

AWM4
Australian Imperial Force unit war diaries,
1914-18 War

Engineers

Item number: 14/23/6

Title: 4th Field Company, Australian
Engineers

April 1916



AWM4-14/23/6

WAR DIARY

4th Field Coy. AE April 1916. Army Form C. 2118

Instructions regarding War Diaries and Intelligence Summaries are contained in F. S. Regs., Part II. and the Staff Manual respectively. Title Pages will be prepared in manuscript.

INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
Raihana Serapenn	April			
	1		Distribution of Coy: - HQ, No. 1 Sec., No. 3 Sec. Rail Head; NO. 4 sec. L. half of line, No. 2 Sec. R. half of line, the latter half coy carrying out repairs and construction of front line trenches, the former, general camp works.	
	10		Lieut. Coghlan and party consisting of 2 nd cpl. Butcher and sappers J. Brown, S. E. Monument, C. Sherman, J. Wemyes, J. H. Corless, E. W. L. Hartley, S. Mackay, and F. Reade returned to Rail Head being relieved by Lieut. Dunsdon and nine sappers from no. 3 sec.	
	11	1400	Engineer party detailed above started on raiding expedition to Jif Jaffa	
	15		Raiding expedition returned with one Austrian officer and about 30 Turks prisoners who had been engaged in boring operations. The artesian boring plant was destroyed with gun cotton and very valuable information collected. Report attached.	Appendix I
19		Lieut. Davidson and no. 1 sec. relieved Lieut. Mills and no. 4 sec. on L. of line.		
20.		Remainder of no. 3 sec. returned relieved remainder of no. 2 sec. on R. of line.		

P.E.

4th Field Coy.

Army Form C. 2118

WAR DIARY

Page 2

A. E.

April. 1916.

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~

(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information				Remarks and references to Appendices
Railhead Scrapum	April. 1916.		Camp works completed during month.				
		Unit	Commenced	Mess Huts Completed	Commenced	Stables. Completed	
		3 rd LH. Bde. H.Q.		1		1	
		3 rd LH. Field Amb.			1		
		4 th Div. Sig. Troop.			1	1	
		R.H.A.					
		Camel Trans. Corps			3	1	
		10 th Regt. A.L.H.		3	3		
		4 th Field Coy.	7	1	7	1	
		12 th Inf. Bde. H.Q.			1		
		45 th Bn.	1	5			
		46 th Bn	4	6			
		47 th Bn.	-1	9			
		48 th Bn.		1			
		12 th Bde. MG. Coy.		2			
Mobile Vet. Sec.			1				
Cookhouses and launders for about 3 units.		28	27	4			
Also general camp works.				R.L.			

4th Field Coy.
Army Form C. 2118
A.E.
April 1916

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~~INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY~~
(Erase heading not required.)

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices
<i>Railhead Scrapum.</i>			<p><i>General Training was carried on by men not engaged on works and classes for m.c.o.'s</i></p> <p><i>Coy. received second no 2 inoculation for typhoid and paratyphoid A and B.</i></p>	

R.C.

4th Field CoAE

appendix I

COPY.

D

Engineer Officer's report on Reconnaissance with Light
Horse to Jif Jafa 11/4/16 to 15/4/16.
Attached Sketches Pages V. VI. VII.

1400
11/4/16 Column moved off from Railhead in following order:- 1. Light Horse. 2. Machine Gun Section. 3. Engineers. 4. Army Medical Corps. Bearing SE direction. Passed front Firing line. For several miles sanddunes, hills and ridges, all running (in general) north and south direction parallel to Canal. Country much the same as that in the vicinity of front line trenches. Prevailing winds appear to be northerly judging from trees and shrubs.

1730
11/4/16 Halted for meal. Proceeded one hour later in NE direction. Sanddunes change direction, now running E and W.

1900
11/4/16 Column entered bed of "WADI" - very hard sand bottom and flat - averaging 7 yards in width - good going for transport WADI has appearance of a prepared causeway. Watercourse is marked by small groups of pine trees at intervals on either bank.

For several miles country on north side of WADI is flat, and for the most part exposed, whilst on the south bank it is hilly affording good cover the whole way. It is fairly straight and has not many bends.

2300
11/4/16 Came up to Camel Convoy, and bivouaced till dawn. Proceeded along bed of WADI, track improving and widening, and a number of small islands were passed with pine trees growing on them.

0900
12/4/16 Entered range of hills and WADI became rocky and harder for transport, high banks on either side.

1145
12/4/16 Column arrived at Cisterns close to "MOIYA HARAB". Cisterns are situated on north bank of WADI about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile lower down from fork, where WADI divides into two, and at the junction of a small estuary. A cross section of cisterns and WADI is shown on attached sketch. Location of Cisterns is marked by big pine tree and heaps of white stones recently quarried. There are also two large fig trees growing close by. North side of WADI at this point is very stony, but on south side are high sandhills.

1200
12/4/16 Pumps and trough put into service immediately by Engineers. Total length of suction required 6 feet only. If cistern had been full then water could have been siphoned into trough. Cistern is in convenient position for watering horses, but it is necessary to use troughs, as horses cannot drink direct from cistern. Water in outer cistern measured 18000 gallons.

Refer
Sketch Total capacity when full to overflow 30000 gallons.
Water in inner cistern measured 15000 gallons.
Total capacity when full to overflow 75000 gallons.
Small weir diverts flood water from WADI and fills water cistern as shown on sketch.
Inner cistern is 10 feet lower than outer cistern, and is filled by overflow from outer cistern through small hole $2\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter drilled through rock.
Roof of inner cistern is supported in centre by 5 ft. square pillar. Overflow from this cistern irrigates a cultivated flat about $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent. Base formed at this point. Four Engineers left in charge of water supply. After dark Column proceeded up bed of estuary to northward for two miles. Track very stony, uneven and difficult to traverse. After leaving bed of WADI traversed for 3 or 4 hours a high stony plateau in NE direction.

0200
13/4/16 Arrived at Trig. Point 1340, and bivouaced till dawn. Camels left behind here. Party proceeded soon after dawn to objective taking NE direction, skirting high hills on right of route, and flat plain on left.



45 D
0900
13/4/16.

Sighted Gin tripod in centre of plain. Halted under cover of hill bearing 110° on gin and 1 mile from it. Aeroplane dropped message at this point. Party advanced to Jif Jafa camp and encountered enemy. While fighting proceeded Engineer party of six examined and demolished plant, which consisted of complete artesian well boring outfit with 3 bores already put down. I was particularly impressed with the plant, which was very substantially designed and well made. According to statement of prisoner, it was German Military pattern. In vicinity of camp a number of wells had been sunk and large underground tanks ~~cut~~ cut out of rock for holding flood waters.

No.1 Bore:- ~~Bore~~ ~~work~~ apparently abandoned.
8" diameter well casing.
51' deep.

Dry red sand at bottom (no water).

No.2 Bore:- 40 yards west of No.1 bore.

6" diameter well casing.

276' deep, chalk and sand at bottom (no water).

Boring plant erected, though work had been temporarily suspended. Plant was left in readiness to proceed.

No.3 Bore:- First sighted in centre of plain.

8" diameter casing.

256' deep. Dry sand at bottom (no water). Gin still in position though work apparently abandoned. No tools nor plant.

Sketch shews position of Bores etc., Camps, and Wells.

Plant demolished by Engineers:-

1. 2 sets of gins wrecked by cutting legs at points BBBB shewn on sketch. 4 slabs of guncotton used at each cut, 3 slabs found not quite sufficient.
2. 2 winches wrecked by shattering gear wheels with one slab and frame of winch with one slab (Points 6 on Sketch).
3. 2 4-ton screw jacks broken to fragments with two slabs on each jack.
4. Large quantity of tools, small parts of boring plant, drills, couplings and plates etc. were dropped down bore together with 2000 rounds (Martini Henri).
5. All 3 Bores destroyed by blowing in well casing 25 ft. from surface at point A on sketch. In case of 6" diameter bore 2 slabs were lowered on string after lighting fuse. The two 8" diameter bores were treated in a similar manner but in this case 3 slabs were lowered. Fragments of well casing were blown up to surface.
6. 400 feet of hydraulic piping used for boring purposes were destroyed by cutting in two with guncotton. Two slabs placed in middle of heap of pipes effectively destroyed same. A heap of 14 lengths of this piping was found 800 yards to east of No.1 bore and destroyed (included in 400 feet above). No part of boring plant left intact.

Returned homeward along same WADI.

1300
14/4/16.

One hour after heavy thunderstorm, WADI flood came down at the rate of 12 miles per hour, which necessitated Column leaving WADI for higher ground.

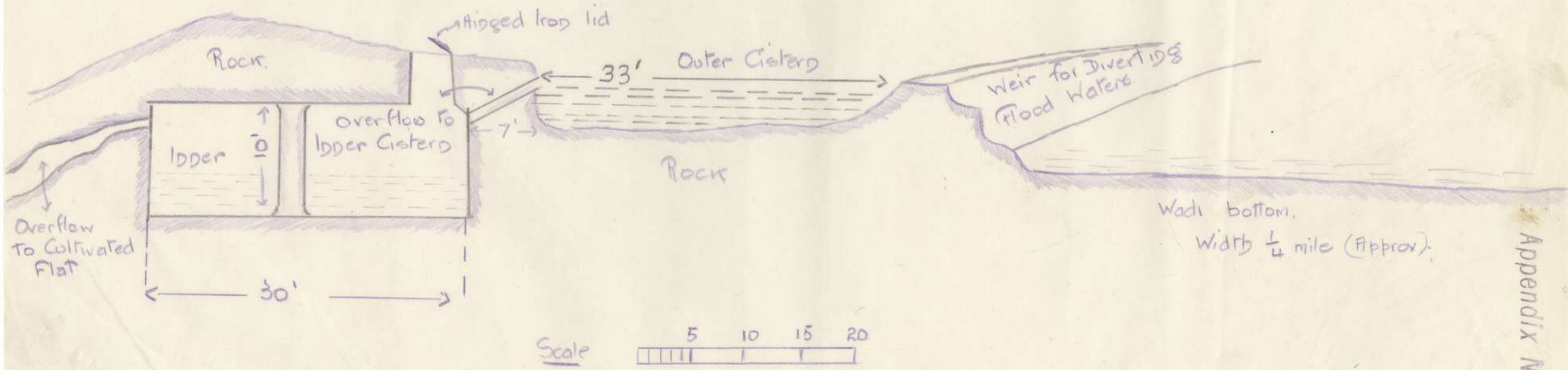
0400
15/4/16.

Engineers party arrived at Railhead "all correct".

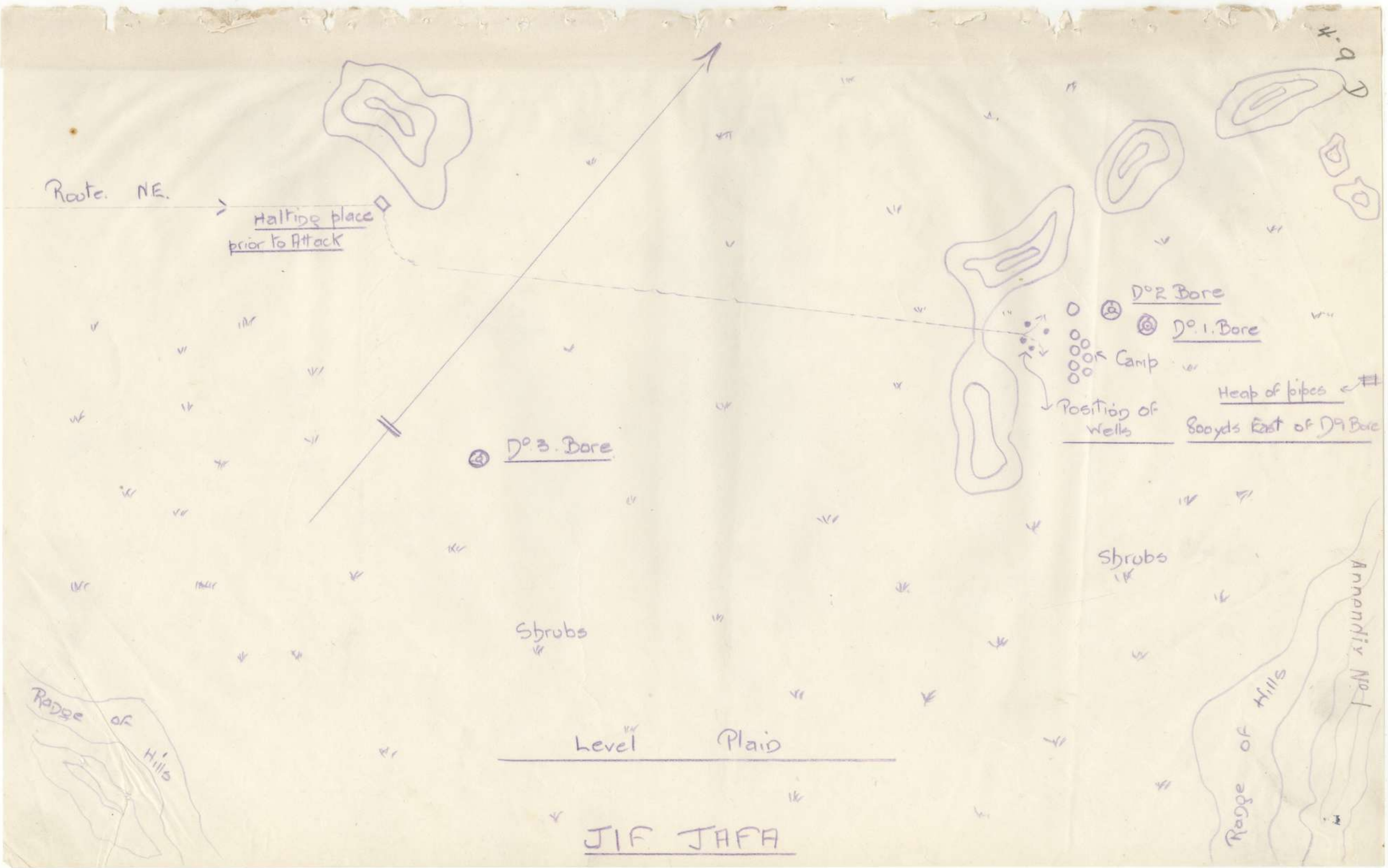
(Signed) J. Coghlan Lt.
4th Fld. Co. Engrs.

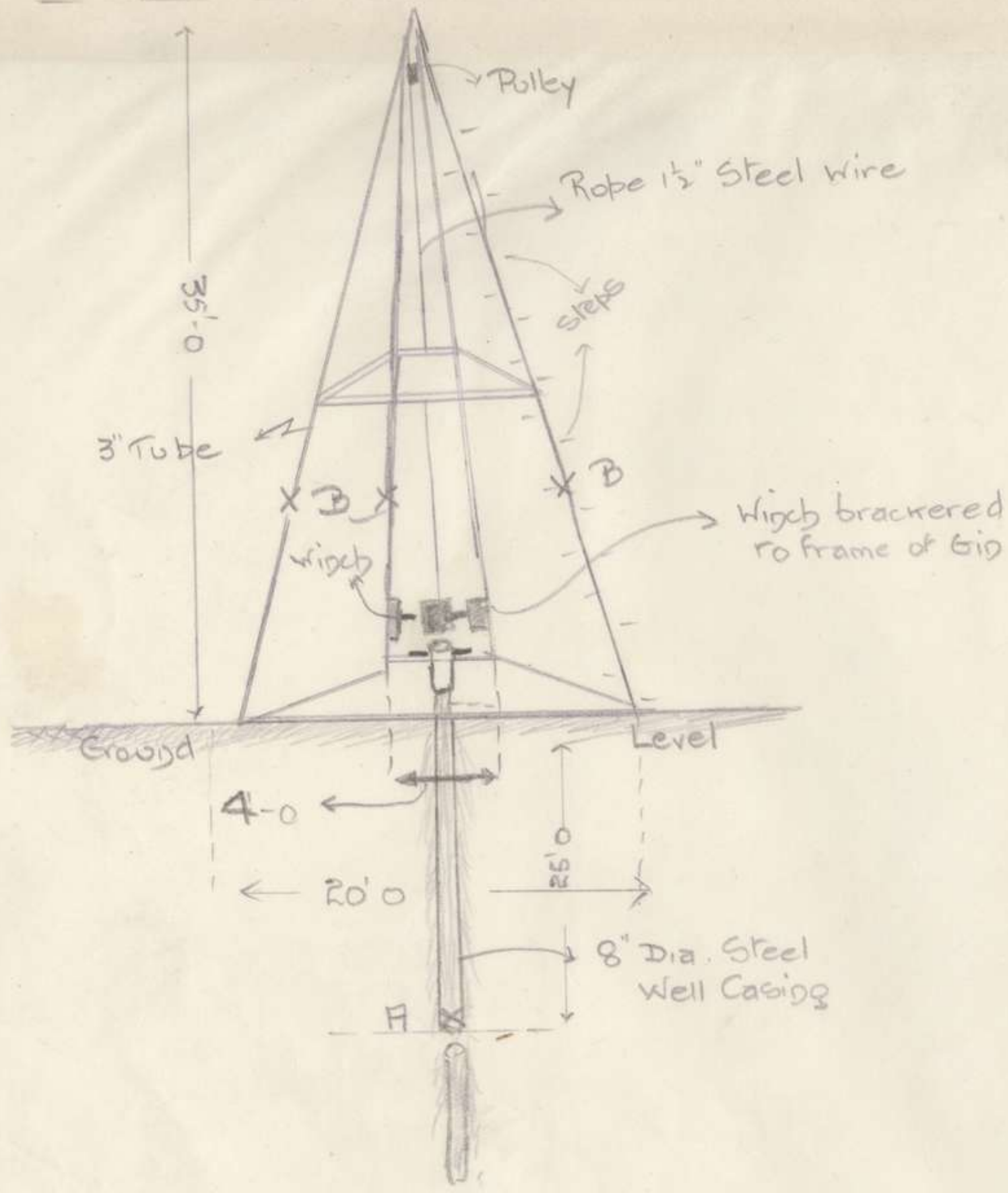
Cisterns Near "Moiya Harab"

4.8
D

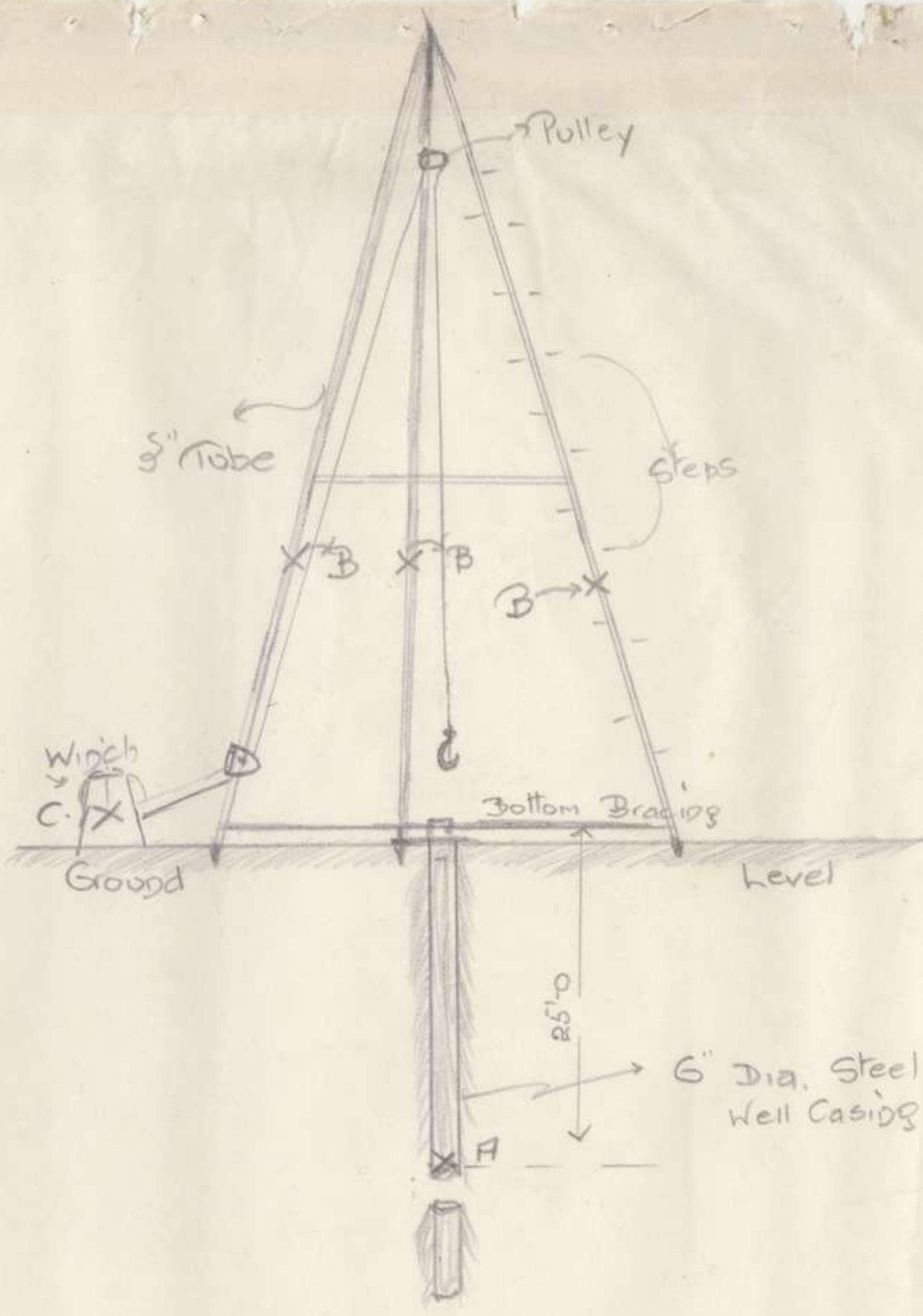


Appendix No. 1
5

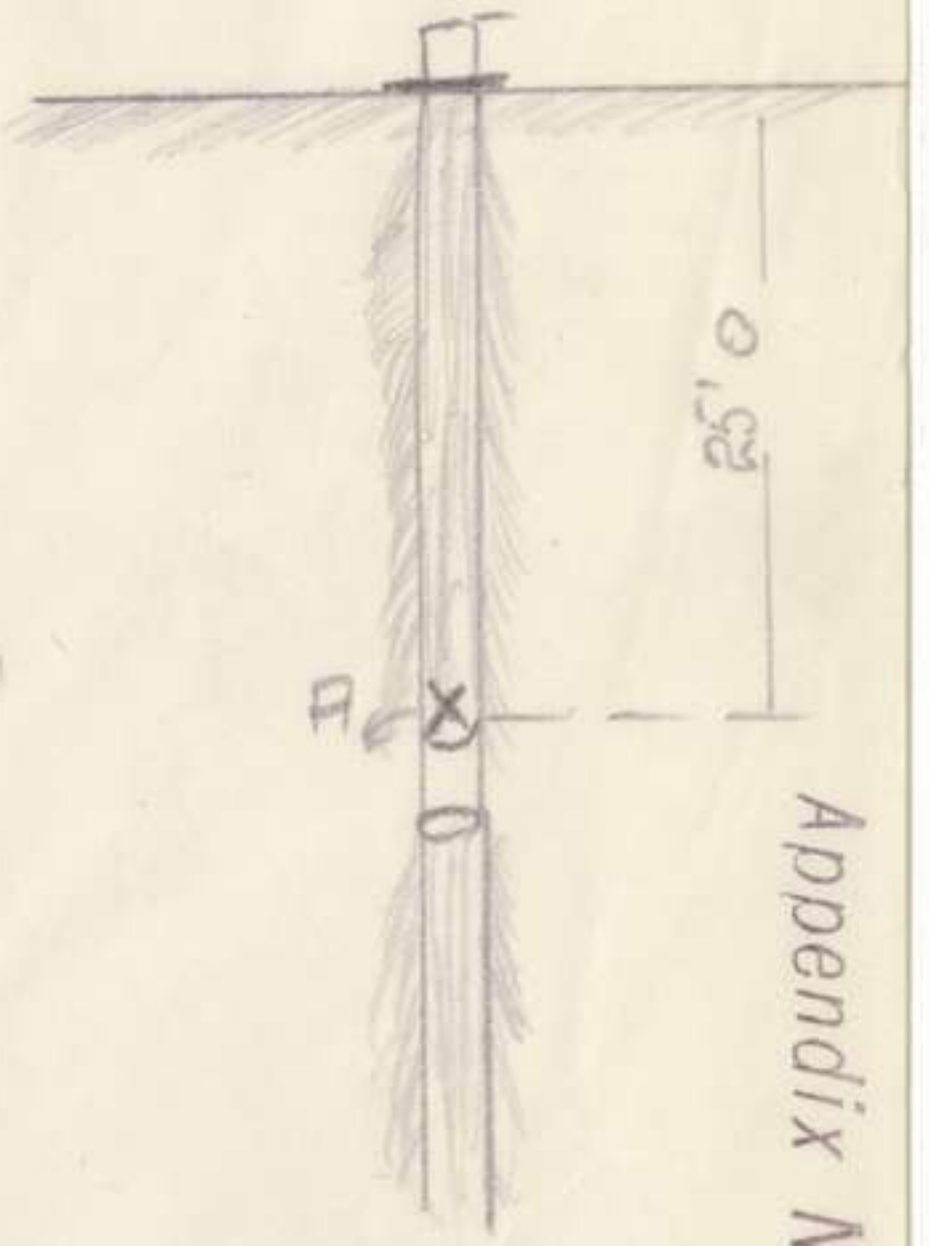




No. 3 Bore



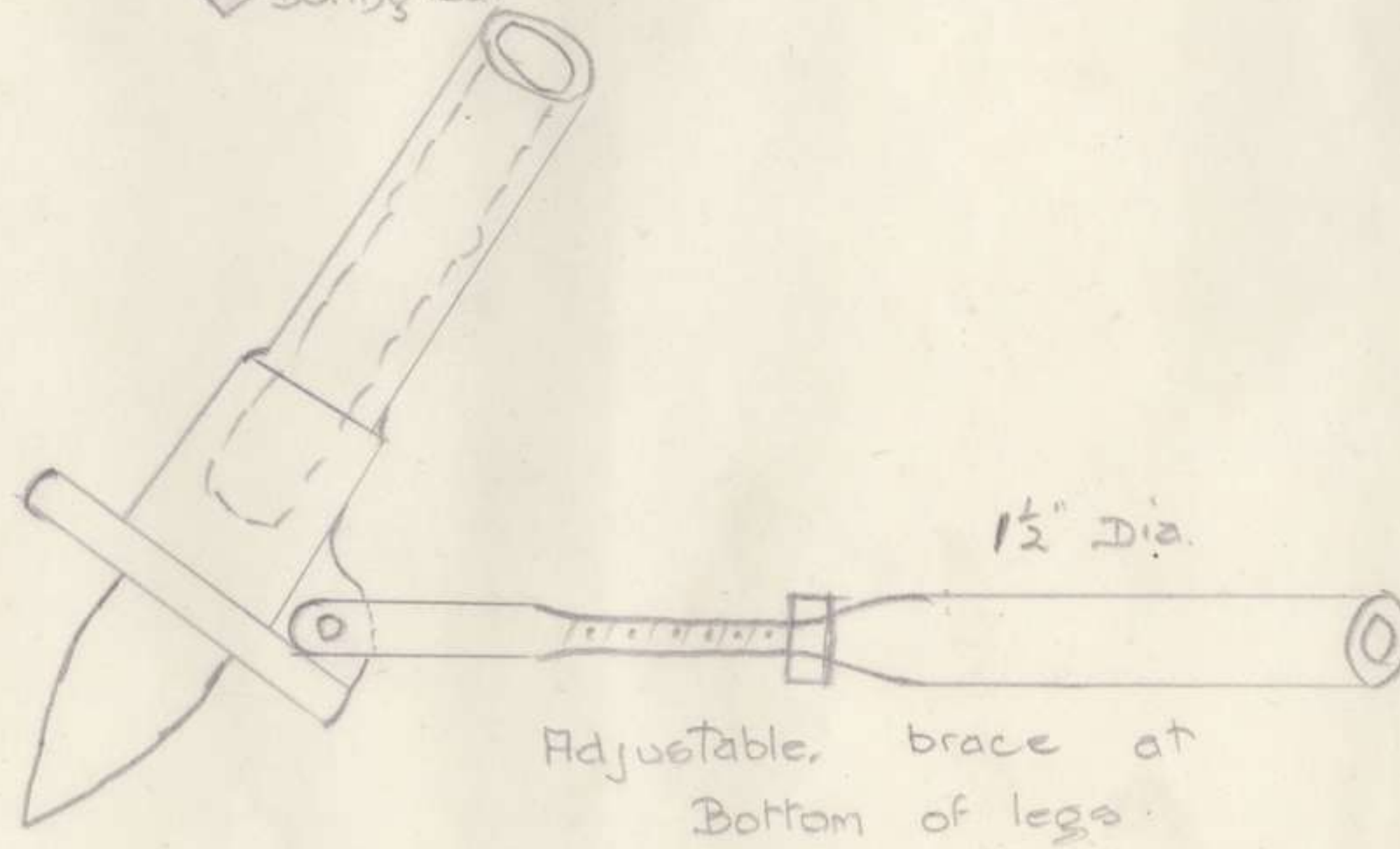
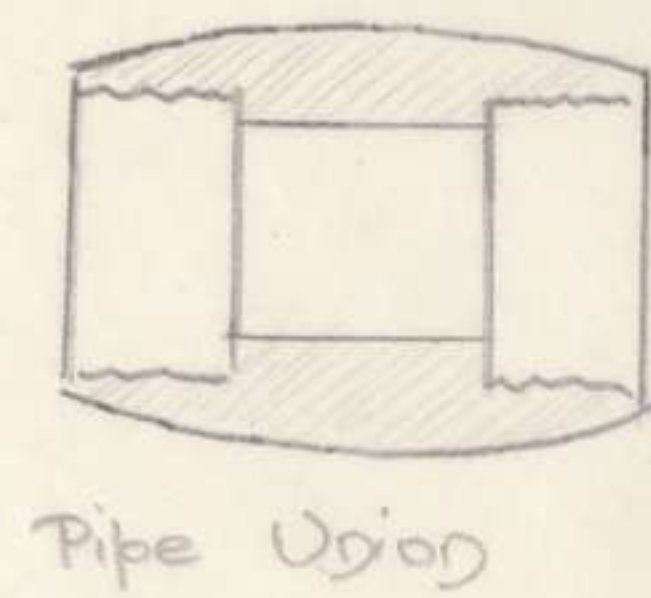
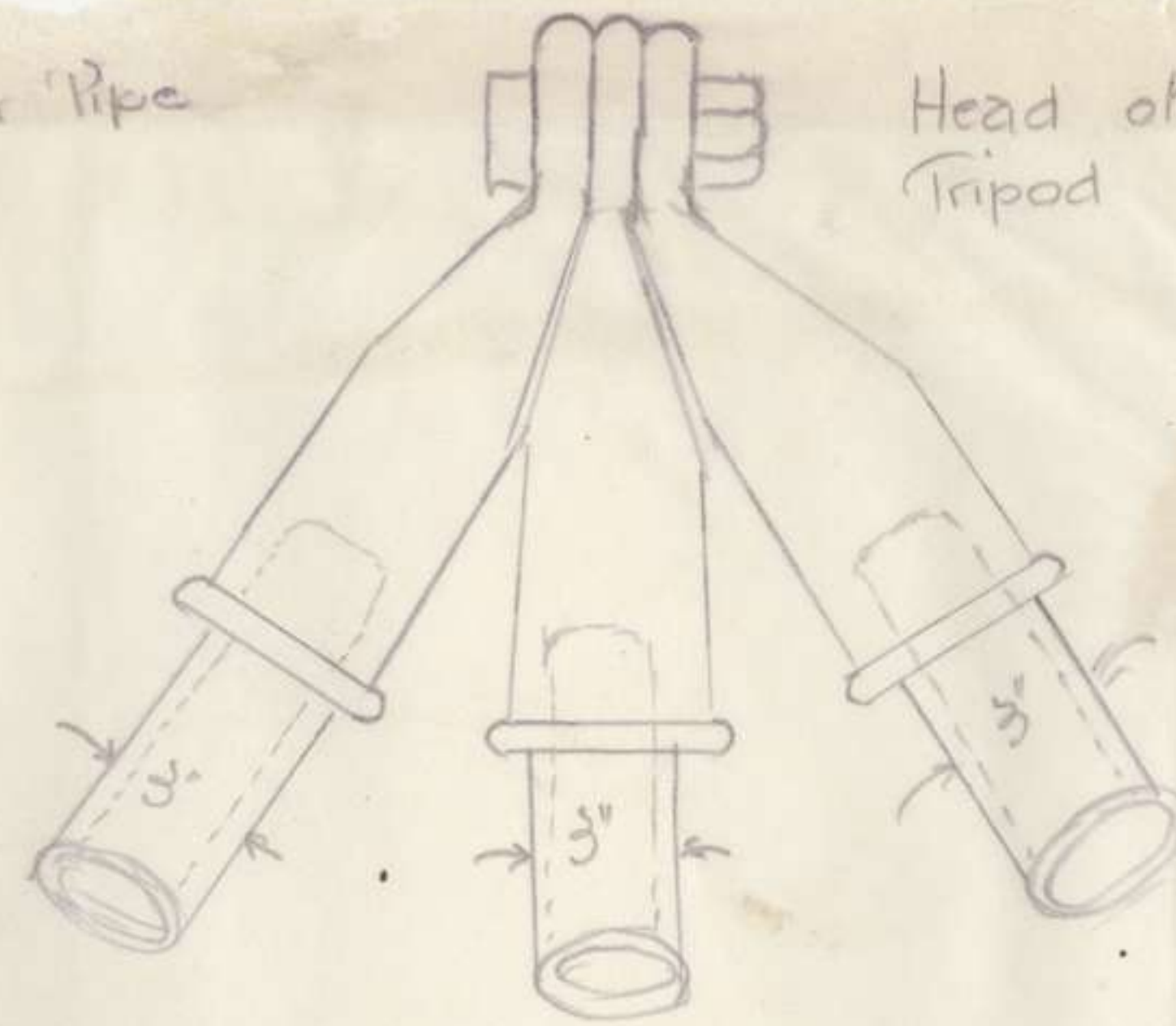
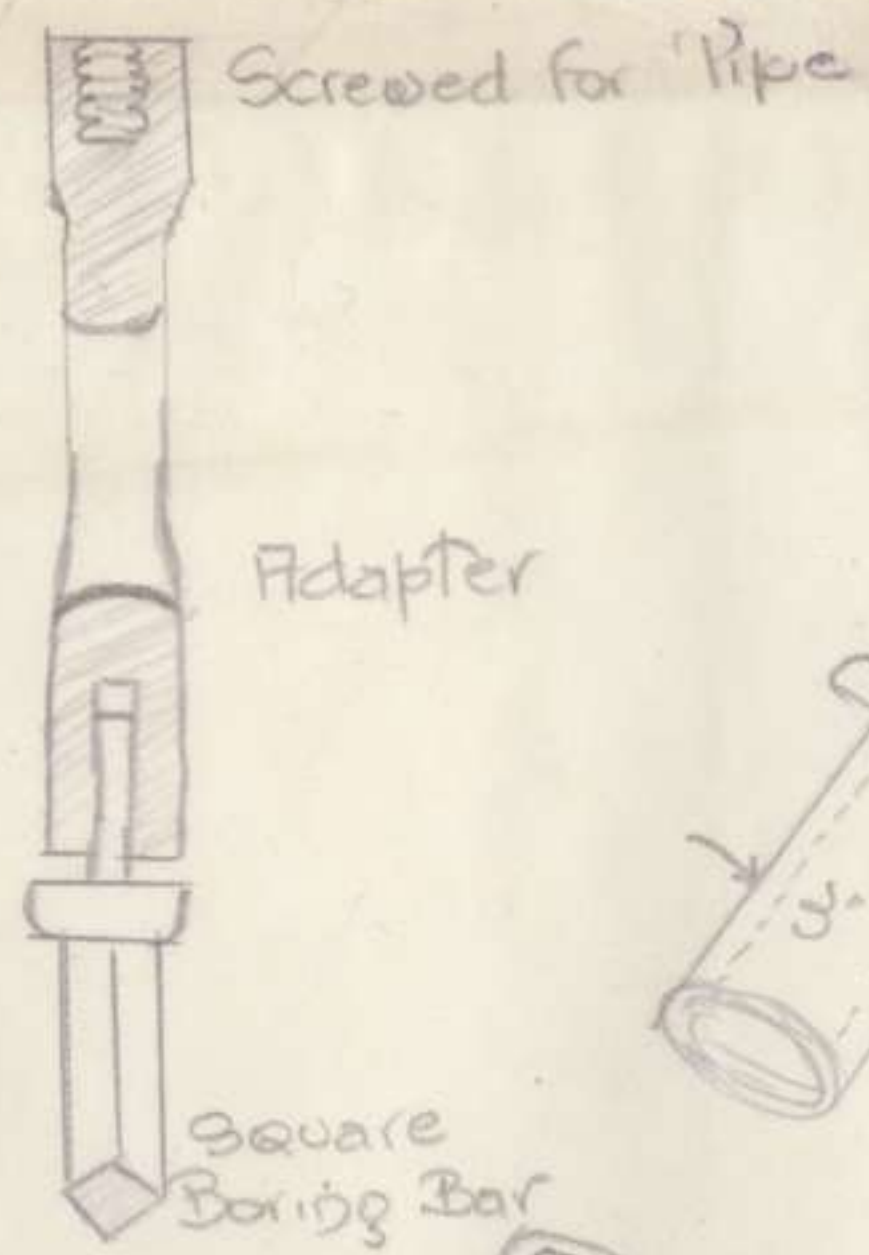
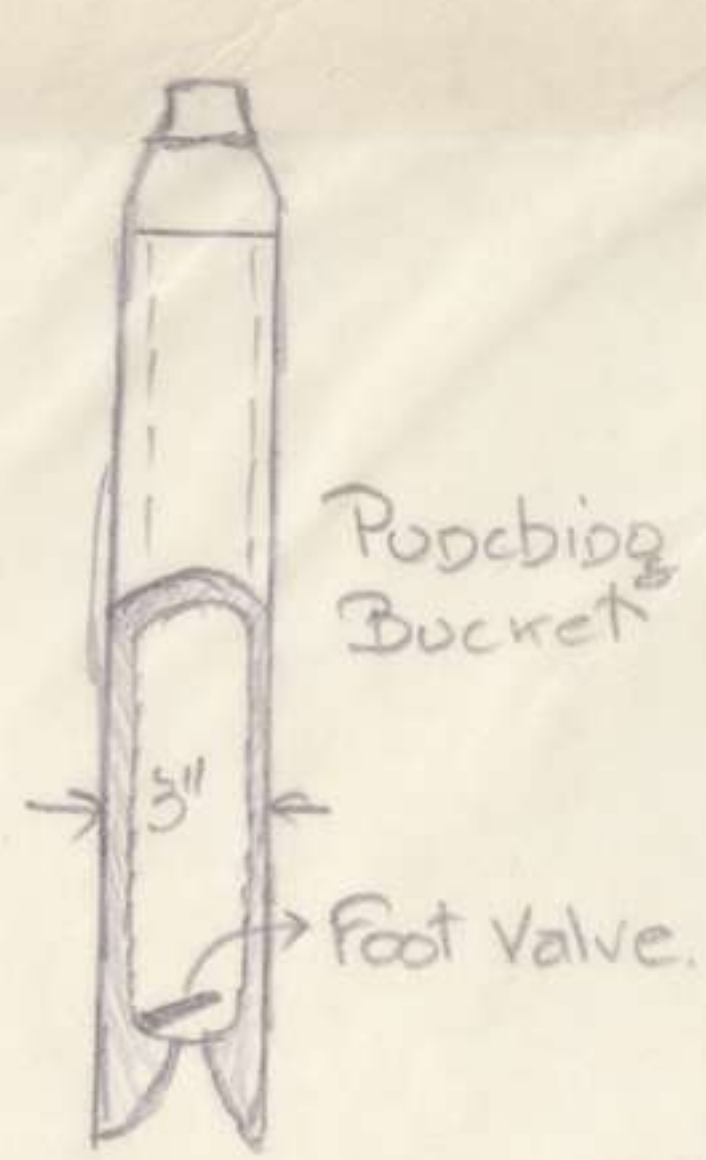
No. 2 Bore



No. 1 Bore

4.7.19

Appendix No. 1



Foot of Gig legs

A.G.S