U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

D. M. Thorns, Superintendent.

State: Louisiana.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

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

Locality:
Coast of Louisiana.

1887.

Chief of Party:
F. Walley Perkins.
Descrip'tive Rep'ts

Plane Table Sheets

1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856

from

Raccoon Pt., Isle Derniere

to

S.W. Base, Grande Isle

Louisiana

1857

Act.

J. Valentine Perkins

Chief of Party

Act.

O. Pardella

W. B. Hodgkins

Topographer
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 under consideration.

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

The only relief to the monotony of this flat grassy surface is a slight rise along the Gulf Coast.
former of broken-shell and sand, rarely more than a metre high, above the marsh upon which it rests, and occasional ridges of similar origin, ranging from one to four metres in height, wide, rounded, 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 brackish mud bottom, affording good holding ground; and as there is partly more than one line of breakers, it is generally practicable to ride in 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 render but slight danger to the crew and practically none to the life of passengers or crew.
There being no danger of her going to pieces it would always be practicable to stay by the ship until the weather moderated.

Gaining to the slight coherence of the light particles constituting the air 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 set up very rapidly while many bays or navigable 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 was 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 an nearly a simple description of the economy of the general a final work would follow. Consequently the area covered was extremely...
small in proportion to the coast surveyed. All important shore line was mapped by means of the plan table but most of the latter and small bays were determined by distant angles at short intervals connected by dotted lines upon the plan of 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 plan table work: 431
Miles of shoreline: 202.7

- of creeks and bays: 117.1
- March: 79.4
- Canals: 3.4

- Roads: 3.2
- Ponds: 2.0

Square miles: 103.
As this was a combined force engaged in reconnaissance, triangulation, signal building, and topography on an unexplored tract only about one half of 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 seasons expenses the cost five acres is only about 33/4 cents.

The weather was better than for 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.
Annotated Sheet

Page in 1762

Western part of Isle Cornier

A long, low, elevated, streaming instrument of the north part of it nearest Annapolis Basin formed along the eastern edge with a thin layer of land trees about sixty 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, unprogressed population.

Here is a good harbor of refuge for vessels of light draft under Prince Point.

Caiton Bay has a pretty uniform depth of from 5 to 6 feet. Lake Peto is a large body of water with deep lakes and all available depths.
depth of 5½ to 6½ ft. There is a fishing village of some fifteen or thirty houses on its North Western shore of very recent date, probably 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 diligent observers deprives us of the data necessary to judge of any permanent modifications or their direction.
Incredible Fact

Aug. 10th 1893

Eastern part of the Esmére's section island.

The Eastern portion of the Island is a ten quarters' sheet of marsh, with a thin cover of sand on its southern edge. The Island which commences about the mile to the Eastward is about three miles long and of similar formation. There is a good pass at the Eastern end of the Island but with only one or seven feet inside.

The Eastern part of Cape Bolto is rather narrow, but also by long narrow islands running nearly North and South and with one well defined channel, but a pretty general depth of about five faths.

Straitmore. Bay is a very large sheet of water with very regular bottom varying from 27 feet. It is said to have many islands in its
Northern part but is quite open as far as observed.
Caillon Island to East Zimbelhie Island

Caillon Island is a narrow strip of sand at the Eastern end of Morehouse Bay, with the usual core of sand on its southern side. It is said to be wearing away very fast. There is a bit of hard land in its north-east extremity, where a clump of trees about the single house marks a prominent land mark.

West Zimbelhie Island has a rather broader deposit of sand near its western extremity from which a wide sand choral extends for some miles completely cutting off the approach to Caillon Island from the Eastward 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 partially by a growth of palm.

The inner ridge being along the bank 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 fringed by innumerable little marsh Islets.

Between East and West Cape there are the many piers into Confettier bay. Six and a half or seven feet may be carried over the entire bar just north of which and outside of the Sills of the Islands there is a four fathom hole, soft bottom, with moderate ebb and flow, and a half foot can be carried up to the Sills where there is good water but hard bringing again. As far as known only eight feet five feet can be carried over the tidal section just North of the Light House East of which the water deepen.
East Sunbather Island is a long, narrow low bit of marsh, largely covered by sand, subject to overflow in many places, and separated from the mainland to the Eastward by shallows which subject to constant change. Directly to the Eastward is the Father mouth of Bayou la Fourche barely passable for small boats. About two miles and a half from East is Bayou Fortune, 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 Shiloh Farm above White Church have been formed by the breaching of the Levees. It does not naturally receive any water except from the Mississippi. Prior to Canals have been cut connecting...
it withimbli & Baratana Bays near its mouth, and Lake Wakua and Bayou Black further North. Its shores are practically uninhabited for the first twenty miles from its mouth alone, while for many miles they are thickly settled by planters, gardeners and small farmers. Proceeding higher up by some of the richest sugar plantations in the State a mile or two above the head of the creek commences a strip of virgin land following the general course of the Bayou and continuing with foot breaks throughout its whole length. In places the trees grow close to the edge of the water but at a pole leave a margin of land open land varying from one to several hundred acres. Formerly the Bayou Delta was much wider but the closing up of Pass Manchac for military purposes during the War 1870
1812 forced 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 garrison.
Planetable Sheet
Aug. 24, 1706
Chânière Caminada & Barataria Bay

The system of wooded ridges lying parallel to and about two or three miles back from the coast known as Le Pryrie is a marked feature on the coast. It consists of a series of very narrow bands of hard sand separated by very soft sand and is probably an extension of the Chânière Caminada. Chânière only in name as the trees have wholly disappeared and a fishing village of some fifteen hundred Aboadiers has within the past forty years grown up upon the two ridges of which it consists.

The Pecos opposite this place has a bar carrying about 3 1/2 feet of water with a 13 fathom anchorage inside but clean springing form. It is gradually moving to the Eastward and at the same time cutting off the western end of Pointe bleu 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 road extends twelve or fifteen miles further north and there are large bodies of water lying to the northward of the present limits of the road.

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 peninsular mail and a small pressure steamer is put on the route for the accommodation of the guests of the hotel.

The principal transaction points with which connection vessels make here well marked and easily recovered.