ONEOTA FORMATION, STODDARD QUADRANGLE, WISCONSIN

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The Oneota formation, of Lower Ordovician age, is a division of the Prairie du Chien group. For a detailed study of its lower portion, the area selected is the Stoddard quadrangle, in southwestern Wisconsin, along the Mississippi in Vernon and LaCrosse counties. Here the lower part of the Oneota is repeatedly exposed in the upper portion of the Mississippi bluffs, with numerous quarries and natural outcrops also developed up the side valleys and coulees of the dissected Western Upland.

The data on which the study is based consist of detailed descriptions of outcrops and quarries prepared by the writer more than 20 years ago in the course of field work jointly supported by the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey and the Milwaukee Public Museum. Until the present study, these data had not been plotted, nor was the degree of persistence of most of the strata suspected. Field re-examination of the sections in the light of results brought out by the detailed plotting would almost certainly discover additional occurrences of many of the known key beds.

The results in this limited area strongly suggest that lithologic criteria may be employed more widely

over the Upper MississippiValley for detailed stratigraphic tracing within the lower part of the Oneota. in turn should permit the establishment of the degree of unconformity of the Oneota base, and have a bearing on the question as to whether the lower, sandy strata of the formation are equivalent to the Gunter sandstone of the Ozark Region.1 the Ozark and Upper Mississippi facies meet in the subsurface areas of Illinois and Iowa, the study has possible applications to practical problems of subsurface correlation, nomenclature. and underground water resources. The wide variety of lithologies indicated suggests that dolomites of different specifications might be commercially recoverable from different parts of the formation.

ONEOTA FORMATION

The Oneota formation in the Stoddard quadrangle lies unconformably on the Cambrian, Sunset Point formation, and is overlain by the Lower Ordovician, Shakopee (or Willow River) dolomite, from which it is generally separated by a limited thickness of sandstone strata (new Richmond sandstone). Pre-St. Peter erosion has removed the Shakopee strata over wide areas, however, so that commonly the St. Peter sandstone contacts some portion of the Oneota.

LOWER ONEOTA STRATA

The lower 35 to 40 feet of the Oneota formation comprise a natural unit, which in turn can be subdivided into two consistent members. and these further into a number of distinctive strata, herein designated by the numbers 1 to 9. In all, 15 strata are numerically designated, among which those numbered 1 to 9 are considered primary, those with lower case letters suffixed secondary, and those given prime symbols, of a tertiary category. The first category are those most persistent in occurrence and consistent in position and character.

Strata discriminated are, in descend-

ing order, as follows:

Stratum 9. Rather massive dolomite characterized by a broad-domed Cryptozoon occurring in masses several feet in diameter; at other localities, massive, cherty to noncherty dolomite without cryptozoa occupies this position.

Stratum 8. A dolomite stratum bearing a Cryptozoon packed as columnar colonies 3 to 6 inches in diameter and rising the full height of the bed. Chert

is commonly present. Stratum 7. Fourth green-specked band. Dolomite, coarsely crystalline, vitreous, clean, gray or buff, studded with glauconite; floating sand grains present. "Chitons" may occur.
Stratum 7a. A zone of "chitons" com-

monly underlies Stratum 7. At other localities cryptozoa (No. 7a) are pres-

ent in this position.

¹ Willman, H. B., and Templeton, J. S., Cambrian and Lower Ordovician exposures in northern Illinois: Trans. Ill. Acad. Sci., vol. 44, p. 116, 1951.

² The term "chiton" is employed herein to the remains of an organism the shell of which, in curvature and size, is best compared to Dentalium. The "chiton" shells, however, are closely septate and only hemi-tubular, being open on one side for the full length of the shell. The reference to "chitons" was tentatively made by E. O. Ulrich (personal communication). Where the shells are abundant, their silicified remains may readily be detected on the vertical face of the bed by means of their crescentic cross sections.

Stratum 6. Cryptozoon stratum, packed with columnar colonies, 1 to 2 inches in diameter and rising to the full height of the bed.

Stratum 5. Third green-specked band. Like 7, with "chitons" locally present.

Stratum 4. Zone of abundant "chitcommonly associated with rather obscure cryptozoa.

Stratum 3b. Locally developed zone

of colitic dolomite.

Second green-specked 3. Stratum band. Like strata 5 and 7, but no "chitons" reported.

Stratum 3a. Locally developed zone of oolitic dolomite, commonly underlain

by obscure cryptozoa.

Stratum 3', 3". Small (1cm) subspherical pebbles of yellow-green, argillaceous, dense dolomite in matrix of dolomitic sandstone. Probably not a specific stratum but a characteristic lithology which developed intermittently at various levels within a vertical span of several feet.

Stratum 2. First green-specked band.

Like Strata 3, 5 and 7.

Cryptozoon, in dome-Stratum 1. shaped masses averaging 1 foot in diameter and compounded of closely packed columnar growths. Oolitic dolomite or oolitic chert commonly fills depressions between domes. Cryptozoon conglomerate locally occupies this interval.

Stratum 1a. Locally developed colitic dolomite or dolomitic sandstone.

Oneota base ("B"). A cobbly sand-stone conglomerate lies commonly near or at the base of the formation, but change from fine-grained, sorted Sunset Point sand to the coarser, very poorly sorted Oneota sand is the specific criterion of the contact. Strata within the upper few feet of the Sunset Point formation are in places silicified to a semi-quartzite, as in other parts of Wisconsin. Evidence from other areas strongly suggests that this developed in connection with a pre-Oneota erosion surface.

Among the above key lithologies, the various green-specked bands appear to be highly persistent, as are some of the Cryptozoon strata (par-The "chiticularly Stratum 6). tons" occur through quite a considerable vertical span of strata, but their most persistent occurrence is in a bed (Stratum 4) directly underly-

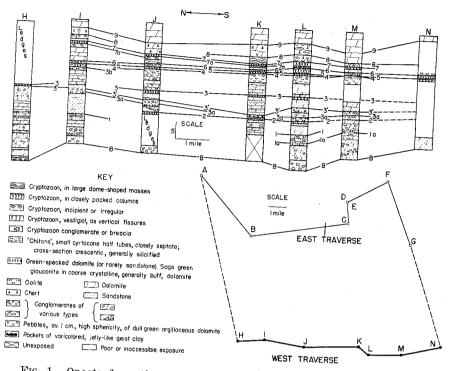


Fig. 1.—Oneota formation, Hickory Ridge and Mound Ridge members. West half of Stoddard quadrangle, Wisconsin.

ing Stratum 5. Oolite, generally in dolomite, is present at nearly all localities, but its persistence in specific strata is less constant than that of glauconite. Chert is even more sporadic in occurrence and is not used for stratal designation; the same may be said for sandstone beds, and for most conglomerates.

HICKORY RIDGE AND MOUND RIDGE MEMBERS

Below the base of Stratum 4 (Chiton stratum) the dolomites are for the most part arenaceous and are interbedded with sandstones, whereas little sand occurs above. On this basis, it seems desirable to divide the unit into two members, the Hickory

Ridge below and the Mound Ridge above. Names are taken from physical features in T. 13 N., R. 7 W., Wisconsin, where the type locality is a bluff-top quarry, 1 mile south of Genoa, Vernon Co. (see appended section).

If the member boundary is thus placed, all oolite is confined to the lower or Hickory Ridge member, whereas the "chitons" and most of the chert are confined to the upper or Mound Ridge member. The latter averages 13 feet in thickness, with a range of from 10 to 17 feet; the former 24 feet, with a range of 22 to 26 feet.

Fossils are rare in the Hickory Ridge member, but the trilobite

Symphisurina and small, planispiral gastropods have been found in several areas in Wisconsin. No fossils have as yet been found in the Mound Ridge member.

GENOA MEMBER

Overlying the Mound Ridge member is a stratigraphic section of varied thickness, characterized by strata which are distinctly and evenly bedded, with clean flat bedding planes and smooth vertical jointing. This sequence falls naturally into two divisions, the lower of which ranges from 8 feet in the north to 29 feet in the south. This lower rock

unit is light buff, or buffy mottled, commonly in beds 2 to 3 feet thick, which may subdivide under the weather to flagstone dimensions. On the basis of these characters, the unit is called the "buffy bedded zone." Beds are dull in lustre, compact, homogeneous, and generally finely crystalline. Many of the strata are studded with globose, nut-size cavities with facetted walls, which may be lined with dolomite or quartz druse, or solidly filled by white, minutely crystalline quartz. beds have zones of horizontal burrows, which are also conspicuous on the bedding planes, where greenish shale partings are commonly present.

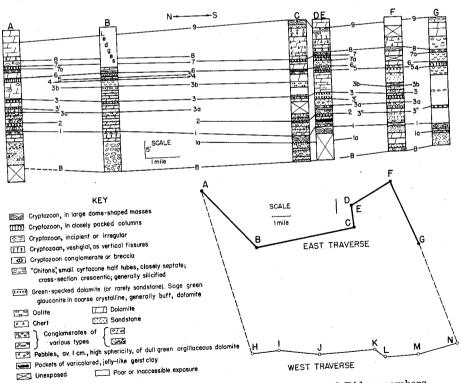


Fig. 2.—Oneota formation, Hickory Ridge and Mound Ridge members. East half of Stoddard quadrangle, Wisconsin.

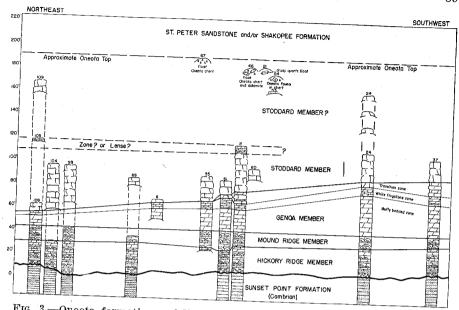


Fig. 3.—Oneota formation, subdivisions. Based on sections related to a line drawn NE-SW across Stoddard quadrangle (lithologic representations are conventionalized).

Chert nodules, in rows parallel to the bedding, occur at a few localities, in the upper part of the unit. Ripple marks were observed at one locality. No fossils were noted.

The higher of the two divisions, the "white flagstone zone," ranges from 3 feet thick in the north to over 8 feet in the south. The dolomite is white, dull, homogeneous, and finely crystalline, and readily breaks to flagstone slabs 2 to 6 inches thick. Nut-sized cavities of the type described in the underlying are generally present; fucoids are scarce or absent, and no chert is reported. Weathering etches out a fine lamination. Dendrites commonly mark the minor joint planes. No fossils have been found.

The white flagstone zone may be directly overlain by massive, rough weathering dolomite of the Stoddard

member; or, as much as 12 feet of strata may intervene between the two units. In the main, these strata may be regarded as transitional. Commonly, a few feet of flagstone like the underlying but buff in color will be present at the base, followed by a thicker zone in which these buffy flagstones will be interbedded with Stoddard-type strata. Or, the entire interval may be represented by thick but distinctly bedded buff dolomite, the character of which gradually approaches Stoddard lithology upward. Chert nodules, some of which may be silicified pebbles, occur not uncommonly in this transition zone, in bands parallel to the bedding.

The persistence and relatively constant thickness of the white flagstone zone, in contrast to the varied thickness of the underlying buffy beds, raises the question as to the presence of an unconformity at the base of the Genoa member. There is, however, no supporting physical evidence. It is quite possible that the buff unit may thicken because of factors other than that of unconformity; moreover, the white flagstone, while continuous lithologically, may not be everywhere contemporaneous. The upward transition of the Genoa member into the Stoddard member seems strongly indicated.

As a result of the variations discussed, the Genoa member ranges from a minimum thickness of 11 feet in the northeast to 46 feet in the southwest part of the quadrangle. The name is taken from the village of Genoa, which lies one mile north of the type locality, which also serves as the type locality for the Hickory Ridge and Mound Ridge members.

STODDARD MEMBER

Above the cleanly bedded, compact, homogeneous strata of the Genoa member, is a massive, roughweathering dolomite, which may in fact comprise all of the remainder of the formation. Strata of this lithology have been observed to a height of 160 feet above the Oneota base, but the upper beds of the formation are only intermittently exposed on the quadrangle (fig. 3).

The longest continuous exposure of post-Genoa rock was measured in a bluff-top quarry (X 57.11), one mile south of Stoddard, Vernon Co. The 37 feet of rock immediately succeeding the Genoa beds here consist of gray, crystalline-granular, cherty dolomite, massive, virtually without bedding planes, vuggy and traversed

by irregular porous areas which cause rough-weathering; the vugs are lined with quartz druses, small calcite rhombs, and marcasite (altered to limonite). Poorly preserved gastropods were noted at several localities.

Above this, at the top of the cliff at the type locality, is a 6 foot thickness of dolomite that is thin-bedded and cryptocrystalline and broken by the weather into small angular pieces 1 to 2 inches in dimension. The only other outcrop of this horizon and lithology is a 2-foot exposure of thin-bedded, homogeneous, medium-grained gray dolomite on U.S. Highway 14 at the north edge of the quadrangle.

Since dolomite and chert of Stoddard type have been found at higher elevations, but in limited exposure, the question naturally arises as to whether the thin-bedded homogeneous strata are local lenses or represent a consistent zone. In the latter case, it may or may not be expedient to designate these beds as a separate member, and to restrict the term Stoddard member to the strata between the thin beds above and the Genoa beds below. Used in this latter way, the Stoddard member would range in thickness from over 50 feet in the northeast to about 25 feet in the southwest part of the quadrangle. Conversely, on the basis of abundant high level chert float of Oneota type, which also yielded Oneota fauna at one place, the member may reach a thickness of over 130 feet.

Strata of Stoddard lithology may be highly fossiliferous, but the fossils have been nearly obliterated by recrystallization of the dolomite, so that collections are confined to the chert, which has yielded the rich Gasconadia putilla Gasconade-Chepultepec fauna of mollusks, with the trilobite Hystricurus.

POST-ONEOTA STRATA

Based on actual outcrop, the Oneota formation in the Stoddard quadrangle has a thickness of at least 160 feet, but high-level residual chert of Oneota type, at one locality also with Oneota fossils, suggests an additional 30 feet may be present under the ridge tops, to give a total thickness of 190 feet. This compares not unfavorably with a thickness of 170 feet reported by Kay⁸ for Allamakee Co., Iowa, directly across the Mississippi.

At several localities, masses of St. Peter sandstone, which may or may not be in place, were found far below

³ G. Marshall Kay, Ordovician system in the Upper Mississippi Valley: Guide Book 9th Annual Field Conference, Kansas Geol. Soc., p. 282, 1935. the Oneota top, and at one place, close to the Cambrian contact. This is a common phenomenon in this part of Wisconsin, where the occurrences are such as to suggest that the pre-St. Peter relief was close to the magnitude of the present topographic relief, and that some of the present topography may be exhumed pre-St. Peter topography.

A Platteville outlier rising into the Mifflin member in SW 1/4 sec. 34, T. 13 N., R. 7 W., on Mound Ridge indicates the top of the St. Peter sandstone to lie roughly 325 feet above the Oneota base. Topography and chert float indicate that the 135 foot interval between the postulated Oneota top and St. Peter top is occupied in part by that sandstone and in part by Shakopee (Willow River) strata. Whether the New Richmond sandstone is present between the Oneota and Shakopee could not be determined because of inadequate exposure.

Type Sections

HICKORY RIDGE, MOUND RIDGE, AND GENOA MEMBERS

Quarry and Mississippi bluff in NE ¼ SE ¼ sec. 32, T. 13 N., R. 7 W., 1 mile south of Genoa, Vernon Co., Wis.

0	denoa, vernon Co., Wis.	•
Oneota Forn	nation, Stoddard member	hickness
Bed 48. Bed 47.	Grassy slope with a few projection 1	Ft. 50±
Oneota Form	ation, Genoa member	
Bed 46.	Dolomite, single had similar to 1	
Bed 45.	Dolomite, like hed 44 but buss-	1.7
	lined cavities common in lower part. "Transition zone." Dolomite, whitish, flaggy, dull, homogeneous, regularly and distinctly bedded, with many nut-size cavities containing quartz and calcite: fine lamination apparent on surfaces etched by weathering; dendrites along joint cracks. Some beds near base have a buffy cast. Top 2 inches is clayey dolomite, weak, finely laminated. "White flagstone zone."	1.8

	at the and
]	Dolomite, light buff, compact, homogeneous, in distinct and rather thick beds, with nut-size cavities lined with small quartz crystals. Top of bed bears abundant "worm" furrows and is studded with broad, flat chert nodules. "Buffy bedded 3.2"
	and is studded with broad, that their hodded 3.2 zone."
	Dolomite, light gray mottled with buff, distinctly bedded, homogeneous, somewhat porous, with very few cavities.
Bed 41.	
	Dolomite like bed 39, but buffy and less rough. Buffy bodden 2
Bed 39.	Dolomite, gray to buffy, compact, massive, rough-weather massive, breaking to irregular blocks under the weather; full of drusy breaking to irregular blocks under the weather; full of drusy breaking to irregular blocks under the weather; full of drusy breaking to be seen and the second transfer to be seen as th
Bed 38.	Dolomite, light gray, buff weathering, wen bedded with subdivided under weather; homogeneous, with horizontal rows of nut-sized cavities lined with dolomite druse and calcite rhombs; "worm" furrows prominent on some bedding surfaces, which may also have bluish green shale partings. Some layers have open, horizontal borings. "Buffy bedded zone."
Oncote Form	nation, Mound Ridge member
Bed 37.	Dolomite, brownish to purplish gray, grands nodules of layer, massive, rough-weathering, studded with nodules of white chert; abundant cryptozoa in large, subglobose colonies white chert; abundant cryptozoa in large, subglobose colonies compounded of small, closely packed columnar colonies. Silicicompounded of small, closely packed columnar colonies silicicompounded of small, closely packed columnar colonies.
Bed 36.	Dolomite, purplish gray, granular, single layer, of lifer and in middle traversed by parallel vertical cylindrical openings (vestigial cryptozoa); a few "chitons" in lower part; impure (vestigial cryptozoa); a few "chitons" in lower part; impure 2.1
Bed 35.	Dolomite, resistant, brittle, abundantly specked by States grains in light gray matrix; numerous floating sand grains; grains in light gray matrix; chitons," common. Stratum 7.
Bed 34.	Conglomerate, with pebbles apparent only on weathers, pebbles well rounded, slightly darker than matrix and less compact, maximum size slightly more than 1 inch; matrix 0.4
Bed 33.	Dolomite, made up largely of cryptozoa in sharp, colored packed colonies, which are not everywhere present. 1.7
Bed 32	Dolomite, crystalline, specked with moss green, clayey state O.4
Bed 31	- 1- wire poroug to compact, with numerous
Outsta Flat	mation, Hickory Ridge member
Oneota For Bed 30	Dolomite, sandy in upper part, brown, crystamine grant 2.2
Bed 29	Dolomite, purplish brown, firm, single layer luli of large 0.7
Bed 28	B. Dolomite, purplish gray, compact, with occasional graduation 0.9
Bed 2'	eingly angeled by moss green, dayey state

Bed 26.	
Bed 25.	Sandstone, irregularly delemitic
Bed 24.	Dolomite, sandy (bolom) and
Bed 23.	Oolite, rather coarse grained and 1.3
Bed 22.	Stratum 3a. Dolomite, cryptocrystalling and with scant dolomite matrix.
	glauconite lower portion number lew inches mottled by
Bed. 21.	Sandstone white to volley will be said and said
Bed 20.	Sandstone locally delegate tross-faminated 1.3
	greenish clay infiltration; local lenses of fine, earthy dolomite with greenish cast. Rock breaks to irregular fragments under weather. Dolomite, purplish and buffer most 1.2
Bed 19.	Dolomite nurnitch and base 1.2
	equal abundance, lacking in upper part; rock compact and
Bed 18.	Sandstone delemities 2.4
	bedded. Stratum 1a. contre grams abundant; well
Bed 17.	Sandstone, dolomitic, friable to well cemented, with a few small pebbles of yellowish clay: peoply certain, with a few
	calcite crystals form nisiform concretions of ted; locally sand-
	Sandstone, poorly sorted, variously cross-laminated, irregularly cemented, with pebbles of Sunset Point sandstone, which weather away to cavities. Base of Oneota formation 3.4
Sunset Point	Formation
1 n s s k 1:	Somewhat interrupted exposure; sandstone, largely in definite, well cemented beds; white, buffy, or brown; fine-grained, aminated, locally cross laminated; horizontal borings common throughout. Basal bed resistant, forming projecting shelf; succeeded by fine, weak, white, saccharoidal sandstone; highest bed subquartzitic, breaking to firm angular lenses near base; mudcracks in the weak, white sandtone
Bed 14. S li a c a o	tone
Trempealeau F	ormation, Jordan member
Bed 13. Saction of the control of th	andstone, medium to coarse grained, grains rounded, frosted; ean, porous without fine fractions, except for occasional urtings of resistant shale which weather in relief; cross-dded with bedded units having steep foresets of constant rection, prevailingly northwest; no bedding planes, but an ternation of thick, steeply and gently cross-laminated zones, e complex itself having a northerly inclination. Sand sically white and friable but brilliantly stained by ochre.

STODDARD MEMBER

STODE TITLE	
quarry and Mississippi bluff in NW ¼ NE ¼ sec. 33, T. 14 N., R. 7 W., 1 r south of Stoddard, Vernon Co., Wis.	nile
Oneota Formation, Stoddard member (?) Dolomite, thin bedded, cryptocrystalline, broken by weather into angular chips 1 to 2 inches in diameter	6
Oneota Formation, Stoddard member Dolomite, massive, almost without bedding, gray, crystalline granular, compact to porous, vuggy with linings of drusy quartz or rhombic calcite, and less commonly marcasite (limonite pseudomorphs); chert nodules; poorly preserved molds of gastropods	37
Oneota Formation, Genoa member Transition zone White flagstone zone Buffy bedded zone	11.7 4.9 12.4
Oneota Formation, Mound Ridge member including development of Strata 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9	12.4
Oneota Formation, Hickory Ridge member including development of Strata 1, 3a, 3', and 3b	22.3 24.3
Sunset Point Formation. Trempealeau Formation, Jordan member Van Oser submember.	14.5
LOCALITIES	
(Letters and numbers to left correspond to those on charts)	
W. 101, contar of NW 1/2 sec. 7, T. 14 N., R. 5 W.; 1 mile WNW of	Coon
Valley, Vernon Co.	e rail-
B. Locality 89; SE 4/4 NE 1/4 sec. 27, T. 13 N., R. 6 W.; ravine 1 mile 3 C. Locality 61; NE 1/4 sec. 27, T. 13 N., R. 6 W.; ravine 1 mile 3	SW of
C. Locality 61; NE ¼ NE ¼ sec. 21, 1. 15 Aug. Newton, Vernon Co. Newton, Vernon Co.	ghway,
Newton, Vernon Co. D. Locality 55; SE ¼ SE ¼ sec. 23, T. 13 N., R. 6 W.; quarry on County high mile ESE of Newton.	county
E. Locality 57; NW ¼ NW ¼ sec. 25, T. 13 N., R. 6 W., 12 vine west highway, 1.5 mile ESE of Newton. (locs. 55 and 57 are combined	
F. Locality 50; SE 1/4 NW 1/4 sec. 6, T. 12 N., R. 5 W., Tavino users	age on
G. Locality 41; SE ¼ SE ¼ sec. 9, T. 12 N., R. 6 W., brain on 200	Side of
H. Locality 7; west half SE 1/4 sec. 21, 71. 14 N., It. 7 V.,	aissinni
I Locality 11; NW ¼ NE ¼ sec. 33, T. 14 N., R. 1 W., 44411	sissippi
J. Locality 15; NE ¼ SW ¼ sec. 9, T. 13 N., R. 7 W., Medonara 2	y, ver-
non Co. K. Locality 30; NE ¼ SW ¼ sec. 28, T. 13 N., R. 7 W.; ravine ½ mile	west of
Genoa, Vernon Co. L. Locality 24; NE ¼ SE ¼ sec. 32, T. 13 N., R. 7 W.; quarry 1 mile s	south of
 Genoa, Vernon Co. M. Locality 28; SW ¼ NW ¼ sec. 9, T. 12 N., R. 7 W.; Mississippi bluff north of mouth of Bad Axe River. 	, 1 mile
north of mouth of 2000	

- N. Locality 37; NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 21, T. 12 N., R. 7 W.; Mississippi bluff, 1.5 miles south of mouth of Bad Axe River.
 - 6. NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 15, T. 14 N., R. 7 W.; quarry on road ascending bluff $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles NNE of Stoddard, Vernon Co.
- 11. equals "I."
- 21. NW ¼ sec. 13, T. 13 N., R. 7 W.; road at head of Spring Coulee, Vernon Co.
- 37. equals "M"
- SW ¼ SE ¼ sec. 7, T. 12 N., R. 5 W.; knoll rising above elevation 1,200', on Nottingham Ridge, Vernon Co.
- 53. SE ¼ SW ¼ sec. 2, T. 12 N., R. 6 W.; ledge at bend of ridge road, 1.5 miles
- 54. SE 1/4 NE 1/4 sec. 3, T. 12 N., R. 6 W.; in ravine 0.2 miles south of State Route 56, 1.5 miles southwest of Plainview School, Vernon Co. 55. see "D"
- 60. NE 1/4 NW 1/4 sec. 20, T. 13 N., R. 6 W.; bluff 1/4 mile west of mouth of Wire 61. equals "C"
- 67. SW 1/4 NE 1/4 sec. 30, T. 13 N., R. 5 W.; ridge top 1.2 miles NNW of White 89. equals "B"
- 98. NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 19, T. 14 N., R. 5 W.; bluff on north side of valley, 2 miles south of Coon Valley, Vernon Co.
- 104. NE ¼ NW ¼ sec. 11, T. 14 N., R. 6 W.; on U. S. Route 18, 2½ miles west of
- 109. SE 1/4 SE 1/4 sec. 29, T. 15 N., R. 6 W.; on U. S. Route 18, descending from Brinkman Ridge to Mormon Coulee, LaCrosse Co.