



THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

EDWARD EVERETT HALE

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**THE
LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER
COLUMBUS**

FROM HIS OWN LETTERS AND JOURNALS

**BY
EDWARD EVERETT HALE**

The Life of Christopher Columbus By Edward Everett Hale.

This edition was created and published by Global Grey

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APPENDIX A

(The following passages, from Admiral Fox's report, give his reasons for believing that Samana, or Atwood's Key, is the island where Columbus first touched land. The interest which attaches to this subject at the moment of the centennial, when many voyages will be made by persons following Columbus, induces me to copy Admiral Fox's reasonings in detail. I believe his conclusion to be correct.)

This method of applying Columbus's words in detail to refute each of the alleged tracks, and the study that I gave to the subject in the winter of 1878-79 in the Bahamas, which has been familiar cruising ground to me, has resulted in the selection of Samana or Atwood's Key for the first landing place.

It is a little island 8.8 miles east and west; 1.6 extreme breadth, and averaging 1.2 north and south. It has 8.6 square miles. The east end is in latitude 23 degrees 5' N.; longitude 73 degrees 37' west of Greenwich. The reef on which it lies is 15 by 2 1/2 miles.

On the southeast this reef stretches half a mile from the land, on the east four miles, on the west two, along the north shore one-quarter to one-half mile, and on the southwest scarcely one-quarter. Turk is smaller than Samana, and Cat very much larger.

The selection of two so unlike in size show that dimension has not been considered essential in choosing an island for the first landfall.¹⁹

The island is now uninhabited, but arrow heads and stone hatchets are sometimes found; and in places there are piles of stones supposed to have been made by the aborigines. Most of the growth is scrubby, with a few scattered trees.

¹⁹ I am indebted to T. J. McLain, Esq., United States consul at Nassau, for the following information given to him by the captains of this port, who visit Samana or Atwood's Key. The sub-sketch on this chart is substantially correct: Good water is only obtained by sinking wells. The two keys to the east are covered with guano; white boobies hold the larger one, and black boobies the other; neither intermingles.

