

2527

Ding. Chart. No. 904-1

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

*O. H. Tittmann* , Superintendent.

State: *Porto Rico*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

*Hydrographic Sheet No. 2527*

LOCALITY:

*San Juan Head to  
Ensenada Honda*

*1901.*

CHIEF OF PARTY:

*J. B. Boutelle*

2527

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT  
HYDROGRAPHIC SHEET

## SAN JUAN HEAD TO ENSENADA HONDA PORTO RICO

The area covered by this sheet is mostly navigated by the steamers of the N.Y. & P.R. S.S. CO., small coasters and vessels trading with the port of Fajardo, Humacao and Naguabo. The entrance at Cape San Juan Head between the Cape and the Cucarachas Rocks is about  $3/4$  of a mile wide with 11 fathoms depth of water. There is also a good channel between the Cucarachas and Iacos Cay about  $1/3$  of a mile in width with 5 fathoms depth of water. The current sets through both of these channels at about a 2 knot speed. Vessels bound for Fajardo after rounding Cape San Juan Head keep the starboard hand aboard passing between the shore and the Laja shoal a dangerous reef directly in the fair way for entering the harbor; a black can buoy marks the N.W. point of this shoal. The east channel into Fajardo lies between the Laja shoal and the reefs north of Obispo Cay and is about  $1/4$  of a mile wide with 5 fathoms of water. A range for this channel is to bring the top of S.W. Cay at Culebra midway between Palominos and Palominos Chiquita Cays. The harbor of Fajardo is small with good anchorage in 4 fathoms under the lee of Obispo and Zancudo Cays. This anchorage is dangerous in a norther but is well protected from the prevailing trade winds. There is good anchorage in 7 fathoms on the west side of Palominos Cay under the <sup>lee of the</sup> island. There are no wharves in the harbor and shoal water extends out about a half a mile from the Playa, cargoes being handled entirely by lighters (see description of Fajardo Harbor sheet). Pilots can be obtained by hoisting a flag at the foremast head. A pilot is generally stationed at the south end of Palominos Cay. There is a channel to the southward from Fajardo between the mainland and Ramos Cay with 17 feet of water but this channel should not be attempted without a pilot. Steamers entering at Cape San Juan Head or leaving Fajardo bound for the southward use for a range Mt. Piraguas on Vieques Isd. over Cabeza de Perro Cay until well below Ramos Cay past the Largo Shoal, then bearing to the eastward and passing between Cabeza de Perro and Lavandera rock. This range carries about 6 fathoms of water but passes near and east of a 4 fathom spot with 6 or 7 fathoms around it just east of Zancudo Cay. On passing Cabeza de Perro a southwest course passing well clear of Cabras Cay will pass through from 7 to 10 fathoms of water and well clear of the point of Arenas Shoal. This channel should not be attempted by vessels drawing over 20 feet unless with an experienced pilot. If well buoyed out a 5 fathom channel can be had. During fresh trades a moderately heavy sea sets in from the eastward south of the Largo shoal. The Largo shoal is steep to and the sea breaks over it all the time. The most prominent landmarks in this vicinity are the Piraguas rocks, they stand well up out of water and can be seen for a long distance. the Lavandera rock is awash the sea breaking over it continuously.

The two small harbors of Ensenada Mañaguá and Port Medio Mundo

are open roadsteads and only used by small fishing boats. the shores of the mainland and the cays are mostly of coral rock bounded by reefs a few feet under water extending out from about 20 to several hundred yards and landing is difficult except on exceptionally calm days and through narrow openings in the reefs to the beach inside. Fajardo is the principal town on this part of the island and has about 3000 inhabitants, the town lies about 1 1/2 miles inland. There is a Custom House at the Playa but it is discontinued at present vessels having to enter and clear at Humacao. Ceiba is a small collection of huts only. The produce of all this section goes to Fajardo for shipment.

Respectfully submitted by

*J. B. Bontell*

Assist. C. & G.S. Chief of Party.

N.B. The two fathom spot about 2 miles east of Cabras Isd. marked (e.d.) on chart no. 904 was searched for and reported as not found.