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Diag. Chart No. 1276-E

Department of Commerce and Labor
COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

O. N. Pittman
Superintendent.

State: *La*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

H. S. Sheet No. *2997*

LOCALITY:

*Atchafalaya
Bay, Wax Lake*

1909

CHIEF OF PARTY:

H. L. Beck

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Louisiana

Wax Lake and portions of
Big Wax Bayou,
Little Wax Bayou and
Myrtle Bayou

Scale $\frac{1}{10000}$

Topography by: J. H. Hawley, Aid.
Hydrography by: H. L. Beck, Asst.

April & May 1909.

Schooner TRANSIT
H. L. Beck, Asst. C. & G. Survey
Chief of Party.

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Descriptive Report.

C. & G. SURVEY,
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(To accompany Sheets ~~T 2944, T 2945 & T 2946~~
(H. 2997, H. 2998 & H. 2998^a))

This descriptive report covers the three topographic sheets (also hydrographic) which were required to show Little Wax Bayou, Wax Lake and its connection with Atchafalaya Bay (Wax Lake Pass), a portion of Big Wax Bayou and various other bayous in the vicinity of Belle Isle.

The whole region between Morgan City, La. and Belle Isle is low and swampy and intersected by a network of bayous.

Little Wax Bayou connects with the Atchafalaya River about 2½ miles below Morgan City. The name "Little Wax" appears on chart #199 for a bayou about 4 miles to the southward of the one called by that name on these sheets.

After making inquiries among the natives of the region, in regard to the names, the conclusion reached was that the chart is incorrect. There is a good deal of difference of opinion as to the correct names for many of the bayous.

composing the network of waterways between Morgan City and Belle Isle, but nearly all of the people interviewed were of the opinion that this one should be called Little Wax.

The most direct water route from Morgan City to Belle Isle, and the route ~~is~~ generally used by all kinds of river craft, is via Little Wax Bayou, Adams Cross, Big Wax, "Belle Isle Cut Off", Myrtle Bayou and the dredged canal.

The stern wheel river steamboats which transport the sugar from the plantations in the Bayou Salle region are said to go via Little Wax Bayou to Wax Lake, across Wax Lake to Bayou Blue and through Bayou Blue. All of the channels here mentioned are shown on the three sheets, except Bayou Blue of which only the end connecting with Wax Lake is shown.

The sheets themselves show the character of the country traversed; viz.: flat and swampy and covered in places with vegetation of a tropical luxuriance of growth.

The region is for the most part uninhabited the greater part of it being uninhabitable.

~~Four Trees, Texas.~~

For about two miles from the Atchafalaya River, there are, at intervals along the banks of the bayou, small areas (the largest of them being several acres in extent) of solid ground, none of it, however being at an elevation of more than one foot above high water.

On a number of these solid areas, native "Cajuns" live in small houses and miserable huts.

As one gets farther away from the Atchafalaya River, there is less and less solid ground, and what timber there is, is in places a quarter of a mile or more away from the bayous. Wherever there is no timber or brush the swamp is covered with a heavy growth of "grass" which frequently attains a height of 12 or 15 feet.

A considerable amount of trapping is done, in the winter months by the natives for small fur bearing animals. Aside from this the region is almost worthless, irreclaimable, and a fertile breeding place for mosquitoes of a number of different varieties, and numerous other insect pests. Snakes, also, are rather plentiful.

~~1244, 1245, 1246.~~

About 8 miles from the Atchafalaya River (following the channel of Little Max Bayou.) the courses of Little Max Bayou and Big Max Bayou come close together, and are connected by a short bayou known as Adam's Cross.

There are numerous other bayous, diverging from the ones surveyed, which were not investigated.

No topographic work was done on Belle Isle, which is said to be the highest point on the coast of Louisiana.

However, the bayous and waterways leading through the marshes to the "island" were surveyed and the result seems to show either that they were not before properly charted, or that numerous and considerable changes have taken place since the original survey was made.

The salt producing company, which was formerly operating on Belle Isle, having failed in business, the buildings are being torn down and carried away.

On the north east end of the island is a gas well which occasionally spouts a few barrels of oil.

The "New Pass" which connects Wax Lake Pass with Atchofalaya Bay did not exist when the original survey of this coast was made. It is said that a number of years ago one man with a spade cut a small channel through the narrow neck of marsh. The current, running in and out, has since that time made the "New Pass" what it is now.

The topography of Wax Lake and Wax Lake Pass was controlled by triangulation. The topography of Big and Little Wax Bayous was done by means of a plane table traverse, connecting at each end with triangulation stations.

These topographic sheets are also used for hydrographic sheets.

Wax Lake was developed in the usual manner by a system of parallel lines of soundings.

The bayous shown on these sheets were deemed sufficiently well developed when a single mid-channel line of soundings had been run, inasmuch as the deepest

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Descriptive Report. (continued)
~~T 1944, T 1945, T 1946.~~

water is nearly always found in the middle. Positions were obtained by ^{single} compass bearings on bushes, trees, flags, etc. determined by the plane table.

A more elaborate system of development of these bayous is not needed, and furthermore, would entail an almost interminable amount of extremely disagreeable work.

A. L. B.

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Statistics for Hyd. 2997

Date	Letter	Volume	Positions	Soundings	Miles	Vessel
May 19 th 1909	a	1	105.	448	22.0	Launch Maine
May 20 th , "	b	1	153 ⁽²²⁾	684 ⁽⁶⁸⁾	12.5 ^(3.0)	" "
May 21 st , "	c	1	22 ⁽¹⁰⁾	95 ⁽⁵⁸⁾	2.2 ⁽¹⁾	" "
Totals		1	280	1227	36.7	Totals

Soundings plotted in feet.

Topography inked by Field Party
 Protracted by Field Party
 Plotted and inked by R. L. Johnston
 Verified by

Report on Hyd. Sheet 2997.

This sheet, covering the area, from Atchafalaya Bay through Wax Lake Pass and Wax Lake to Possum Pt. Bayou, was originally a topographic sheet, but since the hydrography was protracted on it, it was made a combination sheet to save a repetition of the work.

Wax Lake is very flat with an average depth of four feet, while from Atchafalaya Bay to the mouth of Wax Lake about eighteen feet can be carried.

The records are in good condition and the developement is sufficient for the importance of the region.

In plotting the hydrography the holes pricked at positions should have been filled with colored ink and the colors used on the sheet should correspond with those in the records.

The curves are left in pencil to be inked by the verifier

R. L. Johnston

Draftsman

10/25/09

Report on Hyd. Sheet 2997

This sheet covers an area from Atchafalaya Bay to Possum Pt. Bayou at the north end of Wax Lake.

Wax Lake is very shallow and flat with an average depth of four feet throughout.

Wax Lake and Wax Lake Pass, which connects it with Atchafalaya Bay, have been pretty well covered, while one channel line has been run through Little Wax, Big Wax and Myrtle Bayous. This development is all that the importance of the locality warrants.

The crossings are generally good.

The colors used in the records and on the sheet should have been made to correspond.

R. L. Johnston
Draftsman
2/17/10

Verified:

J. Swain
2-17-10

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Diag. Chart. No. 1276-2

Department of Commerce and Labor
COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

J. A. Littmann
Superintendent.

State: *Louisiana*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Hydro Sheet No. *2998*

LOCALITY:
*Big Wax and
Little Wax
Bayous*

1907

CHIEF OF PARTY:
H. P. Beck

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Report for Hydro Sheets 2998 and 2998^a

The hydrography on these sheets covering Adam's Cross, Myrtle Bayou, Little Wax Bayou and a portion of Big Wax Bayou, consists of a single line run in the channel, which is as much as the importance of the locality demands.

At the point where Little Wax Bayou joins the Atchafalaya River, several lines have been run, which are apparently conflicting, but they were confirmed by the Chief of Party.

It might have been better in recording this work to have used feet and tenths instead of fathoms and feet, but in any case in instances where there is no whole foot, but a decimal of a foot a cipher should be placed before ^{the} decimal point to avoid the confusion of decimals with whole feet.

In protracting the sheet the colors used on the sheet and in the records to designate different days, should correspond

R. L. Johnston
Draftsman
11/12/09

Protracted by Field Party.
Plotted and inked by R. L. Johnston.
Verified by J. C. W.

1-25-10

No List of Plane Table Positions
accompanies this sheet for the reason
that there are no objects which could
be recovered, that would be of any
value to a future surveying party.