

4631

U. S. COAST & GEODETIC SURVEY
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Form 504

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

R. S. PATTON Director

State: Texas

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Topographic
Hydrographic

Sheet No. J

4621

LOCALITY

Houston Ship Channel

~~Greens Bayou to Clinton~~

Clinton to Turning Basin

1930-31
1932

CHIEF OF PARTY

John A. Bond, R. and G. E.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY
R. S. PATTON, DIRECTOR

Project No. 68
1930-31

Descriptive Report
to
Accompany
TOPOGRAPHIC SHEET J
of
HOUSTON SHIP CHANNEL AND VICINITY
TEXAS

John A. Bond, H. and G. E., U. S. C. and G. S.
Chief of Party

Descriptive Report to Accompany Topographic Sheet J

Houston Ship Channel, Texas

INSTRUCTIONS.

The topography on sheet J is a part of Project No. 68, the instructions for which were dated July 24th, 1930.

LIMIT AND SCALE.

Surveyed on a scale of 1/5000, the sheet covers the shore line of the Houston Ship Channel from Clinton to the turning basin. This sheet joins sheet H on the east and is the westernmost of the series of sheets of the Houston Ship Channel.

CONTROL AND SURVEY METHODS.

Usual plane table survey methods were employed. Positions were obtained mainly from three point fixes and resections with only one traverse. This traverse was an unclosed spur of three-eighths mile in length on Sims Bayou.

The control consisted of 9 triangulation stations adequately spaced along the ship channel.

A series of air photos of the Houston Ship Channel will be forwarded under separate cover, and should prove useful in supplying interior detail which could not be economically covered by plane table methods. The area included on this sheet is covered by photos Nos. 2 to 12.

In most cases the low water line shown on the sheet has been drawn from information obtained during the hydrographic survey.

At a few places where there was a good agreement with the U.S.G.S. survey of 1915 small sections of the 20 ft. contour were drawn on the sheet without the usual survey methods.

At no place was an extra plane table station established inshore solely to delineate the 20 ft. contour.

All elevations on this sheet are based on the datum plane at Harrisburg as determined by the U. S. Engineers.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES.

A steep bluff bank of 20 feet extends down to the water's edge over the greater portion of the shore line of the ship channel. The shore line of Sims Bayou, Brays Bayou and Buffalo Bayou is much lower and is fringed with a scattered growth of magnolia, elm, oak and pine.

Many large industrial concerns have their plants on this section of ship channel. Among the major concerns are two oil refining plants, one oil storage property, one flour mill, a municipal grain elevator, five cotton compress plants, a fertilizer factory, and several large warehouses.

Only the most prominent buildings immediately adjacent to the ship channel are shown. In several cases the inshore limits of buildings were drawn from air photographs and are shown on the sheet as a dashed line.

Blue prints of the following properties will be forwarded with the sheet: Public wharf, Houston Compress Co., Ship Channel Compress Co., Magnolia Compress Co., Texas Chemical Co., Lone

Star Cement Co., Texas Warehouse, Clinton, Manchester Terminal Corp., Gulf Refining Co., and Sinclair Refining Co. A field inspection of the above blue prints was not considered necessary due to the existence of recent air photographs covering this area.

Extensive residential and business building has taken place in Manchester, Harrisburg and Magnolia Park.

Attention is called to the several wrecks shown in the water areas on this sheet. A wrecked tug is located about 260 meters east of the Public Belt R. R. bridge on Sims Bayou and a wrecked barge at the mouth of this bayou. A wrecked barge partially beached is shown at the east entrance of Harrisburg Bend. Six wrecked ships are shown to the north of Fidelity Island.

Six boat ways are to be found in this area. The Bloodworth Ways, Plazer ways and the Marine Service ways are located on Brays Bayou. The first two mentioned are capable of hauling out launches and tugs up to 90 feet in length. The Marine Service ways can accommodate only small craft. A ways owned and operated by W. L. Jones about 600 meters above the G.H. and S.A.R.R. bridge on Buffalo Bayou has hauled out the 130 ft. craft belonging to the Houston Pilot Association. The Elliott boat ways located near topographic signal Way in Harrisburg Bend can accommodate launches, small barges and small yachts. The Haddon ways near the Public Belt R.R. bridge on Sims Bayou is used by tugs and shell barges. Machine shops are operated in connection with all of the above boat ways.

The U. S. Engineers' base line extends along the north side of the ship channel except for a small section between Clinton and the American Maid Flour Mills where it crosses to the south side of the channel. The station numbers are distances measured on the center line of the channel from the zero at Morgan Point. Markers are set along the shore line normal to their corresponding points on the center line. The markers are bronze discs set in concrete every 500 feet, with iron pipes at intermediate 100 ft. stations.

COMPARISON WITH PREVIOUS SURVEYS.

The ship channel and the areas adjacent to the channel have undergone so many radical changes due to extensive dredging operations and industrial developments that very little comparison exists between the present survey and the U.S.G.S. survey of 1915.

Several of the changes from chart 532 are: The buildings as shown on what was Clinton Island do not exist; a new municipal warehouse is located on the south side of the turning basin; a metal boat shed has been constructed on the south side of the fire boat wharf; there are no field indications of a cable area north of Fidelity Island; the two small buildings shown near topographic signal Bos do not exist; and a wharf now occupies the site of a warehouse previously shown about 200 meters northwest of triangulation station Flour.

NEW NAMES.

All names shown on the sheet have been taken from chart 532, except "Fidelity Island" for the small island about 340 meters

south of triangulation station Tank 2 which name is well established in local usage.

The portion of the ship channel that is charted as Buffalo Bayou is known locally as Houston Ship Channel.

LANDMARKS.

A list of landmarks for charts which contains the positions of prominent objects and all beacons and ranges will be forwarded under separate cover.

Respectfully submitted.

Washington, D.C.,
November 20, 1931.

Edmund L. Jones
Edmund L. Jones
Aid, U.S.C. and G.S.

Approved:

John A. Bond
John A. Bond, H. and G.E.
Chief of Party, U.S.C. and G.S.

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

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REG. NO.

4621

TOPOGRAPHIC TITLE SHEET

The Topographic Sheet should be accompanied by this form, filled in as completely as possible, when the sheet is forwarded to the Office.

Field No. J

REGISTER NO. **4621**

State Texas

General locality Houston Ship Channel

Locality Clinton to Turning Basin

Scale 1/5000 Date of survey May, 1931, 19

Vessel _____

Chief of Party John A. Bond

Surveyed by Edmund L. Jones

Inked by E. L. Jones, H. W. Murray

Heights in feet above M.H.W. to ground ~~to tops of trees~~

Contour, Approximate contour, Form line interval 20 feet

Instructions dated July 24, 1930, 19

Remarks: _____