

1858

Form 504

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey

Topographic

Field No.

Office No.

1858

LOCALITY

State

Massachusetts

General locality

Wood's Hole

Locality

& vicinity

1888

194

CHIEF OF PARTY

W. J. Vinal

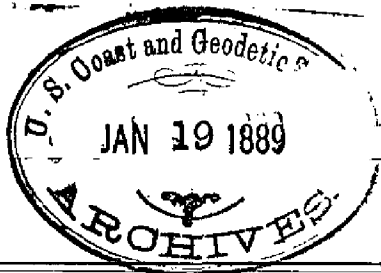
LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

DATE

1858



1858



U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

J. M. Thorn, Superintendent.

State: *Mass.*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. *1858.*

LOCALITY:

Woods Hole
and
Vicinity

1888.

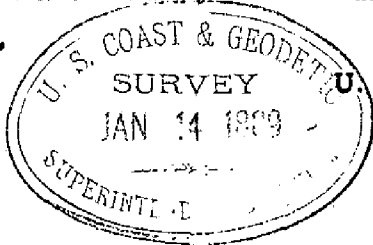
CHIEF OF PARTY:

W. Irving Vinal

descriptive report

Give here full address to which reply should be sent:

Ellington, Connecticut.



U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,

Ellington, Connecticut,

January 11th, 1889.

Mr. F. W. Thorn,

Superintendent U. S. C and G. Survey,

Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to submit herewith a Descriptive Report of the scenery in the vicinity of Wood's Holl, Massachusetts, made by myself from November 1888, to accompany the original plan-table sheet, scale 1:5000. Reg. No. 1858.

The action of glacial drift is quite apparent in this locality; the soil is light, of inconsiderable depth and very generally strewn with boulders. There are no masses of exposed rock in situ. The beaches are ordinarily made up of very coarse shingle with occasional short strips of sand and are usually backed by steep bluffs except in the smaller bays and near Falmouth village on Vineyard Sound. The faces of these bluffs are in many instances protected from rapid erosion by a growth of grass or small bushes.

The very swift current of the straits, locally called "The Hole", between Monomasset Island and the main shore, has abraded the north side of Pine Island and the points of Long Neck and Devil's Foot Island to a marked extent.

The marshes shown on the map are small; most of them have been drained and some are cultivated.

Formerly there was but little forest of full growth within the limits covered by this survey, the wood both on the main land and the islands being mostly oak. Mr. J. S. Fay, Jr., a summer resident of Wood's Holl, has in recent years planted extensive groves of pine trees which include many varieties.

Long Neck, Mucatina Island and most of Monomasset Island are destitute of trees, the other islands however are thickly wooded.

On the main land the roads are wide, have gentle grades and are kept in excellent order.

Bridges wherever they occur, are short and built of wood, except the one of stone spanning the entrance to Eel Pond Harbor; all of them are substantial and in good repair. Several bridges cross the railroad track above grade; there is only one important grade crossing shown on the map.

Fences bounding roads and fields are, owing to abundance of material, usually built of stone.

The islands included in the survey are owned by Mr. John W. Forbes of Boston, Mass. He with his family, his sons, Colonel and Commodore Forbes, and their families reside here during the summer months and communicate with the main land by private steam yacht.

Wood's Holl (Hill) is the terminus of one branch of the Old Colony Railroad from Boston and is seventy-two miles from that city. Steamboats belonging to the same Company land here on their trips between New Bedford, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket.

The summer headquarters of the U. S. Fish Commission are located here; at the western end of the village are the extensive factories and wharves of the Pacific Guano Company; a buoy and supply depot of the U. S. Light House Establishment is situated on Little Harbor. An officer of the U. S. Army is stationed here and has charge of the Weather Signal and Government Telegraph Office in this vicinity.

North of Little Harbor and on Parker's Neck and

on Nob'ska Point are the elegant summer residences of Messrs J. S. Fay, Sr., J. S. Fay, Jr., H. H. Fay, Butler, Foster, Jones and C. Liddell.

There are twenty-one places of business, one hotel, four churches, one public hall and one public school house in the village of Wood's Holl and many improvements are in progress.

Encroachment of the sea and consequent serious changes in the shore line on the Buzzard Bay side of Long Neck and on the main land, particularly between the Bay and Great Harbor, are prevented by three short breakwaters or walls of stone built along the high water ridge.

The low water line is distinctly defined on the sheet but may be slightly modified in outline when the soundings are plotted.

Yours respectfully,

W. Irving Vinal,

Assistant U. S. and C. Survey.