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U. S. COAST & GEODETIC SURVEY
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Form 504
Ed. June, 1923

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

R. S. Patton, Director

State: LOUISIANA

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Topographic } Sheet No. "C" 4794
~~Hydrographic~~ }

LOCALITY

GULF COAST OF LOUISIANA

MERMENTAU RIVER

193 3

CHIEF OF PARTY

W. E. Parker

Applied to drawings of charts 1007 & 1116

Q.A. 15/34, C.N.D.

LOCALITY AND LIMITS

The topography on this sheet extends from the coast inshore along the Mermentau River to the approximate north end of Upper Mud Lake which is the north limit of Chart 1278. The work was performed at a 1:20,000 scale. In executing the topography on the sheet only the details near the water were stressed. Features that might be of aid in reducing air photos were located. All objects that might be of aid or interest to the navigator of a small boat along the river were located. Scant attention was paid to features unimportant to these two considerations.

CONTROL AND METHODS

Eleven triangulation stations, established by the party of Lt. j.g. E. R. McCarthy in the spring of 1933 are located on the sheet. The topography was controlled by a combined system of graphic triangulation and traverse, using the existing triangulation to start the graphic triangulation from, and for a check to the control as it progressed up the river.

The shoreline of the river was located from a traverse run along the river, after a few supplemental control points had been established by graphic triangulation. As the traverse progressed additional points were located by graphic triangulation so that adequate control was always in advance of the detailed survey to serve as a check on the traverse along the river. At a majority of setups along the traverse line one or more triangulation stations were visible in addition to graphic triangulation stations. Only a very few setups were dependent upon traverse alone, due to trees obscuring signals. At such setups no important cuts were taken. Only detail in the immediate vicinity was rodded in.

Due to the extremely marshy nature of the ground around Lower Mud Lake the shore line along the south side from OLAK eastward to Hog Bayou and on the north side from O MAR eastward to Hog Bayou was located by 3-point sextant fixes taken at intervals of about 150 meters. The fixes were plotted on the sheet in the field and the shore line between them sketched in.

The highway to the westward from the river was controlled by 3-point fixes. To the eastward from Grand Chenier a traverse was run along the highway between Church East and Grand Chenier Catholic Church. This traverse was out 0 meters in distance and 20 meters in azimuth. It was swung in by a simple traverse adjustment.

LANDMARKS AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

The area surveyed contains no landmarks of value to the navigator along the coast. The two churches in Grand Chenier and a few of the houses along the highway are visible from two or three miles offshore but they are very hard to identify to one who has not observed them at close range.

To the operator of a small boat along the river all the structures along its shore perhaps serve as landmarks but if so only to a small extent for in the river proper the best water is nearly always mid-stream and that is the only guide necessary to such small boats as use the river.

The highway is a good second class road surfaced with shell. It is not a through road. Its eastern end is about five or six miles east of the eastern limits of the sheet. It was built to serve the community along it. It runs westward through Camaron, around the south end of Calcasieu Lake, then north through Hackberry and out to the railroad at Sulphur. The ferry is state operated and carries passengers and vehicles free of charge. It runs on call throughout the twenty-four hours. It is a barge secured to a cable laid across the river and is propelled by a small open motor boat.

There are very few structures in the river or lakes worthy of note. [○]Bar is the remains of a small old barge aground on the mud flat. The piling shown at the entrance of the river into Lower Mud Lake are the remains of an old dam built to direct the flow of water along the north shore of the lake.

The remains of the old lock along the north bank of the river opposite [○]Un are almost in ruins. It was built a great many years ago to give passage for boats around a dam that crossed the river at this point. The dam was dynamited years ago and all evidence of it is now gone. Natives of the vicinity reported submerged piling in the vicinity of the old dam on which several small boats were ripped open. However no such accidents were reported in recent years and neither the topographic party nor the hydrographic party saw any evidence of submerged piling remaining.

There are no docks at [○]Grand Chenier projecting more than about 10 feet into the river. There are two freight boats running into Grand Chenier, one from Lake Charles and one from Lake Arthur. They tie up along the bulkhead or at one of the small docks.

Most of the houses along the river are occupied by fishermen and most of these houses have a small dock for mooring fishing boats.

The piling shown in Upper Mud Lake mark the right edge of the channel to a vessel bound upstream.

Most of the area covered by this survey is marshy. With the few exceptions shown the land is all marshy from the highway south to the coast line. The highway runs along the south edge of a strip of firm land that averages about one half mile in width. This strip is known as Grand Chenier Island. The area indicated as marshland is not freshly flooded at each high tide but is flooded so frequently and drains off so slowly that there is water standing on it the greater part of the time.

None of the canals shown are navigable to craft of more than about 18 inches draft. The one near the mouth of the river and those along the highway are drainage canals. Those along Upper Mud Lake were dug to get material for a levee to prevent the lake waters from overflowing the surrounding country.

The bayous shown are also shoal and no effort was made to locate them beyond the limits of the traverse line along the river.

COMPARISON WITH OLD SURVEY

As a whole the survey compares quite closely with the old work as indicated on chart 1278. There is no bayou between Vaughn Settlement and Upper Mud Lake as large as the one indicated on the chart. Nor do the mouths of the bayous in this vicinity check with those shown on the chart. The present shapes of the islands in Upper Mud Lake are different than those indicated on the charts but this is probably due to erosion. The shoreline in the vicinity of Sat and Pal varies somewhat from the chart.

LIST OF PLANE TABLE POSITIONS

Descriptions of 40 topographic stations have been written for all prominent objects, located by plane table, that might be recovered and utilized for hydrographic work or photo topography. The stations so described on standard form 524 are: How, Chim, Red, Tee, Small, Win, Cross, Al, Base, Ney, Ape, Three, High, Kis, Un, Yel, Pow, Door, Lone, Dow, Off, Him, Tank, End, Pa, Dif, Gul, Cot, Old, Two, Hel, Ran, Low, Fed, Tin, Ros, Nor, Ted, Barn, and Hat.

In addition to the permanent stations 58 stations of a temporary nature such as erected flags, flags in trees and bushes, odd trees, piling, fence posts and old shacks were located. The temporary stations, that will probably be lost within a short time, are: Lo, Fen, Fly, Black, White, Mer, Tan, Min, Riv, Do, Can, Cor, Post, Mud, Seen, Lak, Pod, Lag, Bar, Mar, And, Frame, Dead, Wye, Pole, Fe, Dam, Clo, All, Tree, Den, Shack, Cold, Bee, Hit, Pil, Crab, El, Bud, Pal, Say, Dos, Sow, Tuk, Ma, Joe, Fay, Doc, Car, Bit, Pet, Lum, Isle, Mus, Up, Tik, Sat and Pen.

INSERTS

In accordance with the instructions for this work inserts are placed on the sheet to assist in locating triangulation stations on air photographs. The inserts show the location of triangulation stations Δ Yard, Δ Ferry and U.S.G.S. 183 with reference to recognizable topographic features in their immediate vicinities. All inserts are made at a scale of 1:200. All distances given are taped distances and all azimuths are measured with a sextant from a line of known azimuth. No measurements were made other than those shown.

Inasmuch as triangulation stations Δ Cotton Gin, Church West, Church East and Church (Grand Chenier Catholic) are structures

visible in photographs it is assumed that the descriptions of them submitted by the triangulation party will enable those reducing air photographs to locate the position of the part of the structure observed upon.

No inserts were made for the triangulation stations along the coast because there are no recognizable topographic features in their vicinities with which to connect them.


ADDITIONAL WORK

No additional work is recommended in this area.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles A. Schanck,
Jr. H. & G. Engineer.

APPROVED


W. E. Parker, Captain,
Coast and Geodetic Survey,
Chief of Party.

Statistics for Topographic Sheet "C"

Statute miles of shore line. . . 41.4

Statute miles of roads 17.2

Statute miles of canals 5.0

Statute miles of creeks 7.0

Area in square statute miles. . . 25.0

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

REG. NO. 4, 84

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. Q

REGISTER NO. 4, 84

State Louisiana

General locality Gulf Coast

Locality Mormontau River

Scale 1:20,000 Date of survey March-April, 1933, 1932

Vessel HYDROGRAPHER

Chief of Party H. E. Parker

Surveyed by Charles A. Schanck

Inked by Charles A. Schanck and D. H. Bassett

Heights in feet above L.H.M. to ground to-tops-of-trees

~~Contour, -Approximate-contour, -Form-line-interval-----feet~~

Instructions dated December 17, 1932, 192

Remarks: _____

Remarks

Decisions

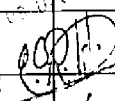
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4		
5	USGS map, "Kings"	<u>King Bay</u>
6		
7	see notes below	<u>Bayou La Boute</u>
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10	adopted by decision U.S.B.G.N. 1/27/36	<u>Grand Cheniere</u>
11	" " " " "	<u>Grand Cheniere Ridge</u>
12	" " " " "	<u>Bayou La Boute</u>
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GEOGRAPHIC NAMES

Survey No.

GEOGRAPHIC NAMES										
Survey No.										
Name on Survey	<div>On Chart No. 1275</div> <div>On previous survey No. 71655 (old)</div> <div>On U. S. quadrangle Maps</div> <div>From local information</div> <div>On local Maps</div> <div>P. O. Guide or Map</div> <div>Rand McNally Atlas</div> <div>U. S. Light List</div>									
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	K	
Upper Mud Lake	*		/							1
Lower Mud Lake	*		/							2
Little Pecan Bayou /	*		/							3
Pumpkin Bayou	*									4
King Bayou	*		/							5
Hog Bayou /	*		/							6
Bayou La Bouve ?	*									7
Mermentau River	*		/							8
Cowpen Bayou /	*									9
Grand Cheniere /		H	*			I	*			10
Grana Cheniere Ridge										11
Bayou La Bouve										12
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Map of the Gulf of Mexico

by: 

on 4/20/36

see my letter

M 234-

RECEIVED
 by *[Signature]*
 on 4/20/36
 for my letter

REVIEW OF TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY No. 4794

Title (Par. 56) *Mermentau River, La.*

Chief of Party *W.E. Parker* Surveyed by *C.A. Schenck* Inked by *C.A.S. and D.H. Bassett*

Ship *Hydrographer* Instructions dated *Dec. 17, 1932* Surveyed in *Mar.-Apr. 1933.*

1. The survey and preparation for it conform to the requirements of the ~~the~~ Topographic Manual. (Par. 7, 8, 9, 13, 16.)
2. The character and scope of the survey satisfy the instructions. ✓
3. The control and closures of traverses were adequate. (Par. 12, 29.)
South and east shores of Lower Mud Lake determined by sextant fixes.
4. ~~The amount of vertical control that the Manual specifies for contours and lines was accomplished.~~ (Par. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.)
5. ~~The delineation of contours and lines is satisfactory.~~ (Par. 49, 50.)
6. There is sufficient control on maps from other sources that were transmitted by the field party to enable their application to the charts. (Par. 28.) *None submitted.*
7. High water line on marshy and mangrove coast is clear and adequate ✓ for chart compilation. (Par. 16a, 43, 44.)
8. The representation of low water lines, ~~reefs, coral reefs and rocks, and legends pertaining to them is satisfactory.~~ (Par. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41.) *No low water line is shown although H. 5361 and chart 1278 shows that it is the dominating feature of Lower Mud Lake.*
9. ~~Rocks and other~~ important details shown on previous ✓ surveys and on the chart were verified. (Par. 25, 26, 27.)
10. The span, draw and clearance of bridges are shown. (Par. 16c.) *None*
11. ~~Locations and elevations of summits are given.~~ (Par. 10, 51.)
12. ~~The tree line was shown on mountains.~~ (Par. 16g.)

NOTE: Strike out paragraphs, words or phrases not applicable and modify those requiring it. Paragraph numbers refer to those in the Topographic Manual. Use reverse side for extending remarks.

13. The descriptive report covers all details listed in the Manual, in so far as they apply to this survey. (Par. 64, 65, 66, 67.)
Discussion of geographic names practically omitted.
14. The descriptive report also contains additional information required in aero-topography relative to type of photographs, method of compilation and type of ground control. ✓
15. The descriptions of recoverable stations and references to shore line were accomplished on Form 524. (Par. 29, 30, 57, 67 except scaling of DMS and DPs, 68.) *40 Cards submitted.*
16. A list of landmarks for charts was furnished on Form 567 and plotting checked. (Par. 16d, e, 60.) *Des. report states there are no landmarks of value.*
17. The magnetic meridian was shown and declination was checked. (Par. 17, 52.) ✓
18. The geographic datum of the sheet is *N.A (1927) adjusted* and the reference station is *correctly* noted. (Par. 34.)
19. Junctions with contemporary surveys are adequate. ✓
20. Geographic names are shown on the sheet and are covered by the Descriptive report. (Par. 64, 66k.) *See reverse of this page.*
21. The quality of the drafting is good. (Par. 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50.) ✓
22. No additional surveying is recommended. ✓
23. The Chief of Party inspected and approved the sheet and the descriptive report. ~~after review by~~ *There is no evidence that the chief of party inspected the sheet.* ✓
24. Remarks:

Reviewed in office by *E. P. Eccles, April 15, 1936*

Examined and approved:

E. H. Green
Chief, Section of Field Records

L. O. Polbur
Chief, Division of Charts

Fred. L. Peacock
Chief, Section of Field Work

G. H. Russell
Chief, Division of Hyd. and Top.

There is no systematic discussion of geographic names in the descriptive report.

Vaughan Settlement is shown on chart 1278 and mentioned in des. report, but not shown on the sheet.

Oakgrove Ridge and Indian Pt. Bayou are shown on chart, but not mentioned in des. report or shown on sheet.

Grand Chenier. The postal guide lists Grand Chenier as a post office. ^{the name} It is probably applicable to the village close to the river. It is so shown on T. 1655 (1884-8) which repeats the name on the long strip extending to eastward.

Grand Chenier Island. The des. report states that the long strip extending eastward from the river is known as Grand Chenier Island. On both the sheet and chart the strip is called Grand Chenier.

4. List of names of "Grand Chenier" and "Grand Chenier Island" in the report of the Survey of the Gulf of Mexico, 1884-85, p. 100.