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SECTOR 1 — CHART INFORMATION

SECTOR 1

OFF-LYING ISLANDS—WEST COAST OF MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Plan.—This sector describes the islands and shoals lying off the W coasts of Mexico and Central America. The descriptive sequence is SE.

Tanner Bank to Isla Clarion

1.1 Tanner Bank (32°42'N., 119°09'W.), about 13 miles long and 5.5 miles wide, extends in a NW-SE direction. It has a least known depth of 16.4m which is marked close N by a buoy.

Cortes Bank (32°30'N., 119°11'W.), about 24 miles long and 6.5 miles wide, extends in a NW-SE direction. This bank lies about 5 miles S of Tanner Bank and parallel to it. The irregular bottom of the bank is hard and consists of white sand and broken shells with fine coral in the SE part. An increased swell is usually noticeable in the vicinity of this bank.

Bishop Rock (32°27'N., 119°08'W.), awash, lies on the SE side of Cortes Bank and is marked by a lighted buoy. The sea usually breaks over this danger even in moderate weather. Several shallow shoal patches and a wreck, with a depth of 1m, lie in the vicinity of this rock.

The current setting in the vicinity of Cortes Bank is variable in direction and attains a rate of 1 to 2 knots.

Caution.—A disused chemical munitions dumping area, the limits of which may best be seen on the chart, lies 60 miles SE of Cortes Bank.

1.2 Isla de Guadalupe (29°02'N., 118°17'W.) lies about 140 miles off the coast of Baja California and is under the sovereignty of Mexico. It is about 20 miles long, 7 miles wide, and very radar conspicuous.

The island consists of a chain of high, volcanic mountain ridges which rises to a height of 1,295m near its N end. The shores are high, bold, and rugged.

The S part of the island is barren, but there are fertile valleys and trees in the N part. The mountain peaks are obscured by clouds for the greater part of the year, but when visible, they can be seen at distances of up to 60 miles. When viewed from the E, the S side of the island appears lower than the N side. The coasts generally consist of rocky bluffs with detached rocks fronting some of them.

Two high and prominent islets lie within 2 miles S of the SW end of the island. Elsewhere, the other islets found fringing the coasts are very small.

Punta del Norte, off which discolored water has been observed, is the N extremity of the island.

Anchorage can be taken by small craft close inshore within a small cove lying on the E side of Isla de Guadalupe, 1.5 miles S of Punta del Norte. The bottom consists of gravel with no weeds. This anchorage is not exposed to the violent winds that descend from the hills at the other roadsteads. A light is shown from a metal pyramid, 12m high, standing in the vicinity of this cove.

Anchorage can be taken within a cove lying on the W side of the island, 6 miles N of its SW extremity. However, this cove is exposed to the heavy swell from the NW and is not recommended. A light is shown from a metal tower, 12m high, standing on the headland at the N side of this cove. Anchorage can also be taken within a cove lying on the S coast of the island, 1 mile E of its SW extremity. A light is shown from a metal pyramid, 12m high, standing in the vicinity of the W side of this cove.

Rocas Alijos (Escollos Alijos) (24°58'N., 115°46'W.), a dangerous group of above and below-water rocks, lies about 190 miles W of Cabo San Lazaro. The group consists of three principal rocks and numerous smaller ones which, when seen from a distance, give the appearance of a ship under sail. South Rock, the largest of the group, is 34m high. Vessels should give this danger a wide berth.

Rosa Bank (26°13'N., 115°00'W.), with a least depth of 502m, lies about 83 miles NNE of Rocas Alijos.

1.3 Islas Revillagigedo, a group of four islands, consists of Isla Socorro, Isla San Benedicto, Isla Clarion, and Isla Roca Partida. These islands, which are under the sovereignty of Mexico, are all formed by volcanic origin. The current in the vicinity of the islands usually sets in a S direction and attains a rate of 0.5 to 1 knot.

Isla Socorro (18°48'N., 110°59'W.), the largest island of the group, rises abruptly from the sea to a summit, 1,130m high. When viewed from seaward, this island has a barren and desolate appearance. Its surface is broken by furrows, small craters, and numerous ravines. The island is covered by a dense growth of cactus and sage with some grass, but the vegetation in general is of a low order. There are lava outcrops in places and lava lines the walls of many of the ravines.

Cabo Regla, the S extremity of the island, consists of a rocky bluff which is surmounted by a hill, 76m high. A small cove, with a rocky beach, lies about 0.5 mile E of the point and a village, with a church, stands on its W side. Two beacons form a range which leads to a boat landing at the head of the cove.

Bahia Braithwaite, entered 0.5 mile NE of the small cove, provides sheltered anchorage, from all except S and E winds, during December to June. Vessels can anchor in depths of 18 to 20m, sand and shell with rock in places, about 0.3 mile offshore, with the highest peak of the island bearing 335°. This bay can be identified by a rocky beach at its head.

Bahia Cornwallis, entered NW of Cabo Regla, provides shelter from June to December, but vessels must anchor close inshore. The anchorage lies off the first of two white coral beaches to the W of Cabo Regla. Large vessels can anchor in a depth of 15m within Caleta Binner, a cove, which lies in the SE part of the bay.

Ensenada Grayson (Caleta Grayson), an inlet, lies 3 miles NW of Cabo Regla and is the location of a freshwater spring.

The site is marked by the letter W over an inverted arrow cut into the face of the cliff. Several shallow rocks lie in the approach to this inlet.

Cabo Pearce, the E extremity of Isla Socorro, is dominated by a tableland which stands about 1 mile inland and is 305m high. It is reported that volcanic activity has formed new shoals in this vicinity and towards Bahia Braithwaite, the rock-fringed E extremity of the island. Vessels should navigate with caution.

Cabo Middleton, the N extremity of the island, consists of a low peninsula which is connected to the shore by a neck of sand. Rock Islets, two detached above-water rocks, lie about 1 mile offshore, 1 mile ENE of this point. It is reported that breakers have been sighted extending up to about 0.8 mile W from these rocks.

Anchorage can be taken by small craft within a deep and sheltered bight located at the E side of the cape. A bight located at the W side should be avoided due to several detached rocks lying in the entrance.

Cape Henslow, located 5 miles SW of Cabo Middleton, is the outer extremity of a small peninsula. This cape consists of vertical cliffs, 30m high. Oneal Rock (Piedra Oneal), steep-to and 13m high, lies about 1 mile NNW of the cape and is marked by breakers on its NW and SE sides.

Punta Tosca, the W extremity of Isla Socorro, is located 2.3 miles S of Cape Henslow.

1.4 Isla San Benedicto (19°19'N., 110°49'W.), a barren and rocky island, lies 27 miles NNE of Isla Socorro and has two prominent peaks. The tallest peak is 297m high and rises near the S part of the island. When seen from a distance, these two peaks often appear as two distinct islets.

Good anchorage can be taken off a small shingle beach located about midway along the E side of the island.

Three small but high detached rocks lie within 0.2 mile of the W side of the island. A detached rock, with a least depth of 3m, lies about 0.8 mile W of the N extremity of the island.

A shoal, with a depth of 28m, was reported (1963) to lie about 15 miles N of Isla San Benedicto.

Isla Roca Partida (18°59'N., 112°04'W.), a barren and steep-to rock, is 33m high and lies 62 miles W of Isla Socorro. It consists of two white pinnacle rocks which are connected by a ridge, 6m high. When viewed from a distance, this rock resembles a jury-rigged vessel.

Isla Clarion (18°21'N., 114°44'W.), the W most island of the group, lies 214 miles W of Isla Socorro and has three prominent peaks. The W most and tallest peak is 335m high. The coasts are backed by perpendicular cliffs, 24 to 183m high, with the exception of the middle part of the S coast in the vicinity of the Bahia Azufre.

Roca Monumento, 61m high, lies 0.2 mile off the NW extremity of the island. This prominent rock is formed by a square base surmounted by a column which consists of alternate layers of red and white conglomerate.

A rocky shoal, with a least depth of 5.5m, was reported (1933) to lie about 0.8 mile NE of the rock. A detached rock, 7.6m high, lies about 0.2 mile offshore, 1.3 miles E of the rock.

Bahia Azufre (Sulphur Bay), indenting the S side of the island, provides shelter during N winds. Vessels should anchor

in a depth of 22m about 0.3 mile from the shore of this bay. A strong W set has been experienced at this anchorage. During moderate weather, boats can land on the sandy beach at the W side of this bay, but no attempt should be made to land elsewhere on the island.

A light is shown from a metal tower, 14m high, standing on the E entrance point of Bahia Azufre.

The section of coast between Roca Piramide, lying off the SE extremity of the island, and Bahia Azufre, is fronted by foul ground which extends up to 0.3 mile offshore in places and breaks.

A rock, with a depth of less than 1.8m, was reported (1958) to lie about 0.4 mile E of the NE extremity of Isla Clarion.

Shamada Seamount (16°53'N., 117°30'W.), with a depth of 28m, lies about 190 miles SW of Isla Clarion.

Ile Clipperton to Isla del Coco

1.5 Ile Clipperton (10°17'N., 109°13'W.), which is under the sovereignty of France, lies about 640 miles SSW of Cabo Corrientes (20°24'N., 105°43'W.). This dangerous atoll consists of a low coral ring of varying width which encloses a lagoon filled with stagnant water. Two openings that formerly led into the lagoon are now closed.

The atoll is mostly 1.5 to 4.5m high, but Rocher Clipperton, a prominent formation, is 20m high and rises on the SE side. From a distance, this rock resembles a sail, but on closer approach it has the appearance of an immense castle. A shoal, with a depth of 9m, is reported to lie about 1 mile WSW of this formation.

A derelict hut, with a mast, was reported (1976) to stand near the middle of the NE side of the atoll. A rock lies close offshore, about 0.5 mile E of this hut.

Soundings give little warning when approaching the atoll from any direction. A high, breaking surf pounds the coral reef that encircles the atoll and, at times, completely sweeps across it into the lagoon.

Anchorage can be taken in depths of 37 to 82m about 250m from the reef at the NE side of the atoll, with Rocher Clipperton bearing between 177° and 190°. The bottom is coral with good holding ground, but heavy squalls from between N and ENE are frequent and vessels at such times should be prepared to quickly leave this anchorage.

In the vicinity of the atoll, the flood current normally sets E and the ebb current sets W, but the strength and duration of these currents depends largely upon the wind.

1.6 Ville de Toulouse Rock (11°16'N., 116°44'W.), the existence of which is doubtful, was reported (1871) to lie about 450 miles W of Ile Clipperton. A vessel, with a draft of 4.6m, struck a sunken rock in this locality.

Oceana Bank (8°24'N., 115°25'W.) was reported (1871) to lie about 385 miles WSW of Ile Clipperton. It has a least depth of 115m and is marked by discolored water.

Germaine Bank (5°00'N., 107°35'W.), existence doubtful, was reported (1916) to lie 315 miles SSE of Ile Clipperton and to have a depth of 20m. Depths of 22m, 40m, and 109m, have been reported to lie 10 miles SSW, 10 miles NW, and 40 miles W, respectively, of this bank.

A shoal, with a depth of 10m, was reported to lie about 350 miles SSW of Oceana Bank in approximate position 2°49.0'N, 116°30.5'W.

1.7 Isla del Coco (Cocos Island) (5°32'N., 87°04'W.), which is designated a national park and is administered by Costa Rica, is about 4 miles long, 2 miles wide, and radar conspicuous. Cerro Iglesias, the summit, is 671m high and rises in the SW part of the island.

The coasts are fringed by numerous islets and rocks, which extend up to 0.8 mile offshore in places, and are indented by many small bays and coves. The shores are mostly formed by steep cliffs and a heavy surf usually breaks all around the island.

In the vicinity of the island, the ebb tidal current sets E and the flood current sets W, the latter being the weaker. The currents running off the island are strong and irregular, but generally set NE and attain rates of up to 2 knots.

A shoal, with a depth of 30m, was reported (1987) to lie about 10 miles NE of the island.

A rock, about 2m high, is reported (1947) to lie about 1 mile WSW of Cabo Dampier, the S extremity of the island. Islas

Dos Amigas, consisting of two islets, lies at the edge of the foul ground, 1.8 miles WNW of Cabo Dampier.

Bahia de Chatham (5°33'N., 87°03'W.), located on the NE side of the island, is surrounded by high cliffs. Foul ground extends up to about 0.3 mile seaward from the head of the bay. Isote Ulloa, 56m high, lies 0.3 mile E of Punta Pacheco, the E entrance point of the bay. Vessels can anchor during good weather in a depth of 26m with this islet bearing 119° and well open of Punta Pacheco. Vessels can also anchor in a depth of 13m about 300m off the SE shore of the bay. The bottom is coral and sand with poor holding ground and the anchorage is unsafe with onshore winds.

Bahia de Wafer, located on the NW side of the island, is mostly foul and does not provide as good an anchorage as Bahia de Chatham. This bay has general depths of less than 5.5m extending almost to the line of the entrance points.

The N coast extending between Bahia de Chatham and Bahia de Wafer is backed by high, steep cliffs. Isla Manuelita, 104m high, lies close N of Punta Agujas, the N extremity of the island.