U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

T. E. Mendenhall, Superintendent.

State: Fla.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheets Nos. 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160 and 2161.

Locality:

Pensacola, Escambia, Blackwater and East Bays.

See also 1984.

1894.

Chief of Party:

P. A. Welker, Assistant.
U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,
General W.W. Dufield, Superintendent.

State: Florida.

Descriptive Report.
Topographic Sheets Nos. 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160 and 2161.

Locality:
Pensacola Bay, Escambia Bay, Blackwater Bay and East Bay.

1894.

Chief of Party: P.A. Walker, Assistant.
General W. W. Duffield,
Superintendent U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,
Washington, D. C.,

Sir:

In obedience to Instructions and Memoranda for Descriptive Reports, 1887, I beg leave to submit the following report of Topographic Sheets Nos. 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160 and 2161. These are all adjoining sheets and consist of a survey of Pensacola Bay, Escambia Bay, East Bay and Blackwater Bay, Florida, on a scale 1:10,000.

The base of the work was established from a triangulation carried over the bays mentioned, from the line Navy Yard Wharf, Fort Pickens, near the entrance to Pensacola Bay. The plan table was used for the execution of the topography.

Sheet No. 2157 consists of a portion of
Escambia Bay. The small village of Bohemia, which is distant about 60 miles above Pensacola, is shown near the southeastern edge of the sheet. It is a station on the Pensacola and Atlantic Railroad. Here is located a railroad section house, one shingle mill, one general merchandise store, a post office and a telegraph office. There is only a small collection of houses and they are mostly occupied by people employed by the railroad company and at the mill. There are no wharf facilities. Boats drawing eight feet of water can go within about one quarter of a mile from the beach. The timber used at the mill for making shingles is brought down the Escambia River and is loaded in rafts or booms from the mouth of the river distant about six miles. Roads lead from Bohemia to Pensacola and the interior of the country, but they are not much traveled and of little consequence.

About 1 1/4 miles above Bohemia is another small collection of houses but of no importance. It is the railroad station called Iniesta.
A high bluff follows the beach closely to within about 400 meters of West Escambia, when it turns back from the shore and follows around the swamp. The bluff at some places, especially when it is close to the shore, is very abrupt and considerably broken and cut up by large gullies. Springs of water break out from these places some of which disappear in the sand upon reaching the shore. The slopes when they are covered with vegetation range from 25° to 50°. Back of the swamp the slope is more gentle and uniform.

At Deit's Pt. there is a long shoal extending from the point east to the old beacon. This shoal shifts from north to south with the prevailing wind.

The Pensacola and Atlantic Division of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad follows the shoal, except for a short distance near Deit's Pt., and crosses Escambia Bay on a wooden trestle. About one third of the distance across the trestle there is an iron swing bridge, which is tended by a man day and night.

The general character of the bluff shows
a mixture of clay and sand of a yellowish color. The beach is a clean white sand, very little of the soil is good for agricultural purposes. On a small portion of the low land close to the beach, oranges, peaches, plums and vegetables are raised.

At the north-eastern end of the turtle crossing Escambia Bay is a large grassy swamp which extends north around Bayou Mulatee and east and south to the head of Indian Bayou. This swamp is flooded with water during spring tide. In numerous places it is very boggy and dangerous to cross.

Indian Bayou is very shallow as is also the entrance and it is not of much importance. Boats drawing two feet of water are occasionally taken up therein for the purpose of bringing out fire wood.

Fart land again begins about 1/4 mile southeast of the entrance to Indian Bayou and continues to a point about 1/2 mile south of the entrance to Trout Bayou. In the locality about Trout Bayou there is quite a collection of houses occupied mostly by people engaged
in fishing, raising vegetables and carrying firewood to the Pensacola market. The land is not of much value. At a high tide boats drawing three feet of water can be taken about 3/4 of a mile up the bayou. Very fair roads lead from here over to Blackwater Bay and to the Town of Milton, the county seat. Close to the shore along the remainder of the sheet is a strip of gravel marsh land, which in several places extends back as far as 1/4 mile. There is a narrow fringe of white sand beach along the entire shore and there is no difficulty in traveling along the whole length with the exception of crossing the bayous.

All of the land on this side of the bay is low, at no point does it rise to a height of as much as 15 feet above the water of the bay.

The entire country described is densely covered with timber, mostly pine, but little of it is of any value at present, all the best having been cut out for lumber. The trees are from 20 to 70 feet high and consist of spruce, pitch and yellow pine, scattering live oak, water oak,
bend oak, red bay, sweet bay, magnolia and
palmetto are also found. The soil is generally
sandy, mixed with clay.

During an ordinary season in this locality
the climate is delightful. But without doubt
malarial malaria exists at times. While engaged
in the work during the months of April and
May, 1894, there was much sickness among the
different members of the party. This was probably
due to the unusual dry season, which caused
the decomposition of the vegetable matter in the
swamps.

Fish are plentiful in the bay. Such as trout,
seacrab, mullet and Spanish mackerel. Oysters
are also found. In the woods are some quail
and wild turkeys.

The Topography represented on Sheet N2:2159
adjoins that on Sheet N2:2157. The general
character of the country is similar to that
already described for the latter sheet.

A narrow strip of sand beach follows
around the whole length of the large grass
swamp represented and there is no difficulty
in walking around it except in crossing the
lagoons. The swamp is boggy in many places,
but it can be crossed. The road shown at the
northern part of the sheet leads to Milton.

At the south end of the sheet is a re-
survey of a portion of the shore line of East Bay.

Sheet No. 2158 is a resurvey of a portion of
Blackwater and East Bays, Florida. It joins
Sheet No. 2159, and the general character of the
country is similar to that described for Sheet
No. 2157.

On the west shore of Blackwater Bay and East
Bay the land is low with patches of swamps
bordering all of the streams entering the bays.
The beach is a clean white sand. Near it the
swamps have a growth of grass from two to
four feet high, but a short distance back
they are covered with dense timber and
brush.

The roads to the south and east lead to
Exceeding Bay, and the road to the north leads to Milton.

Only a small portion of this territory is more than 20 feet above the ordinary level of the bay, this is the space within the curve represented.

On the west shore of Blackwater Bay and the north shore of East Bay, the character of the land is the same, but the land interior is somewhat higher. There is a very gentle rise until the 20 foot curve is reached about one mile inland and then it rises very rapidly until the crest of the ridge is reached at an altitude of 55 feet.

Beginning at the station "Grassy," and extending north and east is one vast swamp cut up by numerous small lagoons and four large branches of the Yellow River. The swamp bordering Catfish Lagoon to an extent of two to six hundred meters from the shore line is covered with tall grass; back of this grass is dense and heavy timber. This swamp is entirely under water during the ordinary flood or high tide.
The fresh-water swamp which is shown a short distance inland and from which Bayou Fundy and numerous other bayous have their source is also very extensive. It continues very nearly parallel to the shore for some distance beyond the entrance to East River. This swamp is densely covered with pine, cypress, oak, cedar, red and white bay and a mass of briars and brush that is often so thick as to be almost impenetrable.

The roads represented lead into the interior, but they are not often traveled and are not of much importance. Little of the land in this locality is of much value.

Sheet No. 2161 is a survey of portions of East Bay and East River, Florida. This sheet adjoins Sheet No. 2158. The country is similar in character and little in addition can be said. East River is a beautiful sheet of water and is navigable for some distance beyond the portion surveyed for boats of light
draught. The country is of little value except as a place for obtaining firewood and fishing. In the locality near the entrance to East River redfish are plentiful. Oysters are also found here.

Sheet No. 2160 is a resurvey of a portion of the south shore line of East Bay. It adjoins sheet No. 2061.

Very respectfully yours,

P.A. Welker,

Assist., C. & G. Survey.