U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

T. M. Thorne, Superintendent.

State: Louisiana.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheets No. 1762, 1763, 1764, 1765, 1766.

Locality: Coast of Louisiana.

1887.

Chief of Party: A. Walley Perkins.
Descriptive Reports

to accompany

Plane Table Sheets

1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856

from

Raccoon Pt., Isle Dernière

to

S.W. Base, Grande Isle

Louisiana

1857

Act.

H. Walker Denny

Chief of Party

Act.

O. Bardella

W. C. Hodgkins

Topographer
Geological formation and general description of Coast.

The geological formation of the coast of Louisiana from the mouth of the Mississippi to Sabine River is a uniform alluvial deposit hundreds of feet in depth, increasing in width from about fifteen miles at the eastern boundary of the state to something over seventy in the region under consideration.

The country for many miles back from the Gulf is a flat marsh, subject to overflow, boldly indicated by large basins, lakes and lagoons, and drained by a network of Rivers, Bayous, Creeks which interlacing separate it into innumerable Islands.

The only relief to the monotony of this flat country is a slight slope along the Gulf Coast.
former of broken-shells and sand, rarely more than a metre high, than the marsh upon which it fell, and occasional ridges of similar origin, ranging from one to four metres in height, to the limit, lying further back, and probably marking the incursions of the land before the sea.

The water along the shore is shoal, deepening very gradually and regularly for some distance, with the soft mud bottom, forming good holding ground, and so there is partly more than one line of breakers, it is generally practicable to ride out a gate at anchor off the shore coast.

While in case of a vessel being stranded elsewhere than at the mouth of an inlet, the bottom is so soft and the breakers so inconsiderable as to involve but slight danger to the vessel and practically none to the life of passengers or crew.

Moreover...
Moreover, there being no danger of her going to pieces it would always be practicable to lay by the ship until the weather moderated.

Gaining, to the slight coherence of the light particles constituting the salt the shores both of Gulf and inland waters are subject to constant changes and all bodies of water having slight currents, such as Lakes and Coves, fill up very rapidly while many bays and navigable for small craft a few years ago are now barely traceable. Whether there is a corresponding deepening of the remaining water courses is uncertain.

As the main object in view as the result of the season's work was the collection of the material for the immediate preparation of landing charts, the topography was confined to a nearly square sheet line in the economy of the general or final work would follow. Consequently the area covered was extremely small.
small in proportion to the coast surveyed. All important shore lines were mapped by means of the planetable but most of the latter and small routes were determined by distant angles at short intervals connected by stikches based upon trigonometric compass courses and estimated distances. The results of the latter class of work proved extremely satisfactory both in quality and on account of the large area, otherwise inaccessible, covered by an officer and a single man working from a very light flat bottomed boat.

The statistics are as follows:

- No. of days devoted to planetable work: 43
- Miles of shoreline: 302.7
- Miles of roads and canals: 117.1
- Miles of routes: 79.4
- Miles of roads: 3.4
- Miles of pikes: 3.2
- Squa. miles: 103.
As this was a combined party engaged in reconnaissance, triangulation, signal building, and topography on an unexplored tract only about two half the working days during the time that the party was in the field, could be made available for topography, but even charging to that branch of the work one half of the season's expenses the cost five acres is only about 23.54 cents.

The weather was better than for the same months during first seasons but as the work extended 56 miles in longitude the same degree of economy was not possible as in a more compact section
Tuntable Head
Reg. in 1762
Western part of Lake Simcoe

A long, low, island, running east and west, for the most part very narrow, March Basin formed along its southern edge with a thin layer of sand. Trees about thirty feet high near its extreme extremity. There was formerly a popular pleasure resort on this part of the island which was destroyed by the hurricane of 1855, with great loss of life. At present there are only a few small houses occupied by an indolent, poverty-stricken population.

There is a good harbor of refuge for vessels of light draft underhostname Point.

Caillon Bay has a pretty uniform depth of from 5 to 6 fathoms. Lake simcoe is a large body of water with deep lakes and an island.
depth of 5½ to 6½ fath. There is a
fishing village of some fifteen
or twenty houses on its North Western
shore of very recent date, probably,
not more than one or two years.
Some tides pass over the island
in different places forming new
inlets of varying depth which soon
fill up again.
Minor changes of shore line
are frequent but the absence of
reliable surveys of earlier date, of
the inhabitants or intelligent accident
observers deprived us of the data
necessary to judge of any permanent
modifications in their direction.
Incredible Fact

Aug. 10, 1803

Eastern part of St. Lawrence Island.

The Eastern portion of the Island is a low marshy sheet of marsh, with a thin coat of sand on its southern edge. The Island which commences about two miles to the Eastward is about three miles long and of similar formation. There is a good place at the extreme end of the Island but with only six or seven feet inside.

The Eastern part of Cape Polls is rather narrow, but as it runs more or less parallel to the main land, running south to north the well defined channels but a pretty general depth of about five feet.

Steepholme Bay is a very large sheet of water with very regular bottom, varying from 17 feet 7 feet it is said to have many islands in it.

Northern
Northern part but is quite open as far as observed.
Caillon Island is a narrow strip of marsh at the Eastern end of Morehouse Bay with the usual face of sand on its southern side. It is said to be wearing away very fast. There is a lot of hard sand in its south east extremity where a clump of trees about the single house marks a prominent sand mark.

East Montello Island has a rather broader deposit of sand near its western extremity from which a wide sand channel extends for some miles completely cutting off its approach to Caillon Island from the flats near and Eastward. The Island is said to be growing rapidly to the Westward.

Back of this broad sand beach there are two hard ridges.
covered sparingly by a growth of point trees. The inner ridge lying along the back of a lagoon is inhabited by a few families who live by fishing and on the increase of a few cattle. The Northern and Eastern portion of the Island is faced by innumerable little marsh islets. Between East and West Cantablier Islands is the main pass into Cantablier Bay. Six and a half or seven feet may be carried over the outer bar just north of which and outside of the front of the Islands there is a four fathom hole, soft bottom, with moderate ebbing and flowing and a half foot can be carried up to the P.H.O. Where there is good water but cannot bring in more. At least five fathoms can be carried over the shallow section just North of the Light House beach of which the watch depend.
East Tributary Island is a long, narrow low bit of marsh largely surrounded by sand untouchable in many places and separated from the mainland by shallow water subject to constant change. Literally to the Eastward is the Triportic mouth of Bayou La Marche barely passable for small boats. About two miles and a half North East is Bayou Fourchon the main entrance to the Bayou with a very narrow bar at present camping about five feet. The Bayou La Marche has good water as far as sight can alone while there have been formed by the breaking of the Severs. It does not naturally receive any water except from the Mississippi. Now that canals have been cut connecting
it with Emballi (or Bora) Bays near its mouth, and Lake Walker and Bayou Black further North. Its shores are practically uninhabited for the first twenty miles from its mouth alone, which for many miles they are thickly settled by market gardeners and small farmers succeeded higher up by some of the richest sugar plantations in the state.

A mile or two above the head of the falls commences a strip of wooded land following the general course of the Bayou and containing both forest breaks throughout its whole length. In places the trees grow close to the edge of the water, but as a rule leave a margin of land open land varying from one to several hundred yards. Formerly the Bayou Delta was much wider but the closing of Red River for military purposes during the War...
1812 proved a permanent obstruction to the flow of the waters in that direction and that section has now an independent drainage system based upon the triangulated perennial.
Planetary Sheet

Aug. 24, 1706

Purisine, Chânière Cuminada, & Barataria Bay

The system of wooded ridges lying parallel to and about five or six miles back from the coast known as La Purisine is a marked feature, viz., stretching along this coast. A number of a breed of very narrow bands of hard clays separated by very soft marsh and is probably an extension of the Chânière Cuminada. Chânière only in name as the trees have wholly disappeared and a fishing village of some fifteen hundred inhabitants has within the past forty years grown up upon the two ridges of which it consists.

The Pass opposite this place has a bar carrying about 5 ½ feet of water with a 13 ft. anchorage inside foul steamer running room. It is gradually moving to the Eastward and at the same time cutting off the western end of Grand Isle and
and the front of the Caminada.

The survey was carried north as far as the mouth of the canal leading into Bayou La Fourche but the Bay
extends twelve or fifteen miles further north and there are large bodies of water
lying to the northward of the present
"mouth of the river.

There is a weekly mail from
Grand Isle during the winter months,
a small steamship being employed
in the service. During the summer
season there is a paddle steamer
and a small paddle steamer is
sent on the route for the accommodation
of the crews of the mail.

The principal transportation
points with which connection vessels
made here are well marked and easily
recovered.