2479

The Harbor or Great Harbor
(Enseneda Horna de Culebra)

Culebra Island, Porto Rico

Topographic Sheet No.

Descriptive Report

by J.S. Bourke

Assistant Engineer

1900

51851
Topographic Sheet No.

Culebra Island

Polo Rico

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The Harbor or Great Harbor, known locally as "Ensenada Honda de Culebra". The survey of this harbor, made by request of the Navy Dept. to determine its capabilities as a Naval or Coring Station, was executed during the months of Feb., Mar., April 1900. A base was measured near the head of the harbor and the triangulation extended over the island of Culebra and outlying Cays and an astronomical azimuth observed. The geographic positions were computed depending on the position of Culebrita Lk. No. as published in "List of Lights of the World" Vol. I. H.O. 1898 viz: \( \phi = 18^\circ 18' 43'' \) \( \lambda = 65^\circ 13' 45'' \). An astronomical latitude was afterwards observed by the party of Asst. Navigators on the H. O. Blake who was also to connect the triangulation with the longitude station at St. Thomas. When the results of this work are received by the Office the projection should be changed to correspond to the true position.
The harbor is about 1/2 mile long with an average width of 1/2 mile and is completely landlocked on three sides. The entrance has a large coral reef extending from both sides with an opening into the harbor of about 270 meters in width.

The shores of the harbor are hilly and largely covered with a dense growth of small trees and underbrush so thick that it can only be penetrated by cutting trails. Much of this wood is being gradually cleared away by the inhabitants for purposes of cultivation. On the eastern side of the harbor is a small village called "San Idefonso," which has a native population of about 200. A small amount of supplies such as fruit, vegetables, eggs can be obtained here and there are several thousand cattle raised on the island and fresh beef can be had but not of very good quality. There is no fresh water on the island, what few streams, ponds and wells there are being all more or less brackish. This brackish water is used by the cattle & by some of the inhabitants when cistern water is not available. There are two large cisterns at San Idefonso and a certain amount is dealt out to each one of the inhabitants every morning. The rainy season
at Culebra lasts from about June to October and during the rest of the year there is practically no rain at all.

The houses are mostly small "shacks" with sides of palm leaves - sometimes boards with thatched roofs. A few of them are built of boards entirely. The natives are all of the poorer class of "Porto-Ricanians".

Contains show diff. of elev. for every 10 metres. Heights where given are in metres.

[Signature]
Assistant C. A. Smyth
Chief of Party

The local Spanish names, when obtainable, are written on the sheet in pencil.