U.S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

T. M. Thorn, Superintendent.

State: Louisiana.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

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

Locality: Coast of Louisiana.

1887.

Chief of Party:

F. Wallyl Perkins.
Descriptive Reports

To accompany

Plane Table Sheets

1857

Lt. B. Haller, Lieut. Raccoon Pt. to Delmère

S. W. Base, Grande Isle, Louisiana

Act.

C. S. Parmelia

Chief of Party

W. J. 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 and varying in width from about fifteen miles at the western boundary of the State to something over seventy in the region where consideration.

The country for many miles back from the Gulf is a flat marsh, subject to overflow, boldly indented by large lagoons, lakes, and lagoons, and drained by a network of rivers, bayous, and creeks which interlacing separate it into innumerable islands.

The only relief to the monotony of this flat marshy expanse is a slight rise along the Gulf Coast.
form of broken shell and sand, rarely more than a metre high, than the march upon which it fell, and occasional ridges of similar origin, ranging from one to four metres in height, often nocked, lying farther back and probably marking the incursions of the land upon the sea.

The water along the shore is shallow, deepening very gradually and regularly for some miles out with the soft mud bottom extending good holding ground; and as there is partly more than one line of beach, it is generally practicable to ride off a gate or anchor off the shore line. 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
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 bed 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 Cores fill up very rapidly while many bays and inlets for small craft a few years ago are now barely traceable. Whether there is a corresponding deepening of the remaining watercourses is uncertain.

At the main object in view as the result of the season’s work was the collection of the material for the immediate preparation of sailing charts, the Topography was confined to be nearly a simple chronological or the economy of the general or final work would permit. Consequently the area covered was extremely smal.
small in proportion to the coast surveyed. All important shore line was mapped by means of the planitable but most of the latter and small depths were determined by distant angles at short intervals, connected by stiches based upon navigable 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 making from a very light flat bottomed boat.

The statistics are as follows:

No. of days devoted to planitable work 43
Miles of shoreline 202.4

Rocks 3.71

Ponds 183.
As this was a combined party engaged in reconnaissance, triangulation, signal building and topography on an unexplored tract only about one 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 acre is only about 33 1/4 cents.

The weather was better than in the same months during past seasons but as the work extended 56 miles in longitude the same degree of economy was not possible as in a more compact section.
Ternate island, which has been occupied by a few small houses occupied by an indolent mixed population. There is a good harbor of refuge for vessels of light draft under wind, point.

Caillon Bay has a pretty uniform depth of from 5 to 6 feet. Lake Petis is a large body of water with deep lakes and an island.
depth of 5 1/2 to 6 ft. There is a
fishing village of some fifteen
or twenty houses on the North Western
shore of very recent date, probable,
not more than one or two years.

Storm tides pass over the island
in different places forming new
inlets of varying depth which soon
fill up again.

Main changes of shore line
are frequent but the absence of
reliable surveys of earlier date, of
old inhabitants or intelligent resident
observers deprives us of the data
necessary to judge of any permanent
modifications or their direction.
Eastern part of the Santa Cruz Island.

The Eastern portion of the Island is a kind of marsh, with a thin layer of sand on its southern edge. The Island itself commences about three miles to the Eastward, is about three miles long and of similar formation, there is a good place at the Eastern end of the Island but with only six or seven feet inside.

The Eastern part of Cape Belto is rather narrow, but also by long narrow islands running nearly North and South and north are well defined channels but a pretty general depth of about five fathoms.

Sanitain. Bay is a very large sheet of water with very regular bottom varying from 67 feet. It is said to have many islands in it.

Sanitain
Northern part—but is quite open as far as observed.
Caillo Island to east Zumbalair Island

Caillo Island is a narrow strip of sand at the eastern end of Storehouse Bay with a small area of land on its northern side. It is said to be washing away very fast. There is a bit of hard land in its south east extremity where a clump of trees about the single house makes a prominent land mark.

West Zumbalair 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 Caillo Island from the mainland and Eastward. The island is said to be growing rapidly to the Westward. Back of this broad sand beach there are fine sand ridges.
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were familiar with the Blackfriar's
castle. She viewed it as a true
scenery of the

Alara, a

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East Timballe Island is a long, narrow bar of sand, largely covered by
land except in many places and separated from the mainland by
shallow water subject to constant change. Directly to the
Eastward is the Victoire mouth of Bayou La Fourche barely passable
for small boats. About five miles and
a half south-east is Outer Fourche,
the main entrance to the Bayou
with a very narrow bar at present
Camping about five feet. The Bayou
La Fourche has good water as far as
Huntsman alone while others have
been formed by the breaking of the
Severs. It does not naturally receive
any water except from the Mississippi
River. Fat canals have been cut connecting
it with Stamboli & Portaconni Bays near its mouth and Lake Walker and Bayou Platte farther North. Its shores are practically uninhabited for the first twenty miles from its mouth. High for many miles they are thickly settled by planters, 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 feeder commences a strip of wooded land following the general course of the Bayou and continuing with few breaks throughout its whole length. In places the trees grow close to the edge of the water but at a pulse there a margin of land open land varying from one to several hundred acres. Formerly the Bayou Delta was much wider but the closing of Pass Manin for military purposes during the War
1812 forced a permanent restriction to the flow of the waters in that direction and that section has now an independent drainage system based upon the triangulated plain.
The system of wooded ridges lying parallel to and about two to three miles back from the coast known as La Pryrie is a marked feature. The forests along this coast, remnants of a line of very narrow bands of land, separated by very soft marshes and dunes, are an indication of the Chênière Caminada. Chênière 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 one ridge of which it consists.

The Pees opposite this place have a bar carrying about 3½ feet of water with a 13½ fathomage inside submerged sand. Sailing from here, it is gradually moving to the eastward and at the same time cutting off the western end of Grande 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
channel of the river.

There is a weekly mail from Grand Isle during the winter months.

A small steamer being employed in the service. During the summer
season there is a remarkably brisk and a small passenger steamer is
sent on the route for the accommodation of the queues of the field.

The principal transportation
points with which connection were
made were well marked and easily
recovered.