



2490

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

O. H. Tittmann Superintendent.

State: *P.R.*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. *2490*

LOCALITY:

Mangrove Harbor &c.

1900.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

W. C. Hodgkins

2490

Descriptive Report
to accompany Topographic Sheet ⁵²⁶³⁶ ~~2490~~,
Mangrove Harbor, etc., Porto Rico, on 1/5000.

1. The general character of the country is hilly but of only moderate height. The relief is considerably broken, apparently by erosion. It appears to have a rock base.
2. The outer shore is fringed by coral reefs, outside of which the water is bold. In the harbor, the mangroves as a rule fringe the shore, the real shore line being some distance back in the trees. In the upper part of the harbor there are muddy deposits, but as the entrance is approached the shore becomes sandy, with numerous broken fragments of coral and broken shells. Quite an extensive coral reef extends to the southward from the bluff point on the north side and a similar reef also stretches to the northward from the eastern end of Water Cay, which is a bold rocky bluff on the south side of the entrance. Although the eastern end of Water Cay is precipitous, it

reaches an elevation of little more than ten metres and the greater part of the island is low and covered by trees. The higher portion has only some scattered bushes and numerous cacti. From the southern end of the black, rocky bluff the coral reef continues to the southwestward in the direction of Breeze Pt. and forms a breakwater for the small harbor called the "Basin" (La Caldera), a branch of Mangrove Harbor.

The sand beaches are generally hard.

Low water line is shown by a dotted line upon sand beaches or mud flats. On the coral reefs, the outer limit of the heads visible at low water is indicated by signs for detached rocks.

3. There is no record of any stranding upon this coast, so far as I know.

4. No travelling dunes.

5. No natural levees.

6. There are broken cliffs of dark rock, apparently volcanic, at Punta Negra and on Water Cay, both mentioned above.

I saw no sign of springs.

7. There is no evidence of recession. There

does not appear to be very much erosion at present. Some mud is brought down during heavy rains and is deposited for the most part in the coves.

8. The greater part of the country is covered by a rather scrubby forest growth. The trees reach a height of 20 to 30 feet and are of species unknown to me by name.

The most noticeable variety in the spring is a low tree which bears great quantities of white, salver shaped flowers, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 inches across and having a delicious perfume. This tree is called by the St. Thomas negroes the "lily tree" and has a milky juice, which flows profusely when the tree is wounded. This juice is said to be acrid and poisonous and to produce blindness if introduced into the eye. There is considerable underbrush. Along shore the mangrove is frequently found in sheltered coves. Various kinds of cactus and of yucca are plentiful and near the huts of the few inhabitants the coco nut palm and the banana are found.

9. About 75% of the land is wooded and

about 25% in pasturage, supporting cattle and sheep of very good appearance. Horses do not seem to be raised in any great numbers.

There are no towns and but few inhabitants in this portion of the island.

There is practically no trade. There are no roads. Communication is either by water or across country on foot or horseback. There are no railroads, canals or rivers. The very few fences are usually of wire.
10. There are no "resorts".

11. This is the first survey by the United States. In 1852 a survey was made by the British Admiralty (See B.A. Chart 2677). At that time the entire island was wooded, there being then no inhabitants. In 1879 the government of Porto Rico, examined the island of Culebra and decided to colonize it which was accordingly done. Aside from the partial clearing of the island, there seems to be very little change, except that some new names have been introduced. This question will be treated separately.

12. There is no evidence of change of shoreline.
W. C. Hodgkins