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# Mutiny’s Bounty: Pitcairn Islanders and the Making of a Natural Laboratory on the Edge of Britain’s Pacific Empire

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**MUTINY'S BOUNTY: PITCAIRN ISLANDERS AND THE MAKING OF A NATURAL LABORATORY ON THE EDGE OF BRITAIN'S PACIFIC EMPIRE**

**Adrian Young**

A DISSERTATION

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**Abstract**

In 1789, Fletcher Christian led 18 sailors in a mutiny on *HMAV Bounty*. They set Captain William Bligh and his loyal crew adrift, took twelve Tahitian women and six Tahitian men captive, and eventually settled on Pitcairn Island, a remote volcanic isle in the Southern Pacific. Their descendants still live both there and on Norfolk Island, to which many of them migrated in 1856. My dissertation follows the making of these islands into sites for the production of knowledge about race, language, national identity, and colonial governance. Writers and researchers came to construe the islanders as near-perfect research subjects, describing their home islands as "accidental experiments" and "natural laboratories." However, that metaphor elided the intentional and careful construction of both islands as exemplary, insular, and experimental spaces. During the nineteenth century, moralists, missionaries and evangelical authors made the islands into object lessons in Victorian and Anglican virtue. The migration to Norfolk Island in 1856 was authored by colonial administrators as a morally freighted "experiment" in colonial settlement and racial destiny—an experiment that bureaucrats later termed a dysgenic failure after a series of on-the-ground investigations. Stepping into field spaces engendered by that long history of observation and scrutiny, twentieth-century social scientists measured, interviewed, and recorded Pitcairn Islanders in order to define the boundaries of race and language. The dissertation unpacks their field practices to relocate the making of modern biological anthropology and creole language studies to situated encounters in the southern Pacific.

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**List of Abbreviations**

ADM – Admiralty

AMNH – American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY

CO – Colonial Office

FCO – Foreign and Commonwealth Office

FO – Foreign Office

HMSO – Her/His Majesty's Stationary Office

KAVHA – Kingston Arthur's Vale Historical Area

NAA – National Archives of Australia

NLA – National Library of Australia

NLNZ – National Library of New Zealand

NMM – Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK

OM – Otago Museum, Dunedin, NZ

PISC – Pitcairn Island's Study Center, Pacific Union College, Anguin, CA

RAI – Royal Anthropological Institute

RCS – Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons, London, UK

RGS – Royal Geographical Society

RHL – Rhodes house Library, Oxford, UK

TNA – The National Archives of the United Kingdom

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization

SDA – Seventh Day Adventism/Seventh Day Adventist

SLNSW – State Library of New South Wales

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Dissertation writing often feels like solitary work, and it is—but when looking back on the debts I have accrued in pursuing this project, I realize how much my labor was totally and completely underwritten by the support and labor of others. No dissertation is an island. To begin with, I am indebted to several sources of research funding. The archive of writing about Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands is scattered across the globe; papers have accumulated in New York, California, London, Sydney, Wellington, Dunedin, and many places besides. I was able to consult them through the generosity of the Australia National University Center for European Studies, which awarded me a visiting fellowship, and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, which awarded me a Caird Short-Term Research Fellowship. The Princeton History Department funded travel to Pitcairn Island itself, still one of the more difficult—and expensive—destinations in this increasingly flat and globalized world. The Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in the Humanities (IHUM) awarded me a fellowship and admission to its joint PhD program; through the intellectual generosity of its director, Jeff Dolven, and the members of my cohort, I learned to trespass into new disciplinary terrain.

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Richards for welcoming me to the Norfolk Island Museum, and Albert Buffet, Alice Buffet, Colleen Crane, Tom Lloyd, Trish Magri, and Jodie Williams for speaking with me about their language, culture, and its researchers. History writing sometimes feels like very abstract work, because the writer's relationship with his subjects is mostly mediated by text—but my time on Pitcairn and Norfolk helped me to know them as very real and human places.

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# Chapter 1| Introduction

**Telling *Bounty* Stories**

"Why another book about Pitcairn Island and its inhabitants? It is a reasonable question to ask after some 2,500 historical, scientific, and romantic books and articles have been published on various aspects of the subject."[1] So began a 1964 manuscript about Pitcairn Island. Its author was Hardwicke Knight, an amateur photographer, writer, and adventurer from New Zealand who had joined a team of archaeologists from the University of Otago in a survey of the island earlier that year. Back at his typewriter on the South Island's mist-shrouded Otago peninsula, he faced the difficult problem of justifying a new monograph about a much-studied place, and of situating his own work in the long tradition of writing about its people.

Knight's bibliometric estimation was perhaps a shade exaggerated. Pitcairn Island, the furthest, smallest, remotest, most superlative outpost of Britain's Pacific empire, had indeed attracted an outsized interest from writers and investigators over the last two centuries. Tallying every newspaper and encyclopedia article and every stray description of the island from a vast corpus of travel accounts, one could easily arrive at or indeed surpass 2,500 entries. Summing up only dedicated books and long-form articles about the Pitcairn Islanders, however, we could reduce Knight's count by almost an order of magnitude. No matter—even if tallied in the hundreds rather than thousands, the sheer mass of text devoted to the island and its people has been remarkable. On a per capita basis, they likely rank among the most written-about people ever to have lived. The arguments and approaches of the entries in Knight's massive bibliography ranged widely, but many of those who wrote about the Pitcairn Islanders shared at

[1] Hardwicke Knight, "preface," *Preliminary Report*, 1, Papers of Hardwicke Knight, Hocken Library, University of Otago, MS-4118-107.

least one commonality: though Pitcairn was and remains among the most difficult-to-reach places on the globe, authors persistently imagined it as an intellectually accessible microcosm with utility for working out the problems of the larger world, a place with which they could learn about themselves, their own societies, even humanity itself. Or, as Hardwicke Knight put it much more simply and directly: "To know more about Pitcairn is to know more about human nature."[2]

This dissertation is about that idea. Or, more specifically, it is about the people, texts, and encounters that generated, sustained and, on rare occasions, critiqued that idea. The people and texts are, roughly: sailors and their travel narratives, government administrators and their reports, anthropologists and their measurements, and linguists and their tape recordings. Other iterations of this project could easily include archaeologists, geneticists, lawyers, historians, and novelists—all communities that imagined the island as a kind of microcosm or natural laboratory. The encounters from which they built and sustained that idea, on the other hand, are not amenable to nearly so neat a taxonomy. Most visits with Pitcairn Islanders were fleeting, measured in hours or days, though some lasted a good deal longer—three months in Knight's case. This dissertation will examine those encounters in detail where the archive permits. All of them, in once capacity or another, were intimate experiences in a small, idiosyncratic place from which authors later fashioned their texts and, in them, their larger truths about human nature.

**The Mutiny on the *Bounty* and Pitcairn's Island**

That Knight, or anyone, should take notice of Pitcairn Islanders at all depended on another story, one which was well-known to the Anglophone readers and filmgoers of the

[2] Ibid.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the mutiny on the *Bounty.* Though its status has slowly eroded, the story of the mutiny was once canonical in English-speaking culture. The *Bounty*, William Bligh, Fletcher Christian—writers could expect their readers to understand that constellation of names, and to assign them their appropriate significance. When Britain's National Maritime Museum held its bicentennial exhibit on the *Bounty* in 1989, the exhibition catalogue began with a note professing that "nearly everyone has heard of Bligh, his mutiny, and his epic voyage."[3] Accounts began with attestations of the mutiny and Pitcairn's fame and near universal recognition well before then, too. In 1922, the author of a short story about the South Pacific wrote, in what reads as both declaration and exhortation, that "everybody must know the story of the mutiny of the HMS *Bounty*. It is a most enthralling and romantic narrative of fact."[4] A half century before that, an 1871 article in a Boston literary magazine asserted that "The main facts of the *Bounty* mutiny are no doubt familiar to most of our readers."[5] Supposing, nevertheless, that a late Victorian reader was somehow unfamiliar with Bligh or Pitcairn and looked up their respective entries in contemporary literary reference books, she would discover:

> Bligh (William), *Captain of the* Bounty*, so well known for the mutiny headed by Fletcher Christian, the mate (1790).*[6]

And:

> Pitcairn's Island (Pacific Ocean) . . . *The mutineers of the* Bounty *established a colony, consisting of 9 British sailors, 6 native Tahitian men, and 12 women, on this island in 1790. Through dissensions and massacres, there remained, in 1800, only one Englishman, Adams, the Tahitian females, and 19 children.*[7]

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[3] Terence Lewin, *Mutiny on the Bounty, 1789–1989: An International Exhibition to Mark the 200th Anniversary, 28 April 1989–1 Oct. 1989* (London: Published by Manorial Research PLC in association with the National Maritime Museum, 1989), 4.
[4] S. Gordon Gurwit, "Out of the Coral Sea," *Argosy All-Story Weekly* 147, no. 2 (November 18, 1922):186.
[5] "The Mutineers of the Bounty," *Literary World* 1, no. 2 (Boston, April 1, 1871): 1.
[6] E. Cobham Brewer, *The Reader's Handbook of Allusions, References, Plots, and Stories* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1880), 113.
[7] George H. Townsend, *A Manual of Dates: A Dictionary of Reference to All the Most Important Events in the History of Mankind to Be Found in Authentic Records* (London: Routledge, Warne, and Routledge, 1862), 668–669.

This dissertation is not a history of the *Bounty* or of the early settlement on Pitcairn; those subjects were written and re-written and then written again over the last two centuries, sometimes by writers who will appear in the coming chapters. And yet, an understanding of that history is necessary to comprehend what follows in these pages. There is no way to relay the story of the *Bounty* and the settlement of Pitcairn without imbricating myself in the very literature I set out to disentangle, and critical distance from a place famous for entangling its authors is a writerly fantasy in any case. So join me, and forgive me, as I devote a few paragraphs to the recapitulation of an oft-told yarn.

*  *  *

In October of 1787, the admiralty dispatched Her Majesty's Armed Vessel *Bounty* to the Pacific, under the command of Lieutenant William Bligh. Bligh was a veteran of James Cook's last and fatal voyage of exploration to the Pacific, having served as master of the *Resolution* during the same journey to Hawai'i in which Cook met his famous end.[8] After the Cook voyages, the Royal Society and its president, Joseph Banks, pressed the admiralty to outfit a ship for a voyage to Tahiti in an experiment in economic botany. Breadfruit trees, which the Cook expeditions reported grew there in abundance, might make a cheap and plentiful foodstuff for the enslaved people of Britain's Caribbean colonies. On Banks's advice, the Navy transformed the *Bounty's* great cabin into a greenhouse, displacing Bligh and crowding the small vessel's officers and enlisted men into closer quarters, and sent the *Bounty* to the South Seas. The ship sailed to

[8] A storied locus of mythmaking in its own right: Robert Borofsky, "Cook, Lono, Obeyeskere, and Sahlins," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 2 (April 1997): 255–282; Marshal Sahlins, *How "Natives" Think: About Captain Cook, For Example* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Gananath Obeyesekere, *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Tahiti largely without incident, arriving after a year's journey in October of 1788. Its crew spent five months anchored at Matavai Bay, gathering breadfruit saplings and entangling their lives with those of the Tahitians, a complex cross-cultural encounter that most histories recount simply as one of hedonistic sexual hospitality. On April 5, 1789, the *Bounty* weighed anchor and began the long voyage home.

A few weeks later, on the morning of April 28, 1789, master's mate Fletcher Christian led a mutiny. Bligh knew Christian well; he had sponsored his career and chose him especially for the breadfruit expedition—later accounts would tell the mutiny as series of personal betrayals. Christian and his mutineers took over the *Bounty*, setting Bligh and his loyal crew adrift in the ship's launch.[9] The renegades sailed back to Tahiti, where some chose to remain. Most, however, feared the prospect of reprisal and capture if they stayed and soon sought a more permanent home where they could live out their lives in Pacific obscurity.[10] They attempted to found a settlement on the island of Tubuai, but after their violent colonization attempt resulted in the murder of dozens of its inhabitants, they gave up the experiment and returned to Tahiti. They soon tried again. Kidnapping twelve women and six men, most of them Tahitians but some from Tubuai and Raiatea, Christian and eight other mutineers sailed away from Tahiti for the last time. They tacked eastward, toward Pitcairn's Island, recently discovered for Europeans by Carteret in 1767 and described in his account as uninhabited.[11] Navigating to it was difficult work as its

[9] The launch was too small to accommodate all loyalists; some remained on the *Bounty*. Bligh and his crew sailed on the open boat some 4,000 miles to the Dutch colony of Timor—a heroic act that partially mitigated his reputation. One of the more interesting accounts is a novella bearing Jules Verne's name, though it was actually only edited by him and mostly penned by his friend Gabriel Marcel: Jules Verne, *Les Révoltés de la* Bounty (Paris: Musées des Familles, 1879).

[10] The most comprehensive historical treatment is still that of eminent Pacific historian and Pitcairn obsessive Henry Evans Maude, "In Search of a Home: From the Mutiny to Pitcairn Island, 1789–1790," *Journal of Pacific History* 67, no. 2 (June 1958): 104–131.

[11] It was first discovered by humans perhaps a thousand years ago; the island still bears many traces of an initial Polynesian settlement—though it was indeed uninhabited when the mutineers arrived. The island was named "Pitcairn's" Island in early maps, named for the midshipman who first sighted it. Footnotes like this one in other

location was mischarted by several degrees longitude, but the mutineers finally arrived on January 23, 1790. They found an island ringed by massive cliffs; it would have struck the mutineers, as it did later observers, as a natural fortress. The crew found a place to run their ship ashore and salvaged what valuables they could before burning the *Bounty* down to the water line. Far above the cliffs, they built a small settlement.

What follows is known only through a handful of sometimes contradictory accounts, though most histories describe the island's early years as a period of racial and sexual conflict. The English mutineers parceled out the land of the one-by-two-mile island among themselves, granting none to the Tahitians. The mutineers each took a wife, leaving a remainder of three Tahitian women for the six Tahitian men. Most authors agree that following the death of one of the mutineers' wives, things broke down. The Tahitian men rose up, killing five Englishmen, including Christian, in a surprise attack. The surviving mutineers fled into the bush and with the help of some of their wives proceeded to kill the Tahitian men. Soon, the remaining mutineers turned on each other; according to most accounts, one was murdered with an axe to the head and another committed suicide by tying a stone around his neck and leaping from a cliff. When the killing was done, two Britons survived, along with most of the women and their children. One of those Englishmen was Edward "Ned" Young, who died of "asthma" in 1800. That left Alexander Smith (also known as John Adams) as the last mutineer; he lived until 1829. It is his ever-shifting retellings on which writers have built much of their understanding of the island's early history.[12]

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texts ubiquitously note that the midshipman's uncle was killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill. For one of the island's first-ever appearances in English text, see Philip Carteret, "Captain Carteret's Voyage," in *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere and Successively Performed by Commodore Byron, Captain Carteret, Captain Wallis, and Captain Cook in the* Dolphin*, the* Swallow*, and the* Endeavour, ed. John Hawksworth, vol. 1 (London: Strahan and Cadell, 1773), 561.

[12] John Adams, "Statement to the Officers of the Blossom," 1825, Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK NMM/PGR/14; Philip Pipon, "Narrative of the State Mutineers of H.M. Ship *Bounty* Settled on

The women, so often omitted from accounts like these, were active agents in the island's early history—though the conflation of "Tahitian" and "feminine" qualities hidden within the Pitcairn community remained a long-running motif in writing about the island. Yet the women, on rare occasions, told their own tales, too.[13] One of them was Teehuteatuanoa, the wife of Isaac Martin, whom the mutineers called "Jenny." The archive reveals little about her life, but historians have speculated that the "Tua" in her name suggests she came from a high-class family. In 1819, she narrated her own account of the island's early years; published in newspapers, it is one of the few perspectives by anyone other than Adams to survive.[14] By supplying muskets and intelligence to the mutineers, the women likely decided the island's fate; indeed, in Teehuteatuanoa's account the women killed the last of the Tahitian men themselves. They kept the skulls of their slain husbands in their houses and enforced their own customs—they would not violate *tapu* by eating with the men. Several of the women later built a raft in an attempt to escape the island, though the men found and destroyed it. They gathered weapons to assert their own authority and to halt the abuse by the island's men, relenting only after tense negotiation. After a period of accommodation, the surviving adults and their children built a more stable community on the island, one which later visitors ubiquitously described as Christian patriarchy.

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Pitcairn's Island in the South Seas," September 1814), SLNSW, Papers of Joseph Banks, 71.05; H. B. Willis, "Pitcairn's Island in the Southern Ocean," 1814, NLNZ, qMS-2259; John Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage, to Pitcairn's Island* (London: Law and Whittaker, 1817).

[13] Trevor Lummis is one of very few authors to take their perspective seriously, see *Pitcairn Island: Life and Death in Eden* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Brookfield, Vt., USA: Ashgate, 1997). More recently, Pauline Reynolds has begun investigating the history of Pitcairn's women through material cultures; see *Pitcairn Tapa: 'ahu No Hitiaurevareva* (Huahine, French Polynesia: 'Ana'ana, 2008). Some historians are still more interested in their bodies rather than lived histories, i.e. Robert Langdon, "'Dusky Damsels': Pitcairn Island's Neglected Matriarchs of the Bounty Saga," *Journal of Pacific History* 35, no. 1 (June, 2000): 29–47; for the history of Pacific femininity and its representations, see: Patty O'Brien, *The Pacific Muse: Exotic Femininity and the Colonial Pacific* (University of Washington Press, 2006).

[14] Teehuteatuanoa (Jenny), "Account of the Mutineers of the Ship *Bounty* and their Descendants at Pitcairn's Island," *Sydney Gazette* (July 17, 1819): 817; "Account of Jenny, an Otahetian Woman," *United Services Journal* 2, no. 2 (November, 1829): 589–593.

Strangers encountered the Pitcairners for the first time in 1808, beginning a series of visits that subsequent chapters will describe in substantially greater detail. After the admiralty took an interest in their welfare, the entire community migrated briefly to Tahiti in 1831, but returned after only a few months. They were not Tahitians, the Pitcairners said, and many of them died from diseases against which they had little immunity. In 1856, they migrated again, this time more permanently, to Norfolk Island, another Pacific island and a recently abandoned British penal colony some 4,000 miles to the west. A few families, unhappy with their lot on Norfolk, returned to Pitcairn in 1859. Communities of Pitcairn Islanders survive on both islands to this day. At the time of writing there are about 45 on Pitcairn and roughly 700 on Norfolk Island, though emigrants also live in New Zealand and scattered throughout the English-speaking world.

The legendarium surrounding the mutiny and the settlement on Pitcairn grew quickly, as contemporaries framed those events into narratives. The first *Bounty* stories were told to the Tahitians by Fletcher Christian and his mutineers to explain their captain's absence while searching for supplies and cooperation in 1789. Bligh and Captain Cook had founded a colony at Aitutaki, the mutineers told their Tahitian hosts; all was well. Another early *Bounty* story was Bligh's, told in England to salvage his reputation.[15] His command had been piratically usurped, though his skilled seamanship had led his loyal crew to Timor in an open boat. His story prompted the admiralty to dispatch HMS *Pandora* to Tahiti, where it captured most of the mutineers Christian had left behind.[16] Some of them met their end when the *Pandora* wrecked on

[15] William Bligh, *A Narrative of the Mutiny on Board His Majesty's Ship the* Bounty *and subsequent voyage of part of the crew in the ships boat from Tofoa, one of the Friendly Islands of Timor, a Dutch settlement in the East Indies, illustrated with charts* (London: G. Nicol, 1790); *A Voyage to the South Seas, undertaken by command of His Majesty, for the purpose of conveying the breadfruit tree to the West Indies in His Majesty's Ship* Bounty (London: G. Nicol, 1792).

[16] Edward Edwards and George Hamilton, *Voyage of the HMS* Pandora *Despatched to Arrest the Mutineers of the* Bounty *in the South Seas, 1789–1791* (London: F. Edward, 1915).

the Great Barrier Reef. Others, after courts martial in England, were hanged from the yardarm of HMS *Brunswick*. A few, with money and connections, found pardons. The trials in Britain, replete with interpretations and counter-interpretations from parties fighting for their reputations and lives, constituted another set of *Bounty* stories, which together generated significant interest in the press and spurred the further mythologization of the *Bounty* saga.[17]

Other histories followed across the nineteenth century. Books by Sir John Barrow, the reverend Thomas Boyles Murray, and Lady Diana Belcher became well-worn standards that linked the story of the mutiny to the story of Pitcairn.[18] The twentieth century saw no shortage of *Bounty* histories, either, nor did the twenty-first; Caroline Alexander's mass-market retelling is a bookshop mainstay.[19] Nevertheless, fictive and filmic accounts were perhaps the most dominant genre of *Bounty* tales during the last hundred years. Directors and movie studios retold the story, sometimes including its Pitcairn epilogue, in major motion pictures staring Errol Flynn, Clark Gable, Marlon Brando, and Mel Gibson.[20] Perhaps the most popular iteration of all was a trilogy of novels published between 1932 and 1934 by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall.[21] Their books eventually sold some 25 million copies and kindled a fascination with the *Bounty* and Pitcairn in readers across the globe. One visitor to Pitcairn, who wrote his own account of

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[17] William Bligh, *Answer to Certain Assertions contained in the Appendix to a pamphlet entitled 'Minutes of the Proceedings of the Court Martial Held at Portsmouth , August 12, 1792, on ten persons charged with mutiny on board His Majesty's Ship* Bounty (London, G. Nicol, 1794).

[18] John Barrow, *The Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of H. M. S.* Bounty, *Its Causes and Consequences*, The Family Library, no. 25 (London: J. Murray, 1831); Thomas Boyles Murray, *Pitcairn, the Island, the People, and the Pastor: To Which Is Added a Short Notice of the Original Settlement and Present Condition of Norfolk Island* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1857); Lady Diana Jolliffe Belcher, *The Mutineers of the Bounty and Their Descendants in Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands* (London: John Murray, 1870).

[19] Richard Hough, *Captain Bligh and Mr. Christian: The Men and the Mutiny* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1973); Caroline Alexander, *The* Bounty: *The True Story of the Mutiny on the* Bounty (New York: Viking, 2003).

[20] *The Mutiny on the* Bounty, directed by Raymond Longford (Australia: Crick and Jones, 1916), the film is likely lost; *In the Wake of the* Bounty, directed by Charles Chauvel (Australia: Expeditionary Films, 1933); *Mutiny on the* Bounty, directed by William Dieterle (USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1935); *Mutiny on the* Bounty, directed by Frank Lloyd (USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM), 1962); *The* Bounty, directed by Roger Donaldson (UK: Orion Pictures, 1984).

[21] Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *The Mutiny on the* Bounty (London: Chapman and Hall, 1933); *Men Against the Sea* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1934); and *Pitcairn's Island* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1935).

the place in 1980, still recalled reading the novels as a small boy in 1930s South Africa. "Like millions of other boys of my age in the English-speaking world I was entranced by this, the greatest sea story of all time," he recollected before beginning his own account of the island.[22]

Many of the names and histories above will appear in the coming chapters, sometimes as historiographical footnotes, and sometimes as the subjects and protagonists of my own story. However, readers looking for another telling of the *Bounty* mutiny or a straight-forward history of Pitcairn and Norfolk will be disappointed. I have no theory on the cause of Christian's insurrection or the violence of the settlement's early years, and I am only interested in the mutiny's consequences insomuch as they interested others. Those searching for an accounting of that history should instead turn to the many books already written, and to wiser historians than myself. The best among them was Greg Dening, the eminent Australian ethnohistorian who wrote his own history of the mutiny and its representations, and who still stands as the most humane reader of *Bounty* stories.[23] For Dening, the *Bounty* was both an object and a symbol, a floating stage on which captain, sailors, and breadfruit plants together enacted their own affective geography—and a *theatrum mundi* on which English-speaking culture enacted one of its most persistent stories. My work necessarily builds on his.

Dening's history of Pitcairn, ending at 1830, is unfortunately all too brief. Many other authors, however, have written more straightforward accounts of Pitcairn, Norfolk, and their people that cover the whole of the last two centuries. In addition to Trevor Lummis's 1997 work, cited above, oft-cited surveys of Pitcairn's history include David Silverman's 1967 *Pitcairn*

[22] Douglas Thorsen, "Only on Pitcairn," unpublished manuscript, 1982, NLNZ, MS-Papers-3926.
[23] Greg Dening, *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power, and Theater on the* Bounty (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

*Island* and Glyn Christian's 1982 *Fragile Paradise*.[24] Norfolk Island, too, has been the subject of several historical surveys, which can guide readers interested in its colonial history.[25] Other histories by other communities abound. Seventh Day Adventists, for instance, have long written about Pitcairn and its past; the island achieved a place of prominence in the faith's imagination after its conversion in the late nineteenth century. Herbert Ford in particular has devoted decades to writing about the island and its people, and has created a Pitcairn Island Study Center at the Adventist Pacific Union College in Anguin, California. His magnum opus is a list of every ship visit to the island ever recorded, with accompanying notes—it contains thousands of entries. [26] Specialists in academic fields, too, have written their own histories of both islands, including linguistic histories, archaeologies, legal histories, and even a musicology that attends to the islands' past.[27]

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[24] Glyn Christian, *Fragile Paradise: The Discovery of Fletcher Christian,* Bounty *Mutineer* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1982); David Silvermann, *Pitcairn Island* (New York: World Publishing Company, 1967). There are too many other histories to list exhaustively, many uncritical, but entries in the bibliography include: Robert W. Kirk, *Pitcairn Island, the* Bounty *Mutineers, and Their Descendants: A History* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co, 2008); Susanne Chauvel Carlsson (who's father directed *In the Wake of the* Bounty), *Pitcairn: Island at the Edge of Time* (Rockhampton, Australia: Central Queensland University Press, 2000); Peter Clarke, *Hell and Paradise: The Norfolk*-Bounty-*Pitcairn Saga* (London: Viking, 1986); Frank Clune, *Journey to Pitcairn* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1966); and Robert B. Nicolson and Brian F. Davies, *The Pitcairners* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1965). Henry Evans Maude, a prominent early historian and anthropologist of the Pacific and onetime Pitcairn colonial administrator, was obsessed with Pitcairn and its history and went on to become a prominent early historian of the Pacific. C.f. "Tahitian Interlude; the Migration of the Pitcairn Islanders to the Motherland in 1831," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 68, no. 2 (June 1959): 115–140. His son also wrote about Pitcairn and Norfolk, see: Aleric M. Maude, "The Development of the Pitcairner Settlement on Norfolk Island, 1856–1959," *Australian Geographer* 8, no. 3 (1961): 103–115.

[25] Maev O'Collins, *An Uneasy Relationship: Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth of Australia* (Canberra: Australia National University E Press, 2010); Raymond Nobbs, *Norfolk Island and Its Third Settlement: The First Hundred Years: The Pitcairn Era, 1856–1956 and the Melanesian Mission, 1866–1920* (Sydney: Library of Australian History, 2006); Merval Hoare, *Norfolk Island: An Outline of Its History 1774–1987* (St. Lucia, Australia: University of Queensland Press, 1988); Frank Clune, *The Norfolk Island Story* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1981); C. H. Currey, "An Outline of the Story of Pitcairn's Island and Norfolk Island," *Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Australian Historical Society* 44 (1959): 325–374.

[26] Herbert Ford, *Pitcairn Island as a Port of Call: A Record, 1790–2010, 2d Ed.*, 2 (Jefferson, NC: Mcfarland, 2012). Every other scholar of Pitcairn owes a tremendous debt to his work.

[27]Peter Mühlhäusler and his student, Joshua Nash, have studied the language of Norfolk Island extensively (at the time of writing, Nash is conducting fieldwork on Pitcairn). Their efforts to understand the history of the language, and especially the creation of place names, has produced some of the richest understandings of both islands' pasts to date. See: Joshua Nash and Mitchell Low, "Language and Place-Knowledge on Norfolk Island," *Ethnos* 80, no. 3 (May 27, 2015): 385–408; Joshua Nash, "Melanesian Mission Place Names on Norfolk Island," *Journal of Pacific*

It is only very recently that academics have begun to frame the discursive or spatial histories of either island in any capacity. These, by graduate students and young scholars, have treated the island as an indigenous space, deconstructed the use of the *Bounty* myth for tourism, or have investigated the definition and consequences of its small-island status. None of these, however, deal comprehensively with the history of writing about or knowledge-making on these two much-mythologized Pacific spaces.[28] This dissertation is, so far as I know, the first. That said, the line between a history of a place and a history of its representations is a thin and arbitrary one. In many respects, this dissertation is just another *Bounty* story, like the ones whose histories I will examine in the rest of these pages. It will join the texts listed above as yet another entry in the vast and ever growing *Bounty*/Pitcairn/Norfolk corpus, already 2,500 entries strong by 1964 in Hardwicke Knight's reckoning. I will mail a copy to the Norfolk Island Museum in the Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historical Area, where I imagine it will join a small row of other graduate theses on a dusty library shelf. It may circulate as a file on Pitcairn Island thumb drives.

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*History* 47, no. 4 (2012): 475–89; Joshua Nash, *Insular Toponymies: Pristine Place-Naming on Norfolk Island, South Pacific and Dudley Peninsula, Kangaroo Island* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2013); Peter Mühlhäusler, "Acts of Identity in the History of the Pitcairn/Norfolk Language" in *Plurilinguisme Mehrsprachigkeit Plurilingualism: enjeux identitaires, socio-culturels et ducatifs*, eds. L. Mondada and S. Doehler, (Tübingen, Germany: A. Francke, 2003), 29–38; Peter Mühlhäusler, "Pidgin English and the Melanesian Mission," *Journal of Pidgin and Creole Languages* 17, no. 2 (2002): 237–63; Peter Mühlhäusler and Elaine Stratford, "Speaking of Norfolk Island: From Dystopia to Utopia?" in *Small Worlds, Global Lives: Islands and Migration*, eds. Russell King and John Connell (London: Pinter, 1999); see the last chapter for more of Nash and Mühlhäusler's work. Nigel Erskine's archaeology dissertation produced extensive knowledge on Pitcairn's early settlement, see "The Historical Archaeology of Settlement at Pitcairn Island 1790–1856" (PhD diss., James Cook University, 2004). For a sample of legal histories see Michael O. Eshleman, "Law in Isolation: The Legal History of Pitcairn Island, 1900–2010," *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law* 18, no. 1 (2011): 17–71; Michael O. Eshleman, "A South Seas State of Nature: The Legal History of Pitcairn Island, 1790–1900," *Pacific Basin Law Journal* 29, no. 1 (January, 2011); see conclusion for more. For musicology: Philip Hayward, *Bounty Chords: Music, Dance and Cultural Heritage on Norfolk and Pitcairn Islands* (Eastleigh, UK: J. Libbey, 2006).

[28] Christine K. Johnson's work comes closest, see: "The Identity of Place: Pitcairn Island in Cultural and Historical Geography" (Ph.D diss., University of Nevada, Reno, 2014). Johnson attempted a multidisciplinary geography of Pitcairn that combined literary, archaeological, and spatial evidence to uncover the "real" Pitcairn lurking beneath the external and often negative accounts. She also lived for three months with the same family who kindly hosted me on the island. See also Maria Amoamo, "Fieldwork in Remote Communities: An Ethnographic Case Study of Pitcairn Island," in *Advances in Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, in *Field Guide to Case Study Research in Tourism, Hospitality, and Leisure*, eds. Kenneth F. Hyde, Chris Ryan, and Arch G. Woodside (Bingly, UK: Emerald: 2012), 417–38; Maria Amoamo, "(de)Constructing Place-Myth: Pitcairn Island and the 'Bounty' Story," *Tourism Geographies* 15, no. 1 (2013): 107–124; 2006; Marie-Louise Anderson, "Norfolk Island: Pacific Periphery" (master's thesis, University of Tasmania, 2001).

It will almost certainly appear as an entry in future Pitcairn bibliographies, and may even be read by future *Bounty* and Pitcairn obsessives like Hardwicke Knight and myself. I hope it helps its readers in some small way to understand what draws people like them, and me, to study these two distant, insular places, and to understand the strange persistence of the notion that knowing the lives of their inhabitants will help us to know our own.

**Arguments and Frames**

My dissertation, it should be said at the outset, is not at its center about Pitcairn Islanders. Or rather, if this dissertation is about Pitcairn Islanders, it is mostly about "Pitcairn Islanders" as an idea or a category, a subject of inquiry that emerged historically across the last two centuries. Like other Pacific Islanders, Pitcairners saw strangers configure their home islands, their lives, and their bodies into the spaces and subjects of "accidental experiments" and "natural laboratories" from which they gathered evidence and generated larger truths. Pitcairn Islanders, as living, embodied subjects, were protagonists in that story, of course, just as the sailors, travelers, anthropologists, linguists, administrators, and writers they encountered were. Beginning with Pitcairn Island's "rediscovery" by American whalers in 1808, and then ranging widely across the subsequent two-hundred years, this dissertation will show how Pitcairn Islanders and their interlocutors together produced the images of themselves and their islands that captivated writers and readers across the Anglosphere, and from which theorists developed their understandings of human nature, society, and culture. In telling that story, I necessarily weave together threads from other literatures, of which *Bounty* stories comprise only a subset. It

is in these discourses, and with them, and only rarely against them that I seek to make a small contribution of my own.

One set of those literatures is comprised of the historiographies of identity and identity-making. Pitcairn became famous not only as the epilogue of the *Bounty* story, but as a site where "Englishness and "Tahitianess" encountered each other and assumed a unique "hybrid" form. In Regency accounts of Pitcairn Islanders, Englishness and Tahitianness were relatively mutable qualities, defined according to criteria of language, religion, and patrimony. Transplanted into an oceanic context, Englishness was imperiled but also found a generative new soil in a romanticized Pacific garden of hybrid possibility. By the early Victorian period, performances and representations of Anglican piety and patriotic devotion cemented the Pitcairners' status as "British."[29] Over the course of the nineteenth century, however, notions of identity further calcified into the rigid, hierarchical typologies of physical anthropology and race science, a process not unrelated to the expanding project of settler colonialism. In the twentieth century, biological and racial categories became gradually unstable once again, as hybrid populations in sites like Pitcairn and Norfolk became the test subjects of an anthropological discipline looking to reform both its racial categories and its disciplinary identity. Race, as a scientific concept, however, was difficult to purge and left impressions on the anthropological, linguistic, and genetic work that followed in the subsequent decades.

Historians have already written a great deal about the use of faraway places, especially Pacific islands, as sites for defining European selfhood and identity, which they constructed against racialized otherness.[30] In the case of the British nation-building project, insularity

[29] I use both "English" and "British," following the metonymic and nebulous uses of the terms of my actors. See chapter 2 for more.
[30] See especially Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680–1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

afforded a neat frame not only for the construction of identities at home but for their cross-comparison in and beyond the fledgling second empire.[31] I do not mean to intervene in that conversation, except insomuch as to join other authors in resituating some of that narrative in the imperial and extraimperial sphere. British identity was built not just in the British Isles, but in the many isles authors conceived of as somehow British (or, in definitions by negation, as not-British). Rather, it is in the historiography of race as a scientific category in which I seek to make a larger contribution, though in part by reconnecting the construction of race to a longer history of formulations of "Britishness" and otherness in the Pacific. The history of race science was once dominated by "rise and fall" narratives; in the old historiography, race was built by metropolitan elites in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, dismantled by them in the twentieth, and largely cast aside by the postwar years.[32] Recent work has troubled that narrative, showing both the construction and deconstruction of scientific racism to have been a considerably more fraught and complex process.[33] By locating the making and unmaking of race in a persistent set of Pacific islands, I show that race was made and unmade not only by metropolitan elites, but by scientific subjects and their investigators in situated Pacific encounters. At the same time, I aim to further trouble narratives of steady rise and precipitous decline. Racial categories emerged haltingly and not without contestation. They were dismantled

[31] See especially Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003). For a more robust treatment of the historiography surrounding these questions, see footnotes 5–9 in chapter 2.

[32] Especially Stephen J. Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1996); Pat Shipman, *The Evolution of Racism: Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800–1960* (New York: McMillan, 1982); Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States Between the World Wars* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993). See chapter 4 for a more robust treatment of the literature.

[33] The best recent monograph is Tracy Teslow, *Constructing Race: The Science of Bodies and Cultures in American Anthropology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

through Pacific encounters, too, though imperfectly and incompletely—racial typology, always unsettled, proved difficult to eradicate outright.

My dissertation is about several far-flung islands: Pitcairn and Norfolk, explicitly, and Britain, implicitly. Accordingly, I engage ongoing conversations about space, place, insularity, and distance. Those literatures are themselves vast, occupying considerable territory on academic bookshelves. To begin with, there is the question of Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands' insularity. Islands are, by definition, bound off from the rest of the world—and yet they are connected by the oceans that surround them, serving as meeting points and way stations.[34] In recent years, a burgeoning field of "island studies," replete with its own books, journals, and manifestos, has generated an interdisciplinary conversation on islands and insularity.[35] There have already been several very good reception and discourse histories of Pacific islands.[36] That work reminds us that islands were "invented" by the accumulation of outside representations—and that through those representations islands have long served as epistemologically and culturally freighted zones in the western imagination, places useful for working out larger problems and for critiquing the self. Islands, on account of their supposed boundedness, became zones in which to

[34] A major argument of "ocean" history, itself prefigured by Atlantic history, World Systems Theory, and other transnational turns in historical scholarship. My entrepôt to the larger Pacific has been Matt K. Matsuda, *Pacific Worlds: A History of Seas, Peoples, and Cultures* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[35] Godfrey Baldacchino, "The Coming Age of Island Studies," *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 95, no. 3 (July, 2004): 272–283; Godfrey Baldacchino, ed., *A World of Islands: An Island Studies Reader* (Charlottetown, PEI: University of Prince Edward Island, 2007); Pete Hay, "A Phenomenology of Islands," *Island Studies Journal* 1, no. 1 (2006): 19–42; much of that writing is underpinned by theoretical approaches to spaces, especially Henri Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1991, first published 1974).
[36] Beverley Haun, *Inventing "Easter Island"* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Jill Franks, *Islands and the Modernists: The Allure of Isolation in Art, Literature, and Science* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006); Miriam Kahn, "Tahiti: The Ripples of a Myth on the Shores of the Imagination," *History and Anthropology* 14, no. 4 (December 2003): 307–326.

assess society, the human, and our connections to each other: "No man is an island, / entire of itself, / every man is a piece of the continent, / a part of the main."[37]

Writing and thinking about islands was often intimately tied to utopian discourse. More placed his Utopia on an island, and other insular utopias and dystopias followed: Francis Bacon's Bensalem, Jonathan Swift's Laputa, Denis Diderot's Bougainville (a real place, rendered as imagined), H. G. Wells' *Island of Doctor Moreau* (an insular site of scientific experimentation in hybridity), Aldous Huxley's Pala.[38] The potential list is long; decentered and often imaginary islands were central in the making of what introductory university courses used to call "Western Civilization." Many writers have described both Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands as utopias, though in recent decades authors have taken instead to revealing that both islands are actually hidden dystopias, rife with internal discord and violence, places of disenchantment.[39] The utopia/dystopia binary is difficult to escape, and this dissertation will track the emergence of both threads. However, it is worth recollecting that in More's original formulation, "Utopia" was a play on words, meaning not only "good" place but also "no" place. Utopia was not just insular and inaccessible, but impossible. Rather, for the most part this dissertation will treat the emergence of Pitcairn and Norfolk in Anglophone discourse as heteropias. In Foucault's

[37] John Donne, "XVII. Meditation," *Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions, Together with Death's Duel* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959, first published 1624), 108–109.
[38] Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516); Francis Bacon, *The New Atlantis* (London: 1627); Jonathan Swift, *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World. In Four Parts. By Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and then a Captain of Several Ships* (London: Benjamin Motte, 1726); Denis Diderot, *Supplément au voyage de Bougainville* (Paris: 1796); H. G. Wells, *Island of Doctor Moreau* (London: Heinemann, Stone, and Kimball, 1896); Aldous Huxley, *Island* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1962).
[39] For Pitcairn: Kathy Marks, *Lost Paradise: From Mutiny on the* Bounty *to a Modern-Day Legacy of Sexual Mayhem, the Dark Secrets of Pitcairn Island Revealed* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009); Dea Birkett, *Serpent in Paradise* (New York: Anchor Books, 1997); the latter is especially unloved on Pitcairn Island. For Norfolk: Robert Macklin, *Dark Paradise: Norfolk Island; Isolation, Savagery, Mystery and Murder* (Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2013); Tim Latham, *Norfolk: Island of Secrets; The Mystery of Janelle Patton's Death* (Crows Nest, N.S.W: Allen & Unwin, 2005); both books describe investigations into a brutal murder on the island.

formulation, these "other" places were simultaneously disconnected from and contiguous with the larger world, places "neither here nor there" in which society recreates or rediscovers itself.[40]

In tracking Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands' spatial and heterotopic configurations over time, I make several arguments, each situated in its own literatures. For one thing, by attending to the construction and use of Pitcairn and Norfolk's insularity, I aim to join island studies' robust interest in insular places with a larger history of knowledge making in colonial and extra-metropolitan spaces. The literature on colonial knowledge is itself imperiously expansive; historians have critically investigated its practices, modes, forms, and content for the last half century. Much of the first wave of scholarship about "science and empire" was about knowledge making's complicity in the imperial project. Science and technology were "tools of empire," abetting the conquest and administration of much of the globe.[41] At the same time, histories of knowledge and empire emphasized the epistemic violence wrought by orientalist science; regimes of knowledge ordered the world into civilization hierarchies that naturalized the colonial order.[42] Concomitantly, imperial expansion abetted the development of whole scientific disciplines, not least the "science of man," which, while not always an uncritical handmaiden of empire, was built within the intellectual and material infrastructure of colonialism.[43] Histories of science and empire were necessarily histories of space and conceptions of space. What made spaces colonial? Was knowledge necessarily entangled in the local, or could it overcome

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[40] Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York: Vintage Books, 1971); see also discussions in Mariangela Palladino and John Miller, eds., *The Globalization of Space* (London: Pickering and Chato, 2015).
[41] Daniel Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1981).
[42] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979); Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993); Helen Tilley and Robert Gordon, eds., *Ordering Africa: Anthropology, European Imperialism, and the Politics of Knowledge* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007).
[43] Peter Pels, "The Anthropology of Colonialism: Culture, History, and the Emergence of Western Governmentality," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 26 (1997): 163–183; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); Patrick Wolfe, *Settler Colonialism and the Transformation of Anthropology: The Politics and Poetics of an Ethnographic Event* (London: Cassel, 1999); Talal Asad, ed., *Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter* (Ithaca, NY: Ithaca Press, 1973).

tyrannies of distance?[44] Was post-colonial knowledge similarly situated, or could it become unfettered from its colonial encumbrances?[45] Histories of cartography, in particular, showed us that the ordering of colonial space was a prominent feature of modernity and global history.[46]

Pitcairn and Norfolk were ambiguous as colonial spaces. Both were marginal sites on the far periphery of the imperial sphere, and so before situating the dissertation in the historiography of colonial knowledge, it is worth defining the extent to which the settlements on Norfolk or Pitcairn were indeed colonial at all. They were certainly colonies, in the literal and legal senses of the word. Pitcairn and Norfolk essentially comprised new settlements built on uninhabited *terra nulii*, enacting the ambition rather than the reality of a settler colonial project that more typically displaced indigenous people. Though both islands had once been home to Polynesian cultures, they were abandoned when discovered for Europe in the eighteenth century. They certainly operated under the formal control of the British Empire, even if they comprised specks of land too slight to be colored red or pink with any impressive effect. However, as was the case in many other imperial domains, actual colonial oversight was tenuous and intermittent at best. Pitcairn was born as a decidedly anti-imperial space, a mutineers' haven. Though it flew the Union flag for decades, it was only formally incorporated as a colony in 1838 when a visiting

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[44] Steven Shapin, "Placing the View from Nowhere: Historical and Sociological Problems in the Location of Science," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 23, No. 1 (1998): 5–12. The dissertation of course relies on an existing literature of the "spatial turn," see: David N. Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003);* David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers, *Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Diarmid A. Finnegan, "The Spatial Turn: Geographical Approaches in the History of Science," *Journal of the History of Biology* 41, no. 2 (August, 2007): 369–388; Simon Naylor, "Historical Geographies of Science: Places, Contexts, Cartographies," *British Journal for the History of Science* 38, no. 1 (March, 2005): 1–12.

[45] Diarmid A. Finnegan and Dr. Jonathan Jeffrey Wright, *Spaces of Global Knowledge: Exhibition, Encounter and Exchange in an Age of Empire* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015); Roy MacLeod, "On Visiting the Moving Metropolis: Reflections on the Architecture of Imperial Science," *Historical Records of Australian Science* 5, no. 3 (1982): 1–16.

[46] Matthew H. Edney*, Mapping an Empire: the Geographical Construction of India, 1765–1843.* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1997); Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1988); D. Graham Burnett, *Masters of All They Surveyed: Exploration, Geography, and a British El Dorado* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

naval officer wrote its constitution; it achieved a limited notoriety as the first British territory to implement female suffrage. Beyond occasional visits from naval captains and administrators, it remained effectively self-governing. Its formal status as a British overseas territory remained a contentious issue at the turn of the millennium; see the conclusion for further discussion. Norfolk Island's colonial status was ambiguous in its own way. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the island hosted two penal colonies administered by the governors of New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, the prison colonies of prison colonies at the end of the earth.[47] When the second of these was abandoned in 1856, the Pitcairn Islanders who took up residence on Norfolk understood that the island would be reserved exclusively for themselves as a personal gift from Queen Victoria. For much of the period since then, the governor of New South Wales administered Norfolk, enacting schemes that varyingly maintained its isolation or meddled in bids for "improvement." After the federation of Australia, Norfolk Island eventually became an external territory, though part of the population long contested any measure of Australian governance—a conflict that remains to this day.

Neither island offered Britain any considerable economic or strategic value; instead, administrators in the Colonial Office often dismissed both islands as burdensome annoyances. In the early twentieth century Norfolk hosted a transpacific cable station, and during the Second World War it saw the construction of a little-used airfield, but it otherwise held little geopolitical import. Pitcairn Island's pragmatic service to the Victorian empire was mostly as a refreshment station for ships on lonely Pacific patrols, and its occupation by a small community flying the union flag served primarily to keep the French tricolor out, at least according to the zero-sum logic of imperial acquisition. During the postwar years, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office repeatedly sought to divest itself of its bothersome Pacific island, even if it kept the sun from

[47] Robert Hughes, *The Fatal Shore* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988). For further treatment, see chapter 3.

setting on the diminishing British Empire. Its closest brush with geopolitical relevance was as a listening post from which British and American air force personnel monitored French Nuclear testing during the 1960s and 1970s; otherwise it remained an expensive imperial holdover.[48] One administrator, writing in 1979, declared that he "would dearly like to wipe our colonial slate clean in the Pacific" and lamented that not all of his colleagues shared that view. "Some of them," he said, "even have a romantic nostalgia for such anachronisms as Pitcairn and would strongly oppose any drastic action to get shot of it."[49] Indeed, the notion that Pitcairn Island should even have a politics or a political meaning struck some writers as absurd. Mark Twain, after reading a British admiral's account of Pitcairn in 1879, wrote a satirical short story, "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn," in which an American stranger stages a coup d'état and transforms the island into an empire of its own—a laughable notion for so small and impotent a place.[50] The absurdity of such a notion also animated Australian historian W. K. Hancock's collection of essays, *Politics in Pitcairn*.[51] Writing about both islands in this millennium, too, has treated them as silly or anachronistic holdovers, the impotent relics of a once-powerful empire.[52]

For many observers, however, Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands' places in the empire were anything but trite or absurd. Indeed, to many Victorians their smallness and peripherality in fact made them more valuable in ideal or intellectual terms. As model "British" communities persevering and even thriving in splendid isolation, Pitcairn and Norfolk served as moral examples for the colonial project. When observers racialized Norfolk in the early twentieth century, it retained its morally exemplary status, if in increasingly negative terms as a stark

[48] See documents in the National Archives of the United Kingdom (herafter TNA), especial FCO 32/729 and CO 1036/1657.
[49] Letter from R. J. Stratton to Sir Harold Smedley, October 8, 1979, TNA FCO/107/114.
[50] Mark Twain, "The Great Revolution in Pitcairn," *Atlantic Monthly* 43, no. 257 (1879): 295–302.
[51] W. K. Hancock's collection of essays, *Politics in Pitcairn* (London: Macmillan, 1947).
[52] Ben Fogle, *The Teatime Islands: Adventures in Britain's Faraway Outposts* (London:Penguin Books, 2004); Simon Winchester, *Outposts: Journeys to the Surviving Relics of the British Empire* (New York: Perennial, 2004).

reminder of the perils of race mixing and eugenic deterioration. This dissertation argues that both islands' peripherality and exemplarity emerged not only as a matter of physical geography, but as carefully presented and preserved qualities, made by writers in their descriptions and by governors through bureaucratic action. The migration from Pitcairn to Norfolk was an intentional Victorian experiment in colonial and racial settlement, and its seclusion was the result of planning and scrutiny on the part of colonial officials. Pitcairn, too, was a favored colony; some officials blithely ignored it, but others privileged and preserved its isolation; in 1882, British officials made it illegal for an islander to marry an outsider without special dispensation. The British Empire, like other empires, was generative of peripheral but meaningful sites such as Pitcairn or Norfolk; these two islands were hardly unique in that respect. St. Helena, the Falklands, the Andaman Islands, and other insular spaces like them constituted imperial outposts whose intellectual or symbolic meaning for the empire eventually complimented or eclipsed their strategic function, joining wastelands, national parks, and other zones whose peripherality was made by design as well as by nature.[53] Historians could attend more closely to the historicity of

[53] The history of environmentalism in the British Empire has treated the making and use of such spaces with the most historical respect, see: Richard H. Grove, *Green Imperialism: Colonial Expansion, Tropical Island Edens and the Origins of Environmentalism, 1600–1860* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996) and Peder Anker, *Imperial Ecology: Environmental Order in the British Empire, 1895–1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); for examples of histories of manufactured and representationally laden peripheries, see also: Vitoria di Palma, *Wasteland: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014); Simone Abram and Marianne Elisabeth Lien, "Performing Nature at World's Ends, *Ethnos* 76, no. 1 (2011): 3–18; Jane Carruthers, *The Kruger National Park: A Social and Political History* (Scottsville, SA: University of Natal Press, 1995); Shafqat Hussain, *Remoteness and Modernity: Transformation and Continuity in Northern Pakistan* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015). Theoretical writing on peripheral and marginal spaces, on the other hand, is much more extensive. For one introduction, see Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, "From the Margins," *Cultural Anthropology* 9, no. 3 (August, 1994): 279–297. In the history of anthropology, spaces configured by colonialism and then appropriated as storied zones of knowledge production abound; Robert Gordon historicized interest in the Kalahari over the course of a career, see *The Bushman Myth: The Making of a Namibian Underclass* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) and "The Making of the 'Bushmen,'" *Anthropologica* 34, no. 2 (1992): 183–202. Many other sites remain understudied. The Andaman Islands, for instance, stand out as a zone in which modern social science made both itself and modern conceptions of race and civilization; see David Tomas, "Tools of the Trade: The Production of Ethnographic Observations on the Andaman Islands, 1858–1922," in *Colonial Situations: Essays in the Contextualization of Ethnographic knowledge*, ed. George Stocking (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 75–108; Claire Wintle, "Model Subjects: Representations of the Andaman Islands at the Colonial and Indian exhibition, 1886," *History Workshop Journal* 67, no. 1 (2009): 194–207.

these often purposely peripheral spaces, whose marginality and remoteness abetted their prominence in the imperial imaginary, and vice-versa.

Remoteness and insularity are, of course, relative. For Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders, their islands were home; for most of those who wrote about Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders, these were among the most distant places in the world. On Pitcairn, contemporary adventure tourists find their desire to visit one of the world's superlatively distant places satisfied by a sign at the island's highest point. Arrows signal the way to, among other places, Tahiti (2,325 km), Sydney (7,493 km), New York (9,322 km), and Paris (15,127 km), highlighting the vastness of Pitcairn's loneliness. The view from that spot does the same; looking in all directions one sees blue Pacific Ocean stretch out to the horizon on every side, blocked out only by the odd pine or lantana. The map that opened before the reader of anthropologist Harry Shapiro's 1935 monograph about Pitcairn Islanders attempted a similar effect.[54] Black lines radiated out from Pitcairn across the Pacific to Asia, Australia, and the Americas, signifying remoteness and distance. Yet here Pitcairn was revealed to be the center of the world, and the spider's web of black lines connected the island to a periphery strung around the world's edges, containing such afterthoughts as Asia, Australia, the Americas, and other distant spaces. Maybe it is just a parlor trick in relativism—of course one observer's periphery is another's center.

It reminds me, however, of another, much more schematized set of lines on a map. These, too, represent the connections between distant places, between metropolitan investigators and peripheral subjects. That image is a schematic from Bruno Latour's 1987 *Science in Action,*

[54] Stephan Kraft, "Pitcairn Island (map)," in *The Heritage of the Bounty: The Story of Pitcairn Through Six Generations*, by Harry L. Shapiro (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936), front matter.

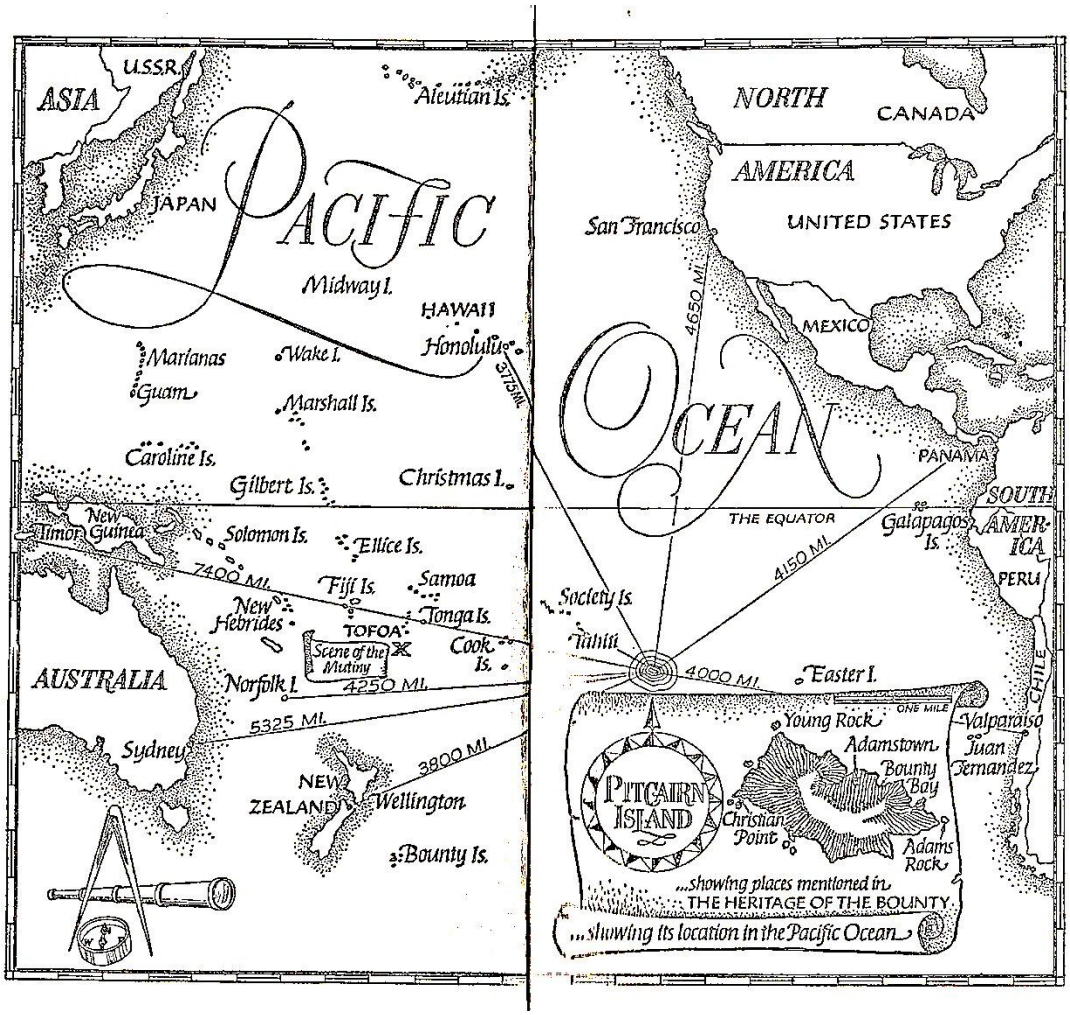



**Figure 1: Map from Shapiro's *Heritage of the Bounty* (1936)**

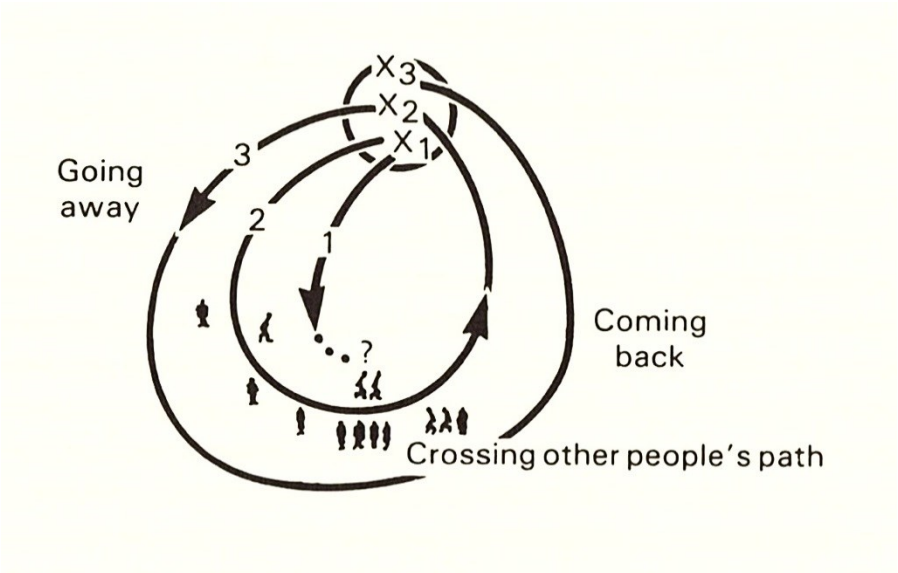



**Figure 2: Cycles of accumulation from Latour's *Science in Action* (1987)**

which comes after a discussion of the science of cartographic exploration in the Pacific periphery.[55] In Latour's telling, scientists ventured out into the world to determine the contours of a Pacific landmass and whether it is indeed an island or a peninsula, connected or severed from the Asian continent. Voyages into the periphery yielded interactions with locals and new knowledge, which explorers returned to the metropole. Subsequent journeys yielded further interactions and further data (or what Latour more precisely calls "immutable and combinable mobiles"), which accumulated in "centers of calculation," and from which scientists derived the authority to enroll others into their vision of the world. Scientists discovered that the landmass is an island; they returned that knowledge to the center, and there they produced maps saying as much. An asymmetry developed; the metropolitan scientists accumulated a growing corpus of knowledge, while peripheral subjects were confined to their marginal spaces and local geographies.

Staring at that image as a first-year graduate student, I could not help but wonder about the perspective of those silhouetted figures milling about in the field of exploration. The question mark, which for Latour denoted the mysterious end met by a lost expedition, to me read as nothing so much as an expression of the quizzical, even bemused reaction of the pair strolling left to right at the diagram's center. "Here comes another one of those bloody expeditions," I imagine them thinking to themselves. Indeed, if an asymmetry built up between explorers and their subjects, in places like Pitcairn the scales may well have tilted in the opposite direction, at least where some forms of knowledge were concerned. In much-studied places, locals developed more experience and more expertise in the practice of fieldwork than did many of their interlocutors. In that capacity, Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands were centers of accumulation *par*

[55] Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 220.

*excellence*, places where observers and even their observations piled up in tremendous abundance. In fact, if one is interested in learning how knowledge was made, then one should devote attention to places like Pitcairn and Norfolk, where expeditions, entanglements between researchers and subjects, and knowledge claims appeared with persistent regularity.

The idea that Pitcairn and Norfolk could serve as crucibles of knowledge formation is perhaps better articulated using the language of this dissertation's historical actors. In their terms, both islands were "natural experiments" or "natural laboratories." Writers and scientists often used the metaphor of the laboratory to frame their discussion of Pacific islands; their treatment of Pitcairn and Norfolk were particularly acute instantiations of a more general impulse.[56] In this dissertation, I tackle the history of the "natural laboratory" in two ways. First, I track the historicity of the concept itself, following the way scientists deployed and defined the notion of the natural laboratory across time. Most histories of the "natural laboratory" analyze the concept synchronically; it emerges from or against particular twentieth-century contexts.[57] Histories of

[56] See, for example, Jared Diamond and James A. Robinson, *Natural Experiments of History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); Robert J. Whittaker and Jose Maria Fernandez-Palacios, "The Natural Laboratory Paradigm," in *Island Biogeography: Ecology, Evolution, and Conservation* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 1-6; see also Diamond's interest in Pitcairn as an especially useful microcosm of global environmental management in *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail Or Succeed* (New York: Penguin, 2011). For histories of the Pacific island as laboratory, especially of race or biogeography, see: Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard, "Race, Place and Civilisation," *Journal of Pacific History* 47, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 245–262; Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard, *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750–1940* (Canberra: Australia National University Press, 2008); Henrika Kuklick, "Islands in the Pacific: Darwinian Biogeography and British Anthropology," *American Ethnologist* 23, no. 3 (1996): 611–638; and Roy M. MacLeod and Philip F. Rehbock, *Darwin's Laboratory: Evolutionary Theory and Natural History in the Pacific* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994). Histories of the Galapagos are, thanks to their Darwinian connection, especially prevalent, cf. Edward J. Larson, *Evolution's Workshop: God and Science on the Galapagos Islands* (New York: Basic Books, 2002); Elizabeth Hennessy and Amy L. McCleary, "Nature's Eden? The Production and Effects of 'Pristine' Nature in the Galápagos Islands," *Island Studies Journal* 6, No. 2 (2011): 131–156. Histories of Hawai'i as racial laboratory have situated its history within US racial and imperial contexts: Warwick Anderson, "Racial Hybridity, Physical Anthropology, and Human Biology in the Colonial Laboratories of the United States," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (April 2012): S95–S107; Shelley Sang-Hee Lee and Rick Baldoz, "'A Fascinating Interracial Experiment Station': Remapping the Orient-Occident Divide in Hawai'i," *American Studies* 49, no. 3 (2008): 87–109.

[57] Larson's and Douglas's work, above, are notable exceptions and points of departure. For other histories treating the "natural laboratory," see: Elizabeth DeLoughrey, "The Myth of Isolates: Ecosystem Ecologies in the Nuclear Pacific," *Cultural Geographies* 20, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 167–184; Matthew Farish, "The Lab and the Land: Overcoming the Arctic in Cold War Alaska," *Isis* 104, no. 1 (2013): 1–29; Beth Greenhough, "Assembling an Island

colonial governance, too, have shown the metaphor of laboratory to have been ubiquitous across many iterations of the colonial project, though the boundary between those rhetorical deployments and the work of science was unclear.[58] In this dissertation, I will show that, at least in the case of two well-known Pacific natural laboratories, the concept within scientific discourse was dependent on a longer, deeper, and more situated history. In the cases of Pitcairn and Norfolk, it emerged first as the idea of the "accidental experiment" during the Victorian period, and even then was reliant on the extra-scientific staging of the islands as exemplary spaces by earlier visitors and writers. Over time, both sites developed into "natural laboratories," as field scientists sought prestige for themselves and rhetorical substantiations for their knowledge claims—and as they fell into well-worn patterns of hospitality enacted by their expert scientific subjects.[59] However, in scientific and public discourse, the adjectives "natural" and "accidental" excised or occluded the artificial and intentional projects from which the metaphor arose in the first place. Second, I mean to reframe the metaphor by treating Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands as "laboratories" of my own for understanding the practice of science. Anthropologists, linguists, and other knowledge-makers came to Pitcairn and Norfolk to transform their inhabitants into

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Laboratory," *Area*, 43, no. 2 (June 2011): 134–138; Thomas F. Gieryn, "City as Truth-Spot Laboratories and Field-Sites in Urban Studies," *Social Studies of Science* 36, no. 1 (February 1, 2006): 5–38; Beth Greenhough, "Tales of an Island-Laboratory: Defining the Field in Geography and Science Studies," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 31, no. 2 (June 1, 2006): 224–237; Gísli Pálsson and Paul Rabinow, "Iceland: The Case of a National Human Genome Project," *Anthropology Today* 15, No. 5 (October 1999): 14–18; John Edward Terrell, Terry L. Hunt, and Chris Gosden, "Human Diversity and the Myth of the Primitive Isolate," *Current Anthropology* 38, no. 2 (1997): 155–195.

[58] Alexander D. Bardner, *Empire Within: International Hierarchy and its Imperial Laboratories of Governance* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Helen Tilley, *Africa as Living Laboratory: Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011); Omnia El Shakry, *The Great Social Laboratory: Subjects of Knowledge in Colonial and Postcolonial Egypt* (Stanford, CT: Stanford University Press, 2007); Gewndolyn Wright, *The Politics of Design in French Colonial Urbanism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

[59] Part of a larger history of field science and its struggle for legitimation, see: Henrika Kuklick and Robert E. Kohler, eds., *Science in the Field,* Osiris 11 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Robert E. Kohler, *Landscapes and Labscapes: Exploring the Lab-Field Border in Biology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Sharon Kingsland, "Frist Went's Atomic Age Greenhouse: The Changing Labscape on the Lab-Field Border," *Journal of the History of Biology* 42, no. 2 (May 2009): 289–324; Jeremy Vetter, ed., *Knowing Global Environments: New Historical Perspectives on the Field Sciences* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011.

"human guinea pigs;" but, because the islands attracted such persistent interest from knowledge makers, they accumulated enough visits to constitute an interesting series in their own right.[60] By building on the historiography of scientific practice, the dissertation will examine how field scientists, as curious laboratory subjects themselves, went about the work of doing science over time.[61]

My attention to the practices and spaces of knowledge making on Pitcairn and Norfolk is not unrelated to the historiographies of colonial, postcolonial, and global science. In a widely cited article, James Secord, reflecting a move by historians of science toward the global, suggested that a primary concern of the discipline was to understand how knowledge was produced, "made to travel," circulated, and received around the world.[62] His program constituted, from a certain perspective, a more nuanced and historically sensitive reframing of Latour's concern for mobility and scale. In the years before and after his manifesto, historians of global and imperial science produced remarkable work on the exchange and reception of knowledge at local and global levels; some of the most exciting iterations of these contributions studied history of circulation by following scientific objects themselves.[63] Other scholars have pushed back against what they, perhaps derisively, termed a "hydraulic turn" overly obsessed

[60] Not my metaphor; quoted from "A Racial Laboratory," *New York Times* (February 28, 1935): 18.
[61] For recent histories of scientific practice and method in the colonial field, see Jim Endersby, *Imperial Nature: Joseph Hooker and the Practices of Victorian Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Vanessa Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration a Science?," *Isis* 105, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 318–334; Fraser MacDonald and Charles W. J. Withers, *Geography, Technology and Instruments of Exploration* (New York: Routledge, 2016). The initial turn to histories of practice is older, see: Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice,* trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977); Andrew Pickering, *Science as Practice and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992).
[62] James A. Secord, "Knowledge in Transit," *Isis* 95, no. 4 (December 1, 2004): 654–672.
[63] Kapil Raj, *Relocating Modern Science: Circulation and the Construction of Knowledge in South Asia and Europe, 1650–1900* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Fa Ti Fan, "The Global Turn in the History of Science," *East Asian Technology and Society* 6, no. 2 (May 2012): 249–258; Lissa Roberts, "Situating Science in Global History: Local Exchanges and Networks of Circulation," *Itinerario* 33, no. 1 (March 2009): 9–30; on circulating objects: Ricardo Roque, "Race and the Mobility of Humans as Things," *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 39 no. 4 (July, 2014) 607-617; Ricardo Roque, *Headhunting and Colonialism: Anthropology and the Circulation of Human Skulls in the Portuguese Empire, 1870–1930* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Anne Fabian, *The Skull Collectors* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

with circulations, connections, and flows, instead pushing historians of science to recall the contributions of postcolonial studies. [64] In the decades before I came to graduate school, postcolonial histories of knowledge highlighted "entanglements" generated between colonizer and colonized, and the irrevocable situatedness of knowledge in the politics and culture of colonialism even beyond the temporal or spatial boundaries of formal empire.[65] Concurrently, postcolonial scholars focused their attention on hybrid spaces; in their reading the colonial frontier constituted generative "contact zones" whose products transgressed the binaries of colonizer/colonized.[66] That such a frame remains relevant to the study of Pitcairn and Norfolk should go without saying.

By joining a focus on colonial and postcolonial entanglement with an attention to situated scientific practice, I aim to tell the history of knowledge making from its conduct at the margins—perhaps even one of the most "marginal" places on earth. Visitors built knowledge on Pitcairn and Norfolk through encounters with their subjects. That knowledge constituted more than data gathered at the periphery; theories of race, eugenic decline, language, identity, and cultural contact were made and unmade, in part, on these two islands. At the same time, I will follow knowledge as it "traveled" from Pitcairn and Norfolk into broader discourses and the wider world. That knowledge proved eminently "combinable" but not entirely "immutable"; it

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[64] Warwick Anderson, "Marking Global Health History: The Postcolonial Worldliness of Biomedicine," *Social History of Medicine* 27 no. 2 (May 2014): 375; Peter Howlett and Mary S. Morgan, eds., *How Well Do Facts Travel?: The Dissemination of Reliable Knowledge* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); see also Sujit Sivasundaram, "Sciences and the Global: On Methods, Questions, and Theory," *Isis* 101, no. 1 (2010): 146–158; Suman Seth, "Putting Knowledge in Its Place: Science, Colonialism, and the Postcolonial," *Postcolonial Studies* 12, no. 4 (December 1, 2009): 373–388; Warwick Anderson "From Subjugated Knowledge to Conjugated Subjects: Science and Globalization, or Postcolonial Studies of Science," *Postcolonial Studies* 12 no. 4 (2009): 389–400.

[65] Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).

[66] See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992); Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession* (1991): 33–40; and especially Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994); for more recent work on actors at cultural boundaries see Simon Schaffer, et al., eds, *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820* (Sagamore Beach, MA: Science History Publications, 2009).

appeared in a wide variety of contexts and in surprising places, sometimes serving as evidence on opposite sides of the same debates.

Some of my actors themselves argued that there was a close connection between universal knowledge and local experience. In 1963, a shipboard Hardwicke Knight, collecting his thoughts in a journal entry before the University of Otago archaeological expedition landed at Pitcairn, posited an association between experience and knowledge, or more precisely suggested that knowledge of a place itself "is experience. I would rather call it intimacy rather than knowledge." Musing on the scientific work in which he was about to take part and the possibility of knowing the place he was about to visit, he asserted: "I wish no carnal knowledge of Pitcairn," though if he was to gain knowledge, "it shall be intimate."[67] The history of scientific practice on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands is in many respects a history of intimacy. One of the best-honed scientific field practices of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was anthropometry, the measurement of human bodies. Using calipers, anthropometers, and skin tone scales, anthropologists measured and recorded the bodies of subjects across the world. Anthropometry was, by design, depersonalizing and calculating—it reified living subjects into scientific objects, people into measurements on tables. At the same time, it constituted deeply intimate work, demanding that anthropologists lay hands on those whom they measured. In this dissertation, and not just in the chapter on race science, I attempt a kind of "anthropometry" of my own, a measurement of the human in science's entangled oceanic encounters. In part, I do so simply by reconstituting what I can of the lives of both the knowledge makers and their subjects on Pitcairn and Norfolk, a project that is too often impossible where the racialized subjects of anthropometry

[67] Hardwicke Knight, *Pitcairn Journal* (1964) 1, private archive of Meg Davidson.

are concerned.[68] I do so, also, by attending to the embodied, intimate, and intersubjective experience of scientific practice, building on recent work in the history of anthropology and cross-cultural encounter.[69]

Within that literature, some scholars have joined or borrowed from the "affective turn" to give histories of encounter a new inflection.[70] I am very interested in affect and emotion in the history of knowledge-making on Pitcairn and Norfolk. Accounts of both islands were suffused with emotive language; I want to take visitors' and islanders' descriptions of friendship, intimacy, fascination, and disgust seriously. In so doing, I retain a historian's skepticism of projects that naturalize emotions across time—and certainly do not want to replicate uncritically the cloying tropes and exoticizing sentimentality of the colonialist idiom. However, writers and knowledge-makers of all stripes almost ubiquitously described Pitcairn and Norfolk as "interesting" and "fascinating" places. Visitors to the islands, and sometimes readers who had never been to them, became Pitcairn obsessives, devoting years of their lives to their study. That

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[68] Here I follow the much more robust rehumanizing of work Sadiah Qureshi in *Peoples On Parade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011) and "Displaying Sara Baartman, the 'Hottentot Venus,'" *History of Science* 42, no. 2 (June 1, 2004): 233–257; see also Janet Browne and Sharon Messenger's "Victorian Spectacle: Julia Pastrana, the Bearded and Hairy Female," *Endeavour* 27, no. 4 (December, 2003): 155–159; Roslyn Poignant, *Professional Savages: Captive Lives and Western Spectacle* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004); and, in a very different context of scientific use, Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010; For dehumanization see Andrew Zimmerman's *Anthropology and Antihumanism in Imperial Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

[69]Athena McLean and Annette Leibing, *The Shadow Side of Fieldwork: Exploring the Blurred Borders between Ethnography and Life* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008) and especially in Johannes Fabian, *Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). That work builds on late-twentieth-century critical anthropology's interest in fieldwork as genre and practice, as in Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977); James Clifford and George E. Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); George W. Stocking, *Romantic Motives: Essays on Anthropological Sensibility* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

[70] Vanessa Smith, *Intimate Strangers: Friendship, Exchange and Pacific Encounters* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Deborah Durham, "Disgust and the Anthropological Imagination," *Ethnos* 76, no. 2 (2011): 131–156; Kristoffer Whitney, "Tangled up in Knots: An Emotional Ecology of Field Science," *Emotion, Space and Society* 6 (February 2013): 100–107; for an introduction to broader investigations and theory of affect, see: Patricia Ticineto Clough and Jean O'Malley Halley, *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham, NC : Duke University Press, 2007); Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, *The Affect Theory Reader* (Durham, NC: Duke Unviersity Press, 2010).

interest has a history, and I mean to treat it historically, not by performing some kind of psychoanalytical or neuro-historical naturalization of affect, but rather by producing what I will refer to simply as a social history of captivation. Captivation with the island was built through interactions and relationships between islanders and strangers, and propagated at a distance by texts. The phrase shares an obvious etymological connection with the words "capture" and "captive," all stemming from the Latin verb *captivare*. If that association suggests that observers attempted to capture their island subjects, and vice versa, each for their own reasons, then my meaning is clear enough.

Hardwicke Knight, whose journals I have come to know intimately, was deeply captivated by Pitcairn; he described his experience with the island as marked by a lasting and affecting hospitality. "Pitcairn is the sort of island a man falls in love with," he wrote, "and I come away saying this is the nearest to paradise I shall experience in this life."[71] He was obsessed before he arrived, of course; he had already read all that he could about it in some of the 2,500 sources he identified and, once on the island, spent much of his time literally attempting to retrace the steps of the explorers who came there before.[72] He remained obsessed well after he left; he studied the photographs he took of the rock carvings on the island's cliffs again and again, retracing their lines on fresh sheets of paper. Most archaeologists agreed that the petroglyphs were left by Polynesians some eight centuries ago. Knight saw in some of their geometric forms the shape of a European sailing ship, or perhaps even something stranger; his notes contain images comparing one outline to a menorah.[73] He showed university of Otago archaeologist Helen Leach a stone tool he thought had been deliberately flaked to form a map of

[71] Hardwicke Knight, "Pitcairn Island Since the *Bounty*—and Before!" 1, Knight Papers, MS-4118-153.
[72] Hardwicke Knight, *Pitcairn Survey Report* (1964), 9–19, Knight Papers, Misc-MS-339.
[73] Untitled image and photographs, in folder "Petroglyphs Pitcairn," Knight Papers, MS-4118-157.

the island.[74] He saw Pitcairn everywhere, and the world in Pitcairn. Friends worried that his obsessive interest was turning toward the eccentric.[75] And yet, his was perhaps only an extreme instantiation of the same captivation that drove other sailors, writers, and scientists to study these two small islands. Indeed, though I understand this dissertation to be a telling of their captivation, as I look through my shelves of *Bounty* books and my thousands of digital files, I understand that I have become a Pitcairn obsessive, too.

**Definitions and Chapter Summaries**

Before we proceed further, allow me to offer a short note on categories and definitions. I deliberately use the terms "knowledge maker" and "knowledge" rather than "scientist" and "science" when speaking generally of investigations on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands over the last two centuries; many of this dissertation's actors, especially in the first century of discourse about the island, were figures who did not define themselves as scientists, or at least not primarily. Nonetheless, their writing helped to stage the island for later scientific work and was centered on some of the same questions of identity and racial mixture that would occupy later scientists. In the case of Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands, as in the case of many perennial field sites, scientific and extra-scientific work shared broad continuities across time. From the perspective of Pitcairn Islanders, in any case, the boundaries between the islands' various species of investigators were sometimes blurred or arbitrary. That is not to say I will avoid attending to questions of

[74] "Interview With Helen Leach," by Meg Davidson, March 4, 2011, cited in her unpublished biography of Hardwicke Knight. An excerpt, "Hardwicke Knight on Pitcairn," is available at her website, http://www.hardwickeknightbio.com. Davidson has spent years working toward a biography of Knight, an important figure in the history of Dunedin, NZ.
[75] Interview with Lin Phelan and Linden Cowell by the author, April 19, 2014, Dunedin, NZ.

disciplinarity or academic boundaries, far from it; as the chapter divisions make clear, knowledge makers came to Pitcairn for reasons internal to their own disciplines, too. They made and remade their fields in part through their Pacific encounters. Sometimes I will dispense with the terms "knowledge maker" and "scientist" altogether, opting instead for the larger category of "stranger." The word is not mine, but rather pulled from the language of the islands themselves, and more specifically from the Pitkern language glossary of a 1964 linguistics text: "**stranger** [`streɪndʒə]: non-Pitcairner."[76]

I write, too, of "Pitcairn Islanders" and "Norfolk Islanders." Before 1856, they constituted only one group of people, but after the "experiment" they diverged. Some of my actors, including some Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders themselves, treated the bifurcated communities as two branches of the same ethnos. I am not in the business of deciding who is or is not a Pitcairn Islander, and so will largely redeploy the language of my actors and sources where appropriate. Thus, Norfolk Island had, in the nineteenth century, its "Pitcairn People," in the early twentieth its Pitcairn "race," and in recent decades its "Pitcairn Islanders" as an indigenous community.[77] However, each island, separated from the other by over four thousand miles of Pacific Ocean, meaningfully constituted its own unique locality with its own unique history of investigation. Sometimes these histories were joined, but more often they remained autochthonous. I will also, of necessity, deal with a small glossary of racial designations: "white," "black," "Polynesian," and so on. I introduce these terms with hedging quotation marks in order to gesture at their instability and situatedness. These often heavily racialized categories were the products of classification by colonialist, nationalist, anthropological, and missionary

[76] Alan S. C. Ross and A. W. Moverley, "Glossary," in *The Pitcairnese Language* (London: Andre Deustch, 1964), 259.
[77] For a treatment of Norfolk Islanders as indigenous peoples, see Mitchell Low, "Putting Down Roots: Belonging and the Politics of Settlement on Norfolk Island" (PhD diss., University of Western Australia, 2004).

literatures; they were deployed as rhetoric in historically specific contexts. As in other histories of anthropology and scientific racism, the reader here should assume implicit sets of punctuation marks as grammatical *cordons sanitaires* around the terms this dissertation scrutinizes. In telling their history, I aim not to reconstitute them, but rather to contribute to a project that denaturalizes them by showing how they were made and sometimes unmade. Indeed, their instability across time is one of the threads I track across the next several hundred pages, as I follow the means by which categorizations of identity became nationalized and racialized, and how those same identifications were later troubled or destabilized.[78]

Let me also provide a map of the dissertation to come. From here, it proceeds in roughly chronological order, tracking the work of knowing Pitcairn Islanders and their islands across the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Each chapter is built around a set of knowledge makers and their texts. The next, on sailors and their travel accounts, describes the early history of encounter between strangers and Pitcairn Islanders. It begins with American whaler Mayhew Folger's "rediscovery" of the island in 1808 and surveys the history of Pitcairn's meetings with sailors and its representations in text through the middle of the century. Many of these early encounters, and the texts they produced, constituted investigations and interrogations over identity. Pitcairn, as a zone of British and Tahitian hybridity, troubled neat demarcations between national, racial, and civilizational categories. Though hierarchies of racial and civilizational status were then already crystalizing in western thought, early nineteenth-century writers saw tremendous possibility in Pitcairn's ambivalent racial landscape. Over time, however, travelers and observers came to identify in Pitcairn Islanders' language, religion, and patrimony the hallmarks of Britishness, transplanted and thriving in the South Seas—a model settler society. The islanders'

[78] For an articulation of that project and position, see Bronwen Douglas, *Science, Voyages, and Encounters in Oceania, 1511–1850* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2014).

patriarchal government, conversion to Christianity, and Anglican piety, once represented in missionary and evangelical accounts, made them especially exemplary. Its staging as a model community was attendant not only on descriptions of the island in travel accounts, but on the islanders' growing culture of hospitality and experience interacting with naval visitors—they became practiced in the art of making and maintaining their island as a space of captivation. And yet, they were not the only actors able to utilize Pitcairn's captivating power; a series of strangers settled on the island as beachcombers and political usurpers, each of them negotiating between the islanders, their visitors, and Pitcairn's mythologized history to harness its power for themselves.

Chapter three follows a much smaller set of knowledge makers and their texts: colonial administrators and their investigative reports—though, as in other chapters, it will unpack the larger context and import of their writing, too. It begins in 1856 with the "experiment," the mass migration of the entire population of Pitcairn Island to Norfolk Island. Victorian administrators explicitly employed the language of "experimentation" to describe the exodus. Pitcairn Islanders were widely acknowledged as exemplary people whose isolation kept them "pure;" in transferring them to a new environment, their observers wondered whether or not they could maintain their celebrated purity. The chapter will follow the enactment of the "experiment" itself, recovering what it can of Pitcairn Islanders' experience. It will also follow the appearance of the "experiment" and information drawn from governmental accounts in Victorian scientific and social discourse. It was the migration to Norfolk Island that first brought Pitcairn Islanders to the wider notice of anthropological and social science, and through which it became a well-known example in debates over race, population, and consanguinity. Scientific debates over "hybrid vigor" and eugenic degeneration in turn informed the governmental reportage that

comprises the chapter's second half. Using the transcripts of governmental investigation, the chapter's last sections describe the history of administrative inquiry on Norfolk Island, and to a lesser degree on Pitcairn. Bureaucrats, fearing moral and racial deterioration, exhaustively and invasively scrutinized the islanders' social, biological, and sexual lives. Their investigations configured both islands as well-known sites for understanding hybridity in racial, eugenic, and corporeal terms. That scrutiny also accustomed the island's inhabitants to the interest of strangers in their heredity and racial character, and with chapter two comprises part of the long prehistory of both islands as "natural laboratories."

Chapter four examines physical anthropologists and their texts, especially anthropometric measurements. It begins in London in 1917 with the arrival of two brothers from Pitcairn Island at the Royal College of Surgeons' Hunterian Museum, where anthropologist Arthur Keith performed a physical examination of their bodies and assessed their genealogies. The bulk of the chapter, however, follows anthropologist Harry L. Shapiro, first as a Harvard doctoral student performing the investigatory work of race science on Norfolk Island in 1923, and then as a curator of New York's American Museum of Natural History conducting fieldwork on Pitcairn Island in 1934. From situated, entangled work of anthropometric measurement in the Pacific through the publication and dissemination of its results among scientific and public readerships, the chapter will follow the substantiation and critique of the typological race concept. To do so, it will, in places, reframe the language of race science, treating Arthur Keith as the "type specimen" of a scientific racism founded on comparative anatomy and rigid typology. It will also perform a kind of "anthropometry" of physical anthropology and its fieldwork. Anthropometry, literally the measurement of the human, was founded on the reification of human subjects into scientific quanta, but here I mean to take measure of the human relations, entanglements, and

embodied subjects of physical anthropology. Harry Shapiro, first introduced as a PhD student, will emerge in the chapter's middle section as a standard-bearer for the typological race science of his advisor, Earnest Hooton. However, through his situated Pacific encounters, the chapter will narrate his eventual reconfiguration of the race concept and of his own discipline. By tracing the dissemination and circulation of Shapiro's results, as well as his own writing and advocacy after returning from the field, the chapter will close by attending to the extent—and limits—of Shapiro's influence on the critique of the race concept. At the same time, chapter four will track the coalescence of Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands into "natural laboratories" in the language of scientists and their audiences. That metaphor relied on a long history, detailed in the dissertation's previous two chapters, which Shapiro and his readers elided in order to render both spaces as "naturally" or "accidentally" experimental.

The last chapter is about linguists and their texts, principally tape recordings and transcriptions. Linguists, too, treated the islands as "natural laboratories," and did so more consistently than any other community of knowledge makers. Beginning with the work of schoolteacher Albert Moverley on Pitcairn Island in 1950, then following the investigations of Australian linguist Elwyn Flint in the next decade, and ending with Shirley Harrison's studies of Norfolk Island during the 1970s, the chapter will examine the making of linguistic knowledge on both islands. "Pitkern" and "Norf'k," as some linguists came to call the islands' dialects, were contact languages, formed from the fusion of existing languages. In the middle decades of the twentieth century, the study of creoles and contact languages still occupied an uncertain disciplinary position; they had been subjects of study for well over a century but remained outside the discipline's mainstream. At the same time, as local languages, Pitkern and Norf'k were considerably maligned by outsiders who attempted to extinguish them in favor of English.

Thus, when linguists met their informants on both islands, both scientists and their subjects worked toward their own forms of legitimization. At the same time, the chapter will follow the project of building linguistic knowledge on both islands by unpacking the practices of field recording, showing the study of contact languages to have necessitated the formation of *its own* contact languages, as researchers and their subjects negotiated each other and together improvised field practices. Shirley Harrison in particular, as an ethnic Norfolk Islander who earned a PhD in linguistics, will emerge as a code-switcher, navigating the shifting and ambiguous linguistic boundaries between Norfolk Island, the mainland, science, and indigeneity.

Finally, there is the work of concluding. Many authors have drawn conclusions with Pitcairn Islanders, and I am the same; dissertations, after all, demand "original contributions to knowledge." The last section of the dissertation will muse on the means and possibilities of drawing conclusive knowledge from Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands. In addition to knowledge about British identity, eugenic degeneration, racial typology, and language formation outlined in the next four chapters, both islands more recently have seen outsiders draw conclusions about ecological mismanagement, genetic inheritance, the universality of Western law, and the scope of the surviving British Empire, such as it is. The latter questions were exacerbated by a series of investigations between 1999 and 2004, in which seven men on Pitcairn Island were accused of sexual assault of minors, part of what prosecutors described as a culture of rape that extended back at least decades. Trials, held on Pitcairn itself, reactivated the history of scrutiny into both islands' moral and sexual affairs and reconfigured Pitcairn as a forensic space. Prosecutors called into question the island's heritage, and journalists wondered at the possibility of knowing the "real" Pitcairn lurking beneath the surface of such a well-studied place. At the same time, geneticists on Norfolk Island drew blood samples from its Pitcairn descendants, performing

gene-linkage analyses but also producing new studies of admixture that recalled the race science of the last century. By emphasizing the long and entangled history of knowledge making on both islands, and by rehearsing other investigators' anxiety about the possibility of ever knowing places usually celebrated for their legibility, I suggest that we should bear in mind the history of science's attention to the difficult, situated, social, and contingent work of forging truths.

# Chapter 2| Writing

**Sailors, Stage Play, and the Making of a Captivating Place**

The curtain drew open. Revealed before the audience was "a picturesque glen," flanked on each side by mountains. The waves of the South Pacific lapped in the distance. A palm tree grew center stage. Amid the scenery was the better part of a theater company, dressed as Pacific natives and English sailors, presenting spectacular "Indian Sports" and a "Grand Ballet." Their setting was an island only recently rediscovered half a world away. The date was April 17, 1816, and it was the premiere of *Pitcairn's Island,* a new operetta at the *Theatre Royal* on London's Drury Lane. A long subtitle ensured that audiences recognized the performance's ripped-from-the-headlines appeal: *A New, Romantick, Operatick Ballet Spectacle Founded on the Recent Discovery of a Numerous Colony Formed by, and Descended from the Mutineers of the Bounty Frigate*.[1] There is no record of how many were in attendance, but the celebrated *Theatre Royal*, the fourth venue to stand on that spot on Drury Lane, could seat as many as 3,000 spectators in its three-tiered galleries.

Though its subject and setting were glossed from contemporary reports, the *Spectacle's* playwrights proved imaginatively unconstrained by newspapers' descriptions of either—its plot was straightforward romance and adventure. Fletcher Christian's daughters, Otaheina and Oberea, witness the arrival of a British contingent on the shores of their isolated paradise. It is a dramatic and perilous moment; Christian and his fellow mutineers are perhaps the most notorious criminals alive, men so desperately sought that the admiralty dispatched the *Pandora*

[1] Only the playbill, sold in the theater, survives: Montague Corri and the Drury Lane Theatre Royal, *Songs &c. in Pitcairn's Island: A New, Romantick, Operatick Ballet Spectacle Founded on the Recent Discovery of a Numerous Colony Formed by, and Descended from the Mutineers of the Bounty Frigate: First Performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane on Wednesday April 17, 1816 with New and Selected Musick, New Scenery, Dresses and Embellishments* (London: printed by C. Lowndes, 1816).

to the far end of the world to find them. Otaheina asks her sister, "How could you go / to lead me so / among these handsome strangers? I cannot stay; / unless we run / most surely are we all undone!"[2] But the sisters need not have worried. The British sailors prove as good-willed as they are handsome, singing "Britannia's legions only seek / against the strong to guard the weak."[3] True to their word, the British and the descendants of the mutineers soon band together to defeat a party of hostile "natives." With the island pacified, Oberea and Otaheina soon fall in love with British sailors. The island, once the hidden den of the empire's most infamous scofflaws, is rehabilitated. Its hybrid English-Tahitian community has earned its place in the empire and civilization by fending off the "savage threat." The last scene displays the "grateful attachment of the Islanders" as the navy departs.[4]

*Pitcairn's Island* debuted only a few years after the island itself was rediscovered by the American whalers of the *Topaz* in 1808 and independently discovered again by the Royal Navy vessels *Briton* and *Tagus* in 1814. In conjunction with accounts in newspapers and periodicals, the Drury Lane melodrama was one of the first images of the distant Pacific island and its inhabitants any Britons encountered, but the questions and themes it activated would be with Pitcairn for some time. Were the islanders, the descendants of traitorous mutineers, loyal and trustworthy? What was their identity, in any case: were they British, Tahitian, or something new—something hybrid, perhaps even dangerous in their liminality? Could romantic affection for Britain and its culture tame the islanders' Polynesian heritage? In posing and offering answers to these queries, *Pitcairn Island's* playwrights helped to instantiate a discursive treatment of the Pacific island as a kind of stage, a literal one in this instance, in which British writers could work out the nature of British identity and Britain's place in the world. In so doing,

[2] Corri, *Pitcairn's Island,* 7.
[3] Corri, *Pitcairn's Island,* 10.
[4] Corri, *Pitcairn's Island,* 14.

the melodrama became an early entry in an ever-expanding library of texts that used the island as a microcosmic space for working out macrocosmic problems.

This chapter, which surveys writing about Pitcairn Island in the first half-century after its rediscovery, will unpack the early history of the island's staging within travel accounts, and in texts written from them. Pitcairn emerged in nineteenth-century British discourse as a site where, due to a romanticized history and a celebrated hybridity, the work of defining self and other was especially acute. The island played host to hundreds of visits during its first half-century, many of which generated written descriptions dedicated to the explication of the islanders' identity and the meanings their island afforded. Many of these texts emphasized the islanders' language and loyalty as markers of their Britishness and celebrated Pitcairn as a bastion of surprising familiarity in an otherwise alien and distant "fifth part of the world."[5] However, though writers consistently treated the island as exemplary in some capacity, the lessons they drew from it shifted—and both this chapter and the next will track the emerging criteria by which visitors and writers used Pitcairn Islanders to define their own Englishness. By the middle decades of the nineteenth century, writers increasingly promulgated an image of the island as not just a hybrid or loyal place, but as a moral and religious Eden, the Pitcairners' Britishness defined not only by their patriotic devotion to the crown but by a profound and affecting piousness. Religious and didactic writing deployed the Pitcairners as living examples of the life to which their readers should aspire, and a wide Victorian readership came to know Pitcairn as a moral, Anglican utopia, inaccessible and distant, but nonetheless real.

[5] I will use "British" and "English" interchangeably, reflecting the mixed use of both categories by my actors. Many early Pitcairn sources treat the latter as a metonym for a former, and in any case the project of building British nationhood was then, as now, an unfinished one. For mainstay treatments, see Krishnan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), or better Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

Many histories of Pacific islands have already treated their depiction by travelers as places freighted with cultural and epistemic weight.[6] Indeed, following the advent of the postcolonial critique, many historians and literary scholars read in texts about the Pacific not only the formation of the Polynesian subject, but the making of the European self.[7] As a space celebrated for its hybridity, however, Pitcairn offers a particularly distinctive vantage point from which to examine how writers and sailors defined themselves and their Britishness.[8] In much of the writing on identity and colonialism's culture, the encounter with non-western alterity came to define the western self through acts of negation.[9] Pitcairn Islanders were sometimes described in the same mode—they were more literate, more handsome, and more Christian than the "Polynesian" inhabitants of the islands to their east. However, more often than not descriptions of the Pitcairners emphasized their uncanny familiarity, as though they were English people transplanted and modified strangely, but not uniformly negatively, by the infusion of Pacific qualities. During the first half of the nineteenth century, racial theories became rigid and hierarchical, and the boundaries between self and other began to ossify—but in the Pitcairners' strange hybridity, writers and sailors nonetheless continued to find a zone of fertile possibility. In their bodies and in their community, self met other and produced peaceful, loyal, and devout British subjects. In that way, they were symbols of the success of the missionary and settler

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[6] Harry Liebersohn, *The Travelers' World: Europe to the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Jonathan Lamb, Vanessa Smith, and Nicholas Thomas, eds., *Exploration and Exchange: A South Seas Anthology, 1680–1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Neil Rennie, *Far-Fetched Facts: The Literature of Travel and the Idea of the South Seas* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1995).

[7] See especially Jonathan Lamb, *Preserving the Self in the South Seas, 1680–1840* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

[8] Kathleen Wilson, *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2003). In locating a history of knowledge gathering and self making in a hybrid space, the chapter necessarily touches on an older thread of post-colonial scholarship. See Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992) and especially Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1994).

[9] Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). Jonathan Lamb, in *Preserving the Self in the South Seas,* analyzes the use of litotes in Pacific travel narratives, i.e., "the natives are not unhandsome."

projects, object lessons in imperial aspiration—and they faired considerably better in the estimation of imperial observers than many other hybrid peoples.

Moreover, while histories and ethnographies of islands as stage settings in the European imaginary have been mainstays in the historiography of the Pacific, the spatial history of Pitcairn's staging is unique.[10] The beach is a storied site in Pacific literature, the scene of exchanges and violence, powerfully representing contact in all its spatial symmetry and asymmetry, negotiations and misunderstandings.[11] Pitcairn Island has no beach. It was and remains ringed by towering cliffs on all sides, an inscrutable rock jutting up from the ocean against which the surf pounds with an unremitting roar. Instead, Pitcairn Island's meetings and encounters with strangers began as negotiations offshore between boat and ship, followed by landings around the dangerous rocks at Bounty Bay. After leaping from whale boats unto the rocky shore, islanders led their visitors up the steep Hill of Difficulty, and only then did strangers arrive in Adamstown. To land on Pitcairn Island meant crossing a difficult threshold and turning one's trust over to local pilots and oarsmen. Over time, these encounters became, if not habitually staged, then at least well-rehearsed enactments of hospitality and meaning. After shepherding their guests onto shore, Pitcairn Islanders played host to visitors intrigued by the *Bounty* story, and so they showed their guests the relics—the ship's anchor, its bible, their own

[10] Metaphors of "stage" and "theater" have long been used in ethnohistorical and anthropological writing. See Johannes Fabian, "Theater and Anthropology, Theatricality and Culture," *Research in African Literatures* 30, no. 4 (1999): 24–31; Greg Dening, "The Theatricality of Observing and Being Observed: Eighteenth-Century Europe 'Discovers' the ? century 'Pacific,'" in *Implicit Understandings: Observing, Reporting, and Reflecting on Encounters between Europeans and Other Peoples in the Early Modern Era*, ed. Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 451–483; Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Exploration of Landscape and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988). I don't mean to intervene in a historiography of giants; rather, I lean on their work to help explain how Pitcairn and Norfolk became "natural" laboratories, and to help set the stage for my own social history of captivation.

[11] Most famously articulated in Dening's work: Greg Dening, *Beach Crossings: Voyaging Across Times, Cultures and Self* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004); Greg Dening, *Islands and Beaches: Discourse on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774–1880* (Chicago: Dorsey Press, 1980).

bodies, and so on. Their guests ate fresh fruit and joined the islanders for meals. They prayed with them, and sang God Save the King.

Early visitors left feeling a deep affection for the island, an attachment borne from brief meetings that sometimes lasted lifetimes.[12] Some of those same visitors retold their hospitable encounters in travel narratives, which in turn promulgated an image of the island to the wider Anglophone world as a place renowned not only for its connection with a romantic past, but for an Edenic present. In this chapter, I want to track the early history of the island as a space where both its residents and their guests were engaged in the work of making the island interesting. Bruno Latour once wrote that "interest, like anything else, can be constructed."[13] In Pitcairn's case, its inhabitants captured the benevolent interest of strangers, and strangers inscribed their interestedness in text—in what I will describe here as a social and intellectual history of captivation. Its consequences, both for visitors who sought knowledge and meaning, and for the Pitcairn Islanders who hosted them, were not only epistemological but decidedly material, and will occupy the remainder of this dissertation.

**Romancing Englishness in Pacific Hybridity**

The island's first-ever encounter with strangers has been told and retold hundreds of times. The island's own record, a one-volume register of important events, is perhaps the shortest, recounting the occasion as follows: "1808. Arrived Ship *Topaz* of Boston, Folger

[12] In taking the affective register of Pacific encounters seriously, I lean heavily on Vanessa Smith's recent work: Vanessa Smith, *Intimate Strangers: Friendship, Exchange, and Pacific Encounters* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[13] Bruno Latour, "Give me a Laboratory and I will Raise the World," in *Science Observed: Perspectives on the Social Study of Science*, eds. Karin D. Knorr-Cetina and Michael Mulkay (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1983), 145.

Master."[14] Here, however, I will draw from one of the earliest external records of that meeting, Captain Folger's own recollection of it as retold in a book by his friend, New England sailor Amasa Delano, to suggest that even in their very first meeting with outsiders the Pitcairn Islanders were forced to submit to scrutiny over their identity.[15] In Delano's account, the American whaling ship *Topaz* halted off the coast of a mischarted island. As the whalers prepared a landing party, an outrigger canoe approached. To the Americans' astonishment, its rowers hailed them in English, but at a careful distance. The captain answered them, introducing himself as Mayhew Folger, of Boston, in America. The natives replied: "You are an American; you come from America; where is America? Is it in Ireland?" Taken aback, Folger tried again to discern the islanders' identity. Delano records the captain's memory of their exchange. Folger asked:

> *"Who are you?"*
> *"We are English."*
> *"Where were you born?"*
> *"On that Island which you see."*
> *"How then are you Englishmen, if you were born on that island, which the English do not own, and have never possessed?*
> *"We are Englishmen because our father was an Englishman."*
> *"Who is your father?*
> *"Aleck."*
> *"Who is Aleck?"*
> *"Don't you know Aleck?"*
> *"How should I know Aleck?"*
> *"Well then, do you know Captain Bligh of the* Bounty*?"*[16]

That moment was revelatory, and interrogation quickly gave way to fascination. The story of the mutiny on the *Bounty* had been retold the world over, and Folger knew it well.

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[14] "1808," *Pitcairn Island Register*, Caird Library, National Maritime Museum, Greenich, UK (hereafter NMM) REC 61. The *Register's* early entries were written years after the arrival of the *Topaz*.
[15] Amasa Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres: Comprising Three Voyages Round the World; Together with a Voyage of Survey and Discovery, in the Pacific Ocean and Oriental Islands* (Boston: E. G. House, 1817). Delano was a captain, too, and lives on in literature as a central character in Herman Melville's *Benito Cereno* (1855).
[16] Amasa Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*, 139–140.

Delano tells us that Folger felt a profound pleasure at the realization that he was witness to the living vestiges of a well-mythologized historical act: "The whole story immediately burst upon his mind, and produced a shock of mingled feelings, surprise, wonder, and pleasure not to be described."[17] Even at the moment of the island's first encounter with the outside world, it was already threaded into a legendary and romanticized mythos. But if the moment was a pleasurable one, it was pleasure tinged by fear and trepidation on both sides. Folger invited "Aleck," onto his ship, but the invitation was declined. The islands' women, the natives said, were fearful for Aleck's safety and refused to let him board. The islanders instead offered their own invitation: Folger and his crew were welcome to land.

Here they were at an impasse founded on mutual suspicion and inscrutability; both parties were still unknown to each other, and their motives unclear. Was Folger's offer a ruse? The Americans could easily return Aleck to England to be hanged. Were the islanders deceitful? It was certainly plausible that a party of wanted mutineers would kill to keep their haven secret. Folger, after some deliberation, eventually did land and spent a day making a brief survey of the island. He took note of its population, mostly children, and its produce, mostly yams. He also pieced together an account of the mutiny. "Aleck" was Alexander Smith, one of the mutineers who left Tahiti with Fletcher Christian on the stolen *Bounty*. The rest of the mutineers, Smith told him, had been killed when the Tahitian men they took as servants revolted.[18] Their widows in turn killed all the Tahitian men, leaving Smith the last man alive. Alone, he converted the widows and their children to Christianity. The island had been peaceful for years. After a day on shore, the two parties exchanged gifts and the Americans departed.

[17] Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels,* 139.
[18] Some retellings of Folger's account have it that Fletcher Christian died a natural death before the slave revolt.

Folger wrote the Admiralty in 1809 to inform them of his discovery.[19] The British government never responded. Perhaps preoccupied with the prosecution of the wars against France and then the United States, it regarded a lone missive by a Yankee whaler as only so much distracting rumor. Folger's correspondence was eventually published in the *Quarterly Review*, though the editor of that London publication noted, "If this interesting relation rested solely on the faith that is due to Americans, with whom, we say it with regret, truth is not always considered as a moral obligation, we should hesitate in giving it this publicity."[20] Nevertheless, the story that the *Bounty* mutineers and their descendants survived on a lost South Seas island slowly spread through the English-speaking world. In 1814, Royal Navy vessels *Briton* and the *Tagus* visited the island, though likely without having heard of Folger's account. Within a few years, their descriptions of the island, along with those of Folger's, were published and republished in books and journals.[21] Soon, the story of Pitcairn Island was everywhere, appearing in periodicals and in theatrical spectacles like the one on Drury Lane.

One of the first people ever interested in Pitcairn Island who had not visited herself was a young English poet named Mary Russell Mitford. The daughter of an impecunious physician, she and her father nevertheless managed to maintain a middle-class existence together in several Berkshire villages after she drew the winning prize in a lottery.[22] In 1811, at the age of 24, she

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[19] Reprinted widely, including two articles in the *Quarterly Review*: "Voyage de Dentrecasteaux," 3, no. 5 (February 1810): 21-43; "Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean by Captain David Porter" 13, no. 26 (July 1815): 374–383. Both articles are anonymous but presumably by Sir John Barrow.

[20] "Voyage de Dentrecasteaux," 24.

[21] John Barrow, *Interesting Narratives and Discoveries Including the Life of James Bruce, Esquire, Travels in South Africa, Discovery of an English Colony on Pitcairn's Island in the South Sea (*Shrewsbury: C. Hulbert, 1817); Amasa Delano, *Narrative of Voyages and Travels*; John Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage, to Pitcairn's Island* (London: J. W. Marriott, 1817); Charles Lenox Sargent and John Adams, *The Life of Alexander Smith, Captain of the Island of Pitcairn, One of the Mutineers on Board His Majesty's Ship* Bounty*, Commanded by Lieut. Wm. Bligh* (Boston: S.T. Goss, 1819); "Descendants of the *Bounty's* Crew, on Pitcairn's Island," *Calcutta Journal* 4, no. 133 (July 13, 1819).

[22] For more biography, see Mary Russell Mitford, *The Life of Mary Russell Mitford: Told by Herself in Letters to Her Friends* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1870); Mary Russell Mitford, *Recollections of a Literary Life, or,*

published her first long-form work, *Christina, the Maid of the South Seas*.[23] A narrative poem in four cantos, it followed an imagined romance between an English sailor and Fletcher Christian's daughter on Pitcairn Island. It was not a classic by any means; it was published in only one edition and few copies survive. If it is remembered at all, it is only for two reasons. First, Mitford eventually developed substantial acclaim as the author of *Our Village*.[24] Second, the poem prefigured Byron's own romantic telling of the mutiny and its aftermath. My aim here is not to rehabilitate *Christina* and rescue it from obscurity as a lost romantic masterwork. Even those literary scholars who have read it in recent years found in it rewards other than formal brilliance.[25] But *Christina* does offer something else: it was the first major written work ever published about Pitcairn Island, and so is the very first entry in a corpus of hundreds of texts that spans two centuries.[26] It was also a text centered on definitions and critiques of Englishness, one which found remarkable possibilities in Pitcairn Island as a space overgrown with vibrant, fecund hybridity.

*Christina, the Maid of the South Seas* might strike the reader as just another romantic adventure. Its plot certainly tends toward the formulaic. Henry is an English voyager crossing the Pacific on an American ship captained by his friend Seymour. Their vessel is damaged in a gale

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*Books, Places, and People* (New York : Harper & Bros., 1872); and Alison Booth, "Revisiting the Homes and Haunts of Mary Russell Mitford," *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 30, no. 1 (2008): 39–65.

[23] Mary Russell Mitford, *Christina, the Maid of the South Seas; a Poem* (London: A. J. Valpy, 1811).

[24] Mary Russell Mitford, *Our Village: Sketches of Rural Character and Scenery* (E. Bliss, 1828), first published as a serialization in *Lady's Magazine*.

[25] Literary scholars have produced a number of readings of *Christina,* sometimes with and sometimes against Byron's *The Island:* Lord George Gordon Byron, *The Island, Or Christian and His Comrades* (London: John Hunt, 1823). Catherine Addison argues that Mitford reaffirmed early-nineteenth century notions of gender, see "Gender and Race in Byron's The Island and Mitford's Christina," *Antipodes* 18, no. 1 (June, 2004): 72-76; Elisa E. Beshero-Bondar performed a close reading to suggest "musical performance poses a Romantic tension between verbal authority and nonverbal resistance" in "Romancing the Pacific Isles before Byron: Music, Sex, and Death in Mitford's Christina," *ELH* 76, no. 2 (2009): 276-308. Beshero-Bondar is the principal editor of *Digital Mitford: The Mary Russell Mitford Archive*, a growing digital history project, http://www.pitt.edu/~ebb8/DigitalMitford/index.html.

[26] The literature around the *Bounty* and Pitcairn Island is voluminous, with well over a thousand contributions. Almost none of them acknowledge the existence of Mitford's poem; her gender and genre set her outside the standard bounds of what later became a veritable academic subculture.

and its crew are forced to land on a remote island. There they find the lost mutineers, including handsome young Hubert and his betrothed Christina, Fletcher Christian's daughter. The community is led by patriarchal Fitzallan—Fletcher had long ago leapt from a cliff in a fit of romantic inner torment.[27] Henry, wandering the island's woods one moon-lit night, finds Christina mournfully attending her mother's funerary urn in a hidden glen. He watches her until she departs, and then picks up the tear-covered flowers she has dropped, falling, of course, hopelessly in love. Fitzallan, meanwhile, narrates the island's past for the visiting American sailors inside a majestic cavern. Years ago, the Tahitian men of the island rose up, killing all but Fitzallan. Fletcher Christian's widow, in turn, poisoned and stabbed the murderous men. Soon, however, conflict between Englishness and Tahitianness threatens to reassert itself when Hubert, playing romantic airs on his flute, enchants Christina and wins her heart. She is torn between the incestuous, brotherly affection of her affianced Hubert and the adventurous heart of the English sailor. Hubert and Henry nearly come to blows as the Americans make ready to leave the island. Christina goes sullenly to her wedding with Hubert, only to discover that her fiancée has reconciled with Henry and has given the couple his blessing. Love conquers all, racial tension is tamed, and Henry and Christina live happily ever after.

As in the *Operatick Spectacle* performed on Drury Lane a few years later, Mitford's Pitcairn became a stage for romantic passions—passions that were resolved when the island's heritage of mutiny was mollified by the next generation's romantic reattachment to Britain. Its romantic tropes were obvious: enchanted glens, hidden caves, turbulent suicides, star-crossed lovers, and a beautiful maiden. But Mitford's poem was not simply an exercise in romantic imagination. Rather it is the notion of Pitcairn Island as an accessible and living space of hybridity and contact that sustained much of her interest. In her preface, Mitford claimed that,

[27] "the sudden shock/ scatter'd his brains upon the rock," Mitford, *Christina,* Canto III, verse xxi.

"Fitzallan's Narrative, romantic and improbable as it appears, is entirely founded on facts."[28] She drew the premise itself from Folger's actual encounter with the islanders in 1808, which she claimed to have learned of through an anonymous "gentleman, who heard from several officers of the *Topaz* an account of the manners, the virtues, and the happiness, which she has attempted to portray."[29] The poem was built on more than hearsay; her entire text was meticulously researched. Endnotes totaling 140 pages annotated her work, substantiating detail after poetic detail with careful citations from nearly every prominent account of the Pacific then available.[30] She also reproduced the only published source about Pitcairn then in existence, Mayhew Folger's first letter to the Admiralty published in the *Quarterly Review*.[31]

Many of Mitford's citations served to substantiate small details about the islanders' way of life. She shored up even two-line couplets with a bulwark of ethnographic description taken from her library of Pacific travel accounts. The note to her lines "The link'd ivahahs, side by side, / Short poles at once, unite, divide" included a lengthy excerpt from Cook's first voyage, from which the reader learned not only that the *ivahah* is a kind of canoe, but also the canoes' other names, classes, sizes, constructions, and uses in warfare.[32] The phrase "Oh generous people!" led to a lengthy disquisition, again from Cook, on gift-giving in Polynesia.[33] Other footnotes offered descriptions of native dress from Wallis, Tahititian sports from Hawksworth,

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[28] Mitford, *Christina*, vi.
[29] Mitford, *Christina,* vi-vii.
[30] From her citations, it is possible to partially reconstruct Mitford's Pacific library, which includes William Bligh, *A Voyage to the South Sea Undertaken by Command of His Majesty* (1792); James Cook, *The Voyages of Captain James Cook Round the World* (1809); George Vason, *An Authentic Narrative of Four Years' Residence at Tongataboo* (1810); James Burney, *A Chronological History of the Discoveries in the South Sea or Pacific Ocean* (1803); Alexander Dalrymple, *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean* (1770); John Hawkesworth, *An Account of the Voyages Undertaken by the Order of His Present Majesty for Making Discoveries in the Southern Hemisphere* (1773); William Dampier, *A New Voyage Round the World*, (1703); and John Fegan, *Voyage around the World by Lewis de Bougainville 17669*.
[31] "Voyage de Dentrecasteaux," 21-43.
[32] Mitford, *Christina*, Canto I, note 9, pp. 206–208, citing Cook, 221–224. Yes, these are footnotes to footnotes.
[33] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto II, note 7, pp. 230–231, citing Cook, in Hawksworth, 187–188.

the exchange of names from Alvera Mendana de Neyra, and so on. [34] Impossibly minor details were supported by the same style of robust substantiation. If the lines "from the mountain height / peers the wild goat in rude afright" were included in her poem, it was because Mitford read in Bligh's account that "among the articles which they brought off to the [*Bounty*] and offered for sale, were capsicoms, pumpkins, and two young goats."[35] The lines "rose the gay fig" demanded an excerpt from botanist Daniel Solander.[36] Neither animal nor vegetable was left to the imagination.

Yet Mitford's imagination elsewhere was unconstrained. She admitted as much, changing the names of her actors for mostly poetic reasons. "Alexander Smith" was in her estimation "surely the most unpoetical appellation by which [a] hero ever was distinguished," so she rechristened him "Fitzallan."[37] Mayhew Folger became "Seymour." Other actors she invented entirely; Fletcher Christian was never said to have had a daughter Christina, neither was there any report of a Hubert.[38] The island's shacks became "extremely picturesque and beautiful" English cottages "resembling the better sort of those usually seen in Devonshire."[39] How Christina's mother ended up in an urn in a moonlit glen is known only to Mitford. It should go without saying that no English adventurer on the American *Topaz* ever romanced the island's most beautiful maiden, or at least no such romance is remembered elsewhere. Mitford dismissed her work as a flight of fancy in her closing lines: "Oh! It is sweet, in this disjointed age / To 'scape awhile life's sad realities." Her Pitcairn was a romantic escape from life in Regency Britain—but if it was only a flight of fancy, why did Mitford so meticulously research and

[34] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto I, note 10, pp. 208–210, citing Wallis; Canto II, note 22, p. 300, citing Hawksworth; vol. 2, 204; Canto II, note 5, pp. 225–228, citing Bligh, 65, and Alvera Mendana de Neyra, in Dalrymple, 81.
[35] Mitford, *Christina*, Canto III, note 7, p 313, citing Bligh, 64.
[36] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto I, note 4, p. 200–202, citing Banks' and Solander's description in Cook.
[37] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto III, note 8, pp. 313–318, citing Folger's letter in the *Quarterly Review.*
[38] Though he may have been modeled loosely on Thursday October Christian.
[39] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto III, note 8, pp. 318.

endnote her text? Footnotes and endnotes were hardly unknown in Romantic poetry; but Mitford's notes were more exacting and more prolific than most of those offered by her contemporaries.[40] Footnotes can serve as defensive structures, meant to ward off potential attacks and shore up points of weakness; perhaps they served to protect a young woman entering a literary field in which her contemporaries were not, by most measures of social capital, her peers.[41] Just as crucially, Mitford was well aware that both Bligh and the families of the better-connected mutineers, especially the Christians and the Heywoods, carefully guarded their reputations. The memory of the *Bounty* mutiny remained a contentious one within certain echelons of English society. As Mitford noted in her preface, "It was difficult so to write, as to avoid on the one hand the charge of palliating a most fatal conspiracy and, on the other, an imputation far more dreaded by the Author!—of irritating the feelings of a highly respectable family, and tearing open the scarcely healed wounds of kindred affection."[42]

However, more was at work. In methodically fusing her poetry to a corpus of travel accounts, Mitford imbued her romantic flight of fancy with the weight and heft of the real.[43] Thus began the work of transforming Pitcairn into a heterotopic space, both connected and disconnected from contemporary society—but generative for self-critique. Travel narratives like Cook's were widely read and even more widely respected as authoritative depictions of otherwise-inaccessible peoples and places. *Christina* was a profoundly intertextual poem,

[40] William Wordsworth interspersed his poems with footnotes referencing other texts, including geographies and histories, i.e., the endnotes in *The Excursion: A Poem* (London: Edward Moxon, 1836), 345–374; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, a mentor of Mitford's, hemmed in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1817) with a running prose description; and Reginald Heber, whom Mitford herself cited and much admired, corroborated flowery descriptions of Levantine geography with citations from travel accounts in *Palestine* (1803). Hers are much longer.
[41] It was an imbalance that weighed on her mind; in her introduction she wrote, "The Author is well aware that age and sex have no right to be urged at the critical bar in extenuation of literary errors; yet there may be some gentle readers, who will not refuse to a young and timid female the indulgence. . . . [T]o their mercy she appeals."
[42] Mitford, *Christina,* v–vi.
[43] It should go without saying that Cook et al.'s image of the Pacific was "real" insomuch as it constituted the dominant and authoritative image of Pacific reality available to elite British audiences at the time.

threaded into a matrix of histories and travelogues that had already accrued substantial cultural currency. Small details about Pacific customs from Cook's or Carteret's accounts gave substance to the otherwise insubstantial, ethnographically rendering flesh onto characters who were otherwise only archetypes. Mitford's rendering of the islanders' actual bodies, for instance, was purportedly drawn from Wallis's description of Pacific islanders as "stout, well made, active, and comely people," as was their costume, "a kind of white cloth, that is made from the bark of a shrub."[44] That work made Pitcairn into a living utopia, real but distant, a contradiction useful for the work of assessing her own society.

Mitford dwelled considerably on the problems and possibilities of Pitcairn's hybridity. The landscape of Mitford's romantic-but-real Pitcairn Island thrived on images of Englishness transplanted. Lush tropical vegetation grew orderly vines across her poem, but even English seedlings did well in the Pacific soil. Pitcairn became a crossbred garden of Pacific and European cultivars, where "fruits of every clime unite / As if some fay, from Europe's shores; / Had borne them to that balmy air, / To bloom in fresher beauty there."[45] It was a beneficent mixture that was mirrored by its inhabitants. The island's fusion of Polynesian and English strains showed off the most aesthetically pleasing virtues of each; though Britishness emerged as the dominant, if strengthened, form. Describing the second-generation siblings, she wrote: "The towering youth, the graceful maid, / Were both in Indian garb array'd; / but not a trace of Indian feature / Appear'd in either glorious creature."[46] Rather, they were picture-perfect representations of Englishness draped in the trappings of Tahitian culture, preserving the purity of the noble savage while maintaining the enlightened air of civilization: "Of polished life they own the sense /

[44] Mitford, *Christina,* Canto I, note 10, pp. 208–210, citing Wallis, in Hawksworth, 260–262.
[45] Mitford, *Christina.* Canto I, stanza ix.
[46] Christina and Seymour are apparently more fair-skinned than their fellow islanders, who are described as more Polynesian in appearance elsewhere. Mitford, *Christina,* Canto I, stanza xiii.

Savage alone in innocence!" It was, in fact, the combination of paradisiac purity and English industry that rendered Pitcairn such a unique and beautiful place. As Fitzallen recounted: "A lovely desart we had found, / If desart 'twere, where all around / Liv'd plant, and flower, and flowering tree, / A silent world of faëry! / Soon felt the vale of British spade; / Soon rose the cottage in the shade." Pitcairn was not only England transplanted, but England at its most idyllic: rural, industrious, and pure. The metaphor of transplantation was, of course, an apt one for the island—relying as it did on the *Bounty*'s original mission to collect breadfruit saplings to plant on another set of islands half a world away. It suggested that while not without attendant risk, Englishness could survive and even thrive in new and hybrid forms through its encounter with the Pacific world.

Mitford's poem attracted some attention in its day. A critic in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* called it a success in the style of Sir Walter Scott, admiring Mitford's capacity to "discover sources of instruction and delight, where an ordinary mind can descry only sterility and gloom."[47] The *Critical Review* found her flowery poetry about vegetation a bit overdone but declared: "nothing can be imagined more bold and original than the subject which our poetess has chosen for her exercise of her imagination." That the poem had a firm basis in fact was a mark in its favor: "What of fictitious remains is rather grafted upon than a deviation from the truth," wrote her reviewer.[48]

Other romantic imaginings of the island appeared, too. Byron's *The Island*, published in 1823, was even more a fictive projection than Mitford's rendering.[49] Fletcher Christian, with his Tahitian consort and fellow mutineers, flees to a "guilt-won paradise," though not explicitly

[47] Unsigned review of *Christina: Maid of the South Seas,* by Mary Russell Mitford, *Anti-Jacobin Review* 39, no. 157 (July 1811): 260.
[48] Unsigned review, "Christina, the Maid of the South Seas, a Poem, by Mary Russel Mitford," *Critical Review* 23 (July, 1811): 264.
[49] Lord Byron, *The Island, Or Christian and His Comrades* (London: John Hunt, 1823).

Pitcairn Island, where they are hunted down and killed by their British pursuers—the world having enacted the violent and emotive turbulence that already raged in the hero's heart.[50] Some texts intentionally blurred the lines between romantic fancy and honest testimony; a six-hundred-page, wholly invented biography of Alexander Smith sold in Boston in 1819. Born the "son of a gun" on an English man of war, he grows up in the navy only to become a mutineer, and then redeems himself as Pitcairn's patriarch.[51]

Ships began to visit the island with more regularity. Like much early nineteenth-century travel writing, accounts of these visits by sailors and especially Royal Navy officers also adopted a romantic tone. These travel narratives not only celebrated the island community's unique origins but mirrored Mitford's interest in the islanders as generatively transplanted Britons. As mentioned above, first to visit after the *Topaz* were the British ships of war *Briton* and *Tagus* in 1814. Hunting for American privateers in the Southern Pacific, they independently rediscovered the island, having received no notice of Folger's landing six years earlier. Several of the ships' officers wrote accounts of their discovery that were published in the following years.[52] Captain Pipon of the *Tagus* devoted much of his text to descriptions of the islanders themselves, as well as to their settlement. The island's young men he deemed "finely formed, athletic and handsome." Its women were beautiful and surprisingly modest. They "have invariably a piece of Linnen reaching from the waist to the knees, & generally a Mantle or something of that nature thrown loosely over the shoulders & hanging as low as the ankles; this however is frequently

[50] Byron, *The Island,* 48.
[51] Attributed to Sargent, *The Life of Alexander Smith*.
[52] Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage*; Philip Pipon, *The Descendants of the* Bounty's *Crew* (London: Henry Colburn, 1834); Captain of the *Briton* Sir Thomas Staines' account was first published alongside Folger's letters, presumably by Barrow, in "Journal of a Cruise made to the Pacific Ocean by Captain David Porter" *Quarterly Review* 13, no. 26 (July, 1815): 374–383.

thrown aside & often entirely off. . . . It is not possible to behold finer forms."[53] Nonetheless, as much as he indulged in the exoticism and eroticism that usually accompanied descriptions of Pacific islanders, it was the presence of Englishness that made the islanders especially noteworthy. Thursday October Christian, Fletcher Christian's son, was one of the first figures the sailors encountered, clambering aboard the *Tagus* from his canoe. Pipon described him as dressed in only a loincloth, a poncho around his shoulders, and a hat bedecked with feathers. His skin was "of course brown," but not "that mixture of red, so disgusting in the wild Indians." His manner was friendly, his English grammatical and intelligible and, most importantly, the officers were "glad to trace in his benevolent countenance all the features of an honest English face. I must confess," Pipon wrote, "I could not survey this interesting personage without feelings of tenderness and compassion."[54]

Lieutenant H. B. Willis, during the same 1814 encounter, underscored not only the island's beauty and vibrancy, but its uncanny Englishness. In a journal entry, he described his utter astonishment at seeing the small community of English-speakers, all living under the orderly patriarchy of John Adams. He noted, too, its fertile soil, its orderly houses, and its people, who possessed "the most athletic and finest forms, exhibiting the most beautiful faces and the most admirable symmetry and shape." They formed a "society of human beings very unlike their wretched progenitors. Blessed with innocence, harmony, and peace, though scantly provided, exemplify how few things are really essential, in any situation, to make a community, when pure, comfortable, happy, and independent." Willis illustrated his journal entry with a full-

[53] Philip Pipon, "Narrative of the State Mutineers of H.M. Ship *Bounty* Settled on Pitcairn's Island in the South Seas" (September, 1814), 9-10, State Library of New South Wales (hereafter SLNSW), Papers of Joseph Banks, 71.05.
[54] Pipon, "Narrative of the State Mutineers of H. M. Ship *Bounty*," 6.

color rendering of Pitcairn's green peaks and rugged cliffs above his text, flanked on both sides by human figures. These he labeled "female natives" and "male natives," both of which blended ethnographic with classical style. He cast their young healthful bodies with European features and draped their bodies with light, flowing cloths.

Perhaps the most romantically-tinged early description of Pitcairn Island is that of John Lawrie, a sailor who visited the island on the *Hercules* in 1822. British colonists in Calcutta, having read about the island's rediscovery, purchased a shipment of gifts and supplies for the island, which the *Hercules* delivered. Though replete with ethnographic description of Pacific peoples, Lawrie's journal is mostly devoted to discovery of a more introspective variety. He had joined a ship bound for the South Seas after a love affair turned sour; "deprived of every hope, and sickened with every pleasure, I am forced to fly into a foreign land, there to seek shelter from all agony, and await the lenient hand of time to sooth my woe."[55] Claiming inspiration from Robert Burns, he recounted his experience on the island in a poetic register. "Mysterious Isle! – so long the seat of fear / When England searched for 'Christian' and his peers- / How strange to find so sweet an Eden here!" he wrote after seeing Pitcairn for the first time.[56] Lawrie too agreed that the islanders were a simple but beautiful people, living peaceful lives beyond the problems of the wider world. Theirs was a community that, during his brief visit, he found deeply affecting. On leaving Pitcairn, he wrote: "Farewell, sweet ocean speck, a long farewell! / Yet, wakeful as the waves that round thee swell / My soul shall watch thee, as a thing Devine / apart from the world, from vice and crime."[57]

Captain Frederick Beechey's visit with HMS *Blossom* in 1825 was among the most read and retold of Pitcairn's early naval visits, not least because Beechey published an immense, two-

[55] John Lawrie, "Pitcairn Island, 1822 Aboard *Hercules,"* 95-95, National Library of Australia (NLA), MS 9122.
[56] Lawrie, "Pitcairn Island, 1822," 105.
[57] Lawrie, "Pitcairn Island, 1822," 113.

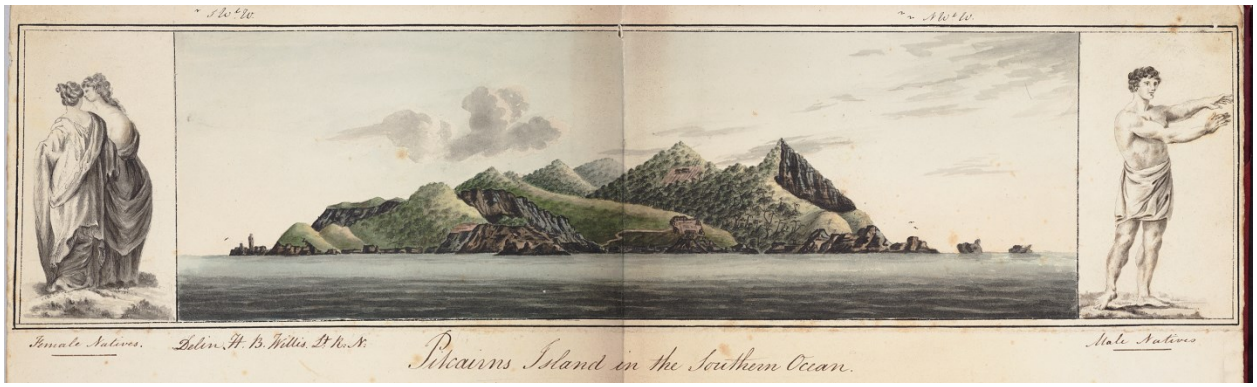



**Figure 3: H. B. Willis, "Pitcairn's Island in the Southern Ocean" (1814), manuscripts collection, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ, qMS-2259.**



**Figure 4: Edward Finders, "Landing in Bounty Bay," (1830) engraving based on drawing by F. W. Beechey, 1825, National Library of Australia, PIC Drawer 6032 #U2068 NK10632.**

volume account of his expedition to the Pacific that including an 80- page narrative of his narrative of his encounter.[58] The visit produced texts by other officers, too.[59] The *Blossom's* call at Pitcairn can thus serve as a particularly well-evidenced example of early encounters between the islanders and their visitors, in which the Pitcairners made themselves hospitable and the sailors interrogated them over their loyalty and identity. In 1825, the narratives by previous naval visitors to Pitcairn had already circulated through the Anglophone world, and the island's romantic story was becoming established as British maritime legend. Beechey's crew certainly felt the Island's romantic pull. George Peard, a lieutenant on the *Blossom*, recorded his feelings in his journal as the ship made its way toward Pitcairn: "Every one's curiosity was raised to the highest pitch to behold a spot which had afforded shelter to part of the mutinous crew of the Bounty, and been colonized by them," he wrote, "some were even look[ing] forward to find him, Fletcher Christian."[60] Though of course most accounts already reported the leader of the munity dead, it remained as a commonplace but impossible dream.[61] Beechey recorded the crew's anticipation, too: "The interest which was excited by the announcement of Pitcairn Island from the mast-head brought every person upon deck," he recalled, "and produced a train of reflections that momentarily increased our anxiety to communicate with its inhabitants; to see and partake of

[58] Frederick William Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Pacific and Beering's Strait, to Co-operate with the Polar Expeditions, Performed in His Majesty's Ship "Blossom," Under the Command of Captain F.W. Beechey in the Years 1825, 26, 27, 28* (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1831).
[59] George Peard, *The Journal of Lieutenant George Peard of H.M.S. "Blossom", 1825–1828,* ed. Barry M Gough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973); Edward Belcher, "Private Journal, remarks etc. HM Ship blossom on discovery during the years 1825, 6, 7, Capt F W Beechey Comdr" unpublished manuscript, NLNZ, MS-0158; James Wolfe, *Journal of Voyage in HMS* Blossom, NLNZ, Micro-MS-Coll-08-0538.
[60] Sic, Peard, *Journal*, 75-76.
[61] Peard, *Journal,* 76. There were rumors in Britain that Christian survived and had secreted himself back to his native country; pardoned mutineer Peter Heywood claimed to have seen him disappear around a street corner. Heywood's story is reproduced in his step-daughter's history: Lady Diana Jolliffe Belcher, *The Mutineers of the* Bounty *and Their Descendants in Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1871), 175. The legend never died; a recent novel published by Simon and Schuster imagined Christian's wandering, post-Pitcairn life: William Kinsolving, *Mister Christian* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2012).

the pleasures of their little domestic circle; and to learn from them the particulars of every transaction connected with the fate of the Bounty."[62]

As the *Blossom* closed in on the island, a canoe ventured out from its secluded bay. This time, the last mutineer rowed out with the younger Pitcairn men. His name, he admitted, was not Alexander Smith at all, but John Adams.[63] It was a suitable appellation for the patriarch of a new Eden. He came dressed in the remnants of his old uniform and "retained his sailor's gait, doffing his hat and smoothing down his bald forehead whenever he was addressed by the officers."[64] Gone was the apprehension of previous encounters. He and the younger Pitcairn men eagerly shook the hands of every officer with "undisguised feelings of gratification."[65] Beechey recorded the islanders' amazement at the size and provisions of the man of war. The sailors were "so rich," they told him.[66] They invited the ship's crew ashore, and soon a party of officers and men were rowing through the dangerous surf at the landing place, which Beechey christened "Bounty Bay." The name, which indelibly inscribed the island's romantic past on its landscape, has stuck ever since.

On shore, the *Blossom*'s crew met Hannah Young, John Adams's daughter. A decade earlier, during the *Briton* and *Tagus's* visit, a British officer recorded that she wept openly at the thought of her father being taken away and hanged. Her performance helped to convince the British captains of the sincerity of Adams's and the island's redemptive turn.[67] During the *Blossom's* visit, she staged the same demonstration again. Young kissed her father's cheek "with a fervency demonstrative of the warmest affection," and the others wept tears for him. Beechey

[62] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 66.
[63] Adams was his given name; he adopted Smith at some point during his naval career, perhaps to hide some transgression.
[64] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 67.
[65] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 67.
[66] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 97.
[67] Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage,* 92.

was convinced, too. Indeed, throughout his stay the islanders comported themselves with what he regarded as "a simplicity and sincerity which left no doubt of the truth of their professions."[68] Accordingly, the sailors reassured Adams and his family that their patriarch was safe. Beechey invited Adams onboard the *Blossom*, and the old mutineer accepted, returning to the ship with the captain that night. Poor weather made further landings impossible for several days, cutting off communication with the shore. The islanders purportedly watched the *Blossom* with "some apprehension," worried that the British might renege on their promise and return the mutineer to a London court martial and a hangman's noose. Adams, however, seemed to enjoy his time alone with the *Blossom's* crew, partaking again in a naval culture he had left decades ago. He demonstrated his reassimilation by joining the crew to perform "dances and songs on the forecastle, and was always cheerful."[69]

That conviviality came with a price. At some point during Adams's time on the *Blossom*, Beechey and his officers interrogated him about his role in the mutiny, the fate of the mutineers, and Pitcairn's past. Captain Beechey performed several kinds of knowledge gathering, ranging from hydrographic survey to ethnographic description, but his first duty was to history. His officers pressed the old mutineer for every detail they could of the *Bounty* uprising and the mutineers' settlement on Pitcairn, compiling them into a seven-page written testament to which Adams, barely literate, signed his name.[70] The old mutineer's story differed in places from its previous iterations. When the insurrection began, he went above deck, took a weapon, and joined the mutiny. Eight mutineers eventually made their way to Pitcairn, but four were killed when the Tahitian men they enslaved rose up. Adams and three other survivors, alongside their wives, killed the Tahitians with muskets and hatchets. One of the surviving mutineers built a still, drank

[68] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 98.
[69] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 114.
[70] Adams's Statement to the Officers of the Blossom, 1825, NMM/PGR/14.

himself into delirium, and threw himself off a cliff with a stone tied around his neck. Another lost his wife to an accident on the cliffs and demanded one of the others' wives as a replacement, growing belligerent when they refused. Fearing that their lives were at risk, Adams and the third mutineer "resolved to put him to death which was consequently done by a pole axe."[71] The last two lived peacefully together, converting the island's women and children to Christianity until Adams's co-conspirator died of asthma, leaving him the island's lone patriarch.

In narrating his story to the *Blossom's* officers, Adams admitted a good deal more complicity than he had before. The shifts in his narrative accompanied a growing relationship with naval visitors. The exemplary community Adams had raised and its dramatic demonstrations of affection for him won the empathy of visiting officers. Impressed by the island's prosperity and honest devotion, they assured Adams of amnesty. In return, Adams gave successive captains more "truthful" narratives. These established an early history of the island as one of masculine competition: English men defeated Tahitian men, and the Tahitian wives were won over and converted, loyal and obedient. Most early visitors narrated that history in their travel accounts to emphasize Adams's redemptive turn, and Beechey did the same. Meditating, like Mitford before him, on the island's paradisiac power to convert its inhabitants from evil to good, the captain wrote, "It would have been wonderful, after the many dreadful scenes at which they had assisted, if the solitude and tranquility that ensued had not disposed them to repentance."

The islanders learned to captivate their guests; displays of Anglican devotion were especially effective. Adams himself was not subtle in demonstrating Pitcairn's religiosity. The *Blossom's* officers visited the island on a Sunday, during which he led a church service. Adams was sure to include prayers for the royal family, offered "with much apparent loyalty and

[71] Adams's Statement to the Officers of the Blossom, 7.

sincerity." Other prayers "were added to the usual service; and Adams, fearful of leaving out any essential part, read in addition all those prayers which are intended only as substitutes for others." Another islander then delivered a sermon and, "lest any part of it should be forgotten or escape attention, it was read three times." Hymns were sung, first by the adults and then again by the children. The entire service was repeated at sunset. With the addition of separate morning, midday, and evening prayers, "they may be said to have church five times on a Sunday," tallied the captain.[72]As other visitors had reported, the islanders orthodoxly adhered to the practice of saying grace before every meal. When Adams accidently took a bite of bread mid-conversation, he suddenly "recollected himself, and feeling as if he had committed a crime, immediately put away what he had in his mouth, and commenced his prayer."[73] Moreover, the islanders told their guests that they never broke a vow. Adams promised Beechey that he would accompany him to the island's summit. Half-way up, the old man wheezed and struggled, and Beechey insisted that he could continue unescorted. Yet Adams kept going; a promise was a promise, he told the captain.[74] Their brand of Anglicanism was nonetheless an idiosyncratic and unorthodox one—they maintained, for instance, strict Levitical dietary restrictions on the basis of their own reading of the Bible.

Performances of religion were a means by which the islanders could display their Englishness and their patriarch's redemption. Beechey and his crew, however, were interested in the Tahitian elements of Pitcairn's hybrid community. His principal descriptive register was the romantic; an amateur artist from a family of professional painters, he produced dramatic sketches of the island with exaggerated precipices and canoes charging through towering breakers. He

[72] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 121–122.
[73] Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage,* 88–89; Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 102.
[74] "Another instance of a rigid performance of promise was exemplified in old Adams, who is anxious that his own conduct should form an example to the rising generation." Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 83.

tried to romanticize the island's women, too, taking note of Pitcairn's "pretty black-eyed damsels" and their innocent glances in the standard mode of South Pacific eroticism.[75] His officers searched out signifiers of Tahitianness in their way of life; both Lieutenant Peard and Captain Beechey recorded that the islanders baked their food by burying it next to heated stones, and noted their *tapu* against both genders eating meals together.[76] When such signifiers proved insufficient, the *Blossom's* officers sought a more direct performance of Tahitian heritage. One night, after dinner, one of them asked for a dance. The Pitcairners were reluctant, telling the sailors that by custom they refrained from dancing.[77] The officers insisted and the Pitcairners, playing the part of the hospitable host, relented; three women agreed to perform. The islanders produced three percussion instruments: a large gourd, a wooden instrument that they called a "porou," and the *Bounty's* old copper fish-kettle.[78] The women's performance of modesty was as important as the performance of the dance itself; they exhibited what Beechey described as "a reluctance which showed it was done only to oblige us, as they consider such performances an inroad upon their usual innocent pastimes." But they danced nonetheless, staging "such parts of the Otaheitan dance as were thought most decorous." Beechey was disappointed; their performance struck him as "little more than a shuffling of the feet, sliding past each other, and snapping their fingers."[79]

Beechey's officers also searched out signs of alterity in the islanders bodies, corporeal investigations of racial status that prefigured the island' later history of anthropometric investigation. Alexander Colie, the ship's surgeon, tried to ferret out Tahitian characters and

[75] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 105.
[76] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 100, 104.
[77] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 111–112. Dancing remained essentially forbidden expect on select occasions for the next two centuries.
[78] Peard, *Journal,* 93.
[79] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 111–112.

signs in the islanders' bodies. Trained as a physician at Edinbourgh, he measured their pulses and the circumference of their skulls and recorded their skin and hair color.[80] Already, other markers of identity were in operation on Pitcairn. However, the islanders contested any categorization of themselves as "black." Their narratives of the island's early history, at least those they told their British guests, were founded on English victory over Tahitian influence, a division they maintained during their conversations with outsiders, and which elided the history of their mothers. John Shillibeer, during the visit of the *Briton* and *Tagus*, recorded that the islanders said Christian was "shot by a black fellow," and wrote that "the hatred of these people to the blacks is strongly rooted, and doubtless owes its origin to the early quarrels which Christian and his followers had with the Otaheiteans after their arrival at Pitcarn's." His account included an anecdote, often cited in later literature, in which Friday October Christian encountered a West Indian sailor on one of the British ships. "Christian looked at him sternly, rose, asked for his hat, and said, "I don't like that black fellow, I must go," and it required some little persuasion before he would again resume his seat."[81]

Racial descriptions appear throughout Beechey's account, but he assigned the islanders to no discrete category. They were "South Seas" in some respects, English in others—though he did compare them to other Pacific islanders more often than other early commentators. Nonetheless, he unvaryingly described them as living in an appealing and endearing community. Indeed, the islanders had thoroughly charmed him. As the landing party made preparations to return to the *Blossom*, the community gathered to offer its farewell and departing gifts. It was a gray, foggy day, and the ship sailed slowly away from Pitcairn as the islanders' distant cheers grew

[80] Physical descriptions of the islanders appear in Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 127–128. It is unclear whether Collie imbibed any phrenological notions while at Edinburgh. Chapter four will discuss the history of physical anthropology and the science of race on Pitcairn in significantly more detail.
[81] Shillibeer, *A Narrative of the Briton's Voyage,* 82–83.

inaudible. Beechey wrote that he was "unconscious until the moment of separation of the warm interest their situation and good conduct had created in us."[82] Like other visitors, he inscribed his lingering affection for the Pitcairners in his travel narrative. Closing his account, he declared: "All which remains to be said of these excellent people is that they appear to live together in perfect harmony and contentment; to be virtuous, religious, cheerful, and hospitable, beyond the limits of prudence; to be patterns of conjugal and parental affection."

**An Anglican Paradise Found**

Beechey left Pitcairn captivated by the islanders and their hospitality, and his account would soon captivate others. The image of the island he inscribed in his expedition narrative would persevere for much of the nineteenth century. However, it was neither the islanders' professions of Englishness nor their racial hybridity that most captured the Victorian imagination. The island's romantic valences never disappeared entirely, of course; Pitcairn persisted in the Anglophone imaginary as an idealized stage setting for the display of mutinous passions or romantic spectacles, and readers the world over still became captivated by the legend of the mutiny and the myth of the lost paradise. But by midcentury, writers and readers increasingly fused those romantic conceptions with explicitly religious and moral ones. Pitcairn's mutinous past became a necessary antecedent for a utopian present—an act of original sin had, ironically, cast Adams's descendants into Eden. Writers began to leverage Pitcairn not only as an aestheticized, romantic stage, but as a didactic object meant to demonstrate lessons in virtue, and

[82] Beechey, *Narrative of a Voyage,* 124.

by midcentury its inhabitants' Englishness increasingly became defined by their displays of Anglican devotion.

One of the more powerful men to become interested in Pitcairn Island through sailors' accounts was Sir John Barrow. He became one of the island's first historians and one of the first writers to treat it as an expressly didactic space. As a permanent secretary of the Admiralty and a prominent figure in British foreign affairs during the first half of the nineteenth century, Barrow's interest in the wider imperial world was always more than pragmatic. He wrote accounts of his travels in South Africa and China and was a founding member of the Royal Geographical Society.[83] An admirer of Joseph Banks and a strong advocate for exploration, Barrow ordered several Royal Navy ships to visit Pitcairn, particularly Beechey's *Blossom*.[84] He was the anonymous author of many early articles about the island in the *Quarterly Review,* and likely the man who published Folger's letter.[85] In 1831, he drew on the reports of his naval commanders, his personal correspondence, and other published sources to produce one of the first full-length histories of the mutiny and Pitcairn Island.[86] In *The Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of HMS* Bounty, *Its Causes and Consequences*, Barrow collected nearly every travel account of the island then available, along with testimony and journals from

[83] Christopher Lloyd, *Mr. Barrow of the Admiralty: A Life of Sir John Barrow, 1764–1848* (London: Collins, 1970); John Barrow, *An Auto-biographical Memoir of Sir John Barrow, Bart., Late of the Admiralty: Including Reflections, Observations, and Reminiscences at Home and Abroad, from Early Life to Advanced Age* (London: John Murray, 1847).

[84] Frederick Beechey, after visiting Pitcairn, sailed the *Blossom* to Point Barrow, Alaska, which he named after his patron.

[85] He contributed hundreds of articles to the journal, many of them anonymous articles that have now been attributed: see Jonathan Cutmore, "The Early 'Quarterly Review': New Attributions of Authorship," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 28, no. 4 (December 1, 1995): 305–329.

[86] Or at least it was the first long-form narrative of the island's past explicitly in the genre of history writing. The first half covered the mutiny, the second half Pitcairn. Barrow was likely the figure in the Admiralty who pushed for early naval visits to the island. His interest in foreign affairs was always broad; he was a founding member of the Royal Geographical Society.

the mutiny itself.[87] He had never been to the island, but he had become enchanted with its people by reading every report of them that crossed his desk or appeared in the press. His book consisted principally of long excerpts from these disparate accounts, between which Barrow's own prose served as a kind of moral scaffolding.

Summing up his book in its conclusion, Barrow declared: "Many useful and salutary lessons of conduct may be drawn from this eventful history." The first was the stark moral example of the mutineers' fates; insurrectionists and murderers got their comeuppance. A second lesson was borne from Pitcairn's founding irony: that from a genesis in sin, the islanders had produced an earthly Eden. Barrow portrayed John Adams as a figure not only redeemed but sanctified, pulling examples from Shillibeer and Beechey to suggest he never told a lie or neglected to offer a prayer before a meal. "What is most of all extraordinary," he wrote, "the very man, from whom [the islanders] have received their moral and religious instruction, is one who was among the first and foremost in the mutiny, and deeply implicated in all the deplorable consequences that were the results of it."[88] But John Adams's moral turn charmed him, as did the character of the entire community; Barrow thought it "impossible not to feel a deep interest in the welfare of this little society."[89] In the coming decades, Barrow's Royal Navy captains would bear out that interest as the island's protectors and stewards. From the time of the Beechey voyage onward, Barrow's Royal Navy ships visited more and more frequently. Barrow continued publishing their reports in the periodical press, particularly in the *Quarterly Review*, inciting still greater interest in the faraway island.[90]

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[87] John Barrow, *The Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of H. M. S. Bounty, Its Causes and Consequences* (London: J. Murray, 1831).
[88] Barrow, *The Eventful History,* 169–170.
[89] Barrow, *The Eventful History*, 183.
[90] Cf. John Barrow, "Spirit of Discovery," *Mirror* 23, no. 647 (February 8, 1834): 83–86.

At the same time, depictions of Pitcairn Island began to appear in moral and pedagogical texts meant explicitly for children. As early as 1827, a primary school textbook excerpted an account from Pipon's narrative of the *Tagus* voyage. From it, pupils learned "that for morals, politeness of behavior, and . . . a strict adherence to truth and the principles of religion," the islanders had no equals.[91] After 1831, many of these didactic texts borrowed directly from the sailors' accounts excerpted in Barrow's history. An 1838 *Lecture to Young Men on Chastity* used Pitcairn Island to illustrate "the effect of a simple and correct regimen on the physical and moral character of youth."[92] The Pitcairners maintained a simple diet, exercised often, and abstained from all temptation; the health of their bodies reflected the health of their souls. An entry in the children's series *Stories for Summer Days and Winter Nights* included "The Ship and the Island," which retold the tale within the frame of a grandfather narrating a seafaring adventure story to his grandchildren.[93] It borrowed liberally from other accounts, especially those in Barrow, to introduce the Pitcairners as a chaste people with excellent moral and hygienic habits.[94] Tracts staged Pitcairn as a kind of parable, one example in a string of moral examples in right living. Editors largely reprinted stories about Pitcairn directly from other accounts with little editorial intervention, trusting that the moral valances were self-evident. Pitcairn had become an object lesson.

In time, entire books devoted to Pitcairn's edifying example began to appear. One of the first was N. W. Fiske's hagiographic *Aleck: The Last of the Mutineers, or the History of*

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[91] Abraham Thompson Lowe, *Second Class Book: Principally Consisting of Historical, Geographical, and Biographical Lessons, Adapted to the Capacities of Youth, and Designed for Their Improvement : Intended for the Use of Schools* (Worcester, Dorr & Howland, 1829), 102.
[92] Sylvester Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity: Intended Also for the Serious Consideration of Parents and Guardians* (Boston: G.W. Light, 1838), 152.
[93] *The Ship and the Island* (London : Groombridge and Sons, 1849).
[94] The story of John Adams's conversion, for example, is essentially a line-by-line paraphrase of Barrow's prose. Compare pages 33–34 in *The Ship and the Island* to pages 306–307 in Barrow's *Eventful History*.

*Pitcairn's Island* in 1845.[95] Fiske took pains in his preface to assure his readership that the story of Pitcairn Island was "actual history," unlike those "fabulous tales which are often put into the hands of children," and "have an unhappy tendency, however excellent their morality may be, to create and foster that love for novel-reading which has proved the ruin of multitudes."[96] He transformed the island's past into one long morality play. Young readers learned that the mutineers got their just deserts and that their faithful descendants were eventually rewarded by God. In a late chapter, Fiske interrupted his factual narrative to indulge in a moment of instructive fiction, imagining a conversation between a mother and her children. They have just finished reading his account of Pitcairn's history and, like the reader, rightly have some questions. After all, wrote Fiske, **"**It is impossible to read thus far this singular history without its awakening some interesting reflections."[97] William, one of Fiske's stand-in readers and ever the diligent pupil, takes note of the story's first and most obvious moral lesson:

> ***William***. *How little the mutineers gained by their crime!*
>
> ***Charles***. *But God brought some good out of it.*
>
> ***Mother***. *What do you mean by that, Charles?*
>
> ***Charles***. *Why, if the mutiny had not taken place, there would not have been that happy little colony on the island; and was it not God that caused it to turn out so?*
>
> ***Mother***. *Yes. The wickedness of Christian and his associates was overruled by God, so that much good has resulted. A fertile island, capable of supporting many inhabitants, which had for ages been a desert, has received a thriving colony. Here an interesting community is established, in which industry and good order prevail, and the influence of religion is universally felt. It is to be hoped that many generations will enjoy these blessings. It is also a remarkable fact, that several persons, before thoughtless, have been awakened, by what they saw and heard in visiting this island, to ask "what shall we do to be saved," and have become hopefully pious.*

[95] N. W. Fiske, *Aleck: The Last of the Mutineers, or the History of Pitcairn's Island* (Philadelphia: E.C. Biddle, 1845).
[96] Fiske, *Aleck*, iii.
[97] Fiske, *Aleck*, 155.



**Figure 5: John Adams instructs Pitcairn's widows and children, from *The Ship and the Island* (1849)**

> ***Jane***. *And, mamma, I think the story also shows us what good it does to teach children the Bible.*
>
> ***Mother***. *Most certainly. The village of Pitcairn shows to every one, how desirable and useful it is for families and neighborhoods, that the children should study and regard the Bible. To what is all the order, industry, cheerfulness, thrift and happiness of that village owing? Suppose that Aleck, when the widows and their orphan children were left to his care, had allowed them to live just as they might please, without making the Bible their guide and rule; what would have been the consequences? Do you think that they would have become the lovely and harmonious society which has been described?*[98]

One of the more popular books to explore the island as a religious example was Thomas Boyles Murray's *Pitcairn: The Island, the People, and the Pastor*, first published in 1854 but reprinted in multiple editions during the nineteenth century.[99] Murray was an Anglican clergyman and a member of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, a missionary organization that established ties to the island during the middle decades of the century. The Society delivered religious books and other gifts to the islanders and took part in arrangements to ordain the island's minister. Murray too felt "wonder and gratitude to contemplate so exemplary a race, sprung from so guilty a stock," and prayed for the island: "May you long continue a living model of all that is lovely, and of good report; and may nations not disdain to follow your example!"[100] Worrying, like others had before him, that readers would regard the Pitcairn story as "too delightful to be real," Murray buttressed his account of the island with excerpts from a half-century of travel accounts, including those of Shillibeer, Beechey, and dozens who followed; Captain William Waldegrave's 1830 visit with HMS *Seringipatam* became a familiar source.[101] Readers learned, as they so often did in these accounts, that the islanders kept diligent

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[98] Fiske, *Aleck*, 134–135.
[99] Thomas Boyles Murray, *Pitcairn: the Island, the People, and the Pastor* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1854).
[100] Murray, *Pitcairn,* xiv.
[101] John Barrow, *A Description of Pitcairn's Island and its Inhabitants: with an Authentic Account of the Mutiny of the Ship* Bounty *and of the Subsequent Fortunes of the Mutineers* (New York: J. and J. Harper, 1832), 278–284.

church services, often several in one day, never broke a promise, and steadfastly said grace before every bite of food.[102] If he was concerned about their hybrid racial status, he made no mention of it—though that was an attitude in line with his evangelical principles. The islanders were good Anglicans.

Like Barrow and Fiske, Murray sanctified the figure of John Adams. Here, too, he was the last mutineer, redeemed for his crimes earlier in life by converting the Tahitian widows and raising a generation of pious children. But in Murray's account, divine intervention was more direct. Sometime after the last murders, Adams dreamed. In one vision, a horrible being appeared and threatened to stab him with a dart. In another, he saw the future hellscape to which he, as a sinner, was surely doomed. Murray offered these two visions as the work of the Holy Spirit, "whose merciful design it was to give [Adams] a better knowledge of himself, and a sense of the justice and goodness of God, and to bring him, an humble suppliant, to the throne of grace."[103] His hagiographic rendering of Adams brought Pitcairn into the highest moral register, and it maintained that elevated status in religious and missionary tracts for years to come.[104] Indeed, so sanctified was Adams that visitors to Pitcairn began to collect his relics. A Victorian visitor to the museum of the Royal United Services Institution could see a lock of his hair in an ornate gold

[102] Murray reproduced Beechey's story of the islanders holding five service in one day, p. 150, and diligent offerings of grace before meals from Waldergrave's account, p. 153, and Beechey, p. 175. The first account of Waldergrave's visit was published by John Barrow in "Spirit of Discovery," 83–86.
[103] Murray, *Pitcairn,* 112. It is unclear where Murray heard the story of Adams's dreams. It is possible the tale was relayed orally through G. H. Nobbs, who visited Britain in 1852 to be ordained, or via any of the visitors to Pitcairn with whom Murray corresponded.
[104] *The Converted Mutineer and His Bible Class: Or, John Adams and the Children of the Mutineers* (Boston: Massachusetts Sabbath School Society, 1855); Thomas Boyles Murray, *The Home of the Mutineers* (Philadelphia: American Sunday-School Union, 1854); *The Transformed Island: a Story of the South Seas* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1854). The story of Adams's transformation appeared in missionary texts in other languages, i.e. *Piṭkairn ṭāpū ke logoṉ ke bayān meṉ* (Mirzapore, India: North India Tract Society, 1866).

frame, a kind of protestant reliquary, next to other relics of the nation such as Nelson's coat and the *Victory's* flag.[105]

By the middle part of the century, sometimes dozens of ships visited the island in a single year. The increased connectivity brought mail, and with it the possibility of more regular correspondence with the wider world. Pitcairn Islanders penned letters to their visitors or potential visitors, maintaining relationships and urging the government to send naval vessels. Caroline Adams, for instance, wrote to Admiral Sir Fairfax Moresby, commander of the pacific station, with just such a request in 1851. "We have never had the pleasure of welcoming an English admiral to our little island," she implored: "how inexpressibly happy shall we be if you should think fit to grant this, our warmest wish." She added: "Certainly we as loyal subjects of the Queen, ought to be visited annually, if not oftener, by one of her majesty's ships of war." A dozen women appended their names, along with prayers for Queen and country.[106] Moresby accepted the invitation, calling with the *Portland* in 1852 in the first of several visits.

The *Portland's* sailors, like other Victorian visitors to Pitcairn, were well-versed in the literature and stories that surrounded the island. This time they came looking not only for a romanticized refuge, but a moral and religious paradise. Fontescue Moresby, the admiral's secretary and son, recorded his anticipation before an 1852 visit in a letter home:

> *Having read so much about the mutiny of the* Bounty, *and the subsequent romantic history of the mutineers, which has resulted in the formation of a colony celebrated for their virtue, and simplicity, and religion, I experienced a feeling of something (I know not what to call it) on approaching the island, that I have felt*

[105] *The Collector* 6, no. 15 (June 1, 1895): 249; also published as "Relics of the Past in London," *Nation* 60, no. 1558 (May 9, 1895): 357–358. The lock of hair and its frame are now part of the collections of the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, "Pigtail," NMM/REL0003.
[106] Letter from Caroline Adams, et al, to Sir Fairfax Moresby, July 28, 1851, NLNZ, MS-Papers-0766.

> *when visiting some spot held sacred either from history or from being the scene of some Biblical relation; it is a secret kind of satisfaction.*[107]

He had already gleaned from poets and historians one of Pitcairn's more important characteristics; it was bounded off and held apart from the rest of the world not only by its insularity but by its exemplarity. Pitcairn was a romanticized and sanctified space, not only at a physical but also a spiritual and temporal remove from the wider world. Accordingly, visitors like him came to Pitcairn expecting something altogether more sacrosanct than the banal and profane places from which they had come.[108]

Once they landed on the island, mid-century visitors were rarely disappointed. The islanders were consummate hosts and displayed every characteristic their guests sought. Visitors usually looked for signs or stories of the mutineers. John Adams was dead now, but his children and grandchildren gladly retold his account of mutiny and colonization. Royal Navy Captain Edward Fanshawe heard two Pitcairn men calmly narrate the island's blood-soaked history of massacre and violence over breakfast in 1849. They spared no praise for their departed patriarch; when the time came to relate John Adams's redemptive turn, one of the narrators put "his handkerchief to his face and sobbed."[109] The whole island was unremittingly hospitable. Fontescue Moresby was pleasantly surprised to learn that young women were allowed to accompany visiting officers unescorted. Two or three attached themselves to him at all times—"but their demeanor is so virtuous, modest, and natural, while they show so much affection," he

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[107] Letter from Fortescue Moresby to unknown recipient, August, 1852, reprinted, National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection, NK2295. Available online at http://nla.gov.au/nla.gen-nk2295. Also cited in Murray, *Pitcairn,* 211.

[108] The separation of the other by the construction of a temporal remove was, and remains, a common strategy when writing about faraway people. C.f. Nicholas Thomas, *Out of Time: History and Evolution in Anthropological Discourse* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989); Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002)

[109] Edward Gennys Fanshawe and Alice Eliza Jane Fanshawe, *Admiral Sir Edward Gennys Fanshawe, G.C.B. A record. Notes, journals, letters. Written and compiled by Alice E. J. Fanshawe. Photographs by Evelyn L. Fanshawe. [With plates, including portraits.]* (London: Spottiswoode & Co., 1904) 190.

wrote, “that I could not help feeling quite a love towards them all.” The island’s men were just as unabashed in demonstrating their affection for their visitors. Moresby described his last day on the island as

> *too affecting. Never in my life have I ever seen any thing to equal it. The whole of the kind affectionate people crying, the girls clinging round us, begging us to come back again soon. I tried for a few moments to bear up, but it was a sad failure. I broke down, and am not much ashamed to say (as I kissed them all round) I cried as much as they did. One big stout fellow came and said, 'God bless you, sir!' and gave me a kiss. I thought his heart would break. I could not have believed that a few days would have made me feel such an affection for any single person, much more for a great number, as I did for them; but so it is: their honest, pure, virtuous character produces an impression that can never be effaced*.[110]

Displays of affection abounded in travel writing about Pitcairn during this period. The islanders, even in their own accounts, never painted their affection as affectation; in their autochthonous records they appear profoundly grateful that visitors had stopped at their island, though they were particularly thankful for the many supplies and gifts those visitors deposited. The island register’s account of Moresby’s visit concludes, “It is beyond our powers sufficiently to thank them. Among the many useful articles they left us, is a bull and a cow (calves) for which we have long wished.”[111] The register contained a long list of ships and captains who visited Pitcairn. Many of them signed their own names, sometimes with a flourish and a personal note. In varied sizes and handwriting, each signature was a record of an encounter between Pitcairn Island and an outside crew. From them, the islanders could learn what mattered most to their guests. Following his visit in 1848, the captain of the *Calypso* wrote, “Highly gratified to find the high state of moral feeling and conduct of its inhabitants as well as their perfect appearance of happiness and prosperity.”[112] In 1852, Captain George Mathersby signed his name and wrote,

[110] Moresby, cited in Belcher, *The Mutineers of the* Bounty, 242–243.
[111] “August 11, 1852,” *Pitcairn Island Register*, NMM/REC/61.
[112] H. S. Worth, “August, 1848,” *Pitcairn Island Register*, NMM/REC/61.

"Having spent two days ashore on this most interesting island I cannot but express the pleasure it has afforded myself as well as all the officers of the *Daedelus* to have visited it. I have never before had the privilege of witnessing such an example of piety with every Christian virtue attached to it."[113]

Elsewhere in the register, the islanders recorded their own experiences of these encounters. Describing the HMS *Sparrowhawk*'s 1839 visit, the register records: "In the afternoon the children of the school were examined and received the approbation of our respected visitors; Captain Stephens afterward divided a valuable present among the inhabitants."[114] Each visit by outsiders was a profound opportunity; guests, especially Royal Navy crews, brought gifts and news from the outside world. At the same time, each visit was also a judgment. Had the islanders lived up to their moral reputation? Were they as simple and pious as described? Most nineteenth-century visitors found their expectations happily fulfilled, bestowed the islanders with gifts, and returned home with stories about a simple and captivating island. The Pitcairners often reciprocated by handing over gifts of their own. George Mullen, a sailor who called with the *Rose* in 1850, departed Pitcairn with "100 oranges, a few bread fruit, cocoa-nuts, melons" and, most meaningfully, "a piece of copper off the old *Bounty*. This I highly prize," he wrote.[115] Pieces from the ship itself were often the islanders' most effective and affective gifts; they continue to circulate the world over.

Sailors maintained their affection for Pitcairn long after they left. Admiral Fairfax Moresby wrote, "Of all the eventful periods which have chequered my life, none have surpassed in interest" the 1852 visit to Pitcairn, adding, "it is impossible to describe the charm that the

[113] Captain Mathersby, "Jan 29, 1852" *Pitcairn Island Register* NMM/REC/61.
[114] "November 8, 1839," *Pitcairn Island Register* NMM/REC/61.
[115] George Mullen, "Pitcairn Island Described" (unpublished manuscript, 1850) NLNZ, MS-Papers-0908.

society of the Islanders throws around them under the Providence of God."[116] On his return to London, Moresby and his son helped to found the Pitcairn Island Fund Committee, which they formed under the auspices of the missionary Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Joining them were other powerful British figures who had grown interested in the island. Among them were a number of naval officers, including Waldegrave and Fanshaw, whose accounts are mentioned in this chapter. Clergymen joined, too, most notably Bishop of Oxford Samuel Wilberforce and the reverend Thomas Boyles Murray, author of *Pitcairn: The Island, the People, and the Pastor*.[117] They raised money to have Pitcairn's religious leader brought to London for ordination in 1852, arranged to have supplies shipped to the island, and managed its financial affairs.

Though moral and religious accounts predominated, the island's presence in the Victorian imagination was by no means uniform. Some visitors to Pitcairn, far from finding the world's most celebrated living utopia, felt only disillusionment when they finally arrived. As early as the 1840s, occasional naval visitors reported a sense of disappointment when visiting Pitcairn. The medical officer on the HMS *Curacoa* surveyed the island in 1841 and wrote, "Captain Beechey says he found this little spot 'a happy little society, well instructed, orderly, and friendly.' Candor obliges us to state that this description will no longer apply to them." Rather, the islanders were home to the same petty vices familiar to the rest of the world. The *Curacoa's* surgeon, William Gunn, also saw some element of artifice at work in the islanders' engagement with the outside world. He reported that the Pitcairners were "anxious to conceal the facts" of their private disagreements, "believing that it was only the character of their being a virtuous and

[116] Letter from Fairfax Moresby to unknown recipient, August, 1852, reprinted, National Library of Australia, Rex Nan Kivell Collection, NK2295. Available online at http://nla.gov.au/nla.gen-nk2295.
[117] Meeting of December 3rd, 1852, "Pitcairn Island Papers," NLNS, Micro-MS-Coll-20-2111. Murray offered a brief history of the committee in his book: Murray, *Pitcairn,* 249–250.

innocent family which made the English Government, as well as the English people, take such an interest in their welfare and happenings."[118] However, though some sailors grumbled occasional rumors that the island was lapsing into dystopia, that opinion remained a minority one for the coming century.

Religious conceptions of the island also by no means occluded patriotic interest in the islanders' Britishness. Pitcairn retained a place in the Victorian imagination as a guiding example for the British imperial mission, though later patriotic articulations were different in some respects from those that graced the stage of the Theatre Royal some half century before. Descriptions of the island had long painted Pitcairn as a kind of devoted Anglican village. Now, authors took up accounts of the island's industriousness and devotion to the queen in order to make it into a moral example for the antipodean settler empire. An 1869 jingoistic collection of imperial biographies, *Pioneers of Civilisation*, portrayed John Adams not only as a kind of modern Anglican saint, but as a prophet of imperial destiny. In its narrative it was he, not Fletcher Christian, who chose to settle on the deserted island. The community there was prosperous "in spite of the continual quarrels between the races," and once the Tahitians were exterminated, Adams led the community to even greater peace and happiness.[119] *Pioneers of Civilisation* offered as moral examples those men who either "have been the means of helping the savage out of barbarism, or of introducing a condition of social life before which the savage vanished."[120] Pitcairn clearly was meant to demonstrate the latter. Other advocates for empire found it easy to overlook the island's racial heritage if that occlusion made it possible to draw out the appropriate narrative. The Australian judge and amateur historian Alfred McFarland, apparently noted for harsh sentences against racial minorities, wrote in his history of the

[118] William Gunn, *Medical Journal of the HMS* Curacoa (1841), TNA/ADM/101/95/4A.
[119] John Tillotson, *Pioneers of Civilisation* (London: John Hogg, 1869), 99.
[120] Ibid., v.

islanders that "for heroic courage, tender affection, and earnest faith," they were "the noblest off-shoot of the British race in the Southern Hemisphere."[121]

An 1853 article published in *Blackwood's Magazine* on the occasion of a visit to Britain by Pitcairn's pastor made the islander's affective place in the empire clear. The piece included an excited account detailing the pastor's audience with Prince Albert and Queen Victoria: "The queen, much as her anxieties are occupied with north, south, east, and west, had recent reason to muse, not unpleasingly, on a certain little speck in the South Pacific Ocean, where she is specially loved."[122] It drew on Thomas Boyles Murray's account to produce a history of the island that made its allegiance very clear. The islanders, readers learned, saluted their monarch on her birthday with a salvaged *Bounty* cannon and sang God Save the Queen on every special occasion. When a French sailor, caricatured with an outrageous accent, asked "veder de people had heard of Prince Louis Napoleon and de French Republic? And would dey enlist demselves under it?" he was proudly rebuffed. Yes, they had heard of him, readers learned, but the islanders were "faithful subjects of VICTORIA, QUEEN OF ENGLAND."[123] Pitcairn remained a patriotic and loyal imperial outpost, whose union flag kept the tricolor at bay in that corner of the Pacific.

Rather, for Victorians, if Pitcairn seemed less utopian and more another proud colony, it was because Britain itself was again ascendant. To early nineteenth-century romantics, Pitcairn was a verdant, hybrid landscape, a space distant and distinct enough to critique Britishness itself. A peaceful garden isle stood in direct contrast to early industrial Britain. By the mid-Victorian period, however, some writers began to leverage the distance between Pitcairn Island and Britain

[121] Alfred McFarland, *Mutiny in the "Bounty" and Story of the Pitcairn Islanders* (Sydney: J. J. Moore, 1884), 239; H. T. E. Holt, "McFarland, Alfred (1824–1901)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography,* National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mcfarland-alfred-4089/text6533, accessed 17 October 2013.
[122] "The Paradise in the Pacific," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 73, no. 452 (June 1853): 647.
[123] Emphasis theirs. "The Paradise in the Pacific," 648.

in order to emphasize in more positive terms the gulf in sophistication between the two islands. A *Frasier's Magazine* article in 1851 made that rhetorical move explicit:

> *If you could suddenly whisk up into the air one of the descendants of the mutineers in Pitcairn's Island and suspend him over the high road in front of the southern entrance to the Crystal Palace, so that he might command a bird's-eye view of the great thoroughfare both ways, and all over the Park, and down through the glass road into the interior of the exhibition, taking in a panorama dense with population, heaving with movement, the probability is, that the man would either rub his eyes and imagine he was dreaming, or shut them again, lest in the stunning effect upon his senses, his brain might get bewildered.*[124]

The Crystal Palace was an enormous steel and glass structure built in London's Hyde Park as the central venue of the Great Exhibition, a massive display of industrial, artisanal, and artistic products from all over the globe. In many respects, it was the first world's fair, meant to demonstrate the heights to which British civilization could, and would, climb.[125] The author of the *Fraser's Magazine* article lifted up a hapless islander in order to provide a useful vantage point from which to look out over such a terrific spectacle of civilization and progress. To measure the advancement of history required some sort of neutral yardstick, and the islanders, English-speakers drawn from the same civilization that had produced the Crystal Palace, but morally and historically sequestered from it, could provide the necessary standard. "It is, therefore," continued the article, "that we should like to blindfold a Pitcairn native, and snatching him away from his potato patch in a balloon, suddenly take off his bandages at that point over the road where the whole panting mass might be revealed to him at a glance. The exhibition itself would yield nothing half so suggestive as his astonishment."[126]

[124] "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," *Fraser's Magazine* 40, no. 260 (August 1851): 1–2.
[125] The definitive work on the Crystal Palace is Jeffrey A. Auerbach, *The Great Exhibition of 1851: A Nation on Display* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999).
[126] "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," 2.

The fantasy of a Pitcairn Islander looking out at the bustle of London became embodied reality thirty years later when Pitcairn Islander Russell McCoy visited London in 1881. It was not the first time a native of Pitcairn or Norfolk had visited the metropolis, but it excited considerable interest nonetheless. That fascination was due in no small part to the work of enterprising stage managers at the Royal Aquarium in Westminster who contrived to put him on display. The London Aquarium was an all-purpose venue, home to plays, concerts, and all manner of carnivalesque performance, including the exhibition of people from other parts of the world.[127] Visitors were invited, for a small fee, to meet this "veritable Pitcairn Islander." An English-speaking Christian, McCoy was a difficult figure to exoticize, and newspapers seemed to recognize the ironic disconnect between romanticized image and embodied reality. "There will be nothing but friendly welcome for this English South Seas islander, who comes guarded by the not ineffective talisman of his wife's wedding ring," declared one.[128] Still, he played his part well. When a reporter asked what he thought of London's modern wonders, he responded that the steam-engines and railroads were indeed very astonishing—"He was very deeply impressed."[129] McCoy spent an afternoon on display before a sympathetic Anglican clergyman rescued him from the ignominy and shuffled him offstage.[130] The living instantiation of the fantasy was, as drama, perhaps unsatisfying. Russell McCoy was happy to answer questions about his great-grandparents, though he was mostly concerned about his wedding ring, which was broken and needed repair.[131] How his exhibition rated as entertainment in comparison to the

[127] The exhibition of people from other cultures in human zoos has very long history. See Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011).
[128] "A Pitcairn in London," *Launceston Examiner* (Launceston, UK), July 7, 1881, 3.
[129] "Pitcairn Island," *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times* (London), no. 1034, May 7, 1881, 300.
[130] The story was retold in Rosalind Amelia Young, *Mutiny of the* Bounty *and Story of Pitcairn Island, 1790–1894* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press, 1894), 219.
[131] "Pitcairn Island," *The Penny Illustrated Paper and Illustrated Times,* 300.

more risqué and exoticized performances the Aquarium hosted is not recorded in any discernible sources.

These two encounters were suggestive of Pitcairn's place in the British imagination, and the uses to which the island was put. Writers imagined the island as a space from which they could define themselves. Pitcairn was initially a romanticized zone in which to establish or critique notions of identity, not least Englishness itself. Its hybridity, while potentially threatening, was not an overwhelming obstacle to that project—rather, it could even be generative. In time, the islanders accrued a utility as moral object lessons, their history serving as a parable for redemption from sin and their present society as an example of good living. Those nationalistic and evangelical projections could fuse, as they did for some Victorians, for whom the island became a bastion of imperial and missionary success at the edge of Britain's antipodean colonies. Many writers referred to Pitcairn as a living utopia, but in most instances they employed it as a heterotopia, an "other" place both set apart from and connected to the world, one that British society used to expose or recreate itself. The *Fraser's Magazine* article employed that rhetorical move in one of its purest forms, figuratively uplifting a Pitcairn Islander to gain perspective. The island's utility in the Anglophone imagination, however, necessarily grew from relationships and human encounters. The islanders and their interlocutors alike worked to stage the island as an exemplary space. Pitcairn's people, accustomed from their first encounters with strangers to interrogations over their identity, became well-rehearsed subjects of scrutiny. Building on a romantic inheritance as best they could, they made themselves hospitable hosts, staging themselves and their island to capture the benevolent interest and affection of outsiders in a long history of captivation. Visitors played no small part in that history themselves, staging the islanders in their travel accounts as the exemplary inhabitants of an insular utopia for

their own purposes. Sometimes, as Russell McCoy's time on the stage of the London Aquarium demonstrated, that stage play was literal.

**The Men Who Would Be King**

The history of Pitcairn's staging as a place of captivation, and all the work done by hospitable islanders and interested outsiders to make it exemplary, had immediate consequences for the island itself. I have related some of them above, and will devote the rest of the dissertation to elucidating others. I want to close this chapter, however by offering as a coda another iteration of Pitcairn's social history of captivation. It begins with a text—an 1820 article published in a British sailors' magazine urging some sailor or missionary to join the community and take the aging John Adams's place as its leader. The island might have been a perfect British community in the South Seas, but only further literacy and Anglican piety would preserve it. "Should one or two pious *seamen,* sufficiently acquainted with English grammar, and perhaps used to teach[ing] youngsters be stirred up by reading this narrative, to take a passage on the next ship that is expected to touch at Pitcairn's island, the assistance required for such a voyage would surely not be withheld," its author implored.[132]

A figure matching that ambition landed with the *Cyrus* in 1823. John Adams was growing older and sought another educated man to take his place as the island's schoolteacher and moral leader. He asked if any of the crew would like to remain behind as his successor. John Buffet, an English sailor on the *Cyrus*, took up the offer and chose to stay on as the island's new patriarch. Or at least that is how Buffett himself told it in a short memoir published two decades

[132] Samuel Greatheed - Authentic history of the Mutineers of the Bounty (1820), NLNZ, Micro-MS-Coll-08-0099.

later in a Hawaiian newspaper.[133] According to his own telling, Buffett had traveled the world as a sailor; he was shipwrecked off Quebec, survived a typhoon off Manila, and now sought a quieter and more meaningful life. Before his 1823 arrival, he had already read several accounts of the island, including Delano's, and "thought it the most eligible place in the world, a place free from temptation, and with no hindrance to prevent a man becoming Christian." Another sailor on the *Cyrus*, John Evans, hid himself on the island until the ship departed, and he too was allowed to remain. They married local women and became the first of many "outsiders" to live on Pitcairn Island. Buffett set up a household and began instructing the islanders in reading, writing, and religion.

Buffet's influence lasted until 1828, when another pair of "outsiders" came to Pitcairn. They arrived without any other crew in a ragged, unnamed vessel. Its captain, Noah Bunker, was seriously ill and asked to remain on the island; Adams and the islanders reluctantly gave him permission. Soon afterward, Bunker flung himself from the cliffs that ringed Pitcairn. The islanders found him on the rocks below with several broken bones, somehow still alive. A visiting whaler gave him laudanum for his pain; when no one was watching Bunker drank the entire bottle.[134] Bunker was survived by his traveling companion, George Hunn Nobbs. Nobbs, too, had been a sailor and adventurer. He introduced himself as the "unacknowledged son of Francis Rawdon, Marquis of Hastings, and Jemima French, daughter of an Irish baronet who fled after the Irish Revolution."[135] He purportedly took the name Nobbs from the family who fostered him as a child, and he went on to a career at sea, serving on Royal Navy ships in Africa, South America, and India. Nobbs, like Buffett before him, claimed that he had sought out Pitcairn as a utopian refuge from the rest of the world. His dying mother urged him to find some quiet spot

[133] John Buffett, "A Narrative, of 20 Years' Residence on Pitcairn's Island," *Friend* 4, no. 1 (1846): 2–3.
[134] Buffett, "A Narrative, of 20 Years' Residence on Pitcairn's Island."
[135] Buffett, "A Narrative, of 20 Years' Residence on Pitcairn's Island."

where the family's transgressions could be atoned. Nobbs mentioned Pitcairn as one such refuge, "as much of its history as had come to my knowledge." His mother, he said, seized on the idea and her last words were "Go to Pitcairn Island, my son, dwell there, and may the blessing of God rest upon you!"[136]

Nobbs used material from his dilapidated vessel to build himself a house on the island. He soon began to exert his own influence over the Pitcairners, founding a rival school to Buffet's and reading his own sermons. His presence captivated most of the locals, who joined his flock, but disturbed some of the islanders' distant observers, who worried that this outsider would taint their paradise. "The seeds of discord are already sown," wrote John Barrow. "This Nobbs is probably one of those half-witted persons who fancy they have received a *call* to preach nonsense," he pronounced, adding that "the preservation of the innocence, simplicity, and happiness of these amiable people is intimately connected with his speedy removal from the island."[137] Nevertheless, Nobbs was to remain for some time; in the face of competition, Buffett largely retired from public life and left the new outsider to become the island's next leader.

Nobbs' influence lasted until 1833. In that year a tall, slender Englishman, somewhat over sixty years old, landed on the island. He introduced himself as Joshua Hill and said that he had been sent by London to serve as the island's governor. He designated several of the island's men as his "councilors" and named three youths as "cadets."[138] His machinations again split the island—some Pitcairners supported their old Englishmen, others their new Englishmen. But Hill soon expanded his control. He ordered that islanders cease all communication with Buffett and Nobbs, and he forbade natives from marrying outsiders. When Buffett continued opposing his rule, Hill decided to make an example out of him. The dictator and his councilors held a trial and

[136] Letter from Nobbs to Fairfax Moresby, reprinted in Diana Belcher, *The Mutineers of the* Bounty, 233.
[137] John Barrow, *The Eventful History of the Mutiny*, 330-331.
[138] Much of this account is necessarily drawn from texts penned by Hill's rivals, especially Buffett's account.

sentenced Buffett to be hung by his hands in the church and flogged. The wounds left him in bed for weeks.[139] Worried for their lives, the other Englishmen fled the island as exiles on the next ship.

Hill maintained his control by threatening to write the Admiralty whenever challenged. When the next ship of war came, enemies would be punished and friends would be rewarded with gifts. It was a story that necessarily relied on the support of outside visitors, and to a remarkable degree he obtained it. In 1833, visiting naval captain Charles Fremantle reported that he found on Pitcairn a man who appeared "to have come from England expressly to establish himself amongst these people as a kind of pastor or monitor."[140] Hill told Fremantle that when he had first arrived on the island, its inhabitants were in a state of immoral drunkenness, especially Nobbs. Not to worry, said Hill, he had broken the stills and Nobbs's hold over the islanders, established a temperance movement, and set Pitcairn back on its righteous course. Hill also gave Fremantle copies of papers attesting to a relationship with the Admiralty and colonial office. "It appeared to me so extraordinary a circumstance," wrote Fremantle, "a gentleman of Mr. Hill's age and apparent respectability, coming from England for the express purpose of residing upon Pitcairn Island. . . . I at first thought he must be some adventurer, more likely to do harm than good." But Hill's papers—and his accusations about Nobbs's immoral influence—convinced the captain, and Fremantle gave Hill his approval. The captain forwarded reports of Hill's benevolent influence to John Barrow, who in turn wrote articles in British publications celebrating Hill's potential to return the islanders to their high moral standard.[141]

[139] Buffett, "A Narrative, of 20 Years' Residence on Pitcairn's Island."
[140] John Barrow, A. A. Sandilands, and Joshua Hill, "Recent Accounts of the Pitcairn Islanders," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 3 (January 1, 1833): 165–166.
[141] Barrow, Sandilands, and Hill, "Recent Accounts of the Pitcairn Islanders," 165–166.

Who was Joshua Hill? According to the man himself, just another adventurer ready to reform, and be reformed by, the island. In an 1834 letter, Hill penned a short autobiography. In it, he composed a story in keeping with the island's fantastical history, and one compelling enough to captivate both the islanders and their outside visitors. "I have visited the four quarters of the globe, and it has ever been my desire to maintain, as far as lay in my power, the standing of an English gentleman," he declared. Hill listed a litany of honors and achievements: he had dined with princes and Bonapartes, commanded Royal Navy vessels, joined the Royal Society, traveled to North America and India, and had once maintained the most fashionable carriage in Paris. He himself was an aristocrat, too, a close relative of the Duke of Bedford. That last claim was something of a surprise to the actual son of the Duke of Bedford, Captain Lord Edward Russell, who visited Pitcairn with the HMS *Actaeon* in 1837 to investigate rumors that Hill's influence had taken a turn toward the oppressive. Russell reported that the man was a fraud, as did letters from Buffett and Nobbs, and he fell from favor with Barrow in London.[142]

Hill's influence lasted until 1838, when the navy finally sent the *Imogene* to remove him from power. The ship's crew deposited him in South America, where he disappears from the historical record. The exiled Englishmen returned to the island, and Nobbs resumed his position as patriarch, which he maintained for the rest of his life. He reacquired his standing in no small part by this time securing the approval of outsiders. Nobbs charmed Admiral Fairfax Moresby, who agreed to send him to London to be ordained as the island's chaplain in 1852. In London, he charmed Albert and Victoria and the members of missionary societies. He especially charmed Reverend Thomas Boyles Murray, who made him a principal figure in his book—Nobbs was the eponymous pastor in *Pitcairn: The Island, the People, and the Pastor*. By the time of his death

[142] The story is repeated in numerous sources, including Diana Belcher, *The Mutineers of the* Bounty *and their Descendants*, 178.

on Norfolk Island in 1884, he was remembered fondly by allies in Britain and friends on Norfolk, and has passed into the island's history as one of its most benevolent wardens.

Figures like Buffet, Nobbs, and Hill are hardly unknown in the history of the Pacific. Beachcombers appear often in early accounts of Pacific islands, living out liminal existences on the margins of empires and in the incipient days of colonialism.[143] They often served as go-betweens, facilitating exchanges between visiting ships and indigenous people. In that sense, Pitcairn's resident "outsiders" were not unique. And yet, as agents in Pitcairn's history as a space of captivation, they did something more. They took up the island's history and used it to their advantage, tailoring their own stories to capture the support of Pitcairners and outsiders alike. Pitcairn was already marked off as an exemplary place, so its patriarchs shaped their own histories to match; they too were drawn in by its utopian nature. Pitcairn was a zone of romance and adventure; as disinherited nobles and roving sailors, its patriarchs fashioned biographies for themselves eminently suited to it. Pitcairn was a moral space; they emerged as its moral leaders. They also embodied another impulse shared by other outsiders: writers enlisted Pitcairners as actors and the island as a stage in their own morality plays, whether about Christian redemption or English resilience. Most of the time that work happened on the page. Sometimes it happened more literally, as when Pitcairners and British sailors together defeated "hostile natives" on the Theatre Royal's stage, or when Russell McCoy was put on display. Joshua Hill's rule was an extreme instantiation of that dramaturgical impulse.

[143] E.g., Michelle Elleray, "Crossing the Beach: A Victorian Tale Adrift in the Pacific," *Victorian Studies* 47, no. 2 (Winter 2005): 164–173; Rod Edmond, "Chapter 3: Mutineers and Beachcombers," in *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gaugin* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 63–97.

# Chapter 3 | Experiment

**Colonial Administrators and Their Subjects**

In 1852, governor of Van Diemen's Land Sir William Denison received a despatch from the secretary of state for the colonies. It instructed him to advise the government on the viability of a bold resettlement scheme: Was it possible to move the whole population of Pitcairn Island across 4,000 miles of Pacific Ocean to Norfolk Island? Pitcairn Island was famously small, but its population was growing—a Malthusian crisis loomed. The islanders' allies in British naval and missionary circles began to discuss the possibility of relocating them and sought a new home that might mimic Pitcairn's famous isolation. Norfolk, a similarly remote but considerably larger island to the north of New Zealand, had for the better part of the last century hosted a penal colony notorious for its violence and brutality. But the crown, relenting to movements for reform and reports of inhuman brutality, was to close the prison. Could the soon-to-be abandoned isle prove a suitable venue for the Pitcairners, the Colonial Office asked and, if so, could the roughly two hundred islanders feasibly be relocated? The stakes, at least in moral terms, were high. "You must be too well acquainted with the history of these interesting people to render it necessary that I should enlarge the subject here," the despatch read; "It is enough to say that they are a community who, in the small and remote island which they occupy, have preserved an innocence of life and a gentleness and benevolence of manners which have gained for them the esteem, the admiration, and the goodwill of all by whom they have been visited."[1] It was vital for all concerned that the islanders maintain their purity and innocence. Denison answered in the affirmative and began preparations.

[1] Despatch from John Pakington to William Denison, December 15, 1852, *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

For many naval officers, it was a tantalizing idea. A ship's surgeon visiting the penal colony on Norfolk Island in 1852 had heard the "rumour that the Gov't intended removing the convicts entirely and supplying their place with the Pitcairn Islanders," noting in his journal that "this indeed would be a change for the better, and convert what now might be considered a den of crime into a perfect paradise of a place."[2] He was not alone; the islanders' admirers across the British imperial world celebrated the coming migration as a modern-day Exodus, a colonial resettlement they understood in expressly moral terms. By the middle of the nineteenth century, writers and missionaries had already transformed Pitcairn Island into an intensely sanctified space. Readers across the Anglosphere imagined the island as a living utopia, home to mutineers who, through an original sin of their own, ironically found themselves cast *into* paradise, and whose descendants had transformed a violent Pacific hell into a pacific Eden. The proposal to relocate them was, in moral terms, a test of Antipodean colonial settlement on a small scale. Would the Pitcairn Islanders be able to replicate their exemplary history? Across the second half of the nineteenth century, the success of their resettlement became a running question in the Victorian imagination, taken up by administrators, writers, and scientists alike. In government reports, the public press, and scientific discourse, writers came to refer to it simply as "the experiment."

This chapter is a history of "the experiment," from its instantiation in the 1850s to its assessment in the decades straddling the turn of the century. It will examine the inquiries conducted by its operators, survey the intellectual context of its formulation, evaluate the criteria by which its success was determined and, ultimately, recover some modicum of the experience of those who lived under scrutiny within its bounds. Just as the dissertation already has done in the case of sailors and their readers, the coming chapter will take up colonial administrators as a

[2] John Nihill, "Journal of Her Majesty's Sloop Cockatrice" (1852): 24, ADM/101/94/3B.

set of investigators concerned with the production, use, and (sometimes restricted) dissemination of knowledge about Pitcairn Islanders. Like the sailors and writers who preceded them, and like the scientists who would follow, colonial administrators were engaged in a project of elucidating truths about the distant island people for whom they increasingly made themselves responsible.[3] Their surveillance prompted a shift in the Anglophone world's conception of the islands, reconfiguring them from romanticized paradises into explicitly racialized and scientized spaces. Indeed, the notion that Pitcairn or Norfolk could serve as a living experiment, so crucial to the investigations of twentieth-century scientists and to their articulation of the islands as natural laboratories, was borne in no small measure from the work and obsessions of nineteenth-century bureaucrats. Colonial administrators made Pitcairn Islanders into the subjects of the "Experiment." Anthropologists, linguists, and geneticists later appended the adjectives "natural" and "accidental" to it, language that elided Norfolk's intentional and meticulous construction as an experimental space during the previous century. This chapter will recover that hidden ontology.

However, while the administrative reconfiguration of Pitcairn into "the experiment" was a vital precondition for the island's later use as a natural laboratory for the human sciences, the investigative work of colonial administration is best understood outside of that teleological frame. I mean to take very seriously investigation by colonial administrators as a form of knowledge production in its own right, though its concerns were embedded in some of the same scientific, moral, and romantic discourses treated elsewhere in this dissertation. Administrators scientized Pitcairn for their own reasons, borrowing from Victorian scientific language in order to create an experiment not in racial science as such, but in colonial settlement and governance—

[3] For a robust discussion of this dissertation's situation in the historiography of colonial knowledge making, see chapter 1, especially footnotes 40–46.

even as both concerns were becoming more closely imbricated within the logic of settler colonialism. In surveying the making of "the experiment," the chapter will situate the calcification of racial and national categories in a Pacific crucible purpose-built to test both those classifications and, concomitantly, the viability of a colonial project founded on racial improvement. Colonial bureaucrats initially favored the language of religious piety and national loyalty inherited from older discourses about the island, and they set up the island as an experiment with those qualities in mind. Across the coming decades, however, observers increasingly fetishized sex and heredity while deploying the language of race, degeneration, and eugenics. Ultimately, they abandoned visions of racial improvement in favor of racial hygiene.[4] Those concerns were widespread across metropole and empire, and the dissertation will show both islands' place in a broader Victorian social thought—but those concerns were made and enacted with a particular acuteness and attention on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands.

**Setting an Experiment and Its Subjects in Motion**

William Denison was well placed to carry out the task of relocating the Pitcairn Islanders. He was a military engineer, rising through the ranks of the officer corps before assuming the

[4] A general trend across the empire well described in the literature, but made with a particular and intentional acuteness in Norfolk Island and other peripheral spaces like it. Cf. Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800–1960* (New York: McMillan, 1982); Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness: Science, Health, and Racial Destiny in Australia* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006); Bronwen Douglas and Chris Ballard, eds., *Foreign Bodies: Oceania and the Science of Race 1750–1940* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2008); Damon Ieremia Salesa, *Racial Crossings: Race, Intermarriage, and the Victorian British Empire* (Oxford , UK: Oxford University Press, 2011); Chloe Campbell, *Race and Empire: Eugenics in Colonial Kenya* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2012); Bronwen Douglas, *Science, Voyages, and Encounters in Oceania, 1511–1850* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). See also the discussion on race, sex, and hygiene at the end of this chapter.

lieutenant governorship of Van Diemen's Land.[5] A seasoned bureaucrat, he had already managed one British experiment in the resettlement of populations, the carefully administered penal colony in Tasmania. However, in addition to the governance of the convict population, his administration came up against two other problems of population control. First was the political incorporation of those free settlers who were steadily arriving in the colony and whose interests in ending transportation, opening up new areas to settlement, and establishing responsible government clashed with the aims of the Tasmanian carceral project. The settlers staged a minor rebellion against Denison after the publication of a condescending report he authored about them. Second, Denison bore witness to the final, brutal alienation and extermination of Tasmania's indigenous population in the face of British colonization; he relocated the roughly fifty surviving aboriginal people from Flinders Island to Oyster Bay in what he regarded as a charitable and palliative act.[6] These various "population" concerns were, of course, intertwined in the colonial history of the antipodes, and indeed historians of Australia are increasingly conjoining indigenous, penal, and free settler histories into the same, larger narrative.[7]

Denison was, so far as I am able to determine from the archive, the first figure to consistently deploy the word "experiment" in describing the management and migration of the Pitcairn Islanders; it was following his usage that "The Experiment" became a standard

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[5] C. H. Currey, "Denison, Sir William Thomas (1804–1871)", in *Australian Dictionary of Biography,* National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/denison-sir-william-thomas-3394/text5145, published first in hardcopy 1972 (accessed December 4, 2015). Denison published an extensive two-volume autobiography, *Varieties of Vice-Regal Life*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, and co., 1870). One biographical accounting of Denison's rule in the antipodes exists: J. M. Bennet, *Reluctant Democrat: Sir William Denison in Australia 1847–1861* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2011).

[6] The "extinction of the Tasmanians" was, like Pitcairn, a much fetishized case in Victorian anthropology; see Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800–1930* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003); Russell McGregor, "The Doomed Race: A Scientific Axiom of the Late Nineteenth Century," *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 39, no. 1 (April 1, 1993): 14–22.

[7] Jessie Mitchell, "'The Gomorrah of the Southern Seas': Population, Separation and Race in Early Colonial Queensland." *History Australia* 6, no. 3 (2009): 1–15; for a magisterial history linking together the convict histories of New South Wales, Van Diemen's Land, and Norfolk Island, see Robert Hughes's *The Fatal Shore* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988).

appellation by which he and other Victorians came to call the entire project of relocating the Pitcairn people from one island to another.[8] "Experiment" was a common word in Victorian parlance; it had already long acquired its technical meaning in natural philosophy, but it retained a slightly larger metaphoric purchase than it presently enjoys.[9] Denison, though a scientifically minded man who took an ethnographic interest in those he administered, proposed his experiment principally as a "moral" rather than sociological test in race and colonial settlement. He nonetheless managed its parameters carefully; in an ongoing conversation with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, he laid out his plans.[10] Denison suggested, before all else, that Norfolk Island be reserved for the Pitcairners wholesale so that their much-vaunted isolation could continue. "It would in my opinion be advisable," he wrote in 1855, to prohibit any sale of land or right of immigration to anyone but "the race now about to inhabit this small island, and to hold out as little encouragement as possible to the domestication of the other races, be they white or coloured among them, until the effect of the removal of the altered circumstances in which they are about to be placed can be clearly seen."[11]

Denison was especially interested in the islanders' mixed heritage, and was eager to determine whether their Polynesian roots would spell success or doom for the new settlement. In another despatch, he suggested the Pitcairners might retain "the indolence of the South Sea

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[8] A chapter in a book on Norfolk history has delved into the history of "the experiment," see "British Experiments on Norfolk Island" in Maev O'Collins's *An Uneasy Relationship: Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth of Australia* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2010), 1–18. As a general history of the island and not a history of science or intellectual history, O'Collin's narrative inhabits rather than analyzes "experiment" as a category.

[9] The Oxford English Dictionary has references for the meaning "An action or operation undertaken in order to discover something unknown, to test a hypothesis, or establish or illustrate some known truth," which extend at least to the 14th century. "Experiment, n." *OED Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, March 2016), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/66530?rskey=pfPJAn&result=1&isAdvanced=false, accessed May 04, 2016.

[10] Reflecting a tumultuous period of British politics, his correspondents between 1852 and 1856 were a revolving door of high officialdom, including: Sir John Pakington, Henry Pehlam-Clinton, the Duke of Newcastle, Sir George Grey, Sidney Herbert, Lord John Russell, Sir William Molesworth, and finally Henry Labouchere.

[11] "Despatch from William Denison to Lord John Russell, September 3, 1857," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

Islander," which he described as the "effect partly of the climate in which they live, partly of their natural constitution." Denison suggested that only time would tell whether the Pitcairners, perched halfway between civilization and savagery, would live suitably industrious and productive lives.[12] His concern over the deleterious effects of environment on settlement reflected a longstanding current of western thinking on race and colonization which, in a Lamarckian mode, fused conceptions of place and race. It was a notion that would give way, in the course of the Norfolk "experiment," to a much more rigid conception of race as inherent and inflexible.

Denison protected the Pitcairners' isolation fervently during the initial plans for resettlement; he was particularly concerned that whalers or "speculators . . . might be disposed to take advantage of the ignorance of the natives." In 1856, only a few months before the islanders were scheduled to arrive at their new home, Denison was given the lieutenant-governorship of New South Wales. He asked that Whitehall allow him to retain administrative control over Norfolk Island from his new position, and the Colonial Office acquiesced.[13] Denison was adamant, however, that the new colony not be absorbed directly into New South Wales precisely in order to curtail outside influence and eliminate the possibility of anyone "interfering with the experiment which is now about to be made."[14] While the island later lost much of its autonomy, to this day it retains an ambivalent status as an external territory of Australia.[15]

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[12] "Despatch from Sir William Denison to the Duke of Newcastle, June 8, 1853," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1987). The racist trope of the "savage" made indolent by an easy tropical existence is a very old one; c.f. Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), David Arnold, "'Illusory Riches': Representations of the Tropical World, 1840–1950," *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 21, no. 1 (2000): 6–18.

[13] "Despatch from William Denison to George Grey, December 25, 1854," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

[14] "Despatch from William Denison to George Grey, February 27, 1856," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

[15] See the bulk of Maev O'Collins's *An Uneasy Relationship* for a pro-autonomy perspective.

For a time, Denison also curtailed plans to set up an Anglican mission school for Melanesians on Norfolk Island. It was the persistent dream of George August Selwyn, the bishop of New Zealand, to build a base of operations for missionary work closer to the other islands of the Pacific. When he learned that Norfolk would be abandoned, he envisaged the island, perched halfway between New Zealand and New Caledonia, as a site from which evangelical missionaries across Melanesia would emanate. A school for indigenous peoples on Norfolk would teach them English, train them as proselytizers, and dispatch them across the Pacific to spread Anglican influence. The Pitcairners' religious allies in London were initially thrilled at the prospect; Pitcairn and its inhabitants, too, were long regarded as a font of Christian evangelical spirit in the Pacific, even if they never converted any of their distant neighbors in practice. The Pitcairn Fund Committee, headed by Royal Navy officers, Anglican bishops, and members for the missionary Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, which had been instrumental in advocating for the relocation of the Pitcairners to Norfolk, was pleased by the proposal. The bishop could set up his school on one half of the island, and the committee's friends could settle on the other.[16] The school staff could provide religious instruction to the Pitcairners, and the Pitcairners would finally serve in the missionary role that the Anglicans had long envisioned for them. After Denison inveighed the Colonial Office against the establishment of a mission school, the government in turn advised the Pitcairn Fund Committee not to support the proposal. The committee dutifully adopted a resolution demanding that "no one interfere with the purposes of the Pitcairn Islanders" and that "proper precautions be taken that their community be held distinct as to property and self-government and that the whole island be

[16] "Minutes of the Pitcairn Fund Committee, July 5, 1854," Pitcairn Island Papers, Micro-MS-Coll-20-2111, NLNZ.

protected from intrusion by any other parties."[17] The bishop was persistent, however. Denison recorded awkward confrontations with Selwyn in the social world of Sydney. The two met after the bishop's arrival in New South Wales, and Selwyn pressed the idea of Norfolk as the seat of a South Seas bishopric. Denison described him as a "most earnest and zealous person."[18] Still, he denied the request and, in a letter written the following morning, explained that the islanders should "be enabled to carry out at Norfolk Island the same primitive or patriarchal system which has produced such good effects upon their moral conduct at Pitcairn's Island," free from the influence of even such beneficent powers as the Anglican church itself.[19] The Bishop finally withdrew his plans. The experiment was safe, for the time being.

In 1855, as ships began transporting the last of Norfolk's convict population to Van Diemen's Land, Denison dispatched a Royal Navy vessel to Pitcairn Island to conduct one last investigation of its affairs. The *Juno,* under the command of Captain Stephan Fremantle, called on the island in the same manner naval vessels had for almost half a century. Boats emanated from Bounty Bay and hailed the *Juno*. Fremantle and a landing party came ashore and climbed up to Adamstown. This time the islanders encountered a naval captain with a different set of questions than those of his predecessors. His investigation was meant to determine not their loyalty or vitality but, starkly, whether or not they wished to abandon their home forever. Nearly the entire population of 187 people gathered to hear Fremantle read a letter from the British consul of the Society Islands. The message promised that, though Norfolk could not be officially ceded to the Pitcairners, the former penal colony would be theirs for settlement. The consul

[17] "Minutes of the Pitcairn Fund Committee, July 18, 1854," Pitcairn Island Papers, Micro-MS-Coll-20-2111, NLNZ.
[18] "Letter from William Denison to his mother, June 19, 1856," reproduced in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-Regal Life,* vol. 1, 335.
[19] "Letter from Denison to Selwyn, June 16, 1856," reproduced in "despatch from William Denison to Henry Labouchere, June 25, 1856," *Parliamentary Papers: Further papers on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

added that his warmest wishes for their prosperity were coupled with "a hope and a belief that they will take with them and retain that sterling principle and noble simplicity which have caused the Pitcairn Islanders to be so cared for by England."[20]

The islanders were unimpressed. Fremantle noted that the Pitcairners took up the question as "a melancholy subject for deliberation." Many of the older residents recalled their aborted attempt to relocate to Tahiti in 1831, a move that resulted in several deaths by disease. Others worried that the elderly, the very young, or the sick might not survive the journey. Some, according to Fremantle, were too sentimentally attached to their old home. Nobbs, their pastor, who the captain noticed was the only one to wear shoes, spoke against leaving. The other outsiders, Buffett and Evans, evinced the same sentiment but suggested that they would accede so that their children might have a better life. Many islanders, when queried, replied only with the word "go." At the end of the night, the lieutenant tallied that 153 of the 187 had agreed to the transfer.[21] Before he left to report their decision, the islanders presented the captain with a letter, signed by most of the adult population, expressing their thanks.[22]

On his return, Fremantle informed Denison of the islanders' decision. He added, as a caveat, that they were determined to maintain their storied isolation and independence, writing:

> *The islanders express a hope that they may be allowed to live on Norfolk Island in the same seclusion from the rest of the world as they have hitherto done at Pitcairn; and it is impossible for anybody who has once been an eyewitness of the exemplary conduct and the pious, single-minded character of these innocent people, not to urge a compliance with a request so natural and reasonable.*[23]

Like other naval captains, Fremantle also felt obligated to report on their moral status. On that count, the islanders continued to be exemplary models of British loyalty and Anglican devotion.

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[20] "Letter from Nicholas Toup to the Pitcairn Islanders, July 5, 1854," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).
[21] Stephen Fremantle, "Visit to Pitcairn's island," HMS Juno, Sept 23, 1855, TNA CO 201/496.
[22] Letter from G. N. Young to Fremantle, September 20th, 1855, Mitchell Library, AP25/3.
[23] Ibid.

"So much has been written and published about them that it would be superfluous to recapitulate the peculiar characteristics which have excited so much interest in England, and gained for them the affectionate sympathy of all their fellow Christians," he wrote. "I can only add my corroboration to their still remaining the same cheerful, docile, and unsophisticated community as they have been so often represented." It was enough for Denison, and enough for Whitehall. The Lieutenant Governor hired a merchant vessel, the *Morayshire,* to transport the Pitcairners the following winter.

What of the subjects of Denison's experiment? What can we recover, historically, of their experience as objects of fascination, transported like so many other imperial subjects across vast oceanic distances? The historiographies of science and empire alike are crowded with discursive histories analyzing the texts, representations, contexts, and motivations of scientists and administrators charged with the management of colonial populations; rarer are narratives relating the experiences of those they managed. Indeed, the problem of accessing subaltern subjectivities via an asymmetrical colonial archive itself compiled as an act of power is a famous one in colonial, post-colonial, and subaltern studies.[24] In the mold of recent accounts of colonial and scientific subject experiences, I want to take a moment here to disinter, from both "insider" and colonial texts, something of the experience of being transported to a new home under the auspices of a grand imperial scheme. It will serve, I hope, as a window in the lives of those Pitcairners on Norfolk who would soon come to find themselves investigated and examined by a

[24] See especially Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

far less sympathetic colonial bureaucracy—and as an ethnohistorical telling of an early episode in the making of the Pitcairn and Norfolk people into persistent scientific subjects.[25]

The *Morayshire* arrived off Pitcairn on April 22, 1856. As usual, two Pitcairners greeted the ship in a canoe and informed its captain that the island's population was now 193. On board the *Morayshire* was a British naval officer, who introduced himself to the islanders as acting lieutenant G. W. Gregorie and explained that the government had charged him with overseeing their transfer. Gregorie had left for Pitcairn with very careful instructions from Denison. He was, above all else, to "maintain the strictest separation between the crew of the vessel and the female passengers," as the governor had warned him that the islanders were especially susceptible to "receiving impressions from others." The barrier between passenger and crew was principally meant to serve as a bulwark against sexual liaisons, but it was also more generally a measure to maintain the celebrated isolation and "purity" of the Pitcairners in every sense of the word. Denison also instructed Gregorie to maintain a strict and careful record of his interactions with the islanders, and to produce a full report both for him and for the Secretary of State for the Colonies. This report was to include any "suggestions which you may think calculated to facilitate the working of the experiment about to be made, or which may tend to the happiness and prosperity of the very interesting people who are the subject of that experiment."[26]

Once ashore, Gregorie's first act was to assemble the community in the Adamstown school house, where he read a letter penned by Denison.[27] It began by offering warm encouragement: "I have sent you a fine vessel to take you to Norfolk Island," Fremantle read. "It

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[25] Taking, very mildly and clumsily, a cue from Greg Dening's manifesto, "Performing Cross Culturally," *Manifestos for History,* ed. Keith Jenkins, Sue Morgan, and Alun Munslow (New York: Routledge, 2007), 98–107. See also footnote 68 in chapter one.

[26] "Instructions for Lieutenant Gregorie from William Denison, 1856," reproduced and enclosed in "Despatch from William Denison to George Grey, February 27, 1856," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).

[27] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856, TNA ADM 125/135.

will be large enough to make you all very comfortable." At the same time, the letter warned the islanders that after the *Morayshire* left sight of Pitcairn, the island would fall outside of the sphere of British protection, and men of war would no longer call to distribute supplies and see to the welfare of those who chose to stay. It concluded by encouraging the islanders to "maintain that happy simplicity, and that true Christian character, which has gained you the regard and esteem of your fellow countrymen all over the world."[28] The islanders remained skeptical, and many now hesitated about the move. George Adams, one of the older men on the island, had long ago sworn he would never leave Pitcairn. Charles Christian, Jacob Christian, Vernon Young, John Quintal, and their families joined Adams in his skepticism. Gregorie thought their reasons "foolish" but did what he could to persuade the holdouts. Their children, he reiterated, would have a better future.[29] Afterward, Gregorie held a private conversation with the aging George Adams, who confided in the British officer that his grandchild, a young infant, had taken ill and he could not countenance the thought of burying her at sea. If her health rallied, he said, he would join the others on the *Morayshire*.[30] His sons in turn urged him to go but promised to stay and take care of him if he refused.

At six the next morning the bell in Adamstown square rang, and the islanders began preparations for departure. The *Morayshire* had arrived earlier than expected. The Pitcairners had planned to leave in August and their crop of taro was not yet ready, but they gathered what seedlings they could. They stripped each house of its belongings, mostly clothes, cookware, books, and some pieces of furniture, and carried them on their backs down the steep, winding

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[28] "Letter from Denison the Pitcairn Islanders," reproduced and enclosed in "Despatch from William Denison to George Grey, February 27, 1856," *Parliamentary Papers: Correspondence on the subject of removal of inhabitants of Pitcairn's Island to Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1857).
[29] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856 ADM 125/135.
[30] G. A. Gregorie, "April 22," *Journal of a voyage from Sydney to Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands on board the Morayshire*, 23 Feb-8 Jun 1856, TNA, RUSI/NM/138, hereafter *"Journal."*

trail to the landing in Bounty Bay. By the end of the day, most of the dwellings in Adamstown were empty, their contents packed in crates and set aside.[31] The next morning, the islanders transferred the first of many loads to the *Morayshire's* whaleboats. As they watched boatmen row the island's belongings out to the waiting ship, Vernon Young and Jacob Christian admitted that they had changed their minds and would go to Norfolk, too. George Adams and Charles Christian remained obstinate in their desire to remain.[32] During the next few days, the Pitcairners continued the arduous work of hauling their belongings down the Hill of Difficulty to the Landing, an act made all the more treacherous by rains that turned the steep path into a slippery channel of mud. As the weather worsened, the *Morayshire* crew and Pitcairn men had increasing difficulty pulling their boats through the choppy sea. The *Morayshire's* captain reduced the number of transfers each day and allowed his men to rest on the island each night; Gregorie kept a watchful eye over them and warned the sailors to keep their distance from the women. That Sunday, the captain himself came to shore and the island's pastor, Nobbs, preached sermons tailored to the move. As the day of departure neared, Charles Christian decided at last to leave. Only George Adams still swore to remain.[33] The following Tuesday, as the village became increasingly emptied, George Adams awoke to find that his granddaughter had taken a turn for the better. He told Gregorie that he, too, would go to Norfolk.

The *Morayshire's* sailors loaded the last of the Pitcairners' belongings over the next two days. In the meantime, the Pitcairners captured or killed every remaining hog on the island, not so much for the purposes of food or husbandry but rather to ensure the animals did not dig up their relatives' graves after their departure.[34] Finally, on May 3, it came time for the islanders

[31] Gregorie, "April 23," *Journal.*
[32] Gregorie, "April 24," *Journal.*
[33] Gregorie, "April 27–28," *Journal.*
[34] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856 ADM 125/135.

themselves to embark. The weather was clear at 9:00 am when the bell at Adamstown rang for what everyone knew to be the last time. Soon the entire populace made its way to the landing. George Adams's sick grandchild was the first into a boat, followed by other sick and elderly islanders. By late afternoon, the embarkation was done. Finding himself blessed by a sudden surplus of time, Gregorie ordered the *Bounty*'s cannon loaded, too. "I thought the Governor or someone might consider it worth keeping," he wrote; "The islanders themselves do not value it in the least and laughed at me taking such a useless old thing away."[35] The heavy detritus of the *Bounty* myth perhaps meant more to the naval officer than to others. At five o'clock that evening, the *Morayshire* set sail for Norfolk Island, and the looming, green-shrouded volcanic mass of Pitcairn retreated into twilight.

The journey from Pitcairn to Norfolk was an unpleasant one; many of the islanders were seasick.[36] Yet they found moments of levity. On the Queen's birthday, they danced and sang their allegiance, demonstrating their Britishness and loyalty for themselves and for the Royal Navy officers, who duly reported it.[37] Few Pitcairners had ever been so far from home. A select minority had traveled to Valparaiso or London, and the older islanders remembered their sojourn on Tahiti, but many had never left their one-by-two-mile home. When a sailor sited another island mid-voyage, the passengers crowded the *Morayshire's* decks, eager for a glimpse of the first land other than Pitcairn they had ever seen.[38] At night, they crowded the lower deck; Jonathan Adams, the father of George Adams's sick granddaughter, complained that the hot and humid conditions there were too dangerous for her, and the captain gave her a cabin, a privilege otherwise only afforded to Nobbs, who emerged from his private quarters each day to read

[35] Gregorie, "May 3," *Journal.*
[36] Gregorie, "May 22," *Journal.*
[37] Gregorie, "May 24," *Journal.*
[38] Gregorie, "May 23," *Journal*; the island was Ata (Pylstaart Island), in Tonga (The Friendly Group).

morning and evening prayers.[39] On Sunday, June 1, a baby was born on the ship; its parents named him Rueben Denison, after the lieutenant governor who was the patron of their exodus.

The islanders first sighted Norfolk on the fifth of June. Two British ships, the *Herald* and Fremantle's *Juno,* were there to greet them and to assist in their landing. By the eighth of June, all of the Pitcairners were on shore. They settled into the prison colony's abandoned houses and barracks, assigned to them by Fremantle's crew.[40] Sailors distributed rations of beef, biscuits, tea, and sugar.[41] Soon after, the Pitcairners wrote a letter to Denison, under whose nominal jurisdiction they now resided, thanking the government for their new home. A handful of convicts and their guards remained, there to serve as caretakers until the Pitcairners arrived. Royal Navy officers assigned plots of land and herds of cattle to each family, and the convicts instructed these new pastoralists as well as they could in the farming and husbanding practices that would form the material basis of their new life.[42] Sometime in those first few weeks on Norfolk, George Adams's granddaughter died. She had fallen ill again shortly after the landing and never recovered.[43]

While Gregorie and Fremantle, per their instructions from Denison, were prolific journal-keepers during the transit, there are fewer descriptions of the passage and initial resettlement written by Pitcairners. John Buffett kept a diary during the affair, but his accounts, like many others from the island, are more matter-of-fact. His writing was in the style of the island's longstanding mode of recordkeeping, which chronicled important events like births, deaths, and ships' visits in dry, textual accounts and reserved narrative history for oral tradition. His description of the first day on Norfolk reads:

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[39] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856, ADM 125/135.
[40] Gregorie, "June 8," *Journal*.
[41] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856, ADM 125/135.
[42] Stephen Fremantle, letter to Ralph Osborne, Admiralty, "Visit to Norfolk Island," June 28, 1856, ADM 125/135.
[43] Letter from G. W. Gregorie to William Denison, June 28, 1856, ADM 125/135.

> *June 8 — Landed on Norfolk Island after being thirty seven days on board the* Morayshire *i.f. London, Captain Mather by whom we were treated with great kindness during the passage one birth no deaths. When we arrived HMS Ship* Herald *was laying off and surveying, the captain on shore. The* Herald's *boats assisted us in landing*.[44]

Several other accounts by islanders survive, such as a small correspondence between two young Pitcairners, Catherine 'Kitty' Christian and Louisa 'Victoria' Quintal, and the HMS Herald's second master, Frederick Howard, that reveals something of their experience with the transfer. They describe the problems the community faced growing food, as well as a lingering sense of disappointment. "We are not so happy as you may suppose," wrote Catherine Christian in October of 1857. "This island is not like our old home."[45] However, the bulk of their correspondence with the young officer was centered on the girls' enthusiastic affection for him. Despite Denison's general suggestion that Gregorie limit liaisons between the islanders and outsiders, relationships developed. In one missive, Catherine thanked Howard for his most recent letter. "I must inform you that I read it night after night before I go to bed, but when I am reading it what you think my mind is continually on that you must find out by yourself. Howard I must say you are the best stranger that I am acquainted with."[46] She gave a number of gifts and tokens of to the young officer; gift exchanges like these were a common feature of visits to Pitcairn as they were across the Pacific.

Fremantle and Gregorie, for their part, both noted in their reports that the Pitcairners seemed bewildered by their new surroundings, and that their mood after landing was at best sanguine. Norfolk was, the islanders said, larger and more open than their old home, without

[44] John Buffett, "June 8" *Diary of John Buffett* (1856), Turnbull Library, Wellington,Micro-MS-Coll-08-0123.
[45] Letter from Catherine Christian to Frederick Howard, October 8, 1857, Letters to Frederick Howard, KAVHA Museum, Norfolk Island.
[46] Letter from Catherine Christian to Frederick Howard, October 19, 1857, KAVHA.

Pitcairn's dramatic precipices and dense vegetation.[47] Nonetheless, Denison interpreted his subordinates' reports as, on balance, positive and forwarded them to the Colonial Office. He also wrote the Pitcairn Island Fund Committee, informing its membership that the Pitcairners were now well settled in their new home, that their future was bright, and that they would no longer require any charitable assistance. They were now the "occupants of a most fertile island, with stock of all kinds, with tools and appliances for all their immediate wants."[48] Indeed, Denison ensured that the parameters of his experiment on Pitcairn would remain well-policed by dissuading either the Fund Committee or the British government from providing any further aid to a population they had long treated as worthy of special benevolence. In a letter to the new Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1856, Denison again asserted that "it is better that as little interference as possible should take place with the islanders at present," and he insisted that as soon as the first harvest came in on Norfolk the government cease shipments of any supplies of any kind.[49] The experiment was now in motion.

**Pitcairn Islanders and Victorian Social Thought**

We will come to the assessment of that experiment, and Pitcairners' contestation of it, in a moment. First, however, we should examine some of the criteria by which its parameters as well as its success or failure would be determined. While the experiment's geographic borders were well-defined by its carefully maintained social and physical insularity, its intellectual boundaries owed a great deal not only to the legacy of moral interest in the island, but to its

[47] Letter from Captain Fremantle, 28, June, 1856, ADM 125/135.
[48] Letter from William Denison to the PIFC, July 14, 1856, CO 201/500.
[49] "Letter to Labouchere from Denison, July 21, 1856," reproduced in Denison, *Varieties of Vice-Regal Life*, 395.

wider Victorian scientific milieu. The attentions shown the islanders by the Anglophone press and, more immediately, by Denison and the Colonial Office, made Pitcairners into a pertinent and well-known case for writers and intellectuals. In the wake of the transfer to Norfolk, Pitcairn Islanders appeared in several scientific debates about the nature of race and population, usually as a ready-made example or counterexample. Let us pause for a moment our situated narrative on Norfolk Island, and follow reports of the island into circulation, surveying the varied uses made of Pitcairn Islanders by the armchairs of the Victorian world. By tracing the appearance of the Pitcairners as a datum within a growing social theoretical discourse, we can open up the intellectual context in which Denison and his successors operated and suggest something of the intellectual stakes in play. By tracing the ubiquity of Pitcairn Islanders in nineteenth-century intellectual discourse, we can also take measure of the wide career of ethnographic cases like theirs—Pitcairners turned up in remarkable places. Duncan Bell described this period in Britain's intellectual life as "an age of grand (and grandiose) theorizing," in which "it is very hard to separate 'the political' (or 'political theory') from other domains of nineteenth-century thought."[50] In the case of Pitcairn *as* a case, his observation rings true; Pitcairn figured in debates which, in a characteristically Victorian mode, compressed the moral, the political, and the scientific in sweeping debates over race, reproduction, identity, and governance.

Well before "The Experiment," Pitcairn Island had already attracted some muted attention among geographers, ethnologists, and political economists interested in leveraging the island as a kind of exemplary space. Disciplinary borders were fluid during the early nineteenth century in any case; writing on matters of social theory was often the province of educated gentlemen. Sir John Barrow, the admiralty figure who wrote the first comprehensive history of

[50] Duncan Bell, *Victorian Visions of Global Order: Empire and Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

the island, was a founding member of the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) and introduced naval correspondence about the island at meetings.[51] These letters, alongside new reports of the island in published travel accounts, prompted early discussions by the organization.[52] Like the travel accounts on which they were based, early RGS attention fixated on the islanders' ways of life, especially signs of their Tahitian ancestors, as well as their exemplary moral conduct. But early scientific observers were keen to draw out other lessons, too. They were especially interested in Pitcairn's rate of population growth. Of all the details offered by travel accounts, the number of the island's population attracted some of the most sustained interest; Royal Navy captains invariably took a census during each visit, and published accounts usually included population figures. Barrow did the same in his own history, noting that "the rate at which population is likely to increase may, perhaps, be determined by political economists."

The rate of population growth was no small concern in the first half of the nineteenth century. In a rapidly industrializing and urbanizing Britain, Thomas Malthus's attention to the limits faced by growing populations accrued a powerful currency.[53] Islands became useful as models for population growth; their clearly delineated boundaries showed in stark terms the limits imposed by finite space and resources. In his *Essay on the Principle of Population*, Malthus devoted an entire section to South Pacific islands.[54] "The bounds to the number of people on islands, particularly when they are of small extent, are so narrow, and so distinctly marked," he wrote, that they "tend considerably to illustrate the present subject." Islands were

[51] John Barrow, A. A. Sandilands, and Joshua Hill, "Recent Accounts of the Pitcairn Islanders," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 3 (January, 1833): 156–168.
[52] "Royal Geographical Society" *Athenaeum* no. 505 (July 1, 1837): 484.
[53] Robert J. Mayhew, *Malthus* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014); James P. Huzel, *The Popularization of Malthus in Early Nineteenth-Century England: Martineau, Cobbett and the Pauper Press* (London: Ashgate, 2006).
[54] Thomas Robert Malthus, "Chapter V: Of the Checks to Population in the Islands of the South Sea," in *An Essay on the Principle of Population: Or, A View of Its Past and Present Effects on Human Happiness* (London: T. Bensley, 1807), 79–109.

useful models, their lessons easily exported to the rest of humanity; Malthus noted that with its own finite limits, "the whole earth is in this respect like an island."[55] Malthus wrote his famous essay before Pitcairn Island was rediscovered, though he did buttress his thinking with other accounts from the Pacific, especially those from the Cook voyages.[56] His writing produced an abstract image of insularity, which lived on as a kind of common thought experiment. A small island with a growing population and finite resources, whether hypothetical or real, could act as a microcosmic distillation of the messier realities of population growth in much larger places like Britain or Europe. With the discovery and settlement of Pitcairn, and especially after its rendering as a well-documented example, theorists could point to a real-world enactment of Malthus's imagined island scenario. With its tremendous rate of population growth, Pitcairn seemed to demonstrate perfectly his general law of the geometrical increase of human population.

Accordingly, Malthus's critics were compelled to address the Pitcairn case in their arguments against him. Reformist author and politician Thomas Doubleday took up Pitcairn as a counterexample in his anti-Malthusian tract, *The True Law of Population Shewn to Be Connected with the Food of the People*.[57] He admitted that the Pitcairn Islanders did increase their population dramatically, in line with Malthus's geometrical notion of growth, though accounts of the island suggested a different cause. The Pitcairners lived, Doubleday said, a hardscrabble existence digging root vegetables from the soil on a tiny and circumscribed island, yet their population growth was won in spite of the constraints Malthus warned should lead to famine and

[55] Malthus, "Of the Checks to Population," 79–80.
[56] For the colonial situation of Malthus's thought, see Ute Tellmann, "Catastrophic Populations and the Fear of the Future: Malthus and the Genealogy of Liberal Economy," *Theory, Culture, and Society* 30, no. 2 (March 20, 2013): 135–55; Alison Bashford, "Malthus and Colonial History," *Journal of Australian Studies* 36 no. 1 (2012): 99–110.
[57] Thomas Doubleday, *The True Law of Population Shewn to Be Connected with the Food of the People* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Company, 1842).

death. Indeed, Doubleday argued, it was only because the islanders obtained their simple food "by constant exertion" that they were able to thrive. The islanders ate mostly vegetables and labored for every morsel, unlike the spoiled nobility of England who ate luxuriously, lived unlaboriously, and reproduced at a much lower rate. Like many social-theoretical utilizations of the island in the mid-Victorian period, his argument was centered on the islanders' moral economy; they lived well and so reproduced well. Others agreed. "These colonists were placed in the exact position to try this grand experiment completely," remarked a favorable critic in the *British Quarterly Review*, and the results were, at least to him, convincing.[58] Political economists, in their discussions of Malthus, contended with the example of Pitcairn for years.[59] American political economist Henry George, in his criticism of *The Principle of Population,* admitted that Pitcairn might offer a rare example of pure Malthusian increase but insisted it was "an exceptional case."[60] One of George's own critics, in turn, thought it anything but an exception. With its own finite parameters, he declared, "*the world is Pitcairn's Island enlarged*."[61]

Theorists frequently pointed to the island's astounding growth rate, and its population figures often appeared in scientific and theoretical texts. Though travel accounts might differ in the style or content of their ethnographic descriptions, numbers were consistent across accounts. Population figures were among the few data from the island to remain both mobile and immutably constant, reliably surviving the journey from the on-the-ground survey, through travel accounts, and into scientific tracts essentially unchanged, even if their interpretations could vary

[58] Unsigned review of "The True Law of Population" by Thomas Doubleday *TBritish Quarterly Review* 2, no. 4 (August, 1845): 442.
[59] William Edward Hickson, *Malthus: An Essay on the Principle of Population in Refutation of the Theory of the Rev. T.R. Malthus* (London: Taylor, Walton, and Maberly, 1849), 72-73.
[60] Henry George, *Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase in Want with Increase in Wealth, the Remedy* (London: William Reeves, 1884), 80.
[61] Lord Bramwell, *Nationalisation of Land: A Review of Mr. Henry George's 'Progress & Poverty'* (London: Liberty and Property Defence League, 1882), 7. Emphasis his.

widely.[62] A population number from Pitcairn was a microcosm in microcosm, a model island reduced to a single figure, the distillation of a distillation. As such, it became very easy to compare Pitcairn's example with that of other populations. And so if Pitcairn was a place where "the theory of Malthus had taken its full swing in practice," it could, by its conversion into a set of numbers, be illustratively juxtaposed with "the black population of the Southern United States," or the whole of the American continent, since all offered known rates of growth which showed the dramatic increase possible in human populations.[63] An author of religious tracts even used them to demonstrate the viability of Bishop Usher's biblical time-frame, arguing against the "deep time" proposed by geologists. After all, if the Pitcairn Islanders could grow twelve-fold in less than a century, then certainly Noah's descendants could people the earth in the course of several millennia.[64]

The island's population figures also became very useful in nineteenth-century scientific debates about race. During the middle decades of the nineteenth century, prominent ethnologists took polygenic stances, especially in France and the United States, arguing that humanity was broken into distinct races and that these races were essentially separate species. In France, polygenic theories were famously espoused by Paul Broca, and in the United States by the "American School" of Henry Morton's followers, especially Josiah Nott and George Gliddon.[65]

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[62] It is of course the argument of this dissertation that Pitcairn Island, as a scientized case, was eminently mutable; however, population figures look a great deal like immutable mobiles; Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987); Peter Howlett and Mary S. Morgan, *How Well Do Facts Travel?: The Dissemination of Reliable Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[63] Thomas Doubleday, "To the Right Hon. Lord Bourgham and Vaux," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* 41, no. 257 (March, 1837): 337–338; John Crawfurd, "On the Supposed Infecundity of Human Hybrids or Crosses," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London* 3 (January, 1865): 359.

[64] Herbert William Morris, *Present Conflict of Science with the Christian Religion* (Philadelphia: P.W. Ziegler, 1876), 402; Herbert William Morris, *Harmonies of the Universe: As Displayed in the Laws of Nature, the Dominion of Providence, and the Dispensations of Grace* (Philadelphia: P.W. Zeigler, 1881).

[65] Terence D. Keel, "Religion, Polygenism and the Early Science of Human Origins," *History of the Human Sciences* 26, no. 2 (April 1, 2013): 3–32, Robert Kenny, "From the Curse of Ham to the Curse of Nature: The Influence of Natural Selection on the Debate on Human Unity before the Publication of The Descent of Man,"

Though "species" was then a markedly fluid concept, many definitions suggested that its boundaries were discernible in terms of fecundity; the members of two different species, even if they could reproduce together, would not bear fertile offspring—horses and donkeys could produce mules, but mules did not themselves reproduce. Thus, wrote Josiah Nott in 1844, as the offspring of separate species, racially hybrid populations were not viable in the long term. "If a hundred white men and one hundred black women were put together on an island, and cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world" he wrote, "they would in time become extinct."[66] As in the case of Malthusian theory, the isolated island was the thought experiment *par excellence* with which to imagine population dynamics at their most absolute—a notion which preceded the coalescence of island biogeography as a field of scientific inquiry. And, as in the case of Malthus, critics used Pitcairn as the living embodiment of that thought experiment. It was a near-perfect instantiation of Nott's racialized scenario, settled by English men and Tahitian women. Yet there, wrote a detractor, its population "regularly increased up to 1840," hardly the extinction Nott prophesized.[67]

But it was in Britain, where the mythos of Pitcairn was the strongest, that the island appeared most often in responses to Broca's or Nott and Gliddon's assertions about the infecundity of mixed-race populations—especially in the years after Denison's experiment brought the island to the attention of its scientists. Britain had its polygenic school, too; Robert

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*British Journal for the History of Science* 40, no. 3 (September, 2007): 367–388; Adam Dewbury, "The American School and Scientific Racism in Early American Anthropology," *Histories of Anthropology Annual* 3, no. 1 (2007): 121–47; Kathy Alexis Psomiades, "Polygenist Ecosystems: Robert Knox's The Races of Man (1850)," *Victorian Review* 36, no. 2 (2010): 32–36; for surveys on scientific racism see John P. Jackson and Nadine M. Weidman, *Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004); Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science*; Stephen Jay Gould's popular *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1996), which is often cited yet also often critiqued.

[66] Josiah Nott, *Two Lectures on the Natural History of the Caucasian and Negro Races* (Mobile, AL: Dade and Thompson, 1844), 34; white, masculine insecurity obviously undergirded examples such as these; theorists never seemed especially eager to reverse the scenario and deposit white women with black men on deserted islands.

[67] "Unity of the Races," *The Southern Quarterly Review* 7, no. 14 (April 14, 1845): 446.

Knox was an early proponent and the Anthropological Society of London welcomed polygenic interpretations. However, with a long tradition of liberal and evangelical sympathies, many members of the Ethnological Society of London tended toward monogenism. The two societies often clashed, as they did over the question of the fertility of mixed-race populations.[68] In 1864, F. W. Farrah read a paper at a meeting of the Anthropological Society that drew from prominent polygenists such as Louis Agassiz and Paul Broca to argue for the general infecundity of hybrid populations.[69] Karl Vogt, the famous German polygenist, was at the meeting and voiced his support. It was Alfred Russel Wallace who led the monogenist defense. Wallace reminded the society that "there was the well-known case of the Pitcairn Islanders, in which the males of one race and the females of another race were shipwrecked on an island, adding only that "it would be important to know the results."[70] It was a rhetorical gesture; the results were relatively widely known. Indeed, another attendee spoke up to suggest that Pitcairn had thrived over the last century, to the point that it was found "necessary to remove some of them to Norfolk Island, as they increased so rapidly that they exceeded their resources and therefore, the evidence of the Pitcairn Islanders contradicted the assertion that the progeny of mixed breeds are infertile."[71] A few months later John Crawfurd, a leading early anthropologist, offered a paper at the Ethnological Society in response and again relied on Pitcairn as a ready-made experiment and living counter example: "A chance not likely to occur again furnishes us with a fact which seems to me to set for ever at rest the allegation of infecundity in human hybrids."[72] The island, with its thriving population growth, exhibited an indisputable vitality. Though Crawford was himself

[68] The Ethnological Society was an offshoot of the Aborigines' Protection Society, which was itself an offshoot from the Abolition movement. The ESL and ASL merged to form the Royal Anthropological Institute in 1871.
[69] F. W. Farrah, "On Hybridity," *Journal of the Anthropological Society of London* 2 (1864): 222–224.
[70] F. W. Farrah, "On Hybridity," 227.
[71] Ibid.
[72] John Crawfurd, "On the Supposed Infecundity," 356–362.

famously a polygenist, he used the island in an effort to set to rest what he saw as a distracting issue.[73]

An alternative solution to the "problem" of race mixture was especially popular in some constituencies of British natural history: the notion of heterosis, or hybrid vigor. Rather than tending toward infecundity and extinction, its proponents argued, the offspring of "crossed" races were actually healthier and more robust. It was a theory that nonetheless still abided notions of European superiority; in such crossings "lower races" were biologically lifted up toward European levels. It was a pressing concern for some mid-Victorian observers at a moment when the settler empire was fast expanding. As organizations like the Aborigines' Protection Society were keen to indicate, indigenous peoples were dying in the face of advancing European colonialism, not least the indigenous Tasmanians under Denison's rule, who were a much publicized case.[74] An 1864 essay read in Oxford put it in clear terms: "Is it a law of nature that the progress of one race should be founded on the extinction of another?" But it offered an alternative solution: biological and cultural amalgamation; "Pitcairn's Island," added the lecturer, "seems to confirm this solution."[75] In the years after the transfer to Norfolk, the Pitcairn Islanders were common examples for proponents of hybrid vigor. Particularly after the promulgation of Darwinian notions of fitness, the islanders' well-known population figures suggested that mixed-race populations displayed a profound reproductive capacity.

Darwin himself had some interest in the islanders; much of his writing and thinking famously involved recourse to insular populations. He read Belcher's *Descendants of the*

[73] Darwin citied him as believing in no less than sixty races in *The Descent of Man* (1871), 174. Crawfurd was a complicated figure, unabashedly racist even by nineteenth-century standards, but nonetheless a president of the ESL during the 1860s; his polygenism was founded on linguistic as much as biological evidence.
[74] See footnote 16.
[75] Kelly Cheyne, *The Relations Between Civilized and Uncivilized Races: A Price Essay Read in the Theater, Oxford* (Oxford: T. and G. Shrimpton, 1864): 28.

*Mutineers* alongside Denison's autobiography to determine the Pitcairners' population numbers, using them as an index of their vitality. Darwinian fitness was, after all, often coldly numeric—how many of an individual's or population's progeny survived to reproduce? When Darwin found Denison's published sources insufficient, he wrote to the governor's widow to find out more. In an 1874 letter, he explained to her:

> *It is notorious that these people increased rapidly in Pitcairn I., & the point which I am anxious to learn is whether, after their removal to Norfolk I, they continued to increase as rapidly as before. I fear that it is hardly probable that I could any how ascertain their numbers when first brought to Norfolk I, the number of those who left the island, and their number at any recent date. In the animal and vegetable kingdom it is certain that very slight changes of condition sometimes affect the fertility of species in a marvelous manner, and I much desire to ascertain whether any thing of this kind has occurred in Norfolk Island.*[76]

Darwin had already used Denison's experiments in earlier editions of his *The Descent of Man* to argue in favor of hybrid vigor. Contrasting the happy fates of the mixed-race Pitcairners and the sad extinction of the aboriginal Tasmanians, he wrote:

> *It appears that a cross with civilised races at once gives to an aboriginal race an immunity from the evil consequences of changed conditions. Thus, the crossed offspring from the Tahitians and English, when settled in Pitcairn Island, increased so rapidly that the island was soon overstocked. . . . What a contrast does this case present with that of the Tasmanians; the Norfolk Islanders increased in only twelve and a half years from 194 to 300; whereas the Tasmanians decreased during fifteen years from 120 to 46.*[77]

In contrasting the fate of Denison's two mobile populations, the numbers said it all.

In the era of Darwinism, Pitcairn became notable as an example especially conducive to biogeographical thinking. Alfred Russel Wallace in particular maintained an interest in the Pitcairners for some time. On two isolated islands, separated from the rest of humanity and following their own social and biological path, the islanders were living out a trajectory well in

[76] Letter from Charles Darwin to Carline Denison, 1874, NLNZ, MS-Papers-0972.
[77] Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man and Sexual Selection in Relation to Sex* (London: John Murray, 1871): 154.

line with his other research on island biogeography.[78] In 1871, when another history of the Pitcairners was published, he penned a favorable review of it in *The Academy*. It was an opportunity to muse on Pitcairn and Norfolk's potential as experiments. "It is so rarely that social problems can be subjected to anything like a critical experiment," he wrote, "owing to the impossibility of eliminating the disturbing influence of adjacent populations." But,

> *in Pitcairn Island we had an instance of people almost completely isolated from the rest of the world, who, owing to such exceptional circumstances as can hardly be expected to occur a second time, were morally and physically healthy, with most of the capacities and virtues, and but few of the vices of civilisation; and who were both able and willing to keep themselves free from intermixture or social contamination. Many curious problems were here in process of solution.*[79]

Which problems? Wallace identified a long list of concerns. Did hybrid populations eventually become infertile? Would Tahitian or English features appear with greater frequency? Would the islanders' inbreeding prove deleterious? Would they degenerate? Wallace's interests, here as elsewhere, were not only biological. Would the islanders maintain their famous moral code? What form would their government take? How would they manage their wealth and economy? Would they share it communally or horde it privately? Both Wallace's description of the islanders and the questions he asked of them demonstrate how clearly the island's moral and scientific exemplarity were intertwined.[80]

However, Wallace worried that "The Experiment" did not, in fact, make for a terribly good experiment—as it was far from "natural" by any definition. On Pitcairn they had been "one of the happiest, as they are one of the most interesting, of English-speaking communities," free

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[78] The Wallace industry, a smaller subsidiary of the Darwin industry, is nonetheless vast. See biographies by Martin Fichman, *An Elusive Victorian: The Evolution of Alfred Russel Wallace* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010); Peter Raby, *Alfred Russel Wallace: A Life* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002).

[79] Alfred Russel Wallace, "The Mutineers of the Bounty, and their Descendants in Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands, by Lady Belcher," *Academy* (February 1, 1871): 108.

[80] Wallace privileged the moral sphere, too, in demarcating the boundaries between human populations in his biogeographical work: Jeremy Vetter, "Wallace's Other Line: Human Biogeography and Field Practice in the Eastern Colonial Tropics," *Journal of the History of Biology* 39, no. 1 (March 2006): 89–123.

from outside contaminants. Removal to Norfolk Island brought them by marginal degrees closer to outside influence, in the form of whalers and potential interference from the governor of New South Wales. Indeed, the government had failed to maintain Norfolk as an isolated experiment; the Melanesian Mission eventually did open a small school on Norfolk in 1867.[81] Though built on the far side of the island from the Pitcairn settlement, and despite reports that the two communities kept a strict distance from each other, Wallace thought a certain contaminating influence was inevitable. Nevertheless, in the interests of science, he urged the government to keep the islanders as isolated and contained as possible. He wrote,

> *We trust that the officious though well-meaning persons who so rudely broke up the happy and united community in its original home, will for the future leave these interesting people to manage their own affairs (for which they are quite competent), and to work out after their own fashion the many problems in physical, social, and political science which increasing population will soon force upon them.*[82]

Wallace understood the disturbing variables that drove the Pitcairn experiment. Increasing population, in the face of isolated and limited resources, exerted pressure. If the islanders again approached a possible Malthusian crisis, then that was precisely the sort of problem the experiment was meant to address.

Wallace continued citing the island for years. In 1879, a brief history of Pitcairn and Norfolk appeared in *Australasia*, in which he once again urged that the model community be left alone.[83] He leveraged the island again in 1900 in defense of socialism. Human nature was no impediment to economic cooperation, he argued; an improvement in environment could improve

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[81] The College of St. Barnabas trained indigenous people from across Melanesia to serve as missionaries; its leader during the 1870s was Robert Henry Codrington, himself an early anthropologist. He used his access to Melanesian pupils to transform St. Barnabas into his own field site, eventually producing the first English-language texts on the Melanesian language and Melanesian culture: Robert Henry Codrington, *The Melanesians; Studies in Their Anthropology and Folk-lore* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891). He did not, however, write a great deal about the Pitcairners on the other side of Norfolk Island; his papers reveal a polite but removed relationship with them. See the *Papers of Rev Robert Codrington*, Rhodes House Library, Oxford.

[82] Wallace, "The Pitcairn Islanders," 109.

[83] Alfred Russel Wallace, *Australasia* (London, Edward Stanford, 1879), 515–516, 575.

human nature, and so even the members of a criminal underclass could thrive if transplanted to a communal utopia. It had worked in Pitcairn Island: "We cannot suppose there was any great change of character, always for the better, in the descendants of these rough men and savage women, but the better conditions brought about by the influence of the one survivor, *appeared* to effect a radical change in their nature."[84] Pitcairn was a common example in part because it was a particularly mutable one; its supposedly circumscribed parameters and history of exemplarity rendered it a ready-made case in point applicable to any number of arguments. Thus, Wallace could use it both to attack polygenesis and to defend socialism in equal measure.

One of the ironies of the island's use in scientific discourse was that it could be leveraged both as an example of extreme outbreeding and extreme inbreeding. Not only was the island peopled by Englishmen and Tahitians, their offspring had married and reproduced with each other for several generations. In the latter decades of the nineteenth century, as eugenic concerns were becoming more prominent, theorists began to focus more attention on inbreeding. Their principal question: Was the problem of inbreeding actually a problem? Some theorists argued that most inbred populations rarely exhibited deleterious effects. In his book on consanguinity, Alfred Huth drew the reader's attention to "cases where such marriages have occurred constantly in communities for so long a time that the effects for evil, if any, must show themselves." The first of these was Pitcairn's Island. Citing a library of travel accounts and histories, Huth argued that "as to their health, all observers agree nothing could be better."[85] Edvard Westermarck, one of the most prominent late nineteenth-century theorists of the incest taboo, was forced to contend

[84] Alfred Russel Wallace, "Ralahine and Its Teachings," in *Studies Scientific and Social*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan and Co, 1900), 475.
[85] Alfred Henry Huth, *The Marriage of Near Kin: Considered with Respect to the Laws of Nations, the Results of Experience, and the Teachings of Biology* (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1875); Huth cited travel accounts by Fogler, Beechey, Waldergrave, Fremantle, and others in Barrow's and Murray's histories, as well as several newspaper accounts.

with Huth's argument and the Pitcairn case. His counter-argument was a surprisingly rare one; Westermarck suggested that the island was nowhere near as insular as others thought. In his *1891 History of Human Marriage*, he cited Beechey's 1825 account to propose that outsiders had long frequented the island and the population was more outbred than its popular mythos suggested.[86]

Neither Wallace, Darwin, nor any other nineteenth-century scientists studied Pitcairn or Norfolk in any particular depth. None of them visited. Rather, the islands were simply well-known cases, widely-acknowledged model communities known through popular accounts that scientists could leverage in support of one argument or in refutation of another. They lifted evidence about life on Pitcairn directly from histories such as Barrow's or Belcher's, which in turn lifted directly from sailors' accounts. In scientific as in religious tracts, Pitcairn floated through Victorian discourse, bobbing up above the surface here and there whenever it could be usefully invoked as a ready-made example, and washing ashore in far-flung and disparate debates. Sustained scientific inquiry on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands would come in the next century. Nevertheless, nineteenth-century theorists already identified those problems that would attract the interest of future researchers, especially eugenicists and physical anthropologists: the inheritance of racial characteristics, the vitality of consanguineous populations, and the possibility of degeneration among hybrid peoples. Their efforts will occupy the next chapter. The first set of investigators to determine the outcome of the grand experiment in Norfolk came from a different community altogether. Indeed, like the Royal Navy sailors who prefigured them, the first visitors to perform an in-depth mode of fieldwork *avant le lettre* among Norfolk Islanders were the colonial administrators tasked with governing them. Theirs was a pragmatic and practical form of knowledge production, to be sure, but one that also activated the same

[86] Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage* (Macmillan, 1891), 344.

questions about the effects of consanguinity, race mixture, and population management that so interested Darwin, Wallace, and their contemporaries.

**Governmental Investigation and Racial Anxiety**

In 1857, just a year after the Pitcairners' relocation, William Denison visited Norfolk Island. Afterward, he produced a lengthy report for his masters in London, which detailed the position of the Pitcairners one year after the settlement of their new home. It serves as the first record of many governmental visits, all of them concerned in one way or another with the assessment of "the experiment." Denison's text begins with an account of his first evening on Norfolk Island. Upon his arrival, he read his royal commission before an assembly of the people and ordered that his instructions to them be entered into their local records. He abrogated their existing laws wholesale and supplied a new constitution for the island, which would continue to elect counselors and a chief magistrate for themselves. His intervention was, like many of his actions, intended to forestall the meddling of others; a provision in the new constitution forbade the pastor, in this case the "outsider" Nobbs, from holding the office.[87] He also introduced a longstanding provision against the importation of alcohol. When asked, none of those assembled voiced objections.

Looking around the room, like many visitors to Pitcairn and Norfolk before him, Denison took the opportunity to scan the islanders' faces, reading them for signs of European of Polynesian heritage; "I was struck," he wrote, that "there were none who could be called

[87] Enclosure 2 in William Denison, "Despatch to Henry Labouchere, October 28, 1857,"*Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863).

strikingly handsome, but all, or nearly all, were good looking, had good features, well-developed foreheads, and an intelligent expression of face." That remark was neither an errant nor out of place in his report. His despatches to London were comprised of political news and legislative recommendations but, in the style of colonial governmental intelligence, they also assumed the generic mode of ethnographic reportage. In addition to letters replete with descriptions of the islanders' habits and appearances, Denison sent the Secretary of State for the Colonies a complete copy of the new laws, extracts from his personal diary of the visit, a report of a ship's surgeon on the islanders' health and vitality, a report on the condition of the island' structures and landscape, a report on their agriculture, copies of his advice to the new magistrate, and a complete list of all male islanders, their ages, and their families. To these he appended a "general sketch of the condition of these people," giving a "clear idea of the character of the islanders."[88]

The first discovery Denison made was that the islanders had largely run out of grain. There was no flour to be had, only pest-blighted biscuits, of which the governor made a reluctant dinner. He spent his first few days on Pitcairn meeting with the magistrate, chaplain, and other leaders, mostly to sort out a supply of staple foods and other necessities for which the island was still wanting. Afterward, however, Denison roamed over the island on foot alongside a party of officers from the *Iris,* the ship that had brought him to Norfolk. These included a gardener, the ship's surgeon, and Fortescue Moresby, the son of Pitcairn's patron Admiral Fairfax Moresby. As described in the previous chapter, Fortescue had himself visited and written about Pitcairn and served as a member of the Pitcairn Island Trust Committee. He carried a camera with him, and as the governor's party encountered Pitcairn Islanders at their homes he asked them to pose.

[88] William Denison, "Despatch to Henry Labouchere, October 30, 1857," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863), 1.

Denison sent these portraits to the Colonial Office.[89] The use of photography by investigators on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands would come to have a long history. The gardener brought Wardian cases full of plants from Australia to be introduced to Norfolk, and he gathered samples of ferns and pines from the island for the return to Sydney—biological experimentation was perhaps the empire's most established mode of scientific governance, especially on remote island colonies.[90] In his exploration of the island, the governor took careful note of economically useful plants, the state and cleanliness of the islanders' homes, and the Pitcairners' physical appearance. Denison's descriptions, neatly collated in his despatches, essentially comprised the whole of the metropolitan government's official knowledge about its new colony. Denison's intelligence gathering was multidisplinary out of necessity. But what conclusions did he ultimately draw from his diverse inquiries? "My stay among them was too short, and the position in which I stood with them too peculiar, to justify any opinion on my part as to their general character," he wrote, but that did not stop him from providing precisely that. He confirmed the heavily moralized descriptions of his predecessors, insisting that the islanders' much vaunted religious purity still formed "the very best foundation upon which the structure of a society can be raised, and we are bound to use every means to protect them from the evil influences which the peculiarities of their present position may tend to develop."

However, Denison did note with alarm that the islanders had failed to adapt to their new, more agrarian mode of subsistence. They were already beginning a gradual decline into

[89] William Denison, "Abstract of journal," enclosure in William Denison, "Despatch to Henry Labouchere, October 30, 1857," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863), 11; hereafter "abstract of journal." I have been unable to locate the portraits.

[90] Lucile Brockway, "Science and Colonial Expansion: The Role of the British Royal Botanical Gardens," *American Ethnologist* 6, no. 3 (August, 1979): 449–465; Michael Osborne, "Acclimatizing the World: A History of the Paradigmatic Colonial Science," *Osiris* vol. 15 *Nature and Empire: Science and the Colonial Enterprise* (2000): 135–151; Peder Anker, *Imperial Ecology: Environmental Order in the British Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

"indolence," he warned, though whether as a result of their race or their changed environment he did not specify. They raised sheep and traded wool but failed to grow corn in sufficient quantities. To remedy the situation, Denison prescribed a common cure of mid-Victorian governance: the judicious application of economic liberalism. He urged that the government of New South Wales disrupt the islanders' famous tradition of communal property; instead he would further allocate land to individual families as an inducement to private labor.[91] Denison, as the originator of the experiment on Norfolk, placed a primacy on the maintenance of the islanders' isolation and moral exemplarity, but he was not especially concerned about the maintenance of their traditional ways of life. Rather, he was the first of many governors who would judge the islanders on their industry and economy, those quintessentially Victorian values that understood self-sufficiency in moral as well as material terms. If Norfolk Island was a racialized test case for British settlement, then the economic was the chief metric by which mid-Victorian officialdom would assess its success—but it was an "economic" assessment that emphasized the *oikos* itself, uniting moral and political economy and even insular ecology by privileging household management.

Denison's reports were, like other government narratives about the Pitciarners, compiled as parliamentary papers and published by Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO). These comprised some of the chief sources of information about the life of the fledgling colony, containing official despatches from Denison to the Colonial Office, census data, surveys of land ownership, and so on. So great was the interest in the Pitcairners that Colonial Office officials compiled many of the reports expressly for public dissemination through HMSO publications, and indeed excerpts of these reports appeared in widely published accounts of the island during

[91] William Denison, "Despatch to Henry Labouchere, October 30, 1857," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863), 14.

the subsequent decade.[92] From them, readers could learn that Denison made a return trip to Norfolk Island in 1859 and discovered, to his disappointment, that the islanders continued to struggle. Food was scarce. Some families, desperately unhappy, chose to return to Pitcairn, bartering what little they had for passage on visiting ships. They founded a renewed settlement on Pitcairn and their descendants live there to this day. Denison encouraged the bulk of the Pitcairners to stay on Norfolk, reminding them that they would receive no aid or protection if they returned to Pitcairn. Most remained.[93] Denison noted some "positive" developments, too. He had arranged for an outside school teacher, a Mr. Rossiter, to oversee the education of the islanders. "I took Mr. Rossiter's arrival among them as a turning point," he wrote to his superiors in London, as the education of the children would soon uplift not only them but also their parents. Denison was especially hopeful that the schoolteacher's wife would serve as an instrument of didactic virtue for the island's women, whom Denison said "show less of the influence of civilization and instruction than the men; they are but little in advance of the Tahitian women from whom they are descended."[94] The introduction of outside instructors further instantiated a tradition of English-only teaching which, a century later, islanders and linguists alike blamed as a major cause for the near eradication of the Pitkern/Norf'k language.[95]

The following year, Denison left Sydney to become governor of Madras and then, for a brief period, governor-general of India. He retired to Surrey, where he wrote his memoirs before

[92] Most particularly Lady Diana Jolliffe Belcher's *The Mutineers of the Bounty and Their Descendants in Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1871), which collated much of the existing official correspondence and went through multiple editions. It in turn formed the basis of some scientists' interest in Pitcairn, including Wallace's. The original copies of these despatches and reports are also available at the National Archives; see especially CO 201/531, CO/201/577, CO 201/579, CO 537/462, and CO 537/463. For reports published by HMSO, see bibliography.

[93] Today their descendants number at around 1,000. Pitcairners on the two islands remained under various genres of intellectual scrutiny; outsider interest in *both* of these *largely separate* communities will form the focus of the remaining dissertation.

[94] "Despatch from Denison to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, July 10 1859," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863) 30.

[95] See chapter five, on linguistics.

dying in 1871. The experiment he left behind would now be administered and assessed by his replacements. Like their predecessor, they made visits to the island in person to investigate its progress. Denison's immediate replacement, Sir John Young, visited for the first time in 1861. He met with the islanders and walked Norfolk's hills, inspecting the islanders' farms and homes. Young also met with Rossiter; he, too, regarded the schoolteacher as a figure necessary for lifting the Pitcairners up to a more civilized status, even if he was an outsider. When asked by the Colonial Office whether or not he should be kept on, Young insisted that Rossiter was the chief impediment against the Pitcairners' "relapse into listlessness which climate and the abundance with which they are surrounded are so apt to superinduce." Without him "there might ensue a complete forgetfulness of the habits and purposes of civilized life," forcing the "experiment abandoned as a failure."[96] Among his other principal recommendations was that the bishop of New Zealand be dissuaded from opening up a mission school on the island, a dream that Selwyn's replacement, John Coleridge Patteson, took up again once Denison left office. The danger, as Young conceived it, was not a matter of outside interference by the bishop or the school staff, but by their charges—young Pacific islanders who threatened to corrupt the Norfolk experiment in sexual and biological terms. Arguing for the school's exclusion on the basis of racial hygiene, Young insisted, "I cannot conceive of anything more likely to demoralize the population and turn it from a high type of race it now assumes back to that of mere South Seas savages. Looking at the simplicity and inexperience of the young girls . . . I cannot but think that the introduction of a number of half-savage youths at the period in life when their passions are

[96] "Despatch from John Young to the Duke of Newcastle, May 10, 1862," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863), 43.

least under control would be in the highest degree pernicious, and indeed fatal to the prospects of the community"[97]

Nonetheless, Patteson was able to convince a majority of the Island Council and Norfolk's allies in Britain to allow the construction of a school, which finally opened in 1867. The mission occupied a site on the far side of the island from the Pitcairn settlement, and the two remained mostly amicable, if guarded and distant, neighbors until the school was again relocated to the Solomon Islands in 1920.[98] It is striking that the two communities interacted so little. The mission was later run by Robert Henry Codrington, who was a foundational figure in the early anthropology of the Pacific; he authored the first in-depth study of the Melanesian language. However, he took very little interest in the language or customs of the Pitcairners—he held hybridized contact languages, whether in Melanesia or among the Pitcairn Islanders, with distinct disdain.[99] Patteson dined occasionally with pastor Nobbs and led the odd sermon for the Norfolk Islanders, but he largely kept a disinterested distance. In a letter to his aunt he described the islanders in less than flattering terms: "The Pitcairn people have been too lazy to make use of the trees in the government garden," and were "not by any means industrious. They dislike on the whole the Mission coming here . . . but they are in the main perfectly friendly and some of them apparently cordial." Indeed, the islanders resented the presence of a mission school on an island they understood to have been reserved exclusively for their use.[100]

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[97] "Despatch from John Young to the Duke of Newcastle, May 10, 1862," *Parliamentary Papers: Copy of Correspondence with the Government of New South Wales, in reference to the Pitcairn Islanders settled in Norfolk Island* (London: HMSO, 1863), 47–48.

[98] The school left some impact on the island, particularly its language and place-names; see Peter Mühlhäusler, "The College of St. Barnabas on Norfolk Island and Its Languages: An Early Example of Missionary Language Planning," *Language & Communication* 30, no. 4 (October 2010): 225–239.

[99] Joshua Nash, "Melanesian Mission Place Names on Norfolk Island," *Journal of Pacific History* 47, no. 4 (December 2012); the process by which the islanders' language, and its study, became legitimized will occupy chapter five.

[100] Letter from Codrington to his aunt, May 9, 1867, Papers of Reverend Henry Codrington, Rhodes House Library, MSS. Pac. S. 4.

Visits by New South Wales administrators proceeded apace across the following decades; every few years a representative of the government landed on Norfolk Island, met with local leaders, toured the island, and produced a report for the Colonial Office laden with legal, political, and ethnographic description. The tone of these missives, however, began to slide into a more pessimistic register; an 1884 report by special commissioner Henry T. Wilkinson, who lived among the Norfolk Islanders for six months, was especially negative.[101] In 1895, then governor Viscount Hampden surveyed the literature produced by Norfolk's colonial bureaucracy thusly: "The general purport of these reports is that the island is fertile, but that the population, partly from inherited character and habits, and partly from the absence of any controlling party, have no desire to cultivate the land." Moreover, relations between the governor's office and the Norfolk Island council had deteriorated considerably, and Hampden accused the island's magistrate of dereliction of duty.[102] He recommended that New South Wales take direct control over the island and that their autonomy come to an end, as it did to a considerable degree the following year.[103] The Australian colonies were moving toward federation, and he suggested that the island be incorporated into the State of New South Wales and so into a united Australia. Much of the growing antagonism between the Norfolk Islanders and the New South Wales governor stemmed from the islanders' vehement opposition toward any such plan. They wrote a series of letters and petitions to the New South Wales government, the Colonial Office, and the Queen in protest. Such a move, they implored the governor, would "involve the destruction of the distinctive character and race of the people, as well as of their ancient laws, institutions and

[101] *Papers Related to Her Majesty's Colonial Possessions, Reports for 1883, 1884, and 1885* (London: HMSO, 1886).
[102] "Letter from Viscount Hampden to Joseph Chamberlain, January 20, 1896," *Correspondence Relating to the Transfer of Norfolk Island to the Government of New South Wales* (London: HSMO, 1897), 4.
[103] "Enclosure by Viscount Hampden, December 2, 1895" *Correspondence Relating to the Transfer of Norfolk Island to the Government of New South Wales* (London: HSMO, 1897), 3.

customs of themselves and their Pitcairn fathers. . . . It would inundate the island with strangers."[104]

Undeterred, the governor commissioned yet another report on the conditions of Norfolk Island, this one to focus especially on issues of land tenure in preparation for the territory's absorption into New South Wales. Hampden sent J. H. Caruthers and Charles Oliver, two Australian bureaucrats with expertise in land use issues honed while working on the expansion of the New South Wales rail system, to conduct a survey. They visited the island across the first weeks of 1896 and, like so many other visitors, investigated not only the system of land ownership but also the general character and lifeways of the inhabitants. They produced a lengthy account, republished for public consumption, detailing further failures by the Pitcairn community to create a productive local economy. Their account is especially noteworthy for introducing the language of racial deterioration into the official discourse on the island in a much more pronounced way than it had heretofore been deployed. From the moment Denison launched the experiment, outside visitors had remarked on the islanders' mixed heritage and had put the islanders' supposed failings down to the ethnic origin of their grandmothers or their "tropical indolence." However, the Caruthers and Oliver report highlighted race-mixing and inbreeding as the principal cause of the Norfolk Islanders' supposed laxity, mirroring the essentialist language of the period's social theory to construe the islanders' racial heritage as an insurmountable burden. "The moral condition of the island is not good," they wrote, "but is perhaps not much, if at all, worse than might be expected of any community similarly isolated, and being, on the one side, of Tahitian descent." Moreover, they said,

> *there is evidence of the deterioration of the race. The physique of the young people is not equal to that of their parents, and there is prevalence of disease*

[104] "Letter from Byron Adams and O. Masey Quintal to Viscount Hampden, February 24, 1896," *Correspondence Relating to the Transfer of Norfolk Island to the Government of New South Wales* (London: HSMO, 1897), 15.

> *common to the issue following close intermarriage. The mental capacity of the children, the direct issue of members of the community, is not equal to that of the white men who have settled on the island and married women of the community.*[105]

Though domestic politics and interference from New Zealand eventually prevented the governor from incorporating the island wholesale into the territory of New South Wales, he was able to use the evidence of that report to secure permission to place his own resident magistrate in direct control of the island.[106]

The report marked a shift in the nature of bureaucratic interest in Norfolk's Pitcairn people. In the decades straddling 1900, government surveillance became more critical, and investigations made biologized and rigid understandings of race a central concern. The remainder of this chapter will study these investigations in some detail, unpacking the practices by which outsiders assessed the eugenic condition of the island. Their attentions, sharpened by the period's anxiety over racial degeneration, in turn shaped the conditions for the physical anthropological fieldwork of the 1920s and 1930s. The archive of government reports about Norfolk Island is not unlike the archives of colonial governmentality across the empire. Bureaucrats produced a number of textual accounts, many of which were subsequently published for public consumption. Their readings of Norfolk life comprise our principal sources for understanding not only how discourse about the islanders was created, but how that discourse and its production affected the lives of the island's denizens. However, precious few textual artifacts remain that speak to the ontology of that discourse other than those same published papers; there is little surviving correspondence from official visits. One remarkable exception is the report of a 1903 investigation on Norfolk Island by Governor Sir Harry Rawson's deputy,

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[105] J. H. Caruthers and Charles Oliver, "Report on Pitcairn Island," *Correspondence Relating to the Transfer of Norfolk Island to the Government of New South Wales* (London: HSMO, 1897), 20.
[106] Alan Kerr, *A Federation in These Seas: An Account of the Acquisition by Australia of Its External Territories* (Barton, ACT: Attorney General's Department, 2009).

William Houston, whom he placed in charge of island affairs. Houston's report was, like others from the same era, meant to prepare the island for potential incorporation into New South Wales—and to determine, finally, the moral state of the islanders. It so scandalized its readers in the Colonial Office that it was withheld from publication, as was increasingly the case with negative reports about Norfolk Island.

The archives of the Colonial Office contain not only Houston's full report, but also the hundreds of pages of notes and minutes that led to its production. Houston took a secretary with him to the island who transcribed verbatim accounts in shorthand of every meeting and interview the governor held, some 70 across the space of a month. They constitute, for our purposes, an unparalleled archive of the practices of one genre of colonial knowledge gathering. The transcripts of his interviews with anonymized informants reveal a form of governmental ethnographic investigation that is too often relegated to the margins of the history of anthropology and colonial knowledge. Historians of the social sciences and colonial science often subsume colonial intelligence of this sort into the pre-history of anthropology itself; it is fieldwork *avant-la-lettre* most usefully understood as a precursor mode to the real work of scientific investigation that would follow or, at best, as a source of knowledge that could be interpreted by armchair theorists—and fin-de-siècle reportage on Norfolk did see use by scientists and did mark out the island as a potential field site in the next century. That said, in the closing section of this chapter, I want to treat the ontology of the Houston report in its own right as a sustained effort to assess the outcome of Denison's experiment. Let us walk, then, alongside Houston and his silent, watchful secretary as they traverse the island and step into islanders' homes, there to determine hidden truths about the character of the people he was meant to

govern. Let us listen in, through the secretary's shorthand transcription, as Houston interrogated the islanders—and the islanders countered with interrogations of their own.

Houston was a career public servant who rose to his position through the ranks of Australian government land surveyors.[107] It was for that reason that Rawson chose him to address Norfolk affairs. He found passage on the HMS *Phoebe* and landed on May 11, 1903. Like his predecessors, Houston began his visit with a public meeting, which some 200 attended. The islanders were anxious that their autonomy would be further eroded and regarded Houston with suspicion. The dramaturgy and spatial configuration of the general meeting were, as a first encounter, unhelpful; Houston introduced himself as an authoritative stranger before an undifferentiated mass of locals. The deputy governor detected that a palpable "tenseness of feeling existed, and that antagonism was in the air."[108]

The next day, Houston received notes from concerned foreigners living on the island. One urged the deputy governor to treat his missive with total secrecy before laying out a vision of the island as a fallen dystopia. Its author had lived on the island for a year, studying the people from a distance, and now he offered the administrator some careful warnings before he began his investigations. The islanders, he said, were masters "in the art of lying and hypocrisy." The anonymous author added, "I mixed with the young people and was soon made aware of the fact that I had been fooled like a child. It was a good lesson and I hope to take it to heart. I consider Australia's confidence men and sharps could not hold a candle to these people." Their much-vaunted earnestness and pious simplicity were a ruse, he said, and nothing more.[109] Rather, the

[107] Kenneth W. Knight, "Houston, William (1846–1932)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography,* National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/houston-william-3805/text6031, published first in hardcopy 1972.
[108] William Houston, "Administration of Norfolk Island" June 13, 1903, CO 537/462.
[109] "Extract from a resident of Norfolk Island (No 67) to Mr H L Thompson, Secretary to the Deputy Administrator of Norfolk Island Affairs, written confidentially" May 12 1903, CO 536/462.

island was a seedbed of incest and sexual licentiousness, rampant with illicit abortions and illegitimate births. If the island's failings seemed chiefly matters of politics or productivity, that only reflected more fundamental moral flaws lurking beneath the surface. The author encouraged Houston to uncover it once and for all. From that first day, the deputy governor decided that he would have to radically broaden his ambit, and that questions of land tenure should be subsumed by more fundamental inquiries if the problems on Norfolk were ever to be settled.

A week later, Houston stood before a map of the settlement alongside the island constable (Collins) and the court magistrate (Nobbs), with his secretary always invisibly recording their conversation in shorthand.[110] A transcript of their conversation proceeds as follows:

> *Mr. Houston: (To Collins) Anything you tell me about these people will be confidential, and Mr. Nobbs, you know, is a gentleman who would respect that.*
>
> *Mr. Nobbs: Oh yes, sir, absolutely.*
>
> *Mr. Houston (producing a plan): I have got all the different buildings numbered on this plan.*

One by one, the assembled party worked their way through each house on the island, in each instance determining which family owned and lived in it. However, though a trained surveyor, Houston looked over the chart with an eye not to its physical, but rather its moral topography.

> *Mr. Thompson: No. 1. Stone, with shingle roof, stone verandah round, three sides. Four large rooms, hall, kitchen, and bake house. Occupied by William Quintal, Sr., and his son-in-law F. Quintal, and family. Age 80. Pitcairn Islander. Occupied since transfer from Pitcairn.*
>
> *Mr. Houston: Are they still there?*
>
> *Const. Collins: Yes, Fairfax is still there. William Quintal is not there now. That is still his home.*

[110] "Visit of H. E. The Governor and the Deputy Administrator," *Appendix H Notes of Interview with Constable Collins as to the character of Occupants of Houses owned by Government,* May 21, 1903, CO 536/462.

*Mr. Houston: What character have these people got?*

*Const. Collins: I always find them very good.*

A few houses later, they arrived at number 13.

*Const. Collins: George is alright, sir. He has two daughters with illegitimate children, one two and the other one.*

*Mr. Houston: One of the schoolteachers is named Evans?*[111]

*Const. Collins: That is one of the illegitimate children.*

*Mr. Houston: She is a very decent little girl, too, apparently?*

*Cont. Collins: Yes.*

*Mr. F Nobbs: She is a very nice girl, but the family have been very loose in that way.*

Houston's secretary made a note of it, and they continued on again.

After working through the entire island in that capacity, the deputy governor arrived at a moral survey of the entire population, having divined through court records, the constable's memory, and abject hearsay some accounting of the island's sexual landscape. It was painstaking work, but valuable to Houston as a pseudo-empirical assessment of the island's true moral character, useful for addressing a century of debate about the island's celebrated purity and rumored degeneration. It offers us a window into the variety of knowledge British officials pursued on the ground and the evidentiary basis from which their reports were comprised, particularly at a moment when the policing of sexual and racial boundaries became a more pronounced imperial project. [112]

[111] A common surname, the Evans family descend from John Evans, who came to the island in 1823. Houston evidently remembered the name was connected to a schoolteacher about whom he had heard rumors, and that the school teacher was connected to the family under discussion.

[112] For a deft treatment of the history of colonial knowledge and the policing of sexual and intimate boundaries, see Anne Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

Houston by no means restricted his inquiries regarding the island's sexual culture to the constabulary. The deputy governor conducted interviews with locals of every age and gender. His secretary recorded each encounter. The transcripts of his conversations are suggestive of the islanders' experiences in dealing with official inquiry, which increasingly constituted the navigation of direct and invasive questions about their sexual histories. When physical anthropologist Harry Shapiro landed on the island two decades later to ask about illegitimate children and procure true family lineages for his scientific research, the islanders were already practiced at treating gossip, family secrets, and sexual history as a form of knowledge prized by their interlocutors. Houston's conversation with a Mr. Six is suggestive of these morally tinged investigations. Six was another outsider – as can be expected, it was often recent transplants rather than Pitcairners themselves who were most eager to speak with Houston. However, though an outsider, his account is especially revelatory of Houston's aims and concerns.

*Mr. Houston: You say that the moral condition of the island is what?*

*Mr. Six: Well, it is really bad. . . .*

*Mr. Houston: Where could I get any direct evidence of these things? Where could I go to enquire about them? I intend to enquire of Seven and Eight and Nine: but how could I get a knowledge of the facts? Would it be possible? I doubt whether it would be possible.*

*Mr. Six: As I say, I have been in the houses: I have seen people go into the room and shut the door; and I have known what has been going on; but I cannot prove it. You cannot absolutely prove it. I have seen things when riding in the bush. I have seen young fellows and young girls get off the ground, but I cannot prove anything, can I? You see they are cunning as can be. Of course the names are known of people here that carry on these things.*

*Mr. Houston: I have got the names. . . .*

*Mr. Six: Well, that is what it is. I am told that one little girl, about 14 years of age, went to one of the doctors, I do not know which, and he questioned her and he found out the names of some nine.*

*Mr. Houston: Was that doctor Eleven?*

*Mr. Six: I do not know which doctor it was. This girl told him the names of nine people who had had connection with her.*

*Mr. Houston: Boys and men?*

*Mr. Six: Men, boys, whatever they may be. . . .*

*Mr. Houston: Was this a young girl?*

*Mr. Six? Yes, under 14 years of age. Of course it is commonly said that you cannot get a virgin at anything like that age here.*[113]

At this point, Houston instructed his secretary to anonymize the names of the informants in each interview, a practice he carried forward across the rest of his investigative work on the island. The secretary dutifully replaced each name with a number. Houston carried the only copy of the key himself.

Before closing the conversation, Mr. Six offered Houston a warning:

*Mr Six: If anyone knew I had this information they would put barbed wire across my road on a dark night; they would thrash me; they have already been at some of the cable people; that is why some of these people are not willing to speak out. Twelve could suppress it. He knows it. But what is he? He is married to one of them; and some of his relations are so terribly in the thick of it that he cannot. Of course everybody coming here says "what grand people." I called here one day passing in the steamer and I went to church. I said "what grand people." The next time I came here I found out what they were. And yet they have their good ways. . . . You cannot reconcile the one to the other.*

*Mr. Six then left the room.*

Houston made an effort to determine the cause of what he took as a profound moral laxity. He interviewed the school staff; the teacher, a local herself, regarded the children of Norfolk Islanders as considerably less brilliant than those of outsiders. Whether it was a consequence of their racial heritage, their consanguineous marriages, their language, or

[113] This account is, by a wide margin, the earliest suggestion of a Pitcairn rape culture I have encountered in the archive, predating evidence covered by the trials and Kathy Marks in *Lost Paradise* (New York: Free Press, 2009) by a half century. The problematics of history, jurisprudence, and investigations into sexual assault on Pitcairn Island will be discussed briefly in the conclusion of this dissertation.

something else, she could not say, but she did complain that the "jargon" they spoke disrupted her teaching considerably.[114] The headmaster, on the other hand, considered the children to be as naturally bright as any others but definitively blamed the islanders' local language for their poor composition skills.[115] Houston, though, seemed increasingly convinced that the islanders' heritage was the direct cause of their present problems. He sought out signs of recessive Tahitian markers lurking in the shadows of the island culture. In one interview, he asked about rumors recorded in previous government reports that the islanders maintained heterodox burial practices, possibly informed by their Tahitian ancestry. The islanders supposedly opened coffins and kissed the corpses, and kept them in their houses for days. His informants denied the practice.[116]

Informant 55 discussed the islanders' "animal propensities," especially among their children. Houston was particularly interested in determining the cause of the supposed degeneration, and whether it could be attributed to Tahitian ancestry, consanguinity, or both.

> *Mr. Houston: As the result of Intermarriage is there not usually a declension of the mental powers?*
>
> *Mr. 55: I think so.*
>
> *Mr. Houston: And is there not a special physical development?*
>
> *Mr. 55: Oh yes.*
>
> *Mr. Houston: Would that not account for some of the animal propensities?*
>
> *Mr. 55: I should be inclined to think that the animal propensities result from their descending from the Tahitians, but there is mental and physical degeneration very marked.*
>
> *Mr. Houston: Physical degeneration?*

[114] Houston, "Minutes of interview with Miss Mildred Nobbs," May 15 1903, CO 536/462.
[115] Houston, "Minutes of interview with Mr. Gustav Adolph Quintall (Head Master)," May 13 1903, CO 536/462.
[116] Houston, "Visit of H. E. The Governor and the Deputy Administrator," Appendix D. Minutes of Proceedings, paragraphs 697-712, undated, CO 536/462.

> *Mr. 55: Yes, such things as the increase of Tuberculosis and diseases of that kind, and the increase of mental diseases. For instance, there is a child born that will be a blind idiot. And in one family, No 58, there is one son who has tuberculosis spine with curvature and distortion, and another whose mental capacity is not by any means what it ought to be, and a child who is virtually a blind idiot. . . .*
>
> *Mr. Houston: That is a family where there has been close intermarriage?. . . It could be traced?"*[117]

Houston sought what information he could on the islanders' physical health; he procured from informant number 59 a list of the islanders' "deformities, etc."[118]

Sometimes Houston asked the Norfolk Islanders directly about their own physical deterioration. In one meeting with a group of older residents, his interlocutors seemed initially confused that the administrator would even field a question on such a topic. They were expecting a conversation about land tenure, and said so. "That is settled," replied Houston. Instead, he asked about inbreeding:

> *There is no doubt that the breeding in and in is doing harm, and that what you really want is fresh blood. There is no doubt about that. We see it in England: we see it in every country where cousins marry: that gradually, not always in the next generation, but in succeeding generations, there is degeneration—all kinds of sicknesses, all kinds of diseases and decrepit people, shaky people, come to the fore. I mean that you have got merely to read history, you have merely to read medical books, and you will find that it is one of the laws of nature you cannot get out of.*[119]

His informant responded:

> *Well, your excellency, facts are stubborn things, and we have ocular demonstration amongst us. I am not an advocate of that (intermarriage) but away from Norfolk Island their children are little puny miserable things, while you will find many stalwart fellows amongst the Pitcairn Islanders.*[120]

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[117] A passage itself cited by Lord Chelmsford in his 1910 report, see: Letter from Lord Chelmsford, July 20th, 1910, page 4, TNA, CO/537/463.
[118] I have not been able to locate the list.
[119] Houston, "Visit of H. E. The Governor and the Deputy Administrator. Appendix D. Minutes of Proceedings," paragraphs 1899–1900, CO/537/462.
[120] Houston, "Visit of H. E. The Governor and the Deputy Administrator. Appendix D. Minutes of Proceedings" undated, paragraph 1901, CO/537/462.

The archive of investigative work on Norfolk is necessarily asymmetrical; it privileges the perspective of investigators, not the investigated. The Houston report, however, contains several rare instances in which early twentieth-century Norfolk Islanders directly contested the discourse of degeneration that increasingly surrounded their island. His transcripts indicate that the islanders were careful students of the reports written about them by outsiders. Indeed, some islanders took the opportunity of their conversations with the deputy governor to conduct their own interrogation, defending their island against aspersions cast by visitors' accounts. One interviewee brought with him a report published in 1896 and read it out loud to Houston:

> *Mr. Young: [Reading from a text] 'The very fertility of their soil is against them. They can live without industry and so they reap not the blessing of toil. . . . The lazy ones are fed by the workers and they know it and continue to be lazy. Cut off from contact with the outside world they have no interest apart from their own, no patriotism, no wish to make a name in the world for their island, or for themselves and their children. Given plenty to eat, enough sleep, and free scope to their lower nature to enjoy itself—they are quite happy and contented. They live in a half lotus-land and they die as they live.'*
>
> *Mr. Houston: That is a thing that ought never to have been published.*
>
> *Mr. Young : The Government must know where it came from.*
>
> *Mr. Houston: The Government do not know where it came from.*

The text was drawn from an 1896 newspaper article, one of a flurry of articles in the Anglophone press that relayed the results of publically released reports by Hampden, Caruthers, and Oliver—all of which emphasized the Pitcairners' supposedly environmentally-induced indolence. That text was in turn mentioned in an official despatch, which was published by both the New South Wales government and the HMSO. A copy of that same text, reproduced in a newspaper, in turn wound its way to Norfolk Island. Outsiders on Norfolk of course knew that the Pitcairners were careful students of their own investigators. One informant, in a meeting with Houston, warned him that he, too, would be watched on the island. They "will come to the verandah without their

shoes and listen through the windows: you do not know they are there. They sneak up and you are quite unaware of their presence—one has to be very circumspect in one's speech."[121]

After a month of investigations, Houston wrote a report summarizing his findings, while his secretary compiled the minutes of each interview into a massive corpus of ancillary text. Houston's conclusions, however, were short and to the point. "Their immorality or want of morality," he wrote, "is to a large measure due to the Tahitian blood in their original stock." Houston's secretary shipped the report and its related transcripts to London, where it attracted considerable attention among Colonial Office staff for its lurid content. A comment on the dossier noted, "This is disgusting and I think we should not let any lady typists copy it but find some male typist."[122] Many Colonial Office staffers examined the report uncritically, expressing shock at the suggestion that the Pitcairners' carefully preserved utopia had turned to dystopia. Unlike their mid-Victorian counterparts, most of these later administrators withheld the more pessimistic accounts about Norfolk Island from publication. Houston's text was read by a dozen colonial officials and then filed away into bureaucratic obscurity, referenced only by other reports on the island in the coming decades. A note on the dossier containing the Houston report nonetheless follows: "I wish the details were known—they would put an end to these figments of Arcadian communities," not least because it would provide the government the needed political capital to deport the population of Pitcairn if needed.[123] News of visits by outraged officials from Sydney did filter from time to time into the Australian press; "Norfolk Island A Polluted Paradise," ran a front page headline in 1898 in Sydney's *Truth*, a scandal sheet with radical and republican leanings.[124] Readers learned of the island's "monstrous misrule, immorality," and

[121] Houston, "Interview with Mr. 54, memo of conversation dictated May 19," CO/537/462.
[122] Note by C.P.D, Sept. 1, 1910, CO 537/463.
[123] Ibid.
[124] "Norfolk Island a Polluted Paradise" *The Truth* (Sydney, NSW: Sunday August 14, 1898):1–3.

"shamefully scandalous state of things." The Pitcairners, those famous descendants of Fletcher Christian and his romantic band of mutineers, were now the victims of "steady moral and physical degeneration" as race mixture and close marriages took their toll. The article noted, conspiratorially, that recent reports about the island were no longer released publically.

During the same period, a number of equally pessimistic reports generated by naval and administrative visits emerged about Pitcairn Island, where a similar concern over racial and eugenic deterioration came to dominate visitors' accounts. After an 1898 visit, for instance, Judicial Commissioner Hamilton Hunter warned that "lax in morals, weak in intellect, they are fast degenerating." He added that "unless something is speedily done to alter their condition they will probably drift into hopeless imbecility."[125] The new settlement on Pitcairn drew less sympathy from the Navy and Colonial Office than did the pre-1856 community. The Pitcairners had reestablished the colony against Denison's advice and without the government's sanction. More damningly, the Pitcairn Islanders had converted from Anglicanism, long the islanders' most celebrated marker of their Englishness and piety, to Seventh Day Adventism, an American sect British administrators looked upon with suspicion.[126] While New South Wales and the Colonial Office withheld critical accounts of the Norfolk Islanders from publication, the Colonial Office did release critical reports about Pitcairn—and scientists read them. The Journal of the American Medical Association, for instance, reported on the Hunter account and the eugenic consequences its contents suggested.[127] The evangelical community, too, took note that one of its favored examples of religious purity no longer stood as a sacrosanct exemplar. An article in the

[125] Letter from Hamilton to WPHC, October 15, 1898, Inward Correspondence, Genera, Turnball Library, Micro-MS-Coll-11-040.
[126] See Dennis Steley, *Unfinished: The Seventh-Day Adventist Mission in the South Pacific, Excluding Papua New Guinea, 1886–1986* (PhD dissertation, University of Auckland, 1989).
[127] "Degeneracy of Pitcairn Islanders," *JAMA* 32, no. 14 (April 8, 1899): 771. See the next chapter for more.

*Evangelist*, relaying the news of the Hunter report, began: "The Pitcairn Island romance is ended."[128]

Though never published by the HMSO, Houston's report was referenced by subsequent official accounts of Norfolk Island life, most explicitly in 1910 when another visit by Governor of New South Wales Lord Chelmsford produced similar results. Assessing a half century of governmental investigation into the lives of the Pitcairn Islanders and the success of the Norfolk Experiment, Chelmsford declared it an absolute failure. He summed up the project in no uncertain terms:

> *The key to the whole situation seems to me to lie in the past history. To put it in a sentence: The attempt was made in 1856 to establish [on] an inaccessible island a community free from all the evils of civilization, and to reproduce in the 19th century a Garden of Eden without the serpent. No doubt those responsible for the experiment launched it in good faith, believing that they had found in the Pitcairn Islanders a people endowed with all the virtues and all the innocence of our first parents before the fall. I do not hesitate to say that no experiment has ever failed so dismally, and that the Norfolk Islanders of Today, so far from being innocent and virtuous, are as debased, as idle, as immoral or—unmoral perhaps would be a more suitable epithet—a people as exists on the face of the earth*.[129]

It is not my intention here to dredge up from the archive the artifacts of an intrusive investigatory discourse, not least one animated by racist, eugenic, and imperial concerns, in order to cast aspersions against long-dead Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders. Indeed, we should pause here to note that, with rare exception, every word in the archive reanimated here was penned by an outside investigator who was embedded in a specific colonial context as either an agent of the empire or the nascent Australian state.

However, we can read their accounts in order to understand how their investigatory work was situated within that world. Colonial administrators in particular, like Denison and Houston, sought to determine the "fundamental truth" about the character of the Pitcairn Islanders not

[128] "The Romance of the Sea Ended," *Evangelist* 70 (New York: March 9, 1899): 4.
[129] Lord Chemsford, Letter of July 20, 1910, 1, CO/537/463, hereafter "*Chelmsford Report.*"

only, or indeed not principally, to rule their subjects efficiently. Rather, they investigated the islands and their inhabitants in order to understand how race mixture, consanguineous marriage, and colonial settlement would play out in the experimental microcosm they themselves had constructed. The implicit stakes of that governmental experiment were high, not only for the Pitcairners, but for the empire and for humanity. Within the burgeoning science of man, Pitcairn remained a regular referent in arguments about what has been called the central problem of mid-Victorian anthropology and ethnology: the debate over the racial unity of the human species. Once marked out as a ready-made example within scientific discourse, it resurfaced later as a minor point of reference in eugenic debates, perhaps the most central problem of late-Victorian and Edwardian social science. While scientists like Darwin and Wallace read administrators' accounts, the flow of discourse was not explicitly multidirectional. Neither Houston, Chelmsford, Denison, nor their contemporaries cited figures like Knox, Broca, or Galton directly. However, as a long-running historiography has made plain, the late-Victorian world was suffused by anxiety over racial and eugenic deterioration.[130] The Norfolk experiment, offering administrators a twin example of race mixture and consanguineous marriage within a geographically, socially, and epistemologically closed space, activated that anxiety most acutely. Government reports about Pitcairners responded with the increasing deployment of scientized language across the last decades of the nineteenth century, of which the excerpts from Houston's text referenced above are broadly representative.

[130] Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, 1848–1918* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989); J. Edward Chamberlain and Sander Gilman, eds., *Degeneration: The Dark Side of Progress* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985); Sander Gilman, *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985); Kelly Hurley, *The Gothic Body: Sexuality, Materialism, and Degeneration in the Fin-de-Siecle* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996); William Greenslade, *Degeneration, Culture, and the Novel, 1880–1940* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

In declaring the experiment a failure, the colonial bureaucracy came to adopt a distinctly high-imperial political economy of race, one which sought explicitly to control the sexual and moral lives of its racialized subjects as a matter of good medicine, good science, and good administration. Rigid and biologized conceptions of Britishness, which privileged race and the body, overtook previous markers of Britishness, not least religion and language. That shift was part of a broader transformation in the way the British imagined their empire and the subjects residing within it, especially in its antipodean colonies. As Warwick Anderson has written, "during much of the nineteenth century, being 'white' in the Australian colonies usually meant claiming British ancestry," but in the last decades of the nineteenth century whiteness was recreated on the tropical frontier by scientific and medical examinations of the body, investigations that constituted a "discourse on settlement" in their own right.[131] That trend appears in especially stark relief in the case of Norfolk Island. Government accounts underwent a total and rapid transformation in tone and outlook as their depictions of the island evolved from moral utopia to eugenic dystopia in the space of a single generation.

On what basis did administrators like Chelmsford draw that conclusion? Certainly they noted a failure of economy and industry, those eminently Victorian values whose absence suggested an atavistic reversion on the part of the "indolent half-casts," as Sir Charles Dilke, the era's most famous champion of the idea of an Anglo-Saxon "greater Britain," termed them after a visit to Pitcairn Island in 1866.[132] More often sex, and panic over sexual immorality, became the principal arbiter by which colonial administrators determined the success of Denison's experiment. Literary scholar Anne McClintock has noted that, at precisely this period, "sexual purity emerged as a controlling metaphor," and perhaps *the* controlling metaphor, for "racial,

[131] Warwick Anderson, *The Cultivation of Whiteness*, 1–4, 14.
[132] Charles Wentworth Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries, During 1866–1867* (London: Macmillan, 1869), 321–330.

economic, and political power."[133] Sex neatly combined the moral, the racial, and the bodily into a set of signs easily legible to Victorian investigators. Sex, bodily deterioration, and race were already strongly aligned in the colonial imagination of the Pacific, most prominently through concern over venereal disease. "At the heart of the European paradise of the South Pacific," wrote Rod Edmond in *Representing the South Pacific*, "a counter-discourse of the diseased Pacific body augmented the significance of any blemish to its surface, and these blemishes were most frequently ascribed to sexual causes."[134] In the case of Pitcairn, sexual deviance was both the cause and sign of imminent cultural and bodily degeneration. Cases of "immoral" behavior suggested deeper problems lurking beneath the surface, problems that flowed indelibly through the island's blood.

Indeed, so pressing was this problem that Houston abandoned his assigned project of assessing land use within days of his arrival in order to tackle the far graver threat to the island's political economy that its sexual laxity presented. "There was a danger" he wrote, "of children being contaminated."[135] The island's women were long more closely associated with the populations' founding Tahitian mothers, and "loose" girls both represented the atavistic threat of a return to Polynesian forms and indicated the moral deterioration close marriage had wrought. Pitcairn was always defined by its founding story, but racially-inflected concern over sex transformed its link to the past from a question of legacy to a question of heredity. Sexual deviance was the principal criterion, too, by which Lord Chelmsford declared the experiment a failure, the outward sign of hidden but imminent racial and eugenic disaster. He called for an immediate end to the island' special treatment and carefully imposed isolation. The results of his

[133] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 47.
[134] Rod Edmond, *Representing the South Pacific: Colonial Discourse from Cook to Gauguin* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 194.
[135] Notably cited in *Chelmsford Report*, 10, CO/537/463.

and his predecessors' investigations suggested that Norfolk not only required Sydney's direct intervention, but that Britain, New South Wales, and the Australian state would have to adopt a new orientation that racially and sexually policed the mixed populations under its purview. At Chelmsford's advice, Norfolk Island's chief magistrate instituted harsher fines of ten pounds for "fornication" and raised the age of consent to sixteen years.[136] At the same time, the Colonial Office quietly instructed ships' surgeons to investigate the health of Pitcairn Islanders in explicitly eugenic terms.[137] A somber Chelmsford advised the Colonial Office and the Australian government of "the necessity of a paternal government for some time. "The islanders," he said, were "so intermarried, that honest, healthy self-government is impossible." He advised that Australians settle Norfolk Island in large numbers in order to swamp the Pitcairn population and thus diffuse its racial and eugenic risks. It was a move that not only would put a distinct end to the island's isolation and the experiment's parameters, but that was meant to forever dissolve the Pitcairners as a distinct people.[138]

The vehemence of British disgust and outrage at the islanders' shift from supposed utopia to dystopia demands another layer of reading, too, one that takes into account the special place of the islanders in the British imaginary, as well as the unique relations the islanders engendered with outsiders and investigators. We can locate, in the disappointed and disillusioned attitude that dominates Houston and Chelmsford's reports, an attenuation of the island's captivating powers. Their writing evinces an injured and slighted tone; theirs is the discourse of people once captivated by the island's carefully cultivated mystique, now stung by the realization that the island was not the one they had come to know. The transcripts of Houston's interviews on

[136] Letter from C. S. Elliot to Lord Chelmsford, June 28, 1910, CO/537/463.
[137] See L. Lindop, Surgeon, *HMS Algerine,* "Report" ( February 1, 1911), NLA, MS 1058; Cecil Hunter Rodwell, *Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island* (London: HMSO, 1921); both discussed in next chapter.
[138] *Chelmsford Report*, 15, CO/537/463.

Norfolk record his shifting sense not only of the island's present condition, but of the entire mythos built around the Pitcairn people and their history. Chelmsford cited the following extract from Houston's report to suggest a purposely hidden, dystopic Pitcairn lurking beneath the surface. Take, for instance, his conversation about Pitcairn's storied past with informant fifty:

> *Mr. Houston: But at Pitcairn the strain was stronger than it is here now, and yet everybody that went there depicted them as an isle of saints . . . pious, innocent simple. How do you account for that?*
>
> *Mr. Fifty: I have the older people talk here—they are gone now, dead, and I do not think they were anything of the kind. Did it ever strike you what old George [sic] Adams did with all those women?*
>
> *Mr. Houston: I never thought about it; but it did strike me that he was left with all those women, and that there was some population.*
>
> *Mr. Fifty: There were some queer doings at Pitcairn. You see there was a fine to be let it known to the world.*

Denison might have been shocked at the notion that the islanders managed their investigators carefully, but reports as far back as Henry Wilkinson's 1884 investigation of the island suggested that the Pitcairners colluded to prevent the revelation of unsavory aspects of island life to their interlocutors. According to Wilkinson, "a heavy penalty was inflicted on any one of their number who exposed to strangers facts which might be used to their disparagement.[139] Other writing about Pitcairn Island from the same period adopted a similarly outraged and disillusioned tone. British Consul to Tahiti H. A. Richards, under whose jurisdiction Pitcairn fell in 1913, solicited information on the islanders from James Lyle Young, a trader and founding member of the Polynesian Society.[140] Young wrote a scathing account, which Richards passed on to the Colonial Office. He described Pitcairn as a community whose

[139] Notably cited in *Chelmsford Report*, 2.
[140] Claus Gossler, "The Commercial Career of James Lyle Young: Contemporary Evaluations of a Notable South Seas Character," *Journal of Pacific History* 44, no. 2 (September, 2009): 209–220.

devout piousness co-existed "with the utmost laxity in matters sexual." However, he qualified the "hypocrisy" that so outraged his peers. "We must take into consideration," he wrote,

> *the fact that for a hundred years past the Community has lived on charity from passing vessels, and the Islanders have long ago learned that the romance surrounding their history, and their reputation for loyalty to the throne, as well as for simplicity and innocence and devout religious belief, have always been their assets; their stock-in-trade, in short, which leads to the good opinion of visitors and to consequent gifts. . . . Considering therefore, the whole history of these people, and their descent and conditions of life it is, perhaps, unjust to stigmatize as hypocrisy and deceit, the smooth face, the ingratiating manner, and the profession of religion which these poor people are, so to speak, compelled to put on in order to live.*[141]

Young was not a sympathetic friend of the island, and his perception of the islanders was steeped in the anxious language of racial and sexual panic already documented in his peers above. However, he did identify a fundamental fact of life for Pitcairn Islanders, both on Pitcairn and Norfolk. They were the subjects of periodic and persistent scrutiny by outsiders. Subjected to inquiry by the agents of the empire, Pitcairners turned their status as the objects and subjects of investigation to their advantage when and where they could. Outsiders wanted to find captivating islands; the Pitcairners worked to make themselves captivating, and in so doing captured for themselves a contingent of naval captains, missionaries, and colony administrators whose benevolent interest could provide them material aid and political goodwill. As anxiety over race and degeneration loomed larger in the British imagination, the islanders' power to captivate diminished. Young, for instance, was the furthest thing from captivated, calling on London to dismantle the extra-imperial settlement on Pitcairn. "These interesting and unfortunate people should be saved from themselves," he wrote, "and taken off the island and established elsewhere, so that they may have a chance to marry outside of their own circle of relationship. If this course

[141] Letter from J. L. Young to H. A. Richards, July 12, 1913, FO/687/15.

is not followed, it is my well-considered opinion that the community will continue to degenerate both physically and mentally."[142]

Nonetheless, that opinion was far from unanimous. The attenuation of the Island's power to captivate was never complete; the idea of a romantic mutineers' utopia in the South Seas, loyal and pure, was remarkably resilient. The same year that Young and Richards considered Pitcairn's forced disbandment, a thirty-page report by the captain of the HMS *Algerine*, who was sent to investigate rumors of total degeneration, described it as "an almost ideal little community" and critiqued sweeping condemnations of Pitcairners on both of their islands. "Is there no immorality in Tahiti or other parts of the civilized world?" he demanded. "Why are these people to be put on such a pinnacle that they are to be better than most other places?" At the same time, adventure stories kept up an image of both Pitcairn and Norfolk as ideal paradises whose seclusion kept them uncontaminated by the currents of history or modernity.[143] Sympathetic histories still portrayed them as simple, religious, and pure.[144] The islanders, too, began to publish their own accounts, which were often religious in nature. Rosalind Amelia Young, Pitcairn's school teacher, wrote her own history of the island in 1894. It was read within Adventist circles and cited by early twentieth-century academics interested in the island. "Many who have visited the island have gone away with the impression that the favoured inhabitants breathe a purer air than other people, and an atmosphere wholly untainted by sin," she wrote. "But it is difficult to conceive how such an idea can for a moment be entertained concerning any

[142] Ibid.
[143] George Louis Becke and Walter Jeffrey, *The Mutineer, a Romance of Pitcairn Island* (London: T. Fisher Unwin,1898); Richard Whiting, *The Island: Or, An Adventure of a Person of Quality* (Chicago: Charles H. Sergel and Co., 1899); prefiguring Nordoff and Hall's treatment in the 1930s.
[144] William Young Fullerton, *The Romance of Pitcairn Island* (London: Carey Press, 1923).

place upon earth which is inhabited by any of Adam's fallen race. Human nature is human nature the world over, and fallen at that."[145]

But above all, above colonial outrage and arguments over racial degeneration, above Chelmsford's indignation or Young's explanations, the archive of governmental reportage on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands suggests something even more curious. After a half-century of conscious experimentation, of carefully defined parameters, and of persistent surveillance, the islands' governors found themselves administering a place that, as far as they were concerned, fundamentally defied their attempts to build knowledge—and perhaps even defied knowability. Despite a small library of narrative accounts, despite the intensity of their moral investigations, and in the face of hundreds of pages of reports, colonial administrator remained deeply ambivalent about the possibility of understanding their two remote islands. The remainder of this dissertation will follow investigations by professional scientists, especially anthropologists, archaeologists, and linguists, into the lives of Pitcairn Islanders. Their efforts, which inherited the experimental space engendered by the mostly undisclosed knowledge-making work of colonial administrators, produced a sizeable bibliography of accounts about the islands and their people, who became on a per capita basis among the most studied people in the world. But anxiety and ambivalence over the ability to access the "real" Pitcairn or Norfolk haunted scientists' fieldwork, too, caught up as both islands were in a carefully cultivated mythos and a complex dynamic of outsider and insider. "There is no place," declared a frustrated Lord Chelmsford after summarizing a half-century of government reportage, "where it is more difficult to find out the real truth than Norfolk Island."[146]

[145] Rosalind Amelia Young, *Mutiny on the Bounty and the Story of Pitcairn Island, 1790–1894* (Mountain View California: Pacific Press, 1894), 253.
[146] *Chelmsford Report*, 2.

# Chapter 4 | Taking Measure

**The Anthropometry of Race Science's Natural Laboratories**

> *Little did the nine mutineers of the HMS Bounty who landed in 1789 on Pitcairn Island and married Polynesian women suspect that they would become human guinea pigs for anthropologists and students of heredity. Cut off from the world, that little colony, which now numbers 200, has made it possible to substitute solid facts for the fancies that underlie racial prejudice.*[1]
>
> —"A Racial Laboratory," The *New York Times*, 1935

In 1935, physical anthropologist Harry Shapiro returned from a three-month expedition to the Pacific. He visited many islands during his cruise through Eastern Polynesia, but the one with the most significance for him, for anthropology, and for the American public was Pitcairn. Recent novels and films had given the *Bounty* island a renewed cultural purchase, not least a trilogy of bestsellers by novelists Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall.[2] Later that year, Clark Gable and Charles Laughton would restage its story yet again across silver screens. It was, once more, becoming a well-known place. And yet, the image of the Pitcairn Islanders Shapiro brought back from his fieldwork was something different from the island's previous iterations. As the *New York Times* article told its readers, Pitcairn Island was a "racial laboratory," and the islanders were its "human guinea pigs." British and Australian administrators had already configured Norfolk Island as a kind of living experiment, of course, but its results as they interpreted them had been dire: Pitcairn Islanders were, if anything, examples of racial and eugenic degeneration. But now, in the interwar decades, Pitcairn Islanders became instead the

[1] "A Racial Laboratory," *New York Times* (February 28, 1935): 18.
[2] Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *Mutiny on the* Bounty (New York: Little, Brown, and Company, 1932); Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *Men Against the Sea* (New York: Little, Brown, 1934); Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall, *Pitcairn's Island* (New York: Little, Brown, 1934).

experimental subjects of a laboratory that "made it possible to substitute solid facts for the fancies that underlie racial prejudice," and that suggested a potentially revolutionary redefinition of the race concept.[3] If the science of race could change, it could do so in a place like Pitcairn Island.

This chapter is about that remarkable, historically contingent notion: the idea that Pitcairn Island could serve as a "natural" laboratory in which anthropologists redefined the category of race itself—and, at the same time, worked to redefine their own discipline. It is a story situated, like all histories, in a particular moment. By the early twentieth century, a growing US imperial presence had re-centered the Pacific as a field of geopolitical ambition and cultural fascination; once peripheral strings of islands now seemed, if still distant, suddenly relevant. Moreover, the definition and meaning of race had accrued an even more pressing significance; the American republic and the British Empire saw movements for racial equality, while far-right regimes across the European continent adopted racialist dogma as state ideology. At the same time, physical anthropology faced a growing intellectual pressure to define and defend its method and its object of study. The advent of genetics had effected a revolution in the study of inheritance, while new currents in biology made "populations" rather than "races" a central object of study—a category with mutable and flexible dynamics that threatened the stable typologies and classifications on which physical anthropology had been built. Against those complex external and internal contexts, physical anthropology used sites such as Pitcairn to rework its definition of race, dispensing with essentialisms and typologies while preserving some core elements of the concept itself.

Stories require characters and settings, and this chapter will follow a few protagonists, some of them Pitcairners but most of them scientists, across four islands. It will open in Britain

[3] "A Racial Laboratory," *New York Times* 18.

in 1916, where two brothers from Pitcairn Island became living anthropological specimens at the hands of the Hunterian Museum's Sir Arthur Keith, a man whom I will read as a type specimen in his own right of early twentieth-century physical anthropology. Then, it will shift focus to Norfolk Island in 1923, where young doctoral student Harry Shapiro spent five months making it into an anthropometric laboratory of miscegenation in the theoretical mold of his advisor, Harvard's Earnest Hooton. Next, it will examine an older Harry Shapiro on Pitcairn Island in 1934, where a new set of relationships remade it into the laboratory of a changing race science. Finally, it will journey back with Shapiro to his office in the American Museum of Natural History in Manhattan, from which he introduced his human subjects into a wide set of public and scientific discourses. By examining physical anthropology's measurement of the human in the Pacific, and by following the knowledge made during those examinations into a wider set of conversations and literatures, I myself aim to take measure of the shifting science of race across the first half of the twentieth century.

In so doing, I will join my story to stories already told. Histories of the decline of scientific racism have, until recently, told triumphalist accounts in which metropolitan scientists dismantled "race" from within, as new intellectual developments, coupled with external US and European politics, made the concept untenable.[4] Only recently have historians begun to revisit that narrative. Tracey Teslow, in a much-needed book on American race science, has done a

[4] In many accounts science self-corrects; see: Stephen J. Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (New York: Norton, 1996); Pat Shipman, *The Evolution of Racism: Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994); Paul Farber, "Race-Mixing and Science in the United States," *Endeavour* 27, no. 4 (December 2003): 166–170; for a detailed history of physical anthropology, see Frank Spencer, *Ecce Homo: An Annotated Bibliographic History of Physical Anthropology* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986); Frank Spencer, *History of Physical Anthropology,* ed. Frank Spencer (New York: Garland Pub, 1997); Michael A. Little and Kenneth A. R. Kennedy, eds, *Histories of American Physical Anthropology in the Twentieth Century* (Lanham, MD: Lexington, 2009); for early external histories, see Nancy Stepan, *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800–1960* (New York: McMillan, 1982); Elazar Barkan, *The Retreat of Scientific Racism: Changing Concepts of Race in Britain and the United States Between the World Wars* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

great deal of work to upend triumphalist narratives of scientific racism's decline.[5] She positions Harry Shapiro as a pivotal agent in that story, a figure who drifted from Hootonian racial typology to liberal, environmental determinism in the mold of Columbia's Franz Boas. I will add to Teslow's contribution by further complicating Harry Shapiro's physical anthropology, narrating not only its intellectual evolution, but also its Pacific situatedness. Throughout these next pages, I will show the local, entangled, and practical history of race science—a history of, among other things, calipers, gossip, measurements, anxiety, and trust. Only then will I follow the knowledge made in the Pacific through a broader set of scientific and public discourses on race, showing that the Pitcairn Islanders' use as a racial and eugenic datum remained ambivalent, multivalent, and mutable. Warwick Anderson, in a project that saw publication just as I began this dissertation project, has already done remarkable work situating Shapiro's race science in his Pacific fieldwork, including a short account of his time on Pitcairn. In Anderson's histories, Shapiro's intimate, ambivalent oceanic encounters changed him, prompting a reappraisal of racial typology.[6] It is a beautiful, humane treatment, though Shapiro's Pitcairn story is necessarily limited to only a few pages. Here, I seek to expand on Anderson's work by situating Shapiro's call at Pitcairn against the larger history of investigation on the island, delving more fully into the anthropologist's human entanglements, and following more widely the reception

[5] Tracy Teslow, *Constructing Race: The Science of Bodies and Cultures in American Anthropology* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014). Her work joins a recent scholarship that has shown the midcentury science of human difference to be a complex and heterogenous discipline; see Susan Lindee and Ricardo Ventura Santos, "The Biological Anthropology of Living Human Populations: World Histories, National Styles, and International Networks: An Introduction to Supplement 5," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (April 1, 2012): S3–16, along with other contributions in that volume; John P. Jackson and Nadine M. Weidman, *Race, Racism, and Science: Social Impact and Interaction* (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2004). On the partial replacement of race with "population," see Lisa Ganett, "Racism and Human Genome Diversity Research: The Ethical limits of Population Thinking," *Philosophy of Science* 68, no. 3 (September, 2001): 479–487. For a historiographical treatment, see Jonathan Marks, "Solving the Riddle of Race," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science, Part C* (article in press, published online 2016).

[6] Warwick Anderson, "Hybridity, Race, and Science: The Voyage of the *Zaca,* 1934–1935," *Isis* 103, no. 2 (June 1, 2012): 229–253; Warwick Anderson, "Racial Hybridity, Physical Anthropology, and Human Biology in the Colonial Laboratories of the United States," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (April 2012): S95–S107.

and diffusion of his results across the mid-century public and scientific discourses on race. Most of all, I frame the field practice of physical anthropology as an intimate, if dehumanizing, act. Anthropometry, the measurement of human beings, was race science's central method. Here, I aim for a kind of anthropometry of race science, a measurement of the human within the practices and relations from which it built and reformed its vast systems of human difference.

**Racial Anthropology's Type Specimens**

On an August morning in 1916, two Pitcairn Islanders arrived at the Royal College of Surgeons' Hunterian Museum, in the heart of London.[7] They were the brothers Charles and Edwin Young, sent to the museum by Katherine Routledge, an archaeologist who had picked them up from the island during an expedition to the Pacific the year before. Amid the Hunterian's display cases of human skeletons and jars of preserved organs, the brothers met Sir Arthur Keith, the museum's conservator. Keith was among the most eminent physical anthropologists in the world, and he recognized in the brothers a profound opportunity. Pitcairn Island was already one of anthropology's better-known cases of both race mixture and inbreeding, but no anthropologist had ever examined a Pitcairn Islander in person. Today that would change.

It is often impossible to reconstitute in text the lives of people whose bodies were recorded by physical anthropology, especially those who lived on the far colonial periphery. However, Charles and Edwin Young have left traces in the archive beyond Keith's account—and

[7] Sir Arthur Keith, "The Physical Characteristics of Two Pitcairn Islanders," *Man* 17, no. 88 (August, 1917): 121–131.

even physical anthropology's reification of their bodies into the racialized quanta of anthropometry left behind indications of the human beyond height, weight, and cephalic index. Let us begin, then, by following these two lives across the globe and through the scientific literature of the early twentieth century, pausing in Pitcairn and London to note their intersections with the lives of those who studied them. In so doing, we can also trace the history of anthropological thought and practice, the status of racial typology in early twentieth-century science, and the context within which Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands became well-known laboratories of miscegenation and inheritance. Just as importantly, we can learn something of how human beings became human subjects in early twentieth-century race science.

Charles and Edwin Young were born on Pitcairn Island in 1889 and 1892, respectively.[8] Pitcairn was then a growing community, recently converted to Seventh Day Adventism. Edwin grew up to marry a local girl, while Charles from time to time went to sea with trading expeditions; the islanders had recently built a small schooner for themselves and, for the first time, attempted to communicate more regularly with their Pacific neighbors.[9] Neither brother lived a totally peaceful life. Charles and Edwin found themselves brought before the island's local court on numerous occasions; both brothers were caught up in extramarital affairs, a violation of local law.[10] More seriously, island magistrate Gerard Christian tried and convicted Edwin for beating his wife in multiple hearings.[11] The island court imposed fines, which the

[8] Ages from Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 121; corroborated by the islanders' Mercantile Marine War Medal citations, "Medal Card of Young, Edwin C," The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereafter TNA), BT 351/1/156331, "Medal Card of Young, Charles R," TNA, BT 351/1/156304.
[9] Katherine Pease Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island: The Story of an Expedition* (London: Hazell, Watson and Viney, 1919): 314; "Pitcairn Island Correspondence: Expenses in Connection with the Schooner *Messenger*" TNA, FO 687/18.
[10] Letter from Gerard Christian to David Young, July 1, 1914, TNA, FO 687/17.
[11] "Proceedings of the local Court of Justice on Pitcairn Island for the Half year ending in December 31" TNA, FO 687/17

brothers could pay in physical labor, but both Charles and Edwin openly defied the magistrate's judgment. He was, after all, just a neighbor as much as anything else.[12]

If the brothers were ready to leave Pitcairn, an opportunity came in August of 1915 when a yacht called on the island. Visits were few and far between then; the world war had seriously reduced shipping and any guests were welcome. Melvin Adams sent a short note out with a whaleboat, inviting the passengers and crew ashore. "We cannot offer luxury, we live simply and wholesomely," it read, but the island offered to share what little it had.[13] The islanders soon learned that the yacht was the *Mana*, owned by British archaeologists Katherine and William Scoresby Routledge. They had spent the last year conducting excavations and ethnographic research on Rapa Nui (Easter Island). The Routledges' visit to Pitcairn was driven by scientific interest, too. For the last century, visitors had reported that it was home to the remnants of a lost Polynesian settlement, though these had been rarely investigated by outsiders. Sketching a possible itinerary before leaving Britain, Katherine Routledge listed Pitcairn among her possible stops with the simple note "Has never been worked. Specially interesting."[14] The Pitcairners, of course, knew the traces of the island's first inhabitants well. They showed the Routledge expedition carvings etched into Pitcairn's rocky cliffs and helped the team uncover two structures." They also turned over a number of stone implements they had found in the soil over the years.[15] These, the Routledges said, would be catalogued in the British Museum, where they would be safeguarded for "a hundred years." Some of the islanders laughed off the idea; "The end of the world would have come before then," they told Katherine.[16]

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[12] "Report on the Island of Pitcairn for the year 1914" (May, 1915) , pp. 3, 14, TNA, FO 687/17.
[13] Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island*, 307.
[14] Katherine Routledge, "Pacific Islands, anthropological note on," Archives of the Royal Geographical Society (hereafter RGS), WSR 4/1/1/1-3.
[15] Routledge, "Easter Island Report to Royal Society," September 10th 1915, RGS, WSR/4/10/41.
[16] Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island*, 313–314.

The Routledges had a second scientific mission, too, "to collect pedigrees on Pitcairn and make observations from the point of view of the Mendelian theory." On arrival, they soon realized how difficult a proposition that was. The island's genealogy was complex, and Katherine recalled that it would have been a "troublesome business." Whether the trouble arose on account of tangled family lines or the tangled politics of outsider and insider she did not record. In any case, she decided that the island was not the perfectly isolated experiment anthropologists sometimes imagined. Given the constant influx of new genes from visitors and castaways, she regarded their "experimental" value as dubious. Though she did look through local records, she soon gave up on collecting genealogies.[17] Instead, the Routledges collected two islanders. As the expedition prepared to leave, several Pitcairners asked for passage to Tahiti. Charles and Edwin alone received berths, though on the condition that they earn their keep by working on the yacht. They agreed, and on September 2 they left Pitcairn with the expedition.[18] The brothers boarded the Routledges' yacht sporting hats wreathed with flowers and were sent off by a swarm of friends and relations. They would not see their friends and families again for more than two years. At Tahiti, both brothers decided to travel with the *Mana* all the way to London, joining the crew in a more official capacity. Charles, who had some experience at sea, signed on as a deck hand, Edwin served as steward; both received sailors' uniforms.[19] The journey to London was a long one—across the Pacific to Hawai'i and on to San Francisco, where the *Mana* moored alongside the empty exhibition halls of the city's recent Panama Pacific International Exposition. Charles and Edwin quickly became an exhibition in their own right; so many reporters asked to speak with them that they set a fixed price for each

[17] Ibid.
[18] *Log Book of the Aux. Schooner* Mana*, August 1st 1915–October 31st 1915,* v.12, RGS, WSR 1.
[19] Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island*, 321.

interview.[20] From San Francisco the *Mana* sailed through the Panama Canal and finally on toward England, its crew wondering all the while whether a German submarine would strike, but the *Mana* arrived safely in Southampton on June 23, 1916. With no definitive plans aside from an eventual return to Pitcairn, the two brothers chose to spend the summer in England.

The Routledges deposited their collections of remains and artifacts at British scientific intuitions, including a set of 56 Rapa Nui skulls for Arthur Keith at the Hunterian. However, as Keith was also interested in Charles and Edwin's bodies, they brought the brothers along, too, in order "to make some amends for [their] lack of Mendelian research on their island."[21] Both sets of specimens arrived at the museum on the morning of August 10.[22] Keith was there waiting, joined by Colin Mackenzie, an Australian doctor and comparative anatomist who was in London to catalogue war injuries.[23] It was a sweltering summer day, but the brothers submitted quietly and politely as the scientists touched and prodded. The tacit, tactile work of early twentieth-century physical anthropology was in turns intimately human and necessarily dehumanizing. Keith ran his fingers through each man's hair; he described their skin as "delicately smooth and agreeably soft."[24] He measured their weight and their height, both sitting and standing, as well as the length of each limb. He set to work with calipers, touching the metal instrument to the brothers' heads and faces seventeen times to record the span of their jaws and the breadth of their skulls. Eventually, he worked his way down to their chest, their legs, and on to their feet. He used that examination to reduce each man to a table of measurements, thirty-seven in all. As

[20] Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island*, 331.
[21] Routledge, *The Mystery of Easter Island*, 389.
[22] Arthur Keith, "August 10," *Rough Diary for 1916*, Royal College of Surgeons Archive (hereafter RCS), MUS/6/1/7. See also Keith's recollection of the experience in his memoirs: Sir Arthur Keith, *An Autobiography* (London: Watts, 1950), 402–404.
[23] Monica MacCallum, "MacKenzie, Sir William Colin (1877–1938)," in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mackenzie-sir-william-colin-7392/text12831, published first in hardcopy 1986, accessed online 12 April, 2016.
[24] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 126.

Keith measured the brothers empirically, he also sized each man up in more subjective terms; his first impression was of "robust, active, well-formed men" with an "air of easy composure." They spoke quietly but exactly, answering questions about their grandparents and great grandparents in an English that struck the anthropologist as somehow alien. But above all, Keith noticed their missing teeth and "their negative rather than positive mental qualities."[25] After a few hours and a few photographs, Keith dismissed the brothers.

Sir Arthur Keith was one of the world's leading practitioners of typological race science; accordingly, we can take him as a kind of type specimen in his own right, a subject through which we can understand physical anthropology in the early twentieth century. I am not the first to treat Keith as a type specimen; he was the model for Malvina Hoffman's sculpture "Nordic type: Great Britain" displayed in the Chicago's Field Museum's Races of Mankind exhibit during the 1930s.[26] Like many late-Victorian scientists, he began his career on the colonial periphery, collecting plants and primates in Southeast Asia before building his career in London and eventually taking his position at the Hunterian. Keith made a name for himself not only as an anatomist, but as an expert on race and human evolution; he was a famous proponent of the Piltdown skull.[27] His examination of Charles and Edwin was standard for his field, as was his interpretation of their bodies. In 1916, race was not just the dominant object of study for professional anthropologists, but a paradigmatic category around which the science built its understanding of itself and humankind. For anthropologists like Keith, race was the biological lot afforded a given people, culture its expression, and evolution the process of its articulation. Races could be represented by and expressed as types, in the manner of natural historical

[25] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 124; Keith, *An Autobiography*, 403.
[26] Marianne Kinkel, *Races of Mankind: The Sculptures of Malvina Hoffman* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 59; Malvina Hoffman, *Heads and Tales* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936).
[27] And according to some, complicit in the hoax, as in: Frank Spencer, *Piltdown: A Scientific Forgery* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1990).




**Figure 6: Charles Young, from Arthur Keith, *The Physical Characteristics of Two Pitcairn Islanders* (1917)**

method. The Pitcairn Islanders, as the products of contact between races, were important as objects of study that suggested whether these types were stable, where the divisions between them lay, and how they interacted. These were important questions not only for anthropology, but for the empire. In a 1919 lecture at Oxford, Keith made the imperial stakes of his discipline's work explicit. "England," he said, discovered through its colonization of the world that "racial contact gives rise to burning antagonisms. . . . Of the importance of a right understanding of the nature of these forces for the future maintenance and development of the British Empire there cannot be any question."[28] For Keith, every hybrid racial population was an "experiment" in race mixture, whether large or small. He used the metaphor widely, referring to the settlement of the Americas as the "greatest anthropological experiment the world has ever seen."[29]

Before he could analyze the brothers' bodies, Keith had to determine whether they were suitably representative of the larger Pitcairn "type." To begin with, he pressed the Routledges for more information. Katherine responded by reminding Keith that she "deliberately and intentionally did not go to Pitcairn to study the present hybrid race." However, she was able to supply him with a genealogy for the brothers stretching back to the first generation on Pitcairn, which she had gathered from Pitcairn Islander Beatrice Young.[30] Beatrice Young herself had spent some time with the oldest members of the island, working out lines to great-great-grandparents on paper and "reading it aloud to different ones to be sure it was right."[31] The Routledges had also contacted a man now living in England who had married a Pitcairn woman.

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[28] Arthur Keith, lecture to the Oxford University Junior Scientific Club "Nationality and Race from an Anthropologist's Point of View, Being the Twenty First Robert Boyle Lecture Delivered before the Oxford Junior Scientific Club, On November 17" (Oxford University Press, 1919).
[29] Arthur Keith, "The Dawn of National Life: An Outline of Racial Origins: How Man Emerged from the Horde at the Call of the Tribal Spirit," *Peoples of All Nations* vol. 1, ed. J. Hammeron (London: The Amalgamated Press, 1922) xx–xxi.
[30] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 121.
[31] Letter from Beatrice Young to Katherine Routlege," December 10, 1916, cited in Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 122.

The woman had died some years earlier, but Routledge told Keith that she had written her husband to ask for further genealogical information, adding: "I feel shy at present to ask him to let you measure the skull of his dead wife."[32]

Without access to direct information or other Pitcairn bodies, Keith drew what he could about the island from reports and correspondence issued by the Colonial Office, quoting directly from their accounts to substantiate Pitcairn's reputation as a zone of tremendous physical, intellectual, and moral degeneracy.[33] The two decades before Keith's 1916 examination had seen a marked uptick in governmental reportage about Pitcairn Islanders, especially where the question of degeneration was concerned. Many of the resulting reports were withheld from the public, but those inquiries that the Colonial Office chose to publish did receive some notice by scientists. The *Journal of the American Medical Association,* for instance, relayed the results of Hamilton Hunter's 1898 investigation to inform its readers that the "experiment" on Pitcairn Island had failed; quoting Hunter to describe the islanders as "lax in morals, weak in intellect, lazy and rapidly degenerating."[34] The *Lancet* republished a 1903 ship's surgeon's account that suggested the islanders' teeth rotted due to racial or hereditary factors."[35] A letter in *Nature* drew from a recent report to note that the island's women bore more Tahitian characteristics than the island's men. "These facts struck me as being particularly interesting," it read, "as experiments of this nature in human heredity are difficult to obtain. Perhaps some 'Mendalist' may be able to

[32] Letter from Katherine Routledge to Arthur Keith, August 29, 1916, RCS, MS0018/2/1/11/5.
[33] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 123.
[34] "Degeneracy of Pitcairn Islanders.," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 32, no. 14 (April 8, 1899): 771–771.
[35] J. Kingston Barton, "The Teeth of the Pitcairn Islanders," *Lancet* 161, no. 4153 (April 4, 1903): 990–991; J. Kingston Barton, "The Incisor Teeth of the Pitcairn Islanders," *Lancet* 170, no. 4395 (November 23, 1907): 1495. I have encountered many strange Pitcairn obsessives in the course of this project; a doctor tracking government reports of teeth over the course of four years ranks among the strangest. The islanders' teeth as a sign of hereditary degeneration were subject to running interest by the Colonial Office. See also: L. Lindop, "Copy of Report by Staff Surgeon, L. Lindop on the Teeth of the Pitcairn Islanders Together with Copies of a Letter from Lindop to the Director General of the Admiralty Medical Department and One from the Director General," March 15, 1911, NLA, MS 1058.

use or explain them."[36] Most of these short texts treated Pitcairn as a living experiment that could elucidate pressing anthropological or eugenic problems, and Keith identified "a consensus among those who have visited the island in an official capacity that the islanders have active, well-formed bodies," but "in a proportion at least—a lack of mental ability."[37]

Accordingly, Keith's immediate anthropological problem was clear: to determine whether the Pitcairn experiment in racial mixture had indeed produced vital bodies and inferior minds, and to determine how "English" or "Tahitian" those bodies were. To do so, he turned the results of his discipline's core practice, anthropometry, to its core method, comparative anatomy. He read his measurements of Charles and Edwin's bodies against those of an idealized Tahitian form; in Keith's case, that form was the body of man listed in the museum catalogue as "Tera Poo, a native of Tahiti."[38] Like Charles and Edwin, this man had journeyed from the South Pacific to England—though he had never made it home. After he died of tuberculosis in a London hospital in 1816, the Royal College of Surgeons' Sir William Blizard took his remains to the Hunterian museum, where he peeled away three pieces of his skin to preserve his tattoos before stripping the flesh from the rest of the body, retaining the defleshed skeleton for the comparative work of ethnology.[39] What the man's actual name was I cannot say, but a near-contemporary Tahitian word list from the Cook voyages records the same spelling to mean "the centre, or middle of a thing."[40] Certainly, his body became the center from which Keith understood the attributes of the "Tahitian type," and against which he analyzed the bodies of

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[36] C. B. Williams, "The Pitcairn Islanders," *Nature* 81, no. 2087 (October 28, 1909): 518, commenting on Michael John Nicoll and James Ludovic Lindsay, Earl of Crawford, *Three Voyages of a Naturalist: Being an Account of Many Little- Known Islands in Three Oceans Visited by the Valhalla* (London: Witherby & Co., 1908).
[37] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 124.
[38] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 121.
[39] "Skeleton of Tera Poo, a Native of the Island of Otahiete," *Catalogue of the Contents of the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons in London,* vol. 3 (London: Francis Warr, 1831), 4.
[40] James Cook, *A Voyage Towards the South Pole, and Round the World*, vol. 2 (London: W. Strahan and T. Cadell, 1777), 328.

Charles and Edwin. Keith identified a tangled mix of English and Tahitian characteristics, though some "Tahitian" features stood out; they both seemed to have similarly broad noses, and both the Tahitian cranium and the brother's heads prominently shared a "peculiar kind of brachycephaly," a shortness of the skull. To emphasize his point, the anthropologist overlaid a line drawing of Charles's head over the Tahitian man's skull, a hybrid scientific image that graphically revealed the Pitcairners' Tahitian qualities, and Keith's comparative work.[41]

At the same time, Keith determined the islanders' pedigrees, relying mostly on Beatrice Young's genealogies. Pitcairn was "a very remarkable experiment," Keith said, but it was all the "more wonderful that we are able to trace the exact parentage of Charles and Edwin." The brothers' ancestry extended back six generations, to the moment of Pitcairn's settlement by the mutineers and their Tahitian wives. Keith's method was comparative, but his interest in the islanders' heritage as well as their mental and bodily vitality was suggestive of changes in his discipline, or at least its intellectual context. The advent of genetic science offered a new perspective on the acquisition of racial characteristics, and anthropologists began to contend the question of race along Mendelian lines. Keith's use of the pedigrees, however, relied very little on Mendel and was exclusively in service of the science of racial types. Summing up all the pairings, he worked out the exact ratio of English to Polynesian ancestry. Supposing "that each parent on the average hands on his or her characteristics to their progeny in an equal degree," he wrote, "we find that the ancestral composition of Charles and Edwin Young should be the following: $\frac{13}{32}$ parts are British, $\frac{19}{32}$ parts are Tahitian."[42] It was a surprising result; Keith had assumed that European visitors had diluted the "purity" of Pitcairn's experiment in race mixture, and yet the Tahitian ancestry predominated. Perhaps it was a more useful experiment than Routledge had anticipated.

[41] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 121, 128.
[42] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 122–123.

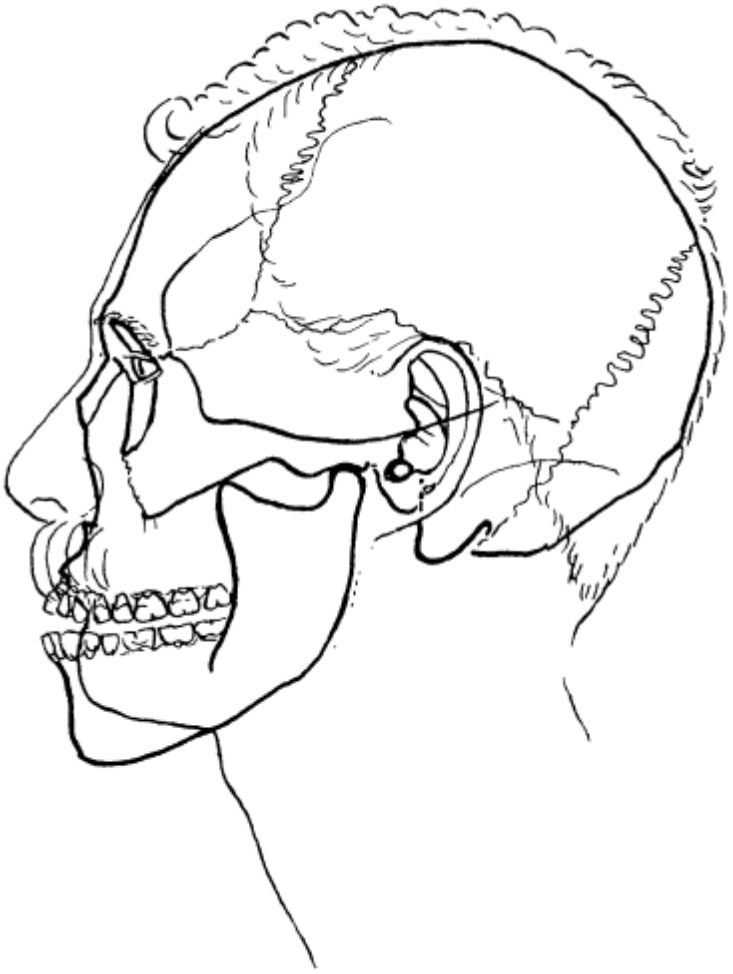


**Figure 7: "Outline of the Profile of Charles Young's Head, with a Profile of the Cranium of the Tahitian Tera Poo Placed within It," from Arthur Keith, *The Physical Characteristics of Two Pitcairn Islanders* (1917)**

If Pitcairn was a living experiment, what were its results? Keith published his measurements and analysis in *Man*, the journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute. He assessed the brothers' physical bodies unequivocally. Their racial characteristics were as their pedigree suggested: both were "decidedly more Tahitian than European." Moreover, their healthy bodies indicated that concern over biological deterioration was misplaced—"there could be no thought of physical degeneration; in chest and in muscle they were splendidly developed," he declared. However, there was the matter of their skulls—and of their quiet, gentle demeanor. Typical English skulls possessed a cranial capacity of roughly 1,490 cubic centimeters, and Tahitian skulls were quite similar, at 1,470. But from his measurements, Keith extrapolated that Charles's could not exceed 1,300, and that Edwin's was even smaller. Cranial capacity was the negative space of the skull, a cavity which anthropologists filled with beads or grains of sand to produce an estimation of brain size and intelligence. "Visitor after visitor to Pitcairn has remarked on the lack of intelligence exhibited by a certain proportion of the Islanders," Keith noted; perhaps their small brains suggested an explanation. Whether inbreeding was responsible he could not say definitively without more data, but he discounted it. Rather, he hypothesized that small-headedness might be a sex-linked trait inherited from the brothers' female, Tahitian ancestors.[43] How such a Tahitian characteristic, and any degeneracy it portended, might be passed down through the generations was a problem only further study of a larger Pitcairn population could clarify.

Pitcairn was, as the previous chapter has shown, a known case in anthropological and social discourse. Accordingly, readers in both of these intertwined communities took note of Keith's description of Charles and Edwin. *Nature* picked up the news, informing readers that a professional scientist had finally examined "members from this interesting community" and that,

[43] Keith, "The Physical Characteristics," 128, 130–131.

though their brains were small, there was no indication whatever of physical degeneration.[44] In the United States, *Eugenical News*, the leading journal of the eugenics movement published out of Cold Spring Harbor in New York, printed a critique of Keith's investigation. It took serious issue with Keith's accounting of the brothers' heredity as ratios of racial admixture. "Modern students of heredity do not try to measure ancestral influence in an individual by percentage of blood carried," it chided. However, it welcomed Keith's quantitative and exhaustive description of each islander's phenotypical traits, and especially their pedigrees. From them, it suggested that Pitcairn was a viable, living Mendelian experiment in racial crossing, in which it remained to be seen whether the "individuals of the mongrel group are vigorous enough to withstand the generally deteriorating influences of continued interbreeding."[45]

However, unique as the encounter was for Arthur Keith and for anthropological science, it was hardly so for Charles and Edwin; their visit to the Hunterian museum was only the first of several meetings in London. The following week they received invitations to visit Buckingham Palace for a short interview as representatives of Britain's most distant colony. Like their examination under Keith's calipers, this was also simultaneously a performance of Britishness and Pacific otherness. The *Daily Mirror* ran their photographs alongside exoticized images of Rapa Nui and the South Pacific; the two "stalwart young Pitcairn Islanders," readers learned, hailed from a place so distant it had "scarcely heard of the war." And yet they were loyal British subjects, exchanging gifts with the royal family to bring back to Pitcairn.[46] The brothers' encounters with strangers, whether scientists, journalists, ship's visitors, or kings, were in some ways remarkably similar. Each set found them fascinating for their hybridity, and each was

[44] "Notes," *Nature* 99, no. 2494 (August 16, 1917): 490.
[45] "Pitcairn Island Brothers," *Eugenical News* 3, no. 2 (February, 1918): 13.
[46] "Yearning for Their Simple Life," *Daily Mirror* (London: 1 Aug, 1916): 12; "Court Circular," *Times* (London: July 29, 1916): 11.

interested in taking a measure of the distance which separated them from the familiar. In that respect, their encounter with Keith was far from extraordinary.

**A Hootonian Experiment in Racial Contact**

When American anthropologist Harry Shapiro published his second monograph about Pitcairn Islanders in 1936, his opening lines conjured not an image of a distant Polynesian island, but rather a New England classroom and it's lecturing professor. In an "epistle dedicatory," Shapiro recounted a moment in his professional life that he retold often: the instance he first heard the story of Pitcairn Island. In Shapiro's retellings it was a winter morning in 1922; he was a young anthropology student inside Harvard's Peabody Museum, where Earnest Hooton was delivering one of several lectures on race mixture. Hooton had devoted several classes to the *Reheboth Basters* of southern Africa, whom Shapiro found drab and uninteresting. Then, at least as Shapiro told it,

> *with all the magic of the movies the scene shifted, and we were in the warm, vibrant Pacific, on the Cytherean shores of Tahiti, amidst the turmoil of a mutiny on board the* Bounty *and stranded on a forgotten speck of land called Pitcairn, where human folly was succeeded by inhuman virtue. That unique narrative of an eighteenth-century breadfruit expedition resolving itself into mutiny, court-martial, hanging, crime, murder, and finally, a new population of mixed bloods made a glorious text.*

Hooton explained that the island represented a near perfect case study in racial mixture, and told his students that he would "rather go to Pitcairn than anywhere else in the world." Shapiro decided the same; the island captured the young student's imagination with a profound and lasting totality. "After all," he later wrote, "what could have made a more absorbing subject for

research than the heredity of the hybrid Anglo-Polynesian children of the *Bounty*?"[47] He chose to make the island the subject of a PhD dissertation in physical anthropology, the first in the United States, and the research problems Pitcairn presented would form the substance of his professional career and the basis for a substantial intervention in the science of race.[48]

Harry Shapiro was born in Boston in 1902, the son of Jewish immigrants from Poland. His father was a cobbler who owned a business successful enough to afford the family a stable, petit-bourgeois life. Shapiro was a bright student, especially devoted to classical languages and classical cello, and his studies won him a place at the Boston Latin School and then Harvard.[49] It was there that he came under Hooton's spell. Earnest Albert Hooton, an understudied figure in the history of anthropology, was enormously influential in the discipline's early years.[50] Like many early anthropologists, Hooton had earned a doctorate in classics at the University of Wisconsin before drifting into the burgeoning science of humanity. He became an expert on race and human evolution and a rising figure in Harvard's anthropology department. Today, he is most remembered for his theories of race and his support of the eugenics movement—this chapter will further substantiate that disciplinary memory—but perhaps Hooton's most significant contribution to the field was his mentorship of young physical anthropologists. Historians of anthropology have written a great deal about Franz Boas's legacy as a teacher and mentor; in the first half of the last century, the Boasians came to exert a near-total dominance in

[47] Harry L. Shapiro, *The Heritage of the Bounty: The Story of Pitcairn Through Six Generations* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936), x–xii.
[48] Harry L. Shapiro, "A Study of Race Mixture as Exemplified in the Descendants of Tahitian and English Mutineers of the Bounty" (PhD diss., Harvard University, department of anthropology, 1926). The results were published as Harry L. Shapiro, "Descendants of the Mutineers of the Bounty," *Memoirs of the Bernice P. Bishop Museum* vol. 11, no. 1 (1929), 1–106.
[49] Frank Spencer, "Harry Lionel Shapiro," in *Biographical Memoirs* vol. 70 (Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 1996), 369–388; William Howells, "Obituary: Harry Lionel Shapiro (1902–1990)," in *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 83, no. 4 (December, 1990): 499–500.
[50] Eugene Giles, "Two Faces of Earnest A. Hooton," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 149, no. S55 (January 1, 2012): 105–113.

American social and cultural anthropology.[51] Hooton's corresponding influence among physical anthropologists has been occluded, but it too was profoundly important in shaping the discipline. His students went on to play an outsized role in the scientific debate over the race concept and fundamentally reconfigured the discipline into biological anthropology during the middle decades of the twentieth century, among them Joseph Birdsell, Sherwood Washburn, William Howells, Stanley Garn, and Carleton Coon. All of them played important roles in the discipline's reconfiguration of and around the race concept. Shapiro, as Hooton's first graduate student, was no exception. Accordingly, we should examine the Hootonian race science a young Harry Shapiro learned and practiced.

Hooton's obsession with Pitcairn Island reflected the discipline's broader research program during the interwar years, one which made the study of race and its boundaries a central and vital fixation. Boas, of course, was a famous anthropometrician and physical anthropologist, too. In a number of papers on racial adaptation, Boas argued for a notion of race as a mutable category, as its characteristics changed quickly in new environments; he thought that studies of mixed-race peoples would help define and possibly defang the race concept.[52] Hooton, on the other hand, held to a more rigid notion of race, though he too agreed that studying racial admixture would aid in defining the category. In a 1926 paper setting out anthropology's aims, Hooton declared that "the study of race mixtures is perhaps the most important field of research

[51] See especially Regna Darnell's work: "The Professionalization of American Anthropology: A Case Study in the Sociology of Knowledge," *Social Science Information* 10, no. 2 (April 1, 1971): 83–103; *And Along Came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in Americanist Anthropology* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1998); *Invisible Genealogies: A History of Americanist Anthropology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001).
[52] Franz Boas, "Changes in the Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants," *American Anthropologist* 14, no. 3 (July 9, 1912): 530–562; Franz Boas, "Race Problems in America Today," *Science* 29, no. 752 (May 28, 1909): 839–849; Franz Boas, "The Half Blood Indian," (1894), in *Race, Language, and Culture* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1940), 138-148.

in anthropology today."[53] Race, for Hooton, was a semi-permeable but nonetheless essential category. The world was comprised of "primary" and "secondary" races. The primary races, of which Hooton recognized three great classes of "whites," "negroids," and "mongoloids," had evolved as more or less "pure" types, but these were increasingly rare. Instead, the world's peoples were mostly comprised of "secondary races," derived from a mixture between two or more primary races. An investigation of how these secondary groups had evolved, both physically and culturally, would reveal a great deal about the patterns of human development, the parameters of human diversity, and the definition of race itself. Hooton was always one to make anthropology a politically salient field, and he suggested that the study of race could proffer solutions to the broader social problems in the United States and Europe. "It is now becoming apparent to the public at large that investigation of the consequences of racial crossings has more than a purely academic interest," he wrote. It was vital "that data of scientific worth should be obtained to answer" both the discipline's and the public's most pressing concerns. These he laid these out simply and clearly:

> *How do radical hybrids compare with their respective parent stocks in fertility and vitality? What is the rate of increase in each case? How do radical hybrids compare with their respective parent stocks in regard to mental characteristics? What is the status of such hybrids with respect to social efficiency and economic and political stability? . . . How are the physical and mental characteristics inherited in such hybridizations?*[54]

Hooton regarded Pitcairn and Norfolk as ideal sites for working through these problems.

They were not unique in that respect. Physical anthropologists had turned to other famous sites of race mixture, too, and students encountered many of them in Hooton's

[53] Earnest A. Hooton, "Progress in the Study of Race Mixtures with Special Reference to Work Carried On at Harvard University," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 65, no. 4 (January 1, 1926): 312. Hooton published a number of books accessible to a public readership, see: *Apes, Men, and Morons* (New York: Putnam, 1937); *Twilight of Man* (New York: Putnam, 1939); *Up from the Ape* (New York: Putnam, 1946).
[54] Hooton, "Progress in the Study of Race Mixtures," 315–316.

classes. While a bored 21-year-old Shapiro stared out the windows, Hooton built his lecture on the mixed-race peoples of southern Africa from the work of Eugen Fischer. A Freiburg University professor and Germany's most respected expert on race mixture in the early twentieth century, Fischer would later become an influential figure in the history of Nazi eugenics and race science.[55] He first made a name for himself as a student of hybridity on Germany's colonial frontier. Working in a Southwest African colony that historians have identified as a laboratory for German imperial violence and genocide, Fischer used the semi-isolated community of the Rehebothers as a living experiment in miscegenation.[56] He determined that these people suffered no infertility or decrease in reproductive vitality, and on the whole found them to exhibit characteristics of both their "parent races." However, he noted that rather than producing a perfectly averaged hybrid people, the various traits of each race, whether mental or corporeal, appeared according to much more complex hereditary laws.[57] Anthropologists would need to embrace genetics to parse out the tangled problems of their inheritance.

Eugenicists did. Charles Davenport, a major figure in the development of American eugenics, initiated similar research projects in Jamaica under the auspices of the Eugenics Record Office (ERO) at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. The ERO drove much of the American

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[55] Despite his important role in German and Nazi race science, there is no full biography of Fischer in English. He appears more often, however, in Holocaust studies and in histories of race science, and in the German-language literature: Niels C Lösch, *Rasse als Konstrukt: Leben und Werk Eugen Fischers* (Frankfurt am Main; New York: Lang, 1997*)*; *Bernhard Gessler, Eugen Fischer, 1874–1967: Leben und Werk des Freiburger Anatomen, Anthropologen und Rassenhygienikers bis 1927* (Frankfurt am Main; P. Lang, 2000); Heiner Fangerau, "Rassenhygiene und Öffentlichkeiten: Die Popularisierung des rassenhygienischen Werkes von Erwin Baur, Eugen Fischer und Fritz Lenz," *Bevölkerungsfragen: Prozesse des Wissenschaftstransfers in Deutschland und Frankreich 1870–1939,* ed. Patrick Krassnitzer and Petra Overath (Köln: Bölau, 2007), 131–154.

[56] Eugen Fischer, *Die Rehebother Bastards und das Bastardierungsproblem beim Menschen* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1913); Benjamin Madley, "From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by Nazis in Eastern Europe," *European History Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (July, 2005): 429–464; Isabell Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Cornell University Press, 2005).

[57] Fischer wrote: "Als Ergebnis einer Rassenkreuzung gibt es keine neuen Rassen, rein durch Bastardierung niemals. Die Merkmale spalten nach der Mendelschen Regel." Fischer, *Die Rehebother Bastards*, 306.

research program in human genetics during the first half of the twentieth century and helped to make the United States a leader in the science. American eugenics, even more than its British counterpart, was fixated on questions of race and race mixture. However, unlike physical anthropology, eugenicists sooner adopted a more statistical mode, trusting in numbers to find the mean characteristics of races and populations.[58] Laboratories like Cold Spring Harbor developed genetic knowledge through rigorous experiment with model organisms like rabbits, guinea pigs, and fruit flies. Human beings, as eugenicists often lamented, were not amenable to the same rapid and controlled reproduction, and so eugenicists would have to transform living populations into natural experiments through the collection and quantification of large data sets.

Jamaica, as an island space already configured by a long colonial history into a site of racial contact, would serve as Davenport's living laboratory. Like Pitcairn, Jamaica had a long history of use as a microcosm in which to work out macrocosmic problems; its utility as a living experiment was also presaged by a longer history of colonial scrutiny.[59] Davenport sent Florence Danielson and Morris Steggarda to Jamaica in 1912 and 1927 respectively to gather anthropometric measurements and family histories. Between them, they ultimately collected the genealogies and measurements of over 1,000 Jamaicans, sorting them into categories of "black," "brown," and "white" in order to work out racial inheritance.[60] Like Fischer, Davenport's research was explicitly motivated by a desire to address societal problems. "Miscegenation

[58] Theodore Porter, *Karl Pearson: The Scientific Life in the Statistical Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006); Richard A Soloway, *Demography and Degeneration: Eugenics and the Declining Birthrate in Twentieth Century Britain* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990). The historiography of genetics, eugenics, and race in the US and UK is massive; mainstays include: Garland E. Allen, "The Misuse of Biological Hierarchies: The American Eugenics Movement 1900–1940," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 5, no. 2 (Spring, 1983): 105–128; Peter Bowler, *The Mendelian Revolution: The Emergence of Hereditarian Concepts in Modern Science and Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Daniel Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).
[59] Henrice Altnik, "An American Race Laboratory: Jamaica, 1865–1940," *Wadabagei: A Journal of the Caribbean and its Diaspora* 10, no. 3 (Fall, 2007): 53–83.
[60] Charles B. Davenport and Morris Steggerda, *Race Crossing in Jamaica* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Institution, 1929).

commonly spells disharmony," he declared, "A hybridized people are a badly put together people and a dissatisfied, restless, ineffective people."[61] He used his work in Jamaica to shore up American apartheid, supporting stringent eugenic measures against race mixing.

Hooton pressed his students to find further racial laboratories. Shapiro embraced his advisor's agenda, but before going on to study miscegenation on Pitcairn, he would have to learn a great deal more about genetics. He spent the 1922–23 academic year at Harvard's Bussey Institute for Applied Biology, where he studied with William Castle and Edward East. Castle's model organisms of choice were mice and fruit flies, but he was deeply interested in questions of human heredity; like many geneticists he worked with Davenport's ERO.[62] Even before he taught Shapiro, Castle recognized the value Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands afforded as living laboratories. "About the only conditions under which a racial cross . . . could be fairly tested would be those under which Pitcairn Island was populated," he wrote in a 1921 textbook, adding, "The experiment has gone far beyond the $F_1$ generation and would afford unique material for a study of the effects of race-crosses uncomplicated by race-antipathies. . . . It is to be hoped that some student of eugenics will give the case careful and critical study."[63] Shapiro was that student, and Castle, East, and their model organisms trained him in the laboratory work and methodology of the new science of heredity. Before going on to make Pitcairn into a "natural" laboratory, Shapiro became acquainted with the brick-and-mortar variety.

Shapiro left for the Pacific on July 14, 1923, departing New York by steamer. On board was another New York scientist traveling southward for fieldwork, a zoologist from the

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[61] Charles B. Davenport, "The Effects of Race Intermingling," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 56, no. 4 (1917): 367.
[62] L. C. Dunn, "William Earnest Castle, 1867–1962" in *Biographical Memoirs,* vol. 38 (Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences, 1962): 31–80; Karen A. Rader, "'The Mouse People': Murine Genetics Work at the Bussey Institution, 1909–1936," *Journal of the History of Biology* 31, no. 3 (September, 1998): 327–354.
[63] William E. Castle, *Genetics and Eugenics: A Textbook for Students of Biology and a Reference Book for Plant and Animal Breeders* (Harvard University Press, 1921), 68–69.

American Museum of Natural History; together they joined a growing wave of American scientists emanating from the Northeast and pouring to the South and West each summer for seasonal fieldwork. At the Panama Canal, Shapiro caught a passage on the *Paparoa*, a New Zealand Shipping Company vessel bound for Auckland. Shapiro was out of place on the ship. It was full of emigrants from Britain, whom the anthropologist described as speaking "exalted cockney" but without any "a spark of intelligence."[64] Few were interested in talking anthropology with him. It took a week to traverse the vast stretch of open ocean between the Canal Zone and Pitcairn Island and, as he approached his destination, Shapiro grew worried. He did not have official permission to land on Pitcairn. Without the proper papers the *Paparoa's* captain was disinclined to let the young anthropologist disembark. As Shapiro later told it, he was equally disinclined to bow to the authority of the captain, whom he described as a "a tough, old, red-faced Englishman." In a personal mythology that mirrored Fletcher Christian's, Shapiro planned to stage a minor mutiny; he secretly packed his belongings and conspired with a fellow passenger to "surreptitiously" launch one of the steamer's boats.[65] According to Shapiro, a sudden tropical storm arose, making impossible either a landing or his plan to jump ship. The captain gave Pitcairn a wide berth, and Shapiro never so much as caught a glimpse of the island.

Shapiro arrived in Auckland on August 23 and faced a dilemma. Should he purchase a return passage toward the canal and try again for Pitcairn? A landing was not guaranteed, and in any case ships typically only called when outbound from Panama. Short on funds and time, he decided instead to move on to Norfolk Island. That same day, Shapiro left for Sydney, where he arrived on August 28. He spent a month in Australia, waiting for a ship bound for the remote island. While there, he attended the Second Pan Pacific Conference, a joint meeting of Australian

[64] Harry Shapiro, *Norfolk Diary*, Shapiro Papers, American Museum of Natural History (hereafter AMNH), Box 33.
[65] Christian, before plotting a ship-wide mutiny, supposedly planned to build a raft and set himself adrift—a more honorable path.

and American scientists, which demarcated the vast space of Oceania as a zone for scientific work. Shapiro met Alfred Court Haddon and William Jams Perry, whom Shapiro quite disliked, as well as Herbert Gregory of Honolulu's Bishop Museum, who would go on to play an important role in Shapiro's professional development and in sponsoring his anthropometric work on Pacific islands. He met younger scholars, too, who told him about fieldwork in distant islands and bragged about contracting malaria. Shapiro found them mostly insufferable.[66]

Shapiro finally got his chance to do fieldwork of his own when he left for Norfolk Island on the *Makambo* on September 25. The journey took a week, most of it through rough weather. He landed on Norfolk Island, like nearly all visitors did, at the jetty in Kingston, amid the old penal settlement. At the landing, his first encounter was with another outsider and fellow obsessive, a Catholic priest fascinated by the island's history—a common experience for students of the Pitcairn/*Bounty* story. On learning Shapiro was from Boston, the older islanders, who fondly recollected American whalers from New Bedford, asked after long-remembered acquaintances. Shapiro's most fruitful meeting was with Cornelius "Cornish" Quintal.[67] Cornish was born on Pitcairn Island, the grandson of mutineer Matthew Quintal. By the time of Shapiro's visit, he was one of the oldest men on the island, a patriarch who had spent his youth harpooning whales off the island's coast and his old age leading church services.[68] G. C. Henderson, an Australian historian of the Pacific who visited the island a few years after Shapiro, described Cornish as an old man who nonetheless "retains a childlike faith in the almighty and speaks and laughs as a child does."[69] In one of Henderson's books, Cornish appears in a full-page

[66] Harry Shapiro, *Norfolk Diary*.
[67] Shapiro, *Descendants of the Mutineers,* 3.
[68] "Pioneer of Norfolk Island" *The Mercury* (Hobart, Tasmania, Monday, March 19, 1934).
[69] "Historical Research: Sojourn on Pacific Islands" *The News* (Adelaide: Friday, June 17, 1927): 8.

photograph, a broad smile emerging in the space between a hat and a grandfatherly beard.[70] Cornish served as Shapiro's point of entry to the Pitcairn community, a role he had played for other visitors in the past.[71] Shapiro considered him his "guide and mentor."[72]

A guide was helpful, especially given the island's complicated political and cultural terrain. Shapiro had arrived at an island in transition. Norfolk Island was still a remote space, and one still populated mostly by its "Pitcairn People." The Melanesian Mission had left the island a few years earlier, but strangers were hardly unknown. Regular visits by ships brought ever more frequent visitors, and sometimes even tourists, some 238 in 1923.[73] Many of these were passengers in transit from the New Hebrides to Sydney on the *Makambo* who spent ten days riding hired horses on the island or hunting game with guides such as Cornish. There was, too, a long legacy of friction with the Australian mainland that was not readily apparent to the young anthropologist. When the Pitcairn Islanders came to Norfolk Island in the nineteenth century, they did so with the understanding that the island would be reserved exclusively for their community—indeed, that isolation was largely preserved as a kind of grand Victorian experiment in colonial settlement. However, ever-increasing number of settlers had moved to the island from the mainland and elsewhere, an influx many Norfolk Islanders came to resent. At the same time, the Australian government increasingly interfered in the affairs of its ambiguous external territory. As the previous chapter has shown, the island came under heavy scrutiny during the early decades of the twentieth century; the islanders hosted a number of administrative visits that sought to investigate their community for moral and biological degeneration.[74] In

[70] G.C. Henderson, *Fiji and the Fijians, 1835–1856* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1931), 302.
[71] "Sport and Natural History in Norfolk Island," *Country Life* 13, no. 327 (April 11, 1903): 486.
[72] Harry L. Shapiro, "The Romance of the Norfolk Islanders," *Scientific American* 135, no. 3 (September, 1926): 182.
[73] J. W. Parnell, "Norfolk Island: Report of the Administrator" (Government of Australia: September 1, 1923): 5-8.
[74] See previous chapter.

consequence, when Harry Shapiro arrived with calipers and questions about heredity, the islanders were quite accustomed to outsiders interested in their sexual and reproductive lives—government agents, working to absorb the island into the Australian state, had already attempted to read their bodies as deteriorated and degenerate. That history of negative scrutiny made some of Shapiro's work problematic. He complained that "the conditions of field work made the collection of family data very difficult. I was able to obtain only a few complete family records, so that a study of family inheritance was impossible."[75]

Shapiro left behind few field notes from Norfolk—his expedition diary in the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) archives contains only two entries; the first ends at the moment of his arrival at the pier in Kingston. However, we can reconstruct the practice of his research from his published accounts and from contemporaneous texts. The other entry in Shapiro's surviving Norfolk journal outlines the procedure for summarizing a "case in mental disease" and instructions for administering an intelligence test—though no records of any intelligence testing survive. He instead derived assessment of the islanders' character from conversations with the island's school teacher and from his day-to-day interactions. Shapiro wrote that the Norfolk Islanders "form affectionate attachments to people of whom they are fond, but I have the feeling that their emotions, although easily exhibited, are superficial." His assessment reflected the anxiety of a visitor unsure that he could access the true nature of the island's residents. He had read as much in recently published accounts of the island. "Many experienced observers maintain that in spite of the apparent openness of manner of the Norfolk Islanders, it is impossible to gain their entire confidence," he wrote. "A reserve is felt even after long acquaintance." The islanders knew that, in their encounters with Shapiro, they were under

[75] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 33.

observation, and he noted "a manifest shyness in meeting strangers which I had to deal with in my field work. The children are especially shy in the presence of strangers."[76]

Shyness was understandable. Like colonial officials, Shapiro asked intrusive questions about the islanders' heritage; he was interested in births from extramarital affairs and in the island's sexual histories. He also asked Norfolk Islanders to submit to physically intrusive tests. As in Keith's examination of Charles and Edwin Young, his anthropometry was a simultaneously detached and intimate affair. In his five months on Norfolk Island, Harry Shapiro measured 150 people: 64 men, 49 women, and 37 children. Anthropometric practice was fairly standardized by 1922; Shapiro followed the method of German anthropologist Rudolph Martin.[77] His toolkit was standard, too. Shapiro used an anthropometer, which consisted of a rule along which slid two long metal arms, to measure the height of the skull, the width of the shoulder blade, the thickness and breadth of the hand, the length of the middle finger, the thickness of the leg, the width of the foot, the width and depth of the chest, and the span of the pelvis. Using two different calipers, he took detailed measurements of the head and face, including length and width of the skull, several measurements of the nose, and measurements of the jaw. Using a color scale, a set of pantone cards ranging across the spectrum of human skin tones, he recorded the shade of the islanders' skin, both on the cheek and on the inner arm. He felt their skin, too, to record its texture. He marked down the islanders' hair color, and ran his fingers through it to feel its thickness. He noted their eye color, and the shape of the eye folds. He asked the islanders to open their mouths and made records of their teeth.[78]

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[76] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 32.
[77] For a history of anthropometric standardization, and Martin's role in it, see: Amos Morris-Reich, "Anthropology, Standardization and Measurement: Rudolf Martin and Anthropometric Photography," *British Journal for the History of Science* 46, no. 3 (September 2013): 487–516.
[78] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 33–34, 48.

Perhaps Shapiro's most powerful tool was his camera. He took two photographs of each islander he measured, and these became valuable as two different kinds of objects. First, they were useful scientific evidence; anthropology had long made photography a tool of anthropometry. By taking photographs in standard poses, usually straight on and in profile, scientists produced libraries of comparative material. Second, they served Shapiro as material tokens with which he could pay back the Norfolk Islanders for their time and cooperation, a cooperation which, given the monotonous and invasive nature of the work, was anything but assured. Another anthropologist of Polynesia, describing Shapiro's work, put it bluntly: "It is a tough job to jolly the natives along during the tedious measuring, especially if they feel it is a ridiculous stunt. The actual measuring takes a discouraging amount of time, but the preliminary work is even more exacting and drawn out, then at the end, the natives must be paid with photographs."[79] The photographs maintain their dual nature to this day, surviving in Shapiro's papers and published accounts as both the anthropometric record of 150 Norfolk Island bodies, and as the portraits of 150 Norfolk Island lives. Some figures still smile back, their eyes fixed on the anthropologist's lens, meeting the viewer's gaze.

After five months on Norfolk Island, Harry Shapiro packed his camera and calipers and took the long return voyage home. He left with a precious gift from the Norfolk Islanders, a "poi pounder" said to have belonged to one of their Tahitian ancestors.[80] Back in New England, he wrote up his dissertation, defending in 1926. Physical anthropology was a very small field in the 1920s, and Shapiro was Earnest Hooton's first graduate student—his professional prospects were uncertain. However, when assistant curator of anthropology at the American Museum of Natural History Louis R. Sullivan unexpectedly died, Hooton pushed the museum to hire Shapiro as his

[79] Letter from Kenneth Emory to Herbert Gregory, November 20, 1927, Shapiro Papers, Box 3, correspondence 1923–1930.
[80] Hooton, "Progress in the Study of Race Mixtures," 319.




**Figure 8: Photographs of Norfolk Islanders from Harry Shapiro, *Descendants of the Mutineers of the* Bounty, Memoirs of the Bernice P Bishop Museum, v. XI, n. 1 (1929)**

replacement. Sullivan's work had been on the physical anthropology of the Hawai'ian islands, making Shapiro a natural choice to continue his research program. At the museum, Shapiro took over Sullivan's many projects, designing a new "Hall of Man" and cataloguing hundreds of human remains the museum had acquired from around the world. His move to Manhattan brought him, by degrees, out of Hooton's orbit and into that of Franz Boas; Shapiro began an association with the anthropology department at Columbia that brought him into contact with such figures as Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict, introducing him to a more politically radical and explicitly anti-racist brand of anthropology. Manhattan was a global metropolis, but its academic community had its own insular politics and web of relationships.

At the museum, Shapiro distilled the results of his Norfolk Island fieldwork into a hundred-page monograph, which Honolulu's Bernice P. Bishop Museum published in 1929. It was the first long-form account of Pitcairn Islanders by a professional anthropologist; however, Shapiro acknowledged the islanders as a widely-studied people and drew extensively from the vast library of texts already written about Pitcairn and Norfolk. What, exactly, should comprise the relationship of his anthropology to that existing literature was an open question. Shapiro, long captivated by the Pitcairn Island story, opened his monograph like most authors did: by invoking the *Bounty* mutiny itself. He drew at length from travel narratives and published accounts of Pitcairn and Norfolk, including of course Barrow's, Beechey's, and Belcher's, as well as those by Bligh, Murray, Brodie, Shillibeer, and a dozen others. Shapiro had become a careful student of the island's history; he retold the story of its settlement, murders, the arrival of figures like Joshua Hill and George Hunn Nobbs, and the eventual transfer to Norfolk in dramatic detail.[81] It irked his editor, the Bishop Museum's Herbert Gregory, who complained that the history was all ephemera; it had been fully and repetitively described by a swarm of

[81] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 1–8.

authors over the last century, and its recapitulation offered nothing of scientific value. Instead, Gregory argued, Shapiro's measurements comprised his sole worthwhile contribution: "intelligible to few other than professional anthropologists, the tables constitute the essential part; they tell their own story."[82] The islanders' bodies, reduced to anthropometric data, were their own record of the island's history and they spoke for themselves, if one knew how understand their language. Gregory suggested instead that "the human interest and romantic side could best be expressed through magazine articles."[83] Shapiro disagreed and initiated a frustrated exchange of letters with Gregory.[84]

For Shapiro, Pitcairn's history was more than so much claptrap; it was the set of circumstances that generated his living experiment, and even small details like the class status of the mutineers might offer key insights into the islanders' present condition. His text ultimately retained much of the *Bounty* story and Pitcairn's early history. This dissertation has tracked the emergence of the metaphor of the natural laboratory; in Shapiro's treatment of the island's history, we can witness his own emerging sense of its status as an experimental space. His use of the laboratory metaphor would become more elaborate in the following decade, but in his 1929 Norfolk Island account, Shapiro already marshaled the island's past to justify its study in the present. Interestingly, he did so in a way that privileged culture and society as well as race and environment. "The mutineers and their Tahitian wives brought with them to Pitcairn no idealistic theory for the foundation of a new society, he wrote. Thus,

> *an account of their life and customs is the story of the development and growth of an unconscious social experiment. It is interesting to note the survival of Tahitian customs and methods peculiarly adapted to the environment of Pitcairn, and the change brought about by the introduction of American and European ideas and*

[82] Letter from Herbert Gregory to Harry Shapiro, March 10, 1927, Shapiro Papers, Box 4, Folder 16.
[83] Letter from Emory to Shapiro, April 9, 1927, Shapiro Papers, Box 4, Folder 16.
[84] See letters from Shapiro to Gregory, December 8, 1927, March 24, 1928, and January 11, 1929, and letters from Gregory to Shapiro January 11, 1928, and November 17, 1929, Shapiro Papers, Box 4, Folder 16.

> *manufactures. But even more interesting are the customs developed by the islanders themselves, especially their self-government and their social and religious attitude. That the Pitcairn Islanders were isolated from all contact during the very early years of the colony is a matter of great importance. There are few half caste groups who have no sense of social inferiority due to the stigma attached to half-breeds.*[85]

History mattered; the island was a "social experiment" as much as a biological one. Perhaps most importantly, Pitcairn and Norfolk were free from the influence of racial prejudice that corrupted the utility of mixed-race populations as anthropological samples elsewhere. Environment, the laboratory space itself in this metaphor, was itself a variable shaping the adaptation of cultural forms. Crucially, for Shapiro, this experiment was an unconscious one, an accident of history rather than an intentionally founded utopia. Like many scientists who deployed the metaphor, he attended carefully to the islands' history, while eliding their intentional construction as experimental spaces. At the same time, it is worth noting that Shapiro's sense of the islands as living experiments was not totally naïve. He acknowledged, for instance, that their boundaries were more permeable than others imagined, and that the Pitcairn Islander population had been joined by an influx of new members from around the world over the last century.

If Norfolk was a "social" experiment, then it was worthwhile to explore its society in some detail. In a wide-ranging section of his monograph, Shapiro described the islanders' furniture, dress, fishing, music, food, industry, drafts, and agriculture.[86] Shapiro was chiefly interested in physical anthropology, but in the early twentieth century "anthropology" was still very much a four-field affair. He had no carefully articulated methodology for investigating culture or society; indeed, profession-wide methodologies of fieldwork were only in their infancy when Shapiro set out for Norfolk. Rather, he simply observed the people around him during his time on the island, built from conversations and friendships. "Naturally my

[85] Shapiro, *Descendants,* 9.
[86] Shapiro, *Descendants,* 11–20.

conclusions are colored by my contacts," he wrote.[87] He found the Norfolk Islanders endearing, for the most part. While he decided that they had lost some of their innocence through contact with the wider world, he recorded that "there still remains a charm of manners which springs from good humor and fondness for people." He sought out "survivals" of their Tahitian origins, but was disappointed to find that most Tahitian cultural forms recorded by previous visitors had disappeared—they cooked food differently, farmed differently, ate differently, spoke differently, and built houses differently than they had on Pitcairn.[88] However, Shapiro did decide that the islanders' simple economy, lack of social stratification, and generosity among themselves nonetheless rated their experiment a success in social terms. If anything, their shifting lifeways suggested that their society was a strong one; their dual heritage made their society adaptable and flexible. Though "much influenced by European contacts, it has maintained itself—a fact that acquires increased significance in view of the deterioration of the fiber of Polynesian life as a result of European influences."[89]

Shapiro knew the reports that chastised the Norfolk Islanders for their "laziness" and "indolence;" he had read those government accounts that were ultimately published. His own assessment did not deviate from general opinion; he wrote that the islanders, while physically healthy and capable of performing incredible physical feats, failed to engage in sustained work—a deficiency he attributed to the environment of an "island where crops are grown without much effort."[90] He did, however, contest suggestions of moral deterioration. "The morality of the Norfolk Islanders has recently been criticized by various visitors," he wrote. While he acknowledged that the island did not conform to its utopian, nineteenth-century image, he

[87] Shapiro, *Descendants,* 31–32.
[88] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 23.
[89] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 69.
[90] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 32.

rejected the notion that it had devolved into an amoral dystopia. "I do not believe that the unmarried are more immoral than the young men and women of many of the large cities of America and England," he declared, adding, "certainly, if immorality is measured by its sordidity, the Norfolk Islanders can not be said to be essentially an immoral people."

Observers had long pointed to a link between consanguinity, degeneration, and mental disease among the Norfolk Islanders. Mental deterioration's presence or absence would constitute a meaningful scientific discovery, but Shapiro found the work of assessing the islanders' intelligence very difficult. Though he brought instructions for administering intelligence tests, none survive in his archive and none appear in his publications. Shapiro dug through the century of travel accounts to prove that most visitors rated the islanders as very intelligent, dismissing recent reports as the result of short and superficial visits. He interviewed the schoolteacher, who considered his pupils as capable as any he had taught on the Australian mainland. Even after five months on the island, however, he found it difficult to draw any conclusion on the basis of observation alone, writing: "It is difficult to estimate to what extent the [mental] characteristics of the islanders were due to isolation and ignorance of the life and habits of thought of their guests." Ultimately, Shapiro decided, "the intelligence of the islanders appeared to be not of a low order. . . . My impression of the adults is of a bright and intelligent people."[91]

How consanguineous were the islanders, and how had they intermarried over the generations? It was a central question for Shapiro, but one the conditions on Norfolk made impossible to answer in a precise way. Because the islanders were reticent to share their family histories, he was forced to build his Norfolk genealogies "from publicly available data." Here, the corpus of travel accounts and published texts about Pitcairn was vital; in conjunction with the

[91] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 32.

island register it allowed Shapiro to reconstruct much of the island's reproductive past. These accounts necessarily elided questions of infidelity.[92] Shapiro tried to sidestep the problem of reconstructing pedigrees by considering the Norfolk Islander community as a racial whole, a method that was in line with Hooton's and Keith's. He reconstructed their population numbers from 1789 onward, using these, like Darwin, as an index of their fitness. Shapiro tried to track some traits across the generations in Mendelian terms, including eye, hair, and skin color, but found it difficult. He wrote to his mentor in genetics, William Castle, for advice. Shapiro had used the islanders' present eye color to reconstruct their genetic history, assuming that the Norfolk Islanders' Tahitian and English ancestors roughly matched the eye color of their larger ancestral populations. However, he found that blue and mixed eye colors occurred at a much higher rate in the Norfolk Island population than expected. "I know that in dealing with laboratory material one could plot where the DDs are crossed with DRs," he wrote, "but here all possibilities must be accounted for."[93] Reality was messy, and even in a confined and well-studied space the laboratory metaphor had its limits.

It was in the cross-comparison of anthropometric data that Shapiro made his most direct contribution to the study of Pitcairn Islanders. He arrayed his many measurements in tables, producing quanta that were useful to other anthropologists for racial comparisons. In turn, Shapiro employed data sets built from some three dozen European, North American, and Pacific populations to perform a comparative analysis of his own. Where Sir Arthur Keith, using the methodology of an older school of comparative anatomy, had read one skeleton as a type specimen of the Tahitian "race," Shapiro used a large data set built from E. S. Craighill Handy's 1923 measurements of people across the Society Islands. Data on "English" people were easier

[92] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 56.
[93] Letter from Shapiro to Castle, October 26, 1926, Shapiro Papers, Box 18, Folder 11.

to come by. Shapiro used anthropometric surveys ranging from Aleš Hrdlička's study of upper-crust New England families to measurements of English prisoners. His cross-comparisons included not only the bodies of scientists' data, but the bodies of scientists themselves; one of his more frequently cited data sets consisted of Felix von Luschan's measurements of English scientists. Large statistical aggregates were necessary to overcome Norfolk's deficiency as a laboratory. "Unlike laboratory experimentation, a control cannot be maintained, nor is it possible to measure accurately every factor which enters into a problem such as this," explained Shapiro. "Though the massing of statistics does not palliate a deficiency of accurate knowledge of all the factors involved, nevertheless, it is necessary to make the best of what data exist."[94]

Comparing his Norfolk measurements to these Pacific and European series, Shapiro discovered not only that his islanders expressed traits that were similar to both parent stocks, but that they often surpassed either the English or Tahitians in measurements of robustness and vitality. Their stature was especially noteworthy, not least because anthropology and eugenics often regarded height as an index for racial health. The islanders, especially the men, grew much taller than either the English or Tahitian average. On the question of biological degeneration, there could be no equivocation: "I found on Norfolk none of the marks of degeneracy which are said to be prevalent among the present Pitcairn Islanders."[95] Instead, five months of tedious anthropometry on the island, and a year of statistical cross-comparison in Boston and New York suggested the very opposite. The islanders' mixed-race heritage had bequeathed them a "hybrid vigor" that produced a healthier, more vibrant population, and their inbreeding had caused no noticeable harm. "The crossing of two fairly divergent groups leads to a physical vigor and exuberance which equals if not surpasses either parent stock," Shapiro wrote. "This superiority is

[94] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 41.
[95] Shapiro, *Descendants,* 33.

not an ephemeral quality which disappears after the F1 or F2 generation, but continues even after five generations."[96]

Shapiro's work substantiated a century of speculation about hybrid vigor and reaffirmed Hooton's sense that the inheritance of racial traits could be fruitfully measured in hybrid populations. Its reception was relatively muted, though the wide variety of constituencies who ultimately found his work fruitful suggests how turbulent and diverse the science of race was during the interwar period. *Science* published a short note on his results, indicating that the mental and physical vitality of the islanders dispelled any notions that either race mixture or consanguineous marriage were inherently deleterious.[97] That falsification was important, not least for its wider implications for the racial politics of the United States. Melville Herskovits, the famous student of Boas and a founding figure in African and African American studies, cited Shapiro's Norfolk study at length in order to assail the hard-line racialist eugenics of Charles Davenport and R. Ruggles Gates.[98] His unpublished material was important to anthropological science, too; his data joined other data sets in the growing library of anthropometric measurements available to students of race. R. R. Gates himself, for instance, asked for his Norfolk measurements in 1930.[99]

Eugenicists also pointed to Shapiro's work as one of the most useful studies yet of race mixture, one which proved in conditions as close to laboratory experiment as possible that racial admixture could be understood and disentangled through the study of living hybrid

[96] Shapiro, *Descendants*, 69.
[97] "Results of inbreeding on Norfolk Island," *Science* vol. 65, no. 1693 (1927): 10.
[98] Melville J. Herskovits, "A Critical Discussion of the 'Mulatto Hypothesis,'" *Journal of Negro Education* 3, no. 3 (July 1, 1934): 389–402.
[99] Letter from R. R. Gates to Shapiro, September 25, 1930, Shapiro Papers, Box 3.

populations.[100] However, Norfolk Island's implications for the control of consanguineous marriage were of considerably more interest to them. Shapiro's work suggested that, so long as the founding population carried no harmful traits, close marriage could result in perfectly healthy offspring—there was nothing inherent to incest itself that made consanguineous marriage dangerous. One eugenicist took that to mean policy makers could encourage people with helpful genes to marry amongst themselves across multiple generations, creating an incestuous but superior elite.[101] Popular accounts of Shapiro's research similarly highlighted his work's implications for incest above its implications for the race concept, and even his own article for *Scientific American* emphasized the island's romantic history and present condition rather than engaging too directly in the problem of defining race.[102] Indeed, Shapiro's work did not particularly trouble the category of race itself; he was still operating largely within the mold of his Harvard advisor.[103] Hooton, for his part, celebrated Shapiro's results as "not inferior in interest or importance to Eugen Fischer's classic work" on Southern Africa.[104] Shapiro's conception of racial inheritance made his Hootonianism clear; the islanders inherited "Polynesian" or "European" hair, eyes, skin, or and so on; in each character they tended toward one or another racial type. That said, Shapiro was not uniformly un-Boasian. Environment, he

[100] J. C. Trevor, "Some Anthropological Characteristics of Hybrid Populations," *Eugenics Review* 30, no. 1 (April 1938): 21–31; K. Wagner, "The Variability of Hybrid Populations," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 16, no. 3 (January 1, 1932): 283–307.
[101] Anthony M. Ludovici, "Eugenics & Consanguineous Marriages," *Eugenics Review* 25, no. 3 (October 1933): 147–55.
[102] Harry Shapiro, "The Romance of the Norfolk Islanders," 182.
[103] French anthropologist Henri Nueville was one of the few interested in Shapiro's work; he used the Pitcairn Islanders to critique the race concept directly. Henri Neuville, "Les Metissages de L'ile de Pitcairn," *L'Anthropologie*, 1933; Henri Neuville, *L'espèce, la race et le métissage en anthropologie*, Archives de l'Institut de Paléontologie Humaine vol. 11 (Paris: l'Institut de Paléontologie Humaine, 1933). For a brief discussion of Neuville, see Alice Conklin, *In the Museum of Man*: *Race, Anthropology, and Empire in France, 1850–1950* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013), 168–169; Shapiro also corresponded briefly with Neuville about his Pitcairn work: Letter from Henri Neuville to H Shapiro, August 2, 1933, Shapiro Papers, Box 7.
[104] Hooton, "Progress in the Study of Race Mixtures," 319.

suspected, played an immense role in social development and may have affected physical qualities like stature; it was a factor that modified racial traits.

After publishing his Norfolk Island results, Shapiro spent much of his first decade at the AMNH splitting time between his curatorial work and field work in the Pacific. In 1928, he traveled with linguist Frank Stimson and anthropologists Kenneth Emory and Peter Buck to the Tuamotus and the Marqueses Islands.[105] 1929, he spent nine months on Hawai'i, measuring the bodies of mixed-race people.[106] Alfred Tozzer had already measured Hawai'ians during the previous decade, and when Peabody Museum geneticist L. C. Dunn later analyzed his data at Hooton's request, he termed the island a "great natural experiment in racial hybridization."[107] Shapiro carried that work forward, configuring Hawai'i as a laboratory of miscegenation not unlike Norfolk Island. He returned to Hawai'i twice more before 1932, on visits that also included stops in China and Japan.[108] Through his many Pacific journeys, Pitcairn remained an elusive and unrealized goal. "My desire to visit Pitcairn, though thwarted, did not die," he wrote, but "it certainly received little encouragement. After each of my successive trips to Polynesia, I sighed regretfully that I was still unable to voyage to that isolated rock in the middle of the South Pacific. Pitcairn seemed like an unrealizable dream."[109]

[105] Anderson, *Hybridity, Race, and Science;* for a biography of Emory, see Bob Krauss, *Keneti: South Seas Adventures of Kenneth Emory* (Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, 1988).
[106] *Christine Leah Manganaro, Assimilating Hawai'i: Racial Science in a Colonial "Laboratory, 1919–1939* (Phd diss., University of Minnesota, 2012); Anderson, "Racial Hybridity, Physical Anthropology, and Human Biology."
[107] L. C. Dunn, "An Anthropometric Study of Hawaiians of Pure and Mixed Blood, Based Upon Data Collected by Alfred M. Tozzer." *Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University* 11, no. 3 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Peabody Museum, 1928): 95.
[108] Frank Spencer, "Harry Lionel Shapiro," 375.
[109] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, xiv.

**Harry Shapiro's Anthropometry**

That changed in 1934, when an opportunity to visit Pitcairn first presented itself in the form of a forty-nine-year-old millionaire from San Francisco named Charles Templeton Crocker. The heir to a massive railroad fortune and husband to a Hawai'ian sugar heiress, Crocker spent his thirties as a dilettantish dramatist (his orientalist opera "Fay-Yen-Fah" premiered in 1925) before turning to more adventurous and philanthropic pursuits. His family fortune bought rare books, donated to a revived California Historical Society, and charitable gifts for the California Academy of Sciences. In 1930, he built a 118-foot yacht based on the model of the *Bluenose,* a Nova Scotian fishing and racing schooner. Crocker christened it the *Zaca,* which a friend had told him was "the Indian word for peace." Imagining himself as the commander of intrepid scientific expeditions, Crocker soon put the ship to work as a platform for research and fishing trips, though often the two were one and the same.[110] "I know little of sailing, the sea rather terrifies me, and I am not insensible to any abnormal motion of the deck," he wrote; it was only "an unaccountable love of adventure" that drove him to the rolling waves of the Pacific.[111] In 1933, the president of the American Museum of Natural history, Henry Fairfield Osborn, suggested that if Crocker wanted "scientific" adventure, it could be had by taking an expedition to collect material for the museum's new Pacific Hall. Crocker agreed. In a meeting with the

[110] Templeton Crocker, *The Cruise of the* Zaca (New York: Harper, 1933); "Scientific Survey of South-Eastern Polynesia," *Nature* 133, no. 3362 (April 7, 1934): 527.
[111] William Templeton Crocker, "Draft of *"Zaca* Sails South: a Non-Scientific Diary" 1-3, Crocker Papers, California Academy of Sciences, Box 2, Folder 7-8. Herafter, Zaca *Sails South*. The Crocker Papers contain different versions of Crocker's journal across several boxes and folders; I will make note when drawing from other iterations.

museum's director, Roy Chapman Andrews, he declared, "well, here I am, my boat is in San Francisco, and my checkbook is in my pocket; all three are at your disposal."[112]

The AMNH was chiefly interested in procuring bird specimens and soon attached its ornithologist, James Chapin, and Lee Jacques, a bird illustrator, to the expedition.[113] The voyage offered human opportunities, too. Crocker was interested in anthropology, and the museum was interested in anthropological material. Andrews put forward Shapiro's name as a possible expedition member, calling him a "splendid fellow."[114] After a short meeting, Crocker agreed to bring the anthropologist aboard.[115] Also on the team were Maurice Williams, an entomologist and friend of Crocker's, and Tashio Asaeda, a photographer. They would join the *Zaca's* crew of some dozen, including the ship's doctor, George Lyman.[116] The *Zaca* would journey south to the Marqueses, the Tuamotus, Tahiti, the Austral Islands, and then East to Mangareva, Rapa Nui, and then Chile before sailing northward via the Galapagos.[117] At Shapiro's insistence, Pitcairn was added to the itinerary. It was an ambitious plan, and one that afforded the anthropologist considerable opportunity to harness the Southern Pacific as a field for race science. Writing his old scientific travelling companion, Kenneth Emory, he declared: "I shall try to measure everything in sight."[118]

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[112] Letter from (unknown, presumed to be RCA) to Frank Chapman, March 22, 1934, Central Archives, AMNH, 1216 1934.
[113] Letter from Robert Cushman Murphy to George H Sherwood, January 4, 1936, Central Archives, AMNH, 1216 1934.
[114] Letter from RCA to Leonard Sanford, February 23, 1934, Central Archives, AMNH, 1216 1934.
[115] 1933, Letter from WTC to HFO, February 7, 1933, Central Archives, AMNH, 1216.
[116] Crocker, "*Zaca* Sails South," 20; Harry Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca*, September 15, 1934–January 31, 1935*, hereafter *On Board the* Zaca, Shapiro Papers, Box 33. The latter are Shapiro's typed field notes. His papers also include different, handwritten notes: Harry Shapiro, *Pitcairn Notebook* (December, 1934), Shapiro Papers, Box 146.
[117] For a much richer account of Crocker, the Zaca, and its wider journey, I refer the reader again to Warwick Anderson, "Hybridity, Race, and Science."
[118] Letter to Kenneth Emory from Shapiro, February 6, 1934, Shapiro Papers, Box 3, Folder 17.

The *Zaca* left San Francisco on September 19, 1934; a large crowd gathered to watch the ship sail out toward the Golden Gate.[119] As the *Zaca* wove its way south through the waves, its passengers and crew settled into routine. Shapiro passed the time listening to music. He had brought his cello, but the rocking of the ship back and forth in the swells interfered too much with his bowing.[120] Instead, he listened to a collection of records Crocker had gathered for him, "closing his eyes contentedly when music of the proper quality is being played."[121] He stood on the deck and watched the millionaire take shots at passing seabirds, or waved at passing whales. Returning to his cabin below, he passed the time rereading Herman Melville's *Typee,* a novel of castaways and captivity in the Marqueses he had loved as a boy. He wondered at the possibility of writing himself into the Melville story during his own visit to the South Pacific, perhaps in the form of an article, "*Typee* 90 years after."[122] He had ample opportunity; the expedition spent the next three months visiting one island after another. Shapiro collected as many measurements and blood samples as possible, though his relations with his subjects were strained and securing cooperation was sometimes difficult. Some demanded money in exchange for access to their bodies, an arrangement Shapiro rejected.[123] At Mangareva, he learned that another anthropologist had already come through and had "said that the people were savages." Shapiro deemed it an absurd rumor.[124] On some islands, he tried to win friendship and cooperation through his cello, but most audiences were unimpressed.[125] Shapiro, for his own part, was equally unimpressed with the locals. The Marquesans were "not very good looking," he wrote in his field notes, describing them as more "mixed" and more "deteriorated" than during Melville's visit a century

[119] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 1.
[120] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 9.
[121] Crocker, *Zaca* Sails South, 27.
[122] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 9.
[123] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 43.
[124] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 97.
[125] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 57.

earlier.[126] He sometimes had more success with the dead; Shapiro robbed a number of graves and arranged to have skulls sent back to New York.[127] Through all the travel and work, relationships on the *Zaca* frayed. After Shapiro went ashore without permission, Crocker reprimanded the anthropologist for defying his authority as the commander of the expedition. A slighted Shapiro thought the whole affair "damned silly," but it left a lingering feeling of resentment.[128]

On December 20th, the *Zaca* left Mangareva for Pitcairn, plying the empty, rolling ocean for two days before an anxious Shapiro sighted the island at 6:30 p.m. on December 22.[129] It was a significant moment. Before him the rocky island loomed, the object of a decade and a half of imagination and aspiration. He described it in his notes as "a feint gray shape on the horizon," barely discernible from the distance as an "elevated plateau with a peak at either end." It looked, somehow, smaller than he had imagined while pouring over his collection of "ancient woodcuts, inky plates, and blurred photographs."[130] The ship lingered well off the island's cliffs, waiting until the light of the next morning.[131] As the moon rose and the stars emerged in the sky, Shapiro looked up and called it "a lovely night to dream about Pitcairn before the disillusion tomorrow."[132]

Shapiro's first encounter with Pitcairn Islanders was not unlike thousands of other first encounters before it. At 7:30 the next morning, two longboats launched from Bounty Bay. Its oarsmen cleared the distance between island and shore with practiced quickness, and soon the *Zaca* was overflowing with visitors. Some forty Pitcairn Islanders climbed up from the launches and unloaded packages of curios. Neither scientists nor crewmembers were interested in

[126] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 38.
[127] Crocker, Zaca *Sails South*, 89; Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 20, 37.
[128] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 46.
[129] Crocker, "Manuscript Eastern Polynesia,"102,Crocker Papers, Box 2, Folder 11. Another draft of his *Zaca* journey, with revisions (hereafter, "Eastern Polynesia").
[130] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 5.
[131] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia,"102.
[132] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 131.

purchasing souvenirs, but they welcomed the islanders aboard as curiosities in their own right. Crocker sized each visitor up, and he did not like what he saw. "Pitcairn Islanders on the whole are not fine looking types, quite the reverse," he wrote in his journal. The exceptions were "those few who are dark skinned, who stand out as a more manly lot."[133] He was particularly annoyed by their requests for gifts and donations; the island supplied sufficient resources, he thought. Shapiro, too, sized up the islanders as he spoke with them, scrutinizing their physiognomy with an anthropometric eye. The women he deemed especially unattractive. Many had lost their teeth, and he thought them "withered and thin with age" compared to the Polynesian women in whose company he had spent the preceding months. The men he deemed stouter and stronger, like "old salts."[134] The islanders occasionally spoke in a language that the anthropologist, even after five months on Norfolk Island, found incomprehensible, though they adopted a more standard English with a "colonial or New Zealand accent" for the benefit of their visitors.[135] The islanders, as usual, would have recourse to their own language when needed.

Among the crowd on the *Zaca's* deck, Shapiro spotted to faces that seemed uncannily familiar, and realized that these belonged to Charles and Edwin Young, who had let Arthur Keith measure them in London almost two decades earlier. These two, he decided upon seeing them in person, "were the most miserable of the lot," with missing teeth and high-beaked noses, looking something like "what Barnum and Bailey would call The Bird Man."[136] To denigrate them would be to call into question Keith's types, and to raise science's opinion of the population as a whole. Shapiro approached Edwin, asking him, "Aren't you that man Sir Arthur Keith examined in London?"

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[133] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia,"103.
[134] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 137.
[135] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 132.
[136] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 132.

"Why yes," he answered. "How did you know?"

"I recognized you from the photograph he published," Shapiro replied.[137] It was a rare instance in which anthropometric photography, a medium intended to transform living subjects into standardized scientific objects, revivified its object back into subject.

After an hour, the islanders guided Shapiro into one of their launches and rowed through the waves toward Bounty Bay. It was a calm day, but approaching the landing was still a delicate and dangerous affair. In a maneuver that impressed the anthropologist, the oarsmen brought their craft through the surf on a wave and steered swiftly around the dangerous rocks. Shapiro had spent the last three months jumping from boats onto shores and gangways, and so refused the arms the islanders extended him at the landing. He leapt to the shore on his own power and fell on his face. The islanders lifted him back up; no one laughed.[138]

Once safely on land, Shapiro fell into the well-rehearsed patterns of hospitality the Pitcairn Islanders used to welcome all their visitors. He elected to live with Burley Warren, whom he described as soft-spoken, simple, and kind. "The hospitality of Burley" and his wife, Eleanor, "was so warm-hearted, so generous, that I immediately felt at home, and I knew that I should love them," Shapiro wrote; "In their unpretentious way, with the native food and manners of unpremeditated simplicity, they had the art of welcoming a stranger."[139] From the landing, Burley carried the anthropologist's luggage on the path that wound its narrow way from the landing up the Hill of Difficulty to Adamstown. At the top, a crowd of mostly women stood watching. The settlement itself was nothing like what Shapiro expected from his reading. Paths meandered everywhere. The houses were not set on any particular plan, and the verdant plant life seemed overgrown around them. Beechey, after his 1825 visit, had described a well-ordered

[137] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 7.
[138] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 133; Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 9.
[139] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 7, 10, 14.

English village, or so Shapiro seemed to recall. This was something else, something disappointing. "There is perhaps too much of the touch of shanty whites about these islanders which make them too close to our seamy side to be truly romantic," he wrote. "One has constantly to be whipping the imagination with scenes from the *Bounty* or with names like John Adams, Friday October Christian, to keep from forgetting 'romance.' And yet the kindness is very touching."[140] As he unpacked his things, a stream of Pitcairn Islanders came to greet him, joking and shaking hands.[141]

Shapiro spent his first morning on the island as a tourist. After a breakfast, he accompanied Burley to his "plantation" higher up the island. Walking up the winding clay paths, Shapiro took note of the island's produce and scanned the village below. Rising above it, he took in the island's ridge and the shadowy form of Christian's Cave embedded in a cliff face. After gathering a few pineapples, Shapiro returned to Adamstown and spent the next hour wandering the village. He was interested in the relics of the island's long history of settlement and, like most visitors, in relics of the *Bounty* itself. He saw the bronze gudgeon of Bligh's ship and its old vice and anvil, then strolled through the cemetery, reading familiar names on the tombstones.[142] Throughout his walk, Shapiro read the island against its textual history, "silently checking [his] illusions against what [he] was actually seeing." Everywhere, people stopped to greet him. In their conversations, Shapiro asked the islanders about their ancestors and was disappointed to learn that his interlocutors drew their information from the very same texts he had. "I was told almost to the very phrases the accounts I had read for myself, and I discovered that these modern islanders learned their yarn not from some rich local tradition handed down inviolate through generations, but from the very books I had myself consulted." If anything, Shapiro soon decided

[140] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 151–152.
[141] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 137.
[142] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 135–137.

that he knew their history in considerably *more* detail; the Pitcairners drew from only a handful of texts, while the anthropologist had read and reread "every tome that twelve years of search had revealed."[143]

Shapiro called on the island magistrate, Parkin Christian, to arrange a community-wide meeting in which he could explain his work. Christian acquiesced, though the anthropologist couldn't help but feel that the leader "seemed to be rather cynical about the islanders."[144] True to his word, the bell in Adamstown rang after dinner that evening, summoning everyone to the meeting house. Shapiro walked the short clay path from Burley's house by the light of an electric flashlight and stepped into the large wooden building on the edge of the square. A single kerosene lamp perched on a table at the head of the room lit a hundred faces, all staring back as he prepared to introduce himself and his project. Gazing out into the sea of eyes, Shapiro understood not only his vulnerability, but also the tangle of relationships that separated his "natural" island laboratory from the jars of fruit flies on which he had worked under Castle and East:

> *Suddenly and unbidden the thought came to me that the success of my work depended on the cooperation of these people, and immediately a horrible fear seized me that they might not understand, might even be hostile and resent strangers, however scientific in aim, prying into their intimate lives. I cursed the personal equation which always confronted me in my studies of the human animal. For a moment I longed for the godlike power of the entomologist or the zoologist who had no need to placate his subjects or to consult their convenience.*[145]

Without any prepared remarks, he told the crowd that he was an anthropologist, that he had come to study problems of race mixture, that he would measure them, and that he would trace their genealogies. Neither his field notes nor his published accounts suggest that he mentioned

[143] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 17.
[144] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 136.
[145] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 24–25.

inbreeding. As he spoke, Shapiro felt that the islanders became more and more amenable to his work. They were most concerned whether their own individual lineages would be represented—and their support was "clinched" when told that they would also receive medical care from George Lyman, the *Zaca's* surgeon.[146]

Shapiro was, by 1934, no stranger to fieldwork—but then, neither were the Pitcairn Islanders. From the late nineteenth century, Pitcairn, like Norfolk, hosted a series of visits by naval officers and government bureaucrats meant to produce reports about its social, political, and biological condition—and, as in the case of Norfolk Island, reports about Pitcairn became steadily more pessimistic and infused with concern over racial and eugenic deterioration. After Admiral H. Bury Palliser visited in 1898, for instance, he declared: "there is no doubt that they are deteriorating through the effects of intermarriage and overpopulation."[147] In 1897, the captain of the HMS *Comus* described them as indolent and immoral and wondered whether intermarriage would deteriorate them further.[148] Anxious reports such as these prompted the admiralty to instruct ships' surgeons to investigate the health of the population during later visits. They examined the islanders' bodies and especially their teeth for signs of degeneration. High Commissioner Cecil Rodwell included reports by two medical doctors in the summary of his 1921 visit. The commissioner spent his time interrogating the islanders over social and political affairs—he noted that illegitimate births and difficulty in establishing paternity were among the island's most serious problems.[149] The doctors, meanwhile, provided medical aid and, at Rodwell's request, examined the islanders "from the medical and anthropological point of

[146] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 138–139; Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 25–26.
[147] Letter from H. Bury Palliser to the Secretary of the Admiralty, April 25, 1898, enclosure no. 1, *Pitcairn Island: Correspondence Relating to the Condition of the Pitcairn Islanders* c. 9148 (London: HMSO, 1899): 1.
[148] Letter from Henry Dyke to the Secretary of the Admiralty, November 23, 1897, enclosure no. 1, *Pitcairn Island: Correspondence Relating to the Condition of the Pitcairn Islanders* c. 9148 (London: HMSO, 1899): 2.
[149] Cecil Hunter Rodwell, *Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island* (London: HMSO, 1921): 4, NLA, 22681332.

view."[150] One of them, Daniel Colquohuon, a retired surgeon and professor of medicine at the University of Otago, recorded their heights, skull shapes, skin tones, hair types, and other racial features. In a separate report to the admiralty, he declared them physically and mentally healthy.[151] By the time of Shapiro's visit, government investigations of this sort still came with intermittent intensity; only a few years before, assistant high commissioner H. G. Pilling's short investigation of the island produced a report bemoaning its isolation and lax sexual culture.[152] Like many observers, Pilling assessed the Pitcairners on racial grounds, reporting that "in appearance, the islanders resemble the usual type of Polynesian half-caste to be seen throughout Polynesia. They appeared to me to be of good physique, the majority with bright intelligent faces, but here and there were to be noticed some with the dull bucolic type of countenance usually associated with out-of-the- way villages in isolated districts."[153] A doctor accompanied him, who produced a "physical report" on the children.

The islanders were accustomed to other forms of investigation, too. They had a nascent tourism industry, of a kind, in which they sold curios to passengers on ships. The Nordhoff and Hall *Bounty* trilogy had prompted a renewed interest in the island—indeed Hall himself visited in 1933. Two years before, in 1931, the island hosted a pair of filmmakers, the Australian director Charles Chauvel and his wife, who came to produce the full-length talkie *In the Wake of the Bounty*. Chauvel retold the *Bounty* story by intercutting a restaged eighteenth-century narrative

[150] Rodwell, *Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island*, 8.
[151] D. Colqohoun, "Impressions of the Inhabitants of the Island," Annexure 2, Cecil Hunter Rodwell, *Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island* (London: HMSO, 1921): 4, NLA. His report was excerpted for the scientific community in "Notes," *Nature* 109, no. 2727 (February 2, 1922): 150.
[152] H. G. Pilling, *Pitcairn Island: Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island* (London: HMSO, 1930). Pilling, like many observers, assessed the Pitcairners on racial grounds, reporting that "in appearance, the islanders resemble the usual type of Polynesian half-caste to be seen throughout Polynesia. They appeared to me to be of good physique, the majority with bright intelligent faces, but here and there were to be noticed some with the dull bucolic type of countenance usually associated with out-of-the- way villages in isolated districts." A doctor accompanied him, who produced a "physical report" on the children.
[153] Pilling, *Report on a Visit to Pitcairn Island*, 6.

starring a young Errol Flynn with documentary footage of present-day Pitcairn.[154] At the beginning of the hour-long feature, an opening crawl of text informs the audience that they are not watching a "drama," but rather the first in a series of travel films "depicting strange incidents, strange places, and strange peoples." Chauvel came to Pitcairn to "secure the exact backgrounds on which the drama of the *Bounty* was enacted." Other writers had long used Pitcairn as a stage setting on which to enact their own dramas or theories, but he made the practice bodily and explicit.

Chauvel and his wife spent three months on Pitcairn.[155] They filmed scenes whose tones varied between staged drama and romanticized ethnography of the sort that would come to dominate filmed depictions of the South Pacific. In both instances, the islanders played themselves. In scenes of domestic life, Pitcairn Islanders—an unseen narrator calls them "villagers"—wash clothes, weave baskets, and tend to their children. The camera lingers on the faces of the island's residents, like Mary Ann McCoy and William Christian, as the narrator explains that "in the majority of cases, the Tahitian type prevails." At the end of the film, the Pitcairners stage a distress call on the island's wireless transmitter to a passing ship. David Young's child has fallen ill and needs medical attention. The calls go unanswered and, after plaintive prayers, the infant dies. It was a different genre of investigation than the islanders' had previously experienced—of long duration, involving film cameras. Yet, in its insistence that the islanders act out their roles on their island stage, it was somehow familiar. The Chauvels seemed to enjoy their time on the island. They maintained a correspondence with some of the Pitcairners that lasted several years. Hilda Young wrote them to say "you does leave a vacant place in our

[154] Charles Chauvel, *In the Wake of the* Bounty (Expeditionary Films, 1933). MGM recut Chauvel's footage into two documentaries under the names *Pitcairn Island Today* and *Primitive Pitcairn* following the release of their adaptation of their own 1935 *Mutiny on the* Bounty.
[155] In addition to the film, Charles Chauvel produced a textual account*: In the Wake of the* Bounty: *To Tahiti and Pitcairn Island* (Sydney: The Endeavour Press, 1933).

island, everybody seems to miss you so."[156] Several years later, the director and the islanders were still exchanging gifts by post; Bernice Young sent a piece of the *Bounty's* copper.[157]

Accordingly, when Shapiro unpacked his tools in the meeting house the next day, his subjects were well-rehearsed; they had posed for measurements and cameras before. As in encounters with doctors during official visits, the physical space of his examinations blurred the line between medical care and anthropological scrutiny; across the room, George Lyman set up a free clinic for the islanders. Crocker noted that Lyman proved much more popular than Shapiro, "as for some reason the islanders were shy about being measured."[158] In its intensity, however, the practice of Shapiro's anthropometry also presented something more novel for the Pitcairners. He collected roughly the same array of measurements he had on Norfolk Island and followed the same methods. It was, as always, intrusive, close, personal work. He measured 17 people on his first day, including his host, Burley. In addition to anthropometric measurement, Shapiro also collected blood samples—blood groups, he and other anthropologists thought, might serve as a racial marker and a means to assess racial inheritance in mixed groups.[159] Further blending the expedition's medical and anthropological presence, Shapiro relied on Lyman to "stick the islanders' fingers" for him when he could and was annoyed that the doctor's time was devoted instead to medical care. As on Norfolk Island, photography proved a powerful anthropometric tool, too. Expedition photographer Toshio set up his camera and took portraits of some forty islanders, mostly women, and Shapiro collected photographs of his own.[160]

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[156] Letter from Hilda Young to the Chauvels, July 13, 1932, The State Library of New South Wales (hereafter SLNSW), MLMSS 666.
[157] Letter from Bernice Young to the Chauvels, January 8, 1936, SLNSW, MLMSS 666.
[158] Crocker, Zaca *Sails South*, 96.
[159] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 107.
[160] Some photos are kept in the Crocker papers, Oversize Photo album labeled "Black Album 20: Eastern Polynesia, 1934–1935;" many are in Shapiro Papers, Box 14 L.

Shapiro conducted most of his work in the meeting house, but he took his instruments further afield when necessary. At the school, the teacher gathered his pupils so that Shapiro could perform a pigmentation survey, comparing lighter and darker skin tones against the pantones of his von Luschan scale. Hospitality facilitated anthropometry; he visited some islanders in their homes and chatted with them while measuring their bodies. Vieder Young was old enough to remember the migration to Norfolk in 1856 and told Shapiro about hiding to escape departure on the *Morayshire's* boats while sitting for the examination. Shapiro noted the resemblance between Vieder and his sons Charles and Edwin, though he thought that Keith's two samples were "degenerate copies of the old man."[161] Despite his house calls, at the end of the week some bodies eluded him, and Shapiro drew up a list of islanders for Parkin Christian to track down—which the magistrate dutifully did.[162]

The "natural" experiment that Pitcairn afforded was powerful, Shapiro argued, in part because the heritage of the islanders was itself a known quantity—or at least it could be made known, with sufficient work. Parkin Christian loaned a copy of the island register, which contained entries for marriages, births, and deaths. Crocker, bored with islanders, spent three days copying down the bulk of Register. It was tedious work, but an excuse to stay aboard the *Zaca*.[163] He dispatched some of the ship's crew to the island cemetery, where they copied down inscriptions on headstones.[164] Shapiro used that data to plot the island's population and life expectancy in his notebook.[165] He bolstered that archival work by interviewing residents, especially older ones. James Hall, after his 1931 visit, had boasted in *Tale of a Shipwreck* that

[161] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 159.
[162] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 161.
[163] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 112.
[164] Crocker, Zaca *Sails South*, 99; three small notebooks contain epitaphs from the cemetery, in Crocker Papers, Box 6, Folder 12.
[165] Shapiro, "Pitcairn Notebook," 74–57.

one islander, Mary Ann McCoy, could trace most of Pitcairn's genealogy back to the community's founding moments. During his stay on the island, Hall had asked about the "puzzling family relationships" on the island, and McCoy had expressed a concern that no one kept track. When Hall told her about Shapiro's work on Norfolk, she supposedly said "Oh, why couldn't he have come here as well? I might have helped him."[166]

Shapiro managed to enlist Mary Ann McCoy as an informant. He found her inside her three-room house, which he noted for its impeccable cleanness. He soon developed an affection for his informant, whom he soon began referring to as "Aunt Mary Ann."[167] Her "blindness was provocative of an overwhelming tenderness," he wrote. "I felt that she was as delicate and precious as an ancient porcelain, I wish I could convey the feeling she invoked."[168] That said, he also found his conversations with her tedious; memories about family relationships were interspersed with long anecdotes about missionaries. Through conversations with her and other older residents like Vieder Young, the anthropologist learned that the written record of their heritage was problematic. Shapiro's visit had caused McCoy serious anxiety, she said. She wanted to help him establish accurate genealogies, but that work necessitated the revelation of secrets affairs and infidelities. "I'm so ashamed," she repeated, over and over. After a few days, she broke. Explaining that she could not countenance a lie, she confessed every illegitimacy she could recall. She swore Shapiro to secrecy: "The people will blame me if it came out," she implored.[169] In the face of that revelation, Shapiro broadened his net, asking other informants about cases of birth outside wedlock. After examining the schoolchildren, teacher Roy Clark "reluctantly gave [him] the lowdown on most of them." Shapiro's host, Burley, also confessed

[166] James Norman Hall, *Tale of a Shipwreck* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1934), 62–64.
[167] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 120.
[168] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 22-23.
[169] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 161.

several illegitimacies. It all caused the anthropologist real concern; perhaps the perfect racial laboratory was even less laboratory-like than previously imagined. "I doubt the genetic value of the islanders," he wrote in his field notes after speaking with his informants; "I am afraid that too much admixture from stray sources and sub rosa promiscuity on the island has botched the record."

Shapiro's conversations with Pitcairners like Mary Ann McCoy or Burley Warren are suggestive of just how far the practice of his scientific fieldwork relied on and was imbricated with the island's preexisting forms of hospitality. The Pitcairners were masters in the art of receiving visitors; they welcomed the *Zaca* crew warmly and developed affecting relationships with them quickly. Shapiro, when he put down his calipers, acted much like any other guest. At Burley's house, he shared in meals and scenes of peaceful domesticity; after a long day of measuring he sat writing in his field diary while Eleanor Warren wove baskets and her children played on the floor.[170] He joined the islanders at their church services, though their zealousness struck the Jewish intellectual as simultaneously endearing and foolish. He detested listening to "eternal and ceaseless nonsense on Adventism," and their weekly tithes and donations for mission work, coming from an island that had so little, struck him as a terrible and needless waste. [171] At the same time, he enjoyed saying grace before meals, a custom about which he had read so much in his library of Pitcairn texts. He also noted the islanders' singing; visitors had long described the Pitcairners' use of music to entertain and capture the sympathies of their guests, especially the hymn "In the Sweet By and By" and their "Goodbye Song." The *Zaca* scientists tried to reciprocate with music of their own, but Beethoven on the gramophone impressed no one. The islanders preferred what Crocker described as "interminable religious or

[170] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 141.
[171] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 157.

sentimental songs," which they broke into on "the slightest provocation."[172] They had no ear for music at all, he complained—their songs were simply "a fervent manner in which to express sticky sentiment."[173]

Shapiro tried to distance himself from the island's usual visitors, those other tourists who got caught up all too easily in sticky sentiment. Indeed, he even made it a point to study the dynamic between insider and outsider. In his conversations with the Pitcairners, he asked about their interactions with passengers on the liners that stopped by on their way between Panama and New Zealand. The *Ruahine* called during Shapiro's stay on the island, a much needed opportunity for the Pitcairners to sell curios, send mail, and purchase provisions. In his field notes, Shapiro disparaged, without irony, the passengers of ships like these, who in brief, half-hour interactions with the islanders had "an opportunity to inspect the 'strange creatures' and ask impertinent and ill-advised questions."[174] "Do the people of Pitcairn really live without sin?" was a common query, they told him. The last century's moral writing had a hold on many visitors' imaginations. And yet, Shapiro could not help but feel that he was falling into the same roles and the same conversations, himself. As he set up his instruments in the meeting house each morning, his subjects asked for his impressions of the island. Shapiro found himself repeating the same praises he had read in other accounts. It was to the point, he wrote, that "I came to mistrust the sincerity of my emotions. But the visitors so obviously expected the praise that I could not bring myself to refute it, nor did I wish to."

Some entanglements were unavoidable. Crocker intended that the expedition leave on the evening of January first, but some hours before departure Elden Coffin ran toward the settlement yelling "Ray's been shot!" Ray was Arthur Young's son, hit by a stray bullet while out hunting

[172] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 114.
[173] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 107.
[174] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 133.

goats. Shapiro continued drawing blood samples while Lyman attended the wounded boy. The doctor decided that it would be necessary to remove the bullet fragments, and so Shapiro assisted, holding a flashlight and a retractor. He found it not unlike the work of dissection, but more interesting—though cutting an incision into a live, surgical subject nonetheless produced a "terrible feeling."[175] It was not the first time Shapiro and Lyman gave emergency assistance. On Christmas day, after the crew of the *Zaca* had finished a hearty meal and launched flares and rockets to signal goodnight, a boat rowed out from the landing to ask for emergency aid—a women had been severely beaten by her husband and needed immediate attention.[176] Within minutes Lyman was at the landing, and he met Shapiro in Adamstown. They found the victim "unable to speak, suffering intensely, and almost unconscious," with blows to the eyes and jaw.[177] Situations such as these drew Lyman and Shapiro into the community as more than tourists or observers; moments of violence and trauma enmeshed the *Zaca* expedition into more entangled relations. The Pitcairn Islanders submitted their bodies to Shapiro for examination, and Lyman healed them.

The morning after operating on the boy, Shapiro walked down to the landing to be rowed back to the *Zaca.* Much of the community came out to the Edge to wave goodbye. As the expedition made its final preparations for departure, some three dozen Pitcairners rowed out with Shapiro to bid their farewells, crowding the decks of the yacht. Crocker gave them a few gifts, rice, flour, and some fishing line.[178] They reciprocated with gifts of their own; Shapiro left with a souvenir box, some baskets, and a piece of wood from the *Bounty*'s hull. The islanders sang hymns, a traditional signal of affection when guests departed the island—though Crocker wished

[175] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 163–164.
[176] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 107.
[177] Letter from Lyman to Parkin Christian, December 27, 1934, Crocker papers, Box 7; Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 142–144.
[178] Crocker, "Eastern Polynesia," 113.

they would stop. The expedition had to leave imminently if it was to stay on schedule. The Pitcairners piled back onto their launches and rowed toward Bounty Bay, waving all the while. The *Zaca* sailed into a clear day over broad, rolling swells, and within a few hours the island receded below the horizon.[179] The expedition continued on to Rapa Nui, where Shapiro measured the inhabitants and made a cast of one of the island's famous statues. It still sits in the American Museum of Natural History, one of its more famous Pacific objects. The *Zaca* sailed on to the Galapagos and back to California, but Shapiro, his measuring done and tired of cramped shipboard relations, left the expedition at Valparaiso and caught a steamer for New York.[180]

**"A Racial Laboratory"**

Once back in his Manhattan office, Shapiro began the work of inscribing his Pacific encounters and his intimate anthropometry as text. The result was *The Heritage of the Bounty,* a book that published his scientific results together with a popular account of the island and his visit, all rendered in readable, accessible prose. It was by far Shapiro's most successful book, popular with the public and well received by academics. First published by Simon and Schuster in 1936, it went through several editions, republished in 1962, 1968, 1979, and 1986.[181] The

[179] Shapiro, *On Board the* Zaca, 165–166.
[180] Telegram from WTC, February 3, 1935, Central Archives, AMNH, 1216 1935 C; Letter from Shapiro to Emory, March 6, 1935, Shapiro Papers, Box 3, Folder 17.
[181] Harry Shapiro, *The Heritage of the* Bounty: *The Story of Pitcairn through Six Generations*, 2nd ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster (1936); *The Heritage of the* Bounty, revised with new postscript (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1962); *The Heritage of the* Bounty (New York: AMS Press, 1979); *The Pitcairn Islanders (Formerly the Heritage of the* Bounty*)* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1968); *The Pitcairn Islanders,* revised edition (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986).

book made it to Pitcairn, too; Burley wrote Shapiro to congratulate him on a successful portrayal of the island.[182]

*The Heritage of the Bounty's* success was understandable; in the decade between Shapiro's Norfolk Island monograph and the release of his Pitcairn book, the American imagination of the Pacific and the meanings of race had both seen tremendous changes. Nordhoff and Hall's *Bounty* trilogy renewed Anglophone interest in the *Bounty* story. Another film joined Chauvel's; MGM's 1935 best picture winner, staring Clark Gable as Fletcher Christian, further fired the American imagination. The anthropology of the Pacific, too, had itself achieved an unexpected culture prominence, as the eventual success of Shapiro's Pacific Hall at the AMNH would attest. Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa,* first published in 1928, suggested that Pacific islands, as microcosms of the human, could offer a critique of American social forms and mores.[183] Moreover, Shapiro's work spoke directly to issues of racial hygiene embraced by National Socialism and still promulgated by a variety of groups in the United States. *The Heritage of the Bounty* thus thrived on both a depression-era, Trader Vic-informed fascination with a tiki-culture image of the Pacific and on its implicit promise to tackle race and eugenics. Pitcairn was, once again, a distant, but relevant microcosm. A *New York Times* reviewer wrote, "Those coming to the story of the *Bounty* for the first time, if such there be, will find Dr. Shapiro's book startling in its human epitome. After all, Pitcairn Island, its people and its development, but represent the world brought down to its simplest elements."[184]

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[182] Shapiro responded: "I am glad you liked my book. I tried to tell the truth and to give the people back home some idea of the life on Pitcairn and its history, for there is great interest among America in the island." Letter from Shapiro to Burley Warren, June 1936, Shapiro Papers, Box 10.

[183] Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa: A Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization* (Oxford, England: Morrow, 1928); Nancy Lutkehaus, *Margaret Mead: The Making of an American Icon* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Peter Mandler, *Return from the Natives* (New Haven, MA: Yale University Press, 2013).

[184] Percy Hutchison, "The Heritage of the Famous Mutineers of the Bounty," New York Times (April 26, 1936): BR10; see also Robert Van Gelder, "Books of the Times," *New York Times* (April 21, 1936): 21.

Let us trace, then, the writing and reception of *The Heritage of the Bounty*, as well as Shapiro's subsequent publications drawn from his Pitcairn research, and examine the imbrications that wove together Pacific fieldwork and eugenic theory as well as an anthropologist's personal relations with the politics of race relations. We can begin by noting that Shapiro left some texts unwritten. The islanders and some of the *Zaca* scientists maintained a correspondence; ornithologist James Chapin exchanged letters and small tokens of affection with Lucy Christian for the next two decades, just as Chauvel and other visitors had.[185] Shapiro wrote letters, too, but not as many as he felt he could have. Missives from the island remained on his desk unanswered.[186] His was always a slightly withdrawn personality, not least on the *Zaca* and on Pitcairn, though he did feel a real affection for the island. Once back in New York, he placed his piece of the *Bounty* in a wooden frame, the souvenir of a journey twelve years in the making finally accomplished. It joined the other material and textual objects collected during his journey, most particularly his field notes, his diary, a pile of photographs, and sheet after sheet of anthropometric measurements.

Those reams of data, numbers representing the spans of noses, hips, skulls, and other body parts of 124 adult islanders and some sixty children, instead absorbed the anthropologist's interest and attention. Pouring over field notes containing hereditary information from the island register and informants like Mary Ann McCoy, Shapiro realized that the islanders' pedigrees were so complexly intertwined, the original cross between founding generations so distant, that classical Mendelian methods would be difficult. He would not trace traits at the individual level from parent to child. Rather, he would analyze his data in aggregate, averaging features for

[185] Letter from Lucy Christian to James Chapin, October 9, 1952, Shapiro Papers, Box 35, Folder "Chapin Correspondence with Pitcairn." Chapin wrote one small account of the voyage: James P Chapin, "Through Southern Polynesia," *Natural History* 37 (1936): 287–308.
[186] Letter from Shapiro to Howard McAllister, October 28, 1941, Shapiro Papers, Box 6, Folder 27.

comparison with other populations, and tracking the variability of features between sets of brothers and sisters. Transferring his measurements within families to sheet after sheet of graph paper, he calculated the fraternal variability of ten different traits.[187] These coefficients would tell him how strongly correlated some features were between siblings, useful for understanding the degree and impact of their consanguinity. Shapiro gave his measurements to Franz Boas, who did some of the calculations for him. "I was surprised to see how high the fraternal correlations are," wrote the eminent anthropologist; the numbers were similar to "the inbred community of Eastern Tennessee" and the "inbred Ojibwe."[188]

How inbred were they, *exactly*? Among Shapiro's most critical calculations was a quantitative measurement of the islanders' level of consanguinity itself. Anthropology and eugenics had standard methods for determining consanguinity; Sewell Wright's coefficient of relationship, developed in 1922, was the most common. It, very roughly, expressed the probability of a child inheriting a given gene from both parents.[189] Shapiro ignored it, however, in favor of his own method, which exploited his mass of genealogical data. For each living, adult Pitcairn Islander, he divided the total number of real-world ancestors by the largest number of ancestors theoretically possible. Thus, if a Pitcairn Islander of the sixth generation could have 64 theoretical ancestors, but in actuality had only 42 actual ancestors, then her "inbreeding index" would be 65.265 percent. The lower the number, the more inbred the individual. By averaging the "inbreeding index" of all members, Shapiro could track the island's consanguinity across time:

[187] "Pitcairn Island – 1934 Data on Siblings," Shapiro Papers, Box 33.
[188] Letter from Franz Boas to Shapiro, January 6, 1936, Shapiro Papers, Box 1, Folder 23.
[189] Sewell Wright, "Coefficients of Inbreeding and Relationship," *American Naturalist* 56, no. 645 (July–August, 1922): 330–338.

| | Number | Average Index of Inbreeding |
|---|---|---|
| 1850–1859 | 4 | 84.38 |
| 1860–1869 | 7 | 91.07 |
| 1870–1879 | 15 | 86.67 |
| 1880–1889 | 22 | 70.87 |
| 1890–1899 | 26 | 71.36 |
| 1900–1909 | 26 | 61.96 |
| 1910–1916 | 23 | 51.53 |

As expected, the number sank with each generation, though it ranged quite widely among individuals. The islander with the smallest number of ancestors had an "inbreeding index" of 25.56 percent.[190]

Shapiro's population-wide statistical analysis departed in some ways from the older methodology of physical anthropology, like that of Arthur Keith, which was reliant on the anatomical description and comparison of representative types. Indeed, his familiarity with statistical methods put him at odds with much of the discipline's old guard. In a letter to British eugenicist J. C. Trevor, he complained that even data sets compiled by renowned anthropologists like Aleš Hrdlička were problematic, as they relied too much on typology and failed to understand modern quantitative methods.[191] That said, while Shapiro no longer relied on classical methods of comparative anatomy, his practices nonetheless relied on an implicit typology. In his records of most islanders' measurements, Shapiro placed a small mark in the lower left hand corner. These served as a record of his assessment of each subject's overall appearance on a scale "ranging from Tahitian to English. The Most Tahitian is T+++, the next

[190] Shapiro, *Heritage of the Bounty*, 252.
[191] Letter from Shapiro to Trevor, June 14, 1937, Shapiro Papers, Box 9.

T++, and so on to the Intermediate, and then E (English), E+, E++, and E+++."[192] He eventually published a table of those assessments, noting that some islanders could "pass" for English, but none could "pass" as Tahitian." Looking over the numbers, it seemed the women appeared in aggregate "more Tahitian" than the men—were some traits, like eye color, sex-linked, the anthropologist wondered?[193]

| | Strongly English | Moderately English | Slightly English | Intermediate | Slightly Tahitian | Moderately Tahitian | Strongly Tahitian |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Males | 12 | 8 | 13 | 11 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Females | 6 | 5 | 8 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 2 |

Shapiro transferred most of the features he measured, including eye color and the length and width of body parts, onto cards and graph paper for calculation. Keeping the sexes separate, he produced averages of the islanders' skin, eyes, heads, faces, noses, and so on. These, too, he ultimately arrayed on spectra between poles of Englishness and Tahitianess. Individuals carried unique mixtures of traits and no longer stood in as representative types, but in thinking made explicit through his practice, each one tended toward a pure, racial essence.

Shapiro described the Pitcairners' physical anthropology in two lengthy chapters near the end of *The Heritage of the Bounty*, both of which made the racial and eugenic meaning of his work clear: race mixing was unproblematic, even beneficial. The islanders tended in some respects toward their Tahitian ancestors and in other respects toward their English ones, but they

[192] Letter from Shapiro to Hooton, March 12, 1935, Shapiro Papers, Box 5, Folder 2.
[193] Quotes and table from Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 229–232; the totals in each line of the table do not sum to 62 because Shapiro did not enter subjective racial assessments for some islanders.

were clearly vital and healthy, having benefited from "hybrid vigor."[194] They suffered no mental disabilities or diseases. The only deleterious effect the anthropologist could discern was their poor dental health, though he was willing to attribute that to their latent Englishness.[195] In a critique of his own society, Shapiro stressed that, "unlike other half-caste populations" in the United States, the Pitcairn Islanders "never had to eat the bitter bread of social or economic prejudice."[196] Indeed, he closed his section on the islanders' biology by calling up the memory of the people he met on Pitcairn and his relationships with Parkin Christian and "aunt" Mary Ann McCoy, "who possessed qualities of leadership or traits of personality that raised them above the level of their neighbors."[197] His reassessment of the island's racial and eugenic lot was built, explicitly, not only from his numbers but the interactions that generated them. The *New York Times,* relaying Shapiro's results in several articles even before the publication of his book, told its readers that the mixed-race Pitcairners were racially and genetically healthy, lived under a "form of communism" and, what's more, were "good-looking, too."[198]

Shapiro devoted the book's early and middle chapters to the island's history and culture. *Heritage* opened with the mutiny itself, based on accounts by Bligh and Edwards. Subsequent sections retraced the island's early history, drawing on most of the famous nineteenth-century texts about the island, including Barrow's, Murray's, Belcher's, and Young's, often citing them at length. Shapiro also devoted considerable time to the island's contemporary culture and society. As in his Norfolk book, describing the island's culture and restaging its history here served several purposes, capturing the interest of a broad readership hungry for another retelling

[194] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 197–198.
[195] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 231–232.
[196] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 196.
[197] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 254.
[198] "200 Found Living on Pitcairn Island: Descendants of Nine English Mutineers Reported to Be Handsome and Bright" *New York Times* (February 27, 1935): 21.

of the *Bounty* tale while also performing important intellectual work. For one thing, Shapiro still practiced a broad, four-field anthropology. He devoted a few pages to the islanders' language, for instance, which he described as composed of "mispronounced English and Tahitian words" spoken alongside a few new words, all strung together with a "degenerate English syntax." He included a short wordlist.[199] For Shapiro, language was "as much a cultural phenomenon as the construction of a house or the manufacture of tapa. It may be modified by cultural contact or borrowed or dropped just like any other item in the cultural equipment."[200] He described other cultural forms, too: cooking, fishing, farming, housing, and so on. Many "female," Tahitian cultural practices predominated, though some English forms persisted, alongside new developments. All of these were the result of the same experiment in hybridity, and all of them he categorized in racial terms. "Culture contacts are prolific in producing new combinations and original contributions," Shapiro wrote. "As race-crossing in nature reshuffles the genes and opens new possibilities . . . so the impact of cultures may, and often does, produce evidences of originality even under favorable circumstances."[201]

Shapiro's analysis of culture won him few professional admirers. Polynesianist E. S. Craighill Handy complained that his "cultural study calls for original observation and analysis by a social anthropologist. . . . He appears to write with contented obliviousness to the painstaking monographs of his ethnological and linguistic colleagues."[202] Nevertheless, as on Norfolk, Shapiro used his description of the island's culture and history to substantiate Pitcairn as a racial laboratory. As Shapiro told it, "the very sequence of events which produced a unique and absorbing story in its own right also created, as a by-product, a social and biological experiment

[199] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 210–213.
[200] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 207.
[201] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 174–175.
[202] E. S. Craighill Handy, "The Heritage of the *Bounty:* The Story of Pitcairn through Six Generations," *American Anthropologist* 39, no. 2 (April–June 1937): 357.

of profound importance." He was adamant that his account did not romanticize the island's past. "Pitcairn was not the scene of a Utopia," he implored; rather, its violent and unique history inadvertently produced a useful natural experiment; "No social or political theories stimulated its founding, but it was an unconscious and spontaneous experiment none the less."[203] His assertion that Pitcairn's settlement and use as an exemplary space derived from spontaneous and "unconscious" accident was a feature of "natural experiments" as mobilized by field scientists. Pitcairn, of course, had a long history of investigation and even careful construction as an exemplary space. Though not as dramatically as Norfolk, it too was staged as an intellectually useful peripheral space by a string of writers, missionaries, naval captains, and government officials.

Shapiro advanced the metaphor of experiment and laboratory further than any previous investigator. Victorians had staged both islands as didactic and exemplary spaces, Denison conceived of the islanders' migration from one to another as a moral experiment in colonial settlement, and nineteenth-century naturalists like Darwin and Wallace deployed Norfolk and Pitcairn alike as case studies and "accidental experiments." Shapiro, however, directly analogized between Pitcairn Island and the work of laboratory experimentation—particularly genetic experimentation. "The biological experiment that blind circumstances have created on Pitcairn offers a rare opportunity for the investigation of the laws of heredity," he insisted. The dynamics of race mixture "resolved themselves as surely as though they had been active chemicals in at test tube. Isolation has preserved the results."[204] History, such as Shapiro understood it in the form of local archival records like the *Register,* further substantiated the island's role as a genetic experiment. It was not a perfect human instantiation of a genetic

[203] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 137–138.
[204] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 217.

laboratory; that would be impossible "until we can breed men like rats or guinea pigs and isolate the females."[205] But records, in conjunction with the corrective oral testimony of informants like Mary Ann McCoy, could produce pedigrees nearly as good as any generational series of model organisms. Moreover, the metaphor of the laboratory helped Shapiro in rhetorical terms, co-opting the more prestigious image of genetic science and remaking an obscure and distant island into a space directly relevant to public concerns. "Geneticists and anthropologists have sighed for just such a community," another *New York Times* article told its readers, "If they have their way, the island will remain a kind of laboratory in which nature may be watched as she performs the miracle of welding alien types into an anthropological unit and thus illuminating the dark subject of our own racial status."[206]

Geneticists and eugenicists themselves were interested in Shapiro's living experiment and its connection to the work and laboratory genetics. Hermann Joseph Muller, for instance, was interested to note that Shapiro's data on the variability of racial traits did not align neatly with classical Mendelian expectations.[207] Robert Cook, the editor of *Heredity* and a leading American demographer and eugenicist, on the other hand, gave the book a very positive review in his journal. He was especially excited by the possibility of making "exact comparisons between human genetics on Pitcairn and laboratory genetics in other organisms." Drawing from Shapiro's inbreeding indices, Cook sketched his own "make-believe pedigree" for a make-believe Pitcairn Islander. The amount of inbreeding was, for his taste, "disappointingly small," though hardly insignificant—roughly equivalent to that of a coupling of first cousins. Nonetheless, even if Pitcairn was "nearly perfect" as a human experiment, it also had its deficiencies. "We have much

[205] Shapiro, *Heritage of the* Bounty, 219.
[206] "A Racial Laboratory," *New York Times,* 18; see also "Pitcairn Refutes Inbreeding Harm: Biologist's Study of Island Records Shows Mental and Physical Vigor Unimpaired," *New York Times* (November 7, 1936): N11.
[207] H. J. Muller, "On the Variability of Mixed Races," *American Naturalist* 70, No. 730 (Sep.–Oct. 1936): 409–442.

talk today of social experimentation," he wrote, "but the experiments almost always have bad beginnings, set up as they usually are to meet an emergency, and of their end usually the less said the better! A valid control is usually lacking, and so many variable factors enter in that we can never be sure of getting an unequivocal answer." Pitcairn was the closest iteration of a living experiment he had yet encountered, but even here he wanted to see a few more generations run. Perhaps in a hundred years, he suggested, it would have seen enough iterations and the race scientists of 2036 would obtain even more telling results.[208]

When presenting his work to professional anthropologists, Shapiro also explicitly compared his results to those of laboratory genetics.[209] However, among anthropologists it was Pitcairn's implications for the study and definition of race that mattered most. Theorists had long wondered whether mixed-race unions would, over an extended period of time, produce healthy progeny, and they had long pointed to Pitcairn and Norfolk as evidence. So far as professional anthropologists were concerned, Shapiro's work on Norfolk and now Pitcairn put the issue to rest finally and conclusively. At the same time, physical anthropologists, who had made race their discipline's central object of study, found themselves having to define and even justify the reality and utility of race as a scientific category. Shapiro's Pitcairn work, by identifying the persistence or dissolution of "English" and "Tahitian" characteristics in mixed-race populations, by necessity defined its stability and parameters.

Nazi propagandists, of course, made the importance of these definitions explicit, and Shapiro felt compelled to confront fascist race theory directly. Boas felt the same. In a letter, he complained to Shapiro that the Germans were "swamping" scientific congresses as a "means of

[208] Robert Cook, "News from the *Bounty*" *Journal of Heredity* 27, no. 8 (August, 1936): 283–288; he briefly referenced Shapiro's work again a few years later: Robert Cook, "Six Generations to a Century," *Journal of Heredity* 33, no. 11 (November, 1942): 371.
[209] As in his talk at the annual meeting of American physical anthropologists in 1937; Harry L. Shapiro, "Proceedings of the Eight Annual Meeting" *American Anthropologist* 22, no. 3 (April-June 1937): A1–A16.

propaganda."[210] The two soon began working together to develop a response that would galvanize professional anthropology and the English-speaking public against Nazi race science. Their first proposal was to compose a statement decrying Nazi claims and setting the record straight on the scientific status of race, to be signed by leading physical anthropologists. They asked Earnest Hooton to write it, agreeing that the general public would be more receptive and less biased against it than one written by two Jewish intellectuals.[211] The choice of Hooton was interesting, given that in some respects he and Boas were at the head of very separate anthropological schools founded, in part, on different conceptions of race—but Shapiro was able to triangulate between them. Hooton agreed and soon penned a dozen "Plain Statements about Race."

Hooton's plain statements were enormously suggestive of an anthropology of race and heredity in flux. Hooton never denied the existence of race, nor did he abandon the notion of an essential racial typology in theory. However, he did define race in more fluid and dynamic terms than did the Germans, and he categorically denied that any one race was more fit or capable than another—though he did not foreclose the possibility. "Physical anthropologists, as yet, are unable precisely to grade existing human races upon an evolutionary scale," he declared.[212] Nevertheless, he added, the Aryan ideal of racial purity was an absurd fantasy. There were essentially no "pure" races in the modern world, as all human populations were mixed ones—and studies of mixed-race peoples like Shapiro's had shown them to be healthy and happy.[213] Rather, Hooton suggested, the public should be more concerned with eugenic health across the whole of humanity. Every race had its "insane, diseased, and criminal" elements, and these

[210] Letter from Franz Boas to Shapiro, October 26, 1937, Shapiro Papers, Box 1, Folder 23.
[211] Letter to Hooton from Shapiro, October 22, 1935, Shapiro Papers, Box 5, Folder 2.
[212] E. A. Hooton, "Plain Statements About Race," *Science* 83, no. 2161 (May 29, 1936): 512.
[213] Unsurprisingly, Hooton often relied on the work of his first pupil to substantiate points about race mixture. See his *Apes, Men, and Morons*, 143, and *Twilight of Man*, 171–175.

needed to be mitigated within each race. "Every tree that bears bad fruit should be cut down and cast into the fire," he wrote."[214] It was bombastic prose, but typical for Hooton. Shapiro was quite pleased and thanked his mentor for writing it. "I am personally deeply grateful—too grateful to express it adequately," he said. "I hated asking you, although there is no one I would rather ask."[215] The draft approved, Boas, Shapiro, and Hooton set about soliciting other professional anthropologists to endorse the statement. They circulated the draft, but to no avail. Other scientists, including the Smithsonian's Aleš Hrdlička, the University of Pennsylvania's Frank Speck, and Washington University's Robert Terry, were reluctant to append their names.[216] Ultimately, the three decided that Hooton would publish his statement under his name only in the journal *Science*.[217]

If Pitcairn, as a racial laboratory, presented living proof that race was fluid and race-mixture was unproblematic—how did racialists respond? In Germany, few writers took up the problem; Pitcairn, like the *Bounty* story itself, was mostly an Anglophone fetish object. The most cited authority on the study of race mixture among German race theorists was still Eugen Fischer, not least because Fischer had flourished as the anthropological voice of the Nazi regime. Nonetheless, there had been occasional accounts of Pitcairn in the German-language anthropological literature, and in 1940 a sociologist of the "Nuremberg Circle" even composed a monograph on the social development of the island, built from published accounts. Emil Rogner's *Pitcairn Island: A Contribution to the Study of the Development of Human Society*, used the island's history to assert a theory of race mixture and society that, in line with national

[214] Earnest A. Hooton, *Dozen Statements about Race*, Shapiro Papers, Box 5, Folder 2.
[215] Letter from Shapiro to (Babe Ruth) Hooton, October 23, 1935 Box 5, Folder 2.
[216] Letter to Shapiro from Hooton's office, October 22, 1935, Shapiro Papers, Box 5, Folder 2; Letter from Hooton to Shapiro, October 30, 1935, Shapiro Papers, Box 5 Folder 2.
[217] E. A. Hooton, "Plain Statements About Race," 511–513.

socialist ideology, rejected both Marxist and classical liberal interpretations.[218] Citing Shapiro's studies a great deal alongside older accounts like Beechey's and Barrow's, Rogner asserted that the island's strong early leadership under Adams, strengthened by its adoption of strong religious principles and its tight community spirit, had made its society a robust one. Rogner admitted that the racially-mixed islanders were healthy, but he put that down to a fortunate racial inheritance. Like high-Victorian anthropologists, he placed Polynesians at the middle rather than the bottom of his racial hierarchy, and he noted that the English, while already a "mixed race" themselves, had bequeathed their descendants a set of healthy European characteristics. That said, Rogner argued, there would always be a racial limit to their development.[219] Indeed, exacerbated by the abandonment of their religious patriarchy, the signs of racial degeneration and tropical indolence were already visible.[220]

The more politically active, radical, and anti-racist public intellectuals of American anthropology assailed hard-line conceptions of race across the next few years, especially once war with Germany broke out again—a project for which Shapiro's Pitcairn and Norfolk work was useful. Some of the midcentury anthropology's most prominent public intellectuals recognized its value for antiracialist polemic. Pitcairn Islanders appeared in Ruth Benedict's *Race: Science and Politics*, where she deployed them to prove that "new human types" were still forming, as they had throughout human history, and that mixed races flourished.[221] Ashley Montagu, too, drew on Shapiro's work to cite the Pitcairners as a useful example of not only

[218] Emil Rogner, *Pitcairn-Island: Ein Beitrag zur Lehre von der Entfaltung Menschlicher Gesellungen*, Nürnberger Beiträge zu den Wirtschafts- und Sozialwissenschaften, Heft 78 (Nümberg: Verlag der Hochschulbuchhandlung, Krisdie & Co, 1940).
[219] Rogner, *Pitcairn-Island*, 58.
[220] Rogner, *Pitcairn-Island*, 49–50.
[221] Ruth Benedict, *Race: Science and Politics* (New York: Viking, 1945), 43–44, 52.

biological but cultural "hybrid vigor."[222] Boas, who had calculated some of their measurements himself, used the islanders for the same purposes in his publications across the next decade.[223] He consulted Shapiro's Pitcairn data directly again in 1942 while preparing more work on the question of race and population.[224] Shapiro, for his own part, used Pitcairn and Norfolk to envisage a deracinated and deracialized world in his writing for the public. Though humanity had once been broken up into discreet populations, he said, it had spent the last million years settling the known world and recombining; the islands were simply small iterations of a still-active global process. He saw a world peopled by racial types, but types which were amenable to benevolent mixture, mutation, and gradation. Humankind would "become increasingly homogeneous," evolving into a mixed-race unity. That was nothing to worry about, however—as on his Pacific islands, the old racial divisions would melt away into a pan-racial combination, and like Pitcairn, the world would be peopled by a healthy, happy population and a creative, adaptive culture.[225]

During the next two decades, Shapiro rose to become a leading figure in his field. He served as president of the American Ethnological Society, the American Eugenics Society, and the American Anthropological Association.[226] As physical anthropology's founding figures grew older, he was at the vanguard of a new generation ready to reform the discipline. Shapiro used his position to advance his moderate vision on racial questions; the Eugenics Research

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[222] Ashley Montagu, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth: The Fallacy of Race* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), 110–111; M. F. Ashley Montagu, "The Creative Power of Ethnic Mixture," *Psychiatry* 5, no. 4 (November 1, 1942): 523–536.
[223] Franz Boas, "The Relations Between Physical and Social Anthropology," (1936) in *Race, Language, and Culture* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1940), 174.
[224] Letter from Boas to Shapiro, March 30, 1942, Shapiro Papers, Box 1, Folder 23; Franz Boas, "Individual, Family, Population, and Race," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 87, no. 2 (August 16, 1943): 161–64.
[225] H. L. Shapiro, "Some Reflections of an Anthropologist on the Future of Our Population," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 80, no. 4 (February 15, 1939): 587–600.
[226] President of the American Ethnological Society 1942–1943, president of the American Eugenics Society 1955–1962, and president of the American Anthropological Association in 1948; Frank Spencer, "Harry L. Shapiro."

Association changed its name to the Association for Research in Human Genetics in his office at the AMNH.[227] Perhaps his most important and lasting public contribution was his involvement in the formation of the UNESCO statements on race. In 1950, a committee organized under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) released a document entitled "The Race Question." The committee's membership included such scientific and academic luminaries as Claude Levi-Strauss, Joseph Needham, and Ashley Montagu; their aim was to categorically dismantle Nazi and racialist claims in the wake of the Second World War.[228] Their text received harsh criticisms from biologists, geneticists, and physical anthropologists, however, who felt the committee ignored their disciplines' contributions to the study of race. Shapiro joined Theodozius Dobzhansky, J. C. Trevor, J. B. S. Haldane, L. C. Dunn, and other specialists in a second committee to revise the statement.

The geneticists and physical anthropologists produced a new document, which joined the original UNESCO statement in dismantling typological and racialistic claims, but in more moderate terms.[229] The committee agreed that race was neither an essential nor an unyielding category, and that it was not responsible for differences in human ability. However, neither did they reject the reality of race as a scientific concept. Rather, race was a "zoological" term of convenience, "reserved for groups of mankind possessing well-developed and primarily heritable physical differences from other groups." Human evolution was complex and dynamic; social or physical barriers were constantly inducing the formation of separate racial groups, while racial

[227] Letter from Osborn to members of the Eugenics Research Association, October 25, 1938, Shapiro Papers, Box 12.
[228] See Michelle Brattain, "Race, Racism, and Antiracism: UNESCO and the Politics of Presenting Science to the Postwar Public," *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 5 (December, 2007): 1386–1413; Anthony Q. Hazard, "A Racialized Deconstruction? Ashley Montagu and the 1950 UNESCO Statement on Race," *Transforming Anthropology* 19, no. 2 (October 1, 2011): 174–86.
[229] L.C. Dunn et al, *The Race Concept: Results of an Inquiry* (Paris: UNESCO, 1952).

crossing was "constantly breaking down the differentiations so set up."[230] Shapiro was able to make that point especially explicit in a subsequent UNESCO publication on "Race Mixture," in which the Pitcairn Islanders appeared as his primary case study.[231] As the Pitcairners showed, race was mutable, contained by flexible boundaries, and dependent on environment—but it was nonetheless real and amenable to analysis and description. Lawyers and students of law ultimately saw some utility in those discussions on the definition of race. The Supreme Court read the UNESCO statements when making its decision in *Brown* v. *Board of Education* in 1954, and Shapiro's Pitcairn work even accrued some citations in American legal scholarship as authors sought to overturn anti-miscegenation laws.[232]

Collaborations with geneticists like those who sat on the second UNESCO committee, as well as cross-disciplinary agreement over the definition and nature of race, mattered a great deal to post-war anthropology. As the UNESCO statements made clear, the revelation of Nazi atrocities had undermined support for eugenics and race science, exacerbating interdisciplinary pressures on physical anthropologists; the field would have to adapt. It was at this same moment that Sherwood Washburn, another Hooton student, called for a "new physical anthropology," one which would make the subdiscipline relevant to biologists and students of culture.[233] Rather than fixate on race as its paradigmatic object of study, it would focus on the evolution of populations

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[230] Harry Shapiro, "Revised Version of UNESCO Statement on Race," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 10, no. 3 (September, 1952): 335–336.
[231] Harry Shapiro, "Race Mixture," *The Race Question in Modern Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 343–392.
[232] Cf. Jerold D. Cummins and John L. Jr Kane, "Miscegenation, the Constitution, and Science," *Dicta* 38 (1961): 24; Stuart W. Conner, "Constitutionality of Miscegenetic Marriages," *Montana Law Review* 11 (1950): 53; John P. Jackson, *Science for Segregation: Race, Law, and the Case against* Brown v. Board of Education (New York: New York University Press, 2005).
[233] Sherwood Washburn, "Section of Anthropology: The New Physical Anthropology," *Transactions of the New York Academy of Sciences*, series II, vol. 13 (1951): 298–304; For a classic treatment of Washburn's project and its gendered cold war context, see Donna J. Haraway, *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and Nature in the World of Modern Science*, Reprint edition (New York: Routledge, 1990). For a more recent take, see Jessica Mikels-Carrasco, "Sherwood Washburn's New Physical Anthropology: Rejecting The 'religion of Taxonomy,'" *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 34, no. 1–2 (2012): 79–101.

and even on interdisciplinary analyses of society, culture, and ways of life—hunting, for instance, was a constellation of behavior, evolution, and culture that attracted considerable interest. The new physical anthropology would attend particularly to theory, making meaningful contributions to the study of behavior, cultural forms and, most importantly, human genetics. The field would retain its methods, it would still examine bodies, collect blood, and dig up fossils, but it would lose its name. "Physical" anthropology had too much baggage—"biological" anthropology better encompassed its new aims and aspirations. Pitcairn Islanders appeared across the discourse of the new physical anthropology. Some of Shapiro's peers used his work to help dismantle a science founded on the classification of racial types, even as it relied on a latent racial typology.[234] Perhaps the strangest place Shapiro's Pitcairn Islanders appeared in the literature of the new physical anthropology, however, was next to a troop of baboons; Frank B. Livingstone read the early history of violence and murder on Pitcairn against competition for mates among his primate subjects.[235] Shapiro, by then a senior and eminent member of his profession, was among the new physical anthropology's most ambiguous adherents. He acknowledged the shift in nomenclature. At the AMNH, he replaced his "Hall of Man" with a "Hall of the Biology of Man, and he built a similar exhibition for the New York World's Fair.[236]

Shapiro's Pitcairners remained flexible and mutable objects of racial evidence in the era of the new physical anthropology. Proponents of the continuing utility of the race concept cited them, too, including some Hootonians, most prominently the University of Michigan's Stanley Garn, and the University of Pennsylvania's Carleton Coon. They self-described as

[234] George D. Snell, "Hybrids and History: The Role of Race and Ethnic Crossing in Individual and National Achievement," *Quarterly Review of Biology* 26, no. 4 (December, 1951): 331–347.
[235] Frank B. Livingstone, "Genetics, Ecology and the Origins of Incest and Exogamy," *Current Anthropology* 10, No. 1 (Feb. 1969): 59. By some accounts, violence between English and Polynesian settlers in Pitcairn's early history began as competition over spouses.
[236] "Hall of Human Biology," Shapiro Papers, Box 83, Folder "Anthropology notes, HLS Miscellaneous Topics."

"populationists" rather than racial typologists, but Coon especially held that large aggregates of humans living in relative isolation and passing on heredity traits constituted races more or less in the traditional sense.[237] In a joint 1955 article, they suggested that race was a permeable but nonetheless consistent category, useful for classifying relatively separated groups of humans around common characteristics. There were large "geographical" races in the traditional sense, and "local races" like the Pitcairners, which constituted the lower bound of the category's definition.[238] Pitcairn Islanders, after all, possessed a unique set of physical characteristics, variable among themselves, but distinguishable in aggregate from other populations—as Shapiro's work had proved. Pitcairn, as a natural laboratory of race, was an ambiguous one.[239] Shapiro himself never abandoned the utility of race, even as his conception of it shifted. As a pioneer of forensic anthropology, he suggested that categorizing skeletal remains into one of the three "major subdivisions of mankind" was relatively straightforward, even if these populations were quite internally variable and graded into each other.[240]

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[237] Coon held on vociferously to typological, polygenic racism, cf. Carleton Coon, *The Races of Europe* (New York: Macmillan, 1939); Carleton Coon, *The Origin of Races* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1963); John P. Jackson, Jr, "'In Ways Unacademical': The Reception of Carleton S. Coon's The Origin of Races," *Journal of the History of Biology* 34, no. 2 (June 1, 2001): 247–285; Peter Sachs Collopy, "Race Relationships: Collegiality and Demarcation in Physical Anthropology," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 51, no. 3 (Summer, 2015): 237-260. For a history of the turn to "population thinking," c.f. Michael A. Little, "Human Population Biology in the Second Half of the Twentieth Century," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (2012): S126–38; Jonathan Marks, "The Origins of Anthropological Genetics," *Current Anthropology* 53, no. S5 (April 1, 2012): S161–72; Jenny Bangham and Soraya de Chadarevian, "Human Heredity after 1945: Moving Populations Centre Stage," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science Part C: Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 47, Part A (September 2014): 45–49.

[238] Stanley M. Garn and Carleton S. Coon, "On the Number of Races of Mankind" *American Anthropologist* 57, no. 5 (October 1955): 999; see also the responses of both anthropologists to Andrzej Wiercinski and Tadeusz Bielicki, "The Racial Analysis of Human Populations in Relation to their Ethnogenesis" *Current Anthropology* 3, No. 1 (Feb., 1962): 29–46. Joined by Birdsell, they also defended race as a category in Carleton S. Coon, Stanley M. Garn and Joseph B. Birdsell, *Races: A Study of the Problems of Race Formation in Man* (Springfield: Charles Thomas, 1950).

[239] See also lingering eugenic interest in the Pitcairn case, as in Macfarlane Burnet, "Migration and Race from the Genetic Angle," *Eugenics Review* 51, no. 2 (July, 1959): 93–97.

[240] Harry Shapiro, "Forensic Anthropology," *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* vol. 318, Papers in Anthropology and Linguistics (December, 1978): 3–9.

The most widespread, if diffuse, influence of Shapiro's Pitcairn work was in the realm of anthropological pedagogy. The Pitcairn Islanders persisted as the subjects of a natural laboratory through their representations in college teaching. Classrooms and textbooks made the islanders a case study, in which they emerged not only as a lesson in hybrid vigor or human genetics, but as an example of *how* biological anthropology measured bodies, mixture, and difference.[241] Microcosms could stand in for macrocosms, pedigrees could be gathered and analyzed, and human beings were subject to the same forces as any population of model organisms. By the 1960s, Pitcairn Island was stodgy canon, and anthropologists could reminisce about a four-field anthropological education that included "a few fruit flies and Shapiro's study of Pitcairn Island" alongside a little linguistics and archaeology.[242] Indeed, it was in that capacity, on a PowerPoint slide in an introductory lecture in biological anthropology, that I first encountered Pitcairn Island a decade ago. By century's end, Pitcairn Islanders, as a fixation of professional anthropology, had completed a massive arc that spanned from the classroom to the southern Pacific, through scientific and public racial discourse, and finally back into the classroom again—the place where its exemplary status as a natural laboratory did some of its most efficacious work.

And yet, then as now, the natural laboratory of race and human genetics that students like myself encountered in their lectures emerged from complex human interactions in insular spaces. Harry Shapiro's natural experiment was built from his encounters with the Pitcairners, and the encounters of others who proceeded him. These experiences affected him, as they affected the science of race, though often subtly and ambiguously. Shapiro held out hope for a world like

[241] Cf. John Phillip Gillian, *The Ways of Men: An Introduction to Anthropology* (New York: Appleton – Century-Crofts, 194), 132; Juan Comos, *Manual of Physical Anthropology* (Springfield, Illinois: Charles Thomas, 1960), 170–171; Gabriel Lasker, *The Evolution of Man: A Brief Introduction to Physical Anthropology* (New York: Holt, 1961), 177–179; Alan Robin Beals, George Dearborn Spindler, and Louise Schaubel Spindler, *Culture in Process* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967), 23–24; Gretal Pelto and Pertti Pelto, *The Human Adventure: An Introduction to Anthropology* (London: MacMillan, 1976), 109; Robert Jurmain et al., *introduction to Physical Anthropology* (Belmont, Ca: Wadsworth, 2011), 448.

[242] Sally Falk Moore, "Part of the Story: A Memoir," *Ethnos* 70, no. 4 (December 1, 2005): 538–566.

Pitcairn, hospitable, adaptive, a seamless human blend in which the prejudice and factionalism of race dissolved into meaninglessness—even as he held to the reality of race as not just a social but a biological and even essential category. Like many scholars made famous by a successful project, his career and his identity remained forever entangled with the spaces and people he visited as a young anthropologist; his obsession, and the Pitcairners' hospitable accommodation of his captivation, made him. "I did not discover Pitcairn and am in no way responsible for its existence," he wrote, explaining that it sometimes seemed to both science and the public as though he was; but the two had become "so closely connected in the public consciousness that to mention the one was to suggest the other."[243]

[243] Harry Shapiro, "The Pitcairn Islanders," (unpublished lecture, n.d.), Shapiro Papers, Box labeled "Pitcairn Island Work – Press Clippings."

# Chapter 5 | Recording and Speaking

**Linguists, Entangled Tapes, and the Languages of Fieldwork**

We pull a reel from its tin, mount it on a player, and unspool some of its black tape before attaching it to a receiver. With a hefty mechanical click we press rewind; the motor whirs until the end of the tape flickers repeatedly around in circles. We pull the tape through the tone arm and bind it to an empty reel. With another metallic click we press play, starting the machine. An electric motor moves the reels forward again, more slowly this time and more deliberately. Low static vibrates through the speakers until a voice emerges. It is soon followed by another. We hear two people talking with each other around a microphone.

1. **M** Good-day to you!
   **P** ˌwɒtəˈwɛːi ˋju | *How are you?*
2. **M** Oh, I'm all right. How are you?
   **P** ai ˌfiːlen ˋsɪkɪ | ai ˋtˢu ˋsɔ | ai ˋfiːvʌ | ‘ɛs haː ˋgrrʔp | *I'm feeling sick; I'm very ill; I have a cold; it's influenza.*
3. **M** how long have you been feeling unwell?
   **P** ai ˈbɪn ˌsɔː | sɪns ˋjɛsˌtədeˌ | (h)a ˈʔʌdəwʌn ha ˈʔʌdəwʌn | *I've been ill for the past three days.*
4. **M** Three days, eh? Are you coming my way?
   **P** öːˋjes | *Oh yes!*
5. **M** Where are you going?
   **P** ˈdaʊn tedˋsaːid | *down to the other side of the Island.*
6. **M** Down to the other side of the island, eh? What for?
   **P** fə ˈeʃ | ən ʔa ˋoːrendʒ | ˌtek ˌaːʊt ə ˋʃɪp | *For fish, and for the oranges to take out to the next ship.*

*  *  *

What you have just read, of course, is not the record of an audiotape itself, but rather a written transcription of an interview recorded on audiotape. The text above, rendered in both

standard English and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), was transcribed by English phonetician A. C. Grimson, who listened to the tape a decade after it was made.[1] Grimson tells us that "**M**" signifies the voice of Albert Wadkins Moverley, a schoolteacher on Pitcairn Island. "**P**" represents the voice of a "young Pitcairnese girl" who, as an anonymous informant, shall remain unknown—though Grimson tells us she was "about fifteen." Because we cannot listen to the tape itself, we will rely on Grimson's inscription to recover its content. **M** and **P**'s conversation proceeds from here along similar lines: Moverley asks the girl a string of questions about life on the island, they describe a meal, they see a ship arrive, and they watch Pitcairn's men launch boats to meet it. Its subject matter might strike the listener as quotidian, but it is notable as the first interview ever tape-recorded for the purpose of studying the language of Pitcairn Island. It was, it should be added, something of a ruse. Moverley and his former pupil staged their conversation not on the island itself but in distant Wellington, New Zealand, in 1951. Their running descriptions were built not from direct observation, but from shared recollection. Though the record of a brief, if carefully-staged, encounter, Moverley's tape recording achieved a long afterlife as a document of the island's culture, especially once transcribed and translated into text.

Moverley's conversation with his informant took place mostly in two languages: what this chapter will, for convenience sake, call English and *Pitkern*.[2] Once in the possession of professional linguists, however, their interview soon went through a further set of transcriptions and translations, of which Grimson's rendering above is only one. It was transcribed into English

[1] A. C. Grimson, "The Pitcairnese Text," in A.S.C. Ross and A.W. Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1964): 121.

[2] Whether and to what extent Pitkern, Norf'k, and English constitute separate languages remains a matter of linguistic debate. Some islanders prefer *Norfolk* and *Pitkern*, and some prefer *Norf'k*. *Pitcairnese* and *Norfolkese* were usages by outsiders that have since faded. Some linguists, as the chapter will detail, made distinctions between "broad" Norfolk, "modified" Norfolk, and other forms. This chapter will use *Pitkern* and *Norf'k*, following recent publications, or sometimes simply "the language."

and into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), transferred from one tape to another—and through other acts of interpretation transformed from raw data to linguistic theory. This chapter is about linguistic encounters like the one between Moverley and his informant, the recordings they produced, and the languages in which they were performed, translated, and understood. Though Moverley's work was the first of its kind, it was soon followed by other research and other tapes. From the second half of the century onward, linguists investigated the lives, language, and culture of Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders with remarkable persistence, a scrutiny that continues to the present. Many of those social scientists took up the idea of the "natural laboratory" to configure Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands into field sites in which to study the development of contact languages; many observers contended that Pitkern and Norf'k were pidgins or creoles formed from the fusion of Tahitian and English.[3] The islands' isolation and well-documented history, they argued, might make them especially conducive places for understanding how those contact languages formed over time. As one eminent creolist wrote in 1975: "Pitcairn Island English with its offshoot on Norfolk is of extraordinary interest because it offers as near a laboratory case of creole dialect formation as we are ever likely to have."[4]

Linguists who took up research on the "hybrid" language of Pitcairn and Norfolk had a great deal to prove. Classically, like the philology from which it arose, early professional linguistics was most interested in "pure" languages. Pidgins, creoles, and contact languages were discounted as corruptions and jargons; their description was the domain of missionaries and traders, agents of affairs who learned and spoke them for pragmatic rather than philosophical

[3] The definition of creoles and pidgins varies over time and between linguists. Roughly, a pidgin is a second language formed to enabled communication between groups; once it becomes a native language it is termed a creole.
[4] John Reinecke, "Pitcairnese and Norfolk," in *A Bibliography of Pidgin and Creole Languages* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1975): 590–592.

reasons.[5] Indeed, so maligned were contact languages that Robert Henry Codrington, who lived on Norfolk Island as the head of the Melanesian Mission and who wrote the first substantial study of Melanesian languages, ignored it completely and derisively.[6] It was only during the middle of the twentieth century that professional linguists began to systematically study contact languages in sites like Pitcairn and Norfolk. John Reinecke, in some respects the father of modern creole studies, produced his early work on the Hawai'ian creole in the 1930s; then, during the Second World War, knowledge of pidgin languages on Pacific islands suddenly became of considerable strategic interest, and the government sponsored research into them.[7] Building on their wartime experience, American linguists Robert Hall and Douglas Taylor led the development of a new field of contact language studies during the years that followed.[8] By the 1950s, a growing number of linguists entered the new subfield and began conducting studies of sites like Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands. That early generation of specialists in pidgins and creoles pioneered the professionalization of pidgin and creole studies, fighting to legitimize the study of these long-stigmatized languages.

Linguists were thus enmeshed in a complex disciplinary politics. But as soon as they entered the lives of their research subjects, they became inextricably entangled in the social and political realities of their field spaces, too. Albert Moverely was particularly embedded in Pitcairn's politics. He came to the island not as a linguist but as a government teacher, and in that

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[5] The history of linguistics was long dominated by linguists' internal accounts, e.g. Dell H. Hymes, *Essays in the History of Linguistic Anthropology* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 1983), or E. F. K. Koerner, *Essays in the History of Linguistics* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing, 2004). For linguists' colonial situation, see Joseph Errington, "Colonial Linguistics," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001): 19–39.

[6] Peter Mühlhäusler, "The College of St. Barnabas on Norfolk Island and its Languages: An Early Example of Missionary Language Planning," *Language and Communication* 30, no. 4(October 2010) 225–239.

[7] John E. Reinecke, "Marginal Languages" (PhD dissertation Yale, 1937).

[8] For an introduction to the history of creole and pidgin language studies, see John Holm, *An Introduction to Pidgins and Creoles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000) and Michel DeGraff, "Against Creole Exceptionalism," *Language* 79, no. 2 (June 2003): 391–410. See also Charles Stewart, ed., *Creolization: History, Ethnography, Theory* (Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press, 2007), which includes a history co-authored by Peter Mühlhäusler, who has himself studied Norfolk Island for thirty years.

capacity quickly became caught up in the island's local and colonial politics. Although he soon left the island to enter academic linguistics, he could never fully extricate himself from Pitcairn's fractious affairs. Neither could the social scientists who followed him avoid insular politics; though not directly affiliated with the colonial state, they inherited the conditions engendered by a century of previous research and government intervention.

At the same time, both island communities found themselves struggling to assert their cultural and political autonomy. In the decades after the Second World War, Pitcairn and especially Norfolk came under growing administrative influence, while the concurrent decolonization of neighboring islands put their political futures in doubt. Some Norfolk Islanders welcomed a more normalized relationships with the Australian government, while others worried that it meant an end to their political and cultural independence. The islands' demographics were also becoming troubling. Pitcairn's population gradually began to shrink, as young people left for educations and careers in New Zealand and failed to return. On Norfolk, the "Pitcairn People" found themselves living next to larger and larger numbers of "strangers," mostly Australians—by midcentury the populations had achieved a rough parity. On both islands, the local language was dying, in some instances literally beaten out of pupils by government teachers. And so, when Pitcairn Islanders spoke with interviewers, they spoke with men and women who were potential allies in their own struggles for cultural legitimization or political autonomy. But they had given interviews before, and as careful managers of their relationships with outsiders, they knew that outside interest could produce negative portrayals and undesirable consequences.

Linguists entered that complex insular and disciplinary terrain armed with tape recorders. By the 1950s, recording devices in social scientific research already had a long history, including

the famous use of wax cylinders at the end of the nineteenth century—though of course pens and pencils were recording devices, too, and were always the more ubiquitous technology.[9] Portable magnetic reel-to-reel tape recorders emerged as consumer products in the early 1950s and soon became widespread research tools, not least because they were affordable and easily transportable.[10] Crucially, their recording media—spools of dark, magnetized tape wound around plastic reels—were compact, easily duplicable, and readily disseminated to colleagues around the globe. In the three decades following Moverley's interview, Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders were interviewed on tape by at least seven sets of academics.[11] Along with written field notes, wordlists, and historical documents, these reels comprised the principal data from which linguists built the academic study of the islands' languages—and they can serve as a primary source from which to understand the making of linguistic knowledge in these two island laboratories.

Magnetic tapes are, like all archival documents, complex and sometimes problematic objects. They speak from an ephemeral past through the formidable static of distance, and they are, with their transcriptions, both the documents and products of complex cross-cultural encounters.[12] Accordingly, this chapter will treat ontology of field recordings as a historical

[9] Raymond M. Lee, "Recording Technologies and the Interview in Sociology, 1920–2000," *Sociology* 38, no. 5 (December 2004): 869–889; Erika Brady, *A Spiral Way: How the Phonograph Changed Ethnography* (Oxford: University Press of Mississippi, 1999); Gregory Radick, "Primate Language and the Playback Experiment, in 1890 and 1980," *Journal of the History of Biology* 38, no. 3 (November 2005): 461–493.

[10] David Morton, *Off the Record: The Technology and Culture of Sound Recording in America* (New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1999); Eric D. Daniel, C. Denis Mee, and Mark H. Clark, *Magnetic Recording: The First 100 Years* (New York: IEEE Press, 1999); and David Morton, *Sound Recording: The Life Story of a Technology* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004).

[11] These include the American Polynesianist Donald Marshall on Norfolk Island in 1951, New Zealand ornithologist Gordon Williams on Pitcairn in 1956, Australian linguist Elwyn Flint on Norfolk Island in 1957, two teams from the University of Otago under archaeologist Peter Gathercole and anthropologist John Harré on Pitcairn in 1963 and 1964, Swedish linguist Arne Zettersten on Norfolk in 1970, writer and linguist Anders Källgård on Pitcairn in 1980, and Macquarie University graduate student Shirley Harrison on Norfolk between 1970 and 1982.

[12] The tapes, as objects that are understood by several different communities, exist as a species of boundary objects; as in Susan Leigh Star and James R. Griesemer's nomenclature: "Institutional Ecology, 'Translations' and Boundary Objects: Amateurs and Professionals in Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, 1907–39," Social Studies of Science 19, no. 3 (August 1989): 387–420.

problem in its own right.[13] In producing interviews, linguists, Pitcairn Islanders, and Norfolk Islanders—each pursuing their own aims—became entangled in each others' social and political worlds. In the voices and performances encoded onto tape, we can hear not only the basic material from which the scientific description of a language was born, but also the work of informants to preserve and guard their culture. In the silences between their utterances, we can hear not only the practical effort of linguists to record the voices of their informants, but also the careful negotiation of their relationships with their subjects, with their societies, and with the long history of scrutiny on both islands.[14] In the movement of these tapes from field sites to universities across the globe, we can see the work of linguists to produce and secure knowledge about a very distant and inaccessible place.

Most importantly, however, through these texts we can recover the work of linguists and their informants to produce a new, shared "language" of fieldwork, as interviewers and interviewees collaborated to articulate new recording practices. It is one of the ironies of the history of linguistics that the study of contact languages necessitated the formation of *its own* contact languages; scientists and subjects, unsure of each other and pursuing their own ambitions, improvised in the space of the recorded encounter new procedures for capturing and encoding the islands' culture. In treating the site of linguistic recording as a "trading zone," and the practices and negotiations of that work as "contact languages," I am borrowing from science studies' own appropriation of those terms by returning them to their original context. Peter Galison wrote that "two groups can agree on rules of exchange even if they ascribe utterly

[13] In treating their ontology as scientific objects, I draw too from Lorraine Daston, *Biographies of Scientific Objects* (University of Chicago Press, 2000) and *Things That Talk: Object Lessons from Art and Science* (New York: Zone Books, 2007).

[14] The close reading field of field recordings as the archive of scientific practice bears an unintended resemblance to ethnomethodology and conversation analysis in science studies. C.F. Michael Lynch, "Laboratory Shop Talk," in *Art and Artifact in Laboratory Science: A Study of Shop Work and Shop Talk in a Research Laboratory* (Boston: Routledge, 1985), 142–178.

different significance to the objects being exchanged," and so it was with linguistic recording—scientists and subjects understood their encounters very differently and sought to derive their own rewards from them. "In an even more sophisticated way," Galison adds, "cultures in interaction frequently establish contact languages, systems of discourse that can vary from the most function-specific jargons, through semispecific pidgins, to full-fledged creoles."[15] Galison used the notion of contact language metaphorically, and so will I in these pages to describe how, in the human encounters occasioned by field recording, scientists and their subjects worked dialogically to develop the practices from which interviews were made. In the case of Moverley and his former pupil in the excerpt above, it meant the hastily improvised projection of interviewer and subject to a distant and jointly recollected space. In the case of the fieldworkers who followed him, it would mean extensive negotiations to produce new and lasting idioms of fieldwork. That new language was often necessary in order to deal practically and pragmatically with the island's long history of observation and scrutiny.

This chapter will narrate the complicated work of managing, translating, and trespassing the boundaries between languages and cultures both in the field and in linguistic science by narrating the experiences of three protagonists. The first, Albert Moverley, is the teacher whose voice we have already heard in the transcript above. He came to Pitcairn in 1948 and, like many of the island's teachers, set about studying his pupils and their families. He went on to pursue a PhD in linguistics at the University of Birmingham and, with his advisor, produced the first monograph on the language of Pitcairn and Norfolk. The second is a fieldworker, Elwyn Flint, an Australian linguist from the University of Queensland, who conducted some of the first in-depth scientific investigation into the language of Norfolk Island in 1957 and who maintained an

[15] Peter Galison, *Image and Logic: A Material Culture of Microphysics* (University of Chicago Press, 1997), 783. See also Michael E. Gorman, *Trading Zones and Interactional Expertise: Creating New Kinds of Collaboration* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010).

interest in the island for years afterward. The third is Shirley Harrison, a Norfolk Islander herself, who earned a linguistics PhD at Sydney's Macquarie University after studying her family's native language over the course of the 1970s. Much of her work was on code-switching: the ability of speakers to reorient from one language to another, often mid-sentence, and often in response to shifts in situation or context. She became a consummate code-switcher in her own right, pivoting adeptly between the languages of island, mainland, scientist, and subject. Taken together, the efforts of teacher, fieldworker, and code switcher comprise not just a history of language study on Pitcairn and Norfolk, but a situated history of fieldwork, its texts, its practices, and its languages and idioms. Let us unravel that history, then, by following threads of their entangled tape recordings—wherever they may lead.

**Teacher**

The work of Albert W. Moverley, the first person to record the islanders' language on tape, is suggestive of how deeply entangled the production of linguistic knowledge was with local and colonial realities. Moverley was born in New Plymouth, New Zealand, in 1908, the son of a surveyor.[16] He earned a B.A. from the University of New Zealand in 1927 and an M.A. in history from the University of Otago in 1928 before becoming a teacher, moving from school to school in New Zealand over the next two decades.[17] In 1947 he applied for a position as the government instructor and headmaster on Pitcairn Island and was chosen over sixty other

[16] Moverley's biography is laid out in the preface to A.S.C. Ross and A.W. Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language* (London: Andrew Deutsch, 1964), 7–8.
[17] Letter from J.W. Hayward to A.S.C. Ross, July 25 1961, Letters Additional Collection, Cadbury Research Library Special Collections, University of Birmingham (Hereafter L.Add), 1609; letter from E.G. Kedgley to A.S.C. Ross, July 31 1961, L.Add 1612.

candidates—it was thought that his experience in rural schools and with Māori students would be applicable to the island's unique circumstances. He, his wife, and daughter were told to pack a small number of belongings and travel to Fiji, there to meet a ship bound for Pitcairn.

Pitcairn Island's school had until recently been in the hands of the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Most of the island converted to the faith in the late nineteenth century, and since then Pitcairn maintained a special status in Adventist literature as the church's preeminent missionary success story in the Pacific.[18] Pitcairners themselves proselytized on other Pacific islands for a period, and the Adventists named a celebrated missionary ship after them. In 1938, the island school was refounded by two SDA missionaries, Fred Percival Ward and his wife Myrtle, who remained on the island as educational and spiritual leaders for much of the next decade.[19] When the Wards left after the Second World War, however, the church had difficulty staffing the post. With the island's coffers replenished by an uptick in trade with passenger liners and the increased sale of postage stamps, the colonial administrators at the Western Pacific High Commission decided to set up a government-funded and administered school on the island. They would eliminate the SDA education and instead introduce a New Zealand curriculum—and establish a more permanent government presence.[20]

In Suva, Fiji, the Moverleys met with the colonial administration before boarding the *Awahou* for Pitcairn Island. In addition to the Moverley's personal belongings, the ship was loaded with the prefabricated pieces of a modern school and a schoolteacher's house. Three "skilled Indian craftsmen" sailed with them to help construct the buildings on Pitcairn.[21] They

[18] Dennis Steley, "Unfinished: The Seventh-Day Adventist Mission in the South Pacific, Excluding Papua New Guinea, 1886-1986" (PhD dissertation, University of Auckland, 1989), 59–64.
[19] Dennis Steley, "Unfinished," 314–319.
[20] Brian Freeston, "Note on Pitcairn," April 14, 1949, 8, in The National Archives of the United Kingdom (hereafter TNA), CO 537/4933.
[21] Ibid.

arrived at Pitcairn in January 1948 the same way all visitors did; the *Awahou* waited offshore while the island men sent out launches to meet them. The Pitcairners' first interaction with their new government teacher was to load him and his family into their boats, along with the mass of material provided for their house and school. Once ashore, the men winched or carried the building materials from the landing place up the steep "Hill of Difficulty" to Adamstown, while the Moverleys stood watching with the island's women and children.

Though there to replace the Adventist teachers, Moverley came to the island with a missionary sensibility of his own. In Suva, the high commissioner for the Western Pacific had described Moverley's role as that of "universal guide, philosopher, and friend to the islanders" and assumed that, as an educated man among uneducated islanders, he would emerge as a natural leader.[22] But the teacher's place in the community was uncertain. In a very literal sense, he operated outside, or even above, the people he came to serve. The new school and teacher's house were built on a hill at the edge of the settlement, not far from Christian's Cave, where the mutinous leader had supposedly once looked down upon his new colony in tormented seclusion. As a government report noted, "the average Pitcairn home is roughly built, unpainted, un-cared for, and decidedly uncomfortable"—while Moverley's house was large and well-appointed, with multiple rooms, a veranda, hot and cold water, and even a refrigerator.[23] Unlike the established Pitcairn families, however, the teacher had no land of his own to farm—most of his food came from exchanges with islanders. "This type of assistance can be spasmodic however," noted a later teacher, and "they will not accept anything in return which makes it rather embarrassing."[24]

The Moverleys' political standing was just as tentative. The island's local leader was Andrew Young. Officially, he had been appointed the island secretary with support from

[22] Colonial Office Despatch, June 16, 1949, TNA, CO 537/4933.
[23] J.B. Claydon, "Report on Pitcairn Island," January 30, 1954, TNA, CO 1036/114.
[24] "Education in Pitcairn Island," 2, TNA, CO 1036/739.

members of the colonial administration, an ambiguous position that only partially reflected the unofficial power his family exerted in island politics. The Moverleys considered him the "island dictator" and their chief opponent in efforts to reform, secularize, and modernize the island. In an interview with the Colonial Office after their time on Pitcairn, Jane Moverley complained that "this man and his supporters have in fact for many years been the rulers of Pitcairn" and that island leaders were "thrust into office by Young (albeit under the cloak of free elections) and as a consequence have been permitted to exercise little or no authority in the execution of their office."[25] The Moverleys instead found allies among a set of Pitcairners who had stronger ties to the outside world. Floyd McCoy, who had spent decades away from Pitcairn and had married an Australian woman, became an unpopular chief of police with their backing. A government report noted that McCoy's tendency to lean on his foreign experience while reforming the island doomed him to "yousa making big" attacks from his political opponents.[26] The Moverleys also befriended other "strangers" from abroad, including postmaster Roy Clark, his wife Hyacinth, and nurse Evelyn Totenhofer, whom Andrew Young blamed for the death of his adopted daughter.[27] Aligned with the island's political minority and its resident foreigners, the new teacher further reinforced his outsider status.

The Moverleys' most fraught relationship was with the Seventh Day Adventist church, which had dominated religious life on the island for the last seventy years. Shortly before his arrival, missionaries Fred and Myrtle Ward themselves had returned to Pitcairn to rejuvenate the Adventist mission and to maintain what influence on education they could. Their vision seemed incompatible with that of the Moverleys, and battle lines between church and state began to form in the small community of only 130 people. According to Herbert Ford, the Adventist historian

[25] Letter from Gordon Williams, October 21, 1952, 3, TNA, CO 1023/194.
[26] Claydon "Report on Pitcairn Island," 6.
[27] Claydon "Report on Pitcairn Island," 19.

of Pitcairn, Albert Moverley denounced the religion soon after his arrival, threw Adventist religious texts into the sea, and vowed to remove the influence of the church from the island.[28] In any case, the Moverleys certainly were no friends of the Wards and held a dim view of the church. Jane Moverley, who imagined herself as a kind of "social worker amongst the islanders," declared in an angry letter to the Colonial Office that Adventism was being used as a "weapon" on the island, and that the Pitcairners needed instead a "down to earth guidance which is not so hopelessly beyond the limited heights to which semi-Polynesians can aspire."[29] Albert Moverley wrote critically about the Wards himself in his reports to the colonial administration, criticism that subsequently led the High Commission to refuse an extension of the Wards' permission to reside on the island. In a report to the Colonial Office, the High Commissioner explained that "experience has shown that the island is too small to contain peacefully more than one stranger in a position of moral authority." The Wards left Pitcairn in 1951 after the Colonial Office revoked their residency permit.[30]

The Pitcairners had reason to fear political intervention by outsiders. In the years after the Second World War, Britain faced a new imperial reality in the Pacific. Larger colonies were on an unsteady path to decolonization. Smaller colonies such as Pitcairn, stranded further and further on the far periphery of Britain's administrative reach, presented bureaucratic burdens—the awkward residuum of empire.[31] The Colonial Office and its successors spent the decades after the war searching for a means to divest themselves of responsibility for colonies like

[28] Herbert Ford, *Pitcairn*: *Port of Call* (Angwin, CA: Hawser Titles, 1996), 281. Ford derives much of his material from close personal contacts with the island, as well as the impressive archive of Pitcairn material he has collected at the Pitcairn Islands Study Center at Pacific Union College.
[29] Letter from Jane Moverley to R. Garvey, November 18, 1952, TNA, CO 1023/194.
[30] Savingram, from assistant high commissioner to secretary of state for the colonies, March 19, 1952, TNA, CO 1023/194.
[31] The literature on post-war decolonization is far too massive to rehearse here; for its impact on smaller overseas territories, see Robert Aldrich and John Connell, *The Last Colonies* (Cambridge University Press, 1998). Connell himself has written a sociological article on emigration from Pitcairn: John Connell, "The End Ever Nigh: Contemporary Population Change on Pitcairn Island," *GeoJournal* 16 (March, 1988): 193–200.

Pitcairn.[32] A transfer to one of the dominions was a possibility; though when Moverley was tasked with gauging the community's favorability toward a potential transfer to New Zealand, he reported that the islanders felt "indignant, disappointed, and almost betrayed."[33] Certainly, the islanders understood that they were under surveillance, and that their teacher was the government's man on the island, reporting on conditions and sentiments. Would he convince the Colonial Office to strip the island of its SDA presence, to change its government, to consign them to administration by Australia or New Zealand, or even shut down the island completely?

Surveillance by teachers on the island was not only political, however. While on Pitcairn, Moverley became fascinated by the islanders' speech and began assembling a word list. He spent hours with Floyd McCoy and the Clarks, discussing the language and making a game of translating English nursery rhymes into the local language. Moverley was hardly alone in taking an interest. During the 1950s, every government school teacher who followed produced some sort of academic or scientific record of the islanders in addition to his government reports. Roy Sanders, who took Moverley's place in 1951, wrote to his superiors in Fiji to announce that he would produce a thesis "on the Behavior Patterns of an Isolated People," emphasizing that "no one here will ever know about it, of course, and the method will by psycho-anthropological."[34] He eventually completed it for an M.A. in sociology at the University of Auckland in 1953.[35] His successor, George Allen, administered intelligence tests to his pupils to address a longstanding interest in the islanders' mental fitness.[36] The next teacher, Alan Wotherspoon, requisitioned a tape recorder from the Colonial Office "to capture for posterity the unique speech characteristics

[32] See especially the colonial office files CO 537/4001 and CO 537/1859 in TNA.
[33] Colonial Office Despatch of May 3, 1949, TNA, CO 537/4933.
[34] Letter from Roy Sanders to H.A.C. Dobbs, July 7, 1952, TNA, CO 1009/811.
[35] Roy Sanders, "Our Island, Being a Study of Pitcairn Community in Transition" (master's thesis, University of New Zealand, 1953).
[36] Claydon "Report on Pitcairn Island," 80–81.

of these islanders."[37] His replacement, Ernest Schubert, in turn wrote accounts of present-day life on the island for government and academic publications.[38]

Pitcairn's language had long been an object of fascination and derision, described by visitors either as a curiosity or a sign of the islanders' supposed degeneration. Colonial administrators treated it mostly as an annoyance. "Conversation I always found difficult," wrote one bureaucrat in 1954,

> *mainly because of the Islanders' grave vocabulary deficiencies, but also with many through language differences. Some of the older inhabitants appear to have forgotten the English they once knew (or could not be bothered using it) and used Pitcairnese exclusively in their conversation. The 'language' is unintelligible to the outsider. It was mortifying, perhaps in a council meeting, after explaining laboriously some point or other, to find out that the island secretary or chief magistrate would have to turn around and explain it again in Pitcairnese for the benefit of some members. . . . Culturally (in a strict sense of the word) I am inclined to say that with few exceptions the development is not far beyond the moronic stage.*[39]

Other administrators, however, celebrated it as an idiosyncratic feature of island life. In a Reuters article about the island in 1950, assistant high commissioner for the Western Pacific Adrian Dobbs told an interviewer about the islanders' distinctive language. He described it as "a sort of shorthand English. For instance, what sounds like 'eye kawa' means 'I can't tell you anything about that.'"[40] It was a colonial curiosity, rendered as pleasurable factoid for the consumption of English-speaking readers.

Thousands of miles away in Birmingham, England, linguistics professor Alan Strode Campbell Ross read that line in his early edition of the *Times*, or at least that is how he recounted the moment in his later book on the Pitcairnese language. "This—to me incomprehensible—

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[37] Letter from A. Wotherspoon to Harry Brattain, Pitcairn Island, January 27, 1956, TNA, CO 1036/114.
[38] Ernest Schubert, *The Pitcairn Island Story* (London: Longmans, 1961) and "Pitcairn Island Today," in *The Pitcairnese Language* by Ross and Moverley, 26–36.
[39] Claydon, "Report on Pitcairn Island," 8.
[40] A phrase one imagines colonial administrators heard a great deal. The wire article appeared in a number of papers; I have drawn my quote from "The 'Bounty' Bible Returns To Pitcairn Island," *The Sydney Morning Herald* (April 22, 1950), 2.

remark, and all that might underlie it, seemed to merit linguistic inquiry," he recalled.[41] Indeed, it so aroused his curiosity that he wrote to Dobbs to ask for more information. Dobbs connected him with Moverley, who told the English professor that he was very interested in the language and had already done some work on it. Ross was impressed enough to invite Moverley to Birmingham to begin a doctoral dissertation in linguistics and a thesis on what they called "Pitcairnese." The invitation came at a propitious time. After two years on Pitcairn, the HCWP declined to renew Moverley's teaching contract. His antagonism toward the Wards and the island leadership had been too much; he had made too many enemies. "Had the Moverleys been more moderate in their approaches," wrote the high commissioner, "the information and advice which they are so anxious to impart would have been welcome."[42] The Moverleys took a steamer home, and the Youngs vowed that there would be trouble if they ever returned.[43]

Before leaving New Zealand for Britain, the former school teacher took his last opportunity to gather firsthand data, even if without any sort of professional training. Wellington was home to a growing Pitcairn community, and it was among them that he found and tape-recorded his informant, the girl of fifteen who had only recently emigrated. They spoke together into a microphone about the island they had both left behind, describing in the present tense a world from which Moverley had been effectively exiled, but about which he aimed to become expert. When they were finished, Moverley took the tape from the recorder and packed it, his field notes, and his family's belongings for the move to Birmingham. There, Moverley met his doctoral supervisor in person for the first time.

[41] Ross and Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language*, 7.
[42] Letter from the high commissioner to the secretary of state for the colonies, September 16, 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.
[43] Letter from G. Allen to the governor, Fiji, July 4 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.

Alan Strode Campbell Ross was the professor of linguistics at the University of Birmingham.[44] The position was created especially for him in 1951, making him one of the first British academics to hold a chair specifically in linguistics.[45] He was an expert philologist, working most famously on the development of the Germanic languages, though he was versed in theoretical linguistics and wrote on phonemics. During the early 1950s, he emerged as a widely-read expert on markers of class differences in the English language, the codes and signifiers that separated the wealthy from the aspirational.[46] He was thus not only a member of a founding generation of modern academic linguistics in Britain, but literally an expert in proper English—and so had sufficient credibility to supervise a thesis on the study of what was then still widely regarded as an improper jargon.

Moverley began his dissertation under Ross's supervision in 1952, funded by a scholarship Ross had secured for him. That project would be built, in large measure, on the material Moverley had brought from Pitcairn and New Zealand: his notes, a glossary in amateur orthography he had compiled on the island, and the recording he had made in Wellington. However, in addition to his data, Moverley also brought with him his political entanglements. He and his wife spent much of the academic year 1952–1953 insisting that the Colonial Office intervene more strongly in island affairs—which they described as moral, political, and sexual anarchy.[47] The Moverleys urged the administration to support their friend, island policeman

[44] E. G. Stanley, "Ross, Alan Strode Campbell (1907–1980)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/69690, accessed September 2, 2014.
[45] M.A.K. Halliday held him to be first, though usually that figure is thought to be J.R. Firth. See: "M.A.K. Halliday," in *Linguistics in Britain: Personal Histories*, eds. Keith Brown and Vivien Law (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002): 121.
[46] Alan S. C. Ross, "Linguistic Class-indicators in Present-Day English." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 55, no. 1 (1954): 20–56; republished in Nancy Mitford, eds. *Noblesse Oblige: An Enquiry into the Identifiable Characteristics of the English Aristocracy* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956).
[47] Kathy Marks suggested that the Moverleys knew about the abuse of minors on the island and that they were ignored by the administration in *Lost Paradise* (New York: Free Press, 2009). While the Moverleys complained

Floyd McCoy, who remained caught in a political struggle with Andrew Young. Jane Moverley also pressed the government to facilitate the divorce and emigration of Alta Warren, who she said was being abused by the husband she had been forced to marry. Rumors suggest Alta was being kept prisoner on Pitcairn.[48] The administration wrote off the Moverleys' critiques as a petty annoyance. One administrator recorded that her "attitude for exaggeration is well noted."[49] The Colonial Office made it a policy to purposely avoid her as she was becoming "a source of embarrassment.[50] Unaware of the administration's negative opinion, Ross and Moverley asked the Colonial Office for a grant to fund their project on Pitcairn's language. "I cannot see the least reason why, even if we could, we should contribute funds for Mr. Moverley," wrote one Colonial Office official. "The excuse for this remarkable excursion, i.e. the thesis on the Pitcairnese Language (which I must say sounded to me, when Mr. Young was here, simply like bad English), seems to me most unlikely to be of any practical value to us or to Pitcairn."[51]

Moverley grew increasingly bitter as his relationship with the administration soured and the antagonism of his enemies on Pitcairn increased. In 1953, he complained that a shipment of geological samples he had requested from the island for colleagues at the university had been purposely withheld by Young and his allies. In a letter about it to the Colonial Office, he launched into a tirade about Pitcairn politics. He was being misunderstood, he said—or rather, the Colonial Office had failed to understand the islanders' codes and signals. He urged the administration to send an official to investigate the island, and that this official bear in mind the island's languages and practices of obfuscation, as he saw them:

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about rampant illegitimacy, I found no specific reference to child abuse among the Moverley correspondence in the National Archives. Maidia Moverley wrote an account of her time on the island which her daughter herself published as *Our Pitcairn Story* (New Zealand: self-published, 2007) a half-century later.

[48] Letter from Joan (sic) Moverley to her MP, GW Lloyd, May 28, 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.

[49] Note by RH Holden, June 10, 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.

[50] Letter from Carvey, December 9, 1952, TNA, CO 1023/194.

[51] Note to Kirkman, January 15, 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.

> *Let him know that the hallmark of the successful Pitcairner is the ability to "hypocrit the stranger". (Quote is a standard expression.) Let him realize that in a month's stay with ears and eyes wide open all the time he might have a faint glimmering of the truth about Pitcairn. After three years there he would be beginning to get at the basic facts. Let all his statements and commitments be confirmed in writing and made public in his hearing, with nothing left for after his departure, unless he wants his every word perverted. Let his sentences be simple and his words be short. Let him remember that, despite his impressions to the contrary, the Pitcairners are basically and psychologically Polynesian, and that, though they may speak intelligible English, they think in Pitcairnese. Let him not ask negative questions, for the Pitcairn idiom in answering is the opposite of ours, so that 'yes' means 'no' and vice versa.*[52]

That Moverley, in his tirade, should proscribe a field methodology as a corrective to political problems was no accident. The problem of knowing the "truth" about Pitcairn was, for him at least, professional, political, and deeply personal all at once. It was a problem of language and meaning, of understanding informants who, it seemed to him, worked to belie understanding. Moverley, through a racial lens, thought he had deciphered their codes and significations, even as the colonial administration had failed to do so.

A. W. Moverley died unexpectedly in late 1953. He was survived by his wife, his daughter, and his unfinished thesis. Ross, still interested in the language, took up the project himself. On the basis of the unfinished manuscript and the data his student had gathered, especially the 1951 Wellington tape, he set to work writing analyses of his own. His first publication was an article on the island's toponymy.[53] Ross used Moverley's toponymic data to argue that place names on Pitcairn were "pristine," meaning that the moment of their naming and the conditions leading to it were known historically, as were uses of those names in the time since. As such, isolated but well-recorded Pitcairn constituted a perfect test case for the study of

[52] Letter from A.W. Moverley to the Colonial Office, August 23, 1953, TNA, CO 1023/194.
[53] A. S. C. Ross and A. W. Moverley, "Note on Some Pristine Place-Names of Pitcairn Island," in *Actes et Memoires*, vol. 2 (presented at the Cinqquieme Congres International de Toponymie et d'Anthroponymie, Salamanca, 1955).

language formation from the moment of its inception, a perfect laboratory for linguistic research. In producing a monograph on the language as a whole, however, Ross immediately faced two problems. First, the data he had at hand were scarce—only a tape, an amateur glossary, and a few notes—and Ross was not able to undertake fieldwork half a world away. Second, he had no knowledge of Tahitian. He was able to redress the latter by learning some of the language in Paris in 1955. To redress the former, he enlisted the help of a network of linguists and informants around the world. Among them was Elwyn Flint, a linguist at the University of Queensland.

**Fieldworker**

Elwyn Flint, a linguist who conducted fieldwork across Australia and the Pacific over the course of a four-decade career, can serve as a useful figure through whom to understand the history of research into contact languages as it was conducted on the ground. Born in 1910, Flint did some post-graduate work in English as a reader at the University of Queensland before being ordained as an Anglican priest. After his wartime service as a chaplain and intelligence officer, he returned to the university to earn an M.A. and became a lecturer there, a post he would hold for the rest of his career. Colleagues remembered him as eccentric and "intensely private, manically absorbed in his work."[54] Flint was especially interested in language variation; his principal project was to record languages in Queensland and to document the varieties of English spoken by people across the Pacific, from pidgin languages to aboriginal languages and the dialects of recent immigrants from Europe. In October of 1955, Flint visited Britain and met with

[54] Peter Edwards, "Some Reflections on Elwyn by Professor Peter Edwards," Flint Collection Finding Aid, Fryer Library, University of Queensland (July 1997), available online at https://www.library.uq.edu.au/fryer/ms/Flint/flint_cat_edwards.html, accessed on October 4, 2014.

Ross, who had just published his first article on Pitcairnese.[55] As one of the first linguists to systematically tape record contact languages, Flint was fascinated by Moverley's Pitcairn material. He agreed that considerably more work was needed, and the two became collaborators.

Flint aimed to record interviews on Norfolk Island after his return to Australia. Norfolk Island was home to most of the descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers and their wives; about 300 "Pitcairn People" lived there in 1957 compared to Pitcairn's 130. As described in chapter 3, the entire population of Pitcairn Island had been evacuated to Norfolk in 1856, though some families returned to Pitcairn in the following years. Since then, there existed two populations of Pitcairners living on separate Pacific islands, each speaking closely related languages. Norfolk, like Pitcairn, was deeply isolated: it was a thousand miles from Australia and had no harbor. However, during the Second World War, Allied forces built an airfield on the island. The runway was paved after the war and regular flights commenced, bringing tourists, foreign residents, and a steadier connection with the wider world.

Ewlyn Flint arrived on Norfolk Island in 1957 with a portable tape recorder. He stayed for a month, recording 17 conversations between 31 informants, who ranged in age from young children to nonagenarians. All told, Flint and his interlocutors produced some 75 minutes of material Flint deemed usable or—as the linguist meticulously counted—10,153 words.[56] These tapes, like Moverley's, became much-traded commodities with long afterlives. They were transcribed and translated, and then copied and shared with researchers across the world. And, like Moverley's tape, they were deeply entangled objects, borne from a tumultuous local and colonial politics of their own.

[55] Letter from Elwyn Flint to A.S.C Ross, January 30, 1956, L.Add 1552.
[56] Elwyn Flint, "Bilingual Interaction between Norfolk Island Language and English," paper presented at the First Conference of the Linguistic Circle of Canberra, 20th May, 1961, in Papers of Elwyn Flint, UQFL 173, Box 3 Folder 1, Fryer Library, University of Queensland Library (hereafter Flint Papers).

As on Pitcairn, administrators on Norfolk had long looked down on the local language with a mixture of curiosity and derision. They tended to refer to it mostly as a corrupt form of English, a patois, or simply a "lingo." That did not stop them from recording or describing it; C. R. Pinney, the island's administrator during the 1930s, collected a glossary of local words and enclosed it in a letter to Canberra, writing that it should "give some idea of the limits of expression of the lingo," and demonstrate "the mental handicap the islanders have been suffering from.[57] Another report from 1912 put it even more bluntly, declaring that it was "in no respect a language, it is not even a patois, . . . it is a corruption of bad English spoken by *Bounty* men and imperfectly imitated by the Tahitians."[58] The administration made it a policy to pursue its total elimination. In my own interviews with Norfolk Islanders in 2014, older informants were quick to tell me about the corporal punishment their teachers meted out when they slipped into their native language.

Compounding the forbidden status of the language was the contentious political status of the island itself. Many "Pitcairn People" on Norfolk held to the tradition that the entire island was granted to them by Queen Victoria in 1856. However, the island was administered first by the governor of New South Wales and, after confederation, as an external territory of Australia. The islanders circulated occasional petitions urging a reconsideration of their status but remained subject to the authority of an administrator appointed by the mainland.[59] The island's changing

[57] C.R. Pinney to Kenneth Binns, December 23, 1937, Papers of Charles Robert Pinney, National Library of Australia (hereafter NLA), MS 9931.
[58] Inspector Reay, "Education on Norfolk Island," 30 May 1912, 12, Flint Papers 4, Folder 12.
[59] I.e. Letter from the Norfolk Island executive council to C. R. Pinney, 18 July, 1932 and Petition to The Governor general of Australia, July 31, 1934, Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Wellington, (Hereafter Turnbull Library) Micro-MS-Coll-08-0011.

demographics only added further pressure to the Pitcairn community, members of which began to express serious concerns about the future of their culture and way of life.[60]

When Flint and his tape recorder appeared on Norfolk Island, his interlocutors already had some experience dealing with outside researchers. Word lists and glossaries like Pinney's had appeared in print for most of the century. Anthropologist Harry Shapiro had measured and photographed their bodies and produced a glossary of some of their language during his visit in 1923. In fact, the islanders had already been tape recorded by at least one linguist. The American Polynesianist Donald Stanley Marshal visited briefly in 1951 to make his own cursory tape recordings. He was warned by the administration that it would be difficult to gain the islanders' confidence, but he recorded in his diary that he "made first contact with the islanders by simple expedient of walking up to house, introducing self, and telling what I wanted – Very hospitably received – they remembered Shapiro with pleasure . . . invited me in for tea." His Americanness, or rather his non-Australianness, may have benefitted him. Marhsal recorded some of the islanders' speech, which he described as "virtually all English (Cornwall) with little or no Tahitian." His informants were happy to describe their language to him and were anxious to add that "they don't like being called 'lazy' by mainlanders."[61]

Flint also found his fieldwork congenial. He wrote that he considered the Norfolk Islanders to be among the most pleasant and hospitable subjects he had ever recorded; they were, he said, "highly intelligent, linguistically conscious, and keenly interested in their own language."[62] However, that did not mean Flint found the process of capturing useful samples of

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[60] Maev O'Collins, *An Uneasy Relationship: Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth of Australia* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2010); for a broader history by a local author see Merval Hoare, *Norfolk Island: An Outline of Its History 1774–1987*, 4th ed. (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1988).
[61] Donald Stanley Marshall, "First and Second Expeditions" 1951, Turnbull Library, Micro-MS-Coll-08-1335-1. For a discussion of negative appraisals by outsiders, especially administrators and social theorists, see chapter 3.
[62] E. H. Flint, "The Language of Norfolk Island," in *The Pitcairnese Language* by Ross and Moverley, 189.

their language on tape easy—the long history of scrutiny into the island's affairs and negative appraisals of the language had left their mark. Flint had a great deal of experience in field recording, having worked extensively among Queensland's aboriginal peoples, but on Norfolk he and his subjects were forced to develop novel recording practices. When Flint first began recording, his subjects invariably slipped into standard English; even when speaking to each other in his presence, they found it difficult to maintain a flowing conversation. Theirs was a private language; English was used with outsiders, as they had with Shapiro. To overcome their hesitation, the islanders agreed to speak with each other into the tape recorder without Flint present at all, collaborating to produce conversation topics, scenarios, and loose scripts to follow in his absence. Their topics ranged from the imaginative to the mundane: the recent centennial celebrations, the whaling industry that had once driven the island's economy, the appearance of a ghostly apparition, and so on. The tapes are full of stops and starts, of mumbles and hesitant statements as well as brashness and laughter—these were improvised performances.

Let us take the Moverley reel off of our tape player and listen for a moment to one of Flint's tapes.[63] With a click, the motor whirs. We fast-forward, stop the tape, and hit play to find ourselves midway through one improvised dialogue:

> **B.** Nex' week I gwen' clean out all dem lantana; I gwen plant der tatie, 'cause ca' do no --- no tatie; an er plahn, I gwenner plant der plahn, I gwenner plant some watermelon, we gunna do plenty thing ower ours, because I fraid dah side ower ours ser gone to der pack; an' dah much em horse here, on Norfolk Islan', --

Mid-sentence, the tone shifts, and the informant begins to speak more quickly and urgently. The subject is changing. She continues:

> **B.** You know wha'? – des Islan' gunna come sameas any more side in des worl'... Dah –des Islan' ser had it, an' true, we wan' to keep it up, 'cause is

[63] E.H. Flint, "Norfolk Island Dialogues 1-17," p. 21, Flint Papers, Box 3, Folder 3. For a translation in Australian English, see below.

ours, an' we wan' to look out good fer des Islan, 'cause, I tell ye what, if nought, dem horse gwenner run us from off des Islan'.

**A.** Well, I – I agree with you there.

**B.** Yeah.

This excerpt, like the excerpts from the Moverley tape offered earlier in the chapter, is of course not a tape recording at all. It is a transcription rendered in a standard English orthography. After Flint collected his dialogues on Norfolk Island, he copied and transcribed them, from one tape to another and from tape onto paper. Once he produced transcriptions like the one above, he translated them, from the islanders' language into English. He then further translated that material from raw linguistic data into scientific writing, and he disseminated it to colleagues across the world. Rewinding these entangled objects has already shown us the complex encounters from which they were formed. Now, let us instead fast forward for a moment, and see where Moverley's and Flint's tapes lead us in the insular community of professional linguistics. As physical records, tapes like these traveled some distance, moving between colleagues and around the world. As things that talk, and as things that are sometimes silent, the tapes continue to speak not only to the practices of linguistic fieldwork, but to the modes and idioms of academic collaboration within professional linguistics itself.

When Flint returned to Brisbane, he set to work processing his material. He had already produced a loose transcription of his tapes in consultation with his informants on Norfolk Island, like the one excerpted above. Magnetic tape, he knew, produced artifacts, especially when recording vowel sounds, and was not to be trusted implicitly—better to corroborate unfamiliar sounds with a text produced in the field.[64] Now back in Brisbane, he set to work transcribing

[64] Elwyn Flint, "Bilingual Interaction between Norfolk Island Language and English," paper presented at the First Conference of the Linguistic Circle of Canberra, 20th May, 1961, Flint Papers, Box 3 Folder 1. Flint also described

each dialogue into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).[65] IPA transformed an audio tape into a textual record that fixed the sounds of each dialogue in way legible to every linguist on Earth.[66] It was a translation into another medium and, in a sense, a translation into a professional language. In England, Ross too needed a standardized transcription of the Moverley tape. He asked phonetician A. C. Grimson, an expert on English pronunciation, to transcribe it into IPA. Grimson complained that the quality of the tape was terrible, and that he was only able to work through some passages after enlisting "the fresher ears of some colleagues to help in some of the difficult points. We are all very diffident about being categoric in our judgments on such a poor recording—there was some disagreement amongst us."[67] Tapes made sharing linguistic material easier, but also demanded collaboration in order to fix its meaning. The excerpt from the Moverley interview that opened this chapter was ultimately the product of no less than four authors.

After securing transcriptions of each tape, Ross and Flint both set to work producing translations into English. Ross's and Grimson's methods of translation are unrecorded in the archive, but Flint's was meticulous. While on the island itself, he worked with his interlocutors to produce rough-and-ready translations. Once back in Brisbane, he collected every word mentioned in his tapes into a massive form-meaning reference list, "not a linguistic lexicon, but a fully indexed reference list of the linguistic forms and meanings which occur in the dialogues and appendices (elicited material). It includes all variant forms and meanings, and lists function words as well as content words." The list consisted of 155 pages of cross-referenced words, the

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his preferred fieldwork methodology to New Zealand sociologist John Harré some years later; see Letter from Flint to Harré, 18 December, 1964, Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 13.

[65] Transcriptions of Norfolk Island Dialogues, Flint Papers, Box 3, Folder 4.

[66] For the IPA of the time and its development, see Robert W. Albright, *The International Phonetic Alphabet: Its Backgrounds and Development* (1958); for a history of the International Phonetic Association, see M. K. C. Macmahon, "The International Phonetic Association: The First 100 Years," *Journal of the International Phonetic Association* 16, no. 01 (June 1986): 30–38.

[67] Letter from AC Grimson to ASC Ross, November 9 1959, L.Add 1560.

fixed, categorized substance from which future study could begin. "It is," Flint wrote, "the raw material, not the end product of research."[68] Next, Flint copied his 17 dialogues onto a new tape and, working with his reference list and field translations, again translated each one himself. His translation of the excerpt from dialogue 8, reproduced above, was as follows:

> **B.** Next week I am going to clean out all those lantana bushes; I'm going to plant (English) potatoes because one can't do without – without – without potatoes and bananas; I'm going to plant bananas, I'm going to plant some watermelons – we are going to do plenty of things at our place, because I'm afraid our place has gone to the pack. And there are so many of those – outsiders about here on Norfolk Island you know what? – this island is going to get like any other place in this world. That – this island has had it! And true, we want to keep it up, because it's ours, and we want to improve this island – because, I'll tell you what, if not, those outsiders are going to run us off this island!
>
> **A.** Well, I – I agree with you there.
>
> **B.** Yes.

Translating was only the beginning. Next came the difficult work of interpreting the tapes' meaning for creole language studies. Flint and Ross's interest was centered on two major problems. First, there was the sociohistorical question of the language's formation through contact and secluded evolution. To understand it would require intense etymological work, but Flint had no formal training in Tahitian, and Ross had only received a year's exposure in Paris. Yet if the languages of Pitcairn and Norfolk were in fact contact languages, then tracing the Tahitian influence in each would be crucial. Ross and Flint assembled lists of suspect words heard in their tapes—those they didn't recognize or for which they suspected a Pacific origin—and sent them to experts on Polynesian languages, sometimes with copies of the tapes

[68] E.H. Flint, "Norfolk Form-Meaning Reference List (FRL)" Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 1.

themselves.[69] Plant, animal, and food names were particularly common subjects of their queries. Among the professional informants with whom Ross and Flint consulted was Gordon Williams, a New Zealand ornithologist who had done fieldwork on Pitcairn in 1956. He not only responded with advice, but pointed Ross to tape recordings he himself had made during his expedition; he had brought the recorder with him to collect bird calls and found himself recording the islanders, too. His recordings were broadcast on BBC radio as a documentary later that year.[70]

Second was the status of the Norfolk and Pitcairn languages themselves. A short catalog of the words used to label the speech of the islanders is elucidatory of the uncertainty surrounding that question: was the island's "speech" a "pidgin," a "patois," a "creole," a "contact language," a "cant," "bad English," an "accent," a "lingo"—or a fully constituted "language" of its own? The answer carried genuine implications not only for the speakers of the language, who would gain a modicum of outside credibility for a central part of their culture long discredited by outsiders, but also for the linguists who studied them, who wanted to substantiate their object of study as legitimate. To settle the issue, Flint set about determining the mutual intelligibility of English and the Norfolk Language. To do that, he asked his fellow linguists to listen to his tapes. Following a method used by linguists Donald Laycock and Stephen Wurm to study the intelligibility of languages during their fieldwork in Papua New Guinea, Flint asked colleagues who had no prior experience with the language to go through the dialogues "utterance by utterance, and then significant part by significant part of utterance" in sessions of fifty minutes at a time so as "to avoid fatigue."[71] The listener then recorded his or her own perception of each

[69] Donald S. Marshall and Ralph Gardner White especially became key advisors in that capacity. Letters from Elwyn Flint to A.S.C. Ross, May 22, 1961, and September 19, 1961, L.Add 1596 and L.Add 1614; and Letter from Stanley Marshall to A.S.C. Ross, June 2, 1960, L.Add 1565.
[70] Letter from Gordon Williams to ASC Ross February 25, 1961, L.Add 1586.
[71] Elwyn Flint, "Bilingual Interaction between Norfolk Island Language and English," 4; the method was adopted from S. A. Wurm and D. C. Laycock, "The Question of Language and Dialect in New Guinea," *Oceania* 32, no. 2 (December 1961): 128–143.

utterance and meaning on another tape of his own. Flint averaged their results, thus deriving intelligibility quotients for each Norfolk dialogue. These ranged from 32.5 percent to 79.7 percent, with an average intelligibility of 57.2 percent. The passage cited above was rated 50.4 percent intelligible.[72]

The boundary between languages and dialects, especially in the creole and pidgin language studies emerging at the time, was understood to be an ambiguous one. Wurm and Laycock set the boundary between language and dialect at "around 50%, with the sphere of 40-60% . . . constituting the sub-language range, which is intermediary between language and dialect."[73] Reporting his results at a linguistics conference in Canberra, Flint declared the Norfolk Islanders' speech "a sub-language of English, though some forms of it enter into the dialect range. It is therefore justifiable to call a speaker of Norfolk and English a bilingual." That raised new questions: How did these languages co-exist and influence each other? What kept them separate? In any case, the ramifications were not lost on Flint. For linguists, the study of communities like Norfolk was "thus no narrow specialist study, but one which directs the attention of the linguist to important practical and theoretical aspects of language."[74] In a later manuscript on Norfolk, Flint mused on its meaning for the islanders, too: "If language is part of culture, then to ask people to give up that language is equivalent to asking them to surrender part of their culture."[75]

[72] Norf'k, when written in an accessible, English-based orthography, might strike the reader as considerably more intelligible than when spoken.
[73] Wurm and Laycock, "The Question of Language and Dialect in New Guinea," 133.
[74] Elwyn Flint, "Bilingual Interaction between Norfolk Island Language and English," 9.
[75] Elwyn Flint, "Norfolk Island, a bilingual Community" unpublished manuscript, n.d., Flint papers, Box 17 Folder 4.

Ross finally published his book, *The Pitcairnese Language,* in 1964 to positive reviews.[76] It was as much an edited volume as it was a monograph, offering contributions by Flint and several other authors, including former colonial administrator Henry Evans Maude, who wrote about Pitcairn's history, and onetime Pitcairn schoolteacher Ernest Schubert, who came to the island some years after Moverley and described the present condition. The volume included excerpts from Flint's Norfolk dialogues as well as the entire transcript of Moverley's Wellington tape by A.C. Grimson. A. W. Moverley himself, who had died over a decade before, was listed as Ross's co-author. In his portion of the text, Ross made a case grounded in philology, history, and descriptive linguistics that "essentially, Pitcairnese is a 'mixture' of English and Tahitian."[77] He recognized that Moverley's data was thin, but drew on his reading of the islands' many nineteenth-century accounts and the work of his co-authors to argue for the value of studying hybrid or isolated communities like Pitcairn and Norfolk. "One can witness the actual birth of a language and follow it through to the present day," he declared, adding, "The same kind of thing could perhaps be done for other small isolated communities—only it has not been."[78]

Ross himself did not use the term laboratory when describing Pitcairn or its language; he again preferred to term it "pristine," describing the island as a space where the evolution of language could be more easily tracked. He did not indicate whether the shared connotations between "pristineness" and "purity," that once ubiquitously deployed adjective in Pitcairn texts, were intentional. His reviewers, however, used the metaphor of the laboratory unambiguously to describe both Pitcairn and Norfolk as field spaces with unparalleled potential. One reviewer

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[76] David DeCamp, "The Field of Creole Language Studies," *Latin American Research Review* 3, no. 3 (Summer 1968): 25–46; see also reviews by J. E. Busein in *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 28 (1965): 667–668, George W. Turner in *Anglia* 86 (1968): 358–360, and Robert A Hall, "Review of Ross, Moverley, et Al," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 74 (1965): 137–138.
[77] A.S.C. Ross, "On the History of the Pitcairnese Language," in Ross and Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language*, 136.
[78] Ross and Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language*, 11.

wrote that "if a comparative philologist were to devise a laboratory experiment to test etymological theories, he could hardly devise a better experiment than Pitcairn.[79] However, though Flint, Maude, and Ross treated the islands' histories in considerable detail, none described their isolation or experimental status as intentional or manufactured.

Flint authored a chapter in *The Pitcairnese Language*, too, on "The Language of Norfolk Island."[80] In it, he described the island's isolation during the nineteenth century and the arrival of further immigrants during the twentieth. The language, he said, was still active despite government ambitions to eradicate it, and despite the Pitcairn descendants' shrinking share of Norfolk's total population. He also included long excerpts from his interview transcripts in IPA accompanied by English translations that were produced by another Norfolk Islander—he would let the voices and meanings of the islanders themselves circulate as knowledge here. Flint ended the chapter with a word list of unique Norf'k forms, to which he ascribed meanings and etymologies where possible. Remarkably, he also devoted considerable space to a discussion of the unique role his informants played in his field practice. "It may truthfully be said that the people of Norfolk Island are the real authors of anything linguistic written in this chapter," he wrote. "This does not simply mean that the material, representative specimens of which are here presented, is based on tape recordings made and other information supplied by them." Rather, he told his readers, the Norfolk Islanders astonished him with "the breadth of their knowledge and their quick practical grasp of the essentials of what was required. . . . So much was this so, that at times there was the strange feeling that the roles of research worker and informants were

[79] G. W. Turner, "A.S.C. Ross; A.W. Moverley, The Pitcairnese Language [Review]" *Anglia* 86 (1968); 258–360, 358.
[80] Flint, "The Language of Norfolk Island, 189–211.

reversed, and that it was the islanders who were really conducting the project; and this feeling persists."[81]

After authoring his contribution to the Ross and Moverley volume, Flint maintained an interest in Pitcairn and Norfolk and hoped to elicit additional material. An opportunity came in 1963, when New Zealand's University of Otago sent two teams of social scientists to Pitcairn Island, an archaeological expedition headed by Peter Gathercole that stayed for several months, and a social study of the contemporary community led by John Harré that succeeded the archaeologists. Flint asked the New Zealanders to record as many tapes as they could.[82] He knew that the work of collecting audio recordings for linguistic purposes would be relatively new for both the scientists and their subjects, and he did what he could to facilitate the process. Flint sent Harré copies of his 1957 Norfolk dialogues, as well as a package of fifteen 5-inch tapes on which the Otago team could record Pitcairn Islanders' speech. He suggested, too, that Harré and Gathercole play his Norfolk dialogues for their informants in order to elicit a response, a dialogic technique he had often used among aboriginal groups in Queensland. "Having heard, and presumably understood, what their Norfolk Island kinsmen have been saying and noted their facility of conversation, they might well be ready to give suitable material themselves," Flint advised. The 1957 Norfolk tape thus traveled to Pitcairn, where it was literally in dialogue with Pitcairn informants, who in turn produced tapes of their own. The linguist also encouraged both teams to let the islanders speak among themselves, without the presence, coaxing, or interruption of outsiders. "The informants tend initially to be shy about using their language to an outsider," he cautioned, "but the Norfolk Islanders found no difficulty in speaking to one another, provided

[81] Flint, "The Language of Norfolk Island," 189.
[82] Letter from Flint to Gathercole, December 22, 1964, Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 13.

that they were left alone with the tape recorder running, and the research worker withdrawn out of sight and hearing."[83]

Harré recorded six tapes on Pitcairn in 1965, which he duly sent back to Flint. His informants were, in many cases, the same people Shapiro had measured some three decades earlier. Parkin Christian was now in his 80s, but still a figure who took the lead in engaging with the island's guests. The anthropologist noted that Christian "claims to be able to speak Tahitian but it is difficult to get him seriously into this." Harré instead recorded him in conversation with a young teenage girl, whom he noted "listens to a lot of pop records. Concerned with teenage symbols (e.g. Beatle stockings and mock leather dress)." The island was no perfectly isolated laboratory; it was susceptible to outside influences—indeed, this informant had done some school in New Zealand, like an increasing number of the island's youth. Harré noted all instances of outside contaminants on the islanders' language he could, while identifying those informants who struck him as the most "pure." In some instances, the Otago team followed Flint's guidelines well when making their recordings. Two conversations proceeded between families and friends, with unrehearsed but generative interruptions from others as they joined the conversation. In most recordings, however, Harré departed from Flint's practice. He or his partner were in the room during the interviews, for which the sociologist apologized. "Although I, or one of my team, were present when the recordings were made, our relationship with the community was by this time such that our presence should have had a minimal effect."[84] They had their own fieldwork practices and their own research agenda—they felt they were accepted

[83] Letter from Flint to Harré, 18 December, 1964, Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 13; Letter from Harré to Flint, October 14, 1965, Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 13. Emphasis his.

[84] Letter from John Harré to Elwyn Flint, October 14, 1965, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 3 Green. Shirley Harrison's personal papers and linguistic recordings were preserved after her death through the attention of her daughter, Anne Harrison. She gifted some of them to the Norfolk Island Museum, while others are temporarily held in the private archives of linguists Peter Mühlhäusler and Joshua Nash. All three have generously shared her papers.

participant observers, and there was only so much control Flint could affect from an ocean's distance.

Looking back on the experience fifteen years later, however, Harré wondered if things were in fact more complex than he first imagined. Rather than record "flat" Pitcairn or English, his team encountered something else, a hybrid language born from cross-cultural contact, even from the recording experience itself, which existed somewhere on a spectrum between the two. "The accent and vocabulary would vary across this continuum depending on who was present during the conversation and the circumstances within which it took place," he wrote. "In the presence of strangers when Pitcairners were talking amongst themselves, they would frequently modify their accent and introduce more English words as a consequence of the outsider's presence. There was not always a clear break representing a move into English, for we found during the course of our stay, as we became more accepted it was recognized that we had picked up odd Pitcairn words, expressions and idioms, when speaking to us in English they would retain a heavy Pitcairn accent and lapse periodically into Pitcairn expressions."[85]

Flint was slow to publish anything from his new Pitcairn/Norfolk material. He had moved on to other projects, and it was not until a decade later that he turned to the subject again. During the 1970s Norfolk Island was once more in the news; its residents, like many indigenous communities, were advocating for recognition and greater autonomy against what they saw as unjust incursion by the Australian state and Australian society.[86] The increasing numbers of tourists and the steady migration of outsiders to their island were fundamentally altering its social and cultural landscape. In 1976, a census showed that of the 859 adults residing on

[85] Letter from Harré to S. Harrison, March 4, 1981, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 3 Green.
[86] The islanders' indigeneity is a matter of some contention and study, see introduction.

Norfolk Island, only 323 were of Pitcairn descent.[87] In the face of that growing influence, the islanders founded the Society of Descendants of the Pitcairn Settlers, whose aims were to "promote knowledge of the Pitcairn race" and to "foster and defend the system of community self-help and self-reliance that developed on Pitcairn Island and exists in Norfolk Island." They sent a petition to the Queen asking that the British government clarify their position as an autonomous territory.[88]

It was in that more contentious context that Flint listened again to his reels of tape, consulted his form-meaning reference list, and prepared his Norfolk material for publication. In his 1979 paper, "Stable Societal Diglossia on Norfolk Island," he laid out his renewed thinking on the language.[89] He was now less interested in the categorization of the Norfolk language itself, but in its stability as a form coexisting with English across time. English on Norfolk Island, now more than ever, was the "high" form—the language of government, of writing, of religious services. It was taught in school, to the exclusion of all other dialects, and immigrants from the mainland brought standard varieties with them in ever larger numbers. And yet, Norfolk language, which Flint now classified as "an English-based contact vernacular," had persisted with remarkable stability as a "low" form alongside English across Pitcairn and Norfolk's entire history.[90] Flint described the Norfolk language as a kind of "social dialect" borne from contact, which consisted of a continuum of different varieties. Its speakers could range between registers of high and low, selecting from a repertoire of styles depending on the situation in which they found themselves. Speaking with outsiders, they could range toward English; speaking around outsiders, they could resort to a more private language. They could speak it among themselves as

[87] Letter from D. J. Rogers to Shirley Harrison, February 21, 1980, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[88] See Merval Hoare, *Norfolk Island*, 23–24.
[89] Elwyn Flint, "Stable Societal Diglossia in Norfolk Island," in *Sociolinguistic Studies in Language Contact: Methods and Cases*, eds. William Mackey and Jacob Ornstein (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 295–332.
[90] Flint, "Stable Societal Diglossia in Norfolk Island," 323.

a marker of their identity. If his fieldwork and his playback experiments had yielded widely different measures of intelligibility, it was because the nature of the language itself abetted that divergence. Norfolk language was, Flint suggested, a set of increasingly inscrutable codes, sustained in part through encounters with outsiders. Rehearsing the careful recording practices that comprised his own fieldwork, Flint suggested that the low language was made accessible to linguists like himself, if imperfectly, only through an improvised field methodology jointly built on trust and the recognition of alterity.

**Code Switcher**

Soon after publishing his 1979 Norfolk language article, Flint received a letter from a Macquarie University PhD student named Shirley Harrison. She explained that she was researching the language of Norfolk Island and asked him for copies of his tape recordings.[91] Harrison had written a master's thesis, *The Language of Norfolk Island*, at Sydney's Macquerie University in 1972 and was now completing a doctoral dissertation on the same subject.[92] Her research across the 1970s and 1980s, including several visits to the island itself, then constituted the most intense academic investigation of Norfolk Island language to date. This chapter will close its account of linguistic fieldwork on Pitcairn and Norfolk by examining Harrison's work, her practice in the field, and her relationships with other academic linguists. Certainly, I could close instead by telling the history of investigation by more eminent scholars; several professional linguists also pursued research projects on Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands during the

[91] Letter from Flint to John Harré, 16 October 1979, Flint Papers, Box 4, Folder 13.
[92] Shirley Harrison, "The Language of Norfolk Island" (master's thesis, Macquarie University, 1972).

closing decades of the twentieth century, and some of them will appear as Harrison's interlocutors in the coming narrative. However, in treating the history of investigation on Norfolk and Pitcairn Islands, I aim to represent as well as I can the full spectrum of work done in both spaces. The conduct of normal science included disciplinary leaders such as Harry Shapiro, ordinary fieldworkers such as Flint, post-graduate students such as Harrison, and interested amateurs who tried to enter the academy, such as Moverley. If the island is indeed a "laboratory" in which to study the practice of field science, it would be poor laboratory technique indeed to discard that portion of our series comprised of scholars like her. They are ubiquitous figures in the history of field science, and played an important part in the history of Norfolk Island as a field space.

Harrison was, in any event, a remarkably interesting figure in her own right. Her work comprised some of the first academic writing about either Pitcairn or Norfolk done by a woman. Female authors had written about both islands during the nineteenth century, of course, often notably; Mary Russell Mitford was one of its first chroniclers in any form, Diana Belcher became one of its most popular historians, and Pitcairn Islander Rosalind Amelia Young emerged its most famous native author. Nevertheless, the scrutiny of Pitcairn Islanders by social scientists had heretofore been undertaken almost exclusively by men, and Harrison remains among the few female scientists of any discipline to enter into their insular academic community. I am most interested in her, however, because she was by descent and ethnicity a Norfolk Islander. As such, she emerged as a fairly unique figure in the history of research on the islands, an actor who blurred the uncertain dialectic between outsider and insider.

Her work was itself built on problems of liminality and hybridity. Harrison became, like Flint, deeply interested in the varieties of Norfolk Islanders' speech. She devoted a decade to

studying the islanders' shifts between codes, describing the language that occupied the middle ground between "English" and "Norfolk," or what Flint called "high" and "low." This chapter will thus treat Harrison as an expert on code switching who herself became an expert code switcher, a figure who grew adept at navigating and sometimes trespassing the linguistic boundaries of several communities at once. As an academic fieldworker negotiating the difficult terrain of insider and outsider on a much-studied island, she found herself confronting the same complex dynamics as the linguists who preceded her—and engaged her informants to further develop the practices and idioms of fieldwork. At the same time, as a Norfolk Islander entering into social scientific discourse, she found herself confronting the complex dynamics of a professional culture with its own unique languages and codes. If the study of contact languages demanded its own pidgin, she emerged as a fluent speaker.

Shirley Harrison was born on the island in 1931, the daughter of Norfolk Islander Moresby Buffett and Australian schoolteacher Mavis Buffett (née Porter). Like most Norfolk Islanders, she knew her genealogy well; she was a fifth-generation descendent of American Whaler John Buffet, who settled on Pitcairn in the early 19th century. She spent the first ten years of her life on Norfolk before moving to the mainland with her family; she would spend much of the rest of her life in Sydney and its suburbs. Though her father spoke the local language fluently and she heard it a great deal in her childhood, she did not learn it with the same adeptness. Her family had lived in a remote corner of the island and spoke English at home. Her daughter later recollected that Shirley Harrison "always understood Norfolk speech quite well but regretted that she did not grow up speaking Norfolk with other children and families."[93] Harrison first appears in my archive in 1960, at 29 years old, stepping into the office of historian and former Pitcairn

[93] Anne Harrison, "Letter to the *Norfolk Islander,*" n.d., private archive of Anne Harrison; Shirley Harrison, "Variation on Present Norfolk Island Speech: A Study of Stability and Instability in Diglossia" (PhD dissertation, Macquarie University, 1984), 1.

administrator Henry Evans Maude at the Australia National University.[94] "A dazzling Blonde named Miss Buffett from Norfolk Island, via Armadale, was brought in last week by Wurm and Freeman," Maude wrote in a letter to fellow Pacific historian James W. Davidson. "She wants to do a thesis on the Norfolk Island dialect but I told her of all that was being done by Ross and Flint on the subject."[95] Wurm, here, was Stephen Wurm, the pioneering scholar of Papuan contact languages on whose field practices Flint later based his own mutual intelligibility tests of Norfolk language—the study of contact languages was, in postwar Australia, a small and consanguineous community in its own right. Harrison abandoned the project for the time being; it was almost a decade before she began pursuing the project again as an M.A. thesis under linguist Arthur Delbridge at Macquarie University.

Harrison's first and principal informant for her master's thesis was her own father, Moresby Buffet. He was born on Norfolk Island in 1904 and remembered well life before the airfield brought in its steady stream of outsiders, a time the islanders increasingly romanticized when whaling, fishing, and farming still ruled Norfolk's economy.[96] Buffett spoke the language adeptly, though he actively discouraged his own children from learning it.[97] His attitude grew more positive in his later years, when his daughter brought a tape recorder into his home and began recording his speech. Harrison eventually built much of her understanding of Norfolk's grammar, phonology, and lexicon from interviews with her father. After recording him, and a few other Norfolk Islanders who lived in New South Wales, she set about conducted interviews on the island, too, transforming her childhood home into a linguistic field space. It would be difficult and delicate work, in which identity and position mattered a great deal. Moresby Buffett

[94] Maude authored a chapter, "History of Pitcairn" in *The Pitcairnese Language,* by Ross and Moverley, 45–101.
[95] Letter from Flint to J. D. Davidson, September 14, 1960, Maude Papers, Special Collections, University of Adelaide (hereafter Maude Papers), Box J, Folder 1960 Part II.
[96] Obituary of Moresby Buffet, untitled, n.d., private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[97] Harrison, *Variation in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 184.

described his own struggle to understand the social nuances of speaking and listening on the island. "Before speaking to young people whom I have never met before, I always enquire if they speak English or Norfolk," he said. "Reasons—if they speak Norfolk I may be regarded *waweha* for speaking English.[98] If they prefer to speak English I may be ridiculed for speaking Norfolk, or they may resent me for speaking Norfolk."[99]

Harrison came to Norfolk Island as a researcher for the first time in 1970. Exploiting her family connections, she recorded sixteen interviews with Norfolk Islanders on tapes, which she later analyzed with a segmenter machine and a sonograph.[100] She spent much of her time working to establish the language's basic phonology. When not recording formal interviews, she wandered the island listening to informal conversation. Descriptions of surreptitious eavesdropping in her early field notes reflected the dissonance between her insider status as an islander and her outsider status as a social scientist. "I noticed Gwen, Dick, Nobbs family switching to modified Norfolk when speaking to dad," she wrote in 1970, "was this because I was present, or a common feature of their speech these days?"[101] Attending dinners with friends or listening to the language exchanged in the local shops, she jotted down expressions and noted forays into or lapses from Norf'k. Many of her notes blurred the languages of intimacy and objectivity, treading an ambiguous boundary between the styles of scientific reportage and familiar gossip: "many women partially speak English to their children," and "Ruth says all young kids say 'swim' instead of *nauɛ* these days," she recorded.[102] Harrison noted above all that, especially among younger people, explicitly "broad" Norfolk forms were becoming rare. Or

[98] According to Ross and Moverley, *The Pitcairnese Language*, a word meaning "prone to give oneself airs; remote, reserved."
[99] "Functions of Norfolk and English," n.d., private archive of Joshua Nash.
[100] "Untitled Talk Given to Students at Macquarie University," n.d., presumably 1972 or shortly afterward, 6, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[101] Shirley Harrison, "August 31, 1970," untitled diary named in archive as woolstar green exercise book (herafter *Norfolk Diary*), Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 2 red.
[102] Shirley Harrison, "August 28, 1970," and "August 31, 1970," *Norfolk Diary*.

perhaps they were simply rare around her. In her field notes, she recorded that the use of such forms seemed to be "determined by whether there are mainland people present or not—and this modified form (as would often be spoken in my hearing), it seems to me to be an intrusion of English sounds and vocabulary."[103]

From her interviews and field notes, Harrison produced in her 1972 master's thesis a full description of Norfolk Island's language, its structure, its grammar, its sounds, and its lexicon, including a glossary of words and etymologies.[104] She described its history in some depth, reading from the same accounts by Folger, Beechey, and her own great-great-grandfather that outside students of Pitcairn's past had poured over for the last century. As she wrote, the question of Norfolk's legitimacy as a language, and indeed the legitimacy of contact languages and their study, was at the forefront of her mind. One of her notebooks from 1970 includes thoughts on her incipient draft: "Perhaps answer a few of the morally biased comments on pidgin and creole languages," she mused, before listing potential sources of criticism and derision. Writers had suggested that Norfolk was a "corrupted and distorted form" of English and "has no pattern," but examples from her interviews would prove otherwise. If creoles lacked the ability to express new ideas with depth, she would point to "resourcefulness of N." If the language as a whole seemed unimportant, she would suggest "the people are interesting—and their story appears to have captured interest of many writers and others since earliest days of Pitcairn – so [has] their language"— the legacy of research and writing about the islands was its own source of legitimacy.[105] Ultimately, she came to describe the language as a "cross between a regional

[103] Shirley Harrison, August 31, 1970, *Norfolk Diary*.
[104] Harrison, "The Language of Norfolk Island."
[105] Shirley Harrison, "Points to be considered for introduction," untitled notebook, (n.d., presumably 1969–1970), private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.

dialect and a creole language," or perhaps most accurately "a separate and perhaps unique type of language, arising from the uniqueness of its development."[106]

It was during Harrison's subsequent doctoral work that she conducted the most intensive field recordings—and during which she and her subjects further developed the practices and idioms of linguistic research. Her ambit was certainly much larger. She eventually interviewed over a hundred informants, both in Australia and on Norfolk Island. Across the last decades, patterns of migration had flowed across the Pacific in both directions, and a sizeable expatriate community of Norfolk Islanders resided in Australia, especially in Sydney. In 1979, Harrison began interviewing these Australian Norfolk Islanders in their homes, work she carried on for several years. Unlike her previous interviews, however, these would take a new form. Having already produced a monograph on "Norfolk" language, she chose to research instead the varieties of its use. Her interest was no longer just in "pure" Norfolk language, what she called "Broad Norfolk," or its differences with the English spoken on the island, which she called "Norfolk English"—but rather in the many variations in the islanders' speech, and especially the continuum of expressions that ranged between the two, which she called "Modified Norfolk." Eliciting it proved difficult. In Sydney, she began by bringing her father to her interviews, deploying him as a kind of experimental "constant" whose steady presence would bring order and consistency to a variety of interviews.[107] He also was the key to opening a closed network of Norfolk emigrants, a figure who could access informants who might otherwise be too hesitant to sit for interviews.

It was not a perfect system by any means. After one interview with an older Norfolk Islander in Sydney, Harrison lamented that her informant "Normally speaks N as Broadly as

[106] Shirely Harrison, Untitled Talk Given to Students at Macquarie University, 7–8.
[107] Shirley Harrison, "Points to be observed in conduct of interview," untitled notebook, n.d., presumably 1982, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler; Shirley Harrison, *Varieties in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 92–93.

anyone," but "preferred not to commit herself to N on tape," and would not "acknowledge her competence in N while being taped."[108] Over time, Harrison addressed the islanders' reluctance by adapting her approach. She developed a pattern of conversation topics that proved conducive for eliciting "broader" forms of the language. Those "associated with local affairs," especially the "arrival of ships and planes" and "criticisms of island officials, administrators, school master, doctor, etc." were particularly generative.[109] Harrison also came to administer her interviews in a well-planned order. First, she would ask about specific words or constructions. Only then would she try to force her interlocutors away from the familiar, through the introduction of "variant actors in the situation that might lead the addressees away from [Broad Norfolk]," to see how their speech changed. It was best if that happened organically, by ceding control to the subjects and spaces of the interview itself. The "language" of fieldwork on Norfolk would have to be conversational and improvisational, leaving gaps in which Norfolk Islanders could speak. She found it useful "if a non-islander can come and go while the tape is being made to see effect of his presence, effect of the addressee speaking to him," she wrote. [110]

Most importantly, like Flint before her, she found it best to remove herself from the room when possible. In her absence, signified by the running tape-recorder, the islanders would improvise their own record of their own speech. It was a technique built in part on the experience of other linguists—she cited the method of social scientists working with insular speech communities in Belfast, Harlem, and Jamaica—and in part from recognition of the island's insider/outsider dialectic. Flint's experience producing tape recordings with Norfolk Islanders

[108] "Interview between dad, Grace, John, Emily," untitled notebook , January 1982, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[109] Shirley Harrison, "Topics suited to N, restriction of N," manila dated June 3, 1984, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 4 red.
[110] Shirey Harrison, "Points to be observed in conduct of interview," untitled notebook, n.d., presumably 1982, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.

was an explicit starting point, and she cited him as such; he had, after all, dealt with the same problems in the same insular place. [111] Harrison was deeply cognizant of the difficulty of capturing so ephemeral a quality as code switching from the situated, embodied reality of fieldwork. It "is likely that insufficient evidence would be available to test this from my tapes," she wrote in her field diary after completing her first 27 interviews. "Note the difficulties of recording islanders' natural behaviors in this regard since it is a delicate point of speech behavior and awareness that he is being observed and recorded is likely to affect the speaker's response."[112]

Harrison visited Norfolk again to collect new interviews in 1980. The island was a different place than the one she remembered from her childhood, or even from her visit a decade earlier. At a picnic during her first days on the island, she was excited to observe "groups + individuals were speaking N to one another in the hearing of Strangers – without very great self-consciousness, it seemed. It suggested that they had more confidence about N status than in previous years." Other Norfolk Islanders, however, told her that the language was in a precarious state. "The attitude of these people is often that they can't speak N properly, are embarrassed by lack of it," she wrote. "There still appears to be a strong situational constraint."[113] In any event, her field practice itself would have to adapt. If she was to capture the changing use of the language and its shifts between forms, she would need to record the voices of young people in addition to those of her and her father's generations. The school would be a vital recording site. She wrote the principal to ask for permission to record his pupils and to explain her practice. "Interview is too formal a word, I feel" she told him. "I would ask them to discuss (in Norfolk)

[111] Harrison, *Variation in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 90–92.
[112] Shirley Harrison, entry begging "To this point," untitled notebook, n.d., presumably 1980, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[113] Shirley Harrison, "November 30, 1980," *1980 Norfolk Notebook*, private archive of Joshua Nash.

those subjects that would present no difficulty in order that I might listen to and tape the conversation so that I would have it for my later experience."[114] The principal assented, and Harrison made several visits to the school, recording its Norfolk-speaking students in groups of about a half-dozen, eventually collecting dozens of interviews.[115] She was especially interested in recording the speech of students who not only came from "pure" Norfolk families, but from mixed households like her own.

As during her previous stay on the island, her field notes suggest a visit not entirely free from anxiety over her own status and her own capacity to switch between codes. She certainly felt insecure about speaking Norf'k herself. After one visit to the school, she told an informant that she had "difficulty at eliciting Norfolk from Norfolk Islanders when I speak English to them.[116] She told another informant that her inability to speak fluent Norfolk "prevents me from being able to tape my own conversations with Norfolk Islanders.[117] Harrison had no trouble translating from English to "Broad" Norfolk for other linguists, of course, but speaking fluently on the island was another matter.[118] Instead, she turned again to methods of recording and speaking by transposition, letting a tape recorder and other islanders stand in for her by proxy. Like many fieldworkers, she came armed with a list of contacts who might open up a broader network. She met family friends during her first days on the island and asked them to have conversations with other islanders for her; during her first week on Norfolk she gave blank tapes and recorders to five different contacts. She later did the same with a broader set of Norfolk Islanders, sometimes by correspondence.

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[114] Letter from Harrison to the principal, Norfolk Island public school, September 16, 1981, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[115] Harrison, "November 25, 1980," *1980 Norfolk Notebook*.
[116] "November 27, 1980," *1980 Norfolk Notebook*.
[117] Letter from Harrison to Charlie Adams, June 13, 1980, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[118] She translated 50 sentences for a linguist at the University of Texas-Austin in 1982, for instance. Letter from Ian Hancock to Harrison, October 19, 1982, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 2 green.

Harrison's tapes came with loose instructions: "It would be excellent if you could make a recording in three separate conversations of about 20 minutes each. The subjects that are talked about are not terribly important as long as they are topics that are easily discussed in Norfolk."[119] As Harrison's press-ganged fieldworkers roamed the island with the recorders in hand, they elicited improvised encounters and conversations of their own. When an islander's machine attracted the interest of a four-year-old child, the record of two adults coaxing "Broad" Norfolk speech out of her proved a valuable record in its own right.[120] Reliance on tape recording led to some problems, however, even in her own interviews. She lost a conversation at the school when her recorder malfunctioned.[121] The recorder also had to be started, of course, a procedure which was hardly surreptitious and which required forethought. "Missed an excellent chance of having a tape between X and her grandson Y," she complained in her notes, "should have put it on as soon as I saw him arrive. . . . What patterns of switching were there? (Can't remember, of course)."[122]

After finishing her interviews on Norfolk, Harrison returned to Sydney, where she continued to record Norfolk Island emigrants and set to work producing a dissertation, *Varieties in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, which she defended in 1984. In that text, and in her subsequent professional publications and correspondence with fellow academics, she shifted codes again, translating her Norfolk experiences into the language of professional linguistics. She signaled her identity as a Norfolk Islander openly, but usually tangentially, through footnotes on her positionality or in discussions of her field practice—as the language of professional linguistics demanded. In her methods section, she suggested that her dual status as a Norfolk Islander and a

[119] Letter from Harrison to Joe Nobbs, n.d., private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[120] Harrison, *Variation in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 216.
[121] Harrison, "November 27, 1980" *1980 Norfolk Notebook*.
[122] Harrison, "December 2, 1980," *1980 Norfolk Notebook*.

field scientists made for a generative recording praxis, establishing an "INSIDER-OUTSIDER role in interviews with young people. Recognition of her INSIDE links with the Norfolk Island community encouraged informants to interact normally with the interviewer and with one another." And yet, "at the same time, she was able to act as an OUTSIDE observer, a friendly supervisor and guide to the progress of each interview."[123]

Most of her 450-page monograph consisted of extensive excerpts from her field recordings, which she accompanied with close readings to produce an analysis of the island's variegated linguistic topography. She broke her informants down into five distinct categories: adults who spoke an almost pure "broad" Norfolk, adults who were competent "broad" speakers, adults who spoke "modified" Norfolk, youths who spoke with many "broad forms," and youths who used many "modified forms." Both sets of youth also employed forms that were unique to their generation. All of her informants engaged in code switching between some variety of English and some variety of Norfolk. Speakers often chose from a linguistic repertoire to signify their identities; if an islander was asked whether he or she spoke Norfolk, "an answer in the affirmative was the speaker's ticket-of-leave into a network of Norfolk Island camaraderie, allowing him to be accepted as a 'true' Norfolk Islander sharing insider status and obligation and exchange rights with others of the same racial background," Harrison wrote.[124] Moreover, those shifts happened fluidly. By selecting some words or sounds over others, a speaker could shift, often within a sentence, between identities and meanings. As Harrison put it: "Having Broad Norfolk and Norfolk English as symbols of WE/THEY, INSIDER/OUTSIDER association enables the Norfolk Islander to exploit the stylistic potential of the intermediate area between codes. Thus a move towards the THEY code may coincide with change of topic or participants in

[123] Harrison, *Variation in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 81–82. Emphasis hers.
[124] Harrison, *Variation in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 24.

the conversation. It may signal information about the speaker's feelings and attitude towards his subject, towards his interlocutor and towards his language setting."[125] Perhaps most importantly, Harrison suggested that while shifts in code were often intentional and situational, they also became integrated into the unconscious structure of the language itself, evolving as a permanent feature of speech on Norfolk Island. It was all perhaps best understood as "style," whether deployed intentionally or otherwise.[126]

Perhaps not un-coincidentally, Harrison's analysis was also an apt description of her own fieldwork experience, as she and her interlocutors invented new forms while navigating the political and linguistic landscape of the island in their interviews, and as the aspiring linguist shifted between codes to bring her work to the academic community. After earning her doctorate, Harrison entered into that most insular mode of discourse: academic publication and professional conference. In papers and presentations, she translated her field experience into the language of professional linguistics.[127] To begin with, she summarized much of her doctoral work in a 1986 paper on "The Social Setting of Norfolk Speech," in which she described "modified Norfolk" and its partial changes of code in some detail.[128] She included excerpts of interviews on the island, re-signifying her personal encounters as scientific evidence. Below is a conversation she recorded between a twelve-year-old child (ChM) and an older informant (TM) at the island school, transcribed into English and IPA; Harrison underlined its "modified forms" for emphasis:

> **ChM:** Should *bi sə si ə fʌs* time *wi bɪn* camping was *dʌun hj ʌ had wʌn* big line between *I tu tri soə wɪ* thought… well, *wɪ nœwə gʌt wʌn* tent *soə wɪ tʃʌk wʌn* bit *ə* canvas *oəvə* the top of *da* wire so the tent's in a pyramid without any sides on it *ən* I went to sleep about nine o'clock *ən* E. *ən dɛm stɛ əwek*

[125] Harrison, *Varieties in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 8.
[126] Harrison, *Varieties in Present Norfolk Island Speech*, 436.
[127] Shirley Harrison, "A Language History of Norfolk Island," *Working Papers of the Speech and Language Research Centre 1.4.* (Sydney: School of English and Linguistics, Macquarie University, 1976), 1–171; "Bounty from the Mutiny," *The Macquerie Dictionary Society* 4, no. 1 (1987): 2–4.
[128] Shirley Harrison, "The Social Setting of Norfolk Speech," *English World Wide* 6, no. 1 (1985): 131–154.

*ən* I woke up about three o'clock *ən lʊk* in the end of the tent *ɛs* this *goəsbird hɛm ən mi dɛm sə* already *stat ʌp kas dɛm sə* scared. Him *ən* G. *ən I* dɛə… ooh, I *næwə bɪn flaɪ soə fas*

**TM:** I've *næwə* seen you fly.

**ChM:** *ju næwə bɪn si* anything *dɛn*.

Harrison also provided a translation into Australian English:

**ChM:** You should have seen the first time we were camping. It was down here, and there was a big line between these two trees, so we thought. . . . Well, we didn't have a tent so we threw a bit of canvas over the top of the wide . . . and E. and they stayed awake and I woke up about three o'clock and looked. In the end of the tent was this ghostbird . . . him and me . . . they had already gone because they were so scared . . . him and G. and I were there . . . oh, I have never flown so fast.

**TM:** I've never seen you fly.

**ChM:** You've never seen anything then.[129]

Harrison did not become a professor of linguistics, remaining an independent scholar. She was 53 when she defended the dissertation and told her colleagues that she undertook the second graduate degree mostly to support her own research on the language.[130] However, she did become a member of their professional community in meaningful respects. For one thing, she supplanted Flint as the discipline's source for knowledge about Norfolk Island's language. Scholars compiling catalogues of contact languages or English varieties relied on her when building their entries for Pitcairn and Norfolk. The eminent creolist John Reinecke corresponded with her for his 1975 *Bibliography of Pidgin and Creole Languages*; he based his Norfolk entry in part on her thesis work and suggestions, calling the island "a laboratory case in creole formation."[131] Linguist John Holm, too, called the language a creole in large measure on the

[129] Shirley Harrison, "The Social Setting of Norfolk Speech," 152.
[130] Letter from Shirley Harrison to Arne Zettersten, June 30, 1980, private archive of Joshua Nash.
[131] John E. Reinecke, *A Bibliography of Pidgin and Creole Languages*, 590–592; letter from Shirley Harrison to John Reinecke, June 23, 1972, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler; Letter from Harrison to John Reinecke, July 12,

basis of Harrison's work.[132] She supplied him with interview transcripts and translations, which he published in his own volume on contact languages.[133] Academics saw Harrison as a vital go-between who could relay knowledge from an insular place. She translated fifty lines from English into "Broad" Norfolk for University of Texas linguist Iain Hancock's comparative project on creole languages.[134] University of Heidelberg linguist Manfred Görlach, who had read some of Harrison's previous work, wrote to her about potential publication in a series he was editing. Her research was unique and valuable, he said, not least because it was dependent on her status. "Your access to the in-group of elderly speakers of N (do you speak N yourself? Or do you just understand it?) is indeed a prerequisite for such a collection and analysis," he wrote. He wondered, too, if she could become an even more valuable translator and go-between for linguistic science by breaking into Pitcairn's famously insular speech community. "They say you have to become Seventh Day Adventist first," he noted, "but the situation may be slightly different for someone coming from one of the 'old families.'"[135]

Harrison also spoke with other linguists engaged directly with research on the Pitcairn and Norfolk languages. Over the second half of the century, the islands accumulated a number of linguistic researchers from Europe and Australia, who visited at various times to record their inhabitants' speech. As a Norfolk Islander and the author of some of the most in-depth research to date on the language, Harrison corresponded with these researchers to defend the legitimacy of her claims about the language and, concomitantly, the status of the language itself. Her discourse within that insular community would require careful attention to shifts between styles

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1973, private archive of Joshua Nash; letter from John Reinecke to Shirley Harrison, June 9, 1972, private archive of Joshua Nash; letter from John Reinecke to Shirley Harrison, July 18, 1972, private archive of Joshua Nash.

[132] John Holm, "Substrate Diffusion," in *Substrata versus Universals in Creole Genesis,* eds. Pieter Muysken and Norval Smith, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1986), 266; John Holm, *Pidgins and Creoles: Volume II Reference Survey* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 546–551.

[133] Letter from John Holm to Shirley Harrison, June 26, 1982, Harrison Papers, private archive of Joshua Nash.

[134] Letter from Ian Hancock to Harrison, October 19 1982, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 2 green.

[135] Letter from Manfred Görlach to Harrison, April 27, 1979, private archive of Joshua Nash.

and codes. In 1970, shortly after Harrison's first fieldwork on Norfolk, the island was visited by Swedish linguist Arne Zettersten, who made tape recordings of his own. It was part of broader work on isolated and insular communities—he conducted research on the languages of Pitcairn Island, Tristan da Cunha, and St. Helena, as well.[136] In 1975, he became a chaired professor at the University of Copenhagen and began working on the languages of Pitkern and Norf'k with a student from the University of Göteborg named Anders Källgård, who went to Pitcairn to make recordings of his own in 1980.[137] Källgård described his Pitcairn fieldwork as very positive. "Pitcairn was an exceptional experience,'" he wrote. "The then 60 islanders were tremendously hospitable, and I was given full support in my linguistic work."[138] Andrew Young, who had clashed with Moverley and was measured by Harry Shapiro, became one of his primary informants. When Zettersten sought to publish some of their results in Manfred Görlach's *English World-Wide* series, the editor encouraged Zettersten to collaborate with Harrison. Görlach was "baffled" that the Swedes had not been in communication with her and insisted they work together. Zettersten's interviews from Norfolk were "of course quite different" from Flint's or Harrison's, Görlach added; in comparison his showed "little broad Norfolk, lexically and syntactically, and only traces of Norfolk phonology."[139] Harrison was much better positioned, it seemed to him.

Zettersten wrote to Harrison across the next two years, sharing his transcripts and insisting the two collaborate, though Harrison remained reluctant to jointly author a book and

[136] Arne Zettersten, "The Mutineers of the *Bounty* and the Language of Their Descendants," *Moderna Sprak* 60 (1966): 393–398.
[137] Letter from Zettersten to Harrison, n.d., presumably July–August of 1979, private archive of Joshua Nash.
[138] Anders Källgård, "Present-Day Pitcairnese," *English World-Wide* 14, no. 1 (1993): 71–114.
[139] Letter from M, Görlach to A. Zetttesten, September 12, 1979, private archive of Joshua Nash.

preferred to write jointly published but separately authored pieces.[140] As the Swedish linguist prepared his manuscript, Harrison looked over the transcripts of his interviews. They were fascinating documents in their own right, but Harrison could not help but note the differences between her work and his. Zettersten's presence, and his interview technique, had resulted in the elicitation of very different material. Like Görlach, she noted that his conversations tended a good deal toward English forms. Analyzing a conversation between informants A and B, she ventured: "no doubt the interview situation and the fact that B speaks close to [English] with the odd [Broad Norfolk] put in throughout draws A to a similar style," especially as both informants were "putting up a case." Her private notes suggested further qualms with Zettersten's work, not least his translations.[141]

She corresponded directly with Källgård, too.[142] In an exchange about their joint work, he inquired about the possibility of setting a standard for spellings in transcriptions across their publications, suggesting that they adopt English spellings where possible, limit IPA transcriptions, and provide few translations. Harrison fervently disagreed. "I do not favour the use of your spelling conventions for the transcription of the Norfolk texts," she replied. In a draft letter, she wrote "I feel that it misrepresents the character of the language. . . . I assume that the transcription adopted should indicate as clearly as possible the characteristics which distinguish Norfolk from English." An English-based orthography would obscure small differences in sounds, dulling the uniqueness of Norfolk and flattening the variations Harrison had identified.

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[140] Letter from Zettersten to Harrison, n.d., presumably July–August of 1979, private archive of Joshua Nash; letter from Harrison to Zettersten, June 30, 1980, private archive of Joshua Nash; letter from Zettersten to Harrison, May 25, 1981, private archive of Joshua Nash.
[141] Letter from Harrison to Zettersten April 9 1981, private archive of Joshua Nash.
[142] Anders Källgård, *Pitcairnese: A Report 30 Years after Moverley, Concentrating on the Vocabulary* (Göteborg, Sweden: Göteborg's Universitet, Engelska Institutionen, 1981); Anders Källgård, *Myteristernas Attlingar* (Stockholm: Textab, 1986); Anders Källgård, *Fut yoli noo bin laane aklen?: A Pitcairn Word-list* (Göteborg, Sweden: Göteborg's Universitet, 1991); Anders Källgård, "A Pitkern World List," *Pacific Linguistics, Series A. Occasional Papers* 91 (1998), 107–171.

Setting a different standard for the language in linguistic publications would preserve the importance of her work—and the uniqueness of the language itself. IPA transcriptions and the presence of English translations would signal Norf'k's status as an autonomous language in a very visible way.

Another frequent interlocutor was Donald Laycock, a linguist at the Australia National University, who had written prolifically about contact languages—indeed, Flint had based his Norfolk intelligibility tests in part on Laycock's field methods as a PhD student in New Guinea's Sepik district. During the 1980s, Laycock became interested in Norfolk after he was invited to help author a book on its language. Alice Buffett, a Norfolk Islander and cousin of Shirley Harrison, won a grant from the Churchill Trust to design a system for writing Norf'k, part of a general turn toward its preservation and the preservation of other threatened languages. The award sent her to ANU to take a course in linguistics and provided money to hire an expert consultant. Laycock was initially hesitant to take the job; he told Harrison that he had recommended her as the better candidate, and in any case he was more interested in saving an endangered language than in trespassing onto her territory. He sensed that, because the invitation came from Alice Buffett and not from the island government, he was about to enter into a contentious position and he certainly did "not wish to get embroiled in island politics."[143] He nonetheless took up the work, spending a month on Norfolk Island in October of 1986. His was a very different kind of fieldwork, as befitted a very different task. Much of Laycock's work consisted of putting Harrison's informants, especially her father's interviews from her 1972 thesis, in dialogue with his own. Describing his method to Harrison, Laycock claimed to produce a workable system "by looking at [her] sentences, then composing sentences of the same type (taking wild guesses that they might be acceptable in Norfolk), then checking them with

[143] Letter from Laycock to Harrison, April 15, 1986, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 15 red sleeve.

Alice."[144] Thus, Norfolk was translated from field interview into recording, from recording into transcription, and from transcription into field interview, and then again into another orthography.

The ultimate goal, Laycock said, was a system of writing that anyone who already read standard English could comprehend, but which would appear "sufficiently different from Australian English to be readily recognized as Norfolk." It would be simple, workable, and accessible to any layman.[145] Laycock may have wished to avoid politics, but setting a standard orthography entailed inevitable political commitments, as others were already committed to different systems for writing the language, and indeed some islanders had already published literary writing using one form or another. While he and Alice Buffett were working toward their book, another islander, Beryl Nobbs Palmer, produced *A Dictionary of Norfolk Words and Uses*.[146] Laycock didn't think much of it; he sent Harrison a scathing multipage "review" of the text and said it was "so bad it gives me physical pain every time I look at it." Harrison, of course, was devoted to her own system, and stood to lose if another one was adopted. As in Harrison's debate with Zettersten and Källgård, the adoption of one orthography or another carried implicit stakes for the status of the language itself, and for the recognition of Harrison's interpretation of it. Whose forms would become standard? Whose description of the language would become set in stone? And, ultimately, how separate from English would the language appear?

Laycock wondered how the book would be received; "You know the politics on the island," he told Harrison.[147] She certainly did. While Laycock corresponded and collaborated with her regularly on the project—he sent her drafts and solicited feedback—Buffett had been

[144] Letter from Laycock to S. Harrison, April 28, 1987, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, B orange.
[145] Letter from Laycock to Harrison, April 15, 1986, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 15 red sleeve.
[146] Beryl Nobbs Palmer, *A Dictionary of Norfolk Words and Uses* (Norfolk Island: self-published, 1986).
[147] Letter from Laycock to S. Harrison, April 28, 1987, Norfolk Island Museum, B orange.

more reticent. "I haven't heard from Alice," she told Laycock after he sent her a draft of the book, explaining that it "may have a lot to do with the parochial rivalry that you may have noticed exists between Norfolk Islanders.[148] She also chided Laycock himself for becoming too personal, and for losing his sense of social scientific objectivity in the island's tangle of personal politics. She read his bitter review of Beryl Nobbs Palmers' dictionary and took issue with his approach. "I accept the content of what you say about Beryl Nobb's publication, but would like to avoid the very divisive tone that you adopt throughout the article," she said, suggesting that "a more objective, 'scientific' style might have conveyed your meaning more effectively." Whether speaking on the island or of the island, he should speak the language of a scientist. However, like any researcher she was hardly immune from the island's personal and situational politics. She had not pursued closer communication with Alice Buffett, either—in part because she never felt that the island had recognized her own work. "I believe it stems from my disappointment at (certain) Norfolk Islanders' ~~reaction~~ response/recognition to my own work on Norfolk Language," she candidly wrote in the draft of a letter to Laycock. She was glad to see others write about the language, but she wanted her successors to "act in an ethical manner by acknowledging the ~~sound~~ extensive and I hope thorough analysis that has already been done on the language."[149]

Harrison ultimately took a conciliatory approach and penned a foreword for *Speak Norfolk Today.* An early draft of that text situates Buffett and Laycock's work in the context of the islands' two competing languages—not Norf'k and English in this case, but rather the local and the scientific idioms between which she had navigated for the last two decades:

[148] Letter to Don Layckcok from Harrison, May 14, 1987, Norfolk Island Museum, B orange.
[149] Letter to Don Laycock, n/d, probably a continuation of her letter dated May 14, 1987. The Harrison papers contain draft copies of letters; I have preserved her edits and elisions.

> *To this stage there have been two types of study of the language of Norfolk Island; one refers to the academic investigations of the sounds, grammar, lexicon and other features of Norfolk; the other includes the various collections of Norfolk words and phrases which have been published by lay people who are interested in the language but without linguistic training. The method of writing Norfolk is very different in the two fields of study. The examples of academic research ~~have~~ present~~ed~~ words in phonetic script, a ~~this~~ system which has the great ~~advantage~~ merit of expressing sounds in a standard and accurate manner but which has the ~~obvious~~ drawback of restricting the understanding of material written in phonetic symbols to the few people who are familiar with the system. The lay studies show a ~~non-standardised~~ arbitrary method of recording Norfolk words since each writer chooses a spelling which he or she considers appropriate.*

But through their work, Laycock and Buffett offered

> *. . . Norfolk Islanders and Outsiders interested in the language a standard method of writing Norfolk. It is a great benefit for all – for Norfolk Islanders who may be encouraged to write in Norfolk more often and explore the written potential of their language and for all students and interested people who may now refer to a standard form of Norfolk words.*[150]

In her private correspondence, Harrison critiqued many of Laycock's choices; the orthography was becoming standardized in a form beyond her control, the product of a collaboration between scientists and islanders other than her own. Laycock acknowledged her criticisms and suggested that he had his own qualms about some of Alice Buffett's ideas, too. But "an orthography doesn't have to be absolutely perfect, just workable, and this one is," he wrote. "We will see how it settles down in usage."[151]

In addition to co-authoring his book with Buffett, Laycock published academic work of his own on the language. After visiting the island, he began writing talks and then an article on the "status of Norfolk," revisiting the contentious issue of the language's categorization. He sent a draft to Harrison for comment.[152] In it, like many writers before him, he poured over the history of visitors' interactions with the island. Pitcairn's tumultuous past fascinated him; he wrote that

[150] Shirley Harrison, "Forward," May 15, 1988, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, orange D.
[151] Letter from Laycock to Harrison, August 10, 1988, Norfolk Island Museum, 15 red sleeve.
[152] Letter from Laycock to S. Harrison, April 28, 1987, Norfolk Island Museum, B orange.

"it is probable that no language-variety in the world has a more romantic history."[153] Drawing especially on Maude's historical work, and primary source accounts from Folger, Beechey, and the larger corpus of early Pitcairn texts, he noted that early visitors were almost unanimous in describing the language of the island as English—and descriptions of Tahitian-English creole were essentially absent from the record. He examined the language's form, content, and structure, too. Its grammar and syntax were essentially English, he decided. Its lexicon, too, consisted mostly of words with English etymologies. "The lexical deficiencies of [Pitcairn-Norfolk] are such, in fact, that the language can hardly be said to have advanced much beyond the jargon stage," he declared. "The many texts given by Harrison (1984) show how difficult it is for even fluent speakers of [Pitcairn-Norfolk] to carry on a conversation without the use of words that the speakers acknowledge to be 'English.'"[154] Reading from the historical record, from Harrison and Flint's work, and from his own experience, he understood the language instead as a kind of "code" or 'jargon," a language whose purpose was to separate insiders from outsiders. It was, he said, "a deliberate creation of adults, a secret language, designed to exclude non-Islanders. The proper technical term for such a language is not dialect, or creole, but *cant*." He also took on Harrison's ideas directly, deploying her doctoral work in support of his thesis. "The variety called 'modified Norfolk' by Harrison (1984) also fits the view of [Pitcairn-Norfolk] as essentially a mark of acceptance by Islanders," he wrote. "It is, in fact, not 'modified Norfolk" but 'modified English', or, on another view, 'instant Norfolk,' it is a form that anyone with a quick ear can acquire within a week, as the first step into acceptance in Norfolk-speaking communities."[155]

[153] Donald C. Laycock, "The Status of Pitcairn-Norfolk: Creole, Dialect, or Cant?" in *Status and Function of Languages and Language Varieties*, ed. Ulrich Ammon (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 608.
[154] Laycock, "The Status of Pitcairn-Norfolk," 617.
[155] Laycock, "The Status of Pitcairn-Norfolk," 624–625.

Such was the rough-and-tumble language of academic disagreement. Harrison wrote back in kind, deploying her expertise and the language of linguistic science to counter Laycock's assertions. She, too, had read the same historical sources, and argued from them that outsider contact with the island during its first decades was far too infrequent to merit the construction of a private jargon.[156] Moreover, while she was the first to argue that expressions of Norfolk were fluid, giving rise to the "modified" forms she had spent a half-decade recording, "Broad" Norfolk had remained remarkably consistent over the past six generations—it was, in her words, "an exceptionally stable language which has maintained as many T[ahitian] and English dialect features from the time of its origin."[157] Moreover, she said, Laycock's assertion that her doctoral work described an easily acquired modification of English was misplaced. "I think it unfortunate and misleading to apply 'instant Norfolk' to modified Norfolk patterns," she wrote. "It completely ignores the interesting and difficult question of explaining how the modified patterns (and they are various) have come about." Rather, she implied that Laycock and Buffett were delegitimizing the language. By classifying Pitcairn-Norfolk as a cant, by calling "modified Norfolk" "instant Norfolk," and even by choosing to call their book "Speak Norfolk Today," they were discounting the legitimacy of the island's language as a unique, sophisticated, and autochthonous form. "Your approach almost seems to give support to the old view that pidgins and creoles are such simple, inferior forms of language that they are not worth much attention," accused Harrison.[158]

Laycock died unexpectedly in 1988 at the age of 52.[159] His articles on Norfolk were published posthumously in part with the help of his former student at the ANU, Peter

[156] Letter from Harrison to Donald Laycock, May 14, 1987, Norfolk Island Museum, B orange.
[157] Letter from Harrison to Donald Laycock, n.d., likely 1987, Norfolk Island Museum, 15 red sleeve.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Lois Carrington, "Donald Clarence Laycock 1936–1988," *English World-Wide* 10, no.1 (1989): 121–122.

Mühlhäusler, who was becoming an authority on contact languages in his own right.[160] Mühlhäusler wrote to Harrison to ask for assistance as he prepared Laycock's posthumous manuscript for publication.[161] She wrote back to suggest that Laycock had misread her thesis, defending her interpretation of Norfolk's language as more than a cant, at least in her descriptions of modified Norfolk.[162] Mühlhäusler's opinion mattered a great deal. In the next decade, he himself became drawn to the island as a field site and a subject of research. Over the ensuing decades he made the study of its language his central project; he had first encountered the language while reading Ross and Moverley's book as a graduate student, and found the notion of studying the evolution of a language in a living laboratory a remarkably appealing one—an opportunity which was the envy of many in the natural sciences.[163] From 1997 on he visited the island nearly every year, authoring dozens of papers on the language and its history. He supervised a graduate student, Joshua Nash, who studied Norfolk Island place names and who went on to do the same on Pitcairn. Like Laycock, Mühlhäusler collaborated with Norfolk Islanders in writing books about their language and culture.[164] His work on the language, and his assistance in language planning and language preservation efforts, has done a great deal to maintain and legitimize its use.[165]

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[160] Donald Laycock, "The Interpretation of Variation in Pitcairn-Norfolk," in *Development and Diversity: Language Variation across Time and Space: A Festschrift for Charles-James N. Bailey*, eds. Jerold A. Edmondson, Crawford Feagin, and Peter Mühlhäusler (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1990), 621–628.
[161] Letter from Mühlhäusler to Harrison, December 13, 1989, and Letter from Mühlhäusler, February 5, 1990, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, 15 red sleeve.
[162] See also Letter to Peter Mühlhäusler, March 10, 1998, Harrison Papers, Norfolk Island Museum, A orange.
[163] Interview by the author with Professor Peter Mühlhäusler, Adelaide, March 30, 2014.
[164] Peter Mühlhäusler, Rachel Nebauer-Borg, and Piria Coleman, *Ucklun's Norf'k: Words as a Memory of Our Past* (Norfolk Island: Norfolk Island Museum Trust, 2012).
[165] Peter Mühlhäusler, "A Language Plan for Norfolk Island," in *Language Endangerment and Language Maintenance*, eds. David Bradley and Maya Bradley (London: Routledge Curzon, 2002) and "From Despised Jargon to Language of Education: Recent Developments in the Teaching of Norf'k," in *Education in Languages of Lesser Power: Asian-Pacific Perspectives*, eds. Craig Alan Volker and Fred. E. Anderson (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2015), 223–241.

During the decades surrounding the turn of the millennium, the steady interest of linguists in their language helped some Norfolk Islanders very directly in their bids to secure its legitimacy. In 2004, the island's legislature passed a law to recognize Norf'k as an official language. In his argument, the law's sponsor recounted the history of the language and its recognition by academics:

> *It has experienced testing times. It has been scorned. It has been scoffed at and it's been derided. It has been banned in the Norfolk Island educational system. Physical and mental punishment has been meted out to those who have entertained its use but notwithstanding all of this, the Norfolk Islander has not been dispossessed of this essential cultural trait. Indeed in more recent times we have turned to teaching it in our school and it has been the subject of a number of learned treatises.*[166]

The categorization of the language itself, however, remains subject to debate in linguistic circles; some argue that it is a creole, while others are agnostic on the question.[167] The notion of Norfolk and Pitcairn as natural laboratories thrives, too, as linguists continue to make Norfolk a perennial field site.[168] Writing in 2008, Mühlhäusler and co-author John Ingram reiterated that both Pitcairn and Norfolk continue to "provide laboratory conditions to study linguistics processes such as language contact, dialect mixing, and languages in competition."[169]

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[166] "Norfolk Island Language (Norf'k) Bill," *Norfolk Island Hansard, 11th Assembly* (Norfolk Island, 2004), 4.
[167] C.f. Andrei A. Avram, "Pitkern and Norfolk Revisited," *English Today* 19, no. 3 (July 2003): 44–49; Peter Mühlhäusler, "Some Notes on the Ontology of Norf'k," *Language Sciences* 33, no. 4 (July 2011); 673–679. The latter treats the shifting designations by linguists over time, suggesting that these have changed with linguistic fashion.
[168] John Ingram and Peter Mühlhäusler, "Norfolk Island-Pitcairn English: Phonetics and Phonology," in *The Pacific and Australasia*, eds. Kate Burridge and Bernd Kortmann (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 269.
[169] Ibid.

**Entangled Tapes**

For the past half century, linguists were persistent but transient figures on the islands. As fieldworkers, they appeared for a few weeks or months to make recordings and gather data, and then left with their tapes and texts. Tape recordings, however, have long afterlives. Moverley's 1951 tape disappeared sometime after Ross's death in 1980, though linguists often asked each other if it could be tracked down.[170] Flint's tapes, on the other hand, circulated widely. A copy went to a linguist in Scotland, in exchange for tape recordings of Tristan da Cunha speech.[171] Another copy went to linguist Ralph Gardner White in Tahiti, in exchange for help with Tahitian etymologies.[172] Zettersten traded his recordings and transcripts for Flint's material, as did Gathercole and Harré—Pitkern voices crossed the globe in exchange for Norf'k voices.[173] They circled back to the sites at which they were born. Versions of Flint's dialogues are on display in the Norfolk Island Museum and are archived on Norfolk Islanders' hard drives. Recoded as digital files, they may yet circulate for some time.

Flint was especially generous about sharing his tapes with Shirley Harrison. She wrote him in 1979, explaining that she was a Norfolk Islander beginning a PhD project on the language and asking if he could share his data.[174] He gave her everything he had ever recorded, alongside copies of tapes from Harré and Gathercole, after receiving their permission. That generosity was part of the language of science, he told her, one based on open communication between scholars. "Please do not feel any personal obligation to me," he wrote. However, as documents of the

[170] Letter from Görlach to Harrison, April 27, 1979, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[171] Letter from Flint to J. Leighton, linguistic survey of Scotland, March 18, 1965, Flint Papers, Box 3, Folder 3.
[172] Letter from Flint to R. Gardner White, July 24, 1961, Flint Papers, Box 21, Folder 3A.
[173] Letter from Görlach to Harrison, June 16 1979, private Archive of Joshua Nash; letter from S. Harrison to J. Harré, December 17, 1980, Norfolk Island Museum, 2 green; letter from Gathercole to Flint, November 13, 1964, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[174] Letter from Harrison to Flint, n.d., probably 1979, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.

islands' languages, they entailed other responsibilities—their mutual obligation was to the Norfolk Islanders whose voices were preserved. "When the speech and human records were made, a pledge was given to the informants that these recordings would not be broadcast or otherwise made public," he explained. "Older informants remembered the attempt made by the educational authorities in the early part of the century to suppress Norfolk, some of them even being punished for using it in school. The informants were very ready to cooperate in making the recordings for scientific purposes, but naturally were still a little sensitive."[175] Flint and Harrison corresponded and exchanged telephone calls for the next five years, trading information and sharing recollections of the island. When he died in 1984, he left her his library of sociolinguistics books.[176] Harrison herself was similarly generous about sharing her recordings and transcripts. She sent copies of hers and Flint's recordings to American linguist Iain Hancock; after hearing Flint's conversations and seeing transcriptions of her fathers' voice, he told Harrison that he had changed his mind about the language—it was a creole after all.[177]

When Shirley Harrison died in 1999, she left behind a large archive of recordings and transcripts of her encounters with Norfolk Islanders, as well as a substantial record of her communication with professional linguists across the world. Some of these documents are in the library of the Norfolk Island Museum; others are in the private collections of linguists Peter Mühlhäusler and Joshua Nash. These documents, like other records of Norfolk and Pitcairn voices, continue to circulate through academic circles, though now in digital form. They are not perfect records, having become warped with time and over their journeys. Materially, tape was prone to break with storage and use. Ross and Grimson wrote that Moverley's tape was so worn

[175]Letter from Flint to Harrison, April 15, 1980, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[176]Letter from A. R. Doherty to Harrison, February 15, 1984, private archive of Peter Mühlhäusler.
[177] Letter from Ian Hancock to Harrison, October 19, 1982; letter to Hancock from Harrison, June 15, 1983; Letter from Ian Hancock (UT Austin) to Harrison, August 26, 1983; all in Norfolk Island Museum, 2 green.

with play as to be incomprehensible. Harrison snapped Gathercole's tapes in three places, though she stitched them back together as best she could, resulting in only a few losses.[178] As transcriptions, records of Norfolk and Pitcairn voices have traveled even more widely: translated and recorded into academic texts, circulating in journals and books, and accumulating in libraries the world over. Appearing in one journal article and then another, records of Norfolk and Pitcairn voices sometimes substantiated the language was a creole, at other times evidenced it as a cant or a secret code, designed to be inscrutable to those strangers trying to listen.

However, even if fixed in those forms in libraries and repositories, these tapes and transcriptions are thoroughly entangled objects, winding back into a long history of surveillance and through a complicated local and academic politics. Like blood samples, ethnographic objects, and other artifacts collected by field scientists across the colonial and postcolonial twentieth century, spools of magnetic tape are historically and ethically freighted by the data they hold and the translations they have endured.[179] As the archives of their own ontology, they continue to speak to the cross-cultural encounters that engendered them, even as they are copied and recopied for new uses and new contexts. They are records of, and in, several languages—of varieties of English, Pitcairn, Norfolk, and science at once.

Before closing, let us take Flint's reel off of our tape player and listen again to Moverley's recording—only figuratively, of course, since it survives now only as a transcript in a half-century-old linguistics text, and this is after all just another textual reproduction. But no matter. We fast forward and then slow the tape down. Once more we hear Moverley (**M**) and his

[178] Letter to Peter Gathercole from Harrison, December 14, 1980, Norfolk Island Museum, 2 green.
[179] A condition which entails both responsibilities and opportunities for researchers; see Emma Kowal, "Orphan DNA: Indigenous Samples, Ethical Biovalue and Postcolonial Science," *Social Studies of Science* 43, no. 4 (August 2013): 577–597; Warwick Anderson, "The Frozen Archive, or Defrosting Derrida," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 8, no. 3 (2015): 379–387.

former pupil (**P**) talking around a microphone in Wellington in 1951. They are imagining themselves on Pitcairn, where they see some young people clumsily carry a baby:

34. **M** Now that they know that we are watching them, the children are behaving better.
**P** i`jeə | demz̩ ˈʔaɪ sə `piəɬ | They certainly are; they're feeling ashamed.

35. **M** Oh, they are ashamed, are they?
**P** i`jeə | kɔːwʌn `stɾeɪndʒə ˌsi dem | *Yes, indeed, because a non-Pitcairner is watching them.*[180]

[180] Grimson, "The Pitcairnese Text," 124.

# Conclusions

**Locating the Truth on Pitcairn Island**

Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands have hosted many knowledge makers over the past two centuries; in telling their history, I chose four communities who made the islands into microcosms for understanding human nature. Sailors, administrators, anthropologists, and linguists left behind substantial archives and were crucial figures in that story, each using the islands for their own purposes even as they contributed to their broader construction as exemplary spaces. However, in excavating the ontology of these two "natural laboratories," I could have written about other communities, too. Before I attend to the work of concluding with and about Pitcairn Islanders, I should gesture briefly toward some of those disciplines whose pasts I have left untold.

Geneticists comprise one such set of knowledge makers. Certainly, early twentieth-century eugenicists and physical anthropologists configured both islands as Mendelian "natural laboratories," but more recent research on Norfolk Islanders bears a rhyming similarity with their work. Since 2000, a team of geneticists from Australia's Griffiths University has conducted studies on Norfolk Island in collaboration with scientists at other universities across the globe. With approval from the island government and careful permissions from their research subjects, they collected samples from over 600 Norfolk Islanders, offering in return their aid in health planning.[1] Their analysis of that material has proceeded along two basic trajectories. First, they have sought to determine whether specific health problems—eye disease, heart disease, and

[1] C. Bellis, R.M. Hughes, K.N. Begley, et al., "Phenotypical Characterisation of the Isolated Norfolk Island Population Focusing on Epidemiological Indicators of Cardiovascular Disease," *Human Heredity* 60 (2005): 211–219.

migraines, particularly—are gene-linked.[2] Second, they have sought to build a comprehensive understanding of the Norfolk Island population and its history in order to substantiate it as a useful isolate for genetic research. In work that suggests remarkable continuities with the physical anthropology of the early twentieth century, they have determined the island's level of isolation as well as ratios of European and Pacific Islander admixture.[3] As a 2015 article explained, their research has corroborated historical and even fictive accounts to prove that the islands host a

> *uniquely admixed population. The current Norfolk Island population has arisen from a small number of founders with mixed Caucasian and Polynesian ancestry, descendants of a famous historical event. The 'Mutiny on the* Bounty*' has been told in history books, songs and the big screen, but recently this story can be portrayed through comprehensive molecular genetics.*[4]

Like Shapiro, geneticists combed through written accounts of the islands to produce a comprehensive set of pedigrees. "Accurate and detailed historical accounts have been used by genealogists to create and maintain a well-documented database of the entire Norfolk Island population, spanning all the way back to the original founders," they write. To date, "the pedigree includes ~5700 individuals coalescing over 11 generations or 200 years back to the original 9 European sailors and 12 Tahitian women." The islanders' heritage, both in the form of blood samples and as an archive of relationships spanning centuries, has been mapped with an expansiveness that far exceeds Harry Shapiro's tables and note cards.

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[2] "Justin C. Sherwin, Lisa S. Kearns, Alex W. Hewitt, et al., "Prevalence of Chronic Ocular Diseases in a Genetic Isolate: The Norfolk Island Eye Study (NIES)," *Ophthalmic Epidemiology* 18, no. 2 (2011): 61–71; C. Bellis, H.C. Cox, T.D. Dyer, et al., "Linkage Mapping of CVD Risk Traits in the Isolated Norfolk Island Population," *Human Genetics* 124 (2008): 543–552; Hannah C. Cox, Rod A. Lea, and Claire Bellis, "Heritability and Genome-wide Linkage Analysis of Migraine in the Genetic Isolate of Norfolk Island," *Gene* 11, no. 1 (2011): 119–123.

[3] B. P. McEvoy, Z. Z. Zhao, S. Macgregor, et al., "European and Polynesian Admixture in the Norfolk Island Population," *Heredity* 105 (2010): 229–234; Stuart Macgregor, Claire Bellis, Rod A. Lea, et al., "Legacy of Mutiny on the *Bounty*: Founder Effect and Admixture on Norfolk Island," *European Journal of Human Genetics* 18 **(**2010): 67–72.

[4] Miles C. Benton, Shani Stuart, Claire Bellis, et al., "'Mutiny on the *Bounty'*: The Genetic History of Norfolk Island Reveals Extreme Gender-Biased Admixture," *Investigative Genetics* 6, no. 11 (2015).

I have neglected other communities of knowledge makers, as well. Archaeologists have been persistent visitors to the islands for a century, even if this dissertation has treated them only in passing. In chapter four, Katherine and William Scoresby Routledge appeared as characters who worked mostly in the service of physical anthropology, collecting genealogies and brothers Charles and Edwin Young for further examination. When they called on Pitcairn in 1915, Katherine came with a note in her journal about the island: "Never been worked. Specially interesting."[5] With the islanders' help, they surveyed Pitcairn for relics of its previous habitations, but they stayed only for a few days. The Routledges were followed by other archaeologists; it was not uncommon for expeditions to or from Rapa Nui to stop at the island. A Belgian archaeological expedition to Easter Island called in 1935, not long after Shapiro and Crocker visited on the *Zaca,* bringing with it archaeologist Henri Lavachery and anthropologist Alfred Métraux.[6] Adventurer and pseudo-archaeologist Thor Heyerdahl visited with a team of Norwegian archaeologists in 1956; he dined with Parkin Christian and watched divers haul pieces of the *Bounty's* ballast out of the bay, while the rest of the expedition photographed rock carvings and collected stone tools.[7]

Scholars interested in Rapa Nui had reason to investigate Pitcairn; one of the leading research questions in Pacific archaeology during the middle of the nineteenth century was to understand the diffusion of Polynesians across the Pacific. Rapa Nui was the extreme eastern terminus of their settlement; bolstered by its own unique mythologization, it attracted significant attention of its own. Pitcairn was the penultimate waystation on that migration, and the material

[5] Katherine Routledge, "Pacific Islands, anthropological note on," Archives of the Royal Geographical Society (hereafter RGS), WSR 4/1/1/1-3.
[6] Henri Lavachery, *Contribution à l'Etude de l'Archéologie de l'Île de Pitcairn* (Brussels: Société des Américanistes de Belgique, 1936).
[7] Thor Heyerdahl and Edwin N. Ferdon, eds., *Reports of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition to Easter Island and the East Pacific* (New York: Rand McNally, 1965).

remnants of its lost settlement suggested strong links between the two islands. By tracing lines of cultural propagation through Pitcairn's petroglyphs and ruins, researchers hoped to unravel the "mystery of Easter Island." Some researchers had wider agendas. To locate a lost past was to search for the present self. Thor Heyerdahl famously sailed into the Pacific looking for a kind of hidden whiteness, convinced that an ancient race of blonde-haired Americans had sailed from the Andes to Rapa Nui, then Pitcairn, and finally beyond into the wider Southern Pacific.[8]

Long-duration field expeditions came in the second half of the century. In 1963, a team of archaeologists from the University of Otago arrived on Pitcairn, headed by Peter Gathercole. They stayed for three months, systematically surveying the island to gather material from its 800-year-old quarry sites. They found an island rich in stone tools—what they described as a kind of ancient Polynesian factory—and eventually returned to New Zealand with a treasure trove of specimens. They bought many of these from island residents like Nelson Dyett; the Pitcairners themselves had long collected the remnants of Pitcairn's first inhabitants and knew how to bargain with strangers.[9] Other visitors came in the decades that followed. Bishop Museum archaeologist Yosihiko Sinoto excavated on Pitcairn and Henderson, a coral atoll in the same island group, in 1971.[10] His work showed that humans came to Pitcairn and Henderson not just as collectors of stone but as inhabitants, settlers who remade these "pristine" islands into human spaces. It was part of a reorientation in Pacific archaeological research; archaeologists still came to islands like Pitcairn to understand settlement and migration, but they now did so in order to work out how human colonization affected and was affected by insular environments. Islands would become laboratories of environmental management and mismanagement.

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[8] Thor Heyerdahl, "The Voyage of the Raft of *Kon-Tiki,*" *Geographic Journal* 115, no. 1/3 (Jan–March 1950): 20-41; Thor Heyerdahl, *Aku-Aku: The Secret of Easter Island* (New York: Rand McNallly, 1958).
[9] Catalogue of the Otago Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand; c.f. catalogue numbers D. 66.1717.
[10] Yosihiko H. Sinoto, "An Analysis of Polynesian Migrations Based on the Archaeological Assessements," *Océanistes* 39 (1983): 57–67.

Sifting through the remnants of the islands' first habitations, archaeologists discovered that with human arrival, bird and plant life was devastated.[11] Jared Diamond, then an ornithologist and ecologist, read articles about Pitcairn and Henderson with interest.[12] Perhaps, he suggested, the collapse of small and marginal places like Pitcairn could offer lessons to the broader world. As he later wrote, "the fates of the former populations of Pitcairn and Henderson are a metaphor for what may await all of us if we continue on our present course."[13] Archaeological work has proceeded along similar lines on Pitcairn and Henderson Islands since, including significant research by Marshall Weisler in 1991 and 1992. The last decades have also seen excavations of Norfolk Island's Polynesian past. Researchers continue to puzzle out how the first settlers arrived, lived, and died out—and whether their fate in those microcosms offers portents for our own.[14] Only recently have archaeologists studied the material past of the *Bounty* descendants explicitly, but that has not stopped writers from comparing the ecological management practiced by Pitcairn's first inhabitants to that of its second.[15] Both colonists, as the custodians of an ecological microcosm, are thought to offer lessons for us all.

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[11] David W. Steadman and Storrs L. Olson, "Bird Remains from an Archaeological Site on Henderson Island, South Pacific: Man-Caused Extinctions on an 'Uninhabited" Island,' *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences USA* 82 (1985): 6191–6195; Marshall Weisler, "Henderson Island Prehistory: Colonization and Extinction on a Remote Polynesian Island," *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* 56 (1995): 377–404.

[12] Jared Diamond, "Human Settlements: Why Did the Polynesians Abandon their Mystery Islands?" *Nature* 317, no. 6040 (October 31, 1985): 764.

[13] Jared Diamond, "Foreword: Introduction to the Exploration of the Pitcairn Islands," *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* 56, no. 1 (1995): 1–5.

[14] Atholl Anderson and Peter White, eds., *The Prehistoric Archaeology of Norfolk Island, Southwest Pacific.* Records of the Australian Museum, Supplement 27 (Sydney: Australian Museum, 2001); Patrick D. Nunn, "Environmental Catastrophe in the Pacific Islands around AD 1300," *Geoarchaeology* 15, no. 7 (2000): 715–740; Joseph A. Tainter, "The Archaeology of Overshoot and Collapse," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35 (2006): 59–74.

[15]Nigel Erskine, "The Pitcairn Project: A Preliminary Report of the First Integrated Archaeological Investigation of the Mutineer Settlement of Pitcairn Island," *Bulletin of the Australian Institute for Maritime Archaeology* 23 (1999): 3–9; Nigel Erskine, "The Historical Archaeology of Settlement at Pitcairn Island 1790–1856" (PhD dissertation, James Cook University, 2004); Jared Diamond, "The Last People Alive: Pitcairn and Henderson Islands," ch. 3 in *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed* (New York: Viking, 2004).

Though I did not discuss historians as a community of knowledge makers in their own right, my own discipline has produced its share of *Bounty* obsessives; in fact, histories probably outnumber other genres as a form of writing about the island. For the last two centuries, historians have retold the islands' pasts in order to illuminate something about our broader present. This dissertation has introduced some of them: there was Sir John Barrow, the geographer and patron of Pacific exploration and empire; there were, too, Victorian moralists, including Lady Diana Belcher, who helped to relay the story of the Pitcairners' genesis and exodus to Norfolk Island, and the Reverend T. B. Murray, who told John Adams's life in the form of hagiography. In the twentieth century, historians authored many histories of both islands, even if the dissertation has mentioned them only briefly or not at all. Henry Evans Maude, a one-time governor of Pitcairn, early historian of the Pacific, and collaborator of linguists Ewlyn Flint and A.S.C. Ross, was long obsessed with both islands. He penned historical accounts that ranged from the mutiny across the nineteenth century, and collected a vast corpus of Pitcairn and Norfolk material. David Silverman visited Pitcairn during the 1960s and wrote a book about their past and present that remains a mainstay of *Bounty* bibliographies.[16] Herbert Ford continues to chronicle the island's past from his Pitcairn Island Study Center. Economic and developmental histories appeared, too. LSE political economist Robert Wade did his first fieldwork on Pitcairn in 1964–1965, and Malcom Treagold produced a monograph on Norfolk's economic history during the 1980s.[17] It bears mention that Pitcairn and Norfolk Islanders have written their own histories, too, from John Adams's first accounts of the *Bounty,* through Rosalind Amelia

[16] Henry Evans Maude, "Tahitian Interlude; the Migration of the Pitcairn Islanders to the Motherland in 1831," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 68, no. 2 (June 1959): 115–140; "In Search of a Home: From the Mutiny to Pitcairn Island, 1789–1790," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 67, no. 2 (June 1958): 104–131; "History of Pitcairn" in *The Pitcairnese* Language by Ross and Moverley, 45–101.
[17] Malcom Treagold, *Bounteous Bestowal: The Economic History of Norfolk Island*, Pacific Research Monograph No. 18 (Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University, 1988).

Young's writing, to the more recent accounts of Merval Hoare, a New Zealander resident on Norfolk since the 1940s. A full list is of the island's historians and histories is very long.[18]

The best-known authors of the islands past were not historians at all, but fiction writers. Novelists James Norman Hall and Charles Nordhoff produced a *Bounty* trilogy that millions of Anglophone readers took as a narrative of historical fact. Though its action and dialogue were largely invented, the authors built their story from a thorough reading of the historical record and even a visit to Pitcairn itself in 1933. Moreover, the line between historical and fictive registers was already blurred; some histories that purported to offer factual accounts, such as the 1819 *Life of Alexander Smith*, were almost entirely contrived. That slippage has long been a feature of Pitcairn stories. Greg Dening wrote that all narratives about the island were really forms of "parable;" they suggested something broader about our lives.[19] Dening, as another historian of Pitcairn, did the same, using the *Bounty* and the island in order to tell larger truths about language, "cultural literacy," and the modes in which we understand the past.

Many of those historians who wrote about Pitcairn and Norfolk never visited the islands, relying instead—as historians do—on others' texts to tell stories with others' lives. But a good number of them did, including the author of this dissertation, who visited Norfolk Island for ten days in May of 2014, and Pitcairn for eighteen days in February and March of 2015. Before arriving, I had read nearly every published text about Pitcairn and Norfolk, just as other visitors had. Once ashore, I spent some of my time on both islands retracing the steps of those who came before me. I tried my hand at a simple kind of fieldwork, recording a few informal conversations on Norfolk Island, though on Pitcairn I kept my camera, digital audio recorder, and notebook in my pack. I wrote in both of my journals at night, summing up each day's experience. I still keep

[18] See the first chapter for further discussion.
[19] Greg Dening, *Mr. Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power, and Theatre on the* Bounty (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 338.

those field diaries, one a digital text, the other a thin moleskin notebook with entries and illustrations in pen, with the rest of my Pitcairn/Norfolk files. Reading them like I would any other archival document, I see in them now the uncertain work of a novice graduate student. I worried a great deal about the reflexivity and recursion that inevitably arose when writing about people who wrote about people.

Those same diaries suggest that I found communities accustomed to explaining themselves to outsiders, and to being observed. "It feels like living inside a petri dish sometimes," Melva Evans told me during a conversation near the end of my stay on Pitcairn.[20] Most of those with whom I spoke knew well the work of the researchers who preceded me; copies of books about Pitcairn and Norfolk abounded on Pitcairn and Norfolk. One Norfolk Islander brought out a charred mass of pages, black around the edges, which he told me he had once pulled from the remnants of a house fire—arson is sometimes suggested to be an unsavory if infrequent expression of local contentiousness. The title page on the top of the stack still clearly marked it as Ross and Moverley's *The Pitcairnese Language*. Above all, both islands struck me as keenly aware of their own pasts—and as unique, singular, and often beautiful places. Like other researchers, I came away from my time in Pitcairn, Norfolk, and their archives across Europe, Oceania, and America having located truths of my own. Like the historians who preceded me, I will conclude my own text with a summation of arguments and findings, laying out again my own original contribution to knowledge.

First, however, I want to narrate briefly a few last instances of knowledge making. During the first decade of the new millennium, separate criminal inquiries on both islands prompted yet another wave of outsider interest. Between 2000 and 2004, these police and judicial investigations reactivated two centuries of writing about the islands and attracted the

[20] Conversation with Melva Evans, March 12, 2015, cited with permission.

attention of journalists and legal scholars, who produced accounts of their own. In 2002, Janelle Patton was killed on Norfolk Island. Sensationalist stories by journalists and "true crime" writers capitalized on the island's storied history and isolation, offering accounts of a grisly murder potentially committed by one of the island's own.[21] That attention exacerbated longstanding skepticism of outsiders; anthropology PhD student Mitchell Low, doing his own fieldwork on the island in 2007, recalled that the media attention "crystalized into an initial wariness of anyone asking a lot of questions about Norfolk, myself included."[22] Pitcairn Island saw even more focused scrutiny. In 1999, police began investigating the island after receiving reports of sexual abuse against minors. During the next two years, Operation Unique uncovered a series of crimes against children and adolescents extending back across the last half century; the crown ultimately charged 13 men with 96 offenses. Hearings for seven of those men were held on Pitcairn Island itself in 2004.

The trials brought to the fore once more questions about the Pitcairners' culture, their history, and their identity as British. The defense, both at the trial and in appeals that went as far as the Privy Council, put forward an argument built from a close reading of the island's past to suggest that Pitcairn was, in legal and historical terms, outside of British jurisdiction, and that the islanders had long maintained their own autochthonous culture. The prosecution contested that argument, and the court found itself in the position of arbitrating not only present allegations but conflicting interpretations of the past. The trial decision records that "the Public Defender has provided the Court with a lengthy chronology, drawn from a mass of historical material. The

[21] Roger Maynard, *The Fatal Flaw* (Sydney, NSW: Random House, 2007); Tim Latham, *Norfolk: Isle of Secrets; The Mystery of Janelle Patton's Death* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin, 2005); Norm Lipson and Adam Walters, *Nightmare on Norfolk* (Sydney, NSW: ACP, 2005). A trial on the island found New Zealander Glenn McNeill guilty of her murder.
[22] Mitchell Low, "Putting Down Roots: Belonging and the Politics of Settlement on Norfolk Island" (PhD dissertation: University of Western Australia, 2012), 24.

Public Prosecutor has challenged the significance of much of the material advanced, and the chronology, as straying into matters of submission and interpretation." It adds: "Counsel have only been able to agree upon the validity of some of the dates and events."[23] Both the defense and prosecution had poured over the written record and unpublished archive of the well-studied island—the H.E. Maude collection at the University of Adelaide proved particularly useful. The defense's evidence for Pitcairn's isolation and special status ultimately derived from a number of sources, not least the correspondence of Governor William Denison, the author of "The Experiment" himself. He had made concerted efforts, they reminded the court, to preserve the island's unique customs and isolation.[24] Drawing from other sources, the prosecution instead argued that the island had long demonstrated its Britishness and its loyalty, pointing to their reception of visiting ship's captains and their reliance on naval officers to draw up their own constitutions. The Crown decided in the prosecution's favor; the Pitcairners were British subjects and subject to British law. When the trials were over, six men were convicted on 35 counts; four of them were sentenced to imprisonment in a jail on the island itself. In the years since, legal scholars have written prolifically on Pitcairn, treating it as a place for thinking over the limits and cultural context of the law.[25]

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[23] Trials No 1-55, Queen v. 7 Named Accused (PNSC 2004), 10, available online at http://www.paclii.org/pn/cases/PNSC/2004/1.html.

[24] "No interference should take place with the rules under which they have hitherto been living; that, in point of fact, they should be enabled to carry out at Norfolk Island the same primitive or patriarchal system which has produced such good effects upon their moral conduct at Pitcairn's Island."

[25] C.f. Dawn Oliver, ed., *Justice, Legality, and the Rule of Law: Lessons from the Pitcairn Prosecutions* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2009); Helen Power, "Pitcairn Island: Sexual Offending, Cultural Difference, and Ignorance of the Law," *Criminal Law Review* (July 2007): 609; Si Shephard, "Physical Isolation and Failed Socialization on Pitcairn Island: A Warning for the Future?" *Journal of New Zealand and Pacific Studies* 2, no. 1 (April, 2014): 21–38; Michael O. Eshelman, "Law in Isolation: The Legal History of Pitcairn Island, 1900–2010," *ILSA Journal of International & Comparative Law* 18, no.1 (Fall, 2011): 17–71; Anthony Trenwith, "The Empire Strikes Back: Human Rights and the Pitcairn Proceedings, *"Journal of South Pacific Law* 7, no. 2 (2003). For an overview of the legal literature, see Michael O. Eshleman, "A Preliminary Legal Bibliography of the Pitcairn Islands, South Pacific Ocean," *Law Library Journal* 106, no. 2 (2014): 221–236.

The most widely read accounts of the trials were not by academics, but by journalists. The affair elicited considerable attention from reporters the world over, though given the island's limited facilities, only a select group of correspondents were granted permission to cover the trial in person. Among them was British journalist Kathy Marks, who eventually published a book on the subject. Its title made her aims clear; *Lost Paradise: From Mutiny on the* Bounty *to a Modern-Day Legacy of Sexual Mayhem, the Dark Secrets of Pitcairn Island Revealed* promised to show readers a horrifying dystopia lurking beneath a much-mythologized utopia. She, too, read the island's many accounts, including Beechey's, Shapiro's, and Flint's, and she spoke to researchers who had studied the island. Marks also dug through the unpublished Colonial Office correspondence in the National Archives; I occasionally found her yellow request slips between the folios in Kew while doing my own archival work. She and I came to similar but nonetheless divergent conclusions about the island's long history of visits and investigations. "Many outsiders fall under Pitcairn's spell, intoxicated by the cachet of the place, perhaps, or by the giddy sense of being so far from anywhere," she wrote in *Dark Paradise*. "They suspend critical judgement and lose touch with conventional values."[26] She, too, saw the history of writing about the island as a kind of social history of captivation, though she understood it in entirely pragmatic, even mercantile, terms: "If the world learned what Pitcairn was really like, the locals feared, the cruise ships would stop calling, and the parcels of new cloths would stop arriving . . . the myth would be exposed for what it was, just a myth, and the mutineers' descendants would be left to their own devices."[27] The islanders' efforts to "hypocrite the stranger" were nothing more than cover up, she suggested, a means by which they could blind their guests to the *real* Pitcairn Island lurking out of sight.

[26] Kathy Marks, *Lost Paradise: From Mutiny on the* Bounty *to a Modern-Day Legacy of Sexual Mayhem, the Dark Secrets of Pitcairn Island Revealed* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 202.
[27] Marks, *Lost Paradise,* 166.

Marks came to the island as an investigative journalist whose job was to locate the truth. Once she dispensed with the veil of "myth" surrounding the island, she found very large truths indeed. "What did Pitcairn tell us about human nature and life in small, remote communities?" she asked. "Is this how all of us would behave if left to ourselves, with no one looking over our shoulder? Is Pitcairn a cautionary tale?"[28] Sympathizing enormously with the island's women and girls and drawing from interviews with the island's victims, she elaborated her own theory of violence and place. Pitcairn's isolation mattered, of course, as did its lack of consistent administration, but the seed of abuse had been planted at the moment of settlement itself. Mutineers came to an isolated island and, after a string of murders over women, built a patriarchal society which treated them as sexual commodities to be shared. She compared it to William Golding's *Lord of the* Flies: "Pitcairn seems to confirm Golding's dark vision. Like his unnamed island, it was a social laboratory, but a real one—the site of a unique experiment thrown up by the confluence of historical events."[29] However, as historically particular as that "experiment" was, its implicit lesson was, she contended, universal: "We recognize that hellish little universe, and we recognize ourselves. The island offers a glimpse of the darkness that lies within every one of us."[30]

I close my own history with the trials and a reading of Marks's account neither to join her in suggesting that the islands are actually hidden dystopias, nor to hint that there is a "real" Pitcairn or Norfolk lurking somewhere behind layers of myth and hospitality. Rather, I take her as yet another entrant into a crowded discourse, the latest in a long line of investigators who have made one or another of the islands into a suggestive microcosm of human nature. She will certainly not be the last. Observers have long suggested that the islands, at least as the *Bounty*

[28] Marks, *Lost Paradise,* xxiii.
[29] Marks, *Lost Paradise,* 272.
[30] Marks, *Lost Paradise,* 279.

descendants know them, are coming to an end. Pitcairn, in particular, with its small and aging population, strikes writers as nearing the end of its story.[31] For the moment, however, both communities persevere, and visitors persist in documenting them. I met one such stranger, not an academic but an artist, during my last days on Pitcairn. British photographer Rhiannon Adam had come to Pitcairn after the Royal Geographical Society and BBC Radio 4 offered her a "Journey of a Lifetime" award. When a cruise ship called on the island in March of 2015, I spent a morning photographing her photographing tourists photographing Pitcairn Islanders—in what felt like an absurd apotheosis of my project's recursive reflexivity.

Adam stayed for three months after I left, documenting her time on Pitcairn mostly through camera lenses, though she also brought an audio recorder with her to produce a half-hour radio program and maintained a blog. An entry in the latter, written at the end of her stay, relays her own sense of the place, its visitors, and the layers of myth and encounter that comprise it. "I had wondered why the islanders would risk my own negative experiences escaping into the world and tarnishing their image," she wrote after watching a visiting Danish film crew record the islanders' smiling faces. "But then I realized that the balance is always tipped in their favour, that the mythical and romantic image that has been cultivated for the last two centuries will outlast anything I could ever say or do."[32] It was an unsettling feeling. "Pitcairn has led me to question what is real on more than one occasion," she admitted.

Pitcairn emerges in Adam's account as it does when approaching it from the ocean, a shrouded, cliff-bound mass rising slowly from the waves. That was the island as I last saw it, receding into the horizon as I stared out from the deck of the *Claymore II*, and that was the island

[31] C.f. John Connell, "The End Ever Nigh: Contemporary Population Change on Pitcairn Island," *GeoJournal* 16, no. 2 (March, 1988): 193–200.
[32] Rhiannon Adams, "The Departure," *From London to Pitcairn* (blog), October 19, 2015, https://rhiannonsetsoff.wordpress.com/.

as Adam last saw, too: "For one last time I took in the steep cliffs, the foreboding shapes, and took a last look at Christian's Cave and a vanishing Adamstown," she wrote of her departure. "The island was cloaked in low lying cloud, as though it had closed up already and was hiding from me. The smoke and mirrors in tangible form, the mysticism closing in, shrouding it from view."[33] That Pitcairn should still seem inscrutable after thousands of visits and hundreds of texts is wholly remarkable, but Adam is not the only observer to feel that knowledge of the island—real knowledge—is perhaps impossible and unobtainable. I am reminded of Lord Chelmsford's frustrated declaration, a hundred years earlier, that "there is no place where it is more difficult to find out the real truth than Norfolk Island."[34] It is an admission of unknowability that sits uneasily alongside the notion of the island as a natural laboratory, a place where isolation should permit clarity, and where knowledge is eminently legible and exportable. I suggest that one way to begin resolving that dissonance is to think seriously and historically about what it means to produce knowledge in a particular place, and to attend to the hard, difficult, and situated work of locating truths. Sometimes, visitors emerged from the entanglements of the local with discrete knowledge, at other times they came away with declarations of insular unknowability.

As conclusions go, that may strike the reader as an observation verging on the glib or banal, but an attention to such banal matters as context and place has been one of the major contributions of the history of science—and it is work that remains unfinished. Though Pitcairn and Norfolk were especially acute sites of situated truth-making, the islands are in many respects hardly unique. There are, I suspect, many places like them in and beyond the Pacific, whose long histories as zones of persistent knowledge making have not yet been told. I also suspect that

[33] Ibid.
[34] Lord Chemsford, Letter of July 20, 1910, 2, CO/537/463.

every one of those sites is distinctive in its own way—just as Pitcairn and Norfolk's truths and the work that made them were the result of their own insular contexts and histories.

Let me close, then, by offering my own truths about Pitcairn and Norfolk's uniqueness as sites of knowledge making, truths that I located through my own hard, situated work in archives and on two small Pacific islands. This dissertation is, fundamentally, a telling of how two islands became "natural laboratories," and how knowledge was made within them. In narrating that story over the course of two centuries, I suggest that persistent sites of research, not least sites of "natural experiments" such as Pitcairn and Norfolk, have long histories that should be understood diachronically as well as against their contemporary moments. "Natural laboratories" are often the furthest thing from "natural," in many instances having been carefully configured as such by a series of encounters and representations over time. To suggest that categories have a past is a common historian's gambit, but it is remarkable to what degree these islands' histories have been selectively celebrated and elided in order to make them more suitable microcosms. Historians of science, empire, and especially "science and empire" could attend more closely to the pasts of such often purposely peripheral places. Though they were inconsequential or ancillary to European geopolitical and mercantile ambition, they nonetheless became intellectually freighted zones with genuine significance to missionaries, scientists, the racialist champions of a "Greater Britain," and many other communities and readerships. That diverse constituencies in the past found them of interest suggest that we, too, should attend to their manifold histories and meanings.

In historicizing Pitcairn and Norfolk as "natural laboratories," I have treated them as "laboratory" spaces of my own. Because both islands have attracted investigators consistently over time, they can serve as productive sites in which to study the practices and products of

knowledge making in their own right. Those strangers who came to scrutinize Pitcairn Islanders comprise a diverse set of laboratory subjects, including naval officers, ships' surgeons, colonial bureaucrats, geneticists, anthropologists, linguists, and other social scientists. The scientists among them include disciplinary leaders, work-a-day researchers, aspiring graduate students, and amateurish dilettantes—a full range. These specimens offer us a remarkable and representative sampling, and by examining their behavior in these "laboratory" conditions, I have narrated the situated history of knowledge making and its practices. During the nineteenth century, naval visitors produced travel accounts from their meetings with Pitcairn Islanders, encounters that often took the form of interrogations over identity. The interest of naval visitors was borne from fascination with the *Bounty* mythos, but was accommodated by the islanders' own practices of hospitality. Victorian colonial administrators in turn devised the migration of Pitcairn's entire population to Norfolk Island as a grand moral "experiment." In their subsequent examination of that experiment, bureaucrats located settler colonialism's anxieties over race, sex, and degeneration on Norfolk—though their on-the-ground scrutiny also preserved instances in which Norfolk Islanders contested that assessment. In the twentieth century, physical anthropologists took up both islands as "natural laboratories," inheriting field sites already habituated to racialized scrutiny. Taking measure of the race concept in local Pacific encounters, they reaffirmed and then partially unmade typological racism. Soon afterward, linguists redeployed these persistent field spaces as laboratories of their own for the study of contact languages and language variation. They negotiated the islands' long histories of scrutiny by generating, with their informants, new idioms and languages with which to record their voices.

The dissertation also followed the circulation of knowledge made on Pitcairn into wider discourses. Information from and about Pitcairn Islanders was fixed and made mobile through

text, but often remained eminently flexible and mutable in application. During the early nineteenth century, poets, dramatists, and evangelical writers read from travel accounts to stage the island as an exemplary space for the performance of British identity; from Pitcairn's garden of hybrid possibility its people emerged as patriotic, pious, pure, and exemplary. Sir William Denison's mid-Victorian "experiment" sharpened the islanders' status as the inhabitants of a generative and exemplary microcosm. Once scientized and condensed as a "case," the idea of Pitcairn or Norfolk appeared in a wide variety of contexts and discourses. In Victorian social theory, the islanders emerged as a prominent example in debates over hybrid vigor, as a sticking point in theories of the incest taboo, and as an example or counter-example of racial deterioration. In the twentieth century, they served as data to uphold and then partially unmake typological racism, and became an outlier against which to define the boundaries and definitions of language.

Over the decades, Pitcairn Islanders floated through a broad set of intellectual currents, and sometimes they washed up in strange places: in Nazi race science, in an ethological study of mate competition among baboons, as proof of the biblical time frame. Pitcairn Islanders even went into outer space; physical anthropologist Joseph Birdsell once argued that the long-term vitality of the islands' consanguineous communities proved that other planets could be peopled by small founding populations.[35] To follow Pitcairn Islanders into global knowledge is to reveal the peripatetic, transnational, and transdisciplinary life of "facts." However, the texts and records produced from situated fieldwork on Pitcairn and Norfolk remained entangled in the conditions and politics of their production; they were built from situated encounters and served as archives of their own complex ontologies. Those texts circled outward into discourse, but they also piled

[35] Joseph B. Birdsell, "Biological Dimensions of Small, Human Founding Populations," in *Interstellar Migration and the Human Experience*, eds. Ben R. Finney and Eric M. Jones (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 110–119.

up in large numbers on the islands themselves—Pitcairn and Norfolk became sites of tremendous accumulation, weighed down by layer upon layer of texts and experiences that in turn "set the stage" for yet more encounters.

I chose to study the history of research about Pitcairn Islanders because I wanted to tell an ethnohistory of knowledge making on the beach, at the site and moment of encounter itself. But Pitcairn, crucially, has no beach, and perhaps that is its most situated truth. It is surrounded on all sides by formidable volcanic cliffs. Instead, the island received its visitors through what became a well-elaborated alternative form. Rather than beach crossings in a liminal contact zone, it saw negotiations in boats off-shore, carefully maneuvered landings in Bounty Bay, and welcoming receptions in Adamstown. From the experience of those negotiated, situated, hospitable, and sometimes difficult and contested encounters, strangers and Pitcairn Islanders together made very large truths in a very small place. Writing, experimenting, measuring, recording, and speaking with their hosts, strangers located some of the knowledge they sought—and they circulated it widely. However, there lurked, hidden within discourses rife with universal claims, a lingering anxiety that knowledge hard earned on the islands and made through tangled local interactions could not easily transcend its Pacific confines, if indeed outsiders could access real knowledge at all. For some visitors, to locate Pitcairn's truth was to locate the limits of knowledge making itself somewhere in the space between the pounding surf and the cliffs above.

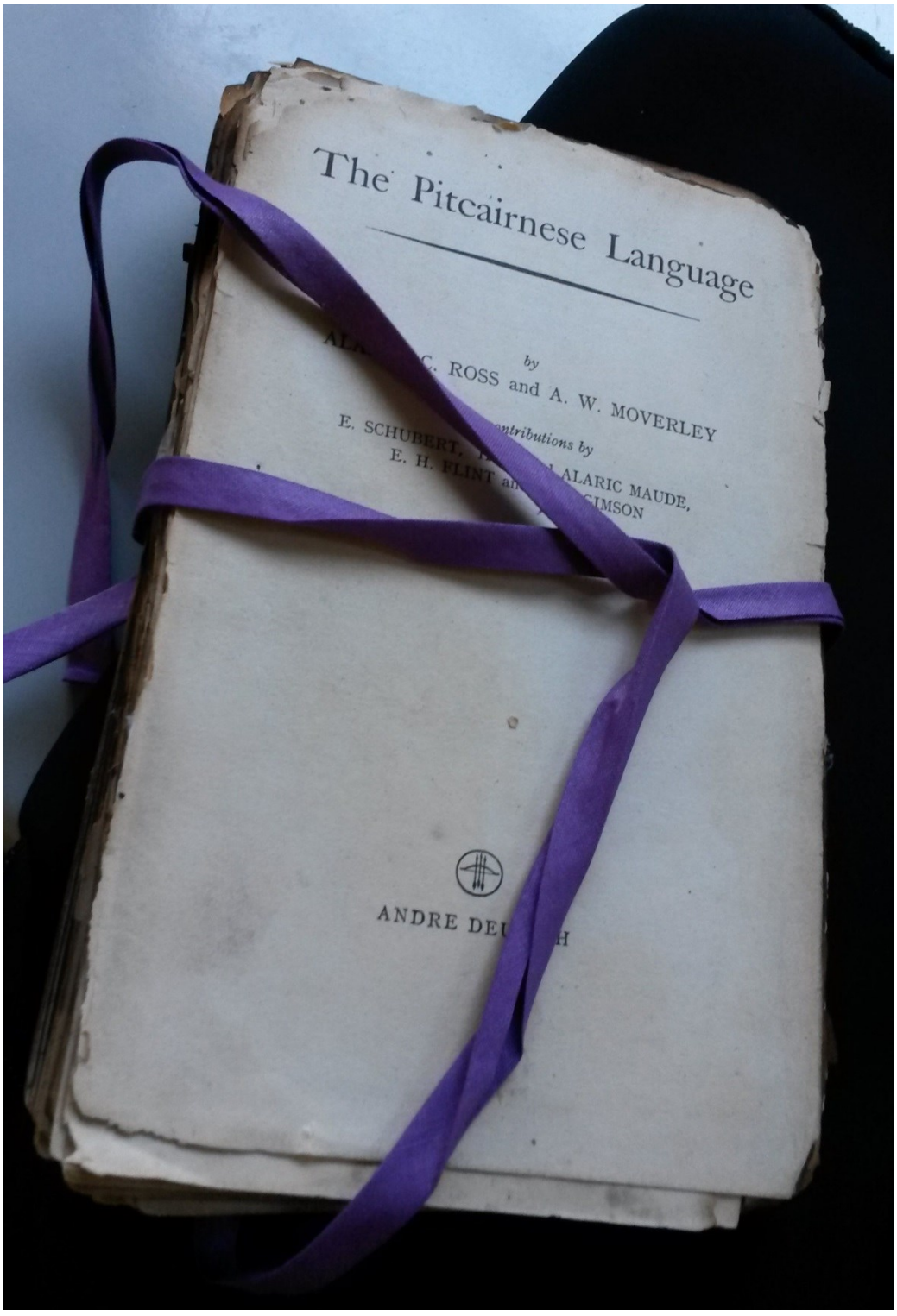



**Figure 9: *The Pitcairnese Language* on Norfolk Island, burned in a house fire and bound with ribbon. Photo taken by the author, May 2013.**

## Public Archives, Libraries, and Special Collections

### Australia

Elwyn Flint Papers, Fryer Library, University of Queensland, St. Lucia, QLD
Henry Evans Maude Papers, Archives and Special Collections, University of Adelaide, SA
State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW
The National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT

### New Zealand

Alexander Turnbull Library Collections, The National Library of New Zealand, Wellington
Collections, Otago Museum, Dunedin
Hocken Library, University of Otago, Dunedin

### Norfolk Island

Library and Archives of the Norfolk Island Museum, Kingston (see note on Harrison Papers, next page).

### United Kingdom

The British Library, London
The National Archives, Kew
Caird Library and Archive, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich
Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham, Birmingham
Manuscript Archive, Royal Geographical Society, London
Robert Henry Codrington Papers, Commonwealth and African Studies, Bodlian Library, Oxford
Papers of Sir Arthur Keith, Archives, Royal College of Surgeons, London

### United States

C. Templeton Crocker Papers, Special Collections, California Academy of Sciences Library, San Francisco, CA
Harry L Shapiro Papers and Central Archives, Special Collections Library, American Museum of Natural History, New York, NY
Pitcairn Islands Study Center, Pacific Union College, Anguin, CA

## Private Collections

Hardwicke Knight Papers, Private collection of Megan Davidson
Private Archive of Meralda Warren
Private Archive of Kevin Young
Shirley Harrison Papers, Private collection of Anne Harrison
Shirley Harrison Papers, Private collection of Peter Mühlhäusler
Shirley Harrison Papers, Private collection of Joshua Nash

## Note on Personal Collections

Much of Pitcairn's history is encoded in texts held in private archives, often in digital form on personal hard drives. In writing this dissertation, I have become indebted to Pitcairn Islanders, Norfolk Islanders, and fellow researchers who have generously shared their material. Without the bounty of documents their kindness afforded, those figures on the edges of professional knowledge-making communities, whose personal papers are not archived in academic repositories, would not have had their due. Unlike public collections catalogued by archivists, these documents often lack call numbers or rigid organizational systems. I have attempted to cite them as clearly as possible given the circumstances. The papers of Shirley Harrison, on which much of the last chapter is built, are a particularly special case. Her research on Norfolk Island, which spanned decades, left behind a treasure trove of linguistic and historical records. Some of these are in the possession of her daughter, others are in the temporary trust of linguists, while still others are held at the Norfolk Island museum. I was able to consult them as photocopies and as digital files; I have attempted to mark each source as legibly as possible given the circumstances.

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## Appendix | Selected Visitors to Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands

A complete list of every visitor to Pitcairn and Norfolk Islands is impossible, though Herbert Ford has come remarkably close in his *Pitcairn as a Port of Call*, now in its second edition. Here, I have produced a much shorter list cataloguing visitors to either island mentioned in the preceding text, with an emphasis on knowledge makers. The lists of social scientists are relatively complete, while the lists of naval visitors, administrators, natural scientists, and writers are highly selective.

**Naval and Maritime Visitors**
Mayhew Folger of the American ship *Topaz*, Pitcairn, 1808
Officers Pipon, Staines, and Shillibeer, of HMS *Briton and Tagus*, Pitcairn,1814
F. W. Beechey, George Peard, and surgeon Alexander Colie, of HMS *Blossom*, Pitcairn 1825
Ethnologist and diplomat Jacques Antoine Moerenhout, Pitcairn, 1829
Captain William Waldegrave, of *HMS Seringipatam*, Pitcairn, 1830
Fremantle, 1833
Lord John Russel, *HMS Actaeon*, 1837
William Gunn, Surgeon, Curacoa, 1841
Captain Edward Fanshawe, 1849
Admiral Fairfax and Fontescue Moreseby, *HMS Portland*, Pitcairn, 1852
Captain Stephan Fremantle, *HMS Juno*, Pitcairn, 1855
Lieutenant G. W. Gregorie, on *The Morayshire,* transfer from Pitcairn to Norfolk, 1856
Henry Dyke, *HMS Comus*, 1897
Admiral Palliser, Pitcairn, 1898
Admiral Byrd, 1939

**Government Administrators**
Sir Willian Denison, Norfolk, 1857 and 1859
Sir John Young , Noroflk,1861
Admiral De Horsey, Pitcairn, 1878
Henry Wilkinson, Norfolk, 1884
J. H. Carruthers and Charles Oliver, Norfolk,1896
Hamilton Hunter, Pitcairn, 1898
William Houston, Norfolk, 1903
R. T. Simons, Pitcairn, 1904,
Chelmsford, Norfolk, 1910
Cecil Rodwell and Dr. Daniel Colquohuon, 1921
H. G. Pilling, Pitcairn, 1929

J. S. Neill, Pitcairn, 1938
J.B. Claydon, Pitcairn, 1954

**Anthropologists and Related Social Scientists**
Harry Shapiro, Norfolk, 1923, Pitcairn (with T. Crocker, Chapin, et al.), 1934-35
Alfred Métraux, Pitcairn (with Lavachery, et al.), 1935
Roy Sanders, Pitcairn, 1951-53
Donald Marshall, Norfolk, 1951
John Harré, Pitcairn, 1964-65
Peter Haywood, musicologist, Norfolk 1999
Christine K. Johnson, Pitciarn, 2004
Mitchell Low, Norfolk, 2006, 2007, 2010-11
Maria Amoamo, Pitcairn, 2008-2013

**Linguists and Language Researchers**
Albert Moverley, Pitcairn, 1948-1951
Elwyn Flint, Norfolk, 1957
Shirley Harrison, Norfolk, 1970
Arne Zettersten, Norfolk, 1970
Shirley Harrison, Norfolk 1980
Anders Kallgard, Pitcairn, 1980
Donald Laycock, Norfolk, 1986
Peter Mühlhäusler., Norfolk, 1997-present
Joshua Nash, Norfolk 2007, 2008, 2009, Pitcairn, 2016

**Archaeologists**
Katherine and William Scoresby Routledge, Pitcairn, 1915
Henri Lavachery, Belgain Archaelogical Expedition, Pitcairn, 1935
Thor Heyerdahl, Pitcairn, 1956
Peter Gathercole and the Otago University survey, Pitcairn, 1963-64
Yosihiko Sinoto, Pitcairn, 1971
Marshal Weisler, Pitcairn, 1991-1992
Athol. J. Anderson, Norfolk, 1995-1996
Nigel Erskine, Pitcairn, 1998-1999

**Historians**
J. C. Henderson
H. E. Maude, Pitcairn, 1944
Merval Hoare, 1949—
Malcom Treagold, 1988
Robert Wade, Pitcairn 1964-65
Warwick Anderson, 2011
Adrian Young, Norfolk 2014, Pitcairn 2015

**Geneticists**
Norfolk Island Health Study (Griffiths University), Norfolk, 2000-2015

**Journalists, Writers, Artists, and Filmmakers**
Charles Dilke, 1867
Charles Chauvel, filmmaker, 1931
James Norman Hall, novelist, 1933
David Silverman, 1967
Iain Ball, 1971
Glynn Christian, filmmaker, 1980
Dea Birkett, writer, 1991
Kathy Marks, journalist, Pitcairn, 2004
Rhiannon Adam, photographer, 2015

**Natural Scientists**
Michel John Nichol, 1903
James Chapin (with Crocker, Shapiro, et al.), Pitcairn, 1934-35
Gordon Williams, ornithologist, Pitcairn, 1956
Scott Commemorative Expedition, Pitcairn, 1991
National Geographic Expedition, Pitcairn, 2012