U.S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

T.C. Mendenhall, Superintendent.

State: Fla.

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic.Sheets Nos: 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160 + 2161

Locality:
Pensacola, Escambia, Blackwater and East Bays.
See also 1984

1894.

Chief of Party:
R.A. Weller, Aasst.
U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,
General W. W. Duffield, 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.
U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,

Toledo, Ohio.

Dec. 29th, 1894.

General W. W. Duffield,
Superintendent U.S. Coast & G. 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 1:10000.

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 37½ 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 towed in rafts or booms from the mouth of the river. Distant about 6 miles. Roads lead from Bohemia to Pensacola and the interior of the country, but they are not much traveled and of little consequence.

About 1½ miles above Bohemia is another small collection of houses, but of no importance. It is the railroad station called Shalimar.
A high bluff follows the beach closely to within about 400 meters of West Escambia, where it turns back from the shore and follows around the swamp. The bluff at some places, especially where 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 where they are covered with vegetation range from 25° to 50°. Back of the swamp the slope is more gentle and uniform.

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

The Pensacola and Atlantic Division of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad follows the shore, except for a short distance near Deild'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 treeline crossing Escambia Bay is a large grassy swamp which extends north around Bayou Moultrie and east and south to the head of Indian Bayou. This swamp is flooded with water during spring tides. 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 there for the purpose of bringing out firewood.

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 shore is a strip of gray
marshland, 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 briar, oak, and oak.
sand oak, red bay, sweet bay, magnolia and
palmite 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,
sea bass, mullet and Spanish mackerel. Oysters
are also found. In the woods are some quail
and wild turkeys.

The topography represented on sheet No. 2159
adjoins that on sheet No. 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 bays. 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 survey of a portion of the shore line of East Bay.

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Sheet No. 2158 is a survey 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 dune timber and brush.

The roads to the south and east lead to
Escambia 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 interior 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 bayous and four large branches of the Yellow River. The swamp bordering Catfish Lagoon to an extent of two to six hundred miles 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 brush and brack that is often so thick as to be almost impermeable.

The roads represent 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 fire wood 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.