limestone, chert, minor shale, and microcrystalline silica. Limestone is light brown to light yellowish gray, dolomitic, argillaceous lime mudstone; its thin wavy beds contain ndant gray chert nodules. The upper part of the unit, stained yellow to orange in some areas, includes chert with a "brain" texture interbedded with microcrystalline silica and dense, nodular chert. Sponge spicules increase in abundance upward. Fossils are common in the upper 100 feet; they include the trilobites Huntonia palacea, Phacops sp. and

unit is relatively unfossiliferous. Near the base is greenish gray cherty limestone and

matozoan fragments). The thick, tabular bedding has styolitic partings. The upper part is argillaceous. There have been reports of Ostracods and foraminifera (Ammodiscus sp.

P Limestone is light to medium brownish gray lime mudstone and wackestone that has numerous regular layers of green to caramel-colored chert throughout, along with shaley partings scattered throughout the unit. Near the top are small nodules and spheres of pyrite and large colonies of Favosites sp. and calymenid trilobites. The lower contact is Q Limestone is dark gray lime mudstone in thin, wavy, and lenticular beds with dark gray chert nodules in the upper part. Laminae and interbeds of greenish gray calcareous shale become thicker and more numerous downward. Fossils include crinoids, carpoids,

R Shale and limestone. Shale is light to medium greenish gray, soft and fissile, and clayey to silty. The upper part is very calcareous, and the lower part slightly calcareous. Inter beds and nodules of *limestone*, lithologically similar to limestone in the overlying unit, an

common in the upper part of the Orchard Creek. The lower contact was not observable; it

bedded chert with interbeds of green shale. The lower contact is gradational. N Shale and limestone. Shale is brick red, mottled, and variegated with purple and green. Because it is very calcareous and silty, it could be called marlstone. It is typically burrowed. Limestone is brick red, greenish gray and purple mottled, argillaceous lime of the unit is mostly shale and the lower part mostly limestone. The lower contact is sharp O Limestone, a lime mudstone and skeletal wackestone, is light to medium gray with pale red and green mottling and contains coarse pink to red calcite crystals (largely pel-

lower contact is poorly exposed but appears conformable.

contains a greater proportion of chert.

in well cuttings. The lower contact is sharp.

H Shale. Black, hard, brittle, highly fissile, noncalcareous, slightly silty, pyritic shale pre-

he State Pond Shale Member at the base is green to dark olive gray, mottled, soft, slightly calcareous clay shale. Where altered, the Springville Shale is a hard, dense, siliceous

ccentuated by weathering. Where altered, the Fort Payne is either bedded chert or

siliceous, grading into and intertonguing with the underlying unit.

The lower contact is sharp and probably disconformable.

rounded chert pebbles and cobbles up to 6 inches in diameter. Chert is commonly tripo

tion. Assignment to the Wilcox Formation is questionable.

may intertongue with Tuscaloosa (?) gravel.

Delta Fault divides into several closely spaced subparallel faults that have stepwise displacements down to the east. A number of smaller faults that strike N15°W to N40°W have been mapped a short distance east of the Delta Fault, particularly in Section 21, T14S,

R2W. The exposed faults are high-angle and normal. Innumerable small faults, most too small to show on the geologic map, were observed east of the Harrison Creek Anticline and Delta Fault. Trends of these faults are diverse, but the most common trends are N20°E to N20°W, east to west, and N30°E to N40°E. Northtrending faults are most common in the northern half of the study area, whereas northeasttrending faults are largest and most numerous in the southern half. Linear drainages and scarps such as Sexton Creek, Sandy Creek, Jim Branch, and the Cache River bluff at Tatumville indicate the presence of additional large, unmapped northeast-trending faults or

Nearly all the small faults in the Mill Creek Quadrangle dip steeper than 60°, and many are vertical. Most of these faults have a few inches to about 20 feet of throw, but a few have more than 100 feet of throw. Horizontal slickensides, reversals of dip directions, wrongway "drag," and positive and negative flower structures (Harding 1985) along many of the faults indicate strike-slip displacement; however, the amount and direction of horizontal offset can rarely be determined. Two west-northwest-trending faults west of Dago Hill in the SW4, Section 3, T14S, R2W, bear horizontal striations; the "smoothness test" and arrangement of pinnate fractures along the faults are consistent with left lateral displacement. A positive flower structure, or pop-up structure, has been mapped in the NE¼, Section 33, T13S, R2W. In the narrow, west-northwest-trending fault slice, the distinctive red limestone of the Bainbridge Formation has been upthrust into contact with the younger Bailey Limestone and Grassy Knob Chert. A small pull-apart graben filled with megabreccia is exposed along the streambed in You-Be-Damned Hollow in the SW¼ NW¼, Section 35, T13S, R2W. North of this site a series of en echelon north-northeast-trending faults have been mapped. These high-angle faults outline narrow horsts and grabens and locally

tectonically thickene

contain pull-apart breccia like that in You-Be-Damned Hollow. The fault pattern implies left lateral, divergent wrenching. At least some faulting is post-Cretaceous. Undifferentiated Cretaceous–Tertiary gravel is in fault contact with Paleozoic rocks along Cooper Creek, SW½ SW½ NE½, Section 1, T14S, R2W, and also at the entrance of an abandoned ganister mine northeast of Elco in Section 18, T14S, R1W. The belt of Cretaceous-Tertiary strata in the northeastern Mill Creek Quadrangle is a paleovalley filled with fluvial sediments. The linear trend and par-

allelism with faulting suggest structural control. The complexity of faulting, poor exposure, and paucity of marker beds precluded draw-

ing structure contour lines on the geologic map.

ALTERED ROCKS Lithologies of all Paleozoic units are altered in a large portion of the study area. The area of altered strata covers the Mill Creek Quadrangle (except the northeast and northwest corners) and part of the southeastern McClure Quadrangle. The altered strata continue northward into the Jonesboro Quadrangle and southward into the Tamms Quadrangle.

In this area, all the rocks are leached of carbonate minerals and silicified. The Grassy Knob Chert and Clear Creek Formation are altered to chert and microcrystalline silica (tripoli) with some clay partings. The Grand Tower Limestone is dissolved, leaving a residuum of clay and chert. The basal Dutch Creek Sandstone Member is brecciated. The St. Laurent Formation is altered to punky, cherty, laminated low-density rock that contains no calcite or dolomite. The altered Springville Shale is a multihued chertlike material called "calico rock"; and the formerly siliceous limestone of the Fort Payne Formation is a bedded chert and ganister (granular silica). Alteration extends at least 400 feet below the surface,

the depth of the deepest drill holes in the area. The rocks are thoroughly faulted and fractured throughout the area of altered strata, as described in the preceding section on structural geology. By contrast, unaltered rocks contain few faults and are only moderately jointed. Geophysical data indicate a large body of dense magnetic rock, probably a mafic pluton, beneath the altered strata. In several parts of the study area, densely silicified rocks of the Clear Creek and Grassy Knob Formations occur along faults. The Grassy Knob is extensively silicified along the northern part of the Delta Fault and other faults in Sections 5 and 8, T14S, R2W; whereas ledge-forming cherts of the Clear Creek follow northeast-trending faults in the NW¼, Section 14, in the same township. Horizontally burrowed layers in both the Grassy Knob and Clear Creek Formations were especially susceptible to alteration; they are heavily silicified well away

The relationship of alteration to igneous activity suggests hydrothermal activity (Berg and Masters 1994). Intense fracturing provided pathways for hydrothermal fluids. Weathering processes also may have played a role in altering rocks near the surface.

Microcrystalline silica (tripoli) is the principal economic mineral product of the Mill Creek-McClure area. More than 200 tripoli mines, mostly small room-and-pillar drift

mines, have operated in the study area in the last 100 years or so. One underground and two surface mines are active, and silica processing plants are in operation at Elco and Tamms (Berg and Masters 1994). Tripoli occurs in altered Clear Creek Formation and Grassy Knob Chert, and to a lesser extent, in the Bailey Limestone. Four factors led to the formation of tripoli: (1) original bio-

genic silica in the form of sponge spicules, abundant in the host rocks; (2) abundant detrital quartz silt in the host rocks; (3) hydrothermal leaching and concentration of silica; and (4) near-surface weathering in the past (probably a minor factor). Tripoli is used for polishing compounds, abrasives, and extenders or fillers in paints and plastics. Iron-oxidestained tripoli is used as an ingredient in portland cement. Dense, hard chert from the study area has been used for skid-resistant pavement and road

gravel, and for making refractory bricks. Ganister derived from silicification of the Fort Payne Formation was formerly mined for use in the manufacture of refractory bricks

No oil or gas production has been achieved in or near the study area. The Humble Oil Company's Pickel No. 1 well, drilled in 1967 to a total depth of 8,492 feet, was dry and abandoned. This hole was drilled near the structural apex of the Harrison Creek Anticline. The oldest formation penetrated was the basal Cambrian Mt. Simon (Lamotte) Sandstone.

No shows of oil or gas were reported. The hydrothermal theory of alteration in this area suggests the possibility of metallic ore deposits in the subsurface. Local residents tell of pioneer lead mining in the vicinity of the Delta Fault, but their reports cannot be confirmed. Concentrations of limonite, goethite, and manganese oxides occur near the Delta Fault and other faults in the study area. These minerals suggest that metallic ores may be present at depth. Unusually high concentrations of metals occur in cuttings from the Humble Pickel No.1 oil test hole. Results of the analysis of cuttings from 29 wells distributed throughout Illinois (Erickson et al. 1987) indicated that samples from the Pickel well had the highest values of silver, arsenic, and lead; the sec-

Pickel well was six times greater than that for any other well (Erickson et al. 1987). Berg, R. B., and J. M. Masters, 1994, Geology of Microcrystalline Silica (Tripoli) Deposits,

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