during the Flood. All of these kinds of growth structures are found in Europe as well as North America, and have been carefully identified many times and in many places. The technical literature describing them is truly abundant. For example, in M. R. Walter's work on stromatolites (Walter, 1976), the bibliography contains 2,034 entries (with no repetition of works), relating to the stromatolites and carbonate algal mats; and the bibliographies for ancient bioherms and reefs (including fossilized true-coral reefs) are at least as large. See J. L. Wilson (1975, p. 96-280) for a summary treatment and references on ancient reefs and bioherms.

It is true that the identification of the algae which produced ancient stromatolites and fossilized algal mats was difficult at first, but with the advent of the scanning electron microscope and improved usage of standard electron microscopes it became possible to see and identify the cells and filaments of the fossilized algae in the stromatoids (Walter, 1976, p. 251-259; Flügel, 1977, p. 57-60). Furthermore, the process of formation of calcareous algal structures of types very similar to these ancient ones, by present-day species of marine algae, has been observed in many places such as in the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, and the western coast of Australia (Friedman, et al., 1973; Ginsburg, 1975, p. 198-232; Walter, 1976, p. 193-203). In comparing these and other features with ancient limestones we find abundant evidence that a large proportion of the earth's limestones were formed in warm, shallow seas with the cementing together of the skeletal particles beginning after they have been slightly buried by bottom currents (Reading, et al., 1986, p. 283-342).

With the great amount of data--such as we have been citing--which indicate that at least practically all limestone strata were produced slowly, we have abundant reason to believe that they were formed long before the biblical flood--and also long before the creation of Adam and Eve. (We do not accept an evolutionary view of either the human race or the organisms which produced the limestone and fossils of the earth. Evidently the early strata of which we have been speaking were formed as a result of the growth of lime-secreting algae--which are not listed in the Genesis account of creation--and by the many kinds of shell-producing marine organisms which God created. Genesis 1:20-22 refers to some of the latter which were created on the fifth day of creation.)

There are some creationists who try to assume that most of the limestone strata were created as limestone at the original creation. But even Cambrian limestones which are sometimes found at depths of 6 to 10 km in the oil fields usually contain clearly identifiable fossils. Unless we are willing to say that God created dead