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JAN 6 - 1904

State: *Porto Rico*

Acc. No. *2534*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Hydrographic Sheet No. 2534

LOCALITY:

*South Coast - from
Ratonon Island to
Juanica Harbor*

1901

CHIEF OF PARTY:

Jos. L. Flower

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Description Report
Hydrographic Sheet No. 2534
South Coast of Porto Rico, From Ratonos
Island To Guánica Harbor

Geo. L. Flower
Chief of Party, U.S. C. & G. S.
COAST AND
GEODETIC SURVEY

JAN 6 9 46 AM 1904

FILE
REFERRED:
ASSISTANT IN CHARGE

Descriptive Report

Hydrographic Sheet No. 2534

South Coast of Porto Rico - Ratons Island to Guayama Harbor

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When this survey was made there were no aids to navigation within the limits of this sheet. The available charts were inaccurate and useless. With accurate charts and the necessary aids to navigation, a few buoys judiciously placed, this portion of the coast would be perfectly safe for any careful navigator, by daylight, as most of the dangers are visible.

In approaching the shore at night, however, extreme precaution is necessary, for when soundings are reached the water shoals rapidly and in places there is deep water close to the outlying reefs. This is particularly the case off Guayanilla Harbor.

The general character of the coast east of Guayanilla Harbor is

that of a low alluvial plain bounded on the north by the foot hills of the mountain chain. West of Guayaquilla Harbor the foot hills reach to the shore making it bold with high steep cliffs in places.

Many coral reefs lie along shore upon which, in some cases, islands of considerable size have been formed.

There are no harbors of present commercial importance inside the limits of this sheet, and yet Guayaquilla Harbor is a magnificent haven. The approach is free from danger, the entrance deep and safe and inside it is perfectly protected, is large enough for an immense shipping and has an excellent holding ground and is second to no harbor on the island as a haven during the hurricane season. It is a matter of marvel that with such a harbor close at hand, the open harbor of Ponce should have grown into the principal

commercial harbor of the southern coast.

East of Guayaquilla Harbor the shoal along shore runs out from two to two and a half miles. To the westward it runs closer in until Guánica Harbor is approached, when it spreads seaward again.

Pallaboa Bay, an indentation of the shoreline just east of Guayaquilla Harbor, contains several islands behind which vessels can secure some measure of protection from the prevailing S.E. swell. The holding ground is good and there is ample water but the passages between the islands would have to be buoyed. With Guayaquilla Harbor so close there appears no necessity for vessels to seek shelter here.

At the eastern extremity of the shoal a coral shoal, called Arenas Cay, makes out from Buchara Point for a distance of about a mile, and terminates in a coral reef which is awash at the

western end of this reef are two small islands called "Ratons Island". Between the reef and the shore the water is very shoal, south of the reef the slope is rapid, the 80 feet curve being about one-half mile from the islands.

During the day the prevailing wind is from the southeast. As shore is approached, the wind dies out at sun down and a land breeze springs up, which rarely exceeds a gentle breeze. At sunrise the S. E. winds return and develop into a good stiff breeze.

There is quite a perceptible westwardly current along the edge of the soundings and for some little distance to sea.

Geo. L. Flower
 Chief of Party, U.S.S.