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DIAGENESIS AND RESERVOIR ANALYSIS OF THE BIRDBEAR FORMATION, WILLISTON BASIN, NORTH DAKOTA

by

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A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

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Master of Science

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This thesis, submitted by Sunny O. Ekwenta in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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This thesis is being submitted by the appointed advisory committee as having met all of the requirements of the School of Graduate Studies of the University of North Dakota and is hereby approved.

Dean of the School of Graduate Studies

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> Sunny O. Ekwenta May, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

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ABSTRACT

The southwestern part of Birdbear Formation of the Williston basin is part of the three shelf-wide sedimentary cycles in the Devonian transgressive-regressive sequence rock deposit. It is bounded above by the Three Forks and below by Duperow Formation. The formation can be informally divided into an upper A zone and a lower B zone. The common rock types in the Birdbear are dolomites, limestone, and anhydrites as well as combinations of anhydrite limestone, and dolomite limestone that is mostly found in the upper zone usually at the contact between the Three Forks and the Birdbear. Hydrocarbon has been found in the A zone in a stratigraphic trap formed by the anhydrite acting as a seal and in the B zone by the structural trap caused by the dissolution of salt in the Prairie Formation.

The formation has undergone different diagenesis which has altered its primary sediments and giving rise to secondary porosity and permeability. The formation contains mostly wackestone, packstone, and biosparite. Dolomitization and fossil fragments dissolutions are the two most common diagenetic processes occurring in the Birdbear, hence creating intercrystalline and biomoldic porosities. The reservoir quality analyses show that the Birdbear Formation has decent porosity and permeability but the answer to why the Birdbear is not a prolific producer can be found in the TOC/Rock-Eval analyses.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As the quest to explore and exploit more hydrocarbon increases globally to meet the growing energy demand, great attention has been paid in great measures to the Williston Basin. With the advent of horizontal drilling technologies and fracking, this basin has witnessed an unprecedented level of drilling activities in recent times. The Williston Basin to the northeast is bounded by the Canadian Shield, Sweetgrass arch at the north and northwest, Transcontinental arch at the south and southeast, series of Laramide structures like the Mles City arch, Black Hills Uplift, Bowdoin dome, and Porcupine dome to the west and southwest (Figure.1)**,** and deposited over a Precambrian basement. Structurally it is an intracratonic depression with over 16,000 ft. of sediments according to Anna, L.O (2013). The Williston Basin has a wide extent with boundaries in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. In the North Dakota this basin, attention has been mostly on the Bakken and the Three Forks Formations having been identified as a prolific producer and as such, great attention has been paid to these two formations as far as research goes. Despite all the work that has been done on these two formations, little attention has been paid to the formation that is stratigraphically below it, the Birdbear Formation (Upper Devonian).

The Birdbear stratigraphically underlies the Three Forks Formation and overlies the Duperow Formation. It is mostly a carbonate-evaporite formation that extends over all the Williston Basin of North Dakota, Montana, Southwest Manitoba and Southern Saskatchewan. It is referred to the Nisku Formation at the Alberta Basin and Montana (Kent, 1968). The formation is easily identified in a wireline log by its sharp kick-outs at the base of the Three Forks Formation **(**Figure 2). This formation is usually a carbonate member and the middle mostly alternates between carbonates (limestone and dolomites), and anhydrite and at the boundary between the Three Forks and the Birdbear usually starts with a thin layer of anhydrite.

Figure 1. Outline of Williston Basin and major structural features (Anna, 2013).

The Birdbear usually ranges in thickness between 0 to 125 feet. The thin layer of anhydrite at the top of the formation often acts as a barrier or seal for further movement of hydrocarbon that accumulated in the carbonate rocks (Murray, 1964). The anhydrites are present everywhere and are a sign of transition from the Three Forks.

The study area occupies two counties in the Southwestern part of North Dakota, namely the Billings and Golden Counties, Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 2. Wireline Log showing the top of the Birdbear with a kick out the top of the Duperow. In-between is the probably anhydrite interval as shown by the point where the density porosity goes off the scale.

Figure 3. Map of North Dakota with counties showing the area of study and oil wells drilled in the Birdbear.

Figure 4. Map of Study area showing the sampled areas in Golden Valley and Billings Counties, oil wells drilled in the Birdbear Formation and the points of cross-section.

1.1 Objectives

The formation has undergone different levels of diagenesis that has significantly affected the reservoir qualities of the formation. These changes reflect on the porosity and permeability of the rocks. This study is to determine how much these diagenetic processes have impacted on the reservoir quality and the lithological changes throughout the formation and how it correlates. This study will look at the reservoir characterization and the quality of the source in the Birdbear Formation. The kerogen type and the stage of the thermal maturation will also be evaluated.

1.2 Methodology

Three basic approaches have been used in this study: cores analysis, thins sections, and wireline logs. Based on availability, only seven cores were used. The cores were analyzed for color, grain size, sedimentary structures, fractures, porosity, and fossil contents using hand lens, color chart, grain size chart. Dilute hydrochloric acid was used to distinguish the limestone from the dolostone. Descriptively, Folk, (1959 and 1962), and the Dunham (1962) classification schemes, were used to name the rocks. Pictures of features of interest were taken from the cores. Thin sections were also examined with the help of a Leica microscope using different magnifications. A total of 105 thin sections were examined to better understand the diagenetic processes and to examine features like porosity, fractures, fossil contents as well as naming the rock types using Folk (1959) and Dunham (1962) classification schemes. Well profiles from the North Dakota Industrial Commission were also used to get some properties of the wells like the porosities, permeability, oil, and water saturation to give further interpretations.

Five hundred and forty wireline logs were used to determine the tops and bottoms of the formation and to identify the anhydrite unit using the PETRA (2014) software. This was done by noting the signatures of the wire line logs as it moves through the different lithology. About 300 wireline logs of neutron-density porosity logs, gamma ray, and sonic logs were digitized and plotted using the SURFER (2013) software to help identify the porosity distribution across the study area as well as the thicknesses of the formation and the anhydrites. Twenty-five rock

samples were collected and sent to StratoChem for TOC/Rock-Eval and Pyrolysis to determine richness and maturity stage of the source rock. The rock TOC (Total Organic Carbon) was determined. The rock-Eval method was done by heating and decomposing the samples in the absence of oxygen. The hydrocarbons present in the sample are volatilized and measured and noted as S1. Pyrolysis checks the kerogen present which is recorded as S2, and the CO present is recorded as S3. The Hydrogen Index, Oxygen index and Production Index was calculated from:

1.3 Geologic Setting

The Williston Basin is an oval depression (Figure 5) that is on the western edge of the Canadian Shield and stretches to Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, is known to be part of an embayment stretching through Saskatchewan and Alberta to the open sea beyond, (LeFever, 1999). The repeated flooding of the embayment by changes in sea levels and its decline caused the lower portion of the Birdbear to be predominantly made up of shallow marine limestone and dolostone and the upper portion mainly anhydrites. The largest part of the Williston Basin is in North Dakota which also is where the deepest part of the basin is located (Gerhard et al 1982)

The Birdbear lies on top of the Duperow Formation and below the Three Forks Formation (Figure 6). The anhydrites suggest that North Dakota at a time experienced arid conditions like the sabkha environment. Kissling and Ehrets (1985) noted that the deposition of this Devonian sequence (marine transgressive-regressive sequence), was controlled by three shelf-wide cycles of progressive hypersalinity of which the third cycle deposited the Birdbear,

Figure 6. Hydrocarbon in the Birdbear Formation mostly occurs in the dolomitized stromatoporoid just below the anhydrites. The Birdbear can range in thickness from 0 to 125 ft. and is mainly made up of upper anhydrite layer which acts as a seal for hydrocarbon (Murray, 1964), anhydrite limestone and, dolostone.

Figure 5. Extent of the Williston Basin with its major structural features.

(www.dmr.nd.gov/ndgs/resources/)

BEQUENCE	SYSTEMS	LITHOLOGY	ROCK UNITS	THICKNESS FT $\{m\}$	
$\overline{}$ ABSAROKA	TRIASSIC		SPEARFISH	750 (225)	
	PERMIAN	Program	MINNEKAHTA	40 (12)	
			OPECHE	400 (120)	
	PENNSYLVANIAN		BROOM CREEK	335 (100)	
			AMSDEN	450 (135)	
			TYLER	270 (80)	
KASKASKIA $\overline{}$	MISSISSIPPIAN		OTTER	200 (60)	
			KIBBEY	250(75)	
			CHARLES MISSION		
			MADISON CANYON LODGEPOLE	2000 (600)	
			BAKKEN	145 (45)	
	Upper Devonian DEVONIAN Middle Devonian		THREE FORKS	240 (75)	
			BIRDBEAR	125 (40)	Study Area
			DUPEROW	460 (140)	
			SOURIS RIVER	350 (105)	
			DAWSON BAY	185 (55)	
			PRAIRIE	650 (200)	
			WINNIPEGOSIS	220 (65)	
			ASHERN	180 (55)	
TIPPECANOE	SILURIAN		INTERLAKE	1100 (335)	
			STONEWALL	120 (35)	
	ORDOVICIAN		STONY MTN.	200(65)	
			RED RIVER	700 (215)	WILLISTON BASIN PETROLEUM
			WINNIPEG GRP.	405 (125)	SYSTEMS
ã	CAMBRO - ORD	جبجي	DEADWOOD	900 (270)	
	PRECAMBRIAN				

Figure 6. North Dakota Geologic Column. The arrow shows the study area. (Modified from LeFever 1992; Anna, 2009).

Figure 7. Depositional cycles in the Upper Devonian Stratigraphy with composite log characteristics and subdivisions of the Duperow and Birdbear Formations (Ehrets et al, 1985).

Williston Basin Cross Section: This cross-section of the Williston Basin is to scale and was run from Beach to Fargo, N.D., along Interstate 94

Photo courtesy of the North Dakota Geological Survey.

Figure 8. Cross Section of the Williston basin from Beach to Fargo, (NDGS).

1.4 Previous Work

A number of work have been done in the Williston Basin as a whole and in some of its formations like the Bakken and Three Forks Formations, which has been the attention of so much exploration activities in recent time, but little work has been done in the Birdbear Formation especially the North Dakota portion of the Birdbear. Most of the work was done on the Canadian portion. The Birdbear Formation was initially defined by Sandberg and Hammond (1958) using the Mobil Oil Producing Company No.1 Birdbear well, c SE1/4NW1/4 Sec.22 T. 149 R. 91W, in Dunn County, North Dakota. Many oil operators still use the name Nisku Formation. The low level of tectonic disturbance, widespread lateral continuity of key beds, and availability of cores and geophysical logs make the Birdbear Formation an excellent rock interval for the development of carbonate depositional and diagenetic models (Halabura, 1982). He also noted that the lower member of the Birdbear shows sediments of marine, low to medium energy deposition. Such sediments are laminated to massive dolomite, nodular bioclastic lime wackestone, bedded to nodular bioclastic lime wackestone to packstone, massive to laminated lime mudstone, partially to completely dolomitization of the original micrite matrix with dolomite crystals sizes ranging from microcrystalline to microsucrosic. Common fossils include brachiopods, gastropods, ostracods, foraminifera, bryozoan and broken intraclasts, Halabura, (1982).

In distinguishing the lower and the upper portions of the Birdbear and its environment of deposition, Halabura (1982) noted that the upper member is supratidal while the lower member is subtidal (Figure 9). It should be noted that many workers have divided the Birdbear into different numbers of units or members depending on what they want to achieve. Kissling (1996) for example divided the Birdbear formation into three members.

Figure 9. Depositional model for Birdbear Formation in southeast Saskatchewan Halabura and a typical Birdbear depositional cycle. Halabura (1982).

Burke et al (2005) like Halabura (1982) also divided the Birdbear into two units, upper (A) and lower (B) based on gamma ray logs. With the upper part being picked on the gamma ray at the highest reading above the top of the Duperow Formation which also keeps the anhydrite layer within this upper part. This study agrees with this division (Figure 11). He also noted that most of the pay zones are within the part A and that could likely be as a result of stylolite swarms as conduits for the movement of hydrocarbons that helps to drain the large area that accounts for the large production from this zone A. The lower portion of the Birdbear is made up of carbonates, burrow mottled, calcareous mudstone and Wackestone which contains a lot of fossils like gastropods, rugose and brachiopods while the upper portion is mainly cycles of dolostone and anhydrites.

Figure 10. Divisions of the upper and lower zone of the Birdbear and the contact of the anhydrite.

Typically production in the B zone normally comes from the point of structural highs which is also helped by the overlying anhydrite in the A zone acting as a cap rock.

Figure 11. The probable pay zones in both the upper and lower member divisions of the Birdbear formation.

The structural highs and traps in the B zone are as a result of the multistage dissolution and collapse of caverns in the underlying Prairie salts (Clark 2011) and concluded that B zone is a structural play. In his work on the trap mechanics in Nisku Formation of Northeast Montana,

Swenson (1967) noted these structural highs are steep sided and less than a mile in diameter and form the B zone reservoirs in northeastern Montana.

The A zone is a thin bed has seen production from about 2 to 4-foot layer of porous dolostone. Most production comes from cycle 2 (LeFever 2009) which is seen as the source rock with an anhydrite overlying it and acts as cap rock. So this is seen as a stratigraphic play. Because of how thin this layer is, horizontal drilling is very common in zone A. Hans et al (1988) studied the causes of pervasive subsurface dolomitization that is very common in the Birdbear in the Central Alberta where it is referred to as Nisku. They stated that most of the dolomitization ranges from partial to complete and concluded that expulsion of burial compaction water and thermal convection of formation fluids are the driving force for the dolomitization in the Birdbear formation.

Martiniuk et al (1995) identified three reservoir facies within the Lower member including a stromatoporoid and Amphipora bank facies, and a dissolution-related alteration facies.

Cynthia et al (1982) on the diagenesis of the Nisku Formation and the origin of the latestage cements, interpreted that the sequence of diagenesis is a selective dissolution of fossils, dolomitization, extensive stylolitization, precipitation of calcite cements before, during and after stylolitzation and late-stage anhydrite replacement. In his work on Carbonate Reservoir Models Lucia (1992) noted that dolomite cement systematically grows on the dolomite crystal faces thereby reducing the reservoir qualities.

Figure 12. First stage of dissolution of the Prairie salt. Dissolution collapse leads to the formation of sink holes. Dbd=Devonian Dawson Bay formation; Dpe= Devonian Praire evaporate Formation; Dw=Devonian Winnipegosis formation; Si=Silurian Interlake formation. (Source: Swenson, 1967).

Ehrets et al (1985) noted that paleostructural and facies controls were also important to the reservoir development of the Birdbear Formation. While discussing the reservoir characteristics, he noted that the amount of porosity is related directly to the degree of dolomitization, with the completely dolomitized part having the highest porosity, as well as developments of porosity within dolomitized Amphipora and stromatoporoid banks in both Duperow and Birdbear Formations all through the Williston basin.

Fowler (2001) studied the east-central Alberta part of the Birdbear (Nisku) and shows that of the 182 samples subjected to Rock-Eval/TOC analysis, 51 had TOC content greater than 1%, 19 have greater than 2% and 2 have greater than 10%, with the higher TOC samples showing Type II organic matter. Fowler also sampled the Birdbear Formation from Southern

Saskatchewan equivalent to the Birdbear in the North Dakota axis and found that twenty-one out of the forty-one samples have TOC greater than 1%. The type of organic matter for this area shows Type I and Type III. Fowler et al, (2001) sampled the Birdbear Formation from Montana and North Dakota but none showed any hydrocarbon potential.

CHAPTER II

UNIT DESCRIPTIONS AND WELL LOG CORRELATION

The core descriptions were done based on the availability of cores. A total of seven Birdbear cores were described which amounted to a total of about 248 ft. Most of the cores analyzed do not have the entire formation represented making it difficult to have a big picture of the formation of individual wells. Most of them were just a fraction of the entire length of the formation. With that challenge in mind, this work used well logs to reconcile the point of each sampled core. It should also be noted that a comparison of the well logs and the cores show that the well logs were off by a few feet. Going by the informal divisions of a lower B zone and an upper A zone, the cores examined and the thin sections will be used to identify the different lithologies in the formation. Most of the descriptions here are relative and descriptive. A total of 105 thin sections from six cores (one core has no thin section), were examined using the petrographic microscope. More images of the thin sections can be seen in Appendix II.

The core for NDGS 291 was found at the lower end of zone A. Starting from bottom up, the lower unit that has abundant fossil fragments. Most of the fossil fragments found are gastropods, brachiopod stems, ostracod, and bryozoans giving us a biosparite. Most of the fossil fragments can be seen undergoing recrystallization. Stylolites and dissolution seams can be seen thin section. Most of the limestone can still be seen with scattered dolomite crystals. Burrows and amphipora also seen at around 10685 ft. depth. The limestone continues up until at the depth of 10685 ft. where there is more dolomitization taking place. Euhedral dolomite crystals increase the intercrystalline porosity. At the top of this core is an increment in limestone producing an anhydrite limestone. Between 10677 to 10678 ft. is a very short interval of mostly limestone sandwiched by anhydrite limestones on both sides. The rock type up here is mostly packstone.

Figure 13. NDGS 291. 10691.5 ft. A packstone with a lot of fossil fragments. The fragments have been calcified and only defined by the micrite envelope. This section gives us a biomicrite.

Figure14. NDGS 291. 10699.9 ft. Vug caused by dissolved fossil fragment undergoing recrystallization.

Figure 15. NDGS 291. 10588.8 ft. Progressive Dolomitization. Ostracod on the less dolomitized section as well as fragments of ostarcods and gastropod on the side showing more dolomitization. Beside the whole ostracode is a fivefold structure of echinoderm with recrystallization taking place inside the fossil fragment.

Figure 16. NDGS 291. Depth. 10691-2 ft. A packstone showing biosparite and stylolite.

Figure 17. NDGS 291. 10681-5 ft. Patches of anhydrite limestone with fractures.

In NDGS 859, the upper and lower zones are represented. The lower B zone is more of limestone with lots of fossil fragments and different levels of dolomitization. The level of dolomitization in the B zone is more than the A zone.

Figure 18. 859. 10957.95ft. Partially dolomitized Packstone. Selective replacement of original micrite by crystalline dolomite. Selective dolomitization.

In zone A, patches of anhydrite becomes very common and more dolomitization.

Dissolution seams, fossil fragments, stylolites and calcification of the original aragonites of the fossil fragments are so common. Most of the rock type is biosparite, wackestone and packstone. The anhydrites are invasive in most places. Fossil fragments observed are echinoid spine, brachiopod stem, bivalves, ostracod and bryoazon.

Figure 19. NDGS 859. 10925 ft. Anhydrite limestone.

Within the matrix of this unit is predominantly anhydrites filling the fractures and pores.

The dissolved fossil fragments shows recrystallization going on.

NDGS 10776 has no thin section. The cored interval all falls within the B zone. The lower part of it is limestone with abundant burrows and stylolites. Abundant Amphiporas at the lower unit of this core. Apart from this lower limestone layer, the upper part is mainly dolostone with patches of anhydrites.

Figure 20. NDGS 10776. 11226-4 ft. Packstone with burrows.

Figure 21. NDGS 10776. 11214-5 ft. Abundant amphiporas.

In the Golden Valley County, the core of NDGS 15412, fall in the B zone, the cores are highly fractured with anhydrites plugs at intervals. The rock type is mostly dolostone and wackestone. Solution seams at interval and increase in intercrystalline porosity.

Figure 22. NDGS 15412. 10719-0 ft. Highly burrowed with stylolites.

Figure 23. NDGS 15412 ft. highly burrowed wackestone with anhydrite plug.
The A zone is mostly dolomitized with some of the dolomitized areas showing sucrosic textures. It highly porous due to the effect of dolomitization.

Figure 24. NDGS. 15412. 10710.9ft. Highly porosity due to dolomitization. Sucrosic texture and intercrystalline porosity.

Vugs created due to fossil dissolution adds to the porosity as well. Fractures and stylolites

are very abundant. The top of the core interval starts with mudstone and fractures.

Of note in this core is the absence of fossil fragments and biosparite. The core is mostly

dolomitized and evidence of possibly dissolved fossil fragments undergoing recrystallization.

Figure 25. NDGS 15412. 10736.5ft. Dolomitized packstone showing a vug possible created by fossil fragment dissolution and recrystallization.

NDGS 15625 has no well log so it difficult to make a separation between the zones. This happened to be the deepest core interval (12685-12656) of the Birdbear in the study area and is mostly dolostone. Again like the previous Golden Valley county core, this core does not have abundant fossil fragments like the Billing County cores and less of dolomitization process and more of micrite. Another important observation in this core is the persistent anhydrites all through the 29 ft. core. Fractures, stylolites, pressure seams due to depth, recrystallization and vugs remain a common occurrence in this core interval. Highly porous as water poured on the core quickly drains. Most of the original rock is still in place with little evidence of dolomitization.

Figure 26. 15625. 12681ft. Anhydrites running through the core.

NDGS 15679 and 21734 are both Golden Valley cores that extends through most of the A zone and parts of upper B zone. Again abundant dolomitization and fewer fossil fragments but not enough to be called a biosparite like those in the Billings County. Different degrees of selective dolomitization, dolomitization fronts, fractures, stylolites, dissolution seams, dissolved fossil fragments, recrystallizations, vugs, dog-tooth spar, anhydrite and mostly highly porous are some of the attributes of this core. The rock type goes from limestone to anhydrite limestone, and from dolostone to dolomitic limestone depending on the percent composition of the different rock types. The areas with limestone is mostly in the upper A zone and dolostone are mostly at the lower B zone. The amphiporas were mostly observed in the lower B zone. Burrows are also a common feature. More images of the features of these cores will be in appendix II.

Figure 27. NDGS 15679. 10724-0ft. Contact between an upper limestone and lower dolostone.

Figure 28. NDGS 15679. 10742-3 ft. Highly fractured packstone.

2.1 Well Log Correlation

Figure 29. Cross-Section of the Study Area.

Figure 30. Cross-section and the sampled points in the study area.

Figure 31. Cross-section of the study area.

Figure 32. Points of cross-section.

CHAPTER III

DIAGENESIS

Diagenesis can be defined as the alterations that happened and changed the composition and texture of the sediment after the initial sediment has been deposited. The primary deposits include the initial porosity, mineralogy, and grain sized. This alteration can be physical, chemical, and biological. Diagenesis can destroy information about the primary features but can also leave behind vital information about the post-depositional history of the sediment.

Diagenesis in marine sedimentary rocks is divided into two stages: early and late diagenesis. The early diagenesis happens on the seafloor or happens close to the surface of the seafloor. The late diagenesis gives features of marine cements. Most diageneses in the Birdbear Formation occur in early diagenesis as seen by the common occurrence of dolomitization which is a product of the mixing zone.

Diagenesis can decrease or increase permeability and porosity, but mostly decrease them especially with time and depth. An understanding of the diagenetic processes, the processes that brought about them, the factors that affect porosity and permeability are very important in hydrocarbon exploration in a carbonate reservoir. The common diagenetic processes include cementation, dissolution, replacement, recrystallization, physical/mechanical and chemical compaction and fracturing. The Birdbear Formation has undergone significant amount of diagenesis that has affected its reservoir quality. In this chapter, we shall examine how diagenetic

processes have affected the reservoir quality with the help of images gotten from thin section study using a microscope.

3.1. Composition and Classification of Carbonate Rocks

Carbonate sediments are produced at or near the site of deposition. The two main rock types found in this Formation are Limestone, CaCO₃, and Dolostone, $(CaMg(CO₃)₂)$. Most of the shallow marine carbonate sediments are very unstable, especially aragonite and Mg-calcite. Calcite, Mg-calcite, aragonite, and dolomite are all stable under a shallow sea water. Longman, (1981) gave the characteristic of the most common carbonate minerals (Table 1) Limestone is made up of calcite, aragonite, which are either skeletal or nonskeletal constituents from a biochemical or chemical origin. Limestones mostly are characterized by the amount of grains, lime mud (micrite), cement and pores, (Leighton and Pendexter, 1962**), (**Table 2). Limestones can easily be affected by diagenetic processes such as solution, cementation, replacement and recrystallization. Diagenesis affects limestone in a way that most of the primary constituents can be lost giving rise to secondary characteristics. Mostly giving rise to dolomite constituents of limestone with an increase in diagenesis as seen in this study of the Birdbear formation. Folk (1959) attached the name interclasts to the detrital grains which are debris broken from preexisting rocks. Skeletal grains are those from remains of hard parts of secreted by organisms like crinoids. Pellets are micritic and lack much of internal structures.

Limestone can also be looked at in terms of clastic and biogenic according to Dunham (1962). Below is Folk (1959) Figure 33, and Dunham (1962) Figure 34 classification schemes of carbonate rocks according to depositional Texture. These classifications are based on the percentage of mud content, and grain content as well as the fossil content.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Most Common Carbonate Minerals (Longman, 1981).

Table. 2. Categories of Grain Types in Limestone (Leighton and Pendexter, 1962).

 $\overline{}$, $\overline{}$

Figure 33. Folk's Classification of carbonate rocks (modified from Folk, 1959).

Figure 34. Classification of carbonate rocks according to depositional texture (modified from Dunham 1962).

3.2. Diageneses Environments

Diagenetic environment can be defined as the region in the subsurface where fluid movement, chemistry, nature of the host rock and other factors produce a pattern of diagenesis.

All the diagenetic processes that occurred in the Birdbear formation can be used to identify its

environment. Interpreting a diagenetic environment can be very complicated due to the abundant diagenetic environments and the different textures and characteristics that they produce. We will attempt to reconcile the numerous diagenetic processes that have been observed in this study and its possible diagenetic environment.

A typical marine sediment during sea level lowering has a sequence that moves from the marine phreatic zone through the mixing zone into the meteoric phreatic and finally into the vadose environment, and the sequence reverses during transgression (Longman, 1981).

The **Marine phreatic zone** represent a zone where all pores in the sediment are filled with normal marine water. Marine **cementation** is common in this zone.

Figure 35. The major subdivisions of a coastal meteoric diagenetic zone. Redrawn from James and Choquette (1984).

The **Freshwater phreatic zone** lies right above the mixing zone and below the water table and the vadose zone. It has all its pore spaces filled with fresh water, mostly meteoric water. Climate and the nature of rainfall is a very important controlling factor in this zone. Common here are both dissolution**s** of fossil fragments that creates secondary porosity as well as cementation by calcite. This zone is very complex because of the different paths of fluid

migration, and levels of saturation. Longman 1981 gave five subdivisions of the Freshwater

phreatic zone and its characteristics.

Table 3. Idealized Zonation in the Freshwater Phreatic Environment Based on the Assumption that Saturation of Water with Respect to CaCO3 Increases as the Eater Moves Downward. (Longman 1981).

Vadose Zone: This environment is lying above the water table with most or all pores filled with water and air. This zone is prone to occasional wetting during rain with much dissolution occurring there. Figures 36 shows the different environments of daigenesis and its associated features.

Figure 36. Diagenetic environments and associated features. Beaumont and Hartmann (1999)

The Birdbear Formation is typically deep as far as subsurface depth is concerned. Longman (1981) in his work on the "Carbonate Diagenesis as a Control on the Stratigraphic Traps (with examples from Williston Basin)", noted nine major diagenetic events that occur during deep subsurface diagenesis: (1) sediment compaction and fluid expulsion; thermal maturation of some minerals and organic material; (3) Stylolitization, (4) dolomitization, particularly along faults and reef margins; (5) calcite cementation, often in proximity to stylolites; (6) fracturing; (7) dolomitization and neomorphism along stylolites; (8) creation of secondary porosity; and (9) oil migration.

3.3. Porosity

Preservation of porosity is very important in hydrocarbon exploration in a carbonate reservoir. At the time of deposition, the porosity is high but with diagenesis, most of the primary porosity is lost. Secondary porosity forms from the diagenetic modifications of the original sediments from the movement of fluids in the pore spaces. Some of the factors that reduce porosity are compaction, early cementation, subsurface cementation, stylolitization. The

combination of cementation, leaching, recrystallization, mineralogical stabilization and replacement can provide numerous possible diagenetic paths. Facies which have initial low permeability may be made more permeable through dolomitization or leaching (Scholle, 1979). This study shall attempt to look at some of the factors as it affects porosity. Few images will be used as examples in this section.

3.4. Dolomitization

Dolomite $(CaMg(CO₃)₂$ is a carbonate with calcium and magnesium occupying preferred positions having a rhombohedral shape (Figure 38).

Figure 37. Schematic representation of the crystal structure of dolomite showing the alternation of cation and anion (carbonate) planes, and the alternation of calcium and magnesium planes. (Lynton S. Land, 1982)

3.5. Dolomitization Mechanism

Dolomitization is a selective process where finer carbonate materials like mud are

replaced by minerals like crystals.

Dolomites forms by replacing an original carbonate. This happens when fluid imports

 Mg^{2+} and dissolves the original carbonates, precipitates dolomite and exports Ca^{2+} . The new

dolomites nucleate from solution as primary sediment or it will precipitate into pores as cement.

Most models of dolomitization are hydrologic and need the movement of fluid through rocks and a large source of magnesium. Different models of dolomitization models that have been proposed including (1) The Reflux model, (2) the Meteoric Mixing Model, and (3) the burial Diagenesis. (4) Primary precipitation (5) solution-cannibalization (6) subsurface brines and so on. All models have an argument but none is so certain. Figure 38. shows the common dolomite textures exhibited by dolomite.

The Birdbear Formation has witnessed abundant levels of dolomitization and it will be right to see how much this dolomitization has affected the porosity of this formation. They seem to be an argument on how much dolomitization is necessary for good porosity and permeability. In his work to relate the effects of dolomitization with porosity, Wardlaw (1979), noted that the initial stage of dolomitization of between 50 to 70 percent dolomite content, shows the porosity of the host rock to remain the same or only show slight decrease, but with higher dolomite content or dolomitization, the porosity and permeability will show an abrupt increase. But Longman M.W (1982) noted that only intermediate degree of dolomitization is sufficient as too much dolomitization will produce tight dolomites and little will produce scattered dolomite rhombs.

Figure 38. Three common dolomite textures. (A) Non-planar crystals in a xenotopic. (B) Planar-e crystals (e for euhedral) in an idiotopic mosaic. (C) Planar-s crystals (s for sunhedral) in a hypidiopic mosaic. After Sibley & Gregg (1987).

Between the marine phreatic and fresh water phreatic environment is the brackish water which results from the mixing of waters of both environments. The most interesting diagenetic process taking place in the mixing zone is dolomitization but not all mixing zone forms dolomite (Longman, 1981). Dolomitization process requires an abundant supply of magnesium, so if there is a limited supply of magnesium in the mixing zone, we can end up having partial dolomitization and this can account for partial dolomitization in some parts in the study area. The dolomitization is the major source of porosity and permeability in the study area as seen from thin section sections.

Naturally, dolomites have more porosities and permeability because of the differences in sizes, shapes as well as the way the crystals are arranged. Dolomites have a coarser grain size than limestone. These dolomites are better reservoir rocks than most limestones. It should also be noted that it's not all rocks that have high porosities and permeability will have high hydrocarbon recovery. The study area is highly dolomitized with some areas showing selective

dolomitization due to different the prevailing rock type as some are more resistant to dolomitization than others. Others show invasive dolomitization. Some units reveal a welldefined dolomitization front. The dolomitization gives rise to intercrystalline porosity, intergranular porosity, and sucrosic texture. Planar-e and planar-s textures are very common.

Figure 39. NDGS 291. 10689 ft. Thin section photomicrograph showing a partially dolomitized packstone. Punctuate wall of brachiopod stem on the right.

Figure 40. NDGS. 291 10957.95 ft. Thin section photomicrograph the Packstone shows dolomitization process with lots of the original micritic limestone still in place.

Figure 41. NDGS 15412. 10689.2 ft. Thin section photomicrograph of a packstone. Dolomite crystals from dolomitization showing different dolomite textures and the red stain showing the porosity. The red stains show the porosity developed by the process of dolomitization.

Figure 42. NDGS 15412. 10710.9 ft. Thin section photomicrograph sucrosic structure with euhedral texture of dolomite showing a well-dolomitized layer with intercrstalline porosity. The well-dolomitized zones in the Birdbear can be said to be the most porous.

Figure 43. NDGS 15412. 10736.5 ft. Thin section photomicrograph showing a dolomitization front or selective dolomitization. The less dolomitized maybe as a reason of a more resistant material than the dolomitized area.

3.6. Cementation

Chemical precipitate fills in spaces within or between grains. This is a case whereby the open pore spaces created are being filled with precipitated materials. Calcite cement is the most common cement found in carbonate rocks and can assume different shapes like rhomb, coarse blade, radial-fibrous crust, poikilotopic crystals or equants crystals. Cementation is a common process that is common within the marine phreatic zone, especially in the marine active zone and less in the marine phreatic stagnant zone. Cementation mostly occurs on steep slopes or in a shoreface environment like around sediment/water interface. The Birdbear has a lot of cementation processes going on, and these could only be in a marine phreatic (active) zone.

Figure 44. NDGS 15679 10708.9-9.2 ft.. Isopachous cement typical of a marine environment. The calcite cements uniformly close up and reducing the porosity of the reservoir.

Figure 45. NDIC 15679. 10723-4 ft. Calcite cements growing from the probably dissolved fossil fragments the calcite cement almost closing up the pore space.

3.7. Fossil Fragment Dissolution

This involves the leaching out of unstable minerals thereby giving rise to vugs and secondary porosity. Original aragonites are most often leached. Most dissolutions in the Birdbear Formation were formed by the dissolution of fossil fragments. Most dissolution occurs after deep burial and along stylolites. The vadose zone which lies below the land surface and right above the water table is a zone that is characterized diagenetically by dissolution and removal of aragonite. This is done by solution and precipitation. Pendant cement and equant calcite is another feature of this zone. The Birdbear Formation contains a lot of dissolved fossil fragments. As a matter of fact, dolomitization and fossil fragment dissolution are the major factors responsible for the porosity and permeability in the Birdbear. These dissolutions form vugs in the formation. The vugs add to the porosity as well as the dolomitization.

Figure 46. NDIC 291, 10690 ft. Dissolved aragonite shell with calcite precipitation in the center causing biomoldic pores. Equant calcite cementation gradually closing in the vug that has been created.

Figure 47. NDGS. 859. 10928-929 ft. Packstone Biomoldic pores as a result of leached fossil fragments and dolomite cements.

Figure 48. NDGS. 15679. 10730 ft. Thin Section of marine cementation (center) illustrating intergranular cementation. The vugs caused by dissolution can be seen recrystallizing.

Figure 49. NDGS. 15679. 10736 ft. Coarse crystalline dolomite with interlocking crystals. Around the nuclei is a replacement of the original limestone by dolomite and hollow probably caused by leaching of fossil fragment shows calcite overgrowth by precipitation.

3.8. Physical / Mechanical Compaction

The Birdbear shows a lot of diagenetic attributes that are due to physical compaction. This is not surprising going by the fact that the Birdbear is found at a considerable depth. The overburden acts on this formation giving rise to compactions as well as subsurface fluid migration. These are shown by fracturing and compressing of fossil fragments, alignment of grains in a particular orientation, and dewatering. The type of rock is also a function of the compaction as it has an effect on the destruction of porosity. So dolomites are more difficult to destroy than limestones. Good porosity is present in the deeply buried dolomites in the Williston Basin (Longman, 1981).

From thin sections examined in this work, evidence of mechanical compaction are visible from the fracturing of the fossil fragments.

Figure 50. NDGS. 291. 10588.8 ft. Thin section photomicrograph of Wackestone with fossil fragments like echinoids, gastropods, bryozoan, and broken bivalves. It's very important to note that most mechanical evidence happens at great depths in the subsurface as a result of the pressure of overburden.

Figure 51. NDGS. 291. 10689.5 ft. Thin section photomicrograph Wackestone with a broken brachiopod stem as a result of the mechanical compaction process.

Figure 52. NDGS 859. 10925-26 ft. Packed biosparite showing abundant fragmented fossil fragments.

Going by the depth at which the Birdbear Formation is found, compaction is a common as seen from its effects on the fossil fragments. The type of rock could be a significant factor on the porosity but the porosity in dolomites are less destroyed than in limestone (Longman 1981). This can explain to us why the deeply buried dolomite found in this Formation still retains an appreciable porosity.

3.9. Chemical compaction/Stylolitization

Chemical compaction includes dissolution seams, stylolites and solution seams.

STYLOLITIC: This is porosity that occurs along a pressure solution seam. Stylolites can have a significant porosity that is essential for hydrocarbon exploration. Most stylolites are associated with fractures making stylolites very important diagenetic process.

Stylolites generally occur at a high depth like as seen with mechanical compaction, but this is more chemical in nature. There is no agreed depth at which stylolites typically occur but it is accepted that at depths, large volumes of rock dissolves and the dissolved material are

squeezed from the rocks, sometimes through zones of weakness like faults and fractures.

Stylolites are very common in this study area and mostly found at depths of at least 10,000 ft.

Figure 53. NDGS 291. 10693 ft. Thin section photomicrograph stylolites separating a dolomitized zone from undolomitized zone. The rock materials above are more prone to dolomitization than the ones below and could have resulted to a zone of weakness like a fault from where the dissolution seam precipitate out solutions to form the stylolite.

Stylolites can be useful in providing a part for the migration of hydrocarbon, and creating

fractures.

3.10. Fractures

Fractures in the Birdbear Formation can be attributed to the dissolution of the underlying Prairie salt and is instrumental to the formation of the Birdbear reservoir, Swenson (1967). Fractures were observed in the study area, some running extensively. These fractures are also conduits for the migration of hydrocarbon and other fluids in the reservoir. We can say it is another source of porosity in the reservoir.

Figure 54. NDGS. 859. 10920-21 ft. Thin section photomicrograph of finely crystalline dolomite with faults. Such fractures can act as a conduit for migration of hydrocarbon.

Figure 55. NDGS. 15412. 10716.8 ft. Thin section photomicrograph fractures highlighted by the blue stain.

3.11. Recrystallization/Calcification

This is a change from micrite to microspar. A process where calcite grows to form larger

crystals. It is a change in crystal size or geometry without changing the mineralogy.

Figure 56. NDGS. 15679. 10723-4 ft. Recrystallization forming calcite cements growing from the dissolved fossil fragments.

Figure 57. NDGS. 15679. 10708.9-0.2 ft. The bivalve here has been leached and then being recrystallized by dolomite calcites. The outline can only be seen by the micrite envelope.

CHAPTER IV

RESERVOIR CHARACTERISATION

In an attempt to establish the potential characteristic of the reservoir of the Birdbear formation, an emphasis was laid on the porosity and permeability. Using Petra, the tops of five hundred and forty wells were picked. This was done using the gamma ray logs which easily pick the boundary between the Three Forks and the Birdbear Formation. Also picked is the anhydrite interval which is within the A zone. This is indicated by the points where the density porosity goes off the scale. After picking the tops, Petra was again used to digitize about 300 wells. The data from the digitized tops was imported into excel spreadsheet. The thickness of the Birdbear and the anhydrite were calculated. The average value for each thickness and the tops of the well were calculated and plotted using Surfer software. The plot gives a picture of the behavior of each of the parameter across the study area. The Birdbear formation has an average thickness of 75 ft. and an average depth of 10725 ft. across the study location. The anhydrites has an average thickness of about 24 ft. across the area.

The neutron log is used to measure the hydrogen concentration in the formation while the density log is a measure of the electron density of the formation.

The average neutron porosity in the Billings County is 1.1% and 3.0% in the Golden Valley County. The average density porosity in the Golden Valley is -0.135%. Combined average neutron porosity for the counties is 1.9% and the combined density porosity for both counties is -0.31%.

From the limited NDGS well file, the permeability in the Golden Valley averaged 37k.air md, and is far better than those in the Billings County which averaged 0.43 k air md.

Contour map of Birdbear Formation in the study area

Figure 58. Contour map of the Birdbear Formation in the study area.

The above is a contour map of the area of study. From the figure, it can be seen that the

Birdbear gets deeper as we move northeast and least on the southwest towards the Montana

boundary.

Table 4. Porosity Values of Sedimentary Rocks (From Schlumberger Log interpretation chart, 2010).

Figure 59. Contour map of the density porosity. The area in white shows no reading or zero porosity.

A plot of the density porosity is an attempt to see the spread of the density porosity across the two counties. This plot shows a lot of areas that has no density. The areas of negative or no density porosity could be as a result of different rock type used in the porosity measurement. If the measurement was calibrated for limestone but runs into dolomite, the values could be in negative or absent. An area northwest of the area in the Montana border has porosity density of between one and two.

The average neutron porosity in the entire study area is 1.9% with higher porosity found in the in the southwest part of the area. The Golden Valley having more porosity than the

Billings County. From the middle to the northeast has diminished porosity. From the neutron porosity contour map, the southwest part of the study area has porosity ranging from 2% to 12% which is good for a limestone and a carbonate rock as seen from table 4.

Isopach map of Anhydrites in the study area

Figure 61. Isopach map of the Anhydrite in the study area.

The anhydrite significantly increases to the north. It shows the southwest towards Montana has lower anhydrites than towards the deeper part of the basin. Going by the fact that the anhydrites act as a seal for the hydrocarbon, the upper part could be that seal needed for the more porous lower part.

Isopach map of the Birdbear in the study area

Figure 62. Isopach map of the Birdbear Formation in the study area.

This map is an effort to see the thickness of the formation across the area. Again the formation thickens towards the northeast and least at the southwest. This is an indication that the Birdbear gets deeper towards the McKenzie County which is the deepest part of the Williston basin.
CHAPTER V

HYDROCARBON POTENTIALS

Factors that control source rock richness include the stratigraphic setting, environment of deposition and diagenesis. The use of TOC and Rock-Eval pyrolysis can help us to determine oil and gas zone, kerogen type, the oil window and the stage of oil maturation. Organic matter sources can be brachiopods, ostracod, and other fossil fragments. The parameters screened for in TOC/Rock-Eval are S1, S2, S3, TOC, and Tmax, Figure 63, where S1 is a measure of the free hydrocarbons volatilized at a temperature of about 300°C. The values can be affected or contaminated by drilling mud or fluid. S2 is the kerogen (non-volatile organic matter) presents in the rock and reflects the amount of hydrocarbons that the rock can produce. S2 decreases with depth/burial and is given out at a higher temperature of between $300-550^{\circ}$ C at 25° C/min. An S2 value of at least >5 is needed to have a good source rock (Osadetz and Snowdon, 1986). The third parameter S3 is a measure of the organic $CO₂$ from the kerogen at fast heating of about 300-390 \degree C at 25 \degree C a min. Tmax is the temperature at which S2 is maximum, this is measured in Celsius (°C). Tmax is an indication of the level of the kerogen maturation. S1-S3 are measured in mg/g while TOC is in wt. %. From the TOC/Rock-Eval Pyrolysis analyzes, other measurements can be derived. HI: Hydrogen Index (HI= $(S2/TOC)$) X 100. This ratio gives the measure of hydrogen richness of a source rock. A plot of HI against OI will give us a rough idea of the generative potential of the petroleum. OI is the oxygen potential: (S3/TOC x 100) measures the richness of oxygen in the source rock. Most researchers consider OI greater than 50 as immature

oil window but this is very unreliable. Production Index, $PI = S1/S1 + S2$, is the ratio of the already generated hydrocarbon to the potential hydrocarbon. This work will go with K.G. Osadetz and L.R. Snowdon (1995) standard and Peters and Cassa, 1994 in interpreting the results of the TOC and Rock-Eval pyrolysis.

Figure 63. Explanation of parameters analyzed in TOC/Rock-Eval.

Figure 64. Partial distribution of oil and gas wells producing from the Devonian Birdbear Formation. www.dmr.nd.gov/ndgs/Resources/

Figure 65. Key to some of the parameters and standards.

Osadetz et al (1986) notes that TOC of \leq 0.3% has questionable significance in all other parameters, Oxygen Index (S3/TOC) has questionable significance if TOC is $\leq 0.5\%$, and Tmax and Production Index (PI=S1/(S1+S2)) is questionable if S1 and S2 are \leq 0.2, and all these could mean no potential, they observed. Though generally speaking good source rock can depend on the TOC content and its kerogen type, but a high TOC content can sometimes compensate for its poor Kerogen type. The organic geochemistry images for the samples analyzed will be in the appendix III.

A total of twenty-five samples were collected from the available cores. Even distribution of sampled points was taken into consideration in order to have a good representation of the different zones of the Birdbear formation from the available cores. An average of four samples were obtained from each of the seven available cores. The logs and the points of sample collection can be seen in the Appendix. The samples were sent to StratoChem Services for TOC

(total organic carbon) and Rock-Eval pyrolysis analyses. Table 5 shows the results obtained and some associated well information of the samples. Three cores were from the Billings county area and the other four core were gotten from the Golden Valley County. K.G. Osadetz and L.R. Snowdon (1995) noted that most Paleozoic rocks in the Williston have no or little petroleum source rock potential and that organic matter associated with carbonate rocks have more hydrogen and are easily changed thermally than fine-grained siliciclastic hence a different criteria for rating potential carbonate source rocks as shown in Table 5.

Table. 5. Results of TOC/Rock-Eval.

TOTAL ORGANIC CARBON and ROCK-EVAL PYROLYSIS

Project #: 16FG0013

5.1. TOC/Rock-Eval Result and Interpretations

5.1.1. Source Rock.

Using the Osadetz and Snowdon (1986) criteria for rating potential source rocks, most of the samples analyzed fall between fair to good, with just two samples indicating very good (table 6). Four samples were taken from NDGS Well no. 219 and has TOC values of good to very good. All samples were taken from the upper A zone as this core interval does not get to the B zone. NDGS well number 859 has three samples all from the lower B zone with two showing fair and the one closest to the A zone indicating good. NDGS well number 10776 samples were all from Zone B indicating fair, good and very good which is different from the observed trend. NDGS Well number 15412 has all good TOC in the A zone with the one fair TOC in the B zone. NDGS well 15625 all shows poor TOC. This well has no well log. Again NDGS Well number 15679 followed the same trend, but NDGS Well number 21734 samples all taken from A zone shows fair TOC. In all, 2 samples were classified poor, 13 samples were classified as fair, 7 were good, and just 3 as very good in terms of source rock.

Table 6. Standard Criteria for Rating Potential Source Rocks (Osadetz and Snowdon, 1986).

A Dembicki (2009) plot of S2 against TOC, for source rock classification Figure 67, shows that the source rocks of the study area are between poor and fair with the majority in the poor category.

Figure 66. A Dembicki (2009) plot of S2 against TOC.

5.1.2. Kerogen Type.

From the derivatives in the Rock-Eval and pyrolysis, the Kerogen type was made. Using Peters et al (1994), (Table 7), and considering the HI, it will be noticed that the HI values from this area are between 24 to 210.

HI Main Expelled Product (mg HC/g TOC) S_2/S_3 Atomic H/C at Peak Maturity Kerogen Type >600 Oil >15 >1.5 $10 - 15$ Ⅱ. 300-600 $1.2 - 1.5$ Oil $11/111b$ 200-300 $5 - 10$ $1.0 - 1.2$ Mixed oil and gas $0.7 - 1.0$ Ш $50 - 200$ $1 - 5$ Gas

 < 0.7

None

Table 7. Geochemical Parameters Describing Kerogen Type (Quality) and the Character of Expelled Products (Peters et al 1994).

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Five out of the twenty-five readings falls below the value fifty which is considered as Kerogen Type IV with no hydrocarbon. One point is above 210 considered as Type II, which is a mixture of oil and gas but the rest 19 readings (majority) is between 50-200, considered as Kerogen Type III (gas prone).

A van Krevelen plot of the HI vs OI (Figure 67), also reflects the point that the Kerogen Type is mainly Type III and few Type II, with some in the boundary between Type II and Type III. This shows that the Kerogen type is mainly gas with few still in the oil window.

Figure 67. A Van Krevelen plot of HI vs OI.

5.1.3. Thermal Maturation.

The thermal stage of a reservoir is also very important in determining the thermal maturation of the reservoir. This tells us if the source rock is in the oil window or past the oil window.

Considering the Tmax and Production Index of the study area against Peters and Cassa (1994) levels of thermal maturation, Table 8, shows that most of the thermal maturation of the study area are mainly in the mature category especially in the of late mature category. A plot of the Hydrogen Index against Tmax on a modified pseudo-Van Krevelen plot also reveals that most of the source rock are Type III and thermally matured but with a handful in the immature category, (Figure 68).

Level of Thermal Maturity					
Maturation			Generation		
R_{α} (%)	T_{max} $^{\circ}$ C	Thermal Alteration Index (TAI)	Bitumen/TOC	Bitumen	Production Index
				(mq/q rock)	$[S_1/(S_1 + S_2)]$
$0.2 - 0.6$	<435	$1.5 - 2.6$	< 0.05	< 50	< 0.10
$0.6 - 0.65$	435-445	$2.6 - 2.7$	$0.05 - 0.10$	50-100	$0.10 - 0.15$
$0.65 - 0.9$	445-450	$2.7 - 2.9$	$0.15 - 0.25$	150-250	$0.25 - 0.40$
$0.9 - 1.35$	450-470	$2.9 - 3.3$	---	---	>0.40
>1.35	>470	>3.3	---	---	\cdots

Table 8. Level of Thermal Maturity (Peters and Cassa, 1994).

Figure 68. Modified pseudo-Van Krevelen plot of Hydrogen Index against Tmax.

Table 9. TOC/Rock-Eval Including the Well Status and Well Bore Type.

Conclusion

The Birdbear formation can be divided into two informal units: the lower B zone and the upper A zone. The A zone is made up of dolomites, limestone, and abundant anhydrites. Its environment is supratidal while the lower part is made up of dolomite, limestone, amphiporas and stromatoporoids. Its environment of deposition is subtidal. The rock types are wackestone, packstone, grainstone, biosparite, micrites and biomicrites. The potential pay zone in the A zone is stratigraphic caused by the anhydrite patches in this zone while the pay zone in the B zone is structural due to the salt dissolution in the Prairie Formation. The formation is mainly made up of dolomite and limestone. The formation has undergone some significant diagenetic activities and the most common of those diagenetic processes are dolomitization. Most of the sediments have undergone different levels of diagenesis ranging from moderate to completely dolomitized depending on how much of the original sediment have been dolomitized. This process took place in the early diagenesis stage in the marine environment in a mixing zone. The Mg^{2+} needed in the mixing zone for dolomitization to occur was from the salt from the Prairie Formation. The dolomitization process gave rise to secondary intercrystalline porosity and sucrosic texture. The total dissolution of fossil fragments also is a significant diagenetic process in the formation giving vugs and biomoldic secondary porosity while some of the porosity have been closed up by calcite cement and recrystallization. Selective replacement, mechanical compaction and chemical compaction like stylolites and dissolution all added to the changes that have affected the reservoir quality.

From the contour map, the Birdbear Formation in the study area has the shallow part in the southwest Golden Valley and gets deeper in the northeast part of Billings County. Density porosity in the study area, though low but better in the southwest of Golden Valley going into

Montana. The Neutron density porosity increases from the middle of Billings County to southwest Golden Valley, with patches of other high areas of neutron porosity in the western Billings and northern Golden Valley Counties. In general, most of the area has a good porosity. Isopach map of the anhydrite shows that it is increasing in southwest to northwest trend from Golden Valley to Billings Counties with more anhydrites in the Billings County. The thickness of the Birdbear Formation increases in the study area in a southwest to northeast trend, getting thicker towards the deeper part of the Williston basin.

The study area shows that the source rock ranges from poor to fair and the Kerogen Type is Type III. This means that the area is gas prone. Most of the "good" source rock are found within the A zone while most of the "fair" source rocks are in the B zone. The source rock also was discovered to be mostly mature and few immature using the thermal maturation index. The results above could explain why most of the well drilled in this area are either dry, permanently abandoned, or temporally abandoned.

Out of the seven cores examined, three were dry well, one permanently abandoned, two temporally abandoned and with just one active well.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I CORE AND THIN SECTION DESCRIPTION

NDGS 291 AMERADA HESS CORPORATION FRYBURG HEATH-MADISON UNIT P-812 BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA FRYBURG FIELD CORE INTERVAL: 10676-10699.7

NDGS 859 TEXACO INC. GOVT. - M. S. PACE 1 BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA MAGPIE FIELD CORE INTERVAL:10925-10958

NDGS 10776 PROPEL ENERGY CO ANNA LOGOSZ 1 BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA WILDCAT CORE INTERVAL: 11196-11202

11196-11199: Dolostone. Pale brown in color. Visible pores. Pockets of anhydrite, stylolite. Laminated. Very fine grained. From 11198 ft. fine grained mudstone and soft sediments. Fractures. 11199-11200: Limestone. A short interval of Limestone. Light gray color with pockets of calcites align in a uniform direction running from east-west. 11200-11202: Dolostone. A short Anhydritic dolostone. Pale brown. Dissolution seams. 11202-11227: Limestone. Light (olive) gray color. Highly porous with lots of burrows. Abundant Stylolites, vertical fractures. Highly effervescence. Abundant amphipora giving this interval a spotted appearance. Stromatoporoids. Recrystallization taking place in the fractures. At 11220 ft. the amphipora reduces but stromatoporoids extend all the way.

NDGS 15412 WHITING OIL AND GAS CORPORATION FEDERAL 32-4HBKCE GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY BICENTENNIAL FILED CORE INTERVAL: 10690-10739 (49ft).

Comparing the core with the log, the log was noted to be about 24ft off. The core was also not deep enough to make a contact with the Duperow Formation below. The core interval 10700- 10730 is highly oil stained.

NDGS 15625 FH PETROLEUM CORP. STATE 14-16 GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY COOKS PEAK FIELD CORE INTERVAL: 12656-12685

12656-12657: Dolomite. Peloids. Both vertical and horizontal fractures. Calcite acting as the cementing materials in the multiple fractures. Patches of anhydrites. Stromatolites.

TS: 12657.8: Completely micritic fine grained.

- TS:12667.5-12667.6: Fractures with recrystallization taking place in the fractured area and spreading inward from the fractures. The other areas still have the dolomite envelope. Patches of anhydrites and selective onset of dolomitization and recrystallization happening in dissolved fossil fragments. Dissolution seams.
- 12657-12665: From 12657 ft. the anhydrites are greatly diminished and just scattered. Presence of microlaminae. Vertical fractures. Peloids. The anhydrites still filled in the fractures. This central vertical fractures that ran almost all through this core some places where not filled by anhydrite but some places as dissolution seam.
- 12665-12668: Anhydrite crystals increase but not as massive as the first unit. The central running fractures make the central part of this core more porous than the other parts of the core. As we get to the lower part of this unit, the dolomitization increases considerably.
- 12668-12672: Dolomite: This section begins with lots of embedded anhydrite. Brachiopods stems very common at 12668 ft. Widespread stylolite seam which extend from the corner but goes to the center from point 12669 ft. This centrally running stylolite at some points thins out but quickly reappears at the center of the core. Cross laminae continue to attend this core as well as fractures. Water poured on the core quickly drains through the central stylolite. At 12670 ft. saw nodular anhydrites recrystallizing from the fractures and the stylolite. Stromatoporoids at 12672 ft.
- 12672-12679: Dolostone. From 12673 ft. the huge stylolite covered the entire surface of the core and the calcite crystals increases in abundant making the core more light colored. Fractures with pressure seams. A bivalve impression (brachiopod) seen at 12674 ft. More fractures as we go down the core and cross laminae. At 12677 ft. is peloidal grainstone as we move back to abundant fractures with patches of anhydrites.

12680-12685: Anhydritic Dolostone. Peloidal grainstone. Fractures with recrystallization occurring in the fractures. The anhydrites being massive at some points and at other time nodular. Stylolite.

NDGS 15679 FH PETROLEUM CORP. BROWN 42-28 GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY WILDCAT FIELD

CORE INTERVAL: 10700-10758 (58ft).

NDGS 21734 CHESAPEAKE OPERATING, INC. OLSON 12-139-104 A 1H GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY WILDCAT FIELD

CORE INTERVAL: 10494-10550

- TS: 10493.8 Botryoidal anhydrites penetrating the limestone with few dolomite crystals. Micritic with evidence of faults. 10494-10497: Anhydrite. Light to medium (N7, N6, N5) gray nodular anhydrite with
- areas of soft sediments running across the face. 10498-10499: Limestone. Pure limestone with strong effervescence. Medium gray, interparticle porosity. Have high porosity. Stromoporoids. Fault running east-west.
- 10499-10501: Dolomitic limestone. Slightly dolomitic. Pale Greenish Yellow (10Y8/2). Fine grained soft sediments of mudstone bands running across the core at intervals giving it a dark and light color bands. Peloids and desiccation features so abundant.
- 10502-10509: Anhydritic Limestone: This section starts with pure massive nodular anhydrite then at 10503 the anhydrites turns grayish orange pink (10R 8/2). At intervals, the anhydrite seems to be covered by soft sediments with desiccation features and peloids with laminated bedding.
- TS: 10509.2: Anhydritic Limestone. Micrite envelopes. The anhydrites form a band that is compacted due to pressure. Micritic.
- 10510-10513: Dolomitic Limestone: The anhydrites is reduced to tiny bull eye patches on the surface of the core. Abundant peloids. Peloidic limestone. Stromaporoids. Floatstone. Stylolite at 10514 and at 10516. Desiccation features. Abundant fractures.
- TS: 10521: Dolomite. Grain-supported. Packestone. More dolomitized than the upper units. More of an invasive dolomitization. The blues stains to show the porosity.
- 10514-10550: Dolomitic Limestone: Medium Light Gray (N6). Good porosity. Abundant amphipora. Abundant burrows, Anhydrites acting as floatstone, Wackstone/packstone. Stromatolites. Abundant fractures. Stylolite at 10517 and 10520. Peloids. Brachiopod stems.

APPENDIX 2

THIN SECTION IMAGES

NDGS 291

AMERADA HESS CORPORATION

FRYBURG HEATH-MADISON UNIT P-812

BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

FRYBURG FIELD

291 (10,588.8 ft.). Packstone showing selective dolomitization, dissolution seams and horse tail stylolites. Crinoid arm plate (stared)

291 (10599.8 ft.) Dolomitization front moving from right (packstone) to left (wackestone). This preferential dolomitization showing that the rocks at the right are more prone to dolomitization than those on the left.

291 (10588.8 ft). Packstone showing a bioclast. This section still have the original limestone still largely not dolomitized.

291 (10,588.8 ft.) selective dolomitization with Biserial foraminifer (arrows).

291 (10,676 ft.). Dolomite crystals with patches of anhydrites.

291 (10680 ft.). Packstone with dolomite crystals and a bivalve that has been calcified with its original outline only able to be identified by the micrite envelope.

291 (10680 ft.) Large bladed anhydrites displaced and replacing the original carbonate material. These anhydrites occludes the porosity

291 (10685 ft.) Punctuate brachiopod stem filled with anhydrites.

291 (10689 ft.) Wackestone with fragment like echinoids and bivalves that has been calcified.

291 (10684.8 ft.) Dolomite crystals chemically being sutured together hence reducing porosity.

291 (10685 ft.) Packstone partially dolomitized but with lots of the "ghost" of the original sediment visible by the micrite envelops.

291 (10689 ft.) Fine dolomite crystals with fracture running over it.

291 (10690 ft.) Dissolved aragonite shell with calcite precipitation in the center causing biomoldic pores.

291 (10693.5 ft.) Stylolite.

291 (10693.5 ft.) Wackestone with crinoids, gastropods, and bivalves outlined by the micrite envelope.

291 (10699.9 ft.) Wackestone with lots of fossil fragments making up the allochem and constituting a biosparite.

291 (10699.9 ft.). Echinoid, brachiopod and other fragments making up this Wackestone.

291 (10699.9 ft.) The ooid at the lower section of this wackestone, as outlined by the micrite envelope has been filled by calcite thereby closing what could have been a good source of porosity. Also seen are other fragments like echinoid and broken bivalves.

291 (10699.9). Moldic pores formed by fragment dissolutions(arrows), though the vugs created can be seen to be undergoing calcification.

THIN SECTIONS IMAGES FROM NDGS 859 TEXACO INC. GOVT. - M. S. PACE 1 BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA MAGPIE FIELD

859 (10920-21 ft.) Finely crystalline dolomite with faults

859 (10921-922 ft.) Packstone with selective dolomitization and dolomite cements in the fossil fragments. Leaching has taken place in the fragment forming a biomoldic pores.

859 (10925-26 ft.) A packstone showing bivalve, echinoid and brachiopod forming a biosporite with micrite envelopes projecting the outline of the original structures.

859 (10925-26 ft.) This packstone shows gastropod and brachiopod fragments embedded in a limestone with dolomite crystals

859 (10925-26 ft) Wackestone/Sparse biomicrite with different fossil fragments that can only be recognized by the micrite envelops. Most of the fragments have been calcified.

859 (10925-26 ft.) This packstone/biosparite shows isopachous cement showing a marine with a variety of fossil fragments as a contributor to the sediment. The soft arogonites from the bivalves and the ooids has been dissolved but the outline can still be seen with calcite crystals growing in the middle.

859 (10928-929 ft.) Selective Dolomitization but the original sediment can still be seen.

859 (10928-929 ft.) Packstone with dissolution seam running through the unit. The dissolved fossil (upper left) produces a vug with recrystallization taking place within. Scattered dolomite crystals and anhydrite at the bottom left.

859 (10928-929 ft.) Dolomitization causing high porosity.

859 (10933-934 ft.). Dolomitization front showing probably a more resistant material to the right with recrystallized fossil fragments projected by the micrite matrix.

859 (10933-934 ft.) Packstone/biosparite. Abundant fossil fragments calcified. The bivalve shows a geopedal structure (arrow)

859 (10943-944 ft.) Wackestone with crinoid

859 (10946-947 ft.) Wackestone/biomicrites. Fossil fragments.

859 (10946-947 ft.) Wackestone/biomicrites. Fossil fragments.

859 (10946-947 ft.) Wackestone/biomicrites. Fossil fragments.

859 (10948-949 ft.) Transverse section of single echinoid spine (arrow) with the flower pattern and lobate outline.

859 (10948-949 ft.) Echinoid stems (arrow) and other fossil fragments.

859 (10950-51 ft.) echinoid spine with stylolites running through it.

859 (10950-51 ft.) Biosparite. Foraminifera (arrow)

859 (10950-51 ft.) Selective dolomitization inside a fossil fragment and echinoid spine by the side.

859 (10955.9 ft.). Foraminifera (stared) and brachiopod stem in this wackestone

859 (10955.956 ft.) Fossil fragments and a vug being recrystallized (above) in this wackestone.

859 (10955.956 ft.). Broken brachiopod stem at the top with solution seam

859 (10957.95 ft.). Selective replacement of original micrite by crystalline dolomite.

THIN SECTION IMAGES FROM NDGS 15412 WHITING OIL AND GAS CORPORATION FEDERAL 32-4HBKCE GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY BICENTENNIAL FILED CORE INTERVAL: 10690-10739 (49ft).

15412 (10682 ft.). Anhydrite precipitating through the fault. Vug due to fragment dissolution

15412 (10682 ft.). Patches of anhydrites in the fractured areas.

15412 (10682 ft.). Fine dolomite crystals with the blue stains showing the porosity.

(10689.2 ft.) The white dolomite crystals replacing the original matrix.

15412 (10710.9 ft.) A mixture of dolomite crystals and anhydrites patches.

15412 (10712.5 ft.) Invasive dolomitization with areas of dissolved fossil fragments now vuggy with recrystallization taking place creating a biomoldic pore spaces.

15412 (10714.4 ft.) Areas of dissolved fossil fragments now vuggy with recrystallization taking place creating a biomoldic pore spaces.

15412 (10720.5 ft.) Areas of dissolved fossil fragments now vuggy with recrystallization taking place creating a biomoldic pore spaces.

15412 (10722.5 ft.) Styloite running through this dolostone.

15412 (10728.5 ft.). Fractures.

15412 (10728.5 ft.) Large bladed anhydrites displaced and replacing the original carbonate material. These anhydrites occludes the porosity

15412 (10728.5 ft.) Moldic porosity caused by vugs in the packstone

15412 (10733.3). Red stain showing fracture

THIN SECTION IMAGES NDGS 15625 FH PETROLEUM CORP. STATE 14-16 GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY COOKS PEAK FIELD

15625 (12667.5 ft.) Fossil fragment that has been calcified shows a contrast from the original sediment.

15625 (12667.5 ft.) This moldic pore space has been almost completely closed by dolomite calcite cement.

15625 (12667.6 ft.) Fossil fragment undergoing recrystallization.

THIN SECTION IMAGES FROM NDGS 15679 FH PETROLEUM CORP. BROWN 42-28 GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY WILDCAT FIELD CORE INTERVAL: 10700-10758 (58ft).

15679 (10704.2-6 ft.). Calcite cement closing up the pore space. This affects the porosity of the reservoir.

15679 (10709.2-9.5 ft.) The bivalve here has been leached and then being recrystallized by dolomite calcites. The outline can only be seen by the micrite envelope.

15679 (10709.2-9.5 ft.) Isopachous cement typical of a marine environment. The calcite cements uniformly closes up and reducing the porosity of the reservoir.

15679 (10709.5-10 ft.). Dolomitization going on through the dissolved fossil fragment. Most of the original matrix is still in place. 15679 (10709.8-10 ft.). Solution seams

15679 (10723.4-7 ft.) Packstone shows Echinoid with its five-fold symmetry. Arogonitic micrite shows the original outline that has been replaced by sparry calcite.

15679 (10723-4 ft.). Calcification of the original matrix

15679 (10728 ft.)The dolomites have dark and cloud cores and clear rims. The cloudy cores we can interpret to mean a mixing zone condition. A shift to marine condition gives the limpid dolomite outer zones that could be the cement.

15679 (10736 ft.). Coarse crystalline dolomite crystals in a probably burrow.

15679 (10736 ft.) Coarse crystalline dolomite with interlocking crystals. Around the nuclei is a replacement of the original limestone by dolomite and hollow probably caused by leaching of fossil fragment shows calcite overgrowth by precipitation.

15679 (10755 ft.). Crinoids in a partially dolomitized packestone

15679 (10755 ft.). Invasive and selective dolomitization

15679 (10757 ft.). Primary sedimentary like this burrow remains open until filled by probably sparry calcite cement. Open burrows are normally loosely packed and can add to the porosity of the reservoir.

THIN SECTIONS FROM NDGS 21734 CHESAPEAKE OPERATING, INC. OLSON 12-139-104 A 1H GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY WILDCAT FIELD

21734 (10493.8 ft.). Bathryodal anhydrites embedded in this limestone

21734 (10509.2 ft.) Anhydrite running through this limestone. The anhydrite bands shows evidence of physical deformation possibly due to pressure.

21734 (10521 ft.) Partially dolomitized packstone.

APPENDIX III

DIVISIONS OF THE A AND B ZONE WITH THE CORE INTERVALS OF THE POINTS OF TOC/ROCK-EVAL SAMPLES

The following are well logs showing the divisions of the A and B zones, the core intervals, and the points from where the samples for TOC/ Rock-Eval analyses where taken.

NDGS 859

EXACO INC.

GOVT. - M. S. PACE 1

SWNE 31-144-100

BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

NDGS 15412 NP RESOURCES, LLC FEDERAL 32-4HBKCE SWNE 4-143-103 BILLINGS COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

NDGS 15679

FH PETROLEUM CORP.

BROWN 42-28

SENE 28-142-103

GOLDEN VALLEY COUNTY, NORTH DAKOTA

APPENDIX IV

TOC/ROCK-EVAL ANALYSES GRAPHS

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 7.5

 2.5

 10.0

 12.5

 15.0

 17.5

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APPENDIX V

PRODUCTION CURVES OF SOME WELLS IN THE STUDY AREA FROM THE NORTH DAKOTA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

APPENDIX VI

TABLES OF DATA

Showing the Wells, Locations, Density Porosity, Gamma Ray, Neutron Porosity and Sonic Log Values in the Study Area.

UWI	SURFLAT	SURFLON	Dens.Por.	G. Ray	Neut.Por.	SONIC
3303300313	47.031987	-103.97642	0.02	19.58	0.13	55.51
3303300315	47.072418	-104.0178	0.05	24.17	0.15	56.60
3303300316	47.012876	-103.82378	0.00	21.38	0.10	53.35
3303300317	47.003566	-103.96976	0.00	24.58	0.10	
3303300318	47.046714	-103.99035	0.03	27.11	0.14	56.66
3303300323	47.014843	-103.91695	0.00	30.03	0.10	51.89
3303300324	47.009332	-103.80567		23.90	0.10	53.25
3303300325	47.108582	-103.90464	-1.53	23.36	0.09	53.44
3303300326	46.9966	-103.89148	-0.03	22.27	0.08	50.31
3303300329	47.019282	-103.88977	-0.01	25.90	0.08	52.33
3303300331	47.021085	-103.86893	-0.02	22.07	0.09	50.01
3303300335	47.068415	-104.02794	0.04	24.52	0.12	55.53
3303300336	47.022241	-103.80558	-0.03	23.46	0.07	51.59
3303300337	47.090075	-103.91104	-0.01	26.69	0.08	52.97
3303300338	47.128355	-103.94598	-0.03	29.28	0.07	
3303300342	46.990505	-103.94539				51.38
3303300343	47.025404	-103.83999	-0.01	17.90	0.10	52.19

List of wells, Birdbear Fm, Duperow Fm and the anhydrite tops with the calculated thicknesses of the Birdbear Formation and the anhydrites.

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