

On March 27th the solitary island of Ascension was in sight, rising alone in the midst of the vast Atlantic. When about eight miles distant, we sounded and dredged in 425 fathoms, getting a good supply of mud, echini, coral, &c. A heavy squall of rain set in, which detained us for a short time; after which we proceeded towards the land, and later in the day came to anchor off the south or lee side of the island. The island as seen from the ship has a barren aspect, although warmed by the light colour of the sand. It was taken possession of by the British in 1815, and is about nine miles in length from east to west, and five or six miles from north to south.

The surface of the land consists of ridges of naked rock, hills of clinkers and cinders, and plains of ashes, dust, and lava. Just abreast of the anchorage is a somewhat level, cleared space, where are situated the buildings used as stores and workshops, a small fort, a pretty little church, and the hospitals. Barracks and scattered residences of the naval officials complete the group. The garrison is at present under the command of Captain J. W. East, R.N.; man-of-war routine and discipline are carried out in every department as if on board ship; the island is under the direction of the Admiralty, and used as a depot for stores for vessels employed on this part of the West African Station. The hills of Ascension are very numerous. The most elevated