many other oil fields. Nowhere on any continent can any creationist or other person point out even a 100-foot thickness of well-lithified sandstone, limestone, siltstone, evaporite strata, or compacted shale, which has been formed within the past 80,000 years. (I am assuming that the Flood was not more than 80,000 years before the present time.) In fact, we rarely find more than a few feet of well-lithified sedimentary rock which have formed within that period of time, except on coral reefs in the oceans.

TABLE 1. Summary of deposits which lie above the evaporite coverings of the reefs of oil fields in northwestern Alberta. The thicknesses given are averages for several wells in the area. Each section shown in the table is actually an elaborate series of layers or beds of varying thickness--usually from a few inches to a few feet--and differing somewhat in composition from each other. (Based on J. Law, "Geology of Northwestern Alberta and Adjacent Areas," American Association of Petroleum Geologists Bulletin, v. 39, 1955, p. 1927-1965.)

Geologic Period	Thickness in feet	Description of strata (beginning with the uppermost, ground-level deposit)
Pleistocene (an epoch)	100 ft.	Varied layers of glacial till, gravel, sand, silt, and clay
Cretaceous	700	Thin layers of shale; and small to considerable amounts of layered sandstone, layered limestone, and ironstone
Mississippian	300	Limestone, shale, and siltstone, with some chert nodules (many alternating layers)
Upper Devonian	700	Limestone (several different types and grades)
	600	Silty limestone (Some layers alternate with thin deposits of calcareous shale)
	1600	Shale, with intermittent layers of siltstone and limestone
Middle Devonian	300	Limestone (often laminated), with some interstratified dolostone, shale and sandstone
	700	Evaporite coverings (Muskeg Formation)

Thus, young-earth creationist writers who either ignore or try to "explain away" these very real characteristics of the earth's sedimentary cover are giving professional scientists and educators a valid reason to reject "creation science" as a defective and wholly unreliable system. Such creationist authors often openly profess to be able to explain precisely how the sedimentary formations of the earth were produced, yet they regularly fail to recognize and use the major definitive characteristics of the sedimentary strata. Ideas which are merely created or visualized in human minds can not properly be called earth science; earth science, of necessity, studies the characteristics of the earth itself. Until the literature of creationism can be made to meet this standard it will continue to wither and fall before the "big guns" of the anti-creationist movement. Besides this tragedy our Christian brethren will continue to be confused as to the real nature of scientific evidence, and concerning which science-related beliefs are actually compatible with the Bible.