

JOHN W. KING  
MEM. A. S. E. E.  
CIVIL & MECHANICAL ENGINEER  
MIAMI, FLORIDA

REPORT  
of  
EXAMINATION and EXPLORATION

of  
Township 53 S. Range 29 E.  
Township 53 S. Range 30 E.

Located in  
LEE COUNTY FLORIDA

by  
*John W. King*

Jan. 17, 1917. Miami, Florida.



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January 17, 1917.

Captain James F. Jaudon.,  
1018 Avenue E.  
Miami, Florida.

Dear Sir:-

In accordance with your request for a report of the agricultural possibilities in Township 53~~6~~, Ranges 29 and 30~~f~~, owned, I understand, by the State of Florida, I extended my tour of inspection to the Manetto Company's property to embrace this particular territory, as requested by you, during which I visited the town of Chokoloskee twice and once passing diagonally through the Township (53 South, Range 30 East) by ascending through a creek called Turners River to the headwater which rises, or to express it more properly, drains the Cypress Swamp laying within Township 52, S. Range 31 East; and again by ascending the headwaters of the Fickey-una-Hatchee River, which traverses in a diagonally Northeasterly direction from the central portion of Township 53, Range 28 E. and passes near the Northwesterly corner stake of Township 53 S. Range 29 S. On both explorations I made general as well as detailed observations and examination of this and adjacent territory. This report of observations and

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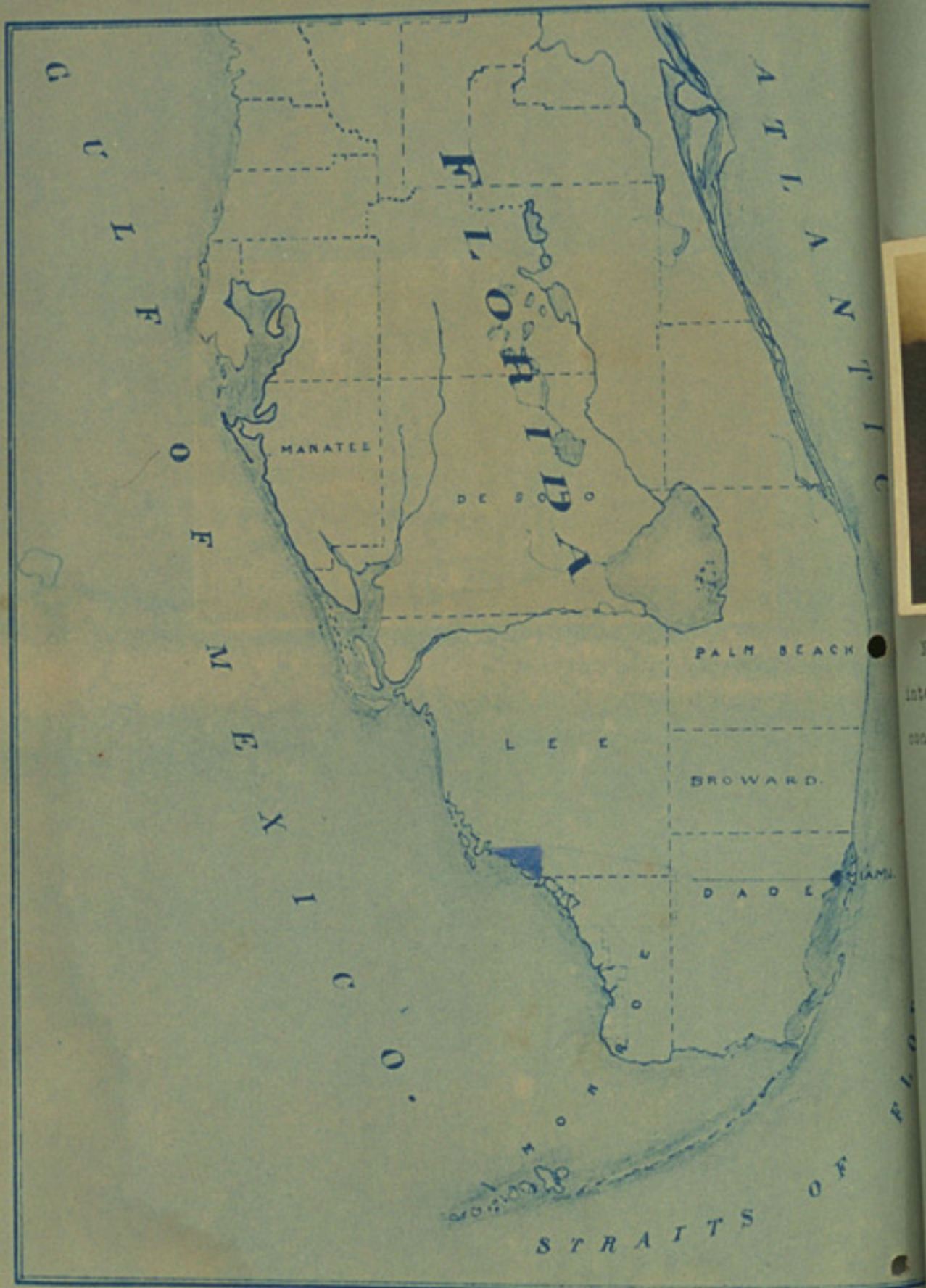
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examinations is given in conjunction and should be read with my reports upon the property of the Manetto Company and also upon the A.W. Hopkins tract which lies adjacent to this property.

After making general observations as well as detailed examinations and explorations of this territory by ascending rivers, creeks and other water passages towards the interior, I made further explorations by advancing over land in various directions, as far as the immediate conditions permitted. The result of such examinations I beg to submit as follows:-



No. 1. Photographic view of Chokoloskee Island and Bay--showing extent of Bay and prominence of the shell mound of Chokoloskee Island.



No. 2. Photo  
 into Chokolo  
 construction

No. 3. B  
 338 R. 3

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No.2. Photographic view of one of the numerous inlets into Chokoloskee Bay from the Gulf of Mexico, showing construction of oyster bars.

No.3. Blue print showing general location of township 53 S R. 30 E, given on opposite page.

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No. 4. Blue print showing details of lands and their general characteristics, attached at back of report.

#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY.

This property, Township 53 S. Ranges 29 and 30 E. lie in the Southwestern portion of the Florida Peninsular adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico and constitutes the middle portion of the southernmost tier of Townships in Lee County.

Within the confines of this territory is one of the largest unbroken sheets of water in the Ten Thousand Islands namely, the Chokoloskee Bay--a body of water two to three miles wide and nearly ten miles long; lying three or more miles from the Gulf Coast, in a West North Westerly direction, extending from a point below the Southern boundary of Township 53, in Range 31, crossing the entire length of Range 30, and finally concluding in the interminable

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series of islands that constitute and form this particular coast and has given it its name.

Chokoloskee Bay, though not directly connected with the receiving basin area further East consisting of that chain of individual Bays of which, Huston, Chevelier, Alligator etc. are but members, it nevertheless acts in a similar capacity as a receiving basin of the waters flowing from various streams that lead from the great unclaimed area of lower central Florida.

From Chokoloskee Bay the waters dissapate through innumerable tortuous channels winding their way between the various low lying, flat, partly submerged mangrove islands, for a distance of two miles, or more, until they empty into the Gulf of Mexico; at several places these channels become more or less straightened and are called passes--two of which lead from this Bay, the westernmost called "Sand Fly Pass" and the Eastern or "Main Pass", through which boats drawing five feet of water pass. From the mouth of this pass and in all the adjacent channels and throughout Chokoloskee Bay, are oysters in profusion gathering in great quantities in their natural formation, clustered on the pendent branches of the mangroves as well as projecting roots, in bunches often a foot or more in diameter--then again, forming bars projecting into the channels and bays, from the banks in "saw tooth"

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formations, interlaid in greater or less magnitude with the projecting bars from the opposite shore of the channels, causing this channel to vere in a most erratic manner from one side to the other. These bars are all submerged at highwater and most of them submerged at low water, but occasionally, here and there, these bars project above the surface at low water, some asmuch as six inches. At the entrance to the "Main Pass" to Chokoloskee the oysters were found adhering to a very recent formation of tubular white coral, near the surface of the water; in sme specimens the coral imbedding them in the mass of a solid substance.

The rivers emptying into the Bay flow from a north-easterly direction and at their mouth are well defined, wide and deep. They are usually straight, gradually narrowing and shallowing as they ascend towards a pronounced, well defined rocky ledge that extends along the western coast of the Peninsular.

The gradual incline of the surface is noticable from narrowing and shallowing of the streams, as they progress upwardly along the gradual incline to the crest and outcrop of this natural rocky ledge. *After reaching this Rock Ledge* ~~Down~~, the streams difuse through innumerable small, flat and shallow water passages called sbaughs;--Emptying into Chokoloskee Bay are four streams of inportance--The Allen River, Half Way Creek,



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Turners River and Barnes River, all of which lead to and drain the Big Cypress.

This rock ledge in some cases projects through the surface of the surrounding ground and through its ability to hold and retain the water above, provides the essentials ~~so~~necessary for the growth of that vast area of country indicated on the maps at the "Big Cypress Swamp".

The LANDS lying within these two Townships are mostly mangrove swamp with the exception of the North east portion of Township 53 S. Range 30 E. where at a distance of about one mile south-westerly from the Township corner stake, lies the already mentioned Rock ledge, lying in a North-westerly South-easterly direction as shown on the accompanying blue prints.

To the North-east of this Rock Ledge, enters, in a saw tooth formation, the lower extremity of the cypress strands projecting south from the Big Cypress Area and at its end is a few scattering pines.

The soil is a sandy loam, rich in partly decomposed vegetable matter, with a silicacious limestone rock, projecting through to the surface;; this conditions prevails throughout the land of this Township, from the rocky ledge North and easterly to its borders.

From the Rock ledge to the South and West is a flat prairie with occasional Hammock growth; this prairie is

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sufficiently inclined to be self draining and this has been evidently produced by the precipitation of silicious and decomposed vegetable matter that has floated over and deposited on the outside of this rock river-- samples herewith submitted.

Of lands available for agricultural purposes, there is in Township 53 S. Range 30, approximately the north easterly half, subject to over-flow during the wet season. The balance of this Township is the characteristic mangrove swamp.

In township 53 S, Range 29 E, approximately all the land is Mangrove swamp and not subject to agricultural purposes. However, this is with the exception of a few isolated cases--notably, of "Indian" (?) shell mounds, the most prominent of which is that of Chokoloskee Island wherein heaps of shells, principally oysters (two varieties), some conch (two varieties) and an occasional clam are found, that have been piled in ridges to a height of twenty or more feet; this island is about three-quarters of a mile long and one-half mile wide and lays in an isolated position in the center of the Eastern portion of the bay. Chokoloskee village consists of two stores and a dozen cottages. Other shall mounds in this vicinity consist of one near the mouth of the Turner River, in the mangroves consisting of about ten acres. Another one

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the South shore of the Western portion of Chokoloskee Bay, of probably like extent; another at Everglade.

The result of these explorations ~~and~~ observations and examinations are herewith submitted. Viz:

Stations	14	15
Date	December 31, 1916.	<i>Dec. 31/1916</i>
Location	6 miles up Turner River.	9 Miles up Turner Riv.
Tide	None	None
E L of water above tide Est.	4'-6"	5'-0
E L of Land	1'	1'
Character of land	Prairie	Woods
Surface	Flat	Flat
Condition	Natural	Natural
Soil	Silicious Loam	Sandy on rock
Depth of soil	2	Rocks to surface
Verdure Trees	Fresh water mangroves	Cypress and pine
	Button wood Cabbage Palms	
Under growth	Sawgrass flag Bermuda Grass.	Wire grass
Remarks	Soil samples	Samples of rock.

With reference to the above, I beg to submit the following samples, Viz:

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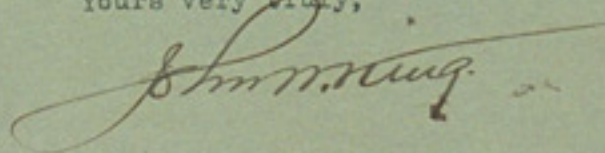
No. 5. Sample of soil taken at Station 14.

No. 6. Sample of Rock taken at Station 15.

Trusting you will find the above information  
of value, I remain,

Yours very truly,

JWK/NH

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John W. King", written in dark ink. The signature is fluid and extends across the width of the "Yours very truly," line.