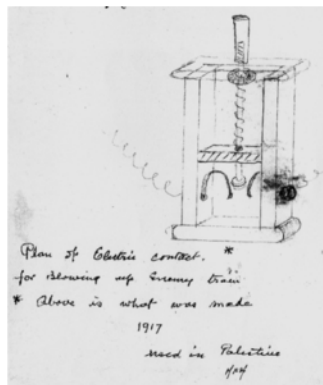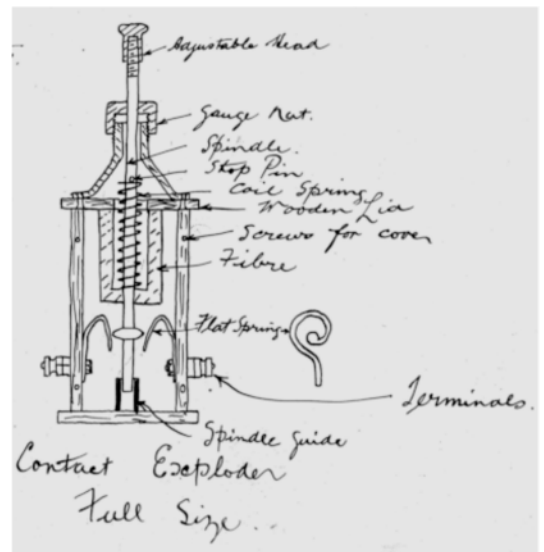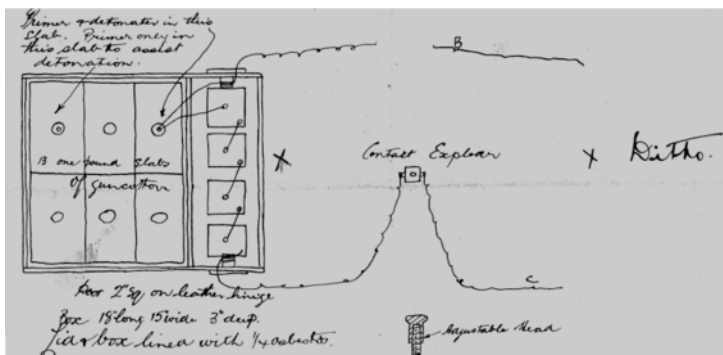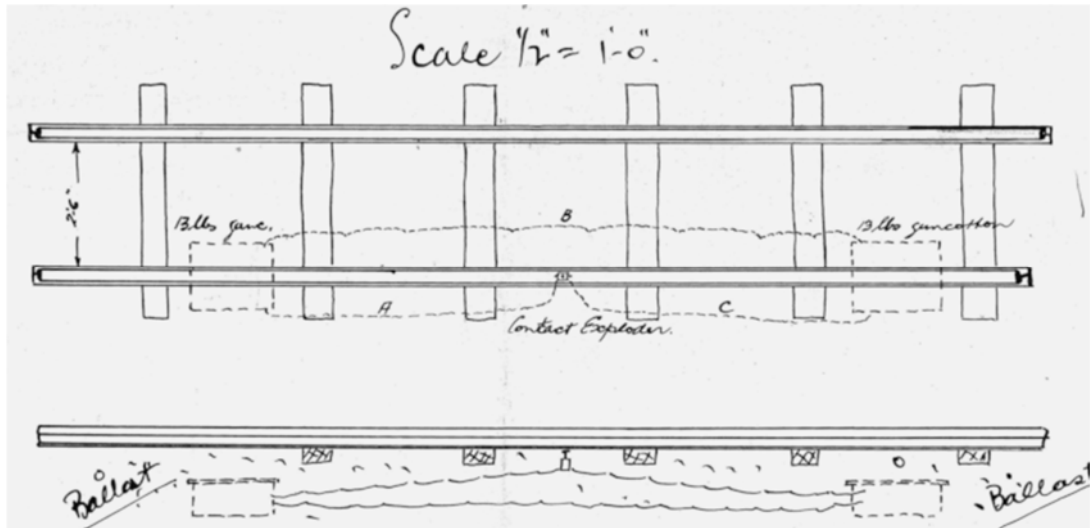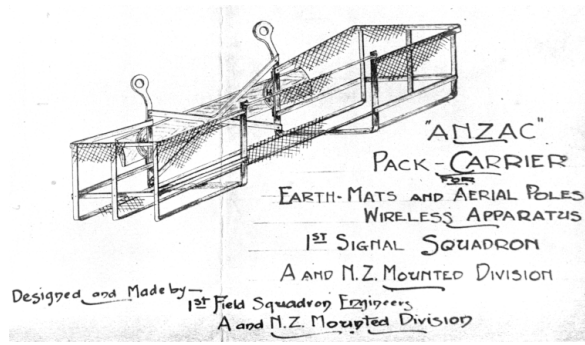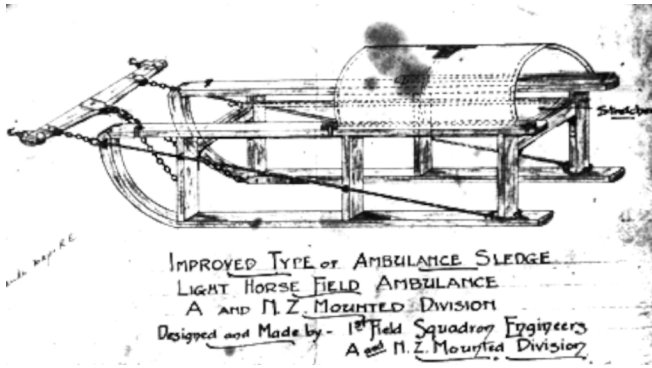# Herbert Frederick Hutchings
WW1 Drawings

We have in our files at the Historical Society drawings which came from the estate of Herbert Frederick (Fred) Hutchings. At the time of his death in May 1976 Fred had in his possession a number of engineers drawings from the first world war. They would have come from his time in the 1st Field Squadron Engineers. Presumably the men working on the projects had copies of the original drawings, which fortunately Fred managed to keep.

Fred was a local boy from Bergalia where his father was a farmer and the manager of the Cheese Factory. He enlisted in October 1915 at the age of 27. His older brother Benjamin also enlisted and served overseas. Fred's service record shows that he was 6 feet 1 inches tall, had blue eyes and brown hair. He transferred from the Light Horse to the 1st Field Squadron Engineers in June 1917.

Below are a series of Engineer's drawings showing how to blow up a Railway Line.

Two more drawings from Fred's collection

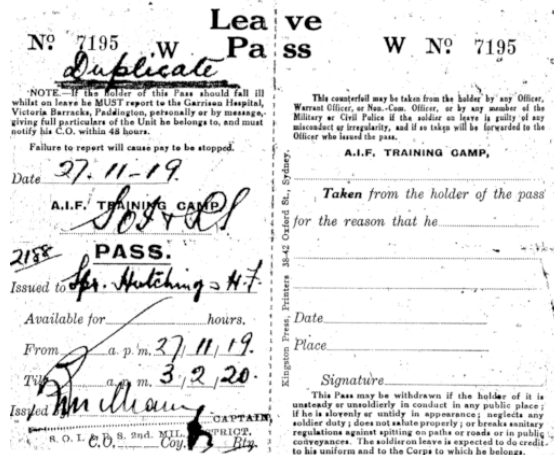The War Diaries show that on the 1st February 1917 the Engineers were –

"*Making pack carriers for earth mats & poles, wireless apparatus signal squadron A&NZ MTD Divisions. Making a new type of Ambulance Sled for the Light Horse Field Ambulance.*"

Note: War Diaries are available on Australian War Memorial web site www.awm.gov.au

Apart from working out how to blow up railway lines, the Engineers had a large number of more mundane tasks. When Fred joined them in June the War diaries list the following activities at Abasan-el-Kebir (now in the Ghaza Strip).

"*During first week a large number of miscellaneous jobs were put through about Division and SHQ such as carpentry, Divisional Sergeants Mess, tent covers, office furnishings – making ladder, measuring rods, scum skimmers for Watering Officer – Exchanged remounts – Drew material for instructional purposes – Repairing tables D.H.Q, making notice boards …*"

Fred returned to Australia in 1919. He embarked at Port Said on the S.S. Plassy on the 20th of September and disembarked on the 30th of October 1919.

S.S Plassy shown here arriving in Adelaide earlier in 1919 with troops returning from London. *(Reproduced with the permission of the State Library of S.A.)*

Leave Pass issued to Fred prior to his final discharge.

The Plassy was designed as a passenger ship for the P&O Company and launched in 1900, she was scrapped in 1924. During the war she not only acted as a troop ship but also as the Grand Fleet Hospital Ship. *(Source: Australian War Memorial)*