

VIEW CARD Mint (ca) 1900
Commemorating Belgian Antarctic expd. 1897-9
Penguin rookery in Gerlache Strait.



Souvenir de l'Expédition Antarctique Belge Une „rookerie“ de manchots dans le Détroit de Gerlache.

Ed. Nels, Bruxelles.

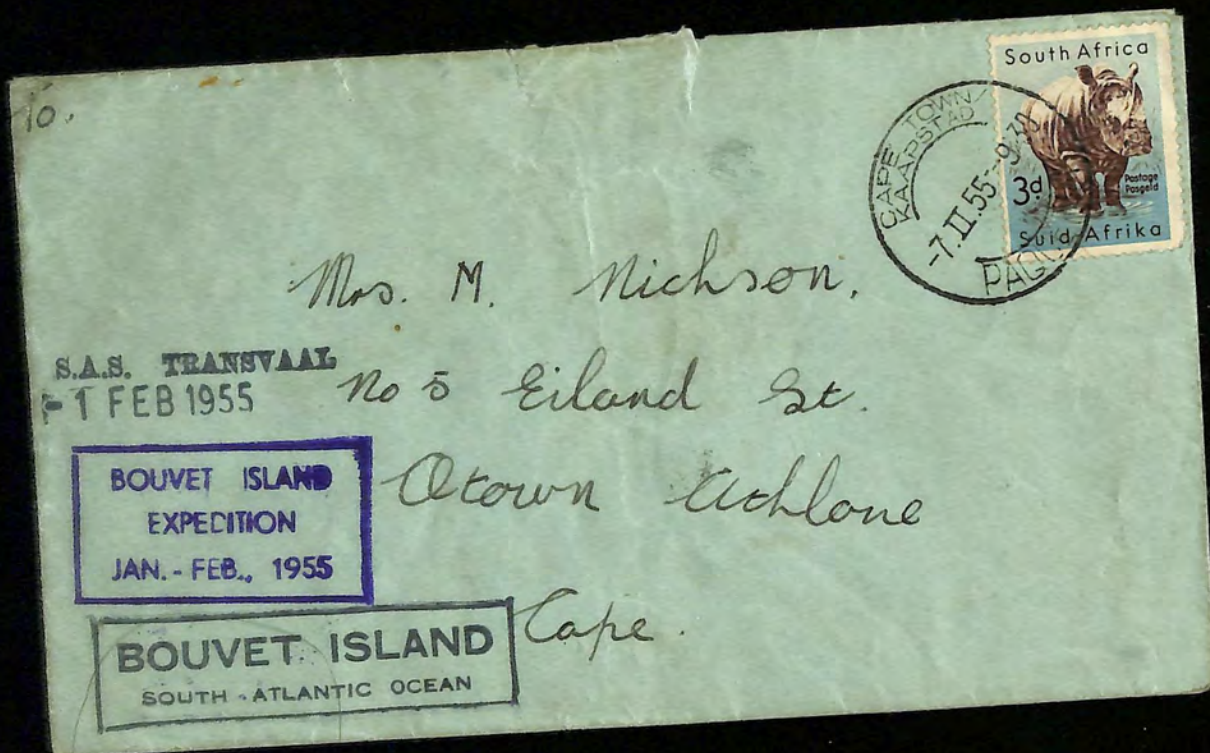
VIEW CARD Mint (ca) 1900
Commemorating Belgian Antarctic Expd. 1897-9
Mt. Williams, Anvers Island



Souvenir de l'Expédition Antarctique Belge Le Mont William (Monts Osterrieth) Ile Anvers.

Ed. Nels, Bruxelles.

1955 (Feb.1) Cv. w\$the purple cachet of
the ~~Bouvet~~ Bouvet Island Expedition Jan-Feb
1955 w/additional black cachet Bouvet Island
South Atlantic Ocean and S.A.S. Transvaal
1 Feb.1955. Addr. to the Cape obviously by
a member of the ship w/Cape Town cds. of
7.II.55 on S.African 3d.Hippo defin. A very
scarce cover



Mrs. "Carlisle"

at Tristan da Cunha

1 March 1937



CARD

The address to be written here



Dear Sir, You may care to
keep this with your stamp
collection as a curiosity
- although it has no stamp!
This, the loneliest inhabited island
in the world, has no coinage
either. Yours sincerely
H. B. C.

Cadet E. Davis R.N.

R.N. College,

Dartmouth,

S. Devon

England.



TR 21



UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE

FALKLAND ISLANDS (ILES FALKLAND)

POST CARD

THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.

Mrs Paul Kesterlin



Germany

THE ANNEXED CARD IS INTENDED
FOR THE ANSWER
(LA CARTE CI-JOINTE EST DESTINEE
A LA REPONSE.)



Copyright 2256

H.M.S. "CARLISLE."

Abramams. Devonport



UNION POSTALE UNIVERSELLE
FALKLAND ISLANDS (ILES FALKLAND)

POST CARD

THE ADDRESS ONLY TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.

REPLY



REGISTERED LETTER.

THIS LETTER MUST BE GIVEN TO AN OFFICER OF THE POST OFFICE TO BE REGISTERED, AND A RECEIPT OBTAINED FOR IT. THE ADDRESS MUST BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE.

THE STAMP
TO PAY THE
POSTAGE
MUST BE
PLACED HERE.



FEE PAID.



Mr. W. Carey
Port Stanley
Falkland Islands



H. W. Bishop Esq.
Spendiary Magistrate
Christ church.
New Zealand.



J. Carnard
Messrs. Kinsley Burns & Co
Lyttelton



AFTER 5 DAYS RETURN TO

W.C. Schroeder

Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

FEB 29
10 PM
1940
POSTAL



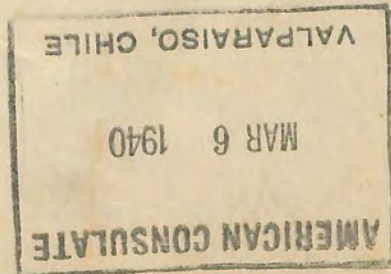
Mr. W. Herbert Schroeder,
U.S.M.S. NORTH STAR,
Byrd Antarctic Exped.

VALPARAISO,
CHILE.

CARE U.S.
Consul

VIA
AIR MAIL





This envelope approved by the U. S. Post Office Dept.
for Air Mail Only. Use for other purposes not permitted.

471

Feb. 29, 1940 Thurs.

Dear Herline,

Since Maat has told you everything there isn't much left for me to say. Colin & I went to see Mr. Barber last Saturday night. He is pleased that we have made up, as you can imagine. Colin claims that he has changed & now thinks the way I do. Let's hope so, anyway. Mr. Barber has taken your letters all over showing them to everyone. He is as proud as a peacock & keeps raving about how wonderful you are. Have you written to him lately? He'll be tickled when he gets his Pitcairn Is. cover Sunday.

It's too bad you can't bring a husky puppy home with you. What are they going to do with the dogs when the expedition is over? Maybe you could speak for one.

Lots of love,

Colin + xxx

M.R. 12/17/99
1940 (Feb 29) Airmail Cover from Harvard Univ. address to Exped. member on "USMS North Star Byrd Antarctic Exped. Valparaiso Chile Care US Consul", US Famous American Issue franking (some missing?), bkstp of US Consulate, letter mentions cover from Pitcairn Isl hopes that addressee can bring back a husky dog when expd. is over, cover faults, VG and rare inbound Byrd III cover. 4471

RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF ARMOUR INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Aboard the

ANTARCTIC SNOW CRUISER



Monsieur
Victor Konseillant
Ahurei
Ile Rapa

Pitcairn - Byrd Cruise
NORTHSTAR
RAPA ISLE 1939

Letter from Richard E. Christen
was contained in envelope
shown. Maybe pre-addressed
and sent with request for
info.?



H. E. Hilgendorff
Bristol RD#1
Pennsylvania
U. S. A.

Pitcairn Island.
April 4. 1937.

H. E. Hilgendorff.

Yours of March 3rd received and
I try an answer it to go by first chance.

The mails from England, America, and everywhere comes
to Panama or New Zealand, and mail boats call at Pitcairn
from both New Zealand and Panama, so mails could
go and come to Pitcairn Island from any part of
the world. we usually get mails from everywhere. China,
Japan, England. U.S.A. France, Canada, Germany,
Chile, Belgium, Italy, and from everywhere.

Pitcairn Island is a small place. $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles wide
and 2 miles long. 1100 feet the highest point from sea to
the highest point, mostly hilly and very fertile good
for farming, we grow such as. Oranges. Melons, peaches,
pineapples, Jackapples, Bananas of all sorts, tomatoes
mangoes, &c. Corn. Beans. peas, potatoes, arrowroot.
pumpkins, all grows on the island.

The climate is just fine not too cold and not too
hot no snow or ice, just beautiful climate.

Trusting this finds you happy.

Yours Sincerely
Richard Edgar Christian

PITCAIRN ISLAND EXPEDITION

229 CHAPMAN STREET

PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Richard Edgar Christian
Chief Magistrate

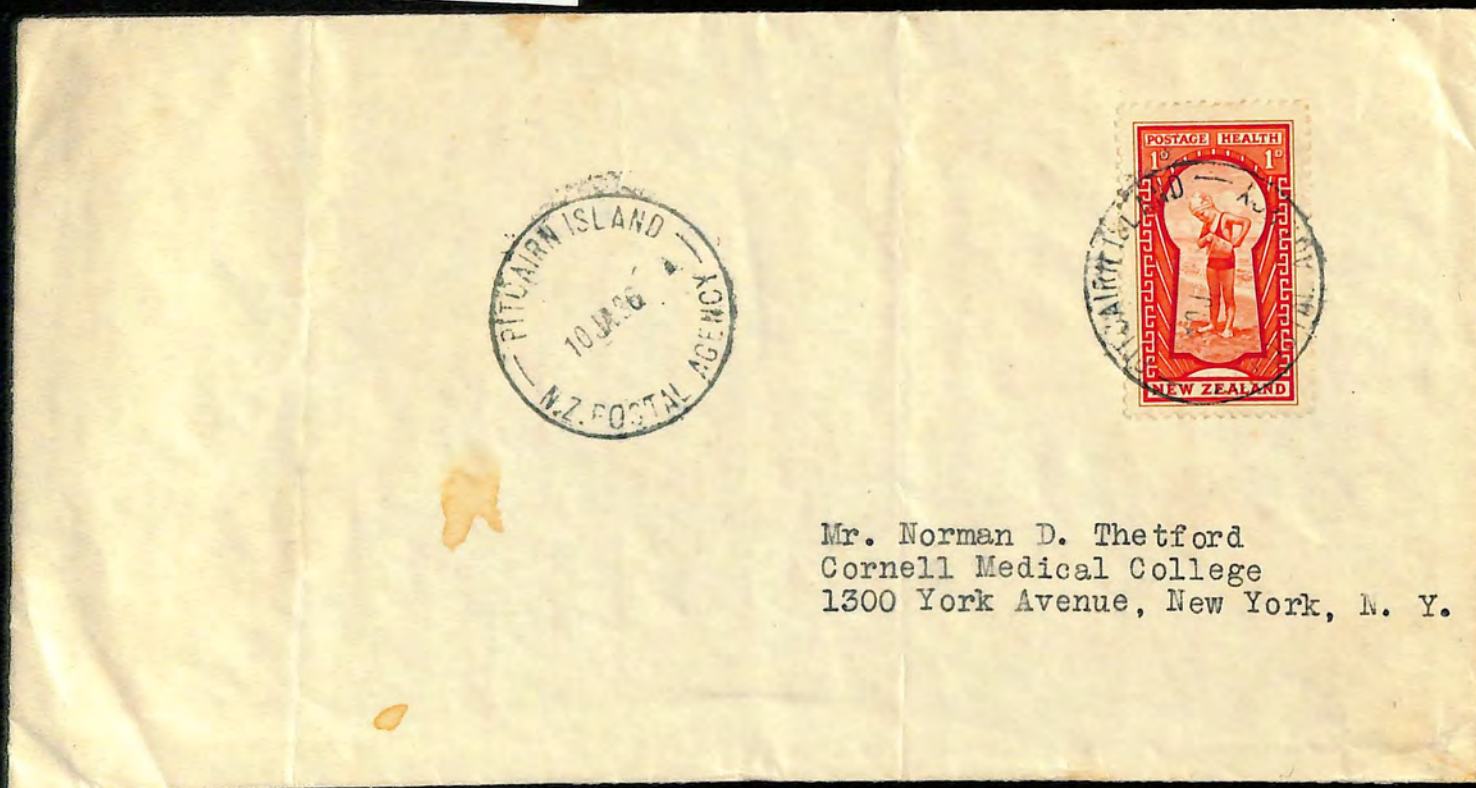
D. C. Meriden Sparrow
Lt. Bellem Jr. Chief Eng.



#558 Pitcairn Island



Pitcairn Island
to New York Jan 10, 1936
#556





Mr John Andrews,
Paradise, Pa.,
N. S. A.

Mailed at Pitcairn Island,
original home of the "Bounty"
mutineers. *Richard B. Christian*



Frank A. Cook
PO Box 537
Christchurch
New Zealand

Wanganui N.Z.
June 3rd.
1937.

Dear John: I am sending
some covers to Pitcairn
Island to be mailed.

Yours among them. It
will be interesting to see
how long this takes
to reach you. Pitcairn
is a New Zealand
"dependency" & is off
the regular steamer
route - hence irregularity
of mails. Pitcairn
has no stamps of its
own, N.Z. ones being
used. Yrs
Hed.

PITCAIRN ISLAND: 1935 Cover to the U.S.A., franked by New Zealand 1d Admiral cancelled
"PITCAIRN ISLAND/N.Z. POSTAL AGENCY". Backstamped in transit at Balboa, Canal Zone.
From the Washburn Correspondence.



Q over is very appealing and interesting to me personally, as I lived
on Mansfield St. in Allston at #23 age 4 years old, I think
that any one who may have known of the family is now dead

BA5159 & 150 August 25, 2000

x/pm

R/No. 21



Roger Wells,

Great Coates Road,

Grimsby. England.



Miss Ruth Mulligan
Walnut Hill School,
Natick, Mass. U. S. A.



COMMEMORATING ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE VOICE OF **PITC** THE SOUTH PACIFIC
ON PITCAIRN ISLAND SETTLED BY THE MUTINOUS CREW OF
H. M. S. BOUNTY



THE STAMP SHOP
78 WEYBOSSET STREET
PROVIDENCE, R. I.
U. S. A.



COMMEMORATING ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE VOICE OF **PITC** THE SOUTH PACIFIC
ON PITCAIRN ISLAND SETTLED BY THE MUTINOUS CREW OF
H. M. S. BOUNTY



*Andrew C Young
Radio Operator
Pitc.*



COMMEMORATING ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE VOICE OF **PITC** THE SOUTH PACIFIC
ON PITCAIRN ISLAND SETTLED BY THE MUTINOUS CREW OF
H. M. S. BOUNTY



*Andrew C Young
Radio Operator
Pitc.*

*Frank Marley
310 S. Keystone Ave
Sayre, Pennsylvania
USA*



COMMEMORATING ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE VOICE OF **PITC** THE SOUTH PACIFIC
ON PITCAIRN ISLAND SETTLED BY THE MUTINOUS CREW OF
H. M. S. BOUNTY



Granville P. Lindley
Radio Engineer
P.I.C.

THE STAMP SHOP
78 WEYBOSSET STREET
PROVIDENCE, R. I.
U. S. A.



COMMEMORATING ESTABLISHMENT OF
THE VOICE OF **PITC** THE SOUTH PACIFIC
ON PITCAIRN ISLAND SETTLED BY THE MUTINOUS CREW OF
H. M. S. BOUNTY



Richard Edgar Christain
Chief Magistrate
Lt. Bellum Jr.
Chief Engineer



Dr. K. C. Bailey, F.T.C.D.

Registrar,

Dublin University,

Dublin,

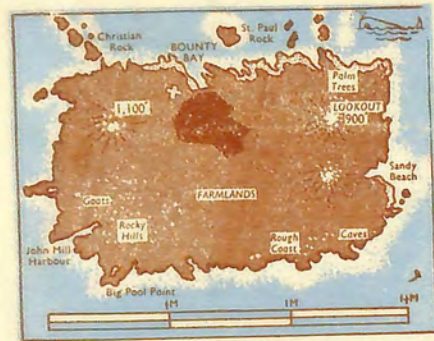
Ireland.



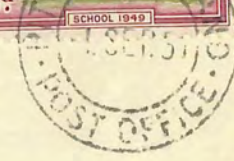
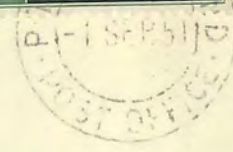
R. P. Clark,
Postmaster

*Pitcairn Island Vase 4/19/50-202
By 48 Cans SR 455 Additional Vase 9/11/51
(2711)*

ADDITIONAL
4^d & 8^d VALUES



PITCAIRN ISLAND

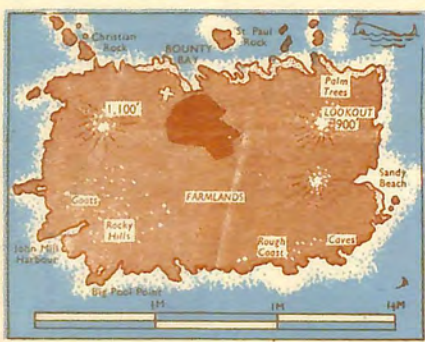


The Mint Stamp Bank,
Columbia, La.,
U.S.A.

FIRST DAY SOUVENIR COVER



ADDITIONAL
4^d & 8^d VALUES



PITCAIRN ISLAND



CLYDE J. SARZIN,
FLOWER HILL, ROSLYN,
NEW YORK,
U.S.A.

FIRST DAY SOUVENIR COVER





Roger Wells,

Great Coates Road,

Grimsby. England.



FIRST DAY COVER.

R PITCAIRN
No. 773



10 OCT. 49 0006



MR. A. H. de COSTA,

P.O. Box 97,

Gisborne,

NEW ZEALAND.



First Day Cover



*Fred Mc Christian
Chief Magistrate*



PITCAIRN

Subtropical Pacific Island lying almost mid-way between New Zealand and Panama —peopled by the descendants of the mutineers of the H.M.A.V. Bounty. Discovered 1767. Settlement 1790. British possession 1839.

First issue Postage Stamps, Oct., 1940.

0849

1864



*Mr. J. A. Murby
432, Earlham Rd.
Norwich
England, Norfolk*

Pitcairn Island
9th June, 1974

Dear Rodger,

Enclosed you'll find
your envelopes and trust it is
what you wanted.

Also is a postcard for
you, thought you might like
to have one.

Our population seems
to be decreasing rapidly. Most
of the people seems to be leaving
the island going off to New Zealand.
Next year a few is expected to
return (we hope). It's a beautiful
spot here anyway.

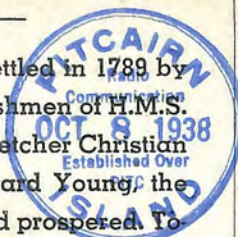
Sincerely
Thelma Brown.

PITCAIRN ISLAND

Pitcairn Island was settled in 1789 by a small band of Englishmen of H.M.S. Bounty. Headed by Fletcher Christian and assisted by Edward Young, the small colony grew and prospered. To day, there are about 200 inhabitants, most of whom can trace their lineage to the nine original English settlers.

The island is about two miles long and a mile wide, with lofty cliffs of a thousand feet rising from the water's edge. Along the slopes, on small plantations, pineapples, lemons and semi-tropical fruits are grown. These fruits are a means of barter with passing ships to secure supplies.

PKT 605



Richard Holland
84 Church St. Gonville, N.H.

U.S. 9.



PER VLIEGTUIG
PAR AVION

Base Baudouin-Bruxelles
via Capetown

AEROGRAM

AEROGRAMME

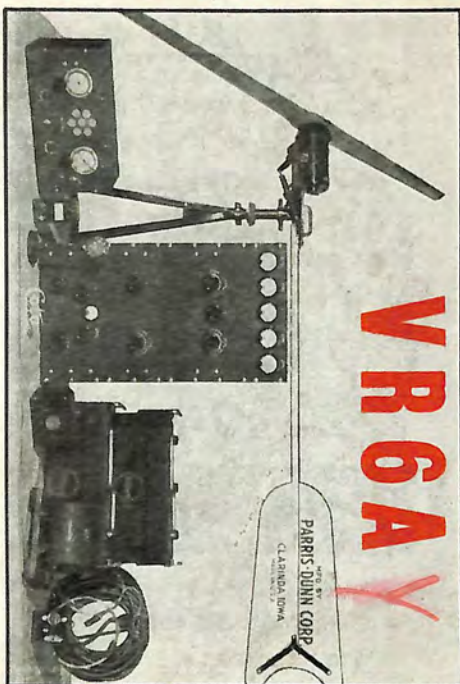


Mme Fernande Hamoir
41 Avenue Station
SERAING Belgique

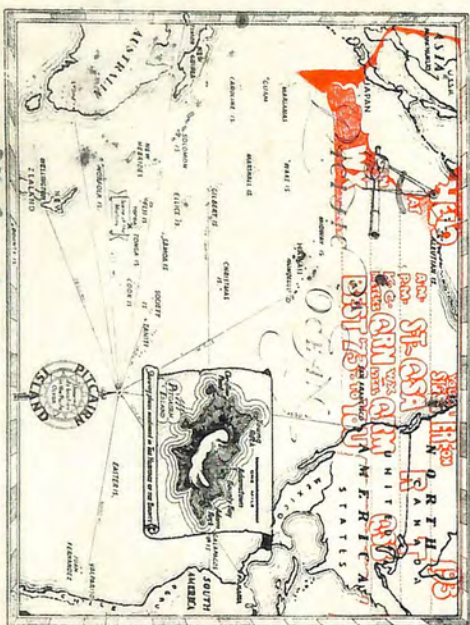
З - ДЕ-АНООГ

LAT.
25.04 S
.....
LONG.
130.06 W

ЗАМНО О-П-ОД ОУ



This station, designed and built by Colo-Coil Co., has been a gift from these manufacturers who have donated their parts and equipment: Aeroxox Corp., Amer. Lava Corp., Amerex Electronic, Bassett Research, Billey Elec. Co., Cardwell Mfg. Co., Colo-Coil Co., Co., Kenyon Transformer Co., Omite Mfg. Co., Pioneer Generator Corp., RCA Radiotron, E. M. Sargent Co., Shure Bros., Triplet, Willard Storage Battery Co.



Operator... *Andriam T. Jomari*
Map printed by permission of Simo and Schuster

FRANÇOIS GODINAS
11 Avenue de la Station
SERAING (Belgique)
Directeur A. V. A. Club
Membre - correspondant de l'
ACADÉMIE D'AÉROPHILATÉLIE

AFZENDER (Naam en adres) :
EXPEDITEUR (Nom et adresse) :

REMARQUE IMPORTANTE

REMARKEN OP DE VERZENDINGEN VAN DE
 1. ZIJ VAN GESCHREVEN BIJDEN
 OF OM 'EVEN WELK VOORWEP, VAN AARD OM HET
 GEWICHT VAN DEZE BRIEF TE VERHOEGEN, ZAL DEZE OVER
 DE GEWONE WEG WORDEN VERZONDEN.

REMARKEN OP DE VERZENDINGEN VAN DE
 1. ZIJ VAN GESCHREVEN BIJDEN
 OF OM 'EVEN WELK VOORWEP, VAN AARD OM HET
 GEWICHT VAN DEZE BRIEF TE VERHOEGEN, ZAL DEZE OVER
 DE GEWONE WEG WORDEN VERZONDEN.

BEANGRIJPE OPMERKING

PC 175

CHRISTMAS ISLAND
CENTRAL PACIFIC OCEAN



DISCOVERED BY CAPTAIN JAMES COOK, R. N.
CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25, 1777

LARGEST COCOANUT PLANTATION IN THE WORLD
OPERATED BY
CENTRAL PACIFIC COCOANUT PLANTATIONS, LTD.
LONDON
EXECUTIVE OFFICES: PAPEETE, TAHITI



Mr. Austin S. Grimes
2137 West Adams Street
Phoenix, Arizona
U.S.A.

*By first official mail
Dunedin Wellington*



M. D. G. Holt

Standard Vacuum Dec

Shanghai
CHANGS
China

Pitcairn Island

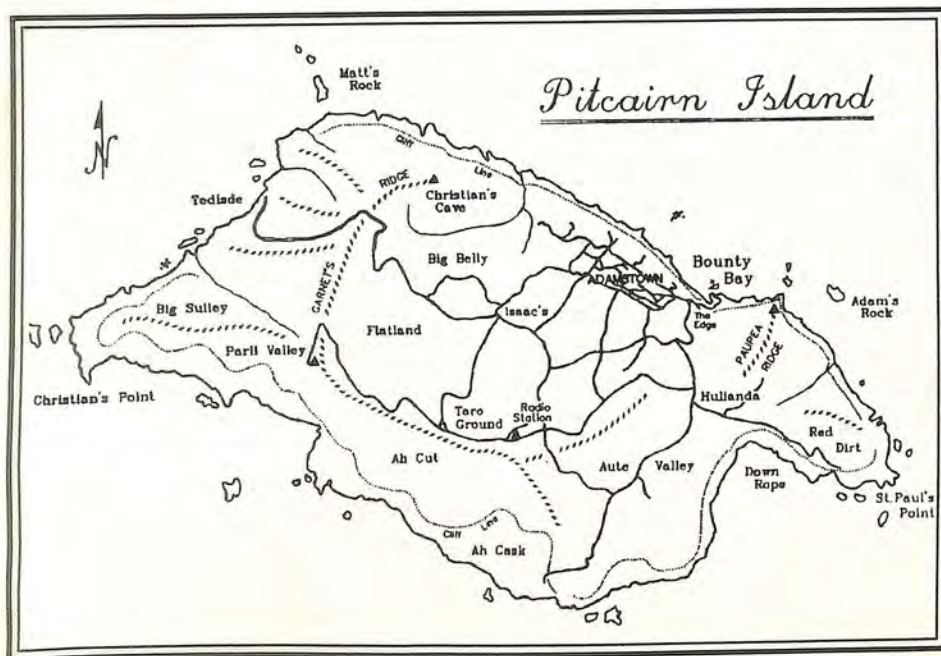
Tracking Station, 1967

The weather was so bad the night of July 19, 1967, that the small U.S. Army support-ship FS-216 had to anchor well off the island. Brief flashes from lightning bolts provided quick glimpses of the 1¼-square-mile island with no harbor to protect the ship from the storm. No signs of life were detected, no twinkles of light, on this South Pacific island in a sector where for a myriad years the charts showed no islands existed. Two days later, the storm lifted, and Pitcairn Island dried in the sunlight, cisterns full again after a dry spell. With the clear dawn, longboats soon approached the ship, where boxes of equipment were slung over the side and lightered ashore to be transported laboriously up the cliffside to the tiny village atop. And so it was that Operation SECOR (Sequential Collection of Ranges) arrived on Pitcairn Island.

by Dr. Gale J. Raymond

SECOR was made up of a series of six-month temporary high-technology satellite tracking stations of that period, scattered about the world. In the Pacific, identical tracking facilities of SECOR were set up on Tarawa, Fiji, Johnston Atoll, Christmas Island, Canton Island, possibly Easter Island, and others to survey the earth in a giant triangulation network, utilizing the balloon satellite, *Echo*. Using highly accurate atomic-coordinated clocks, on clear, cloud-free

nights, several adjacent stations some 1,000 miles apart simultaneously would photograph the *Echo* satellite with a star background in fifteen-minute time exposures. The end result was a highly accurate positioning of all satellite station locations on the earth, with the goal of developing a correct map of the world's land masses, sizes, and orientation, by the U.S. Army Map Service. This was accomplished at enormous expense, quickly to be made obsolete by even more high-tech navigational satellites and advanced procedures.



For someone with my background — a military and mufti background as a field geographer (area specialist) and as a postal historian by hobby — one special joy is collecting tracking station covers, with odd cancels and exotic stamps from strange “impossible” places. In the early days of the space program, it was not difficult to obtain tracking station covers by simply addressing covers to myself or by writing scientists at stations openly listed by NASA to inspire public interest, knowledge, and support. But lesser-known stations came and went, often for just a few weeks or months, under parallel programs by military or

other official services such as NASA, the U.S. Army Map Service, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, even the Coast Guard and U.S. Marines, plus those established by other nations with their own or mutual space programs. At a stamp show, an enthusiastic collector of Pitcairn Island stamps and covers, Don Siler, asked if I had any covers from the Pitcairn Island tracking station. He had owned one in his collection donated to the SDA Church, which sold the collection immediately to another Pitcairn buff.

Chatting at the NEW ZEALAND 90 World Stamp Exhibition with Garth Harraway and his wife, I learned that he had been the Pitcairn commissioner since 1974, after a two-year hitch there as school teacher, from 1972 to 1973. "Why, yes," he mused. "I recall hearing of a tracking station there briefly, about 1967. Why do you ask?" With only minimal prodding, he soon exhumed from the records the name and Alaska address of one young American at the station, David Evans, who had the good fortune to marry one of the island residents, Melva Warren. Later I wrote Evans, catching him at home recovering from the flu. Bored and restless, he took me up on the challenge to write the story before his memory faded. A computer whiz, he roughed out and then refined the "History of the Pitcairn Island Tracking Station, 19 July–28 December 1967," for his own family's benefit as well as mine. He also loaned me his best slides, from which I had photocopies made of the tracking station and Pitcairn Island itself.

Theirs was a seven-man team, trained in Maryland, where they prepared a self-supporting station to travel to Pitcairn for six months. An ex-U.S. Army Geodetic Surveyor, Evans was hired by the U.S. Army Map Service, with Pitcairn Island his initial assignment. His team's equipment included a small wheeled van containing the electronics and film-developing dark room, a small observatory dome for the ballistic camera, four generators, and about 100 drums of fuel, plus several tents for the campsite, along with all the food and supplies for the six-month duration. The island was alerted in advance of their arrival, and with two tractors and a lot of back-breaking work, the islanders prepared a road to the highest point on Pitcairn at 1,100 feet elevation and a campsite at "Parli Walley" (Valley). The team had flown from Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland, in July 1967, on a C-141 cargo plane to American Samoa. Two weeks later their equipment was loaded onto the U.S. Army Support Ship FS-216 with a Captain King and Filipino crew for the ten-day trip to Pitcairn. The islanders took team members into



Special road built by Pitcairn Islanders to highest peak — 1,100-foot Parli Walley — for a tractor to haul up equipment to the U.S. Army tracking station, July–December 1967.

individual homes until the station was established.

After an initial three weeks of preparing the station for operation, three men left for other locations. Four remained — John H. (Jack) Page, station chief; Naz Ortenzi, electronics technician; Evans, geodesist; and the cook, who, alas, departed about two months later for home, leaving those staying to rotate the job as cook, which soon became



Tracking station campsite, Parli Walley.



A cover from the Pitcairn Island tracking station is postmarked Pago Pago, Samoa, September 18, 1967.

self-service. Overall, scientific operations were quite satisfactory; reports were carried by the several Army support ships, either the FS-392 or -216, shuttling back and forth to American Samoa with supplies and mail. David says the islanders were most appreciative and very good to them, providing meals, entertainment, fresh baked bread, and a hot bath when needed. On Christmas Day 1967, Evans and Melva Warren were wed in the church. Melva accompanied him home to the United States and to his next duty station in the Azores. In 1971, the family traveled ten weeks for a two-week visit home to Pitcairn — the rest of the time was spent in getting there and back. For a lot of reasons, a tentative private plan for an airstrip on nearby Henderson Island was squelched as “economically infeasible.” There is still no scheduled shipping, no regular passenger service, no airline service.



U.S. Army vessel FS-392 off the coast of Pitcairn Island.

Did any other covers survive from the Pitcairn Island tracking station? No others, I fear, due to its short existence and a team of only three. A radio ham, Evans, AL7JZ, relayed most messages to the United States on both ham and official government frequencies. Official reports and occasional mail under U.S. postage went aboard the supply boat every few weeks to Pago Pago, American Samoa, in care of the U.S. Weather Bureau Office there. The FS-216, under Captain John H. King, served initially until replaced in November by the FS-392, under Captain George Jacobs. Although some Pitcairn civil mail was taken and posted at Samoa, no arrangements or connections had been made to pick up their mail there. Foreign mail addressed to Pitcairn went routinely by air to the Panama Canal or New Zealand, then was put aboard irregular ships passing

by Pitcairn Island, whose longboats fought heavy surf to meet such ships at anchor well off-island. Only rarely has the Royal New Zealand Air Force air-dropped mail, as circumstances permitted.

On December 1, 1967, the FS-392 picked up the Fiji governor, Sir Derik Jakeway, in Tahiti and took him for his official visit to Pitcairn. Notice was too late to fly the tracking station's mail from U.S. Samoa to Papeete in time for the special trip, which opportunely necessitated another trip down to Tahiti and back for mail. Tracking station personnel were aware in advance that their written reports and mail would be going and coming through faster channels, as advised in advance, and accordingly each took a supply of U.S. stamps in his personal kit, stamps necessary from U.S. Samoa, where letters were postmarked. In Pago Pago, there were regular, often daily, air mail connections to the United States, so few letters went by the Pitcairn civil post with Pitcairn Island stamps. It is not known if the tracking station cover to Don Siler, by some lucky fluke, had Pitcairn postage stamps and a notation of sorts from someone on the team as to its origin from the tracking station, but its present location is unknown; a report would be appreciated. On the mail run back to and from Tahiti, Captain Jacobs kindly took ten Pitcairn Islanders for the two-and-a-half-day visit. On their return to Pitcairn on December 16, another five islanders were aboard for the next mail run again to Tahiti for the lights, sights, shopping, and city life. An unforgettable Christmas dinner was enjoyed aboard ship coming home, enlivened by the radio report to Pitcairn

hinting that they were bringing home a horse. That report created some pandemonium on the island. Not true, fortunately.

Evans, a stamp collector of sorts, suspected that none of his letters, with ordinary U.S. stamps, was even preserved. After all, that was twenty-five years ago. On occasional family visits back "down" in the States from Alaska, he tried to remember to ask if anyone had saved letters from him. I explored various other channels, unsuccessfully.

Finally Evans stopped by the home of a California relative who not only had saved his letters (both of them!), but the envelopes as well, which he kindly relinquished to Evans, who has now passed them on to me. The covers are ugly ducklings — poorly canceled, and one is an oversized 8 by 10-inch manila envelope with stamps intrinsically worth about thirty cents, retail. But these two covers are cherished as priceless historically. Although written at different dates, they traveled in one small mailbag or briefcase to U.S. Samoa, where they were postmarked, poorly, at Pago Pago, U.S. Samoa 96920, on September 18, 1967. Although there is no mention of the tracking facility on the covers, Evans had applied a 2-pence Pitcairn Island stamp on the reverse of one letter — thus preserving a piece of history. (Evans subsequently has rescued four other family-mail covers with the same tracking-station address but bearing Pitcairn Island stamps. These covers, too, now grace my collection of tracking station covers.)



Pitcairn Island tracking station, July–December 1967.

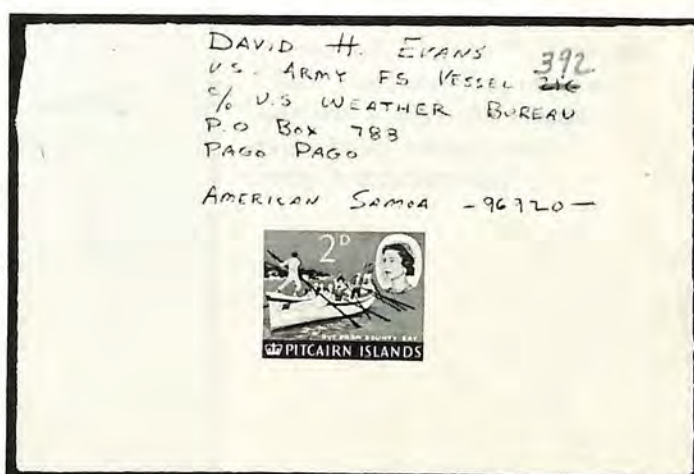
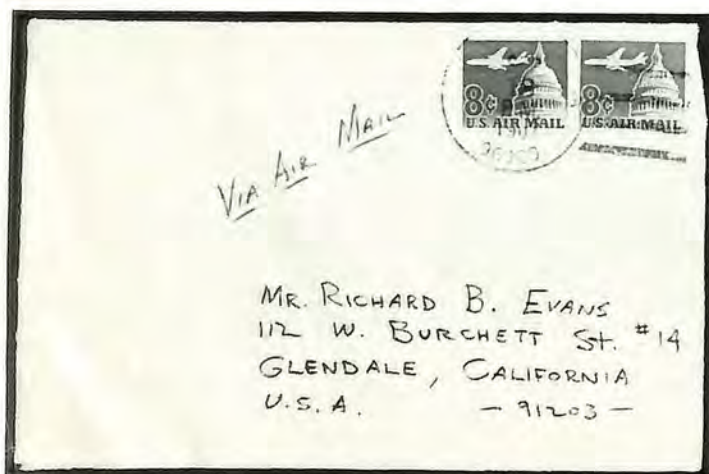
So not all island treasures are in the form of pirate doubloons or golden chains and gemstones. Sometimes "gems" can be just simple covers — from a tracking station on Pitcairn Island.

Acknowledgment

Deep appreciation goes to David H. Evans for the covers and the technical and personal history herein. Washington cannot seem to locate its official files on Operation SECOR.

The Author

Dr. Gale J. Raymond is a retired U.S. Air Force officer. A cover collector since age 11, he is partial to "impossible" covers from remote places, especially tracking station and military postal history covers. He also collects Divers, Mermaids, and Armadillos on stamps, Bahamas covers and postmarks, and professionally sells private islands and castles, as well as brokering exotic coffees and palm trees. He also served as a U.N. observer in Cambodia, his thirteenth and last war.



Tracking-station team members were not allowed to include a location in return addresses. Evans sidestepped this rule by applying a 2-pence Pitcairn Island stamp to the back of this cover.