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THE WAKE OF THE BOUNTY

THE WAKE OF THE BOUNTY

HOW A SHIP HAVING PASSED THE LINE WAS DRIVEN
BY STORMS TO THE COLD COUNTRY TOWARDS THE
SOUTH POLE; AND HOW FROM THENCE SHE MADE HER
COURSE TO THE TROPICAL LATITUDE OF THE GREAT
PACIFIC OCEAN: AND OF THE STRANGE THINGS THAT
BEFELL: AND IN WHAT MANNER THE ANCIENT
MARINERE CAME BACK TO HIS OWN COUNTRY.

Argument of the 'Ancient Mariner' by
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

BY C. S. WILKINSON

With 8 pages of half-tone illustrations



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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER
AND OF MY MOTHER
WHO DEARLY LOVED A MYSTERY

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PROLOGUE

The certainty of Death is attended with uncertainties, in time, manner, places.—SIR THOMAS BROWNE: URN BURIAL

Some circumstantial evidence is very strong, as when you find a trout in the milk.—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

IN London is a street of bookshops, and there one day I found on the shelves a scrapbook. Having often found it interesting to speculate on the motives which lead to compiling such collections, I examined it page by page. Its original owner had evidently been interested in typography, as almost all the items which it contained seemed to have been preserved for that reason. There was one manuscript letter among the specimens of printing, however, a curt, business-like discussion of some plans which had been drawn up by its writer, and it had no obvious intrinsic importance which would account for its presence in the collection. But it was signed in a distinctive hand 'F. Christian'. Could it be Fletcher Christian? I wondered. Yet he died on Pitcairn, well, before 1800 at any rate, and this letter was dated 1812, from the address 'Portnessock'. Still, one had heard rumours, and it would be interesting to see if it had been written by him. So I bought the scrapbook and began to make inquiries about documents signed by Fletcher Christian, in order to compare them with the letter, but found to my surprise that there was no record of any, despite his importance as the founder of a British colony, and a member of a family of some standing. In the library of an Oxford College, while examining some papers of the Christian family, I did indeed find a signature which startled me by its resemblance to the one in my letter, but it was in fact that of John Christian, Fletcher's elder brother, who died in 1791.

Different methods must therefore be tried, and I soon discovered that Portnessock is in Wigtownshire, a district which I had heard associated with Christian, and otherwise topographically possible. I found that the scrapbook itself had belonged to

the last representative of the Cumberland family of Losh—Fletcher Christian, too, came from that part of the world—well-known in the north a hundred and fifty years ago, and deserving still to be remembered, if only for the diversity of their more famous acquaintance. This included Humboldt, William Wordsworth, George Stephenson, and—but this is denied—Marat, Jean Paul Marat, Charlotte Corday's victim, whose name has come to stand for all that was detestable in the French Revolution. One of the Losh brothers saved the life of Humboldt, another was George Stephenson's partner in his patent locomotive, and of James Losh, who had died in the previous year, Wordsworth wrote in 1834, 'Last year has robbed me of Coleridge, of Charles Lamb, James Losh . . / The friendship was of long standing, for James had visited Wordsworth when the poet was living at Racedown and Nether Stowey nearly forty years earlier. This preservation of the letter by the Losh family interested me greatly when I found that John Losh had participated in a published defence of Fletcher Christian, accusing Bligh of being the cause of the mutiny.

Here I found myself unable to pursue the history of the letter any further, and was forced to leave the question of its authorship unsolved. But I did this with the less reluctance since I had already found the letter itself to be independent of the other and, to me, surprising new aspects of the case as they now appeared, so that I have come to regard it only as a signpost which directed my footsteps from that street of bookshops on a journey whose end I little foresaw when I walked away that day with my purchase.

CHAPTER I

This could have occurred nowhere but in England, 'where men and sea interpenetrate, so to speak—the sea entering the life of most men, and the men knowing something or everything about the sea....

—JOSEPH CONRAD: YOUTH

AS with men, so with ships; there are more ways than one of achieving fame. The *Victory* carried the greatest of admirals to his death in the midst of his greatest triumph: speed and beauty gave the *Cutty Sark* celebrity in her own day, and her name now lives as the symbol of the golden age of the sailing-ship, while the glory of the *Golden Hind*, *Revenge*, and *Ark Royal* is that of the era of Elizabeth I. On her way round the world Anson's *Centurion* waited grimly for the Manila galleon, and brought home great treasure and an immortal story of difficulties and dangers overcome. Other ships carried the great explorers: Cook's *Endeavour* discovered seas and lands at the other end of the world, the *Terra Nova* returned with the tragic story of the death of Scott, and adventures of another sort began when the *Beagle* and her naturalist set out on their voyage.

Not the least celebrated of the ships of England is the *Bounty*, although she won no victories, brought home no treasure, and her end was ignominiously to be burnt by men of her own crew. Yet her fame is secure, for one April morning in 1789 as she sailed homewards through the islands of the Pacific, there took place on board her what men have agreed to call the greatest of mutinies, led by the greatest of mutineers. Moreover, this was followed by one of the most famous of open-boat voyages; by a trial, death-sentences, and pardons; by a romantic settlement on a desert island; and about the whole affair in general, and its leading character in particular, is an attractive atmosphere of mystery.

The story of the mutiny itself draws much of its interest from

the contrast between the two chief characters—the commander of the ship, Bligh, and the leading mutineer, Fletcher Christian. The career of the former does not depend for its interest on the mutiny alone, for it is closely connected with early Colonial history, so that Bligh has found his biographers. About Fletcher Christian we know surprisingly little. He must, in fact, be the most famous of historical Englishmen of whom there is no full-length biography. The common criminal of his own time had his 'Life', if his crime were sufficiently spectacular, yet there is none of Fletcher Christian, although the supremacy of Dick Turpin, among the highwaymen is not more firmly established than that of the *Bounty* mutineer in his own field. Apart from the audacity of his offence and the romance of its sequel, he was a gentleman by birth, as we are frequently told, and so would seem an ideal subject for the hack biographer of his time. Yet no account is other than superficial in dealing with his early life and his connections. One's first thought is to ascribe this to a feeling of respect for the family of the culprit, but a slight acquaintance with the tone of contemporary ephemeral literature is sufficient to discount this theory, especially when it is found that at least one member of that family, John Christian Curwen, born John Christian, was prominent in the politics of the day. This was the hey-day of the cartoonist, yet the appropriate British Museum catalogue does not record a single item dealing with, or even referring to, the mutiny of the *Bounty*, and this although Christian's politically-minded kinsman suffers in his own right at the pencil of Gilray,* as the advocate of advanced views of French origin.

To the modern reader one of the charms of the story has been its absence of context and the unimportance of its date. Most events of the past require for their better understanding a knowledge of contemporary society and politics, and there has been a

*The famous Gilray cartoon, 'The New Morality', which appeared in the *Ami-Jacobin* in 1798, and in which Coleridge, Southey, and Lamb are depicted, contains a reference to this member of the family, for 'Curwen's Speech' is seen issuing from the Cornucopia of Ignorance. In this connection, I was surprised, as a collector of early editions, to find how rare some of the few contemporary publications on the *Bounty* are, much rarer than one would expect. The known laws which control relative rarity of such books fail completely to account for the almost total disappearance of some of these items. Yet others, Bligh's own account of his adventures, for example, while not common books, are found at least as often as one could reasonably hope.

tendency in recent years to over-estimate that necessity, based on the somewhat depressing theory that human behaviour, morals, and motives are entirely controlled by their economic background. From histories inspired by this view the tale of the mutiny of the *Bounty* has provided a refreshing change, for it is a drama played with characters so far removed from their social environment as to appear timeless. One does not think of Bligh and Christian, for instance, as contemporaries of Pitt and Wordsworth, or even of other sailors, such as Nelson and Sidney Smith.

But this pleasing circumstance, which has added so much to the appeal of the story, has also prevented a solution of the mysteries connected with it. The answer to the greatest of the problems of the *Bounty* has to be sought, not in a lonely ship or remote island, but here at home in England. Fortunately, even in this wider field of research there is very little which affects the story and at the same time is peculiar to its age. Family ties are not perhaps as strong today as they were in the Borders a hundred and fifty years ago, but they can still be understood and appreciated. Of the politics involved, it is sufficient to say that there were then two great parties, just as at other times, and that those engaged in them favoured their own families and friends when opportunity or necessity arose, a phenomenon not confined to the England of 1800. The additions which such research makes to the story are more prepossessing than those generally revealed by this process, for loyalty, always a pleasing topic, is their leading motive, and a marriage has been discovered, to round it off in a fashion which should appeal to the most exacting feminine reader.

It seems surprising that no attempt on these lines has yet been made to reconcile the tale of the mutiny with the history of the age. The answer, I think, lies in the modern tendency to specialisation. The scholars who have examined the story of the *Bounty* have been compelled, by the difficulty of the research involved therein, to limit their studies of contemporary social, political, and literary history.* Taste, too, will have its effect. The man

* For instance, the editor, an accepted authority on the subject, of some correspondence relating to Bligh, found in a letter from Dr. Betham, his father-in-law, 'Annie and Betty, who is exceedingly well, all desire their love to you,' and comments, non-committally, 'There was an Anne Betham who was the intimate friend of Charles and Mary Lamb.' So there was, but a slight knowledge of Lamb's circle, or a reference to the *Dictionary of National Biography*, reveals that the Bethams whom Lamb knew were a different family from that into which Bligh married.

who chooses adventure on the high seas for his field of study will not expect to find much to interest him, for example, in the lives and letters of the literary, just as the biographer and critic of the poet will dismiss the mutineers of the *Bounty* as a gang of ruffians. Even the historian, keenly alive to the value of all contemporary information, will tend to overlook the affair of the *Bounty*, as being too personal in its origin and too limited in its results to affect his knowledge of the period, and in doing so he admits its apparent isolation from historical context. For his purpose the great mutinies of Spithead and the Nore, which took place a few years later, are better suited, both in motive and size. An academic background, too, renders its possessor extremely unlikely to show any comprehension of the causes of the mutiny, as it is highly improbable that such a man will ever have served in the ranks of His Majesty's forces, and this largely accounts for the adulation of Bligh and lack of sympathy for the mutineers which have manifested themselves in certain circles.

The difference of taste, which splits the ranks of readers as well as of scholars, may be responsible for gaps in many stories. Few men have read both the *Biographia Literaria* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*, yet it is possible that either book may contain something of interest for lovers of the other. There is thus a chance that information of value to the student of a book may exist undiscovered in a work of a different kind, even though that work may be as well or better known. In a source-book of information concerning the *Bounty* there are references which call for serious examination by students in another, and very different, field. That this has never been made seems to indicate that no such student has ever read this book. The absence of information, where it may be expected, also can have significance, and under these conditions will be even more likely to escape discovery. For instance, no student of the mutiny appears to have noticed the absence of reference to it, and to one of its principals, in some of the most likely sources of information concerning them.

In this attempt to fit the *Bounty* into her English background, and in doing so to solve her mystery, it has been necessary to retell the story of the mutiny itself, as otherwise the chronology, which is of great importance, would be difficult to appreciate. This is unfortunate, not because the story will not bear retelling, but because so many abler pens than mine have already written it, and I have no new information to offer on the event itself. On

the eternal question of the responsibility for the mutiny I do not think it possible to achieve impartiality, and I have made no attempt, as the reader will discover if his patience endures. He will also discover that in trying to find a solution to the mystery I have raised more problems. It is in the hope that others may be able to solve them that I have written this and the following chapters, and in the wish that others, whether or not they agree with my conclusions, may find in the consideration of the evidence some of the pleasure that I have myself received from it.

CHAPTER II

The ring-leaders in the mutiny were two scoundrels, Christian and Young, who had great influence with the crew, because they were genteely connected.—GEORGE BORROW: THE ROMANY RYE

THE name of Christian is generally associated with the Isle of Man, so that the mutineer is often described as a Manx-man, but he was, in fact, born in Cumberland, where his father's family had been settled for three generations. Here on the edge of the Lake District the inquirer can form his earliest picture of Fletcher Christian, as a boy on a piebald pony, riding to school down the main street of Cockermouth from his home just outside the town, a bright boy, of a well-connected and wealthy family, a boy whose happy future seems assured.

The events which caused the Christians to leave the Isle of Man have given Sir Walter Scott the background to his *Peveril of the Peak* but the distinction of having inspired a Waverley novel was not appreciated by their descendants, who gloomily remarked how 'the family of CHRISTIAN is indebted to this splendid luminary of the North for abundant notoriety'. This is a little unfair to Sir Walter, as the activities of Fletcher Christian had already ensured a fame for the family beyond even that which Scott could bestow.

The story used in *Peveril* was that of William Christian, Deemster of the Isle of Man, and traditional founder of the Derby Stakes.* His conduct during the Civil War had aroused the anger of the Derby family, feudal lords of the island, so that he had been executed by them after the Restoration, in defiance of the Act of Indemnity. His countrymen regarded him as a martyr, and his

* 'Even the races, a sport generally interesting to people of all ranks, were no longer performed.... The hearts of both parties revolted from the recollection of former days, when all was peace among them, when the Earl of Derby, now slaughtered, used to bestow the prize, and Christian, since so vindictively executed, started horses to add to the amusement.' (*Peveril of the Peak*.)

wrongs and the retribution due to his enemies became the subject of a song, *Baase Iliam Dhone*, or 'The Death of Brown-haired William', which was still popular a hundred and fifty years later, when a visitor to the island recorded how he found it *twanged through the demi-nasal, demi-guttural trumpet of the carman, and warbled by the landlady's pretty daughter*.

The Christians, then, came to Cumberland and settled at Ewanrigg, or Unarigg as it is sometimes called, near the village of Ellenborough, close to Maryport. Legend has it that the estate was purchased with the proceeds of a night's gambling with the Bishop of Sodor and Man. In their previous home they had shown certain tendencies which had been noticed by their neighbours, 'by policie, they are crept into the principal place of power, and they be seated round about the country and in the heart of it; they are matched with the best families.*' They soon established themselves in their new surroundings, and by Fletcher Christian's time had intermarried with many of the leading houses of Cumberland.

Two of his first cousins acquired great contemporary fame which still survives. John Christian, the head of the family, married as his second wife Isabella Curwen of Workington Hall, his cousin and ward, the greatest heiress in the county, a celebrated beauty who had refused the hand of a peer. She brought with her as part of an enormous dowry the beautiful island in Lake Windermere, which still bears her name, 'Belle Isle'.+ The marriage took place in 1782, just after the time when Fletcher first went to sea, and in 1790, the year in which news of the mutiny of the *Bounty* reached England, John Christian adopted the name of Curwen, by which he is best known, and which was borne by his descendants through Isabella. John Christian Curwen became a prominent and influential Whig politician, twice refusing a peerage. His views were extremely advanced for his day, and he was one of the few great landowners who joined the 'Society of Friends of the People'. He had many interests, including scientific agriculture and yacht racing, and his

* It was the custom in the Isle of Man for illegitimate children to take the name of the father, and one member of the house was supposed to subordinate even his pleasures to family aggrandisement. 'The deemster did not get soe many for lust's sake, as to make the name of Christian flourish.'

+ It has also been called Curwen Island, Christian's Island, and Bella Isle. During the Second World War it was taken over by the Admiralty and was known as 'H.M.S. *Bounty*.'

descendants claim him to be the pioneer of National Insurance.

Fletcher's other celebrated first cousin was the son of the Bishop of Carlisle, Edward Law, the defender of Warren Hastings, and better known as Lord Ellenborough, the last Chief Justice to hold cabinet rank. His political views were very different from those of John Christian Curwen, and he was entrusted with the trial of offenders with whom his cousin must have had many sympathies. The brothers of the Lord Chief Justice included two Bishops, a Member of Parliament, and Thomas Law, who in 1791 left the service of the East India Company and two years later settled in the United States, where he attained some distinction under Washington, marrying the granddaughter of the President's wife by her first husband.

The father of the mutineer was Charles Christian, a younger son of the house of Ewanrigg. Trained in the law, he became Coroner of Cumberland, and settled at the home of his wife, Moorland Close, or Mairlandclere, within two miles of Cockermouth. The lady was a member of the important local family of Fletcher, one of whom had entertained Mary, Queen of Scots, after her flight from Scotland.* They were a numerous clan, with coronets among their kinship, for Sir George Fletcher had married a daughter of the Earl of Annandale, of whose family it was prophesied:

*Within, the bounds of Annandale
The gentle Johnstones ride:
They have been there a thousand years
A thousand more they'll bide:*

while the Fletcher-Vane branch were allied with the Earls of Westmorland and Marquesses of Cleveland. The Fletcher-Fleming branch also had considerable standing in the district, and at the time of our story Sir Henry Fletcher was a Member of Parliament and a Director of the East India Company, and had performed the difficult feat of attaining popularity with men of all parties. Another interesting connection is that with the local family of Wilson, one of whom married Lucinda Washington, cousin of the first President of the United States. The Washingtons, who had long resided nearby at Warton, were also connected with the Curwens through the Whitehaven family of

* She had landed at Workington, and was received by the Curwens at Workington Hall; the family still possess the chalice she gave them, the 'Luck'.

Gale, one of whom was the mother of Isabella Christian Curwen, while another married Captain John Wordsworth, cousin of the Poet. The President's father was at one time in the guardianship of the Gales. The association of the Washingtons with the neighbourhood was long maintained, the President's brother being sent to school at Appleby. A Washington was Rector of Warton many years later.

Political feeling ran high at this time, and in Cumberland the hostility between Whig and Tory was accentuated by a deep personal hatred between the two local leaders, the Duke of Portland and Sir James Lowther, later Earl of Lonsdale. Lowther was described as 'truly a madman, but too rich to be confined', and his unpopularity lingered on for many years in the north, where he was known as the 'bad Earl', while children who misbehaved were threatened with 'Jemmie Lowther will get you'. His political power was great, and he controlled nine Parliamentary seats, whose occupants were known as 'Lowther's ninepins'.

*Even by the elements his power confessed;
Of mines and boroughs Lonsdale stands possessed,
And the sad servitude alike denotes
The slave who labours and the slave who votes.*

Another contemporary tribute refers to him as 'Jimmie Grasp-all, Earl of Toadstool', and he was reputed never to approach a man but to 'break him or make him'.

Sir James disputed a grant of property in the neighbourhood of Carlisle which had been made by the Crown to the Portland family, and attempted to have it reversed by Parliament. He met with a defeat which roused him to frenzy, and at the next election he himself fought the Duke of Portland's nominees, Curwen and Fletcher. He was elected after a furious contest in which bribes and liquor were lavished on the voters, but his opponents petitioned against his methods, and he was unseated in favour of his enemies. The feud continued, and 'Jupiter' Carlyle relates how 'the Duke of Portland was opposed in Cumberland by Sir James Lowther, who, after a ten years' war drove the beaten Duke, with infinite loss of money, out of the North. Lowther went off conqueror, but more detested than any man alive, as a shameless political sharper, a domestic bashaw, and an intolerable tyrant over his tenants and dependants.'

The family connections of Fletcher Christian were thus of great

importance, and at no other time could they have had more influence. Just before his birth there had begun in Cumberland and its neighbourhood one of those periods of great mental and physical energy which sometimes occur in isolated districts, and this outburst of personal talent coincided with an age of commercial expansion. The county itself prospered, as industrial developments were fostered by Curwen in Workington and Lowther in Whitehaven, while many of its sons successfully sought their fortunes further afield, and won prominence in the professions, in the arts, in political life, and in the service of the East India Company.

Thus at a time when ties of family and friendship were strong, the power and influence of Cumberland men was spreading and increasing and, should he ever need it, Fletcher Christian could be sure of loyal, far-reaching and effective support from an influential body of kinsmen and their friends.

CHAPTER III

*I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:
If things ensued that wanted grace
As hath been said, they were not base:
And never blush was on my face.*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

IN 1876 William Fletcher, a member of the family of Fletcher Christian's mother, addressed a local learned society at Cockermouth:

Charles Christian and his wife took up their residence under her paternal roof at Moorland Close, and there, according to the registers of Brigham Church, on the 25th September 1764 was born their sixth son, Fletcher Christian, the ill-fated mutineer of the *Bounty** Their fourth son, Edward, was brought up to the Bar, became professor of law at Cambridge, and eventually rose to the dignity of Chief Justice of Ely. Besides editing a well-known edition of Blackstone's Commentaries, he was the author of numerous books on legal and social questions. One of these, which would have been of great interest to me in preparing this lecture, was called forth by the trial of some of the mutineers of the *Bounty* in 1792, but I regret to say I have not been able to meet with a copy anywhere, notwithstanding a careful search through the library of the British Museum, and although the library contains upwards of twenty of Edward Christian's works,†

* There are many other accounts of the date of his birth and of his position in the family, but this agrees with the parish register, with the muster-roll of the *Bounty*) and with Bligh's description of him.

† It is very unfortunate that Mr. Fletcher had to make this emphatic disclaimer. Had he read the book in question he could hardly, with his knowledge of local and family history, have failed to find information which would have greatly interested his Cockermouth audience. For the purpose of his lecture, he had borrowed the manuscript journal of James Morrison, a member of the crew of the *Bounty*, from Lady Belcher, herself the author of a book on the Mutiny. Yet Lady Belcher's own book shows clearly that

Few records have been preserved of Fletcher Christian's boyhood. He received his education, first at the parish school of Brigham, and afterwards at the Grammar School, Cockermouth. There was at one time at Moorland Close a painting of a piebald pony upon which tradition said the boy Fletcher used to ride to and from school: and I understand that a sketch of the outline of his foot, which he had traced with his initials, may still be seen upon the lead roof of a summer house in the garden. One of Fletcher's schoolfellows at Cockermouth was Isaac Wilkinson, once a poet of some local celebrity. In after years the poet bore this testimony to the early character of the mutineer: 'I can with truth say, a more amiable youth I never met with; he was mild, generous and sincere,' and Wilkinson repeated this testimony in the following verses:

*His soul was open, generous and humane:
His was a heart that felt for others' pain;
Yet quick of spirit as the electric beam
When from the darkling clouds its lightnings gleam.*

There is a curious omission in this Cockermouth address by a local scholar, for there was another poet of some celebrity, in addition to Isaac Wilkinson, who was a schoolfellow of Fletcher Christian—William Wordsworth;* surely an incongruity as great as that which sent Warren Hastings and William Cowper to Westminster School together.

There was even a distant relationship between the two boys, Wordsworth's grandmother, Dorothy Crackanthorpe, being a member of a great local family, one of whom had married a Fletcher. Both boys, too, were the sons of lawyers, and came from the same rank of society.

The omission is the more striking when it is found that, as William Fletcher well knew, the lane from Moorland Close along which the boy would ride to school enters the main street of Cockermouth directly opposite the large Georgian house where the Wordsworths lived and which was the birthplace of William, so that it would be a very familiar sight to Fletcher Christian.

she had access to a copy of this work of Edward Christian on the subject, and it is strange that Mr. Fletcher apparently did not apply to her for information about it.

* Neither the poet nor his biographers refer to this fact. When Miss Doreen Wallace, in her delightful *English Lakelands*, mentions the two names together in connection with Cockermouth, she says: 'Wordsworth is so great a man that to mention Fletcher Christian on the same page seems bathos.'

Moorland Close was described as 'a quadrangular pile of buildings, in the style of the medieval manor house, half castle and half farmstead', and it has undergone little alteration since Fletcher's time.

Behind the house is a walled orchard, reputed to have been originally a Border fort. The watch-tower, which looked out over the moors, was apparently converted into a summer-house in the eighteenth century, and this, and not the house itself, tradition asserts to be the birthplace of Fletcher Christian. It is known locally as the 'monkey-house', the name a sailor would give it, being reminiscent of a type of deck-house so called. Above the door into the tower-room may still be seen the tracing of the mutineer's foot, and it is said that when two of his descendants from Pitcairn visited Moorland Close fifty years ago their feet were found to fit it exactly.

As his name indicates, Fletcher was intended by his parents to settle on their estate, his surviving elder brothers being educated for professional life. But the boy longed to go to sea, and in the year 1781, at the age of sixteen, climbed out of his window to an outhouse roof, from which he dropped to the ground and ran away to the nearby port of Whitehaven,* where he shipped on an exploration voyage. There is a local story that an unsuccessful—or too successful—love affair was a contributory cause of his flight.

From this point we have the account of Edward Christian, Fletcher's brother:

Christian, having stayed at school longer than young men do who enter the navy, and being allowed by all who knew him to possess extraordinary abilities, is an excellent scholar, and everyone acquainted with him from a boy till he went on board the *Bounty* can testify that no young man was ever more ambitious of all that is esteemed right and honourable among men, or more anxious to acquire distinction and advancement by his good conduct in his profession. He had been an acting midshipman but a short time in the service when Captain Courtenay, the late brave commander of the *Boston* frigate, entrusted him with the charge of a watch in the *Eurydice* all the way home from the East Indies. This, no doubt, was extremely flattering to him, and he declared to a relation who met him at Woolwich that he had been extremely happy under Captain Courtenay's command, and at the same time observed that '*it was very easy to make one's self beloved and respected on board a ship: one had only to be always ready to obey one's superior officers,*

* The muster-roll of the *Bounty* gives his place of origin as Whitehaven.

and to be kind to the common men, unless there was occasion for severity, and if you are severe when there is a just occasion they will not like you the worse for it.' This was after the conclusion of the peace, and within a few days the ship was paid off: and being out of employ he wished to be appointed a mate of a West Indiaman, a situation for which he thought himself qualified. Whilst he was in treaty with a merchant in the city to go in that capacity in his ship, Captain Taubman, a relation of Christian's, came to London from the Isle of Man and suggested to Christian that it would be very desirable for him to serve under so experienced a navigator as Captain Bligh, who had been sailing-master to Captain Cook, and who was then in the merchants' service: and as Captain Taubman was acquainted with Captain Bligh, he offered to make an application to him in Christian's favour. The application was made, and Captain Bligh returned a polite answer, that he was sorry he could not take Christian, having then his complement of officers. Upon this Christian of his own accord observed that 'wages were no object, he only wished to learn his profession, and if Captain Bligh would permit him to mess with the gentlemen, he would readily enter the ship as a foremast-man until there was a vacancy among the officers,' and at the same time added, ** We midshipmen are gentlemen, we never pull at a rope; I should even be glad to go one voyage in that situation, for there may be occasions when officers may be called upon to do the duties of a common man.'*

To this proposal Captain Bligh had no objection, and in that character he sailed one voyage, and upon his return spoke of Captain Bligh with great respect. He said that although he had his share of labour with the common men, the captain had been kind to him in showing him the use of his charts and instruments; but at the same time he observed that Captain Bligh was very passionate, yet he seemed to pride himself in knowing how to humour him. In the next voyage Captain Bligh took him out as his second mate, and before his return the captain was chosen to command the *Bounty*. Christian, wishing to go upon a voyage where so much service would be seen, in which he would complete his time as a midshipman, and if it had been successful he would no doubt with little difficulty upon his return have been raised to the rank of lieutenant, was recommended to the Admiralty by Captain Bligh himself as one of his officers; and as it was understood that great interest had been made to get midshipmen sent out in this ship, Christian's friends thought this recommendation, as they do still, a very great obligation.

in a footnote Edward Christian adds:

Upon Christian's return from the second voyage to the West

Indies with Captain Bligh, he had no opportunity of a personal interview with his friends, and he made no complaint by letter. But a person, who had sailed with Captain Bligh and Christian, both to the West Indies and the South Seas, being asked if Captain Bligh's treatment of Christian had always been the same, said: 'No, it would not long have been borne in the merchant service.' Another note states that the writer has been assured that 'the gentlemen and people on board the *Eurydice* ... declare that Christian was the last person whom they would have expected to have committed such a crime*.

Here then was the man whom Bligh chose to accompany him on this important voyage. He has been described by a hostile witness as being 'one of the most foolish young men I ever knew in regard to the sex*'. Of his appearance we are told 'he had a bright, pleasing countenance and tall commanding figure, well adapted to those feats of strength and agility which he so frequently exhibited on the passage to Otaheite*.

Later his brother was to collect the following tributes, amongst others, from his shipmates, which can be accepted with due allowance for the desire of the witnesses to please the important landsman who was interrogating them (on at least one occasion, the interview took place on licensed premises):

He was a gentleman and a brave man: and every officer and seaman on board would have gone through fire and water to have served him.

As much as I have lost and suffered by him, if he could be restored to his country I should be the first to go without wages in search of him.

Mr. Christian was always good-natured: I never heard him say 'Damn you*' to any man on board the ship.

He was as good and generous a man as ever lived.

Certainly it is remarkable how little animosity appears to have been shown against Christian by the victims of his crime, whereas, as we shall see, Bligh could not command the affection or respect even of those whose lives he saved.

We have already noticed how the memory of William Christian continued to attract sympathy in the Isle of Man many years after his death, and some of the same charm must have been possessed by Fletcher, for Isaac Wilkinson's tribute to his schoolfellow was paid some fifty years later, and even today tradition speaks of his character with affection.

So we leave Christian, chosen by Bligh in preference to many

other applicants, about to sail on a voyage which will in all probability determine the success of his naval career, and turn next to his commander.

William Bligh was a Cornishman,* in his early thirties, with a distinguished record as a seaman. He had sailed with Cook, in his third and last voyage, as sailing-master of the *Resolution*, and had taken part in the Dogger Bank action of 1781. After his voyage with Cook, he visited the Isle of Man, where he met Elizabeth, the daughter of Richard Betham, LL.D. of Glasgow, Receiver-General of the Island, whom he married. And here is one of the literary associations which occur so frequently in the story of the *Bounty*, for Dr. Betham was a friend of Adam Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*. More important, in Bligh's opinion, would be the relationship of his wife to her uncle, Duncan Campbell.

Somehow the mere list of the latter's activities seems to revive the feeling of dislike which he aroused in many of his contemporaries. He is described as having headquarters at the Adelphi, considerable government influence, and large plantations in the West Indies, to which he traded with his own ships. Amongst his many interests he had government contracts for the supply, maintenance, and overseeing of those convict hulks which were later to form the background of *Great Expectations*.

This doubtless misjudged man of affairs employed Bligh in his periods of half-pay from the navy, and it was in one of his ships that Christian and Bligh first sailed together, and were serving when it was decided to send out the *Bounty*.

Of Bligh's character much has been written, and only in recent years has a favourable tone become prominent in such discussions. His contemporaries were of a very definite opinion, with few dissentients, but now his services to the State and his importance in Colonial history have caused a movement in his favour. We are told that we cannot dismiss a man of his historical importance as a mere bully, but no one in fact has ever decried his achievements as geographer, or refused to recognise the courage and seamanship shown in his boat voyage. We are told that many of his faults were due to his devotion to his employer, the State. As we shall see, however, certain transactions indicate that this sense

* Although born in wedlock, he has been described as an illegitimate child, doubtless owing to the persistent use of a certain epithet in discussions of his character.

of duty only existed as long as his interests were the same as those of that employer. This admiring attitude, too, ignores the question of the desirability of a state built on the achievements and methods of such men as Bligh, and it is reassuring to find that, while his supporters have been generally of academic type, most of the criticism of his character has come from naval officers and other public servants.

It has also been urged in his defence that his behaviour was that of the average naval officer of his day. That there were, unfortunately, others of the same kind we know by the evidence of the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore, although these were caused mainly by conditions of pay and service which were out of the control of the officers. In the events connected with the *Bounty* we shall find another commander of a similar type to Bligh, but it will be seen that the two men were associated together in public unpopularity. The outspoken views of other naval men, however, indicate that they did not regard Bligh as a typical specimen of their calling. As Sir John Barrow, an Admiralty official of high standing, drily remarked of Bligh as a lieutenant, his * character never stood high in the navy for suavity of manners or mildness of temper'. Sir John went on to add that 'it is indeed a common observation in the service that officers who have risen from *before the mast* are generally the greatest tyrants', and might have proceeded to make the point that such men are apt to show the worst side of their characters to those of their subordinates whom they consider to be of higher social origin than themselves. As early as the fifteenth century Sir Thomas Malory wrote in the *Morte d'Arthur*, how 'it is ever an old law, Give a churle rule, he will not therewith be sufficed. For whatsoever he be that is ruled by a vilaine borne, and the lord of the soile to be a gentleman borne; that same vilaine will destroy all the gentlemen about him. Therefor all estates and lords be well aware whom ye take about you.' A critic of Bligh's later career remarked, in the *United Services Journal*, that every act in it 'was stamped with an insolence, an inhumanity and coarseness, which fully developed his character'.

His portraits show him to have possessed a countenance in keeping with the popular opinion of his qualities, if with less colour than might be expected, and whose most prominent feature was a nose whose size must have been a source of frequent comment by his subordinates.

CHAPTER IV

*Where lies the Land to which yon ship must go?
Fresh as a lark mounting at break of day,
Festively she puts forth in trim array;
Is she for tropic suns or polar snow?*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The bread-fruit, as we call it, grows on a large tree, as big and high as our largest apple-trees; The fruit grows on the boughs like apples: it is as big as a penny-loaf, when wheat is at five shillings the bushel; it is of a round shape, and hath a thick tough rind; when the fruit is ripe it is yellow and soft, and the taste is sweet and pleasant. The natives of Guam use it for bread. They gather it, when full grown, while it is green and hard; then they bake it in an oven, which scorcheth the rind and makes it black, but they scrape off the outside black crust, and there remains a tender thin crust; and the inside is soft, tender, and white, like the crumb of a penny-loaf. There is neither seed nor stone in the inside, but all is of a pure substance like bread. It must be eaten new: for if it is kept above twenty-four hours, it grows harsh and choaky; but it is very pleasant before it is too stale. This fruit lasts in season eight months in the year, during which the natives eat no other sort of food of bread kind.

So wrote Dampier in 1688. Anson, on his famous voyage round the world, found that at Tinian

it was constantly eaten by us during our stay on the island instead of bread, and so universally preferred to it, that no ship's bread was expended during that whole interval. It grew upon a tree which is somewhat lofty, and which, towards the top, divides into large and spreading brandies. The leaves of this tree are of a remarkable deep green, are notched about the edges, and are generally from a foot to eighteen inches in length. The fruit itself grows indifferently on all parts of the branches; it is in shape rather elliptical than round, is covered with a rough rind, and is usually seven or eight inches

long; each of them grows singly and not in clusters. This fruit is fittest to be used, when it is full grown, but is still green; in which state, its taste has some distant resemblance to that of an artichoke bottom and its texture is not very different, for it is soft and spungy. As it ripens it grows softer and of a yellow colour, and then contracts a luscious taste, and an agreeable smell, not unlike a ripe peach; but then it is esteemed unwholesome, and is said to produce fluxes.

In the account of Cook's first voyage it is described as growing on a tree that is about the size of a middling oak: its leaves are frequently a foot and a half long, of an oblong shape, deeply sinuated like those of the fig-tree, which they resemble in consistence and colour, and in the exuding of a milky white juice upon being broken. The fruit is about the size and shape of a child's head, and the surface is reticulated not much unlike a truffle; it is covered with a thin skin, and has a core about as big as the handle of a small knife. The eatable part lies between the skin and the core: it is as white as snow, and somewhat of the consistence of new bread: it must be roasted before it is eaten, being first divided into three or four parts. Its taste is insipid, with a slight sweetness somewhat resembling that of the crumb of wheaten bread mixed with a Jerusalem artichoke.

These accounts aroused some interest at home, and the bread-fruit was a frequent topic. In 1773, for instance, there took place the following conversation:

Soswell. 'I am well assured that the people of Otaheite who have the bread-tree the fruit of which serves them for bread, laughed heartily when they were informed of the tedious process necessary with us to have bread;—plowing, sowing, harrowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, baking.'

Johnson. 'Why, Sir, all ignorant savages will laugh when they are told of the advantages of civilized life. Were you to tell men who live without houses how we pile brick upon brick, and rafter upon rafter, and that after a house is raised to a certain height, a man tumbles off a scaffold and breaks his neck, he would laugh heartily at our folly in building; but it does not follow that men are better without houses. No, Sir, (holding up a slice of a good loaf,) this is better than the bread-tree.'

In 1787 was taken the first step to turn to practical advantage the discoveries, geographical and botanical, which had been so prominent among the achievements of English sailors and

scientists during the reign of George III. It took the form of a Petition which was presented to the King by the merchants and planters interested in the West Indies, and represented that the bread-fruit, if introduced there, would prove of very great utility to the inhabitants.

The scheme was supported by the famous Sir Joseph Banks, who has been described as 'a private gentleman of good fortune*'. He had been a fellow-voyager of Cook, was now President of the Royal Society, and no proposal of this nature could fail to come under his influence.

There can be no doubt of the value to the nation of Sir Joseph's services in exploration and science, but there are other considerations; whether, for example, under a system which permits a private citizen, holding no official position, to exert such influence as this man possessed, its advantages are not offset by the fact that he cannot be held responsible should all not go well with the schemes which he instigates.

In this case the doubts are not allayed by the character of Sir Joseph. His arrogance made him unpopular with many of his contemporaries, and his influence on those whom he chose to advance was liable to produce a bad effect. There were even rumours that Cook himself had not been proof against the ideas of self-importance which the patronage of Sir Joseph was apt to bring to its recipients. Certainly his conception of discipline, as urged on his creatures, strikes an unpleasant note. A civilian advocating severity from a position which precludes him from personal experience of the effect, either as officer or man, is not a figure to command affection. He was not above using his unofficial position to attack those who were thus rendered unable to defend themselves. For example, Bligh himself heard Banks 'tell the King at Court, a similar case to what took place in the *Bounty* was in contemplation, and nearly put in practice on board the *Endeavour*, a person then under Government being principally concerned in it'. It is pleasant to contrast the attitude of Samuel Johnson under similar circumstances: 'I now began to consider that I was depreciating this man in the estimation of his sovereign, and thought it was time for me to say something that might be more favourable.'

The West Indian planters and merchants, including Duncan Campbell, Mrs. Bligh's uncle, advanced their scheme; and Sir Joseph Banks supported it, to such purpose that when Bligh

returned to England in August, 1787, he could write to the great man that 'I arrived yesterday from Jamaica, and should have instantly paid my respects to you had not Mr. Campbell told me you were not to return from the country until Thursday. I have heard the flattering news of your great goodness to me, intending to honour me with the command of the vessel which you propose to go to the South Seas, for which, after offering you my most grateful thanks, I can only assure you I shall endeavour, and I hope succeed, in deserving such a trust.'

Thus Bligh, a relative of Campbell, one of the instigators and potential beneficiaries of the scheme, was chosen by Sir Joseph to command the ship which was to carry it out. And here a further coincidence appears. Sir Joseph also chose the ship which was to be purchased for the voyage and it belonged to the same Mr. Campbell.

Her name was the *Bethia* (the maiden name of Mrs. Bligh, Campbell's niece, was, it will be remembered, Betham), two hundred and fifteen tons burden. She was purchased for £1,950, £9 a ton, which has been described as a low price, upon what grounds I have been unable to discover.

The *Bethia* was refitted at Deptford at a cost of £4,456 under the eye of Sir Joseph, who renamed her the *Bounty*, in commemoration of the Royal benevolence, an expression of gratitude in which Mr. Campbell no doubt concurred. As she carried four short four-pounders and ten half-pound swivel guns she was described as an armed vessel.

In his *Voyage to the South Sea* Bligh omits to mention many of these preliminary details: 'a vessel proper for the undertaking, was bought . . .' and 'The ship was named the *Bounty*'⁹. He describes her as follows:

Her burthen was nearly two hundred and fifteen tons; her extreme length of deck, ninety feet ten inches; extreme breadth, twenty-four feet three inches, and height in the hold under the beams, at the main hatchway, ten feet three inches. In the cockpit were the cabins of the surgeon, gunner, botanist, and clerk, with a steward-room and storerooms. The between decks was divided in the following manner: the great cabin was appropriated for the preservation of the plants, and extended as far forward as the after hatchway. It had two large skylights, and on each side three scuttles for air, and was fitted with a false floor cut full of holes to contain the garden-pots in which the plants were to be brought home. The

deck was covered with lead, and at the foremost corners of the cabin were fixed pipes to carry off the water that drained from the plants, into tubs placed below to save it for future use. I had a small cabin on one side to sleep in, adjoining to the great cabin, and a place near the middle of the ship to eat in. The bulkhead of this apartment was at the after-part of the main hatchway, and on each side of it were the berths of the mates and midshipmen; between these berths the arms-chest was placed. The cabin of the master, in which was always kept the key of the arms was opposite to mine. This particular description of the interior parts of the ship is rendered necessary by the event of the expedition.

Her masts, of naval proportions, were considered too lofty by Bligh, in view of the peculiar nature of the voyage, and were duly shortened. The customary amount of ballast, forty-five tons of iron, he also considered excessive, and only nineteen tons were shipped.

Her figurehead he described as 'pretty', and represented a woman in a riding habit, possibly a member of the Betham family.

The establishment of men and officers was:

- I lieutenant to command
- I master
- I boatswain
- I gunner
- I carpenter
- 1 surgeon
- 2 master's mates
- 2 midshipmen
- 2 quartermasters
- I quartermaster's mate
- I boatswain's mate
- I gunner's mate
- I carpenter's mate
- I carpenter's crew
- I sailmaker
- I armourer
- I corporal
- I clerk and steward
- 23 able seamen

The establishment was actually one of 45 men, but this included

a 'dummy', whose pay went to the support of seamen's widows, He is entered in the ship's muster-roll under the name of * widows' man'.

In addition, a botanist and gardener were to be carried, who would be responsible for the selection and management of the plants. It will be observed that no purser was included in the establishment. This was the case with all small vessels, the office being combined with that of captain.

That the voyage was expected to be a source of great profit is shown by a letter to Bligh from his father-in-law, Dr. Betham. Tm most solicitous about the success of the voyage on your account, that it may not only be the means of your promotion, but attended with such emoluments as may enable you to live comfortably after the toils of the sea are past.'

His pay was, in fact, four shillings per day, irrespective of the pursery, and considerably less than that which he was receiving under Duncan Campbell, as Dr. Betham well knew, and which Bligh himself described as 'a state of affluence... with an income of five hundred pounds a year'.

Eighteen months' stores and victuals were shipped, together with trinkets and ironwork with which to trade with the natives. The chronometer, made by Kendall, had already been round the world with Cook.

On the 15th of October, 1787, Bligh received orders to proceed with his ship to Spithead, but contrary winds delayed his arrival there until the 4th of November. Here he awaited his final orders, which reached him on the 24th. After a preamble setting out the objects of the voyage, they instructed him to proceed round Cape Horn to the 'Society Islands in the southern ocean, where the breadfruit grew in the greatest luxuriance'. Here he was to take on board as many trees and plants as he thought necessary, exchanging for them the iron and trinkets carried for the purpose.

From the Society Islands he was to sail through Endeavour Straits to Prince's Island, in the Straits of Sunda, or, at his discretion, to the north coast of Java, where any casualties among the bread-fruit trees could be made good by the purchase of local plants, a sum of money in ducats being provided for the purpose.

He was then to proceed round the Cape of Good Hope to the West Indies, where half of the trees were to be deposited at St. Vincent for the Windward Islands, and the remainder delivered at Jamaica. The voyage would be completed by returning to

Spithead. A sample of each species of plant was to be brought with him to England, for the royal garden at Kew.

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The weather, which had been very favourable for his departure, now changed, and baffling winds delayed him for over a month. This Bligh naturally found irritating, as it made it almost certain that the *Bounty* would reach Cape Horn at an unlikely time of year for a successful passage, and he took the opportunity to obtain discretionary power to vary his orders with respect to his route on the outward journey.

Fifteen members of the crew, mostly pressed men, had seized their chances to desert at Deptford and Spithead, and the final full complement with which the *Bounty* sailed appear to have been all volunteers.

Bligh was doubtful of the surgeon's suitability for the voyage, and Sir Joseph Banks* interest was promised to a young man who was qualified to replace him if necessary, and who had shipped as an A.B. Three midshipmen had done likewise, as the establishment provided only for two, while five actually sailed.

At this stage Bligh appears well satisfied with ship, officers, and men, with the exception of the surgeon, and his only complaints are directed at the Admiralty, on account of the delay in starting, and for lack of promotion, in both of which he seems to have been justified.

CHAPTER V

*There 'were we long neglected, and we bore
Much sorrow ere the fleet its anchor weighed;
Greenfields before us, and our native shore,
We breathed a pestilential air, that, made
Ravage for which no knell was heard. We prayed
For our departure: wished and wished—nor knew
Mid that long sickness and those hopes delayed,
That happier days we never more must view,
The parting signal streamed—at last the land withdrew.*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: GUILT AND SORROW

AFTER being driven back repeatedly by contrary winds, the *Bounty* finally sailed from Spithead on Sunday, December 23rd, 1787. On board were:

William Bligh	Lieutenant in command
John Fryer	Master
William Cole	Boatswain
William Peckover	Gunner
William Purcell	Carpenter
Thomas Huggan	Surgeon
Fletcher Christian	Master's Mate
William Elphinstone	Master's Mate
Peter Heywood	Midshipman
Thomas Hayward	Midshipman
John Hallet	Midshipman
Edward Young	Midshipman
George Stewart	Midshipman
John Norton	Quartermaster
Peter Linkletter	Quartermaster
George Simpson	Quartermaster's Mate
James Morrison	Boatswain's Mate
John Mills	Gunner's Mate

Charles Norman	Carpenter's Mate
Thomas M'Intosh	Carpenter's Crew
Lawrence Lebogue	Sailmaker
Joseph Coleman	Armourer
Charles Churchill	Corporal
Mr. Samuel	Clerk
Robert Lamb	Butcher
James Valentine	A.B.
Thomas Ledward	A.B.
Matthew Quintal	A.B.
John Sumner	A.B.
John Millward	A.B.
William M'Coy	A.B.
Henry Hillbrant	A.B.
Michael Byrn	A.B.
William Muspratt	A.B.
Alexander Smith	A.B.
John Williams	A.B.
Thomas Ellison	A.B.
Isaac Martin	A.B.
Thomas Burkett	A.B.
Richard Skinner	A.B.
John Smith	A.B.
Matthew Thompson	A.B.
Thomas Hall	A.B.
Robert Tinkler	A.B.
David Nelson	Botanist
William Brown	Gardener

There they are, a crew as famous as the Argonauts. Of their appearance we know little, a brief description by Bligh being all that has survived of most of them. Of their behaviour and character we have learnt more, but only as seamen of the *Bounty*, and their other voyages, their life ashore, are as difficult to trace as the wake of their ship. For such an expedition as this they would assemble, ordinary men whose behaviour was calculable, chosen by chance; they would perform their task and, as individuals, be forgotten. They would perform other tasks later, as they had performed other tasks before, and the memory of them would survive, if at all, as a list of names and as a list of names only.

' But there was one man aboard the *Bounty* that Sunday morning who would not, under certain unlikely conditions, act as would the many other men who might have been chosen in his

place. The accident of this man's presence has made his ship-mates immortal.

As the ship headed out to sea, her crew would doubtless all be on deck, enjoying a last view of England, which they could not expect to see again for at least a year. There would be the senior officers, Fryer, Cole, Peckover, well-meaning, not unpopular with the crew. As the voyage progressed they would dislike their commander more and more, but would be careful not to step outside the letter of the law.

There would be Purcell, the carpenter, who knew his rights, and would insist on them, not over-awed by Bligh's rank, but who also would keep within the law which he knew so well.

Huggan, the surgeon, whose fate Bligh had foreseen even before the ship had sailed, might for once have been seen on deck, in all probability far from sober.

Prominent would be the midshipmen, Peter Heywood, young, loyal, enthusiastic, but as yet incapable of firm decision; Stewart, a stern disciplinarian, but, unlike his commander, not of the kind to arouse active antagonism; Hayward, incompetent, a hypocrite, of no fixed character; Hallet, also incompetent, and unstable; Young, well-connected, nephew of Sir George Young, about whose character we learn little; all of them very conscious that this is a voyage upon which a prosperous career may be based.

Morrison, the boatswain's mate, another sea-lawyer, possibly appeared to be below his true station, with his initiative, powers of observation, and, as was later revealed, considerable literary ability.

Others, too, could have been seen: Churchill, the Ship's Corporal, on whom fell the task of imposing discipline by force when necessary; Lebogue, the sail maker, old and experienced; Samuel, Bligh's clerk, who could keep his head in an emergency, and did not arouse the hostility which one would expect his position and duties to provoke; Ledward, the ambitious young surgeon who had shipped before the mast.

The seamen were, as so often, a mixture of many temperaments who yet would all take their tone from leaders or circumstances as they arose. M'Coy, for instance, Quintal and Thompson were ruffians, but as long as discipline was maintained, would be no worse than troublesome. Others, with no vice, could be led into any folly by the events of the moment, but until those events occurred showed little to distinguish them one from

another. Most prominent as the ship sailed would doubtless be Byrn, the blind fiddler from Kilkenny, who would have an opportunity to show his skill as the *Bounty* weighed anchor, and passed 'through the Needles', bound for the South Seas.

Strong gales drove her southward, moderating on Christmas Day, but increasing on the 26th and doing some damage to the ship. The New Year found her still driving towards the Line, until on the 6th of January she arrived at Teneriffe, where Bligh sent Christian ashore, presumably as the most presentable of his * officers, to acquaint the Governor, the Marquis de Brancheforte, of his arrival, and to offer to fire a salute if it would be returned by the same number of guns from the shore. The Governor replied that he would give such a compliment only to one equal in rank to himself, so that, as Bligh stiffly recorded, 'the ceremony was omitted*.

After her damage had been repaired, and some supplies taken on, the *Bounty* sailed again on January 10th. While at Teneriffe an incident had taken place, according to Morrison, which indicated that already things were far from well on board. Bligh had ordered that the cheese should be brought on deck to be aired, and upon examining it claimed that some had been stolen. This brought a counter-accusation from the cooper, who announced that the barrel had been opened and taken ashore to Bligh's house while the ship lay in the Thames, whereupon he was ordered to be silent, with the threat of a flogging. The deficiency was made good by stopping the allowance of cheese for all hands. More trouble over the food followed when Bligh ordered that one pound of decayed pumpkin should be served instead of each two pounds of biscuit to which the crew were entitled. The only result of his men's complaints was to provoke an outburst in which he threatened to make officers and men 'eat grass, before I have finished with you'. On another occasion he proclaimed his intention of flogging any further complainants. With the bread ration reduced to two-thirds, in the hope of reaching Otaheite without revictualling, there was already an unsatisfactory atmosphere on board when the *Bounty* crossed the Line on February 6th, although she emerged from the low latitudes, as Bligh recorded with just pride, without any case of sickness reported.

On February 17th Bligh wrote to Duncan Campbell that 'We are all in good spirits and my little ship fit to go round a half score of worlds. My men are all active good fellows, and what has

given me much pleasure is that I have not yet been obliged to punish anyone. My officers and young gentlemen are all tractable and well disposed, and we now understand each other so well that we shall remain so the whole voyage, unless I fall out with the doctor who I have trouble to prevent from being in bed fifteen hours out of the twenty-four.'

On the 2nd of March he 'gave to Mr. Fletcher Christian whom I had before directed to take charge of the third watch, a written order to act as lieutenant', and later added, 'his abilities being thoroughly equal to the task'.

The 10th of the month saw the first punishment. Fryer reported Quintal for insolence and mutinous behaviour, and he received two dozen lashes.

Towards the end of March the *Bounty* began her attempt to round Cape Horn, and so to pass into the Pacific, but the delays before she left England had resulted in her being too late to find suitable weather to make the passage. The voyage became a struggle with violent head-winds and on April 2nd

in the morning the wind which had blown fresh all night from the NW. came round to the SW. and increased to a heavy gale. At six in the morning the storm exceeded what I had ever met with before, and the sea, from the frequent shifting of the wind, running in contrary directions, broke exceeding high. Our ship, however, lay to very well, under a main and fore-stay sail. The gale continued, with severe squalls of hail and sleet, the remainder of this and all of the next day. On the 4th the wind was less violent, but far from moderate. With so much bad weather I found it necessary to keep a constant fire, night and day, and one of the watch always attended to dry the people's wet clothes; and this, I have no doubt, contributed as much to their health as to their comfort. Our companions in this inhospitable region were albatrosses and two beautiful kinds of birds, the small blue petrel and pintada. A great many of these were frequently about the wake of the ship, which induced the people to float a line, with hooks baited, to endeavour to catch them, and their attempts were successful. The method they used was to fasten the bait a foot or two before the hook, and, by giving the line a sudden jerk when the bird was at the bait, it was hooked in the feet or body.

Another entry describes how 'the approach of strong southerly winds is announced by many kinds of birds of the albatross or petrel tribe*.

On April 12th Bligh tells us, 'The stormy weather continued

with a great sea. The ship now began to complain, and required to be pumped every hour,' and adds, defensively, 'which was no more than we had reason to expect from such a continuance of gales of wind and high seas'. He goes on to describe how

the decks also became so leaky that I was obliged to allot the great cabin, of which I made little use except in fine weather, to those people who had wet berths to hang their hammocks in, and by this means the between-decks was less crowded. Every morning all the hammocks were taken down from where they hung, and when the weather was too bad to keep them upon deck they were put in the cabin, so that the between decks were cleaned daily and aired with fires if the hatchways could not be opened. With all this bad weather we had the mortification to find, at the end of every day, that we were losing ground; for notwithstanding our utmost exertions, and keeping on the most advantageous tacks (which, if the weather had been at all moderate, would have sufficiently answered our purpose), yet the greater part of the time we were doing little better than drifting before the wind.

On the morning of the 20th, the wind dropped for a few hours so that their hope of making the passage revived, and was fostered by serving a freshly-killed hog to the crew. The weather had proved fatal to the *Bounty's* stock of sheep and poultry, but the deficiency had been partly made good by the pintadas and albatrosses which had been caught and fed on ground corn to rid them of their fishy taste, a process which resulted in the latter being described as 'not inferior to fine geese'.

In the afternoon of the same day, however, the wind returned, with storms of hail and snow, and so, after thirty days of vain battling with head-winds in a strained ship, Bligh gave up his attempt to round the Horn and turned the *Bounty's* head towards the Cape of Good Hope, to the relief of all on board. With favourable winds she made a speedy passage, and after an unsuccessful search for Tristan da Cunha, anchored in False Bay on the 24th of May, 1788.

Here an exhaustive overhaul of the ship took place. She had for some time needed pumping every hour, and now received a complete recaulking in every part of her hull. The chronometer, already suspected of inaccuracy, was found to be three and a half minutes slow and losing three seconds daily, perhaps not surprisingly, since no gymbals had been fitted to it. Bligh took the opportunity of dispatching his mail by a homeward-bound

Dutchman. In a letter to Duncan Campbell he wrote of his satisfaction on arriving without a single complaint of sickness. This he attributed to compulsory dancing, under penalty of loss of grog, from 6 till 8 every night (another letter gives the time as from 4 till 8), and to the excellence of the food he had provided, without, he claims, any thought of profit to himself.

After a stay of thirty-eight days at the Cape, the *Bounty* sailed on July 1st for Australia, where she anchored in Adventure Bay on August 21st. Here she took in wood and water, and put to sea on September 4th, but not before some friction had occurred between Bligh and his officers.

Passing along the south coast of Australia and rounding New Zealand she now headed direct for the Society Islands, and the fair horsewoman at the bow looked out at last over the waters of the Pacific.

On September 9th occurred the first casualty, when James Valentine, A.B., died, apparently as a result of the incompetence of the surgeon.

Otaheite was reached on October 26th, 1788, and the distance run, according to Bligh, 'by the log, in direct and contrary courses, from leaving England to our anchoring at Otaheite, was twenty-seven thousand and eighty-six miles, which on an average, is at the rate of a hundred and eight miles each twenty-four hours'.

CHAPTER VI

What a sight for us bachelor sailors! How avoid so dire a temptation . . . their appearance perfectly amazed me; their extreme youth, the light clear brown of their complexions, their delicate features, and inexpressibly graceful figures, their softly moulded limbs, and free unstudied action, seemed as strange as beautiful.—HERMAN MELVILLE: TYPEE

If you touch at the islands, Mr. Flask, beware of fornication.—
HERMAN MELVILLE: MOBY DICK

THE *Bounty* was greeted with great enthusiasm, and her men with boundless hospitality, by the Otaheitans, and Bligh was soon able to arrange for permission to take up the bread-fruit trees which were the object of his voyage. They were, unfortunately, at a stage of their growth unsuitable for transplanting, which necessitated a longer visit than had been expected.

At this point, in the opinion of many authorities, Bligh made his most serious mistake. Instead of leaving a small party to collect the plants as they became available, and meanwhile carrying out further exploration in the vicinity, still largely unknown, he allowed the ship to remain nearly six months at Otaheite. This prolonged relaxation after the lengthy and arduous voyage, added to the allurements of the society of the natives and the charm of their way of life, had a disastrous effect on the discipline of the crew, and inattention to duty soon became apparent. Bligh complained that 'Verbal orders, in the course of a month, were so forgotten, that they would impudently assert, no such thing or directions were given, and I have been at last under the necessity to trouble myself with writing what, by decent young officers, would be complied with as the common rules of the service', and 'if I had any officers to supersede the master and boatswain, or was capable of doing without them, considering

them as common seamen, they should no longer occupy their respective stations'.

On the 5th of December 'I ordered the carpenter to cut a large stone that was brought off by one of the natives, requesting me to get it made fit for them to grind their hatchets on, but to my astonishment he refused, saying, "I will not cut the stone, for it will spoil my chisel; and though there may be law to take away my clothes, there is none to take away my tools." This man having before shewn his mutinous and insolent behaviour, I was under the necessity of confining him to his cabin/

On the 5th of January, 1789, it was revealed that the superior appeal of life on Otaheite, as compared with that which appeared probable on the homeward-bound *Bounty*, had occurred to Churchill, the Ship's Corporal, whose sense of discipline should have been high, together with two seamen, Muspratt and Millward, for the three men had deserted in the small cutter, taking with them arms and ammunition. ' Had the mate of the watch been awake, no trouble of this kind would have happened. I have therefore disrated and turned him before the mast; such neglectful and worthless petty officers, I believe, were never in a ship as are in this. No orders for a few hours together are obeyed by them: in short, they have driven me to everything but corporal punishment, and that must follow if they do not improve.' The midshipman Hayward was the culprit referred to in this tirade, and he was put in irons.

The deserters were recovered on the 24th and flogged, when Bligh remarked, 'As this affair was solely caused by the neglect of the officers who had the watch, I was induced to give them all a lecture on this occasion, and endeavour to show them that, however exempt they were at present from the like punishment, they were equally subject, by the articles of war, to a condign one/

In the course of a search for the deserters Bligh was constrained by bad weather to spend a night away from the ship, and during his absence the chronometer ran down. Its error at the time had been about seven and a half minutes. 'I set it going again by a common watch, corrected by observations, and endeavoured to make the error the same as if it had not stopped; but being over-cautious made me tedious in setting it in motion and increased the error from mean time of Greenwich/

Bligh's own behaviour at this time, as described by Morrison, was not likely to restore him to the respect of his crew. He

claimed possession of everything that was brought aboard, and seized privately-owned articles of food in order to issue them as the official ration, quelling remonstrance with his customary threats.

His forethought in the matter of the surgeon was now justified, for Huggan died on December 9th as the result of intemperance and lack of exercise. Ledward was immediately promoted to the rank of acting-surgeon, as had been previously arranged.

On the morning of February 6th it was discovered that the ship's cable had been cut almost through, no doubt in the hope that the *Bounty* would go ashore and be so damaged as to prevent her sailing, at any rate for some time. Suspicion fell upon the natives, and it was later to appear that Otaheitan friends of Hayward were responsible, at his suggestion.

Throughout March preparations were made for sailing, and the full complement of plants was aboard by the end of the month. On the 4th of April, 1789, says Bligh:

We made sail, bidding farewell to Otaheite, where for twenty-three weeks we had been treated with the utmost affection and regard, and which seemed to increase in proportion to our stay. That we were not insensible to their kindness the events which followed more than sufficiently proves; for to the friendly and endearing behaviour of these people may be ascribed the motives for that event which effected the ruin of an expedition that there was every reason to hope would have been completed in the most fortunate manner.

On the 6th the *Bounty* had left the Society Islands and was heading westward for the Friendly group. Annamooka was reached on the 23rd. Here Christian was sent ashore to procure wood and water. He found the natives troublesome, but could not take any positive steps to prevent this, as Bligh had given explicit orders that no hostile measures should be adopted. Upon his return to the ship he was nevertheless abused as a cowardly rascal, to which he is reported to have replied with dignity. The 26th saw the *Bounty* at sea again, and on the next day occurred the following incident:

In the afternoon of April 27th Mr. Bligh came up on the quarter-deck, and missing some of the cocoa nuts which were piled up between the guns, said they had been stolen, and that it must have been with the knowledge and connivance of the officers. They were all called up, and declared they had not seen any man touch them, to which Lieut. Bligh replied: "Then you have taken them yourselves/ and ordered Elphinstone, the Master's Mate, to go down

and bring up every cocoa nut in the ship, which he did. They were very numerous as the sailors had made large purchases on their own account. He then questioned each officer as to the number he had bought, and going up to Christian, asked him to state the number in his possession. 'I really do not know, Sir,' Mr. Christian replied, 'but I hope you do not think me so mean as to be guilty of stealing yours.' 'Yes,' said Bligh, 'you——hound, I do think so* You must have stolen them from me, or you could give a better account of them. You——rascals, you are all thieves alike, and combine with the men to rob me. You will steal my yams next. I will flog you, and make you jump overboard before we reach Endeavour Straits.'

According to the accounts of the incident given later to Edward Christian, Fletcher admitted having taken one coconut. 'I was dry: I thought it of no consequence.' Captain Bligh then replied, 'You lie, you scoundrel, you have stolen one-half.' Christian appeared much hurt and agitated, and said, 'Why do you treat me thus, Captain Bligh?' Captain Bligh then shook his hand in his face and said 'No reply!' and called him a thief and other abusive names. . . .

About four o'clock on the same day Captain Bligh abused Christian again. Christian came forward from Captain Bligh crying; tears were running fast from his eyes in big drops. Purcell, the carpenter, said to him 'What is the matter, Mr. Christian?' He said 'Can you ask me and hear the treatment I receive?' Purcell replied 'Do not I receive as bad as you do?' Christian said, 'You have something* to protect you, and can speak again; but if I should speak to him as you do, he would probably break me, turn me before the mast, and perhaps flog me; and if he did it would be the death of us both, for I am sure I should take him in my arms and jump overboard with him.' Purcell said 'Never mind, it is but for a short time longer.' Christian said 'In going through Endeavour Straits I am sure the ship will be a hell.' He was heard by another person to say, when he was crying 'I would rather die ten thousand deaths than bear this treatment. I always do my duty as an officer and as a man ought to do, yet I receive this scandalous usage.' Another person heard him say that flesh and blood cannot bear this treatment. This was the only time he was seen in tears on board the ship, and one of the seamen, being asked if he had ever observed Christian in tears before, answered, 'No, he was no milk-sop.'

Christian now determined to leave the ship that night on a raft.

* Purcell was a warrant-officer, and thus could not be reduced to the ranks and flogged.

He gave away that afternoon all his Otaheite curiosities; he was seen tearing his letters and papers and throwing them overboard; he applied to the carpenter for nails,* who told him to take as many as he pleased out of the locker; and the ship intending to stop at no other island these could have been of no use to him, but in case of his escape to land. Mr. Tinkler, a young boy, one of Christian's mess-mates, was hungry in the evening, and went below to get some pig which was left at dinner; this he missed, and after some search found it packed up with a bread-fruit in a dirty clothes' bag in Christian's cot.

The raft was formed by lashing a plank to the two masts of the launch. Unfortunately the sight of a volcano on the nearby island of Tofoa attracted many of the ship's people to the deck, and Christian was unable to find an opportunity to leave the *Bounty* without being observed.

He had been invited by Bligh to supper that very evening, but had pleaded illness. It was agreed among the officers that each should use this excuse in his turn, but Hayward, now released from irons, accepted, and received some proofs of unpopularity from his messmates.

It was a fine night, so fine that Bligh and Fryer, who were not normally on speaking terms, felt its mollifying effect.

Between ten and eleven o'clock Mr. Bligh came on Deck, agreeable to his usual Custom to leave his Orders for the Night; after Mr. Bligh had been on Deck some little time I said 'Sir, we have got a fine breeze and a Moon coming on, which will be fortunate for us when we come to the Coast of New Holland.' Mr. Bligh replied, 'Yes, Mr. Fryer, so it will,' which was all the conversation that passed between us. After leaving his Orders he went off the Deck. At twelve o'clock we had fine weather and every thing quiet on board.

Christian waited until half-past three in the morning for an opportunity to make his escape with the raft, but the stir on deck prevented him, and he then decided to rest for half-an-hour before taking over the watch at four o'clock.

* Nails were much valued by the Otaheitans. Captain Wallis wrote: 'To discover what present would most gratify them, I laid before them a Johannes, a guinea, a crown piece, a Spanish dollar, a few shillings, some new half-pence, and two large nails, making signs that they should take what they liked best. The nails were first seized with great eagerness, and then a few of the halfpence, but the silver and gold lay neglected.'

CHAPTER VII

He that goeth about to perswade a multitude that they are not so well governed as they ought to be shall never want attentive and favourable Hearers.—HOOKER: OF THE LAWS OF ECCLESIASTICAL POLITY

Away, I say; Go out, and cry a mutiny.—SHAKESPEARE: OTHELLO

AT four o'clock on the morning of the 24th of April, 1789, Stewart woke Christian, so that he could take over the command of the deck. He noticed that the Lieutenant appeared to be in a state of some disorder, and advised him to abandon his project of leaving the ship on a raft. Christian then went on deck, to find that Hayward and Hallet, the mates of the watch, were both asleep, and then, according to his own story, then and not before, he decided to take the ship.

He announced his intention to Quintal and Martin, and soon found himself with seven followers, the others being Churchill, Thompson, Alexander Smith, M'Coy and Williams. To secure arms was the next step, so they told the armourer that they wanted a musket in order to shoot at a shark which was alongside, and thereupon were given the keys of the arms chest. They thus were able to obtain and distribute cutlasses and muskets before their next move, that of securing Bligh, Fryer, Peckover, and Nelson, the botanist, whom they evidently considered to be their only potentially active opponents. Bligh has left his account of his awakening:

Just before sunrising, while I was yet asleep, Mr. Christian, with the master-at-arms [Churchill], "gunner's mate, and Thomas Burkett, seaman, came into my cabin, and seizing me, tied my hands with a cord behind my back, threatening me with instant death if I spoke or made the least noise. I, however, called as loud as I could, in hopes of assistance; but they had already secured the officers who were not of their party by placing sentinels at their doors* There were

three men at my cabin door, besides the four within: Christian had only a cutlass in his hand, the others had muskets and bayonets. I was hauled out of bed and forced on deck in my shirt, suffering great pain from the tightness with which they had tied my hands. I demanded the reason of such violence, but received no other answer than abuse for not holding my tongue.

Fryer found himself arrested in his cabin by Quintal and Sumner, who had now joined the mutineers, and from them he heard that Christian's plan was to set Bligh, with Samuel, Hallet, and Hayward, adrift in the small cutter, in order, as Sumner expressed it, to 'let the b——see if he can live upon three-fourths of a pound of yams a day*'. Fryer knew that the small cutter was in a very bad state of seaworthiness, and pleaded to be allowed to go on deck, with the intention of doing what he could to prevent things going any further. Permission was at last obtained from Christian, and Fryer approached him and said, 'Mr. Christian, consider what you are about'. 'Hold your tongue, sir/ he replied, 'I have been in hell for weeks past—Captain Bligh has brought it on himself.' Fryer said that this was no reason for taking the ship—'Hold your tongue, sir—'Mr. Christian, you and I have been on friendly terms during the voyage, therefore give me leave to speak: let Mr. Bligh go down to his cabin and I make no doubt that we shall all be friends again in a very short time'—'Hold your tongue, sir, it is too late.' Fryer then tried, according to his account, to start a movement to recover the ship, but was again taken below.

Christian had now altered his plans, and decided to put Bligh in a larger boat, in the launch, 'not for his own sake, but for the safety of those who were going with him', but also, apparently, for the purpose of clearing the ship of those who might try to retake her. It must have been about this time that Bligh said to Young, the midshipman, who had joined the mutineers, 'This is a serious affair, Mr. Young,' to which Young replied, 'Yes, it is a serious affair to be starved. I hope this day to get a belly full.'

After much dispute, nineteen persons, including Bligh, were put in the boat, together with what food and equipment the mutineers would allow them. 'Mr. Samuel, my clerk, secured to me a quadrant and compass, some clothes, my journals, and a few material ship's papers, but all my valuable instruments with a timekeeper of three hundred and fifty guineas value, a valuable

collection of books, maps and drawings with all my remarks and observations for fifteen years past were kept from me.'

The scene of the parting of Bligh and Christian has been variously described. According to the former:

Notwithstanding the roughness with which I was treated, the remembrance of past kindnesses produced some signs of remorse in Christian. When they were forcing me out of the ship I asked him if this treatment was a proper return for the many instances he had received of my friendship? He appeared disturbed at my question, and answered with much emotion: 'That—Captain Bligh—that is the thing. I am in hell—I am in hell,' [and] he seemed as if meditating destruction on himself and everyone else.

Finally Christian said, 'Come, Captain Bligh, your officers and men are now in the boat, and you must go with them; if you attempt to make the least resistance you will be instantly put to death.' The boat was veered astern by a rope, and kept there for some time while the mutineers exercised their wit on their commander, provoking him to furious retort. There were threats of violence, however, mixed with the jeers, and those in the boat cast off, keeping astern of the ship so as to be out of the range of her guns.

There were thus nineteen men in the launch, overloading her so that her gunwale was less than eight inches above the water, her length being only 23 feet and her breadth 6 feet 9 inches. They left behind them in the ship twenty-five men, whom Bligh described as 'the most able men of the ship's company*.'

This then was the famous mutiny of the *Bounty*. There has been much discussion on the cause and the blame, Christian having his apologists and Bligh his sympathisers, a state of affairs which looks like enduring for many years to come.

Bligh himself considered the sole cause of the mutiny to be the charms of the feminine inhabitants of Otaheite, and, of course, ignored the possibility of his own conduct being in any way responsible. In his favour it has been advanced that the fact of his sleeping with his cabin door open proves that in his own opinion he had nothing to fear. But it is a mark of a certain type of bully, of which Judge Jeffreys is an example, that it considers itself highly popular, and Bligh's character conforms to it in other ways, in the sudden changes of mood as shown towards the same person, for instance. Much has been made of his solicitude for the health of his men, including his scheme of compulsory

dancing which, however, was not likely to bring him popularity with its beneficiaries, contrary to the belief of his academic admirers. But this and other similar claims prove nothing, for a craftsman will take care of his tools and may yet be a blackguard. Where the welfare of his crew affected his pocket, as it did in the matter of the rations, his paternal attitude is not so noticeable. That Bligh was expected by his family to make a large sum from his pursery we have seen, and after the mutiny he could write, 'I have saved my pursery books so that all my profits will take place, and all will be well..' It has been said in his favour that the complaints of the crew about the quantity and quality of their food have no significance, sailors and soldiers being notoriously given to grumbling about their rations. This last is undoubtedly true, but it is very rarely, and only under extreme provocation, that they will actually make an official complaint as the *Bounty's* men did, even though it was likely to provoke their commander to vindictive retaliation.

It was the belief of Bligh that the mutiny was the result of a plot, long prepared with the utmost secrecy, to seize the ship in order to return to the delights of Otaheite. The evidence, however, shows that it was spontaneous, Christian being prepared up to the time of his taking over the watch to leave the ship on his raft, although when he himself confirmed this he may have been trying to assume the entire blame in the interests of Peter Heywood and Stewart. In any case, it seems extremely unlikely that such a conspiracy would not have come to fruition long before the *Bounty* had sailed so far from Otaheite.

It can, I think, safely be said that without Bligh's unpopularity, deserved or not, there would have been no mutiny, and without the islands of the South Sea and their feminine inhabitants in the background there would have been no mutiny, and even with these two ingredients a third, the unusual character of Christian, was necessary to produce the final result. In this respect it should be noticed that Christian's original plan, to leave the ship by raft, would not present the attractions of the scheme which he proposed to Quintal and Martin, his first recruits. He must have been aware of the strong likelihood of being entertained with a very different kind of reception by the natives upon arriving alone on a raft, to that which he had enjoyed with an armed ship containing valuable merchandise close at hand. Indeed, his chance of survival was small, and the possibility of returning to Otaheite remote.

That being so, since he had made up his mind not to endure Bligh's treatment any longer, even at the probable cost of his life, and at best with the certainty of exile, the seizure of the ship was the only other course open to him. After this had taken place, he could have put Bligh under arrest and brought the ship home, a scheme which has had its advocates. In this it does not appear that he would have had serious opposition from the master, Fryer, or any other of the officers. But the consequences of such an action, upon his return, must have seemed unpredictable and hazardous, even as regards his life. Such a course, too, would not have had the attraction for Quintal and his fellows that was offered by the prospect of a prolonged residence in the South Sea. The next alternative, that of remaining in the Pacific and keeping Bligh a prisoner indefinitely, could not be seriously considered, and so Christian, who appears from the first to have eliminated murder as a possible solution, was left under the necessity of putting Bligh adrift, with a few companions, in the small cutter. It had soon become apparent that it would be impossible to hold the ship against the loyal members of the crew without bloodshed, and the course finally taken was thus forced upon Christian.

From remarks passed at the time (it was proposed to deprive the carpenter of his tools, on the grounds that with them Bligh and his companions could build a larger vessel and return to civilisation) it appears to have been considered unlikely that those in the launch could use her to reach a place from which they could return to England. On the other hand there was always the possibility of a search party or other naval expedition finding them, should they survive, but as the probabilities then stood, those in the launch were being condemned to an extremely unpleasant fate. Now against the majority of those in the launch it does not appear that the mutineers had any grounds for complaint. It is difficult to feel any great sympathy for Hayward, and the quartermaster Norton seems to have been unpopular, but Fryer, Peckover, Cole, and Purcell, at least, disliked Bligh and his methods, and in turn were disliked by him. Yet all were condemned to suffer upon the same terms as Bligh, and, whatever punishment he was considered to have merited, the others certainly deserved better treatment. Here, I think, lies the strongest case against ^Christian and the mutineers, although, as we have seen, he was taking what must have seemed to him, in his unhappy state of mind, the only possible course.

According to Morrison's account, Bligh offered, at the last moment, before leaving the ship, to treat with Christian by promising to forget all that had happened if he were allowed to resume his command, but things had clearly gone too far to admit of such an outcome. With the best will in the world the morning's doings could not be kept secret, and would be fully revealed by serious inquiry, and the vindictive side of Bligh's nature made it obvious that such a promise would be kept with extreme reluctance. Like Hampden as depicted by Clarendon, Christian in drawing the sword had thrown away the scabbard, and, if the analogy may be permitted, was in the later position of Hampden's party with regard to Charles, in having a prisoner whom he should either restore to power or destroy, but he was at least fortunate in being able to take a less drastic course than did Cromwell.

When the character, as revealed by subsequent events, of some of the mutineers is considered, it is remarkable that the event went off without bloodshed, especially when it is found that an issue of rum was made in the middle of proceedings. Indeed, it is known that the suggestion 'Shoot the b——' was made several times, and it speaks much for Christian's forbearance and command of the situation that Bligh sustained no more injuries than those a few gibes and threats could inflict.

It is also a tribute to Christian that what little has survived of the opinion of the castaways in the launch shows little animosity towards him, but reveals that Bligh was considered by them to be the author of their hardships, both when it must have been obvious to them that their lives depended on his leadership and skill, and when they were at length in safety, owing their survival to his courage and ability.

We have seen how Christian, having decided to leave the ship, was forced by circumstances into the course he adopted. But was this, of leaving, and eventually that of taking, the ship, his only possible decision? In the opinion of Sir John Barrow, an Admiralty official of long standing and high rank, Christian should have endured his wrongs until the *Bounty* returned to England, when, upon complaint and investigation, Bligh would have been dismissed from the service. To some degree the prospect of inflicting retribution on a tyrant is an inducement to bear oppression with fortitude, but to what extent this will operate will vary with the character of the victim, and Christian, with whatever faults

he may have had, does not seem to have been possessed of even that slight vindictiveness which would alleviate present suffering with the thought of future revenge. Indeed, in the event, it was made clear that he was completely lacking in this characteristic, fortunately for Bligh. It is difficult to believe that the latter, if he had succeeded in retaking the ship, would have acted with as much self-command and abstention from violence as was shown by Christian during the mutiny.

Christian was faced with the prospect of some months, not only of his present ill-usage, but of something worse, according to his tormentor himself, with his threats of Endeavour Straits and what would happen there. Later in the voyage there would be even less chance of leaving the ship with any prospect of survival, so that it must have seemed to him that this was the time, if it were to be done at all.

Christian was a man of intelligence, and knew the consequences to himself either of desertion or mutiny. In the first case he might be taken by Bligh, and punished as ignominiously as his captor thought fit. Even should he escape this, there was always the prospect of subsequent arrest and punishment. If he escaped the perils of the sea and of attack by the natives, and managed to reach and survive in one of the neighbouring islands, he was cutting himself off from his country and family, in all probability for ever. If he seized the ship, he was still condemning himself to the life of an outcast, and with greater risk of eventual capture and degrading death. In either case he would be bringing disgrace on his family—a powerful consideration with a man of Fletcher Christian's upbringing.

Yet he decided, first to desert, then to seize the ship, and to abandon home and career. Today one can only wonder at the provocation that had induced this state of mind in a man whom his shipmates did not consider to be unduly sensitive, and hope that one is never placed in a position even remotely resembling that of Fletcher Christian on the morning of April 28th, 1789.

CHAPTER VIII

Bligh was one of the best seamen that ever trod deck, and one of the bravest of men: proofs of his seamanship he gave by steering, amidst dreadful weather, a deeply laden boat for nearly four thousand miles over an almost unknown ocean.—GEORGE BORROW: THE ROMANY RYE

BLIGH'S first plan was to make for Tofoa, about thirty miles away. Here he hoped to secure enough bread-fruit and water to suffice for a passage to Tongataboo. This island he had visited with Cook, and its friendly king, Paulehow, was still alive, as he had learnt a few days previously. There he hoped to be able to provision the boat for a voyage to the East Indies.

But at Tofoa Bligh was forced to realise that he was now in a very different position from that he had occupied when he had the *Bounty* at his command. The attitude of the natives soon became threatening, and an attack was made by about two hundred men on the party as they re-embarked, Norton, the quartermaster, being killed by stones.

The crew now faced the fact that so far from being able to expect assistance from the natives, they would in all probability not even be suffered to recruit their stock of provisions without assault. They therefore unanimously pressed for an immediate start homewards without any further attempt to obtain any increase to their store of food. Bligh warned his men that the Dutch colony at Timor lay more than 3,600 miles away, and the chance of finding any relief on the coast of Australia, which lay in their way, was slight, while their supply of necessaries was so small that a daily issue of one ounce of bread and one pint of water for each man was all that they could afford to allow. To this all agreed, but Bligh insisted upon their making a solemn promise to keep to the arrangement, a precaution justified by events. Some of their stock of provisions had been lost in the

attack they had sustained, and in a final examination it was found that they had 150 lb. of bread, 20 lb. of pork, 28 gallons of water, 3 bottles of wine, 5 quarts of rum, and a few coconuts.

Their start on May 3rd was unpropitious. A severe gale brought with it a very high sea, so high that the boat was becalmed when in the trough of the waves. Water was shipped, necessitating constant baling, and a cold night was spent in wet clothing. The weather improved on the 5th, but next day the effect on the party of the small allowance of water began to be noticeable. Seas continually broke over them and combined with the cold at night to produce attacks of cramp. On the 7th the boat was pursued by two canoes, but they finally gave up the chase, to the great relief of Bligh's party, who realised that they were in no state to put up a defence against any assault. Rain now increased their stock of drinking water, but drenched their clothing. The next day fortunately was dry, and they were able to clean out the boat. On the 9th Bligh contrived to fit a weather-cloth round the boat, which helped to keep out the high seas by which they were in danger of being swamped. At night came heavy rain, and water was shipped, so that two men were constantly employed in baling. 'The day brought no relief but its light' was Bligh's grim comment on the morning of the 10th. At midday the rain abated, but their other torments remained. On the evening of the next day, their fifteenth in the boat, the rain returned, and the party passed yet another miserable night. On the 12th they were cold even at noon and their sufferings were not alleviated on the following morning by the issue of their usual spoonful of rum, which Bligh felt that they could no longer afford. For four days these appalling conditions continued, and on the 17th their commander had to face and quell general complaints and demands for extra rations. On the 18th the weather seemed to be improving, but at night wind and rain set in again, and lasted until the evening of the 23rd. At this time the condition of the party was such as to shake even the nerves of Bligh:—'At dawn of day some of my people seemed half dead: our appearances were horrible, and I could look no way but I caught the eye of someone in distress', and 'I began to fear that another such night would put an end to the lives of several, who seemed no longer able to support their sufferings'.

The 24th brought a welcome change. The wind began to moderate and the party saw their first prolonged sunshine for

fifteen days. The seas went down, less water was shipped, and there was no longer need for constant baling. Bligh took the opportunity to review the state of their provisions, and found that in order to provide for contingencies it would be necessary slightly to reduce the daily issue of bread. Somewhat to his surprise the rest of the party agreed to his proposal, the result of which was to leave them with forty-three days' allowance for all hands.

On the following day seabirds were caught, which were doubly welcome, being of a kind that indicated the nearness of land. Each was divided into eighteen portions, which were distributed by the method, well-known at sea, of 'Who shall have this?' (it was used, for example, by Sir Ernest Shackleton and his party, when they took to the ice after losing the *Endurance*) which has been described thus: 'One person turns his back to the object that is to be divided; another then points separately to the portions, at each of them asking aloud "Who shall have this?" to which the first answers by naming somebody. This impartial method of divisions gives every man an equal chance of the best share.'*

On the 28th the reefs that guard the coast of the north-east of Australia were sighted. Bligh found an entrance through them, and the crew of the launch were able to enjoy the luxury of once more sailing in smooth water. On the following evening they landed on an island which lay about a quarter of a mile from the mainland.

Here they found oysters and fresh water, and a fire was lit, with the aid of a magnifying glass. In a copper pot which a member of the party had fortunately had the forethought to bring into the boat, a stew was prepared, the first hot food they had tasted since leaving the *Bounty* over a month previously. The next day showed a marked improvement in the general condition of the castaways, and they sailed again, embarking just as a party of natives appeared on the opposite shore. On the 31st another island was visited for the purpose of seeking food, and here an ugly situation developed. Some of the crew turned sullen, and Bligh reproached Purcell, the carpenter, with ingratitude, pointing out that if it were not for him, their Captain, they would not be here. Purcell agreed with this statement, and repeated it, but with a change of inflection that provoked Bligh to abuse, which

* According to Morrison, so scanty had been the supply of provisions that this method was actually adopted by the seamen of the *Bounty* before the mutiny.

the carpenter answered by retorting that he was as good a man as his commander. Bligh seized and flourished a cutlass but Fryer intervened, and peace, if not harmony, was restored. Embarking again, they proceeded along the coast, landing frequently, until the evening of the 3rd of June, when they once more put out to sea in the same Endeavour Straits with which Bligh had threatened his crew on the *Bounty*, and with the prospect of reaching Timor in eight or ten days.

Once again the boat had to be baled, and the nights were cold and wet. Nelson, the botanist, Lebogue, the sailmaker, and Ledward, the surgeon, were in great distress, and a week later the state of many of the party was so low as to cause Bligh to form the gravest doubts of their survival.

At 3 a.m. on the 12th, Timor was sighted, forty-one days after leaving Tofoa, and after having run, by the log, 3,618 miles. The sea ran too high to permit a landing, and it was not until the afternoon of the next day that Bligh brought the launch to anchor in a small bay, where a native was found who agreed to pilot them to Coupang, the seat of government, which they reached on the morning of the 14th of June.

'An indifferent spectator', said Bligh, 'would have been at a loss which most to admire, the eyes of famine sparkling at immediate relief, or the horror of their preservers at the sight of so many spectres, whose ghastly countenances, if the cause had been unknown, would rather have excited terror than pity. Our bodies were nothing but skin and bones, our limbs were full of sores, and we were clothed in rags. In this condition, with the tears of joy and gratitude flowing down our cheeks, the people of Timor beheld us with a mixture of horror, surprise, and pity.'

For two months they rested in Coupang, and Bligh wrote a report to the Admiralty, giving his account of the mutiny and his voyage in the launch. It will be of interest to give this report in full, although at the cost of some repetition, for the official view of the mutiny was based upon it, and it was used at the subsequent court-martial as the evidence upon which the charges were founded. He addressed the Secretary:

Coupang in Timor,
18th August 1789

Sir,

I am now unfortunately to request of you to acquaint the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that his Majesty's armed vessel *Bounty*, under my command, was taken from me by some of the



Belle Isle, the house of Isabella Christian on the island in Lake Windermere
which bears her name



Ewanrigg, the original Cumberland home of the Christians, as it is today

Workington Hall, the home of the Curwens. It was the principal seat of John Christian after his marriage with Isabella



inferior officers and men, on the 28th April, 1789, in the following manner.

A little before sunrise, Fletcher Christian, who was mate of the ship and officer of the watch, with the ship's corporal, came into my cabin while I was asleep, and seizing me tied my hands with a cord, assisted by others who were also in the cabin, all armed with muskets and bayonets. I was now threatened with instant death if I spoke a word: I, however, called for assistance and awakened everyone; but the officers who were in their cabins were secured by sentinels at their doors, so that no one could come to me. The arms were all secured, and I was forced on deck in my shirt with my hands tied, and secured by a guard abaft the mizzen-mast, during which the mutineers expressed much joy that they would soon see Otaheite. I now demanded of Christian the cause of such a violent act, but no other answer was given but 'Hold your tongue, sir; or you are dead this instant': and holding me by the cord, which tied my hands he as often threatened to stab me in the breast with a bayonet he held in his right hand. I however, did my utmost to rally the disaffected villains to a sense of their duty, but to no effect. The boatswain was ordered to hoist the launch out, and while I was kept under a guard with Christian at their head abaft the mizzen-mast, the officers and men not concerned in the mutiny were ordered into the boat. This being done, I was told by Christian, 'Sir, your officers and men are now in the boat, and you must go with them'; and with the guard they carried me across the deck, with their bayonets presented at every side, when, attempting to make another effort one villain said to the others, '* Blow his brains out.' I was at last forced into the boat, and we were then veered astern, in all, nineteen souls. I was at this time 10 leagues to the S.W. of Tofoa, the north westernmost of the Friendly Islands, having left Otaheite the 4th of April with 1,015 fine bread-fruit plants and many fruit kind, in all 774 pots, 39 tubs, and 24 boxes. These plants were now in a very flourishing order. I anchored at Annamocha 24th April and left it on the 26th. The boatswain and carpenter, with some others, while the boat was alongside, collected several necessary things and water, and with some difficulty a compass and quadrant were got, but arms of no kind,* nor any maps or drawings, of which I had many valuable ones. The boat was very deep, and much lumbered, and in this condition we were cast adrift with about 28 gallons of water, 150 lb. of bread, 32 lbs. of pork, 6 quarts of rum, and six bottles of wine. The day was calm, attended with light breezes, and I got to Tofoa by seven o'clock in the evening, but found no place to land, the land being steep and rocky. On

* He had, in fact, four cutlasses, as he admitted in his published account

the 30th I found landing in a cove, on the north-west part of the island, and here I remained in search of supplies until the 2nd of May; when the natives discovered we had no fire-arms they made an attack on us with clubs and stones, in the course of which I had the misfortune to lose a very worthy man, John Norton, quartermaster, and most of us were hurt, more or less. But getting into our boat was no security, for they followed us in canoes loaded with stones, which they threw with much force and exactness: happily night saved the rest of us. I had determined to go to Amsterdam in search of Paulehow the king; but taking this transaction as a real sample of their native dispositions, there was little hope to expect much from them; for I considered their good behaviour hitherto owing to a dread of our fire-arms, which now knowing us to have none would not be the case, and that supposing our lives were in safety, our boat and everything would be taken from us, and thereby I should never be able to return. I was also earnestly solicited by all hands to take them towards home, and when I told them no hopes of relief remained to us but what I might find in New Holland, until I came to Timor, a distance of 1,200 leagues, they all agreed to live on one ounce of bread per day and a gill of water. I therefore, after recommending this promise for ever to their memory, bore away for New Holland and Timor, across a sea but little known, and in a small boat deep loaded with eighteen souls, without a single map of any kind, and nothing but my own recollection and general knowledge of the situation of places to direct us. Unfortunately, we lost part of our provisions; our stock therefore consisted of 20 lbs. of pork, 3 bottles of wine, 5 quarts of rum, 150 lbs. of bread, and 28 gallons of water. I steered to the WNW. with strong gales and bad weather, suffering every calamity and distress. I discovered many islands, and at last, on 28th May the coast of New Holland, and entered a break of the reef in latitude about $12^{\circ} 50'$ S. and longitude $145^{\circ} 00'$ E. I kept on in the direction of the coast to the northward, touching at such places as I found convenient, refreshing my people by the best means in my power. These refreshments consisted of oysters and a few clams; we were, however, greatly benefitted by them and a few good nights' rest. On the 4th June I passed the north part of New Holland and steered for Timor, and made it on the 12th, which was a happy sight to every one, particularly several who perhaps could not have existed a week or a day longer.

I followed the direction of the south side of the island and on the 14th in the afternoon saw the island Rotty and West part of Timor, round which I got that night, and took a Malay on board to show me Coupang, where he described to me the governor resided. On the next morning before day I anchored under the fort, and about eleven I saw the governor, who received me with great humanity and

kindness. Necessary directions were instantly given for our support, and perhaps more miserable beings were never seen.

Thus happily ended, through the assistance of Divine Providence, without accident, a voyage of the most extraordinary nature that ever happened in the world, let it be taken either in its extent, duration or so much want of the necessities of life.

The people who came in the boat were:

John Fryer	Master
William Cole	Boatswain
William Peckover	Gunner
William Purcell	Carpenter
Thomas Ledward	Acting-Surgeon
William Elphinstone	Master's Mate
Thomas Hayward	Midshipman
John Hallet	Midshipman
John Samuel	Clerk
Peter Linkletter	Quartermaster
John Norton	Ditto, killed at Tofoa
George Simpson	Quartermaster
Lawrence Lebogue	Sail-maker
Robert Tinkler	Able Seaman
John Smith	Ab.
Thomas Hall	Able Seaman
Robert Lamb	Ab.
David Nelson	Botanist, since dead

Total: 18

The people who remained in the ship were:

Fletcher Christian	Master's mate	
George Stewart	Acting ditto	
Peter Heywood	Midshipman	
Edward Young	Ditto	
Charles Churchill	Corporal	
James Morrison	Boatswain's mate	
John Mills	Gunner's ditto	
Charles Norman	Carpenter's ditto	detained
Thomas M'Intosh	Ditto crew	against their
Joseph Coleman	Armourer	consent
Thomas Burkett	Able seaman	
John Sumner	Ab.	
John Williams	Ab.	
Matthew Thompson	Ab.	
Thomas Ellison	Ab.	
William M'Koy	Ab.	
John Millward	Ab.	
Richard Skinner	Ab.	

Matthew Quintal	Ab.
Michael Byrne	Ab.
Henry Hillbrant	Ab.
Isaac Martin	Ab.
Alexander Smith	Ab.
William Muspratt	Ab.
William Brown	Botanist's assistant

Total:25

The secrecy of this mutiny was beyond all conception, so that I cannot discover that any who were with me had the least knowledge of it; and the comparative lists will show the strength of the pirates.

I found three vessels here bound for Batavia, but as their sailing would be late, I considered it to the advantage of His Majesty's service to purchase a vessel to take my people to Batavia, before the sailing of the fleet for Europe in October, as no one could be hired but at a price equal to a purchase; I therefore gave public notice of my intent, and, assisted by the governor, I got a vessel for 1,000 rix-dollars, and called her the *Resource*.

We have not yet our health perfectly established. Four of my people are still ill, and I had the misfortune to lose Mr. Nelson, the botanist, whose good conduct in the course of the whole voyage, and manly fortitude in our late disastrous circumstances deserve this tribute to his memory.

I have given a summary account of my proceedings to the governor, and have requested, in His Majesty's name, that necessary orders and directions may be given to their different settlements, to detain the ship wherever she may be found.

There is but little chance that their lordships can receive this before I arrive myself; I therefore have not been so particular as I shall be in my letters from Batavia.

I shall sail in the morning without fail, and use my utmost exertions to appear before their lordships and answer personally for the loss of His Majesty's ship.

I beg leave to acquaint their lordships, that the greatest kindness and attention have been shown to us while here by the second governor, Timotheus Wanjon, whose zeal to render services to His Majesty's subjects has been unremitting during the sickness of the governor William Adrian Van Este, who is now at the point of death.

The surgeon of the fort, a Mr. Max, has also been ever attentive to my sick people, and hourly attended them with great care.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

WILLIAM BLIGH

Even the memory of their common sufferings and the joy of their delivery could not reconcile Bligh to his subordinates, and he learnt that some members of his party were gleefully informing the inhabitants that upon their return to England he would be hanged, or, alternatively, blown from a cannon. The obvious absurdity of this did not prevent Bligh from calling the suspected culprits together and taxing them with their crime. Hayward, whom we have seen to have schemed at Otaheite to have the *Bounty's* cable cut, and who has been stated to have begged Christian with tears that he might be allowed to stay with the ship after the mutiny, 'flew into my arms beseeching me that I would not believe he could be possibly guilty of any such infamy and ingratitude, and after shedding a torrent of tears, dared anyone to assert he was guilty of any such baseness, or in the least degree privy to it alleging at the same time that he never, but when he was obliged, had any conversation with any on board, for he beleived [*sic*] they had not good principals [*sic*]. The honour and integrity of this young man made the wretches about him tremble and having gained my good wishes, his grief subsided/ This young gentleman seems to have possessed at least one of the powers later attributed to Job Trotter, and evidently Christian held a more accurate opinion of his character than Bligh, who afterwards spoke highly of Hayward and his sense of duty, without reference to his shortcomings when on watch at Otaheite.

In Batavia the party suffered further losses, Linkletter, Elphinstone, and Hall dying there. Bligh, with John Smith and Samuel, sailed for home on October 1st in a Dutch packet, and landed on the Isle of Wight on the 14th of March, 1790. Those left behind in Batavia followed by other vessels, but Lamb died on the passage, and Ledward was lost with the ship in which he was returning.

Thus of the eighteen men who left the *Bounty* with Bligh, only eleven survived to reach England. The sufferings and casualties sustained by the crew of the launch have often been overlooked in assessments of the rights and wrongs of the mutiny, but they merit the more pity for being undeserved.

Many years later, a visitor found Lebogue drinking his grog at ease and remarked, 'This is better than being in the boat.' 'Oh, damn me, I never think of the boat.' was the reply.

CHAPTER IX

*Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lions den;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou, and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH:
THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET

ON his return home Bligh became a popular hero. An account which he published of the mutiny and his voyage in the launch attracted the sympathy and respect of a maritime nation, and as yet there was no critical tendency manifest in public opinion of his character and conduct. William Wilberforce, for example, in whose circle much of the subsequent hostility to Bligh was to originate, at this time had no doubt as to the cause of the mutiny, Otaheite being, in his view, Calypso's island. Regrettable though the affair might be, there was, however, possible consolation for the reformer, for it instantly occurred to him that Edward Christian, in the distressed condition to which news of his brother's escapade had no doubt reduced him, would be a very susceptible subject for conversion to anti-slavery principles, and he arranged that the unfortunate man should immediately be approached with this object.

At the Royalty Theatre two months after Bligh's arrival there appeared:

THE PIRATES

or the Calamities of Captain Bligh

Exhibiting a full account of his voyage, from his taking leave at the Admiralty, and shewing the Bounty falling down the River Thames.

The Captain's Reception at Otaheite, and exchanging the British Manufactures for the Bread-Fruit trees. With an Otaheitan Dance. The attachment of the Otaheitan Women to, and their distress at parting from, the British Sailors. An exact Representation of the Seizure of Capt. Bligh in the Cabin of the *Bounty*, by the Pirates. With the affecting scene of forcing the Captain and his faithful Followers into the Boat. Their Distress at Sea, and Repulse by the natives of one of the Friendly Islands. Their miraculous Arrival at the Cape of Good Hope, and their friendly Reception by the Governor. Dances and Ceremonies of the Hottentots on their departure. And their happy Arrival in England. Rehearsed under the immediate Instruction of a Person who was on board the *Bounty* Store-Ship.*

Bligh's formal court-martial for the loss of the *Bounty*, by which he was, of course, honourably acquitted, was followed by one in which he charged his old foe, Purcell, the carpenter, with insolence and disobedience during the voyage, and which ended in a reprimand for the accused. This incident appears to discount the claim made on Bligh's behalf, that his anger soon evaporated and was an unfortunate mannerism, carrying no real menace.

At this time the mutiny was not regarded as being in any way due to misconduct on the part of the captain of the *Bounty*, and Sir Joseph Banks was already scheming for his dispatch in charge of a second expedition to transplant the bread-fruit. Official recognition of his merits came when the Admiralty promoted him to the rank of Commander.

But that there were some who did not share in the general opinion may be guessed from a perusal of the following letters. Peter Heywood's relatives were naturally anxious to learn what had happened to him, and application to Bligh brought this reply, to his uncle:

26th March, 1790

Sir,

I have just this instant received your letter. With much concern I inform you that your nephew, Peter Heywood, is among the mutineers. *His ingratitude to me is of the blackest dye*, for I was father to him in every respect, and he never once had an angry word

* *Rough, bold, as Grecian comedy displayed
When Art was young: dramas of living men
And recent things yet warm with life; a sea-fight.
Shipwreck . . .*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: THE PRELUDE

from me through the whole course of the voyage, as his conduct gave me much pleasure and satisfaction. I very much regret *that so much baseness formed the character of a young man* I had a real regard for, and it will give me much pleasure to hear that his friends *can tear the loss of him without much concern.*

I am, Sir, &c.,

(Signed) WM. BLIGH

and to his recently widowed mother:

London, April 2nd, 1790

Madam,

I received your letter this day, and feel for you very much, being perfectly sensible of the extreme distress you must suffer from the conduct of your son Peter. *His baseness is beyond all description*, but I hope you will endeavour to prevent the loss of him, heavy as the misfortune is, from affecting you too severely. I imagine he is, with the rest of the mutineers, returned to Otaheite.

I am, Madam,

(Signed) WM. BLIGH

The italics are those used by Sir John Barrow, Second Secretary to the Admiralty, in his account of the mutiny. When one considers the wide popularity of this book, it is surprising to find Bligh's admirers still representing him as a man of normal character greatly ill-used by fortune, or as a hero of humble birth whose only fault was to have been less well-connected than the aristocratic Fletcher Christian. Apart from the brutality of the letters, they display an egotism and an ignorance of the common feelings of humanity which markedly distinguish their author from his fellow-men. The views expressed, moreover, are not consistent with this entry in Bligh's manuscript journal: 'As for the officers, whose cabins were in the cockpit, there was no relief for them; they endeavoured to come to my assistance but were not allowed to put their heads above the hatchway.' Bligh's suppression of this passage, in Barrow's opinion, appeared to be 'a deliberate act of malice, by which two innocent men might have been condemned to suffer an ignominious death, one of whom was actually brought in this predicament; the other only escaped it by a premature death*.

Banks was successful in manipulating his influence, so that Bligh was appointed to the command of the *Providence*, and sailed on his second bread-fruit voyage in August, 1791.

He had always maintained that one of the main causes of the success of the mutiny on the *Bounty* was the absence of a force

of marines, and on this voyage he was allowed an establishment consisting of a lieutenant, a sergeant, 2 corporals, 15 privates, and a drummer. There may have been some comment on the choice of the *Bethia* for the previous expedition, for the ship selected on this occasion was a newly-built West-Indiaman.

In the meantime a frigate, the *Pandora*, of 24 guns, had been dispatched in search of the mutineers with orders to Captain Edwards, her commander, to proceed first to Otaheite, and then to the neighbouring islands, and to bring back such members of the *Bounty's* crew as could be found.

Edwards appears to have been such a man as Bligh himself would have chosen for the task, and Sir John Barrow seems to have been conscious of this affinity when he wrote complacently that 'the conduct of neither of them has been spared, whenever an occasion has presented itself for bringing their names before the public'.

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After turning the launch adrift the mutineers had unanimously appointed Christian as their captain. This would seem an unenviable post, as the task would clearly be no easy one to establish and maintain authority among a body of men, who had released themselves from the bonds of discipline by such drastic means as those which had just been employed on the *Bounty*. Christian, however, appears to have secured order and respect under these difficult conditions.

After throwing overboard the bread-fruit trees, no doubt joyously, and dividing among themselves such property of those in the launch as had been left on the ship, the mutineers headed for Tubai, about 300 miles south of Otaheite. Here they had planned to establish a colony, but within a week of arrival it was found that it would be necessary to visit Otaheite to procure livestock which they lacked.

Much has been written of the attachments formed between the crew of the *Bounty* (Christian in particular) and the ladies of Otaheite as providing the main cause of the mutiny, this being Bligh's own view, but it is thus shown that the mutineers returned to that island only after they had attempted to establish themselves elsewhere.

Arriving in Otaheite in June, they were asked somewhat embarrassing questions about the whereabouts of Bligh and the bread-fruit trees, but their reply was such as would not only allay

suspicion, but induce their interrogators enthusiastically to further their plans. They had met, the mutineers claimed, with Captain Cook at a nearby island, Whytootakee, which he had just discovered, and where he was founding a settlement. Bligh, they added, had stayed there to assist his former Commander, who had put Christian in charge of the *Bounty* with instructions to collect goats, hogs, fowl, and other requisites from Otaheite. These were willingly supplied by the natives, delighted to find that their old friend was making his home so near at hand, and the *Bounty* returned with her cargo to Tubai.

Christian immediately set about the construction of a fort, but the behaviour of the worse elements among the mutineers soon made it apparent that no permanent settlement could be made there. Violent and high-handed actions by these ruffians brought on disputes with the natives, in which Christian took the part of the latter, and after some bloodshed it was decided by a vote of sixteen to abandon Tubai and return yet again to Otaheite.

Christian then addressed his companions: 'Gentlemen, I will carry you and land you wherever you please: I desire no one to stay with me, but I have one favour to request, that you will grant me the ship, tie the foresail, and give me a few gallons of water, and leave me to run before the wind, and I shall land upon the first island the ship drives to. I have done such an act that I cannot stay at Otaheite. I will never live where I may be carried home to be a disgrace to my family.' Young and seven others then declared, 'We shall never leave you, Mr. Christian, go where you will.'

Sixteen men were accordingly put ashore at Otaheite, after dividing the *Bounty's* resources, while the other nine sailed away on the 21st of September, 1789, with seven native men and twelve women. Nothing was known of their destination except that Christian had announced that he would form a colony on some hitherto undiscovered island.

Before leaving he advised the two midshipmen, Peter Heywood and Stewart, to take the first opportunity of joining any naval vessel they should see, and told them that he alone was responsible for the mutiny.

On the morning of the next day the *Bounty* was seen for the last time by those on shore. On board her were:

Fletcher Christian	Master's mate
Edward Young	Midshipman

John Mills	Gunner's mate
William Brown	Botanist's assistant
John Williams	A.B.
Isaac Martin	A.B.
Matthew Quintal	A.B.
William M'Coy	A.B.
Alexander Smith	A.B.

Of those left at Otaheite, a party formed round Morrison, and began the construction of a schooner with which they hoped to reach the Dutch East Indies. Not very much larger than Bligh's launch, but decked, this vessel proved to be very fast and many years later was renowned for the speed of her passages.

With this schooner a start was made for the East Indies by a party of six, but they decided to return to Otaheite, either on account of some distrust of Morrison's powers of navigation, or because of a shortage of provisions.

Many of those left on the island remained independent of Morrison, and, if they wished to return to England, were at any rate content to wait until a vessel reached Otaheite in search of them, which event was regarded as almost certain, whether or not Bligh had performed the unlikely feat of reaching civilisation. About this time Churchill was murdered by his companion Thompson, who in turn was killed by native friends of his victim.

Thus of twenty-five men remaining on the *Bounty* after putting Bligh and his companions adrift, nine had disappeared with the ship, two had been killed, and fourteen were living at Otaheite, namely:

Peter Heywood	Midshipman
George Stewart	Midshipman
James Morrison	Boatswain's mate
Charles Norman	Carpenter's mate
Thomas M'Intosh	Carpenter's crew
Joseph Coleman	Armourer
Richard Skinner	A.B.
Thomas Ellison	A.B.
Henry Hillbrant	A.B.
Thomas Burkett	A.B.
John Millward	A.B.
John Sumner	A.B.
William Muspratt	A.B.
Michael Byrn	A.B.

On the 23rd March, 1791, the *Pandora* arrived at Otaheite, and Coleman was the first to board her, followed by Stewart and Peter Heywood. They were brought to Captain Edwards, who later described the meeting: * I asked "What news?" and Mr. Heywood said he supposed I had heard of the affair concerning the *Bounty*. I cannot recollect all the conversation, but he inquired if Mr. Hayward was on board. I said he was; he desired to see him, and I desired Mr. Hayward to come out of my state room. Mr. Hayward came, and gave them a contemptuous look, and began to enter into a conversation concerning the *Bounty*. I called people to take the prisoners; some words passed, and Heywood said he would be able to vindicate his conduct/

Ellison, Morrison, Norman, and Byrn appeared next, and also were put in irons, while the remaining seven were secured by the *Pandoras* lieutenants, without making any resistance.

A missionary later described Stewart's arrest and its consequences:

The history of Peggy Stewart marks a tenderness of heart that never will be heard without emotion: she was the daughter of a chief, and taken for his wife by Mr. Stewart, one of the unhappy mutineers. They had lived with the old chief in the most tender state of endearment: a beautiful little girl had been the fruit of their union, and was at the breast when the *Pandora* arrived, seized the criminals, and secured them in irons on board the ship. Frantic with grief, the unhappy Peggy (for so he had named her) flew with her infant in a canoe to the arms of her husband. The interview was so affecting and afflicting that the officers on board were overwhelmed with anguish, and Stewart himself, unable to bear the heart-rending scene, begged she might not be admitted again on board. She was separated from him by violence, and conveyed on shore in a state of despair and grief too big for utterance. Withheld from him, and forbidden to come any more on board, she sunk into the deepest dejection: it preyed on her vitals; she lost all relish for food and life, rejoiced no more, pined under a rapid decay of two months, and fell a victim to her feelings, dying literally of a broken heart. Her child is yet alive, and the tender object of our care, having been brought up by a sister, who nursed it as her own, and has discharged all the duties of an affectionate mother to the orphan infant.

The seriousness of the crime of mutiny had always been held to justify placing those guilty of it in irons, so as to limit their communication with others who might be corrupted, as well as in

order to make escape more difficult. In this case, however, it was considered that Edwards should have acted with discrimination. Some of the prisoners had, in fact, already been acquitted by Bligh of any share in the mutiny; others might be able to prove that they had been kept on board the *Bounty* by force; many had given themselves up voluntarily; and none had offered to resist arrest. Nevertheless, Edwards applied the strictest interpretation to his orders, which ran: 'You are to keep the mutineers as closely confined as may preclude all possibility of their escaping, having, however, proper regard to the preservation of their lives, that they may be brought home, to undergo the punishment due to their demerits.*

Their prison was a round-house, eleven feet long, which had been built by his orders on the after part of the quarter-deck, the only entry to it being through an eighteen-inch scuttle in the roof. This contrivance was known as 'Pandora's Box'.

In May, 1791, the *Pandora* left Otaheite with her prisoners in quest of the remainder of the mutineers, and after three months* vain search, reached the neighbourhood of the coast of Australia. Here, in trying to penetrate the Barrier Reef, she met with disaster.

On getting soundings the topsails were filled; but before the tacks were hauled on board and other sail made and trimmed, the ship struck upon a reef; the sails were braced about different ways to endeavour to get her off, but to no purpose ... the ship struck so violently on the reef, that the carpenter reported that she made eighteen inches of water in five minutes, and in five minutes after this, that there were four feet of water in the hold. Finding the leak increasing so fast, it was thought necessary to turn the hands to the pumps, and to bail at the different hatchways; but she still continued to gain upon us so fast, that in little more than an hour and a half after she struck, there were eight feet and a half of water in the hold. About ten we perceived that the ship had beaten over the reef, and was in ten fathoms of water: we therefore let go the small bower anchor in fifteen and a half fathoms water under foot, to steady the ship. Some of her guns were thrown overboard, and the water gained upon us only in a small degree, and we flattered ourselves that by the assistance of a thrummed topsail, which we were preparing to haul under the ship's bottom, we might be able to lessen the leak and to free her of water: but these flattering hopes did not continue long; for, as she settled in the water, the leak increased again, and in so great a degree that there was reason to apprehend she would sink before daylight... there were strong indications that the ship

was on the very point of sinking, and we began to leap overboard and take to the boats, and before everybody could get out of her she actually sunk.

Three of the prisoners, Coleman, Norman, and M'Intosh (specified by Bligh as having been kept in the *Bounty* against their will) had been released to work at the pumps, but Edwards took no steps to free the others and actually abandoned the ship leaving them fettered in their prison. Other members of the crew of the *Pandora* did not share their captain's inhumanity, and seven more of the prisoners were released as the ship sank, taking with her Stewart, Sumner, Hillbrant, and Skinner, still in their manacles.

The others were picked up by the *Pandora's* boats and distributed among them when a start was made for Timor, over a thousand miles away. After a voyage of terrible hardship, they arrived at Coupang, where Bligh had landed two years previously, and met with the same hospitality from the inhabitants.

During their stay here, a party of convicts, male and female, arrived in an open boat from New South Wales, but they had performed this remarkable voyage only to be arrested by Edwards in order to take them to England for trial. After a period of recuperation, the whole party set out for Europe, the prisoners being still treated with the greatest harshness. Sailing in a Dutch East Indiaman, Edwards found H.M.S. *Gorgon* at the Cape, and transferred himself and his charges to her. She sailed for home, and arrived at Spithead in June, 1792.

Here the prisoners' fortune at last took a turn for the better, for they were handed over to the custody of Captain Sir George Montague, a man of very different character to Edwards, and on board his ship, the *Hector*, they awaited their court-martial.

But nothing was known of the fate of Christian and his eight comrades after they had last sailed from Otaheite in the *Bounty*.

CHAPTER X

*The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,
The Judges are ranged—a terrible show!*

JOHN GAY: THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

If you prove a mutineer—the next tree!—SHAKESPEARE:

THE TEMPEST

THE court-martial of the mutineers took place on board the *Duke* at Portsmouth, starting on the 12th of August, 1792, and finishing on the 18th of the same month. The Court consisted of a President, Vice-Admiral Lord Hood, and eleven captains.

The charge was 'Mutiny on the 28th April, 1789, on board His Majesty's ship *Bounty*, for running away with the ship and deserting His Majesty's Service', against:

Peter Heywood	Midshipman
James Morrison	Boatswain's mate
Charles Norman	Carpenter's mate
Joseph Coleman	Armourer
Thomas Ellison	A.B.
Thomas M'Intosh	A.B.
Thomas Burkett	A.B.
John Millward	A.B.
Michael Byrn	A.B.
William Muspratt	A.B.

As Bligh was engaged in his second attempt to transplant the bread-fruit, his evidence took the form of his report to the Admiralty from Timor, together with an extract from his journal.

The principal witnesses were:

John Fryer	Master
William Cole	Boatswain
William Peckover	Gunner

WUliam Pttrcfll	Carpenter
Thomas Hayward	Midshipman
John Hallet	Midshipman

Evidence of arrest was given by Captain Edwards and two of his lieutenants from the *Pandora*.

The only question under consideration was that of fact: whether the prisoners had actually taken part in the mutiny; and so no evidence of its causes was relevant. The law recognised no degree of guilt, and the only penalty which could be awarded was that of death.

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Norman, Coleman, and M'Intosh were acquitted, as was inevitable in view of Bligh's statement that they were detained on the ship against their will. By implication, it would seem, he was of the opinion that all the others who remained in the ship were mutineers, although it was revealed in evidence that he believed Byrn, the fiddler, to be innocent. Byrn's blindness would have made him a definite handicap to the party in the launch if he had joined them, and he himself had been rightly apprehensive of his fate under the trying conditions which he saw to await them. The Court took the obvious course and acquitted him.

Burkett, Ellison, and Millward were shown by most of those who gave evidence to have taken part in the mutiny, bearing arms, and were condemned, as also was Muspratt, on the testimony of fewer, but positive, witnesses.

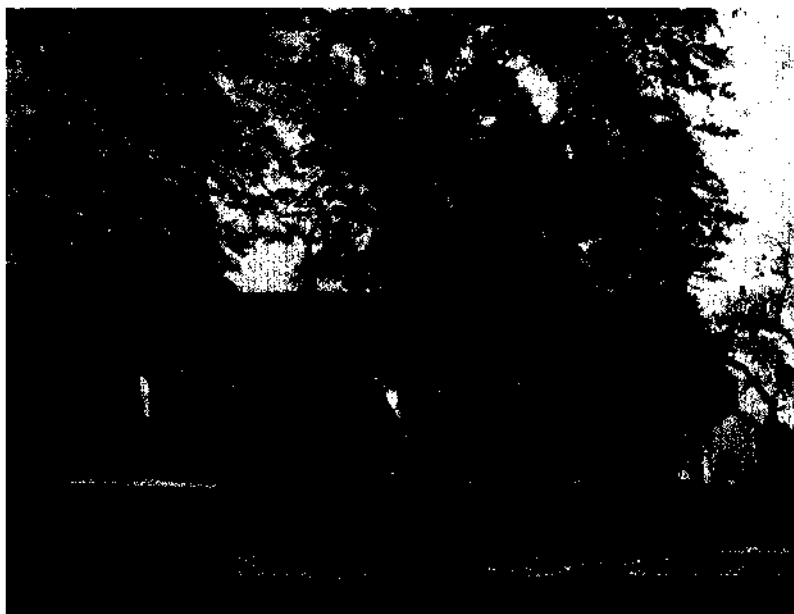
There was a very strong case against Morrison, to some degree offset by his having at the time of the mutiny made a witness take note of his statement that he was prevented from leaving the ship. Here the Court had a difficult question to decide, and solved it by condemning him, but adding a recommendation to mercy.

We come now to the case of Peter Heywood, which has aroused more interest than that of any other of the accused. There was already a reaction of public opinion against Bligh, and it appears to have been concentrated in a movement in favour of the midshipman. The brutality of Bligh's letters to Heywood's mother and uncle doubtless had its share in arousing this feeling, and combined with the youth of the prisoner in creating a wave of sympathy which must have had its effect on the Court.

The testimony in favour of Peter Heywood was mostly negative, from men who had seen no reason to consider him to be one



Moorland Close as it was fifty years ago



Moorland Close today

of the mutineers, but who could offer no definite evidence of his innocence. On the other hand, Hayward and Hallet, the two midshipmen, were positive in their testimony against him, and the Court condemned him, but joined his name to that of Morrison in their recommendation to His Majesty's mercy.

It appears that the Court made every endeavour to ascertain the true answer to the question, the only one with which it was concerned; whether the accused had actually taken part in the mutiny and remained voluntarily in the ship. Its task was the more difficult as the overloading of the launch provided a legitimate reason for a loyal seaman to stay with the *Bounty*. Out of the ten accused the issue was clear in eight cases; with regard to the other two, in view of the fact that the death sentence was the only one which could be passed, they took what appears to have been the sole course possible on the evidence as it was given to them.

There is one decision by the Court at which criticism has been directed, both at the time and subsequently, and that is the absence of a recommendation to mercy in the case of Ellison, as compared to Peter Heywood. Both were youths of much the same age, and it has been suggested that the Court condemned the one and advocated mercy for the other under the influence of the superior social standing of the midshipman. But it was not only the youth of Heywood that was responsible for the recommendation to mercy, and in any case this consideration would have little effect upon a court of eighteenth-century naval officers, most of whom had probably been at sea for a number of years before reaching the ages of Heywood and Ellison at the time of the mutiny. With regard to the accusation of class interest, it has been overlooked that Peter Heywood was condemned, as far as one can judge, entirely upon the evidence of his social equals, the two midshipmen, Hayward and Hallet. There is, however, one good reason for the discrepancy between the two sentences, and that is the certainty of Ellison's participation in the mutiny as opposed to the doubt in the case of Heywood.

Much has been made of a romantic journey undertaken by Nessie Heywood to secure her brother's pardon. The anxiety of his family, while natural and understandable, was unjustified, as his legal advisor, Graham, wrote to them immediately after the verdict: 'That any unnecessary fears may not be productive of misery to the family, I must add, that the king's attorney-general

(who with Judge Ashurst attended the trial) desired me to make myself perfectly easy, for that my friend was as safe as if he had not been condemned.'

Both of the recommendations to mercy were, of course, successful, and a respite was granted to Muspratt, who had appealed on a point of law and was eventually discharged. He had been defended by a skilful lawyer, Stephen Barney, who was later to publish his version of the Minutes of the trial.

The other condemned men, Ellison, Burkett, and Millward, were executed on board the *Brunswick* in Portsmouth Harbour in the following month, and her captain reported that 'A party from each ship in the harbour, and at Spithead, attended the execution, and from the reports I have received, the example seems to have made a great impression upon the minds of all the ships' companies present'.

Millward is reported to have addressed those present thus: 'Brother Seamen, you see before you three lusty young fellows about to suffer a shameful death for the dreadful crime of mutiny and desertion. Take warning by our example never to desert your officers, and should they behave ill to you, remember *it* is not their cause: it is the cause of your country you are bound to support.'

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Of the forty-six men who had sailed from England on the *Bounty*, two, Valentine and Huggan, had died before she left Otaheite, so that there were forty-four men on board her at the time of the mutiny. Of these nineteen were set adrift in the launch, of whom Norton was killed by the natives of Tofoa; Nelson, Linkletter, Elphinstone, and Hall died in the East Indies; Lamb died and Ledward was lost on their passage home; a total of seven casualties in Bligh's party, so that twelve reached England safely. They were Bligh himself, Fryer, Cole, Peckover, Purcell, Hayward, Hallet, Samuel, Simpson, Lebogue, Tinkler, and John Smith.

Of the twenty-five men who stayed in the ship, sixteen settled at Otaheite. Here Churchill was killed by Thompson, and Thompson by the natives, so that there were fourteen of the *Bounty's* men on the island when the *Pandora* arrived, who were all arrested and imprisoned in her. Four were drowned in her when she was lost off the Australian coast, Stewart, Hillbrant, Sumner, and Skinner; so that only ten arrived home for trial.

Of these four were acquitted, Norman, M'Intosh, Coleman, and Byrn; three were condemned and executed, Burkett, Ellison, and Millward; two were condemned and pardoned, Peter Heywood and Morrison; while Muspratt was condemned and discharged upon a point of law.

Thus all of the original forty-six are accounted for except the party of nine—Christian, Young, Mills, Alexander Smith, Brown, Martin, Williams, Quintal, and M'Coy—who had last been seen sailing away from Otaheite in the *Bounty*.

CHAPTER XI

/ breakfasted with Lysons. He says Captn. Bligh is fully prepared to answer any reflexions on his conduct which may be published by the friends of Christian, and wishes it may come to that issue.—
JOSEPH FARINGTON'S DIARY

LORD HOOD, who had presided at his court-martial, advised Heywood to continue his career in the navy, offering to take him as midshipman in his own *Victory*[^] and the condemned mutineer of the *Bounty* did in fact serve under some of the captains who had tried him.

In 1793 Bligh returned in the *Providence*, having this time successfully transported the bread-fruit to the West Indies, for which the Jamaicans voted him a thousand guineas. The experiment proved a failure, however, the colonials finding the taste insipid. Bligh had evidently behaved with more discretion than on his previous voyage, for he was cheered when the *Providence* paid off in September.

He was soon made aware of the change in public opinion which had taken place during his absence. His reception at the Admiralty was cool, and he complained to Sir Joseph Banks that he found the Earl of Chatham's conduct 'unaccountable'. But William Pitt, Chatham's brother, was on terms of intimate friendship with Wilberforce, whose views on the slavery question would not dispose him to regard Bligh's connections in a favourable light, and who, as a frequent visitor to Rayrigg, the home of the Fletcher-Flemings, was well acquainted with Christian's Cumbrian supporters. Wilberforce, too, like Edward Christian, was a St. John's man, and it was among those connected with that College that the movement against Bligh found its principal supporters.

St. John's, Cambridge, the 'Tory College in the Whig University', had early become prominent in the anti-slavery movement. In 1785 the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Dr. Peckard, had

set as a subject for the Latin essay, '*Anne liceat invitos in servitutem dare?*' 'Is it right to make men slaves against their will?' The prize was won by Thomas Clarkson, whose name will always be associated with that of Wilberforce in the history of the abolition of slavery. To the sympathies of such a body Bligh and his connection with Duncan Campbell would make little appeal.

Intimate with Wilberforce at St. John's were Dr. Frewen and Canon Cookson, Rector of Fornsett, friends of Edward Christian, and active in his support. Mr. Cookson, as a Canon of Windsor, brought much weight to the cause, as Preceptor to the King's sons, and known to be high in royal favour. But Dr. Fisher, another Canon of Windsor, Rector of Nether Stowey, and a very close friend of Christian's relations, the Laws, was possessed of even greater influence with the King, which, according to Mrs. Piozzi, had led to his being nicknamed the 'King's Fisher'. Other St. John's men, including the Rev. Mr. Antrobus, a Cockermouth man, Chaplain to the Bishop of London, made common cause with Edward Christian in the defence of his brother. Neighbours and friends of the Christians joined him, Gilpins, Loshes, Atkinsons, and Canon Cookson's relative, Captain John Wordsworth. Any case of apparent injustice would arouse the sympathy of Samuel Romilly, the famous law reformer, in close friendship with Edward Christian, Wilberforce, and the rising lawyer, Spencer Perceval.

When, in addition, one considers the family connections of Fletcher Christian, such as those with the popular Sir Henry Fletcher, and Edward Law, son of the Bishop of Carlisle, who had defended Warren Hastings at his trial, and their East India Company interest; with the aristocratic Sir Frederick Fletcher-Vane, and with the influential Whig politician Christian Curwen (late John Christian), it is clear that the forces arrayed against Bligh were sufficiently powerful to give him, and his patron, Sir Joseph, occasion for serious thought.

The range of political opinion represented by Christian's supporters was such as to convince the bystander that their cause was not that of any particular party. A Tory who feared condoning revolt against authority would be consoled by the implication of royal approval, and a Whig would forget other connections of Fletcher Christian in contemplation of his relationship with Curwen. The friends of Christian were thus in the strong position of being able to claim the sympathy of Englishmen of all

shades of opinion in a case of brutal abuse of authority by an officer of the Crown, and would obviously not lack popular support,

A public attack on Bligh was launched by Edward Christian in 1794, and took the form of a book, now of extreme rarity, with the following title-page:

MINUTES
of the
PROCEEDINGS
of the
COURT MARTIAL held at PORTSMOUTH
12th August 1792
on
TEN PERSONS charged with MUTINY on board
His Majesty's Ship the BOUNTY
with an
APPENDIX
containing

A full account of the real Causes and Circumstances of that
unhappy transaction, the most material of which have hitherto
been withheld from the Public

by
Stephen Barney
LONDON

Printed for J. DEIGHTON, opposite GRAY'S-INN, HOLBORN
MDCCXCIV

After a report of the court-martial, which agrees closely with the official Minutes preserved by the Admiralty, there follows:

The Appendix
To Stephen Barney, Esq. Portsmouth
Gray's Inn Square,
15 May 1794

Sir,

I assure you that I regard the Publication of your minutes of the court-martial as a very great favour done to myself, and I am the more sensible of the obligation from being convinced that they were not originally taken with an intent to publish. But they appear to be so full and satisfactory, that from your further kindness in permitting the extraordinary information which I have collected to be annexed as an appendix, the public, I trust, will at length be possessed of a complete knowledge of the real causes and circumstances of that most melancholy event, the Mutiny on board the

Bounty. It is unnecessary for me to add that I alone am responsible for the authenticity, or rather accuracy, of the information contained in the Appendix, as far at least as it has been obtained by me in the manner and from the persons described therein.

I have the honour to be, sir,

Your most obedient and obliged servant,

EDWARD CHRISTIAN

After disclaiming any wish to justify the crime of mutiny, Edward Christian, as the author of the Appendix, states his intention of revealing facts without invective or reproach.

It will naturally be asked, from whom and how have these facts been collected, and why have they been so long suppressed? It may be answered that the writer of this Appendix, with the other relations of the mutineers, entertained no distrust of the narratives published to the world, or the accounts which they received in private; and as they came from those whose sufferings had unquestionably been extreme and preservation almost miraculous, and thus carrying with them the stamp of even greater authenticity than the solemn declarations of a death-bed, they precluded all suspicion and inquiries among those who were most concerned in the horrid representation. Their lips were closed, they mourned in silence, and shuddering at the most distant allusions to this melancholy subject, they were of all persons the least likely to discover the real truth of the transaction.

Edward Christian then goes on to point out that 'all the circumstances stated here could not be produced at the trial, as the Court confined the witnesses as much as possible to the question "Who were actually engaged in the mutiny?"' but adds that nevertheless the evidence as given tends to support the facts he brings forward. These facts, he claims, have been collected from the following, in the presence of responsible witnesses:

Mr. Fryer	Master of the <i>Bounty</i>
Mr. Hayward	Midshipman
Mr. Peckover	Gunner
Mr. Purcell	Carpenter
John Smith	Cook
Lawrence Lebogue	Sailmaker

who all returned in the boat with Captain Bligh: and from

Joseph Coleman	Armourer
Thomas M'Intosh	Carpenter's Mate
Michael Byrn	Seaman

who were three of the four who were tried and honourably acquitted, with Captain Bligh's testimony in their favour; from Mr. Heywood, midshipman, who had received His Majesty's pardon; and from William Muspratt, discharged by the opinion of the judges in his favour upon a point of evidence. 'The writer of this has received letters also upon the subject from James Morrison; the boatswain's mate, who was pardoned. Mr. Heywood is now serving again as midshipman, under Lord Howe in the *Queen Charlotte*, and is much respected by all who know him, and Morrison and Muspratt are also employed again in the King's service.'

Then follow the names of the witnesses to these statements:

John Farhill, Esq., No. 38 Mortimer Street.

Samuel Romilly, Esq., Lincoln's Inn.

Mr. Gilpin, No. 432, Strand.

The Rev. Dr. Fisher, Canon of Windsor.

The Rev. Mr. Cookson, Canon of Windsor.

Captain Wordsworth of the Abergavenny East Indiaman.

The Rev. Mr. Antrobus, Chaplain to the Bishop of London.

John France, Esq., Temple.

John Losh, Esq., Temple.

Rev. Dr. Frewen, Colchester.

John Atkinson, Esq., *Somerset Herald*.

Each of these gentlemen has heard the declaration of one at the least of the persons before mentioned; some have had an interview with five or six of them at different times. . . .

Such was the framework of the document. In it Edward Christian puts forward the charges which have been made against Bligh to this day. His abuse, tyranny, threats, interference with the rations, are all specified, coupled with testimony to Fletcher Christian's popularity, competence, and good behaviour, and ends with the reflection 'that a young man is condemned to perpetual infamy, who, if he had served on board any other ship, or had perhaps been absent from the *Bounty* a single day, or one ill-fated hour, might still have been an honour to his country and a glory and comfort to his friends'.

To informed opinion the conjunction of the names of Canon Fisher and Samuel Romilly, in the list of names of the witnesses to the making of the charges against Bligh, must have given some amusement. Fisher, friend of the King, was a devout Tory and High Churchman, while Romilly had gone so far in the opposite

direction as to send the French States General, for their guidance, a summary of the procedure of the House of Commons, which does not, however, appear to have been given much attention by its recipients.

Edward Christian's defence of his brother was soon followed by a reply from Bligh, which also is among the rarities of the book market:

AN
ANSWER
TO
CERTAIN ASSERTIONS
contained in
THE APPENDIX TO A PAMPHLET
entitled
Minutes of the Proceedings of the Court Martial held at
Portsmouth, 12th August 1792, on Ten Persons charged
with Mutiny on Board his Majesty's Ship the *Bounty*
BY CAPTAIN WILLIAM BLIGH
LONDON
Printed for G. Nicol, Bookseller to his Majesty,
Pali-Mall
1794

The text begins:

It is with no small degree of regret that I find myself under the necessity of obtruding my private concerns on the public. A pamphlet has appeared under the title of *Minutes of the Proceedings on the Court Martial held at Portsmouth, 12th August, 1792, on Ten Persons charged with Mutiny on Board His Majesty's ship the Bounty: with an Appendix containing a full Account of the real causes, etc. etc.* This Appendix is the work of Mr. Edward Christian, the brother of Fletcher Christian, who headed the Mutineers of the *Bounty*, written apparently for the purpose of vindicating his brother's conduct at my expense.

The respect I owe to that public in whose service I have spent my life, as well as regard to my character, compel me to reply to such parts of Mr. Christian's Appendix as might, if unnoticed, obtain credit to my prejudice.

Of the minutes of the court martial thus published, it is necessary to observe that they differ from the minutes lodged in the Admiralty Office, and in some places materially. One instance of this will appear among the proofs which are here submitted to the public.

The information which furnished Mr. Edward Christian with materials for his appendix, he states to 'have been collected from many interviews and conversations in the presence and hearing of several respectable gentlemen.' He then mentions the names of all the persons with whom these conversations were held, without distinguishing the particular information given by any individual.

The mixing together the names of men whose assertions merit very different degrees of credit, and blending their evidence into one mass, is liable to two objections: firstly, the impossibility of tracing the author of any particular assertion; and secondly, the danger, which to a reader is unavoidable, of supposing that the statements made by those who were actually accomplices in the mutiny, came from men of respectable character with whom he has thus associated them.

One of the hardest cases which can befall any man is to be reduced to the necessity of defending his character by his own assertions only. As such, fortunately, is not my situation, I have rested my defence on the testimony of others, adding only such of the written orders issued by me in the course of the voyage as are connected with the matter in question; which orders being issued publicly in writing, may be offered as evidence of unquestionable credit.

These testimonies, without further remark from me, I trust will be sufficient to do away any impression which the public may have imbibed from reading Mr. Edward Christian's defence of his brother.

This is very reasonable, so much so that one authority, Mr. Owen Rutter, a good judge of character, has thereby been moved to speculate as to the possibility of Bligh having had a collaborator. It may be, of course, that he was overawed by the importance of Edward Christian's supporters.

After this preface followed:

List of Proofs

- I Orders issued upon our arrival at Otaheite, to regulate our intercourse with the natives—25th October, 1788.
- II Orders respecting the confinement of three men who had deserted from the ship—24th January, 1789.
- III Letter from the deserters before mentioned—26th January, 1789.
- IV Examination respecting the loss of His Majesty's ship the *Bounty* by the High Court of Judicature at Batavia—13th October, 1789.
- V Descriptive list of the Mutineers—28th April, 1789.

- VI Orders given to Mr. John Fryer, the master, on leaving him at Batavia—14th October, 1789.
- VII Letter from Mr. Peter Heywood, midshipman, to Mrs. Bligh—14th July, 1792.
- VIII Extract from Mr. Peter Heywood's defence, on his trial by a court-martial, held 14th August, 1792 at Portsmouth.
- IX Letter from Mr. Peter Heywood to Mr. Edward Christian published in the *Cumberland Packet and Whitehaven Advertiser* 10th November, 1792.
- X Letter published in *The Times*, 16th July, 1794, from Mr. Edward Harwood, late surgeon of His Majesty's ship *Providence*.
- XI Affidavit of Joseph Coleman—31st July, 1794.
- XII Affidavit of John Smith—1st August, 1794.
- XIII Affidavit of Lawrence Lebogue—2nd August, 1794.
- XIV Letter from Lieutenant Hallet—1st August, 1794.
- XV Letter from Mr. Edward Lamb, commander of the *Adventure*, in the Jamaica trade—28th October, 1794.

Much of the matter contained in this list is obviously utterly irrelevant to the charges brought against its compiler by Edward Christian, but some information of other interest may be extracted. For instance, among the descriptions of the mutineers we find:

Fletcher Christian, master's mate, aged twenty-four years, five feet nine inches high, blackish or very dark brown complexion, dark brown hair, strong made, a star tattooed on his left breast, tattooed on his backside; his knees stand a little out, and he may be called a little bow-legged. He is subject to violent perspirations, and particularly in his hands, so that he soils anything he handles.

And of another mutineer, whose importance in the story is not yet manifest:

Alexander Smith, seaman, aged twenty-five years, five feet five inches high, brown complexion, brown hair, strong made; very much pitted with the small-pox, and very much tattooed on his body, legs, arms, and feet. He has a scar on his right foot, where it has been cut with a wood axe.

Nos. VII and VIII, letters in which Heywood speaks of his respect and gratitude towards Bligh, are intended to throw into relief No. IX, in which he wrote, rejoicing in his pardon, to Edward Christian:

Your brother was not that vile wretch void of all gratitude,

which the world had the unkindness to think him: but, on the contrary, a most worthy character ruined only by having the misfortune, if it can be so called, of being a young man of strict honour, and adorned with every virtue, and beloved by all (except one whose ill report is his greatest praise) who had the pleasure of his acquaintance.

It is difficult to find a reason for the inclusion of the item No. X. It is a letter of praise for Bligh and abuse of Christian, without a single fact of interest. In contrast to Bligh's preface, it has a hysterical tone which must have done his case more harm than good. There is a Dickensian flavour, as of Serjeant Buzfuz or Dick Swiveller, about the phraseology, 'A crime, at the bare recital of which humanity shudders', and 'The shafts of envy are ever levelled against conspicuous merit, but they recoil with redoubled force on the impotent adversary'.

The next four items are denials of individual responsibility for any of the statements quoted by Edward Christian in the Appendix. Owing to the peculiar arrangement of the latter, however, such denials are useless unless made by all the witnesses cited.

The last item is a letter from a former shipmate of Bligh and Christian in the *Britannic*. It has a laboured tone, lacking conviction, and gives to one reader, at least, the impression of having been written to order. Its purpose is to show that Christian received the kindest possible treatment from Bligh, and that he showed no signs of profiting or of wishing to profit from the professional instruction which he received from his commander.

Bligh concludes:

I submit these evidences to the judgment of the public without offering any comment. My only intention in this publication is to clear my character from the effect of censures which I am conscious I have not merited. I have therefore avoided troubling the public with more than what is necessary to that end, and have refrained from remark lest I might have been led beyond my purpose, which I have wished to limit solely to defence.

WILLIAM BLIGH

3rd December, 1794

So the pamphlets were exchanged, and the long argument started which has lasted to the present day without sign of abating.

The honours of war rest, I think, with Edward Christian. He certainly made his brother's case no worse, and at the same time produced a mass of evidence of Bligh's unfitness for command.

His opponent, on the other hand, fails to improve his own position or to do any material damage to that of Christian, while the irrelevance of so much of his material must have aroused doubts as to the justice of his cause.

Possibly as a result of the controversy and the unpopularity of Bligh, a project was abandoned of publishing an account of his second and successful attempt to transplant the bread-fruit tree.

• • • • •

Here the matter was allowed to rest, and not only did Edward Christian and his associates leave Bligh's retort unanswered but they never, so far as I can trace, made any subsequent reference to the *Bounty* or to their own connection with their publication.

CHAPTER XII

*But as it is! . . . My language fails!
Go out and govern New South Wales!*

HILAIRE BELLOC:

CAUTIONARY TALES FOR CHILDREN

IN the meantime Heywood was serving with distinction as a midshipman, and the question of his legal ability to hold a commission was discussed. He had undoubtedly been condemned as a mutineer, and this was held by some to be a permanent disqualification, a view which Bligh appears to have fostered. Joseph Farington recorded in his diary that 'the attacks on his [Bligh's] character are partly imputed to Heywood and his connexions, as at present that young man though pardoned cannot have any promotion. I understand Captn. Bligh is the only person that can contribute to remove the obstacle, which the behaviour of Heywood will prevent him doing.'

Eventually it was suggested that as there was only one penalty for mutiny, death, and his condemnation to this fate had been revoked by subsequent pardon, the record of his offence was thereby expunged. This piece of reasoning was considered to meet the case, as doubtless it would on *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and Heywood was commissioned in 1795.

Interest in the *Bounty* began to lessen with the passage of time and the absence of further information, but there was still some curiosity as to the fate of Fletcher Christian and his party, and in 1796 an opportunist, probably availing himself of rumours that the mutineer had returned to civilisation, attempted to take advantage of this by publishing *Letters from Mr. Fletcher Christian*, followed in 1798 by '*Voyages and Travels of Fletcher Christian*, and a Narrative of the Mutiny on Board His Majesty's Ship *Bounty* at Otaheite. With a succinct account of the proceedings of the Mutineers, with a description of the Manners, Customs,

Religious Ceremonies, Diversions, Fashions, Arts, Commerce, Method of Fighting, the Breadfruit and every interesting particular relating to the Society Islands: also his shipwreck on the Coast of America, and travels in that extensive Country: with a history of the Gold-Mines and general account of the possessions of the Spaniards in Chili, Peru, Mexico, &c.'

A short examination shows them to be forgeries, as they have always been regarded by the authorities. The writer, purporting to be Christian, opens with an apology for the mutiny, and then gives an account of subsequent happenings, culminating in a visit to South America, which bears a strong resemblance to those shore adventures of Mr. Midshipman Easy that Captain Marryat's admirers prefer to overlook.

The forgeries do not appear ever to have been taken seriously and they would certainly not deceive an experienced reader, even if he were unaware of Christian's fate. The style has an indefinable ring of superficiality and insincerity, and the incidents strain the reader's credulity without arousing his interest, although the author appears to have a certain gift of narrative, possibly immature. Both volumes are today extremely rare.

As Bligh does not again enter directly into the story, this appears to be a suitable opportunity briefly to trace his career to its close.

After eighteen months on half pay, during which little is known of his movements, he joined the *Calcutta* in 1795 before transferring to the *Director*, 64 guns, engaged in blockading Texel under the command of Admiral Duncan.

In April and May occurred the mutiny at Spithead, followed by that at the Nore, in the latter of which Bligh was involved, the crew of the *Director* sending him ashore to join the other deposed officers a week after the start. The mutiny ended in June, the *Director* being the last ship to surrender to authority, and Bligh resumed his command. He must have acted with some tact before his ejection, as there does not seem to have been any special animosity against him, and he was not one of the officers removed from their ships by the Admiralty at the request of the men.

In December, 1797, Bligh commanded the *Director* at the battle of Camperdown, and it was to him that the Dutch flagship *Vryhdd* surrendered. Attempts were made many years later to

decry his performance, and even his courage, but appear to have been the effect of prejudice and without foundation in fact. Of his own part in the battle Bligh said 'Adml. Duncan was much gratified, as well as his ship's company with the sight of the conflict'. It indeed appears to have been a well-fought action.

For the next three and a half years Bligh was employed by the Admiralty in surveying and hydrographical work, in the course of which he visited the county of his birth, where the following incident took place, as described by Richard Polwhele in his *History of Cornwall*—'Captain Bligh (commonly called Breadfruit Bligh . . .) was seized in the act of surveying the Harbour of Helford, under the direction of Government, insulted by the bargemen of Helford, and triumphantly brought to the Vicarage to be examined, under a suspicion of correspondence with the enemy [the French].' Unfortunately there is no record of Bligh's reaction to this incident, but it is safe to assume that his deficiencies in 'suavity of manners' and 'mildness of temper', as specified by Barrow, would be at least noticeable, if not prominent.

In 1801 he commanded the *Glatton*, 54 guns, a converted East Indiaman and an unpopular ship, at the battle of Copenhagen, and has recorded proudly how 'Lord Nelson in the *Elephant*, our second ahead, did me the honour to hail me to come on board and thank me for the conduct of the *Glatton*'. Indeed, after Nelson, himself he was regarded as the hero of the day. It is curious that Southey, in his classic *Life of Nelson** when describing the battle, makes no reference to Bligh or to his part in the engagement, although mentioning other Captains by name.

After another spell of surveying on half-pay, he was appointed to the command of the *Warrior*, 74 guns. Here he was again in trouble, for in 1805 his violent behaviour towards his subordinates brought him before a court-martial, and he received a reprimand which earned him a letter of sympathy from Sir Joseph Banks, that advocate of firm discipline.

But his patron was to do even better for Bligh. Of New South Wales he wrote to him, 'I can, therefore, if you chuse it, place you in the government of the new colony ...' adding, amongst other inducements: 'If your family goes out with you, as I con-

' Published in 1813 when Southey was regarded as one of the 'Lake Poets'.

elude they would, your daughters will have a better chance of marrying there than they can have here: for as the colony grows richer every year, and something of trade seems to improve, I can have no doubt but that in a few years there will be men there very capable of supporting wives in a creditable manner, and very desirous of taking them from a respectable and good family/ The effect on Bligh of this delicate attention by his patron is not recorded, but his married daughter and her husband were the only members of his family to accompany him when he sailed for Australia.

Bligh's new career started unfortunately. The convoy in which he sailed was placed under the command of one Captain Shaw, with the proviso that, upon arrival at New South Wales, complete authority would devolve on Bligh, as Governor. Bligh, however, considered that his superior naval rank automatically gave him command of the convoy and disputes soon began, culminating in Bligh altering the course of the ship in which he was travelling without authority from Shaw. The latter, who appears to have had some of the characteristics of his opponent, promptly ordered that two shots should be fired at the near vicinity of Bligh's ship, and that the gun should be laid by Bligh's son-in-law, who was serving on the flag-ship of the convoy. In course of the subsequent recriminations Shaw was court-martialled and honourably acquitted.

Immediately upon Bligh's arrival in New South Wales, the outgoing Governor made him grants of three pieces of land which were named by their new owner Camperdown, Copenhagen, and Mount Betham. Bligh, immediately upon taking office, returned the compliment with a similar grant of Government land to the wife of his predecessor. The name chosen in this case for the estate involved was the appropriate one of 'Thanks'.

Bligh's career as Governor was interesting, but brief. The question of the rights and wrongs of the case is one for Australian historians to settle and is too complex for a layman. The chief facts that emerge are that he interfered, disinterestedly or otherwise, in the liquor trade, fell foul of one McArthur, a person of great influence in the new colony, and was arrested by the military commander, Lieut.-Col. George Johnston, a Dumfriesshire man, and a member of the family of the Earls of Annandale. On this occasion Bligh's nerve appears to have given way, and he was discovered by his captors hiding under a bed. He himself

claimed that he had retreated there in order to conceal some documents of importance.

Eventually a new Governor was appointed, and Bligh returned home. Johnston was court-martialled and cashiered, which was considered, under the circumstances, to be the equivalent of an acquittal.

The Johnston family tell a somewhat different version of the story. They claim that the hot climate of New South Wales affected its Governor's mind, provoking him to violence. Johnston, they say, arrested Bligh on his own responsibility, and sent him back to England. The voyage home cured him of his disorder, but on his return he was so ungrateful as to charge his benefactor with mutiny.

In 1811 the late Governor was gazetted Rear-Admiral, but never flew his flag, and after a period of retirement in Kent, died in Bond Street in 1817. He is buried at Lambeth and his tombstone reads:

Sacred
to the Memory of
William Bligh Esq. F.R.S.
Vice-Admiral of the Blue
The celebrated navigator:
who first transported the bread-fruit tree
from Otaheite to the West Indies;
Bravely fought the battles of his country
and died beloved, respected and lamented
on the 7th day of December 1817
Aged 64.

CHAPTER XIII

It is curious that it should be so particularly on Wordsworth that popular suspicion fastened, while Coleridge was left comparatively undisturbed. I think the explanation is to be sought for in the far more strongly marked incomprehensibility of Wordsworth's character and position.—MRS. HENRY SANDFORD: THOS. POOLE AND HIS FRIENDS

THE next contemporary reference of interest is an example of the incongruities which occur in the search for material' In the British Museum is the notebook of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, which is known to have been compiled in the period between the beginning of 1795 and the spring or early summer of 1798, in which were written the great poems which have established his fame. Here, as a possible topic for a poem, is the surprising entry:

'Adventures of Christian* the Mutineer.'

Before discussing the significance of this, it will be as well to examine the circumstances in which it was written, as they comprise some of the most interesting events in the annals of English poetry.

It is an accepted fact that it was only when he was enjoying the companionship of William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy that Coleridge revealed his true genius, so we may start by tracing the beginning of the association of the two poets. But a surprise awaits us at the onset. As Professor Harper, the authority for the life of Wordsworth, remarks, 'It is strange that no record of the first meeting between Wordsworth and Coleridge has come down to us,' It is indeed as strange as if no record had survived of the meeting of Boswell with Johnson.

It was in 1794 that Coleridge first became aware of the work of

* The underlining is Coleridge's.

Wordsworth. 'During the last year of my residence at Cambridge I became acquainted with Mr. Wordsworth's "Descriptive Sketches", and seldom, if ever, was the emergence of an original poetic genius above the literary horizon more evidently announced.'

Next we have the statement of Wordsworth in a short autobiography which he wrote for the guidance of his nephew in preparing the official account of his life. 'I settled with my only sister at Racedown in Dorsetshire, in the year 1796. Here we were visited by Mr. Coleridge, then residing at Bristol, and for the sake of being near him when he had removed to Nether Stowey, in Somersetshire, we removed to Alfoxden, three miles from that place.' But this is hardly correct. He did, indeed, after a period of several months during which nothing is known of him, settle at Racedown with Dorothy Wordsworth, who had been living with her uncle Cookson at Forncett, in Norfolk, but it was in the autumn of 1795, not 1796. The brother and sister were, in fact, visited there by Coleridge, this being their first definitely recorded meeting, in June, 1797, but the latter had actually been settled at Nether Stowey since the end of December, 1796, and was of course already there when the Wordsworths arrived at Alfoxden in July, 1797.

In passing, it is curious that these inconsistencies escaped the notice, or at any rate the comment, of Christopher Wordsworth in his biography of his uncle. Yet he states without remarking on the discrepancies with William's account, 'In the autumn of 1795, William Wordsworth and his sister were settled at Racedown Lodge', and 'Wordsworth and his sister moved to another abode, near the village of Nether-Stowey in Dorsetshire, where Coleridge then lived'.

There is yet another curiosity to be mentioned in this connection. The authority for the life of Coleridge, Mr. J. Dykes Campbell, noted for the caution with which he accepts evidence, says of certain information that it 'seems to point to a previous visit or visits paid to Stowey by Wordsworth, or to meetings with Poole [a friend of both poets] at Bristol of which direct record is lacking', which is quoted by Professor Harper with evident approval. There is in fact evidence that Coleridge and Wordsworth may have met in Bristol so early as September, 1795.

Wordsworth's autobiography was indeed written fifty years after these events, but one does not expect such discrepancies, in

view of the importance of the facts, and the certainty that they had been a recurring topic of the Poet and his circle during the intervening period.

However this may be, Wordsworth and Coleridge were settled in Somersetshire in July, 1797, Coleridge at Nether Stowey, and William and Dorothy at Alfoxden, three miles away. 'Here we are', wrote Dorothy, 'in a large mansion, in a large park ... we have a view of the sea, over a woody meadow-country ... we are three miles from Stowey, and not three miles from the sea.'

Here it was that those events took place which were to alter the course of the history of English literature, and here are the Wordsworths' accounts of one of them, the conception of the 'Ancient Mariner*'. First we have Dorothy:

We have been on another tour: we set out last Monday evening at half-past four. The evening was dark and cloudy; we went eight miles, William and Coleridge employing themselves in laying the plan of a ballad, to be published with some pieces of William's.

William wrote:

I will here mention one of the most noticeable facts in my own poetic history, and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the autumn of 1797, he, my sister, and myself, started from Alfoxden pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Linton, and the Valley of Stones near to it, and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expenses of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the 'New Monthly Magazine,' set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aikin.* Accordingly we set off, and proceeded, along the Quantock hills, towards Watchett; and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the 'Ancient Mariner,' founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend Mr. Cruikshank.^f Much the greatest part of the story was Mr. Coleridge's invention: but certain parts I suggested: for example: some crime was to be committed which should bring upon the Old Navigator, as Coleridge afterwards delighted to call him, the spectral persecution, as a consequence of that crime and his own wanderings. I had been

* Dr. Aikin had been head-master at Warrington Grammar School, where one of his assistants was the infamous Jean Paul Marat. This was subsequently denied by the Aikin family, one of whom was the celebrated Mrs. Barbauld. Mr. Phibson's entertaining book on the subject of Marat's career in England, however, proves it beyond doubt, and also that Marat was a suitor for the hand of the future Mrs. Barbauld.

† Cruikshank was the agent of the Earl of Egmont, a local magnate brother of Spencer Perceval, and friend of Coleridge, and the dream was of a ship manned by spectres.

reading in Shelvocke's Voyages, a day or two before, that, while doubling Cape Horn they frequently saw albatrosses in that latitude, the largest sort of sea-fowl, some extending their wings twelve or thirteen feet. 'Suppose,' said I, 'you represent him as having killed one of these birds on entering the South Sea, and that the tutelary spirits of these regions take upon them to avenge the crime.' The incident was thought fit for the purpose, and adopted accordingly. I also suggested the navigation of the ship by the dead men, but do not recollect that I had anything more to do with the scheme of the poem. The gloss with which it was subsequently accompanied* was not thought of by either of us at the time, at least not a hint of it was given to me, and I have no doubt that it was a gratuitous afterthought. We began the composition together, on that to me memorable evening: I furnished two or three lines at the beginning of the poem, in particular—

*And listen d like a three years⁹ child;
The Mariner had his will.*

These trifling contributions, all but one which Mr. C. has with unnecessary scrupulosity recorded, slipped out of his mind, as well they might. As we endeavoured to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening), our respective manners proved so widely different, that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a delightful tour, of which I have many pleasant, and some of them droll enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The 'Ancient Mariner' grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds; and we began to think of a volume which was to consist...

If Wordsworth's version of the purpose of the writing of the poem is correct, it is curious that Dorothy, in her account written within a few days of the event, tells a different story, as we have seen, and in fact the 'Ancient Mariner' was eventually published, as she says, 'with some pieces of William's'. Yet, according to Wordsworth this was not thought of until Coleridge and he had returned from their tour some time later.

De Quincey later interested himself in the matter:

In the year 1810 I happened to be amusing myself by reading, in their chronological order, the great classical circumnavigations of the earth; and, coming to Shelvocke, I met with a passage to the effect: That Halley, his second captain (i.e. lieutenant) being a

* In the edition of 1817.

melancholy man, was possessed by a fancy that some long season of foul weather, in the solitary sea which they were then traversing, was due to an albatross which had steadily pursued the ship: upon which he shot the bird, but without mending their condition. There at once I saw the germ of the 'Ancient Mariner' and I put a question to Coleridge accordingly. Could it have been imagined that he would see cause utterly to disown so slight an obligation to Shelvocke? Wordsworth, a man of stern veracity, on hearing of this, professed his inability to understand Coleridge's meaning: the fact being notorious, as he told me, that Coleridge had derived from the very passage I had cited the original hint for the action of the poem: though it is very possible, from something which Coleridge said on another occasion, that, before meeting a fable in which to embody his ideas, he had meditated a poem on delirium, confounding its own dream scenery with external things, and connected with the imagery of high latitudes.

As for Coleridge himself, it is about his later years that the anecdotes, which fix a man's character so firmly in the minds of readers, tend to congregate. Sir Max Beerbohm's famous cartoon, too, shows the poet when opium had sapped his will and animation, and when, of his conventional powers, only the stamina remained, over-application to German philosophy having done its deadly work. 'W. [Wordsworth] and I called upon him one forenoon.' said Rogers, 'when he was in a lodging off Pall Mall. He talked uninterruptedly for about 2 hours during which W. listened to him with profound attention, every now and then nodding his head as if in assent. On quitting the lodging I said to W. "Well, for my own part, I could not make head or tail of Coleridge's oration: pray did you understand it?" "Not one syllable of it," was W.'s reply.' And Southey said of his decline of purpose, 'the moment anything assumed the shape of a duty, Coleridge felt himself incapable of discharging it'.

But it was a different Coleridge whom the Wordsworths greeted at Racedown. As Dorothy described him:

He is a wonderful man. His conversation teems with soul, mind and spirit. Then he is so benevolent, so good tempered and cheerful, and, like William, interests himself so much about every little trifle. At first I thought him very plain, that is, for about three minutes: he is pale and thin, has a wide mouth, thick lips, and not very good teeth, longish loose-growing, half-curling rough black hair. But if you hear him speak for five minutes you think no more of them. His eye is large and full, not dark but grey; such an eye as would

receive from a heavy soul the dullest expression; but it speaks every emotion of his animated mind: it has more of the 'poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling' than I ever witnessed. He has fine dark eyebrows, and an overhanging forehead.

In 1797 he was twenty-five years of age. From school at Christ's Hospital, where began his life-long friendship with Charles Lamb, he went to Jesus College, Cambridge. Here he read widely, but without regular purpose. Debts and love drove him to enlist as a dragoon, but a persistent inability to ride* baffled even Army instruction, notorious for its efficacy on the most unlikely material, and it was doubtless gratifying to both parties when he was discharged, the authorities expressing their reason by the single word 'insane'. After planning with Southey to establish a Utopian settlement on the banks of the Susquehanna (being attracted thereto by its name) he had entered into a marriage, with the sister of Southey's wife, which brought little but unhappiness to either party. It has been well said that 'he married the wrong woman, but with Coleridge, almost any woman would have been the wrong woman'. A periodical, *The Watchman*, which he started in 1796, failed, apparently owing to an unfortunate choice of motto, 'Wherefore my Bowels shall sound like an harp', for the second number. (The last number had for its motto, 'The Watchman has watched in vain.') Then began his association with Wordsworth, as far as it is definitely known.

It is acknowledged that his fame rests on three poems—the 'Ancient Mariner', 'Kubla Khan', and 'Christabel', all written under the immediate personal influence of Wordsworth, and that the 'Ancient Mariner' is his one great complete poem. It first appeared in 1798, in the famous *Lyrical Ballads* produced by Wordsworth and Coleridge in collaboration, the majority of the contents being by the former.

* It may be that the following passage enshrines some equestrian memory of his military career:

*But in a minute she 'gan stir.
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.
Then like a pawing horse let go.
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head.
And I fell into a swoond.*

It so happens that we can learn more about the method of work of Coleridge than possibly that of any other great poet. Some few years ago I was recommended, by those upon whose judgment reliance could be placed, to read *The Road to Xanadu*, by John Livingstone Lowes. Upon first reading it, I found its central idea so surprising, and, to a layman like myself, so completely at variance with what I had always believed of the workings of the poet's mind, that, prejudice being what it is, I might have put the book down had not the fascination of its author's style led me further into it. Here I met with the most interesting detective story I had ever found. The idea which seemed to me so surprising had actually been previously enunciated by Ruskin, unknown to Mr. Lowes, but only in very general terms, and without specific proof, which the scholarship of the latter was able to supply. Here is Ruskin:

Imagine all that any of these men (Dante, Scott, Turner, Tintoretto) had seen or heard in the whole course of their lives, laid up accurately in their memories as in vast storehouses, extending, with the poets, even to the slightest intonations of syllables heard in the beginning of their lives, and, with the painters, down to minute folds of drapery, and shapes of leaves or stones; and over all this unindexed and immeasurable mass of treasure, the imagination brooding and wandering, but dream-gifted, so as to summon at any moment exactly such groups of ideas as shall justly fit each other; this I conceive to be the real nature of the imaginative mind.

Mr. Lowes, then, working independently, realised that the imagination of the great poet, which sets him apart as a creative genius, is concerned with the reception, storing, and producing of acquired impressions—which, nevertheless, undergo great changes in the process—and not with invention in the accepted sense of the word. Concentrating on the 'Ancient Mariner' and 'Kubla Khan', he realised that they had at least one common origin, in Coleridge's vast store of reading ('I have read almost everything,' he said, at about this time) particularly of books of travel. Then, by carefully following him through that great mass of literature, and with the aid of the notebook previously referred to, he found that he could trace the origin of almost all of 'Kubla Khan' and much of the 'Ancient Mariner'.

The divergence in the two results thus obtained, he observed, accentuates the great difference between the poems. 'Kubla Khan' represents a phantasia of images, incomplete in itself,

while the 'Ancient Mariner', drawn from the same sources, has definite form, the 'beginning, middle, and end' demanded by the philosophic critic. That portion of the 'Ancient Mariner' which lies between the appearance of the Albatross and the passing away of the curse can be compared with 'Kubla Khan', and in the search for its sources Mr. Lowes has been as successful as he was with the latter. But outside that passage the origins have been harder to discover, and the source of the outline of the poem as a whole is still to be found.

The entry in the notebook, 'Adventures of Christian the mutineer', naturally interested Mr. Lowes. He carefully ascertained what was generally known of Christian in 1797-8, which was, as we have seen, very little. It is in fact, very difficult to see what Coleridge meant by his phrase. For in 1798, all that was known of Christian was that he had set his captain adrift, and after a few disconnected episodes not deserving the name of 'adventures', sailed off into the unknown. Even if Coleridge had read the spurious adventures (there is no evidence that he did), and even if he had inconceivably failed to observe their lack of authenticity, there is nothing in them to take a poet's eye, and nothing of them, in fact, does appear in the poem.

Christian's outburst, as reported by Bligh, at the time of leaving the ship, 'That—Captain Bligh—that is the thing. I am in hell—I am in hell', struck Mr. Lowes, and he saw in it the origin of the Mariner's sense of guilt and remorse. But something else about the story he had read evidently lingered in Mr. Lowes' mind, for, when he points out, in another part of his book that the course of the Ship in the poem is as accurately recorded as if it were a real voyage, he likens it to one 'by Cook or Bligh'.

There is actually a strong likeness between the voyage of the Ship and that of the *Bounty*. Both vessels sail south (I have used the final version of the poem with its marginal gloss, as more explicit):

*The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the sea came he!
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the sea;*

to the Equator;

*Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon;*

then storms, as the ships sailed on to the south;

<i>And now the Storm-blast came, and he</i>	The ship
<i>Was tyrannous and strong:</i>	driven by a
<i>He struck with his overtaking wings,</i>	storm to-
<i>And chased us south along.</i>	the
• • • • •	Ward south pole.

*The ship drove fast, loud roared the blast,
And southward aye we fled.*

*And now there came both mist and snow,
And it grew wondrous cold:
And ice, mast-high, came floating by,
As green as emerald;*

and then the Ship turned north;

And a good south wind sprung up behind:

followed by the marginal note that the 'ship ... returned northward through fog and floating ice'.

Here Mr. Lowes thinks that the Ship, having rounded the Horn, sailed up the west coast of South America. But it seems more probable that this verse indicates a north-easterly course rather than north-westernly, as we are specifically told that:

*The Sun now rose upon the right:
Out of the sea came he,
Still hid in mist, and on the left
Went down into the sea.*

On Mr. Lowes' route, of course, the sun would rise out of the land; and Bligh himself refers to the mists often encountered on the easterly course.

At this point the phantasy takes command, with the Ship in the Pacific, as confirmed by the Argument of the poem.

To sum up, it appears that the seeker for the original sources of the 'Ancient Mariner*' still lacks the plan of the poem as a whole, and various details apart from the passages with which Mr. Lowes was so successful. On the other hand, this investigator has found as a result of the influence of the story of Christian on the poem, not only the remorse of the Mariner, but a similarity between the course of the Ship and that of the *Bounty*.

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Before leaving Nether Stowey it may be of interest to consider a curiosity of literary history connected with the two poets' residence in that neighbourhood—the incident of the espionage on Wordsworth.

In his *Biographia Literaria* Coleridge wrote of this period when Wordsworth and he were in such intimacy:

The dark guesses of some zealous *Quidnunc* met with so congenial a soil in the grave alarm of a titled Dogberry of our neighbourhood, that a spy was actually sent down from the Government *pour surveillance* of myself and friend. There must have been not only abundance but variety of these 'honourable men' at the disposal of Ministers, for this proved a very honest fellow. After three weeks truly Indian perseverance in tracking us (for we were most commonly together), during which time seldom were we out of doors, but he contrived to be within hearing (and all the while utterly unsuspected; how indeed could such a suspicion enter our fancies?), he not only rejected Sir Dogberry's request that he would try a little longer, but declared to him his belief that both my friend and myself were as good subjects, for aught he could discover to the contrary, as any in his Majesty's dominions. He had repeatedly hid himself, he said, for hours together behind a bank at the sea-side (our favourite resort) and overheard our conversation. At first he fancied that we were aware of our danger; for he often heard me talk of one *Spy No^y*, which he was inclined to interpret of himself, and of a remarkable feature belonging to him; but he was speedily convinced that it was the name of a man who had made a book and lived long ago. Our talk ran most upon books, and we were perpetually desiring each other to look at this, and listen to that: but he could not catch a word about politics. Once he had joined me upon the road (that occurred as I was returning home alone from my friend's house, which was about three miles from my own cottage) and passing himself off as a traveller, he had entered into conversation with me, and talked of purpose in a democrat way in order to draw me out. The result, it appears, not only convinced him that I was no friend of Jacobinism, but (he added,) I had plainly made it out to be such a silly as well as a wicked thing that he felt ashamed though he had only *put it on*. I distinctly remembered the occurrence, and had mentioned it immediately on my return, repeating what the traveller with the Bardolph nose had said, with my own answer, and so little did I suspect the true object of my 'tempter ere accuser' that I expressed with no small pleasure my hope and belief that the conversation had been of some service to the poor misled malcontent. The incident, therefore, prevented all doubt as to the truth of the report, which through a friendly medium came

to me from the master of the village inn, who had been ordered to entertain the Government gentleman in his best manner, but above all to be silent concerning such a person being in his house.

Many years later, De Quincey repeated the anecdote:

Coleridge, in his *Biographia Literaria*, tells a story about a Government Spy dogging him and Wordsworth in their rural exclusion, without collecting anything to incriminate them. The poets talked to each other, now in blame, now in praise, of Spinoza, and this praise and blame of the Spy Nosy, the honest spy very naturally took to himself, seeing that the world accused him of having a nose of unreasonable dimensions, and his own conscience accused him of being a spy.

It will be noticed that the story has altered somewhat in changing hands. Whereas Coleridge refers to the 'Bardolph nose' of the spy as a 'remarkable feature', De Quincey alludes to that organ as being of unreasonable size, and implies that it was famous as such. Now, as De Quincey and Coleridge well knew, the notable point of Bardolph's nose was its colour* ('Thou art our Admiral, thou bearest the lanthorn in the poop, but 'tis in the nose of thee; thou art the knight of the burning lamp') and not its size, which is nowhere mentioned as remarkable, so that there is a definite discrepancy in the two stories. While there are many possible reasons for this, the most likely seems to be that De Quincey thought he could identify the spy as a person who fulfilled his description, and so did not examine the information given by Coleridge as carefully as he might.

The fact that Wordsworth denied all knowledge of the affair when Coleridge's account first appeared led to a scepticism about the whole story, while the few who did believe in the existence of the spy were inclined to attribute the cause of his activities to the presence in the neighbourhood of a violent republican, John Thelwall, who had been tried for sedition, and who visited Coleridge and Wordsworth. This theory was supported by Wordsworth.

But Coleridge has been vindicated. Mr. A. J. Eagleston, C.V.O., has published the original correspondence on the matter which he discovered in the records of the Home Office. It reveals that complaint was made to the Home Secretary, that Duke of Portland whom we have met as Lowther's enemy in the North, by a

* Another report refers to the Spy's drunkenness, which would account for the colour Coleridge evidently wished to attribute to his nose.

local worthy who suspected the tenants at Alfoxden of being French spies. An agent was actually dispatched to Nether Stowey who upon arrival wrote to the Under-Secretary that 'I think this will turn out no French affair, but a mischievous [*sic*] gang of disaffected Englishmen. I have just procured the Name of the person who took the House. His name is Wordsworth a name I think known to Mr. Ford'

In this context the most likely man to fit the last reference is Richard Ford, a London Police Magistrate who controlled the Bow Street Runners. He had been Member of Parliament for Appleby as one of 'Lowther's ninepins', and was a person of some consequence.*

The next letter ends by reporting that Wordsworth has been visited by a 'Great Counsellor from London' whose name the spy is to learn that same evening, and include in his next report.

Here the correspondence ends, as far as it is preserved. Mr. Eagleston says of the later and missing letters that 'It is possible that the Duke of Portland took them away when he went out of office'.

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As *Lyrical Ballads*, which Wordsworth and Coleridge hoped would prove the beginning of an epoch in English poetry, was being published, its authors departed for the Continent, where they remained until the end of the following year.

* By another of the coincidences of literary association which abound in the story of the *Bounty* he was the father of that Richard Ford who wrote for John Murray the delightful *Handbook for Spain*, the guide-book which has become a prose classic.

CHAPTER XIV

Justly does it raise our wonder and gratitude to contemplate so exemplary a race, sprung from so guilty a stock.

REV. T. B. MURRAY: PITCAIRN

WITH the career of Napoleon attracting more and more of public attention, the *Bounty* seemed bound for oblivion as a topic, at any rate as far as the printed word was concerned. The long absence of further news led opinion to the belief that she had been lost, or that Christian and his men had been killed by natives. When after an unsatisfactory peace the country drifted again into war with France a new character comes into the story. It is difficult to assess the importance of the part he plays, or even whether he is an actor at all, but his is far from the least interesting of the names involved although he has never received from historians the attention which he deserves.

John Barrow was born, of humble parents, near Ulverstone,* in that detached part of Lancashire which, together with adjoining portions of Westmorland and Cumberland forms what is called the Lake District. After an early voyage on a Greenland whaler, he soon began to rise in the world. His general ability, skill in mathematics,† and strong anti-slavery views attracted the attention of the influential, and he was employed as a member of the staff of various embassies, which, so far as his own part in them was concerned, could more appropriately be called explorations, to China and the Cape of Good Hope. In 1804 he became

* A monument to Barrow now stands at his birth-place. The laying of its foundation was to have been accompanied by a hymn composed for the occasion by William Wordsworth, but this was prevented by the death of the Poet. The Wordsworths had at the time of William's youth family connections with Ulverstone, as revealed in their correspondence, but its editor, Mr. de Selincourt, unfortunately does not enlarge upon the theme.

† He taught Lady Beaumont, whose husband was a friend and patron of William Wordsworth.

Second Secretary of the Admiralty. Of a certain day in the following year he has recorded, 'Never can I forget the shock I received on opening the board room door the morning after the arrival of the dispatches, when Marsden* called out "Glorious news! The most glorious Victory our brave navy ever achieved—but Nelson is dead!" John Barrow was to hold his position from the year before Trafalgar until 1845, with a short gap in 1806 and 1807. His services to navigation and exploration were enduring in their results, and he has given to English literature at least one classic, for his *Mutiny of the Bounty* has lasted its hundred years, with increasing popularity. The First Secretary during much of Barrow's career in the Admiralty was John Wilson Croker, the diarist, and the two men had in common a dislike of Bligh.

By 1809, says Barrow, the *Bounty* 'had long ceased to occupy a thought in the public mind'. It was twenty years since that eventful April morning in the Pacific, and many changes had taken place. To the group of Christian's friends time had on the whole been kind. Christian Curwen still sat in Parliament, having refused a peerage, while his importance in Cumberland was still growing. Another of Fletcher's cousins, Edward Law, was now Lord Chief Justice under the title of Baron Ellenborough, but his rise in rank had not been accompanied by any increase in popularity. A contemporary remarked of his share in a Parliamentary incident that 'he seized upon Lord Grenville like a bulldog at the animal's baiting for the amazement of beings not less brutish than the poor animal himself', and went on to comment, 'but lawyers so rapidly raised to high station cannot on sudden forget their *Nisi prius* manners'. This aspect of his character did not meet with the approval of Samuel Romilly, now in the full tide of his enthusiasm for the reform of the law, nor of Edward Christian, now Chief Justice of the Isle of Ely, who often received tokens of his cousin's contempt for his judicial abilities,+ Lord Ellenborough finally attained Cabinet rank, being the last Chief Justice of England to do so, as his violent behaviour in State trials resulted in the office being divorced from political associations.

Romilly's old friend, Spencer Perceval, had also risen. After following Edward Law as Attorney-General, he became in this

* The editor of the famous quarto edition of Marco Polo (1818).

+ Ellenborough once described him as being 'in the full vigour of his incapacity'.

year of 1809 Prime Minister, in succession to the Duke of Portland, bringing with him to the Admiralty Viscount Lowther, son by a daughter of the Earl of Westmorland to the successor of the 'Bad Earl' of Lonsdale, who had died unregretted in 1802. This branch of the family held very different views to those of their predecessor, and were disposed to make peace with his enemies, such as Portland himself, and the Wordsworths, Curwens, and Fletchers.

Perceval's talents as a statesman did not rise above the mediocre but he was probably the best thing which could have happened at this stage of the war. Politics had brought about a coolness with Romilly, who had himself regretted his approval of the French Revolution, and suppressed his pamphlet written in its aid with such success that only one copy, his own, has survived.

Dr. Fisher, whom we last met as Rector of Nether Stowey, was now Bishop of Salisbury, having earned Royal gratitude by his supervision of the education of Princess Charlotte, notoriously a difficult subject, and so gaining the approval of Hannah More,' the bp. appeared to have a very proper notion of managing his royal pupil, & casting down high imaginations'. Sir Henry Fletcher had died, to universal regret, in 1807.

Mrs. Christian, Fletcher's mother, together with his sister, had retired to the Isle of Man, after letting Moorland Close to one of his former schoolfellows.

The two poets, Wordsworth and Coleridge, were living together at Grasmere, in the Lake District, but the characters of the two men were developing along different lines, and there were many signs that the intimate association might not be permanent.

On May 14th, 1809, the Admiralty received from Sir Sidney Smith (a close friend of Wilberforce and the defender of Acre, the man whom Napoleon accused of having made him miss his destiny), at Rio de Janeiro, a dispatch which had reached him from Valparaiso and which took the surprisingly long time of almost seven months to get to Whitehall:

Captain Folger, of the American Ship *Topaz* of Boston, relates that, upon landing at Pitcairn's Island, in lat. 25° 2' S., long. 130° W., he found there an Englishman of the name of Alexander Smith, the only person remaining of nine that escaped in His Majesty's late ship *Bounty*, Captain W. Bligh. Smith relates that, after putting Captain Bligh in the boat, Christian, the leader of the mutiny, took

command of the ship and went to Otaheite, where great part of the crew left her, except Christian, Smith, and seven others, who each took wives, and six Otaheitan men-servants, and shortly after arrived at the said Island (Pitcairn), where they ran the ship on shore and broke her up; this event took place in the year 1790.

About four years after their arrival (a great jealousy existing), the Otaheiteans secretly revolted, and killed every Englishman except himself, whom they severely wounded in the neck with a pistol ball. The same night, the widows of the deceased Englishmen arose and put to death the whole of the Otaheiteans, leaving Smith the only man alive upon the island, with eight or nine women and several children. On his recovery he applied himself to tilling the ground, so that it now produces plenty of yams, cocoa-nuts, bananas and plantains; hogs and poultry in abundance. There are now some grown up men and women, children of the Mutineers, on the island, the whole population amounting to about thirty-five, who acknowledge Smith as father and commander of them all; they all speak English and have been educated by him (as Captain Folger represents) in a religious and moral way.

The second mate of the *Topaz* asserts that Christian, the ring-leader, became insane shortly after their arrival on the island, and threw himself off the rocks into the sea, another died of a fever before the massacre of the remaining six took place. The island is badly supplied with water, sufficient only for the present inhabitants, and no safe anchorage.

Smith gave to Captain Folger a chronometer made by Kendall, which was taken from him by the Governor of Juan Fernandez.*

Extracted from the log-book of the *Topaz*, 29th Sept. 1808.

(Signed) WM. FITZMAURICE, Lieut.

Valparaiso, Oct. 10th, 1808

As there appears to be some confusion here, it should be mentioned that a letter of Captain Folger states that Smith told him that the mutineers lived peacefully for many years under Christian, who died a natural death.

This news has been described as creating a sensation. But this can hardly have been so, since, as we shall see, naval officers serving in the vicinity a few years later were unaware of the existence of the colony. It was not until 1810 that the *Quarterly Review*, a periodical with which Barrow was associated, referred briefly to the discovery, and in the following years further information arrived from America. While the news thus eventually reached part at least of the public, it is strange that no great use

* Robinson Crusoe's Island.

was made of the dispatch by the Admiralty, as an object-lesson showing the reward of mutiny, and tending to prove that authority, in the person of Bligh, was justified in its attitude by the subsequent violent deaths of most of the mutineers, provoked by their own misconduct. Equally strange, even inexplicable, is it that the Admiralty did not apparently inquire further into the matter, although the authenticity of the information was assured by the name of Alexander Smith, known to be that of one of the mutineers, and that of Kendall, the maker of the chronometer. Here one would expect expert guidance from Barrow, who was clearly in a position to know the reason for the official attitude but his only comment is: 'Interesting as this discovery was considered to be, it does not appear that any steps were taken in consequence of this authenticated information; the government being at that time probably too much engaged in the events of the war.' While this would be satisfactory enough in the case of an anonymous author, as indeed was Barrow when his book was first published, it is hardly so when the name and position of the writer are known and considered.

In 1811 Mary Russell Mitford published her poem 'Christina, or the Maid of the South Seas', based on the discovery of Pitcairn, and wrote: 'Your meeting at a coffee-house in the Haymarket with a literary man was indeed, my beloved father, a very strange circumstance. It is a coincidence still more extraordinary that "Christina" herself originated from your meeting Mr. McClure in the same manner, at the Huntley. . . .' The poem itself failed in this country, but went through several editions in the United States. The authoress herself, however, claimed some years later that a large English edition was sold. The proofs were corrected by Coleridge, as is shown by the Mitford correspondence, although it has been wrongly stated that her next poem was the first to receive this attention, the result of which was a quarrel between the two authors. The printer of 'Christina' was John Valpy, of whom she wrote:

I hope John Valpy means to leave out the gallows.* Christian's friends, being rather a strange race, might take it for an insult, and think that as the poor man contrived to get out of the world without hanging, I had gibbeted him in effigy at the end of my book.

* The digamma, F, which Valpy used to place either at the beginning or end of the books he printed.

Now, if this fancy should enter any of their noddles, I shall undoubtedly send them to John Valpy and let him fight it out with them. My petticoats shall be no protection to him, I assure him. . . . Tell him this with my kindest regards.

It is hard to imagine that an attachment to the cause of Christian would be strong enough to provoke unpleasantness after so many years, yet this letter indicates that he still had a following, though Miss Mitford's description of it seems hardly fitting if applied to the original group which attacked Bligh in 1794.

Although two frigates were cruising in the vicinity of Pitcairn some years later the Admiralty strangely made no move to inquire into the questions raised by Folger's report and did not even inform their Captains of it, although it might have been useful to them in their search for an enemy privateer, Pitcairn being a possible, though difficult, watering-place. In 1815 the following dispatch was received :

Briton, Valparaiso, 18th Oct. 1814.

I have the honour to inform you that on my passage from the Marquesas islands* to this port, on the morning of the 19th Sept, I fell in with an island where none is laid down in the Admiralty or other charts, according to the several chronometers of the Briton and Tagus. I therefore hove-to until day-light, and then closed to ascertain whether it was inhabited, which I soon discovered it to be, and, to my great astonishment, found that every individual on the island (forty in number), spoke very good English. They proved to be the descendants of the deluded crew of the *Bounty*[^] who, from Otaheite, proceeded to the above-mentioned island, where the ship was burnt.

Christian appeared to have been the leader and sole cause of the mutiny in that ship. A venerable old man, named John Adams, is the only surviving Englishman of those who last quitted Otaheite in her, and whose exemplary conduct, and fatherly care of the whole of the little colony, could not but command admiration. The pious manner in which all those born on the island have been reared, the correct sense of religion which has been instilled into their young minds by this old man, has given him the pre-eminence over the whole of them, to whom they look up as the father of one and the whole family.

A son of Christian was the first born on the island, now about twenty-five years of age, named Thursday October Christian; the elder Christian fell a sacrifice to the jealousy of an Otaheitan man,

* Familiar to many readers as the scene of Herman Melville's *Typee*

within three or four years after their arrival on the island. The mutineers were accompanied thither by six Otaheitan men and twelve women; the former were all swept away by desperate contentions between them and the Englishmen, and five of the latter died at different periods, leaving at present only one man (Adams) and seven women of the original settlers.

The island must undoubtedly be that called Pitcairn, although erroneously laid down in the charts. We had the altitude of the meridian sun close to it, which gave us $25^{\circ} 4' S.$ latitude, and $130^{\circ} 25' W.$ longitude, by the chronometers of the Briton and Tagus.

It produces in abundance yams, plantains, hogs, goats, and fowls; but the coast affords no shelter for a ship or vessel of any description; neither could a ship water there without great difficulty.

I cannot, however, refrain from offering my opinion, that it is well worthy the attention of our laudable religious societies, particularly that for propagating the Christian religion, the whole of the inhabitants speaking the Otaheitan tongue as well as the English.

During the whole of the time they have been on the island, only one ship has ever communicated with them, which took place about six years since, and this was the American ship *Topaz'* of Boston, Mayhew Folger, Master.

The island is completely iron-bound with rocky shores, and the landing in boats must be at all times difficult although the island may be safely approached within a short distance by a ship.

(Signed) T. STAINES.

A private letter of Captain Pipon, of the *Tagus*, gives further details. After describing his astonishment upon seeing that the island was inhabited, he goes on to tell how the first visitors to the ships were Thursday October Christian and George Young, who arrived alongside in a canoe. When the history of the settlers was mentioned, the captains were referred to John Adams, by which name Alexander Smith was now known. They then landed and met Adams, who appeared to be in some fear of arrest, which in Barrow's opinion would have been justified if he had been discovered by Bligh or Edwards. Upon being reassured in this respect, he professed himself willing to return to England, but was dissuaded from this by the other islanders. He then described the events on the island, and told how the *Bounty* had been burnt by Christian's orders, how Christian became as great a tyrant as Bligh had been, how he was shot by an Otaheitan while digging in his field about eleven months after the settlement of the island, and how further murders reduced the male population

to himself and Young, who had later died a natural death. Captain Pipon's account closes with a description of the island and its inhabitants, of whose strength, appearance, and moral virtues he speaks in terms of high praise.

It was these reports, and not that of 1809, which made the existence of Pitcairn and its colony generally known. Joseph Farington, for instance, who had previously revealed in his diary an interest in the *Bounty*, and in Edward Christian, wrote:

1815. Nov. 22. Lysons gave us an acct. of the discovery of what became of the Ship *Bounty* taken in the South Seas, more than 20 years ago by Christian and some of (the) crew from their Commander Capt'n. now Admiral Bligh. They were late(ly) discovered upon an Island called 'Pitcairn Island*' an Island (isolated) 1500 miles from any other Island, and of course not assailable by canoes from any other of the South Sea Islands. There (were) found upon the Island 48 inhabitants, but one only of them remaining of the crew of the *Bounty*. His name is Adams. Christian was dead, but left a son (by an Otaheite woman), now a man.—All the people spoke English, & appeared to live in great harmony. When the crew of the *Bounty* arrived at the Island it was uninhabited.—They had very fine goats, & were on the whole well provided. The Ship *Bounty* had been destroyed. Adams wd. have been glad to return to England, but the rest of the People would not suffer him to leave them.

And the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, announced in April, 1816, the appearance of 'Pitcairn Island: a romantick operatick Ballet Spectackle, founded on the recent Discovery of a Numerous Colony, formed by, and descended from the Mutineers of *The Bounty Frigate*.'

The news of the discovery of the island by the *Tagus* and *Briton* brought other ships to visit the island. Among them was the American whaler *Russell*, whose captain, Arthur, issued the following notice to his crew:

It is the impression of the Russell's owners, that the most part of the company were from respectable families, and it is desirable that their conduct towards the islanders should verify the opinion. As the island has been hitherto but little frequented, they will be the less susceptible of fraud than a more general intercourse with the world would justify. It is desired that every officer and man will abstain from all licentiousness in word and deed, but will treat them kindly, courteously, and with the strictest good faith. As profane swearing has become an un-fashionable thing even on

board a man of war, it is quite time it was laid aside by whalemén, particularly at this time. As the islanders have been taught to adore their Maker, and are not accustomed to hear His name blasphemed, they were shocked with horror, when they heard some of die crew of an American ship swear, and said it was against the laws of God, their country, and their conscience.

Unfortunately, later visitors were not so scrupulous, and it was partly to enable the inhabitants, through a magistrate, to handle any situation that might thus arise that the Island received its first 'constitution* from Captain Elliott, of H.M.S. *Fly* in 1838.

But for many years after the visit by Captains Staines and Pipon in 1814 no official action was taken, and the next report to the Admiralty came from Captain Beechey, of the *Blossom*, who landed at Pitcairn in 1825 while on a voyage of exploration. He found that the colony had received a recruit from a passing whaler, one John Buffett, who had assumed the duties of clergyman, schoolmaster, and shipwright. Adams was still alive, and gave Beechey an account of the mutiny and subsequent events. About two years after landing at the island, he said, Williams's wife was accidently killed. He insisted on being given the wife of one of the Otaheitans, failing which he threatened to leave the island in one of the *Bounty's* boats. This caused hostility between the mutineers and the Otaheitans, culminating in the murder of Christian and four others, apparently in October, 1793, although Adams's chronology was vague. After this the Otaheitan men were killed by the women, except one whom Young shot, and four mutineers, Quintal, M'Coy, Adams, and Young were the only surviving males.

The appropriately named M'Coy turned to account previous experience as an employee in a Scottish distillery, and with the aid of Quintal, who was the owner of a small boiler saved from the *Bounty*, he succeeded in constructing a still. Under the influence of the product of this device, its manufacturer threw himself to his death from a cliff. About this time Quintal lost his wife, and demanded that he should be given that of Young or Adams, and was killed by them in 1799, as butchers would fell an ox, in order to ensure their own safety. About a year later Young died of an asthmatic complaint, leaving Adams as the only survivor of the mutineers. Christian, Adams went on to say, had proved himself a capable and cheerful leader, preserving the respect of all until his death.

Captain Beechey shared his colleague's admiration for the island and its inhabitants, and on his return to England recommended that clothing and various implements should be dispatched to them by the Government.

This was done, and the articles chosen arrived at Pitcairn in 1830, on board the *Seringapatam*, Captain Waldegrave. He found that Adams had died in the previous year, and that the colony had received two more recruits from the outside world, John Evans, described as the son of a coach-maker in St. Martin's Lane, and George Hunn Nobbs.

The latter, whose origin is obscure, had enjoyed a varied career, culminating in holding a commission in the Chilean Navy under Cochrane, whose father, Lord Dundonald, was a friend and partner of John Losh. By his own account he became aware of an irresistible urge to settle on Pitcairn, and after several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a passage to the island, he set out from Callao, Peru, in a launch together with its owner, a dying man. In forty-two days they ran the 3,500 miles to Pitcairn, where the invalid died, and Nobbs dismantled the launch to provide materials for a house.

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By now, in 1831, time had done its work among the actors and bystanders. Perceval, while Prime Minister, had been assassinated in 1812. Sir Samuel Romilly had been driven to suicide by the loss of his wife, to the great satisfaction of Byron, who regarded him as responsible, in the capacity of their legal adviser, for his own separation from Lady Byron. Lord Ellenborough died in the same year, 1818, and Edward Christian in 1823. Another cousin followed in 1828, when John Christian Curwen ended a long and useful life. Fisher died as Bishop of Salisbury, and in 1831 Captain Peter Heywood closed an honourable career, after having been, as he himself stated 'actively employed *at sea* twenty-seven years six months, one week and five days, out of a servitude in the navy of twenty-nine years, seven months, and one day'.

The two poets were still living, but their ways were now very different. Wordsworth had risen socially, and was a person of some worldly importance in his neighbourhood, while Coleridge was ending his days under medical supervision at Highgate, greatly feared by the local children, one of whom oddly enough, was Peter Heywood's step-daughter, and the future Lady Belcher, author of a book on the *Bounty*.

This, then, was the state of affairs as it should appear to John Barrow when he published anonymously, in 1831, his classic *'Eventful History of the Mutiny and Piratical Seizure of H.M.S. Bounty: its cause and consequences'*, the first full-length account of the mutiny since Bligh's 'Narrative', and written in direct opposition to it, as the Admiralty official makes no secret of his opinion that the brutality of the Commander was responsible for Christian's outbreak, and does what he can to condone his action, short of approval of the crime of mutiny. In his preface he modestly disclaims the title of author in favour of that of editor, and states that the book was written at the suggestion of William Sotheby, translator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and friend of Coleridge and Wordsworth, whom he frequently entertained.

CHAPTER XV

It is painful to notice what a tendency there is in mens minds to allow even a slight call of private regard to outweigh a very strong claim of duty to the public.—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (in 1834)

WHEN as a boy I first read Sir John Barrow's book, I was conscious of a feeling of disappointment. Individually enthralling though its incidents were, I was aware of a sense of anti-climax, and a suspicion that I had missed a vital point of the story. Were it as I had read, the story would not have attained such fame, I felt, and Fletcher Christian would not be remembered as a desperate, but somehow admirable character, who had met unjust and tyrannical ill-treatment, not by complaint or subterfuge, but by boldly turning his tormentor adrift and sailing away with a king's ship to the confusion of authority. His death at the hands of his own followers would have robbed his character of all romantic appeal. Can one imagine that Robin Hood, if he had been knocked on the head by Little John at the first distribution of loot, would have survived in tradition as a popular hero? The essence of the qualifications of the claimant of such fame is that he shall escape retribution for at least some considerable time, and preferably altogether.

Where, too, was the mystery always associated with the name of the *Bounty*? Here was a clear account of events which did not in themselves constitute an artistic whole; which could not be said to present that moral so dear to the generations who had transmitted the story, since it was clear that there were faults on both sides; and which at first sight offered none of that scope for speculation which has ensured the survival of so many stories that would otherwise be forgotten. The names of Fletcher Christian and the *Bounty* would hardly be remembered to this day, among unlettered men as well as among scholars, if

their story had been no more than it appeared on the surface. The Mutiny of the Nore and its ringleaders are forgotten, except by the historian, although this was a similar event of much greater importance. How many now know the name of the leading mutineer at the Nore? Yet his effort affected world history, while that of Christian appeared relatively trivial.

I had not, at that time, heard of Johnson's dictum, that notes to a book are an evil, but a necessary evil, though experience had led me independently to the conclusion expressed in the first half of the saying. Thus it was not until a later reading of Barrow's account that I came across the following footnote:

As the manner of Christian's death has been differently reported to each different visitor, by Adams, the only evidence in existence, with the exception of three or four Otaheitan women, and a few infants, some singular circumstances may be here mentioned that happened at home, just at the time of Folger's visit, and which might render his death on Pitcairn's island a matter of doubt.

About the years 1808 and 1809, a very general opinion was prevalent in the neighbourhood of the lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland, that Christian was in that part of the country, and made frequent private visits to an aunt who was living there. Being the near relative of Mr. Christian Curwen, long member of Parliament for Carlisle, and himself a native, he was well known in the neighbourhood. This, however, might be passed over as mere gossip, had not another circumstance happened about the same time, for the truth of which the Editor does not hesitate to avouch.

In Fore-Street, Plymouth Dock, Captain Heywood found himself walking behind a man whose shape had so much the appearance of Christian's, that he involuntarily quickened his pace. Both were walking very fast, and the rapid steps behind him having aroused the stranger's attention, he suddenly turned his face, looked at Heywood, and immediately ran off. But the face was as much like Christian's as the back, and Heywood, exceedingly excited, ran also. Both ran as fast as they were able, but the stranger had the advantage, and upon making several short turns, disappeared.

That Christian should be in England, Heywood considered as highly improbable, though not out of the scope of possibility; for at this time no account of him whatsoever had been received since they parted at Otaheite; at any rate the resemblance, the agitation, and the efforts of the stranger to elude him, were circumstances too strong not to make a deep impression on his mind. At the moment, his first thought was to set about making some further enquiries, but on recollection of the pain and trouble such a discovery must

occasion him, he considered it more prudent to let the matter drop, but the circumstance was frequently called to his memory for the remainder of his life.

There are many points in this passage which deserve close consideration, but the reader must first be reminded that its author was then anonymous, that he in fact occupied a position of great importance at the Admiralty, and that he was very different from the conventional type of Civil Servant, having a wide range of experience of men and ships. Also he was very much aware of the importance of accurate phraseology. This can be seen in his own lucid narrative style, and in his quick eye for the inconsistencies of others, notably revealed in the account of Captain Pollard's adventures from which he quotes in the 'Additional Note' to his book.

It is strange to find that Sir John views with complete calm the possibility of the leading mutineer of the *Bounty* escaping from an early death and revisiting his home with impunity, and omits to pass any strictures on the conduct of Captain Heywood in deciding not to make any attempt to apprehend the criminal. It is also interesting that he vouches, not for the truth of Heywood saying that he saw a man whom he took to be Christian and who in turn appeared to recognise his pursuer, but for the fact itself. The implication appears to be that Barrow himself witnessed the incident, or that he had received corroboration from some reliable source unknown to us. In this respect, it is interesting to find that Heywood always referred to the incident as 'a coincidence'.

The next point that arises is that the accounts of Christian's appearances in Plymouth and in the north occur at a time when the *Bounty* was forgotten, and are spontaneous, since Barrow specifies that the American report of the discovery of the colony on Pitcairn was not known at the time; and so they cannot be inspired by that account, or by the curious contradictions of those parts of it which refer to the death of Christian. In fact, the position with regard to public knowledge of the fate of the *Bounty*, after she left Otaheite for the last time, was the same as it had been since the arrival of the *Gorgon* and her prisoners in 1792. It is interesting to notice that these events took place during Bligh's absence in New South Wales, where he had been arrested by "Fletcher's kinsman, Lt.-Col. Johnston, of Dumfriesshire.

That Heywood was convinced of the truth of his own account is obvious, as it is extremely unlikely that he would invent and

repeat a story which reveals him, although commissioned in the Royal Navy, as condoning the escape of a man whom he believed to be the notorious mutineer, Fletcher Christian. Heywood's own record, pardoned though he was, and the dubiety of his legal ability to hold his commission, must preclude the possibility of a fabrication so likely to prejudice his interests. If then Heywood's story is true, the stranger's apparent recognition of his pursuer and his subsequent flight eliminate the possibility of a mistake of identity and we are left with the conclusion that Fletcher Christian was indeed in Plymouth in 1808 or 1809, an opinion shared by the great naval historian, Sir John Laughton, in his brief biography of Christian in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, the contributors to which are not notable for their credulity. He was unfortunately constrained to add, with obvious regret, that 'nothing is known of his subsequent career'.

The place of the incident is interesting, as its naval associations make Plymouth an extremely unlikely spot for Christian to be found visiting of his own free will, a theory which is proved by the fact that he was actually recognised there by a former ship-mate. As we know of no other association of Christian with Plymouth, we can only assume that his visit was connected with some vessel lying there, and that most probably he had landed from a voyage, as an embarkation would offer him a wider choice of ports.

Of great importance is Barrow's statement that Christian was well-known in the vicinity of Cumberland, as he himself, as we have seen, was born at Ulverstone, in the Lancashire part of the Lake District, and tells us in his *Autobiographical Memoir*, 'A great portion of the first forty years of my life was spent among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmorland, or angling after trout in the mountain-streams', and, at the time of writing this, he still had interests in the neighbourhood.

Further, Christian alone of the mutineers is stated to have been seen in England. This cannot be due to a rumour started by Christian's superior social position, for Young also was well-connected, and there is no hint of his return. On the other hand, it was on the subject of the death of Christian, and not that of any other mutineer, that the inconsistencies of Adams were concentrated, and this also was spontaneous, as they start with the first discovery of the colony, so that they could not have been a consequence of Heywood's story.

When the dates of Folger's visit to Pitcairn and of the Plymouth incident are compared, they appear to tally with remarkable accuracy, so much so as to seem beyond the possibility of coincidence. If Christian had left the island with the *Topaz* and travelled in her to the United States, an England-bound ship from an American port could very well have landed him at Plymouth at a time which would coincide with Heywood's seeing him there. Yet Barrow does not mention this possibility, obvious as it is. This may be because he knew this tempting theory to be false, and that Christian had escaped from Pitcairn prior to Folger's visit. He could have reached this conclusion by way of realising that Christian must have left the island before any of the children born there were old enough to possess a conscious memory. Had Christian remained on Pitcairn until 1808, the secret would have been known to many and could not have been kept. The Otaheitan women were never interrogated* by visitors, but those inhabitants who had been born on the island were in constant conversation with officers and men of vessels which had called there, and the truth would have become known. Yet Barrow ignores this aspect of the question altogether.

Ot great interest is the specific reference to Christian's relationship to the Curwens, as their political influence would render Barrow, as a servant of the Crown, cautious not to give offence to the family, who were sensitive on the subject of the *Bounty*.† His anonymity, he well knew, would not be proof against even perfunctory inquiry. He must thus have been very sure of his ground in mentioning the matter at all, and been certain that no resentment could openly be shown, or public denial made, by the Curwens. The fact that his victims were Whigs would doubtless give Sir John, a life-long Tory, a certain pleasure, while at the same time his good nature would be gratified by the thought that no serious harm could result, as the mutineer, by the law of nature, was almost certainly dead in 1831, the Christians being a short-lived stock.

* Christian's wife was many years later reported to remember Captain Cook, but does not appear ever to have discussed Adams's accounts of her husband's death.

† The modern family history of the Curwens has no reference to Fletcher Christian or the *Bounty*, and indeed goes so far as to state that John Christian, Isabella's husband, and his sister were the last of the Cumberland Christians. After well over a hundred years, the skeleton could surely now be released from the cupboard. After all, it is not such a very gruesome specimen.

Curwen's wife, Isabella, already related to the Christians before her marriage, was the daughter of another Isabella, and the name evidently had pleasant associations for Fletcher Christian, since he called his Otaheitan wife by it, which would go far to atone with the ladies of his family for his misdeeds. Since Barrow appears to be uncertain, like others of his contemporaries, of the exact relationship of Fletcher with John Christian Curwen, although he gets neatly out of the difficulty, it is possible that Isabella Christian Curwen was the aunt mentioned as living in the Lake District. She was an invalid during the latter part of her life (her bath chair was used by Dorothy Wordsworth), so that Christian would be forced to visit her at her home. She lived mostly at Belle Isle, the island in Windermere that had been part of her dowry, and here Christian would be reasonably safe from arrest, in view of the family influence,* and the seclusion of the neighbourhood, concerning which William Wordsworth wrote, as late as 1841, 'So much was this region considered out of the way until a late period that persons who had fled from justice used often to resort thither for concealment, and some were so bold, as not unfrequently to make excursions from the place of their retreat for the purpose of committing fresh offences.'

A final consideration of Barrow's note raises the question of his motives in making any reference at all to the possible return of Christian. As a good servant of the Admiralty he must have wished to present the object-lesson of the leading mutineer killed ignominiously as a result of his crime, and he was fully aware, as is shown by the concluding passages of his book, of the value of such an example of retribution. Yet he himself destroys the effect of his moralising by suggesting that Christian returned safely to his family. His own position, too, in the event of official inquiry, was far from invulnerable if it could be shown that he was in possession of information to this effect at a time when it could be used for the apprehension of the mutineer. On the other hand, he may have known that such an inquiry would never be made, or that he himself would never be attacked. But on the whole it would appear that a fairly powerful reason must have actuated Barrow when he wrote this passage. There are two possible motives which seem to be in character; firstly, a desire to show

* According to William Fletcher, local gossip ran that John Christian Curwen actually prevented attempts to arrest the mutineer, as I think Sir John Barrow intends to hint.

that he was not deceived by Whig machinations; and secondly, and, I think, more probably, to tease some surviving supporter of Bligh with the possibility of Christian's escape from justice.

In the fascinating, and greatly under-estimated *Autobiographical Memoir*, by Sir John Barrow, published in 1847, there is no mention of the mutiny of the *Bounty* or of subsequent events connected with it, and a cursory reference only to his book on the subject.

CHAPTER XVI

What song the syrens sang, or what name Achilles assumed when he hid among women, though pulling questions, are not beyond all conjecture.—SIR THOMAS BROWNE: URN BURIAL

FOR many years after the publication of Sir John Barrow's book, with its hint at Christian's return, the only new sources of information about Pitcairn and its history were various didactic works published by the missionaries who were interested in the island and its inhabitants. Their accounts adopt the view that Bligh was innocent of blame, and that the mutiny was due to the crew's craving for the illicit joys of Otaheite. They then go on to point proudly to the high moral standing of the Colony under the influence of Adams, the sinner who had seen the light, and his devoutly religious successors, in contrast to the lawlessness which reigned under the leadership of Fletcher Christian. One of their favourite topics was to emphasise the violent deaths of the unrepentant mutineers as being the providential reward of their crime. The story of a ringleader who succeeded in evading this fate, and who presumably died a natural death in the neighbourhood of his home, was useless for this purpose, and so the missionaries became firm advocates of the theory that Christian died on Pitcairn. On the other hand they were incapable of perverting or suppressing facts which did not support their belief, and some of the most important evidence against it comes from their own publications.

At the same time, some accounts adopted the view that Bligh's misconduct was responsible for the mutiny, and thus condoned Christian's share in the blame. Prominent in this school was Lady Belcher, a cousin of the novelist Captain Marryat, and step-daughter of Peter Heywood. Holding these views as she does, one would expect her to welcome the idea of Christian's escape from Pitcairn, as providing him with a final triumph over Bligh. Yet she adopts the opposite view, and even, as a shrewd commentator has pointed out, strains the evidence in order to do so.

William Fletcher, whose account of the mutineer's childhood has already been quoted, takes the same course, and in his case there are other indications that his motives are open to question.

Today the story of the *Bounty* is no longer regarded only as a tale of the sea, and assumes fresh importance as part of Colonial history. New methods and standards have been applied to the study of the mutiny and with them has come a strengthened adherence to the belief in Christian's death on Pitcairn. As we have already seen, there is now a tendency to regard Bligh with admiration as a loyal servant of the Crown and consequently the old motive reappears to insist on a violent death for Christian, as a just reward for setting the representative of the State adrift in an open boat. The story of the return of the mutineer, moreover, is traditional, romantic, and popular, qualities regarded with deep suspicion by a certain type of modern scholar.

The position at present, then, is that Christian's death on Pitcairn is assumed as a matter of course, without examination of the evidence, often in obvious ignorance of it, and invariably without search for further information. That this theory has come to be generally accepted is not the least of the surprises which the story of the *Bounty* has to offer.

Before considering the arguments for and against Christian's escape from Pitcairn it will first be necessary to examine the character of Adams, as so much of the early history of Pitcairn has its only source in his testimony. He has, in fact, been frequently described as the sole witness for events on the island prior to the arrival of Captains Staines and Pipon in 1814. This is not altogether true, however, since there is one of his statements for the truth of which outside evidence is available. As we have seen, the *Topaz* visited Pitcairn in 1808, and on the subject of her visit Adams told Captain Staines, according to his report, that 'during the whole time they have been on the island, only one ship has ever communicated with them* which took place about six years since, and this was the American ship *Topaz*, of Boston, Mayhew Folger, master'. This, the only statement which Adams made on the early history of Pitcairn which is capable of independent corroboration, is proved to be accurate and truthful. On the other hand, where his interests were closely concerned he could lie cheerfully, for when examined about his own share in the

* The phraseology is interesting, in view of other evidence which will appear*

mutiny, he produced a highly favourable version of his activities which conflicts strongly with the evidence of other witnesses. On these facts we can only assume that Adams's memory was accurate, and that he was truthful only as long as he was disinterested.

Two main arguments have been advanced in favour of Christian's death on Pitcairn. Firstly, there is the evidence of Adams to that effect, and, secondly, it is claimed that he had no means of leaving the island.

Adams's evidence of Christian's death is, as we have seen, inconsistent as to time, place, and manner, although he remembered Folger's visit with accuracy. The supporters of the accepted story account for these contradictions by claiming that Adams's theological studies had scattered his wits, thus producing what must be the unique spectacle of the advocates of a case insisting upon the insanity of their only witness. On the other hand, Adams would never give his interrogators the final proof of his good faith by pointing out the site of Christian's grave, and always evaded the question of its whereabouts. In the Register he kept on Pitcairn, John Buffett, one of the colony's recruits, wrote:

*What need I tell their hapless leader's fate
(Slain by the hand of one he deem'd his slave)
Save to the rash I would the fact relate
Nor mound nor marble marks his dubious grave.*

Buffett had ample opportunity to interrogate the other possible witnesses during his residence on the island, but he was evidently ignorant of the position of Christian's grave. This is all the more remarkable in view of the great respect shown for the memory of his leader by Adams. It was noticed, for instance, that he never omitted to refer to him as *Mr. Christian*,* and his son, Thursday October Christian, though without marked talents, was regarded as the social leader of the community, and it was to his house that Captain Beechey was taken for his first meal on Pitcairn, where he found plates and cutlery. This position Thursday October could only owe to Adams's respect for his former leader. Yet if Christian had indeed died on Pitcairn, Adams had evidently neither participated in his burial nor ascertained where it had taken place.

The second argument, that of the impossibility of leaving the

* Sir John Barrow comments on this: 'Why indeed should he? Christian was a gentleman by birth, and an officer in His Majesty's service, and was of course always so addressed.'

island, is even more vulnerable. The Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, always interested in Pitcairn, has published an excellent edition of the Register Book of the island, kept by Buffett, who had to rely, of course, on the statements of Adams for events prior to his own arrival. The preface to this admirable publication remarks: 'An entry in the Register will be noted under date 27th December 1795 to the effect that the mutineers were greatly alarmed at seeing a ship close to the island, and another account states that in May of that year at the sight of a ship nearing the island they hid themselves and subsequently found that there had actually been a landing on the beach.'

In view of this it is surprising to find it frequently claimed that the *Topai* was the first ship to visit the island after the mutineers settled there. It was indeed unlikely that the island would remain so long without callers, for it was almost encircled by four great whaling-grounds whose names will be familiar to readers of *Moby Dick*, the Mid-Pacific, the On-Shore, the Off-Shore, and the South Pacific, and lies very near the last-named and largest of them, so that whalers must often have been in the vicinity. Many such ships did in fact take the opportunity of being in the neighbourhood to call at Pitcairn after the existence of the colony became famous. The presence of British whalers in the area attracted the attention of an American privateer during the war with the United States which started in 1812,* and it was in search of her that the *Briton* and *Tagus* came to the Pacific.

It is obvious that Christian could be picked up by a ship visiting the island, or that he could join one which he saw in the vicinity by means of a boat. It is clear that the mutineers would not burn the boats of the *Bounty* together with the ship, and this is confirmed by the threat made by Williams about the year 1792 to leave the island in one of them. No further reference is made to such a vessel, and in 1794, the women, who wished to leave Pitcairn, are recorded to have had a boat built for the purpose.

The presence of a ship in the neighbourhood, however, was not absolutely essential to an escape from Pitcairn, for we have seen how Christian, when desperate, was prepared to take his chance on a raft from the *Bounty*-, and how the possibility of reaching land safely from Pitcairn was enough to justify the women in

* The war was indirectly due to the assassination of Samuel Romilly's old friend, Spencer Perceval, the Prime Minister. During the confusion which followed that event, opportunities to settle a dispute with the United States were lost, so that the Americans declared war.

preparing to make such an attempt. A boat voyage to South America was well within Christian's powers should he be able to provide sufficient food and water for the journey. The prevailing wind, aided by the current, would carry him eastwards to the coast of South America, where he would find a northerly wind to take him to wherever he wished to land. We have seen how Nobbs, although without as powerful a stimulus as that which would provoke Christian to such a voyage, made the journey to Pitcairn in a launch, and there is no record of any undue hardship or danger incurred in his voyage. From the point of view of the navigator it would obviously be more difficult for Nobbs to hit off Pitcairn than for Christian to make a landfall on the coast of South America. Against this theory it has been maintained that if Christian had left the island with the intention of making such a voyage he would have taken the chronometer with him. This instrument, however, was always inaccurate, and had actually been allowed to run down at Otaheite, the precise amount of its variation being known only to Bligh, so that it was useless for any purpose requiring precision. Although valued at 350 guineas, it was so easy to identify that Christian would act very wisely in leaving it behind.

There is one powerful dissentient to the theory of Christian's death on Pitcairn, for the great naval historian, Sir John Laughton, assessed the evidence and decided against it. The testimony of Adams, he declared to be 'neither constant or consistent' and he speculated whether Christian left the island with the *Topaz* or 'in some more adventurous fashion'.

But if Christian did escape from Pitcairn it is possible to find reasons for Adams's inconsistencies. Obviously favourably inclined towards Christian as he was, events ran badly for him. When the colony was discovered by the *Topaz* he was probably excited by the unfamiliarity of contact with strangers, and under the eager questioning of the Americans he seems to have lost his head, as far as the question of Christian's death was concerned. After telling Captain Folger that Christian had died a natural death, as is revealed in Folger's private letter, he must also at some time have stated that he was killed by the Otaheitans and that he threw himself off the rocks into the sea, since the two latter variants of the story occur in the report to the Admiralty.

The visit of the *Topaz* was in 1808, and Adams must have expected the arrival of a naval vessel in search of information as a

natural consequence, so that when in 1814 Captains Staines and Pipon arrived in complete ignorance of the existence of the colony it must have seemed to Adams that the *Topaz* had failed for some reason to make any report of her discovery and so he considered himself at liberty to produce for the next comer whatever account he then thought most suitable, without reference to his previous pronouncements. To Staines and Pipon he told very similar stories, but had difficulties with his chronology. Captain Beechey in 1825 doubtless taxed him with previous inconsistencies and thus provoked yet another story, in more detail than had previously appeared.

If Christian were indeed at large, Adams's position was one of great difficulty. With each visitor he must try to discover whether anything was known of his leader's escape before committing himself to any definite statement on the subject of Pitcairn biography, and in the verbal fencing which this would involve he could be betrayed into inconsistencies.

There is always the possibility, however, that these vagaries were to some extent intentional. That Adams achieved the feat of dying a natural death on Pitcairn indicates that he was no fool; and his conflicting accounts of Christian's death may have been deliberately given with a view to creating an impression of mental weakness, an effect which they have in fact had on many who have studied them, and which would help to protect him from punishment should the escaped mutineer be discovered elsewhere,

It can thus be said that if Christian died on Pitcairn the inconsistencies of Adams and his refusal to point out his grave are inexplicable, and that if on the other hand he escaped from the island there is a reason for Adams's vagaries, although without further information it is difficult to decide why they took the precise form which they did.

Again, assuming that Christian contrived to return from Pitcairn, it is possible to arrive at some conclusion with regard to the means he employed to do so. The fact that nothing more is heard of the boat in which Williams threatened to leave the island implies that Christian used it for his escape, either to a passing ship or by a long voyage to civilisation. A sudden, hurried departure, such as would be necessary to reach a ship in the offing, if concealed from all except Adams, would account for many of the obscurities in the story.

CHAPTER XVII

*/ travelled among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea;
Nor, England, did I know till then,
What love I bore to thee.*

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

A'T this stage it may be useful to sum up the probabilities arising out of Christian's return to England. His escape from Pitcairn would take place not later than 1794, since the boat referred to by Williams was apparently no longer on the island at that date. With its aid he could reach a passing ship which would carry him to a port from which he could reach home. There is so far no reason to assign a date to his arrival in this country, although 1795 appears to be probable. Heywood saw him in Plymouth about 1808 or 1809, at which time there was a general belief, according to Barrow, that he had returned and was visiting the neighbourhood of the Lakes. This was later supported by William Fletcher, who told his Cockermouth audience how 'many tales were rife, from sixty to seventy years ago of his having been met and recognised in the woods and bye-paths of this neighbourhood, but by those who had too much sympathy for him and his family to betray the secret. It was said that his first cousin, John Christian Curwen, M.P., used his great influence to prevent any official search being made for the fugitive.' Today in Cockermouth one may hear from the genial curator of William Wordsworth's birthplace how Fletcher Christian was seen nearby after the mutiny. For his other movements tradition is the only guide. At Anthorne, at the mouth of the river Wampool, in the north-west of Cumberland, a house was pointed out as one of his hiding-places. He was believed to have lived for some time on the other side of the Solway Firth, in Wigtownshire and Dumfriesshire. Tradition in the Isle of

Man, where his mother had retired from Moorland Close after the mutiny, credits him with a marriage at Ramsay. It is interesting to note that Anthorne was notorious as a smuggling port, as also were Portnessock in Wigtownshire and Annan in Dumfriesshire, and all three were engaged in contraband traffic with the Isle of Man, which was a distributing centre in that golden age of the free trader. This industry would give Christian a ready means of surreptitious travel, and might even afford a professional outlet for his energy and capability.

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In the light of the additional information which is now available, the position of Coleridge in 1797 may be re-examined. If he were aware of the possibility of the return of Christian, not only would the phrasing of the entry in his notebook, 'Adventures of Christian the Mutineer' be accounted for, but the whole scheme of the 'Ancient Mariner', for, when the poem first appeared in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798, it was prefixed by the following prose summary:

HOW A SHIP HAVING PASSED THE LINE WAS DRIVEN BY STORMS TO THE COLD COUNTRY TOWARDS THE SOUTH POLE; AND HOW FROM THENCE SHE MADE HER COURSE TO THE TROPICAL LATITUDE OF THE GREAT PACIFIC OCEAN; AND OF THE STRANGE THINGS THAT BEFELL; AND IN WHAT MANNER THE ANCIENT MARINERS CAME BACK TO HIS OWN COUNTRY.'

This is the argument of the poem, as originally announced by its author, and it is an accurate summary of the story of the *Bounty* and Fletcher Christian.*

The question now arises as to how Coleridge could have learnt of the story which was to provide him with the subject of his masterpiece. The person who supplied him with it must fulfil two conditions: he must be in close contact with the mutineer or his connections, so as to learn and be trusted with the secret of his return, which was not well-known at this time, unlike 1808-9,

* In the second edition of 1800, the Argument was altered to:

How a ship, having first sailed to the Equator, was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; how the Ancient Mariner cruelly and in contempt of the laws of hospitality killed a Seabird and how he was followed by many and strange judgements: and in what manner he came back to his own Country.

Later still, this was abandoned in favour of a quotation in Latin from the works of T. Burnet.

and he must also be on intimate terms with Coleridge, as such information would be given only to a close friend, and he must even be in a position to exercise some sort of supervision over the poem, as it is hardly likely that he would give the poet a free hand with such a secret.

There is one person who satisfies both requirements: William Wordsworth, schoolmate, relative, and family friend of Fletcher Christian on the one hand, and on the other the collaborator with Coleridge in the planning, writing, and publication of the 'Ancient Mariner'.

Mr. Lowes* has already established that the 'Ancient Mariner' and 'Kubla Khan' draw upon the same sources, and this, he says, emphasises the essential difference between them. But the difference between the two poems is that the 'Ancient Mariner' has definite form and a complete story, while 'Kubla Khan' is a magical, but shapeless, phantasy. In order to find the cause of this difference we must look for a factor which went to the making of the 'Mariner', but not of 'Kubla Khan'. Again the answer is Wordsworth, who collaborated in the former, but not in the latter, so that it must have been from him that Coleridge got the scheme of the poem. It is indeed natural that Wordsworth would give the 'Mariner' the form which the other poem lacks, for his own works always follow a definite plan although the prolixity which was one of his faults is apt to obscure the fact.

We have seen how, to the great surprise of the authorities, there is no record of the first meeting of Coleridge and Wordsworth, and there is thus a possible reason for this silence, if they met in the neighbourhood of Nether Stowey or Bristol when Wordsworth was about some business connected with Christian which demanded secrecy. It will be remembered that a meeting in this vicinity has already been suspected by the same authorities. That Wordsworth's business was connected with Fletcher Christian is indicated by the fact that the Rector of Nether Stowey was Dr. Fisher, intimate friend of the Law family, and a witness to Edward Christian's defence of his brother.

Such a connection with Nether Stowey would help to account for the inconsistencies of Wordsworth's version of his connection with the neighbourhood. Had he been there surreptitiously in 1795, for instance, it would account for his giving the date of his

* Mr. Lowes is evidently unaware of the possibility of Christian's return and of his connection with the Wordsworths.

settling at Racedown, which took place in the same year, as 1796, so as to avoid admitting having been in the West Country during the earlier year. He goes on to state that he moved to Alfoxden in July, 1797, in order to be near Coleridge when he came to Nether Stowey from Bristol, although Coleridge had in fact been settled there since December, 1796. Since it was with great precipitancy (which has been remarked by Professor Harper) that the Wordsworths moved to Alfoxden after Coleridge's visit to Racedown, it would appear that they were waiting for a signal from Nether Stowey. To conceal this, Wordsworth claimed that it was in the expectation of being joined by Coleridge in that neighbourhood that he made his move, the implication being that he had just learnt of the latter's intention to settle there, although, as we have seen, he had in fact been living there since the end of the previous year. It was about this time in 1797 that Dr. Fisher left Nether Stowey, and while this may be coincidence, it is possible that it was for his departure that the two friends were waiting.

It is very noticeable that a different atmosphere to that of the rest of the poem appears in that part of the 'Ancient Mariner'* which treats of the Hermit. The poetic quality is much lower, and the passage reads more like a family joke than part of a masterpiece. And a family joke it may have been, for if the Mariner is Fletcher Christian, it is possible to hazard a guess at the identity of the Hermit, who, * lives in that wood, Which slopes down to the Sea,' and met and comforted the returned Mariner, when we find Wordsworth referring to his 'Hermitage', and calling his projected autobiographical poem 'The Recluse'.*

It is also possible to guess at the identity of the person whom De Quincey suspected of having been the spy who watched Wordsworth at Nether Stowey, for Bligh fulfils the conditions and was in the neighbourhood at the time. There is now a reason for the interest in the Poet which had been shown by the authorities at Bow Street, especially when it is remembered that Ford's patron was the Earl of Lonsdale, hostile to the Curwens and Fletchers. There is also confirmation of Mr. Eagleston's theory

* I have ignored the question of the symbolism used in the poem as falling within the province of the specialist, whose speculations have already attempted to identify the weathercock in the poem with a reference to the Vane family. The suitability of the crossbow as a weapon for a Fletcher who is also a Christian may have occurred to the reader.

that the spy's reports were removed from the Home Office by the Duke of Portland, Lowther's enemy, and the ally of Christian's family.

Further, there is at last an explanation for Wordsworth's much-criticised strictures on the 'Ancient Mariner' in the 1801 edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*, which do not seem to have been much resented by Coleridge, although his friends were indignant. Wordsworth wrote of the poem:

The author was himself very desirous that it should be suppressed. This wish had arisen from a consciousness of the defects of the poem, and from a knowledge that many persons had been displeased with it. The Poem of my Friend has indeed great defects: first, the principal person has no distinct character . . . secondly, that he does not act, but is continually acted upon: thirdly, that the events, having no necessary connection, do not produce each other. . . .

CHAPTER XVIII

'Is there any point to which you 'would wish to draw my attention?'

'To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time.'

'The dog did nothing in the night-time.'

'That was the curious incident, remarked Sherlock Holmes.'

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE: SILVER BLAZE

WHEN one finds that rumours of Christian's return were current in the Lake District in the years 1808 and 1809, it is obvious that there is a likely source of information in the letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, published in six volumes and edited by a famous scholar, for the Poet and his sister were living in the neighbourhood at this very time. Yet, surprisingly, there is no reference to the local belief in the mutineer's presence in the vicinity, either at this or any other time. Even more surprisingly, there is no mention, in all their published correspondence, of the *Bounty* or of Fletcher Christian himself, despite his boyhood connection with the Poet.*

This appears even more remarkable when it is considered that the witnesses to Edward Christian's vindication of his brother included the Poet's uncle, Canon Cookson, his cousin, Captain John Wordsworth, his college tutor, Dr. Frewen, and his friends, Losh, Gilpin, and Antrobus. Not only was this the case, but Dorothy Wordsworth was living with her uncle, Canon Cookson, until the end of 1793, during which time Edward Christian's book must have been in preparation, and in fact she does mention him in 1791, in terms which indicate a close family connection. Yet she does not make any reference to the mutiny or to his attack on Bligh. The distant relationship between the two families accentuates the unexpectedness of these omissions.

The Wordsworths were a scattered family, with a wide circle

* This silence extends to the works of Southey and De Quincey, although the subject was one which would be expected to appeal to the Lake Poets.

of acquaintances. The mutiny was bound to interest them, with its connection with the Christians and Cockermouth, William even having been at school with Fletcher. It was the kind of story, too, which would interest Wordsworth, and from which he took the subjects of many of his poems. He was always eager to meet with wanderers who could tell him of such things. 'He told me strange stories. It has always been a pleasure to me, through life, to catch at every opportunity that has occurred in my rambles of being acquainted with this class of people/ said Wordsworth, just as the Hermit in Coleridge's poem, Moves to talk with Mariners, That come from a far Countree'.

In the study of Wordsworth's writings there is indeed one point at which it seems inevitable that a reference to the *Bounty* forthcoming, when he says 'a romantic and somewhat tragical affair drew the eyes of all England, and, for many years, continued to draw the steps of tourists, to one of the most secluded Cumberland valleys'. But it is another affair to which he refers, and one which also interested Coleridge, that of the forger Hatfield, which attracted some attention at the time, but is now forgotten, except in its connection with Wordsworth and his friends.

This is but one of many examples of William's interest in contemporary local events, very many of which he used as topics for his poems. Yet he did not thus avail himself of the mutiny itself, or of any of the incidents which arose out of it, such as the arrest, trial and pardon of Heywood, himself a Cumberland man, whose romantic story was well-known in the neighbourhood, and with whose family Wordsworth had been on intimate terms.

In view of these facts it would be interesting to consider the life of the Poet in relation to the connection with Fletcher Christian. But here unexpected difficulties arise. One would take it for granted that the life of William Wordsworth, of good upper middle-class stock, and recognised as a great poet during his lifetime, would be fully known and documented, and that his biography would be without gaps or obscurities. The character of the Poet, too, at any rate that which has general acceptance, is not such as to lead the inquirer to expect mysteries.

Yet it was not until this century that it was revealed that Wordsworth, during a visit to France in 1791-2, had fallen in love with Annette Vallon, a French girl of Royalist views and family associations, and that his love had been returned, and a daughter born to them about the time of his enforced return to

England. This episode, of course, did not appear in the official biography by his nephew the Bishop, Christopher Wordsworth. There are references to it in the poems which confirm, but do not reveal the story. This, which has been described as 'one of the best kept secrets of literary history', was known to over half-a-dozen people, yet eluded the scholar for over a hundred years. There are, however, other questions raised by the poet's biography which this discovery does not answer, and gaps in the record of his life which it does not fill.

It is thus known that Wordsworth was what is picturesquely described as a 'dark horse', capable of activities which he considered not suitable for public knowledge, and of concealing them, and that he had friends who loyally joined in such suppression. In view of this, and of the connection with Fletcher Christian concerning which the Poet and his circle have remained silent, it is clear that his career will bear investigation with regard to his association with the mutineer, and that such an inquiry should emphasise those aspects of his character which might be called into action thereby, and which are least familiar to the general reader. Wordsworth himself left a short autobiography, for the guidance of his nephew Christopher, his official biographer, and this document clearly indicates those aspects of his life by which he wished to be known to posterity.

This autobiography begins by describing his birth at Cocker-mouth in 1770, his family connections, his youth, spent partly at Cocker-mouth and partly at Penrith, and his schooldays. At Hawkshead Grammar School where he went in 1778, he was taught, he said, 'more of Latin in a fortnight than I had learnt during two preceding years at the school of Cocker-mouth'. This gives the time of his attendance at Cocker-mouth as 1776-8, which is confirmed by the history of 'All Saints and Christchurch, Cocker-mouth' in which it is recorded that 'Joseph Gilbanks was from 1778 to 1795 Master of Cocker-mouth Grammar School, which occupied the site of the present Church Room. He had under him Christopher Wordsworth, afterwards Master of Trinity; William the poet; Fearon-Fallows, missionary and astronomer at the Cape; the brothers Quickett (one being Dickens' model curate); and also Fletcher Christian, Lieutenant of the *Bounty* and founder of the Pitcairn Colony.' This account, it will be noticed, neatly avoids mentioning the criminal aspect of Christian's career.

of Fletcher Christian the local poet Isaac Wilkinson remarks, 'He was my school-fellofa (along with William Robinson of Eaglesfield) at Cockermouth Free School for seven years.' Christian being born in 1764, as were Wilkinson and Robinson, it is obvious that his school career at Cockermouth would include the years of Wordsworth's sojourn, 1776-8. He must, for instance, have first attended there in 1776 at the latest for he is known to have been in the navy in 1783 (tradition sends him first to sea as early as 1780) while he cannot have left before 1778, as otherwise Gilbanks could not have claimed him as a scholar.

This association of the Poet with the mutineer is not mentioned either by Wordsworth himself, or by William Fletcher, as we have seen, although the latter points out the contemporaneity of his kinsman with the poet Isaac Wilkinson.

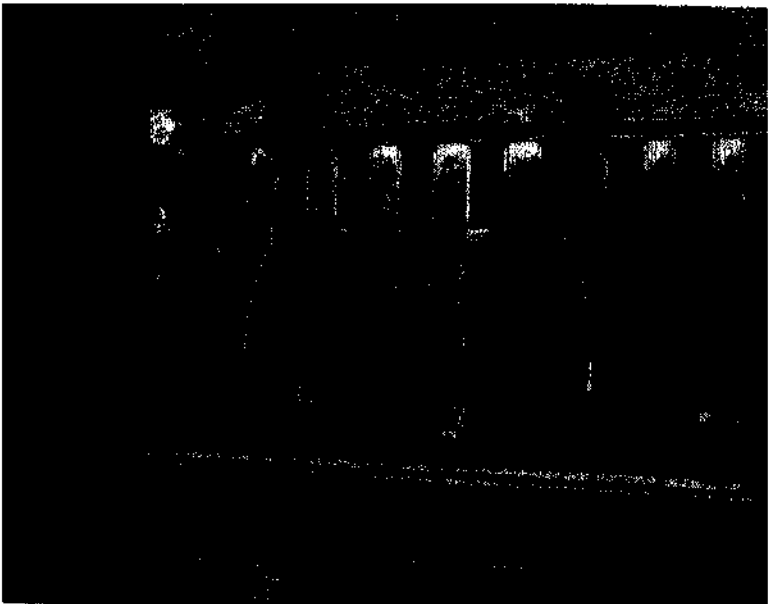
That this fact has subsequently escaped observation is owing to the persistent statement in works of local origin that Christian was born in 1753. This they confirm by announcing that Isaac Wilkinson, his schoolfellow for seven years, was born in that same year, although parish registers show the birth of both men as occurring in 1764. One work on the subject of Cockermouth, for example, after stating that here 'was born in the year 1753,- Isaac Wilkinson, a local poet of considerable eminence', goes on to tell how 'Isaac Wilkinson died in this house in the year 1837, aged 74 years' without apparently noticing the contradiction,* and other and later authorities fall into the same error. Yet Wilkinson's gravestone shows clearly the date of his birth as 1764, and Christian's birth at approximately the same time is confirmed by Bligh's account of him as a mutineer, where he is described in 1789 as being twenty-four years old.

At Hawkshead Wordsworth had for his headmaster in 1781 Edward Christian, Fletcher's brother, and his closest friend 'then passionately loved', was John Fleming of Rayrigg, who was later to become Rector of Brigham, and whose mother was a Fletcher-Fleming.

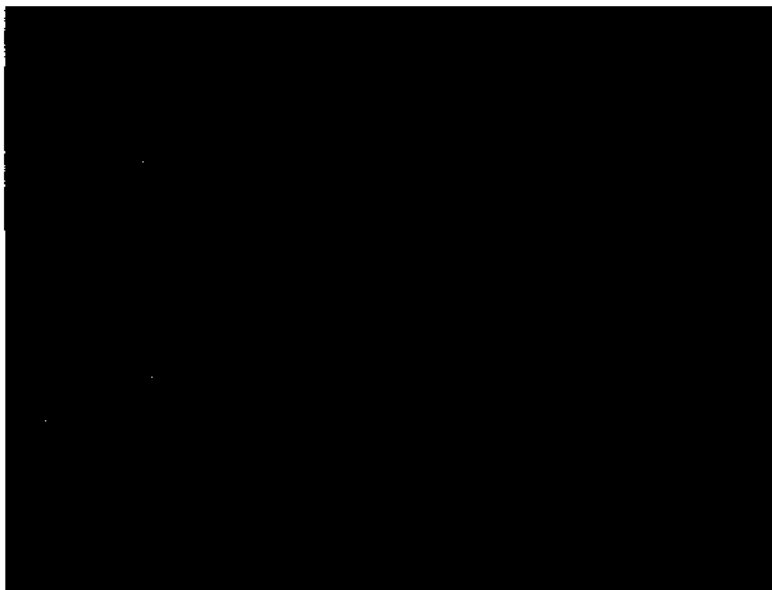
* This account emphasizes and even labours the point by describing how Christian 'was appointed chief mate of the *Bounty*, of which William Bligh—a man of about his own age—was the commander*. It then goes on to give a history of the mutiny which differs from any other that I have found. The names of some of the mutineers appear as variants, M'Roy for M'Coy (or M'Koy), Quintail for Quintal, and Willis for Mills. This seems to indicate that the author had access to a manuscript account which is otherwise unknown.



The traditional birthplace of Fletcher Christian. The summer-house, formerly a watch-tower, in the walled orchard at Moorland Close



The birthplace of William Wordsworth at Cockermouth as seen from the lane which leads to Moorland Close



The plaque on the site of Cockermouth Grammar School commemorating Wordsworth and Christian. The date of the mutiny should, of course, read 1789



The footprint in the gutter of the summer-house at Moorland Close described by William Fletcher as made by Fletcher Christian

In 1783 Wordsworth's father died, leaving little to his children except a debt of £4,825 due to him by the Earl of Lonsdale, which that nobleman refused to pay, in Dorothy's view because of her uncle's 'having said many disrespectful things of him and having espoused the cause of the Duke of Norfolk'.* The young Wordsworths from time to time made efforts to recover their patrimony by legal action, but Lonsdale was able, by means of his wealth and influence, to prevent justice from interfering with his eccentricities.

In the year 1787, in the December of which the *Bounty* sailed for Otaheite, Wordsworth was sent to St. John's College, Cambridge, which we have seen as the place of origin of the Anti-Slavery Movement, and where he had been preceded by his uncle Cookson, William Wilberforce, and Edward Christian. Here he had Dr. Frewen for his tutor, and again John Fleming for his friend.

The news of the mutiny of the *Bounty* reached England in 1790, when Wordsworth made his first visit to the Continent, but, as we have seen, the published correspondence of the Poet and his sister makes no reference to it.

- In 1791 William took his degree and visited London, while Dorothy was living with her uncle Cookson at Fornsett, Norfolk. In June of that year she wrote of the family affairs:

They are now in a critical state; our trial is to come on at the next Carlisle assizes, where we hope the justice of our cause will carry us through. Lord Lonsdale has retained all the best counsel, who except one, are engaged to serve him upon all occasions, and that one he had just engaged the moment before my brother went to him. We have got a very clever man on our side but as he is young he will not have much authority. His name is Christian.†

* The Duke of Norfolk, whose interest in horse-flesh earned him the title of 'Jockey of Norfolk', was the Earl of Lonsdale's rival in the politics of Penrith. Here at Greystoke Castle, John Losh was a very frequent and convivial visitor, and repaid the Duke's hospitality at his own seat of Woodside. A son of the Duke's steward, Raisley Calvert, left William Wordsworth a timely legacy in 1795, which enabled the Poet to establish a home for his sister and himself at Racedown.

† Mr. E. de Selincourt's edition of the Wordsworth correspondence is rightly regarded as a classic example of scholarship. Whenever a name however unimportant, appears in the text, which may be unfamiliar to the reader, Mr. de Selincourt provides a note identifying the newcomer.* Examples would be tedious. Yet there is no note to explain this Mr. Christian or even an attempt to provide him with any other name but his surname.

he is a friend of my Uncle, knows my brother William very well and I am very well acquainted with him, and a charming man he is; I hope, however, that what he wants in experience will be made up in zeal for our interest. You may perhaps have seen his name in the reviews; a pamphlet which he published upon the question whether Hasting's trial was to go on was highly spoken of. He is a professor of common law in the university of Cambridge.

Here Edward makes his solitary appearance in the whole of the published Wordsworth correspondence. He is shown to be a friend of Canon Cookson and William, and to stand high in Dorothy's good graces, but yet there is no mention of him before or after this letter, despite the interest of the Wordsworth family in his vindication of Fletcher Christian. It is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the friendships of William and Dorothy were generally long, and very often life-long. Another and frequent visitor to the Rectory at Fornsett about this time was Wilberforce, who gave Dorothy 'a little treatise on Regeneration' and Mrs. Trimmer's *Oeconomy of Charity*, and so aroused speculation as to his intentions from Dorothy's friend, Jane Pollard,

In 1791 Wordsworth visited France, but his accounts of his stay do not include any mention of Annette Vallon. The autobiography states simply:

In the summer of 1791 I went to Paris, where I stayed some little time, and then went to Orleans, with a view of being out of the way of my own countrymen, that I might learn to speak the language fluently. At Orleans, and Blois, and Paris, on my return I passed fifteen or sixteen months. It was a stirring time. The king was dethroned when I was at Blois, and the massacres of September took place when I was at Orleans. But for these matters see also the Poem [The Prelude], I came home before the execution of the king.

The autobiographical 'Prelude' adds little to this account, although in describing his experiences Wordsworth gives a portrait of a French officer whose identity has been the subject of scholastic dispute, and which, I think, owes something to Fletcher Christian:

This is all the more curious, as a reference to the *Dictionary of National Biography* would have given an instant identification of this Mr. Christian, in the unlikely event of Mr. de Selincourt not being aware of it.

*One, reckoning by years,
 Was in the prime of manhood, and erewhile
 He had sat Lord in many tender hearts;
 Though heedless of such honours now, and changed:
 His temper was quite mastered by the times.
 And they had blighted him, had eaten away
 The beauty of his person, doing wrong
 Alike to body and to mind: his port,
 Which once had been erect and open, now
 Was stooping and contracted, and a face,
 By nature lovely in itself, express'd
 As much as any that was ever seen,
 A ravage out of season, made by thoughts
 Unhealthy and vexatious. At the hour,
 The most important of each day, in which
 The public news was read, the fever came,
 A punctual visitant, to shake this Man,
 Disarmed his voice, and fanned his yellow cheek
 Into a thousand colours; while he read,
 Or mused, his sword was haunted by his touch
 Continually, like an uneasy place
 In his own body.*

In the version actually published by the Poet the passage in roman was altered to read:

*With the hour,
 That from the press of Paris duly brought
 Its freight of public news . . .*

The Annette episode does not concern us, except as an example of the Wordsworths' skill in suppression, but other connections of the Lakeland Lothario in France are interesting, as involving the family of Losh, and through them the Christians. After arriving in France, Wordsworth had written in December, 1791:

I was at the national assembly introduced by a member of whose acquaintance I shall profit when I return to Paris,' This probably refers to Brissot, who had visited England and become friendly with the supporters of the anti-slavery movement, which included many of Wordsworth's friends. William returned to Paris in 1792, shortly after the September massacres, and left for England about the end of the year, his child by Annette having been born in December. His nephew, the bishop, accounts for his departure thus: 'Happily for him, circumstances obliged him to return to England. If he had remained longer in the French capital, he

would, in all probability, have fallen a victim among the Brissotins, with whom he was intimately connected, and who were cut off by their rivals, the Jacobins, at the close of the following May.' But Christopher hints at even more dangerous associations:

Wordsworth's condition in France was a very critical one: he was an orphan, young, inexperienced, impetuous, enthusiastic, with no friendly voice to guide him, in a foreign country, and that country in a state of revolution, it must be remembered, had not only taken up arms against the Monarchy and other ancient institutions, but had declared war against Christianity. The most licentious theories were propounded; all restraints were broken; libertinism was kw. He was encompassed with strong temptations; and although it is not the design of the present work to chronicle the events of his life except so far as they illustrate his writings, yet I could not pass over this period of it without noticing the dangers which surround those who in an ardent emotion of enthusiasm put themselves in a position of peril without due consideration of the circumstances which ought to regulate their practice.

But if the facts were as stated, there was no need for further concealment or apology, as the connection with the Brissotins had been acknowledged by the Poet in his *Prelude'. This passage, it is interesting to note, aroused the suspicions of Mr. Herbert Read, in his study of Wordsworth, and he is plainly of the opinion that the full story of the Poet's activities in France is yet to be told.

Wordsworth's life-long friend, James Losh, also arrived in Paris in the autumn of 1792, and may have been the young Englishman with whom Wordsworth is believed to have associated in France. At this time Losh himself was in some danger from the Parisian mob, but was saved, according to common report, by none other than Jean Paul Marat. The second part of the story has been denied, with that reluctance to admit acquaintance with the evil genius of the Revolution which was subsequently shown by many Englishmen. Yet Marat had visited the Loshes at their home of Woodside, had formed political associations in Penrith, the home of the young Wordsworth, where John Losh visited the 'Jockey of Norfolk'; Carlisle, with which the Losh family was intimately connected; and Newcastle, where they had great interests, and where James eventually settled, practising as a barrister, and prominent in local Unitarian circles. During the preceding years Marat had been on

intimate terms with Brissot, who was, as we have seen, acquainted with the Abolitionists in England, and with whose followers Wordsworth is admitted by his nephew to have associated.

John Losh, in particular, who had studied chemistry in Paris, had many possible points of contact with Marat. The chronicler of the Losh family describes his interest, scientific as well as sporting, in horses and horse-racing, and elsewhere drily recounts of Marat that 'his knowledge of horse-flesh gave him an entree to the higher circles'. John Losh, together with his friend John Christian, was a member of the Society of Friends of the People, with which, and with similar institutions in Carlisle, Penrith, and Newcastle, Marat was associated. At this time freemasonry was used on the Continent as a means of spreading advanced political views, and both Marat and John Losh were keenly interested in the craft, the former being a member of the Grand Lodge, London, while the latter became Master of the Carlisle Lodge.

There is confirmation of this connection of Wordsworth with Marat in a report by Alaric Watts which tells how he met in Paris an old Republican called Bailey. This man claimed that he himself had advised the Poet that his association with the *Mountain*, of which Marat was a prominent member, would lead to his arrest, whereupon he promptly decamped. The Gironde in fact appeared at this time likely to come out on top, and Marat was actually arrested and brought before the Tribunal in April, 1793. Unfortunately for many of his fellow-citizens, however, he was acquitted, and continued his career until it was ended by the knife of Charlotte Corday later in the year.

The Poet's version of his leaving France, as revealed in his 'Prelude', runs:

*Dragged by a chain of harsh necessity,
So seemed it,—now I thankfully acknowledge,
Forced by the gracious Providence of Heaven,—
To England I returned, else (though assured
That I both was and must be of small weight.
No better than a landsman on the deck
Of a ship struggling with a hideous storm)
Doubtless, I should then have made common cause
With some who perished.*

CHAPTER XIX

On that occasion, as on many others, he [William J Pordsworth] expressed an opinion that a poet's Life is written in his WORKS; and this is undoubtedly true, in a remarkable manner, in his own particular case.—CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH: MEMOIRS OF WM. WORDSWORTH

WORDSWORTH himself deals very abruptly in his autobiography with his life after his return from France, simply remarking that he 'passed the subsequent time among my friends in London and elsewhere, till I settled with my only sister at Racedown in Dorsetshire in the year 1796*. This latter event, however, took place in 1795, not 1796.

The family correspondence and other sources of information have added to our knowledge of his life during this period, but Professor Harper had to write that 'Wordsworth's life in 1793 is shrouded with a degree of mystery that is itself mysterious. A poet in his twenty-fourth year is not likely to live without warm friends and curious acquaintances, is not likely to withdraw from social scenes, or to be a niggardly correspondent/ Yet William's published correspondence contains nothing between September 3rd, 1792, and February 17th, 1794. Since Professor Harper wrote the above, some letters of Dorothy's written during that period have been published, but none of William's. We know that he was engaged on a walking tour with a friend during part of 1793, and that he was in the Isle of Wight: 'During the latter part of the summer of that year, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet that was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with gloomy forebodings.'

from the Isle of Wight he is believed to have crossed to France in order to see Annette and their daughter. This visit would have entailed considerable danger, as his previous departure had

not been premature, in the light of subsequent happenings. There seems little doubt that he did actually return to France. When Carlyle was writing his *French Revolution*, many years later, Wordsworth gave him an account of the execution of Gorsas, which took place at about this time, and which convinced Carlyle that he had been in Paris when it happened, and there is other evidence of such a visit. Although the two countries were at war, he could probably have arranged a passage through Benjamin Holmes, Rector of Freshwater, who had been Junior Dean of St. John's during William's residence there, and was believed to know much more about the local smuggling industry than was consistent with his calling.

The gap in the correspondence is particularly unfortunate, as Dorothy was then living with her uncle Cookson, whom we have seen to have been a witness to his friend Edward Christian's defence of his brother, written during this period. At this time, it should be remembered there would be no reason, when writing a letter, to suppress the connection with the mutineer, the possibility of whose return must then have seemed utterly remote.

When William reappears, early in 1794, he is staying at Armathwaite, then the home of the family of Spedding, one of whom was the mother of Peter Heywood, whose strongly-expressed views had so provoked Bligh.

During the rest of 1794 Wordsworth travelled up and down the country, and was in the neighbourhood of the Lakes in January, 1795. From then until he settled at Racedown in October of that year is another blank period. To quote Professor Harper again, 'From January to September, 1795, Wordsworth is as completely lost to sight as if he had been locked up in Newgate or had returned to France', and 'This is very strange, for not only had he a large family connection of educated persons, and not only was he already the author of two volumes of verse, but his character was energetic, and his ambitions inclined him towards public life'. Mr. Herbert Read says of this anomaly, 'There is nothing to explain the gap in the story'. Wordsworth's published correspondence ceases in late December, 1794, and does not start again until November 20th, 1795, when he was already at Racedown, where he stayed until moving to Nether Stowey. Here took place the incidents previously discussed in connection with the writing of the 'Ancient Mariner', and the curious episode of the 'Spy Nozy'. At both places, incidentally, he was visited by

James Losh. At Racedown he wrote his unsuccessful tragedy of 'The Borderers', in which appears a curious compound of the story of the mutiny and Bligh's dispute with Purcell during the boat voyage, although the full account of this had not yet been published, together with some of the details which later appeared in the 'Ancient Mariner'. The cause of the mutiny which is given here may be that which actually inspired Christian's crime, or it may represent an incorrect version of the incident which he produced in justification to his family on his return.

Oswald

. . . On our voyage
 Was hatched among the crew a foul Conspiracy
 Against my honour, in the which our Captain,
 Was, I believed, prime Agent. The windfell;
 We lay becalmed week after week, until
 The water of the vessel was exhausted;
 I felt a double fever in my veins,
 Yet rage suppressed itself;—to a deep stillness
 Did my pride tame my pride;—for many days,
 On a dead sea under a burning sky,
 I brooded o'er my injuries, deserted
 By man and nature;—if a breeze had blown,
 It might have found its way into my heart,
 And I had been—no matter—do you mark me?*

Marmaduke

Quick—to the point—if any untold crime
 Doth haunt your memory.

Oswald

Patience, hear me further?—
 One day in silence did we drift at noon
 By a bare rock, narrow, and white, and bare;
 No food was there, no drink, no grass, no shade,
 No tree, nor jutting eminence, nor form
 Inanimate large as the body of man,
 Nor any living thing whose lot of life
 Might stretch beyond the measure of one moon.

* Compare this with the 'Ancient Mariner.'

All in a hot and copper sky,	Day after day, day after day,
The bloody Sun at noon,	We stuck, no breath, no motion;
Right up above the mast did stand,	As idle as a painted ship
No bigger than the Moon.	Upon a painted ocean.

Water, water, everywhere.
 And all the boards did shrink;
 Water, water, everywhere,
 Nor any drop to drink.

*To dig for water on the spot, the Captain
Landed with a small troop, myself being one:
There I reproached him with his treachery.
Imperious at all times, his temper rose;
He struck me; and that instant had I killed him,
And put an end to his insolence, but my Comrades
Rushed in between us: then did I insist
(All hated him, and I was stung to madness)
That we should leave him there, alive/—we did so.*

Marmaduke *And he was famished?*

Oswald *Naked was the spot;
Methinks I see it now—how in the sun
Its stony surface glittered like a shield;
And in that miserable place we left him,
Alone but for a swarm of minute creatures
Not one of which could help him while alive,
Or mourn him dead.*

Marmaduke *A man by men cast off,
Left without burial! nay, not dead nor dying,
But standing, walking, stretching forth his arms,
In all things like ourselves but in the agony
With which he called for mercy; and—even so—
He was forsaken?*

Oswald *There is a power in sounds:
The cries he uttered might have stopped the boat
That bore us through the water—*

Marmaduke *You returned
Upon that dismal hearing—did you not?*

Oswald *Some scoffed at him with hellish mockery,
And laughed so loud it seemed that the smooth sea
Did from some distant region echo us.*

Marmaduke *We all are of one bloody our veins are filled
At the same, poisonous fountain!*

Oswald *"Twos an island
Only by sufferance of the winds and waves,
Which with their foam could cover it at will.
I know not how he perished; but the calm,
The same dead calm, continued many days.*

Marmaduke *But his own crime had brought on him this doom,
His wickedness prepared it; these expedients
Are terrible, yet ours is not the fault.*

There are several streams called Carron, none of which are in England, but this, I think, must refer to that in Dumfriesshire, rising in the Lowther Hills and flowing into the Nith, as Dorothy wrote of the vicinity in 1803 that 'The heath-plant grew in abundance, of the most exquisite colour—it covered a whole hill-side, or it was in streams and patches'. In 1798, or in the following year, was written 'Ellen Irwin; or the Braes of Kirtle'. Here the identity of the setting of the poem is confirmed by an internal reference to Kirkconnell, and is again in Dumfriesshire, which we have already noticed as one of the traditional hiding-places of Fletcher Christian.

In May 1799, Coleridge wrote to a friend in England, who also knew Wordsworth, that

Wordsworth and his sister passed through here (Gottingen) as I have informed you: I walked on with them five English miles, and spent a day with them. They were melancholy and hypp'd. He was affected to tears at the thought of not being near me—wished me, of course, to live in the north of England near them and Sir Frederic Vane's great library.... He deemed the vicinity of a library absolutely necessary to his health, nay, to his existence.

Although this presupposes a certain intimacy between Wordsworth and the Baronet (Sir Frederick *Fletcher-Vane*), as he offers the use of his library to Coleridge, I have been unable to find any reference in the published Wordsworth papers to Sir Frederick or to his library, although it seems probable that it would be used by Wordsworth during the next few years in the Lake District. The friendship must have been close, in view of Wordsworth's method of handling books—De Quincey records seeing him cut open the pages of a new book with a butter-knife that had just been used for its legitimate purpose*—and Coleridge's habit of copious annotation, not likely to appeal to the collector of 1799.

At the end of this year the Wordsworths settled at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, which was to be their home until 1808. In April, 1801, William wrote: 'Since I left Cambridge my time has been spent in travelling upon the Continent and in England; and in occasional residences in London, and in different parts of England and Wales/ This would imply that he had not been in Scotland,

* Wordsworth himself appears to have considered that his attitude in handling books represented a happy, and even ideal, compromise between excessive care and thoughtless irreverence.

but as we have seen, there is strong evidence of at least one visit before 1800, and most probably before October, 1795, as his movements are almost completely known after that date.

The 'bad Earl' of Lonsdale died in 1802, and the Wordsworths revived their claim against him, including interest, which was eventually agreed by his successor at a lower figure. In 1803 William and Dorothy toured Scotland, and in the manuscript of Dorothy's account of their journey there are these references to a previous visit to that country made by William in 1801.

Writing on the same window-ledge on which Wm. had written to me 2 years before.

Wm. had spoken to me 2 years before of the pleasure he had received from the hether plant in that very place.

Stopped at the front door, as William had done 2 years before with Sir William Rush's family.

The last reference indicates that he made the journey in order to be present at the wedding of his friend Basil Montague with a daughter of Sir William at Glasgow. But there is no mention of this in the correspondence, and in the account of the tour in 1803 it is implied, apart from the three extracts quoted, that William had not travelled that way previously, as there is no mention of previous visits to places of interest on the way, and it is recorded that guides were frequently employed. At Dumfries the grave of Burns inspired Wordsworth as if seen for the first time, although he had passed that way at least once, two years previously, and his enthusiasm for the Scottish poet, 'whose light I hailed when first it shone', was of long standing. Since Wordsworth's movements are well established since October, 1795, his probable early visit or visits to Dumfriesshire (as revealed in * *She dwelt among the untrodden ways* and * *Ellen Irwin**) must have taken place during the lifetime of Burns, who died in 1797. If this is so, it seems strange that Wordsworth did not visit or obtain a sight of him, while his omission to see the grave during his journey of 1801 is inexplicable.

It was on this tour of 1803 that Wordsworth began his long friendship with Walter Scott, although here there is a hint of a previous meeting. Dorothy and he, says Lockhart, Scott's son-in-law,* on the morning of the 17th of September,' walked down

*He superintended Murray's 'Family Library' in which series Barrow's *Mutiny of the Bounty* first appeared.

the valley to Lasswade, and arrived there before Mr. and Mrs. Scott had risen . . .' and 'they met as if they had not been strangers'.

It is interesting to note that Scott had visited Dumfriesshire in March, 1795, which we have seen to be a likely time for Wordsworth's presence in that neighbourhood.

In the autumn of 1805 Scott visited Wordsworth, and about this time occurred a pleasing incident which shows the change in relations between the Wordsworths and the Lowthers since the death of the 'bad Earl', whose successor had married a daughter of the Earl of Westmorland and was thus a connection of the Fletcher-Vanes. Here is Christopher Wordsworth's account:

At the head of Ulleswater, on the east side, stands the magnificent hill called Place Fell. Under it was a small cottage and a little estate which attracted his [William's] attention; and, hearing it might be purchased, he made an offer of a certain sum (800*l.*) to the owner of it. But the possessor would not accept less than 1000*l.* This Wordsworth did not think it prudent to give. It happened, by chance, that the late Earl Lonsdale who was not then acquainted with Wordsworth, heard at Lowther of the Poet's wish to possess it. Lord Lonsdale employed his neighbour, Mr. Thomas Wilkinson ... to negotiate the purchase: and with a view to completing it, and under the impression that it was to be sold for that sum, his lordship paid 800*l.* to Mr. Wordsworth's account. This unexpected act of kindness, performed in the most gratifying manner, made a deep impression on the Poet's mind. It removed every remnant of painful feeling that might still have lingered there, in connection with a name recently borne by one who had debarred him, his brothers, and sister, from the enjoyment of their patrimony for nineteen years. The name of Lonsdale, rendered more illustrious, as it now was, by the private and public virtues of its noble possessor, became henceforth an object of affectionate respect to the household at Grasmere. Nor was this mark of regard the less appreciated by the Poet, although he thought it his duty to accept the property at Paterdale only on condition of paying 800*l.* . . . and for the satisfaction of obtaining it at *this* price, he felt very thankful to Lord Lonsdale, whose donation was so far applied as to raise that sum to 1000*l.*, the sum required to complete the purchase, and he was more grateful still for the unsolicited and unlocked for generosity evinced in the proffered gift. . . .

It is difficult to account for Lonsdale's action, as the Wordsworth's original claim of £10,388 had been finally reduced to

£8,500, which at this time was still being paid by instalments. Had he considered himself as under any further obligation to the Wordsworths over his predecessor's action in withholding payment, he could have met it by admitting their claim to a larger extent. This particular benefaction affected William only, although his brothers and sister should have participated in any sum due to their father's estate. Thus the gift was made to William without any reference to his family, and there is no obvious reason for it, since William's published poetical output up to the year 1805 was hardly likely to strike enthusiasm into a man of Lonsdale's character, and his writings as yet showed no marked leanings in the direction of the political views of the Lowthers, so that it seems as though the reason for Lonsdale's gift must be some action of Wordsworth of which we have no knowledge. Many years later Wordsworth was visited by Scott and Lockhart and the latter wrote that *Mr. Wordsworth and his daughter ... conducted us ... to the noble castle of his lifelong friend and patron Lord Lonsdale'. Although the passage of time may have led to confusion, I think the passage shows that there is reason to suspect an earlier connection between the Earl and Wordsworth than was publicly acknowledged by them. Another sign of the alteration in the Lonsdale policy became apparent some years later, when Mary Lowther married a son of the 'bad Earl's' enemy, the Duke of Portland.

In 1805 the Poet wrote his 'Elegiac Stanzas, suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a storm painted by Sir George Beaumont'. The artist was a patron of William, and we have already met Lady Beaumont as the pupil of the youthful John Barrow.

There has always been some doubt as to whether the picture and poem refer to Piel Castle in Lancashire, or to Peel Castle in the Isle of Man. The poem describes as part of the scene, a ship:

The hulk which labours in the deadly swell.

This points clearly to the identification of the scene with Peel Castle, as it is impossible in the other case to reconcile the position of the ship with local topography.

This is the view now held by Wordsworthian scholars, despite statements to the contrary in early editions, and the opening lines:

/ was thy neighbour once, thou rugged pile!
Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee

are thus of interest, as they must refer to an otherwise unrecorded visit to the Isle of Man.

Despite his gift for long friendships, Wordsworth had during this period so completely severed his earlier connections with Cockermouth, his birthplace, that Dorothy could write to him a few years later, describing how in Cambridge 'we stopped at the gate of St. Johns to set down the Professor of Arabic who I afterwards learned was a Cockermouth man'. Local tradition preserves the memory of the Wordsworths' break with their past.

In 1807 the inquisitive De Quincey arrived at Dove Cottage, and began the observations which are recorded in *Recollections of the Lake Poets*. Here again there is no mention of the *Bounty*, although the affair is so obviously to the Opium-eater's taste. There is, however, a long account of the Hatfield affair and Wordsworth's connection with it. De Quincey found his curiosity at times baffled by the Poet's secretiveness, to his obvious annoyance, as upon an occasion when they visited Penrith together, and Wordsworth left him at the house of his cousin, Captain John Wordsworth, who was away at the time, and did not rejoin him until twenty-four hours later, without giving any explanation of his absence.

And now we come to the years 1808 and 1809 when the rumours of Fletcher Christian's return and visits to the district were so prevalent, but there is nothing to be learnt from the published correspondence of the Wordsworth family. In February, 1809, however, occurs the first reference to the Christians that I have been able to find since Edward's brief appearance in 1791. William writes: 'You were quite right about the Franks. Curwen* certainly misled me', and in March he ordered that a copy of his *Convention of Cintra* should be sent to Curwen, who was believed to be in London. This would argue that there was a certain intimacy, as the political views expressed in the work were unlikely to appeal to Curwen. On the 18th April William wrote from Workington to say that Curwen was there, and not in

* In Mr. de Selincourt's edition of the Wordsworth correspondence, by an odd coincidence, there is no explanation of the identity of Curwen, as was previously the case with Edward Christian, and the name does not even appear in the index. Yet as we have seen, he was a man of considerable importance, local and national.

London,* and so ends the little that the published correspondence tells us of the Christians up to the year 1809, and twenty years elapse before a further reference of any interest appears, In June, 1830, William wrote to Sir Walter Scott:

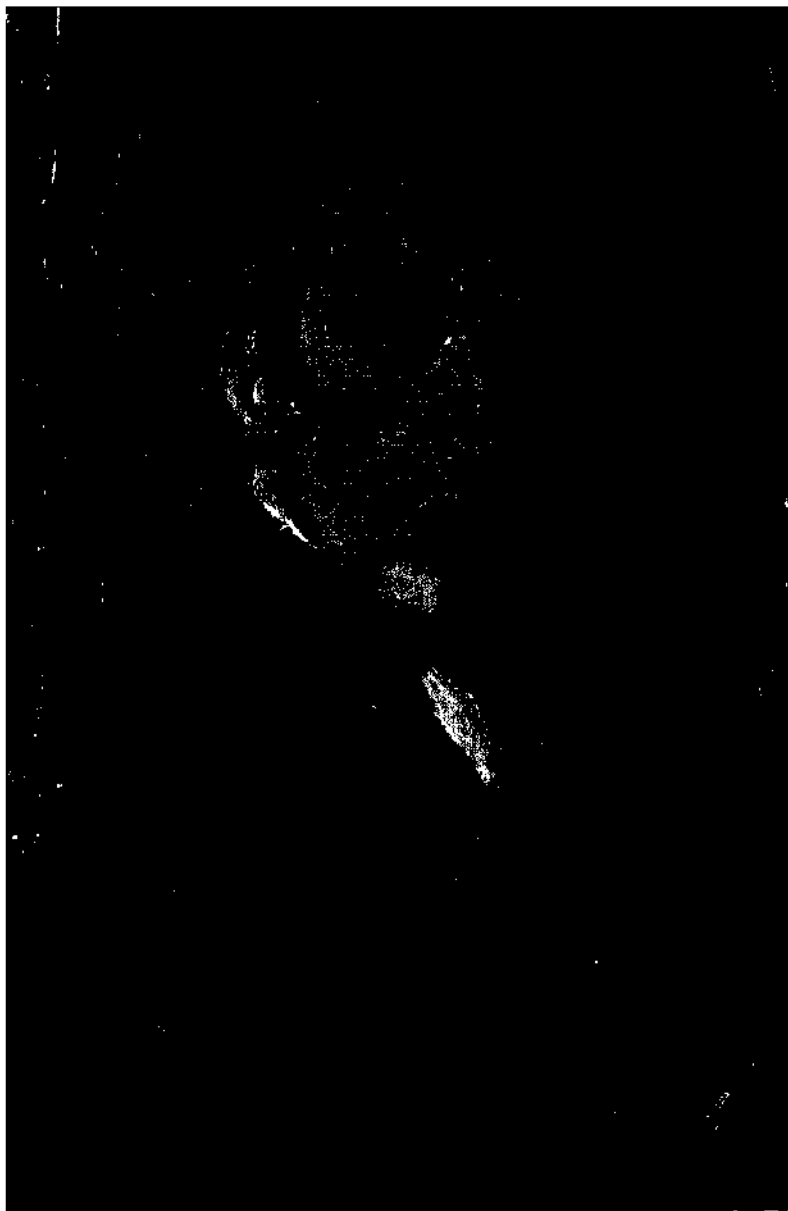
My dear Sir Walter,

Being upon a visit lately to Workington Hall, I there met with the elder brother by the Father's side of Mr. Curwen of that place—Mr. Christian of Unerigg in Cumberland, and Deemster of the Isle of Man. He asked if I was acquainted with you: I replied that I had, for thirty years, nearly, had that honor, and spoke of you with that warmth I am accustomed to feel on such an occasion. He then told me that Professor Wilson, at his request, had some time ago undertaken to write to you upon a point in which, innocently, you had been the cause of a good deal of uneasiness to him. You will guess, perhaps, that he alluded to the Novel of *Peveril of the Peak*. So it was, the conduct and character of his ancestor Christian, had there been represented, he said, in colours which were utterly at variance with the truth and threw unmerited discredit upon his family. He said that the great Historic Families of the Country were open to the Fictions of men of genius, *the facts* being known to all persons of education; but in the case of a private family like his, it was very different; a false impression was easily made, and could not be obviated or corrected in the present instance, except by an acknowledgment from the Author himself.

He added himself that had not the Novel of P. not appeared before he, by the death of his Father,† become the head of the Family, he should have written to the Author himself; but so much time had elapsed since it was published that he preferred addressing you through some Friend of yours. ... He then asked if I could take the liberty of naming it to you; and added that he was anxious that this should be done before the Edition of the Novels, now in course of Publication, came to the Peveril. He was prepared, he said, to furnish you, if you wished it, with documents unquestionably proving that Christian was entitled to, and possessed, the gratitude of the *Isle of Mannors* of his own and subsequent times, and said he was idolised in the Country as a Martyr, I suppose in a good cause. I replied that no one, I was sure, had a greater respect for ancestry than yourself, and that I could not think you would

* Mr. de Selincourt prints this letter without its place of origin, Workington, although this already had been revealed by Christopher Wordsworth in 1851.

† John Christian Curwen, who does not appear to have been inclined to discuss family history with Sir Walter.



Portrait in the possession of Mr. Maurice Dodd and exhibited by him at Wordsworth House. It is generally accepted as representing William Wordsworth in middle age. The suggestion has been tentatively put forward that it is the hitherto undiscovered portrait of the poet which Hazlitt is known to have painted. *Reproduced by permission of the owner*



The vicarage at Brigham, the parish for Moorland Close, where Wordsworth's son John settled with his wife, Isabella Curwen, the granddaughter of Isabella Christian



Washington House, Warton. The arms of the Washingtons may be seen nearby in the wall of the church

regard me as an unwarrantable intruder if I repeated his wish that some notice should be found in the following edition, by which the reader might be set right as to the real character of the person who came to so melancholy an end. Mr. Curwen (the brother as I said of the Deemster), Head by the Mother's side of that ancient House, a genealogy with which you are probably acquainted, was present at the conversation. He is a very intelligent and amiable Man, and seemed in no small degree to share the Complainant's feelings upon the occasion.

To this Sir Walter replied:

I would be most happy to receive and avail myself in this edition of any communication which Mr. Christian may be disposed to honour me with. If I had known the unfortunate Mr. Christian had a direct descendant alive I would probably have given the story a different course. But the name is little known on our northern side of the border, as is intimated by an old story. A poor woman coming into Moffat, a country village, late in the winter night knocked at several doors for quarters which the inhabitants rudely refused. At last she exclaimed aloud 'Good heaven are there no *Christians* in this place.' A window then flew and a person conceiving she enquired after the name replied Na Na woman we're na Christians here we are all Johnstones and Jardines—against which surnames the story is often told as a joke.*

If Mr. Christian is desirous of obliging me with any remarks on the subject of Mr. Christian I should be happy to have them soon, and will endeavour to make a use of them which may be agreeable to him and fair to the memory of his ancestry.

Wordsworth wrote in answer:

I feel truly obliged, dear Sir Walter, by your attention to Mr. Christian's wishes. He is perfectly satisfied. When I mentioned the matter to you I had no suspicion of an event...

What this event was will best be postponed till later, in favour of a consideration of Sir Walter's position in regard to the Christians' recriminations.

* It is difficult to see the application of the anecdote, for the fact of the native believing that 'Christian*' was used as a surname would imply that it was far from being 'little known on our northern side of the border*'. Yet I have been unable to trace any family of that name in Dumfriesshire and the story is in fact usually told of the English side of the border and in connection with 'Armstrongs and Elliotts', not 'Johnstones and Jardines'.

CHAPTER XX

How can one mind preceesely where they hoe been a the days of their life?

SIR WALTER SCOTT: OLD MORTALITY

IN the forthcoming edition of his novels Sir Walter, as good as his word, inserted into *Peveril of the Peak* an account of William Christian, supplied by the Deemster, and prefaced by the following note:

The following notices were recommended to my attention, in the politest manner possible, by John Christian, Esq., of Milntown in the Isle of Man, and Unrigg, in Cumberland, Deemster at present of the Isle of Man. This gentleman is naturally interested in the facts which are stated, as representative of the respectable family of Christian, and lineally descended from William Dhone, put to death by the Countess of Derby. I can be in no way interested in refusing Mr. Christian this justice, and willingly lend my aid to extend the exculpation of the family.

He goes on to say:

I do not conceive that I have done injury to the memory of this gentleman, or any of his descendants in his person: at the same time, I have most willingly given his representative an opportunity of stating in this edition of the Novel what he thinks necessary for the vindication of his ancestor, and the reader will find the exposition in the Notices, for which Mr. Christian desires admission. I could do no less, considering the polite and gentlemanlike manner in which he stated feelings concerning his ancestry, to which a Scotsman can hardly be supposed to be indifferent.

The account itself, as may be expected, favours the theory of William Christian's innocence; and with its publication the matter was allowed to drop. But was *Peveril* the only Waverley Novel to touch the Christian family?

We have seen how the existence of the process which enabled

Coleridge to produce 'Kubla Khan' and the 'Ancient Mariner'* was originally discovered by Ruskin, and how Scott was specifically mentioned by him as one of the great artists in whose work it was apparent.

There were few rumours and fewer secrets of the Borders of which Sir Walter had no knowledge. The story of the mutiny itself was one which would interest Scott, a lover of sensational crime, and the question of the fate of Fletcher Christian was closely concerned with localities which he knew well:

Mr. Bolton's seat, (says Lockhart) to which Canning had invited Scott, is situated a couple of miles lower down on the same Lake [Windermere]; and thither Mr. Wilson conducted him next day. A large company had been assembled there in honour of the Minister—it included already Mr. Wordsworth and Mr. Southey. It has not, I suppose, often happened to a plain English merchant, wholly the architect of his own fortunes, to entertain at one time so many illustrious names. He was proud of his guests: they respected him, and honoured and loved each other; and it would have been difficult to say which star in the constellation shone with the brightest or the softest light. There was 'high discourse', intermingled with as gay flashings of courtly wit as ever Canning displayed; and a plentiful allowance, on all sides, of those airy transient pleasantries, in which the fancy of poets, however wise and grave, delights to run riot when they are sure not to be misunderstood. There were beautiful and accomplished women to adorn and enjoy this circle. The weather was as Elysian as the scenery. There were brilliant cavalcades through the woods in the mornings, and delicious boatings on the Lake by moonlight; and the last day 'the Admiral of the Lake'* presided over one of the most splendid regattas that ever enlivened Windermere. Perhaps there were not fewer than fifty barges following in the Professor's radiant procession, when it paused at the point of Storrs to admit into the place of honour the vessel that carried proud and happy Mr. Bolton and his guests. The three bards of the Lakes led the cheers that hailed Scott and Canning; and music and sunshine, flags, streamers, and gay dresses, the merry hum of voices, and the rapid splashing of innumerable oars, made up a dazzling mixture of sensations as the flotilla wound its way among the richly-foliaged islands, and along bays and promontories peopled with enthusiastic spectators.

The strong Tory flavour of these proceedings would doubtless

* Professor Wilson, otherwise 'Christopher North', of *Noctes Ambrosianae*.

lack charm for Mr. Christian Curwen, although the family were on good terms with Professor Wilson, but Scott must have learnt on this, if not on other visits, of the owner of Belle Isle and his origin. Of Edward Christian, too, the legal antiquary and editor of *Blackstone*, Scott must have heard, and his disclaimer of knowledge of the family history cannot be taken seriously, when one bears in mind his tastes and memory, together with the interest in the family which he evinced in *Peveril of the Peak*.

Of the Waverley Novels, *Guy Mannering* is the obvious choice for examination, as dealing with the Solway Firth and Galloway in general, and Dumfriesshire, a legendary hiding-place of the mutineer, in particular.

Much is known of the origins of the novel and its character. A famous law case, for example, of which an account is given in Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*, involving the inheritance of the Earldom of Anglesea,* provided Scott with much of the plot and many of the names of the characters. Thus Henry Brown of the law case becomes Henry Bartram, alias Vanbeeste Brown, of the novel, MacMullan is changed to MacMorlan, and Jans, Kennedy and Barnes are used without alteration. Curiously enough, Scott himself, in his 'Introduction', while discussing the origins of the novel, never refers to this case, although it was obviously in his mind when he wrote it. It would thus seem that these memories, numerous and direct, had become part of Scott's material although he himself had forgotten their source.

Guy Mannering, published in 1815, opens with a young Englishman who, in November, 17—,

had visited some monastic ruins in the county of Dumfries, and spent much of the day in making drawings of them from various points; so that on remounting his horse to resume his journey the brief and gloomy twilight of the season had already commenced. His way lay through a wide tract of black moss extending for miles on either side and before him. Little eminences arose like islands on its surface, bearing here and there patches of corn, which even at this season was green, and sometimes a hut, or farm-house, shaded by a willow or two, and surrounded by large elder-bushes. These insulated dwellings communicated with each other by winding passages through the moss, impassible by any but the natives themselves.

* By a coincidence, *Peregrine Pickle* also contains the *Memoirs of a Lady of Quality*, by the notorious Lady Vane, who married a member of the family of that name which we have seen to be connected with the Fletchers,

The visitor *finds* himself benighted, and eventually receives shelter at the house of one of the local gentry, the Laird of Elian-gowan, described as *the possessor of a list of forefathers which ascended so high that they were lost in the barbarous ages of Galwegian independence'. While here he meets a smuggler, whose character Scott is stated to have taken from a Dutch free-trader, well-known in the Solway, named Yawkins. Like his prototype, Scott's smuggler has business connections with the Isle of Man, and is described by the Laird, with questionable mathematical accuracy, as 'half Manks, half Dutchman, half devil! run out the boltsprit, up main-sail, top and top-gallant sails, royals and skyscrapers, and away—follow who can!'

There is now a gap in the action of the novel for seventeen years, and then another visitor comes to the neighbourhood, to find the smuggler a fugitive, for the murder of a revenue officer.* He meets the character referred to by Skene in an account of a visit to Mojflfatdale with Scott: 'It was also in the course of this excursion that we encountered that amusing personage introduced into Guy Mannering as "Tod Gabbie", though the appellation by which he was known in the neighbourhood was "Tod Willie". He was one of those itinerants who gain a subsistence by relieving them of foxes, polecats, and the like depradators—a half-witted, stuttering, and most original creature/

But Scott has made his character sinister and formidable, and given him the unlikely past of a deserter from the Navy who has fought against his country. The young stranger asks:

'Is he of this country?'

'Na, na, he's but shortly in office; but he's a fell hunter—he's frae down the country, some gate on the Dumfries side.'

'And what's his name, pray?'

'Gabriel.'

'But Gabriel what?'

'Oh, Lord kens that, we dinna mind folks afternames muckle here, they run so muckle into clans.'

'Ye see, sir,' said an old shepherd, rising and speaking very slow, 'the folks hereabouts are a' Armstrongs and Elliots,* and sic like—twa or three given names—and so, for distinctions sake, the lairds and farmers have the names of their places that they live at, . . .' The asterisk is Sir Walter's, and refers

* Scott obtained much information used in *Guy Mannering* from a revenue officer, who knew the district well.

the reader to a note, in which we meet a previous acquaintance:

Clan Surnames.

The distinction of individuals by nicknames, when they possess no property, was necessary from the number of persons having the same name.

It is told as a well-known jest, that a beggar-woman, repulsed from door to door as she solicited quarters through a village in Annandale, asked, in her despair, if there were no Christians in the place. To which the hearers, concluding that she inquired for some persons so surnamed, answered, 'Na, na, there are nae Christians here; we are all Johnstones and Jardines.'¹

In this connection the anecdote is more appropriate than in the other case we have seen, but is still liable to the same objection if the surname Christian is indeed unknown in the country.

The stranger then sails from Portanferry, which Scott says 'the reader will in vain seek for under that name in the county map', and at which much of the action of the novel takes place. He lands at Allonby, in Cumberland, near Ewanrigg and Ellenborough, from whence he returns across the Solway. The episode lacks connection with the plot as a whole, to an extent unusual with Scott. There is another reference to the English side of the Border, for a principal character, Colonel Mannerling, receives a letter from a friend, who lives beside one of the Westmorland lakes, which contains, amongst other matter, the complaint that,

on the other side of the lake, nearly opposite to Mervyn-hall, is a d—d cake-house, the resort of walking gentlemen of all descriptions, poets, players, painters, musicians, who come to rave, and recite, and madden, about this picturesque land of ours. It is paying some penalty for its beauties that they are the means of drawing this swarm of coxcombs together.

This seems a little unkind to Sir Walter's friends in that neighbourhood.

Thus Scott, in writing his Galloway novel, used some mental association, conscious or unconscious, between Dumfriesshire and a Westmorland lake, and with the neighbourhood of Ellenborough. He has also twice revealed a connection between Dumfriesshire and a fugitive from the consequences of nautical crimes, and in one of these cases has incorporated an anecdote involving the name of Christian.

There is another of Scott's novels, some of whose action takes

place in neighbourhoods associated with Fletcher Christian. In *Redgauntlet*, Alan Fairford boards a smuggler's brig at Annan, in Dumfriesshire. Its captain is depicted as a scholar, with a good knowledge of Sallust and Juvenal. Fairford is landed at the mouth of the Wampool, at which Anthonne is situated, where the smuggling industry is shown to be controlled by one Father Crackanthorp. Again this seems a little hard on Wordsworth, of whose kinship with the great local family of that name Scott must have known, and to Dorothy, as the industrial magnate has, we are informed, a daughter Doll, 'a rare wench*'. One of the smugglers, too, bears the name of Lowther. At the headquarters of this Father Crackanthorp occurs the climax of the novel, the appearance of Prince Charles Edward, secretly revisiting England twenty years after the '45 rebellion.

Here we have a connection in Sir Walter's mind between Dumfriesshire, Anthonne, a gentleman smuggler, an eminent fugitive, and Wordsworth.

It is interesting to see that Scott gives the Jacobite ladies who shelter the Pretender the name of Arthuret. This he must have taken from a house of that name which was a notorious centre of Jacobite intrigue in the Border.

It is thus possible to trace associations in Scott's mind, and beyond that it is difficult to proceed, as such information as he possessed would be acquired by word of mouth and cannot be traced like the annotated reading of Coleridge. But it is certain that the younger Christians resented his references to their family in *Pevekil of the Peak*, if not in other novels, and that their remonstrance was ably represented by Wordsworth to the culprit, who showed praiseworthy restraint in the correspondence by refraining from any reference to the mutineer.

By a curious coincidence there is another great novel by a famous Scot which deals with Galloway. Robert Louis Stevenson, whose family had been associated with Sir Walter, and who had himself known the son of that Skene with whom Scott had met Tod Willie, had travelled in the neighbourhood, and used it as the scene of his *Master of Ballantrae*.

Ballantrae lies not on the Solway Firth itself, as stated in the novel, but on the west coast, to the north of Portnessock. The plot concerns the house of Durrisdeer, the family of Durie:

*Kittle folk are the Durrisdeers,
They ride with ower mony spears.*

and even bears some resemblance to the story of Fletcher Christian, as it is mainly concerned with the reappearances from afar of the black sheep of the family, a fugitive from justice. In one of his adventures he deposes the captain of a ship, and in another episode returns home claiming to have sailed there direct from France, but is discovered to have been picked up by a smuggling vessel at Cockermouth, Christian's birthplace, although Stevenson well knew that it lay inland and was not a port, having himself visited it some years previously and described how 'I turned up a lane, and found myself following the course of the bright little river', which obviously could not be used by shipping. The scene in which the fugitive's lie is exposed ends with the words, 'We can do no less than drink to the King's health and bounty.'

When one finds that Durisdeer is actually on the river Carron, and remembers that Stevenson had also visited Otaheite, it is difficult not to speculate on the possibility of his having heard from his family or from Skene of the return of Fletcher Christian, and incorporating some of his memories in the *Master of Ballantrae*.

Stevenson himself described the genesis of his story in the following cryptic terms:

The man who should thus be buried was the first question: a good man, whose return to life should be hailed by the reader and the other characters with gladness? This trenched upon the Christian picture and was dismissed.

CHAPTER XXI

Our long voyage of discovery is over and our bark has drooped her weary sails in port at last.

SIR JAMES FRAZER: THE GOLDEN BOUGH

WITH the knowledge thus gained of the background of the story of the *Bounty*-, it may be possible to attempt an account of the career of Fletcher Christian after his landing at Pitcairn.

That he did not die on the island seems as clear as that he had opportunities for escape. Life on Pitcairn had little to offer a man of his origin and abilities, and he could very likely foresee that few men, if any, would survive the first years of the colony. Most probably he took advantage of a chance of escape to a passing ship, which would almost certainly be a whaler, in one of the boats of the *Bounty*. He would presumably be in the possession of the ducats intended by the Admiralty to purchase plants in the East Indies, as well as any other money carried by the ship, as they were not removed from the ship by Bligh, and are not recorded as ever subsequently appearing on Pitcairn.* These would ensure him a welcome, a passage, and silence- as to his arrival on board.

In the meantime Edward Christian, strongly supported by the Wordsworth family and their friends, was preparing his attack on Bligh. The statements that the seafaring witnesses afterwards made to Bligh show that they were brought before Edward Christian, where he, presumably in the presence of one of his guarantors, interrogated them, 'Mr. Edward Christian sent for me', or 'I was sent for by Mr. Edward Christian', said Coleman, Smith, and Lebogue. When the profession and habits of such men are considered, it will appear that the assembling of their

* Before the *Bounty* was burnt, copper nails were extracted from her, and were afterwards used by the islanders as a medium of exchange.

testimony in this fashion would involve considerable organisation. Of the two families, Wordsworths and Christians, William Wordsworth, down from Cambridge without a career, was the obvious choice for the task of finding the witnesses and bringing them to Edward and his friends, and later developments would account for the absence of any correspondence of Wordsworth's which would reveal his connection with the affair, and for the scarcity of knowledge concerning his movements during much of this period, which ends early in 1794 when he is found at the home of Heywood's family.

Edward Christian's publication came out in 1794, followed by Bligh's reply, which was left unanswered, and early in the next year Wordsworth disappeared from the knowledge of posterity for over nine months. Since his movements are known from his settling at Racedown in October, 1795, to his return from Germany in 1799, his suspected visits to Bristol, Nether Stowey, and Dumfriesshire may be ascribed to these months. It is also the most probable occasion for the interest in his activities shown by the authorities at Bow Street, which may have been instigated by Richard Ford's patron, the first Earl of Lonsdale, enemy of the Curwens and Fletchers, and might account for the departure to the Continent of the two poets while *Lyrical Ballads* was being published. The entry in Coleridge's notebook and the subsequent poem indicate that he had learnt of Christian's return before the end of 1797, and an association between the fugitive and Wordsworth during 1795 would account for much of the mystery which surrounds the Poet during the greater part of that year. Wordsworth was still without a career, and would again be the choice of the two families in any business requiring delicate handling.

The poem and the fact of its publication would imply that Christian had left the country by 1798, and was thus in safety. The absence of reference to the East Indiaman *Earl of Abergavenny* in the family correspondence during this period, although William's favourite brother, John, served on board her, and she was commanded by his cousin,* Captain John Wordsworth of Whitehaven, may be due to the presence on board of Fletcher for one or more voyages. Bristol, it will be noticed, was

* There are several references to the ship before and after this period. It is tempting to identify the two John Wordsworths with the Pilot and the Pilot's boy of the poem.

a suitable port from which to embark for the United States where he had several connections, and where his first cousin, Thomas Law, was high in the favour of his kinsman, George Washington.

While at Nether Stowey, Wordsworth was the subject of the attention of the Home Office spy. Unfortunately, as we have seen, his reports have been removed from the files, probably by the Duke of Portland, mindful of his old alliance with Curwen and Fletcher against his enemy Lowther; and we may never learn the identity of the 'Great Counsellor from London* who visited the Poet, although Edward Law seems a strong possibility.

In 1801, the curious circumstances connected with Wordsworth's visit to Scotland during that year point to the return of Christian to his reputed hiding-place of Dumfriesshire, where, as we have seen, he had connections. If this is so, he would in all probability have been in the near vicinity of his distant kinsman, George Johnston, who was later to deal so firmly with Bligh in Australia, and who was in Britain during the period 1801-3. In view of his family connection with Annandale, which he commemorated by calling his Australian estate by that name, he must have spent part at least of that time in the neighbourhood of his birthplace, near Dumfries. With the Scottish interest in genealogy, he would in any case have known of his relationship to the mutineer, and this may subsequently have influenced his actions.* There are indications in Bligh's correspondence that he considered his enemies in New South Wales to have connections in England inimical to himself, and he may have had better reason than he knew to 'Curse the day I ever knew a Christian or a Heywood or indeed a Manksman', as he wrote to his wife, somewhat tactlessly, since he had first met the lady when on a visit to the Island.

With the death of the 'bad Earl' in 1802, a change came over the relations of the Lowthers and the friends of Christian. The heir, as we have seen, settled the debt outstanding to the Wordsworths, and even made the offer of a substantial gift to William, under such circumstances as to indicate some previous obligation to the Poet, other than the debt. Since his local influence was such that Fletcher Christian could hardly dare to visit the Lake District without his connivance, it seems that the new master of Lowther was friendly to the fugitive, who actually spent some time on a Lonsdale estate at Anthorne, and this

* Johnston has been described as 'easily led*.

sympathy may account for the Earl's generosity to Wordsworth. In view of the strong Whig opinions of Curwen, a corresponding Tory influence such as that of the Lowthers in favour of Christian is necessary to account for the unanimous local agreement to condone his return to a district where political feeling ran high.

In 1808, the start of Christian's repeated visits to the Lake District, and his recognition by Heywood in Plymouth about the same time, may be the result of a return to England from some distance, following news of the departure of Bligh in 1806 for New South Wales. At any rate, he seems to have regarded himself as in no very great danger, and moved about his own country with confidence. But in 1809, the year in which the Duke of Portland was succeeded as Prime Minister by Spencer Perceval, when the Earl of Westmorland was Lord Privy Seal and Ellenborough Lord Chief Justice; and when Viscount Lowther went to the Admiralty, where Croker, under no illusions as to Bligh's character, had joined Barrow in the secretaryship, there came disaster.

When Christian's friends in high places read Folger's report of the discovery of Pitcairn, they must at first have thought that events had fallen out as favourably as they could possibly hope, for the friendly Adams had been the only survivor of the mutineers, and had told the visitors of Christian's death. But as they read on it must have been with horror that they found the conflicting account given by the American second mate. The publication of the report was clearly liable to cause inquiry, so no steps were taken, and it was only gradually that the news leaked out. In this respect it is difficult to understand the fate of Mary Russell Mitford's poem, 'Christina', published about this time, as she afterwards remarked complacently that a large edition was sold. Yet the poem was not reprinted in England, and is generally regarded as a failure, although it ran through many editions in the United States.

Captains Staines and Pipon, cruising in the vicinity in search of an enemy ship, were allowed by the Admiralty to remain ignorant of the precise position of Pitcairn and of the existence of its colony, but after their accidental discovery of the island there was no hope of further concealment, and the news was released to arouse great interest.

In the meantime one result of the arrival of Folger's report was that Christian's visits to the Lake District ceased, or that greater

secrecy was used, for after this date there is only tradition for a guide, and nothing definite can be learnt. There is a legend, which still persists, that the mutiny of the *Bounty* is in some way connected with the rise of the Mormons in the United States. William Fletcher refers to a belief that Brigham Young, the Mormon leader, was a lineal descendant of Young the midshipman. But the name *Brigham' points rather to Fletcher Christian, Moorland Close being in that parish, as William Fletcher must have realised, together with the fact that in neither case can the dates and circumstances of the Mormon's birth be reconciled with the theory. It would thus appear to be yet another of William Fletcher's eccentricities. But by a curious coincidence there was another character in the story who was slightly but definitely connected with the Mormons, for Wordsworth wrote to a friend in America:

Do you know anything of a wretched set of religionists in your country, *Superstitionists*,^l ought to say, called Mormonites, or latter-day saints? Would you believe it? a niece of Mrs. Wordsworth's has just embarked, we believe in Liverpool, with a set of the deluded followers of that wretch, in an attempt to join their society. Her name is——, a young woman of good abilities and well-educated, but early in life she took from her mother and her connections a methodistic turn, and has gone on a course of what she supposes to be piety till she has come to this miserable close. If you should by chance hear anything about her, pray let us know.

And so ends the little that can be learnt about the career of Fletcher Christian after he escaped from Pitcairn. It seems strange that no further details have ever been revealed, although it does appear that definite efforts were made by Lady Belcher and William Fletcher, at least, to obscure the facts, and there are traces even of much more recent suppression. Concerning a possible reason for this I have no theory to offer, and prefer to close with an account of the event to which Wordsworth referred in his letter to Scott. Here is Dorothy Wordsworth telling of it:

Know then that my eldest nephew, John Wordsworth of Rydal, is engaged to be married to Miss Curwen, the eldest daughter of Mr. Curwen of Workington and Belle Isle. The acquaintance began some months ago in consequence of John's being, at Moresby, a neighbour of the Curwen Family, but the engagement has not been of long standing: and the marriage will most likely be before the end of October. During Dora's stay with her brother, she saw

a good deal of Miss Curwen, visited several times at Workington Hall, and spent a few days there at one time, and very much did Miss C. and she take to each other. John was then a hearty admirer: but it was not till after his sister had left him that he ventured to offer himself to the young lady. She immediately accepted his addresses on condition of parents' approval. This was immediately granted on the side of *her* parents i.e., as soon as it was made known to them; but before that time John's Father and Mother had discouraged him most decidedly; they disapproving very much of long protracted engagements; and John's present preferment being so small as to render marriage—without first waiting for a better Living—a very imprudent step, unless matters were made easy in another way. On this account my Brother and Sister (and we all joined in giving such counsel) advised John not to follow up the proposal already made to Miss C. by laying it before her Father. In the meantime, however, she herself had opened out her mind; and both her Father and Mother willingly, *nay joyfully*, gave their consent—and not only so. Mr. Curwen proposed to do anything in his power to render the accomplishment of the young Peoples' wishes easy to them. About this time Mr. Curwen's Family was removing from Workington to Belle Isle: but strange as it may appear we had never been in his company; for, until the old man's death,* he lived quite retired. My brother had visited him when at Moresby in the Spring, but even *he* had never had any other intercourse with Mr. Curwen; but our *Family-meeting* at Rydall Mount was really like a meeting of old Friends.

Nothing could be kinder or more affectionate than the manners of both Father and Mother—and, as to their Daughter, we were all charmed with the sweetness of *her* manners and deportment... .

The italics are Dorothy's.

Of John she says:

Never was there so happy a Creature as he appears to be at this moment. Sincerely do I hope and pray that he may prove worthy of the treasure he has obtained in the affections of as pure minded and amiable a woman as ever I had an opportunity of knowing.

Mr. Curwen is reported to be 'quite delighted with the connexion*.

On the 5th Isabella called here in a little carriage given her by her Father, to take up Dora, and she (the Bride elect) and Bridesmaid proceeded to Workington Hall. They both looked very pretty

* John Christian Curwen.

and very interesting—seated side-by-side and driven by a servant on one of the horses.

.

Five carriages conveyed the Parties to Church—Servants perched outside—Mr. Curwen, Dora and Isabella in the first carriage—postillions and Servants wore favours. All Workington was abroad making a lane for the carriages to drive through—some on house-tops—all the windows crowded—The people shouted Hurra! Curwen for ever! and the two young brothers of the Bride outside her Carriage kept off their hats smiling and bowing all the way.

Fifty people sat down to Breakfast. Then departed the Bride and Bridegroom for Scotland ... on their way from Church they scattered silver among the people according to the Family custom at W. Hall. Guns were fired, and ships in the harbour hoisted their flags.

After the engagement William had written that:

Lord Lonsdale, to whom I mentioned my son's intended Marriage, naming (as I was at liberty to do in *that* case) the Lady,* has written to me in answer with that feeling and delicacy which mark the movement of his mind and the actions of his life. He is one of the best and most amiable of men; and I should detest myself if I could fail in gratitude for his goodness to me upon all occasions.

And after the marriage:

Were you ever told that my son is building a parsonage house upon a small Living, to which he was lately presented by the Earl of Lonsdale? The situation is beautiful..

The Living was that of Brigham.

.

So to the unforgettable scenes already associated with the *Bounty* we may venture to add another, but it is not as clear as that when the beauty of a night in the South Sea cast its spell over Bligh and Fryer, as they chatted of the homeward voyage, while beneath them the tormented Christian waited vainly to leave the ship with his raft, and began to think of another and more terrible remedy for his misery; or that when the crew of the launch at last saw the land they longed for, or when Christian in Plymouth turned to find Heywood behind him.

*The reconciliation between Curwen and Lowther, Whig and Tory was evidently complete.

Somewhere, in the year 1795, Christian and Wordsworth must have met. It was probably in Bristol that the meeting took place and Wordsworth had made his plans well, since only a suspicion of his visit has come down to us, and Christian safely reached his haven in Dumfriesshire by way of Nether Stowey. One can only speculate whether they met on the open quay, or in some dockside inn, in daylight or in darkness, but the vagueness of their background heightens the attraction of the scene when the two men recognized each other.

.

Another Isabella Curwen marries, and our story comes to an end. The fiddle of Byrn has long been silent, and the charred timbers of the *Bounty* lie far away under the sea. Sailors and poets, lawyers and divines, statesmen and heiresses, have all gone to their place, leaving their strange story behind them. The Wordsworth-Curwen strain has died out long ago, although as late as 1915 a Wordsworth was christened with the name of Curwen, but Pitcairn still faces the Pacific swell as it did when Fletcher Christian left his Otaheitan wife and climbed to his look-out to watch for shipping, half in fear, half in hope, thinking of another island and its Isabella, whom he might never see again.

APPENDIX A

THE ORIGINAL VERSION OF THE 'ANCIENT MARINER'

The Rime of the Ancyent Marinere In Seven Parts

ARGUMENT

HOW a Ship having passed the Line was driven by Storms to the cold Country towards the South Pole; and how from thence she made her course to the Tropical Latitude of the Great Pacific Ocean; and of the strange things that befell; and in what manner the Ancyent Marinere came back to his own Country.

I

*It is an ancyent Marinere,
And he stoppeth one of three:
'By thy long grey beard and thy glittering eye
'Now wherefore stoppest me?*

*'The Bridegroom's doors are open'd wide,
'And I am next of kin:
'The Guests are met, the Feast is set,—
'May'st hear the merry din.*

*But still he holds the wedding-guest—
There was a Ship, quoth he—
'Nay, if thoust got a laughsome tale
'Marinere! come with me.'*

*He holds him with his skinny hand,
Quoth he, there was a Ship—
'Now get thee hence, thou grey-beard Loon!
'Or my Staff shall make thee skip.'*

*He holds him with his glittering eye—
The wedding-guest stood still
And listens like a three year's child.
The Marinere hath his will.*

*The wedding-guest sate on a stone,
He cannot chuse but hear:
And thus spake on that ancyent man,
The bright-eyed Marinere.*

*The Ship was cheer'd, the Harbour clear'd—
Merrily did we drop
Below the Kirk, below the Hill,
Below the Light-house top.*

*The Sun came up upon the left,
Out of the Sea came he:
And he shone bright, and on the right
Went down into the Sea.*

*Higher and higher every day,
Till over the mast at noon—
The wedding-guest here beat his breast,
For he heard the loud bassoon.*

*The Bride hath pac'd into the Hall,
Red as a rose is she;
Nodding their heads before her goes
The merry Minstralsy.*

*The wedding-guest he beat his breast,
Yet he cannot chuse but hear:
And thus spake on that ancyent Man,
The bright-eyed Marinere.*

*Listen, Stranger! Storm and Wind,
A Wind and Tempest strong!
For days and weeks it play'd us freaks—
Like Chaffwe drove along.*

*Listen Stranger! Mist and Snow,
And it grew wond'rous could:
And Ice mast-high came floating by
As green as Emerald.*

And thro⁹ the drifts the snowy cliffs
Did send a dismal sheen;
Ne shapes of men ne beasts we ken—
The Ice was all between.

The Ice was here, the Ice was there,
The Ice was all around:
It crack'd and growl'd, and roar'd and howl'd—
Like noises of a swound.

At length did cross an Albatross,
Thorough the Fog it came,
And an it were a Christian Soul,
We hail'd it in God's name.

The Mariners gave it biscuit-worms,
And round and round it flew:
The Ice did split with a Thunder-fit,
The Helmsman steer'd us thro'—

And a good south wind sprung up behind,
The Albatross did follow;
And every day for food or play
Came to the Marinere's hollo!

In mist or cloud on mast or shroud,
It perch'd for vespers nine,
Whiles all the night thro' fog-smoke white,
Glimmer'd the white moon-shine.

' God save thee, ancient Marinere!
From the fiends that plague thee thus—
Why look'st thou so?'—with my cross-bow
I shot the Albatross.

II

The Sun came up upon the right,
Out of the Sea came he;
And broad as a weft upon the left
Went down into the Sea.

And the good south wind still blew behind,
But no sweet Bird did follow
Ne any day for food or play
Came to the Marinere's hollo!

*And I had done an hellish thing
And it would work' em woe:
For all averr'd, I had kill'd the Bird
That made the Breeze to blow.*

*Ne dim ne red, like GoJ's own heady
The glorious Sun uprist:
Then all averrd, I had killed the Bird
That brought the fog and mist.
' Twas right, said they, such birds to slay
That bring the fog and mist.*

*The breezes blew' the white foam flew,
The furrow follow'd free:
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent Sea.*

*Down dropt the breeze, the Sails dropt down,
' Twas sad as sad could be
And we did speak only to break
The silence of the Sea.*

*All in a hot and copper sky
The bloody sun at noon,
Right up above the mast did stand
No bigger than the moon.*

*Day after day, day after day,
We stuck, ne breath ne motion
As idle as a painted Ship
Upon a painted Ocean.*

*Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water, everywhere,
Ne any drop to drink.*

*The very deep did rot: O Christ!
That ever this should be!
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy Sea.*

*About, about, in reel and rout,
The Death-fires danc'd at night;
The water, like a witch's oils,
Burnt green and blue and white.*

*And some in dreams assured were
Of the Spirit that plagued us so:
Nine fathom deep he had followed us
From the Land of Mist and Snow.*

*And every tongue thro⁹ utter drouth
Was wither'd at the root;
We could not speak no more than if
We had been choked with soot.*

*Ah wel-a-day! what evil looks
Had I from old and young;
Instead of the Cross the Albatross
About my neck was hung.*

III

*I saw a something in the Sky
No bigger than my fist;
At first it seem'd a little speck
And then it seem'd a mist:
It mov'd and mov'd, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist.*

*A speck, a mist, a shape, I wist!
And still it ner'd and ner'd;
And, an it dodg'd a water-sprite,
It plung'd and tack'd and veer'd.*

*With throat unslack'd, with black lips baKd
Ne could we laugh, ne wail:
Then while thro' drouth all dumb they stood
I bit my arm and sucKd the blood
And cry d, A sail! a sail!*

*With throat unslacKd, with black lips bak'd
Agape they hear'd me call:
Gramercy! they for joy did grin
And all at once their breath drew in
As they were drinking all.*

*She doth not tack from side to side——
Hither to work us weal
Withouten wind, withouten tide
She steddies with upright keel.*

*The western wave was all aflame,
The day was well nigh done!
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright Sun;
When that strange shape drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the Sun.*

*And strait the Sun was fleck'd with bars
(Heaven's mother send us grace)
As if thro' a dungeon grate he peer'd
With broad and burning face.*

*Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud)
How fast she neres andneres!
Are those her Sails that glance in the Sun
Like restless gossameres?*

*Are those her naked ribs, which fleck'd
The sun that did behind them peer?
And are those two all, all the crew,
That woman and herfleshless Pheere?*

*His bones were black with many a crack,
All black and bare, I ween;
Jet-black and bare, save where with rust
Of mouldy damp and charnel crust
They're patch'd with purple and green.*

*Her lips are red, her locks are free,
Her locks are yellow as gold:
Her skin is as white as leprosy,
And she is far liker death than he;
Her flesh makes the still air cold.*

*The naked hulk alongside came
And the Twain were playing dice;
* The Game is done! I've won, I've won!
Quoth she' and whistled thrice.*

*A gust of wind sterte up behind
And whistled thro' his bones;
Thro' the holes of his eyes and the hole of his mouth
Half-whistles and half-groans.*

*With never a whisper in the Sea
Off darts the Spectre-ship;
While clombe above the Eastern bar
The horned Moon, with one bright Star
Almost atween the tips.*

*One after one by the horned Moon
(Listen, O Stranger! to me)
Each turn'd his face with a ghastly pang
And cursed me with his ee.*

*Four times fifty living men,
With never a sigh or groan,
With heavy thump, a lifeless lump
They dropped down one by one.*

*Their souls did from their bodies fly,—
They fled to bliss or woe;
And every soul it pass'd me by,
Like the whiz of my Cross-bow.*

IV

*'Tfear thee, ancyeut Marinere!
'I fear thy skinny hand;
'And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
'As is the ribb'd Sea-sand.*

*'Tfear thee and thy glittering eye
'And thy skinny hand so brown——
Fear not, fear not, thou wedding-guest!
This body dropt not down.*

*Alone, alone, all all alone
Alone on the wide wide Sea;
And Christ would take no pity on
My soul in agony.*

*The many men so beautiful,
And they all dead did lie!
And a million million slimy things
Liv'd on—and so did I.*

*I look'd upon the rotting Sea,
And drew my eyes away;
I look'd upon the eldritch deck,
And there the dead men lay.*

*/ looKd to Heaven, and try'J to prays
But or ever a prayer had gusht,
A wicked whisper came and made
My heart as dry as dust.*

*I clos'd my lids and kept them close,
Till the bells like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at myfeet.*

*The cold sweat meltedfrom their limbs,
Ne rot, ne reek did they;
The look with which they look'd on me,
Had never pass'd away.*

*An orphans curse would drag to Hell
A spiritfrom on high;
But O! more horrible than that
Is the curse in a dead mans eye!
Seven days, seven nights I saw that curse,
Andyet I could not die.*

*The moving Moon went up the sky,
And no where did abide:
Softly she was going up
And a star or two beside—*

*Her beams bemock'd the sultry main
Like morning frosts yspread;
But where the ships huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.*

*Beyond the shadow ofthe ship
I watcKd the water-snakes:
They mov'd in tracks ofshining white;
And when they reared, the elfish light
Fell off in hoaryflakes.*

*Within the shadow ofthe ship
I watch'd their rich attire:
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black
They coiVd and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.*

*O happy living things! no tongue
Their beauty might declare:
A spring of love gushes from my heart,
And I bless them unaware!
Sure my kind saint took pity on me.
And I bless'd them unaware.*

*The self-same moment I could pray;
And from my neck so free
The Albatross fell off, and sank
Like lead into the sea.*



*O sleep, it is a gentle thing,
Beloved from pole to pole!
To Mary-queen the praise be given
She sent the gentle sleep from heaven
That slid into my soul.*

*The silly buckets on the deck
That had so long remain'd,
I dreamt that they were fill'd with dew
And when I awoke it rain'd.*

*My lips were wet, my throat was cold,
My garments all were dank;
Sure I had drunken in my dreams
And still my body drank.*

*I mov'd and could not feel my limbs,
I was so light, almost
I thought that I had died in sleep,
And was a blessed Ghost.*

*The roaring wind! it roar'd far off,
It did not come anear;
But with its sound it shook the sails
That were so thin and sere.*

*The upper air bursts into life,
And a hundred fire-flags sheen
To and fro they are hurried about;
And to and fro, and in and out
The stars dance on between.*

*The coming wind doth roar more loud;
The sails do sigh, like sedge:
The rain pours, down from one black cloud
And the Moon is at its edge.*

*Hark! hark! the thick black cloud is cleft,
And the Moon is at its side:
Like waters shot from some high crag,
The lightning falls with never a jag
A river steep and wide.*

*The strong wind reach'd the ship: it roar'd
And dropp'd down, like a stone!
Beneath the lightning and the moon
The dead men gave a groan.*

*They groan'd, they stirr'd, they all uprose,
Ne spake, ne mov'd their eyes:
It had been strange, even in a dream
To have seen those dead men rise.*

*The helmsman steer'd, the ship mov'd on,
Yet never a breeze up-blew;
The Mariners all 'gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do:
They rais'd their limbs like lifeless tools—
We were a ghastly crew.*

*The body of my brother's son
Stood by me knee to knee:
The body and I pull'd at one rope,
But he said naught to me——
And I quak'd to think of my own voice
How frightful it would be!*

*The day-light dawn'd—they dropped their arms,
And cluster'd round the mast:
Sweet sounds rose slowly through their mouths
And from their bodies pass'd.*

*Around, around, flew each sweet sound,
Then darted to the sun:
Slowly the sounds came back again
Now mix'd, now one by one.*

Sometimes a dropping from the sky
I heard the Lavrock sing;
Sometimes all little birds that are
How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
With their sweet jargoning.

And now 'twas like all instruments,
And now like a lonely flute;
And now it is an angel's song
That makes the heavens be mute.

It ceas'd: yet still the sails made on
A pleasant noise till noon,
A noise like of a hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune.

Listen, O listen, thou Wedding-guest!
'Mariner'e! thou hast thy will:
'For that, which comes out of thine eye, doth make
'My body and soul to be still.'

Never sadder tale was told
To a man of woman born:
Sadder and wiser thou wedding-guest!
Thou'lt rise tomorrow morn.

Never sadder tale was heard
By a man of woman born:
The Mariners all return'd to work
As silent as before.

The Mariners all 'gan pull the ropes.
But look at me they retold:
Thought I, I am as thin as air—
They cannot me behold.

Till noon we silently sail'd on
Yet never a breeze did breathe:
Slowly and smoothly went the ship
Mov'd onward from beneath.

*Under the keel nine fathom deep
From the land of mist and snow
The spirit slid: and it was He
That made the Ship to go.
The sails at noon left off their tune
And the Ship stood still also.*

*The sun right up above the mast
Had fix'd her to the ocean:
But in a minute she 'gan stir
With a short uneasy motion—
Backwards and forwards half her length
With a short uneasy motion.*

*Then, like a pawing horse let go,
She made a sudden bound:
It flung the blood into my head'
And I fell into a swoond.*

*How long in that same fit I lay,
I have not to declare;
But ere my living life return'd,
I heard and in my soul discern'd
Two voices in the air,*

*'Is it he!' quoth one, 'Is this the man?
'By him who died on cross,
' With his cruel bow he lay'd full low
' The harmless Albatross.*

*' The spirit who 'bideth by himself
'In the land of mist and snow,
'He lov'd the bird that lov'd the man
' Who shot him with his bow.'*

*The other was a softer voice,
As soft as honey-dew:
Quoth he ' The man hath penance done,
'And penance more will do.'*

VI

First Voice

*' But tell me, tell me! speak again,
'Thy soft response renewing—
' What makes that ship drive on so fast?
'What is the Ocean doing?'*

Second Voice

'Still as a Slave before his Lord,
' The Ocean hath no blast:
'His great bright eye most silently
' Up to the moon is cast—

'If he may know which way to go,
' For she guides him smooth or grim,
' See, brother, see! how graciously
' She looketh down on him.'

First Voice

' But why drives on that ship so fast
' Withouten wave or wind?'

Second Voice

' The air is cut away before,
' And closes from behind.

' Fly, brother, fly! more high, more high,
' Or we shall be belated:
' For slow and slow that ship will go,
' When the Mariners' trance is abated.'

I woke, and we were sailing on
As in a gentle weather:
'Twas night, calm night, the moon was high;
The dead men stood together.

All stood together on the deck,
For a charnel-dungeon fitter:
All fix'd on me their stony eyes
That in the moon did glitter.

The pang, the curse, with which they died,
Had never passed away:
I could not draw my eyes from theirs
Nor turn them up to pray.

And in its time the spell was snapt,
And I could move my eyes:
I look'd far-forth, but little saw
Of what might else be seen.

Like one that on a lonely road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turned round, walks on
And turns no more his head:
Because he knows, a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

But soon there breath'd a wind on me,
Ne sound ne motion made:
Its path was not upon the sea
In ripple or in shade.

It raised my hair, it fannd my cheek,
Like a meadow-gale ofspring—
It mingled strangely with my fears,
Yet it felt like a welcoming.

Swiftly, swiftly, flew the ship,
Yet she saild softly too:
Sweetly, sweetly blew the breeze—
On me alone it blew.

Oh dream of joy! is Ms indeed
The lighthouse top I see?
Is this the Him Is this the Kirk?
Is this mine own countree?

We drifted o'er the Harbour-bar,
And I with sobs did pray—
'O let me be awake, my God!
'Or let me sleep away!'

The harbour-bay was clear as glass
So smoothly it was strewn!
And on the bay the moon light lay,
And the shadow of the moon.

The moonlight bay was white all o'er,
Till rising from the same,
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
Like as of torches came.

A little distance from the prow
Those dark red shadows were;
But soon I saw that my own flesh
Was red as in a glare.

*/ turrfd my head in fear and dread,
And by the holy rood,
The bodies had advanc d, and now
Before the mast they stood.*

*They lifted up their stiff right arms,
They held them strait and tight;
And each right arm burnt like a torch,
A torch that's borne upright.
Their stony eye-balls glitter'd on
In the red and smoky light.*

*I pray'd and turn'd my head away
Forth looking as before.
There was no breeze upon the bay,
No wave against the shore.*

*The rock shone bright, the kirk no less
That stands above the rock:
The moonlight steep'd in silentness
The steady weathercock.*

*And the bay was white with silent light,
Till rising from the same
Full many shapes, that shadows were,
In crimson colours came.*

*A little distance from the prow
Those crimson shadows were:
I turn'd my eyes upon the deck—
O Christ! what saw I there?*

*Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat;
And by the Holy rood
A man all light, a seraph-man,
On every corse there stood.*

*This seraph-band, each wav'd his hand:
It was a heavenly sight:
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light.*

*This seraph-band, each wav'd his hand,
No voice did they impart—
No voice; but O! the silence sank,
Like music on my heart.*

*Eftsones I heard the dash of oars,
I heard the pilot's cheer:
My head was turn'd perforce away
And I saw a boat appear'*

*Then vanish'd all the lovely lights;
The tides rose anew:
With silent pace, each to his place,
Came back the ghastly crew.
The wind' that shade nor motion made,
On me alone it blew.*

*The pilot, and the pilot's boy
I heard them coming fast:
Dear Lord in Heaven! it was a joy,
The dead men could not blast.*

*I saw a third—/ heard his voice:
It is the Hermit good!
He singeth loud his godly hymns
That he makes in the wood.
He'll shrive my soul, he'll wash away
The Albatross's blood.*

VII

*This Hermit good lives in that wood
Which slopes down to the Sea.
How loudly his sweet voice he rears!
He loves to talk with Marineres
That come from afar Countree.*

*He kneels at morn and noon and eve—
He hath a cushion plump:
It is the moss, that wholly hides
The rotted old Oak-stump.*

*The Skiff-boat ner'd: I heard them talk,
'Why, this is strange, I trow!
'Where are those lights so many and fair
'That signal made but now?'*

*'Strange, by my faith!' the Hermit said—
'And they answered not our cheer.
' The planks look warp'd, and see those sails
'How thin they are and sere!
'I never saw aught like to them
' Unless perchance it were*

*' The skeletons of leaves that lag
' My forest brook along:
' When the Ivy-tod is heavy with snow,
'And the Owllet whoops to the wolf below
' That eats the she-wolf's young'*

*'Dear lord! it has a fiendish look—'
(The Pilot made reply)
'I am afraid—' 'Push on, push on!'
Said the Hermit cheerily.*

*The Boat came closer to the Ship,
But I ne spake ne stirr'd!
The Boat came close beneath the Ship,
And strait a sound was heard!*

*Under the water it rumbled on,
Still louder and more dread:
It reach'd the Ship, it split the bay;
The Ship went down like lead.*

*Stunnd by that loud and dreadful sound,
Which sky and ocean smote:
Like one that had been seven days drown'd
My body lay afloat:
But, swift as dreams, myself I found
Within the Pilot's boat.*

*Upon the whirl, where sank the Ship,
The boat spun round and round:
And all was still, save that the hill
Was telling of the sound.*

*I mov'd my lips: The Pilot shriek'd
And fell down in a fit.
Holy Hermit raised his eyes
And prayed where he did sit.*

*/ took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who now doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to andfro,
'Ha! ha!' quoth he—'fullplain I see,
' The devil knows how to row.'*

*And now all in mine own Countree
I stood on the firm land!
The Hermit stepp'd forth from the boat,
And scarcely he could stand.*

*' O shrieve me, shrieve me, holy Man!
The Hermit cross'd his brow—
'Say quick,' quoth he, 'I bid thee say
' What manner man art thou?'*

*Forthwith this frame of mine was wrench'd
With a woeful agony,
Which forc'd me to begin my tale
And then it left me free.*

*Since then at an uncertain hour,
Now of times and now fewer,
That anguish comes and makes me tell
My ghastly aventure.*

*I pass, like night, from land to land;
I have strange power of speech;
The moment that his face I see
I know the man that must hear me;
To him my tale I teach.*

*What loud uproar bursts from that door!
The Wedding-guests are there;
But in the Garden-bower the Bride
And Bride-maids singing are:
And hark the little Vesper-bell
Which biddeth me to prayer.*

*O Wedding-guest! this soul hath been
Alone on a wide wide sea:
So lonely 'twas, that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be.*

*O sweeter than the Marriage feast,
'Tis sweeter far to me
To walk together to the Kirk
With a goodly company.*

*To walk together to the Kirk
And all together pray,
While each to his great Father bends,
Old men, and babes, and loving friends,
And Youths, and Maidens gay.*

*Farewell, farewell! but this I tell
To thee, thou wedding-guest!
He prayeth well who loveth well,
Both man and bird and beast.*

*He prayeth best who loveth best,
All things both great and small:
For the dear God, who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.*

*The Marinere, whose eye is bright,
Whose beard with age is hoar,
Is gone; and now the wedding-guest
Turn'd from the bridegrooms door.*

*He went, like one that hath been stunn'd
And is of sense forlorn:
A sadder and a wiser man
He rose the morrow morn.*

APPENDIX B

KUBLA KHAN

*In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree:
Where Alph' the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.*

*But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran.
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!
The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!*

*A damsel 'with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me,
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drunk the milk of Paradise.*

APPENDIX C

CHRISTINA, THE MAID OF THE SOUTH SEAS

by Mary Russell Mitford

The following poem is founded on a recent discovery by an American vessel of a small English colony, established by some of the mutineers of the *Bounty*, in one of the numerous islands of the South Seas.—In detailing an event, still remembered with anguish by those who shared the sufferings of Captain Bligh, as well as by the friends and relations of the unfortunate persons who occasioned these sufferings; 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. Irresistibly attracted by the character of the gallant and amiable Christian, she yet distrusted the partiality, which might have led her to extenuate his crime; and if she has erred, it has been on the side of authority.

After the plea:

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 which they would withhold from an older and more practised offender; to their mercy she appeals. [She] cannot conclude without expressing her grateful acknowledgments to Captain Burney,* for the friendly assistance which he has rendered her in arranging and revising her notes; an office which none would have performed so readily, and none could have performed so well.

The poem describes the discovery of Pitcairn by the *Topaz* under the command of Captain 'Seymour'. Here they find the survivor of the mutineers, 'FitzAllen', who tells the story of the *Bounty* to the visitors:

' Rear-Admiral James Burney (1750-1821), brother of Fanny Burney, the diarist.

' Christian!' as Hubert breathed the name,
Suspicion quick to Seymor came;
For well he knew—who knows it not?
Misguided Christians ruthless plot.
And he has read, with horror pale,
The suffering Bligh's heart-thrilling tale,
When from his gallant vessel driv'n,
Of every earthly comfort riv'n;
Remote from kind and friendly land,
The rebels chas'd his faithful band.
Still faithful, tho' the crowded boat
Scarce on that Southern wave can float;
Tho' ceaseless rain, and famine's rage,
Within, without, dire warfare wage;
Tho' haggard, worn, and tempest-tost,
Unbounded Oceans must be crost,
Ere the sad wanderers cease to roam,
And find a country and a home.

Oft at that tale the sailor's tear
Has fall'n, for trials too severe;
Tears quickly dried by the warm rush,
Of admiration's ardent blush,
At that brave band's endurance high,
Their patience and their constancy!
And sudden as the thunder's clash,
The captain felt conviction's flash.
'It must be Christian, whom I view!'
Brave stranger, would thy words were true!
'He lies where never mortal ken,
Shall see the hero's form again,
O would he were alive to share
My social joy, my pleasing care!
Yet well I read that asking eye;
Tomorrow every doubt shall fly!
Tis a sad tale, and long to tell;
Today I shun the mazy spell.
But something I would ask—if still
Bligh lives?—Oh! say we did not kill!'

' Yes, he still lives!' Would you had seen
The pallid chieftain's alter'd mien!
Like wretch from torturing wheel unbound,
Bewilder'd first he gaz'd around;

*Scarce the life-giving words believ'd,
By doubt, by fear, in turns deceived'
But when at length assurance came,
Joy seemed to renovate his frame,
To raise his form to statelier grace,
Nerve his firm step, illumine his face,
It flush'd his cheek, it lit his eyes,
Stole down in tears, and burst in sighs;
And meek devotions silent prayer,
And ardent gratitude were there.*

The poem goes on to tell how Henry, a young English sailor of the *Topafa* fell in love with Christina, Christian's daughter. His love is returned, and it is with sorrow that Christina prepares to fulfil her previously-made promise to marry Hubert, one of the young islanders. But all ends well, for Hubert learns of their love, and himself brings Henry ashore to be the bridegroom of Christina.

APPENDIX D

BYRON'S 'THE ISLAND'

BYRON'S poem, 'The Island, or Christian and his Comrades', was his last large-scale work, except for the last two cantos of 'Don Juan'. Poetically it has never been considered to have added to his reputation, and historically it is of little value, as he does not appear to have heard of any of the events which occurred after Christian last sailed from Otaheite. It has occasioned some surprise that he has whole-heartedly adopted Bligh's side of the dispute. This has been attributed to his family association with the Navy, being descended from that John Byron who sailed in Anson's squadron, and whose 'Narrative' of the loss of the *Wager* and his subsequent adventures is an accepted classic, long overdue for a reprint. It is possible that his hatred for Romilly, a supporter of Christian, may have had a share in bringing about his somewhat unexpected attitude. He describes the mutiny thus:

*The morning 'watch was come: the vessel lay
Her course, and gently made her liquid way;
The cloven billow flashed from off her prow
In furrows formed by that majestic plough;
The waters with their world were all before;
Behind the South Seas many an island shore.
The quiet night, now dappling, 'gan to wane.
Dividing darkness from the dawning main:
The dolphins, not unconscious of the day.
Swam high, as eager of the coming ray;
The stars from broader beams began to creep,
And lift their shining eyelids from the deep;
The sail resumed its lately shadowed white
And the wind fluttered with a freshened flight;
The purpling Ocean owns the coming Sun,
But ere he break—a deed is to be done.
The gallant Chief within his cabin slept,
Secure in those by whom the watch was kept:
His dreams were of Old England's welcome shore.
Of toils rewarded, and of dangers o'er;*

His name was added to the glorious roll
 Of those who search the storm-surrounded Pole.
 The worst was over, and the rest seemed sure,
 And why should not his slumber be secure?
 Alas! his deck was trod by unwilling feet,
 And wilder hands would hold the vessel's sheet,
 Young hearts, which languished for some sunny isle,
 Where summer years and summer women smile;
 Men without country, who, too long estranged,
 Had found no native home, or found it changed
 And, half uncivilised, preferred the cave
 Of some soft savage to the uncertain wave—
 The gushing fruits that nature gave untilled;
 The wood without a path—but where they willed;
 The field o'er which promiscuous Plenty poured
 Her horn; the equal land without a lord;
 The wish—which ages have not yet subdued
 In man—to have no master save his mood;
 The earth, whose mine was on its face, unsold,
 The glowing sun and produce all its gold:
 The Freedom which can call each grot a home;
 The general gardens, where all steps may roam,
 Where Nature owns a nation as her child,
 Exulting in the enjoyment of the wild;
 Their shells, their fruits, the only wealth they know,
 Their unexploring navy, the canoe;
 Their sport, the dashing breakers and the chase;
 Their strangest sight—an European face:—
 Such was the country which these strangers yearned
 To see again—a sight they dearly earned.

Awake, bold BUGH! the foe is at the gate!
 Awake! Awake!—Alas! it is too late!
 Fiercely beside thy cot the mutineer
 Stands, and proclaims the reign of rage and fear.
 Thy limbs are bound, the bayonet at thy breast;
 The hands, which tumbled at thy voice, arrest;
 Dragged o'er the deck, no more at thy command
 The obedient helm shall veer, the sail expand;
 That savage Spirit, which would lull by wrath
 Its desperate escape from Duty's path,
 Glares round thee, in the scarce believing eyes
 Of those who fear the Chief they sacrifice:
 For ne'er can Man his conscience all assuage,
 Unless he drain the wine of Passion—Rage.

*In vain, not silenced by the eye of Death,
 Thou call'st the loyal with thy menaced breath:—
 They come not; they are few, and overawed,
 Must acquiesce, while sterner hearts applaud.
 In vain thou dost demand the cause: a curse
 Is all the answer, with the threat of worse.
 Full in thine eyes is waved the glittering blade,
 Close to thy throat the pointed bayonet laid.
 The levelled muskets circle round thy breast
 In hands as steeled to do the deadly rest.
 Thou dar'st them to thy worst, exclaiming—'Fire:'
 But they who pitied not could yet admire;
 Some lurking remnant of their former awe
 Restrained them longer than their broken law;
 They would not dip their souls at once in blood,
 But left them to the mercies of the flood.*

*'Hoist out the boat!' was now the leader's cry;
 And who dare answer 'No!' to Mutiny,
 In the first dawning of the drunken hour,
 The Saturnalia of unhoped-for power?
 The boat is lowered with all the haste of hate,
 With its slight plank between thee and thy fate;
 Her only cargo such a scant supply
 As promises the death their hands deny;
 And just enough of water and of bread
 To keep, some days, the dying from the dead:
 Some cordage, canvass, sails, and lines, and twine,
 But treasures all to hermits of the brine,
 Were added after, to the earnest prayer
 Of those who saw no hope, save sea and air;
 And last, that trembling vassal of the Pole—
 The feeling compass—Navigations Soul.*

*And now the self-elected Chief finds time
 To stun the first sensation of his crime,
 And raise it in his followers—'Ho! the bowl!'
 Lest passion should return to reasons shoal.*

*The launch is crowded with the faithful few
 Who wait their Chief, a melancholy crew:
 But some remained reluctant on the deck
 Of that proud vessel—now a moral wreck—
 And viewed their Captain's fate with piteous eye;
 Sneered at the prospect of his pigmy sail,
 And the slight bark so laden and so frail.*

When all was now prepared, the vessel clear
 Which hailed her master in the mutineer,
 A seaman, less obdurate than his mates,
 Showed the vain pity which but irritates;
 Watched his late Chieftain with exploring eyes,
 And told, in signs, repentant sympathy;
 Held the moist shaddock to his parched mouth,
 Which felt Exhaustions deep and bitter drouth.
 But soon observed, this guardian was withdrawn,
 Nor further Mercy clouds Rebellions dawn.
 Then forward stepped the bold and froward boy
 His Chief had cherished only to destroy,
 And, pointing to the helpless prow beneath,
 Exclaimed, 'Depart at once! delay is death.'
 Yet then, even then, his feelings ceased not all:
 In that last moment could a word recall
 Remorse for the black deed as yet halfdone,
 And what he hid from many showed to one:
 When Bligh in stern reproach demanded where
 Was now his grateful sense of former care?
 Where all his hopes to see his name aspire,
 And blazon Britain's thousand glories higher?
 His feverish lips thus broke their gloomy spell,
 "Tis that: tis that ! I am in hell! in hell!⁹
 No more he said: but urging to the bark
 His Chief, commits him to his fragile ark;
 These the sole accents from his tongue that fell,
 But volumes lurked below his fierce farewell.

With slow despairing oar, the abandoned skiff
 Ploughs its drear progress to the scarce seen cliff,
 Which lifts its peak, a cloud above the main:
 That boat and ship shall never meet again!

APPENDIX E

ISAAC WILKINSON

IN 1824 Isaac Wilkinson published his *Poetical Works*[^] and a Note reads:

The narrative of Lord Byron's new Poem, 'The Island; or Christian and his Comrades,' is founded on the mutiny of the crew of the Bounty, which occurred in the south sea. The unfortunate young officer, who headed the mutineers, was Fletcher Christian, a native of Moorland Close, near Cockermouth. He was my class-fellow (along with William Robinson of Eaglesfield) at Cockermouth Free School, for seven years; and I can with truth say a more amiable youth I have never met with: he was mild, generous, and sincere. I have seen a narrative of the causes which led to the mutiny; and though harsh treatment may not justify revolt, yet, morally speaking, it lessens the offence. When Government are sending vessels to the south seas, it is much to be wished they would send a few implements in agriculture, to the little Colony on Pitcairn's Island.

He then rebukes Byron:

*In milder strains thy tuneful harp had sung,
And softer accents -would have graced thy tongue,
Hadst thou but known the chief of Pitcairn's Isle,
Young Christian, victim to a tyrant's guile;
His heart was open, generous, and humane,
His was a heart that felt for others' pain;
Yet quick of spirit, as the electric beam
When from the clouds its darting lightnings gleam.*

APPENDIX F

PITCAIRN

THE history of Pitcairn subsequent to Barrow's *Mutiny on the Bounty* is too big a subject to be dealt with in an account of the mutiny itself, but the following passages may interest the reader.

In 1832 an adventurer arrived on the island who claimed to be a relative of the Duchess of Bedford, and to be sent by Government. He deceived the islanders, but was exposed by the visit of a naval vessel in which a member of the house of Bloomsbury was actually serving. His autobiographical account of his career included the tale how

I have visited the falls of Niagara and Montmorency, the natural bridge in Virginia, the great Reciprocating Fountain in East Tennessee, the great Temple of Elephanta [*sic*] at Bombay. I have dined with a prince, as well as with a princess and with a count, a baron, an ambassador, a minister (ordinary and extraordinary), and have travelled with one for some weeks. I have dined with a Charge d'Affaires, and lived with consuls, &c. I have visited and conversed with 'Red Jacket,' the great Indian warrior. I have visited and been visited by a Bishop. I have frequently partook of the delicious Hungarian wine (tokay),—Prince Esterhazy's, as also of Prince Schwartzembergh's old hock, said to have been 73 years old; and I was intimate with the brother-in-law of this last German nobleman. I have dined with a principal Hong Merchant at Canton. I have sat next to the beautiful Madame Recamier, and Madame Carbanus [*sic*], at the great dinner parties. I have written to the Prime Minister of England, and have received the late Earl of Liverpool's answer with his thanks &c. I was at Paris when the allies were met there. I have visited and breakfasted with the late Warren Hastings, Esq., at his seat in Gloucestershire. I have had permission with a party of friends to hunt over his grounds. Entertained &c. two or three days at the sporting lodge of an Earl, now a Marquis. I have made a crimson silk net for a certain Marchioness, which she actually wore at her next great party of five or six hundred persons.* I

"There may have been some truth in this, if not in the rest of the narrative.

have danced with the Countess Bertrand, i.e. Mademoiselle Fanny Dillon, before she married the Marshal. I was at Napoleon's coronation. I have been invited to the Lord Mayor's, and to the dinner of an Alderman of London.

In the year 1849, took place the following incident, as described by a missionary:

A Frenchman, of a military air, and partly military costume, arriving, with some other travellers, from the brig Fanny, was courteously received by the islanders. With the politeness characteristics of his countrymen, he soon engaged in conversation with Mr. Nobbs, and, in imperfect English, inquired, Whether the people of Pitcairn had heard of Prince Louis Napoleon, and the French Republic? and, as the next question, Would they enlist themselves under it? Suiting the action to the word, he took a paper for signatures from his pocket.

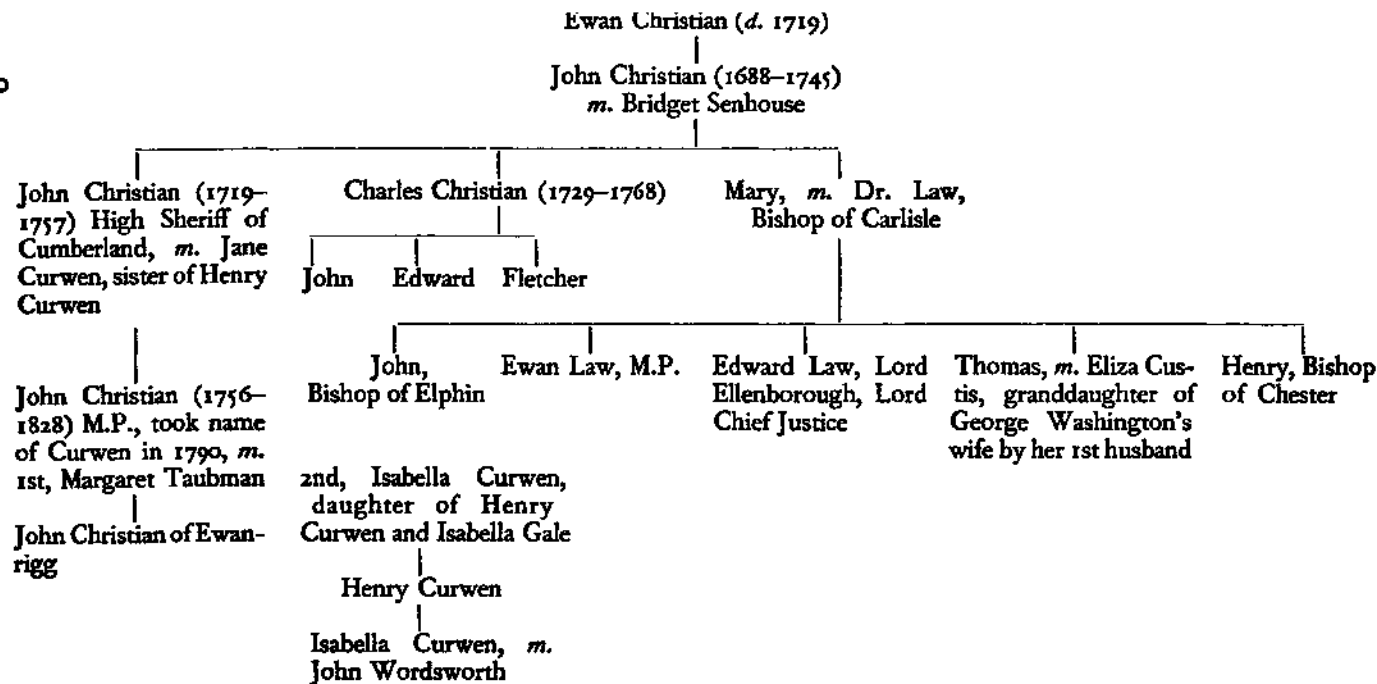
He was briefly answered by Mr. Nobbs quietly pointing to the English flag, which waved in the wind over their heads;

*The flag that braved a thousand years
The battle and the breeze!*

APPENDIX G



ARMS OF CHRISTIAN OF EWANRIGG



SIMPLIFIED GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF CHRISTIAN OF EWANRIGG

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