



"So long as you get enough."

EDUCATION

The Pitcairn dialect

The dialect of Pitcairn is a mixture of English and Tahitian, with the former naturally predominating as most of the island's contact is with the English-speaking world and education is in English.

With visitors a softly slurred English is spoken which is perfectly comprehensible, but among themselves the islanders tend to lapse into a dialect which at times is hard to understand. Apart from the two tongues that came to Pitcairn when it was settled in 1790, a local idiom, particularly in place names, which is part of the island's history, has developed so that a conversation may be studded with bewildering references to John Catch a Cow; Where Tom Off; Father's Block; Timiti's Crack; Up in Ti; Six Feet; and Jinny's Bread.

Some of the more common phrases in use, which give an idea of the form of dialect, are:

<i>Wut a way you?</i>	How are you?
<i>I gled fo meet you.</i>	I am glad to meet you.
<i>Humuch people levan on Pitkern?</i>	How many people live on Pitcairn?
<i>Humuch shep corl ya?</i>	How often do ships call?
<i>Wut wekle groos ana Pitkern?</i>	What food grows on Pitcairn?

Schooling

The story of education on Pitcairn Island was begun by John Adams in the early years of the nineteenth century when, from the Bounty Bible and a prayer-book, he taught the first generation of children to read. In 1823, John Buffet, a volunteer off a whaling ship, remained behind as instructor, and in 1828 he was joined by George Hunn Nobbs, who assumed the triple rôle of pastor, surgeon and teacher, first on Pitcairn and later on Norfolk Island.

After the return from Norfolk Island in 1864, Simon Young, a descendant of one of the mutineers, and his daughter Rosalind kept a simple education alive until, in the last decade of the century, the school came under the guidance of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Between 1917 and 1938, when the Church again appointed a resident pastor, the academic side of the school was once again left to the islanders. In 1948 Government formally assumed responsibility.

The Education Officer, as he is commonly called, is appointed by the Governor in consultation with the New Zealand Department of Education which, except during 1958 and 1959, has courteously made available the services of qualified teachers for tours of duty of two years. In the management of the school the Education Officer is assisted by a committee consisting of the Island Magistrate as Chairman, and two members appointed by the Island Council and the Island Church. Legislation first introduced in 1838 provides for the compulsory attendance of children between the ages of 5 and 15 and for a minimum five-hour day for 380 half-days a year. The timetable has to be approved by the Governor. Examinations are conducted by the Education Officer, and the Governor may prescribe external examinations and arrange for inspection.



The school at Pitcairn Island.

The school and the teacher's residence are of timber and iron construction and were completed in 1950. The equipment is modern and includes a 240v. lighting plant, a film projector, piano, record player, tape recorder, sewing machines, typewriters and a wide range of tools for technical training. The school library is kept well stocked.

The average attendance at the school in the early nineteen-fifties was 20 pupils, increasing to 28 in 1959 and 36 in 1962. Since then the roll has gradually decreased and in 1981 there were less than ten pupils.

The school provides primary education based on the New Zealand syllabus and practical training is given in home studies, commercial practice and typewriting. Correspondence courses in post-primary education were introduced in 1957, and overseas secondary education is encouraged by the grant of bursaries.

The simple pattern of education on Pitcairn is not expected to change much. The island is likely to remain a land of smallholders and handicraft traders; the population will probably remain static, or continue to decline; and the cultural demand, at least for some time to come, seems destined to stay on the level of an isolated coastal village in a large country. Within these limitations and the simplicity of the basic pattern of life, continuity in some essential services must be provided for and it is towards this end that policy is directed.

In particular, the island has a continuing need for women with nursing, midwifery and infant-welfare experience; for men with practical training in mechanical, building, radio and agricultural technology; for local-government officials; and for adequate teaching staff. If the education system can produce men and women for such posts it will assist social improvement, but it will create problems of its own for, besides the probable departure of students seeking success overseas, even a small sub-professional and technical class will have to be so assimilated into the community that the social organization remains balanced and stable.

HEALTH

The general standard of health has been no problem on Pitcairn since, in the early days of settlement, the patriarchal John Adams stamped traditions of justice, moral rectitude and social solidarity on his flock.

For a period of thirty-five years after 1790, when the mutineers landed at Pitcairn, the island was for all practical purposes completely isolated and, after the Tahitian interlude of 1831, it was succeeded by a shorter term of incomplete isolation which ended with the migration to Norfolk Island in 1856. Following the re-occupation of Pitcairn in 1864 there was again a period of partial isolation, terminated by the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914, since when Pitcairn has been regularly visited by ships on the New Zealand run.

The difficulty of landing on the island and the exposed anchorage, which is suitable only for small vessels, reinforced its isolation, since it is evident from the records that brief calls only were the rule. The islanders had, therefore, a natural protection against some of the vice and disease that played havoc elsewhere in the Pacific, although even casual contact was sufficient to introduce them to common infectious ailments such as



colds and influenza. Proof of the value of this isolation is afforded by the experience of the islanders during their short stay in Tahiti in 1831, when 17 out of a total number of 87 succumbed to disease.

Throughout the 190 years of occupation there has been no resident doctor on Pitcairn Island nor, so far as can be traced, was there a nurse until an appointment was made in 1934 in co-operation with the Australasian Union Conference of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Since 1934 this co-operation has continued and it is now the usual practice for the wife of the resident Pastor to be a trained nurse. If local students with sufficient basic education become available consideration will again be given to the training of nurses, which was unsuccessfully attempted in the nineteen-forties.

Occasionally, the assistance of surgeons on passing ships is sought. Occasionally also, a visiting medical officer is able to spend a short time on the island, and reports by H.M.S. *Warrior* and the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition in 1957 commented favourably on the general state of health but noted a need for dental care. In 1962 the surgeon of the Dutch ship, *Willem Ruys*, made an X-ray survey of the population and, by arrangement with the Post-graduate Medical Committee of the University of Auckland, the Administration sent a doctor to the island for a month's visit.

More recently, Medical and Dental Officers have made official visits to Pitcairn from New Zealand to renew vaccinations, to provide full physical examinations, to test eyesight and provide spectacles as necessary, to undertake remedial and preventive dental work, to perform minor surgical operations and to advise on health matters generally. The last such visit was in June 1982.



From time to time surgical cases are evacuated to New Zealand, expenses being met by government loan or grant when necessary. The population has been immunized against poliomyelitis.

Nutrition

The diet of the Pitcairn Islander is comprehensive but excessive in carbohydrate. Two meals a day are normally eaten: breakfast about 10 a.m., and tea, at irregular hours, when the day's work is finished. The morning meal is often simple, consisting of soup and bread washed down with cold water or a sweetened hot drink. The evening meal is better prepared and more varied; the menu may include fish, chicken, goat or tinned meat and *pillhai*, a cooked vegetable dish prepared from sweet potatoes, yam, taro, banana or pumpkin and coconut milk.

Of the other main foods manioc is the most important, but there is a good seasonal supply of the more common vegetables of temperate lands, supplemented by varieties of bean that are available throughout most of the year. Citrus fruit, papaya, mangoes, sugar cane, pineapples, watermelons and guava are also available, but they tend to be accessories to the main diet rather than an integral part of it. Locally grown foods are supplemented by flour, milk, sugar, butter, eggs and a variety of tinned goods imported from either Britain or New Zealand.

Although the diet is soft, and religious prohibitions tend to limit the intake of animal protein and fat, criticism of it must be tempered in view of the physique and health of the population, for, apart from early tooth decay, there is no evidence of dietary deficiency.

COMMUNICATIONS

On Pitcairn itself until 1964 there were no vehicles and the wheel as an aid to transport appeared only on the traditional wheelbarrow which, with an iron-shod wheel, stub runners and hooked handles, has been developed to cope with the steep terrain. In 1965 two tractors (one with a bulldozer blade) were introduced and the islanders converted the former bush tracks into 6.4 km of mud roads suitable for light vehicles in fine weather. The making of the roads encouraged the import of vehicles and in 1974, in addition to the tractors, there were 34 light motor cycles and three Mini-Moke cars in use. Although distances on Pitcairn are never great the height of the island and its rugged terrain result in severe gradients, and power vehicles are very popular. The islanders can also communicate with each other by means of two multi-party telephone lines, the first of which joins together all Government officers and installations, and the second a majority of the homes of others.



The Pitcairn wheelbarrow.

Shipping

The early pattern of communication, after Folger's discovery of the community in 1808, was essentially one of irregular naval and merchant visits, although from the end of the last century several attempts were made to maintain a cutter for communication with Mangareva, some 490 km away in the French Gambier group. The lack of sufficient harbour facilities, however, brought each effort to failure and after the loss of the locally built *Messenger* off Pitcairn some seventy years ago, no further attempts were made.

In any case, the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 brought new life to the island's communications and the old connexion with neighbours, Tahiti in particular, was replaced by a new one with New Zealand. Now that the passenger services of the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Shaw Savill and Albion Company have been withdrawn, only cargo vessels plying between New Zealand and Panama make scheduled calls approximately three or four times per year, but other vessels from time to time break the trans-Pacific voyage at Pitcairn for a few hours. The frequency of visits has tended to fall in recent years, the record reading: 1972-48, 1973-36, 1974-27, 1975-43, 1976-34, 1977-30, 1978-26, 1979-24, 1980-27, 1981-23. Even so, in terms of communications Pitcairn is less isolated than many people think.

Landing at Bounty Bay

The boats of Pitcairn, reputedly made in the pattern of a boat sent to the island by Queen Victoria, are some 11 metres long with a 2.7 metre beam, and row fourteen oars, two at each thwart. With the decline of manpower the boats are no longer rowed but are engine powered.

From the ships that may lie up to 5 km off-shore the boats are brought to within reach of Bounty Bay, the indentation, for it is hardly even a cove, where Christian made his landing. There the engines are stopped until conditions for landing are favourable.

The channel is narrow and a left-hand sweep has to be made to the tiny harbour but, even on a calm day, surf pounds the rocks and the right moment for entry has to be chosen. Wave succeeds wave and the waiting boat rises on crest and falls in trough; then the moment comes and to the cry of "go ahead", the boat picks up speed and shoots with the wave into the channel. Standing in the stern, the coxswain heaves on the sweep till the boat comes round and, still at a good speed, she glides gracefully alongside the concrete jetty.

Within the last few years the landing has been much improved by blasting the rocks that marred the approaches, and the stub jetty has been extended to "Mummy" and "Daddy", two stable rocks further out in the bay, giving more turning room in the tiny basin and a little more shelter from the ocean swell. The western face, too, has been filled and grouted and the rough timber slide and wheezy winch that led to the shanty boat-house have been replaced by a modern installation. It was on the south-eastern bluff of the bay that H.M.S. *Bounty* was burned on 23 January 1790.



Outward Bound.

Telecommunications

Visual communication by lamp with passing ships was started by Mr Andrew Young, the former Island Secretary, in 1921, and in 1922 the Marconi Company, whose attention was attracted by Mr Young's experiments, presented a crystal receiver to the island. In 1926 a New Zealand radio enthusiast gave a small coil transmitter, and in 1938 two United States citizens installed transmitting and receiving equipment provided by private subscription.

In co-operation with the Navy Office, Wellington, regular communications were established in 1940 and improved in 1944, when Pitcairn became a meteorological station. In 1952 additional short-wave facilities were introduced, and during 1962 the complete re-building of the station was begun with financial assistance from the British Government. Until 1 April 1969, regular schedules were handled with Rarotonga in the Cook Islands at 1200 and 1815 hours GMT daily except Saturdays. Since 1 April 1969, the schedules have been handled with Suva in Fiji on 21804 kcs at 0200, 1815 and 2000 hours GMT daily except Saturdays.

Mr T. C. Christian, Radio Officer, also operates a Ham Radio Station VR6TC each Tuesday at 0500 and 2100 hours GMT.



Tom Christian, Radio Officer, works Government Radio.

Postal services

The post office on the island is open for one hour on Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and before the arrival and after the departure of ships making scheduled calls.

Until 1926 letters from Pitcairn franked "Posted on Pitcairn Island: no stamps available" were delivered free of charge in New Zealand and elsewhere. For the next fourteen years New Zealand stamps and rates were used, and on 15 October 1940, the first Pitcairn Island postage stamps, consisting of eight denominations, were issued. The current definitive issue was released on 12 September, 1977.

Issues since 1970 have been as follows—

1970	Flowers.	1977	Fifth definitive.
1970	Fish.	1978	Bounty Day.
1971	Polynesian.	1978	Coronation Anniversary.
1972	South Pacific Commission (25th anniversary).	1978	Development.
1972	Royal Silver Wedding.	1979	John Adams.
1973	Flowers.	1979	Engravings.
1973	Royal Wedding.	1979	Christmas.
1974	Shells.	1980	London 1980.
1974	U.P.U. Centenary.	1980	HM Queen Mother's 80th Birthday.
1974	Churchill Centenary.	1980	Handicrafts.
1975	\$1 Definitive.	1981	Scenic Views.
1975	Mailboats.	1981	Migration to Norfolk.
1975	Insects.	1981	Royal Wedding.
1976	U.S. Bicentenary.	1982	Fruit.
1977	Royal Silver Jubilee.	1982	21st Birthday HRH Princess of Wales.

ADMINISTRATION AND THE LAW

Pitcairn Island was brought within the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in 1898, and in 1952 the Pitcairn Island Order in Council transferred the responsibility for administration to the person of the Governor of Fiji, following separation of the offices of Governor and High Commissioner. When Fiji gained independence in 1971 the administration was transferred to Auckland within the jurisdiction of the British High Commissioner to New Zealand who conjointly holds office as Governor of Pitcairn.

By Ordinance No. 2 of 1952, the Pitcairn Island Government Regulations of 1940, which provide for local government by an elected Council and limited jurisdiction for an Island Court, were given the force of law under the new Order in Council, and the legislation was revised in 1964. The completed revision of the laws was effected in 1974. The Island Magistrate, two Councillors, the Chairman of the Internal Committee, the Island Secretary, three nominated members (one appointed by the Governor and two by the elected members), and two advisory members (one appointed by the Governor and one by the Council) constitute the Island Council, which is charged with the



Governor, Sir Richard Stratton (centre front), and Island Council.

management of internal affairs, and which normally meets in the first week of each month under the chairmanship of the Island Magistrate in whom are vested executive as well as judicial powers.

The Council has authority to enact rules of the nature of by-laws which must be notified to the Governor, in whom resides the power of revocation and alteration. In practice, it is rarely that the Council exercises its legislative functions without consulting the Governor beforehand and, when it does, alteration is usually confined to textual amendment to make the meaning and intention of the rules legally exact. An Internal Committee, consisting of the elected Chairman and other members appointed annually by the Council, is responsible for arranging and supervising the performance of the traditional public work for which all adult and able-bodied men are liable.

The qualifications required for voting are three years' residence and eighteen years of age, and candidates for the posts of Island Magistrate and Councillors must have had twenty-one years' and five years' residence on the island respectively. The electoral roll is prepared by the Island Secretary in December of each year and, except for the Island Magistrate, whose term of office is for three years, elections are held annually on Christmas Day.

The Island Secretary and other non-elected officials of the local government, including the Postmaster, Radio Officer and Police Officer, are appointed by the Governor, invariably after consultation with the Council. For the size of the population the number of official posts is large, but this diversification is traditional and in direct descent from the family type of organization bequeathed by John Adams. The principal holders of public offices from 1956-82 are listed in Appendix III.

To assist the local government in its duties the Education Officer holds the appointments of Government Adviser and local Auditor *ex officio*, in which rôles he is expected to advise when requested and to tender advice when the public good requires it. He attends sessions of the Island Council but has no voting powers.

The Island Court consists of the Island Magistrate and two Councillors. Its jurisdiction is limited to offences under the island code committed by, and civil actions between, residents of the island or which arise within territorial waters. The maximum punishment in criminal cases is a fine of \$50 or imprisonment on the island for 100 days, and in civil cases jurisdiction exists only if the amount in dispute does not exceed \$200 (or \$400 with the consent of all parties). The Island Magistrate has powers of summary jurisdiction in criminal cases when the penalty does not exceed a \$10 fine, and in civil cases where the amount in dispute does not exceed \$10. When the Court is sitting with Councillors the verdict is decided by their vote, the Island Magistrate exercising a deciding vote if the need arises. Sentence or judgment may be passed by the Island Magistrate only.

There is provision in the Revised Edition of the Laws for a Supreme Court of Pitcairn which can be constituted by the Governor as required and which also has jurisdiction in cases outside the competence of the Island Court. A Court subordinate to the Supreme Court but separate from the Island Court can also be similarly established.

In instances where there is no local law, the law of England is applied so far as circumstances permit.

Only two cases which resulted in a conviction and a fine have been tried before the Island Court in the last fifteen years.



Visiting doctor performs minor surgery in Dispensary.

Part III

THE OTHER ISLANDS

Henderson Island

HENDERSON ISLAND, which lies 169 km east-north-east of Pitcairn, was discovered by H.M.S. *Hercules* in 1819 and bears her master's name. A short time later the island was sighted by the American ship *Elizabeth*, by which name it was known to the Pitcairn Islanders when they first visited it in 1851.

Henderson is roughly rectangular in shape, being 7.3 km long and just over 4.8 km wide. Its coastline is steep except in the north, where a fringing reef runs in to a sandy beach and a narrow coastal plain covered with dense bush. Two boat passages are known: one in the middle of the north-coast reef, and the other, reputedly the better one, just off the beacon light, now extinguished, which was established on the north-west coast in 1948 by the Administration.

The centre of the island is a plateau of coral limestone, some 24 to 30 metres high which is covered with dense bush and rough coral outcrops. Patches of soil are rarely more than one metre deep; brackish water occurs in clefts and pools; and, except when the Pitcairn islanders pay their annual visit to collect *miro* wood for their carvings, it is the haunt of land crabs and of birds, including the flightless chicken bird and a handsome parrot (*Vini stepheni*). Fish are plentiful on the reef.

A report from Pitcairn Island gives a description of the caves in the cliff face, which are a feature of the island—

The cave reached a height of 3.6 metres being some 6 metres wide at the base. After entering for about six metres the cave broke into three definite recesses. In one of these recesses could be seen what appeared to be a man-made trough with a slow trickle of water running into it from the rock face. In another recess I found a shaped fan-like shell which could possibly have been used as a spoon or fish scaler. Nearby lay a polished adze.

Near the entrance to the cave were excellent remains of ovens. Two large heating stones lay on top of a great deal of charcoal, mixed with soil and sand that had been blown in over the years. Great quantities of shells and breaking stones could be found underneath the dirt in the cave.

This account also included a reference to the skeletons which from time to time are re-discovered on Henderson Island. An examination of specimens in Suva, Fiji, in 1959, supports the view that they are of recent origin, and probably the remains of shipwrecked mariners of the last century. There may also be remains of earlier inhabitants, but no thorough investigation of Henderson is known to have been made.

In 1957 an American citizen and his chimpanzee were put ashore at Henderson from a yacht, and the story received much publicity in the world press. It is not known whether the chicken that the castaway claimed he lived on was the flightless bird or tinned!

Occasionally, a calling steamer picks up two of the long-boats at Pitcairn and takes perhaps 21 islanders with their provisions to Henderson, where three or four days are

spent in fishing and cutting *miro* wood. The return journey of the boats, under their own power, may take from 18 to 24 hours.

Oeno Island

Oeno Island is about 120 km north-west of Pitcairn and takes its name from an American whaler which sighted it in 1824. It is a low atoll of over 3.2 km diameter with a strip of land on the western reef some 2.7 km long and less than 1 km wide. The fringing reef is entered at the north and the shallow lagoon is studded with coral heads. Brackish water is to be found by digging and the vegetation is of the usual coral atoll type with coconuts, including some planted by the Pitcairners, and pandanus growing well.

The following account of a Pitcairner's visit is based on the record of an eyewitness, Roy Clark, for many years Pitcairn's postmaster. In the late afternoon of 3 January 1961, three boats crowded with 73 men, women and children left Bounty Bay for Oeno Island, "grounding on its white sands at 11 a.m. the following day"—

I see groups of women and children, overcome with sea-sickness, lying on the sand beneath cabbage trees (*Messerschmidea argentea*), languid and weak, glad to be free from the rocking and tossing of the boats during the night and early morning. I recollect the signs of thankfulness and gratefulness on their faces as they relaxed and drank sweet water from the young coconuts so refreshing and cool.

For the nine day's stay the Pitcairners lived in tents, very necessary when tropical squalls may interfere with holiday making, fishing, the hunt for coral and shells and the collection of pandanus leaves for basket weaving.

I see men rushing to the water's edge with spear and line to kill sharks that had ventured in close to the sand—men all tense with determination and excitement to kill their hated enemies.

I see lovers pairing off together, and early morning fishermen fishing from the beach in the moonlight; the men returning home to camp after a few hours on the reef with spear and gun and dumping their baskets of fish on the sands by the hundreds, proud and jubilant of their day's catch.

Swimmers in the lagoon all hours of the day; children becoming as black as natives of other Polynesian islands.

On the Sabbath, the Church service is "held beneath the trees with Pastor using as a pulpit some biscuit tins and the congregation sitting on the sand carpeted with leaves".

The working holiday comes to its end when the boats are loaded for home. Then there is the pull through the passage to the open sea; setting sail; perhaps further squalls and a weary but happy landfall next morning at Bounty Bay.

The fish, dried and salted, is taken home to Pitcairn along with the bundles of leaves that will be woven, for, even if it is primarily a holiday, the visit to Oeno also has its uses.

Ducie Island

When Captain Edwards of H.M.S. *Pandora* was on his mission to find the Bounty mutineers in 1791 he sighted Ducie Island but not Pitcairn, which lay only 470 km to the west. Ducie, which is not visited by the islanders, is a reef-ringed atoll only 6 metres above sea-level. The land surrounding the lagoon is covered at the edges by fine coral; there are few trees, no undergrowth, and very little soil. There is no fresh water. The island is a nesting place for several varieties of Pacific birds; rats and lizards are the only other known inhabitants. The sharks at Ducie Island are said to be extremely dangerous, in contrast to those off Pitcairn where bathing is safe.

Part IV

FROM THE PEN OF ROY P. CLARK

LINCOLN CLARK was a crew member of the clipper "Acadia" which was wrecked on Ducie Island on June 5th, 1881, while sailing from San Francisco to Cork, Ireland. After a thirteen day voyage in the ship's boats the crew found refuge on Pitcairn where they spent eight months before gaining passage back to San Francisco on a passing ship. One, Phillip Coffin, remained on Pitcairn where he married and raised a large family.

Sixteen years after arriving back in the United States incidents so shaped the life of Lincoln Clark that it became possible for him to re-visit Pitcairn. On December 13th, 1909, Lincoln returned to the island accompanied by his sixteen year old son, Roy, to settle permanently.

In 1913 Roy married Hyacinth May, daughter of his father's old shipmate, Phillip Coffin. This happy union continued until May's death in 1974. Roy died in May, 1980.

During his time on Pitcairn Roy acted as school teacher, Postmaster and Church Elder. He was widely read, a man of simple and upright character, a true gentleman. Parts of his writings have been published in several books and magazines, particularly those dealing with philately.

The following excerpts are from his collected stories.

Boating Experiences recorded in 1950

Living as they do in the great Pacific Ocean on an enormous rock rising abruptly from the sea, it is natural that Pitcairners should be hardy, bold and intrepid sailors. From young to old, the conversations that captivate and thrill them are those relating to sea experiences with their large open longboats.

The longboats, which measure from thirty-six to thirty-seven feet in length, with a beam of roughly nine feet, are made by the islanders from island timber except for planking which is obtained from passing ships. Although the boats are not built in exact symmetrical proportions they are staunch and strong enough to withstand rough usage such as going alongside ships and in and out of our rock-bound harbour. Under sail and with a good stiff wind they are capable of speeds up to six or seven knots. Each boat pulls fourteen oars. Each of the five longboats has its own crew. Through the years the crews never change and indeed some crews have been together for as long as fifty years and more.

Numerous times in going and coming from passing ships the boats have met disaster, both in the passage and in the harbour. I have witnessed boats caught on the crest of huge waves and driven with incredible speed directly and uncontrollably onto the rocky shore.

Imagine the scene. A dark night when the waves are running high; the boats, just returned from a passing steamer, are loaded with provisions. Holding torch flares made from the candle-nut tree, most of the islanders have gathered at the Landing place. It matters not the hour, for when the seas are high and there is danger for the boats young and old assemble at the Landing to be of assistance if needed. Lanterns are placed at strategic points along the rim of the harbour and the anxious community line the sandy beach, the men stripped to the waist and the women with dresses adjusted high above knees to give freedom of movement in any emergency. The children are perched on high rocks well out of reach of the incoming seas.

The inner harbour is white with foam and the heavy seas, sweeping over the rocks, swish and roar with deafening sound. There is dread upon the watchers for they realise the danger both to boats and crews in their effort to land. The fitful glare of the torches casts fantastic shadows in the background of trees and boulders and feebly illumines the turmoil of churning waters.

The first boat prepares to come in. Faintly above the roar of the waves the voices of captain and crew can be heard. The helmsman is encouraging the crew and giving orders; he appoints one of his men to "lookout behind". Now all is ready. The helmsman is outlined against the blackness of the night. He stands, feet apart, steadying himself and grasping the tiller with accustomed skill, moving it first to starboard then to port, more from tense excitement than from necessity, for as yet the boat has not come to the position of actually entering the passage. He is awaiting the call of his "lookout man" to "pull ahead".

Now out from the darkness into the dim light of the harbour we can see the first boat coming in. Perhaps the undertow prevails against the crew's effort, because before they can make the shelter of the harbour an immense wave appears. The crew see their danger and shout warnings to the captain. He gives orders to "Hold the boat!" The oars are kept in the water and backed. It is too late. The effort is useless as they are caught in the curve and downward rushing of the wave and carried with breath-taking speed through the opening—straight for the rocks. Will the steersman be able to control the boat and change its direction to head in for the beach and welcome sand? No, his efforts are in vain. The stern rises; the rudder becomes useless. The head dips low in the water and the boat is carried on to the rocks with a bumping scratching sound. With the impact the men are thrown forward off the thwarts, the oars slide into the water and an inrush of waves fills the boat. All is confusion. Jumping over the sides, the men steady the boat while others from shore clamber in to save what they can of cargo and private belongings not already washed overboard. These are handed to helpers ready to receive them until finally the boat, freed from its burden and somewhat lightened, is easier to manage. Ropes are now used to haul it back into deeper water so that it can be brought to safety and not prove a hindrance to the entry of the two other boats. Men and women are called from the water where they have been searching for flotsam and now once again all stand on the beach awaiting the signal to be given for the remaining boats to enter the passage.

Imagine the anxiety of the two crews at sea, witnessing in the dim lights of the harbour and through the spray of heavy seas all that has happened ashore. They have

heard the shouts of orders given and have seen the boat propelled on to the rocks by the heavy seas. Now it is their turn. Slowly making its way to the entrance the first of the remaining boats enters the passage and, without mishap, touches the beach after riding in defiant victory over the wild waters. So also with the last boat, safely home.

Everyone gathers, talking about the experience of the first boat. Now that all danger is over there is much rejoicing and the scene changes from one of consternation and panic to laughter and triumph because once again man has won out against the sea. With high spirits, for as much as no one was seriously hurt, the men examine the damaged boat and find it to be in need of extensive repairs, but with time and effort these will be effected.

Man does not always triumph, however, I recall in vivid detail an incident which occurred a few years ago. It was the first, and so far the only, fatal boating mishap of the present generation and is rarely referred to because of its sad results.

The harbour at the Landing place was a turmoil of angry seas. Waves were of such tremendous force and violence that it seemed impossible that any boat's crew could ever manage to row through and over them, yet before the day was over an attempt was made to leave Bounty Bay because of the arrival of two steamers, one from Panama and the other from New Zealand. The bravest of the island men hastened to the Landing and hauled down into the harbour two of the island's five boats. What follows shows the fearlessness of those two crews.

In the harbour several men held the boats steady to prevent them being dashed upon the rocks. Others of keen judgment stood on a high eminence overlooking the sea as the great combers rolled into the harbour. They waited tensely for the first possible opportunity when, for a few moments, the waves would subside sufficiently for the boat to pull through the channel and reach the open sea. After long agonizing suspense the signal was given to "Pull ahead!" The men in the water holding the boats pushed off the first one. Naked to the waist, the crew bent to their oars with every muscle tense. Their faces expressed fearless determination to get the boat through the passage and into open water or die in the effort.

The scene is as clear to my mind now as if it happened yesterday. The first boat safely reached the open sea and so did the second, but what a narrow escape it had! Rearing precariously on the crest of a mighty surge and seemingly suspended in mid-air as the huge swell rose up higher and higher, the boat was carried to the very peak when, with a terrible roar, the wave collapsed. For what seemed endless moments the boat balanced itself on the summit. Finally the boat settled on the outward side of the heavy comber and was safe, relieving the torment of suspense and anxiety which enveloped those watching from the Landing.

The men remaining ashore thought that if two boats and their crews were successful in making the open sea another attempt could surely be made. Whether from excitement or selfishness, or even sheer bravado, we shall never know, but a third boat was hauled from its shelter and into the harbour. Scrambling in with all haste the crew made ready to accompany the other two boats. There was the same unbearable time of waiting for the signal from the "lookout man" to "Pull ahead!"

But the man selected to send forth the third boat made an error of judgment. A ponderous wave loomed up unexpectedly, caught the boat and sent it with unbelievable speed on to the rocks. Fortunately it did not capsize and was saved from total destruction by the men and women still ashore.

Because of a slight injury I was not able to assist in saving crew and boat and as best I could I made my way from the scene of the disaster to the beach. Half way there I heard the groaning of a man in great pain. He was unable to move from where he had been washed ashore. Shortly afterwards I noticed he was further up the beach and receiving attention.

The seas rose higher with increasing fury. Huge waves swept over large boulders that in times past had fallen from the Landing Point and now form a partial breakwater sheltering the harbour. The boat, in the turbulent waters of even this shelter, became unmanageable and it was now dangerous even to enter the water to secure it with ropes. Angry pounding seas forced the craft from one end of the beach to the other. After many attempts to save it we were in despair as to what we should do next, when an extra large wave came over the breakwater, took the boat up bodily and set it down half way up on the landing slide. Seeing an opportunity to haul it higher on the skid, the men rushed to the sides of the boat. It all happened in an instant of time. As he neared the boat one of the men slipped on the skid, fell in the water and was lost to sight under the boat. An inrush of water lifted the boat from the slide and as it settled down its keel landed on this man's back breaking it instantly.

There was one on the inclined boat ramp, an old man, who observed this sad accident and went to his aid. At this very moment, unseen by the old man, another large sea swept over the breakwater and, as he approached, the force of water threw him against the boat then hurled him on to some rocks half hidden in the harbour. He was dragged from the water but before aid could be administered his heart beats ceased.

Here was a company of islanders and among them neither doctor nor nurse. Faces around me showed bewilderment. Distracted and distraught with fear and apprehension, the people knew not what to do. One man in one of the boat shelters seriously hurt, and another man dead.

The men out at sea were helpless to offer assistance and realised it was impossible for them to return to shore. With heavy hearts they left Bounty Bay and made their way to the oncoming steamer, the one from Panama heading in for land, and the other on the opposite side of the island as yet unseen by the two boats. The islanders have an unwritten law never to let a passing steamer go by without putting forth every effort to board it, and very few captains calling at the island have been disappointed because of inclement weather and heavy seas at the Landing.

After visiting the two steamers the boats met again. Tremendous swells still rolled in at Bounty Bay so there was no recourse but to pull to the south west point of land to our emergency harbour, a small inlet of water not more than sixty feet long by twenty wide. There the crews took shelter until the weather settled sufficiently to enable them to bring the boats back to Bounty Bay. On gaining this emergency landing some of the men were left to take care of the boats while the others hastened home overland to find out what had happened to the other boat and its crew.

They found the old man dead. The young man with the broken back, who had been carried on a makeshift stretcher up the steep pathway to his home in the village, lived only a few hours.

Unusual Sea Conditions

My first intimation of danger—of impending disaster—came when Vi emerged, breathless, at the top of the dark slippery path from the Landing. Exhausted by the

hurried climb, she tried to explain to me that the seas at the Landing were tremendous, washing lumber and drums of cement into the harbour and that it was not safe for the boats to come in: three boats having gone out late in the afternoon to meet a steamer that called in.

I hastened over to the Edge, from which there was a good view of the Landing. In the hazy glow of lanterns I noticed that the tide was exceedingly low, far more so than any islanders had ever seen. Vi, in her excitement, shouted that she was going to phone the schoolmaster and tell him to signal the boats by morse of the danger. A few women folk at the Edge now sensed that disaster was imminent if the boats did come in to the harbour. They shouted with high-pitched voices to warn the crews of conditions at the Landing, but above the roar of the waves breaking on the rocks their voices were not heard. The first boat made ready to enter in through the passage. This was just before the time I noticed that there was hardly any water in the harbour. The water had all been sucked out to sea by the freak wave that had taken the lumber and cement barrels high on to the boat ramp.

The pathway to the Landing from the Edge was muddy and slippery because of heavy squalls of rain during the day but in spite of this every man remaining ashore as well as the women and children made all haste to the Landing, anticipating trouble.

I managed to reach the Landing as one of the boats came in the passage. The scene was phenomenal. Heavy seas in huge waves had swept two remaining long boats and several canoes from their houses. At this time the water in the harbour was so low it was awesome to behold, and this of itself showed that something unusual was happening.

As the first boat came in and rested on the sandy beach there was an unearthly calm. Suddenly a flood of waters broke over the rocks and with a hiss and roar spilt down into the harbour, tossing the heavily laden longboat like a cork from one end of the harbour to the other.

Fortunately one of the crew managed to throw a line ashore and somehow, when the waters subsided, we managed to haul the boat toward the ramp leading to the boat houses. More large seas came rolling over the rocks and into the harbour. The women, like true sailors, gave every possible assistance and without their help the men could not have succeeded in hauling the boat to safety.

As soon as the first boat was secured the wireless operator signalled the other two boats not to come in but the message, sent by torch, was not seen. Shortly afterwards the dim form of the second boat was seen coming in through the angry passage. At this time pandemonium broke loose. Two or three of the women became hysterical. Death seemed to be lurking in the semi-darkness. Tidal waves were sweeping over the rocks and into the harbour for the second time. There were shrieks, yells and warnings from everyone. The inrush of waves propelled the boat on to the beach. One man was catapulted from the boat into the raging waters. We never expected to see him again but by some miracle he managed to swim ashore. Other waves took the boat with such force that it was thrown hard against one of the boat houses and, as it landed, two men were painfully pressed against the post of the house and just missed being crushed to death.

That was all. The seas seemed to settle down to normal. The third boat did not attempt to come ashore but waited outside in Bounty Bay until daylight when it safely negotiated the passage.

This was one of three occasions in living memory when unusual sea conditions at Pitcairn have shown the effect of possible underwater disturbances in some unknown locality.

A Catastrophic Cloudburst

The fifteenth of May 1939 saw the island's worst rain deluge in five generations. Heavy rain had been falling for some time. Donning a good serviceable raincoat I endeavoured to prevent my garden and other property from being inundated by the rivulets of water that came from the land and drains higher up the hill but all my efforts were in vain, for no sooner had I begun to dig a trench than the rush of water filled it, overflowed and went on to do its destructive work.

I gave up in despair and hastened to other parts of the village to find out if my neighbours were in the same difficulties as myself and to lend a helping hand if I could be of assistance. The owner of one home was in utter desperation to know how to cope with the situation. His out-kitchen was flooded and his house in danger of the same fate for the rush of water coming down from sloping land above his house was already level with the flooring. He showed me his vegetable garden which was in a more pitiful plight than my own; all was ruined. He thanked me for my offer to assist him but said that nothing more could be done than what he was able to do with the aid of his two boys, so I bent my head to the wind and rain and, only half seeing my way, crossed the main pathway leading to the Edge. Within me was an intuitive feeling of disaster at the Landing that urged me on with all speed. The pathways and valleys were turned into streams that roared and hissed on to the sea carrying tons of soil with them.

When I arrived at the Edge in the dimness of the early dawn the view of the Landing and Bounty Bay, constantly obscured by sheets of blinding wind-driven rain, was a sight that took my breath away. Incredulous, I stood there watching, bracing myself against the fury of the wind. The panorama was confusing; frightening. It seemed that I watched the scene for hours but in reality it was only a few bewildered minutes while every detail was impressed upon my mind.

I beheld canoe houses dashed to pieces and carried on to the rocks where both canoes and houses piled up in a tangled mass of wood, earth, vegetation and boulders. On the beach, turned broadside to the sea and at the mercy of the waves, was one of our long-boats that had been washed from its shed down into the harbour. How the long-boat reached the harbour from the boathouse, a distance of several yards, without being dashed onto the rocks and broken up, remains a mystery. It seemed that an unseen power brought the boat from its shelter and placed it on the beach in pure devilment. The Landing pathway was obstructed by several landslides from five to seven feet deep.

Grasping the situation and the need for haste on my part to save the long-boat from going onto the rocks and being dashed to pieces, I turned from the scene and with all speed took the pathway to the village to reach the Court House and ring the alarm on the community bell. I wondered as I ran to the Public Square how long the boat had been on the beach. Was it already damaged beyond repair? Would I be too late to save the long-boat from going out to sea? My legs would not move fast enough. Passing the home of a captain of one of the longboats I told him the news and then hurried on to the bell. Peals of three intermittent rings brought all who could hear to the Court House to learn what had happened. Only a few heard the bell, but news spreads quickly on the island and in an incredibly short time every working man was hurrying to the Landing to save one of their much loved boats.

Part of the Landing pathway was impassable. Holding on to grass and roots, we had to slide down an embankment to reach the boat. A portion of the harbour was filled

with earth, stones and debris from the land slides. This extension of the little harbour was what saved the boat from being washed out to sea or on to the rocks.

Amidst general commotion and much excitement the boat was hauled to safety, the canoes rescued from the rocks and the other longboats attended to. All other work that could be done to bring a little order out of the chaos was accomplished as quickly as possible for fear of more landslides and perhaps loss of life. Two men narrowly missed certain death beneath an avalanche of mud, stones and silt. Great was our relief when we reached the Edge again.

Nearly every out-kitchen was flooded; cooking was almost an impossibility. Several vegetable gardens were ruined, cisterns broken, half the roofing of one house blown away to rest against another house several feet distant, breaking many window panes. Pathways in some parts of the island were obliterated. The landslides, beginning at some places in the highest parts of the island, swept everything before them into the sea. Coconut and orange trees by the score were lost. Hundreds of timber trees and others were all rushed on by the great force. Some trees, with earth still clinging to their roots, were shifted several feet from their original positions and there left standing. Plantain trees were destroyed by the thousands. Goats and fowl were caught in the conglomeration of vegetation as it was washed from the mountain sides.

The contour of the western side of the island and our emergency harbour was completely changed. It was filled with many feet of earth interspersed with a confused mass of vegetation. Muddy water extended for miles out from land almost completely surrounding the island. Dead fish and sea squirts of the class ascidian were found upon the new formation of land made by the landslides. Old landmarks that guided fishermen to their favourite fishing grounds had vanished.

Pitcairn Island had never experienced such a catastrophe for five generations. The event filled the people with reverential awe and caused them to think that the judgments of God had visited them and it was a call to repentance.

The beginnings of twelve further landslides were in evidence, leaving no doubt that others would follow at the next heavy rain and cause still greater damage. The rainfall for the first two hours of the cloudburst was six inches. The rain lasted for nearly four hours so approximately twelve inches of rain fell in that length of time.

It was fortunate indeed that most of the landslides did not occur on the north side of the island in the vicinity of the village, for if this had happened many homes and lives would surely have been lost.

Shipwrecks

Pitcairn Island has been the haven of many shipwrecked mariners. 1858 was the occasion of the first locally recorded shipwreck in the Pitcairns group although the master of the vessel, in his published diary, mentions finding the remains of an earlier wreck. The clipper *Wildwave*, in March of that year, was lost on the reef of Oeno Island. The captain and five crew members sailed one of the ship's boats to Pitcairn which was at that time uninhabited, the population having been shifted to Norfolk Island two years previously. Using timber taken from the vacant houses, the men built a cutter which the captain and two men sailed to Nukahiva. Here they met the American sloop *Vandalia* which took them to Tahiti. The *Vandalia* sailed to Oeno and rescued the remaining survivors before collecting the three men left on Pitcairn.

In January 1875 the sailing vessel *Cornwallis* of the firm of Balfour, Williamson and Co., homeward bound from San Francisco, visited Pitcairn. The captain, deciding to come ashore, took with him his apprentices and left the ship in charge of the first officer. A short time after they landed the ship was seen to be drifting towards shore, coming in swiftly and surely to destruction. The poor captain, half frantic, rushed to the landing place to launch his boat and put off to the ship which every moment was drifting nearer the rocks. But no effort could save her and she soon struck on some submerged rocks a few feet from the shore. No lives were lost, but the ship was a total wreck and nothing was saved from her. The next day the American ship *Dauntless* came in and took the crew of the ill-fated *Cornwallis* from the island.

In September 1875 the Liverpool ship *Khandeish* homeward bound from San Francisco was wrecked on Oeno Island. The captain and crew, taking with them what could be saved from the ship's stores, left in their big boat and gig for Pitcairn Island. As the wind was favourable the short voyage was soon accomplished. As soon as the ship-wrecked crew were seen by the islanders a boat was launched to meet the unexpected visitors. They were made welcome and were soon accommodated in various homes, taking part in the daily labours and joining in family worship. The crew of the *Khandeish*, after a stay of fiftyone days, left the island aboard the British ship *Ennerdale* bound for San Francisco. After reaching San Francisco, Captain Spelly of the *Khandeish* sent to the islanders a beautifully toned organ and a good supply of flour which was considered to be a luxury by the people.

On June 5th 1881 the British ship *Acadia* ran aground on Ducie reef. After futile attempts to free her from the reef she was abandoned and the crew made a voyage lasting thirteen days to Pitcairn. Like the crew of the *Khandeish* they were well cared for by the island people, and after several months on the island they were eventually taken off the island by ships which called at different times. Two of the crew remained on the island and married—Phillip Cook Coffin and Albert A. J. Volk. Coffin, aged 44, married a girl of 16 years; Volk married a daughter of Simon Young and shortly afterwards took her to England where she soon succumbed to the cold climate and died leaving two children.

On the night of August 23rd 1883 the Islanders were startled from their sleep by the blowing of a fog horn and the sound of shouting from over the waters. Hastily mustering a crew and launching their boat, the islanders found that a short pull brought them to the object of their search. It proved to be a boat belonging to the barque *Oregon*, bound from Oregon to Chile, which had struck on the low reefs of Oeno. Captain Hardy landed all his Chilean crew and three passengers, a widowed lady and her two children, on Oeno Island. After consulting with his mate, Mr. Walker, he decided to take a small boat and seek a passage through the heavy surf that surrounded the lagoon. Captain Hardy took with him the cook and a sailor, but as the boat passed through the smooth waters of the lagoon into the breakers, it capsized and the captain was drowned. The mate's boat, following almost directly afterward, passed safely through the rolling surf and rescued the two survivors who were clinging to the upturned boat. Upon arriving at Pitcairn the crew and passengers were accommodated in a small disused building. They stayed but a short time on the island and were taken off by the *Leicester Castle* commanded by Captain Boag and bound for San Francisco.

The Oeno reef again claimed a victim on April 24th 1893, this time with disastrous results for Pitcairn Island. On this date the ship *Bowden* commanded by Captain Law, bound for Queenstown, England, ran ashore through the treacherous breakers onto the sands of the lagoon. The Captain saved what he could from his ship, placing many

supplies on the beach including sails, ropes and foodstuffs. He left Oeno for Pitcairn on April 26th, arriving one day later. After the Captain and crew had been accommodated by the various families, the islanders started for Oeno in two of their own boats to fetch the supplies left on the beach by Captain Law. Four trips were made and the men, in taking barrels of beef and canned supplies from the hold of the *Bowden* and working in the stinking bilge water, contracted typhoid fever. On their return to Pitcairn typhoid spread amongst the islanders and thirteen died. Simon Young, their pastor and school teacher, was one of the victims of the fever and his death was a severe blow to the island. The English man-of-war *Hyacinth* took the crew of the *Bowden* from the island after a short stay.

Again, in December 1918, the four-masted schooner *St. James* from Portland, Oregon, bound for Africa, struck the Oeno reef and was a total wreck. Captain Anderson with his crew of fourteen headed for Pitcairn and after a hard pull against unfavourable winds landed on Pitcairn. After staying one month they were taken to New Zealand.

The Grounding of the *Trondhjem*, July 1944

With a gentle breeze blowing from the south and Pitcairn lying serene in the warm sunshine, her people went about their labours with happiness in their hearts filled with the joy of living. It was, in fact, the very kind of tropical day that novelists delight to describe in their tales of the Southern Seas.

Suddenly came the excited ringing of the community bell with the message that a ship was in sight and close to land. Every islander knows that call—five rings, pause, five rings, pause and so on for about a minute. Instantly all work was cast aside while every man's thought was to get to the Landing Place as quickly as possible for now a schooner could be seen close to land and just clear of the western tip of the island, her auxiliary engine helping along with her set sails.

Two of the longboats, carrying approximately fifty men and boys, were very shortly alongside the little craft. A few of the men jumped aboard as the captain of the schooner greeted them; the others remained resting on their oars.

The *Trondhjem* was a twentyfive ton schooner whose crew comprised Captain Markwalder, his wife and their small son—plus a cat and a dog. For over a year, so the captain told the islanders, they had been compelled to remain in Tahiti on account of war conditions but at last were allowed to leave after receiving a special permit from the British Admiralty. All the Captain's savings had gone towards buying the *Trondhjem*, which he hoped to sail to South America; from there the family intended to seek passage to Europe and, finally, to their home in Switzerland.

Mrs Markwalder was not well, so arrangements were made for her to come ashore immediately in one of the boats. Only one more time would she set foot on the little schooner, and then under cruel circumstances, but she had no way of knowing this when she stepped cautiously into the long-boat.

Our Magistrate, Parkin Christian, piloted the schooner to anchorage as near shore as was deemed safe just outside our harbour—in fact, almost in the very place where the *Bounty* was stripped and burned in 1790. It is difficult to conceive how quickly the weather changed within the next twelve hours. Turning from the south the wind began blowing half a gale from the east, chopping and roughing up the sea, and to make it worse for the schooner heavy swells rolled in from the west with a sound like thunder.

At the Landing the surf foamed over the rocks and through the passage into the harbour, threatening destruction to whatever lay in its path.

Through the night, with the schooner straining and tugging at her anchor chain, the captain kept watch alone, fearful that at any hour the anchor might break loose and the ship be dashed on the rocks. Helplessly he stood while the schooner rolled and pitched, powerless to stop the anchor chain as it gouged and pulled until it had torn two planks from the bow, while later he heard the winch strain until it tore itself partially loose, heaving the planks of the deck with it.

Captain Markwalder's frantic signals for help were lost in the grey morning haze until someone caught sight of the vessel's flag flying at halfmast. Immediately the longboats put out to give the assistance of which the captain and his craft were, by this time, in dire need. Sails were hoisted and, with our two longboats following, the *Trondhjem* was sailed to the lee of the island but here the sea proved to be even wilder than in Bounty Bay. Three islanders aboard the schooner with the captain nearly met disaster before the longboats overtook them, for somehow it was foolishly ordered that the *Trondhjem's* sails be lowered, and the current, setting hard toward the land, pulled the ship shoreward through the great troughs of the on-rushing swells. Quickly the sails were set but, being now dead to lee, they were without the slightest puff of wind, while even the auxiliary engine was useless against the strength of the current. Rounding the point the crews of the longboats, realising the danger, rushed to the craft's side, and just in time. A line was cast to the boats and, rowing with all their might, the men managed to tow the schooner into deeper water, free of the heavier swells. The sails filled and for the moment the danger was over.

What next occurred has never been fully understood by the islanders. Somehow Captain Markwalder got the notion that his schooner should be run aground till the weather settled and repairs could be made. Whether he feared some impending disaster to his ship or had a foreboding of evil, I do not know, but the fact is clear that he intimated to the Magistrate that he wanted the *Trondhjem* run ashore in Bounty Bay. Parkin remonstrated with him, explaining just what would happen to the ship once it came through the passage and in to the small harbour—how it would pile onto the rocks, a total wreck. Captain Markwalder would not listen. The two men argued until finally the captain had his way. Parkin said to him, "All right, Captain, you say run your boat ashore for you. So I run it ashore for you."

He then suggested the two longboats be called alongside so that all the family's valuables could be transferred into them, but the captain replied, "No, plenty of time to do this when we get into the harbour."

The wind increased, the swells grew heavier. Leaving three of their crew on board the schooner the longboats headed for land, reaching Bounty Bay and a safe run into the harbour in the late afternoon. That night the island was astir with comments and conjecture as to whether the coming day would witness a shipwreck, or a change of plan. There was no change of plan and, after four generations, the islanders witnessed a sight which must have been much the same as on the day the *Bounty* last set her sails and drove herself upon the rocks.

At daybreak the *Trondhjem* was sighted about five miles off heading straight for Bounty Bay. The islanders gathered in groups along the main pathway leading to the Edge; excitement was in the air. Truly we were awed by the thought of what might

happen. Some thought the captain was bent on his ship's destruction for they could not understand how he should think it possible to bring the vessel through the pounding seas and sharp rocks of the narrow passage. Others were sure that at the last minute he would change his mind. But no, on and on she sailed, not altering by a single point. Two miles away, then one mile, then half a mile off shore. We were certain Parkin was at the helm. At the last minute, wouldn't he swing the schooner off on the wind? No, still she rushed towards the land and we knew beyond a doubt that the *Trondhjem* was doomed. As one man, the entire community rushed for the Landing place.

The little craft laboured through the deep swells, lurching from side to side. We felt its agonising pain and terror. The wind screamed in the sails and we could almost think it was the schooner itself, screaming. How it resented what was happening and how it fought! But the waves caught the stern and propelled it onwards while the surf in the passage waited gleefully to pounce on it, and the rocks beyond waited hungrily.

In a few minutes all was over. The *Trondhjem* rose high on a wave in a last anguished attempt at escape then fell upon the rocks. Masts and spars, booms and blocks, squeaked and groaned as the swells broke and washed over the stern. Sails flapped uselessly in the wind; ropes swung, purposeless, in the air. As the schooner slowly settled the hungry rocks crunched on planks and timbers. One tremendous wave lifted the helpless vessel, wedging it firmly between two large rocks and at the same time tearing a great hole in the side. The ship lay at a forty-degree angle. The men on board (there were four—Captain Markwalder, Parkin and two other islanders) hung on to anything which could afford a hold and slowly, painfully, made their way towards the bowsprit, facing the harbour. One lad, upon reaching the bow, stood poised on the gunwale for a moment then plunged into the frothing harbour. A strong swimmer, he struggled through the swirling waves and in time reached a rock jutting out of the water, only to be washed off by the next approaching swell and carried along, rolling, tumbling, and with very little in the way of self-propulsion, till he landed upon the shore.

In like manner the second man made his escape from the schooner. Then we saw Parkin climbing onto the bowsprit chains getting ready to push himself into the harbour but at that moment a comber caught the vessel so that his hands were wrenched from the chains and he was thrown, twisting and turning in the air, into the raging sea. We feared for his safety because Parkin was a poor swimmer and it seemed certain he would be caught by the strong undertow and swept out through the passage, but happily the more powerful incoming seas carried him—as they had the other two men—upon their crest, and deposited him on shore with no greater injury than a cut over one eye.

The captain now remained alone on his ship. Voices on the beach called to him to jump. He dropped into the water and, except for a cruel looking gash on his leg, proved none the worse for his swim when we pulled him from the breakers.

I chanced to turn towards the wreck and caught sight of a small black head barely holding itself above the frothy water, just abreast of the boat. "A dollar for any man who saves the dog!" I shouted. The poor animal was losing strength fast but bravely trying to follow his master to shore. Now he was in the passage and going out to sea and then we lost sight of him altogether. We thought he was done for, but no, there he was in the surging waters around the rocks, vainly trying to get a foothold on them. During this time one lad had run out along the rocks and managed, by heroic effort and with total disregard for his own safety, to grab the dog by the scruff of the neck and hoist the animal to safety.

Salvage operations began immediately, when some of the more fearless among the island men managed to get on to the hull and take from the ship a surprising amount of her goods.

Next morning the sea had subsided somewhat. The harbour and the rocks at its edge were strewn with wreckage—spars, sails, ropes, wires, timbers, planks, boxes, canned goods, cooking utensils, clothing, souvenirs and a hundred-and-one other items which make up a ship's paraphernalia. The day was spent collecting sorting and carting to the village all that could be saved and be of use. Two days after the grounding the men completely dismantled the ship, some using fishing glasses to dive for water-tanks and drums. During the course of these operations on board the wreck the ship's cat was found, wet and nearly frightened to death, but none the worse for its terrible experience.

For many days to follow the storm and the heavy swells accompanying it were spoken of by the islanders and it was said that never before had such tremendous seas rolled in on Pitcairn's shore. That is saying a lot for I, myself, have seen waves large enough to wash the peaks of rocks thirty feet and more high.

The island government claimed everything salvaged from the wreck except the personal belongings of the captain and his family. Many articles were bought by the islanders, the remainder being set aside for eventual use in community work. A substantial payment for the salvaged goods was made to the Markwalders and this, along with a collection taken up by the church, gave them a start via a passing steamer on their homeward journey. We are happy to say that eventually they reached their native Switzerland, a country without even a single sea to lap at their heels.

"No Guts Captain" and Other Places

Join with me now in a leisurely walk about the Island and learn, if you will, some of the place-names of Pitcairn. There are far too many for us to see them all but we will visit a few. On the island place-names indicate more than a stranger can realise because not only are they what street names and house-numbers are to city dwellers but to us they are also a sort of living record of past happenings. In a great measure places have been named for untoward events—disastrous or painful—which happened here; others are named to commemorate happenings of pleasure and happiness.

Here, near the beginning of our walk, is *Adam's Ground* where a missionary cultivated a plot of ground. Over in this direction is *Gifford's Plun* or plantain patch, while not a great distance further on is *Bang on Iron* where the mutineers set up a forge beneath a large overhanging rock. Beneath this rock runs the pathway leading to *Goat House* and *Down Under Johnnie Fall*. (Here in 1814, John Mills, son of the mutineer, fell from the cliff while gathering birds' eggs. He was carried to his home but died on the way. He was fifteen years old.)

Brown's Water the biggest spring on the island (though of recent years it has run dry) was named after William Brown, assistant gardener on the *Bounty*. It may be he who discovered this spring not far from the village; it is the larger of the only two springs on the island and, other than rain water, it has been the island's source of water since the days of the mutineers. In 1893 when thirteen islanders died of typhoid fever, and when it was most needed, the spring ran dry. Those who were able shouldered water from the spring on the other side of the island in calabashes or any receptacle that would hold water. This other spring has never been known to cease flowing.

Here is a valley where a hog was caught. No one seems to know the circumstances, only that the name of the pig was Sire. Hence *Sire's Valley*.

Niger was the island's school for many years. Picture the building: forty feet long, seven windows facing seaward and two on each end between two doors. One large room, with desks and benches of the crudest making, bare rough-hewn floor, and a few pictures tacked haphazardly on the walls. This was in the years prior to 1948 when *Niger* was razed and the new building at Pulau begun. (The original *Niger* was a dog buried years ago on the site of the old school.) Not far from a rocky stretch of land known as *No Boar* which was once the scene of an unsuccessful boar hunt, is *Rachel's Coconut* (after Rachel Adams, born 1797). Here at *Rachel's Coconut* the islanders obtained their salt, not too long ago, by boiling great pans of sea water.

Howland Fall always brings a sad event to the memory of the oldest islanders. Here is the story in brief—or the part of it that is known.

In January 1889 Howland Christian with his two brothers went searching for birds and their eggs on a dangerous and almost inaccessible cliffside. Having made certain that he was securely tied with the rope the two brothers stood back a few feet and braced themselves with sure footing as Howland crept to the edge and lowered himself over and out of sight. The rope in the brothers' hands remained taut for a long time till they were waiting anxiously for the signal to "Pull up". Suddenly the rope lay limp on the cliff edge—the weight at the end was no longer there. There had been no tampering with the rope. The verdict was suicide as all the evidence ruled out the possibility of an accident but the fact that he left home that morning in high spirits only deepened the mystery. Only he could have given the answer, but nothing of Howland was ever found except his hat.

Among the first sailing ships to call at the island after the mutineers' haven was discovered in 1808 was the *Sultan*. The captain's purpose in calling was to replenish his fast diminishing stock of firewood and Captain Reynolds himself came ashore with some of the crew to lend a hand in the cutting of the wood. Very few trees are left there now but over there is the spot—*Where Reynolds Cut The Firewood*.

No Guts Captain, rather a gruesome appellation, is that spot right there where you are standing. How many years ago a man was buried there I do not know, nor do the oldest inhabitants, so it must be well over a hundred years. Certainly it was in the days when sailing ships ruled the seas. On one of these vessels the captain took sick and died. Possibly it was the request of the captain that he be given a land burial for, according to the evidence, the crew were determined not to bury their captain at sea. One of the men knew something of the process of embalming so the body was properly prepared and preserved, perhaps with spirits, salt, soda (caustic) or even turpentine.

The nearest inhabited island was Pitcairn. Days went by and finally the island was sighted. Coming in close the mate waited for one of the island's boats to come alongside and requested permission for the burial. This was granted as soon as the captain of the longboat was told that the body was embalmed and there need be no fear of any stench from the coffin. And how is it that these details are remembered and the year forgotten? Odd it is, how time decides what will be recalled and what will pass beyond the mists of memory.

So here is the exact spot where the captain was buried. Some years ago while working at the Landing Place with the island men and one day coming here to do some digging for repair work, I unearthed Mister No Guts Captain's skull. My intention was to carry

it up to the school for the study of human anatomy but my co-workers would not hear of this so the skull was put back in the hole. There he lies to this very day, at peace with time and with the world. Perhaps it is a little odd, too, that no enquiry has ever been made about him once he was buried there?

Now we are back in the village. Rest a while on that low bench and listen to a few more names: *Aute Valley*, where the aute plant grew; *Down Cabin*, a fishing place; *Dorcas Apple*, the second word meaning "pineapples" while the name refers to Dorcas Young, born 1832, who settled and stayed on Norfolk Island. *Big Tree To Marae* is a native temple site. *Blocking Place* is the area where each year goats are driven and from which they cannot escape while check-ups are made for sickness, ears are marked and certain goats killed. *Oven* is a place for salt-boiling on the rocks. A beauty spot under spreading banyan trees is called *Shady Nook*, while *Pancake* is a flat surface of stone on the trail to *Tedside* (T'other side) where our emergency harbour is located on the west side of the island.

Turpin's Head was named, logically enough, because a rock jutting into the sea looked like a turpin's head (Terrapin or Tortoise). *Six Feet* is a dangerous rock six feet below high tide mark. At low tide it is extremely dangerous to boats and canoes passing between land and *Matt's Rocks* (named after Matthew Quintal, the mutineer, but also sometimes called Young's Rocks after Edward Young).

Nellie is a fishing ground offshore from Tedside and a risky place to drop a line when groundswells are running, though at this time the fish bite best. The canoes approach *Nellie* warily, the fishermen continually watching for the great swells that sweep in and could capsize the canoes. The bank is situated just where the swells rise to curl over and rush on to the rocks. Here it was that a dog named Nellie was washed into the sea and drowned. While it is the island's most favoured fishing bank it is also the most dangerous.

Many years ago Minnie Christian, daughter of Alphonso Christian (and sister of Howland) went one day to gather a supply of limpets. Seas were running high and a large wave swept her off the rocks. Someone gave the alarm. Now, the island men were gone—either to a passing ship or fishing in their canoes, I have forgotten which—except Skelly Warren who was sick in bed with a fever. He heard the alarm and learned of Minnie's plight. He jumped out of bed, dressed, and grabbing a nearby plank ran to the place where Minnie was floundering in the water. Throwing the plank into the sea, he dived in after it and pushed it towards the drowning woman: plank and man together saved her life. Leaving Minnie in the care of the women who helped them ashore, Skelly hastened home to bed, shivering. Fortunately he was none the worse for his life-saving experience. The place where the woman was washed into the sea became known as *Where Minnie Off*.

There are many other places on the island with names which remain long after the circumstances of the naming are forgotten, such as *Allen's Stone*, *Hole For Matts*, *Tati-Nanny*, *Bitey-Bitey*, *Rat's Hole*, *Old Man's Fishing Place* and there is no reason ever to use any other name.

It was a pleasant day, a pleasant walk to take and, familiar though they are to me, I have enjoyed visiting these places with you.

Trip to Oeno Island from Pitcairn

On December 6th, 1931 two boats containing twenty-nine men and youths left Pitcairn on the seventy-five mile trip to Oeno Island to collect bêche-de-mer on behalf of

two representatives of a New Zealand company who were residing temporarily on Pitcairn. Limited supplies of food were carried and they intended to be home by Christmas. Three earlier departures had been cancelled because of unsuitable weather; Oeno is a low-lying atoll, difficult to see even in fine weather, and only under the most favourable conditions will the boats set sail for this island.

The weather remained fair and several of the remaining men and boys decided to take a third boat to Oeno for a pleasure trip. This party of six left on December 13th, planning to meet up with the first group for a few days' relaxation before the three boats made their way homeward.

To those of us remaining on Pitcairn the likelihood of sighting the boats at the expected time diminished as headwinds continued to blow steadily. Christmas came . . . the New Year . . . another week passed. We began to feel anxious about our friends and loved ones for by this time their provisions would be low and they would be forced to live on a diet of fish and sea birds.

Two weeks overdue. Small groups of people would gather and talk—of Oeno, the missing boats, storms, accidents, starvation. Prayers were made without ceasing.

Three weeks pass and fear gripped the hearts of those who waited. Hope began to die and men and women moved round slowly as if in a daze. Dulled eyes scanned the horizon as the wind dropped but continued to blow dead ahead.

As the fourth week of waiting commenced a cry was heard "Sail ho!" Can it be? Yes it is, it is! The boats had been sighted. But how many? Two. Which two? Where is the other boat? What has become of it? Despair took hold of every heart again.

A few men hurried to the Landing, collecting food and water as they went. A boat was launched and all haste was made to meet the boats as soon as possible.

As we came alongside the first, the sight that met our eyes is almost beyond description. Haggard and worn bodies, with starvation written on every face, were trying to row the boat to land. Some were faint with hunger and unable to move. We gave them food and water before acquiescing to their demand that we go to the other boat where, they said, the crew were in even worse condition.

I shall never forget the sight. As we drew near one could tell by the lift of the oars that it was only will power that moved the arms. Some had already given up; strength was gone. Eyes held a vacant stare, cheeks were sunken and bones protruded. Pale as death, with boils erupting from starved flesh, they struggled on. One or two more days in similar conditions must surely have meant death for some.

We guided the two boats into Bounty Bay and helped the men ashore. Some staggered about, then, with assistance, made their way slowly homewards. Others were carried up from the Landing place. Rest and good food brought life back to starving bodies. All, by God's grace, recovered.

Here is the story as I pieced it together from accounts given to me by several men.

The first two boats arrived safely at Oeno, but by the time they were joined by the third boat they were almost out of food. Even the supplementary supplies carried on this boat did not last long among so many. Food was rationed; two bananas, or fei, a day. Of course there were plenty of fish and birds but a continued diet of these became nauseating.

During their fifth week on the island the wind became almost fair and the decision was made to sail for Pitcairn, some smoked fish and a few biscuits their only remaining food.

Large seas broke over one of the boats as it went through the passage in the reef surrounding the island. The crew battled on but a larger sea eventually swamped the boat. Fortunately it was loaded with timber, otherwise some of the crew would have drowned. One man dived for two others as they were going down; somehow he managed to tie them to some driftwood. Each man had to shift for himself, clinging to whatever he could find for support.

With the assistance of the other crews, the swamped boat was dragged outside the breakers where it was bailed out. Almost everything loose had been washed away. Men in the other boats shared their clothes with the soaked crew. Later in the day the three boats set course for home, the swamped boat being towed because it had lost its sail.

After twelve hours of fair winds a sudden change developed and the wind came dead ahead. The crews decided to beat for land. During the second night one boat became separated from the other two and, in spite of seeing Pitcairn some twenty miles away, the crew turned back to look for the other boats.

By great good fortune the three boats came together but the wind blew harder. "The very demon was in it", the men recounted. The boat under tow had to be abandoned and for four days the two remaining boats battled wind and sea. The fury of the gale equalled any the men had previously experienced. Rationed to two biscuits a day, wet to the skin, and bailing all the time the men fought on.

When the struggle became too great the boats turned and ran for Oeno again. In spite of doubts that they would find the tiny atoll, find it they did. Exhausted men collapsed on the sand. Only fish and birds to eat and some too faint to even look for these.

On the third day the wind came fair enough to head for Pitcairn. These starving men and boys plucked up courage and again set sail for home. A wind change the next day forced them to lower sail, take up their oars and pull for the shore. And it was in this condition we found them. . . .



APPENDIX I — POPULATION STATISTICS

Birth and Deaths

<i>Years</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Increase/ Decrease</i>
1864-1933 (average per decade)	43	16	27
1934-1943	36	21	15
1944-1953	26	24	2
1954-1963	30	17	13
1964-1973	8	10	2
1974-1982	9	10	1

Composition of Population

<i>Year</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Boys (under 16)</i>	<i>Girls (under 16)</i>	<i>Total</i>
1936	81	67	29	23	200
1956	60	50	25	26	161
1961	38	36	21	31	126
1966	37	32	13	14	96
1967	35	30	12	10	87
1968	29	26	10	11	76
1969	31	28	10	12	81
1970	37	30	13	11	91
1971	40	31	10	11	92
1972	39	29	5	11	84
1973	34	24	7	10	75
1974	26	22	5	8	61
1975	31	27	6	6	70
1976	33	25	8	8	74
1977	30	22	8	10	70
1978	28	19	6	8	61
1979	25	20	8	8	61
1980	29	20	6	8	63
1981	23	17	6	8	54

APPENDIX II — DETAILS OF PITCAIRN'S FINANCES

		Revenue							
		1973/74	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
Stamp Sales	92,302	126,313	126,849	188,841	269,146	180,289	355,676	828,442
Interest	30,296	46,626	67,985	54,938	50,694	70,459	121,351	187,668
Miscellaneous	1,737	2,319	3,919	5,447	7,423	8,088	13,501	37,701
Development Grants	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
NZ\$	124,335	175,258	198,753	249,226	412,486	258,836	490,528	1,053,811

		Expenditure							
		1973/74	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
*Administration	18,309	23,935	20,654	33,013	42,924	55,741	68,548	111,917
Education	13,959	14,220	17,304	13,106	27,237	20,972	32,796	38,221
Health	3,997	5,300	14,297	5,234	10,129	9,911	8,360	15,811
Postal	27,357	28,245	35,006	47,813	83,522	70,895	150,919	303,144
Works	11,872	20,562	15,133	28,050	46,994	60,022	42,995	57,867
Development Grants	—	—	—	—	—	—	15,861	—
NZ\$	75,494	92,262	102,394	127,216	381,254	217,541	319,479	526,960

* Includes normal administration services, radio communications, agriculture and miscellaneous expenditure on Pitcairn and in Auckland.

		Assets and Liabilities							
		1973/74	1974/75	1975/76	1976/77	1977/78	1978/79	1979/80	1980/81
<i>Assets</i>									
Cash	111,243	75,338	164,704	265,247	345,673	490,177	465,802	682,496
Investments	273,121	452,800	493,142	510,303	627,298	481,405	814,614	1,262,178
Sundries	4,431	4,587	3,368	10,800	10,502	8,654	3,425	8,238
NZ\$	388,795	532,725	661,214	786,350	983,473	980,236	1,283,841	1,952,912
<i>Liabilities</i>									
Sundries	6,177	4,687	5,953	7,024	93,842	3,803	19,538	7,402
General Revenue Balance	382,618	528,038	655,261	779,326	889,631	976,433	1,264,303	1,945,510
NZ\$	388,795	532,725	661,214	786,350	983,473	980,236	1,283,841	1,952,912

APPENDIX III — OFFICE-HOLDERS IN PITCAIRN, 1964–1982

Island officers (elected)

	<i>Island Magistrate</i>	<i>Chairman of the Internal Committee</i>	<i>Councillors</i>
1964	John Christian	Pervis Young	Christy Warren and Wilkes Young
1965	John Christian	Pervis Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1966	John Christian	Pervis Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1967	Pervis Young	Henry Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1968	Pervis Young	Henry Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1969	Pervis Young	Henry Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1970	Pervis Young	Henry Young	Christy Warren and Ivan Christian
1971	Pervis Young	Cairn Christian	Gifford Christian and Ivan Christian
1972	Pervis Young	Cairn Christian	Gifford Christian and Ivan Christian
1973	Pervis Young	Henry Young	Gifford Christian and Ivan Christian
1974	Pervis Young	Ivan Christian	Thelma Brown and Carol Christian
1975	Pervis Young	Ivan Christian	Thelma Brown and Carol Christian
1976	Ivan Christian	Brian Young	Thelma Brown and Florence Young
1977	Ivan Christian	Brian Young	Thelma Brown and Florence Young
1978	Ivan Christian	Brian Young	Thelma Brown and Carol Warren
1979	Ivan Christian	Charles Christian	Thelma Brown and Dobrey Christian
1980	Ivan Christian	Charles Christian	Thelma Brown and Dobrey Christian
1981	Ivan Christian	Charles Christian	Thelma Brown and Carol Warren
1982	Ivan Christian	Charles Christian	Thelma Brown and Vula Young

Other principal officers

Island Secretary: Andrew Young; Ben Christian (since 1962).

Postmaster: Roy Clark; Oscar Clark; Reynold Warren (since 1979, Acting).

Police Officer: Floyd McCoy; Vernon Young (1960–1972).

Radio Officer: Thomas Christian (since 1958).

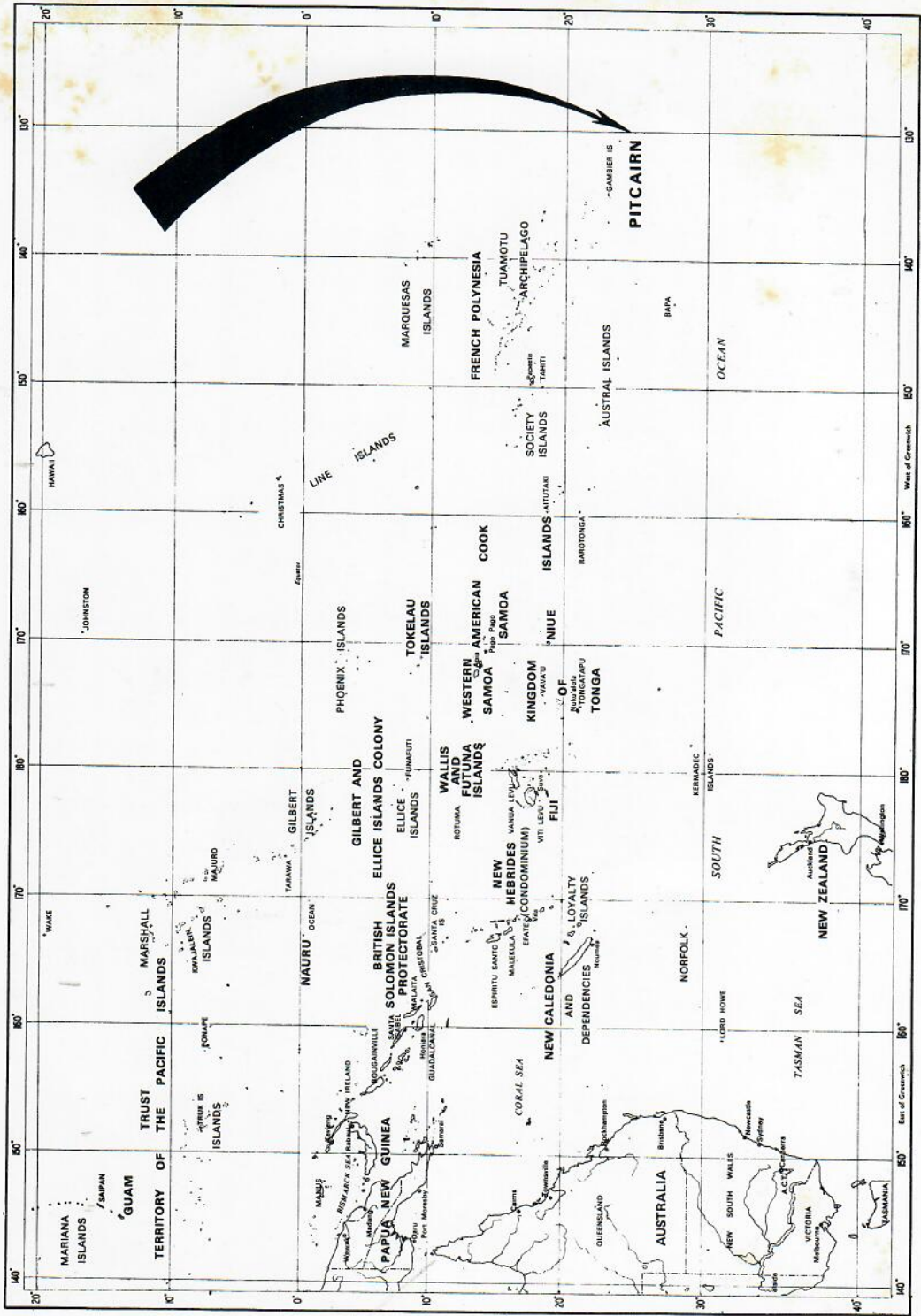
Forester: Jacob Warren (since 1964).

Education Officers: A. W. Moverley 1949, R. Sanders 1951, G. Allan 1954, A. Wotherspoon 1956, E. Schubert 1958, M. D. Howse 1960, S. A. Kinder 1962, J. H. Forster 1964, A. A. Reeves 1967, R. S. Henry 1969, G. D. Harraway 1972, C. P. B. Shea 1974, T. Whiu 1976, A. K. Cox 1978, R. R. Whiting 1980, A. K. Cox 1982.

Resident Pastors of the Seventh Day Adventist Church: L. Hawkes 1956, R. E. Cobbin 1959, D. Davies 1961, W. G. Ferris 1963, L. A. J. Webster 1965, W. G. Ferris 1967, A. Parker 1969, L. A. J. Webster 1971, J. J. Dever 1974, J. H. Newman 1976, W. R. Ferguson 1977, O. L. Stimpson 1980, T. C. Petty 1982.

APPENDIX IV — PITCAIRN ISLAND READING LIST

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Based on map prepared by Division of National Mapping
 Department of National Development Canberra A.C.T. 1968.



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