THE BOUNTY : THE TRUE STORY OF THE MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY PDF, EPUB, EBOOK



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Mutiny on the Bounty

Bligh turned south-west, and steered through a maze of shoals, reefs, sandbanks, and small islands. The route taken was not the Endeavour Strait, but a narrower southerly passage later known as the Prince of Wales Channel. At that evening, they reached the open Arafura Sea , [] still 1, nautical miles 2, km; 1, mi from Kupang. The next day, the coast of Timor was sighted: "It is not possible for me to describe the pleasure which the blessing of the sight of this land diffused among us", Bligh wrote.

In Kupang, Bligh reported the mutiny to the authorities, and wrote to his wife: "Know then, my own Dear Betsey, I have lost the Bounty After the departure of Bligh's launch, Christian divided the personal effects of the departed loyalists among the remaining crew and threw the breadfruit plants into the sea. Christian therefore headed Bounty towards the small island of Tubuai , some nautical miles km; mi south of Tahiti.

Bounty arrived at Tubuai on 28 May The reception from the native population was hostile; when a flotilla of war canoes headed for the ship, Christian used a four-pounder gun to repel the attackers. At least a dozen warriors were killed, and the rest scattered. Undeterred, Christian and an armed party surveyed the island, and decided it would be suitable for their purposes. The most likely source for these was Tahiti, to which Bounty returned on 6 June. To ensure the co-operation of the Tahiti chiefs, Christian concocted a story that he, Bligh, and Captain Cook were founding a new settlement at Aitutaki.

Cook's name ensured generous gifts of livestock and other goods and, on 16 June, the well-provisioned Bounty sailed back to Tubuai. On board were nearly 30 Tahitian men and women, some of whom were there by deception. For the next two months, Christian and his forces struggled to establish themselves on Tubuai. They began to construct a large moated enclosure—called "Fort George", after the British king—to provide a secure fortress against attack by land or sea. He called a meeting to discuss future plans and offered a free vote. Eight remained loyal to Christian, the hard core of the active mutineers, but sixteen wished to return to Tahiti and take their chances there. Christian accepted this decision; after depositing the majority at Tahiti, he would "run before the wind, and After what I have done I cannot remain at Tahiti".

When Bounty returned to Tahiti, on 22 September, the welcome was much less effusive than previously. The Tahitians had learned from the crew of a visiting British ship that the story of Cook and Bligh founding a settlement in Aitutaki was a fabrication, and that Cook had been long dead. Of the 16 men who had voted to settle in Tahiti, he allowed 15 ashore; Joseph Coleman was detained on the ship, as Christian required his skills as an armourer. That evening, Christian inveigled aboard Bounty a party of Tahitians, mainly women, for a social gathering.

With the festivities under way, he cut the anchor rope and Bounty sailed away with its captive guests. The 16 sailors on Tahiti began to organise their lives. Morrison's group maintained ship's routine and discipline, even to the extent of holding divine service each Sunday. Churchill was murdered by Thompson, who was in turn killed by Churchill's native friends. In October at a formal court-martial for the loss of Bounty , he was honourably acquitted of responsibility for the loss and was promoted to post-captain. As an adjunct to the court martial, Bligh brought charges against Purcell for misconduct and insubordination; the former carpenter received a reprimand. The ship finally sailed on 8 May, to search for Christian and Bounty among the thousands of southern Pacific islands. The men in "Pandora's Box" were ignored as the regular crew attempted to prevent the ship from foundering. When Edwards gave the order to abandon ship, Pandora ' s armourer began to remove the prisoners' shackles, but the ship sank before he had finished.

The survivors, including the ten remaining prisoners, then embarked on an open-boat journey that largely followed Bligh's course of two years earlier. The prisoners were mostly kept bound hand and foot until they reached Kupang on 17 September. The prisoners were confined for seven weeks, at first in prison and later on a Dutch East India Company ship, before being transported to Cape Town. There they were transferred to the guardship HMS Hector to await trial. Muspratt, through his lawyer, won a stay of execution by filing a petition protesting that court martial rules had prevented his calling Norman and Byrne as witnesses in his defence.

Some accounts claim that the condemned trio continued to protest their innocence until the last moment, [] while others speak of their "manly firmness that Much of the court martial testimony was critical of Bligh's conduct—by the time of his return to England in August , following his successful conveyance of breadfruit to the West Indies aboard Providence , professional and public opinion had turned against him. After his return to England, Bligh was promoted to rear-admiral in and vice-admiral in , but was not offered further naval appointments. He died, aged 63, in December Of the pardoned mutineers, Heywood and Morrison returned to naval duty. Heywood acquired the patronage of Hood and, by at the age of 31, had achieved the rank of captain. After a distinguished career, he died in Muspratt is believed to have worked as a naval steward before his death, in or before The other principal participants in the court martial—Fryer, Peckover, Coleman, McIntosh and others—generally vanished from the public eye after the closing of the procedures.

After leaving Tahiti on 22 September , Christian sailed Bounty west in search of a safe haven. He then formed the idea of settling on Pitcairn Island , far to the east of Tahiti; the island had been reported in , but its exact location was never verified. After months of searching, Christian rediscovered the island on 15 January , nautical miles km; mi east of its recorded position.

On arrival the ship was unloaded and stripped of most of its masts and spars, for use on the island. The island proved an ideal haven for the mutineers—uninhabited and virtually inaccessible, with plenty of food, water, and fertile land. Christian settled down with Isabella; a son, Thursday October Christian , was born, as were other children. Gradually, tensions and rivalries arose over the increasing extent to which the Europeans regarded the Tahitians as their property, in particular the women who, according to Alexander, were "passed around from one 'husband' to the other". Christian was set upon while working in his fields, first shot and then butchered with an axe; his last words, supposedly, were: "Oh, dear! Some of the women attempted to leave the island in a makeshift boat but could not launch it successfully. Life continued uneasily until McCoy's suicide in A year later, after Quintal threatened fresh murder and mayhem, Adams and Young killed him and were able to restore peace.

After Young succumbed to asthma in , Adams took responsibility for the education and well-being of the nine remaining women and 19 children. Using the ship's Bible from Bounty , he taught literacy and Christianity, and kept peace on the island. In the following years, many ships called at Pitcairn Island and heard Adams's various stories of the foundation of the Pitcairn settlement.

The perception of Bligh as an overbearing tyrant began with Edward Christian's Appendix of Barrow was a friend of the Heywood family; his book mitigated Heywood's role while emphasising Bligh's severity. Among historians' attempts to portray Bligh more sympathetically are those of Richard Hough and Caroline Alexander Hough depicts " an unsurpassed foul-weather commander I would go through hell and high water with him, but not for one day in the same ship on a calm sea ".

However, Bligh's reputation as the archetypal bad commander remains: the Baltimore Sun 's reviewer of Alexander's book wrote "poetry routed science and it has held the field ever since". In addition to many books and articles about the mutiny, in the 20th century five feature films were produced. The first was a silent Australian film , subsequently lost. The film's story was presented, says Dening, as "the classic conflict between tyranny and a just cause"; [] Laughton's portrayal became in the public mind the definitive Bligh, "a byword for sadistic tyranny". In , in advance of a BBC documentary film aimed at Bligh's rehabilitation, the respective descendants of the captain and Christian feuded over their contrary versions of the truth. Dea Birkett , the programme's presenter, suggested that "Christian versus Bligh has come to represent rebellion versus authoritarianism, a life constrained versus a life of freedom, sexual repression versus sexual licence.

A musical Mutiny! From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. This article is about the historical event. For other uses, see Mutiny on the Bounty disambiguation. Voyage of Bounty to Tahiti and to location of the mutiny, 28 April Movements of Bounty under Christian after the mutiny, from 28 April onwards. The nautical "15 October", for example, equates to the land time period between noon on the 14th and noon on the 15th. On arrival, Bligh sent Christian ashore as the ship's representative to pay respect to the island's governor. His violence was more verbal than physical; [14] as a captain, his overall flogging rate of less than one in ten seamen was exceptionally low for the time.

Hough argues that Morrison could not have maintained a day-by-day account of all the experiences he underwent, including the mutiny, his capture, and the return to England. There were also three bottles of wine and five quarts of rum. When HMS Pandora arrived in Tahiti in March in search of mutineers, the schooner was confiscated and commandeered to act as Pandora ' s tender. The schooner subsequently disappeared in a storm and was presumed lost, but was returned safely to Batavia by a skeleton crew. Adams was sometimes inconsistent in his stories; for example, he also claimed that Christian's death was due to suicide. Cambridge Digital Library. University Of Cambridge. Retrieved 21 May Channel 4. Darby, Madge Oxford Dictionary of National Biography online ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Subscription or UK public library membership required. David, Andrew Erskine, Nigel Boston: Archaeological Institute of America. Retrieved 18 May Frost, Alan Pitcairn Islands Study Center.

Pacific Union College. Retrieved 30 April Used by permission from the government-published Guide to Pitcairn, "Mutiny! Essex — The Guide to Musical Theatre". The prosecution based its case against the mutineers on three fundamental mistakes they made. First, in the prosecution's view, they took no actions to directly thwart the mutiny. Second, they did not get into the Bounty's launch with Captain Bligh. Finally, the prosecution noted, none of the men made any determined effort to return to England after the mutiny, but instead many went into hiding in Tahiti. Master of the Bounty , John Fryer, testified first for the prosecution. Fryer, who occupied a cabin opposite Bligh's, described being awoken by shouting just before dawn on the night of April 28, Mutineer Matthew Quintal stepped into his cabin and warned him that if he said anything he was a dead man.

Fryer testified that he looked out his cabin door and saw Christian holding a cord that tied that hands of his nightshirt-clad captain. Fryer offered damning testimony concerning some of the defendants. John Millward, he said, guarded him with arms. When Fryer suggested to Millward that he "knock down" the mutineer standing next to him, Fryer said, Millward cocked his musket and pointed it at Fryer with the warning, "Mr. Fryer be quiet; no one will hurt you.

The Bounty's master told the court that we encouraged James Morrison to turn against the mutineers, Morrison replied, "It is too late. Fryer's testimony was helpful to several of the other defendants, however. Fryer noted that Joseph Coleman "called out several times to recollect that he had no hand in the business," and he testified that during the mutiny he saw Thomas McIntosh and Charles Norman leaning against a rail, apparently crying. William Cole, the boatswain, testified next. He described visiting the seamen's quarters to awaken three of the defendants, Morrison, Millward, and McIntosh, after discovering Christian had taken the ship.

None, he said, wanted anything to do with the mutiny, but while he was talking to them one of the mutineers, Charles Churchill, walked into the room and "called out to Millward, desired him to come upon Deck immediately to take a Musquet. Cole also recalled seeing the prisoner William Muspratt "with a Musquet in his Hand. The court also asked Cole, "You have said that Coleman, Norman and McIntosh were retained in the Bounty against their will--Have you reason to believe that any of the other prisoners were detained against their inclinations? Heywood was. The court swore in William Peckover the next morning. Peckover testified that Burkett, who was carrying arms, called down from the Bounty to the overloaded launch to see if he needed anything else. When Peckover said that he had "only what I stood in, a shirt, and a pair of trousers," Burkett left and returned ten minutes later with additional clothes, which he tossed into the boat.

Peckover testified that except for Coleman, Norman, McIntosh, and Byrn, he "had every reason to suppose" that the other six defendants supported the mutiny. Witness William Purcell described, in his testimony, how he succeeded in changing Christian's mind, convincing the chief mutineer to allow the Bounty loyalists to have the larger and safer of the two available launches. Christian also relented to the ship's carpenter's demand that he be allowed to take his tool chest.

Christian's concession on the tool chest prompted other mutineers to urge that Purcell be ordered to stay on the Bounty , as he with his tool chest might secure the loyalists "another vessel in a month. Purcell was the first witness to offer evidence that incriminated young Peter Heywood. Purcell testified that he saw Heywood on the booms with "his hand on a cutlass. Several additional witnesses rounded out the case for the prosecution. The prosecution rested its case on Friday, and the court allowed the defendants the weekend, as Caroline Alexander writes in The Bounty , "to prepare and rehearse the words that would damn or save them. The four men who Bligh had previously described as having been detained against their will, Norman , McIntosh , Coleman , and Byrn each offered short prepared defenses. The defenses included--for Norman and McIntosh--personal letters from Bligh declaring them innocent of mutiny. In the cases of these men, the court-martial was more a formality than a threat, and their eventual acquittal a virtual certainty.

For three other men, execution was no less likely than acquittal was for the four detained loyalists. Thomas Burkett , for example, faced the damning testimony of more than one prosecution witness that he, with musket in hand, escorted Captain Bligh from his cabin. His long shot defense consisted of accusations against Fletcher Christian forced him to participate in the mutiny against his will and suggestions that he desired to retake the Bounty and return it to England--but never had the support to pull it off. Millward and Ellison also confronted long odds, having been described

by witnesses as being armed with cutlasses at the time of the mutiny. In his defense, Ellison called Christian "a mad man" and said that he feared what would happen if he attempted to thwart the mutiny.

Millward, in his prepared statement, claimed that he--like Burkett--had hoped to retake the Bounty at an opportune time, but that the time never came. Unfortunately for Millward, when prosecution witness William Cole, was asked by Millward to confirm his story of a conversation about retaking the boat, Cole failed to recall any such discussion. Genuine doubt existed only as to the fates of the three remaining defendants, James Morrison , William Muspratt , and Peter Heywood. Morrison mounted a tenacious defense.

He succeeded in getting witnesses to support his argument, that he had wanted to join Bligh in the launch, but had been prevented by mutineers from doing so. He also pulled off something rare in the court-martial in successfully impeaching two witnesses that testified against him. Muspratt had to contend with incriminating testimony that placed a musket in his hands at the time of the mutiny. He attempted to call two of his fellow defendants, Byrn and Norman, as witnesses to confirm his claim that he expressed displeasure with the mutiny as it was in progress, but the Court denied his request. Most public attention focused on the case of Peter Heywood, the lone charged officer.

Heywood's youth, and his upbringing in a wealthy and well-connected British family one of the court-martial judges, in fact, was related by marriage to the Heywood family , invited considerable speculation. Heywood's connections were also responsible for landing him a post on the Bounty , a letter of recommendation on his behalf came from William Bligh's own father-in-law, Richard Betham. Representing Heywood was the well-respected barrister, Francis Const.

Heywood based his aggressive defense on three main arguments: 1 his "bitterly deplored On this last point concerning the launch's overloaded condition, Heywood wisely drew support from Bligh's own published statements on the matter. Const tried to present Heywood as the likable young victim of a series of unfortunate events. He counted on the captains sitting in judgment of Heywood to remember their own early years as untutored midshipman.

The last page of the verdict in the Bounty court martial, including the signatures of members of the Court. Testimony in the Bounty court-martial ended on September 18, and the twelve post-captains began what would be several hours of deliberations over their fates. The ten defendants assembled in the great cabin to hear Lord Hood announce the verdicts of the court. The other six defendants were found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. In the cases of Heywood and Morrison, however, the court "in consideration of various circumstances" did "earnestly recommend" them both "to His Majesty's Royal Mercy. Muspratt, too, eventually gained his release, with the granting of his petition for a pardon based on his having been denied the opportunity to call his desired witnesses. On October 29, , at in the morning, Burkett, Millward, and Ellison were hanged by the yardarm aboard a British naval ship the Brunswick in Portsmouth Harbor.

The bodies remained hanging from the yards for two hours in the rain. Mutineers landing at Pitcairn Island painting by Richard Beechey, c. On January 15, , Fletcher Christian and his band of mutineers, Tahitian wives, and six male servants, ran the Bounty on shore on uncharted Pitcairn Island , where the ship broke up. It would be twenty years before the outside world would hear from them again.

The admiralty journal Quarterly Review in contained the notice that the American sealing vessel Topaz , under a Captain Folger, stopped at Pitcairn and discovered an Englishman, Alexander Smith , who claimed to be the last surviving Bounty mutineer. Smith presented Captain Folger with a chronometer, that proved to be the one assigned to the Bounty , thus confirming his unlikely story. In , the islanders were removed to Norfolk Island, a former penal colony nearly 4, miles to the west. However, less than two years later, 17 of the islanders returned to Pitcairn, followed by more families in Today, just a few dozen live on Pitcairn Island, and all but a handful are descendants of the Bounty mutineers.

About a thousand residents of Norfolk Island half its population trace their lineage from Fletcher Christian and the eight other British sailors. But if you see something that doesn't look right, click here to contact us! On April 28, , year-old Martin Bryant begins a killing spree that ends in the deaths of 35 men, women and children in the quiet town of Port Arthur in Tasmania, Australia. Following the defeat of his proposals for constitutional reform in a national referendum, Charles de Gaulle resigns as president of France. A veteran of World War I, de Gaulle unsuccessfully petitioned his country to modernize its armed forces between the wars. After Henri Petain The year-old deposed former dictator of Italy was established by his German allies as the President Richard Nixon gives his formal authorization to commit U.

On April 28, , boxing champion Muhammad Ali refuses to be inducted into the U. Army and is immediately stripped of his heavyweight title. Ali, a Muslim, cited religious reasons for his decision to forgo military service. Born Cassius Marcellus Clay, Jr. Johnson sends more than 22, U. Sign up now to learn about This Day in History straight from your inbox.

Mutiny on the Bounty - Wikipedia

The Bounty was under rebel command. Christian and his crew, which included a few captives who remained loyal to Bligh, wanted to build a permanent settlement and set their sights on the Tongan island of Tubuai, about miles south of Tahiti. There they met and killed a group of hostile native islanders, then went back to Tahiti to seek laborers and supplies. Certain that the Tahitian chiefs, who had good relations with Britain, would refuse to help them if they knew what had happened, the mutineers covered up the mutiny, lied about their mission, and returned to Tubuai with 30 Tahitians. But they gave up the fight for Tubuai after continued hostilities with the islanders and growing divisions among the crew made a takeover unsustainable. The mutineers returned to Tahiti, only to find that their lie had been discovered. Desperate and cornered by a new plot to mutiny against him, Christian lured a group of Tahitians onto the Bounty for a party, then took them captive and set sail again.

Sixteen British sailors were left behind in Tahiti. Meanwhile, Bligh and his loyalists were on a wild journey of their own. With dwindling rations, the group set out for a Dutch settlement in Timor, some 3, nautical miles away. After 47 days they arrived and reported the mutiny to the Crown. Several died on the way home to England, but Bligh survived. At home, Bligh was court-martialed and acquitted of responsibility for the loss of the ship. Pandora then set sail from England on a mission to capture the mutineers. When the crew arrived in Tahiti in March , they captured the 14

surviving mutineers whom Christian had abandoned.

But the Pandora ran into a disaster of its own when it foundered on the Great Barrier Reef, and four of the shackled captives drowned. In September , the 10 men who had been brought back to England faced court-martial. Under English law, any man who remained on the ship was guilty of mutiny regardless of whether he had actively participated. Four were acquitted, and six sentenced to death by hanging. Three of those six were ultimately pardoned, but the other three mutineers—Thomas Burkett, John Millward, and Thomas Ellison—were hanged on October 29, By this time, the remaining mutineers and their Tahitian captives had found a safe haven on Pitcairn Island, a far-flung island in the southern Pacific. The verdant, uninhabited island seemed like a potential paradise, and the mutineers soon burned the Bounty and set up a permanent colony there.

But the tensions that had marred their voyage persisted on the island. One of the Tahitian women, Tevarua , is thought to have killed herself in response to her ongoing mistreatment. In September , the Tahitian men killed four of the eight mutineers, including Christian. Within the next decade, all but one of the remaining mutineers, John Adams, died. Those descendants still live on the tiny island, which is a British Overseas Territory with a population of around All rights reserved. The real story behind the infamous mutiny on the H. On April 28, , the men aboard the H. Bounty, a British naval vessel commanded by Captain William Bligh, mounted a legendary mutiny. Having spent several idyllic months on the island of Tahiti, the men wanted to build a permanent settlement in the South Pacific. Share Tweet Email. Read This Next SpaceX takes 4 passengers to orbit.

Sanctuary gives hope to chimps, rescuers. Magazine Sanctuary gives hope to chimps, rescuers Saved from the chaos in that region, traumatized chimpanzees have become models of resilience for their human caretakers. Golden hour dazzles at these 10 national parks. Go Further. Animals These animals offer key clues for environmental change. Animals Why Idaho once parachuted beavers into the wilderness. Captain William Bligh and 18 of his loyal supporters were set adrift in a small, open boat, and the Bounty set course for Tubuai south of Tahiti. In December , the Bounty left England for Tahiti in the South Pacific, where it was to collect a cargo of breadfruit saplings to transport to the West Indies.

There, the breadfruit would serve as food for enslaved passengers. After a month journey, the Bounty arrived in Tahiti in October and remained there for more than five months. On Tahiti, the crew enjoyed an idyllic life, reveling in the comfortable climate, lush surroundings and the hospitality of the Tahitians. Fletcher Christian fell in love with a Tahitian woman named Mauatua. On April 4, , the Bounty departed Tahiti with its store of breadfruit saplings. On April 28, near the island of Tonga, Christian and 25 petty officers and seamen seized the ship. Bligh, who eventually would fall prey to a total of three mutinies in his career, was an oppressive commander and insulted those under him. By setting him adrift in an overcrowded foot-long boat in the middle of the Pacific, Christian and his conspirators had apparently handed him a death sentence. By remarkable seamanship, however, Bligh and his men reached Timor in the East Indies on June 14, , after a voyage of about 3, miles.

Bligh returned to England and soon sailed again to Tahiti, from where he successfully transported breadfruit trees to the West Indies. Meanwhile, Christian and his men attempted to establish themselves on the island of Tubuai. Unsuccessful in their colonizing effort, the Bounty sailed north to Tahiti, and 16 crewmen decided to stay there, despite the risk of capture by British authorities. Christian and eight others, together with six Tahitian men, a dozen Tahitian women, and a child, decided to search the South Pacific for a safe haven.

In January , the Bounty settled on Pitcairn Island, an isolated and uninhabited volcanic island more than 1, miles east of Tahiti. The mutineers who remained on Tahiti were captured and taken back to England where three were hanged. A British ship searched for Christian and the others but did not find them. In , an American whaling vessel was drawn to Pitcairn by smoke from a cooking fire.

The Americans discovered a community of children and women led by John Adams, the sole survivor of the original nine mutineers. According to Adams, after settling on Pitcairn the colonists had stripped and burned the Bounty, and internal strife and sickness had led to the death of Fletcher and all the men but him. In , a British ship arrived and formally granted Adams amnesty, and he served as patriarch of the Pitcairn community until his death in In , the Pitcairn islanders were resettled on Tahiti, but unsatisfied with life there they soon returned to their native island. In , the Pitcairn Islands, which includes three nearby uninhabited islands, was incorporated into the British Empire.

In , the islanders were removed to Norfolk Island, a former penal colony nearly 4, miles to the west. However, less than two years later, 17 of the islanders returned to Pitcairn, followed by more families in

William Bligh | Royal Museums Greenwich

Bligh implored Christian to remember that, back in England, his children had bounced on his knee. Christian, replying with emotion, said, "I am in hell--I am in hell. At the last minute, four cutlasses were tossed into the twenty-three-foot boat. Bligh reported: "After having undergone a great deal of ridicule, and been kept some time to make sport for these unfeeling wretches, we were at length cast adrift in the open ocean. Eleven months after the mutiny, and against all odds, William Bligh reached the home shores of England. Bligh took rightful pride in his accomplishment, and in his Narrative of the Mutiny , published just months after his return, he devoted a scant six pages to the mutiny and eighty to the story of his remarkable 3,mile subsequent voyage in an overloaded, under- provisioned boat. The English Chronicle called Bligh's navigation of "his little skiff through so dangerous a sea" a "matchless The nation hailed Bligh as a hero and within a year he was appointed captain of a new breadfruit expedition, this one with a full complement of lieutenants and marines for better security.

In the summer of Captain Edward Edwards assumed command of the gun frigate Pandora , with orders to sail to the Pacific and bring back whatever Bounty mutineers he and his men could round up. On board as his third lieutenant was Thomas Hayward, a Bounty midshipman who accompanied Bligh on his legendary journey in the foot launch. The Pandora arrived in Tahiti in on a fine March day in Three Bounty crew members, anxious to rebuild their lives back in England, swam out to the Pandora. Peter Heywood, who was just seventeen at the time of the mutiny, and Joseph Coleman and George Stewart, after announcing that they were formerly of the Bounty , were arrested and placed in chains.

Coleman informed Captain Edwards of events after the mutiny. He explained that Fletcher Christian left sixteen men on Tahiti and then departed

with the other mutineers in search of a safe tropical haven. From talking with curious Tahitians that had climbed aboard the Pandora , Edwards learned the probable whereabouts of the eleven remaining fugitives on the island. Edwards mounted a roundup effort with the help of local leaders. By the second day, able seaman Richard Skinner was in chains. A party dispatched to arrest a group that had recently sailed in a schooner on the south coast discovered that the mutineers, having heard of the Pandora's arrival, fled into the mountain forests. The search party found three mutineers, James Morrison, Charles Norman, and Thomas Ellison, asleep in a shelter and returned them to the Pandora , where they were placed in a newly constructed prison hut on the quarterdeck.

About the same time, Michael Byrn, a fiddler who was nearly blind, became the eighth Bounty crew member captured. Within the next ten days, the last of the Tahitian fugitives were rounded up. In the same area the following night, they found the last four men: Thomas Burkett, John Millward, John Sumner, and William Muspratt, the cook's assistant. From journals taken from the captured men, Captain Edwards pieced together the story that unfolded after the mutiny. Tensions erupted, it seemed, shortly after Christian took control of the Bounty , with some of the men complaining that Christian and his closest friends "were always served better than these who were thought to be disaffected. Quarreling among the men increased, with claims to native women the most intense source of disagreement.

Within a week, the Bounty sailed from tiny island back to Tahiti for supplies. With a load of pigs, goats, plants, chickens and--most significantly--nine Tahitian women, eight Tahitian men, and seven boys and one girl, the ship sailed back to the Tubuai. For three months, the mutineers struggled to build a community in Tubuai, but by September tensions had become unbearable among the various factions. The decision was made to split up, with some men to be brought back to Tahiti, while the others would sail with Christian in search of a new place of safety. On September 21, , after dropping off sixteen men, each with a musket and seventeen pounds of powder, Christian and eight of his followers bid a final farewell to Tahiti.

Where they sailed and what became of them, no one knew. He had told the men he would "search for an unknown or uninhabited island in which there was no harbour for shipping" and there would run the Bounty ashore--but that was the only clue as to the party's whereabouts. The sinking of the Pandora engraving by Lt. Batty, based on sketch by Peter Heywood. For the next three months, Edwards took the Pandora from one Pacific island to another, in a dogged search for the remaining fugitives. Trouble developed in the Samoas during a June rainstorm, when a vessel carrying nine men was lost. In August, with Christian's party still uncaptured, the Pandora finally turned toward England. Thirty-one crew members and four of the fourteen prisoners Skinner, still in handcuffs, Hilbrant, still in irons, and Sumner and Stewart, struck by a falling gangway went down with the ship.

The other ten prisoners, scattered among four lifeboats, eventually reached Coupang and, finally, England in March Under the law of England, it mattered not whether a man actively participated in seizing command of the ship or took no action to oppose the mutiny. As Nessy Heywood, sister of one of the charged men, Peter Heywood, was reminded in a letter, "The man who stands Neuter is equally guilty with him who lifts his arms against his Captain. Rejecting requests for separate trials, Lord Hood proclaimed, even before the proceeding began: "The Bounty's Mutineers being charged with and were guilty of the same atrocious Crime, committed at the same time. The court-martial of the Bounty mutineers opened on the gray morning of September 12, in the captain's great cabin of Lord Hood's ship, the Duke , moored in Portsmouth Harbor on England's southern coast.

William Bligh, already a national hero, was far from Portsmouth on that day: As captain of the Providence , he was on his way back to the South Pacific on another breadfruit-gathering mission. The ten defendants in the court martial, each charged with violation of Article XIX of the Articles of War, knew that conviction meant probable death. The law read: "If any Person in or belonging to the Fleet shall make or endeavour to make any mutinous Assembly upon any Pretence whatsoever, every Person offending herein, and being convicted thereof by the Sentence of the Court-martial shall suffer Death.

Judge Advocate Moses Greetham, handling the case for the British Navy, opened the proceeding by describing the long series of events, beginning with the breadfruit commission, that led to the court-martial. The jury of twelve naval officers in blue coats and gold buttons listened as Greetham continued by reading William Bligh's detailed report of the mutiny. The prosecution's case took only a few days. The key witnesses, unsurprisingly, were Bounty loyalists. After each witness testified, the defendants themselves--a rather uneducated lot with no special knowledge in the ways of the law--were given the opportunity to cross-examine them.

One defendant, however, did have both helpful connections and sound legal advice. Young Peter Heywood just fifteen at the time of the mutiny , acting on that legal advice, reserved his defense until the prosecution had closed its case. The prosecution based its case against the mutineers on three fundamental mistakes they made. First, in the prosecution's view, they took no actions to directly thwart the mutiny. Second, they did not get into the Bounty's launch with Captain Bligh. Finally, the prosecution noted, none of the men made any determined effort to return to England after the mutiny, but instead many went into hiding in Tahiti.

Master of the Bounty , John Fryer, testified first for the prosecution. Fryer, who occupied a cabin opposite Bligh's, described being awoken by shouting just before dawn on the night of April 28, Mutineer Matthew Quintal stepped into his cabin and warned him that if he said anything he was a dead man. Fryer testified that he looked out his cabin door and saw Christian holding a cord that tied that hands of his nightshirt-clad captain. Fryer offered damning testimony concerning some of the defendants.

John Millward, he said, guarded him with arms. When Fryer suggested to Millward that he "knock down" the mutineer standing next to him, Fryer said, Millward cocked his musket and pointed it at Fryer with the warning, "Mr. Fryer be quiet; no one will hurt you. The Bounty's master told the court that we encouraged James Morrison to turn against the mutineers, Morrison replied, "It is too late. Fryer's testimony was helpful to several of the other defendants, however. Fryer noted that Joseph Coleman "called out several times to recollect that he had no hand in the business," and he testified that during the mutiny he saw Thomas McIntosh and Charles Norman leaning against a rail, apparently crying. William Cole, the boatswain, testified next. He described visiting the seamen's quarters to awaken three of the defendants, Morrison, Millward, and McIntosh, after discovering Christian had taken the ship.

None, he said, wanted anything to do with the mutiny, but while he was talking to them one of the mutineers, Charles Churchill, walked into the room and "called out to Millward, desired him to come upon Deck immediately to take a Musquet. Cole also recalled seeing the prisoner William Muspratt "with a Musquet in his Hand. The court also asked Cole, "You have said that Coleman, Norman and McIntosh were retained in the Bounty against their will--Have you reason to believe that any of the other prisoners were detained against their inclinations?

Heywood was. The court swore in William Peckover the next morning. Peckover testified that Burkett, who was carrying arms, called down from the Bounty to the overloaded launch to see if he needed anything else. When Peckover said that he had "only what I stood in, a shirt, and a pair of trousers," Burkett left and returned ten minutes later with additional clothes, which he tossed into the boat. Peckover testified that except for Coleman, Norman, McIntosh, and Byrn, he "had every reason to suppose" that the other six defendants supported the mutiny. Witness William Purcell described, in his testimony, how he succeeded in changing Christian's mind, convincing the chief mutineer to allow the Bounty loyalists to have the larger and safer of the two available launches. Christian also relented to the ship's carpenter's demand that he be allowed to take his tool chest. Christian's concession on the tool chest prompted other mutineers to urge that Purcell be ordered to stay on the Bounty , as he with his tool chest might secure the loyalists "another vessel in a month.

Purcell was the first witness to offer evidence that incriminated young Peter Heywood. Purcell testified that he saw Heywood on the booms with "his hand on a cutlass. Several additional witnesses rounded out the case for the prosecution. The prosecution rested its case on Friday, and the court allowed the defendants the weekend, as Caroline Alexander writes in The Bounty , "to prepare and rehearse the words that would damn or save them. The four men who Bligh had previously described as having been detained against their will, Norman , McIntosh , Coleman , and Byrn each offered short prepared defenses. The defenses included--for Norman and McIntosh--personal letters from Bligh declaring them innocent of mutiny. In the cases of these men, the court-martial was more a formality than a threat, and their eventual acquittal a virtual certainty.

For three other men, execution was no less likely than acquittal was for the four detained loyalists. Thomas Burkett , for example, faced the damning testimony of more than one prosecution witness that he, with musket in hand, escorted Captain Bligh from his cabin. His long shot defense consisted of accusations against Fletcher Christian forced him to participate in the mutiny against his will and suggestions that he desired to retake the Bounty and return it to England--but never had the support to pull it off. Millward and Ellison also confronted long odds, having been described by witnesses as being armed with cutlasses at the time of the mutiny. In his defense, Ellison called Christian "a mad man" and said that he feared what would happen if he attempted to thwart the mutiny. Millward, in his prepared statement, claimed that he--like Burkett--had hoped to retake the Bounty at an opportune time, but that the time never came.

Unfortunately for Millward, when prosecution witness William Cole, was asked by Millward to confirm his story of a conversation about retaking the boat, Cole failed to recall any such discussion. Genuine doubt existed only as to the fates of the three remaining defendants, James Morrison , William Muspratt , and Peter Heywood. Morrison mounted a tenacious defense. He succeeded in getting witnesses to support his argument, that he had wanted to join Bligh in the launch, but had been prevented by mutineers from doing so. He also pulled off something rare in the court-martial in successfully impeaching two witnesses that testified against him. Muspratt had to contend with incriminating testimony that placed a musket in his hands at the time of the mutiny. He attempted to call two of his fellow defendants, Byrn and Norman, as witnesses to confirm his claim that he expressed displeasure with the mutiny as it was in progress, but the Court denied his request.

Most public attention focused on the case of Peter Heywood, the lone charged officer. Heywood's youth, and his upbringing in a wealthy and well-connected British family one of the court-martial judges, in fact, was related by marriage to the Heywood family , invited considerable speculation. William Bligh was an officer in the Royal Navy and was the victim of a mutiny on his ship, the Bounty, in Bligh — had a reputation for having a volatile temper and often clashed with his fellow officers and crewmen. His crew mutinied against him during a return trip from Tahiti in Bligh, the son of a Plymouth customs officer, went to sea aged seven as a captain's servant on board HM Monmouth.

He became a skilled young seaman and navigator and in , aged 22, he was appointed sailing master on HM Resolution , serving under Captain James Cook on his final Pacific voyage. He did fine chart and survey work, published alongside Cook's journals, but resented the lack of credit received for this. Find out more about Captain James Cook. By he had made lieutenant, and six years later, he was recommended the role of acting captain to command the HM sloop Bounty.

This was to lead a mission to transfer breadfruit from Tahiti to the Caribbean, as food for the slave labour force used on plantations there. Eighteen mutineers set Bligh and 18 of his loyal crewmen adrift in a small boat. Bligh, however, was a skilled navigator and managed to sail them nearly miles to Timor, in the Dutch East Indies. From there, he brought his men back to England to report the mutiny, arriving 14 March Find out more about the mutiny on the Bounty.

Read about the Bounty's medical book, held in the library at National Maritime Museum.

The Bounty: The True Story of the Mutiny on the Bounty by Caroline Alexander

A vessel was obtained and a commander, William Bligh, selected. The voyage, however, did not rank high in the Admiralty's priorities--the ship was small, and Bligh was denied the status "master and commander" and the other commissioned officers and security force usually given to the captain of a voyage of such length. William Bligh's career at sea had a remarkable upward trajectory. By age 22, he had been appointed sailing master the person in charge of day-to-day management of the ship of the Resolution , captained by James Cook.

After rounding the Cape of Good Hope, the Resolution spent a year exploring the Pacific from the southern islands to the Arctic north. In the Sandwich Islands now Hawaii , Bligh witnessed Cook being bludgeoned to death on a beach by natives--a shocking event which might have powerfully shaped his own ideas about discipline. By , Bligh earned command of his own ship, the Britannia, and brought on as a young able-bodied seaman Fletcher Christian, a twenty-three-year-old man with connections to the extended Bligh family. On August 20, , Lieutenant Bligh took command of the Bounty.

When he began to fit-out and man the ship one of the first persons he recruited was Fletcher Christian. Arriving at the tip of South America in late March, the Bounty encountered day after day of mountainous waves that finally forced Bligh to order a ten-thousand-mile detour around Africa's Cape of Good Hope. The Bounty reached Cape Town on May 24, where it remained for thirty-eight days as it was completely overhauled and resupplied. Bligh wrote, "Perhaps a Voyage of five Months which I have now performed without touching at any one place but at Tenarif [Canary Islands], has never been accomplished with so few accidents, and such health among Seamen in a like continuance of bad weather. In Cape Town, in fact, Bligh loaned money to Christian, a not insignificant act of friendship from someone who himself had to watch every penny. Seven weeks after leaving the Cape, the Bounty anchored off the southern coast of Tasmania. At Adventure Bay on Tasmania the first signs of real trouble surfaced.

Bligh criticized his carpenter, William Purcell, for cutting poor quality billets of wood. Purcell responded that Bligh just came onshore "to find fault" and became so insolent that Bligh ordered him back to the ship. Bligh lamented that he was so shorthanded he could not afford to confine or to try Purcell for refusing orders and flogging was not, for a warrant officer, an available option --a fact Purcell seemed to recognize as he continued a course of studied disobedience. James Morrison, boatswain's mate, wrote that at Adventure Bay "were sown seeds of eternal discord between Lieut.

Able seaman James Valentine contracted an ailment there that led to his being bled by the ship's surgeon, Thomas Huggan. Unfortunately, the bleeding resulted in an infection which led to Valentine's delirium and death. Bligh blamed Valentine's death on the incompetence of Huggan and the indifference of officers who, he believed, should have spotted symptoms earlier. Islanders in throngs of canoes greeted the ship, and "in ten minutes," wrote Bligh, the Bounty was so filled with Tahitians that "I could scarce find my own people. Bligh's relations with the natives were cordial, and he loved the place, as this entry in his log makes clear: "[Matavai Bay, Tahiti is] certainly the Paradise of the World, and if happiness could result from situation and convenience, here it is to be found in the highest perfection. I have seen many parts of the World, but Otaheite [Tahiti] is capable of being preferable to them all.

The onset of the rainy season meant that the Bounty would be in Tahiti for five months. Crew members constructed a compound that served as a nursery for breadfruit, and Bligh gave the breadfruit project nearly his full attention. Discipline problems were fairly minor although Purcell's insolence continued to be an issue during the first few months of the Bounty's stay on the island, but Bligh's order prohibiting crew members from most trading with natives led to considerable grumbling.

Still, crew members couldn't be too unhappy, what with an abundant supply of native women, most of whom seem quite pleased to enjoy frequent sexual relations with their pale-faced visitors for the price of a few nails. The first serious problem of the Tahitian stay occurred in January, when three crew members Charles Churchill, John Millward, and William Muspratt and a considerable amount of arms and ammunition turned up missing. Bligh demanded that his Tahitian friends aid in returning the deserters and their supplies. He warned he would "make the whole Country suffer for it" if they failed to "bring the Deserters back. Three weeks after they disappeared, the deserters were tracked down in a village five miles away from the Bounty. The men were subjected to repeated lashings and placed in irons, but they remained grateful that Bligh had indicated that he would not recommend them for a court-martial, a proceeding that might be expected to result in their executions.

Bligh blamed the desertion in large part on Midshipman Thomas Hayward, who had fallen asleep at his station at the critical time. Bligh began compiling a long list of complaints in his own mind of misconduct and neglect by his officers. He complained: "Such a neglectfull and worthless petty Officers I believe never was in a Ship as are in this. No Orders for a few hours together are Obeyed by them, and their conduct in general is so bad, that no confidence or trust can be reposed in them. Draft plan of the Bounty , including the fittings for the transport of breadfruit. With 1, breadfruit safely on board, the Bounty was readied for its departure after twenty-three weeks in Tahiti.

Many of the men did not share Bligh's interest in leaving their island pleasures behind. On the early afternoon of April 5, the ship sailed west. On April 11, the Bounty anchored at an island the natives called Whytootackee, one of the Friendly Islands. According to Fryer, around midnight on April 21, Christian complained to Bligh, "Sir, your abuse is so bad that I cannot do my duty with any pleasure. I have been in hell for weeks with you. Bligh again had words with Christian at Anamooka, calling him a "cowardly rascal" for letting fear, while he was under arms, of "a set of naked savages" interfere with his work of supervising the kegging of water. The captain became further enraged when a native diver was able to slip the grapnel, a small anchor, off its line.

Bligh decided to detain some chiefs that were on board the Bounty until the grapnel was returned. In his rage over the lost grapnel, Bligh also chastised officers and crew as "lubberly rascals" who could be easily disarmed by five people "with good sticks. The Bounty headed north through calm seas toward the island of Tofua.

On the morning of August 27, Bligh concluded that some coconuts were missing from the pile kept between the guns. Bligh announced that he would find and punish the coconut thief. He questioned one person after another about the missing nuts. According to boatswain's mate James Morrison, Christian responded to Bligh's interrogation of him by saying, "I hope you don't think me guilty of stealing. I suppose you'll steal my yams next, but I'll sweat you for it you rascals. I'll make half of you jump overboard before you through Endeavor Straights.

Christian was left devastated by the incident. William Purcell reported that Christian left Bligh with tears "running fast from his eyes in big drops. Bligh described what happened in the predawn hours of April "Just before sun-rising, Mr. Christian, with the master at arms, gunner's mate, and Thomas Burket, seaman, came into my cabin while I was asleep, and seizing me, tied my hands with a cord behind my back, and threatened me with instant death, if I spoke or made the least noise. As others gathered on deck, the mutineers ordered two boatswain to lower the Bounty's launch. Eighteen people either were ordered into the launch or entered voluntarily.

Bligh, by now, recognized he was about to be set adrift. Assorted provisions were gathered, including twine, canvas, lines, sails, a twenty-gallon cask of water, pounds of bread, a tool chest, a compass and a small quantity of rum. Bligh implored Christian to remember that, back in England, his children had bounced on his knee. Christian, replying with emotion, said, "I am in hell--I am in hell. At the last minute, four cutlasses were

tossed into the twenty-three-foot boat. Bligh reported: "After having undergone a great deal of ridicule, and been kept some time to make sport for these unfeeling wretches, we were at length cast adrift in the open ocean.

Eleven months after the mutiny, and against all odds, William Bligh reached the home shores of England. Bligh took rightful pride in his accomplishment, and in his Narrative of the Mutiny , published just months after his return, he devoted a scant six pages to the mutiny and eighty to the story of his remarkable 3,mile subsequent voyage in an overloaded, under- provisioned boat. The English Chronicle called Bligh's navigation of "his little skiff through so dangerous a sea" a "matchless The nation hailed Bligh as a hero and within a year he was appointed captain of a new breadfruit expedition, this one with a full complement of lieutenants and marines for better security. In the summer of Captain Edward Edwards assumed command of the gun frigate Pandora , with orders to sail to the Pacific and bring back whatever Bounty mutineers he and his men could round up. On board as his third lieutenant was Thomas Hayward, a Bounty midshipman who accompanied Bligh on his legendary journey in the foot launch.

The Pandora arrived in Tahiti in on a fine March day in Three Bounty crew members, anxious to rebuild their lives back in England, swam out to the Pandora. Peter Heywood, who was just seventeen at the time of the mutiny, and Joseph Coleman and George Stewart, after announcing that they were formerly of the Bounty , were arrested and placed in chains.

Coleman informed Captain Edwards of events after the mutiny. He explained that Fletcher Christian left sixteen men on Tahiti and then departed with the other mutineers in search of a safe tropical haven. From talking with curious Tahitians that had climbed aboard the Pandora , Edwards learned the probable whereabouts of the eleven remaining fugitives on the island. Edwards mounted a roundup effort with the help of local leaders. By the second day, able seaman Richard Skinner was in chains. A party dispatched to arrest a group that had recently sailed in a schooner on the south coast discovered that the mutineers, having heard of the Pandora's arrival, fled into the mountain forests. The search party found three mutineers, James Morrison, Charles Norman, and Thomas Ellison, asleep in a shelter and returned them to the Pandora , where they were placed in a newly constructed prison hut on the quarterdeck.

About the same time, Michael Byrn, a fiddler who was nearly blind, became the eighth Bounty crew member captured. Within the next ten days, the last of the Tahitian fugitives were rounded up. In the same area the following night, they found the last four men: Thomas Burkett, John Millward, John Sumner, and William Muspratt, the cook's assistant. From journals taken from the captured men, Captain Edwards pieced together the story that unfolded after the mutiny. Tensions erupted, it seemed, shortly after Christian took control of the Bounty , with some of the men complaining that Christian and his closest friends "were always served better than these who were thought to be disaffected. Quarreling among the men increased, with claims to native women the most intense source of disagreement. Within a week, the Bounty sailed from tiny island back to Tahiti for supplies.

With a load of pigs, goats, plants, chickens and--most significantly--nine Tahitian women, eight Tahitian men, and seven boys and one girl, the ship sailed back to the Tubuai. For three months, the mutineers struggled to build a community in Tubuai, but by September tensions had become unbearable among the various factions. The decision was made to split up, with some men to be brought back to Tahiti, while the others would sail with Christian in search of a new place of safety. On September 21, , after dropping off sixteen men, each with a musket and seventeen pounds of powder, Christian and eight of his followers bid a final farewell to Tahiti. Where they sailed and what became of them, no one knew. He had told the men he would "search for an unknown or uninhabited island in which there was no harbour for shipping" and there would run the Bounty ashore--but that was the only clue as to the party's whereabouts.

The sinking of the Pandora engraving by Lt. Batty, based on sketch by Peter Heywood. For the next three months, Edwards took the Pandora from one Pacific island to another, in a dogged search for the remaining fugitives. Trouble developed in the Samoas during a June rainstorm, when a vessel carrying nine men was lost. In August, with Christian's party still uncaptured, the Pandora finally turned toward England. Thirty-one crew members and four of the fourteen prisoners Skinner, still in handcuffs, Hilbrant, still in irons, and Sumner and Stewart, struck by a falling gangway went down with the ship. The other ten prisoners, scattered among four lifeboats, eventually reached Coupang and, finally, England in March Bligh was tried for the loss of the Bounty but acquitted and promoted to captain.

Despite difficulties it was a success; Bligh transferred a cargo-load of breadfruit to the West Indies and returned to Britain with samples of ackee fruit from Jamaica, which he sent to the Royal Society. However, upon his return Bligh found his reputation had been tarnished thanks to the trial of the Bounty mutineers. He was put on half pay and unemployed for 18 months. Bligh returned to active service in and served with distinction under Admiral Duncan at the Battle of Camperdown in and with Nelson at the Battle of Copenhagen in Under his strict authority, he set out to stamp out the corruption that was rife among officials and the military in Australia at that time.

Bligh returned to Britain in and in was promoted to Rear-Admiral, but his days of active service were over and he died in R eflect on the complex legacy of European exploration and how this has shaped the Pacific as we know it today. Explore for free. Visit Us. Search Want to search our collection? Search here. We use cookies to ensure you have the best browsing experience and to help us improve our website. Find out more Accept Cookies.

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