

cover the eastern two-thirds of the United States (east of the Rocky Mountains) is 900 feet (270 m). Of great significance is the fact that several states in the interior of the U. S., from 400 to 700 miles (640 to 1120 km) inland have 270 m of limestone covering almost all of the state, and in the large area known as the Central Appalachians, lying from 150 to 350 miles (240 to 560 km) inland and extending 500 miles (800 km) NE-SW, the thickness of limestone usually exceeds 5,000 feet (1,500 m) with an average of approximately 15,000 feet (4,500 m) of non-carbonate strata at various levels in between the limestone formations (Chen, 1977). Thicknesses of limestone similar to those of the U. S. A. are found in some localities, far inland, in Canada, Europe, Asia, and Africa.

Creationists who have proposed that most of the limestone on the earth was deposited during the biblical flood have hypothesized that it was derived either from inorganic precipitation out of sea water or from large amounts of carbonate skeletal material (sea shells, algal plates, etc.) which might have been swept in from the oceans--or a combination of the two processes. A study of the (low) amounts of calcium and magnesium carbonates contained in even super-saturated sea water makes the inorganic-precipitation hypothesis untenable--and even more so when we consider the fact that precipitated calcium and magnesium carbonates are formed as very small particles which require long periods of tranquil water for settling out.

As for the carbonate skeletal-material hypothesis, mentioned above, we must consider the following problems: (1) To suppose that enough seashell materials were stored in readiness around the North American continent, available to be swept in by the Flood and deposited in neat layers to the thicknesses cited above, and over such broad areas, is completely out of harmony with the physical laws which control organic growth. (2) Science knows of no way by which the flood waters could transport all the shell material inland--even if it had been stored in readiness--and distribute it evenly over such broad areas of the continent from 640 km to 1120 km from the "storage depot." (3) There is no conceivable way that the surging flood waters could transport the shell material inland without mixing it with terrigenous materials on the way. And how would the flood waters bring in layers of pure clay and silt or sand a few minutes later, to deposit the shale and siltstone or sandstone layers over great areas of shell material? (Non-carbonate layers of these types usually appear within a limestone strata sequence, and sometimes regularly alternate with limestone layers in the local column.) (4) We must face the facts of physical laws which control sediment suspension and transport and realize that fine sediments can not settle out of surging flood waters to form neat, smooth and uniform layers--also that seashells of all sizes do not float