# DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

**Topographic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sheet No.</th>
<th>E</th>
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**State**

- British West Indies

**Locality**

- Jamaica Island
- Portland Bight
- Old Harbor Bay

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**1921**

**Chief of Party**

G. C. Mattison
The Topographic Sheet should be accompanied by this form, filled in as completely as possible, when the sheet is forwarded to the Office.

Field No. E

REGISTER NO. T6797 RESTRIC TED

State Jamaica, B.W.I.

General locality Portland Bight

Locality Old Harbour Bay - Vicinity Old Harbour Village

Scale 1:4800 Date of survey Feb. 25, 26, 27, 1941

Vessel U.S.C. & G.S.S. HYDROGRAPHER

Chief of party G.C. Mattison

Surveyed by J.C. Tison, Jr.

Inked by J.C. Tison, Jr.

Heights in feet above none to ground to tops of trees

Contour, Approximate contour, Form line interval none feet

Instructions dated February 18, 1941 (Radiusgram), 19

Remarks: Survey requested by U.S. Army Engineers in letter of February 18, 1941
DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

to accompany

TOPOGRAPHIC SHEET FIELD NO. E T-6797 (1941)

OLD HARBOUR BAY

VICINITY OF OLD HARBOUR BAY VILLAGE

JAMAICA, B. W. I.

FEBRUARY 1941

INSTRUCTIONS

This survey was executed at the request of U. S. Army Engineers in letter of February 13, 1941 and authorized by the Director in radiogram dated February 16, 1941.

EXTENT

The sheet includes a topographic survey of the shoreline of Old Harbour Bay from vicinity of Latitude 17° 53' 53" and Longitude 77° 05' 38" westward to Longitude 77° 06' 57"; and delineation of salt flats back of the shoreline inshore to the edge of impenetrable woodland.

CONTROL

Third order triangulation stations "Leo" and "Bay Eccentric", 1941 and intersection stations "Col" and "How", 1941, furnished control for the topography.

TRAVERSES

A planetable traverse was run from triangulation station "Leo, 1941" westward to triangulation station "Bay Eccentric 1941". The closing error was three meters and adjustment was made in the field according to standard practice.

No other closed traverses were run on the sheet.
METHODS

Standard U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey methods were used throughout.

From triangulation station "Bay Eccentric" westward to topographic station "Roo" an unclosed traverse was run, taking care at each set-up to check orientation and distance by resecting on triangulation stations "Col" and "How".

In delineating the salt flats back of the shoreline, a short unclosed traverse was run inshore from triangulation station "Bay Eccentric", then extended eastward and westward along the open areas of the flats. Another such traverse was taken inshore and to westward at topographic station "Gar". Considerable sketching, supplemented by as many rod readings as possible, was resorted to in outlining the limits of various types of vegetation.

The mangrove line to eastward of signal "Abe", shown on the sheet by means of a-dashed-pencil-line, was located by sextant fixes on the hydrographic sheet and transferred.  

Topographic stations for hydrographic use were located either by direct stadia readings, by three or more intersecting out, or by a combination of the two methods.

From signal "Som" westward, all set-ups for locating the shoreline were made in from one to two feet of water outside the mangroves. The bottom in all cases was found to be firm.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This section of the shoreline of Old Harbour Bay is low and flat and from offshore appears heavily wooded with low trees. No prominent objects exist adjacent to the beach, and the scattered small shacks and huts located between signals "Gar" and "Dir" are partially obscured by trees.

From signal "Dir" southward and eastward the shoreline consists of dense red mangroves, about fifteen feet high, with from two to three feet of water along their outer limits. Signal "Cro" is on the north side of a narrow opening in the mangrove line which admits to a small circular bay in the mangroves. This bay was not surveyed because of the difficulties presented in attempting to take planable control inside.
From signal "Dir" westward to signal "Him" the beach is sandy and there are scattered fishermen's huts from signal "Gar" eastward. Between the beach and the indented salt flats is a narrow sand ridge from two to three feet above high water on which grow scattered thorny trees. East of the flats the ground is sandy and flat back of the shoreline, and this strip of beach serves as the waterfront for Old Harbour Village. Here the native fishermen beach their dugouts and repair fish traps and nets.

The two creeks shown between signals "Him" and "Gar" are fresh, with steep banks, and evidently drain considerable inland areas. Both are choked by sand at their mouths, there being only one or two inches of water in their channels where they cross the offshore sand flats at low tide. The indicated mangroves along their banks are of the "red" variety.

The easterly creek passes inland through Old Harbour Village, and the northern half of the salt flat on its eastern side is thickly dotted with native houses; being also the site of a large fish and produce market.

From signal "Him" westward for about 240 meters, the shoreline is sandy but very low; large black mangrove trees, thick but open underneath, growing just back of the high water line. The remainder of the shoreline westward to the small point of land at triangulation station "Bay Eocentric" is fringed by a narrow strip of red mangroves, and it is the outer edge of these mangroves which is shown on the chart as the shoreline. The high water line is actually from ten to fifteen meters insshore, and back of it grow large black mangrove trees, open underneath except for scattered cacti. The ground is firm and has an elevation of from 0.5 to 0.7 feet above mean high water.

The small point of land at triangulation station "Bay Eocentric" is low and flat, is composed largely of gravel, and has an elevation of about 1-1/2 feet above mean high water. Red mangroves line the shore for a distance of about ten meters outside the high water line and it is their outer edge which is shown on the chart as the shoreline on the chart. Triangulation station "Bay Eocentric" is at the east side of the brick ruins of an old sugar plant which once occupied most of the area of the point. According to natives, a wharf for loading sugar once extended offshore from the south extremity of the point.

Westward from triangulation station "Bay Eocentric" to the limit of the survey, the shoreline is dense red mangroves. They extend inland to the salt flats and are from fifteen to twenty feet high.
The salt flats shown on the sheet are hard and level and appear to be composed of ordinary soil on the surface. They are absolutely bare of vegetation in large areas and in others are found scattered growths of small black mangrove bushes and cactus. The average elevation above mean high water is from 0.5 to 1.0 foot, as ascertained by planetable elevations taken inshore at several points from an estimated mean high water line along the beach. According to natives who live in the vicinity, the flats are flooded by from two to four inches of water at times of very high tides, when the surface becomes muddy and slick but never extremely soft.

The dense woodland to the north of the flats is composed largely of cactus and thorny trees. There is no noticeable change in elevation of the ground surface at transition from the flats.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER SURVEYS

No other surveys were available for comparison.

STATISTICS

Statute miles of shoreline: 2.3
Area square statute miles: 0.2

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Tison, Jr.
Jr. H. & G. Engineer,
C. & G. Survey.

Approved and forwarded:

G. C. Mattison,
H. & G. Engineer,
Commanding HYDROGRAPHER.
LIST OF SIGNALS

to accompany

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT FOR TOPOGRAPHIC SHEET FIELD NO. E

OLD HARBOUR BAY    VICINITY OF OLD HARBOUR
BAY VILLAGE

JAMAICA, B. W. I.

1. TRIANGULATION STATIONS

Leo 1941
BAY Eccentric 1941
Col 1941 (Outside HNL)
How 1941 (Outside HNL)

2. TOPOGRAPHIC STATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abe</td>
<td>Banner on pole outside mangrove line</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bun</td>
<td>Cloth in tree</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cap</td>
<td>Cloth in mangroves</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cro</td>
<td>Cloth in mangroves</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir</td>
<td>Banner on pole just outside mangrove line</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elm</td>
<td>South gable of thatched hut</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fcc</td>
<td>South gable of shack</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gar</td>
<td>Banner on tree</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gim</td>
<td>Banner at end of old wharf</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Him</td>
<td>Tripod signal inside HNL</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nap</td>
<td>Banner on pole just outside HNL</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pap</td>
<td>Cloth in mangrove</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roc</td>
<td>Cloth in mangrove</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son</td>
<td>Banner on pole just outside mangrove line</td>
<td>Not recoverable</td>
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DIVISION OF CHARTS
SURVEYS SECTION

REVIEW OF TOPOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Jamaica, British West Indies, Portland Bight, Old Harbor Bay
Surveyed in February 1941, Scale 1:4,800
Instructions dated February 18, 1941 {Director's
radiogram supplementing project HT-260}

Chief of Party - G. C. Mattison
Surveyed by - J. C. Tison, Jr.
Inked by - J. C. Tison, Jr.
Reviewed by - H. F. Stegman
Inspected by - H. R. Edmonston

1. Junctions with Surveys
No contemporary topographic surveys adjoin the present survey.

2. Comparison with Prior Surveys
No prior surveys have been made in this area by the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

3. Comparison with Hydrographic Office Chart No. 1683
   (Latest Print dated June 1938) Scale 1:99,415
   a. Topography
   This small scale chart contains little information that needs specific consideration in this review.
   The Barksfield Wharf, in Lat. 17°53.7', Long. 77°
   06.5', and the wharf in Lat. 17°54.2', Long. 77°
   05.75' are now in ruins. (See D.R. pp 3 & 5)
   b. Magnetic Meridian
   The value of the magnetic declination obtained at station Bay Eccentric 1941 agrees closely with the charted value. The descriptive report does not state that the declinometer was checked or that any corrections were applied.

4. Compliance with Instructions for the Project
The plans, character and extent of the survey satisfy the instructions for the project.
5. **Condition of Survey**
   a. The inking of topographic details is excellent.
   b. The descriptive report is clear and satisfactorily covers all matters of importance.

6. **Additional Field Work Recommended**
   None

7. **Superseded Surveys**
   No prior surveys have been made by this Bureau in this area.

Examined and approved:

Chief, Surveys Section               Chief, Division of Charts

Chief, Section of Hydrography        Chief, Division of Coastal Surveys