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Form 504

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT

Type of Survey *Topographic*
Field No. _____ Office No. *1756*

LOCALITY

State *North Carolina*
General locality *New Inlet*
Locality *To Cape Fear
River*

1888

CHIEF OF PARTY

W B Wainwright

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U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

F. M. Thorn, Superintendent.

State: *N. C.*

DESCRIPTIVE REPORT.

Several Sheets No.
Topographic

LOCALITY:

New Inlet
to Cape Fear River

1888.

CHIEF OF PARTY:

A. T. Mainwaring

1756
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U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey,

1756

August 29th, 1888.

Special Report
Coast of North Carolina from
Sloop Pt to Carolina Beach

The principal feature of this section of the coast consists in its being the southern terminus of the long chain of sounds which stretch from Cape Henry to Cape Fear.

Although in common with all the sounds facing Ocracoke Bay, they are insignificant in dimensions compared with those on the northern side of Cape Lookout, yet they are of interest in connection with the oft mooted project of a coast line canal.

The main shore is low and sandy, and when not cleared for cultivation, covered with a growth mostly of pine. The majority of these latter, before the war, were of the

valuable long leaf species, from which tar, turpentine, and resin are produced.

But during the war, vast numbers were felled for fuel for the salt works, which occupied every available site along shore.

This, together with reckless "logging", and annual forest fires, has reduced their numbers to a small figure near the coast. Next in importance is the Cypress, which borders every pond and is abundant in every swamp.

The staple products of the farm are, Cotton, Corn, Sweet Potatoes, and Peanuts.

Fruit growing & market gardening for the Northern markets, is occupying a good deal of attention, and the most successful ^{results} so far have been ^{import from} strawberries and asparagus.

Owing to the sandy nature of the soil, the wagon roads are heavy, and afford small means for quick or night transportation.

Directly fronting the ocean, is a narrow strip of beach, covered with the usual unstable sand dunes, and its length broken here & there

by the small inlets. In a few places it is wooded with a growth of live oak, holly, cedar & yew. Back of this beach, on the sounds, there are mostly covered with salt marsh, through which flow in all directions numerous shallow channels, forming an intricate network.

As the creeks draining the mainland are small though many, they have slight influence on the position of the inlets, and consequently these latter close up and move from place to place, as they are subjected to the wind, tide, and currents. The movement is always to the southward, owing to the fact that the southerly currents produced by the northerly winds, is stronger and more persistent than those produced by the southerly winds during summer. This current running to the southward bends the ebb tide from the inlets in the same direction, and the detritus carried in suspension is deposited in the form of a sand bar, which starts ^{from} or hinges on

the North point of the inlet, and stretches across its mouth to some distance below. This causes the ebb flow to make a sharp turn around the South point, gradually wearing it away, and the North point to increase in proportion.

The following changes have occurred since the last survey:

Slump Inlet - closed

New Topsail Inlet - Moved its own mouth, $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile, to the Southward

Old Topsail Inlet - moved a mile and a half to the Southward

Ledberys Inlet - A new inlet broken out to the Northward of Rich.

Rich Inlet - Remains in the same location, but is much narrower

Queen's Inlet - A new inlet broken out

Barren Inlet - Moved a mile to the Southward.

The inside passages from New River to Sharp Pt are tortuous and shoal.

At times it is difficult to go through

with a conc draining only 6 inches of water, and at no place did the depth of water seem to exceed 3 or 4 feet.

From New Ipsail to Sloop Pt there is quite a good 5 foot channel at low water, the shoalest part being on either side of the small marsh island, where the stream leaves the beach, and turns abruptly for the main land.

From New Ipsail to Barren Inlet, the channels along the "Banks" and through the marshes are a succession of streams of irregular width and depth, and the shoals so much interfere in transit, that only a foot can be carried through at low water.

The Bars of New Ipsail and Barren Inlets are the two best, between New River and the Cape Fear, and both have the same depth. ^{6 feet} The bar of each inlet for the greater part of the year is to the southward of its inlet. But during ⁱⁿ the summer, during the freshets

of the southerly winds, they spring farther up the shore + opposite the mouth of the inlet.

A bulkhead with only three feet of water on it obstructs the way from Barren Inlet to Wrightsville Channel.

From here to Masons Inlet there is a good channel with 6 ft. of water until the latter inlet is reached, where it is again clogged with shoals.

On the Southern side of Masons Inlet, there is deep water, which shoals gradually through Myrtle Sound, until its head at Carolina Beach, is reached, where there is only two feet.

Two summer resorts have come into prominence in this section in the past two years. Wrightsville and Carolina Beach. The former is reached by steam Rail Road, and shell road from Wilmington. The rail road, which was finished last June, after reaching the main shore, continues on tracks

work, about a mile over the salt marshes
to a small wooded island, called
the "Stummers". Here a large hotel
& pavilions were in the course of construc-
tion when I left, and also a bridge
across from the island to the beach.

The shell road is 8 miles in length,
has little grade, and is kept in splen-
did condition by the company which
owns the franchise.

Carolina Beach is situated at the
head of Myrtle Sound, and is reached
from the City by steamer on the Cape
Fear River to a point 14 miles below,
and then across to the beach by two
miles of rail-road.

It has a roughly constructed hotel, pavilions,
restaurant and other small buildings.

D. B. Mainwinger

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