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## BULLETIN <sup>116</sup>

## GEOLOGY AND GROUND-WATER RESOURCES OF SHERIDAN COUNTY, KANSAS

By CHARLES K. BAYNE State Geological Survey of Kansas Lawrence, Kansas

Prepared by the United States Geological Survey and the State Geological Survey of Kansas with the cooperation of the Division of Santation of the Kansas State Board of Health, and the Division of Water<br>Resources of the Ka



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\*Intermittent employment only .

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## GEOLOGY AND GROUND-WATER RESOURCES OF SHERIDAN COUNTY, KANSAS

By Charles K. Bayne State Geological Survey Lawrence, Kansas

#### ABSTRACT

This report describes the geography, geology, and ground-water resources of Sheridan County, Kansas. The county is in the High Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province and has an area of about <sup>893</sup> square miles. The population of the county in 1950 was 4,607, about 66 percent of which is on farms. The climate of the county is dry, subhumid to semiarid, which is on farms. The climate of the county is dry, subhumid to semiarid,<br>the normal annual rainfall being 19.35 inches and the mean annual temperature being 53.6 ° F. Farming and livestock raising are the principal occupations in the county.

rielstocene age. The Smoky Hill chalk member of the Niobrara formation Ine rocks that crop out in Sheridan County are sedimentary and range in age from late Cretaceous to Recent. A map showing the surficial geology d cross sections showing the subsurface relations of the geologic formations e included in the report. Much of the county is underlain by the Ogallala formation of Tertiary age, which in the upland areas is mantled by loess of (late Cretaceous) is the oldest rock cropping out in the county and is expose he valleys of the major streams in the eastern part of the county. le Ogallala formation is the most important aquifer in the county although <sup>le alluvium</sup> and materials beneath the Pleistocene terraces yield water to wells.

le report contains (1) a map that shows the location of wells and the depth to water in wells for which records are given and that indicates that the  $\frac{d}{dt}$ pth to water ranges from less than 10 to about 160 feet; (2) a map that show le shape and slope of the water table and that indicates that the water table slopes generally eastward at an average rate of 15 feet to the mile; (3) a map at shows the thickness of Pliocene and Pleistocene water-bearing materials, which range from a featheredge to 140 feet; and  $(4)$  a map showing the configuration of the pre-Tertiary bedrock surface. The ground-water reservoir is recharged chiefly by precipitation that falls locally and in areas to the west. Ground water is discharged primarily by transpiration and evaporation in the <sup>valle</sup>ys where the water table is relatively shallow and to a lesser extent by subsurface movement into adjacent areas, by pumping, and by stream runoff. All public and most domestic and stock-water supplies in the county are obtained from wells.

Some irrigation has been practiced for several years in the county, but only e irrigation well was in operation during the summer of 1952; it obtained water from the Ogallala formation and was used to irrigate about 140 acres. Water from the alluvium and terrace materials has been used for irrigation in <sup>previous</sup> years. Additional large-capacity wells can be developed in the upland areas of the county although the yields will be dependent on the local thickness <sup>d</sup> permeability of the water-bearing materials.

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Analyses of samples of water from 18 wells indicate that the water is suitable for most uses and that water from the Ogallala formation is slightly better in quality than water from the terrace deposits and from alluvium. The field data upon which the report is based are given in tables and include records of 160 wells, chemical analyses of 18 water samples, and logs of 34 test holes and <sup>1</sup> well .

#### INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE INVESTIGATION

An investigation of the geology and ground-water resources of Sheridan County was begun in 1952 as a part of the program of ground-water studies in Kansas by the United States Geologica Survey and the State Geological Survey of Kansas, with the cooperation of the Division of Sanitation of the State Board of Health and the Division of Water Resources of the State Board of Agriculture. Ground water is one of the principal natural resources of Sheridan County. Nearly all water supplies in the county are obtained from wells. Irrigation has not been practiced extensively n the county, but considerable recent interest has been expressed in irrigation and an adequate understanding of the quantity and quality of ground water available and the measures necessary to safeguard its development and use is needed.

#### LOCATION AND EXTENT OF THE AREA

Sheridan County is in the second tier of counties south of the Nebraska border and the third tier of counties east of the Colorado border. Sheridan County is bounded on the east by Graham County,



FIG. 1.-Index map of Kansas showing area covered by this report and areas or which cooperative ground-water reports have been published or are in preparation.

on the north by Decatur County, on the west by Thomas County, and on the south by Gove County. It contains 25 townships and and on the south by Gove County. is an area of approximately 893 square miles. Sheridan Count and other areas in which cooperative ground -water investigations have been made are shown in Figure 1.

#### PREVIOUS INVESTIGATIONS

(1901, 1902), in his report on the utilization of the southern High lo detailed geologic reports on Sheridan County have been published, but several reports refer to the county either directly or III a general way. Haworth studied the regional geology and water resources of western Kansas in 1895 (Haworth, 1897); Johnsor riains, made special reference to the source, availability, and use <sup>of</sup> ground water in western Kansas; and Darton (1905) made a study of the geology and ground-water resources of the central Great Plains. The work by Elias ( 1931 ) on the geology of Wallace County was an important contribution to the geology of western Kansas in that his studies of the Ogallala formation are probably e most comprehensive and his definition of the Sanborn formation was the foundation for later studies of the Pleistocene deposits in western Kansas. A study of the geology and ground-water rescurces of Thomas County was made by Frye (1945) and a similar study of Norton and northwestern Phillips Counties was made by Frye and Leonard (1949). A report was prepared by Beck and McCormack (1951) on the geologic construction materials in Sheridan County, and is one of a series of similar county reports. A comprehensive study of the Pleistocene geology of Kansas was made by Frye and Leonard (1952). Field studies of the geology and ground-water resources of Decatur, Gove, Graham, and Rawis Counties in northwestern Kansas have been completed and reports are in preparation.

#### METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

transferred to Plate 1 with a Focalmatic projector. The wells listed The geology of the area was studied and was mapped on aerial photographs during the summer of 1952 and the data were then n Table 7 were visited during the investigation and the depths to water and the depths of the wells were measured with a steel tape from a fixed measuring point near the land surface, generally the top of the casing. The character of the material below the land surface was determined by the drilling of 34 test holes through the Pieistocene and Tertiary deposits to the Cretaceous bedrock. The

test holes were drilled with the hydraulic -rotary drilling machine owned by the State Geological Survey of Kansas and operated by N. W. Biegler and W. T. Conner of the State Geological Survey . The altitudes of the wells and test holes were determined by field parties under the direction of W. W. Wilson and Edwin Rhine of the Federal Geological Survey using <sup>a</sup> plane table and alidade .

Wells shown on Plate 2 were located within the sections by use of an odometer. The figures adjacent to the well locations on Plate 2 refer to the depth of the water below the land surface and brackets around the figures indicate that a chemical analysis is given in Table 3. Samples of water were collected from <sup>18</sup> wells and were analyzed by Howard Stoltenberg, chemist, in the Water and Sewage Laboratory of the Kansas State Board of Health. Base maps of the county were prepared by Bernita Mansfield from maps from the Soil Conservation Service .

#### WELL-NUMBERING SYSTEM

The well and test-hole numbers in this report give the location of the wells and test holes in accordance with the Bureau of Land Management system of land subdivision. The first numeral of a well number indicates the township, the second the range, and the third the section. The quarter sections and quarter-quarter sections are designated a, b, c, or d in a counterclockwise direction beginning in the northeast quarter. For example, well 9-26-30da (Fig. 2) is in the NE<sup> $\chi$ </sup> SE<sup> $\chi$ </sup> sec. 30, T. 9 S., R. 26 W. If 2 or more wells is in the NE<sup> $\chi$ </sup> SE<sup> $\chi$ </sup> sec. 30, T. 9 S., R. 26 W. are within a <sup>40</sup> -acre tract, the wells are numbered serially accord ing to the order in which they were inventoried.

#### GEOGRAPHY

#### TOPOGRAPHY AND DRAINAGE

Sheridan County is in the High Plains section of the Great Plains physiographic province. The county consists of nearly flat, gently The county consists of nearly flat, gently rolling uplands dissected by valleys of the major streams. The upland surface declines eastward at an average rate of about 15 feet to the mile. The highest point in the county  $(2,900 \text{ feet})$  is in the westernmost part near Thomas County and the lowest point (about 2,250 feet) is in the valley of South Fork Solomon River near Studley.

The principal streams in Sheridan County are Saline, South Solomon, and North Solomon Rivers, and Sand and Prairie Dog Creeks. Saline, North Solomon, and South Solomon Rivers and Prairie Dog

Creek rise southwest of Colby, in Thomas County. The North and South Forks of Solomon River and Prairie Dog Creek flow eastward<br>and northeastward and Saline River flows nearly due east. Sand and northeastward and Saline River flows nearly due east. Creek rises in eastern Thomas County and flows due east to its junction with South Fork Solomon River ineastern Sheridan County . The eastward -flowing rivers are perennial through the eastern two the county and are intermittent in the western third of the  $\frac{1}{2}$ county. Their valleys are broad and relatively flat in the west part



<sup>IG. 2</sup>.—Map of Sheridan County illustrating the well-numbering system used in this report. in this report.

of the county, deepening as they progress. Like most of the eastwest stream valleys in the northwestern part of the state, the valleys l these major east-west streams are asymmetric, the northward <sup>flowi</sup>ng tributaries are more numerous but are shorter and have steeper gradients than the southward-flowing tributaries. The  $\epsilon$ astern third of the county is moderately well dissected for a dis-

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Original from UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA tance of several miles from the main streams. The slopes are gen erally steep and the land is used primarily for grazing.

#### **CLIMATE**

The climate of Sheridan County is dry subhumid to semiarid and is characterized by slight to moderate precipitation, moderately high wind velocity, and rapid evaporation. During the summer the days are hot, but the nights are generally cool. The hot weather in summer is moderated by good wind movement and relatively low humidity. The winters are generally characterized by moderate weather with severe cold periods of short duration and with rela tively little snow.

The average mean temperature at Hoxie is 53.6° F. July generally is the hottest month with an average temperature of  $78^{\circ}$  F. and January generally is the coldest month with an average temperature of 29° F. The average length of the growing season is 161 days; the average date of the last killing frost is May <sup>1</sup> and of the first killing frost is October <sup>11</sup> .



Fic. 3.—Graph showing the annual precipitation and the cumulative departure from normal precipitation at Hoxie .

The normal annual precipitation at Hoxie is 19.35 inches. The greatest annual precipitation was 36.43 inches in <sup>1915</sup> and the least was 9.27 inches in 1910. Most of the precipitation falls during the growing season from April through September. The annual pregrowing season from April through September. cipitation for the period of record and the cumulative departure from normal precipitation are shown in Figure 3.

#### POPULATION

According to the 1950 census, the population of Sheridan County was 4,607, which is an average of 5.2 persons per square mile as compared to 23.2 persons per square mile for the State. The popcompared to 23.2 persons per square mile for the State. ulation of the county has declined steadily since the 1930 census when the population was 6,038. Hoxie and Selden, with populations of 1,157 and <sup>438</sup> respectively , are the only cities in the county for which population figures are available. Although the county has declined in population, the cities have increased in population. About 20 percent of the people lived in the cities in 1930 whereas 4 percent lived in the cities in 1950.

#### TRANSPORTATION

Sheridan County is served by the main line of the Chicago, Rocl island, and Pacific Railroad, which traverses the northwest corner of the county and passes through Selden, and by a branch line of the Union Pacific Railroad that crosses the county from east to west and passes through Hoxie. Several hard-surfaced Federal and State highways serve the county. U. S. Highway 24 crosses eastwest through the middle of the county and Kansas Highway 23 crosses north -south through the middle of the county . U. S. High ways 83 and <sup>383</sup> parallel the railroad and extend through Selden . The rest of the county is served by county and township roads.

#### **AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture is the chief occupation in Sheridan County and, according to the 1945 census , the county contains 739 farms com prising about 540,000 acres, of which about 201,000 acres is pasture or range land and about 339,000 acres is crop land . Because of the practice of summer fallowing <sup>a</sup> part of the cultivated land each year, the acreage harvested differs from year to year. Crops were harvested from 242,000 acres in  $1947$ , 168,000 acres in  $1948$ , 206,000 acres in  $1949$ , and  $177,000$  acres in 1950. Wheat is the principal crop in the county, sorgums, hay, barley, and corn following in order of acreage harvested . The acreages of the principal crops grown in <sup>1950</sup> are given inTable 1.





#### MINERAL RESOURCES

The principal mineral resources of Sheridan County are oil, gas, construction materials, and volcanic ash.

Oil and gas.—The first producing oil well in Sheridan County was drilled in <sup>1943</sup> although several dry holes were drilled prior to that time. The first production was in the Studley field from rocks of the Arbuckle group of Cambrian and Ordovician age . The Adell pool in northeastern Sheridan County was discovered in 1944 , the Studley Southwest pool in 1945, and two other pools in 1952. Production of oil in Sheridan County in 1952 was 394,353 barrels from 47 wells. At the end of 1952 the cumulative production of oil in the county was 3,094,812 barrels. Wells formerly producing from the Arbuckle group in the county have been abandoned, and at the present time all production is obtained from the Kansas City and Lansing groups at a depth of about 3,800 feet.

C*onstruction materials.*—Large quantities of sand and gravel are available for construction materials in Sherid<mark>an</mark> County, principally from the Ogallala formation. Lesser amounts of sand and grave are available from terrace deposits and from alluvium along the principal streams. The sand and gravel in all the pits observed by the writer was suitable for use as road material, and that in several pits was suitable for concrete aggregate . Mortar beds of the Ogallala formation have been used for building blocks, but because of the difference in the hardness of the mortar beds, the blocks show differential weathering and are not as desirable for use in building as are other materials available in the vicinity of Sheridan County.

Volcanic ash.—Volcanic ash consists of fine glass-like shards ejected during the explosive phase of a volcanic eruption. deposits of ash, two of which have been exploited, were observed Four n the county. The ash has been used as a mineral filler in road construction. For a more detailed discussion of volcanic ash and

construction materials in Sheridan County , the reader is referred to e report by Beck and McCormack (1951).

#### **GEOLOGY**

#### Summary of Stratigraphy

The rocks cropping out in Sheridan County are sedimentary and e of Cretaceous (Gulfian), Pliocene, and Pleistocene age. The subdivisions and stratigraphic classification of these strata are given In Table 2 and in the cross sections in Figures 4A and 4B. The areal distribution of the outcrops is shown on the geologic map (Pl .1).

The Niobrara formation of late Cretaceous age underlies the en the county but crops out only in the valleys of Saline and South rork Solomon Rivers in the extreme eastern part of the county. The Pierre shale underlies the western one-third of the county but does not crop out. The Ogallala formation of Pliocene age underlies If the county with the exception of narrow bands along the edge <sup>of</sup> the major valleys, and crops out along some of the major stream and their tributaries, particularly in the eastern part of the county. Deposits classified as the Meade formation of Pleistocene age (Kan n and Yarmouthian stages) occupy a relatively high position along the major valleys, and Crete terrace deposits of sand and gravel containing some silt lie at alower position than the Meade formation along the lower parts of the major valleys. The upland area of the county is mantled by thick eolian silt, which is classified s a part of the Sanborn formation, and is divided into the Loveland, Peoria, and Bignell silt members. Deposits of eolian silt of late Wisconsinan age that are at least in part equivalent in age to the Bignell silt member underlie the more prominent terraces along e major stream valleys. There are low terrace deposits in the major valleys in about the eastern two-thirds of the county and Recent alluvium underlies the floodplains of the major valleys and their larger tributaries.

<sup>\*</sup> The geologic classification and nomenclature of this report follow the usage of the StateGeological Survey of Kansas and differ somewhat from those used by the U. S. Geo logical Survey .



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TABLE 2.-Ceneralized section of geologic formations of Sheridan County, Kansas 2. - Generalized section of geologic formation of Sheridan County, Kansa.

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F1G. 4A.—Geologic cross sections through Sheridan County





Fig. 4B.—Geologic cross sections through Sheridan County.

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## GEOLOGY IN RELATION TO GROUND WATER Cretaceous System-Gulfian Series Niobrara Formation

Character.-The Niobrara formation was named by Meek and Hayden ( 1862) for exposures of calcareous marl and chalky lime stone near the mouth of Niobrara River in northeastern Nebraska . Logan (1897) described the Niobrara formation in north-central<br>Kansas. He used a two-fold subdivision of the Niobrara formation He used a two-fold subdivision of the Niobrara formation consisting of the Fort Hays limestone and the Smoky Hill chalk members. Cragin had proposed the name Smoky Hill chalk earlier, and Williston proposed the name Fort Hays. The Niobrara formation in Sheridan County consists predominantly of chalky shale but also includes chalky limestone and chalk. The Fort Hays limestone. the lower member of the formation , does not crop out in the county , but drilling records indicate that the member is composed of massive beds of chalk and chalky limestone separated by thin<br>beds of chalky clay shale. The thickness ranges from about 45 The thickness ranges from about 45 feet along the eastern edge of the outcrop east of Sheridan County to about 60 feet near the Colorado line .

The Smoky Hill chalk member of the Niobrara formation con formably overlies the Fort Hays limestone member and consists of soft beds of alternating chalk and chalky shale. beds of chalk in the member are light to dark gray; weathered beds are white, tan, vellowish-pink, or brown. The member contains are white, tan, yellowish-pink, or brown. many thin beds of bentonite, and concretions of pyrite and limonite are common throughout. The lower part of the Smoky Hill chalk member is more massive and chalky and resembles the underlying<br>Fort Hays limestone member. The uppermost part of the Smoky The uppermost part of the Smoky Hill chalk member has been silicified locally over much of north western Kansas and beds of silicified chalk were encountered in several test holes in Sheridan County. ably was derived from the overlying Ogallala formation by solu tion of silica in percolating ground water and reprecipitation in the underlying chalk (Frye and Swineford, 1946).

Distribution and thickness.—Although the Fort Hays limestone does not crop out in Sheridan County , it underlies the entire county . Oil -well logs indicate a uniform thickness of about 50 feet. The Smoky Hill chalk member crops out in Sheridan County only in the extreme eastern part along the valleys of the Saline and South Fork<br>Solomon Rivers. The Smoky Hill chalk member underlies the The Smoky Hill chalk member underlies the entire county and reaches <sup>a</sup> maximum thickness of about <sup>580</sup> feet in the western part of the county. The minimum thickness is about <sup>400</sup> feet in the southeastern part of the county , the upper <sup>150</sup> to <sup>200</sup> feet of beds having been removed by pre -Ogallala and later erosion .

W*ater supply.*—The Niobrara formation is a poor aquifer in<br>ansas and it vields no water to wells in Sheridan Countv. The Kansas and it yields no water to wells in Sheridan County. limestones and shales are relatively impervious and could yield water only from joints and seams ( Pl 3A ) The uppermost part of the formation might yield water to wells locally from beds of suicified chalk, as these generally are fractured and jointed. The yield of wells tapping these beds would be small because the silici fied chalk generally is relatively thin ( Pl .3B )

#### Pierre Shale

The Pierre shale, which conformably overlies the Niobrara formation in northwestern Kansas, was named by Meek and Hayden n 1862 from exposures at old Fort Pierre in South Dakota. Elias (1931 ) described and named the several members of the Pierre shale in Kansas and discussed their correlation with later Cretaceou: units of North America. The Pierre shale does not crop out in Sheridan County but it underlies the western one-third of the county. The weathered shale generally is greenish gray or brownish gray and is locally bentonitic, whereas the unweathered shale is predomi nantly dark gray or black . The thickness of the Pierre shale in Sueridan County ranges from a featheredge at its eastern limit to 375 feet in the northwestern part of the county . The formation yields no water to wells in Sheridan County, and in areas outside le county it supplies only meager amounts of highly mineralized water to wells.

#### Tertiary System-Pliocene Series

#### Ogallala Formation

The Ogallala formation was named by Darton (1899 ) for ex posures near Ogallala in southwestern Nebraska . Elias ( 1931 ) made a detailed study of the Ogallala formation in Wallace County and adjacent areas in western Kansas.

Character.—The Ogaliala formation in Sheridan County consists t a diversity of clastic sediments including sand, gravel, clay, silt, bentonitic clay, and locally, sandy and silty limestone and opalcemented sand and gravel called "quartzite" and "caliche". The beds of sand and gravel and of clay within the formation are lenticu-



PLATE  $3 - A$ , Jointing **B**, Silicified chall at the top of the Smoky Hill chalk member of the Niobrara formation. The overlying rocks are "mortar beds" of of the Ogallala formation.

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ar and grade from one lithologic type to another within sh<mark>ort</mark> dis tances both laterally and vertically . Although the materials that make up the Ogallala formation are diverse, the pattern of outcr<mark>o</mark>p is uniform and easily identified. The hard ledges generally are cemented with calcium carbonate and form rough weathered benches or cliffs. If the clastic materials of the Ogallala formation e cemented with calcium carbonate, they resemble mortar and e often called "mortar beds" (Pl. 4A). The thickness of the mortar beds ranges from a few inches to several feet, and the degree of cementation differs greatly within short distances. Sand is the principal constituent of the Ogallala formation and occurs at all horizons . The sand ranges in size from fine to coarse and may be found in beds of silt and clay, and in the "mortar beds". The logs of some of the test holes indicate the presence of some well sorted sand in the Ogallala.

The State Geological Survey of Kansas classifies the Ogallala as aformation and recognizes three members, which, in ascending order, e the Valentine, Ash Hollow, and Kimball. The upper limit of le formation is marked in Kansas by a capping bed called the "algal limestone", which, except for small local deposits, has been removed from most of northwestern Kansas by post -Ogallala ero sion. The algal limestone probably was deposited in shallow water table lakes, whereas much of the calcium carbonate in "caliche" and n mortar beds' probably was deposited at or near the water table. Unanges in the water table within the formation may account for le position of "mortar beds" and "caliche" at various levels in the formation.

Distribution and thickness.—The Ogallala formation was de-posited by streams flowing generally eastward from the Rocky Mountain region. The streams carried heavy loads of material, and as the gradients and velocities decreased, the streams deposited their loads, filling their channels and forming broad floodplains. The floodplains were traversed by the aggrading streams and were built up by the deposition of debris until the streams crossed the low divides of the older Cretaceous rocks .The Ogallala formation origi nally covered most of the western half of Kansas, but subsequent erosion removed the deposits from much of the area . The thickness of the Ogallala formation ranges from <sup>a</sup> featheredge along its east an limit and across some of the high ridges of Cretaceous rocks to more than 350 feet in the western part of the State.



PLATE 4.—A, Typical "mortar beds" in the Ogallala formation in sec. 31, T.<br>8 S., R. 24 W. B, Sanborn formation. Crete sand and gravel member below<br>Loveland silt member and silt of late Wisconsinan age. Loveland silt member



#### Geology and Ground Water, Sheridan County <sup>27</sup>

The Ogallala formation was deposited over all of Sheridan County and now lies at or near the surface throughout the county except n the eastern part in the valleys of Saline and South Fork Solomor Rivers. The thickness of the Ogallala formation in Sheridan County ranges from a featheredge to as much as 220 feet in the west-central part of the county. The cross sections (Fig. 4) show that the Ogal-



Ic. 5. Alap of Sheridan County showing configuration of the bedrock surface beneath the Ogallala formation, the location of test holes, and the altitude at which bedrock was encountered.

lala formation thins in the southern part of the county, owing in part to the higher altitude of the Cretaceous bedrock surface as shown in Figure <sup>5</sup> and in part to the removal of some of the de posits by erosion. The geographic distribution of the Ogallal formation is shown on Plate <sup>1</sup> .

Water supply.—The Ogallala formation is the principal aquifer in —Sheridan County. The coarser materials that lie below the water

table yield water freely to wells in the upland area of the county . All irrigation wells on the upland obtain their water from the Ogal lala formation and those in the valleys obtain at least a part of their water from it. The finer-grained materials in the Ogallala formation may contain water, but because of their low permeability they generally vield only small quantities of water to wells. The thickness erally yield only small quantities of water to wells. of the saturated material in the Ogallala formation differs consider ably over the county as shown in Figure 8. All irrigation wells are in areas that have more than 40 feet of saturated material. The irrigation wells in the valleys, but which obtain water in part from the Ogallala formation, lie in areas that have between 40 and 60 feet of saturated material. Well 9-30-34ba is an old upland well that ob tains all its water from the Ogallala formation. It did not penetrate the entire thickness of the Ogallala, but from  $69$  feet of saturatec material the well was pumped at a rate of 300 gpm. Well 8-28-9ab is an upland well obtaining water from the Ogallala formation. There is 114 feet of saturated material <mark>at t</mark>his well, which is pumpeo it a rate of 580 gpm with a drawdown of 63 feet. Data obtained from a study of the Ogallala formation in areas of outcrop and tes**t** drilling indicate that the Ogallala formation may be equally per meable in other parts of the county and that additional wells can ve developed. The upland area in the north half of the county has the greatest thickness of saturated material (Fig. 8), but this area is also in general the area of greatest depth to water (Pl. 1). Wells of larger capacity probably can be constructed in the areas of greater saturated thickness, but costs would be correspondingly higher and pumping lifts would be greater, owing to the greater depth to water.

The quality of water from the Ogallala formation is generally better than that of water from the alluvium and terrace deposits. The chemical character of water from the Ogallala formation is shown in Table 3.

### Quaternary System-Pleistocene Series

Quaternary deposits in Kansas are of continental origin and are assigned to the Pleistocene series . They underlie much of the surface of the State and are composed of silt, clay, sand, gr<mark>avel, an</mark>d volcanic ash. The Pleistocene epoch as defined by the State Geo logical Survey of Kansas is the last of the major divisions ofgeologic time and has been called the "Ice Age", owing to the presence of continental glaciers in North America and elsewhere . The Pleisto cene epoch has been divided into four main glacial stag<mark>es, the</mark> Nebraskan, Kansan, Illinoian, and Wisconsinan; and three inter-

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of determined constituents

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glacial stages, the Aftonian, Yarmouthian, and Sangamonian. During the Nebraskan and Kansan stages, the continental glaciers entered northeastern Kansas and covered that area with glacial drift. During the Illinoian and Wisconsinan stages the continental glaciers did not reach the State, but the climatic changes accompanying their approach had a direct effect on deposits over much of Kansas .

Deposits of the Pleistocene epoch in Sheridan County and the rest of western Kansas are both fluviatile and eolian. (stream laid) deposits generally are associated with the present drainage systems or with ancient drainage systems, whereas the eolian deposits generally underlie the uplands but locally may ex tend into the valleys and may rest on older fluviatile deposits.

Fluviatile deposits of the Nebraskan stage underlie parts of central and southwestern Kansas and extend westward along Smoky Hill River and although they have not been identified in Sheridan County it is believed that they may be present in the county. Identification of these deposits in Sheridan County is difficult because they were principally derived from the Ogallala formation and their lithology is similar to that of the Ogallala.

The Aftonian interglacial stage followed the Nebraskan stage, and like the other interglacial stages it was marked by an unconformity in the geologic section that differs from the usual unconformity in that it represents a period of little erosion; conditions were stable and weathering was the principal agent at work. These conditions and weathering was the principal agent at work. were conducive to development of soils on the surface of the older deposits. As no Nebraskan deposits have been observed in Sheridan County, soils developed on the Ogallala formation may be in part of Aftonian age.

The Meade and Sanborn formations were deposited in Sheridan County during the Kansan, Illinoian, and Wisconsinan glacial stages.

The Kansan glaciation was followed by the Yarmouthian inter glacial stage during which climatic conditions were again stable and ideal for soil formation. The Yarmouthian stage is the interval of one of the major unconformities in the Pleistocene in Kansas . Although an extensive soil was developed during this stage, it was not recognized in deposits in Sheridan County. This soil, if formed. may have been removed by later erosion, but a part of the soil developed on the 'Ogallala formation in the county may be equiva lent to the Yarmouth soil.

#### Meade Formation - Kansan and Yarmouthian Stages

The Meade formation was described in <sup>1941</sup> by Frye and Hibbard and was named for some deposits in central Meade County, Kansas. The Meade formation in Kansas is divided into two members, the lower ( Grand Island ) member, which is fluviatile and generally consists of sand and gravel, and upper (Sappa) member, which is partly fluviatile and partly eolian and generally consists of silt, sand, gravel, and locally of volcanic ash .

The Meade formation in Sheridan County underlies small areas in <sup>a</sup> high terrace position along the major streams. Only the Sappa member has been identified in the county and its identification was based on the presence of the Pearlette volcanic ash (Carey and  $0$ uers, 1902 $\mu$ The maximum thickness of the ash in the county is 16 feet in the NW  $\frac{1}{2}$  sec. 34, T. 8 S., R. 28 W., in the valley of The Grand Island member of the South Fork Solomon River. Meade formation was not identified in Sheridan County , but in e SW<sup>2</sup> sec. 4, T. 8 S., R. 25 W., Graham County, deposits of sand and gravel along the west side of Morland Lake are probably in the Grand Island member . The combined thickness of the Sappa and Grand Island members at this locality is about 25 feet.  $\mu$  is this exposure is only about 2 miles east of the eastern border of Sheridan County it is likely that the deposits extend westward into Sheridan County. difficult without the presence of distinctive fossils or the volcanic Identification of the Meade formation is h, and the terrace is not mappable because it is well dissected and younger deposits mantle the valley walls at the projected level of known deposits . No attempt was made to map the Meade formation in Sheridan County, as nearly everywhere in the county e younger eolian deposits mantle the level at which Meade deposits should occur. Pearlette volcanic ash deposits are shown on the geologic map (Pl. 1)

The Meade formation in Sheridan County is considerably above the water table and furnishes no water to wells.

#### Sanborn Formation

The Sanborn formation consists of six members . These members n ascending order are Crete sand and gravel, Loveland silt, early Wisconsinan terrace deposits, Peoria silt, Bignell silt, and late Wisconsinan terrace deposits.

The Sanborn formation developed during two glacial stages, the Illinoian and Wisconsinan, and one interglacial stage, the Sar gamonian. Because of the difficulty in distinguishing between the silt members of the Sanborn formation, they were mapped as a unit ( Sanborn eolian deposits ) , but the terrace deposits of early Illinoian (Crete) age and of late Wisconsinan age were mapped<br>separately. The areas of the outcrop of the eolian deposits of the The areas of the outcrop of the eolian deposits of the Sanborn formation and of the terrace deposits are shown on the geologic map  $( Pl. 1)$ .

climatic changes had a considerable effect on erosion and depositio areas. During the Illinoian glacial stage the continental glaciers were a relatively great distance from Kansas, but the accompanying in Kansas stream valleys. Subsequent to or contemporary with this fluviatile action, eolian deposits were laid down on the upland Two members of the Sanborn formation were deposited during the Illinoian stage of glaciation , the Crete sand and gravel member, which is composed of interbedded silt, sand, and gravel of fluviatile origin, and the Loveland silt member, which is composed of silt and fine sand of both fluviatile and eolian origin. Both the Crete sand and gravel and the Loveland silt members of the Sanborn formation are recognized in Sheridan County.

The upper part of the Sanborn formation was deposited during the Wisconsinan stage of the Pleistocene in Kansas and consists principally of eolian deposits but includes some fluviatile terrace deposits in most of the valleys. The Wisconsinan stage has been divided into five substages in which the sequence of erosion and deposition is comparable to that of the earlier stages of the Pleisto cene, but because of the remoteness of the glaciers, the effect on stream erosion and deposition was less pronounced than in the earlier stages. Glaciation in the Rocky Mountains was an important factor in the deposition of fluviatile materials in Kansas during the The Brady soil, formed during the Bradyan interglacial stage, lies on the Peoria silt member and is overlain by the Bignell silt member where the Bignell member is present. Where the Bignell silt member is absent the Brady soil merges into and is included with the modern soil.

The character of the Sanborn formation is indicated by the logs of test holes, by Plate 4B, and by the following measured sections.

Measured section of the Sanborn formation along a steep cut on the south side of U. S. Highway 24 in the NW % sec. 20, T. 8 S., R. 28 W.

# QUATERNARY (Pleistocene)<br>Sanborn formation



NW% sec. 33, T. 10 S., R. 26 W., 100 yards east of road. (Measured by Measured section of Sanborn formation in steep cutbank of Saline River in the  $C. K. Bayne, K. L. Walders, and A. R. Leonard)$ 



3-9370

Crete sand and gravel member—Illinoian stage.—The distribution of the Crete sand and gravel member of the Sanborn formation is shown on the geologic map  $( Pl. 1)$ . The Crete in Sheridan County is in a terrace position along the maior valleys. The terrace is disis in a terrace position along the major valleys. sected, discontinuous, and in a position higher than the younger Wisconsinan terraces but lower than the Meade formation. Younger eolian deposits overlie the Crete in some parts of Sheridan County with the result that the Crete is difficult to map except where it is exposed in steep banks or cuts. Plate 4B shows the Crete sand and gravel member overlain by the Loveland silt member and Peoria silt member, in the NW<sup>X</sup> sec. 33, T. 10 S., R. 26 W. Where the Crete is below the water table in Sheridan County it furnishes water to a few wells. In a narrow strip along the valley of Saline River in southeastern Sheridan County where the Ogallala formation is thin, the Crete probably would yield moderate supplies of water to wells . Records of test holes drilled in Sheridan County indicate that the Crete may be as thick as 55 feet.

Loveland silt member-Illinoian and Sangamonian stages.-The Loveland silt member of the Sanborn formation in Sheridan County consists primarily of eolian silt and was observed in many localities . The member is best exposed on slopes in the upland areas of the county where younger deposits have been removed by erosion. The Loveland consists of silt and small amounts of sand and colluvium in the lower part. The silt generally is tan or tan-brown in Sheridan County but eastward it is distinguished by a pronounced reddish color. The thickness of the Loveland in Sheridan County ranges from a featheredge to as much as 16 feet, and as the member gen aerally lies above the water table it yields no water to wells in the county.

The upper limit of the Loveland member is marked by an uncon formity resulting from a period of weathering in the Sangamon interglacial stage during which <sup>a</sup> soil with <sup>a</sup> well-developed profile The Sangamon soil is the most prominent fossil soil in western and central Kansas; it is much thicker than the modern soil and is exposed much more widely than the Yarmouth soil. The maximum thickness of the soil observed in Sheridan County was<br>about 4 feet. The upper part of the soil, generally dark brown. about 4 feet. The upper part of the soil, generally dark brown,<br>grades downward into silt. Generally there is an accumulation of Generally there is an accumulation of clay a short distance below the top of the soil and an accumulation of limy material at various distances below the clay .

The Loveland silt member was mapped with the eolian members

of the late Wisconsinan deposits and they are shown on Plate <sup>1</sup> as Sanborn eolian deposits.<br>Peoria silt member—Wisconsinan stage.—The Peoria silt mem-

Peoria silt member—Wisconsinan stage.—The Peoria silt mem-<br>er of the Sanborn formation is a uniform, generally fossiliferous, calcareous, massive silt. The deposit generally is buff to light-tan and is easily recognized by its massive appearance and its uniform color. The Peoria silt mantles much of the upland area of Sheridar County, and at the close of deposition of the Peoria the silt probably mantied the entire county with the exception of the lower parts of the valleys where the active streams removed the silt as itwas deposited. The Peoria silt extends over the sides of the valleys and mantles the older terrace deposits . Plate 4B shows the Peoria n the Crete sand and gravel member in the valley of Saline River. The Peoria silt member in Sheridan County ranges in thickness from a featheredge to as much as  $25$  feet. The maximum thickness of the deposit probably never greatly exceeded 25 feet, it along the edges of the valleys the thickness probably was greater than at present as much of the Peoria silt member has been removed by erosion.

The Bradyan interglacial substage, which followed the period of deposition of the Peoria silt member of the Sanborn formation, was <sup>a</sup> period of relative stability during which deposition of eolian deposits ceased or was reduced to a rate such that a soil was This soil, the Brady soil, although not as thick as the formed. earlier Sangamon and Yarmouth soils, is recognized in many places In the upland areas of Sheridan County. It is commonly thicke than the modern soil and generally is dark-brown, but where it was formed under conditions of poor drainage it may be gray to biack and generally has a thicker profile. The thickness of the Brady soil in Sheridan County is commonly about <sup>1</sup> foot but reaches a maximum of  $3$  feet (Pl.  $5$ ).

The Peoria silt member of the Sanborn formation lies above the water table and yields no water to wells.

Bignell silt member—Wisconsinan stage.—Thin discontinuou deposits of the Bignell silt member of the Sanborn formation are distributed widely over northwestern Kansas. The Bignell silt member generally resembles the underlying Peoria silt member n lithology and is separated from the Peoria silt by the moderately developed Brady soil. The Bignell may be identified by its con tained molluscan fauna and under ideal stratigraphic conditions by its position.

 $\mathbf{I}$ 



PLATE 5.—Views of the Brady soil in Sheridan County. A, Upland mantled with the Peoria silt member of the Sanborn formation. Dark line across draw and to left of trail is Brady soil.  $NW4$  sec. 3, T. 11 S., R. 29 W. B, Brady soil below Bignell silt member of the Sanborn formation. SW¼ sec. 21, T. 10<br>S., R. 26 W. Brady soil is dark zone below lighter silt in ditch.



The Bignell silt member in Sheridan County consists of discon tinuous deposits of silt over much of the upland area. is gray to light gray -brown. The Bignell silt member is of colian origin as indicated by its topographic position and its lithology , and is the youngest upland eolian deposit in this area. In Sheridai County the thickness of the Bignell silt member ranges from a lew inches to about five feet. Plate 5B shows the Bignell silt mem ber overlying the Brady soil.

The Bignell silt member lies above the water table in Sheridan County and yields no water to wells.

Terrace deposits—Wisconsinan stage.—In Sheridan County, as n much of northwestern Kansas, early Wisconsinan fluviatile deposits have not been identified, but a part of the lower deposits underlying the late Wisconsin terrace deposits in the stream valleys may be early Wisconsinan in age . In southwestern Kansas early Wisconsinan terrace deposits underlie late Wisconsinan terrace deposits in the Cimmaron River valley, and in Wallace County gravels of early Wisconsinan age underlie the Peoria silt member .

After the deposition of the Peoria silt member and in part contemporary with it, there was a period of valley filling during which nearly all major valleys in Kansas received sediments and during which the sediments underlying the wide, flat low terraces in the valleys in western and north-central Kansas were deposited. In Sheridan County these terraces range in width from a few hundred et to about three-quarters of a mile. I he thickness of these terrace deposits reaches a maximum of 60 feet as indicated by the records of wells and test holes drilled in the valleys.

A terrace that is equivalent in age to the low terrace in Sheridar County has been studied and mapped in the Prairie Dog Creek valley by Frye and Leonard (1949). The terrace is in the Republican River basin and was named the Almena terrace. The same terrace in the North Fork Solomon Valley has been named the Nitwin terrace (Leonard, 1952), and a similar terrace in the Smoky Hill Valley, in an equivalent position in relation to the river, has been called the Schoenchen terrace (Leonard and Berry, report in preparation ) .The Kirwin can be mapped as a continuous unit in e North Fork Solomon Valley from a point in Sheridan Count downstream to the confluence with the South Fork Solomon Valley d thence up the South Fork to a point in central Sheridan County. because this terrace is a continuous mappable unit throughout the valleys of North and South Forks of Solomon River, the name Kirwin terrace is used in this report. A low terrace in the Saline River
valley in Sheridan County was mapped during this investigation. Its position relative to the river is comparable to that of the Kirwin and Schoenchen terraces but as it has not been traced downstream and as its relation to the other terraces has not been determined, o name is given to it in this report. The geographic distribution bt deposits underlying the Wisconsinan terraces in Sheridan County is shown on the geologic map (Pl. 1)

The Wisconsinan terrace deposits in Sheridan County consist of sand, silt, and small amounts of clay and gravel. Where a sufficien thickness of sand and gravel lies below the water table, abundan supplies of water can be developed . Many stock and domestic wells derive water from Wisconsinan terrace deposits and two ir rigation wells derive at least part of their water from these deposits.

#### Undifferentiated Valley Deposits

Undifferentiated valley deposits were mapped in Sheridan County along tributary streams and upper reaches of the valleys of the major streams. The geographic distribution of these deposits is shown on the geologic map ( Pl 1)The narrow band of Recent alluvium in the major valleys was difficult to show on the map be cause of the small scale . In the major stream valleys <sup>a</sup> point was reached upstream at which the margin of the Wisconsinan terrace became difficult to determine and in the tributary stream valleys the margins of alluvium, terrace deposits, and colluvium were difficul o determine. Because of the difficulty in mapping these deposits, which include Recent alluvium, Wisconsinan terrace deposits, and Recent colluvium, these deposits were mapped in one unit. The surface of the undifferentiated valley deposits over much of the area mapped is similar to the surface of the Wisconsinan terrace, but the heel, or side, of the terrace adjacent to the valley wall is difficult to determine because colluvial materials have moved down the valley wall to a broad U-shaped valley with the bottom of the U" hattened. n general, these deposits are not entrenched into the underlying Cretaceous bedrock, as are the late Wisconsina terrace deposits, but lie on the Ogallala formation.

The thickness of the undifferentiated valley deposits in Sh<mark>eri</mark>dar County ranges from a featheredge to as much as 40 feet in <mark>the ma</mark>joi valleys. The deposits lie, in part, below the water table; and where there is a sufficient thickness of saturated gravel or sand, moderate supplies of water can be developed. Many domestic and stock wells in the county yield water derived, at least in part, from these deposits.

#### Alluvium

The Recent alluvium shown on the geologic map  $( Pl. 1 )$  includes those deposits that are in the active channel of the streams and deposits that lie above the channel but below the level of the late Wisconsinan terrace. The areas underlain by Recent alluvium are subject to flooding, and new deposits of sand and silt are built up y each succeeding flood. The water table in the alluvium is con $m<sub>i</sub>$  unuous with the water table in the late Wisconsinan terrace deposits, and wells of moderate capacity can be developed in these deposits it shallow depths. Because of its small areal distribution, the alluvium is not one of the principal aquiters in Sheridan County.

#### GROUND WATER

#### **SOURCE**

The following discussion on the source and occurrence of ground water has been adapted from Meinzer ( 1923 ) and the reader is referred to his report for a complete discussion of the subject.

water that occurs in the pores or openings of the rocks and within  $e$  zone of saturation is called ground water. I ne amount of ground water below the surface in any region and the manner and rate of its movement to wells depend on the nature of the rocks in le region.

n Sheridan County, as well as other parts of northwestern Kansas, ground water is derived almost entirely from precipitation . Apart It the water that falls as rain or snow becomes surface runoff; part evaporates directly into the air; and part is absorbed by plants and transpired into the air .The rest percolates downward through the soil and underlying strata until it reaches the water table where it becomes ground water. Estimates of the amount of water entering e ground-water reservoir in northwestern Kansas each year range from 0.1 to 0.5 inch. Although this is a relatively small percentage of the total annual precipitation, it should be noted that 0.25 inch If water entering the ground-water reservoir amounts to more than  $3$  acre-feet per square mile and more than  $11,600$  acre-feet in the entire county.

 Ground water moves slowly through the rocks in directions de termined by the shape and slope of the water table, which are con trolled by topography, local variations in quantities of recharge d discharge, and the lithology and structure of the rocks. The water moves down gradient and is eventually discharged through

wells and springs, through seeps along valley walls or into the streams, or by evaporation or transpiration in areas where the water table is near the ground surface. Most of the water that is obtained from wells in Sheridan County comes from precipitation within the county and in adjacent areas particularly to the west.

#### **OCCURRENCE**

Nearly all rocks that underlie the earth's surface at depths shallow enough to be penetrated by drilling contain voids or interstices, which range in size from microscopic openings to large cavern. developed in some limestones . The percentage of the volume of the rock mass consisting of such open spaces is known as the porosity of the rock. Although it is desirable to know the porosity of the rock when considering the availability of ground water in agiven area, it is not the porosity but the permeability of the materia that determines the rate at which water can move through it.The permeability of an aquifer is determined by the size, shape, and arrangement of the openings in that aquifer. Beds of silt may have a high porosity but openings so small that the water cannot move freely through them and therefore the permeability is low. Limestone with large but poorly connected openings may likewise have a high porosity but low permeability. Several common types of openings or interstices in relation to texture and porosity are shown in Figure <sup>6</sup>.

#### PERMEABILITY OF THE WATER-BEARING MATERIALS

The rate of movement of ground water is determined by the size, shape, quantity, and degree of connection of the interstices and by the hydraulic gradient. The capacity of a water-bearing materia or transmitting water under hydraulic head is its permeability. The field coefficient of permeability may be expressed in Meinzer's units as the rate of flow of water, in gallons a day, through a cross-sectional area of one square foot under a hydraulic gradient of I'm percent at the prevailing temperature of the ground water. The coefficient of transmissibility is a similar measure and is denned s the number of gallons of water a day transmitted through each 1-foot strip extending the height of the aquifer under a unit hydraulic gradient (Theis, 1935, p. 520). It may also be expressed s the number of gallons of water a day transmitted through each section one mile wide extending the height of the aquifer, und<mark>e</mark>r a hydraulic gradient of one foot to the mile. The coefficient of transmissibility is equivalent to the field coefficient of permeabilit multiplied by the thickness of the aquifer .

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The coefficient of permeability of water -bearing materials can be determined in the laboratory ( methods summarized by V. C. Fishel in Wenzel, 1942, pp. 56-58) or in the field using any of



FIG. 6.-Diagrams showing several types of rock interstices and the relation of rock texture to porosity. A, well-sorted sedimentary deposit having a high porosity; **B**, poorly sorted sedimentary deposit having low porosity; C, well-<br>sorted sedimentary deposit consisting of pebbles that are themselves porous so<br>that the deposit as a whole has a very high porosity; **D**, welldeposit whose porosity has been diminished by the deposition of mineral mat <sup>er</sup> in the interstices; E, rock rendered porous by solution; F, rock rendered porous by fracturing. (From O. E. Meinzer.)

several methods. The recovery method involving the formula developed by Theis (1935, p. 522) and later described by Wenze (1942, pp. 94-96) was used in a pumping test on well 8-28-9ab in Sheridan County in the summer of 1952. Results of this test were computed by the Theis recovery formula :

$$
T=\frac{264 \text{ Q} \log_{10} \frac{t}{t'}}{s'}
$$

in which  $T =$  coefficient of transmissibility in gallons per day per foot

 $Q=$  pumping rate, in gallons a minute

 $t =$  time since pumping started, in minutes

 $=$  time since pumping stopped, in minute

s' = residual drawdown at the pumping well, in feet, at time t'.

The residual drawdown (s') is computed by subtracting the  $s$ iade (nonpumping) water level from the depth to water level at y time (t') after pumping stops. The proper ratio of  $\log_{10} \frac{t}{t}$ <sup>0</sup> s' is determined graphically by plotting  $log_{10} \frac{t}{t'}$  against corresp<mark>onding values of s'. This pro</mark>cedure is simplified by plotting n the logarithmic scale and s' on the arithmetic scale of semilogarithmic paper. If  $\log \frac{t}{t'}$  is taken over one log cycle it will become unity and the equation becomes simply  $T = \frac{264 \text{ Q}}{\Delta s'}$  in which  $\Delta s'$ <sup>is the</sup> difference in drawdown (s )by plotting  $\log_{10} \frac{t}{t'}$ <br>cedure is simplified<br>on the arithmetic so<br>cen over one log cycle.<br>mes simply  $T = \frac{264 \text{ Q}}{\Delta s'}$ <br>over one log cycle. 264  $\Delta$ 

Well 8-28-9ab, an irrigation well on the farm of A. M. Shatzell, is pumped for approximately 8 hours on October 8, 1952. Measwas pumped for approximately 8 hours on October 8, 1952. urements of drawdown were made with a tape and an electric gage during the period of pumping, and measurements of recovery were made for a period of nearly 2 hours after the pump was shut down. The well was pumped at an average rate of 403 gallons a The well was pumped at an average rate of 403 gallons a minute ( determined by <sup>a</sup> Collins flow gage ) ; at the end of pump ing the drawdown was 63 feet and the specific capacity was about 6.4 gallons per minute per foot of drawdown.

The computations for permeability and transmissibility are as follows:

$$
T = \frac{264 \times 403}{2.10} = 50,700 \text{ gpd/ft}
$$
  
 
$$
P = \frac{50,700}{114} = 445 \text{ gpd/sq. ft.}
$$

The transmissibility is computed to be about 50,000 gallons per day per foot and the coefficient of permeability, determined by dividing the transmissibility by the thickness of the aquifer ( <sup>114</sup> feet ) , is about <sup>450</sup> gallons per day per square foot.

#### THE WATER TABLE AND MOVEMENT OF GROUND WATER

The water table is defined as the upper surface of the zone of saturation, except where that surface is formed by an impermeable rock. If the upper surface is formed by an impermeable rock, the water will rise in a drill hole to a point where the pressure from the aquifer is equalized. Under such conditions the aquifer is said to be under artesian pressure and the upper surface of the water when it rises in the drill hole is a point on the piezometric surface . The piezometric surface is the surface to which water from a given aquifer will rise under its full head. There may be small local areas in Sheridan County where the water is under slight artesian pres sure because the rock at the surface of the zone of saturation is relatively impermeable clay or silt, but these areas are negligible; ground water generally will not rise in a well or drill hole above the level at which it is tapped. The water table is not a level surface but rather <sup>a</sup> sloping surface having many irregularities caused by differences in permeability or thickness of the aquifer or by unequal additions to or withdrawals from the ground-water reservoir.

The shape and slope of the water table in Sheridan County are shown on the map (Pl. 1) by means of contour lines drawn on the water table. Each point on the water table along a given contour

line has the same altitude . The contour lines show the configuration of the surface of the ground water body just as topographic contour lines show the configuration of the land surface. The direction of movement of ground water is at right angles to the coutour line in the direction of the downward slope. The water -table contour map is generalized and minor variations in the surface of the ground water body cannot be shown because the wells in Sheridan County are spaced too widely .

The water-table contour map  $( Pl. 1)$  shows that the water moves across Sheridan County in a general easterly direction. The minor exceptions probably are caused by variations in recharge, discharge, and topographic conditions. Along the major streams ground water moves toward the valleys and in some places it moves nearly at right angles to the direction of the general movement of ground water. In the upland area where the water-table contours are fairly uni-



Fig. 7.—Diagrammatic sections showing influent and effluent streams.

torm the water table slopes eastward at the rate of approximatel 5 feet per mile. In areas along the edges of the major valleys where the water moves toward the streams, the slope of the water table is as much as 50 feet per mile. The major valleys in the county exert much influence on the shape of the water table . Con tours bend upstream along all the streams in the easten half of the county, indicating that the ground-water reservoir is losing water o the streams. In parts of western Sheridan County the watertable contours bend downstream indicating that the ground -water body is gaining water from the streams. At the point where the contour lines change from bending downstream to upstream , the stream changes from intermittent to perennial . Figure <sup>7</sup> shows the relation between streams and the water table. Streams that lose water to the ground-water reservoir are called influent streams and

streams that gain water from the ground -water reservoir are called effluent streams.

The water table does not remain in <sup>a</sup> stationary position but fluctuates much the same as the water level in a surface reservoir . Precipitation may cause recharge to the ground-water reservoir with the result that the water table will rise. If the rate of discharge of ground water exceeds the rate of recharge the water table will decline. In Sheridan County, as well as in the greater part of northwestern Kansas, these changes in water table are not great. No longterm records of the depth to water in wells in Sheridan County are available, but records of wells in Thomas County show that over a period of about 10 years the water levels there have fluctuated a maximum of about 6 feet.

#### RECHARGE AND DISCHARGE

Recharge is the addition of water to the ground-water reservoir and may be accomplished in several ways. All ground water in Sheridan County that lies within <sup>a</sup> practicable drilling depth, which in this report is considered to include the ground water in the Pleistocene and Pliocene deposits , is derived from precipitation either within the county or in adjacent areas to the west. Once the water becomes a part of the ground-water body, it moves in the direction of the slope of the water table to be discharged by wells. into streams, or by evaporation and transpiration in the valleys where the water table is relatively shallow. Some ground water is discharged as underflow into adjacent areas to the east.

Although the normal annual precipitation at Hoxie in Sheridan County is 19.35 inches, only about 0.25 inch of this amount enters the ground -water body as recharge. The depth to the water table exerts an important influence on the quantity of recharge in any given area. Probably the most important factor controlling recharge in Sheridan County is the type of material overlying the water table . The upland areas mantled by thick deposits of Pleistocene loess are relatively impervious and permit very little water to move down ward to the water table; hence, the recharge in these areas is relatively small. Along the flanks of the major valleys where permeable beds of the Ogallala formation crop out, recharge probably is con siderably greater. In those valleys where the younger valley deposits consist of sandy silt and sand, the permeability is relatively high and the amount of recharge is also high.

In areas where the beds of streams lie above the water table there is considerable recharge by infiltration through stream channels

during periods of stream runoff. In times of flood when the level of <sup>a</sup> perennial stream rises above the water table in adjacent alluvial and terrace deposits, some water is added to the ground-water reservoir from the stream, but much of the water may return to the stream after the flood has passed. Farm ponds in the upland areas



1c. 8.—Map of Sheridan County showing saturated thickness of Tertiary and Quaternary deposits.

probably contribute water to the ground-water reservoir, but the quantity is small because of the low permeability of the materials in which the ponds generally are built.

Water moving into the county from the west by means of sub surface inflow is a form of recharge in Sheridan County although le water actually enters the ground-water reservoir outside Sheri-<br><sup>an County.</sup> The map showing the thickness of saturated Pliocene and Pleistocene sediments (Fig. 8) and the cross sections (Fig. 4) indicate <sup>a</sup> greater thickness of saturated material on the west side

of the county than on the east side. If the permeability of water bearing materials is everywhere the same, it is apparent that more water enters the county by subsurface flow than leaves the county by this method. This is no doubt true and the difference in quantities of ground water moving into and out of the county are ac counted for in part by the discharge of ground water into streams and the resultant gain in flow of streams as they cross the county. The most important factor in accounting for the difference in sub surface inflow and outflow in Sheridan County is the loss of water by evaporation and transpiration in the valleys and along the valley flanks where the water table is relatively shallow and the rates of evaporation and transpiration are high.

Before wells were drilled in Sheridan County the ground -water reservoir was in a state of approximate equilibrium, that is, the aver-<br>age annual recharge balanced the average annual discharge. Disage annual recharge balanced the average annual discharge. charge was accomplished primarily by seepage into streams, outflow<br>into adiacent areas, and evaporation and transpiration. Much into adjacent areas, and evaporation and transpiration. ground water is now being discharged by wells as they supply water for all domestic and most stock needs. Selden obtain water from wells, and some ground water is used for irrigation. The discharge of ground water from wells in Sheridan County, however, is small in comparison with the total discharge of ground water .

#### **RECOVERY**

When water is standing in a well, there is an equilibrium between ts head and the head of the water in the aquifer outside the well. When the head of the water in the well is reduced by pumping or some other lifting device, the resultant differential head causes <mark>the</mark> water outside the well to move toward and into the well. When water is pumped from a well, the water level in the well declines and the water table outside the well is lowered to form a depression resembling an inverted cone—the cone of depression. The distance that the water level is lowered is called the drawdown.

The total capacity of a well is the rate at which it will yield water when the water stored in it has been removed. The capacity de pends on the thickness and permeability of the aquifer, th<mark>e amoun</mark> bt water available, and the construction and condition of the well. The capacity of a well is generally expressed in gallons a minute. The specific capacity of a well is its rate of yield for each unit of drawdown and is determined by dividing the yield of the well in gallons a minute by the drawdown in feet.

When water is withdrawn from a well at a constant rate, the water level declines rapidly at first and then more slowly until the water level becomes nearly stationary. An increase in the pumping rate will again lower the water level until it again becomes nearly stationary. When the pumping of a well is stopped, the water level rises rapidly at first and then more slowly until it eventually reaches or approaches its original position. Curves showing the drawdow d recovery of the water level in well 8-28-9ab during a pumping test are illustrated in Figure <sup>9</sup>.



FIG. 9.—Graph showing the drawdown and recovery of the water level in well 8-28-9ab.

#### **UTILIZATION**

Data on 160 wells in Sheridan County were obtained during the course of this investigation. All types of wells in all parts of the county were visited and studied . Ground water in Sheridan County <sup>15</sup> used chiefly for domestic and stock purposes. Two cities obtain weir public water supplies from wells but the quantity of ground

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water they use is only a small fraction of the total amount of ground<br>water used in the county. Five irrigation plants were observed Five irrigation plants were observed during this investigation but only one well (8-28-9ab) was in operation during the summer of 1952. Records of wells inventoried ation during the summer of 1952. during the field work for this report are given in Table 7.

#### Domestic and Stock Supplies

Nearly all domestic and stock -water supplies in the rural areas in Sheridan County are derived from wells, although a few stock water supplies are obtained from ponds. Smaller towns in the county that do not have public supplies use water from wells . Analyses of water from typical wells in the area indicate that the water is ofgood quality although water from some wells is relatively hard. The data for the domestic and stock wells are given in Table 7and the chemical character of the water is shown in Table <sup>5</sup>.

#### Public Supplies

Two cities in Sheridan County have public water supplies. Hoxie, the county seat, is supplied by two wells at the west edge of the city that yield water from the Ogallala formation. The Hoxie supply has <sup>a</sup> rated capacity of 800,000 gallons per day and the average daily use is about 300,000 gallons . Water is chlorinated at the wells and receives no other treatment .

Selden pumps water from two wells near the center of the city. The wells obtain water from the Ogallala formation and are 200 feet deep. The wells are spaced about 20 feet apart and only one wel is pumped, the other being used as an emergency well in case of mechanical difficulty in the main well . Rated capacities are 140 gallons per minute for the main well and 60 gallons per minute for the "stand by" well. The wells are equipped with turbine pump powered by electric motors . The average daily use of water at Selden is about 30,000 gallons. The water is of good quality and is not treated.

The city of Grinnell in Gove County has <sup>a</sup> public water supply derived from a well in Sheridan County. The well obtain<mark>s water</mark> from the Ogallala formation and is 150 feet deep . It is equipped with <sup>a</sup> turbine pump powered by an electric motor . The average daily use is about 30,000 gallons. The water is of good qu<mark>ality an</mark>d is not treated.

Data concerning the city-supply wells are given in Table  $7$ .

#### Irrigation Supplies

A relatively small amount of water is used in Sheridan County for irrigation . Five irrigation wells were observed during the course of this investigation (Table 7) but only one (well 8-28-9ab) was in<br>operation during the summer of 1952. The well is 205 feet deep, operation during the summer of 1952. has <sup>a</sup> static water level of <sup>119</sup> feet below land surface, and is equipped with a turbine pump powered by a gasoline engine. During a pumping test, the well yielded 580 gallons per minute with <sup>a</sup> drawdown of 63 feet. The specific capacity of the well was 9.2 gallons per minute per foot of drawdown . The well is used to irrigate about 140 acres .

Two of the irrigation wells observed in the county (6-27-3dd and 10-29-20cc ) obtain water from both the Ogallala formation and from Pleistocene deposits; the others obtain water entirely from The chemical analyses of water from typical wells in the county indicate that the water is suitable for irrigation use ( Table 3 ) .

#### Availability of Ground Water for Future Irrigation Development

The availability of ground water for future development of irriga tion in Sheridan County is determined by the geology and hydrology of the area . The amount of water available for irrigation depends n the permeability, areal extent, and thickness of the water-bearing materials . The areal extent and thickness of the water-bearing materials in Sheridan County are shown in Figure <sup>8</sup> by means of contours . This map was prepared by superposing the water -table contour map (Pl. 1) on the bedrock contour map (Fig. 5), then subtracting the altitude of the bedrock from the altitude of the water ))table at points of intersection. Contour lines were then drawn urough points of equal thickness.

The contours indicate that the thickness of saturated materials ismore than 140 feet inwest -central Sheridan County and decreases considerably in the southeastern part of the county in the Saline River valley and in the east-central part of the county along the South Fork Solomon River valley. Well 8-28-9ab yields 580 gallons r minute of water from about 114 feet of saturated material. In other areas with as much saturated material wells should yield comparable quantities of water if the water-bearing materials are as permeable as they are at well 8-28-9ab. In general, the permeabily of the Ogallala formation is comparatively low and the litholog

4 - 9370

of the formation changes in short distances. However, test drilling should locate permeable sand and gravel in much of the county. A well that yields 500 gallons a minute will pump an amount of water in a 24-hour period equal to two-thirds inch on 40 acres. In some of the valley areas the map of saturated thickness indi



Fig. 10.—Graphical representation of analyses of water from wells<br>in Sheridan County.



cates a thinning of saturated material. This water-bearing material is generally more permeable than water -bearing beds in the Ogallala formation, however, so wells of large capacity can be developed.

#### CHEMICAL CHARACTER OF GROUND WATER

The chemical character of ground water in Sheridan County is shown by analyses of water from <sup>18</sup> wells representing the principal water-bearing formations (Table 3). Figure 10 shows graphically the chemical character of waters from the Ogallala formation, terrace deposits, and alluvium.

The concentration of mineral constituents is given in equivalents per million in Figure <sup>10</sup> , and in parts per million in Table 3. To convert parts per million to equivalents per million the valence of each mineral constituent is divided by its atomic weight; then this factor (listed in Table 4) is multiplied by the parts per million given in Table <sup>3</sup> for each mineral constituent .

Mineral constituents	Chemical symbol	Factor
		0.0499 - 0822 $-0.135$ . 0333 .0164 - 0208 - 0282 -0161 - 0526

 $T_{\text{ABLE}}$  4.—Factors for converting parts per multion to equivalents per million

The samples of water from typical wells in Sheridan County were analyzed by Howard A. Stoltenberg, chemist, in the Water and Sewage Laboratory of the State Board of Health at Lawrence . The analyses show only the dissolved mineral content of the water and do not indicate sanitary conditions . The analyses indicate that the water is suitable for most uses.

#### Chemical Constituents in Relation to  $\mathrm{U}_\mathrm{S6}$

The following discussion of the chemical constituents of ground water has been adapted in part from publications of the U. S. Geo logical Survey and the State Geological Survey of Kansas . <sup>A</sup>sum mary of the dissolved solids, hardness, iron, and fluoride of samples of water from typical wells in Sheridan County is given inTable <sup>5</sup>.

#### Dissolved Solids

Ground water dissolves some of the rock materials with which it comes in contact. After a natural water has been evaporated, the residue consists of mineral matter and some organic matter and The kind and quantity of these minerals in water determine its suitability for various uses. Water containing less than 500 parts per million or dissolved solids generally is considered satisfactory for domestic use, except for difficulties resulting from hardness or excessive iron content. Water containing more than 1,000 parts per million of dissolved solids may contain enough of certain constituents to cause <sup>a</sup> noticeable taste or tomake the water unsuitable for use in some other respect. The amount of dissolved solids in the 18 samples collected in Sheridan County is given in Table 3. Of the 18 samples collected, 15 contained less than 500 parts per million of dissolved solids , 2contained between 500 and 1,000 parts per million, and 1 contained more than 1,000 parts per million.

#### **Hardness**

Hardness is the property of water that generally receives the most attention, probably because it is recognized easily by its effect when soap is used with water . Hard water requires more soap to form suds. Nearly all hardness inwater is caused by calcium and mag nesium and these constituents also cause most of the scale formed in steam boilers or other vessels inwhich water is heated . Inaddi tion to total hardness Table <sup>3</sup> gives the carbonate and noncarbonate hardness . The carbonate hardness is due to the presence in the water of calcium and magnesium bicarbonate and may be almost entirely removed by boiling or by a simple softening treatment. Noncarbonate hardness is caused by the presence of sulfates , chlo rides, nitrates, and fluorides of calcium and magnesium. Carbonate hardness is called temporary hardness and noncarbonate hardness is called permanent hardness .

Water having a hardness of 50 parts per million or less is con sidered soft and treatment of such water is not necessary under ordinary circumstances . Water having 50 to 150 parts per million hardness is suitable for most purposes but the use of soap increases and water in the upper part of this range of hardness should be treated for use in boilers or vessels in which water is heated. Ahardness of more than 150 parts per million is easily noticeable and

le water should be softened for many uses. If the hardness is 200 parts per million or more , the water should be softened for most uses. Where municipal supplies are softened the hardness generally is reduced to less than <sup>100</sup> parts per million .

IABLE J.—Summary of assolved solvas, naraness, tron, and puoride in water from typical wells in Sheridan County

Range in parts per million	Number of samples		
	Ogallala formation	Terrace deposits	Alluvium
Dissolved solids			
$501 - 1,000$ More than $1,000$	1 12 0 0	0 1 2 1	0 1 N
Total hardness			
	13 0 0	1 $\bf{2}$ $\mathbf{1}$	O 1 0
Iron			
More than $1,0,\ldots,\ldots,\ldots,\ldots,\ldots$	$\frac{3}{2}$ $\overline{\mathbf{3}}$	2 1 1 0	0 1 0 Λ
Fluoride			
$0.5 - 1.0.$ More than $1.5. \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots$	8 5 0	3 1 0	1 0 0

llafdness less than 150 parts per million, 14 had a hardness between None of the samples of water collected in Sheridan County had a  $0$  and  $300$  parts per million, and  $4$  had a hardness of more than  $300$ parts per million (Table <sup>5</sup> ).

#### Iron

Next to hardness, iron is the mineral constituent in ground water<br>at receives the most attention in everyday use. The quantity of that receives the most attention in everyday use. iron in ground water may differ considerably from place to place even within the same formation. If iron is present in water in a concentration greater than 0.3 part per million , the excess may pre cipitate upon exposure to air. The rusty stain on vessels and plumb ing fixtures is commonly caused by excess iron in the water . Gen erally, where iron is present in sufficient quantity to give a disagree able taste or to stain utensils, it may be removed by aeration and  $\bm{\mathrm{filter}}$  but in some water further treatment is necessary to remove the iron. The chemical analyses  $(1ab)$  indicate that the con centrations of iron in samples of water from Sheridan County ranged from 0.02 to 12 parts per million. Nine samples contained less than 0.3 part per million , 6samples contained between 0.3 and <sup>1</sup> part per million, and 3 samples contained more than 1 part per million  $($  l able  $\sigma$ ).

#### Fluoride

Although quantities of fluoride are relatively small as compared with other common constituents of natural water, the amount of fluoride in drinking water that is used by children should be known. Fluoride inwater has been associated with the dental defect known s mottled enamel, which may appear on the teeth of children who habitually drink water containing excessive amounts of fluoride dur ing the formation of their permanent teeth . Water containing 1.5 parts per million or more of fluoride is likely to produce mottled enamel (Dean, 1936). Small quantities of fluoride in the drinking water not sufficient to cause mottled enamel are likely to be beneficial by preventing or decreasing the incidence of caries in the permanent teeth of children (Dean and others, 1941). Fluoride has been added to some public water supplies in recent years, generally in concentrations of about <sup>1</sup> part per million .

The concentration of fluoride in samples of water collected in Sheridan County ranged from 0.5 to 1.6 parts per million; only one sample contained more than 1.5 parts per million (Table <sup>3</sup> )

#### Nitrate

Nitrate in natural water has received considerable attention during the last few years because of the discovery that a large amount of nitrate in water may cause cyanosis when the water is used in infan feeding . The Kansas State Board of Health considers water con

taining less than 50 parts per million of nitrate (as  $NO<sub>a</sub>$ ) safe for e and water containing more than 90 parts per million likely to cause cyanosis.

The concentration of nitrate in the samples of water collected in Sheridan County (Table 3) ranged from 0.6 to 11 parts per million -well within the limit for safe use .

## Chemical Quality of Water for Irrigation

The suitability of water for irrigation is dependent principally on e concentration of dissolved solids in the water and the percent n sodium. High concentrations of some mineral constituents are detrimental to plant growth although some plants are more tolerant o certain minerals than others. Plants may be classed in groups as o their tolerance to salinity of the soil. In the first group, which includes those plants that are the least tolerant to salinity, are beans, celery, radishes, red clover, and white clover; in the second group, which includes plants more tolerant to salinity, are rye,  $\alpha$  oats, wheat, sweet clover, alfalfa, and peas; and in the third group, which includes the most tolerant plants, are barley, milo, sugar beets, cotton, and most grasses.

The approximate critical concentrations or percentages of difterent constituents in irrigation water (below which it is safe for irrigation use and above which it may be unsafe for irrigation use) are given in Table <sup>6</sup> (Marr , 1944 ) .





The permissible ranges of concentration of solids given in Table <sup>6</sup> will differ somewhat for different soil, climate, and drainage. water with high concentration of dissolved solids will have less <sup>e</sup>ffect on plant growth in well-drained soils than it will have in poorly drained soils. The use of irrigation water having <sup>a</sup> high mineral content may cause the soil to become less porous or permeable and, n time, the soil may become alkaline.

The concentrations of dissolved solids, chloride, and sulfate and

the percent sodium in samples of water collected in Sheridan County were all within the limits of suitability for irrigation (Table 3). Although the content of boron in ground water in Sheridan County was not determined, the content in ground water from the same aquifers in adjacent areas is within the limits of suitability for  $irrigation$  (Leonard, 1952, p. 76)



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### RECORDS OF WELLS

Information pertaining to 160 water wells in Sheridan County is tabulated in the following pages (Table 7). The well-numbering system used in this table is described on page 10.





# 7.  $-$ Record of wells and spring in Sheridan Count

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.<br>۳ —Records of wells and springs inSheridan County ,Kansas

Good well



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\hline\n\text{c.} & \text{d.} & \text{d.} \\
\hline\n\text{d.} & \text{d.} & \text{d.} \\
\h$ .<br>.<br>. . . . . . . . . . . . . . Ogallalaand Alluvium Principal water-bearing bed Geologic<br>source .nd, gravel... | Ogallala..<br>. Ogallala<br>do<br>.do -s ے۔<br>=  $\theta$ .  $\cdots$   $\theta$ Principalwater ,gravel  $\frac{\text{Character}}{\text{of}}$ material .<br>.<br>.<br>.<br>.<br>.<br>. 6 12 GI GI Sand  $5$  GI  $|$  do. ے۔<br>=  $5 \mid$  GI  $\mid$  do. of  $\begin{bmatrix} \cos \theta \\ \sin \theta \end{bmatrix}$ Jepth | Diam- Lype<br>f well | eter | of  $\overline{G}$  $55<sup>2</sup>$ of  $\frac{e}{\sqrt{\frac{e}{k}}}\frac{e}{\sqrt{\frac{e}{k}}}$  $\ddot{\phantom{0}}$  $1000$ of well,  $\begin{bmatrix} \text{eter} \\ \text{eter} \\ \text{(3)} \\ \text{(4)} \\ \text{(5)} \end{bmatrix}$  well, 0<br>130.<br>130. ុ<br>១-១<br><u>សូនទ</u> Dr 82.0 Dr Dr Dr 36.0 Dr Dr Dr Type of well (2 ) .<br>.<br>. . . . . . . . .<br>.<br>. Well number  $\overline{O}$  or tenant or tenant Owner<br>or tenant ofGrinnell b.... B. Follbetter. A.Trapphorn F.Reitcheck H. Follbetter E. B.Finley I.Ottken City ). ). , .<br>.<br>. W. .  $10\,$  S, R,  $30\,$  W.<br>(10-30-11dd).<br> $10\,$  30-171a 10-30-17ba  $10-30-28cd$ <br>(10-30-30cb)<br> $10-30-30cb$ 10-30-36cc Well number 10-30-22bb T. 11 S., R. 27 P.  $T.10 S., R. 30$  $\widehat{c}$ 

1. Well number in parentheses indicates that analysis of water is given inTable 3 .

∶ក់<br>id: ,drilled well  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; ,spring .<br>.<br>.

3.Reported depths below land surface are given infeet ;measured depths are given infeet and tenths below measuring points . .<br>.<br>.

,galvanized sheet iron  $\frac{2}{3}$ ,none ;<br>Ow ,oil il-well casing.<br><sub>one</sub>. T turbir

:öz≏<br>'ಕವಠ 5.Method oflift :<br>--<br>--,cylinder ;J ,jet  $\overline{z}$ , none;<br>, none; ;T ,turbine .Typeof power : E ,electric ;G ,gas engine ;H ,hand operated  $\ddot{z}$ . ,none  $\ddot{r}$ , tra ,tractor ;<br>≥<br>.: ,windmill  $\frac{1}{2}$ ; irrig  $\frac{1}{2}$  $\frac{1}{2}$  $\frac{1}{3}$ , ste i<br>Sc, s .<br>!<br>ส

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.<br>..

D ,domestic ,not being used , public supply; ,stock ,school in feet

, irrigation<br>hs to wat 7. Measured depths towater level are given in feet<br>in , tenths, ,and hundredths ;reported depths towater level are given



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#### LOGS OF TEST HOLES AND WELLS

The logs of 34 test holes and <sup>1</sup> well in or adjacent to Sheridan  $\mathcal{L}^{\text{output}}$  are given on the pages that follow. The test holes were drilled by the State Geological Survey with a hydraulic-rotary drill <sup>g.</sup> A system of numbering wells and test holes is described on page 10.

<sup>unued</sup> 1952. Surface altitude, 2,492.9 feet.  $6.25 - 6$ ba.—Sample log of test hole in the NEX NWX sec. 6, T. 6 S., R. 25 W.; Graham County, 200 feet south of county line and 15 feet east of road;<br>different accounts

	Thickness, feet	Depth. feet
Road fill	0.5	0.5
<b>TERTIARY-Pliocene</b>		
Ogallala formation		
Sand, fine to coarse, silty; cemented with calcium car-		
bonate	6.5	7
Silt, limy, hard, and fine to medium sand	5	12
Silt to fine sand, limy, white	3	15
	3	18
Sand, fine to medium, silty, light-tan	3	21
Sand, fine to coarse, silty, green	6	27
Sand and gravel, fine to coarse; contains cemented		
	6	33
Sand and gravel, cemented with silty caliche	3	36
Clay, sandy, tan-green to gray-green	3	39
Clay, sandy, tan-gray to yellow-gray	7	46
Sand, fine to medium, silty; some coarse sand and fine		
	8	.54
	2	56
Clay, light-gray $\ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots \ldots$	4	60
	8	68
Sand, fine to medium, clayey, tan-brown	8	76
	10	86
Clay, tan-brown; contains stringers of sand	15	101
Sand, fine to medium; contains a lens of clay	10	111
Sand, fine to medium, silty	10	121
Sand, fine to medium	6.5	127.5
CRETACEOUS-Gulfian		
Niobrara formation-Smoky Hill chalk member		
Chalk, silicified, very hard, yellow-brown	.5	128.0

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 $6-25-31cc$ . -Sample log of test hole in the SW cor. sec. 31, T. 6 S., R. 25 W.; Graham County, 300 feet north and 15 feet east of intersection; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,571.9 feet.

$\omega$ urjace ummuae, 2,011.0 jee	Thickness. feet	Depth, feet
<b>Road fill</b> decreased and a contract the contract of the <b>filler</b>	з	з
QUATERNARY-Pleistocene		
Sanborn formation-Peoria silt member-(Wisconsinan		
Stage)		
Silt, tan-gray to gray-green; contains snail shells	10	13
TERTIARY-Pliocene		
Ogallala formation		
Sand and gravel, fine to coarse	9	22
Sand, fine to coarse; contains stringers of tan-gray		
	5	27
Clay, sandy, tan-gray	18	45
Sand, cemented, light-tan	14	59
	4	63
	15	78
Clay, sandy, light-gray	15	93
	15	108
Sand, fine to coarse, clayey, yellow-gray	19	127
Sand, fine to coarse, silty and a subsequently sensitive and sensitive extension of	7	134
Sand, fine to coarse, interbedded stringers of silty		
	5.5	139.5
	24.5	164
Clay, compact, yellow; contains thin stringers of sand,	6	170
	20	190
Sand, fine to medium; contains some weathered chalk,		
	19	209
Sand, fine to coarse; contains fragments of silicified		
	9	218
CRETACEOUS-Gulfian		
Niobrara formation-Smoky Hill chalk member		
Chalk, silicified at top, and yellow to orange chalky		
	21	239
6-27-3aaa.—Sample log of test hole in the NE cor. sec. 3, T. 6 S., R. 27 W.;		
20 feet east of north-south fence line and 20 feet south of county-line road;		
drilled 1952. Surface altitude 2,543.2 feet; depth to water, 22.8 feet.		
	Thickness,	Depth,
	feet	feet
	4	4
QUATERNARY-Pleistocene		
Sanborn formation		
Terrace deposits-(Wisconsinan Stage)		
	18	22

Clay, sandy, tan-brown.......................... Clay, sandy, dark-brown to gray................

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	Thickness, feet	Depth, feet
		55
Clay, yellow-tan, and fine to coarse gravel and		
		71
CRETACEOUS-Gulfian		
Niobrara formation-Smoky Hill chalk member		
		74

 $\frac{62}{15}$ aad.—Sample log of test hole in the SE% NE% NE% sec. 3, T. 6 S., R. 27  $W$ , 110 feet north of bridge and 12 feet west of center of road; drilled 1952.  $\frac{\text{Surface altitude 2,529.3 feet; depth to water, 11.7 feet.}}$ 



 $6.27-34$ dd. Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 34, T. 6 S., R. 27 W.;  $^{40}$  feet north and 7 feet west of center of road intersection; drilled 1952.  $\frac{S_{unif}}{S_{unif}}$  altitude 2,688.2 feet; depth to water, 144.0 feet. QUATERNARY —Pleistocene



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#### Geology and Ground Water, Sheridan County 71



 $6-29-32 \text{ccd.}$   $\longrightarrow$  Sample log of test hole in the SEX SW % SW % sec. 32, T. 6 S., R. 29 W .; 0.1 mile north of section corner at top of hill , 30 feet east of west right of-way fence; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,842.3 feet; depth to water, 90.0 feet .



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 $7-29-32cc$ . -Sample log of test hole in the SW cor. sec. 32, T. 7 S., R. 29 W.; 70 feet south and 12 feet east of center of road intersection; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,892.4 feet; depth to water, 120.5 feet.



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## Geology and Ground Water, Sheridan County 75



 $8-26-35$ dd .— Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec.  $35, T, 8, S, R$ . 26 W.;

 $8-27-22$  ad  $-$  Sample log of test hole in the SE% NE% sec. 22, T. 8 S., R. 27 W.; 15 feet west of road center and 350 feet north of ridge, 25 feet south of private drive; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,503.9 feet; depth to water, 12.0 feet.



 $8-27-35$ cc.—Sample log of test hole in the SW cor. sec. 35, T. 8 S., R. 27 W.; sec.  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2$ Surface altitude, 2,672.0 feet; depth to water, 110.0 feet.

	Thickness. foot	Depth. foct
	з	3
OUATERNARY-Pleistocene		
Sanborn formation		
Peoria silt member-(Wisconsinan Stage)		
Silt, clay, black (Brady soil) $\ldots$	з	6
Silt, tan-gray to gray-green; contains fossil snails	13	19
TERTIARY—Pliocene		
Ogallala formation		
	9.5	28.5
Sand, fine to medium	1.5	30
Clay, sandy, tan to tan-brown	10	40
Sand, fine to coarse, clayey at top	6	46
Sand, fine to coarse, cemented; contains a few tan-		
gray clay stringers	9	55
Clay, sandy, tan-brown	6	61
Silt, clayey, $\tan$	3	64
Clay, very sandy, tan-brown	3	67
Sand, fine to coarse, silty; contains some gravel	9	76
Clay, compact, light-gray; contains thin stringers of		
	4	80
Clay, sandy, light-tan	9	89
Sand, fine to coarse, silty; contains cemented stringers,	10	99
Sand, fine to coarse, silty; contains stringers of gray		
clay, interbedded	8	107
Clay, sandy, gray to tan-gray	7	114
Clay, sandy, tan	2	116
Clay, compact, limy, fine-sandy, light-tan to tan-		
white $\ldots \ldots \ldots$	2	118
Clay, sandy, tan-brown; contains interbedded		
stringers of fine sand	7	125
Clay, compact, tan-yellow	11	136
Sand, fine to medium, clayey, light-tan	8	144
Sand, fine to coarse	2	146
Sand, fine to coarse, cemented, light-tan	9.5	155.5
Gravel, fine to medium; contains interbedded stringers		
	3.5	159
CRETACEOUS-Gulfian		
Niobrara formation-Smoky Hill chalk member		
Chalk, yellow-orange to white	10	169

 $8-3b$ bb.—Sample log of test hole in the NW cor. sec. 3, T. 8 S., R. 28 W.; 18 et south and 50 feet east of center of intersection in private drive; drilled  $1352.$  Surface diffinde, 2,771.4 feet; depth to water, 132.6 feet.



### 8-28-9ab.--Driller's log of A. M. Shatzell irrigation well in the NW% NE% sec. 9, T. 8 S., R. 28 W.; drilled 1952. Depth to water, 119.3 feet.



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# Geology and Ground Water, Sheridan County 79



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9-26  $t_{\text{total}}$  = sample wg of test note in the sec for, sec. 35, 1. 9 S., n. 20 w.; 10<br>fect north and 70 feet west of center of road intersection; drilled 1952. surface altituae, 2,560.0 feet; aepth to water, 45.4 feet.



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9-29-31dd. Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 31, T. 9 S., R. 29 W.; 100 feet west and 12 feet north of road intersection; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,866.6 feet; depth to water, 86.2 feet.



 $\overline{\phantom{a}}$ 

 $10-26-35$ ad. --Sample log of test hole in the SE% NE% sec. 35, T, 10 S., R, 26

 $\bf{3}$  $3.5$  $\mathbf{3}$  $\frac{10}{13}$ 31 14 60 W.; 12 feet west of center of road near entrance to field on west side of road;<br>drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,487.6 feet; depth to water, 37.6 feet. Surface altitude, 2,487.6 feet; depth to water, 37.6 feet.<br>Thickness, Depth, Thickness, feet Road fill 3.5 3.5 3.5 3.5 QUATERNARY — Pleistocene Sanborn formation Peoria silt member— ( Wisconsinan Stage ) Clay, tan-gray to tan  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$  3 6.5 Silt, gray-green; contains fossil snails  $3.55$ Clay , compact, silty , tan 3 13 Loveland silt member— ( Illinoian Stage ) Silt, brown 3.5 16.5 Crete sand and gravel member Sand, fine to medium , silty, tan -brown .. 4.5 21 Sand and gravel, fine to coarse <sup>10</sup> Sand and gravel, fine to coarse; contains a few fragments of weathered chalk 15 15 46 Sand and gravel; contains stringers of silt at <sup>55</sup> and 58 feet Clay, sandy, gray; contains some embedded gravel. 7 67 Sand, fine to medium  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\qquad$   $\$ CRETACEOUS —Gulfian Niobrara formation - Smoky Hill chalk member  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\qquad$   $\qquad$ 10-26-35dad. - Sample log of test hole in the SE% NE% SE% sec. 35, T. 10 S., R. <sup>26</sup> W .; <sup>12</sup> feet west of center of road and <sup>20</sup> feet north of fence corner on east side of road; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,466.6 feet; depth to water, 18.8 feet. Thickness, Depth, feet Road fill  $\sim$  8 8 8 QUATERNARY—Pleistocene Sanborn formation Terrace deposits— (Wisconsinan Stage ) Clay, silty,  $tan-brown$  7 15 Sand, fine to coarse, silty  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\qquad$  4 Clay, fine, sandy, dark-gray  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ , 10 29 Sand, fine to medium, silty encounter services and services of 38 Clay, compact, blue-black; contains some embedded medium sand 19 55 Sand and gravel, silty  $\ldots$  1 56 CRETACEOUS-Gulfian Niobrara formation - Smoky Hill chalk member feet

Shale, blocky , dark - gray <sup>4</sup>

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10-26-35dd. - Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 35, T. 10 S., R. 26 W.; 40 feet west of center of road and 40 feet south of private road to east on terrace flat; drilled  $1952$ . Surface altitude,  $2,467.4$  feet; depth to water, 19.8 feet.



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 $10-27-2bb$ . Sample log of test hole in the NW cor. sec. 2, T. 10 S., R. 27  $W$ .; i0 feet south and 28 feet east of center of intersection; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,650.4 feet; depth to water, 48.2 feet.

	Thickness. feet	Depth. feet
	5	5
TERTIARY-Pliocene		
Ogallala formation		
Sand and gravel, fine to coarse, silty, red-brown	10	15
Clay, silty, light-tan	2	17
Clay, very sandy, partly cemented, gray	5	22
Sand, fine to coarse, cemented to clayey	9	31
Sand, fine to coarse, clayey, red-brown	6	37
	12	49
Clay; contains interbedded stringers of tan-brown and		
gray-green clay	19	68
	18	86
Clay, sandy to very sandy, tan-brown	3	89
Sand, fine to medium, limy, clayey to cemented,		
	18	107
	З	110
CRETACEOUS-Gulfian		
Niobrara formation-Smoky Hill chalk member		
Chalk, clayey, yellow-orange	4.5	114.5
Chalk, silicified, very hard	0.1	114.6
10-27-34dd.-Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 34, T. 10 S., R. 27 W.;		
6 feet west and 80 feet north of center of road intersection; drilled 1952.		
Surface altitude, 2,672.8 feet; depth to water, 71.8 feet.	Thickness.	Depth.
	feet	feet
Soil	1.5	$1.5\,$
OUATERNARY-Pleistocene		
Sanborn formation		
Peoria silt member-(Wisconsinan Stage)		
Silt, tan-gray	8.5	10
Silt, tan to brown	2	12
Loveland silt member-(Illinoian Stage)		
Clay, dark-brown (Sangamon soil)	з	15
Clay, limy, light-tan	3	18
TERTIARY-Pliocene		
Ogallala formation		
Sand, fine to coarse, clayey, tan-brown	8	26
Sand, fine to coarse, silty	2	28
Clay, very sandy, tan-brown; contains some embedded		
fine to medium gravel	9	37
Sand, fine to coarse	2	39
Clay, sandy, tan-brown	5	44
Sand and gravel, fine to coarse; contains cemented		
stringers	15	59
Clay, sandy to very sandy, light-tan	15	74

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 $10-28-21$ dd.—Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 21, T. 10 S., R. 28 W.; n north-south fence line 50 feet west of center of highway and 80 feet north of fence corner; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,676.2 feet; depth towater , 21.9 feet .



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 $10-28-33d$ d. ----Sample log of test hole in the SE cor. sec. 33, T. 10 S., R. 28 W.; 11  $\overline{5}$  $5\phantom{.0}$ at county line on north road shoulder,  $170$  feet west of center of highway;<br>drilled 1952. Surface altitude.  $2.741.2$  feet: depth to water.  $61.6$  feet. Surface altitude, 2,741.2 feet; depth to water, 61.6 feet.<br>Depth. Thickness. Depth. Thickness,<br>feet feet feet Road fill 1 1 QUATERNARY — Pleistocene Sanborn formation Peoria silt member— (Wisconsinan Stage) Silt, clayey, tan -gray <sup>5</sup> 6 TERTIARY — Pliocene Ogallala formation Sand, clayey, red-brown 3.5 9.5 9.5 9.5 Clay, limy, tan to white successors are seen as  $1.5$  11 Clay , limy, tan to white 1.5 11 Sand and gravel, coarse to fine, silty 2222 2222 2222 Sand, coarse to fine; contains some coarse to fine gravel, cemented, silty, tan brown 35 27<br>ad, fine to coarse Sand, fine to coarse contract the service of state of  $S$ Sand, fine to coarse, and fine to coarse gravel; contains interbedded stringers of sandy clay . . . . . . . 6 38 Clay , mottled gray -brown ; contains some embedded gravel and  $47$ Clay, sandy to very sandy, red-browr 350 Sand, fine to coarse  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ ,  $\ldots$ 55 Clay, sandy, brown; contains some embedded gravel, 9.5 64.5  $\frac{1}{2}$  and,  $\frac{1}{2}$  to coarse; contains some fine to coarse gravel  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$  72 Clay, gray; contains interbedded coarse to fine sand and gravel <sup>6</sup> 78 Sand, fine to coarse  $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$   $\cdots$ 83 Clay, gray, and interbedded fine to coarse sand  $\ldots$  7 90 Sand and gravel, line to coarse  $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$   $\ldots$  8 98 Sand and gravel, fine to coarse, clayey.  $2<sub>0</sub>$ 100 Clay, tan-gray, and interbedded fine to coarse sand and gravel 6.5 106.5 CRETACEOUS—Guinar Niobrara formation—Smoky Hill chalk membe Chalk , yellow -orange ; silicified at top 6.5 113  $10-30-31$ cc.—Sample log of test hole in the SW cor. sec. 31, T. 10 S., R. 30 W.;  $0$  feet north of county line and 5 feet east of right-of-way fenc<mark>e on east side</mark> of road; drilled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,924.6 feet; depth **to water,** 52.4 feet. Thickness,<br>feet Depth, feet. Soil  $1$ 1QUATERNARY —Pleistocene Sanborn formation Peoria silt member- (Wisconsinan Stage) Silt,  $tan-gray$  (and  $s = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9$ ) 10  $\mathbf{5}$ o

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 $u$ niled 1952. Surface altitude, 2,889.5 feet; depth to water, 112.5 feet.  $11-30-1$  aa.—Sample log of test hole in the NE cor. sec. 1, T. 11 S., R. 30 W.; Gove County, 200 feet south and 15 feet west of center of road intersection;







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Base compiled from maps prepared by<br>the Soil Conservation Service

# AREAL GEOLOGY OF SHERIDAN COUNTY, KANSAS

Drainage from map prepared<br>by U. S. Dept. of Agriculture





EXPLANATION





Drainage from map prepared<br>by U. S. Dept. of Agriculture