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**Pandora Project Stage 2:
four more seasons of excavation
at the Pandora historic
shipwreck**

by Peter Gesner

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CHAPTER 2

'FOR CONDIGN PUNISHMENT': A PUNITIVE VOYAGE TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

In 1783, after the treaty that ended the American War of Independence had been signed, dozens of naval crews were paid off all over Britain as they would no longer be required in a much-reduced peacetime Royal Navy. In the course of the year many of the warships the crews had served in were taken to sheltered moorings such as Chatham, along the Medway river, to be 'laid up in ordinary' (moth-balled). One of the 'mothballed' ships was the 24 gun frigate HMS *Pandora*. Disarmed and usually with main- and foremasts taken down, ships 'in ordinary' rode their moorings until called on again. For some, like the *Pandora*, that would not be for another six years.

The *Pandora* had been built for the Royal Navy as a 'Porcupine class' frigate and launched in 1779, at Messrs' Adams, Barnard and Dudman's yard in Deptford on the Thames. It had patrolled the English Channel, participated in blockades against North American ports and been a convoy escort across the North Atlantic during the American War and had been 'in ordinary' from the end of September 1783 to the end of June 1789, when finally ordered into dry-dock – also at Chatham – for 'coppering' of her hull.¹

In late March 1790, the newly coppered frigate was selected along with a number

of similar sized and several larger vessels to be fitted-out and prepared for 'Channel service' as part of a general fleet mobilisation in anticipation of a war against Spain.² A new captain was also about to be appointed.

'TO REMOTE PARTS': THE *PANDORA* IS SELECTED

Receiving word of his appointment to the *Pandora* on 6 August 1790, Captain Edward Edwards travelled from his home in the Huntingdonshire village of Water Newton to Chatham, arriving on 10 August 1790. He came on board on that date and by flying his pennant indicated that he had formally taken command (Logbook entry 10 Aug 1790) (Kemp 1976:188).

Captain Edwards was subsequently called to London on 11 August 1790 for a briefing by the Admiralty about new orders to prepare the *Pandora* for a voyage to 'remote parts' in the South Pacific, instead of continuing with preparations for Channel service (Logbook entries 11 and 17 August 1790). The new orders were the result of the Admiralty's decision – confirmed on 5 August – to send out a single frigate and bring to justice a group of mutineers (referred to as 'piratical

villains') at large in the South Pacific in HM Armed Vessel *Bounty*; the orders included their capture as well as the return to Britain of the vessel they had 'pirated' (see Appendices: Edwards' Orders).

The *Bounty* had been on a voyage to the South Seas to collect breadfruit trees for transplantation from Tahiti to the West Indies, for cultivation as a staple food source to feed the large – mainly African – slave population working on British-owned sugar plantations in the West Indies. When they mutinied, the crew had been homeward-bound, having then been away from home for nearly 17 months; the time away included a sojourn of almost six months on Tahiti to allow the breadfruit tree seedlings they had collected to mature sufficiently to survive a long inter-ocean voyage in potted soil.

Word of the *Bounty* mutiny had reached England with the return of her deposed commander, Lieutenant William Bligh (*Whitehall Evening Post*, 13 March 1790). Bligh's report to the Admiralty caused considerable disquiet as it included an account of the trials and tribulations he and 18 'loyalists'³ endured during 42 days at sea in an open boat after being cast adrift. Following a heroic open boat voyage of some 3800 miles, from Tofu'a across the Coral Sea, through the Great Barrier Reef, the Torres Strait and across the Arafura Sea to Timor, and then on to Batavia (Jakarta), Bligh and all but one of the other 18 men in the launch survived this extraordinary ordeal (Gall, 2010).

In Batavia Bligh subsequently arranged his return to England as a passenger on a ship called the *Vlijt*, a returning Dutch East Indiaman belonging to the Dutch East India Co's (VOC) Amsterdam chamber. The 'loyalists' would follow him several months later in other homeward-bound VOC vessels (Gall, 2010:187). Bligh had negotiated that

upon arrival in British waters he would be dropped off at an English port so he would avoid the inconvenience and delay of having to come home via a Dutch port. Upon his arrival in England in mid-March 1790 Bligh's report of the mutiny was immediately delivered to the Admiralty.

As the enormity of what had happened began to sink in, there was a lot of speculation about the mutinous crew's reasons for what was regarded as their act of piracy. Most opinions initially settled on the view that the mutiny was a result of the 'seductive charms' of the Tahitian women whom the *Bounty*'s crew had consorted with during their lengthy Tahitian sojourn waiting for the breadfruit seedlings to grow (*Woodfall's Register*, 4 June 1790).

Bligh could also think of no other reason for the mutiny and surmised that the *Bounty* would return to Tahiti because the mutineers were eager to resume the idyllic and carefree existence they had enjoyed with their Tahitian girlfriends while the breadfruit seedlings were maturing. Having endured their taunts and threats while alongside, Bligh had heard the mutineers' heartfelt cheer "Huzza for Otaheite" as he and the 18 loyal men in the launch were pushed off and left to their own devices in the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

Extracts from the *Bounty*'s logbook and from Bligh's report detailing the mutiny were sent directly to the King, via Admiralty Secretary Grenville (TNA:ADM. 3/107: Admiralty Board Minutes, 25 March 1790). It is reasonable to assume that Bligh's report and the logbook's extracts were accompanied by a written request from the Admiralty to the King (George III) for direction as to the required response and attendant course of action.

On 30 March 1790 an article appeared in the *London Register* announcing that at the King's behest two naval sloops would be

dispatched to the South Pacific in pursuit of the mutineers. This can be taken as a clear indication that the mutiny was being discussed at Court, as the *London Register* contained well-informed and accurate comment reflecting recent or current topics of deliberation at Court. However, it probably is unlikely that the King would have gone to the extent of actually stipulating how many, or what type of vessel(s) should be sent; after all this was an operational matter, most appropriately left to the Admiralty. Nevertheless a similar notice was published one week later in a country publication saying it was by the 'express command' of the King that the new sloop HMS *Hound* would be one of the two sloops to be sent (*Hereford Journal*, 7 Apr 1790).

Documents illuminating the specifics of the Court's deliberations and containing royal instructions to the Admiralty do not appear to have survived. It is possible that newspaper editors were referring to HMS *Discovery* – already intended, before Bligh's return, as an exploration vessel in Admiralty plans for another voyage of exploration in the Pacific to complete Capt. James Cook's unfinished search for the 'North West Passage'.⁴ However, the *Discovery's* departure was postponed until June 1790; apparently because a second vessel was considered to be required to carry the expedition's stores and special equipment, including a small vessel in frame to be assembled during the voyage for use as a tender to the main vessels.⁵

The practicability of tasking a vessel already selected for a voyage into the Pacific for other purposes must subsequently have been reconsidered. A brig was acquired – renamed HMS *Chatham* – and fitted out as the *Discovery's* tender, while the decision to send the *Pandora* to the South Pacific on a separate mission was minuted at an Admiralty meeting on 5 August 1790 (Adm.3/107). It should therefore be assumed that by then

there was general agreement that a cruise by a single vessel was called for with the sole purpose of capturing and bringing to justice the mutineers and recovering the *Bounty* (TNA:Adm. 2/120:478-80).

For its part, the press were keen to report any detail – unusual, exciting or salacious – that might throw new light on the mutiny to satisfy the growing and widespread public interest in the story. On 4 June 1790, for instance, *Woodfall's Register* reported the publication of a new work containing "secret anecdotes of the Otaheitian women".

However, as more Bligh 'loyalists' returned to England in the course of the second half of 1790 and during the early months of 1791, their accounts fuelled public house and coffee-house chit-chat and rampant speculation about the mutiny's underlying causes. Conjecture started to focus on such questions as whether there could be any truth to the prevalent rumour that Bligh may actually have been to blame for the mutiny because of his unacceptable conduct towards his officers (Kennedy, 1989:34). Allegedly his flawed behaviour included accusations that he was prone to all too public, petty fault-finding, constant belittling and outbursts of stinging invective towards his officers (Denning 1992:56).

Several affronted officers had apparently instigated the mutiny, while none had made the slightest, even token, attempt to support Bligh or try to help him restore his authority. In fact, Bligh's protégé Fletcher Christian, the *Bounty's* acting lieutenant, and three of the most capable 'young gentlemen' – midshipmen Edward Young, Peter Heywood and George Stewart – appeared to have been among the mutiny's main supporters.

By all accounts the *Bounty's* voyage had started ominously in late December 1787 and been dogged by adversity and rising tensions on board; primarily because Bligh

stubbornly persisted with the attempt to take the shorter route into the Pacific by Cape Horn. It was clearly 'too late in the season' and – more importantly – against the advice of his officers. Having eventually been forced to turn back from the Cape Horn route after weeks of making no headway against relentless, severe, adverse weather, they had finally arrived in Tahiti on 26 October 1788, ten months later, by the longer and tedious 'eastern route' via Capetown and Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) after which they spent nearly another 6 months in Tahiti collecting and tending breadfruit seedlings. It seemed there might be some truth to the much heard rumour that acting Lieutenant Fletcher Christian and others had ultimately no longer been prepared to put up with Bligh's constant taunts and critical jibes. To the point that Christian felt sufficiently aggrieved one morning to incite several members of his watch – all equally exasperated and incensed by Bligh's outbursts – to help him take command of the ship and cast adrift in an open boat their irascible captain; with 18 of their shipmates (Denning, 1992: 44; Kennedy, 1989: 211).

RECRUITING FOR A SOUTH PACIFIC VOYAGE

On 12 August 1790 London's newspapers promptly reported the Admiralty's decision to send Capt. Edwards in the frigate *Pandora* in pursuit of the *Bounty* (*St James Chronicle*, 12 Aug. 1790). A noteworthy piece of reporting several weeks later about the planning for the voyage mentioned that the crew would consist only of 140 men – instead of the normal number of 160 for a frigate of the *Pandora's* size. But the smaller complement would consist of 'picked men', who were 'best qualified' for the special purpose of the voyage. This news item was copied and printed several times during August

in other British newspapers, circulating in London as well as in the country (*St James Chronicle* 29 Aug. 1790 and *English Chronicle* 31 Aug. 1790).

For her South Pacific voyage the *Pandora* was equipped with a special armament of 4 eighteen-pounder carronades, 20 six-pounder carriage guns and 12 half-pounder swivel guns. She was also heavily laden with provisions for the officers, midshipmen and sailors on board and with additional stores and spare fittings (Hamilton, 1793:5). In addition to stores and fittings for her own needs, extra crew and extra stores would be required to man, refit and re-supply the *Bounty* in the event she was retaken; in which case she would have to be brought back to Britain by another crew. The Admiralty therefore ordered doubling of the usual number of masters' mates and midshipmen and also called for the spaces, usually filled by the berths of the various officers' and petty officers' servants – up to 25 boys – to be re-assigned to accommodate additional seamen. All of the boys, who had initially come on board as 'servants', were therefore required by special Admiralty order to quit the ship.⁶ Their names were struck off the muster on 25 October 1790 and their spaces were used to accommodate extra seamen (Adm. 36/11136). With the Admiralty's blessings, however, three erstwhile 'servants' were permitted to re-enter. Joseph Cunningham, the bosun's son, was re-entered as an ordinary seaman and David Renouard and Henry Pyecroft, protégées of respectively Captain Edwards and the ship's sailing master George Passmore, were re-entered as midshipmen (see Chapter 3).

Thomas Hayward, one of the *Bounty's* former midshipmen, was among the extra junior officers added to the *Pandora's* complement. Hayward had accompanied Bligh in the launch to Batavia and had been a witness at Bligh's court-martial. His appointment to the

Pandora as the third lieutenant was arranged by Vice Admiral Roddam, who had also urged – unsuccessfully – that more of Bligh's loyalists should have been ordered to join the *Pandora* [NMM ROD / 6 / 4: 247-48].

By assigning Hayward to the *Pandora*, Vice Admiral Roddam was clearly acting with some forethought as he undoubtedly thought Hayward's participation in the search would assist Captain Edwards to recognise the mutineers and also to act as an interpreter in the inevitable contacts and interviews they would have from time to time with local chiefs. With the exception of purser Gregory Bentham⁷ and Thomas Hayward, none of the *Pandora's* crew had any experience of the South Pacific.

Recruiting for the voyage continued until one or two days before departure. On 3 November able seaman Thomas Brixley was the last man to join the crew; he was recruited while the frigate was still off 'Jack-in-the-Basket', at anchor awaiting a suitable wind that would see them through 'the Needles', out of the Solent into the North Atlantic.

Desertions were also still occurring during the last few days. Thomas Pallister opportunistically 'ran' on 4 November while in charge of one of the *Pandora's* yawls, which was engaged in getting additional stocks of fresh water from the fire ship *Pluto*, also at anchor at 'Jack-in-the-Basket'. Pallister deserted by sailing off during a rain squall in the yawl of which he was the boat keeper (Logbook entry 4 November 1790). Edwards sent after the yawl, which was found abandoned on the mudflats; it was soon brought back on board where it later would come to play a vital part in the survival of a large number of the crew.

These examples clearly illustrate the somewhat random nature of late eighteenth century naval recruiting practices, for, had the winds not been contrary, the *Pandora*

would have made it through the 'Needles' on 1 November 1790 and Thomas Brixley would undoubtedly have been 'discharged' from HMS *Flirt* into another ship, while Pallister may have deserted at another opportunity. It was also not uncommon for men to be transferred from one ship to another within several days of their 'appearance'. From the *Pandora's* musters it is apparent that, after spending only one or two days on board, several men were transferred again to other warships at Spithead. The need for experienced, sea-going crew on the ships about to depart in Admiral Howe's fleet to meet the Spanish challenge presented by the 'Nootka incident' was apparently considered more urgent than the *Pandora's* voyage requirements (Adm. 36/11136; see also Log entry for 18 Oct 1790).

The selection of the *Pandora's* crew therefore appears to have been according to circumstances, chance often determining in which ship the men eventually served. With the exception of Lieutenant Hayward, purser Gregory Bentham and possibly Lieutenant Corner, the 'picked men' mentioned by the press appear to have been thin on the ground (*St James Chronicle* 29 August 1790; *English Chronicle* 31 August 1790). Alternatively, what was meant by 'picked men' was a reference to the extra-ordinary composition of the crew, i.e. the extra junior and petty officers (doubling of numbers of masters' mates and midshipmen) and able seamen who would be required as crew for the recaptured *Bounty*, to bring her home safely.

Upon completion of fitting-out, manning and victualing for a long inter-ocean voyage to the 'South Seas', the *Pandora* finally sailed on 7 November 1790, with a crew of 134. In all, twenty-six men on board were pressed men, (see Chapter 3 for the crew's names) while another twenty-three were referred to as 'volunteers' (TNA: Adm. 36/11136).

ROUTE TO TAHITI

The *Pandora's* route into the South Pacific and on to Tahiti was by the 'short' route, around Cape Horn, via Madeira or Tenerife and Rio de Janeiro. The crew was initially making for Madeira to avoid running into trouble with Spanish forces on Tenerife in the event a war did break out. However, ten days into the voyage the *Pandora* encountered HM Sloop *Shark* which brought them the news that the Nootka dispute had been amicably settled with Spain and that the sabre-rattling between the two countries had ceased (Logbook entry 18 November 1790).

The first port of call therefore was changed to Tenerife, where the frigate stayed to take on board more water, wine and fresh supplies; including citrus fruit, bananas and pomegranates (Hamilton, 1793:9). If the *Shark* had not caught up with them to convey the news about the diplomatic resolution of the Nootka incident, they would have gone instead to the Portuguese colony of Madeira, a long-time ally of Britain's, for fresh provisions, water and wine (Logbook entry 18 Nov 1790).

Notwithstanding their fresh supplies, a large number of the crew, including assistant surgeon James Innes, suffered from a contagious fever that swept through the ship on the crossing between Tenerife and Rio de Janeiro. By supplying the men with tea and sugar, surgeon Hamilton treated the sick in a novel way; according to Hamilton this was the first time tea had been provided to a naval vessel at sea by the Victualing Board (Hamilton, 1793:11-12). In spite of Hamilton's best ministrations, however, James Johnson died off Rio de Janeiro on 1 January 1791 and was buried at sea on the same day.

Except for the fever sweeping through the ship's crew, the Atlantic crossing was largely uneventful. There were sightings of waterspouts and also the unpleasant

experience of having to endure stifling tropical heat for several days while sailing through the relatively windless 'doldrums' latitudes. Trials with a patented ventilation device ('White's') to circulate air below-decks were not encouraging. Hamilton remarked that the device would possibly have been more effective if there actually had been some uncluttered spaces between decks for the air to circulate. However, at the beginning of the voyage the vessel was too crammed with stores and provisions (Hamilton, 1793:9-12).

The frigate put in at Rio de Janeiro for more fresh supplies as Edwards was worried that the fever would not have run its course before they reached the notoriously heavy seas around Cape Horn, where they could not afford to be short-handed. After a brief stay in Rio de Janeiro, the *Pandora* ran along the coast of Patagonia towards Cape Horn.

The crew's health improved because of the availability of special supplies, such as hot chocolate and spruce beer, which the Victualing Board had also provided (Hamilton, 1793:20-21). Most of the fever afflicted men responded to this fare and quickly regained their strength as they headed further south into the bracing Patagonian climate. The *Pandora* safely rounded Cape Horn, entering the Pacific in early February 1791. The crew subsequently passed the time making up 'junk' with old lengths of condemned rope and using a forge to manufacture ironware that could be traded with islanders in exchange for fresh provisions, firewood and water, or to be used as inducement of sexual favours from local women (Coleman, 1988b:37).

Easter Island was sighted on 4 March 1791. The voyage would certainly have been very different if Captain Edwards had realised that Pitcairn Island (the small mischarted island where Fletcher Christian and his followers

had found a hiding place) was within a short distance of Easter Island. However, the location of Fletcher Christian and the Pitcairn Island settlement he established there would remain unknown until 1808, when the crew of the American sealer *Topaz* put in by chance at the then wrongly charted island. Being on a different course, the *Pandora* did not pass close enough to Pitcairn Island, although several other islands in the vicinity were sighted and their position recorded in the *Pandora's* log. Edwards named Ducie Island after his patron Admiral Lord Ducie, under whom he had served earlier in his career as a junior officer and to whose influence and good offices at the Admiralty he possibly owed his current command. But Edwards ignored the other islands and dutifully continued on to Tahiti.

By heading there directly, Edwards was following his orders to make an expeditious Tahitian landfall because the Admiralty had received a reliable report from a South Seas' trading captain about a sailor called Jonathan (or Jon) Brown⁸ who was living in Tahiti as a beachcomber and would be able to provide useful information as to the mutineers' whereabouts. Brown had been put ashore from another ship which had called in at Tahiti in 1789. Edwards mentions this in his narrative, adding that he had soon found that Brown was a useful addition to the crew, in light of the assistance he readily provided to track several men who were eluding capture by hiding out in the mountains.

AT TAHITI

The *Pandora* arrived at Matavai Bay (Tahiti) on 23 March 1791 after an uneventful voyage around Cape Horn. All of the crew safely made the voyage to Tahiti, except bosun's mate James Johnston. Expecting to find Jon Brown as the only European in the island, Edwards was probably agreeably surprised to happen on 14 of the *Bounty's* crew as well.

The more so because four of them – armourer Joseph Coleman, midshipmen George Stewart and Peter Heywood and barber Richard Skinner – gave themselves up within a few hours of the *Pandora's* arrival. They were joined two days later by Michael Byrne, the *Bounty's* near-blind fiddler who was living in a remoter part of the island and gave himself up as soon as he was able to get to the *Pandora's* anchorage in Matavai Bay (Adm. MS180/7).

Having paddled out to the frigate before the crew had dropped anchor in Matavai Bay, Joe Coleman informed Edwards that until the day before there had been 14 of the *Bounty's* men in the island, but James Morrison, Charles Norman and Tom Ellison had actually just left Tahiti in a boat they had built during their 20 month Tahitian sojourn. By coincidence they had departed in the *Resolution*, as Morrison had named the boat, the day before the *Pandora's* arrival. However, the *Resolution* soon returned to Tahiti, as the crew had experienced problems with their bark cloth sails and the coconut fibre rigging they had hand-crafted from local materials. On being told of the *Pandora's* arrival in Matavai Bay, Morrison immediately attempted to take his boat directly to Edwards in the *Pandora* to surrender. Before succeeding to get there, however, they ran into a shore party led by Lieutenant Corner, to whom they surrendered instead. They were brought to the ship as prisoners and were immediately put in irons with the five *Bountys* who had already surrendered to Captain Edwards (Morrison in Rutter, 1935:120).

The remaining six *Bountys* fled into the mountains in a last, desperate attempt to avoid capture. But several Tahitian chiefs, one of them Lieutenant Hayward's 'taio', opted to curry favour with the *Pandoras* and turned against the mutineers by giving them up to the *Pandora's* armed shore parties.

'PANDORA'S BOX'

Thus, by 9 April 1791 all had been apprehended and locked up in the 18 by 11 by 5½ foot (4.5 x 3 x 1.6 m) wooden prison cell built on the quarterdeck. It came to be referred to as '*Pandora's Box*' by its inmates. The cell was built by the carpenters to accommodate the prisoners aft of the mizzen mast and to keep them segregated from the crew. An armed guard consisting of two men and a midshipman was posted around the clock to ensure that the prisoners did not communicate with the crew.

The prisoners were subsequently interrogated, one by one; and gradually a picture emerged of the main events after the mutiny. The 14 prisoners had been among a group of 16 Bountys who had decided to separate from Fletcher Christian's party and return to Tahiti. Disaffected by the course of events after the mutiny, they had elected to go their own way in September 1789 after a failed attempt to establish Fort St George, a settlement under Christian's leadership, on Tubuai – one of the Austral Islands, approximately 220 miles to the south of Tahiti. Some had defected from Christian's party because they objected to the excessive brutality and violence directed against Tubu'ians resisting Christian's attempt to colonise their island.

In spite of their unanimous decision to defect from Christian's group however, relations among the prisoners in the 'box' were far from harmonious (Gesner, 2000:7). In addition to the four men who had tried to get in the launch with Bligh and the 18 'loyalists' but were told there was no more room, there were several others who claimed they had had no hand in the mutiny, nor sympathy for, nor prior knowledge of it. They claimed they had been surprised and overtaken by the rapidly unfolding events during the morning of the mutiny, or that

they had been prevented by a 'die-hard' element – men in Christian's watch – from getting into the launch with Bligh.

Before the *Pandora's* arrival, Churchill and Thompson had already died as a direct result of the bad blood that existed between them. It had come to a head when Churchill was shot in the back by Thompson during a fracas that had erupted between them as a result of an argument about the alleged theft of property by one of their Tahitian consorts. The shooting was followed the next day by Thompson being bludgeoned to death in retribution by a party of Churchill's Tahitian friends, who apparently also decapitated him and stuck his head on a pole as a trophy (Morrison, 1935:95).

Others had also quarrelled, but had avoided violent confrontation. They had elected to part company as a strategy to stay out of each other's way; each faction choosing to live separately with their Tahitian consorts in different parts of Tahiti and under the protection of various local chiefs they had befriended. However, it proved difficult to avoid confrontations, as some of them were occasionally called upon by their special friend – their 'taio' – to assist in the defence of tribal lands against the depredations or claims of rival clans from other parts of the island (Morrison, 1935:102-3).

The two midshipmen – George Stewart and Peter Heywood – had constituted one such faction and for the most part lived as quietly as they could. Stewart was apparently content to live with his consort Peggy, with whom he had fathered Charlotte, their daughter. He spent his days with his family, tending a tropical vegetable garden and an orchard; no doubt it was a far cry from life in his native Orkney. Heywood spent much of his time compiling an English-Tahitian lexicon. As a prisoner in HMS *Hector* awaiting his court-martial, Heywood later continued to work on

this lexicon, which would be used by London Missionary Society evangelists when they arrived in Tahiti in 1795 to build the island's first Christian mission (Tagart, 1832:142).

James Morrison and his fellow boat-builders had formed another group, and also lived around Matavai Bay, in proximity to Stewart and Heywood. Although he initially had briefly been part of Morrison's boat builders, Coleman later also chose to live apart tending a still he had erected. Thomas Burkett and John Sumner lived in Papa'ara on the western side of the island, while Will Muspratt, Charles Norman, Will McIntosh, Henry Hildebrand and Mick Byrne had gone to live further away in neighbouring Oparra on the extreme eastern side of Tahiti (Morrison, 1935:76).

When brought together again and confined in the cramped prison cell on the *Pandora's* quarter-deck, old enmities flared up. Captain Edwards mentions that the prisoners frequently resorted to violence when quarrelling and hurt each other when fighting (Adm. MS180/7, Edwards' Papers).

In addition to locking up its crew, Edwards confiscated the vessel Morrison's party had built. Renaming it *Matavai*, it was intended for use as a tender in the coming search for the *Bounty* and he ordered that it be made serviceable by re-rigging it with good sails and rope from the *Pandora's* stores. Nine *Pandoras* were placed on board as crew. Command was assigned to William Oliver, a 24 year old master's mate from Great Yarmouth (Adm.36/11090). Edwards' protégé, 16 year old midshipman David Renouard, was appointed as second-in-command. Renouard wrote an account of his service on board the *Matavai*.⁹

Referring to the 14 prisoners as 'delinquents' or 'pirates', Edwards prohibited contact between them and the ship's crew, as well as between the prisoners and their Tahitian

consorts and friends. He did so because of warnings he received from Tahitian informants, among them Hayward's former *taio*, that the prisoners' Tahitian friends, specifically George Stewart's *taio*, were plotting to free the prisoners, hoping to drive the *Pandora* ashore after cutting the anchor cables during an on-shore wind (Hamilton, 1793:106-7). To prevent conspiracies and to keep the prisoners apart from the *Pandoras* and their Tahitian friends, the deck space around the wooden cell holding the handcuffed and leg-ironed men was declared out of bounds; armed guards were stationed there around the clock to enforce the order.

In spite of these measures however, the prisoners apparently found ways to communicate with the crew and get them to pass on messages to their Tahitian friends. Edwards mentioned that lieutenants Corner and Larkan also both suspected that the prisoners passed notes to the crew when being taken to the 'heads' to relieve their calls of nature (Adm. MS180/7). Prevention of all such contact between the prisoners and their Tahitian friends, even on these occasions, was undoubtedly the reason the prisoners remained locked in the cell when they needed to use 'the heads' while the vessel was still at anchor. They were subsequently given so-called 'necessary tubs' for that purpose (Tagart, 1832:33).

Edwards interrogated the prisoners and interviewed a number of Tahitian leaders for information about the possible whereabouts of the other fugitives and the *Bounty*. He was aided in this by the journals faithfully kept since the mutiny by the two midshipmen Stewart and Heywood. The journals had been found in their sea chests, which Edwards had sent ashore for and confiscated. Brief excerpts were extracted and copied by the *Pandora's* clerk and kept with Edwards' papers (Adm. MS 180/3).¹⁰

Very little useful information was gathered from the prisoners to assist Edwards with a decision about where they should go after Tahiti in their search for the *Bounty*. All Edwards discovered was that during the day, after dropping off the 16 men who had elected to return to Tahiti after the colonisation disaster in Tubu'ai, the *Bounty* had been visible until sunset on the northern horizon. At dawn the following day she was no longer in sight and nothing had been seen or heard of her or her crew in the intervening 18 months.¹¹

The prisoners' treatment in the *Pandora* is sometimes cited as one of the examples of the extreme rigour of eighteenth century naval punishment. In this respect Captain Edwards' treatment of his prisoners has been singled out and considered as extraordinarily heartless and excessively callous (Wahlroos, 2001:184, 196). How much justification is there to consider Captain Edwards as an excessive disciplinarian, or indeed, as some commentators all too readily believe, as a mean, heartless brute?¹² Clearly, it would be wrong to judge by early twenty first century standards.

A good case can be put that as far as keeping the men in chains in a prison cell was concerned, he was simply following his orders to prevent them escaping, in order that they be tried when brought back to Britain. According to his orders, the captured Bountys were to be brought home to undergo punishment 'due to their demerits' (Edwards' orders, Adm. 2/120 see appendix 3). What obviously counted for Edwards was that the appropriate judicial process must be followed, i.e. trial by naval court martial. It was not his place to make or act on personal assessments about a prisoners' guilt or innocence. The prisoners were all treated in the same manner even though he was aware that Bligh had publicly vouched for several men's innocence. During his trial Peter Heywood openly acknowledged that Edwards had not acted maliciously by

imprisoning all of the mutineers but had simply followed the Royal Navy's rules (Tagart, 1832:117).

Edwards was also aware of the need to guard and segregate the prisoners because he was aware of a threat posed by some of the prisoners' Tahitian friends, especially from George Stewart's *taio* who was apparently plotting to rescue Stewart by cutting the *Pandora's* hawsers when there was an on-shore wind to make the ship run aground. Conceivably this plot would put not only the prisoners at risk but the *Pandora* as well (Thomson, 1915:106-7).

On the one hand, the orders Edwards issued on the sand cay after the loss of the *Pandora*, to keep the prisoners apart from the rest of the survivors and his refusal of their request for a sail so they would be able to rig a shelter against the burning tropical sun, should perhaps be described as callous and uncaring. What reasons he had for having such an attitude can only be guessed at. At best, the assumption could be made that he felt weighed down by the many ramifications of having just lost his ship and by the responsibility of getting all of the survivors back to England alive.

Whatever his reason for such orders, this stance was a contributing factor of the criticism levelled at Edwards and his command decisions after his return home. One of Edwards' main detractors was Commodore Sir Thomas Pasley, Peter Heywood's uncle, whose tone in one of his letters to Heywood is ample testimony of his censure of 'that fellow' Edwards' treatment of his prisoners. He was especially disparaging about the prisoners' continual confinement in '*Pandora's* Box' (Tagart, 1832:64). Pasley omits to mention how he would have handled the situation had command of the mission been his. At the very least he might occasionally have let the prisoners out of their cramped captivity to stretch their legs and get some fresh

air. So, midshipmen Stewart and Heywood might have been allowed to spend some time walking the quarterdeck, as Heywood was later permitted to do after his transshipment to HMS *Gorgon* in Capetown during the last stage of his voyage home. Heywood's friends and defenders went out of their way to emphasise this point during his court martial, as if to call attention to their belief that Edwards' conduct towards the prisoners had been excessively unforgiving and that Heywood had therefore already suffered disproportionately and, in fact, had already been adequately punished (Tagart, 1832).

On the other hand there is evidence that contradicts the critical view of Edwards' actions, suggesting instead that Edwards had been fair and reasonably even-handed when it came to dealing with his prisoners and exercising the responsibilities of his command.¹³

Hamilton's good opinion of his captain is evident throughout his narrative. It is also noteworthy to cite the positive opinion *Pandora* midshipman James Atkins had of his captain's conduct. This was reported in May 1792 from Harwich, where Atkins had landed, having been one of the 16 *Pandoras* who accompanied Lieutenant John Larkan from Batavia in the VOC ship *Zwaan*. Larkan's group had been the first of the survivors to leave the Dutch East Indies and would also be the first to reach England via Capetown and The Netherlands (see appendix 5: *Extract from Atkins's Journal*).

SEARCHING THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Leaving Tahiti on 8 May 1791, the *Pandora* spent the next four months in the South Pacific searching for the *Bounty* and the rest of the mutineers (figure 8). Two of her boats were lost during this time. First, a jolly boat went missing on 24 May 1791 off the Palmerston Island atoll, with four crew and midshipman

John Sival, none of whom were ever seen or heard of again. One month later the schooner *Matavai* failed to appear at agreed rendezvous locations off Samoa and at Anamooka in the Tongan Group (Maude 1964).

Command of the schooner had been entrusted to William Oliver. After they had become separated from the *Pandora*, Oliver successfully navigated the schooner from Samoa to Tofu'a where he waited six weeks for the *Pandora* to arrive; thence, thinking the *Pandora* had been wrecked, they sailed through the Fijian islands towards and along New Guinea's south coast, via the Torres Strait and across the Arafura Sea to Surabaya in the Dutch East Indies.

This open boat voyage can be ranked with William Bligh's celebrated open boat voyage to Timor in the *Bounty*'s launch. A transcript of the journal kept by Oliver's second-in-command, 16 year old midshipman David Renouard, has survived and is of considerable historical interest; particularly because it describes several Pacific islands not previously recorded by European explorers (Maude, 1964).

The schooner's crew arrived in Java on 20 September 1791, more than one month before the survivors of the shipwreck; which had occurred at about the same time as Oliver and his crew were struggling to get the *Matavai* through the Torres Strait, probably less than 100 miles to the north of *Pandora*'s Entrance. However, their trials and tribulations would not be over yet.

Ironically, Oliver and his men were immediately imprisoned in Surabaya as suspected *Bounty* mutineers. Renouard recalls that when they at last made Surabaya, Oliver called on the governor seeking humanitarian assistance.

After several weeks in Surabaya's dungeon, Oliver eventually managed to persuade the governor that they were part of the *Pandora*'s crew and to let them travel on to Batavia.

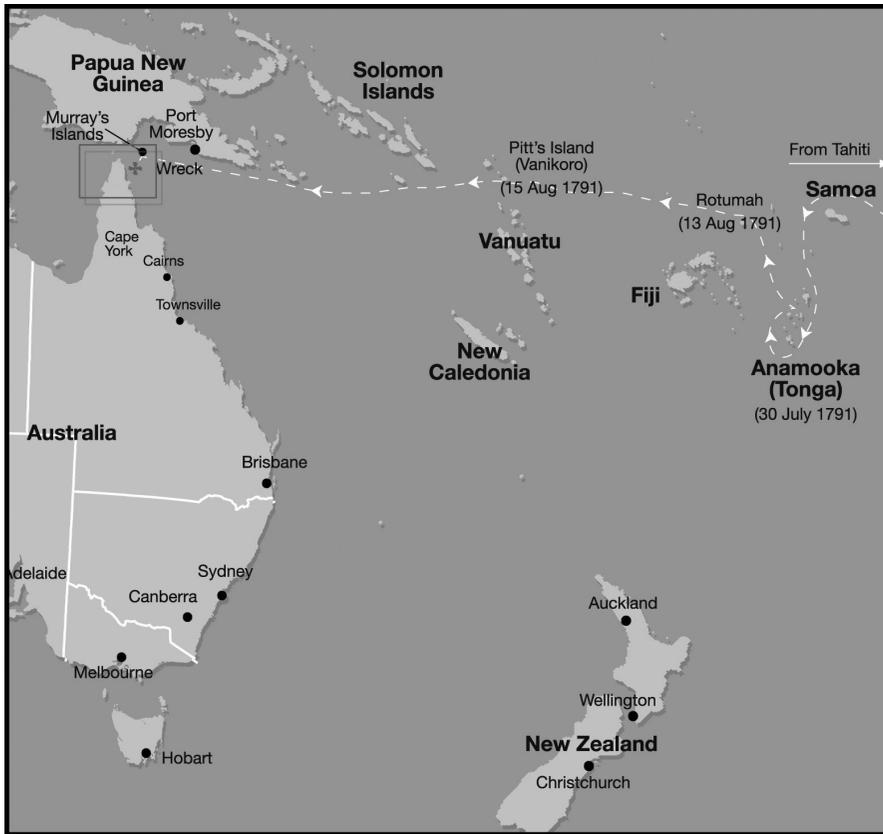


FIG. 8: The *Pandora's* track in the SW Pacific (July-August 1791).

On the way there under military escort, they fetched up briefly in Samarang where, during the last week of October, as a result of a severe storm, they had sought shelter and fortuitously met up there with their former shipmates who had survived the wreck of the *Pandora* and were on board the Dutch East India Co (VOC) ship *Rembang* also making for Batavia (Maude 1964:217-235).

In spite of the earlier mishaps with the boats, the *Pandora* had continued the search for the *Bounty* and Fletcher Christian's party. The search took in Tokelau, Samoa, Niue and the Ha'apai Islands, part of the Tongan group. However, the crew were unaware that each day on their westerly course took them further away from Pitcairn Island.

Upon the reunion with the men in the *Matavai* in Samarang, the *Pandoras* eventually discovered why the *Matavai* had failed to appear at the agreed rendezvous location off Anamooka. Oliver had been given orders to proceed to Anamooka (modern Nomuka, one of Tongan Islands) if they should miss each other off Samoa. The agreed meeting off Samoa had not occurred due to adverse weather, so Oliver set sail for the Tongan Group. However, while bound for Anamooka, he miscalculated the *Matavai's* speed and 'overshot' Anamooka, arriving, about sixty miles downwind and down-current, at Tofu'a instead. Believing they were in Anamooka, however, the tender's crew waited there for the *Pandora's* arrival. After waiting nearly six weeks Oliver concluded that

something untoward must have happened to their frigate; consequently he decided that the *Matavai* should set sail alone for the Dutch East Indies (Maude, 1964:217-35).

While the *Pandora* was awaiting the tender's reappearance at Anamooka in July 1791, several of the crew experienced trouble in their interaction with some Tongans. As related by George Hamilton, one incident involved Edwards' clerk (Edmonds) who was assaulted by a local crowd and entirely stripped of his clothing and belongings. Another incident was an attack on Lieutenant Corner, who was clubbed on the head and apparently felt sufficiently provoked to shoot dead his assailant to retrieve a war club he had just bartered for, which his assailant had snatched from him. Neither of these incidents appears to have prevented the 'brisk trade' for 'curiosities' being carried out between the islanders and the *Pandoras* (Hamilton, 1793:86). Edwards took the opportunity to remind the Tongans of the *Pandora's* firepower by demonstrating what damage one of the ship's six-pounder cannons could do to a tree on the outskirts of the village, even when fired at from half a mile away (Adm. MS180/7, Edwards papers).

After a detour to the Ha'apai Islands and the second visit to Anamooka (Nomuka) during late July 1791 to check whether the *Matavai* had made the rendezvous, several discoveries of small islands were made; among them, the islands of Rotumah and Uvea (Wallis & Futuna Islands). And on 13 August 1791 an island Edwards named Pitt's Island was sighted – now referred to as Vanikoro Island in the Santa Cruz Group, part of the Solomon Islands (Log entry 13 Aug 1791). Hamilton described Pitt's Island as mountainous and surmised it was inhabited because of rising smoke observed in various parts of it (Hamilton 1793:99).

A shore party was not sent to investigate as Edwards may have thought that sending out

shore parties to this island, and to several others they had sighted during previous days, would be a waste of time because fugitive mutineers would not draw attention to themselves by lighting fires. Thus, attributing the fires to the island's inhabitants instead, the *Pandora* sailed on without further investigation. Possibly however, but unbeknown to the *Pandoras*, several fires on Pitt's Island may actually have been signal fires made by survivors of the French explorer La Pérouse's expedition, last heard of when his vessels *L'Astrolabe* and *La Boussole* had left Botany Bay in March 1788. The expedition was to disappear after the ships had been driven aground during a cyclone several months later (Stanbury *et al.* 2004:9-11).

Edwards has been criticised for not investigating the signs of life he saw at Vanikoro; this inaction being regarded as a missed opportunity to be recognised and universally applauded as the person who solved the mystery surrounding the fate of the La Pérouse expedition (Wahlroos, 2001:347). However such criticism can be described as tendentious and historicising, given that at the time of the *Pandora's* departure from England (November 1790) La Pérouse's ships may have been regarded as overdue, but they were not yet actually considered 'mysteriously missing' as such.

Edwards was of course aware that a French expedition under La Pérouse had been in the Pacific since 1786 and that it had also called in at Botany Bay in January 1788, from where their last dispatches had been sent to France (Stanbury *et al.* 2004:10-11). Hamilton mentions finding in the Navigators' Islands (Samoa) some French uniform buttons and clothing belonging to some of the eleven Frenchmen killed during a Samoan attack on a group of La Pérouse's men, among them the expedition's second-in-command De Langle (Hamilton, 1793:92). Thus, the *Pandoras* probably also were aware that the South West sector of the Pacific, which the

Pandora was then traversing, had been the last remaining area still to be explored by La Pérouse during the remainder of 1788 and into 1789. But they would most likely not have been fully aware when departing from Portsmouth (in November 1790) that 'grave fears' were actually being entertained in France about La Pérouse's fate. A French naval expedition, under Admiral Bruny d'Entrecasteaux, to look for La Pérouse was not sent out from Brest until September 1791.

GREAT BARRIER REEF ENCOUNTER

Breakers were sighted by the *Pandoras* in the Coral Sea on 25 August 1791. They were named 'Look-out Shoals' and Stoney Reef Island; modern-day Portlock Reefs and Boot Reef (BA1039). Hoping to find a direct channel to Cook's Endeavour Strait, a west south-westerly course was set to by-pass more breakers lying ahead. On this course the *Pandoras* sighted the first islands and reefs of the Great Barrier Reef in approximately latitude 9° 40' S (Mer Island). Edwards named it Murray's Islands (Logbook entry 26 Aug 1791). In order to by-pass Mer, a southerly course was followed. But the reef was doing justice to its name; no suitable passage was found during the day as they skirted the Great Barrier Reef's outer edge in search of a passage leading west to Endeavour's Strait. During the night the frigate stayed well away in blue water, coming back in at the same latitude towards the reef at daylight. A large opening was eventually sighted at approximately 11° 10' S. A yawl was launched at mid-morning on 28 August 1791 and its commander, Lieutenant Corner, was instructed to investigate the entrance and the waters beyond, to determine whether a safe, navigable passage existed (Rutter, 1935:125).

By sending out Lieutenant Corner in the yawl to reconnoitre the apparently promising entrance, Captain Edwards was not being

overly cautious. Any competent captain would have done the same, especially in light of the remarks about the hidden dangers of navigating Great Barrier Reef waters already made by such tried and reputable navigators as James Cook and William Bligh. Both had picked their way, not uneventfully, through these uncharted, reef strewn waters before the *Pandora* did; but even Cook, the universally celebrated navigator, had run aground in the Great Barrier Reef, coming very close to losing his ship.

Returning later that afternoon¹⁴ at approximately 4pm, Corner signalled from the yawl that he had found a promising passage through the reef (Log entry 29 Aug 1791). Edwards mentions that when it signalled, the yawl was 'outside the reef' (Adm. 180/7, Edwards papers). This indicates that the yawl was returning, having rounded the scimitar shaped reef directly to the south of Moulter Cay¹⁵ and was sailing back through what is now called the northern opening in Raine Island Entrance (figure 9 and 10). But because night was approaching, he was apprehensive about Corner's yawl becoming separated during the night. Edwards ordered the yawl back to the ship to get it on board again before nightfall (Thomson, 1915:72).

THE WRECKING

By ordering the yawl back on board, Captain Edwards was taking a simple measure to prevent the loss of another of the ship's boats. Two boats with 14 men had already gone missing, so he was fearful about losing another and more men. However, this precaution caused the ship to venture into the entrance late in the afternoon while trying to close with the yawl. Hove to, to make it easier for the yawl to draw closer, another difficulty Edwards had to take into account was the effect of a strong tidal current on

the vessel, driving it further west into the entrance where room to manoeuvre was considerably diminished and where it was low tide at approximately 5 pm (Hiddens in Gesner 2000:12).

From about 5.30pm onwards, the flooding tide would have been felt as a strong west-setting current, making the vessel drift further into the entrance and closer to shoal waters (figure 9). It is easy to picture that the look-outs may have been distracted by the signalling between the ship and the yawl. But most importantly, with the sun low on the western horizon after 5 pm, glare would have made it difficult for the lookouts to discern the tell-tale signs of danger ahead, i.e. waves breaking on the many submerged coral reef outcrops (now known to be) located in this part of Pandora Entrance (Author's pers. observation on-site).

The ship ran aground at approx. 7.30pm and remained aground on the reef top until 10 pm (Log entry 29 Aug 1791).

The coral outcrop that the *Pandora* struck is about the area of a large cricket oval. This kidney shaped reef is surrounded on all sides by depths exceeding 30 metres (16 fathoms) (Author's pers. observation on-site).

At approximately 10pm, aided by the rising tide, the crew eventually managed to refloat the vessel and bring it to anchor in 15 fathoms (90 feet) approximately 150 m to the west of *Pandora's* Reef, the reef it had struck and subsequently ground across. Another bower anchor was put out to keep the damaged hull from drifting onto another (smaller) reef approximately 120 m to the west of this anchorage (Log entry 29 Aug 1791). Unluckily for the crew however, by the time it floated off, the grinding and scraping across the reef had caused major leaks.

At approximately 8.50pm, about one and a half hours after striking, the carpenter

reported eight feet (2.2m) of water in the hold (Edwards' papers, Adm. MS180/7).

Three prisoners were ordered out of their cell to assist at the pumps, which were operated continuously during the night (Rutter, 1935: 126). It is not clear why Edwards kept eleven prisoners in the cell rather than letting them all out to help at the pumps or with the bailing. Possibly he was concerned they would interfere with the crew's concerted efforts to save the ship. Placing the master-at-arms (John Grimwood) and the ship's corporal (William Roderick) on top of the prison cell, each armed with a pair of pistols, with orders to shoot if any prisoners attempted an escape, suggests Edwards thought that if set free at this time the prisoners would panic, break out and disrupt the crew's disciplined efforts to save the ship. The boats were lowered and kept astern, each crewed by two able seamen (Hamilton, 1793:105).

By most accounts, the crew behaved in a disciplined manner during the night;¹⁶ whether they were lowering and manning the ships' boats, working below decks to stop leaks by 'fothering' the hull with a sail, bailing at the hatches, working the pumps or heaving guns overboard to lighten the ship. They continued to do so in spite of two of the pumps breaking down and two fatal accidents (Hamilton, 1793:104).

At dawn it had become clear that little more could be done to save the stricken vessel. One of the broken-down pumps was repaired, but the second remained unserviceable. Clearly, as the night wore on, the greatly fatigued men were flagging and were soon no longer able to stay ahead of the water level steadily rising in the hold (Hamilton, 1793:105). After conferring with his officers, all of whom concurred that the ship could not be saved, Edwards gave orders at dawn to release the remaining eleven prisoners and to abandon ship.

It appears that Hodges, the armourer's mate, did not have enough time to finish knocking off

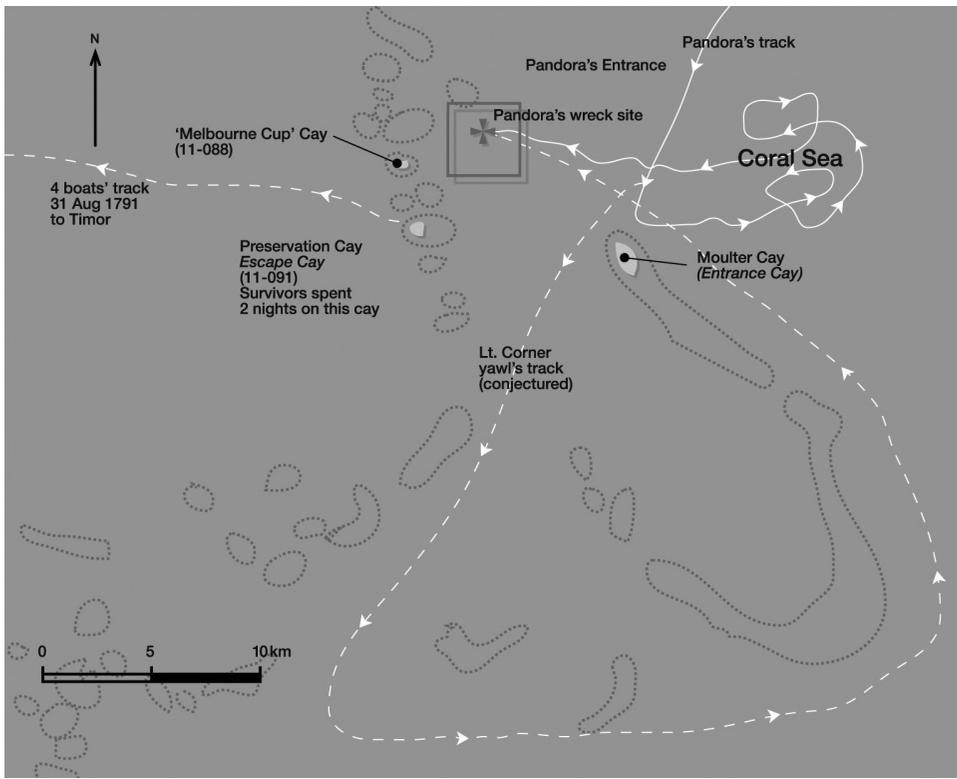


FIG. 9. Pandora's Entrance (modern situation).

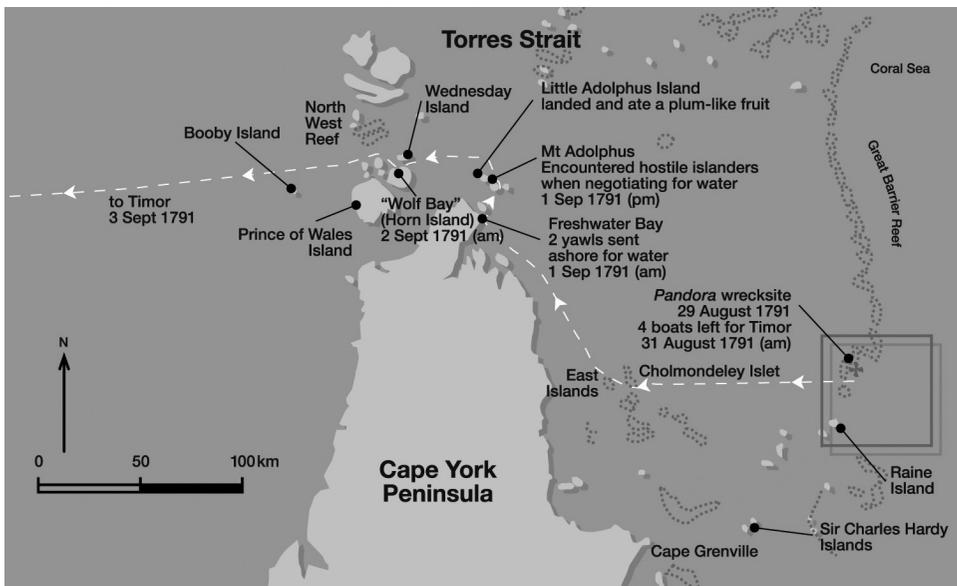


FIG. 10. The Pandora's boats' track through the GBR and the Torres Strait.

the prisoners' fetters. According to Morrison's account, the ship suddenly heeled over and began to sink, before all of the prisoners had been unchained and let out of their cell (Morrison, 1935:125). George Stewart is reported to have refused Hodges' efforts to knock off his fetters (Tagart, 1832:47). Morrison described the desperate situation of the men trapped in the cell, noting that some of the prisoners were completely panic-stricken as they jumped overboard, several still hand-cuffed.

For some reason Grimwood shut and bolted the scuttle, in spite of the fact that Hodges was still in the cell carrying out the captain's order to free the prisoners from their irons and shackles. However the situation was soon rectified by one of the crew who pulled out the bolt and threw away the scuttle's hatch; this action, by bosun's mate William Moulter, must have saved several other prisoners from drowning inside the cell.¹⁷

Four of the prisoners did not survive the wrecking; they died with thirty-one of the *Pandora's* crew. John Grimwood and William Roderick were among the fatalities. Remarkably none of the crew rated as ordinary seamen or as landsman survived the ship's sinking (table 1). Grimwood is on record as having shouted out to the prisoners when about to jump overboard, 'Never fear my lads, we're all going to hell together' (Rutter, 1935:127).

Prisoner George Stewart also perished with his former *Bounty* shipmates Richard Skinner, John Sumner and Henry Hillbrandt. Not having managed to escape from the cell, Hillbrandt, the *Bounty's* Hanoverian cooper, drowned in the 'box'. Stewart managed to get out and jump clear but was brained by a gangway when it crashed down on him while he was in the water. This may have been a fortuitous outcome for Stewart whose alleged refusal to have his fetters removed

perhaps indicates that he was deeply fearful, possibly to the point of hopelessness, about the prospect and likely outcome of the court martial he was being taken home to face. Perhaps he had even had forebodings about the inevitable sentence which would see him end-up dangling ignominiously from a yardarm. His refusal to have his manacles removed may indicate that his mind-set may have been suicidal.

Table 1: Names of the Pandoras who died during the voyage

Before the wrecking (Adm. 36/11136)	
James Johnson (Bosun's mate)	At sea off Rio de Janeiro (31 Dec 1790)
Henry Adams (Ord.)	At sea off Vanikoro (15 Aug 1791)

Discharged Dead i.e. died during the wrecking in Pandora's Entrance on 29 Aug 1791 (Adm. 36/11136)	
Petty Officers	
John ANDREWS	Quartermaster
Alexander ARBUTHNOTT	Sail-maker's mate
Robert BOWLER	Purser's steward
Robert BROWN	Carpenter's crew
John GRIMWOOD	Master at Arms
William RODRICK	Corporal
Able Seamen	
Thomas BRIXLEY	Samuel HAMMOND
Thomas CARROL(L)	Patrick HENRY
William CRAY	William LYON(S)
James CULLIMORE	Alexander PAXTON
William DEDWORTH	William PERRYMAN
Daniel DURLING	William REEVE(S)
George EGLINGTON	William SKELTON
William FLETCHER	William SWAN
Ordinary Seamen	
Robert FEA	James MILLER
James GORDON	William THOMPSON
Richard MACKIE	Robert WEBBER
Martin MAYSONER	
Landsmen	
Joseph BANDY	Evan JONES

ESCAPE CAY OR UNFORTUNATE PANDORAS' CAY

Eighty-nine crew and ten prisoners survived the sinking of the *Pandora*, managing to land on a small cay roughly three miles due west of the wreck. There are conflicting references in the eyewitness accounts to the precise location of 'Escape Cay' or 'Unfortunate Pandoras' Cay'. Edwards mentions that it was situated some 3 to 4 miles from the wreck on a 'W by S½S' bearing, i.e. 262° (Log entry, 29 Aug. 1791). This would indicate that it is the cay currently referred to as 'Melbourne Cup Cay'. The survivors either called it 'Escape Cay' or 'Unfortunate Pandoras' Cay' to distinguish it from 'Entrance Cay' (figure 9). However, both were fixed at latitude 11° 23'S (Thomson, 1915:89).

With reference to figure 9, and assuming this reflects the situation in 1791, the three cays Morrison mentioned are most likely to be 'Melbourne Cup' (11-088) Cay, Escape or Unfortunate Pandoras' Cay (11-091) and Moulter (Entrance) Cay (Gesner, 2000: 14).

Melbourne Cup cay was officially named Carmichael Cay (figure 11) in 1988 in memory of the British able seaman Neil Carmichael who was lost overboard in November 1986 while crewing an archaeological expedition vessel chartered by the Queensland Museum in Pandora's Entrance (Queensland Dept. Environment, Natural Resources & Mines).

During the two days the survivors spent on Escape Cay, a number of them were undoubtedly involved in making more seaworthy the four boats saved from the *Pandora*; by breaking up the boats' floors and using them and spare canvas to raise the boats' freeboard to prevent water coming in over the bows of the heavily laden boats (Hamilton, 1793:109). While one boat went off to fish, another was sent back

to the wreck the next day to see if anything worthwhile could be salvaged; the ship's cat was rescued (figure 12)¹⁸ and some mast timber salvaged (Rutter, 1935:129). Their daily drink ration was three small wine glass measures of fluids – one glass of wine and two glasses of water. This led one man to drink seawater; later on this seaman (James Connell) had to be restrained from running amok (Hamilton, 1793:109). He died several months afterwards in Batavia hospital (table 2).

Table 2: Names of the Pandoras who died after the wrecking (Adm. 36/11136)

Name	Rating	Location
Thomas Barker	AB	Surabaya Hospital
William Clements	Armourer	On board VOC <i>Rembang</i>
John Murphy	AB	On board VOC <i>Rembang</i>
John Davis	Ord	On board VOC <i>Rembang</i>
Alexander Montgomery	Carpenter	Batavia Hospital
Dennis Mahoney	Cook	Batavia Hospital
Robert Milton	AB	Batavia Hospital
John Patterson	AB	Batavia Hospital
William Pilch	AB	Batavia Hospital
James Connell	Ord	Batavia Hospital
William Oliver	Master's mate	On board VOC <i>Vredenburg</i>
William Farrell	AB	On board VOC <i>Vredenburg</i>
Thomas Lindsey	Qtr-master	On board VOC <i>Hoornweg</i>
John Ph. Fenwick	Midshipman	On board VOC <i>Hoornweg</i>
James Brown	AB	On board VOC <i>Hoornweg</i>
James Murray	AB	On board VOC <i>Zwaan</i>
Charles Pummel	AB	On board VOC <i>Zwaan</i>



FIG 11: Carmichael Cay also known as Melbourne Cup Cay, February 1999.



FIG. 12. Oswald Brett's 1998 painting of the foundering *Pandora*. Inset detail: artist's impression of the cat escaping up the rigging (Queensland Museum Collection).

THE SURVIVORS' JOURNEY FROM ESCAPE CAY TO TIMOR

On 31 August, after two days and two nights on the cay, the four boats set off for Timor; on a westerly course. Edwards mentions that they 'steered N.W. by W and W.N.W. within the reef' but omitted to report whether he named the island at the end of their course (Edwards' papers, Adm. MS 180/7). With reference to modern charts however, it can be assumed that the track took the 4 boats through Denham Pass, in which case they later passed Halfway Islet and probably Cholmondeley Islet as well (AUS 835). This track, pioneered in the *Pandora's* boats was, however, never taken up or recommended in published nineteenth century sailing directions. For instance, it does not appear in the 1817 edition of Horsburgh's *'East Indies Sailing Directions'* (Horsburgh 1817).

Several good reasons can be found to account for this situation. Edwards' assertion about the superior nature of this channel was possibly not widely believed and most likely simply ignored by later mariners because many were probably not inclined to heed advice from a captain who had lost his ship in Great Barrier Reef waters. In this regard also, opinions may have been biased by a simple rhetorical question: how could Edwards be compared to such accomplished navigators as the illustrious James Cook and, even, to the notorious William Bligh? Bligh's navigation¹⁹ of what later came to be known as the Great North East Channel, via Bligh Entrance, through the Torres Strait, has always been considered exemplary; almost on a par with the running survey through the Great Barrier Reef and beyond that he had conducted during the famous open-boat voyage in the *Bounty's* launch (Gall, 2010).

Another reason could be the insinuation that the *Pandora* had been lost because of 'lubberly' command decisions (Smythe, *United Services Magazine* 1843:419-20). This allusion is

probably a reflection of the aspersions that were cast on Edwards' good name and seamanship by, among others, mutineer Peter Heywood's friends and well-connected naval patrons. And by James Morrison, who also implied that careless ('lubberly') orders had been given at the time the ship was inside Pandora's Entrance, which directly caused the wreck. In this respect the motto he used in his Memorandum for his narrative is revealing – *Vidi et Scio*; (I saw and I know) [Morrison's Report to Reverend Howell, (Mitchell Library MS Safe 1/33)].

More importantly, later in his career Heywood actually collaborated with James Horsburgh – the author of the then widely used *East Indies and Australasian Sailing Directions* (Horsburgh, 1817) – and was therefore possibly in a position to influence the wording of the sailing directions for these waters; in which case, anything from Captain Edwards was likely to be ignored.

Most significantly however, a climate already existed for the poor opinions regarding Edwards' abilities as a navigator. This had in fact been created by William Bligh, who had predicted that Edwards would not get through Torres Strait without major mishap because – as Bligh somewhat haughtily put it – Edwards was 'not seaman enough' (Denig, 1992:240). This does not imply that Bligh had firsthand experience of Edwards' seamanship; it is likely that Bligh made this remark in a fit of pique, after he realised that the Admiralty would not be giving him command of the *Pandora's* punitive mission so he could settle old scores.

Bligh had probably voiced this coloured opinion to his officers in HMS *Providence* during the second breadfruit voyage; among whom young midshipman Matthew Flinders, who was then learning his craft as a navigator and hydrographer under Bligh's tutelage. In this light it is tempting to

conjecture that Flinders' later views about the best navigation of Torres Strait – in particular about Bligh Entrance and the Great North-East Channel – may have been influenced by Bligh's opinions and his widely acclaimed achievement as the navigator who, during the second breadfruit voyage, had discovered Bligh Entrance and been the first to traverse what later became known, and widely used to this day, as the Great North East Channel through the Torres Strait (Oliver, 1988:250).

More than half a century later, Bligh's pioneering *Providence* track would come to be adopted as the safest and most expeditious route from southern Australian ports into and through the Torres Strait to South East Asia by what came to be known as the 'Outer Route to Bligh's Entrance' (*Nautical Magazine*, August 1863).

The ninety-nine shipwreck survivors set off for the mainland. Before nightfall the four boats formed into single file, the pinnace as the lead boat, the second and third boats each with another in tow and were within sight of the mainland, on a north by north-westerly course (figure 10). Later in the morning the two yawls were ordered inshore to a beach named Freshwater Bay to search for water, while the launch and the pinnace made for the Mount Adolphus Islands.

There are several eyewitness accounts of this part of the survivors' journey to civilisation by Morrison, Edwards and Hamilton (Gesner, 2000:16). There are differences in detail between Edwards' account and Morrison's and Hamilton's. Edwards glosses over the hostile encounter with islanders in the Torres Strait; although he does mention that arrows and musket shots were fired by the parties confronting each other (Thomson, 1915:76). Hamilton and Morrison's accounts are generally more detailed, but neither distinguishes whether the people they met were continental Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders. Morrison

did remark that they appeared to belong to one family group (Morrison, in Rutter 1935:130). Hamilton's opinion was clear-cut: they were a 'savage', benighted people deprived of the 'benefits of civilisation'.

There are also some minor discrepancies between Morrison's and Hamilton's accounts. Hamilton recalls that they were fired upon with ('a shower of') arrows, while Morrison mentions only one spear (a 'javlin') as well as one arrow.

From Edwards and Hamilton's evidence it would appear that the encounter was with Islanders, as bow and arrow were not weapons commonly used by Aborigines (pers. comm. Dr Richard Robins). Moreover, Morrison's mention of physical characteristics, such as stretched ear lobes, also suggests that the encounter was with Islanders or with Papuans and not with continental Aborigines, who did not engage in this practice. Morrison also indicates that one or two of their assailants were hit ('dropd') by the Pandoras' musket fire. However, Hamilton contradicts this by specifically stating that none of their assailants, or any of the Pandoras, were killed or wounded during the confrontation.

Another disparity between Morrison's and Hamilton's accounts is that Hamilton does not mention the disagreement that occurred at this point between Edwards and first lieutenant John Larkan. Also omitted in Edwards' account, Lieutenant Larkan apparently openly and loudly voiced his disagreement with Edwards' order for the boats to steer away in a westerly direction from the Mt Adolphus islands for other nearby islands in view (Rutter, 1935:130). The reason for Larkan's insubordination is unclear. If command had been his, perhaps he would have preferred to land a shore party to chase after the islanders and find the water source they had used to fill the keg the survivors had first handed to them. If that

was the case, he possibly regarded as a sign of weakness Edwards' avoidance of confrontation and the violence that would inevitably ensue.

However, Hamilton and Morrison both indicate that they were in total agreement with Edwards' caution; both clearly favouring a strategy that would avoid further antagonism of these 'hostile savages'. Hamilton's account unmistakably reveals his agreement with Edwards' non-confrontational course of action. Having heard 'indifferent accounts' about them, he was clearly well aware of the threat the Torres Strait Islanders posed to the vulnerable wreck survivors still gingerly picking their way through the dangerous waters of the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait (Hamilton, 1793:117).

From both Hamilton's and Morrison's accounts, however, it appears that a short time after the hostile encounter, an armed shore party did land on an island further to the west to look for water before setting off for the Prince of Wales Islands later in the afternoon. They named this island Plum Island, either modern-day Twin Island or East Strait Island, because of a fruit found by the shore party; the plum – probably the ubiquitous 'nonda' plum – was not considered good eating (Hamilton, 1793:120). They did not succeed in finding more fresh water here and therefore left the island before nightfall, steering towards the Prince of Wales Islands lying to the west of Cape York (AUS293).

Edwards named several of the islands and bays they subsequently encountered in this group, however, not all of the names he chose for them were retained by later hydrographers (e.g. Sandwich Sound), and he did not mention by name any of the islands they steered for. Hamilton does use them however, mentioning them individually (Hamilton, 1793: 120-21). Hamilton's account reveals that an armed shore party landed that night on Horn Island

(Hamilton's Laforey Island) and traversed part of its northern shoreline until dawn. It is assumed that the shore party landed just west of King Point (AUS 293) where the shore forms a shallow bay in the south and towards the south-west (i.e. Hamilton's Wolf's Bay). But as exploration and hydrography were not a priority, the survivors made off from Wolf's Bay in a northerly direction in the afternoon, after they had had found water by digging for it; they filled their bellies and all of their containers, even the carpenters' boots. Continuing his narrative, Edwards reveals that:

... on 2nd September at half past three in the afternoon we stood out of the north entrance of the sound. Before five we saw a reef extending from the north to the W.N.W. and more to the westward (...) in the evening we saw the northernmost extremity of New South Wales, which forms the south side of Endeavour strait... (Edwards in Thomson, 1915:77)

At this point, as Endeavour Strait's southern shore and Prince of Wales Island were receding from view in the twilight, it may have occurred to Lieutenant Hayward that this was the last time he ever wanted to see this part of the world. After all, having been in the *Bounty's* launch with Bligh, it was the second time, within as many years, that he was in the same waters off New Holland's north coast in such dire circumstances. However, there is no record revealing Hayward's frame of mind at this juncture; nor indications whether he had been asked for advice by Edwards. Hayward was in the pinnace with Edwards so it is possible at some stage that they may have discussed how best to get through the Torres Strait. If so, Hayward would probably have pointed out that the *Bounty's* launch had in fact followed Cook's more southerly track through Endeavour Strait (Bach 1987:143).

Clearly however, Edwards did not follow Captain Cook's track. The boats left Sandwich Sound in the afternoon by the northern opening between Hammond and Wednesday Islands, now referred to as Flinders Passage (figure 10). From there they soon made the Prince of Wales Channel, last sighting the Australian coast late in the afternoon after they had cleared the channel – now called Prince of Wales Channel – leading west from Goode's Island to Booby Island and into the Arafura Sea (AUS293).

The boats' progress across the Arafura Sea was comparatively uneventful in spite of some crew members' latent hostility towards the prisoners and simmering tensions among the crew because of the hardships suffered as a result of their very meagre food and water ration – only two wine glasses of water per man per day; and one glass of wine.

During the nights the boats continued to take each other in tow to stay together. But on the fourth day in the boats each of the boat commanders was provided in writing with the latitude of a landfall on Timor chosen as a rendezvous in case of separation. Their longitude, determined by the ship's chronometer which Edwards had managed to save from his cabin, was also noted (Hamilton, 1793:127).

Timor was sighted on 13 September 1791 after 12 days in the Arafura Sea, fifteen days after the wreck. The launch and the pinnace soon made the Dutch East India Company's (VOC) fort at Coupang in Timor on 16 September. The two yawls, commanded by Passmore and Larkan, did not arrive until 18 September, having spent one night ashore near a small village about seventy miles to the south of Coupang, where they had bartered with local Timorese for water and provisions (Logbook entries, 2-16 Sept 1791).

In the course of the ensuing three weeks, which the survivors spent recuperating at

Coupang, Edwards was alerted to another group of British prisoners. This group, led by a man called William Bryant, consisted of seven other men, one woman and two young children. They had arrived in Coupang two months before the *Pandoras*, claiming to be shipwreck survivors. But they were in fact escaped convicts from New South Wales who had made a remarkable and well-prepared open boat escape voyage in the governor's fishing cutter, from Port Jackson (Sydney) along the east coast of Australia through the Torres Strait and across the Arafura Sea (Hughes, 1987:205-9). Their experiences had been every bit as gruelling and difficult as the surviving *Pandoras*' deprivations, but with the significant difference that their number included a woman (William Bryant's wife Mary, née Broad) and her two young children, all of whom endured for 66 days the extreme hardships and hazards of an open boat voyage in tropical waters; compared to the *Pandoras*' 19 day survival ordeal and Bligh's 42 day ordeal in the *Bounty*'s launch (Martin, 1991).

The Bryants' open boat voyage – as well as the one made under Oliver's command by the men in the *Matavai* – brings into sharp focus that good seamanship, including competent knowledge of basic practical navigation, was not the exclusive preserve of commissioned naval officers, senior warrant officers or officers in the merchant navy, but was probably quite familiar to a variety of people with experience of the sea. Not much is known about William Bryant, except that he had had experience as a fisherman at sea off Cornwall – and possibly also as a smuggler – before being sentenced to the penal colony in New South Wales, where, precisely because of the skills he had acquired as a fisherman, he had been placed in charge of the governor's fishing cutter with orders to fish for the governor's table (Martin, 1991; Hughes, 1987).

TIMOR TO ENGLAND VIA CAPETOWN

During their journey from Coupang to Batavia (Jakarta) in the local VOC trader *Rembang* several weeks later, the prisoners and the escaped convicts were confined to the lower deck. Some of the *Pandoras*, who were still relatively strong and healthy, assisted with the handling of the ship. However, for some men departure from Timor on 6 October 1791 appears to have been premature, as they had not yet regained their strength sufficiently to embark. Three of them died in the *Rembang* before the survivors' arrival at Batavia (Table 2). This leg of their journey home might actually have also been the last sea voyage for all of the survivors, but for the exertions of the *Pandoras* who had joined the *Rembang's* crew for the voyage; their seamanship preventing the *Rembang* from almost becoming a wreck during a severe storm they ran into off Madura Island (Hamilton, 1793:149).

As a result of this storm they were forced to put in at Samarang for repairs to the *Rembang's* storm-damaged sails, yards and rigging. Initially Edwards regarded this delay as another setback; however, it resulted in the fortuitous reunion with William Oliver's crew, which had gone missing almost five months earlier in the tender *Matavai* off Samoa. They had managed to reach Java independently after a remarkable voyage from Tofu'a under Oliver's command (Maude, 1964).

Upon arrival in Surabaya, Oliver's party had at first been mistaken for *Bounty* mutineers and had been treated accordingly, the authorities having been alerted by Bligh to be on the look-out for the mutineers and to arrest them should they happen into any port in the Dutch East Indies. However, as their number and appearance did not accord with Bligh's descriptions of the (25) mutineers,

they were soon released and, following William Oliver's plea, were allowed to proceed to Batavia (via Samarang) in the *Matavai*. Albeit under armed guard, after also having had their weapons and ammunition confiscated and locked away in Surabaya's arsenal (ARA/VOC 7887 §400 and §427).

One of their number, Thomas Barker, was too sick to travel and was left behind at Surabaya hospital, where he died a few days later (Table 2). Being 'advanced in years', as 16 year old David Renouard phrased it, the trials and deprivations experienced in the open boat voyage had clearly proved too much for Barker's constitution (Logbook entry 22 Oct 1791).

On their way to Batavia, Oliver's party also put in at Samarang on 30 October 1791 for shelter from the same storm that had raged in the Java Sea and also caused the *Rembang* to require repairs. On this score, Hamilton remarked:

'Immediately on coming to anchor at Samarang, we were agreeably surprised to find here our tender which we had given up for lost. Never was social affection more eminently portrayed than in the meeting of these poor fellows. They informed us they were landed at a small Dutch settlement and then were sent, under proper escort, to this place'. (Hamilton, 1793:151)

The weather soon settled again and they were all able to proceed in company. Finally, on 7 November 1791, one year after the *Pandora's* departure from England, 104 survivors (including the 10 *Bounty* prisoners and the 8 re-united men from the *Matavai* crew) reached Batavia (Jakarta) (Log entry 7 Nov 1791).

Upon arrival, Captain Edwards immediately went to the VOC's offices in Batavia Castle for permission to send 30 sick and exhausted men to Batavia Hospital. He then negotiated

that the remainder of the relatively healthy men, with exception of the 10 prisoners and William and Mary Bryant's party, be placed on board one of the VOC ships in Batavia Roads, pending their distribution as crew among the VOC ships making up the VOC's 1791 return fleet that was then preparing for its voyage to The Netherlands (ARA/VOC 827). The ten prisoners and escaped convicts were temporarily locked up in the dungeon of Batavia Castle.

Following another request by Edwards to the VOC Council, the survivors were eventually divided into 4 groups. Three groups, one under each of the *Pandora's* lieutenants (John Larkan, Robert Corner and Thomas Hayward), were to travel back to England via Capetown and Dutch ports on one of 3 homebound VOC ships – *Horsssen*, *Zwaan* and *Hoornweg* – which were at anchor in Batavia Roads preparing for the return to Europe.

Captain Edwards, several warrant officers, the escaped male convicts from Port Jackson and the 10 surviving Bountys were embarked in the *Vredenburg* as the fourth group (ARA/VOC 827). Mary Bryant and her 2 children took passage in the *Hoornweg* (Adm. 1/1736 Captain's letters, Edwards 19 June 1792). The VOC response to Edwards' request were minuted:

ARA/VOC 827: Resolutions of the General meeting of the Governor General and Council, Batavia.

[Translation from Dutch original by the author]

Tue 8 Nov.1791

Whereas Edward Edwards – a captain in the service of His Britannic Majesty – having been in command of the frigate of war *The Pandora*, which was lost on a reef off New South Wales and from which he and his crew

managed to save themselves in four boats, arrived in Timor and, from there in the ship *Rembang*, arrived here yesterday – has made a written request, because of the small size of the ship carrying his crew, to transfer the healthy men to the 'Admiral's ship' lying in Batavia roads and the sick men, approximately 30 heads, to the citadel hospital in order that they may recuperate there, we have approved and consented to this request. (...)

Fri 18 Nov.1791

(...) considering the current shortage of seamen in town (...) Captain Edward Edwards' (...) written request has been approved and he, with the crew of that frigate, have been granted permission to depart for the Netherlands in the coming return fleet, in accordance with his offer to divide his crew as follows among the return ships: *Vredenburg* – 1 captain, 1 master, 1 clerk, 1 gunner, 2 midshipmen, 1 master's mate, 1 cook, 1 purser, 22 seamen and 10 prisoners;

De Zwaan – 1 lieutenant, 2 midshipmen, 16 seamen;

Horsssen – 1 lieutenant, 2 midshipmen, 1 surgeon, 15 seamen and 4 prisoners;

Hoornweg – 1 lieutenant, 3 midshipmen, 1 carpenter, 1 bosun, 15 seamen, 4 prisoners (among whom 1 woman and 2 children) (...)

Making a total of 115 (?) heads (...) provided that the gunner, the cook, the carpenter, the bosun and the seamen are hired as the Company's servants (...) who are to receive f11 per month in wages as well as rations normally provided to the Company's seamen; also that the captain, the lieutenants, the master, the clerk, surgeon, the

master's mate, the purser and the mutineers from the English ship the *Bounty* commanded by William Bleig [sic] captured by Edwards, will be exempt from paying passage to the Netherlands.

Furthermore we have consented, considering the impecunious situation Captain Edwards is in due to his shipwreck experience, not to charge passage monies for the conveyance of his crew from Timor in the small ship *Rembang*. While it has also been approved and noted that Captain Edwards has given assurances that he will provide each of the officers [in charge] of the men distributed on the afore-mentioned ships with a written order which can be shown to any British warship, to prevent* these men being taken from the Company's ships before they arrive in the Netherlands.

[*NB: This is a reference to the practice of RN press gangs operating at sea; even foreign vessels were boarded by press gangs on the lookout for British seamen]

The group travelling in the *Zwaan*, under Lieutenant Larkan, was the first to leave, departing on 12 November 1791 and making Capetown on 25 January 1792. Before the rest of the fleet's departure on 21 December 1791 from Batavia, the schooner *Matavai* was sold to a local merchant. It was intended for use as an inter-islands' trader.²⁰

Several months later the fleet arrived in Capetown, where, following a request to the Governor by Captain Edwards, the ten *Bounty* prisoners, the escaped male convicts, Mary Bryant, her daughter and Edwards' protégé David Renouard were transferred from the *Vredenburg* and the *Hoornweg* respectively to HMS *Gorgon*, a homeward bound British warship (Letter from Capt.

Edwards to the Governor of Capetown (Capetown Archives C 202 pp. 183-195)). With this transfer, Edwards could rest easier about the prisoners' security as their transport directly to Portsmouth minimised the risk of them escaping. As it was, Henry Nichols managed to 'run' from the *Horsssen* at Capetown, while another (Robert Orchard) was too sick to travel and was left behind in Capetown Hospital (Capetown Archives C 202 (pp. 183-195)).

The rest of the *Pandoras*, still divided into three separate groups, under lieutenants Larkan, Corner and Hayward, remained in the homebound Dutch East India Company ships as mustered crew (ARA/VOC 827). They eventually got home to Britain via The Netherlands. (Adm. 106/2217, Navy Board Records, Letters to the Admiralty, 29 May 1792).

Larkan's group in the *Zwaan* – 16 men in all – arrived in Europe first, notwithstanding that two of them (James Murray and Charles Pummel) died on the voyage and that the vessel lost its' rudder due to heavy seas in the Atlantic (Adm.106/2217; *Rotterdamsche Courant*: 22/5/1792). Arriving at Fort Rammekens in Flushing on 21 May 1792 they eventually managed to charter a Dutch fishing smack which took them to Harwich, where they landed on 28 May 1792 (*Morning Herald* (London) 2 June 1792).

Robert Corner embarked in the *Horsssen* with sixteen *Pandoras*; they were delayed at Capetown for almost one month. But 15 men²¹ in this group eventually arrived in Brielle (or Den Briel) on 12 July 1792, where Corner drew an advance of £30 on the Admiralty. He used this money to pay for his men's subsistence and their passage to Harwich (Adm. 106/1317).

Thomas Hayward's group arrived in the *Hoornweg* a few days later, also in Den Briel (*Rotterdamsche Courant*: 16 July 1792). Three of the *Pandoras* died on the *Hoornweg*. No

evidence has been found to date of Hayward drawing bills on the Navy Board or the Admiralty to pay for his men's subsistence and passage to England, as lieutenants Larkan and Corner had done.

Unfortunately, supplements to the VOC ships' musters and/or pay books for the 1791/92 return voyages made by the *Vredenburg*, *Zwaan*, *Hoornweg* and *Horssen* do not appear to be extant at the Netherlands National Archives in The Hague. An historical reconstruction of the names of the Pandoras in each of the four returning VOC ships and any information regarding them while returning home from their fateful South Seas adventure is therefore not possible. Master's Mate Reynolds and two midshipmen (Matson and Atkins) were in Larkan's group (Refer Primary source 5). Midshipman John Philip Fenwick, a passenger on board the *Hoornweg* and several men in the other two ships died while travelling back to England (table 2).

As for the ten remaining *Bounty* prisoners, they arrived in England direct from Capetown in June 1792, under marine guard in HMS *Gorgon* and were immediately remanded on board HMS *Hector* in Portsmouth, while the Bryant group were taken to Newgate prison (Hughes, 1987). By this time, William Bligh was no longer in Britain. Having been promoted to the rank of post-captain after his court martial, he had departed in August 1791 in command of two vessels – HMS *Providence* and HMS *Assistant* – and was again in the South Pacific on another bread-fruit voyage (Oliver, 1988).

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

The 10 repatriated prisoners' trials were finally held in September 1792 in HMS *Duke*. If found guilty of mutiny or piracy, all of them would receive mandatory death

sentences. However, Bligh had vouched for the innocence of Charles Norman, William McIntosh, Michael Byrne and Joseph Coleman, who were duly found not guilty and immediately released.

The remaining six prisoners – Peter Heywood, James Morrison, William Muspratt, Thomas Ellison, John Millward and Thomas Burkitt – were all found guilty of mutiny as charged and automatically under sentence of death. Eventually however, only Ellison, Millward and Burkitt were executed. This happened on HMS *Brunswick* on 29 October 1792 (*Gentlemen's Magazine*, December 1792:1097-98).

William Muspratt appealed and was acquitted on a legal technicality nearly one year later. The court recommended James Morrison and Peter Heywood to the King's mercy, whereupon they eventually received a Royal pardon.

Heywood and Morrison's pardons were apparently not made known until 28 October 1792. They are reported to have received the news of their pardon

'with a flood of tears...upon which, having been reminded of the shamefulness of their actions during the mutiny, they swore eternal devotion to duty and gratitude to their monarch for his good will towards them.' (Author's translation, *Rotterdamsche Courant*: 8th November 1792).

The trial of the *Bounty* mutineers and Heywood and Morrison's Royal pardons were considered newsworthy enough to be reported in Holland (*Rotterdamsche Courant* 25 Sept and 8 Nov 1792 respectively).

Just before his execution by hanging, together with Ellison and Burkitt, John Millward is reputed to have addressed the witnesses:

You see before you 3 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 that you are bound to support. (Denning, 1992: 41)

The speech was allegedly delivered to the crews in the throng of boats around HMS *Brunswick*. As was customary, one boat with crew from each warship at anchor

off Spithead was required to bear witness that justice was being done. According to an eyewitness account by an officer in attendance at the court martial as well as at the execution, the three condemned men 'behaved with a manly firmness' after Millward's speech and during the final hour at prayer, while Morrison 'performed the last offices' until the gun was fired, signalling the hour for their souls to take 'flight in a cloud' (*Gentlemen's Magazine*, December 1792:1097-98).

□ ENDNOTES

1. 'Coppering' was a relatively new technology; first experimented with in 1761; lengths of copper sheets were nailed to the hull's underside, to one strake's width – approx. 30cm – above the waterline from stem to stern. This prevented 'fouling' of the hull, i.e. growth of barnacles and other crustacea, which considerably slowed down a vessel; also making it sluggish to manoeuvre.
2. Following the so-called "Nootka Incident", this mobilisation was in anticipation of a war against Spain over competing imperialistic claims at Nootka Sound on the North-West coast of North America, where a Spanish warship had impounded a British merchantman considered to be operating illicitly in Spanish waters.
3. These men are generally referred to as Bligh 'loyalists.' Norton, the *Bounty's* carpenter, was killed by hostile Tofuans when the launch was attacked as the castaways were attempting to land on Tofu'a in search of food and water.
4. Historical Records of Australia, Series I, Vol.1, pp. 161-4: a letter from Lord Grenville to NSW Governor Phillip, late March 1790, which includes details regarding another expedition to the N.W. American coast being planned with HMS *Discovery* (Capt. Roberts, later Capt. Vancouver) & HMS *Gorgon*; this letter affirms that:
... in consequence of the information received from Lt. Bligh, late commander of H.M. ship the *Bounty*, of a mutiny having taken place in that vessel, by which he was deprived of his command, His Majesty has judged it proper that the *Gorgon* should be directed, on her return from the N-W coast of America, to touch at the Society Islands, and eventually at the Friendly Islands, in order, if possible, to apprehend the mutineers, a list of whom, rec'd from Lt. Bligh, is enclosed. If he should succeed in this object, he is directed to bring those men, or any of them, in confinement, to Port Jackson. And you will, in that case, send them home in confinement by the *Gorgon*, in order that they may be brought to trial in this country for an offence so prejudicial to the discipline of his Majesty's service."
5. *Hereford Journal*, 7 Apr 1790

ENDNOTES cont.d

6. 'Servants' were normally taken to sea as apprentices, by officers and petty officers alike; they were often related; either an officer's son or a nephew or a son of a family friend. Depending on an officers' rank, at least one servant – and up to 7 servants for the captain – were allowed in a vessel of the *Pandora's* size. It was the Royal Navy's time-honoured 'cadet' system. If the boys did well, captain's, lieutenants' and sailing master's servants could expect promotion or advancement to midshipman or to master's mate and – after completing 6 year's sea time – could sit the lieutenant's exam. The same route was available for master's mates; the most famous example in the eighteenth century Royal Navy probably being Lieutenant James Cook who had gone to sea at 11 years of age and followed the master's mate route to a lieutenant's commission, at which rank he commanded the first of his three epic Pacific voyages
7. Bentham had been a member of Cook's third voyage, serving in HMS *Discovery*.
8. Brown had been put ashore as punishment by Captain Cox of the whaler *Mercury*. He agreed to join the *Pandoras* on a casual basis, agreeing to serve until their arrival in Batavia.
9. The manuscript was all but forgotten for 173 years; until it was published in *Mariner's Mirror* edited by H.E. Maude (Maude, 1964).
10. The original journals have never come to light; most probably they were lost with the *Pandora*.
11. The whereabouts and fate of the other Bountys would not be discovered for another 17 years; in fact, not until 1808, when the mutineers' hideout on Pitcairn Island was stumbled upon by the American 'whaler / sealer' *Topaz* commanded by Captain Mayhew Folger. By then all of the mutineers – except for John Adams (a.k.a. Alex Smith) were dead. Almost all of them had died violently.
12. For instance, as portrayed by Wahlroos 2001:196.
13. Edwards certainly was not a 'flogging captain'; in fact, with only 10 cases of 12 lashes recorded in the log, he had the lowest number of men punished by flogging in the mid to late period of European exploration in the South Pacific (Salmond 2011:403). In this regard, Cook's 'flogging' record stands out in shrill contrast (cf. Denning, 1992:62).
14. Because of the naval practice of starting the date at noon, the dates relate to logbook observations and events taking place on the afternoon, evening and night of one day and the morning of the following day (until noon). For instance, the 'remarks' for 29th Aug 1791, cover the afternoon, evening and night of the day the *Pandora's* ran aground and the morning (the following day) of her sinking. Thus, the blue yawl carrying Corner was sent out to reconnoitre at 10 am (28 Aug) and it was sighted again later the same day during the afternoon, at approx. 4.30 pm (29 Aug), flying the agreed signal that a relatively safe and navigable channel had been found. Capt. Edwards then ordered the yawl back to the ship for the night (29 Aug). *Pandora* ran aground (at approx. 7.20pm) in the evening while manoeuvring to take the yawl back on board; the vessel sank early the following morning at approx. 6.30 am (but still considered 29 Aug, in spite of the dawning of another a day).
15. Named Entrance Cay by Edwards
16. However the *Caledonian Mercury* (9 Apr 1792) mentions under the heading 'News from Edinburgh' a letter received by 'a gentleman in London' from one of the *Pandora's* officers asserting that the loss of so many crew was to be attributed to the fact that some men had broken into the spirits room and subsequently many were 'intoxicated' as they abandoned the sinking ship.
17. Moulter's humanitarian deed was recognised in 1984 when the cay at the eastern side of Pandora's Entrance, referred to by Edwards as Entrance Cay, was officially renamed Moulter Cay
18. The cat is not mentioned again so its fate can only be speculated on.
19. In HMS *Providence* in company with HMS *Assistant* during his so-called 'second breadfruit voyage'.
20. However, one source would have it that she was subsequently sold on in Canton to another merchant and later used as a tender by Cdr. W.R. Broughton (HMS *Providence*) in 1797-8 (Barrow, 1831). After the wreck of the *Providence* off Formosa, the tender was reportedly used to save the crew. Upon the crew's return to safety, the tender was subsequently deployed to complete Broughton's survey (Dawson, 1889:27) It was wrecked a few years later during a typhoon on reefs near the Ladrões Islands in the South China Sea.
21. Orchard was left behind in Capetown hospital; and Henry Nicholls managed to 'run' at Capetown (Adm.36/11136).