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(54) WELL LOGGING DATA PROCESSING METHODS

(71) We, SCHLUMBERGER INLAND SERVICES INC., a Corporation of Panama, 19 Berkeley Street, London, W1, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

5 This invention relates to methods of investigating earth formations traversed by a borehole. More particularly, the invention relates to the processing of well logging data derived from apparatus lowered in a borehole for investigating subsurface earth formations. 5

10 In seeking to determine the presence and depth of hydrocarbon bearing zones (oil or gas) that may exist in the subsurface earth formations adjacent a borehole drilled into the earth, various types of exploring devices may be lowered into the borehole for measuring various properties of the formations adjacent the borehole. The three principal types of such exploring devices are electrical exploring devices (using either electrodes or induction coils), sonic exploring devices, and radioactivity exploring devices (gamma ray, neutron, etc.). 10 15

The electrical exploring devices measure the electrical resistivities (or conductivities) of the earth formations. These electrical resistivities are determined primarily by the amount, distribution and resistivity of the fluids contained in the formation pore spaces. The sonic exploring devices, on the other hand, measure the time required for sonic waves to travel across a given span of the earth formation. This sonic travel time is determined primarily by the nature of the rock structure and particularly its porosity. The radioactivity exploring devices measure either the natural radioactivity of the formations or the radioactivity induced therein by bombardment of the formations with radioactivity particles or rays. 20 25

Two particular radioactivity exploring devices used to investigate formations are the formation density logging tool and the neutron logging tool. The formation density logging tool emits gamma rays which are diffused through the formation and the number of diffused gamma rays reaching one or more nearby detectors are counted to provide a measure of the electron density of the adjacent formation. Moreover, it is known that this electron density is very closely proportional to the bulk density of the formation in substantially all cases. (For cases where this proportionality does not apply, appropriate corrections can be made.) 30 35

The neutron tool on the other hand utilizes a source for emitting neutrons into the adjacent formations. In one form of neutron device, these neutrons lose energy by collision with atoms in the formation. When the energy level of these neutrons is reduced to the epithermal energy range, they can be detected by a nearby detector which counts the number of epithermal neutrons. Since hydrogen atoms are the only ones whose weights are almost equal to that of the neutron, they are the most effective in reducing the energy level of the neutrons to enable their capture. Thus, it can be said that this type of neutron log is essentially a record of the hydrogen atom density of the rocks surrounding the borehole. Since the formation pore spaces are generally filled with either water or liquid hydrocarbons which both have about the same amount of hydrogen, the neutron log does not distinguish between oil and water, but is primarily affected by the formation porosity. Gas, on the other hand, will alter this porosity determination by the neutron log. 40 45

In general, none of these measurements taken alone give a direct and positive indication as to the presence or amount of hydrocarbons in the formations or the relative difficulty in removing these hydrocarbons. The various factors which affect each measurement have to be taken into account and an interpretation or deduction made

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as to the probable existence of hydrocarbons. Among the factors which are considered to be important in determining the location, amount, and ease of removal of oil is the porosity of the formations. Porosity is the fraction of the total volume of a given portion of the formation which is occupied by pores, or void spaces. Other such factors are the make-up of the solid formation material, the water and hydrocarbon saturation, and permeability (ease of fluid to flow in the formation). It is known that by combining the measurements derived from various exploring devices that these factors can usually be obtained. However, when a shaly sand formation is being investigated, the usual interpretation techniques do not apply very well since the responses of most of the tools are affected by shaliness. For example, the true formation resistivity is generally high in an oil or gas bearing formation and low in a water bearing formation. However, in oil or gas bearing shaly sands, the resistivity may very well be low since the shale or clay dispersed in the pore spaces of a sand will tend to have a low resistivity. Moreover, if the formations contain a significant amount of hydrocarbons, and especially gas, additional complications are introduced into the log interpretation process due to the variations in response of the various exploring devices to these hydrocarbons.

Two logs which are useful in distinguishing between sand and shale formations are the spontaneous potential and gamma-ray logs. The spontaneous potential logs gives a measure of the naturally occurring potential of the formations. This potential will be different in shale formations than in sand formations. The gamma-ray log is a measure of the natural radioactivity of the formations and is usually the greatest in shales. However, just distinguishing between sand and shale formations is not enough. It is becoming more and more necessary to evaluate these formations for their lithological make-up as well as for the presence, amount and type of hydrocarbons and their ease of removal. It is therefore, an object of the present invention to provide new and improved methods for processing well logging data to enable evaluation of earth formations and more particularly, shaly sand formations.

The way shaliness affects well logging measurements depends on the proportion of shale, the physical properties of the shale and the way it is distributed in the formation. In the past it has been assumed that shale is distributed in formations in the form of shale laminae between adjacent layers of sand or of shale dispersed in the sand grains. In the case of laminated shale, the shale is considered to be in large continuous chunks in the formation. For the dispersed shale case, the shaly material is considered to be dispersed throughout the sand in the intergranular structure of the sand. The dispersed shale may be in the form of accumulations adhering to or coating the sand grains, or they may partially fill the smaller pore-channels. Dispersed shale in the pores significantly reduces the permeability of the formation.

In the past, formation models assuming either laminated shale or dispersed shale have been individually utilized to enable interpretation of shaly sand formations. It has been found, however, that either model alone does not adequately cover all formation conditions thus rendering interpretation of the measurements difficult.

It is therefore another object of the present invention to provide new and improved methods for processing well logging data which assume formation models which more nearly fit all formation conditions.

In accordance with the well logging data processing methods of the present invention, a plurality of well logging measurements are combined in a new manner to produce data useful in evaluating earth formations.

For a better understanding of the present invention, together with other and further objects thereof, reference is had to the following description taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, the scope of the invention being pointed out in the appended claims.

Referring to the drawings:

FIGURE 1 illustrates exploring apparatus in a borehole for deriving a plurality of well logging measurements along with apparatus at the surface of the earth for digitally recording and processing the derived measurements;

FIGURES 2, 3, 11 and 15 are crossplots of certain of the derived measurements useful in explaining certain features of the present invention;

FIGURES 4, 5, 6 and 7 illustrate models of certain types of formation which models are useful in understanding certain features of the present invention;

FIGURES 8, 9 and 10 are crossplots of certain derived measurements which together are useful in understanding features of the present invention;

FIGURES 12 through 17 are illustrations of certain statistical analyses performed in accordance with certain additional features of the present invention;

FIGURE 18 is a flow diagram representation of the "preliminary pass" portion of a computer program embodiment of the present invention;

FIGURES 19A, 19B and 19C are flow diagram representations of a first sweep of "interpretation pass" portion of the computer program which figures will hereinafter be referred to simply as Figure 19;

FIGURES 20A and 20B are flow diagram representations of a second sweep of the interpretation pass and which will be hereinafter referred to simply as Figure 20;

FIGURES 21A, 21B and 21C are flow diagram representations of a "hydrocarbon analysis" routine found in sweep 2 and subsequently described sweep 3 and which will hereinafter be referred to simply as Figure 21;

FIGURES 23A and 23B illustrate a flow diagram representation of a third sweep of the interpretation pass and will be hereinafter referred to simply as Figure 23;

FIGURES 24A and 24B are flow diagram representations of a "prepare data for output" routine which forms a portion of sweep 3 and which will hereinafter be referred to simply as Figure 24;

FIGURE 25 is an illustrative example of a presentation of the computations made in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

FIGURE 26 is a graphical representation depicting an operation performed in the "prepare data for output" routine of Figure 24.

Referring to Figure 1, there is shown an investigating apparatus 20 located in a borehole 21 on the end of a multiconductor cable 22 which is raised and lowered in a borehole by a suitable drum and winch mechanism (not shown). Investigating apparatus 20 includes exploring devices for obtaining measurements of the acoustic travel time Δt , bulk density ρ_b , the porosity ϕ_N derived from a neutron exploring device, the natural gamma ray content GR of a formation, the diameter of a borehole, the spontaneous potential SP, and deep and shallow resistivities, R_t and R_{xo} .

An acoustic exploring device for deriving a measure of Δt can be found in U.S. Patent No. 3,231,041 granted to F. P. Kokesh on January 25, 1966. An example of an exploring device for obtaining a measure of the neutron derived porosity ϕ_N can be found in U.S. Patent No. 2,769,918 granted to C. W. Tittle on November 6, 1956. An exploring device for obtaining a measure of the bulk density can be found in U.S. Patent No. 3,321,625 granted on May 23, 1967 to John S. Wahl. An exploring device for obtaining measurements of the spontaneous potential and deep and shallow resistivity can be found in U.S. Patent No. 3,453,530 granted to G. Attali on July 1, 1969.

Measurement signals derived from the exploring device 20 are transmitted to suitable signal processing circuits 25 at the surface of the earth. The signal processing circuits 25 prepare the signals for application to a digital tape recorder 26 which converts the well logging signals to digital form for recording on magnetic tape. The resulting magnetic tape is either carried or transmitted via a telemetry link to a digital computer 27 which is programmed in accordance with the teachings of the present invention to process the data in a manner to provide valuable information relative to the nature of the earth formations 23. While all of the measurements to be used in practicing the present invention have, in Figure 1, been shown derived from one exploring device, it is to be understood that these measurements could be derived from a plurality of exploring devices which are run through the borehole at different times. In this event, the data from each run would be recorded on individual magnetic tapes and the data on each tape would be merged onto a single tape for use by the digital computer 27.

The neutron tool responds to the amount of hydrogen in the formations. It is scaled to read porosity directly in mixtures of limestone and water. Through the use of suitable correction factors, it can be adjusted to read porosity correctly in water filled formations of other types of lithology. It is known that the neutron tool will indicate close to the true porosity in formations containing oil, since oil has approximately the same hydrogen content as water. However, in the formations containing gas, the neutron tool will give a value of porosity which is too low because of the low hydrogen concentration in gas.

In addition to deriving a measure of formation porosity from the neutron tool, the bulk density and acoustic travel time measurements can also be converted to measures of formation porosity. The bulk density measurement can be converted to a porosity measurement if the matrix and fluid densities ρ_m and ρ_f are known. The equation for converting this bulk density measurement to a porosity measurement is:

$$\phi_D = \frac{\rho_m - \rho_b}{\rho_m - \rho_f}$$

(1)

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In fresh muds the fluid density ρ_f is usually set equal to 1. However, in light hydrocarbon and gas bearing formations, the fluid density ρ_f will be less than 1, and thus the value of porosity ϕ_D derived from the density tool will be higher than the true porosity.

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The acoustic travel time can also be converted to a measure of porosity provided the acoustic travel time of the rock matrix and fluid, Δt_m and Δt_f respectively are known. The relationship for the acoustic or sonic derived porosity in terms of Δt is:

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$$\phi_s = \frac{\Delta t - \Delta t_m}{\Delta t_f - \Delta t_m} \quad (2)$$

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The resistivity tools used here measure the formation resistivity in a zone radially near the borehole and a zone radially spaced from the borehole. Either an induction logging tool or a deep reading focused electrode tool can be utilized to give a measure of resistivity of the zone radially spaced from the borehole. A pad type focused electrode tool or a focused or unfocused electrode array mounted on the central support member can provide the resistivity of the zone near the borehole. The resistivity reading provided by the shallow investigation devices is called R_{xo} and is usually primarily representative of the resistivity of the formation zone which has been invaded by mud filtrate from the borehole. The deep reading resistivity devices provide a measurement designated R_t which usually is primarily representative of the resistivity in the uninvaded or virgin formation zone.

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The spontaneous potential measurement provided by the exploring apparatus 20 gives the difference between the potential of an electrode on the exploring device and the potential of an electrode located at the surface of the earth. Opposite shale formations, the spontaneous potential will usually remain fairly constant and thus tend to follow a straight line on the log, called the "shale base line". Opposite permeable formations, a spontaneous potential will show excursions from the shale base line. In thick permeable beds free of shale, the spontaneous potential will also reach an essentially constant value, defined as the "sand line".

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The gamma ray measurement provided by the exploring apparatus 20 gives a measurement of the natural radioactivity of the formations. Shaly formations generally tend to have a high radioactivity content because radioactive elements tend to concentrate in shales. Clean formations usually have a very low level of radioactivity. Thus, the gamma ray log can usually distinguish between clean sand and shaly formations.

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It is the purpose of the described embodiments of the present invention to combine the measurements derived from the exploring apparatus 20 in such a manner as to provide information relating to shaly sand formations. The measurements derived from all of these exploring devices are affected in one way or another by the shale content of formations, thus complicating the interpretation of these measurements in such formations. Moreover, when oil or gas is contained in these shaly sand formations, the interpretation of the measurements becomes even more complex. By combining the measurements derived from many exploring devices, it is possible, in accordance with the present invention to accurately interpret the measurements. However, before discussing how these measurements are utilized in accordance with the present invention, it would first be desirable to discuss the nature of shaly sand formations.

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Shale is made up of a combination of silt and wet clay where wet clay is a combination of dry clay material called colloids and water. The relative proportions of silt and clay usually vary from one formation to the next. In the past it has been assumed that shale is distributed in formations in the form of shale laminae between adjacent layers of sand or of shale dispersed in between the sand grains. In the case of laminated shale, the shale is considered to be in large continuous chunks in the formation. For the dispersed shale case, the shaly material is considered to be dispersed throughout the sand in its intergranular structure. The dispersed shale may be in the form of accumulations adhering to or coating the sand grains, or they may partially fill the smaller pore channels. It has been found that either model alone does not adequately cover all formation conditions thus rendering interpretation of the measurements difficult.

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In accordance with an important feature of the present invention, both laminated shale and dispersed shale models are combined into one model to enable a more accurate interpretation of shaly sand formations. Moreover, a third form of shale is added to the laminated and dispersed shale models to provide a shaly sand model which more accurately represents true formation conditions in shaly sands. This third

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form of shale is called "structural shale". In this structural shale model, shale may exist as grains which replace sand grains in the formation matrix. This structural shale is considered to have properties similar to those of laminated shale.

It has been found that all of these forms of shale may occur simultaneously in the same formation. Frequently, however, shale in only one form is predominant but this can change from one depth level to the next. Thus, a good interpretation technique must be universal enough to handle situations where any one form of shale occurs as well as those cases where two or even all three forms occur.

After much experimentation it has been found that over large sections of any given borehole, certain shale parameter values used for interpretation will remain relatively constant, although the particular form of shale may change. Thus, regardless of the particular form of shale, the shale parameter values can be related to those of an average shale for large sections of a borehole.

Responses of the radioactivity tools (gamma ray measurement, neutron, and density) are not affected by the way the shale is distributed in the formation, whether in laminated, dispersed, or structural form. However, the responses of the sonic, resistivity and SP tools are affected by the shale distribution. As will be set forth later, these distinctions are utilized in accordance with the present invention to provide valuable information concerning the character of the shaly sand formations.

A cross-plot of the density-derived porosity ϕ_D versus neutron derived porosity ϕ_N is valuable in evaluating shaly sand formations. Referring now to Figure 2, there is shown such a cross-plot. In Figure 2, certain points can be readily placed on the cross-plot. It is known that in the water, both the density and neutron derived porosities will read values of one. Thus, the water "w" point can be placed on the cross-plot. It is also known that pure silt, which is made primarily of quartz, will be at the same point as quartz, designated "Q-S" on the cross-plot, and dry clay designated Cl_d will be at the point Cl_d on the cross-plot. A triangle can thus be drawn on the cross-plot connecting these three points. In water-bearing formations, all plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D points will fall within this triangle. Furthermore, the relative distances of the plotted point from the three apexes of the triangle give the relative proportions of water, silt and quartz, and dry clay for the formation from which this plotted point is derived.

By plotting a plurality of ϕ_N , ϕ_D points from a formation interval, certain characteristics of the formation can be ascertained. For example, assume that formation interval has produced the plotted points shown in Figure 2. Those points falling in the area x are known to correspond to shale formations. Thus, a line can be drawn through the center of gravity of these shale points from the origin. This line is called the "shale line". Since it is known that pure shales generally have almost no porosity, this shale line will correspond to zero porosity. Thus, any point plotting on the shale line can be said to have zero porosity. The intersection of the shale line with the line between the points Cl_d and W gives the tool response characteristics for wet clay associated with this shale and is thus designated Cl_w . The position of this point Cl_w relative to the water "W" and dry clay Cl_d points gives the amount of water associated with clay, W_{cl} .

It is known that clean sand formations affect ϕ_N and ϕ_D equally. Thus, any points falling on or near a line which subtends an angle of 45° with the ϕ_N and ϕ_D axes are derived from clean sand formations. Those points falling in the area y between the sand and shale lines correspond to shaly sands. These points in the area y exhibit a definite trend between the sand and shale lines. A line which best fits these points can be drawn between the sand and shale lines. The intersection of this shaly sand trend line with the sand line defines a point designated $(\phi_z)_{max}$. $(\phi_z)_{max}$ is the maximum porosity associated with the formations considered in this example of Figure 2. The intersection of the shaly sand trend line with the shale line gives a point designated Sh_o . The fact that this trend line with the shale line points toward a unique point on the shale line indicates that the shale normally associated with the sand has the unique composition represented by the point Sh_o . After a great deal of research, it has been found that for most all levels in the formation interval represented by the Figure 2 example, the type of shale, whether dispersed, laminated, or structural, associated with shaly sand formations in this interval can be defined in terms of the response of the density and neutron tools by this point Sh_o . The neutron and density derived porosity characteristics for this type of shale are designated $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ respectively.

The points plotting in the area Z above the clean sand line most likely represent hydrocarbon bearing formations since hydrocarbons and especially gas decrease ϕ_N and increase ϕ_D .

It is known that the effective porosity ϕ_e and the volume or amount of shale V_{sh}

in a formation at any given depth level can be ascertained by the location of the plotted ϕ_D , ϕ_N point on the ϕ_D — ϕ_N cross-plot. Thus, turning to Figure 3, there is shown a portion of the cross-plot of Figure 2 reproduced to illustrate this. In the Figure 3 cross-plot, a plurality of lines can be drawn parallel to the shale line and each of these lines will indicate a given constant effective porosity. As stated earlier, the shale line itself indicates zero porosity. Thus, as one moves away from the shale line, the amount of porosity will increase.

In the same fashion a plurality of lines indicating the volume of shale can be drawn parallel to the clean sand line. Obviously, any point falling on the clean sand line itself indicates a shale volume of zero percent. As one moves away from the clean sand line, the volume of shale will progressively increase.

Taking an example of how ϕ_e and V_{sh} can be obtained from the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot, if ϕ_D and ϕ_N measurements should give the point 30' of Figure 3, a formation having an effective porosity of 15% and a shale volume of 15% would be indicated.

The influence that each mode of repartition of shale has on the formation porosity will be discussed now. Figure 4 represents a unit volume of clean sand for which each grain is quartz. The porosity is the ratio of the area in white to the total area of the figure. This is the porosity ϕ_z which is called framework porosity. Figure 5 represents the same sand but a quantity V_D of dispersed shale has been introduced in the pore space. The remaining porosity designated ϕ_e has been decreased such that $\phi_e = \phi_z - V_D$.

Figure 6 represents the same sand but for which a quantity V_{STR} of structural shale has been substituted for the quartz grains. Although the sand contains shale, its porosity has not been changed by the presence of structural shale. Thus, $\phi_e = \phi_z$.

Figure 7 represents the same sand but for which a part of the sand has been replaced by a quantity V_L of laminated shale. The porosity in the sand fraction has not changed but only $(1 - V_L)\phi_z$.

Concerning the effect of each type of shale on the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot, if dispersed shale is added to a clean sand formation it occupies part of the framework porosity of the sand. Thus the effective porosity will decrease. Thus, referring to Figure 3 and assuming a sand formation of porosity ϕ_{z1} , the addition of dispersed shale to this sand formation will tend to move the plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D point in the direction indicated by the dispersed shale effect vector, i.e. such that $\Delta V_{sh} = \Delta \phi_e$.

Structural shale, since it takes the form of clay grains replacing sand grains of the same or similar size, will not affect the effective porosity ϕ_e . Therefore, as shown in Figure 3, the structural shale effect will tend to move the plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D point to the right parallel to the shale line (i.e., along a constant ϕ_e line), as indicated by the structural shale effect vector.

An increase in the laminated shale in the formation will tend to decrease the effective porosity ϕ_e because shales have no porosity and laminated shales replace part of the sand of porosity ϕ_{z1} . Since the formation is presumed to have shale of type Sh_o , laminated shale will move the point towards the Sh_o point as illustrated in Figure 3.

The addition of hydrocarbons, and especially gas, to this clean sand formation will tend to move the plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D point to the northwest in the Figure 3 crossplot as represented by vector 29a. This is evident since, as stated earlier, an increase in hydrocarbons will increase the density derived porosity ϕ_D and decrease the neutron derived porosity ϕ_N , especially if the density of this hydrocarbon is low as in the case of gas. Higher density hydrocarbons have very little effect on the neutron tool and thus the data point will tend to move in a more northerly direction, as represented by the vector 29b.

As stated earlier, any given formation can contain shale in all three forms and, at the same time, can also contain hydrocarbons. Thus, through the use of the neutron density crossplot alone, it is not possible to properly evaluate both the hydrocarbon and shale effects.

Let us consider a series of clean sands for which structural porosity may be between ϕ_{z1} and ϕ_{z2} due to the geological process. As stated earlier, it was assumed in the past that either dispersed shale or laminated shale would be associated with these sands.

In the dispersed shale model only the points falling between the two "dispersed shale" lines for ϕ_{z1} and ϕ_{z2} could be truly taken into account and still fit the model (Figure 8). In the laminated model, only the points falling between the two "laminated shale" lines could be truly taken into account (Figure 9). In particular it was not possible to explain the presence of points falling to the right of the (ϕ_{z1}, Sh_o) line except by assuming a ϕ_z larger than the one truly created by geological sedimentation. The addition of the structural shale model permits us to justify and understand why such points may exist.

The simultaneous presence of the three types of shales permit justification of the

position of any points inside the area of Figure 10. However, it was found by a great deal of research that structural shale cannot replace all quartz grains (the point 31a in Figure 10). Thus, it has been found that the position of the shaly sand points on the plot was in practice limited to the right by a curve (dashed curve 30 between ϕ_{z1} and Sh_0) well approximated by a parabola as shown in Figure 10. The parabolic representation of this limit of the domain of shaly sand was developed by empirical analysis and is not obvious. Its physical meaning is that the amounts of structural shale and laminated shale which can be associated with the sand are not independent from one another. On the contrary, it indicates that for points falling on this limit and which do not contain dispersed shale, the smaller the amount of shale, the larger the relative amount of structural shale with relation to laminated shale; and the larger the amount of shale, the smaller the relative amount of structural shale.

Now turning to Figure 11, there is shown the neutron density crossplot of Figure 3 redrawn to illustrate the various areas or sections of the crossplot and their significance. The area defined by the letters SS (standing for shaly sand) defines an area for which all plotted points should fall when derived from formations having a characteristic shale given by the point Sh_0 and a sand framework porosity which is practically constant. In terms of exploring tool readings, this type of shale is defined by the ϕ_N and ϕ_D values of the Sh_0 point, designated $(\phi_N)_{\text{sh}}$ and $(\phi_D)_{\text{sh}}$. Any points falling in the shale area designated Sh define their own characteristic shale type, depending on the particular location of the point within this shale area. Likewise, any point plotting within the dispersed shale area to the left of the dispersed shale line will, in accordance with its position on the crossplot, define a specific type of shale. Nonetheless, most shaly sand data points fall in the hatched line area and the definition of one characteristic shale type for all points in this area represents a dramatic improvement in shaly sand interpretation. If a point should fall to the left of the dispersed shale line for $(\phi_z)_{\text{max}}$, it indicates that the formation has a lower ϕ_z than $(\phi_z)_{\text{max}}$ at that level and thus $(\phi_z)_{\text{max}}$ should be changed to account for this. Thus, assume the plotted point 33 in Figure 11. The dispersed shale line would then move over to accommodate this new point as illustrated by the line 33a to thus give a new framework porosity of ϕ_{z3} .

In discussing types of shale, one parameter that is informative is the relative proportion of silt and wet clay in the shale. To define the relative proportions of silt and wet clay, a linear relationship between the plotted point on the shale line relative to the silt and wet clay points will define the type of shale. In this connection, a term defined as the "silt index" SI of the shale is used throughout the discussion here and can be defined as the ratio of silt to shale and thus the ratio of the distance between the designated point on the shale line and the wet clay point Cl_w to the total length of the shale line between the silt and wet clay points. Thus the silt index of the shale type associated with the shaly sand area SS in Figure 11 will be $\text{Sh}_0 - \text{Cl}_w / \text{O} - \text{Cl}_w$. The silt index of this shale point Sh_0 is designated SI_0 .

Since shale consists of silt and wet clay the following relationship holds:

$$V_{\text{sh}} = V_{\text{silt}} + V_{\text{clay}} \quad (3)$$

The silt index defines the ratio of silt to shale. Thus:

$$\text{SI} = \frac{V_{\text{silt}}}{V_{\text{sh}}} \quad (4)$$

Combining equations (3) and (4), we have:

$$V_{\text{clay}} = V_{\text{sh}}(1 - \text{SI}) \quad (5)$$

Points falling in the shale area X of Figure 2 are essentially shales. These shales do not have uniform composition. Their composition (i.e. the relative amount of clay and silt) is related to the partition of the shale part in this area. To define the composition of this shale it has been found that one may draw a limit parabola equivalent to (30) but which passes through the plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D point under evaluation, using the maximum framework porosity point $(\phi_z)_{\text{max}}$ as the pivot point. Thus, for example, assume that the plotted ϕ_N , ϕ_D point is given by the point 32 in Figure 11. The parabola 30 would then be swung to the position given by the dashed line parabola 30a which passes through the plotted point 32 and intersects the shale line at the point Sh_1 . In this

case, the type of shale associated with the plotted point 32 will be defined by the shale point Sh_1 . As before, the point Sh , is defined by the characteristic tool responses, designated $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$.

It is possible that ϕ_N , ϕ_D points could also fall in the area to the right of the shaly sand area SS and above the shale area Sh . As stated earlier, the parabola 30 defines the practical limit for ϕ_N , ϕ_D points in shaly sands. Therefore, if points fall to the right of this parabola and are not close enough to the shale line to designate the investigated formation as a shale, it is assumed, in accordance with another feature of the present invention, that the porosity data does not correspond to a shaly sand or to a shale. It may correspond either to a different type of lithology or to a level for which the ϕ_N , ϕ_D data is bad due to borehole effect on the measurements. Therefore, this area to the right of the parabola 30 and above the shale area is designated the "unlikely area". (Unlikely to be either shaly sand or shale.) In accordance with still another feature of the present invention, data falling in this unlikely area is verified and, if necessary, corrected using data derived from other exploring devices. How this is accomplished will be described in detail later.

Having now discussed the density and neutron responses in view of the density-neutron crossplot, it would be desirable to discuss the responses of these tools in mathematical terms. The equations for the density and neutron derived porosities ϕ_D and ϕ_N in terms of the effective porosity, ϕ_e , shale volume, V_{sh} , water saturation of the invaded zone, S_{xo} , and the characteristic neutron and density response to shale and hydrocarbon are:

$$\phi_D = \phi_e + V_{sh}\phi_{D(sh)} + \phi_e(1 - S_{xo})(\phi_{D(hy)} - 1) \quad (6)$$

$$\phi_N = \phi_e + V_{sh}(\phi_N)_{sh} + \phi_e(1 - S_{xo})[(\phi_N)_{hy} - 1](1 + 2\phi_e S_{xo}) \quad (7)$$

where

$(\phi_D)_{sh}$ is the characteristic density derived porosity reading in the shale associated with the sand,

$(\phi_N)_{sh}$ is the characteristic neutron derived porosity reading in shale,

$(\phi_D)_{hy}$ is the characteristic density derived porosity reading for hydrocarbons.

$(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ have been discussed above, and $(\phi_D)_{hy}$ and $(\phi_N)_{hy}$ are unknowns.

In the absence of hydrocarbons, S_{xo} is equal to "1" and equations (6) and (7) become:

$$\phi_D = \phi_e + V_{sh}(\phi_D)_{sh} \quad (8)$$

$$\phi_N = \phi_e + V_{sh}(\phi_N)_{sh} \quad (9)$$

In the absence of hydrocarbons, the density and neutron derived porosity readings ϕ_D and ϕ_N provide sufficient information to solve for effective porosity ϕ_e and shale volume V_{sh} . The mathematical solution of equations (8) and (9) is analogous to the graphical solution depicted in Figure 3. The selection of $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ determines the scaling for this graphical technique depicted in Figure 3, i.e., the shale point Sh_0 gives the $V_{sh}=100\%$ point and thus if the type of shale associated with the particular formation under investigation changes, the scale will change correspondingly.

It is obvious by inspecting equations (6) and (7) that when hydrocarbons are present in the formation, the density and neutron derived porosity readings ϕ_D and ϕ_N will not provide sufficient information by themselves, and thus other steps must be taken to properly analyze the formation.

Before deciding whether to utilize other input parameters to correct equations (8) and (9) for hydrocarbon effect, it must first be known whether hydrocarbons do in fact exist in the formation under investigation. The location of the plotted ϕ_D , ϕ_N point on the crossplot does not indicate whether hydrocarbons are present or not. From Figure 3 it can be seen that hydrocarbons have the effect of pulling plotted points in a northerly direction on the crossplot. However, the effects of structural, laminated, and dispersed shale tend to displace the points to the right and parallel to the shale line.

In clean or non-shaly formations, the effect of hydrocarbons will be readily dis-

cernible because all of the plotted points would fall to the northwest of the sand line if the tool readings are accurate. (Of course, if the tool readings are inaccurate, the plotted points could fall anywhere.) However, since it is usually not initially known how much shale, if any, is present in any given formation, it is not known how much the effect of shale offsets the effect of hydrocarbons. As seen from equations 3 and 4, if hydrocarbons affect the tool readings at all, the values of effective porosity, ϕ_e , and shale volume, V_{sh} , given by equations (8) and (9) and the crossplot will be inaccurate.

To overcome this inability to produce correct answers when hydrocarbons are present, two additional pieces of information are utilized. One is a value of V_{sh} derived from other logs which are sensitive to the amount of shale present in the formation under investigation. These are called shale indicators. The second additional piece of information is an assumed relationship between $(\phi_D)_{hy}$ and $(\phi_N)_{hy}$ which reduces these two variables to one. This relationship can be described by writing the expressions for $(\phi_D)_{hy}$ and $(\phi_N)_{hy}$ in terms of hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} as follows:

$$(\phi_D)_{hy} = 1 + 5/7 \left(1 - 9 \frac{4 - \rho_{hy}}{32 - 5\rho_{hy}} \rho_{hy} \right) \quad (10)$$

$$(\phi_N)_{hy} = 9\rho_{hy} \frac{8 - 5\rho_{hy}}{32 - 5\rho_{hy}} \quad (11)$$

Equations (10) and (11) comprise another aspect of the present invention and have been derived from considerations of the chemical composition of hydrocarbons and its relation to its physical properties. The value of hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} is an unknown and is determined by the analysis described hereinafter.

Before discussing how the various formation parameters can be determined when hydrocarbons are present in the formation under investigation, it would first be desirable to discuss the shale indicators mentioned above. These shale indicators are logging parameters or combinations thereof which are strongly influenced by shale content. An approximation of V_{sh} is computed from each shale indicator in such a manner that it is supposed to always be equal to or greater than the true V_{sh} . Accordingly, the smallest of these values of V_{sh} derived from the shale indicators will be the closest to the true V_{sh} and is, therefore, retained to represent the value of V_{sh} in the equations discussed above.

These shale indicators are: (1) spontaneous potential; (2) gamma ray; (3) the value of resistivity in hydrocarbon zones; (4) gas-sandline limit; (5) the saturation ratio S_{xo}/S_w ; (6) a relationship between porosity derived from the neutron log, ϕ_N , and the value of ϕ_N for the shale point, $(\phi_N)_{sh}$; and (7) the hydrocarbon density.

Taking first the spontaneous potential as a shale indicator, it has been found that the spontaneous potential varies in a linear manner with the ratio CEC/W where CEC is the cation exchange capacity of the clay material and W is the total water of the shaly sand in the zone of ionic diffusion. It has been found that the cation exchange capacity is proportional to the volume of clay V_{clay} in the formation and that W is always equal to or less than the volume of water in the invaded zone W_{xo} which is equal to:

$$W_{xo} = \phi_e S_{xo} + V_{clay} W_{clay} \quad (12)$$

In equation (12) the term $\phi_e S_{xo}$ gives the total water content of the invaded zone and the term W_{clay} gives the amount of water bound to the clay particles. To determine the magnitude of W_{clay} the following equation can be used:

$$\rho_{wet\ clay} = (1 - W_{clay}) \rho_{dry\ clay} + W_{clay} \quad (13)$$

The density of dry clay, $\rho_{dry\ clay}$, is usually of the order of 2.85 although other values may be used according to geological experience. The density of wet clay can be determined from the $\phi_D - \phi_N$ crossplot by utilizing the value of ϕ_D for wet clay and solving equation (1) for ρ_m . To determine the magnitude of V_{clay} it is only necessary to know the silt index and V_{sh} to find V_{clay} from equation (5).

It has been found that the relationship between V_{clay}/W_{xo} versus the spontaneous

potential can be approximated with a linear relationship. Thus, if this relationship is known and W_{xo} is known, then the measure of spontaneous potential at each depth level can be used to find V_{clay} . Then, using equation (5), V_{sh} can be determined. However, it is first necessary to determine the relationship between V_{clay}/W_{xo} and the spontaneous potential.

In accordance with another feature of the present invention, this is accomplished by plotting V_{clay}/W_{xo} versus spontaneous potential and drawing a line which incorporates the best fit to the plotted points. Such a plot is shown in Figure 12.

Rather than consider all spontaneous potential values, i.e., those falling along the entire length of the calibration curve 33 of Figure 12, it has been found preferable to consider only those points corresponding to pure shales and clean sands, and define the center of gravity of both clouds of points. Then, a calibration line can be drawn between these two centers of gravity. In Figure 12, the points 34 and 35 represent the center of gravity for the clouds of points corresponding to shale and sand, respectively. The reason for this center of gravity approach is that if all points were considered, an excess of either shale or sand points could unduly influence the position of the calibration line 33.

Once the position of the calibration line 33 is known, measured values of the spontaneous potential can be utilized with the plot of Figure 12 to determine the magnitude of V_{olay}/W_{xo} for each depth level. Values of ϕ_e , S_{xc} , and SI can be determined with other data in a manner to be described later and equations 5 and 12 can then be solved for V_{sh} .

As will be set forth in detail later, the characteristic spontaneous potential in clean sands and shales should be determined. The characteristic spontaneous potential in shales is designated $(SP)_{sh}$ and the characteristic spontaneous potential in sands is labeled the "static spontaneous potential" or SSP. In the past, it has been necessary to obtain such values from a visual inspection of a spontaneous potential log. However, such a visual inspection method does not always give accurate values of these two parameters. For example, a shale or sand bed must be fairly thick before an accurate value of $(SP)_{sh}$ and/or SSP can be determined. If the shale or sand beds are not thick enough, the chosen values of these two parameters may be in error.

SSP is the SP value in clean sands and $(SP)_{sh}$ is the SP value in a formation of 100% shale. It has been found that neither of these parameters will vary significantly over the length of a borehole provided the water salinity remains constant. Thus by determining these two parameters, the SP calibration for all depth levels in terms of V_{olay} is known.

In accordance with another feature of the present invention, values of $(SP)_{sh}$ and SSP can be determined from the V_{clay}/W_{xo} versus SP crossplot of Figure 12 in the following manner. To determine the value of $(SP)_{sh}$, V_{olay} is set equal to "1" to give the quantity $1/W_{clay}$ on the vertical axis of the Figure 12 crossplot. Then the value $1/W_{olay}$ is utilized in conjunction with the calibration line 33 to determine the value of $(SP)_{sh}$. To determine the value of SSP, the fact that V_{olay} must equal zero in clean sands is utilized. Thus, the intersection of the calibration line with the $V_{olay}/W_{xo}=0$ axis gives the value of SSP.

Knowing $(SP)_{sh}$ and SSP which gives the position of the calibration line 33 of Figure 12, V_{clay} can be determined. Then, combining equations 5 and 12, V_{sh} from the spontaneous potential log, $(V_{sh})_{SP}$, can be written as:

$$(V_{sh})_{SP} = \frac{W_{xo}}{1-SI} \times \frac{1}{W_{clay}} \left(1 - \frac{SP - (SP)_{sh}}{SSP - (SP)_{sh}} \right) \quad (15)$$

Another log which can provide an indication of the amount of shale is the gamma ray log. In this regard, it has been found that the relationship for the magnitude of the gamma ray log normalized for bulk density in terms of the volume of silt and clay, V_{silt} and V_{clay} , respectively, can be written as:

$$GR \cdot \rho_b = A + B V_{silt} + C V_{clay} \quad (16)$$

where: "A" is a calibration coefficient giving the background radiation, i.e., the gamma ray count rate in clean water sands; and "B" and "C" are calibration coefficients relating to V_{silt} and V_{clay} , respectively. By multiplying the natural gamma ray count rate GR by the bulk density ρ_b , the gamma ray count rate is normalized for variations in

bulk density. By combining equations 3, 4, 5 and 16, the volume of shale given by the gamma ray log, i.e., $(V_{sh})_{GR}$ is given by the relationship:

$$(V_{sh})_{GR} = \frac{\rho_b \cdot GR - A}{B(SI) + C(1 - SI)} \quad (17)$$

Before using the gamma ray log to provide a quantitative indication of the shale volume, it is first necessary to determine the calibration coefficients A, B, and C. To accomplish this, in accordance with still another feature of the present invention, a statistical fit is made between the gamma ray measurement and the amount of silt, clay and background radiation in the formations.

Turning now to Figure 13 a three-dimensional plot of gamma ray versus V_{clay} and V_{silt} is illustrated. The gamma ray axis is the vertical axis in Figure 13, while the V_{silt} and V_{clay} axes are the horizontally aligned axes to the left and right respectively in Figure 13. By utilizing measures of V_{silt} and V_{clay} derived from the $\phi_N - \phi_D$ crossplot in conjunction with the gamma ray count rate, GR, for each depth level, a point can be plotted on the three-dimensional plot of Figure 13 for each depth level. A plane of best fit can then be drawn in Figure 13. The intersection of this plane with the GR axis gives the magnitude of the calibration coefficient "A" since the GR axis coincides with $V_{silt} = V_{clay} = 0$, i.e., clean sands.

To determine the calibration coefficient "B", it is only necessary to set V_{silt} equal to "1" and V_{clay} equal to "0" in equation 16 which corresponds to looking at the axis $V_{silt} = 1$ in Figure 13. The total length of the vector from the V_{silt} axis at the point $V_{silt} = 1$ to the plane of best fit gives the total normalized gamma ray reading in this case. Thus, since in this case, V_{silt} is equal to "1", the length of this vector from the V_{silt} axis to the plane of best fit along the $V_{silt} = 1$ axis will be equal to A+B from equation 16. Since A has already been determined by the intersection of the plane of best fit with the GR axis and can be projected onto the $V_{silt} = 1$ axis, as indicated in Figure 13, the remainder of the length of this vector is equal to "B". The same reasoning applies to the determination of the calibration coefficient "C" from the vector between the V_{clay} axis and the plane of best fit along the $V_{clay} = 1$ axis, as shown in Figure 13.

If all the gamma ray measurements were indiscriminately plotted in Figure 13, it would be conceivable that there would be a great many more points plotting near one apex of a triangle which defines the plane of best fit than the others, thus giving rise to the possibility of points derived from one type of formation unduly affecting the position of the plane of best fit. To alleviate this problem, the plotted points are segregated into three groups corresponding to clean sand formations, shales having a predominance of clay, and shales having a predominance of silt. Clouds of points corresponding to clean sands, predominantly clay formations and predominantly silty shales are indicated generally in Figure 13 by the designations 37, 38 and 39 respectively. The centers of gravity for each of these three clouds of points are then computed and such centers of gravity are utilized to define the plane of best fit. Thus, the points 40, 41 and 42 represent such centers of gravity. The determination of the calibration coefficients A, B and C is then made in the manner described above.

Once the calibration coefficients A, B and C are determined, these coefficients can be used in conjunction with the measurements of gamma ray, GR, and bulk density, ρ_b , and values of silt index, SI, derived from the $\phi_D - \phi_N$ crossplot, for each depth level in the borehole in accordance with equation (17), to give indications of the volume of shale indicated by the gamma ray measurement, i.e., $(V_{sh})_{GR}$.

A third indication of shale volume can be derived from the measurements of resistivity in hydrocarbon zones. In hydrocarbon zones of irreducible water saturation, the following expression applies:

$$\frac{1}{R_t} = \frac{W_{irr} V_{sh}}{\phi_e R_{sh}} + \frac{W_{irr} 2}{8 R_w} \quad (18)$$

where

R_t is the resistivity of the non-invaded portion of the formation;

R_w is the resistivity of the connate or natural formation water which can be derived from water tables supplied by geologists or by other well-known techniques;

and

$$W_{irr} = \phi_e S_{irr} \quad (19)$$

where

S_{irr} is the irreducible water saturation.

Irreducible water takes the form of water which clings to the grains of the formation material because of capillary forces and which cannot be displaced.

In clean formations, W_{irr} tends to remain constant and can be described by the relationship:

$$W_{clean} = \left(\frac{.8 R_w}{R_t} \right)^{1/2} \quad (20)$$

In shaly formations, the irreducible water volume can be described by the relationship:

$$W_{irr} = W_{clean} + i V_{sh} \quad (21)$$

where i is usually chosen to be 0.1.

After computing a lower limit of W_{clean} by using in equation (2) the highest resistivity recorded in the hydrocarbon zone, a value of V_{sh} derived from the R_t tool, $(V_{sh})_{R_t}$, can be found by simultaneously solving equations (18), (19), (20) and (21). Since the lowest limit of W_{clean} was selected, $(V_{sh})_{R_t}$ will be equal to or greater than

the true value of V_{sh} .

Another shale indicator based on the maximum volume of shale permissible for clean sands fully saturated with gas can be derived. On the $\phi_N - \phi_D$ crossplot, clean sands fully saturated with gas will fall on a straight line passing through the origin of the crossplot. The slope of this gas sand line depends solely on gas properties. As will be set forth in detail later, the data points on the $\phi_N - \phi_D$ crossplot are corrected for shaliness in accordance with the amount of shaliness indicated by the shale indicators. If this shaliness correction moves the ϕ_N, ϕ_D data points beyond this gas sand line limit, it is known that the amount of V_{sh} indicated by the shale indicators was too high. Since all of the shale indicators are presumed to indicate maximum limits of shaliness, the magnitude of V_{sh} which would correct the data points to the gas sandline limit: is chosen to be the most accurate indication of shale volume. It has been found that the relationship for the volume of shale given by the gas sandline limit shale indicator, $(V_{sh})_g$, can be written as:

$$(V_{sh})_g = \frac{\phi \cdot \phi_N - \phi_D}{\phi \cdot (\phi_N)_{sh} - (\phi_D)_{sh}} \quad (22)$$

where

$$\phi = \frac{1}{7} \left[8 \left(\frac{1}{8.5(\rho_g)_{lim}} + \frac{2}{3(\rho_g)_{lim}} \right) - 1 \right] \quad (23)$$

The lower limit of gas density $(\rho_g)_{lim}$ is computed as a function of depth in accordance with the following expression:

$$(\rho_g)_{lim} = \frac{1}{10} \frac{5 + \frac{4 \text{ Depth}}{1000} + 2 \left(\frac{\text{Depth}}{1000} \right)^2}{50 + 2 \frac{\text{Depth}}{1000} + \left(\frac{\text{Depth}}{1000} \right)^2} \quad (24)$$

where "depth" is in feet.

Another upper limit on the volume of shale can be found based on the fact that the invaded zone water saturation S_{xo} must always be equal to or greater than the uninvaded zone water saturation S_w . The reason for this is that, before the borehole is drilled, both the uninvaded zone and the region called the invaded zone after the borehole is drilled have the same water saturation. When the borehole is drilled, the drilling mud will invade a portion of the formation called the "invaded zone" displacing the naturally occurring fluids therefrom. The effect of this invasion is to increase the water saturation if oil was present and displaced by the invading fluid and to cause little change if no hydrocarbons were initially present.

The water saturation of the uninvaded zone, S_w , can be found from the following relationship:

$$\frac{1}{R_t} = \frac{V_{sh} S_w}{R_{sh}} + \frac{\phi_e^2 S_w^2}{.8 R_w} \quad (25)$$

The terms of equation (25) have all been previously defined.

The saturation of the invaded zone, S_{xo} , can be obtained from the following expression:

$$\frac{1}{R_{xo}} = \frac{V_{sh} S_{xo}}{(R_{sh})_{xo}} + \frac{\phi_e^2 S_{xo}^2}{.8 R_{mf}} \quad (26)$$

where R_{xo} is resistivity of the invaded zone, $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ is the invaded zone resistivity of shale formations, R_{mf} is the resistivity of the mud filtrate which invades the invaded zone. R_{mf} can be determined by well known techniques. If an R_{xo} device is not available, the invaded zone water saturation can be approximated from S_w in accordance with the following expression:

$$(1 - S_{xo}) = .5(1 - S_w) \quad (27)$$

Since, as discussed above, S_{xo} must always be equal to or greater than S_w , S_{xo} in equation (26) can be set equal to S_w in equation (25) and these equations solved for V_{sh} to give an upper limit on V_{sh} based on the water saturation ratio. By so doing, V_{sh} given by the saturation ratio shale indicator, i.e., $(V_{sh})_s$, is given by the following relationship:

$$(V_{sh})_s = \frac{1}{S_w} \frac{\frac{R_{mf}}{R_{xo}} - \frac{R_w}{R_t}}{\frac{R_{mf}}{(R_{sh})_{xo}} - \frac{R_w}{R_{sh}}} \quad (28)$$

Another indicator of the upper limit of shale volume is derived from the ratio between the neutron derived porosity ϕ_n to this porosity in shale. Thus

$$(V_{sh})_n = \frac{\phi_n}{(\phi_n)_{sh}} \quad (29)$$

The reason why this gives an upper limit on V_{sh} is obvious from equation (7) since ϕ_e is minimal when shale is the greatest.

A seventh indicator of the upper limit of shale volume can be derived from the fact that a solution of equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26) should give a value of hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} which is equal to or greater than the gas density limit $(\rho_g)_{lim}$. Reciprocally setting $\rho_{hy} = (\rho_g)_{lim}$ permits us to compute from the same set of equations, a value $(V_{sh})_{hy}$ which is at least equal or larger than the true value thereof.

The terms R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ have been used in a number of equations expressing the shale indicators discussed above. In the past, the determinations of R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ have been brought about by inspection of R_t and R_{xo} logs in front of what was estimated to be representative of shale zones. In this prior technique, values of R_t and R_{xo} in shale zones was assumed to represent R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$, respectively.

Thus, in accordance with another feature of the present invention, more accurate values of R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ are computed. These values of R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ can, in accordance with the present invention, vary from one depth level to the next according to the composition of shale.

To determine a representative value of R_{sh} at each depth level, in accordance with the present invention, a statistical routine is utilized to determine the resistivity of a formation as if it had 100% clay. It has been found that the resistivity of the clay, R_{clay} , usually does not vary from one formation to the next in any geological area. How-

ever, as discussed above, the resistivity of the shale, R_{sh} , will vary in dependence on distribution of the clay and silt. Thus, the statistically derived value of R_{clay} can be utilized in conjunction with the silt index SI to determine the value of R_{sh} at each depth level.

5 It has been found that the relationship between R_{sh} , R_{cl} and SI is:

$$R_{sh} = \frac{R_{clay}}{(1 - SI)^2} \quad (32)$$

10 By plotting the resistivity R_t derived from a deep investigation resistivity tool in shale beds versus $1/(1 - SI)^2$, a family of points such as shown in Figure 14 will result. A line 45 can then be drawn in a manner to represent the best fit of all of the plotted points. In a 100% clay filled formation, the silt index will be zero and thus the term $1/(1 - SI)^2$ will be equal to one. Thus, by projecting a line from the "one" point on the $1/(1 - SI)^2$ axis to the line 45 and from there to the R_t axis, a value of R_{clay} is established. Then, as will be discussed later, a value of the silt index, SI, at each depth level is computed and used with the statistically determined value of R_{clay} in equation (32) to determine R_{sh} at each depth level.

15 The same technique is used to find the value of $(R_{clay})_{xo}$ except that a shallow investigation R_{xo} tool is utilized in place of the R_t tool. This value of $(R_{clay})_{xo}$ can be utilized with values of the silt index, SI, to compute $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ at each depth level in the same manner as for R_{sh} . The relationship for $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ is:

$$20 \quad (R_{sh})_{xo} = \frac{(R_{clay})_{xo}}{(1 - SI)^2} \quad (33)$$

25 Having explained how the various shale indicators can be derived, the overall interpretation method of the present invention can now be discussed. For this purpose, refer to the $\phi_D - \phi_N$ crossplot of Figure 15 where the sand and shale lines and limit parabola 30 have been reproduced. As discussed earlier, the $\phi_D - \phi_N$ crossplot can be utilized to determine the parameters V_{sh} and ϕ_e in the absence of a hydrocarbon effect. In mathematical terms, this means that there are as many unknowns in equations (8) and (9) as equations. As discussed earlier the shale terms $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ in equations (8) and (9) constitute the values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D at the point on the crossplot where the limit parabola 30 intersects the shale line (See Fig. 11). If this point of intersection is to the left of the shale point S_{ho} , S_{ho} is taken to be the characteristic shale point and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ will thus become $(\phi_N)_{sh_o}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh_o}$. As discussed earlier, the silt index is determined from the location of this characteristic shale point.

Mathematically, this operation can be performed as follows. The limit parabola 30 in Fig. 3 can be expressed as:

$$35 \quad \frac{\phi_N(\phi_D)_{sh} - \phi_D(\phi_N)_{sh}}{(\phi_N)_{sh} - (\phi_D)_{sh}} = \phi_z \left[1 - \frac{(\phi_N - \phi_D)^2}{((\phi_N)_{sh} - (\phi_D)_{sh})^2} \right] \quad (34)$$

$(\phi_D)_{sh}$ can be expressed in terms of the ϕ_D value of the wet clay point, $(\phi_D)_{clay}$, and silt index SI as:

$$(\phi_D)_{sh} = (\phi_D)_{clay} (1 - SI) \quad (35)$$

40 Likewise, $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ can be expressed in terms of the ϕ_N value of the wet clay point, $(\phi_N)_{clay}$, and the silt index SI as:

$$(\phi_N)_{sh} = (\phi_N)_{clay} (1 - SI) \quad (36)$$

Since $(\phi_D)_{clay}$, $(\phi_N)_{clay}$ are known parameters, equations (34), (35) and (36) can be solved

for $(\phi_D)_{sh}$, $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and SI. If SI is greater than SI_o (the silt index of point S_{lio}), it is limited to SI_o and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ are set equal to $(\phi_D)_{sh_o}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh_o}$.

If there is a hydrocarbon effect, the crossplot will give inaccurate values for V_{sh} and ϕ_o . In mathematical terms, this means that there are more unknowns in equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26) than there are equations. To eliminate one unknown parameter, the lowest value of V_{sh} produced by a plurality of the shale indicators discussed above is utilized. This lowest value is designated $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. Since $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is an upper limit value and not always the actual value, it must be checked. To accomplish this, it is initially assumed that there is no hydrocarbon effect and equations (8) and (9) are solved for ϕ_o using $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. The new shale corrected values for ϕ_N and ϕ_D are designated ψ_N and ψ_D . Thus, ψ_N and ψ_D can be written as:

$$\psi_N = \phi_N - (V_{sh})_{ind} (\phi_N)_{sh} \quad (37)$$

$$\psi_D = \phi_D - (V_{sh})_{ind} (\phi_D)_{sh} \quad (38)$$

These shale corrected readings ψ_N and ψ_D are then compared to determine the location of the new ψ_N , ψ_D point relative to the clean sand line.

Graphically, referring to Figure 15, this operation is depicted by moving the original plotted ϕ_D , ϕ_N point parallel to the shale line by an amount dependent on the computed value of V_{sh} from the shale indicators, as represented by the vectors 47, 48 and 49 in Figure 15. These equations cause the plotted point to move parallel to the shale line, and thus along one of the ϕ_o lines (see Figure 3). The slope of this line will be

$$\frac{(\phi_D)_{sh}}{(\phi_N)_{sh}}$$

Initially, only one value of the shale indicators $(V_{sh})_{SP}$, $(V_{sh})_{GR}$, $(V_{sh})_{Rt}$, $(V_{sh})_N$ and $(V_{sh})_{G_2}$ is retained for the purpose of this correction. As noted before, the volume of shale computed for each shale indicator has been derived in such a way that it must be always either equal to or larger than the true volume of shale. Consequently, the lowest value obtained from any of the shale indicators must be the closest to the true value and is the one retained for subsequent use.

If the correction provided by $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ causes the plotted ϕ_D , ϕ_N point to move to the 45° clean sand line it normally signifies the absence of a hydrocarbon effect on the tool readings, provided that the tool readings are themselves correct. (Correct tool reading refers to the absence of such upsetting factors as borehole enlargement, thick mudcake, etc.) An example of this is shown in Figure 15 where the log readings give a plotted point 50 and the amount of shale, given by the shale indicators moves the data point by the length of the vector 47 to the point 51 on the sandline. In other words, the amount of shale given by $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ was most likely correct since the points should plot on the sandline in the absence of shale and hydrocarbons, i.e., the shale correction given by vector 47, in effect, moves the plotted point 50 to a position on the sandline where the point would have plotted in the same formation if free of shale. This being the case, the initial point 50 can be utilized in conjunction with the ϕ_D — ϕ_N crossplot to determine V_{sh} , ϕ_o , and SI (and from SI, V_{clay} and V_{silt}) in the manner represented in Figures 2, 3 and 11. Mathematically speaking, equations (8) and (9) are solved for V_{sh} and ϕ_o using the values of $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ determined from equations (34), (35) and (36) for the original, measured values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D . The solution of equations (34), (35) and (36) for the measured values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D also gave SI which can be combined with V_{sh} in equations (4) and (5) to compute V_{clay} and V_{silt} .

Now consider the case where hydrocarbons are present and do have an effect on the tool readings ϕ_D and ϕ_N . It will be recalled from Fig. 3 that hydrocarbons move the data point to the northwest. Thus, assuming that $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is accurate, the shale correction given by $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ will move the point across the 45° clean sand line. Thus, assume that hydrocarbons were added to that formation which gave the data point 50. In this case, the data point 50 would be moved to the northwest and the shale correction would move the point across the 45° clean sand line.

Taking an example of this, assume that ϕ_N and ϕ_D plot at the point 52 in Figure 15 and that the shale correction provided by the shale indicators moves the plotted point the length of the vector 48 to a new position represented by the point 53. In this case, the fact that the shale correction has moved the point beyond, or to the northwest, of the clean sand line indicates that the tool readings are probably affected by hydro-

carbons in the formation. However, this must be verified since it is also possible that the magnitude of the shaliness correction given by the shale indicators may be too great.

To verify that the lowest possible value for $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ has been computed, in accordance with another feature of the present invention, a test is made to determine if S_{xo} is less than S_w . If it is, as discussed earlier, something is wrong since S_{xo} should never be less than S_w . It is then assumed that $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is too large and a new shale indicator is introduced. Since S_{xo} or S_w appears to be in error, the water saturations in the invaded and uninvaded zones are computed with equations (25) and (26) and used to compute a value for $(V_{sh})_s$ with equation (28). Since V_{sh} and ϕ_e are not known at this time, the V_{sh} value provided by the shale indicators, $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, is used for V_{sh} in equations (25) and (26) and ϕ_e is approximated with the following expression:

$$(\phi_e)_{app.} = \sqrt{1/2 (\psi_N^2 + \psi_D^2)} \quad (39)$$

where ψ_N and ψ_D are the shale corrected values for ϕ_N and ϕ_D , e.g., the values for the shale corrected data point 53 in Figure 15.

If $(V_{sh})_s$ becomes the minimum V_{sh} value given by the shale indicators, it becomes the value of V_{sh} provided by the shale indicators, i.e., it becomes $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. In this event, it is also possible that the value of V_{sh} provided by the spontaneous potential shale indicator, i.e., $(V_{sh})_{sp}$, may turn out to be less than $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. It will be recalled from the discussion concerning equation (15) that the magnitude of $(V_{sh})_{sp}$ is dependent on the invaded zone water saturation S_{xo} which initially was set equal to 1 to give a first approximation of $(V_{sh})_{sp}$. Thus, a new value of $(V_{sh})_{sp}$ is computed using the newly computed value S_{xo} . Then, if this new value of $(V_{sh})_{sp}$ is less than $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, this new value becomes the new V_{sh} value provided by the shale indicators.

After the best possible value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is derived, the next step is to determine if the new shale correction moves the data point to or near the clean sand line. If the data point still moves past the clean sand line, it is determined if the resistivity logs agree with the apparent answer provided by the $\phi_N-\phi_D$ crossplot, i.e., that hydrocarbons are present in the formations. S_w and S_{xo} are recomputed and used to check this. To this end, if the recomputed values of S_{xo} and S_w are both approximately "1", it means that the resistivity logs are indicating that there are no hydrocarbons. This, in effect, means that the answers provided by the $\phi_N-\phi_D$ crossplot and those provided by the resistivity tools are in conflict. The logical reason for this conflict is that $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is too large, which is always a possibility in view of the manner it is derived. Consequently, $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is then decreased until either the shale corrected data point is on or near the clean sand line or the resistivity tools indicate the presence of hydrocarbons. (Recall that S_w and S_{xo} are both functions of V_{sh} and thus will change as $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ changes.)

Referring back to Figure 15 the shale corrected data point 53 on the crossplot indicates that there is a hydrocarbon effect because the point 53 plots to the northwest of the clean sand line. Assume that the resistivity tools, on the other hand, indicate that there could not be any hydrocarbon effect and thus the amount of shale correction provided by the shale indicator $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ should have brought the originally plotted point 52 to the sand line at the point 55. The length of the shale correction vector is then decreased until either the point 53 is returned to or near the clean sand line or the resistivity tools represented through S_w and S_{xo} indicate a possibility of hydrocarbon effect. In this latter case, the original data point 52 is corrected in accordance with the magnitude of the hydrocarbon effect. As an example of this, assume that the shale corrected point 53 is moved back to the point 56 before the resistivity tools give an indication of hydrocarbons. In this event, the vector 57 closes the gap to the clean sand line. This has the effect of moving the initial point 52 in a direction parallel to the vector 57 and by the same length to provide a data point 57a which corresponds to the initial data point 52 corrected for the hydrocarbon effect. This corrected data point 57a is then analyzed by the $\phi_N-\phi_D$ crossplot in the manner discussed earlier to derive values of ϕ_e , V_{sh} SI.

If, on the other hand, the shale corrected point 53 had been moved all the way back to or near the clean sand line, the original data point 52 would be used for this purpose. In other words, there would be no hydrocarbon correction.

Referring back to the point in the discussion where S_w and S_{xo} were both checked for an indication of hydrocarbon, if it had been determined that both S_w and S_{xo} are sufficiently less than 1 to indicate the presence of hydrocarbon, the value of hydro-

carbon density ρ_{hy} used in equations (10) and (11) is checked to determine if it is lower than the lowest possible value of hydrocarbon density. This lowest possible value is the gas density limit value $(\rho_g)_{lim}$ given by equation (24). To compute the value of ρ_{hy} , equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26) are solved using the value of V_{sh} given by the shale indicators and value of SI , $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$, picked from the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot or from equations (34), (35) and (36).

If ρ_{hy} is greater than $(\rho_g)_{lim}$, i.e., ρ_{hy} is acceptable, it is assumed that the answers provided by the solution of equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26) with values of $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ produced from equations (34), (35) and (36) are accurate. Then, knowing V_{sh} and SI , V_{clay} and V_{silt} can be computed from equations (4) and (5).

Turning to Figure 15, this operation takes the form of moving the shale corrected point 53 the length of the vector 54 to a new point 58 on the 45° sandline. The corresponding correction due to hydrocarbon can be applied to the original point 52 and moves this point to a new location 58A. This is the location of the shaly sand point as if not affected by hydrocarbon. Consequently, this point 58A can be validly utilized in conjunction with the ϕ_e and V_{sh} lines of the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot to compute ϕ_e and V_{sh} (or with equations (8) and (9)).

Additionally, the location of this point 58A also determines SI . In this example, the point 58A is within the shaly sand area of the crossplot and thus the silt index is SI_e corresponding to the shale point Sh_e .

If, on the other hand, the hydrocarbon density test had failed, i.e., ρ_{hy} had been less than $(\rho_g)_{lim}$, there is a clear indication that something is wrong—one of the readings or computations is in error. A likely candidate is the value of S_{xo} given by the R_{xo} tool, often influenced by borehole or mudcake effect. To check this, an approximate value of S_{xo} is computed using the value of S_w given by the R_t tool in accordance with equation (27). This equation is rather empirical and leads generally to reasonable values of S_{xo} . If this new computed value of S_{xo} , designated $(S_{xo})_w$, is less than the value of S_{xo} computed from the R_{xo} tool, it is assumed that the value of S_{xo} computed from R_{xo} is wrong. On the other hand, if $(S_{xo})_w$ is greater than or equal to the value of S_{xo} derived from R_{xo} , it confirms that S_{xo} from the R_{xo} tool is reasonably accurate and that the error is caused by the value of V_{sh} given by the shale indicators being too large. Consequently, V_{sh} is decreased until the ρ_{hy} is equal to $(\rho_g)_{lim}$ whereupon the hydrocarbon effect is computed to enable the subsequent computation of V_{sh} and ϕ_e , with equations (6), (7), (10), (11), (26) using values of $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ given by equations (34), (35) and (36). From these new values of V_{sh} and ϕ_e , a new value of S_w can also be computed, S_{xo} being computed from the simultaneous solution of equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26). Graphically, the operation of reducing $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is the same as discussed earlier where the data point 53 was moved back to the point 56 to give the hydrocarbon effect vector 57 which in turn moved the original data point 52 to the new position 57A for analysis by the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot.

Now, consider what happens when the shale correction vector moves the plotted data point to a position to the right or southeast of the 45° sandline. Such a situation is depicted in Figure 15 by the shale correction vector 49 moving the initial data point 63 to the position 64. This situation is incompatible with the underlying criterion of the method that the value of V_{sh} given by the shale indicators should always be equal to or greater than the true value of V_{sh} . It is, therefore, assumed in this case that V_{sh} given by the shale indicators was correct but that either the value of ϕ_N or ϕ_D is inaccurate.

This implies that either ϕ_N reads too high (effect of borehole enlargement or mudcake) or the density of the sand grains has locally increased (ϕ_D too low). Then, ψ_N is checked to determine if it is compatible with the maximum value that can be expected in this sand. Mathematically, the ψ_N value of the shale corrected data point ψ_N is given by:

$$(\psi_N)_{lim} = \phi_z \left[1 - (V_{sh})_{ind}^2 (1 - SI)^2 \right] \quad (40)$$

If ψ_N is greater than $(\psi_N)_{lim}$, ϕ_N is adjusted until the corrected data point falls on the 45° sandline.

In Figure 15, this operation is depicted by the vector 65 moving the corrected point 64 to a new position 66 on the clean sandline. Accordingly, the original data point 63 is moved in the same direction as the vector 65 and for the same distance thereunto the new position 66A. (Note: In this case, the original data point would fall

to the right of the limit parabola even though not shown that way in Figure 15.) This new data point 66A is then analyzed by the crossplot to find the values of V_{sh} , ϕ_e and SI.

If ϕ_N is compatible with the above test, then it is assumed that the value of matrix grain density, ρ_m is in error and ρ_m is adjusted until the data point moves to the clean sand line. In Figure 15, this operation is depicted by the vector 67 moving the shale corrected point 64 to the new position 68 on the clean sand line and the corresponding movement of the original data point 63 to the new position 68A.

There is a limit on the amount of adjustment made to ρ_m , ρ_m , and thus ϕ_D (See eq. 1), is adjusted only until it is equal to a predetermined limit value of matrix grain density. (In the example given by the vector 67 in Figure 15, it was assumed that this limit condition was not exceeded.) Thereafter, ϕ_N is adjusted until the clean sand line is reached.

The discussion up to this point has assumed that the data points do not fall in the unlikely area. If a point falls into the unlikely area, it must first be verified and eventually corrected before the analysis discussed above can be performed. Since ϕ_N and ϕ_D is now presumed to be doubtful, other data not influenced by the borehole effect is used to control these values and to correct ϕ_N and ϕ_D . To this end, in accordance with other features of the present invention, the porosity ϕ_s derived from the acoustic travel time log and computed in accordance with equation (2) and the values of V_{sh} given by the SP, and Gamma ray shale indicators are utilized to correct ϕ_N and ϕ_D . After making these corrections, the adjusted data point can be analyzed in the manner set forth above.

Before discussing how the acoustic travel time derived porosity ϕ_s can be utilized to correct data falling in the unlikely area, it would first be desirable to explain how the acoustic data can be calibrated for compaction correction in accordance with other important features of the present invention. This compaction correction factor is designated

$$\frac{1}{C_p}$$

It is known that the porosity reading given by the neutron tool is reasonably accurate in clean water sands. It is also known that the value of porosity given by the sonic tool is also accurate in clean water sands after it has been corrected for compaction. Thus, to determine the magnitude of the compaction correction, a crossplot of ϕ_s versus ϕ_N can be used. Such a crossplot is shown in Figure 16. By plotting a plurality of points on the ϕ_s versus ϕ_N crossplot, a line 70 describing the best fit of the plotted points can be drawn. The angle between this line 70 and a line 71 designating $\phi_s = \phi_N$ gives the value of $1/C_p$. In other words, multiplying ϕ_s by the factor $1/C_p$ should move the statistical best fit line 70 to the position given by the line 71.

Having determined the factor $1/C_p$, it is now possible to determine the response of the sonic tool in shales. To this end, a crossplot of ϕ_s versus silt index, SI, can be used. Referring to Figure 17, there is shown such a crossplot. A statistical fit of the points given by this crossplot will give a line 72 which indicates the relationship between ϕ_s versus SI. The intersection of this line with the SI=0 axis gives the value of ϕ_s in pure clay, i.e., $(\phi_s)_{clay}$ and the intersection of this line with SI=SI₀ gives ϕ_s in the silty shale $(\phi_s)_{sho}$. From this data the value of ϕ_s in any shale formation can be determined by its silt index from the equation:

$$(\phi_s)_{sh} = (\phi_s)_{clay} + \frac{SI}{SI_0} \left((\phi_s)_{sho} - (\phi_s)_{clay} \right) \quad (41)$$

To correct data points on the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot falling in the unlikely area with the acoustic derived porosity ϕ_s , it is assumed that if ϕ_N is greater than

$$\frac{\phi_s}{C_p},$$

the value of porosity given by the neutron tool is inaccurate and the acoustic derived porosity is used in its place. However, the data point is moved towards the origin until

$$\phi_N = \frac{\phi_s}{C_p}.$$

This correction is applied only when shale content is low because it has been found that this correction is not usually accurate when the formation is shaly. This correction is graphically depicted in Figure 15 by the vector 75 moving the original data point 76 to a new position 77.

5 In addition to using the compaction corrected sonic derived porosity

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$$\frac{\phi_s}{C_p}$$

to correct unlikely data points, a shaliness check is also made which will correct these points which are very shaly. In this regard, a value of V_{sh} is computed from the new position 77 of the data point after the

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$$\frac{\phi_s}{C_p}$$

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correction and this value of V_{sh} is compared with the minimum value of V_{sh} computed from the gamma ray and SP shale indicators, i.e., $(V_{sh})_{GR}$ and $(V_{sh})_{SP}$. If the value of V_{sh} computed from the crossplot is less than the minimum value of V_{sh} computed from the gamma ray and SP shale indicators, the data point is moved in a southwesterly direction towards the intersection of the line W, CL_d of Figure 2 with the $\phi_N=0$ axis until these new values of V_{sh} from the corrected point on the crossplot becomes equal to $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. This operation is depicted in Figure 15 by the vector 78 moving the corrected data point 77 to a new position 79. This new position 79 then is analyzed in accordance with previous discussion, i.e., the point 79 corresponds to the initial data points discussed earlier.

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After the best values of V_{sh} , ϕ_e , SI have been computed in accordance with the techniques discussed above, these new values can be utilized in equations (25) and (26) to compute new and more accurate values of S_w and S_{xo} . All of this data, V_{sh} , ϕ_e , SI, S_w and S_{xo} can then be recorded as a function of depth to thereby produce logs. Additionally, new values of hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} can be computed by simultaneous solution of equations (6), (7), (10) and (11) using the last computed values of ϕ_e , V_{sh} , S_{xo} and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$. Additionally, a parameter representing the fluid density in the invaded zone, $(\rho_f)_{xo}$, can be computed in accordance with the expression:

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$$(\rho_f)_{xo} = 1 - .7 \left[5/7 (1 - \rho_{hy}) \frac{32 - 9\rho_{hy}}{32 - 5\rho_{hy}} (1 - S_{xo}) \right]. \quad (42)$$

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Additionally, the permeability K can be computed in accordance with one of the following two expressions:

$$K_1 = \frac{C\phi_e^n}{S_w^m} \quad (43)$$

where c , n , and m are coefficients chosen by the log analyst based on geologic considerations, or

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$$K_2 = \left[\frac{100 \phi_e^3}{W_{irr}} \right]^2 \sqrt{\phi_e} \quad (44)$$

where W_{irr} is given by equation (21) when water saturation S_w is appreciable, e.g., greater than two-thirds, and is equal to $S_w \times \phi_e$ when S_w is not appreciable, e.g., less than two-thirds. The choice in selecting equations (43) or (44) depends on what local experience in the area has shown to apply.

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With accurate values of ϕ_e , S_{xo} and ρ_{hy} , it is possible to compute both the volume of residual hydrocarbon and the weight of such residual hydrocarbon in accordance with the following expressions:

$$V_{rhy} = \phi_e (1 - S_{xo}) \quad (45)$$

$$\text{Weight}_{rhy} = V_{rhy} \times \rho_{hy} \quad (46)$$

Additionally a gas index which permits us to recognize the presence of free gas in formations can be derived from the values of ϕ_s , C_p , ϕ_o and ϕ_N as follows:

$$(GI)_s = \frac{\phi_s/C_p - \phi_N}{\phi_o} \quad (47)$$

5 In water or oil zones, ϕ_s/C_p and ϕ_N are mathematically equal and GI remains close to zero. In gas zones, the porosity ϕ_N is decreased due to the low concentration of hydro- 5 gen in gas whereas the value ϕ_s is usually increased—consequently the $(GI)_s$ value increases significantly above zero.

As discussed earlier, there are three forms of shale which can be found in any given formation, namely, dispersed shale, laminated shale, and structural shale. The 10 volume of each of these forms of shale should equal V_{sh} . Thus, 10

$$V_{sh} = V_d + V_L + V_{str} \quad (48)$$

where V_d is the volume of dispersed shale,
 V_L is the volume of laminated shale,
 V_{str} is the volume of structural shale.

15 These forms of shale are differentiated by the manner they affect porosity in accordance 15 with the following expression:

$$(\phi_s)_{max} = \frac{\phi_e + V_D}{1 - V_L} \quad (49)$$

Laminated and structural shales have been related through the following expression:

$$V_L = (V_L + V_{str}) (2 - V_L - V_{str}) \quad (50)$$

20 This distribution can be solved by a simultaneous solution of equations (48), (49) and 20 (50) assuming ϕ_s to be constant and equal to the value of $(\phi_s)_{max}$ given by the $\phi_N - \phi_D$ crossplot. Such conditions are often considered in recent depositions. There is no need to assume that ϕ_s is constant and when the sonic log is available, the following expres- 25 sion can be substituted for equation (49) to thereby give an accurate indication of the shale distribution in a more general way: 25

$$\phi_s = \phi_e + V_D + (V_L + V_{str}) (\phi_s)_{sh} \quad (51)$$

where $(\phi_s)_{sh}$ is determined from the statistical routine depicted in Figure 17, i.e., $(\phi_s)_{sh}$ is determined from SI and the position of the calibration line in accordance with equation (41).

30 In the above discussion of the analysis of the ϕ_N and ϕ_D data, it has been assumed 30 that the shale indicators had already been properly calibrated. Since the ϕ_N and ϕ_D data for the entire formation interval is used to compute several parameters used for this purpose as depicted in Figures 12, 13, 14 and 15, the data derived over the formation interval of interest is analyzed for calibration purposes before the ϕ_N and ϕ_D data is 35 analyzed to produce V_{sh} , ϕ_e , etc. Thus, the data is processed in a preliminary, first sweep before the final interpretation sweep is made. 35

However, as can be seen from a number of the shale indicators equations, hydro- 40 carbons will have a significant effect on the shale indicator calibration. Since the extent of the hydrocarbon effect can not be accurately determined until the shale indicators have been calibrated and the shale indicators can not be properly calibrated until the 40 hydrocarbon effect is determined, a difficult situation arises.

To overcome this problem, in accordance with other important features of the present invention, three sweeps of the data are made. The first sweep calibrates the shale indicators with the neutron and density data, assuming the absence of hydro- 45 carbons. On a second sweep, a complete interpretation of the data, including analysis 45

of the hydrocarbon effect, is made, using this preliminary calibration of the shale indicators. The hydrocarbon effect corrected data is then used during sweep 2 to more accurately recalibrate the shale indicators. It can be assumed that, after this second sweep, the shale indicators are properly calibrated. However, since the shale indicators may not have been properly calibrated during sweep 1, the interpretation analysis during sweep 2 may be inaccurate. Therefore, a third sweep is made to analyze the data using the recalibrated shale indicators.

As many sweeps as desired could be made. The accuracy would improve with each additional sweep. However, it has been found that three sweeps are sufficient in most cases.

To make the shale indicator calibration as accurate as possible, data falling in the unlikely area is rejected during sweeps 1 and 2. During the final sweep 3, this "unlikely" data is corrected and analyzed.

These three sweeps comprise what is defined as the "interpretation pass". Prior to the interpretation pass, a "preliminary pass" is run to prepare the data for the interpretation pass and to produce a ϕ_N — ϕ_D frequency crossplot. (In a frequency crossplot, the number of times that a data point fell into each defined sector of the crossplot is printed at the sector location on the crossplot. This frequency crossplot can then be used to calibrate the tools and to select the parameters discussed earlier, i.e., SI_o , $(\phi_s)_{max}$, etc. Concerning the first pass in greater detail, the data is corrected for certain errors caused by borehole, invasion, mudcake, calibration, etc. Also, the neutron and density data is converted into porosity units, the gamma ray measurements are normalized for variations in density, and the apparent water resistivity, R_{wa} , is computed. A log of R_{wa} can be used to determine the water resistivity R_w for the formation interval of interest. How to accomplish all of these corrections and computations is well known in the well logging art and need not be discussed here.

After this preliminary pass, the interpretation pass is run using the measured data at each depth level as well as the parameters derived from the preliminary pass. Concerning the interpretation pass in detail and first considering sweep 1, after rejecting data which falls in the unlikely area on the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot, the data from each depth level is analyzed for shaliness according to the position of the data point on the ϕ_N — ϕ_D crossplot. By so doing, initial values of ϕ_e and SI can be derived for use in the shale indicator statistical routines. Since, during this first sweep it is assumed that all formations are free of hydrocarbon effect, equations (8) and (9) can be utilized instead of equations (6), (7), (10) and (11). Thus, equations (8) and (9) in conjunction with equations (34), (35) and (36) will be sufficient to solve for these parameters on the first sweep. Of course, if hydrocarbon effect in fact exists, the parameters produced by the statistical routines may be in error. However, this error is substantially eliminated during subsequent sweeps.

Once the shale indicators have been calibrated during sweep 1, it is now possible to make a complete interpretation utilizing the ϕ_D and ϕ_N data in conjunction with the calibrated shale indicators. This is done during sweep 2 of the interpretation pass. During sweep 2, the hydrocarbon effect can be accounted for since values of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ are available even though not the most accurate values thereof. Upon making a complete interpretation, including correction for hydrocarbon effect, during sweep 2, more accurate values of ϕ_e , SI and S_{xo} are available. These more accurate values are utilized to recalibrate the shale indicators. Thus, after the statistical routines run during sweep 2, the shale indicators will be accurately calibrated including taking into account the hydrocarbon effect.

Now that the shale indicators have been accurately calibrated, it only remains to use these newly calibrated shale indicators in conjunction with the derived well logging measurements to make a complete and final interpretation for each depth level. This is the function of sweep 3 of the interpretation pass. During sweep 3, data points falling in the unlikely area are analyzed and corrected so that no depth levels will be passed over during sweep 3.

Finally, the data computed during sweep 3 is prepared for display or recording and then outputted. The parameters computed in the interpretation analysis, i.e., V_{sh} , V_{clay} , V_{silt} , ϕ_e , S_w and S_{xo} , can all be outputted. Additionally, the volumes of laminated, dispersed, and structural shale, V_L , V_D , V_{str} , permeability, gas index, residual hydrocarbon by volume and weight, bulk volume water ($\phi_e S_w$), can also be computed for display and recording. Moreover, synthetic gamma ray, SP and resistivity data can be computed for comparison with the original data. Also, statistical coefficients of fitness which can be used to evaluate the reliability of the gamma ray or spontaneous potential shale indicators can be computed and displayed.

Having now discussed the underlying techniques of the present invention, it is

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possible to discuss a specific embodiment for implementing these techniques. In this connection, it would be possible to use a special purpose computer for performing the analysis or it would be possible to use a computer program for use on a general purpose digital computer. Because of the complexity of the analytical techniques of the present invention, it is considered preferable to utilize the computer program approach.

In this connection, Figs. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23 are programming flow diagrams representing one embodiment of the present invention. First, referring to Fig. 18, there is shown a flow diagram representing the steps performed by the preliminary pass discussed above. Each element in these flow diagrams represents a step in the program. After initiation of the preliminary pass represented by an element 90, the input constants (ρ_m , Δt , etc.) for the formation interval of interest are read as represented by block 91. Next, the data logging parameters are read level by level as represented by the block 92. Next, the logging data is corrected for such things as borehole and calibration errors, as represented by the block 93. Then the values of ϕ_s , ϕ_N and ϕ_D are computed level by level from the logging data as represented by the block 94. The corrected logging data, input parameters, and computed values of ϕ_s , ϕ_N and ϕ_D are stored on magnetic tape, for subsequent use in the interpretation pass as represented by the block 95. At the same time as the data is being written on magnetic tape, the ϕ_N and ϕ_D data is being stored in a drum to enable the production of a frequency ϕ_D versus ϕ_N crossplot by, for example, a line printer, as represented by the blocks 96 and 97. As discussed in connection with Figure 2, the ϕ_D versus ϕ_N frequency crossplot is used to draw the shale line and shaly sand trend line from which $(\phi_s)_{max}$, Cl_w , Sh_w , (and consequently SI_w) can be selected.

After the preliminary pass has been completed, the interpretation pass is initiated (see Figure 19), as represented by the element 100. The interpretation pass immediately enters sweep 1 for the determination of the calibration coefficients by statistical routines, as represented by the element 101. Once sweep 1 is entered, the data stored on magnetic tape from the preliminary pass is read level by level, as represented by the block 102. Next, the constant parameters derived from the frequency crossplots and logs produced by the preliminary pass are read and stored in memory, as represented by the block 103.

Each data point which falls into the unlikely area of the ϕ_N - ϕ_D crossplot (see Figure 11) is discarded and thus not considered during sweep 1. How to write equations to segregate those data points falling in the unlikely area can be easily accomplished by standard analytical geometry techniques. Alternatively, approximation could be made which would require only linear first order equations. Thus, for example, equations could be written to segregate data points falling to the right of the line 106 and above line 107 in Figure 11 to segregate those data points falling in this approximation of the unlikely area. How to write equations for such lines is well known and need not be discussed further here.

After data falling in the unlikely area has been discarded, equations (34), (35) and (36) are utilized to compute the silt index, SI , $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ as represented by the block 109. Graphically, referring to Figure 11, this operation corresponds to drawing the parabola 30 through the data point and the ϕ_s point. The point where this parabola strikes the shale line is designated as the characteristic shale for this depth level and the silt index is computed from this characteristic shale point in accordance with the procedure discussed earlier. If SI is greater than SI_o , SI is set equal to SI_o , $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ is set equal to $(\phi_N)_{sh_o}$, and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ is set equal to $(\phi_D)_{sh_o}$ as represented by the block 191.

In Figure 11, this corresponds to designating the shale point as Sh_o if the parabola 30 crosses the shale line on the silt side of Sh_o . Having the value of silt index SI , it is now possible to compute values for ϕ_e , V_{sh} , V_{clay} and V_{silt} using equations (4), (5), (8) and (9), as represented by block 192. Graphically, in Figure 11, this corresponds to analyzing the data point for these parameters assuming the absence of a hydrocarbon effect.

At this point, values of ϕ_e , V_{sh} , V_{clay} , V_{silt} and SI have been computed for use in statistical routines to calibrate the shale indicators. These values are approximations because the hydrocarbon effect has not been considered. During sweep 2, the hydrocarbon effect will be taken into account to improve this calibration.

Now that a first approximation of V_{sh} and SI is available, it is possible to undertake a statistical analysis of the resistivity of shale formations to determine R_{clay} in accordance with the techniques depicted in Figure 14. It will be recalled from a discussion of Figure 14 that this statistical analysis is undertaken only for points corresponding to data derived from shale formations. If the magnitude of V_{sh} derived from step 192 and the gamma ray count rate are both high and R_t is low, it can reasonably be assumed that the data is from a shale formation. The decision element 193 determines

if V_{sh} is greater than $(V_{sh})_{l1}$, GR greater than $(GR)_1$, and R_t less than $(R_t)_1$ where 1 defines a limit value for these parameters. If the answers to the questions asked by decision element 193 are yes, the value of SI computed by step 109 and the measured value of R_t are utilized to compute a running average of R_{clay} and $(R_{clay})_{xo}$ in accordance with equations (32) and (33) respectively, as represented by block 194. In equations (32) and (33), R_{sh} and $(R_{sh})_{xo}$ constitute R_t and R_{xo} for purposes of making the statistical analysis. If the answers given by the decision element 193 are no, step 194 is bypassed so that only data which is thought to be derived from shale formations will be considered in making these running averages.

It will be recalled from the discussion of Figure 12 that the spontaneous potential log is calibrated to provide indications of $(V_{sh})_{sp}$ by plotting V_{clay}/W_{xo} versus the spontaneous potential for shale formation beds and clean waterbearing sand formation beds. The center of gravity of the data points for each of these two types of formations are then computed to designate the position of the calibration line 33.

The data points falling into these two classes are segregated in sweep 1 through the use of the gamma ray and deep resistivity logs, as well as the magnitude of V_{sh} computed in step 192. Additionally, the spontaneous potential log itself is also utilized for this purpose.

If the spontaneous potential is relatively high and the magnitude of V_{sh} computed in step 192 is relatively low, it can reasonably be assumed that the formation under consideration is a nearly clean sand formation. Thus, a decision element 195 determines if the spontaneous potential is greater than a given limit value, SP_{l1} , and if V_{sh} is less than a designated limit value $(V_{sh})_{l1}$. If the answer to both questions is yes, it can be assumed that a sand formation is being logged. In this event, a running average of V_{cl}/W_{xo} is computed according to

$$\sum_{o}^{N_1} \frac{1}{N_1} \frac{V_{clay}}{W_{xo}}$$

where W_{xo} is obtained from equation (12), and N_1 is the number of samples. This value is designated $(AVC)_{sd}$. Also, a running average of the spontaneous potential is computed in accordance with the expression

$$\sum_{o}^{N_1} \frac{1}{N_1} \cdot SP.$$

This value is designated $(AVSP)_{sd}$. These two operations are depicted in blocks 196 and 197 respectively.

If the answer to the questions asked by decision element 195 is no, the data is checked to determine if it corresponds to a shale formation. In a shale formation, the spontaneous potential and deep resistivity, R_t , should both be relatively low and both the gamma ray count rate and V_{sh} computed in step 192 should be high. It is the function of decision element 198 to ask all of these questions and thereby determine if the data is being derived from a shale formation. If the answer is no, the program exits the spontaneous potential statistical routine. If the answer is yes, a running average of V_{clay}/W_{xo} using the expression

$$\sum_{o}^{N_2} \frac{1}{N_2} \frac{V_{clay}}{W_{xo}}$$

where N_2 is the number of samples. This running average is called $(AVC)_{sh}$. Also, a running average of the spontaneous potential is computed for N_2 samples, which is called $(AVSP)_{sh}$. These operations are depicted in blocks 199 and 200 respectively. After computing these running averages, the program exits the spontaneous potential statistical routine.

Next, the program enters the gamma ray statistical routine to perform the operation depicted in Figure 13. It will be recalled from the discussion of Figure 13 that the data is segregated into three categories corresponding to clean sands, shale formations having a preponderance of silt in one case and clay in the other case. If the gamma ray count rate is less than a given limit value (designated 1_3) and V_{sh} is less than a limit $(V_{sh})_{l3}$, (see blocks 201 and 202) it can be assumed that the data is derived from a clean

sand and running averages are made on $GR \cdot \rho_b$, V_{clay} and V_{silt} according to the expressions

$$\sum_{i=1}^{N_3} \frac{1}{N_3} GR \cdot \rho_b,$$

$$\sum_{i=0}^{N_3} \frac{1}{N_3} V_{clay}$$

5 and

$$\sum_{i=0}^{N_3} \frac{1}{N_3} V_{silt}.$$

5

If the decision element 201 had indicated that the gamma ray was above the limit $(GR)_{13}$, then a series of tests are run to determine if the data points were derived from shale formations having a preponderance of either clay or silt. First, a test is run to determine if the formation under investigation is primarily a shaly one. To this end, as represented by the decision element 204, determination is made as to whether V_{sh} given by step 192 is greater than a limit value thereof. If the answer is no, the program exits the gamma ray's statistical analysis. (It is possible that data from some depth levels will not fit either sand or shale formations sufficiently well for statistical purposes). On the other hand, if the answer is yes, a test is made to determine if the formation is primarily either silt or clay. In this connection, as represented by the decision element 205 the question "is SI greater than $(SI)_{13}$ " is asked. If SI exceeds this limit value, the formation is presumed to have a preponderance of silt and if it is less, the formation is presumed to have a preponderance of clay. For those data points falling in the silty class, a running average of normalized gamma ray $(GR \cdot \rho_b) V_{clay}$ and V_{silt} are computed as represented by the block 206. The same operation is performed for the data points which fall into the clay class as represented by the block 207. The equations for steps 206 and 207 are the same as for step 203 (except for the sample designations N_3 , N_4 and N_5).

The computational data derived from the statistical routines of sweep 1 are stored in memory as represented by the block 225. If the level considered was not the last level, which question is asked by the decision element 226, the program proceeds to the next level as represented by the element 227 to run the same statistical routines for that level. If the presently considered level was the last level, the data stored in memory is utilized to compute SSP and SP_{sh} from the SP statistics as represented by the block 228 in accordance with the following expressions:

$$SSP = \frac{(AVSP)_{sd}(AVC)_{sh} - (AVSP)_{sh}(AVC)_{sd}}{(AVC)_{sh} - (AVC)_{sd}} \quad (52)$$

$$SP_{sh} = \frac{(1 - (AVC)_{sd})(AVSP)_{sh} - (1 - (AVC)_{sh})(AVSP)_{sd}}{(AVC)_{sh} - (AVC)_{sd}} \quad (53)$$

The calibration coefficients A, B, and C from the gamma ray statistics are computed as represented by block 229 in accordance with the following:

Calling the results of the running averages made during the GR statistical routine in the following way:

Running Averages	Silty Shale		
	Sand Class	Class	Clay Class
$\sum \frac{1}{N} \rho GR$	G_1	G_2	G_3
$\sum \frac{1}{N} V_{clay}$	C_1	C_2	C_3
$\sum \frac{1}{N} V_{silt}$	S_1	S_2	S_3

$$A = \frac{1}{\Delta} \left[(S_1 C_3 - S_3 C_1) G_2 + (S_3 C_2 - S_2 C_3) G_1 + (S_2 C_1 - S_1 C_2) G_3 \right] \quad (54)$$

$$B = \frac{1}{\Delta} \left[(C_1 - C_3) G_2 + (C_3 - C_2) G_1 + (C_2 - C_1) G_3 \right] \quad (55)$$

$$C = \frac{1}{\Delta} \left[(S_3 - S_1) G_2 + (S_2 - S_3) G_1 + (S_1 - S_2) G_3 \right] \quad (56)$$

where

$$\Delta = (S_2 C_1 + S_1 C_3 + S_3 C_2) - (S_2 C_3 + S_1 C_2 + S_3 C_1)$$

Before proceeding to discuss sweep 2, it would first be desirable to summarize the operation of sweep 1. As discussed earlier, the purpose of sweep 1 is to run statistical analyses on a number of parameters used for V_{sh} determination from the shale indicators. Since accurate determinations of V_{sh} given by the shale indicators is necessary before a complete interpretation analysis of the data can be performed, it is assumed, as a first approximation, that the data from all depth levels exhibits an insignificant hydrocarbon effect. Having made this assumption, it is possible to solve equations 4, 5, 8, 9, 34, 35 and 36 and to use the results in calibrating the shale indicators. Having a first approximation of the calibration parameters for the shale indicators, it is now possible to compute values of V_{sh} from the shale indicators and thus examine the effect of hydrocarbons on the derived data. This is the function of sweep 2.

Unfortunately, if there is a significant hydrocarbon effect in the formations being investigated, the calibration coefficients for the shale indicators which were derived during sweep 1 will be inaccurate and thus values of V_{sh} derived from the shale indicators will also be inaccurate. It therefore follows that the interpretation analysis made during sweep 2 would also be inaccurate. Therefore, the results produced from sweep 2 will not be outputted as the final results but will instead be utilized to recalibrate the shale indicators, this time taking into account the hydrocarbon effect. After this recalibration operation during sweep 2, the calibration coefficients for the shale indicators will be substantially accurate and thus can be utilized during a final sweep to produce a complete and accurate analysis of the data. Thus it can be said that sweep 2 is for the purpose of recalibrating the shale indicators for the effect of hydrocarbon.

Turning now to Figure 20, there is shown a flow diagram representing the operations performed in sweep 2. After entering sweep 2, the data representing the constant parameters and calibration coefficients which have been stored in the memory, are read as represented by the block 240. As in sweep 1, the data from levels where the ϕ_N , ϕ_D points fall in the unlikely area are discarded, as represented by block 241. Next, that data which has not been discarded is analyzed and corrected for hydrocarbon effect to produce new data values for ϕ_N and ϕ_D , designated ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} as represented by the block 242. This step comprises the operations depicted by vectors 47, 48, and 49 in Figure 15.

Before proceeding with the remainder of sweep 2, it would be desirable to discuss the operations performed in step 242. Thus referring to Figure 21 there is shown the hydrocarbon analysis portion of the program in detail.

After entering the hydrocarbon analysis routine, the value for silt index SI is initially set equal to SI_0 and S_{x0} is set equal to 1 as represented by the block 250.

Next, $(V_{sh})_{GR}$ is computed in accordance with equation (17) utilizing the calibration coefficient A , B and C computed during sweep 1, as represented by the block 252.

Next, $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ is computed with equation (15) using values of SSP and (SP_{sh}) computed in sweep 1, $S_{x0}=1$, (see step 250), and W_{clay} determined from the crossplot (block 253). It will be noted that equation (15) for $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ includes the term ϕ_e . No value of ϕ_e is available at this time. To get around this, a first approximation to ϕ_e , designated $(\phi_e)_{app}$ is computed with the following expression:

$$(\phi_e)_{app} = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \cdot (\phi_N - (V_{sh})_{SP}(\phi_N)_{sh})^2 + (\phi_D - (V_{sh})_{SP}(\phi_D)_{sh})^2} \quad (59)$$

Since $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ is a term in equation (59), equations (15) and (59) are solved simultaneously to derive a value of $(V_{sh})_{SP}$. Then, as represented by the blocks 254 and 254a, $(V_{sh})_{R_t}$ and $(V_{sh})_X$ are computed with equations (18) through (21) and (29), respectively.

The next step, as represented by block 255, is to compute a value for the shale indicator $(V_{sh})_g$ with equations (22) and (23) using the neutron and density derived porosity parameters for the characteristic shale Sh_o , i.e., $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ and a computed value of the gas density limit, $(\rho_G)_{lim}$. This last parameter $(\rho_G)_{lim}$ is computed from equation (24), as represented by the block 256.

The five shale indicators just discussed, i.e., $(V_{sh})_{GR}$, $(V_{sh})_{SP}$, $(V_{sh})_{R_t}$, $(V_{sh})_X$ and

$(V_{sh})_g$ are considered to be the most reliable of the shale indicators. Therefore, these five indicators are utilized, at least initially to determine the value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. As represented by the block 257, $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is set equal to the smallest of these four shale indicators. As will be discussed later, other shale indicators are introduced if inconsistencies appear in the results.

Having a value for $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, it is now possible to correct the ϕ_N and ϕ_D data points for shaliness. To this end values of ψ_D and ψ_N are computed with equations (37) and (38) as represented by the block 258.

Now that the ϕ_N , ϕ_D data has been corrected for shaliness with the shale indicator $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, the next step is to determine the position of the corrected data point ψ_N , ψ_D , relative to the 45° clean sand line. It will be recalled from the discussion of Figure 15 that if the corrected data point falls on or near the 45° sand line, the hydrocarbon analysis portion of the program is completed. Then, the original data point is analyzed for V_{sh} , ϕ_u , SI. On the other hand, if the corrected data point falls either above or below the clean sand line, further steps must be taken.

In this connection, as represented by the decision element 260, the question "is ψ_D less than ψ_N " is asked. If the answer is no, it is next determined whether ψ_N is approximately equal to ψ_D , as represented by the decision element 261, i.e., is the corrected data point on or within a given range of the 45° clean sand line. If the answer is yes, i.e., if the corrected data point is on or near the clean sand line, the program exits the hydrocarbon analysis routine after setting the corrected ϕ_N and ϕ_D values, designated ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} , equal to the original value of ϕ_N and ϕ_D , as represented by the elements 262 and 263.

If the corrected data point had fallen above the 45° line, the underlying assumptions of the method would be satisfied. In other words, since all of the shale indicators are supposed to give indications of V_{sh} which are either equal to or greater than the true V_{sh} , the shale corrected data point ψ_N , ψ_D should fall either on or above the clean sand line. If the shale corrected data point falls above the clean sand line, it can be assumed that either $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ was too large or that a hydrocarbon effect does exist. Both of these assumptions come within the basic underlying premise of the method. However, if the shale corrected data point falls below the 45° line, it can only be assumed that the derived measurements themselves were inaccurate or did not fit the model, or that one or more of the constants have been incorrectly selected. In this event, the program proceeds to make certain tests to determine what is wrong and to make suitable corrections.

Before continuing with the discussion of the hydrocarbon analysis routine, it would first be desirable to discuss some notations used in this routine. The subscript "C" is placed after data which has been finally corrected. Thus, ψ_{NC} and ψ_{DC} represent the final shale corrected data points and ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} represent the final hydrocarbon corrected (if any) data values which are outputted from the hydrocarbon analysis routine. Graphically speaking, in Figure 15, ϕ_{NC} , ϕ_{DC} would represent the point 58a and ψ_{NC} , ψ_{DC} would represent the point 53. Those parameters with numeral subscripts, i.e., ϕ_{N1} , ϕ_{D2} , etc. represent interim data values.

Concerning first the case where the shale corrected data point falls below the line, a test is made to determine if ϕ_N is less than a given limit value representing the ϕ_N value of the limit parabola. If it is not, the shale corrected data point ψ_N , ψ_D is moved to the 45° clean sand line along a constant ϕ_D line, as represented by the vector 65 in Figure 15, the original data point is then corrected by the same amount.

In Figure 21, to accomplish this, the limit value for ψ_N , designated $(\psi_N)_{lim}$, is computed with equation 40, as represented by block 261a. Next, as represented by the decision element 262a, ψ_N is checked against $(\psi_N)_{lim}$. If ψ_N is greater than $(\psi_N)_{lim}$, i.e., ψ_N is out of limits, as depicted in block 263a, a corrected value of ϕ_N is computed in accordance with the following expression:

$$\phi_N = \psi_{DC} + (V_{sh})_{ind} \cdot (\phi_N)_{sh} \quad (60)$$

As depicted by block 264, the final shale corrected density tool value ψ_{DC} is set equal to the ψ_D value computed in step 258. The new value of ϕ_N is designated ϕ_{N1} to distinguish it from the original ϕ_N .

The computation of ϕ_{N1} in step 263a corresponds to moving the original data point, ϕ_N , ϕ_D , an amount equal to the correction applied to the ψ_N , ψ_D point. Thus, in Figure 15, it would correspond to moving the original data point 63 to the point 66a.

Since only the neutron data is altered, the final value of ϕ_D outputted from the hydrocarbon analysis, designated ϕ_{DC} , is set equal to the original measured value ϕ_D . This operation is depicted by block 264. As depicted by block 272, ϕ_{NC} is set equal to ϕ_{N1} computed in step 263a.

Returning to decision element 262a, if ψ_N is within limits, the program proceeds to determine what change of the matrix grain density, ρ_M would be required to move the ψ_D , ψ_N point over the 45° line. Then, as represented by the block 266, ϕ_D is corrected according to the following expression:

$$\phi_D = \psi_{NC} + (V_{sh})_{ind} \cdot (\phi_D)_{sh} \quad (61)$$

Since only the density data is being corrected at this time, ψ_{NC} is set equal to ψ_N , as represented by block 273.

This new value of ϕ_D is designated ϕ_{D1} . Equation (61) has the effect of moving the data point to the clean sand line by making $\psi_{NC} = \psi_{DC}$.

Using ϕ_{D1} , the value of ρ_M is recomputed and designated ρ_{M1} . With this new matrix density parameter ρ_{M1} , it is now possible to check if ρ_{M1} is greater than a value of grain density which is known by local experience to be unlikely to be exceeded. This limit value is labeled $(\rho_M)_{lim}$. This function is represented by the decision element 267. If ρ_{M1} is less than $(\rho_M)_{lim}$, it means that the full correction is possible with the density measurement ϕ_D , i.e., it means that the data point can be moved to the 45° sand line without ρ_M exceeding this limit. Thus, ϕ_{DC} is set equal to ϕ_{D1} computed in step 266 and ϕ_{NC} is set equal to the original data point ϕ_N . In Figure 15, this corresponds to moving the data point from the position 63 to the position 68a. This operation is depicted by block 268.

If the total ϕ_D correction cannot be made because of ρ_{M1} exceeding its limit, ρ_M in equation 1 is set equal $(\rho_M)_{lim}$ and ϕ_D is re-computed, as represented by the block 269. Since this new value of ϕ_D , designated ϕ_{D2} , represents the maximum acceptable correction for ϕ_D , i.e., the maximum movement of the shale corrected data point 64 of Figure 15 towards the clean sand line, the final corrected value ϕ_{DC} can now be set equal to ϕ_{D2} , as represented by the block 270.

At this stage, the corrected data point has not reached the clean sand line because of the limit $(\rho_M)_{lim}$. To bring the data point the remainder of the way to the clean sand line, ψ_D is re-computed with equation (38) using the new value ϕ_{D2} , as represented by the block 271. Then a new value of ϕ_N is computed according to equation (60), as represented by the block 263a. This new value ϕ_{N1} is set equal to ϕ_{NC} and the hydrocarbon analysis routine is exited as represented by blocks 272 and 265. The operation of blocks 271, 263a and 272 corresponds to, in Figure 15, moving the shale corrected data point to the 45° sand line by changing ψ_N . Thus, the original data point would change to a new ϕ_N value.

The discussion to this point in Figure 21 has concerned the analysis which is undertaken when the shale corrected data point falls below or to the right of the clean sand line. Now consider what happens when the shale corrected data point falls above or to the left of the clean sand line. As discussed earlier, this corresponds with the basic premises of the interpretation method of the present invention in that it indicates that either a hydrocarbon effect exists or that $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is greater than the true V_{sh} .

When the shale corrected data point falls above the clean sand line, the deep and shallow resistivity measurements R_e and R_{xo} are utilized to determine which of these two conditions exists. To this end, first approximations of S_w and S_{xo} are computed from equations (25) and (26) using $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ and $(\phi_e)_{app}$, as represented by blocks 280 and 281. If an R_{xo} measurement is not available, which question is asked by the decision

element 282, S_{xo} is computed from equation (27) using the value of S_w derived in step 280, as represented by the block 283.

Now, having first approximation values of S_{xo} and S_w , it is possible to compare S_{xo} with S_w to determine if the saturation computations S_w and S_{xo} appear to be feasible. This test is depicted by the decision element 284.

As discussed earlier, it is known that S_{xo} must be equal to or greater than S_w . If S_{xo} is greater than S_w , i.e., the answer given by decision element 284 is "no", it is initially assumed that something is wrong with $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. (From equations (25) and (26), it can be seen that V_{sh} is a parameter in deriving S_w and S_{xo} , the value being used for V_{sh} in these equations at this time being $(V_{sh})_{ind}$.)

In this event, the R_t and R_{xo} measurements are utilized to compute a new shale indicator $(V_{sh})_s$, in an attempt to provide a value of V_{sh} less than $(V_{sh})_{ind}$.

In Figure 21, $(V_{sh})_s$ is computed utilizing equation 28, as represented by element 310. Then, as represented by the decision element 311, a test is made to determine if $(V_{sh})_s$ is less than $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. If $(V_{sh})_s$ is less, then $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is set equal to $(V_{sh})_s$ as represented by block 312.

A further check can be made of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. Since test 284 has indicated S_{xo} to be less than S_w , and thus presumably less than 1, a new $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ can be computed taking the hydrocarbon effect into account, i.e., a value of S_{xo} from either steps 281 or 283 is available for use in equation (15). (Remember that S_{xo} was initially set equal to "one" in step 250.) This operation is depicted by block 313 and the new value of $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ is designated $(V_{sh})_{SP1}$. As represented by the decision element 314, a test is then made to determine if this value of V_{sh} is less than $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. If it is less, $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is set equal to this new value $(V_{sh})_{SP1}$ as represented by block 315.

With a new lower value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, those computations which require $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ as a parameter can now be improved since a new more accurate value for $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is available. Thus, after setting $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ equal to $(V_{sh})_{SP1}$, this new value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is introduced back into the program just prior to the ψ_N , ψ_D computation step 258. The program then recomputes ψ_N and ψ_D and goes through all of the analyses discussed above. If, after the second time through this portion of the program, S_{xo} is still less than S_w , $(V_{sh})_{SP1}$ is recomputed using the newest $(\phi_c)_{app 1}$ and S_{xo} data. If the newest $(V_{sh})_{SP1}$ value is still less than the new value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$, the program recycles again. This continues over and over again until this portion of the program is exited either by the $S_{xo} < S_w$ test 284 being satisfied or V_{sh} values lower than the last $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ value being no longer computed.

Upon either event taking place, the program next determines if the R_t and R_{xo} data is indicating the presence of hydrocarbons, i.e., the "no" answers from decision element 284, 311 and 314 carry the program to a decision element 288. If the resistivity tools indicate the presence of hydrocarbons, it only remains to make the hydrocarbon effect correction to the original measured ϕ_N , ϕ_D data. Prior to making this correction, the program insures that the computed hydrocarbon density is at least equal to the density of gas $(\rho_g)_{lim}$ computed in block 256.

To accomplish this in Figure (21), a test is then made to determine if S_w and S_{xo} are both less than a given value approximating 1. In this example, the given value is .9. The asking of this question is depicted by the decision element 288.

Next, as represented by block 320, the hydrocarbon density is computed using the last values of ψ_N and ψ_D , computed in step 258 and the last value of S_{xo} computed in either step 281 or 283.

The following five equations are solved simultaneously:

$$F = 1 + 7(1 + 2(\phi_c)_{app 1} S_{xo}) \psi_D / \psi_N \quad (62)$$

$$M = 45F \quad (63)$$

$$N = 128 + 77F - 35 \frac{\psi_D / \psi_N - 1}{1 - S_{xo}} \quad (64)$$

$$R = 128 + 32F - 224 \frac{\psi_D / \psi_N - 1}{1 - S_{xo}} \quad (65)$$

$$M\rho_{hy} - N\rho_{hy} + R = 0 \quad (66)$$

This corresponds to solving for ρ_{hy} in the set of equations giving ϕ_N , ϕ_D for clean formations (8), (9) together with equations (10) (11) relating $(\phi_D)_{hy}$ and $(\phi_N)_{hy}$ to the density ρ_{hy} and the S_{xo} equation (26). This operation is depicted in block 320.

The value of ρ_{hy} computed in step 320 is compared with $(\rho_g)_{lim}$ which has been previously computed, as represented by the decision element 321. If ρ_{hy} is within limits, i.e., the answer is "yes", a new value of ϕ_e , designated ϕ_{e1} , is computed through a simultaneous solution of equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26) as represented by the block 322. Next, this ϕ_{e1} value is compared with the earlier computed $(\phi_e)_{app 1}$, as represented by decision element 324, and if they differ by more than a limit value designated $(\Delta\phi_e)_{lim}$, a new value $(\phi_e)_{app 1}$ is taken, equal to ϕ_{e1} , (block 323a) and new values of S_w and S_{xo} are computed using this new value, as represented by the block 323. This new value is then utilized to compute the new value of ρ_{hy} , i.e., the program returns to step 320. The program continues to circle through this loop until the newly computed values of ϕ_{e1} and $(\phi_e)_{app 1}$ becomes approximately equal, at which time new values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D are computed using the last computed values of ϕ_{e1} , S_{xo} , and $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ in equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (26), as represented by the block 325. The new ϕ_N and ϕ_D values are designated ϕ_{N3} and ϕ_{D3} . These values are the ones corrected for any hydrocarbon effect and therefore may be used to recompute V_{sh} , ϕ_{e2} , SI , $(\phi_D)_{sh}$, $(\phi_N)_{sh}$.

The purpose of this loop is to improve the value of $(\phi_e)_{app 1}$ and, therefore the values of S_{xo} and ρ_{hy} . Initially the value of $(\phi_e)_{app 1}$ was only an approximation which could not take into account the exact value of hydrocarbon effect on the porosity tools, because the exact value of ρ_{hy} was not yet known. After each successive approximation of ρ_{hy} on this loop, more exact values of ϕ_e can be evaluated.

After these new values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D have been computed in step 325, new values of SI , V_{sh} and ϕ_e can be computed. Of these values, SI is of particular interest because it was assumed that $SI=SI_o$ when computing $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. The new value SI which is more correct, will be used now to recompute new values of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ by returning to block 252. Also the true value S_{xo} will be used in the computation of the SP shale indicator. These values are set in block 328 and the data goes through the same analysis again. These new values are entered into the program just ahead of step 252.

It has been found that this recycling operation with the new data values SI and S_{xo} is, at the most, necessary only once. Thus, as represented by decision element 326, the hydrocarbon analysis routine is exited (see element 328a) after one pass through this decision element 326.

Referring back to the decision element 321, if the computed ρ_{hy} value had failed the limit test, it is first assumed that S_{xo} is reading too low. As a check on this, another S_{xo} value is computed from equation (27) using the computed value of S_w , as represented by the block 330. Then, as represented by element 331, a test is made to determine if $(S_{xo})_w$ is greater than the last computed value of S_{xo} (Step 281 or 323). If it is less than S_{xo} , it is assumed that the R_{xo} measurement was erroneous and S_{xo} is set equal to $(S_{xo})_w$, as represented by the block 332. With this new value of S_{xo} , the program returns to the step 320 to recompute ρ_{hy} .

If the new value of S_{xo} brings the computed value of ρ_{hy} above the limit, the program proceeds as discussed earlier with this new value of S_{xo} . On the other hand, if the new computed value ρ_{hy} is still too low, this indicates that the cause of wrong values of ρ_{hy} was not a bad R_{xo} value but excessive value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. The program then branches to block 334 by the following process: it recomputes a value of $(S_{xo})_w$ (block 330) which is evidently equal to the value S_{xo} (because S_{xo} has been already set to $(S_{xo})_w$ in block 332).

Then the decision making block 331 recognizes that both S_{xo} and $(S_{xo})_w$ are equal and therefore branches to block 334 whose function is to decrease $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ by 1% before re-entering the program just ahead of step 258 with this new value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$. Then the program proceeds as explained next.

If $(S_{xo})_w$ computed in step 330 turns out to be greater than S_{xo} derived from equation 26, the program presumes that the R_{xo} measurement is not at fault and instead assumes that $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is too large. In this event, as represented by block 334, $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ is decreased by 1% and entered into the program just ahead of step 258. The program proceeds to take this lowered value of $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ and go through the entire analysis discussed above. The program will continue to recycle and recycle, each time decreasing $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ by 1% until an exit from the hydrocarbon analysis routine is found. For example, graphically speaking, the shale corrected data point may eventually be brought back to a location near the clean sand line and thus the decision element 261 will cause an exit from the hydrocarbon analysis routine, etc.

At this point, the hydrocarbon analysis has been completed and new corrected

values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D , designated ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} , are available for analysis by the remainder of sweep 2.

Now returning to Figure 20, sweep 2 uses these new values ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} to compute a new value of SI using equations (34), (35), and (36), as represented by the block 340. This new value of SI is designated SI_4 . As before, SI_4 is limited to SI_0 if it is greater than SI_0 , as represented by block 341. Along with this, $(\phi_N)_{sh}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh}$ are limited to $(\phi_N)_{sh_0}$ and $(\phi_D)_{sh_0}$ if $SI > SI_0$. Next, new values of ϕ_c , V_{sh} , V_{cl} and V_{silt} are

computed using equations (4), (5), (8) and (9) as represented by block 342. These new values are designated ϕ_{c4} , V_{sh4} , V_{cl4} and V_{silt4} . With these new values of ϕ_{c4} and V_{sh4} , it is now possible to compute new values of S_w and S_{xo} using equations (25) and (26). This operation is depicted in block 343.

At this point, the analysis of the measured ϕ_N and ϕ_D data has been completed for sweep 2 and the corrected ϕ_N and ϕ_D data can now be used to return the statistical analyses to define the calibration parameters for the shale indicators.

In addition to recalibrating the shale indicators, sweep 2 also computes the sonic compaction correction factor C_p , calibrates the sonic data and produces synthetic spontaneous potential, gamma ray, and resistivity data derived from the equations used in the statistical routines. This synthetic data is then compared with the measured data to give indication of the figure of merit of the statistical routines.

Now concerning how the synthetic data is produced, in Fig. 20, the spontaneous potential is reconstructed using the values of V_{clay} , ϕ_c and S_{xo} computed in steps 342 and 343, i.e. V_{clay4} , ϕ_{c4} and S_{xo4} , as well as the values of SSP and SP_{sh} computed during sweep 1. The expression for the reconstructed SP is:

$$SP_{rec} = SSP - \frac{V_{clay}}{\phi_c S_{xo} + W_{clay} V_{clay}} (SSP - SP_{sh}) \quad (67)$$

This function is represented by block 344. This reconstructed SP value is a synthetic value derived from the equation (15).

If the SP data was properly calibrated, the reconstructed SP value should be substantially the same as the measured SP value.

A figure of merit for the SP, designated FM_{SP} , is computed by comparing the reconstructed SP, SP_{rec} with the measured SP, as represented by block 345. The expression for this SP Figure of Merit is:

$$FM_{SP} = \left(\frac{SP_{rec} - SP}{SSP - SP_{sh}} \right) \quad (68)$$

A decision element 346 determines if V_{sh4} is greater than a limit value thereof and bypasses step 345 if V_{sh4} is too large. The reason is that we are interested in the quality of the reconstruction of the SP only where the SP is important as a shale indicator to determine the hydrocarbon effect. Hydrocarbons appear in sands and not shales. Thus, the quality of reconstruction of the SP in shale has no practical significance for present purposes.

A reconstructed gamma ray is also computed from the values of V_{cl4} and V_{silt4} , as well as the calibration coefficients A, B and C computed in sweep 1, according to equation (16). This function is represented by block 347. The reconstructed gamma ray designated GR_{rec} , is compared with the measured gamma ray and a figure of merit for the gamma ray, designated FM_{GR} , is computed according to the following expression:

$$FM_{GR} = \left(\frac{GR_{rec} - GR \cdot \rho_b}{BSI_0 + C(1 - SIO)} \right)^2 \quad (69)$$

This function is represented by block 348. As for the SP, the quality of merit of the reconstruction of GR is of practical importance only when the formation is not too shaly and therefore is computed when V_{sh} is not too large. When this is not the case, the decision element 346 causes the program to bypass the gamma ray reconstruction and comparison.

Both FM_{SP} and FM_{GR} can be averaged on a running basis to provide figures of merit for data over the entire formation section of interest.

Next, using SI_i , ϕ_{cl} and V_{sh4} , the deep resistivity measurement R_i is reconstructed, assuming 100% water bearing formation of resistivity R_w , in accordance with the following:

$$(R_o)_{rec} = \frac{R_w R_{clay}}{(1 - SI)^2 V_{sh} R_w + 1.25 \phi_{cl} R_{clay}} \quad (70)$$

(The term R_o is used here because it has come to be the designation for the resistivity of a formation where $S_w=1$.) This function is represented by block 349. The reconstructed R_i is designated $(R_o)_{rec}$. Next as represented by the decision element 350 and block 351, the same operation is performed to reconstruct R_{xo} according to the following equation if an R_{xo} measurement is available:

$$(R_{xo})_{rec} = \frac{R_{mf} R_{clay}}{(1 - SI)^2 V_{sh} R_{mf} + 1.25 \phi_o R_{clay}} \quad (71)$$

These reconstructed resistivity values can be compared with the measured values to determine the presence of hydrocarbons.

Running averages of data to calibrate the SP, gamma ray and resistivity data are computed in the same manner as for sweep 1. Since sweep 2 has considered the hydrocarbon effect, the calibration coefficients will be more accurate after sweep 2 (if there is a hydrocarbon effect) than after sweep 1. This operation is depicted by element 99 in Figure 20. This element 99 is shown in detail as the dashed line box 99 in Figure 19.

Next the program enters a statistical routine to compute running averages of data which can be used to compute the acoustic or the sonic compaction correction factor $1/C_p$ and sonic response in shale in accordance with the techniques described in Figures 16 and 17. This is represented by element 99a in Figure 20 which is shown in detail in Figure 22.

First, concerning

$$\frac{1}{C_p}$$

it will be recalled from the discussion of Figure 16 that the slope of the line which best fits data points on a ϕ_s versus ϕ_N crossplot relative to the slope of the line representing $\phi_s/\phi_N=1$ gives a statistically averaged value of $1/C_p$. However, as discussed earlier, this statistical averaging must utilize points derived from clean water sands. To insure that only such data points are utilized, a series of tests are run on the data from each depth level.

Referring to Figure 22, step 210 determines if V_{sh4} computed in step 342 is greater than a limit value thereof. If V_{sh} is less than this limit value, a test is made to determine if the sonic travel time readings Δt are valid, i.e., to determine if they are low enough to insure the absence of a cycle skip effect. (Cycle skip is caused by a tool malfunction which causes the Δt measurement to be too high.) This test is performed by decision element 211. Next, a test is made to determine if the V_{sh4} value computed in step 342 is less than a limit value thereof, which limit value is less than the limit value given in decision element 210. This test is represented by the decision element 212.

If the test of decision element 212 is passed, the water saturation S_w is computed from equation (25), as represented by the block 213, and a test is made to determine if S_w is greater than a given limit value thereof as represented by the decision element 214. If the test of decision element 214 is passed, i.e., the clean sand formation is primarily water bearing, then a running average of ϕ_s/ϕ_N using the latest data, i.e., ϕ_{NC} , is computed as represented by block 215. Since ϕ_s/ϕ_{NC} gives the slope of a line between the origin and the data point ϕ_s , ϕ_{NC} (see Figure 16), a running average of ϕ_s/ϕ_{NC} will give the slope of the line 70 in Figure 16 which represents a statistical fit of all of the points corresponding to a clean water sand. If any of these tests (211, 212 or 214) were failed (answer of No), the sonic statistical routine is exited.

To determine the response of the sonic log in shale, i.e., $(\phi_s)_{sh}$, in accordance with the operation depicted in Figure 17, running averages of ϕ_s , SI_4 , SI_4^2 and $SI_4 \times \phi_s$ are computed for data derived from shale formations. To determine if a formation is primarily shaly, a series of tests are run, the first test being the V_{sh} limit test represented

by decision element 210. If this first test is passed, i.e., V_{sh4} is greater than the limit value therefor. Thereafter, tests to determine if Δt , SP and R_t are less than given limits and if the gamma ray count rate is greater than a given limit are made as represented by decision elements 216, 217, 218 and 219. If all of these tests are passed, i.e., if the answer to each test is yes, running sums of ϕ_s , SI, SI^2 , and $SI \times \phi_s$ for N (number of levels) are computed using the latest data (i.e., SI_4), as represented by block 220. If any one of these tests are failed, the program exits the sonic statistical routine.

The running averages from sweep 2 are stored in memory represented by the block 352. If the data being considered is derived from a depth level other than the last depth level, which question is asked by the decision element 353, the program then goes to the next level as represented by the element 354. If it is the last depth level, new values of SSP, SP_{sh} , R_{Cl} , $(R_{Cl})_{xo}$, A, B and C are computed from these new running averages, as represented by the block 355.

Additionally, the sonic travel time in shale of silt index SI_{os} , $(\phi_s)_{sh}$ is computed from the sonic travel time statistics, as represented by block 357, in accordance with the following expressions:

$$(\phi_s)_{sh} = AS - BS (SI) \quad (71a)$$

$$AS = \frac{\sum (SI)^2 \sum \phi_s - \sum (SI) \cdot \phi_s}{N \cdot \sum (SI) - (\sum (SI))^2}$$

$$BS = \frac{\sum (SI) \sum \phi_s - \sum (SI) \cdot \phi_s}{N \sum (SI)^2 - (\sum (SI))^2}$$

The average of ϕ_s/ϕ_{NG} is automatically calibrated in terms of the sonic compaction factor C_p . (See block 356.)

Lastly, the program proceeds to sweep 3 as represented by element 358. As with the change from sweep 1 to sweep 2, the calibration coefficients are carried over to sweep 3. The original measured values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D are used for each depth level during sweep 3, the ϕ_N , ϕ_D values computed during sweep 2 being discarded.

At this point, the shale indicators have been recalibrated to take into account the hydrocarbon effect and figures of merit have been computed to give an indication of the accuracy of the calibration performed during sweep 1. With properly calibrated shale indicators, it is now possible to run a complete analysis of the derived well logging measurements and produce computed output data for presentation. This is the function of sweep 3 which will be described next.

Referring now to Figure 23, there is shown a flow diagram of the operation of sweep 3. In sweep 3, the calibration data from sweep 2 which has been stored in memory is read for use during sweep 3. It will be recalled that during sweeps 1 and 2, data falling in the unlikely area is discarded because of the possibility of its having an adverse effect on the statistical routines used for selecting the calibration coefficients. In sweep 3, data points in the unlikely area are corrected before being analyzed. The sonic derived porosity ϕ_s and $(V_{sh})_{ind}$ are utilized for this purpose.

As represented by the decision element 371, it is first determined whether the plotted data point ϕ_N , ϕ_D is in the unlikely area, as represented by the decision element 371. This same test is performed in blocks 104 and 241 in sweeps 1 and 2. The technique for determining if a ϕ_N , ϕ_D point is in the unlikely area has been discussed earlier.

If the data point does not fall in the unlikely area, the program then proceeds to analyze the data for hydrocarbon effect, as represented by block 242. This hydrocarbon analysis is identical with the analysis undertaken in sweep 2 and need not be discussed further at this point. If the data point does fall in the unlikely area, and if ϕ_e is less than two-thirds of ϕ_z , which question is asked by the decision element 372, the ϕ_D , ϕ_N point is adjusted towards the origin $\phi_D = 0$ until ϕ_N becomes equal to ϕ_s/C_p , as represented by block 373. These new values for ϕ_N and ϕ_D are designated ϕ_N' and ϕ_D' .

Next, as represented by blocks 374, 375 and 376, gamma ray and SP shale indicators are utilized to compute V_{sh} and the smaller of the two is selected. Before $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ and $(V_{sh})_{GR}$ can be computed, a value of S1 is necessary. This value can, for example, be selected as the S1 of the shale point defined by the intersection of the shale line with

a line from the sonic corrected data point to a point defined by the intersection of the $W-Cl_d$ line with the $\phi_N=0$ axis (See Figure 2). How to accomplish this entails standard analytic geometry techniques and need not be discussed further here. The value of SI so defined is labeled SI_{app} and is computed in step 373a. Step 374 uses SI_{app} and the calibration coefficients A , B and C computed during sweep 2 to compute $(V_{sh})_{GR}$ with equation 17. As represented by block 375, the calibration parameters SSP and SP_{sh} computed during sweep 2, and SI_{app} , are utilized to compute $(V_{sh})_{SP}$ with equation (15). Then, as represented by block 376, the smaller of these two values of V_{sh} are selected and called $(V_{sh})'_{ind}$. Next, another value for V_{sh} is computed using the ϕ_N' and ϕ_D' values produced in step 373 with equations (8) and (9), as represented by block 377. As represented by block 378, a test is made to determine if this computed value of V_{sh} computed in step 377, i.e., $(V_{sh})'_{nd}$ is greater than $(V_{sh})'_{ind}$ computed in step 376. If $(V_{sh})'_{nd}$ is less than $(V_{sh})'_{ind}$ the ϕ_N' , ϕ_D' point is adjusted towards the intersection of the $W-\phi_D$ line with the $\phi_N=0$ line until $(V_{sh})'_{nd}$ is equal to $(V_{sh})'_{ind}$ as represented by block 379. The new values for ϕ_N and ϕ_D are used to enter the hydrocarbon analysis routine of step 242. If $(V_{sh})'_{nd}$ had been greater than $(V_{sh})'_{ind}$ the parameters ϕ_N' and ϕ_D' would have been used to enter the hydrocarbon analysis portion of the program.

After the new corrected values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D , i.e., ϕ_{NC} and ϕ_{DC} , have been produced by step 242, these new values are used to compute new values of ϕ_c , V_{clay} , V_{silt} , V_{sh} and SI , as represented by block 381. These new values are designated ϕ_{c3} , V_{cl3} , V_{silt3} , V_{sh3} and SI_3 . With the values of V_{cl3} , V_{silt3} and SI_3 , as well as the gamma-ray calibration coefficients A , B and C computed during the sweep 2, the gamma ray is reconstructed as represented by block 382. Next, the reconstructed gamma ray is compared with the measured gamma ray and a figure of merit is computed according to equation (69) as represented by block 383.

Additionally, the spontaneous potential is reconstructed from the recomputed values of S_{xo} , V_{cl3} and the values of SSP and SP_{sh} computed during sweep 2, as represented by block 384. The reconstructed SP is then compared with the measured SP and a figure of merit is computed in accordance with equation 68 in the same manner as during sweep 2, as represented by block 385. The data is then prepared for output, as represented by block 386. A detailed flow diagram of how this is accomplished is shown in Figure 24 and will be discussed next. Lastly, the prepared data is printed out and/or recorded on magnetic tape or a film recorder, as represented by elements 387, 388 and 389. As shown by elements 433, 434 and 435, the program processes data from each depth level in turn until the last depth level is reached at which time it stops.

Now, turning to Figure 24, there is shown a flow diagram representing the steps performed in preparing the data for output during sweep 3. After the "prepare data for output" routine is entered, new values of S_{xo} and S_w are computed using the latest available data, i.e., that calibrated data computed during sweep 2. This function is represented by block 400. Next the hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} is recomputed by simultaneously solving equations (6), (7), (10), (11) and (27) using the latest computed values of ϕ_N , ϕ_D , ϕ_c , V_{sh} and S_{xo} , as represented by block 401.

When S_w or S_{xo} is close to 1, thus indicating that very little hydrocarbons are present, the computed values of hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} will show large fluctuations for small errors in the parameters which are used in the computation of ρ_{hy} . In this case it might be preferred to compute and print out optionally the fluid density in the invaded zone, $(\rho_f)_{xo}$, instead of ρ_{hy} . Thus, the invaded zone fluid density $(\rho_f)_{xo}$ is computed using equation (42) as represented by block 402. A decision element 403 is used to select whether $(\rho_f)_{xo}$ is to be printed out (see block 404). If $(\rho_f)_{xo}$ is not to be printed out, ρ_{hy} is printed out (see block 405) but only if there is a sufficient hydrocarbon effect for the computed value of ρ_{hy} to be meaningful. As represented by decision block 406, the function $\phi_o \cdot BB \cdot \sqrt{\rho_{hy}}$ is computed and compared with a limit values, where $BB=$

$$5/7 \left[(1-\rho_{hy}) \frac{32-9\rho_{hy}}{32-5\rho_{hy}} (1-S_{xo}) \right]$$

ρ_{hy} is printed only if this function is greater than the limit value.

The next routine prepares the computed water saturation S_w value for output. When S_w is near 100%, the same type of problem discussed above for the hydrocarbon density ρ_{hy} also affects the water saturation S_w . To circumvent this, the computed values of S_w are manipulated such that large fluctuations in S_w on the high end of the scale will produce small fluctuations in the recorded value of S_w . Moreover, an expansion of S_w is made for very low computed S_w values to take into account the fact that

at this low water saturation, the rock matrix becomes partly oil wet which leads to erroneously low computed values of S_w .

Turning to Figure 26, there is shown a plot of computed S_w on the horizontal axis versus recorded S_w on the vertical axis. The dotted line 410 represents the linear one for one relationship of computed S_w versus recorded S_w . The solid line curve 411 gives the recording function applied to the computed S_w values. It can be seen from Figure 26 that for values of computed S_w near 0 and 100%, there is very little fluctuation in the recorded values of S_w .

This function is performed in the flow diagram of Figure 24 as follows. First, the computed S_w is limited to one as represented by block 415. If S_w is between .6 and 1.0, which question is asked by decision element 416, S_w is computed in accordance with the following expression:

$$(S_w)_{\text{record}} = 1 - \frac{4}{15} \left(\frac{1-S_w}{.4} \right)^3 \left[25 - \frac{(1-S_w)^3}{.4} \right] \quad (72)$$

(See block 417). If S_w is between .4 and .6, which question is asked by the decision element 418, the actual computed value of S_w is printed, as represented by block 419. If S_w is between zero and .4, which question is asked by the decision element 420, S_w is computed in accordance with the following equation:

$$(S_w)_{\text{record}} = S_w + .02 \frac{4 - 10S_w}{1 + 10S_w} \quad (73)$$

S_{xo} is function formed and printed in the same manner as S_w is and need not be discussed further. This function is represented by block 422.

Next, cumulative values of ϕ_o and $\phi_o \times (1 - S_w)$ are computed. This corresponds to integrating values of ϕ_o and $\phi_o \times (1 - S_w)$. This function is represented by block 423. A blip is then printed for every predetermined unit of cumulative ϕ_o and $\phi_o \times 1 - S_w$, as represented by block 424.

The next portion of the "prepare data for output" routine is to compute permeability using either equation (43) or (44). Which equation is to be used is determined by the decision element 425. This decision is set by the operator before running the program.

If equation (44) is to be used, it must first be determined whether W_{irr} is to be set equal to $S_w \phi_o$ or a value determined from solving equations (20) and (21). This is determined by looking at the value of water saturation S_w , (see decision element 427). If S_w is greater than two-thirds, W_{irr} is set equal to the value formed from equations (20) and (21), as represented by block 428. On the other hand, if S_w is less than two-thirds, W_{irr} is set equal to $S_w \phi_o$, as represented by block 429.

Steps 439—442 are used in the computation of the percentages by volume of the different forms of shale using equations (48), (49) or (51) and (50). It will be recalled from the discussion of Figure 11 that if the measured values of ϕ_N and ϕ_D give a point on the $\phi_N - \phi_D$ crossplot which falls to the left of the dispersed shale line, the originally selected value of $(\phi_N)_{\text{max}}$ cannot be correct and still be consistent with the model. Such an occurrence is represented by the point 33. In this event, it is assumed that the original $(\phi_N)_{\text{max}}$ is not applicable and a new ϕ_N is chosen such that the dispersed shale line will pass through the point 33. This new ϕ_N value is then entered into equation 49 for the ϕ_N term therein.

To accomplish this in the "prepare data for output" routine of sweep 3, step 440 determines if the measured ϕ_N , ϕ_D point is to the left of the dispersed shale line defined by $(\phi_N)_{\text{max}}$ by asking "It $(\phi_N)_{\text{max}} - \phi_{N,5} > V_{sh,5}$?" If it is, $(\phi_N)_{\text{max}}$ is set equal to $\phi_{N,5} + V_{sh,5}$ (Step 441) for entry into equation 49. V_{10} , V_L and V_{slr} are then computed with equations (48), (49) and (50) (See step 442). Of course, if sonic data is available (Step 439), equations (48), (50) and (51) are used instead (Step 443).

Then the residual hydrocarbon saturation and weight are computed in accordance with expressions (45) and (46) and printed out, as represented by block 432. Next the gas index as given by the sonic log is computed according to equation (47), as represented by block 433.

Finally, if the level being considered is not the last level, the program returns to the beginning of sweep 3 to consider data from the next level, as represented by element 434 (see Figure 23). If it is the last level, the program stops, as represented by element 435.

Now referring to Fig. 25, there is shown an example of a log producer in accordance with the teachings of the present invention. The pip on the left-hand side of the depth track correspond to the integration of porosity. The distance between two consecutive pips represents a selected number of feet of 100% porosity of pore volume per acre. Each pip on the right-hand side of the depth track represents a selected number of feet of hydrocarbon in place.

In track I, V_{sh} and permeability K are recorded. In track II, S_w , $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}}$ and $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}} \cdot \rho_{hy}$ for hydrocarbon analysis are recorded. S_w is the fraction of pore volume filled with formation water. $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}}$ is the residual hydrocarbon per bulk volume and $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}} \cdot \rho_{hy}$ is the weight of residual hydrocarbon per bulk volume. The two curves, $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}}$ and $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}} \cdot \rho_{hy}$ coincide in oil zones since the density of oil is close to unity. In light hydrocarbon zones, the two curves diverge. The ratio of $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}} \cdot \rho_{hy}$ to $\phi \cdot S_{h_{yr}}$ is the hydrocarbon density.

In track III, porosity analysis curves ϕ_o and $\phi_w S_w$ are recorded. ϕ_o is the formation porosity corrected for hydrocarbon and shale effect and $\phi_w S_w$ is the water-filled porosity. Thus, the area between the two curves corresponds to hydrocarbon filled porosity. A bulk volume analysis is recorded in track IV. In this regard, V_{clay} , V_{silt} and ϕ_s are recorded.

It can be seen from the foregoing that new and improved methods have been invented for analyzing shales and shaly sand formations. With these improved methods, more data than has ever before been available can now be computed and displayed to enable a complete interpretation of shaly sand and shale formations.

While there have been described what are at present considered to be preferred embodiments of this invention, it will be obvious to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the invention, and it is, therefore, intended to cover all such changes and modifications as fall within the scope of the appended claims.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A method of processing well logging data, comprising:

(a) deriving a plurality of measurements representative of characteristics of an earth formation at selected depth levels over a section of a borehole;

(b) combining at least some of said derived measurements from at least some of said selected depth levels over said borehole section to compute at least one input parameter for said borehole section;

(c) combining at least some of said plurality of derived measurements from at least some of said selected depth levels with said at least one input parameter to compute at least one output parameter for at least some of said selected depth levels;

(d) characterized by combining at least some of said derived measurements with said at least one output parameter for at least some of said selected depth levels to recompute said at least one input parameter or compute another input parameter for combination with at least some of said plurality of measurements to produce output parameters representative of at least one formation characteristic.

2. A method of processing well logging data according to claim 1 characterized in that at least one of said input parameters is a calibration coefficient of a relation between the magnitude of one of said derived measurements and the shale content of the formation.

3. Method according to claims 1 or 2, wherein several input parameters are computed characterized in that said input parameters are calibration coefficients of relations giving upper limits of the shale content of the formation.

4. Method according to claim 3 characterized in that said measurements related to the shale content include the spontaneous potential, the natural gamma radioactivity, or the resistivity of the formation.

5. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4 characterized in that at least one of said input parameters is a characteristic value of a type of shale over said section of the borehole.

6. A method according to any of claims 1 to 5 characterized in that said at least one output parameter is combined with some of said derived measurements, a first one of which is representative of the bulk density and second one of the hydrogen content of the formation at some of said selected depth levels to recompute one input parameter or compute another input parameter.

7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6 characterized in that said at least one output parameter is representative of a shale content of the formation at some of said selected depth levels.

8. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6 characterized in that said at least



Now referring to Fig. 25, there is shown an example of a log producer in accordance with the teachings of the present invention. The pip on the left-hand side of the depth track correspond to the integration of porosity. The distance between two consecutive pips represents a selected number of feet of 100% porosity of pore volume per acre. Each pip on the right-hand side of the depth track represents a selected number of feet of hydrocarbon in place.

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It can be seen from the foregoing that new and improved methods have been invented for analyzing shales and shaly sand formations. With these improved methods, more data than has ever before been available can now be computed and displayed to enable a complete interpretation of shaly sand and shale formations.

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1. A method of processing well logging data, comprising:

(a) deriving a plurality of measurements representative of characteristics of an earth formation at selected depth levels over a section of a borehole;

(b) combining at least some of said derived measurements from at least some of said selected depth levels over said borehole section to compute at least one input parameter for said borehole section;

(c) combining at least some of said plurality of derived measurements from at least some of said selected depth levels with said at least one input parameter to compute at least one output parameter for at least some of said selected depth levels;

(d) characterized by combining at least some of said derived measurements with said at least one output parameter for at least some of said selected depth levels to recompute said at least one input parameter or compute another input parameter for combination with at least some of said plurality of measurements to produce output parameters representative of at least one formation characteristic.

2. A method of processing well logging data according to claim 1 characterized in that at least one of said input parameters is a calibration coefficient of a relation between the magnitude of one of said derived measurements and the shale content of the formation.

3. Method according to claims 1 or 2, wherein several input parameters are computed characterized in that said input parameters are calibration coefficients of relations giving upper limits of the shale content of the formation.

4. Method according to claim 3 characterized in that said measurements related to the shale content include the spontaneous potential, the natural gamma radioactivity, or the resistivity of the formation.

5. A method according to any of claims 1 to 4 characterized in that at least one of said input parameters is a characteristic value of a type of shale over said section of the borehole.

6. A method according to any of claims 1 to 5 characterized in that said at least one output parameter is combined with some of said derived measurements, a first one of which is representative of the bulk density and second one of the hydrogen content of the formation at some of said selected depth levels to recompute one input parameter or compute another input parameter.

7. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6 characterized in that said at least one output parameter is representative of a shale content of the formation at some of said selected depth levels.

8. A method according to any of claims 1 to 6 characterized in that said at least

one output parameter is representative of the relative proportion of silt and wet clay in the formation at some of said selected depth levels.

9. Method according to any of claims 1 to 8 characterized in that said recomputed input parameter of computed other input parameter is combined with at least some of said derived measurements to recompute said at least one output parameter.

10. Method according to claim 1 or 9 characterized in that said recomputed input parameter or computed other input parameter is combined with at least some of said derived measurements to compute other output parameters.

11. Method according to claim 9 and 10, wherein said at least one output parameter or other output parameters include one or more of porosity, the relative proportion of silt and clay, shale, silt or clay content, water or hydrocarbon saturation.

12. A method according to any of claims 1 to 11 characterized in that at least one of said input parameters for said borehole section is computed by combining first derived measurements representative of the bulk density and second derived measurements representative of the hydrogen content at said selected depth levels with third derived measurements.

13. Method according to claim 12 wherein said third derived measurements comprise one or more of the spontaneous potential, natural gamma radioactivity, resistivity or acoustic travel time of a formation, characterized in that said input parameter is a calibration coefficient relating said spontaneous potential or natural gamma measurements to shale content, or is representative of the acoustic travel time derived porosity or resistivity characteristic of a shale or clay over the borehole section.

14. Method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein first and second one of said derived measurements are combined to produce representations of a data value characteristic of the type or composition of shale at each of said selected depth levels.

15. Method according to claim 14 characterized in that said data value are representations of the volume of at least two of "laminated, dispersed or structural" shale.

16. Method according to any of claims 1 to 13 wherein first and second ones of said derived measurements are representative of bulk density and hydrogen content of a formation characterized in that said first and second measurements are combined to produce an index representative of the relative proportion of silt and clay in the formation in at least some of said selected depth levels.

17. Method according to claim 16 characterized in that the value of said index representative is set in relationship with preselected values of data relating to the bulk density and hydrogen content for a characteristic shale and for a characteristic clay over said borehole section of the formation.

18. Method according to claim 16 or 17 characterized in that a function of said index is combined with a third derived measurement of a third formation characteristic at at least some of said selected depth levels to compute at least a coefficient of a relationship between said third formation characteristic and said index over said section of a borehole, said coefficient being an input parameter for said section of the borehole.

19. Method according to claim 18 characterized by selecting the depth levels at which said function of index and said third derived measurements are combined in accordance with the value of data derived from at least one of said measurements at at least some of said selected depth levels with respect to predetermined limits.

20. Method according to claim 16 or 17 characterized by combining said index representative of the relative proportion of silt and clay in the formation at at least some of said selected depth levels with preselected values of data relating to the bulk density and hydrogen content for a characteristic shale and a characteristic clay over said borehole section of the formation and said first and second measurements to produce for at least some of said selected depth levels characteristic shale values, a third one of said derived measurements being representative of the shale content of the formation, and combining said first, second and third measurements with said produced or preselected shale characteristic values to produce an indication of the shale content or porosity.

21. Method according to any of claims 1 to 20 wherein at least one output parameter is combined with said at least one input parameter to produce computed output representations of at least one measureable characteristic of the formation.

22. Method of claim 21 wherein said measurable characteristics are chosen among the spontaneous potential, the natural gamma radioactivity, the resistivity of an invaded or uninvaded zone of the formation at said selected depth level.

23. Method according to claim 21 or 22 characterized in that at least one output parameter is combined with said at least one input parameter to produce computed output representations of at least one formation characteristic of which measurements



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have been derived at at least some of said selected depth levels, and that said computed output representations are compared with said derived measurement of the same characteristic for at least some of said selected depth levels to produce a figure of merit of said characteristic.

24. The method of claim 1 further characterized in that said derived measurements include bulk density, hydrogen content and a third measurement depending on the formation shale content, and wherein one of said input parameters over said section of the borehole is at least one calibration coefficient relating said third measurement to formation shale, silt or clay content and said at least one output parameter is representative of formation shale, silt or clay content, or composition, the combination of some of said derived measurements with said input parameter including the combination of said derived bulk density and hydrogen content at some of said selected depth levels with said at least one calibration coefficient and with said shale, silt or clay content or composition representative output parameter to produce output indications of porosity or content or composition of shale, silt or clay.

25. Method according to any of claims 9 to 11 wherein said derived measurements include first and second measurements dependent upon porosity and several measurements dependent on formation shale content characterized in that the step of recomputing said at least one output parameter or computing other parameters includes the steps of deriving several values of the shale content from said several measurements by means of so-called shale indicators relationships which all provide upper limits of the shale content, and combining the smallest of these values with said first and second measurements to produce shale corrected values of said first and second measurements.

26. Method according to claim 25 characterized in that said shale indicators include at least one relationship between the magnitude of one of said several measurements and the shale content, some calibration coefficients of said relationship comprising one of said input parameters.

27. Method according to claim 25 characterized in that said shale indicators include relationships based on the gas sand line limit, the saturation ratio between invaded and non-invaded zones, the value of the hydrogen content for a characteristic shale, the hydrocarbon density.

28. Method according to any of claims 25 to 27 wherein a representation of the shale content of the formation is derived from at least one of said measurements characterized in that a representation of the hydrocarbon saturation of the invaded zone is derived from one measurement of resistivity and that said porosity dependent measurements are corrected for shale and for hydrocarbon effects.

29. Method according to any of claims 25 to 28 characterized in that said porosity dependent measurements are representative of the bulk density and hydrogen content of the formation at said selected depth level.

30. The method of any of claims 1 to 13 characterized by further including the steps of determining if data related to one or more of said derived measurements for said selected depth levels is within predetermined limits, preventing the combination of said derived measurements to compute and/or recompute said at least one input parameter for those depth levels where said data related to derived measurements is outside of said predetermined limits.

31. Method according to claims 9 or 10 and 30 characterized by enabling the combination of said derived measurement and input parameters to recompute said at least one output parameter or compute other output parameters for those depth levels where said data related to derived measurements is outside of said predetermined limits.

32. Method according to claim 31 wherein said data related to one or more of said derived measurements are related to the bulk density and hydrogen content of the formation at said selected depth levels and characterized in that the step of enabling the combination of said derived measurements includes adjusting said data related to one or more of bulk density and hydrogen content for those depth levels where said data is outside of said predetermined limits, and thereafter combining said adjusted data to recompute said at least one output parameter or compute other output parameters.

33. Method according to claim 32 wherein said derived measurements at said selected depth levels further include one or more of the formation acoustic travel time and at least one measurement representative of the formation shale content characterized in that the step of adjusting is performed in dependence on one or both of the acoustic travel time or said shale content representative measurement.

34. Method according to claim 9 or 10 wherein said derived measurements include first and second measurements representative of bulk density and hydrogen content, and a third measurement of formation shale content, characterized in that the step of re-

computing said at least one output parameter or computing other output parameters includes the steps of combining said first, second and third measurements to produce data related to shale corrected values of bulk density and hydrogen content, comparing said data related to hydrogen content and bulk density to produce one or more output representations indicative of the presence of hydrocarbons or the accuracy of said data related to shale corrected value and adjusting one or both of said data related to hydrogen content or bulk density to bring about a preselected relationship between said data related to bulk density and that related to hydrogen content.

35. Method according to claim 9 or 10 wherein said derived measurements comprise bulk density, hydrogen content and first and second resistivity measurements representative of the resistivity of different radial portions of a formation, characterized in that the step of recomputing said at least one output parameter or computing another output parameter includes combining said bulk density, hydrogen content and first and second resistivity means to produce corrected data related to hydrogen content and bulk density corrected for shale and hydrocarbon effects, and combining said corrected data with other derived measurements to produce said recomputed or other computed output parameters.

36. Method according to any of claims 1 to 13 characterized by comparing one of said output parameters with a limit value thereof and recomputing at least some of said output parameters if said compared parameter is beyond said limit value.

37. Method according to claim 36 characterized in that said compared parameter is matrix grain density.

38. Method according to claim 36 characterized in that said compared parameter is the hydrocarbon density.

39. Method according to claim 36 characterized in that said compared parameter is the water or hydrocarbon saturation of a selected radial portion of a formation.

40. Method according to claim 36 characterized in that said compared parameter is related to data derived from the hydrogen content of the formation at said selected depth levels.

41. Method according to claim 36 wherein one of said derived measurements is related to the resistivity of the invaded zone of the borehole characterized in that said compared parameter is the water saturation in the invaded zone to test the validity of said resistivity measurement.

42. Method according to claim 36 characterized in that said compared output parameter is related to a measurement dependent on porosity of the formation, said limit value being computed from a maximum of porosity over the borehole section.

43. Method according to claim 36 wherein a value of the shale content is derived from shale detectors characterized by comparing selected ones of said output parameters to determine if they are within a predetermined range with respect to one another and by adjusting the value of the shale content derived from the shale indicators until said output values assume a selected relationship with respect to one another, thereby producing new values of said output parameters.

44. Method of processing well logging data substantially as described hereinbefore with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

45. A log comprising a record of the processed data obtained by the method of any preceding claim.

46. A method according to any of claims 1 to 43 characterised by making a recording of at least one of said at least one output parameters or of other output parameters or of computed output representations of measureable characteristics of the formation as a function of depth on a recording medium.

47. The recording made in accordance with claim 46.

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