SALT LAKE GROUP IN LOWER JORDAN VALLEY, UTAH

By Loren W. Slentz

INTRODUCTION

The Jordan River as it flows northward from Utah Lake to Great Salt Lake, passes through the Jordan Narrows, a water gap in the Traverse Mountains. The Traverse Mountains, an east-west range connecting the Wasatch and Oquirrh Mountains, are thus split by the Jordan Narrows into approximately equal parts. Camp Williams, a military reservation used by National Guard Units in the summer, is located just to the west of the Narrows. (See figure 5 in pocket.)

Professor R. E. Marsell (personal communication) has proposed that the portion of the Jordan Valley between Utah Lake and the Traverse Mountains be called the upper Jordan Valley and northward from the Traverse Mountains to Great Salt Lake the lower Jordan Valley. These terms would surplant the older less-meaningful names of Utah Valley and Salt Lake Valley respectively.

Lower Jordan Valley is thus effectively bounded by the Wasatch Mountains to the east, the Traverse Mountains to the south, the Oquirrh Mountains to the west, and Great Salt Lake to the north.

STRATIGRAPHY

Major Divisions

Paleozoic rocks make up the core of the Traverse and Oquirrh Mountains. Tertiary extrusive flows and pyroclastics together with various sedimentary deposits cover considerable parts of the Traverse Mountains and east foothills of the Oquirrhs and extend well into lower Jordan Valley under the cover of younger sediments. The Tertiary volcanic and sedimentary rocks, here called the Salt Lake group, is divided into three principal units and these are from oldest to youngest: the Traverse volcanics and Jordan Narrow units, the Camp Williams unit, and the Travertine and Harkers fanglomerate units (Figure 6). The varied lithologies, soil profiles, erosional unconformities, and structural deformation all point to a long, complicated, geologic history. It is hoped that the new units proposed herein will prove usable and serve as a guide for further Tertiary studies within the Great Salt Lake Basin.