

thirty feet, seven fathoms (hard coral), being at the edge of a nearly perpendicular shelf; thence to the shore, the bottom was uneven, decreasing to four, three, and two fathoms, until a second or upper coral shelf rose, over which the water at high tide flowed. This extended to where the beach is composed of broken coral and shells, and arose on a gentle declivity to ten feet high.

The Peacock sounded within three quarters of a mile from the southern point of the island: at three hundred and fifty fathoms, the lead brought up for a moment, and then again descended to six hundred fathoms without reaching bottom. When it was hauled up, it had a small piece of white and another of *red* coral attached to it. The west side of the island is a bare reef, over which the surf breaks violently. There is no opening or entrance to the lagoon.

For the purpose of surveying the island, the Peacock and Flying-Fish took the west side, while the Vincennes and Porpoise kept on the east. Boats were lowered and sent on shore for the purpose of landing; several of the officers and naturalists succeeded in reaching the beach, (swimming through the surf,) where they remained about two hours making collections.

I saw some natives, five men and two women, and endeavoured to hold communication with them. The former were armed with long spears. They were cautiously watching our movements; and after the boats had left, they were seen examining the beach for articles that might have been dropped. Every inducement was held out to them to approach my boat, but without success; and we were obliged to return on board for the night, not having succeeded in finishing the survey. Wishing to communicate with the natives, and effect a landing, we lay-to, and by morning found that we had drifted off from the island eight miles to the northwest, and did not again reach our station until towards the afternoon. I then proceeded to the beach, taking with me as interpreter, John Sac, a New Zealander, who spoke the Tahitian language, determined, if possible, to enter into communication with the natives, and to land to make observations. Seventeen natives were now seen on the beach, armed with long spears and clubs, which they were brandishing with menacing attitudes, making motions for me to retire. As I approached them with a white flag flying, many more were seen in the bushes, probably in all about one hundred. I told John Sac to speak to them, which he did, and found he was understood. The only answer he could get from them was, several of them crying out at the same time, "Go to your own land; this belongs to us, and we do not want to have any thing to do with you." It was impossible to beach the boat without