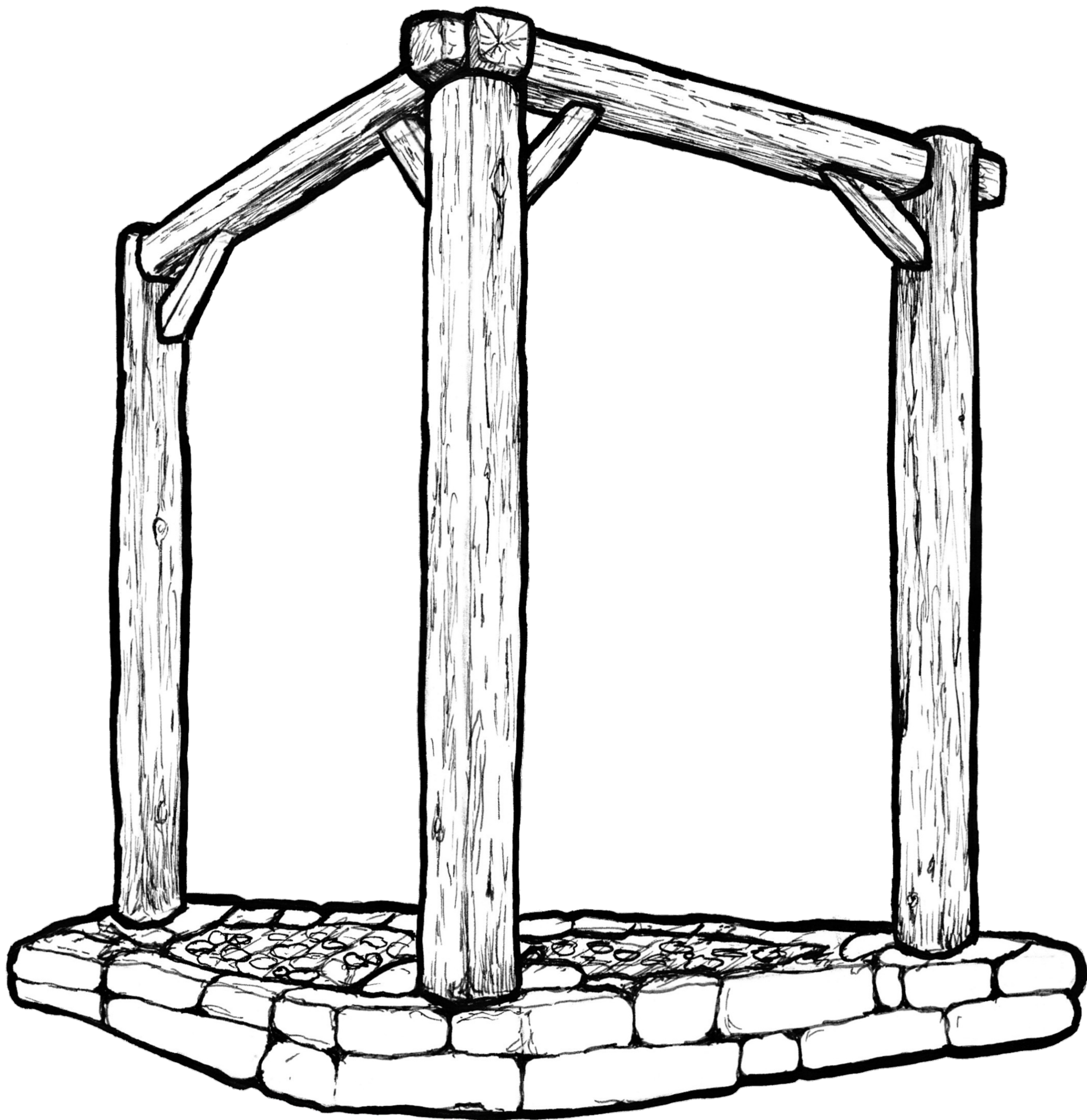




The Older Triangular Gallows

The reconstruction was created based on archaeological research and analogies from other sites. It represents one possible appearance.

The older gallows featured an irregular triangular platform, with the shorter side measuring approximately 5 metres and the longer sides around 7 metres. The perimeter consisted of large stones, while the interior was filled with smaller stones. The platform was accessed via stone steps on the southern side. In the corners of the platform, imprints of vertical wooden posts have been preserved. These most likely supported horizontal beams, as known from contemporary illustrations.

The execution site bore witness to the fates of those whose lives ended here. Some were simply left in the area around the gallows, where a large number of human bones were discovered. Burials were also found south of the later gallows. The executed were buried without proper funeral rites.

In one of the pits lay a man approximately sixty years old, whose body had been cut into seven pieces after death. Particularly remarkable is the discovery of a man aged between 37 and 45. His head had been severed and his rib cage cut open. Following the execution, his body was treated in an unusual manner. He was buried face down, with his head placed between his legs, which were tied together at the ankles. A hen was also placed in the pit with him, and everything was covered with a thick layer of lime. Thanks to this lime layer, not only the skeletal remains of the man and the domestic fowl were preserved, but also the impressions of their bodies, including parts of clothing and feathers. This is an extraordinarily valuable find. It provides a unique insight into contemporary ideas about guilt, punishment, and the treatment of the condemned. In this case, it was an aggravated form of punishment, which was imposed for crimes considered highly severe. Sometimes, such post-mortem interventions are also associated with individuals believed to be revenants or sorcerers. The measures taken (burial face down, head between the legs, etc.) were meant to prevent them from rising from the grave to cause harm.



Archaeologically excavated pits containing the remains of the executed.



The executed man encased in a layer of lime.



Impression of hen feathers, textiles, and rope from the grave pit.

More information about the site and the executed individuals can be found by visiting the Municipal Museum and Gallery in Polička.

