1862

Form 504

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey Topographic

Field No. ..... Office No. 1862

LOCALITY

State Oregon

General locality Port Orford

Locality to

Cape Sebastian

~~194~~
~~1588~~

CHIEF OF PARTY

E. F. Dickens

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

F. M. Thorn, Superintendent.

State: Oregon.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. 1862.

LOCALITY:

Port Orford
to
Cape Sebastian.

1888.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

E. F. Dickins.

A-1862 - Topo.

Descriptive Report

of

Topographical Reconnaissance

from

PORT ORFORD to CAPE SEBASTIAN

Oregon,

Executed during months of June & July 1888.

By E.F.Dickins, Assistant Coast & Geodetic Survey,

TOPOGRAPHICAL RECONNAISSANCE

from

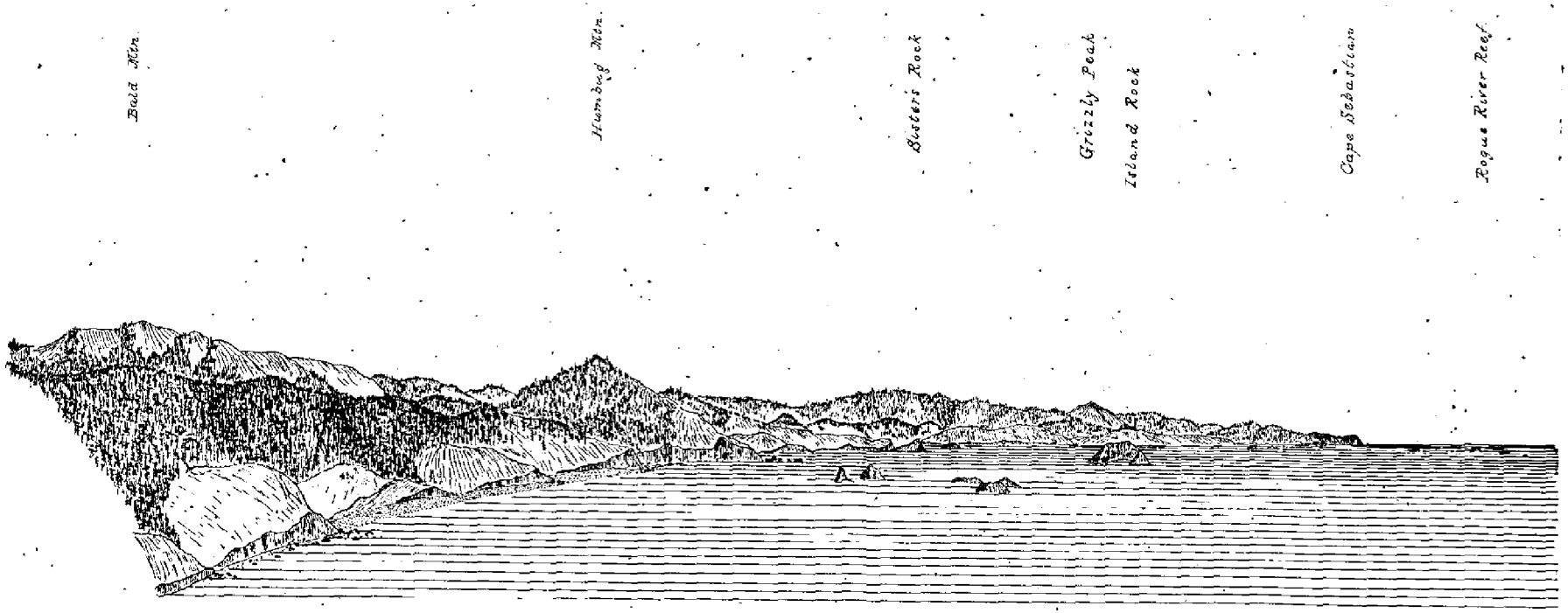
PORT ORFORD to CAPE SEBASTIAN.

OREGON.

Executed during the months of June and July 1888,

by E. F. Dickins, Assistant C. and G. Survey,

PORT ORFORD is the best summer anchorage on the Pacific Coast between San Francisco and the Straits of Fuca, being completely protected from the N. W. winds and swell which prevail during the summer months, so that large vessels can ride at anchor in perfect safety, but during the winter months it is unsafe for sailing vessels, being entirely open to the Southward, a heavy swell will often rise and roll in so suddenly that a sailing vessel cannot get out and several have been caught and driven ashore in the cove. The town is situated on the bluff about 60 ft. above the sea, it was once quite a busy place, being the base of supplies for the gold mines on the Elk and Sixes Rivers, but the mines are now mostly worked out and the town was destroyed by fire several years since and now the place is very dull, consisting at present of 2 general merchandise stores, a hotel, drug store, saloon, blacksmith shop, and about 20 dwellings. There is an old steam



FROM PORT ORFORD looking SOUTH.

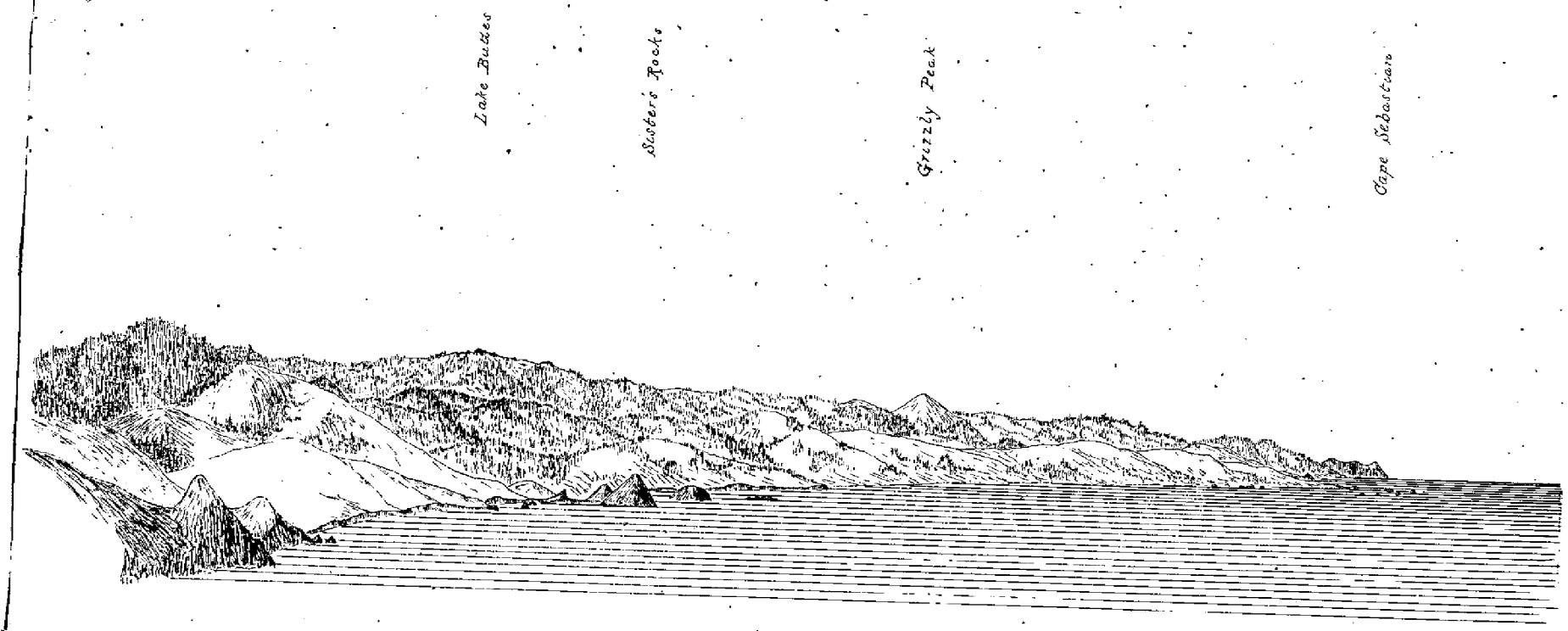
saw mill on the first creek, about a mile, South of the town, but it is not now running. A. Crawford & Co. of San Francisco, have just built a new steam saw mill on Elk River, about 4 miles from the port, with which they propose to connect it by a tramway for transporting their lumber for shipment, they have also built a wharf at the cove. In this vicinity are found large quantities of the finest white cedar on the Pacific Coast, it is known in the market as Port Orford Cedar, and is said to be better in quality than any on the Eastern Coast.

The coast line South of Port Orford is very rugged and precipitous, the bluffs vary from 100 to 200 feet in height, and the ridges behind are heavily timbered,

Three miles South of the port and about a mile off shore is a cluster of five large rocks, varying in height from 65 to 140 feet.

BRUSHY CREEK is a small stream which empties into the ocean about 4½ miles S. E. of Port Orford, it flows around the North & East base of Humbug Mountain, and about 2½ miles S.E. of its mouth comes within 200 yards of the beach, and then changes abruptly to the Eastward. There are several settlers along this creek, who have fine garden patches around their cabins.

FROM HUMBUG POINT looking NORTH.



FROM HUMBUG POINT looking SOUTH.

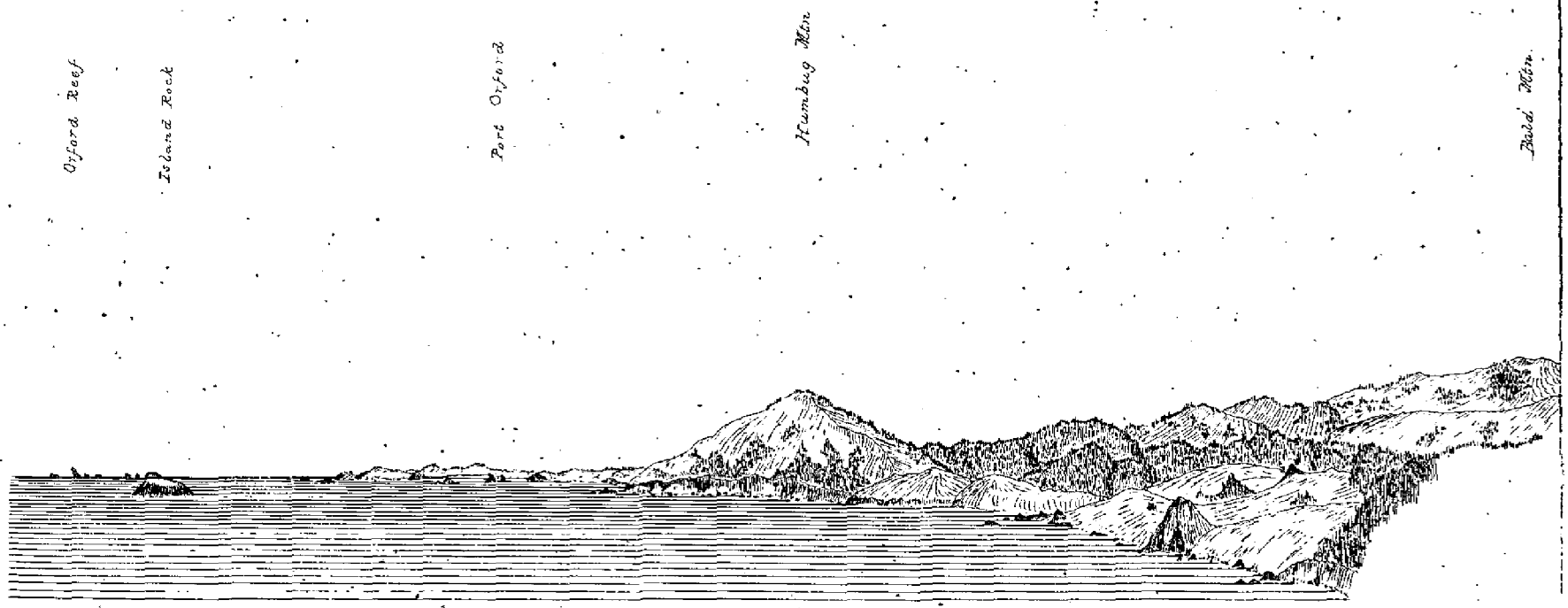
Island Rock

HUMBUG MOUNTAIN is a conical shaped peak about five miles S.E. of Port Orford, and rises to the height of 1740 feet within ¾ of a mile of the ocean, it is heavily timbered on the North & East sides, the coast face is very bold and precipitious with scattered clumps of timber.

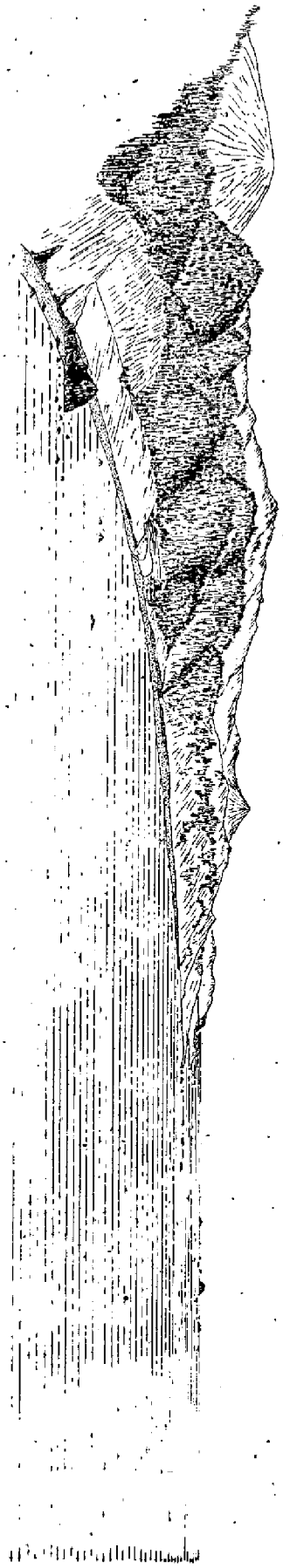
BALD MOUNTAIN, about 2875 feet high, is a round top peak about five miles East of Humbug Mountain, it is bare on its immediate summit, but the Northern & Western slopes are heavily timbered, on the South side it is covered with chaparral, and scattered clumps of timber. About two miles to the S.E. is a sharp conical peak, bare of timber, I had no opportunity of determining its exact position & elevation, or of checking the position & elevation of Bald Mountain, as given by Assistant Chase, as they were almost always covered by clouds during my stay in this vicinity.

ISLAND ROCK is a rocky islet, about five miles South of Port Orford, & 1½ miles off shore, it is about 300 yards in length, by 200 yards in width, & about 220 feet in height, about 200 yards to the Northward is a sharp pinnacle rock 115 feet in height.

SISTERS ROCKS are a very conspicuous cluster of three large rocks, lying close in shore, about eleven miles S.E. of Port Orford, the largest of the group is about 300 yards in diameter & 400 feet in height, it is connected with the



FROM SISTERS ROCKS looking NORTH



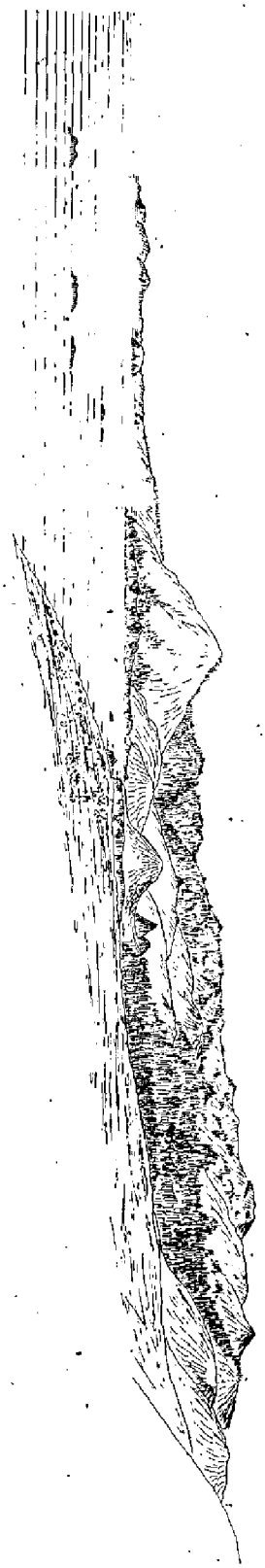
From SISTERS ROCKS looking SOUTH

beach at low water, its outer face is almost perpendicular, but on the inshore side the slope is more gradual, & is covered with chaparral, the second rock is about 250 yards off shore to the S.W. it is dome shaped 100 yards in diameter and about 200 feet in height, the third is a low flat rock, not over 5 or 6 feet in height, & is about 1100 yards off shore to the S.W. Under the lea of these rocks, the sea is comparatively smooth during the summer months, & asthere is a large amount of fine timber & tan bark in this vicinity a shipping point might be made in the cove for small vessels.

From Humbug Mountain to Euchre Creek, the shore line is very rugged & broken, the coast face is comparatively bare, but is backed by heavily timbered ridges.

EUCHRE CREEK is a good sized stream which finds an outlet about 2 miles South of the Sisters Rocks, there is some fine bottom land along this creek, & a number of settlers who have fine gardens & orchards,but their principal occupation is stock raising. Bordering the creek & its tributaries is a large body of Fir & Cedar timber.

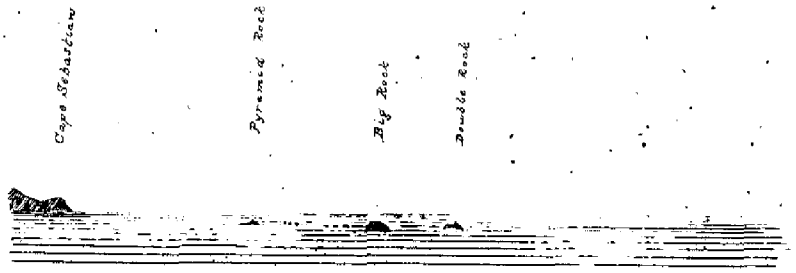
For about 5 miles South of this creek there is a long straight sand beach, bordered by low bluffs & backed by timbered ridges, at one time there was considerable mining done along this beach, but now comparatively nothing.



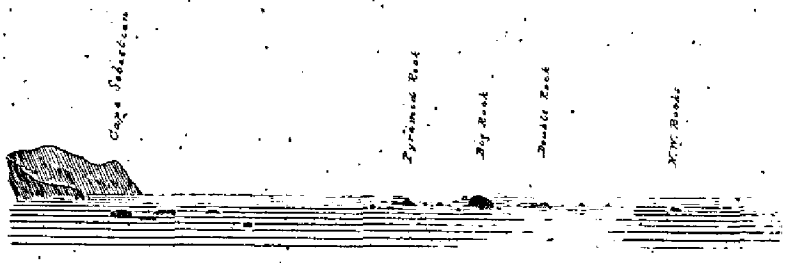
From SENTINEL MOUND (Rogue River) looking NORTH.

HUBBARDS MOUND is quite a prominent dome shaped mound or knoll, situated about 8 miles South of the Sisters Rocks, & about 4 miles North of the mouth of Rogue River, it is 250 feet in height, bare on the S. & W. but covered with chaparral on the N. & E. sides, The ridges between this mound & the mouth of the river are comparatively bare of timber & are used for sheep raising.

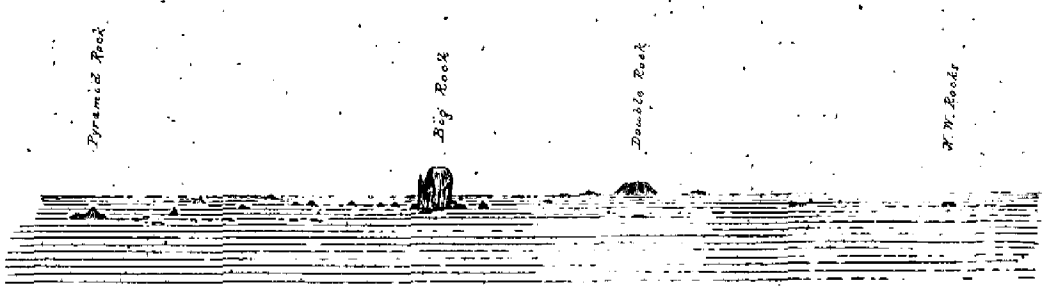
ROGUE RIVER, The mouth of this river is 22 miles South of Port Orford, & 7 miles North of Cape Sebastian, the entrance is very narrow being not over 200 yards in width, there is about 5 feet of water on the bar at low tide, the town of Ellens burg, county seat of Curry County, is situated on the South bank just inside the entrance, & consists of a Salmon cannery, general merchandise store, hotel, blacksmith shop, saloon, & about 30 dwellings, They have a tri-weekly mail from Port Orford, & as there is no road South of the latter place, all travel is on horse back over a rough mountain trail, there is an effort now being made to extend the road to the County seat , & most of the creeks are already bridged. There is a small steam tug stationed on this river, and two small scow schooners plying between Ellensburg and San Francisco, transporting supplies for the store & cannery, & taking away the Canned Salmon, Hides, Tan bark &c.



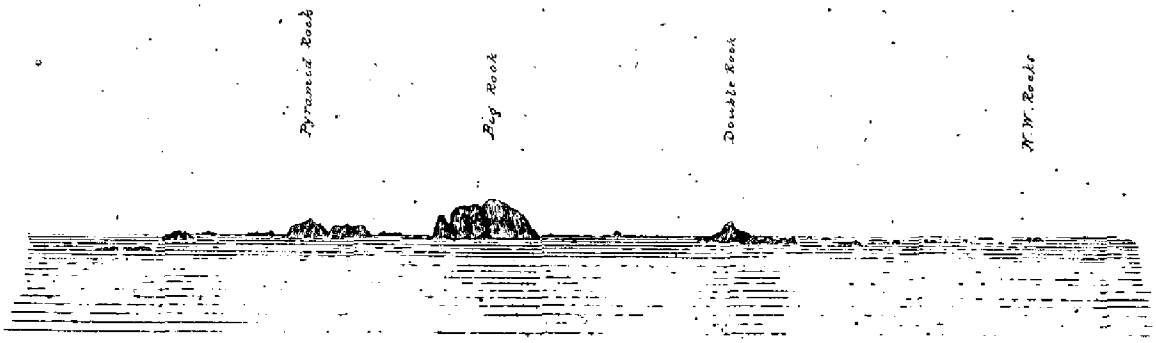
Rogue River Reef from Port Orford



Rogue River Reef from Humbug Point



ROGUE RIVER REEF from HUBBARD'S MOUND



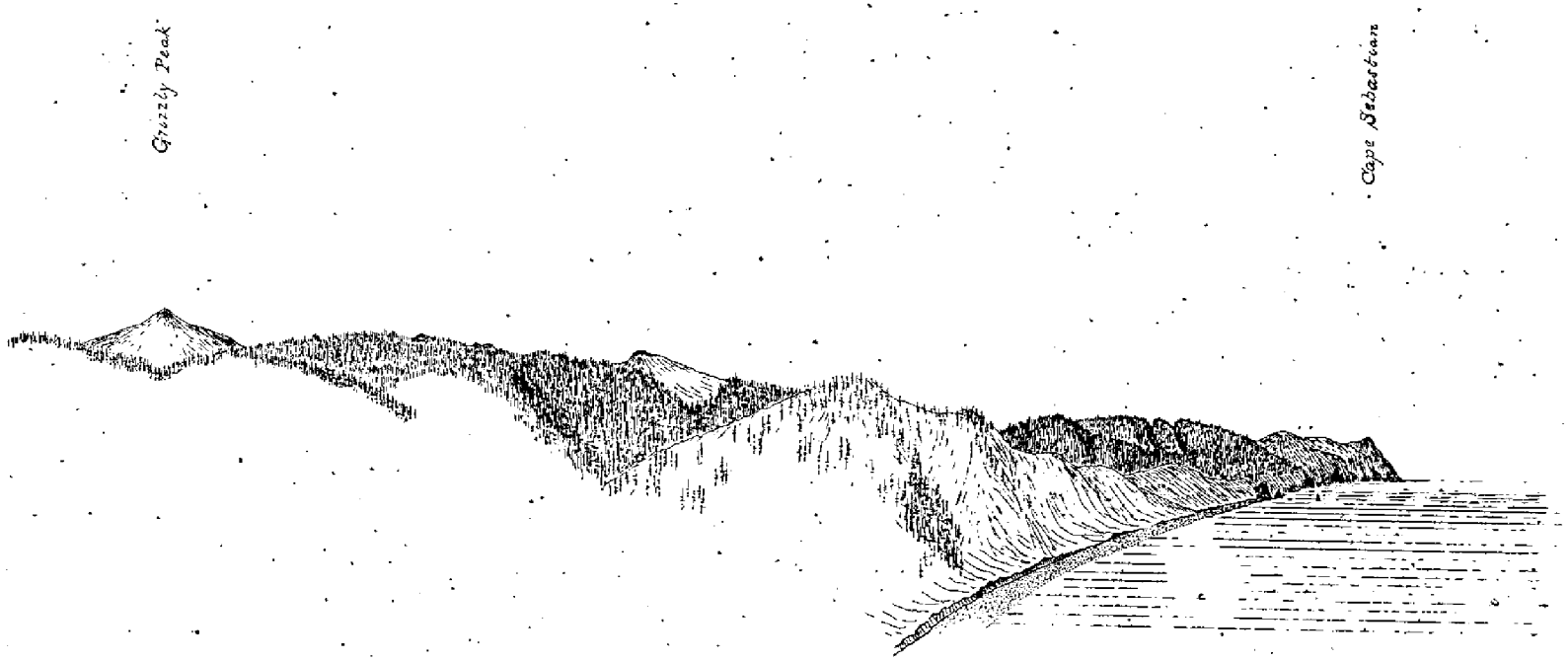
Rogue River Reef from South Spit of Rogue River entrance

ROGUE RIVER REEF consists of a cluster of rocky islets, & sunken rocks lying off the mouth of Rogue River, the general trend of the reef is from N.W. to S.E. Three of the rocks areof considerable size, Big Rock, 120 feet high, bears N. 77° W. distant 3⅓ miles, Double Rock, 65 feet high, bears N. 79° W. distant 3⅙ miles, & Pyramid Rock, 50 feet high, bears N. 74° W. distant 2½ miles, all these bearings are magnetic & from the mouth of river.

The other rocks are much smaller & vary from 25 feet in height to barely awash at high tide, The outermost or N.W. Rocks are about 10 feet in height, & bear N. 72° W. by compass, distant 4½ miles from mouth of river,

Off the reef on both sides are several sunken rocks, the outer & therefore the most dangerous one, bears S. 60° W. distant 3 miles from the mouth of river, & S. 16° E. distant 2⅓ miles from Big Rock, the sea only breaks on this rock or reef at low tide and with a heavy swell, Have noticed that steamers coming up the coast, & hugging close in shore, to avoid the heavy N.W. winds & swell which prevail during the summer months, often pass very close to if not inside this rock, and respectfully suggest that a whistling buoy should be placed there to warn them of this danger.

There is a channel nearly a mile in width, between the reef and the main land, which the small coasting steamers



From SENTINEL MOUND (Rogue River) looking SOUTH

LAKE BUTTES from mouth of ROGUE RIVER

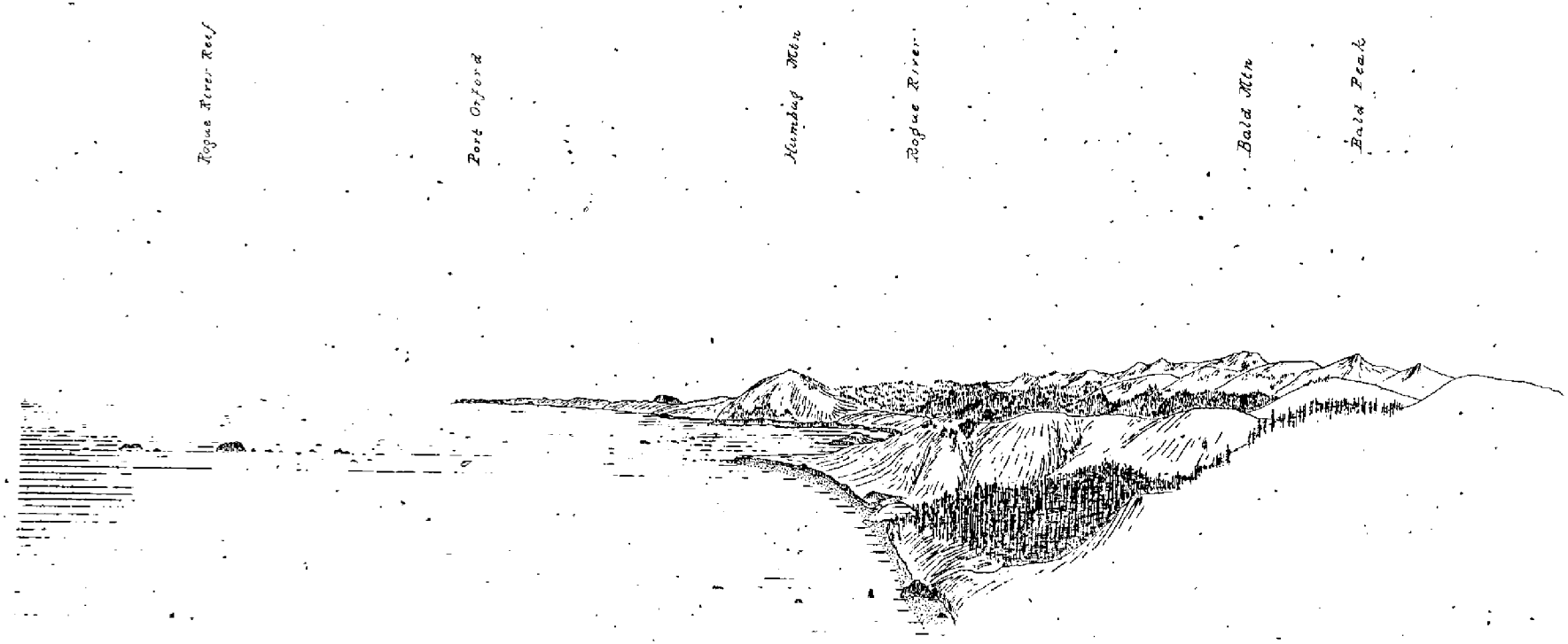
sometimes use, but until a thorough Hydrographic Survey has been made, it is hardly safe, for I have seen the break of sunken rocks on either hand, & it is possible that the reef may extend accross the channel. The Captain of the steam tug Thistle, stationed at Rogue River, informed me that there is 9 fathoms with rocky bottom through this channel.

LAKE BUTTES is a series of rocky buttes lying about 8 miles due East of the mouth of Rogue River, the one determined & located on the sheet is the highest of the group, & is about 3500 feet in elevation.

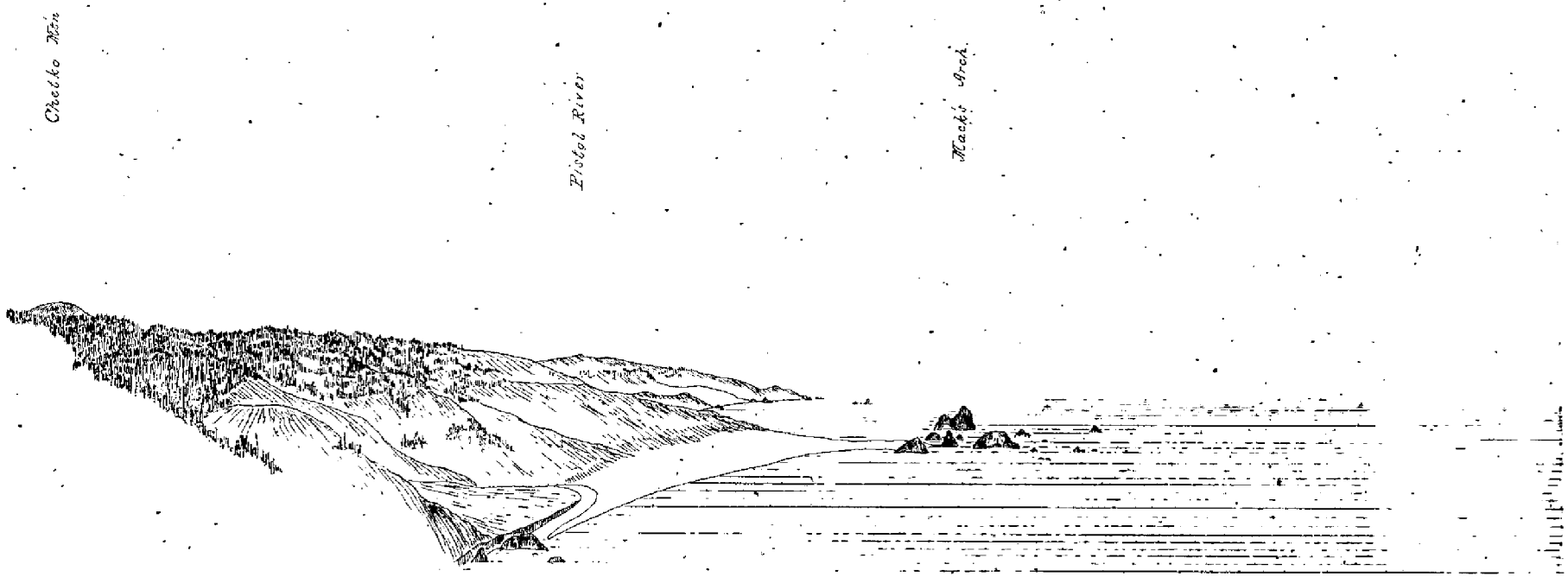
GRIZZLY PEAK is a conical shaped peak about 2350 feet high, bearing S. 82° E. by compass, & distant about 4 miles from the mouth of Rogue River, this peak is bare, & makes quite a prominent land mark rising as it does above the surrounding heavily timbered ridges.

HUNTERS CREEK is quite a good sized stream which empties into the ocean about 2½ miles South of Rogue River, there are several settlers along its banks.

Betweenthe mouth of Rogue River & this creek there is a broad sand beach, backed by low bluffs & timbered ridges, South of the creek the beach continues to within a mile of Cape Sebastian, the ridges are much more rugged & broken, but generally bare on the coast face.



FROM CAPE SEBASTIAN looking NORTH



FROM CAPE SEBASTIAN looking SOUTH

CAPE SEBASTIAN, locally known as "Hunters Head", is a bold prominent headland, about 29 miles South of Port Orford, its coast face is very rugged & almost perpendicular, rising to a height of 720 feet within 150 yards of the shore, The Cape is bare of timber for a mile from the coast , & then backed by heavily timbered ridges. About a mile N.W. of the Cape is a sunken rock, on which there is a break at low water.

HUNTER~~S~~ COVE lies immediately to the Southward of the Cape, by ~~which~~ it is protected from the heavy N. W. winds & swell, & is a good summer harbor for smallvessels.

A good quality of sand stone suitable for building purposes is found here, which might be made available in case a Light House should be built on the above named headland

A Hydrographic Survey of this cove was made by Comdr. P.C.Johnson,U.S.N. Commanding Coast Survey Steamer "HASSLER" in 1873.

Respectfully Submitted

E. F. Dickins

Assistant C. & G. Survey,

San Francisco, Cal.
February 7th 1889