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THE HYDROLOGY AND GROLOGY OF THE GILES (4 MILE) MIJITARY SHEET.

By

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MINES, S. AUST.

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Bore logs (and analyses) Bores Nos. 1 - 5
Petrological report by G. Taylor
Palaeontological report by Dr. N. Ludbrook

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2100_00	
1. 8653 A.B.	Locality Plan
2. 52-260 A.B.	Giles military sheet showing traverses
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#### DEPARTMENT OF MINES - SOUTH AUSTRALIA

THE HYDROLOGY AND GROLOGY OF THE GILES (4 M.)
MILITARY SHEET.

#### Location of the Area.

The Ciles military sheet is between Lat 28° and 29°N and Longitude 132°co, 133°30°S, and its position is shown on the Locality Plan (Plan No. 1).

#### Transport. Communication etc.

Road access is difficult and hard on men and vehicles alike. In dry weather the sand dunes present a formidable problem even to multi-wheel drive vehicles. Reconnaissance work off the very rare tracks necessitates breaking through the mulga scrub, which imposes a terrific strain on vehicles and drivers. Only specially designed and protected vehicles could last more than a few days under these conditions, and mishaps such as staked tyres are a common occurrence. To leave the few tracks in this trackless desert spells serious trouble and even tragedy for any but the most experienced bushmen.

Two-way wireless communication, both between vehicles of the party, and also a base headquarters, is essential. By contrast air reconnaissance at low altitudes and slow speed is the ideal method of covering the ground. Visibility was exceedingly good and any objects of interest could be readily located up to 10 miles either side of the line of flight. Such conditions would not, of course, prevail in the summer time.

#### Provious Investigations

- (1) Australia Twice Tra ersed (Vol. II) by Ernest Giles. Fourth Expedition 1875 covered similar country within 50 miles west of area under consideration.
- (2) Explorations by R.T. Haurice Fowlers Bay to Rawlinson Ranges (1901) Fowlers Ba to Cambridge Gulf (1902).
- (3) Other scientific parties to approach the area without actually traversing it include the Elder Expedition, H.Y.L. Brown and R.L. Jack.

### Present Investigations - Purpose and Scope

The object of the present investigation was to determine

the underground water possibilities of the area. During July - August 1952, a period of approximately ten days was spent to ground reconnaissance using as transport a special type Land Rover, followed in mid-August '52 by several days air reconnaissance. Ground and air traverses are plotted on the accompanying plan. (Plan No. 2).

#### Coccenity

#### 1. Tonography

The area is flat and generally featureless with 2-2 sand dunes regularly spaced at intervals of 200 - 400 yards. The dunes average 30 ft. in height, 200 - 250 ft. width at base, and are bright red in colour. The main topographic feature is a chain of salt lakes occupying the central-western portion of the sheet. Divided now into several separate lakes by very large send dunes (60 ft. height) they represent the only defined drainage in the whole area.

#### 2. Climate

The climate is said with a long, very hot summer and a short, cool winter. Rainfall records are not available, but it is considered there is no regular and reliable wet season. Main precipitation is probably in summer thunder storms, with winter rains rare. During 1952, however, several winter rains up to 30 points have been noted.

#### 3. <u>Vezetation</u>

The Giles military sheet is better wooded than anticipated. The dominant tree is mulga, spaced approximately 1 per 10 - 20 square yards and averaging 10 - 12 ft. height, though in favoured localities trees up to 25 ft. height were observed. Myall is also common, generally subordinate to mulga, but occasionally dominant.

Other trees noted include oaks (confined to well developed on stony knolls) mallees, both Ooldes mailee, 15 - 20 ft. high, and a smaller reddish-leafed mailee. Wild peach trees and wattle were fairly common, and an unknown spiky green tree was observed confined entirely to gypsum ridges.

Large numbers of dead mulga occur, standing and lying, but there is also a considerable regeneration indicated by the number of young mulga and myall.

Several types of misletce are firmly established.

Salt bush is the dominant herbage and small aginifex is common. Due unloubtedly to the abnormal winter rains, a variety of grasses and succulent herbage occurs widespread. A yellow flowering succulent predominates, together with pink, and white (yellow centred) daisies. "Silver" grass was fairly common and parakylia grass was observed well established around at least one clas pan together with several other unknown grasses.

The present abundance of feed would possibly support a shoop to the acre in some areas, but the normal conditions might be more akin to a sheep to the square mile.

#### <u>Concrei Geology</u>

Rock exposures are limited to a few areas around clay pans and salt lakes and occasional stony knolls, the universal mantle of red sand effectively masking the remainder.

dood exposures were studied in detail around the margins of a clay pan in the west-central portion of the military sheet and a number of samples collected for further study. (See Plan 2).

The stratigraphic succession here is (R.b. + 1000 ft.).

Photos 1, 2 and3(

- (0 15 ft. Siliceous boulder bed containing numerous pebbles (mainly quartzites but some quartz and other rock types) ranging in size from 12 ins. Gieneter down.
- 15 30 ft. Sandy shale with some sandstone bars containing small pebbles and gravel, rounded and angular.
- 30 50 ft. Medium grained sandstone with some small pebbles.

Photos (50 → 55 ft. Do - current bedded - no pebbles. 4 and 5 (45 - 145 ft. Very fine grained silty sandstone.

145 - 175 ft. Shales and sandstones.

Some three miles further north where surface elevation is 70 ft. lower (i.e. R.L. 930 ft.) shales are more prominent. Gection here approximates -

0 - 30 ft. sandstone

30 - 40 ft. sandy shales and sandstone bars

40 - 120+ ft. red-brown shales with occasional sandstone bar. # For petrological notes by Asst. Geologist G. Taylor and palaeontological notes by Dr. N. Ludbrook - see appendices.

#### 'Structure

The strats are all horizontal and except for two isolated areas no evidence of folding was seen.

In these two areas the atrata are locally contorted into numerous minute domes and "pounds" thought due to cross folding.

The fold axes do not apparently persist beyond the local confined areas which do not exceed 100 yards square.

With the exception of one fairly strong fault striking N50W and vertical, which is represented by up to 24 inches of crushed, yellow silicified rock standing out in prominent relief. (see Photo No. 6) no faulting was found.

The sandstones exhibit a fairly strong joint pattern, the major jointe striking N50°% to 50°% and dipping very steeply, with a subsidiary system developed at right angles.

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The boulder bed which makes prominent cliffs in the highest elevation visited is an interesting occurrence, and it is suggested this may be possibly originally of fluvo-glacial origin.

Points which support this origin are

- (1) The diversity of rock types present admittedly
  they are mainly quartzites, but of differing types
  and include also quartz, cherts, granite etc.
- (2) The poor sorting of the boulders within the strata.
- (3) The angle of deposition of many peobles in contrast to the horizontal nature of the sediments.
- (4) No stricted pobles were seen but a polish is indicated on some freshly exposed surfaces.
- (5) Whilst most pobbles are rounded, a large number are engular and sub angular.

#### 

No macro fossils were observed, and an unsuccessful search has been made for micro fossils to assist in determining the age of the rocks.

The undisturbed nature of the sediments affords no indication of age, and the rocks could be placed almost anywhere in the time scale.

The presence of micaceous sandstone, and a lithological resemblance to the Pimba sediments suggests they may be of similar age - possibly late Pre-Cambrian?.

#### 

No sign of igneous ectivity was seen in the Jiles military sheet and it is thought the nearest igneous rocks would be towards the Everard Ranges (approximately 40 miles north) and Mulgathing and Commonwealth Hill Station 100 miles 3).

#### Sconomic Mineral Deposits

Apart from very small localised ironatones, no mineral occurrences were noted, and the undisturbed nature of the sediments makes the presence of ore minerals very unlikely.

The best prospects might be opal, as the rocks are universally silicified and several well defined, and extensive "reefs" of potch opal were observed, without any "colour" being noted.

Very extensive ridges of gypsum both "kopi" and crystal.

occur along the margins of the salt lakes, and exceedingly large
toncages are available. The distance from markets and inaccessibility of the area precludes any possibility of these deposits being
an economic proposition.

Two surface samples essayed by the Assay Dept., S.A. School of Mines resulted

- (1) Rock gypsum 95.45% Ca So<sub>4</sub> 2820
- (2) Kopi 87.2 Do -

#### Notes to low

#### (1) Existing Water Supplies - Native Water Holes

No permanent water supplies existed, although the remains of several native water holes were observed. These were all located in hollows surrounded by sand dunes and were readily spotted from the air - appearing as cases in the desert. In each case studied the original water hole has long since collapsed.

Re-opening of the holes to 10 - 15 feet depth would probably restore the water supply, but these can only be considered as small sockages, very limited in output, and with a very variable salinity governed by seasonal conditions and the draw-off. It would be unwise to assume any of these would provide a permanent and reliable source of potable water.

#### (2) Test Bores

The low rainfall and lack of satisfactory drainage systems such as fresh swamps and sandy creeks, suggested the presence of only saline ground waters.

Boring on a number of sites selected to utilise any existing hydrologic or geologic features which might assist in providing better quality water, has confirmed this suggestion.

The location and details of these bores is shown on Plan No. 3 attached, and logs and analyses accompanying this report.

on the Everard military sheet some 20 miles north of its junction with the Giles sheet. Here the prevailing sand ridges suddenly and sharply give way to flat grassy plains and small swamps marking the southern limits of the watercourse known as the Officer. These swamps are grassy and fresh in appearance, and would be well worth drilling, with fair prospects of providing stock water at least. It is considered probable that following The Officer north to the Everard Ranges would provide even better drilling sites.

#### Conclusions

- (1) It is considered that prospects of obtaining permanent reliable sources of potable underground water in the Giles military sheets are very poor.
- (2) Limited supplies of stock water might be obtained in suitable hollows in the sand dunes.
- (3) Large permanent supplies of very saline underground water should be available in any of the more defined depressions (salt lakes and clay pans).
- (4) Horizontal sediments are considered to be the only strata exposed in the Giles military sheet, but sand dunes mask much of the area. The age of these sediments could not be established.

Tab:JK <u>29/9/52</u>. (T.A. Barnes)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MINES

### DEPARTMENT OF THESE

#### PETROGRAPHIC REPORT ON ROCKS OF THE CLIES 4M MILITARY SHRET.

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- 1. Summary.
- 2. Introduction.
- 3. Petrographic Fontures of Samples.
- 4. Illustrations.

#### 

Most of the rocks are of the nature of highly decomposed arenaceous sediments. Calcareous, ferruginous and gypseous rocks make up the remainder. No lithological guide to the age of the rocks can be given. The origin of the alore-conglomerates is oven to doubt, the constituent grains varying in shape from well-rounded to sharply angular, with a variety of rock types represented.

#### 2. Introduction.

The suite of rooks described below were collected during a reconnaiseance air survey of the Giles Military Sheet area. The geologist reports that the outcrops are sporadic and soully show no obvious stratigraphic continuation. Consequently, the nature of the report necessarily takes a form of individual rock descriptions.

The rocks have been dealt with in the following order:

firstly, the numbered samples have been considered, beginning

with the most southerly and ending with the most northerly

in the area. After these the unnumbered samples have been

described. Each brief description has been preceded by the

sample number (as received), the locality, the name given, and

the figure number, where applicable.

All the photographs are reproduced at the same magnification, vis. X70 approx.

An examination was made using material from a borehole, in the area, to assertain whether spores or other organic remains were present. To such remains were discovered, although the generally extreme alteration of the sedi cate would not have been conductive to their preservation.

3. Selient Petrographic Postures of Samples.

Service 3.23: Prom White Cliff Hill 50' high: on top to 10'.

71 mare 1.

The rock is a medium and very even grained sendstone composed of subangular to subrounded quartz grains set in a fine
grained matrix of fibrous to flaky clay. The variable strain
effects in the quartz grains suggest more than one origin for
the material. Apart from small opeque grains, no other micerals
are present.

Sample 3.29: From White Cliff Hill 50' high; on top to 10'.

11:000 2.

This rock is concents veriably grained, most grains being about 0.1 ms. to 0.2 mm across, with occasional quartz grains or rock fragments of much larger size - more than 2.0 cm across. The hand specimen is gray except where iron etained. Chalcadory and clay make up the interstitial material, the chalcadory often forming marrow voin-like structures when it discarts larger grains. Nost of the quartz grains are subengular to angular.

Sample 3.33: From White Cliff Mill. On 20' level. Micro-

The rock contains extremes in composition and grain size.

Rock fragments, which form the most important constituent,

range in type from madetones and chales to presence out and

chalcedonic rocks. The fragments, some of which are angular,

and others of which are well rounded, vary in size from up to

2 cm down to the finest interstitial material. Calcurate

material, clay and chalcedony together with fine quartz, form

the interstitial camenting material.

Semple 5.11: Prom Lite Cilif Hill: 20° to 50° down from top.

Prom seter cut channel on South eide of bill.

Very fine grained subangular to subrounded quartz grains make up the bulk of this rock with a good deal of finely divided

clay and accessory sericite and from exides. The grain size of the quartz is up to 0.07 cm. A few accessory beavy minerals are present.

Semple 5.32. From South side of Thite Cliff Hill 25' down from top. Wiero-conglomerate.

#### .

This is a hotorogeneous, generally coarse and variably grained eronaceous ruck. Composed of Large subunguiar peobles and medium and fine grained quartz grains and quartzoes ruck fragments. Heat of the medium and finer mized grains are of subrounded to rounded outline (as shown in the figure). There is some altered follows. Fibrous or flakey clay forms the interstitial material and is monthly liminate statues.

Sample 3.31: From fallen-in cave, 200 jards South of Shite

Cliff Hill. Seles 30 from top. Trevertinized

arenecous sediment.

consists essentially of a fine grained matrix of calcite, clay and fine quarta, throughout which are distributed rock fragments from 3 cm across down to the finest quarta graine. Quartaite and chart appear to be the dominant rock types represented. These are of all outlines from angular to well rounded. The rock is variably stained with iron exides.

Sample 3.34: Rocky Knob 53' high, 2 mile North of Shite Cliff.
On top to 15'. Chalcedonic rock.

#### Manage to

This is a mottled rock composed of grey and brown angular to subrounded fragments of extremely fine grained chalcedony set in a matrix which appears to be a fine grained silicified sandstone. The letter is composed chiefly of fine quarts, with variable amounts of clay and iron exide. The occurrences of chalcedony sometimes include small areas of massive iron exide. There appears to be such cryptocrystalline silica in addition to the quartz and chalcedony.

Cliff. From about 20' below top. Mudstone.

#### 

The clay cometimes force aggregates up to 1 - 2 cm across.

Sample Sample Rocky Rook & mails north of White Cliff Hill.

#### 

Compact, extremely fine grained rock, varying in colour from pale grey to pale buff-coloured. Anguler fragments of banded chalcedony occur within the fine grained ground mass. which consists of enguler quarts grains set in a groundness of crystocrystalline milica and clay sinerals with occasional opeque grains and limonite. The whole background to the granular material is extremely fine grained and virtually isotropic.

Sample Series 5 males South, and 1 mile Sant of Camp. Orit.

of angular to well-rounded guartz grains ranging in eize from
the finest interstitial material to grains up to several
millimetres across. Rock fragments of chart and quartilts and
grains of felapar occur in the asse say, but a smaller extent.
There are many fine grains of opaque minerals, usually in
aggregates or at least in fairly well defined areas. Secondary
silies occurs throughout both interstitially of ferming aggregate structures.

2222 2 States South, end 1 mile Sect of Comp. Oct.

Variably sized arenaceous detrival rock, composed chiefly of rounded quartz grains ranging in size from the very finest to more than 2 millimetres ocross. Rock frequents of quartzite

Time grained clay, opaque grains and a little secondary silica form the interestivial material. A few larger opaque grains and rare epidate are the only other sinerals present.

Sample 3.21: Rest 1 mile Worth of Camp. Arenaceous ironatons.

Pine grained, finely bedded reddish rock emapsed chiefly of iron exides and fine even grained quarts. The staining is variable, and appears to be related to the original composition, which was probably a banded sandatons containing horizons rich in iron exides. Fine suscevite, saricite, clay sinerals and altered felsper are the only other sinerals present. This rock may conceivably be comparable with presence ironstons occurring in the northeast of the state, e.g. Mt. Victor, Melderky Mills.

Sample 14/1 Boulder Cliff, 3% miles South of Camp. Orit.
Figure 10.

size which has been accondurily silicified, and has weathered in a manner similar to a granite, i.e. with the formation of blocky units which tend to become rounded as weathering proceeds. Of the larger grains, quartz is dominant with minor felepar and rock fragments. The grain size range is from ea. Jam down to the finest interetitied quartz. Clay, tree exides and secondary silics make up the remainder of the interetitied material.

Chiefly of quarts grains overaging 0.5 mm across set in a fine grained matrix of quarts, clay almorate and iron exiden. Nost of the larger quarts grains are rounded or asbrounded. Quartsons rock frequents and felopar grains occur to the minor extent, and tournaline rarely. The grain size variation appears to indicate bedding.

Semple 16c: Boulder Cliff, 3 wiles bouth of Cemp. Sendetone.
A modium grained pale grey condetone consisting of well

rounded to subangular quarts grains, a few grains of altered toloper, muscovite and calcite with minor amounts of amorphous intereditial clay.

Sandstone.

#### .

collular texture, particularly on weathered surfaces. Seeides
the quarts grains, and minor felaper and rock fragments, there
is a good deal of interstitial calcite present, and fairly abundant
clay. In other respects the rock is essentially similar to
Semple 13 (5), (below)

(two specimens examined.)

#### 

- (a) Friable, medium and even grained white condctone with collular texture suggestive of carbonate removal. He calcite is now present, subangular quarts grains being the dominant mineral with subidiary idepar and rock frequents. The serialte, muscovite and clay minerals form the interstitial material. The badding is usually apparent from the tendency to orientation of those quarts grains which are elengate.
  - (b) The second specimen is in every respect similar.
- The rock is a ferroginous sendstone, compelest chiefly of subsangular to rounded quarts frains and highly altered felapar. Susceptite, hydroxica and calcite occur to a small extent throughout; the rescinder of the rock is a fine admixture of iron exides and clay singular.

Section 7: 10 . 11 Thite City. Micacoons empdetons.

The rock is a white, weakly micaceous, fine grained sandstone, composed chiefly of angular to subangular quarts grains with winer altered felaper. Amorphous clay flakes (? balloyatta) accurate because the susception, bydromica and rare chicareous material.

' - Bemole & 12' - 14' Thise Cliff. Sandstope.

#### 

This, five grained evenly granular sendstone, with poorly defined lamination end of a sensemble incoherent and frieble nature. The rock consists chiefly of quartz grains about 6.1 mm serves of angular to subangular cutline. Clay minerals, sericite, muscovite hydronics, opaque grains and tournalies, occur to a small extent.

### <u>Dample 1.</u> • mile southeast of Dingoo 'amp. Durierust.

circular rounded buff coloured calcaraous rock containing subcircular rounded bodies of reddish colour from 1 mm to 1 cm across.

The weathered surfaces are costed with friable buff coloured calcite.

The unweathered rock is of compact fine grained calcite showing
concretionary and veined structures no doubt due to solution.

Subrounded to subangular quartz grains occur throughout. The
rock is variably stained with iron exides which give the reddish
rounded areas mentioned above. There are rare epaque mineral
grains, and, in the section taken, a single grain of ? cordierite.

# Sample 2: 1 mile Southeest of Dingbo Comp. Durierant. Pigure 16.

The specimes is similar to Sample 1, but the hand specimen has a weakly bended appearance. Also, fine clay is distributed thoughout, and concretionary structures are often control around grains of quarts, iron exide or clay aggregates.

# Small S.22: 2 miles West of Camp. Wiesesons ansactons.

Micaceous leminated candators from conterted area. Pine

fairly even-grained sandstone composed of quarts grains is a

dominantly clay matrix. Pelapar grains, accessional rock fragments,

and siner calcite, suscevite, opaque grains and scricite occur as

well. Clay and secondary silice form the remainder of the rock.

The soricite and elongated quarts grains indicate the bodding

direction. The rock appears to be a travertinized and milicified,

slightly micaceous randstone.

\*\* <u>Sample 3-20:</u> 6 miles dest of Comp. Limestone from 10 diff

#### Figure 16.

Limestone, generally of extremely fine grain else, with Occasional small aggregates of grains up to 0.2 mm across. The rock is variably stained with limonite, generally in the form of small rounded patches stained with iron oxide. Some of these appear to have developed from the meathering of spaces grains in alth. There is also evidence of solution in the calcite; irregular voto-like structures occur. A few angular quarts grains up to 0.2 mm across occur, also a little clay sineral.

#### Not bushard: From large and theke. Kope.

This material appears to consist chiefly of a fine grained adminture of clay and gypous alth occasional rounded to subscribe grained of quartz stained with ferruginous material.

The soculer contained in the sample are chiefly of calcute with minor quarts and clay.

### Sample from a mile sect of Coal Mill. Sendetone.

3rows, medium and even-grained candatone, grains averaging 0.2 mm across. A few rock fragments and felapar grains occur and minor opeque grains. The rock is weakly compoted with intergrapular limenits.

# Sendatona.

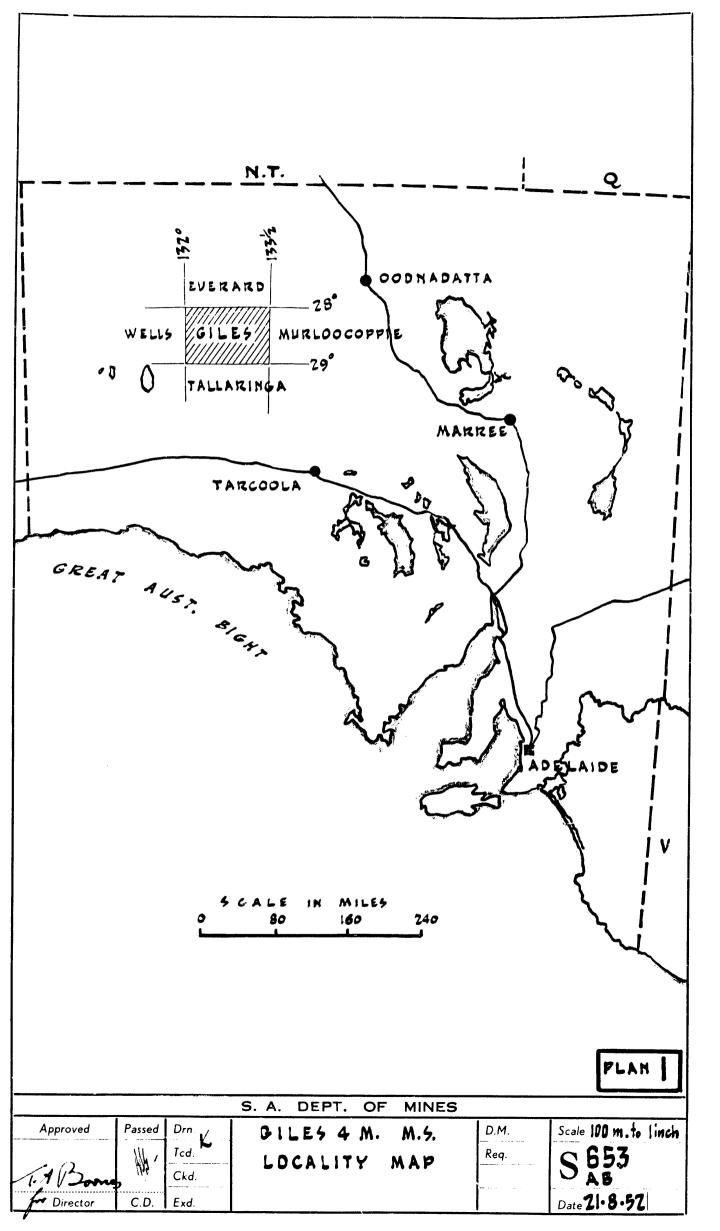
Falo grey to white candetone of variable grain cise, sontly
fine, from 0.5 mm down. Quartz grains, minor epidote, felapar
and rock frequents are the chief constituent minerals, with
interstitial clay minorals and soricite. The bedding can be
distinguished by a tendency towards orientation of the minerals
and by persistant variations in grain size.

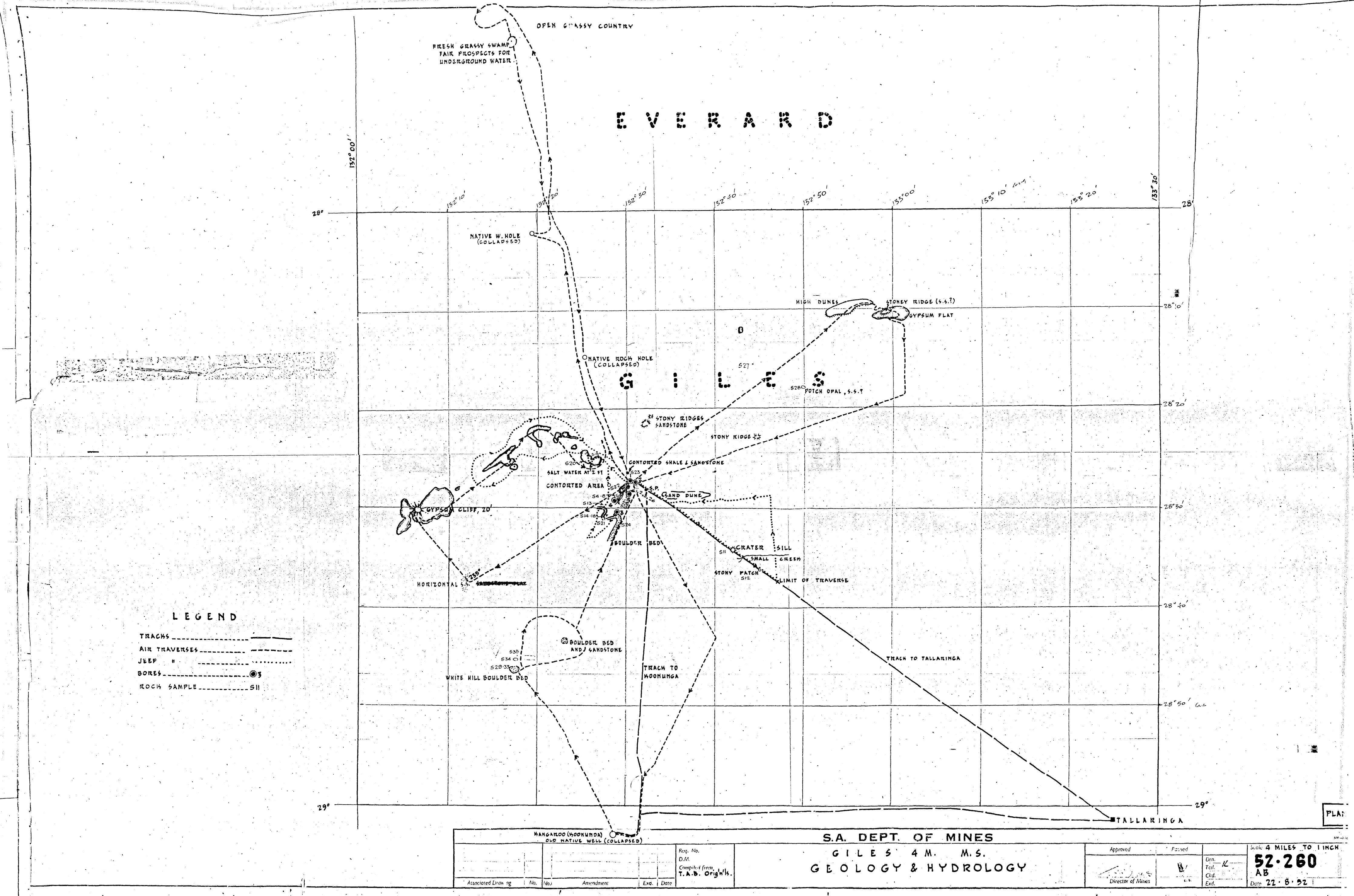
### 280220 2700 22 01/00 57 300 • Claypon • Opel field Fill.\*

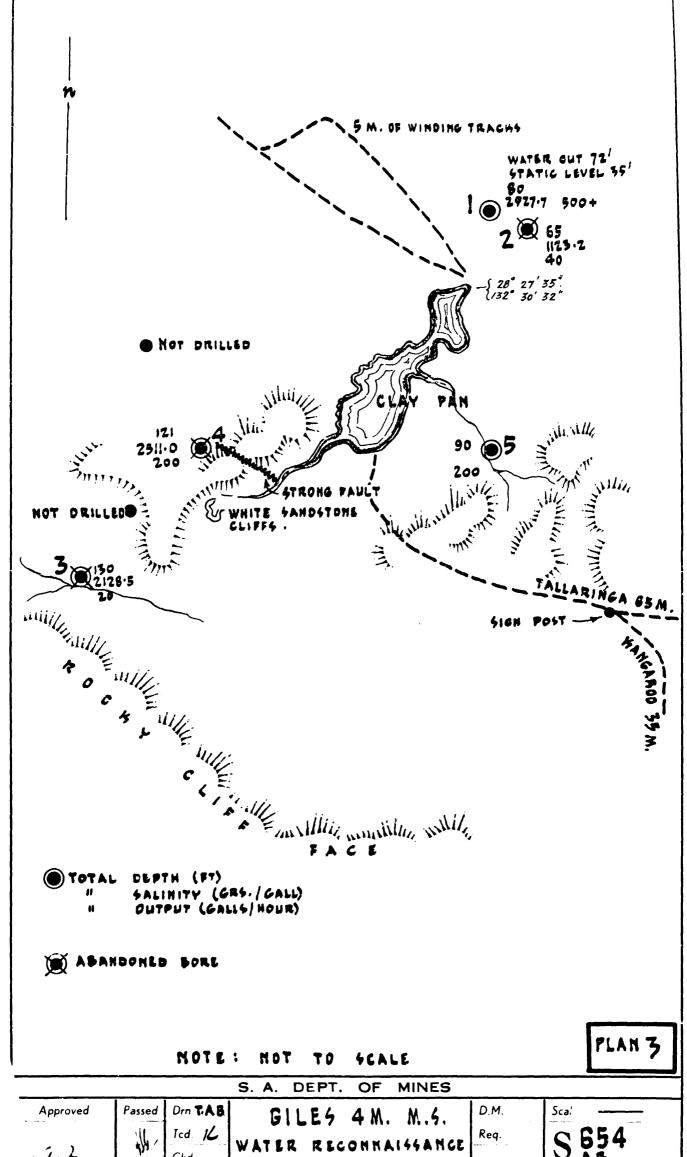
#### 

Pine, even grained pale green condutone with a weakly

banded appearance which may be due to weathering. Lenticles of silica occur parallel to the banding. The quartz grains are subrounded to subangular and are about 0.08 mm across. Felspar and opaque grains are occasionally present and tourmaline and zircon rarely. Grean chlorite, finely divided clay minerals and sericite form the interstitial material.







Ckd 7 E 4 T BORES. Date 21. 8. 52 C.D. Exd Director AREA I