Form 504
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey: Topographic

State: Louisiana

General locality: Lake Pontchartrain

Locality: 1847

CHIEF OF PARTY

P. A. Water

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DATE
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

W. W. Duffield, Superintendent.

State: Louisiana

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Topographic Sheet No. 2255

LOCALITY:

Lake Pontchartrain

From Tanna to Bayou de Branch

1877.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

P. W. Walker, Assistant
U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY,

Washington, D.C.

Nov. 15, 1897

Gen. W. W. Duffield
Superintendent U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey
Washington, D.C.

Sir,

In obedience to "Instructions and Memoranda for Descriptive Reports, 1897," I beg leave to submit the following report of Topographic Sheet No. 2255; Scale 1:2000.

This sheet includes that portion of the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, La., extending from Tannier's (just west of Bayou Tannier) to Bayou de Branch. It also takes in John Pier Bayou, Alligator Bayou, Double Bayou, and Bayou de Branch, and extends inland for a distance of from two to four miles; the limits being from Lat. 30° 00' to 30° 04' and from Long. 90° 11' to 90° 24'. John Pier Bayou is a small stream about 1/2 mile in length. Its mouth is 200 meters west of John Pier 8, one mile west of the eastern limits of the sheet. This bayou is heavily wooded, and the mouth is not at all well defined, though it can be located from a small hut on the
west bank 100 meters from the lake shore.

Alligator Bayou is ¾ of a mile west of John Pier, and

gets its name from the number of alligators found

in its waters. One mile from its mouth this bayou

branches out into two separate streams, one running

south and the other west. They are both of about

the same length, extending inland for a distance

of 1½ miles from their junction. They have each

about five tributaries, and into one of these of

the southern branch, 1½ miles from the lake, a ditch

was cut ½ mile in length, and running in a south

westerly direction. The shore of the lake shown on

this part of the sheet is covered with tall cane,

while there are numerous trees scattered through it.

The timber line is not so well defined as on the

eastern shore of the lake, and the banks of the

bayous are covered with trees and vegetation.

There is also a quantity of valuable cypress growing

through the swamps, and a good deal has been

cut for timber. The trees on the banks of the bayous,

which are comparatively hard ground, consist of

willows together with a few scrub and water

oak, at their source. 3½ miles west of Alligator

Bayou is Double Bayou, which gets its name from

the fact that there are really two separate
streams, the mouths of which are 200 meters apart. The
western stream is the longest, and has one branch
that runs for two miles in a westerly direction.
The eastern stream is 1½ miles in length, and has
five small tributaries. 1¼ miles west of Double Bayou
a ditch known as "Walker's Canal" comes out into the
lake. This runs for three miles from the lake in a
south-easterly direction, and ends in a small stream
that crosses under the track of the Illinois Central
Railroad, 4½ miles south-east of F Branch Station.
This ditch also crosses two different tributaries of
the western branch of Double Bayou, at a distance
from the lake of one and 1½ miles, respectively.
The Illinois Central Railroad runs for eight
miles in a tangent, from the north-west corner of
this sheet in a south-easterly direction. The track
is laid on an embankment built up from
the swamp and crosses over numerous streams on
trestles. Near the western end of the sheet is
Bayou le Branch, which is the largest bayou in
the vicinity. The main part of this bayou is four
miles in length, and near its end a ditch comes in
that runs for 1½ miles in a south-westerly direction.
This bayou has two branches, one joining the main
bayou ½ of a mile from the lake, and runs in a
southwesterly direction for 1 1/2 miles. The other comes in 2 1/2 miles from the mouth, and runs in an easterly direction for 2 1/2 miles. A ditch runs south from this branch for a distance of a mile, being nearly parallel with, and a mile from the main bayou. Bayou Le Branch crosses under the Illinois Central Railroad 1/2 mile from its mouth. For 1/4 mile above that point, the stream was so choked up by water hyacinths, that a great deal of time was lost in forcing the boats through them. On the west bank of the bayou at the bridge is the R.R. Station Le Branch. There are about ten buildings in the neighborhood including a section house, store, one or two dwelling houses, the Le Branch Fishing & Hunting Club, and a few sheds. With the exception of a few huts on the banks of the different bayous, these are the only buildings on the sheet. On the lake shore just east of the mouth of Bayou Le Branch, and on the east bank of the bayou itself are small plots of cultivated land where cabbages are raised. A small stream runs into the bayou at its mouth, that crosses under the railroad track 1 1/2 mile north west of Le Branch Station. All of these bayous are lost at their source in a large flooded swamp which is locally known as the "Lake".
Bayou le Branch is a comparatively deep stream, and with a little expenditure of money in clearing out the willows and water hyacinths, could be made navigable for small craft all the way to its source, and from there a canal could be easily cut to the Mississippi River. In the lake from 50 to 200 metres from the shore, and running parallel with it, are several short rows of piles. These are evidently the remains of some structure, though no information on the subject could be obtained.

Very Respectfully Yours
Fred. W. Young
Assistant C.S.S.