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DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEVELO

BUREAU OF MINERAL RESOURCES, GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS

RECORD Nº 1962/68

UPPER PIEMAN HYDRO-ELECTRIC SCHEME GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY,

TASMANIA 1960



E. J. POLAK.

The information contained in this report has been obtained by the Department of National Development, as part of the policy of the Commonwealth Government, to assist in the exploration and development of mineral resources. It may not be published in any form or used in a company prospectus or statement without the permission in writing of the Director, Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics.

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by E. J. POLAK

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SUMMARY

This report describes seismic refraction, magnetic, and resistivity surveys on the Upper Pieman Power development scheme of the Hydro-Electric Commission of Tasmania. The purpose of the surveys was to determine the depth to the bedrock, and the nature of the bedrock and overburden at five localities, viz: Spillway of the Hanging Rock dam site, Buttress Hill dam site, Tullibardine Saddle dam site, Murchison No. 4 dam site, and Boco Saddle dam site.

- At Hanging Rock dam site spillway, the velocity of the bedrock is from 14,000 to 17,000 ft/sec, and the greatest depth to bedrock is 112 ft. The overburden consists of soil, gravel, and weathered rock.
- At Buttress Hill dam site, the overburden consists of soil, gravel, and weathered rock, and attains a maximum thickness of 198 ft. The velocity in the bedrock ranges from 11,000 to 17,000 ft/sec.
- At Tullibardine Saddle dam site the overburden consists of soil, peat, and gravel, and has a maximum thickness of 133 ft. The velocity in the bedrock is 15,000 to 16,000 ft/sec.
- At Murchison No. 4 dam site the overburden consists of talus material, with a maximum thickness of 89 ft. The velocity in bedrock is from 9000 to 16,000 ft/sec.
- At Boco Saddle dam site the surveys showed a great thickness of low-velocity rock. The velocity in the bedrock ranges from 9000 to 15,000 ft/sec.

1. <u>INTRODUCTION</u>

The Hydro-Electric Commission of Tasmania intends to construct power stations to utilize the power resources of the Upper Pieman system, which is formed by the Mackintosh and Murchison Rivers and their tributaries.

The power station highest up-stream will be near Tullah (Plate 1). A dam on the Mackintosh River will be erected and will flood the Mackintosh and Sophia River valleys. The impounded water will flow through a tunnel into the Murchison River, where the power station will be constructed. The Tullibardine Saddle dam will be constructed to prevent water from the Mackintosh River overflowing into the Tullibardine Creek.

In the second stage a dam will be constructed on the Pieman River down-stream from Farrell Junction.

Three possible sites were chosen for the dam on the Mackintosh River (Plate 1). Two sites are near the Hanging Rock and the lowest site is near Buttress Hill. Several drill holes have been put down on these sites and two geophysical surveys were carried out on the Hanging Rock sites (Polak, 1957b; Dyson and Bamber, 1959a).

Of four possible sites chosen for further investigation on the Murchison River, Murchison No. 1 dam site was surveyed geophysically in 1957 (Polak, 1957a). A geophysical survey was also made of the Rosebery No. 1 dam site on the Pieman River (Dyson and Bamber, 1959b).

In response to an application from the HEC the Bureau of Mineral Resources, Geology and Geophysics carried out further geophysical surveys in March and April 1960 on the following sites:

Hanging Rock dam site, spillway section

Butbress Hill dam site

Tullibardine Saddle dam site

Murchison No. 4 dam site

Boco Saddle dam site

The object of the surveys was to determine the depth to the bedrock, and the nature of bedrock and overburden.

As used in this report the term 'bedrock' refers to unweathered or to jointed rock in a refractor showing the highest seismic velocity. The term 'overburden' refers to river gravel, clay, scree and talus material, and completely or partly weathered rock, all with seismic velocities of less than 9000 ft/sec. A distinction is made between the terms 'talus' and 'scree'; talus includes some clay but scree is free from clay.

Seismic refraction, magnetic and resistivity methods were used. The geophysical party consisted of E.J. Polak, party leader, and B.J. Harwood and M.J.W. Duggin, geophysicists. The HEC provided field assistants and carried out topographical surveys along the traverse lines.

Table 1 shows the length of traverse surveyed at each locality by the three geophysical methods.

TABLE 1

Locality	<u>Seismic</u> <u>Method</u> (ft)	Magnetic Method (ft)	Resistivity Method (ft)
Hanging Rock	4050		-
Buttress Hill	9100	2250	4500
Tullibardine	3550	3500	900
Murchison No. 4	7200	-	-
Восо	4250	-	1550
Total	28,150	5750	6950

2. GEOLOGY

The geology of the area is described by Ward (1908) and Bradley (1954 and 1956). The sites were geologically mapped in detail by Mather (1957).

Plate 1 shows the geological map of the area. The whole area consists of the Ordovician and Cambrian rocks, covered in places with scree, glacial, and alluvial material.

The Dundas Group rocks are of Cambrian age (Opik, 1951) and consist of slate, chert, schist, and greywacke. The bedding planes of the formations are nearly vertical.

The Owen Conglomerate is part of the West Coast Range Conglomerate series and is of Cambro-Ordovician age (Opik, 1951). The conglomerate is wholly quartzose in composition and contains pebbles (2 to 4 inches in diameter) of reef quartz and quartz schist. The matrix has been altered to quartzite material. The rock is strongly resistant to weathering.

The geology of each dam site will be discussed separately.

3. <u>METHODS AND EQUIPMENT</u>

All the methods used have been described in detail by Polak and Moss (1959).

Seismic method

The 'method of differences' (Heiland, 1946, p. 548) was used for traverses along the slope, and broadside spreads were used on steep banks.

The equipment used in the survey was an SIE 12-channel refraction seismograph with TIC geophones having a natural frequency of about 20 c/s.

Magnetic method

A Watts vertical force variometer was used for the survey.

Resistivity method

In the Wenner method of resistivity surveying (Heiland, 1946; p. 707), which was used in the present investigation, four electrodes equally spaced in a straight line are moved as a whole along a traverse, and readings are taken at consecutive stations. In the interpretation, absolute values of resistivity are not as important as sudden changes from high to low resistivity - such changes generally indicate a change in rock type.

A Tellohmeter was used for the investigation.

4. HANGING ROCK DAM SITE

Introduction

A detailed geophysical survey on the Hanging Rock dam site has previously been carried out (Polak, 1957b; Dyson and Bamber 1959a). This report covers the results of a later investigation on the spillway of the same dam site.

Geology

Plate 2 shows the geology of the area surveyed. The whole of the area is covered with gravel, with occasional floaters of the Owen Conglomerate. Some outcrops of the 'bedded series' of Cambrian rocks have been identified near the crest of the divide between the Mackintosh River and Tullibardine Creek.

Seismic results

Plate 2 shows the arrangement of the geophysical traverses. Table 2 gives seismic wave velocities on the spillway section.

TABLE 2

<u>Seismic velocity</u> (ft/sec)	Rock type
1000 to 1800	Soil
4000 to 5000	Gravel
4000 to 9000	Weathered Rock
14,000 to 17,000	Unweathered Rock

A velocity of 9000 ft/sec was recorded only on weathering spreads; apparently the bed is too thin to be recorded on normal spreads with 50-ft geophone spacing.

The depth to the bedrock, the highest seismic velocity refractor, was calculated by the use of apparent velocities obtained from weathering spreads. The depths thus calculated are plotted on Plate 3.

The cross-sections on Plate 3 indicate a thin cover of soil and gravel along the crest of the hill, with a great increase in thickness towards the Mackintosh River. This corroborates data from the previous surveys.

Elastic properties of rocks

Table 3 shows the values of longitudinal and transverse wave velocities measured together on the Hanging Rock spillway site. The elastic properties were calculated (Polak and Moss, 1959) assuming a density of 2.7 g/cm³ for bedrock.

TABLE 3

Location	Apparent	<u>Velocity</u>	True]	Poisson's	Modulus	(10 ⁶	lb/sq.in)
	Long.	Trans.	<u>Velocity</u> (Longi-	<u>ratio</u>	Young's		Rigidity
			tudinal)				•
D1	11,900	6800	16,500	0.26	8.1	5.6	3.25
E8	14,100	8200	17,000	0.26	8.5	5.9	3.4

Conclusions

The geophysical survey provided information on the depth to the bedrock at the Hanging Rock spillway site.

The overburden consists of soil, gravel, and weathered rock. The estimated maximum thickness of overburden is 112 ft near station EE23. The bedrock consists of high-velocity rock (14,000 to 17,000 ft/sec) with Young's modulus of about 8.5 x 10⁶ lb/in 2.

5. <u>BUTTRESS HILL DAM SITE</u>.

Introduction

The proposed dam at Buttress Hill is an alternative to the Hanging Rock dam and is located approximately 1 mile down-stream (Plate 1).

<u>Geology</u>

Plate 4 shows the geology of the dam site. The whole of the area is covered with soil and gravel except for the area close to the river, where massive pyroclastics crop out. The maximum thickness of gravel proved in drill hole DDH 6526 is 79 ft. The bedrock consists of bedded series rocks (Cambrian) in the eastern part of the site and of massive pyroclastics in the western part. The Owen Conglomerate crops out to the east of the site. Evidence for the existence of a fault has been found.

Seismic results

Plate 4 shows the arrangement of the geophysical traverses. Table 4 gives seismic wave velocities on the Buttress Hill dam site.

TABLE 4

Seismic velocity (ft/sec)	Rock type
1000 to 2000	Soil
2500 to 3100	Scree material
4000 to 6000	Gravel
5000 to 9000	Weathered rock
11.000 to 17.000	Unweathered rock

Notes to Table 4

- (a) Seismic velocities in gravel and weathered bedrock overlap and it is therefore impossible to find the thickness of gravel. As has already been mentioned, the weathered bedrock is classified as overburden.
- (b) Measured seismic velocities in the bedrock are higher along the strike of rocks (traverses along the river) than on traverses across the bedding planes.
- (c) The main refractor with the velocity of 11,000 to 17,000 ft/sec is a rock with unweathered joints. Therefore this horizon is deeper than that recorded on the HEC drill hole logs as 'mainly sound rock'.

There are apparent discrepancies in the depths indicated at the intersection of two traverses, where a steep interface underlies the common point. These discrepancies result from the seismic waves arriving from different points of the refracting surface. Consider the intersection between Traverses F and A on Plate 6. The wave travelling along Traverse A and arriving at the intersection will be refracted from the buried ridge, located under station F11. Thus the depth indicated on Traverse A will be shallower than that indicated on Traverse F, normal to Traverse A.

Table 5 gives a comparison between drilling and seismic data.

TABLE 5

Station <u>No</u> •	Drill Hole No.	Depth from drilling (ft)	Rock type	Depth from a eismic data (ft)	Seismic velocity (ft/sec)
K12	6522	0 - 49 4 9-	gravel mainly sound rock Total depth 97 ft.	64	14,300
K7-8	6523	0 -71 * 71 -	gravel mainly sound rock Total depth 77 ft.	137-	15,000
J7	6524	0-77 77-	gravel weathered massive pyroclastics Total depth 91 ft.	109-	16,500
E 1 0	6525	0-25 25-38 38-	gravel weathered pyroclastics mainly sound rock Total depth 54 ft.	70-	16,500
D11-\$2	6526	0 - 79 7 9-	gravel Farrell slate Total depth 85 ft.	101-	14,000

Seismic results are shown on Plates 5 to 7.

The main features indicated by the seismic survey are:-

- (a) On the left bank of the river (Plate 5) the thickness of the overburden increases away from the river, reaching a maximum of 119 ft near station A11. On the right bank of the river, after an initial increase in thickness (possibly an old river valley), the overburden thins out towards the outcrops on the ridge, where weathered rock lies directly under a thin layer of soil. Similar features were found on the Hanging Rock dam site (Polak, 1957b; Dyson and Bamber, 1959a)
- (b) The old river terrace is indicated clearly on the left bank of the river.

Elastic Properties of Rocks

Table 6 shows the values of longitudinal and transverse wave velocities measured together on the Buttress Hill dam site. The elastic properties were calculated assuming a density of 2.7 g/cm³ for bedrock.

TABLE 6

Station No.	Apparent Long.	velocity Trans.	<u>True</u> velocity	Poisson's ratio	Modulus Young's	(10 ⁶ Bulk	lb/sq.in) Rigidity
A26	13,800	7600	15,000	0.28	6.4	4.35	2.6
J 7	9100	5 000	16,500	0.27	7.8	5.7	3.1

Resistivity Results

Resistivity constant-spacing profiles (see Plate 5) clearly indicate a low-resistivity area over the 'bedded series'. The increase in resistivity towards the south-east may indicate the boundary between 'bedded series' and Owen Conglomerate (a similar feature was proved by drilling at the Hanging Rock dam site).

Maghetic Results

Magnetic intensity profiles (Plate 5) indicate a magnetic 'low' near station A6. This may be due to the demagnetization of rocks in the shattered zone of the fault shown on Plate 4.

Conclusions

The geophysical survey provided information on the depth to the bedrock at the Buttress Hill dam site. The overburden consists of soil, gravel, and weathered rock and its estimated maximum thickness is 198 ft near station A36. The velocity in the bedrock ranges from 11,000 to 17,000 ft/sec. The bedrock is deeper than that marked on the HEC logs as 'mainly sound rock'.

6. TULLIBARDINE SADDLE DAM SITE

Introduction

The construction of a dam at either Hanging Rock or Buttress Hill will require the raising of the Tullibardine Saddle, approximately one mile north of the Hanging Rock dam site (Plate 1).

Geology

Plate 8 shows the geology of the area. The low-lying sections are covered with black peat; on higher ground some fragments of rocks are embedded in the soil. Massive pyroclastics crop out on Traverse D and north and south of the area investigated. There are no drill holes in the area.

Seismic Results

Plate 8 shows the arrangements of the geophysical traverses. Table 7 gives seismic wave velocities measured on the Tullibardine Saddle dam site.

TABLE 7

Seismic velocity (ft/sec)

Rock type

1000

Soil

5000 to 6000

Peat and wet gravel

15,000 to 16,000

Bedrock

The depth to bedrock was calculated by the use of apparent velocities obtained from weathering spreads. The results are shown on Plates 9 and 10. Cross-sections A, B, and C were calculated using the 'method of differences'; therefore the depths determined on these traverses are more accurate than on Traverse D, where a broadside-shooting technique was used.

Constant-spacing resistivity profiles on Traverse B (Plate 9) indicate a broad low-resistivity valley with increases in resistivity values near outcrops.

Magnetic profiles indicate small increases in magnetic intensity towards outcrops and also, two uplifts in the bedrock (Traverse D, Plate 10) are clearly indicated the magnetic profile.

Conclusions

The geophysical survey provided information on the depth to the bedrock at the Tullibardine Saddle dam site. The overburden consists of soil, peat, and gravel and has an estimated maximum thickness of 133 ft near station D12. Velocities in the bedrock are high (15,000 to 16,000 ft/sec).

7. MURCHISON NO. 4 DAM SITE

Introduction

The proposed Murchison No. 4 dam site (Plate 1) is an alternative to the Murchison No. 1 dam site which is located less than one mile down-stream and has been previously investigated by Polak (1957a).

Geology

Plate 11 shows the geology of the dam site. The bedrock in the area consists of 'igneous types from the Murchison River' (Mather, 1959). These rocks have been derived from Dundas Group rocks by metamorphism. In places the bedrock is covered with talus material. Six drill holes have been put down to prove the thickness of talus material.

Seismic Results

Plate 11 shows the arrangement of the seismic traverses. Table 8 gives seismic wave velocities on the Murchison No. 4 dam site.

TABLE 8

Seismic velocity (ft/sec)	Rock type
1000	Soil
2000 to 3000	Talus material
5000 to 9000	Weathered rock
9000 to 16,000	Unweathered rock

Plates 12 and 13 show the interpretation of the results of the seismic survey in the form of profiles indicating the thickness of the overburden. Cross-sections A and X (Plate 12) were obtained using the broadside-shooting technique; cross-sections along the river (Plate 13) were calculated by the method of differences!

It is very difficult to assess the accuracy of the seismic survey results, especially where the overburden is very thin and uneven. Table 9 shows a comparison between the thickness of overburden from drilling and from seismic data.

TABLE 9

<u>Drill</u> <u>Hole</u> <u>No</u> .	Depth from drilling (ft)	Rock type	<u>Depth</u> <u>from</u> <u>seismic</u> <u>data</u>	Seismic velocity (ft/sec)
6611	0 - 20 20 - 27 27 -	Mainly sound rock Sound rock	0 - 20 20 -	14,000
6612	0 - 60 60 -	Mainly sound, weathered joints sound rock Total depth 78 ft	0 - 23 23 -	14,000
6613	0 - 23 23 -	weathered joints mainly sound rock Total depth 47 ft	0 - 20 20 -	16,000
6614	0 - 12 12 -	Talus material Sound rock, weathered joints	0 - 12 12 -	16,000
6615	0 - 20 20 - 36 36 -	Total depth 55 ft Talus material weathered rock sound rock Total depth 46 ft	0 - 51 51 -	11,000
	Hole No. 6611 6612 6614	Hole No. drilling (ft) 6611	Hole No. (ft) 6611 0 - 20 Weathered porphyry 20 - 27 Mainly sound rock 27 - Sound rock Total depth 60 ft 6612 0 - 60 Mainly sound, weathered joints 60 - sound rock Total depth 78 ft 6613 0 - 23 weathered joints 23 - mainly sound rock Total depth 47 ft 6614 0 - 12 Talus material 12 - Sound rock, weathered joints Total depth 55 ft 6615 0 - 20 Talus material 20 - 36 weathered rock sound rock	Hole No. (ft)

Conclusions

The geophysical survey provided information on the depth to the bedrock at the Murchison No. 4 Dam site. The overburden consists of talus material; the maximum thickness estimated from seismic data is 89 ft near station F5.

The velocity in the bedrock ranges from 9000 to 16,000 ft/sec.

8. BOCO SADDLE DAM SITE

Introduction

The geophysical survey on the proposed Boco Saddle dam site was made to ascertain whether the water from the Pieman River would be likely to leak into the Boco Creek.

Geology

Plate 14 shows the geology of the area. The whole area of the survey is covered with gravel. Two drill holes have been put down by HEC proving the thickness of gravel to be in excess of 74 ft (DDH 6426 was abandoned in gravel at the depth of 74 ft). Massive pyroclastic rock crops out along the Pieman River, in the Boco Creek, and near the tramline from Farrell Junction to Tullah.

Seismic and resistivity results

Plate 14 shows the arrangement of seismic traverses. Table 10 gives seismic wave velocities on the Boco Saddle dam site.

TABLE 10

Seismic velocity (ft/sec)	Rock type
1000	Soil
5000	Gravel
5000 to 9000	Weathered bedrock
9000 to 15,000	Unweathered bedrock

On Plate 15 the cross-section along the main traverse is shown. The cross-section indicates the great thickness of low-velocity (5000 ft/sec) material, reaching a maximum thickness of 213 ft at stations A20 and A21. Resistivity profiles may be expected to indicate high values over shallow bedrock. The values should decrease with an increase in the thickness of overburden. Local increase in resistivity near stations A10 A22, and A26 may be due to buried peaks of weathered bedrock. It has been concluded that gravel and weathered bedrock have similar seismic velocities and therefore cannot be distinguished by seismic work.

The cross-sections along Traverses C, D, E, and F are shown on Plate 16.

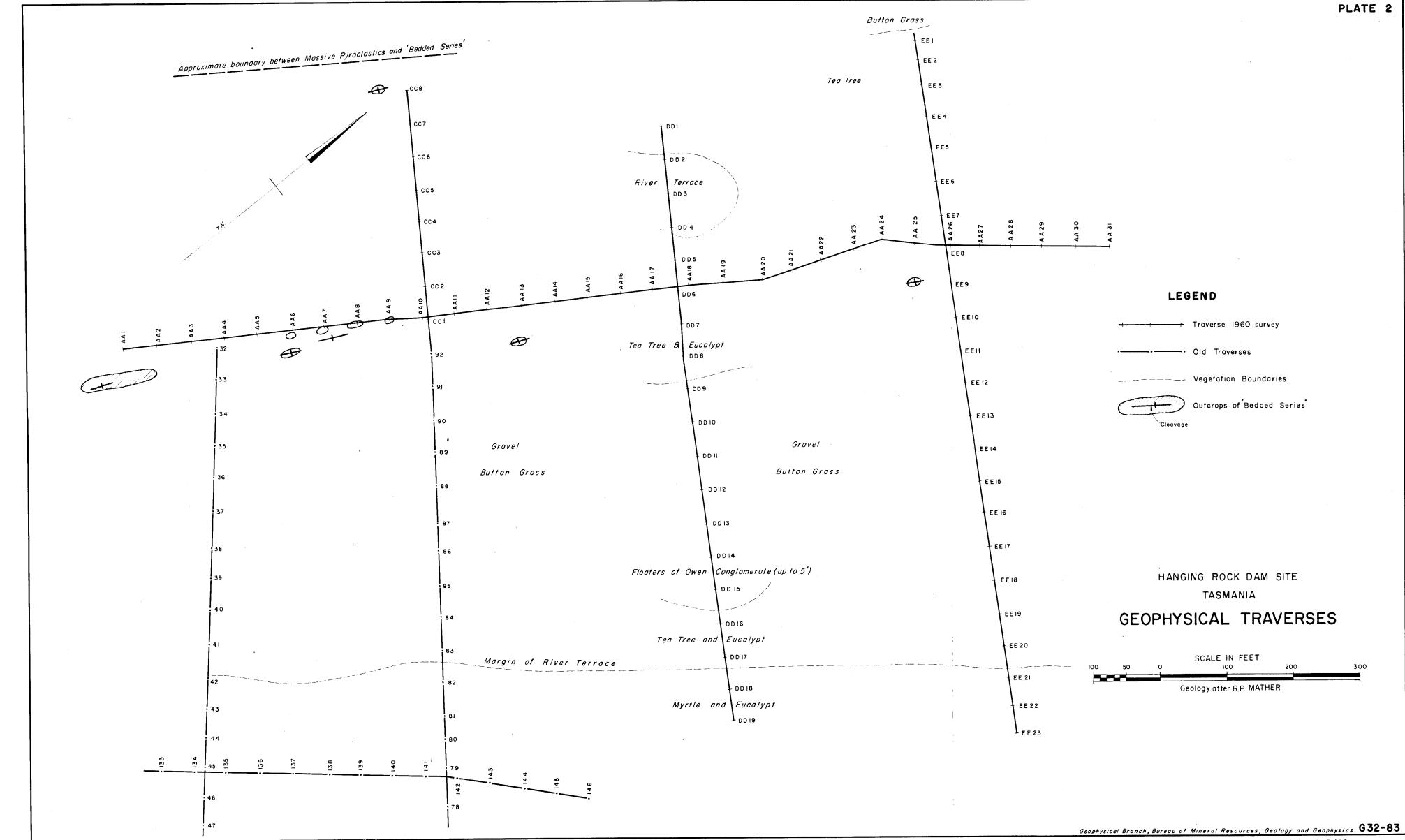
Plate 14 shows also the contours of the surface of unweathered rock. The contours indicate the course of the old river, shown with arrows on the plate.

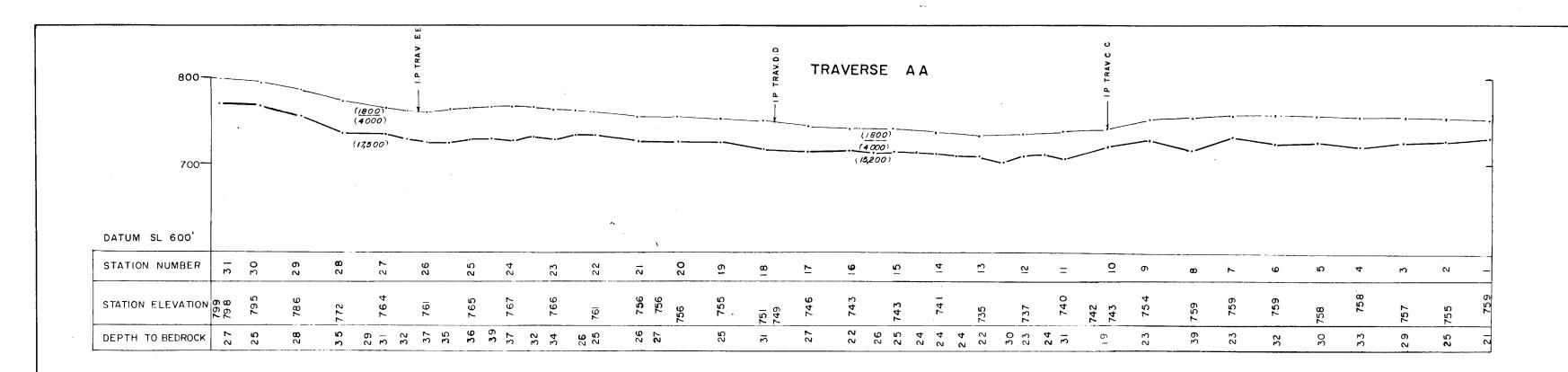
Conclusions

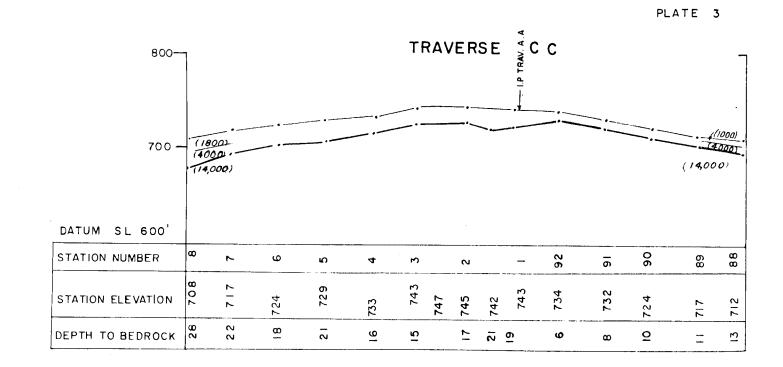
The geophysical survey at the Boco Saddle dam site indicates a great thickness of low-velocity rocks. Rocks with such a low velocity may be expected to have high porosity, and therefore the water would be likely to leak from the reservoir into the Boco Creek.

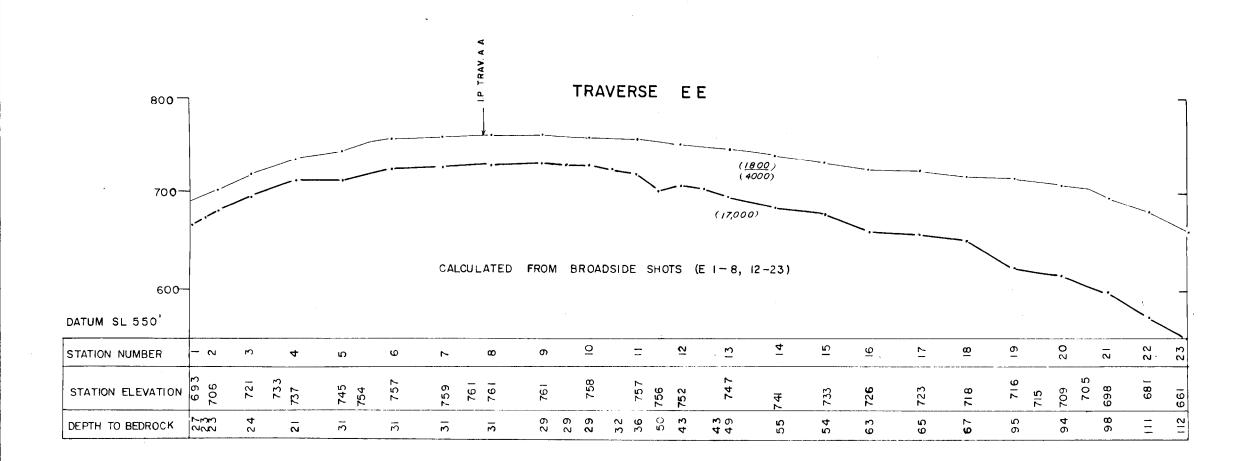
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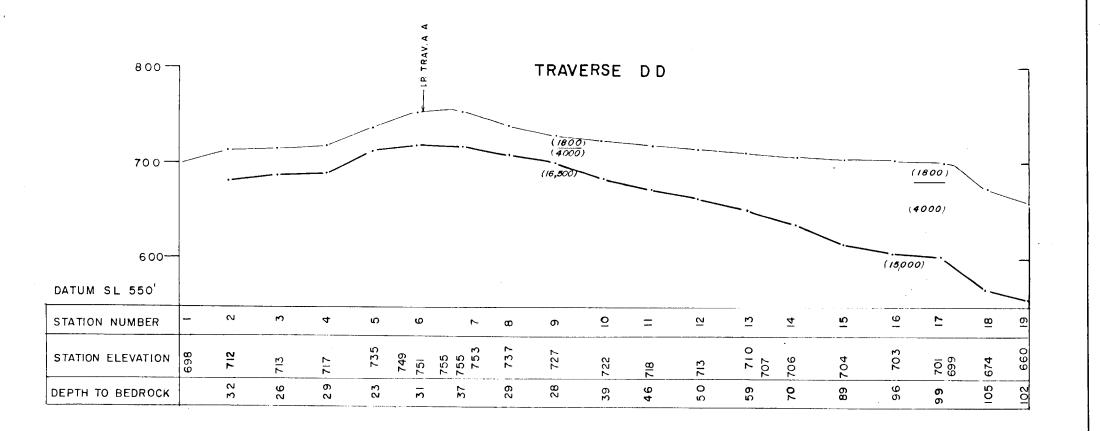
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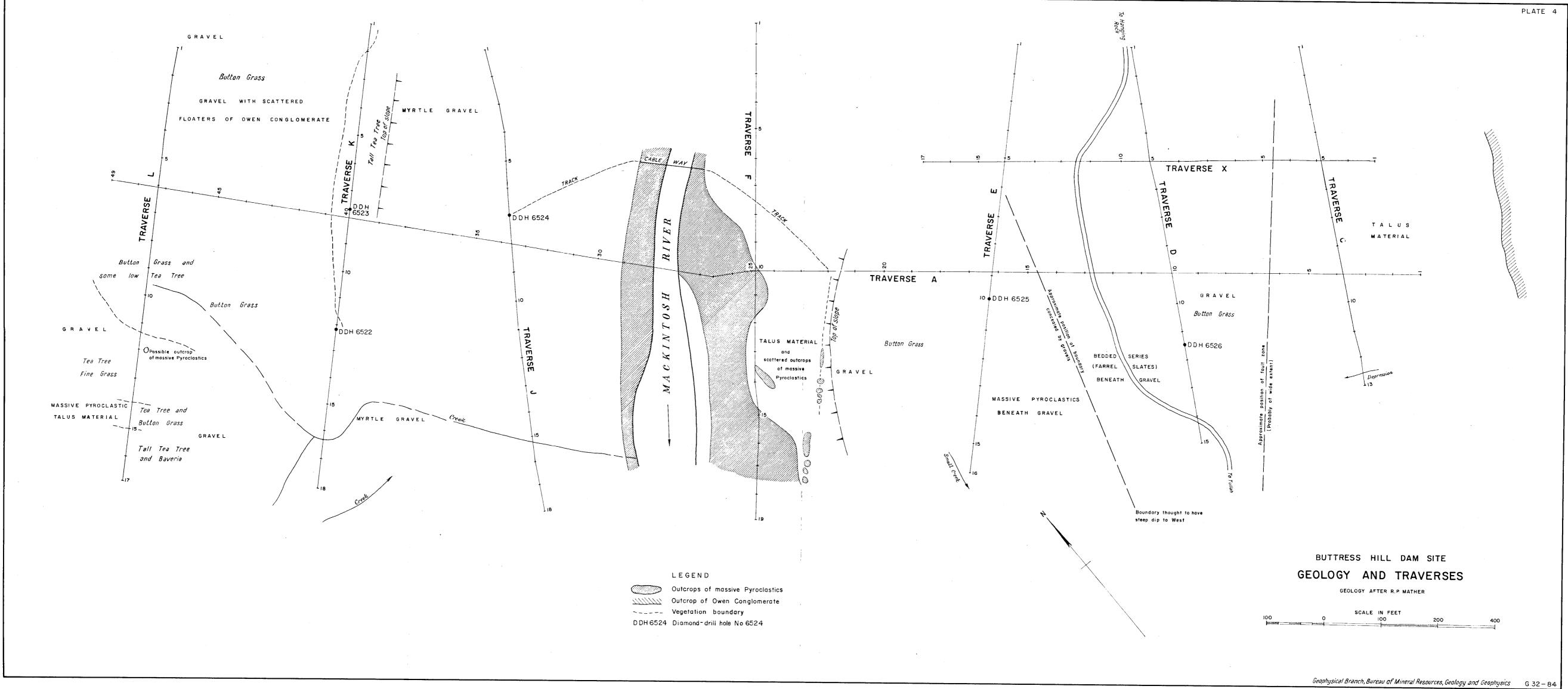


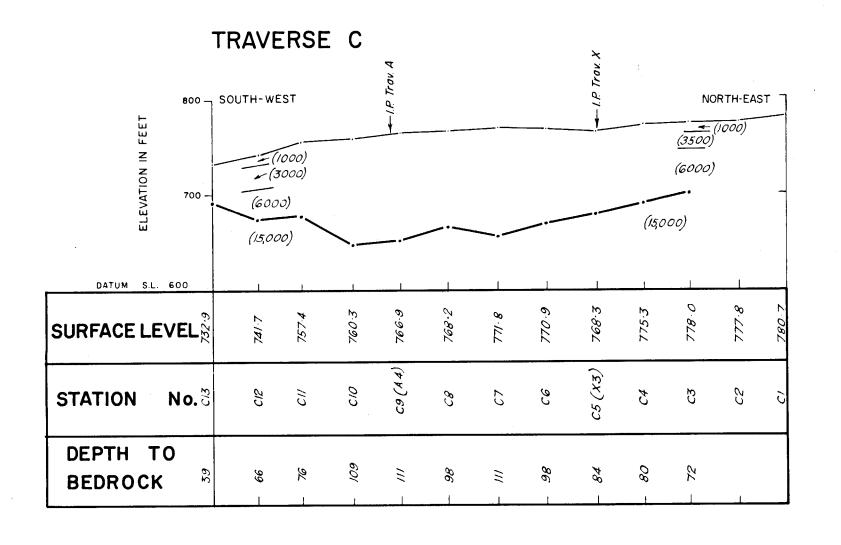


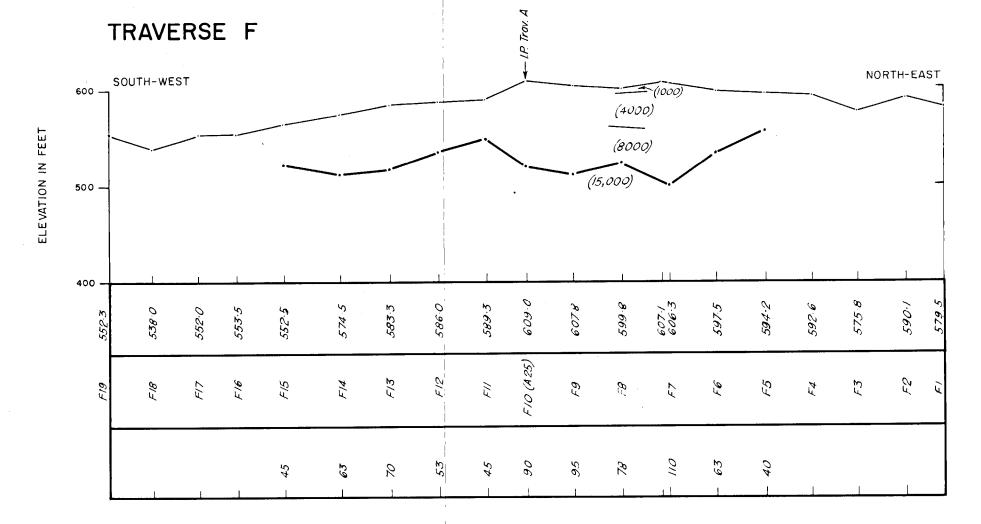
TRAVERSES AA,CC,EE, AND DD

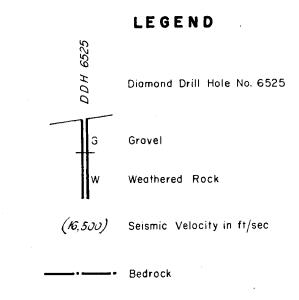
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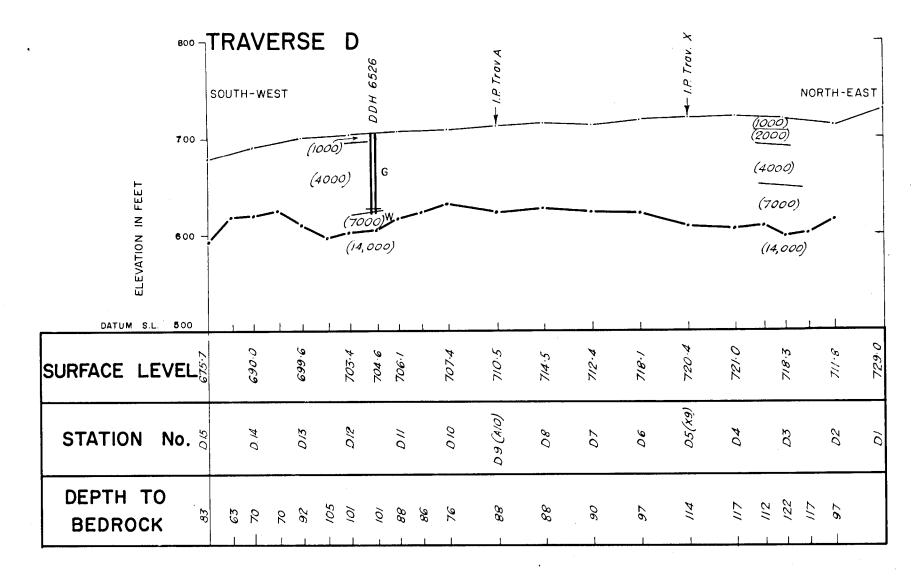
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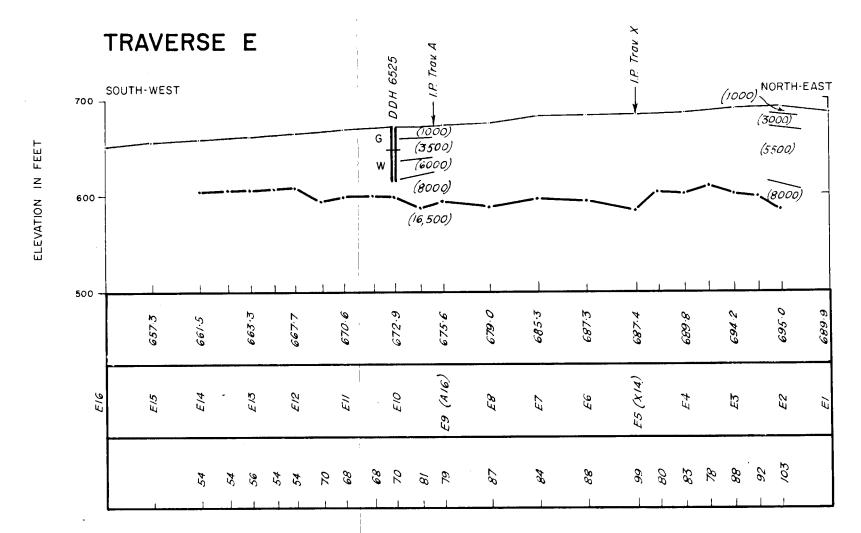


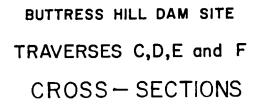


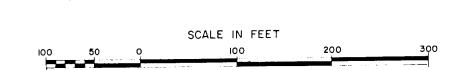


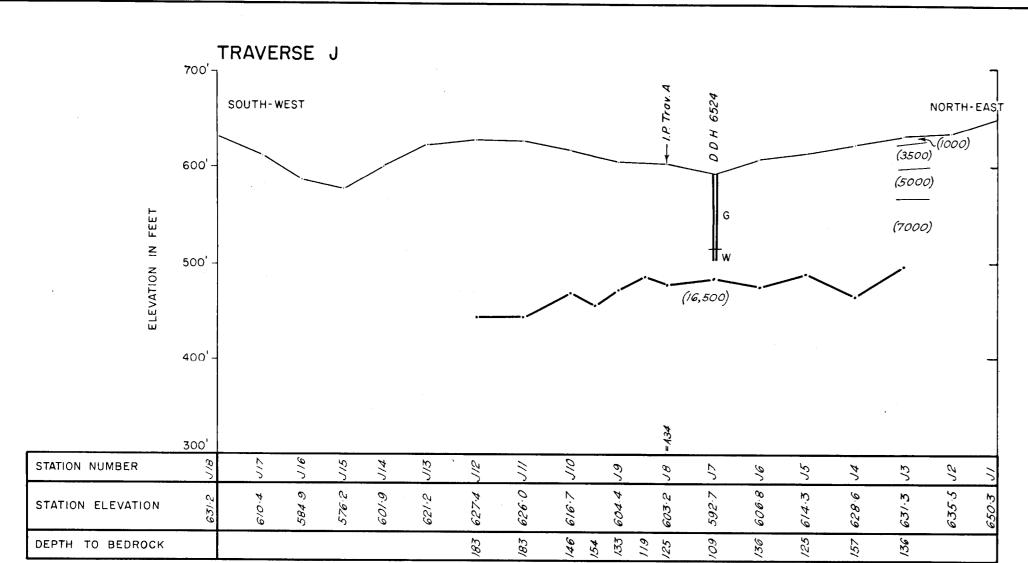


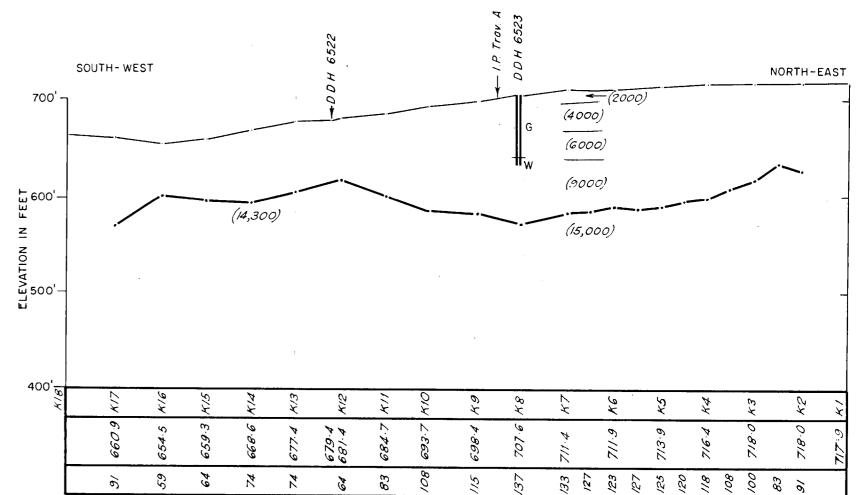




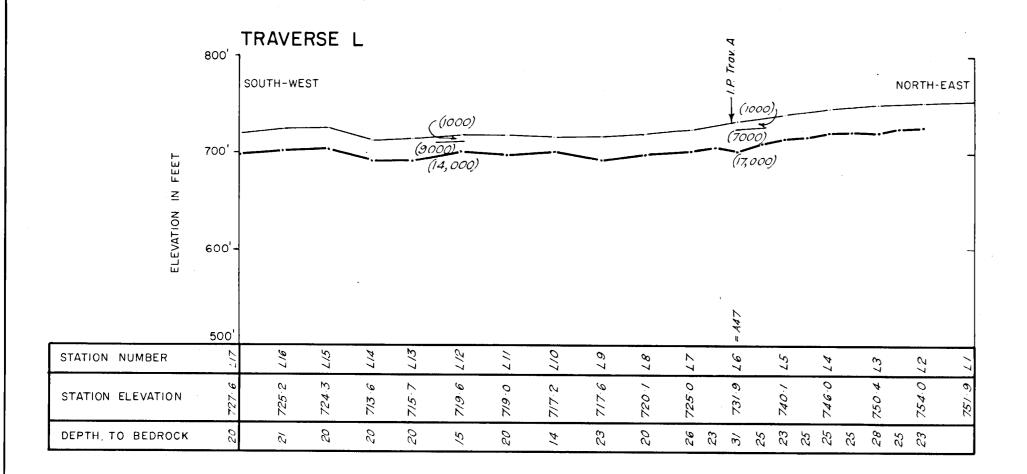


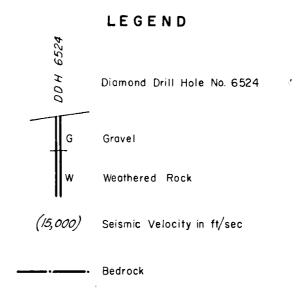






TRAVERSE K





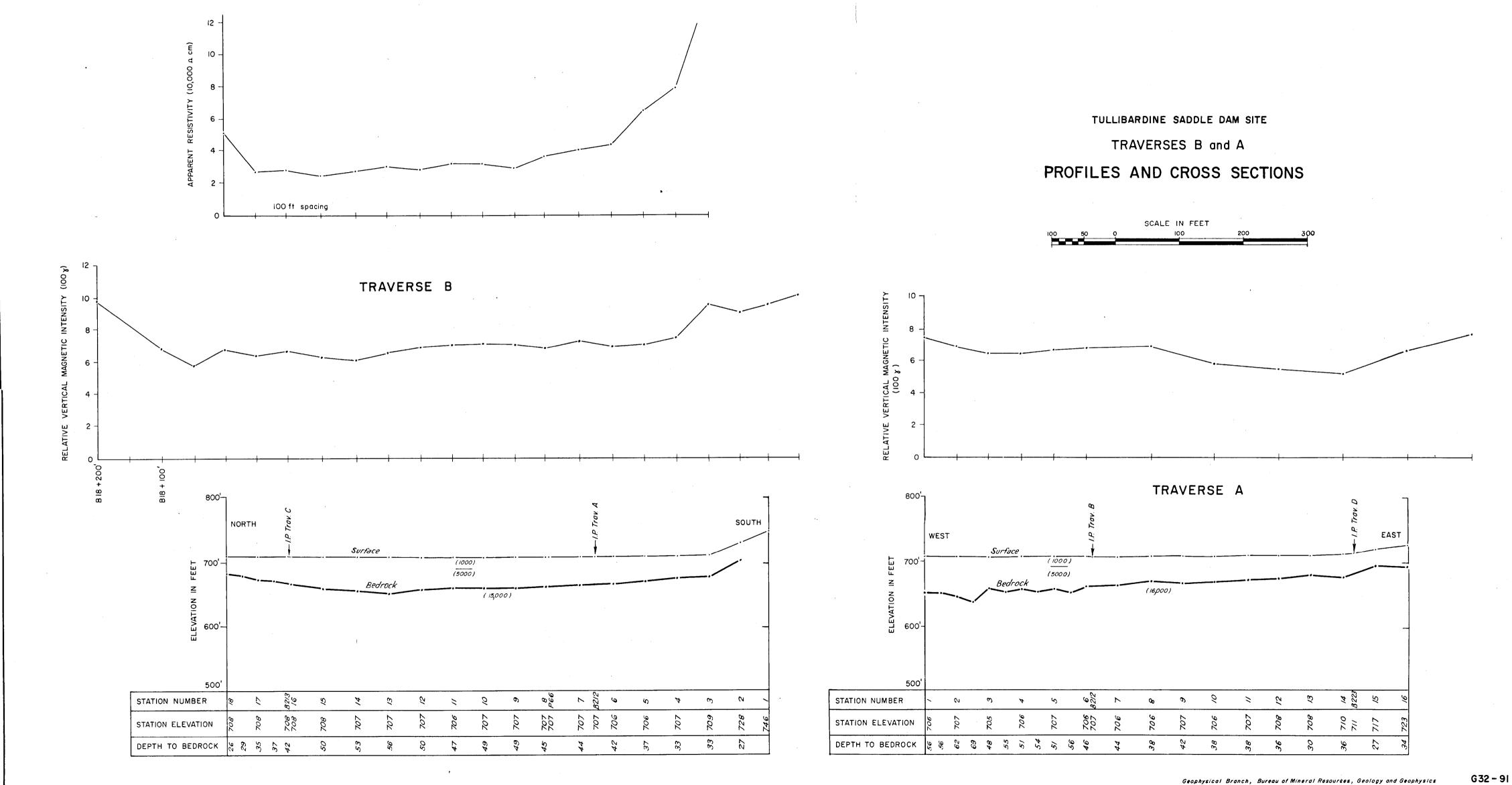
TRAVERSES J,K and L
CROSS-SECTIONS



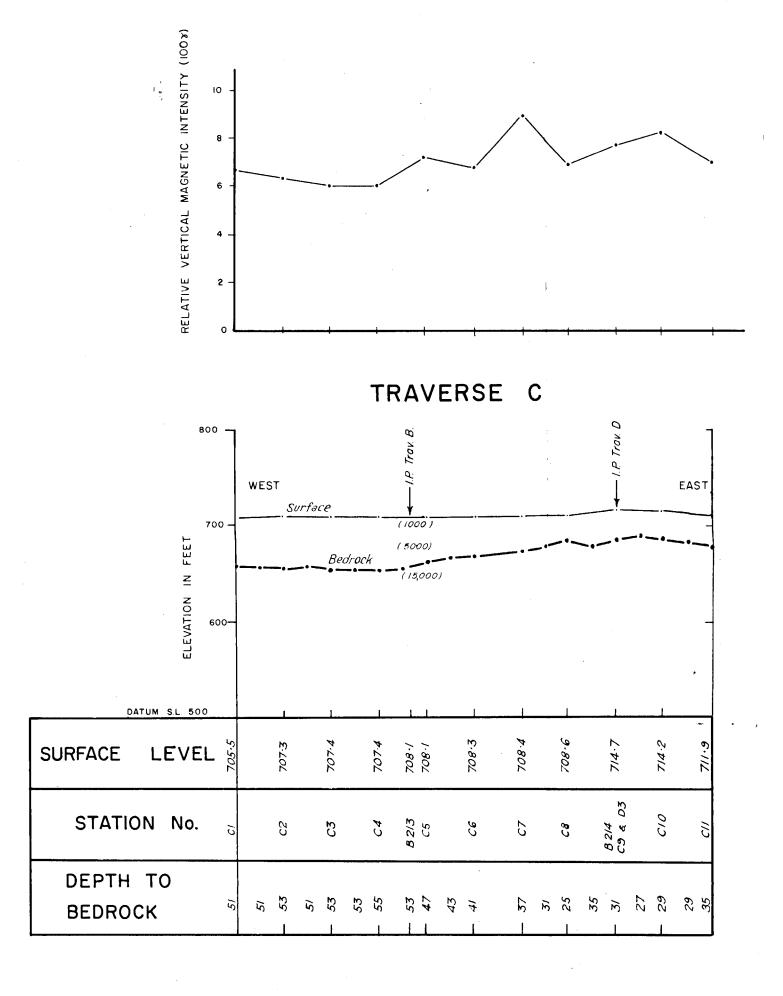
PLATE 7

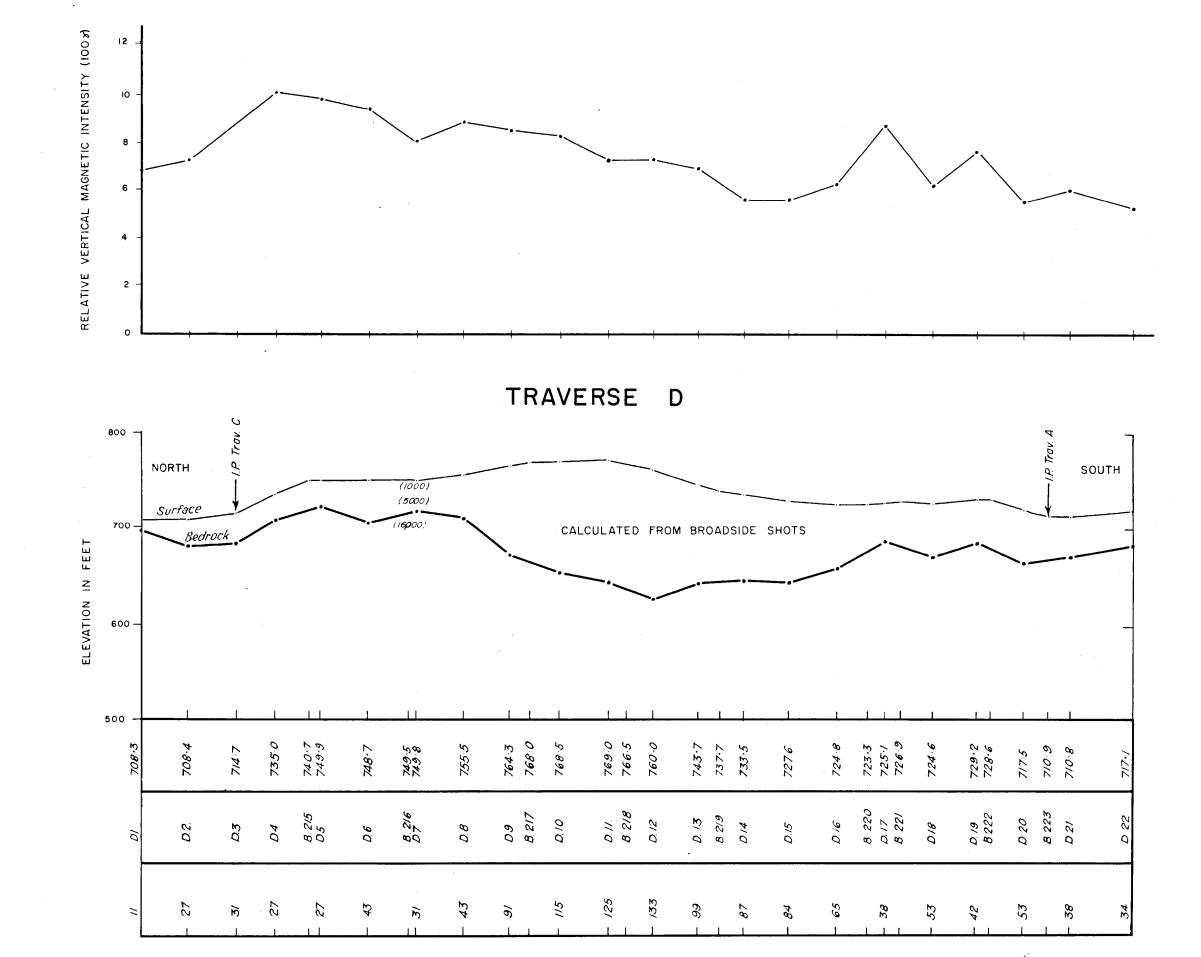
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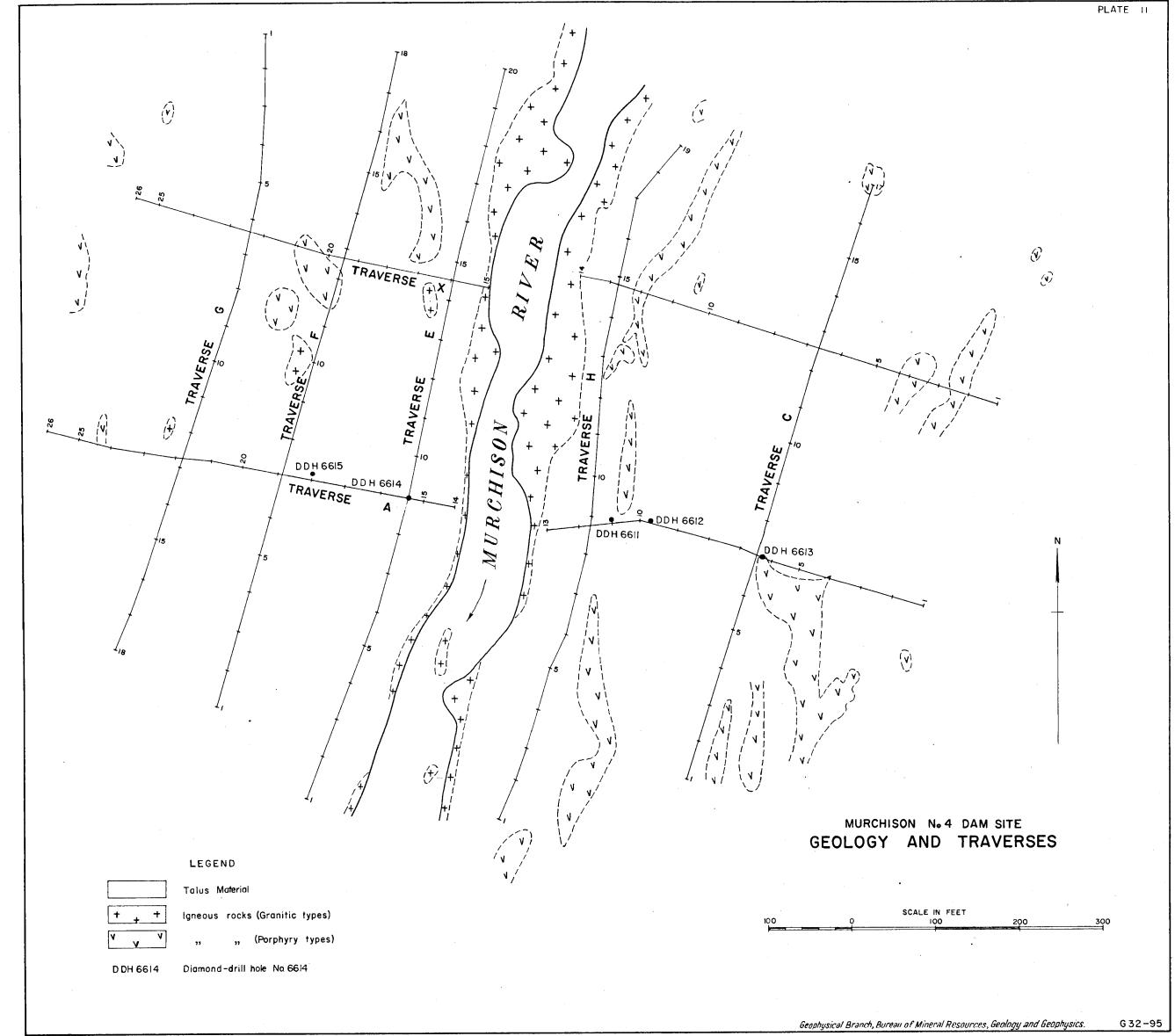


TULLIBARDINE SADDLE DAM SITE

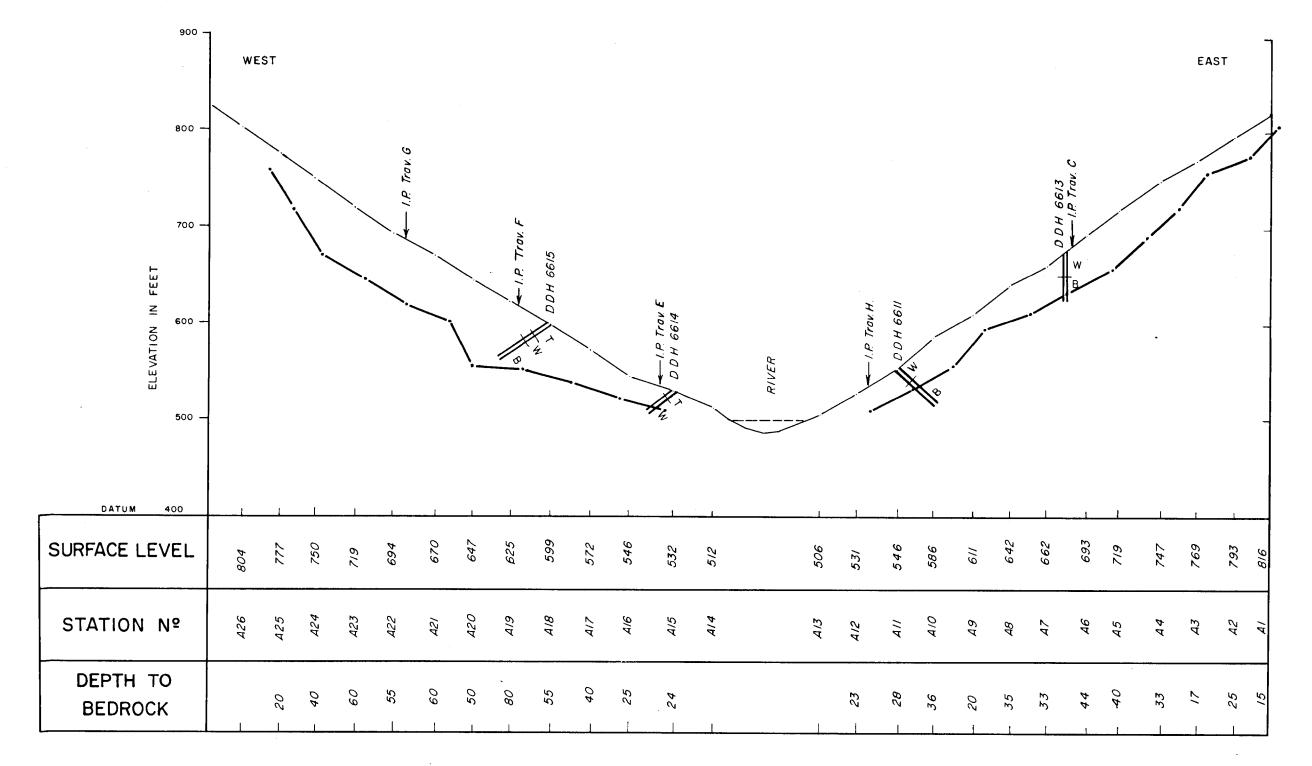
TRAVERSES C and D

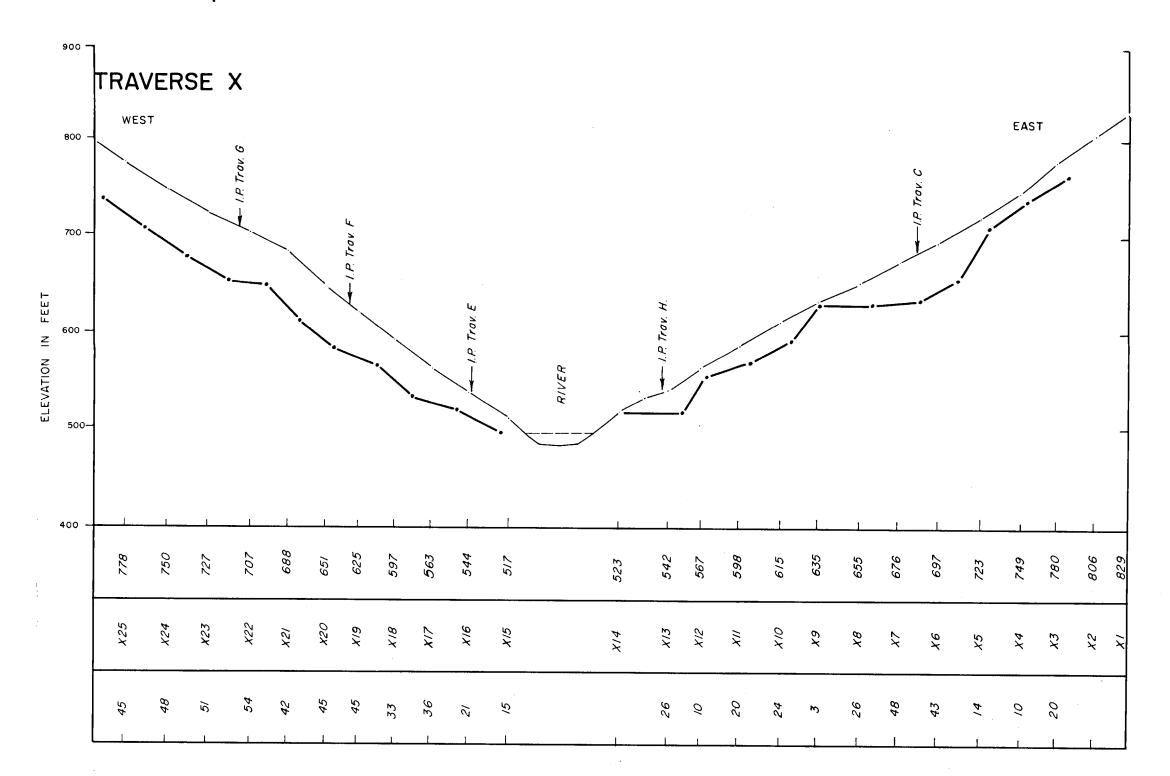
PROFILES AND CROSS-SECTIONS

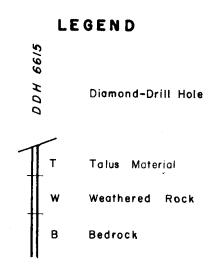












MURCHISON No. 4 DAM SITE

TRAVERSES A and X

CROSS - SECTIONS



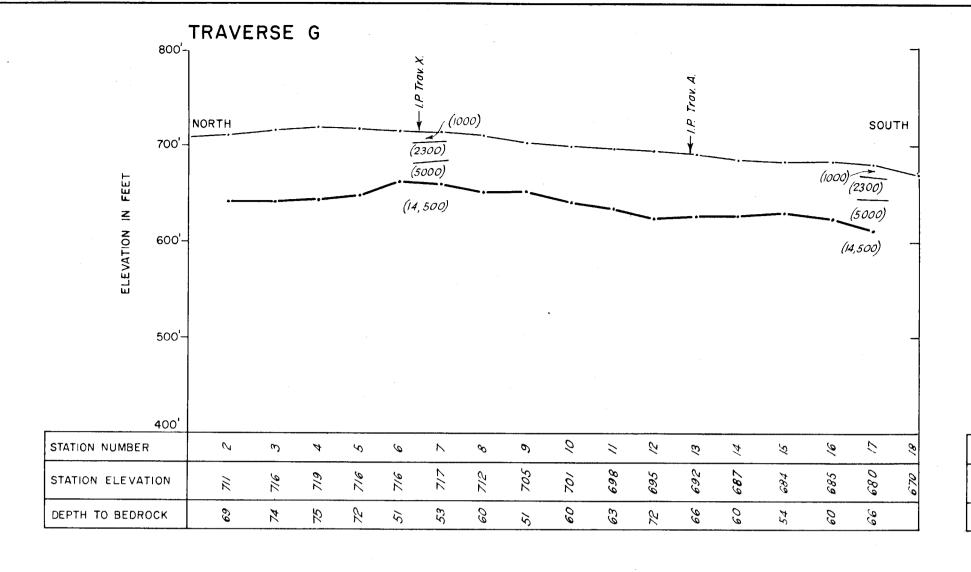
Calculated from Broadside Shots

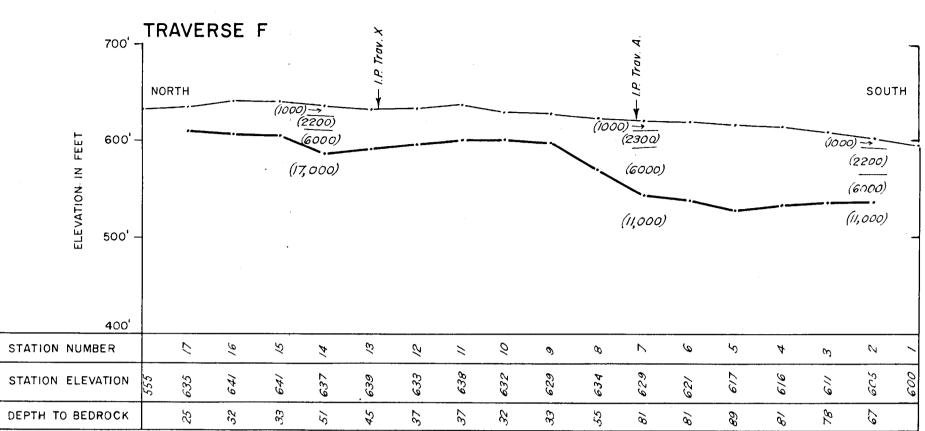
Depths plotted normally to the surface

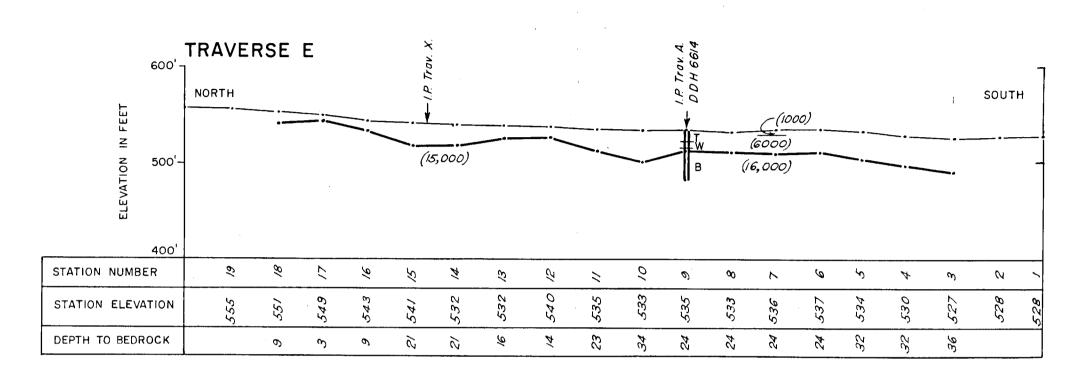
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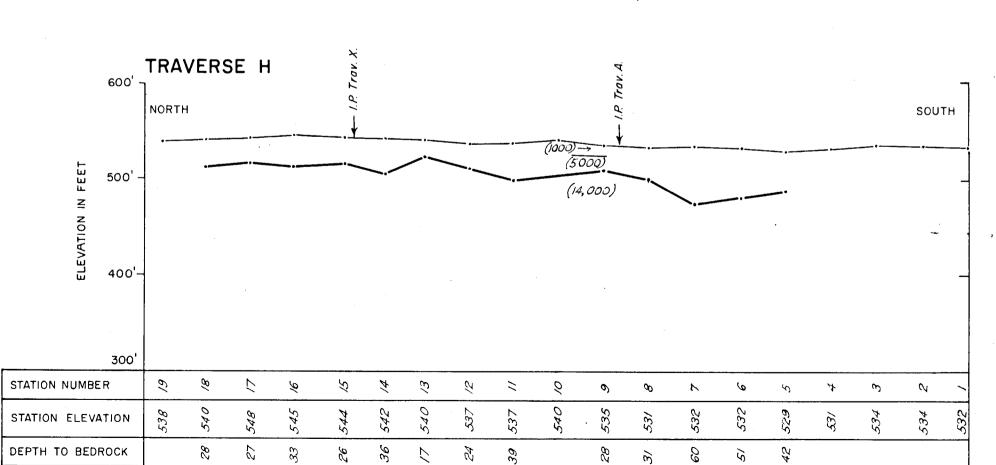
To Accompany Record No. 1962/68

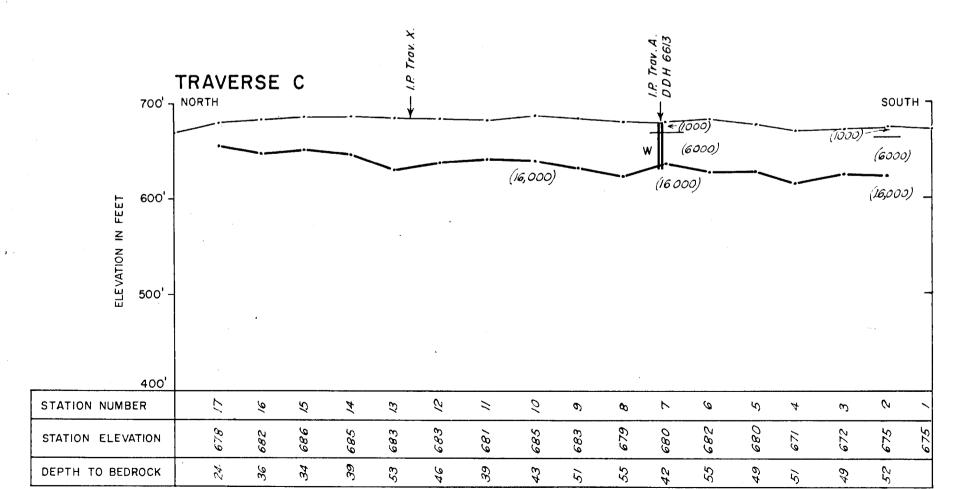


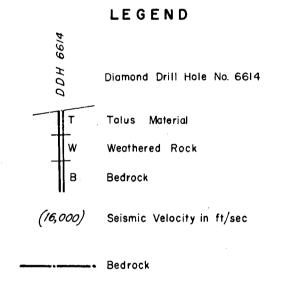




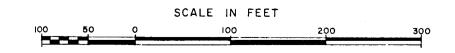


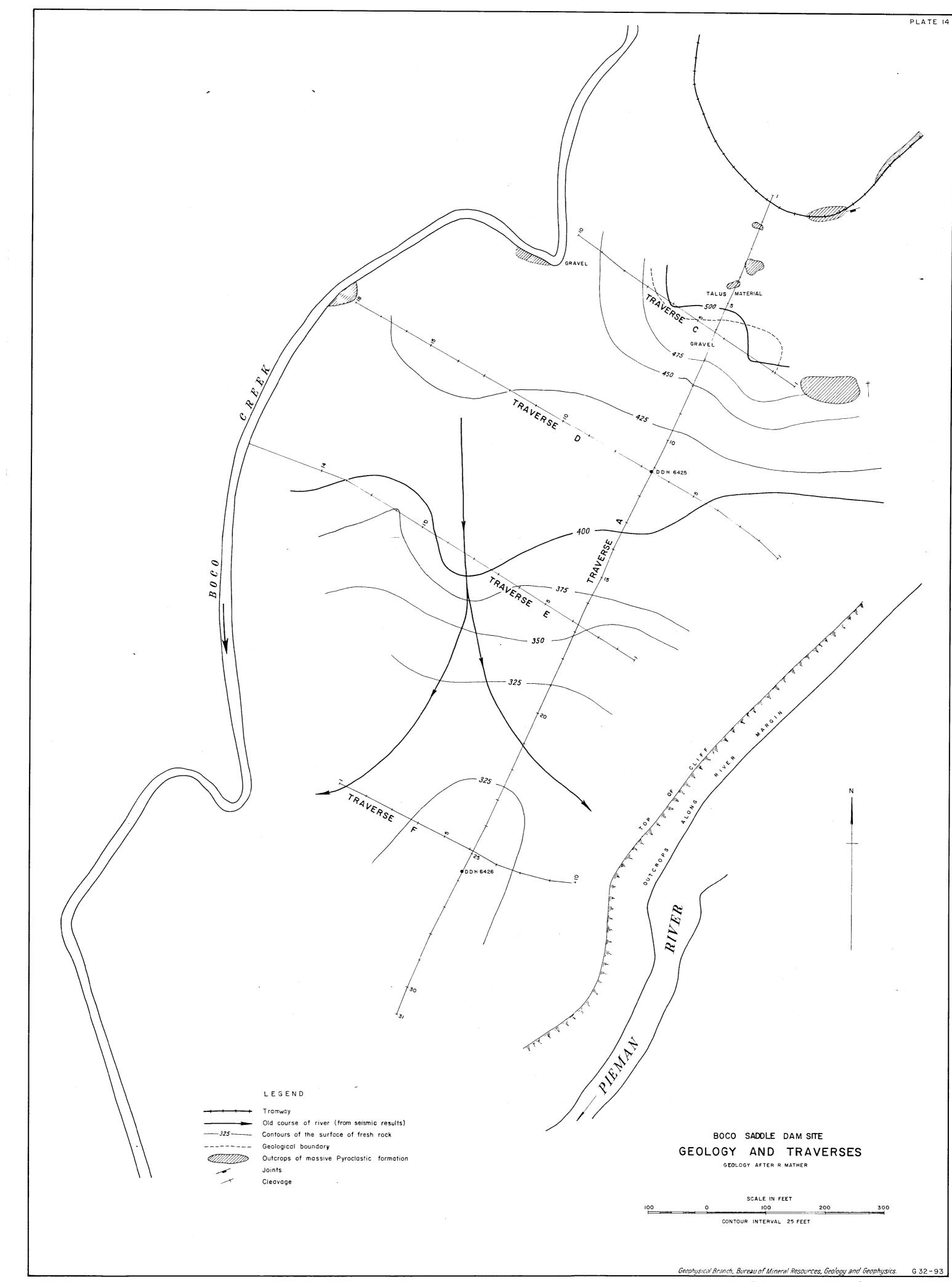




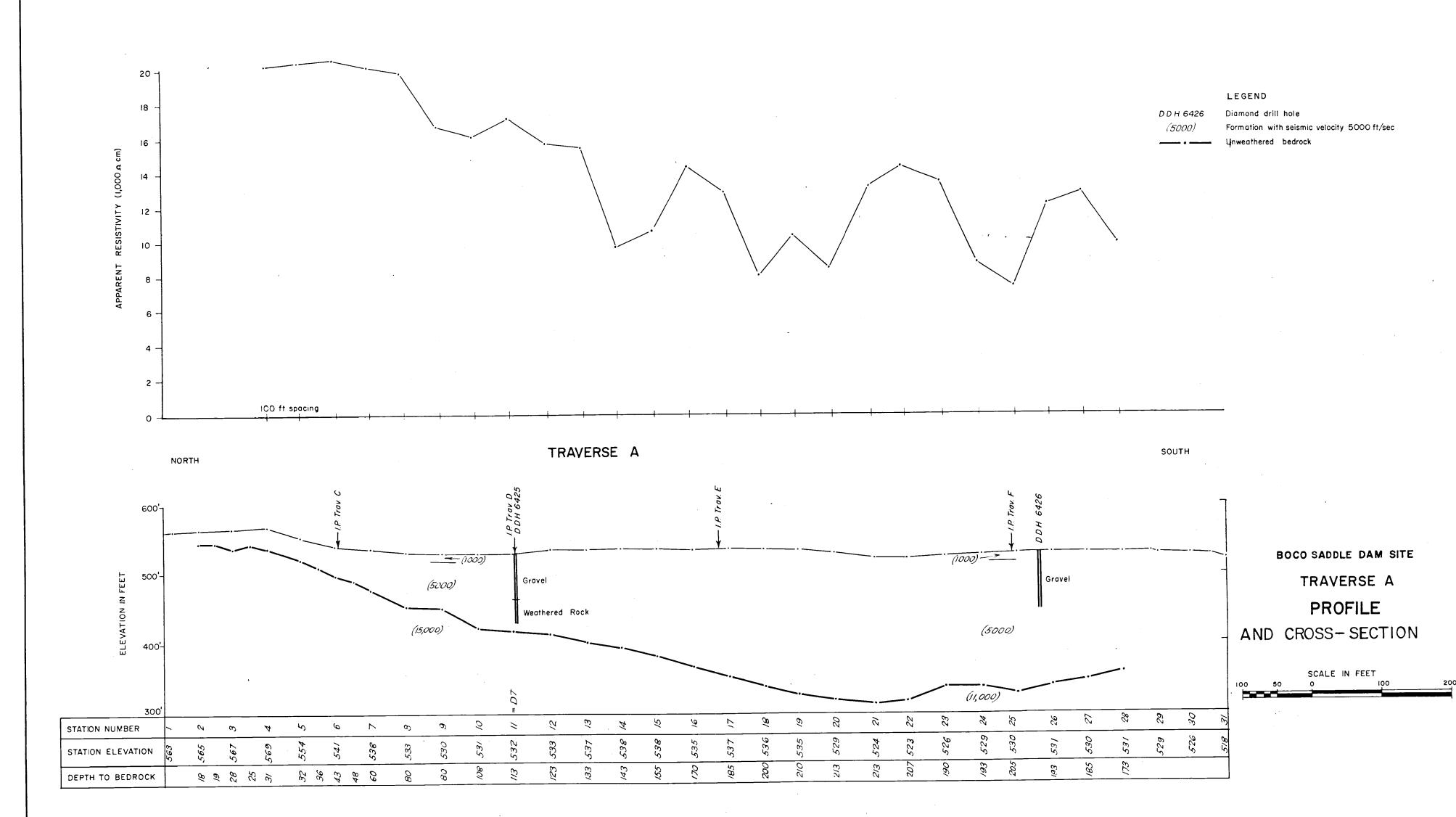


MURCHISON No. 4 DAM SITE TRAVERSES G,F,E,H and C





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