



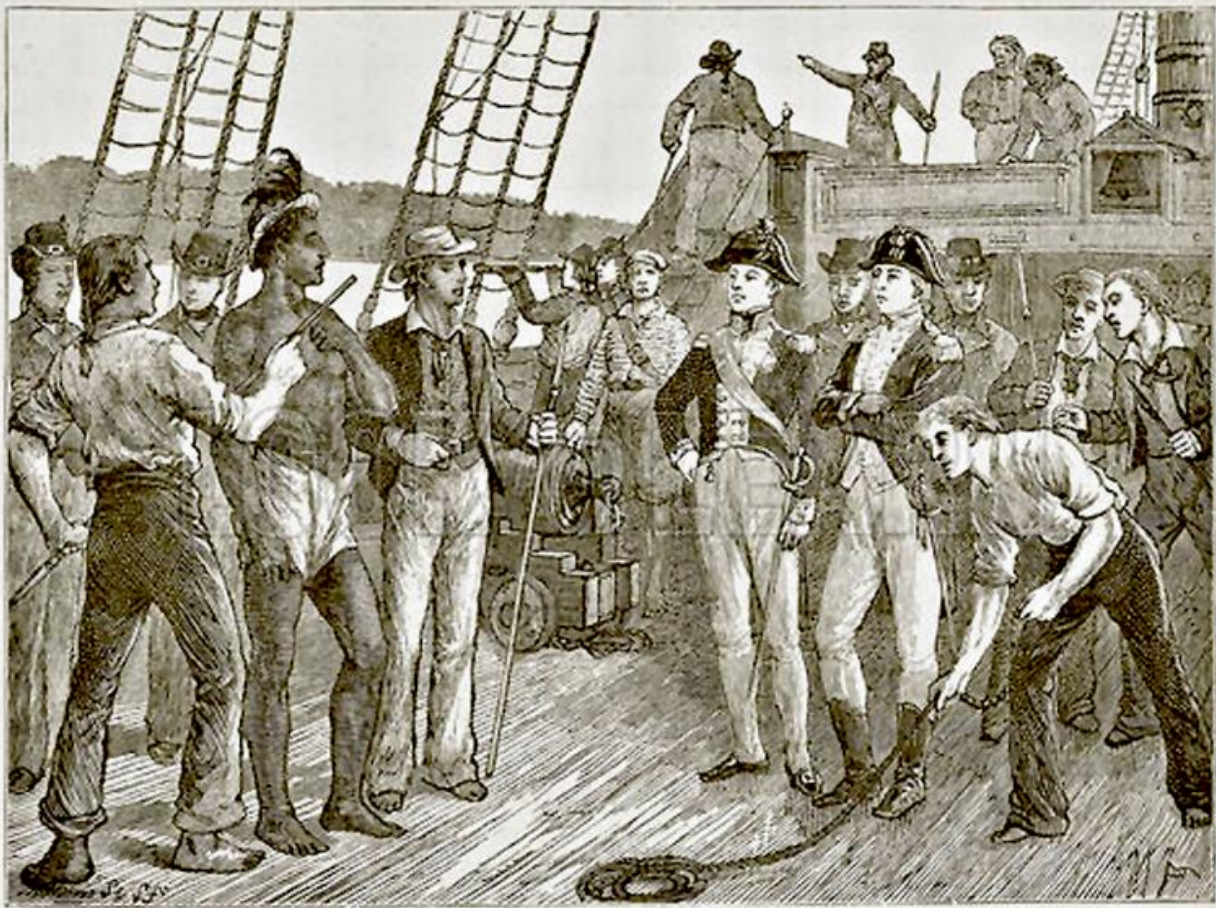
Eingliederung in das Vereinigte Königreich

Am 17. September 1814 kamen die beiden Kriegsschiffe HMS Briton und HMS Tagus vor Pitcairn an. Die Kapitäne Staines und Pison, die von der Entdeckung Folgers sechs Jahre zuvor nichts wussten, waren beeindruckt von der friedlichen und gottesfürchtigen Gemeinschaft, die sie vorfanden. Adams wollte freiwillig mit nach England zurücksegeln und sich dem Seegericht stellen, aber die Bewohner flehten die Kapitäne an, ihn auf der Insel zu lassen. In seinem späteren Bericht an die Admiralität schrieb Staines, dass es ein Akt von großer Grausamkeit gewesen wäre, den letzten noch lebenden Meuterer gefangenzunehmen.

In den Folgejahren gab es weitere Besuche. Walfänger nutzten die Möglichkeit, sich mit frischem Gemüse zu versorgen. In den Berichten, die sporadisch in der Presse erschienen, wurde die isolierte Gemeinschaft romantisch verklärt und daher von frommen Spendern mit Bibeln, Gesang- und Gebetbüchern, aber auch mit Hausrat und Werkzeug versorgt. Im Jahr 1823 blieb als erster Siedler nach den Meuterern der Schiffszimmermann John Buffet auf der Insel, 1828 George Nobbs, der angeblich uneheliche Sohn eines Marquis, der sich als Prediger etablierte. Im Jahr 1831 wurden alle Bewohner nach Tahiti evakuiert. Nachdem dort etliche Pitcairner, darunter Fletcher Christians Sohn Thursday October, an Infektionskrankheiten gestorben waren, kehrten 65 Überlebende bereits im September 1831 auf ihre isolierte Insel zurück.

Nach Übergriffen vorbeifahrender Walfänger strebten die Bewohner den Schutz durch die britische Krone an. Mit Unterstützung des Kapitäns Elliot vom britischen Walfänger Fly formulierten sie eine Verfassung für die Inselgemeinschaft, die am 30. November 1838 an Bord der Fly unterzeichnet wurde. Mit dem British Settlements Act vom 16. September 1887 wurde Pitcairn dem Britischen Königreich auch de jure unterstellt.





H.M.S. "BRITON," AT PITCAIRN ISLAND.

HMS Briton (1812)

HMS Briton.



HMS Briton off Rio de Janeiro

Career (United



Kingdom)	
Name:	HMS Briton
Owner:	Royal Navy
Ordered:	28 September 1808
Builder:	Chatham Dockyard
Laid down:	February 1810
Launched:	11 April 1812
Fate:	Broken up 18 September 1860
General characteristics	
Class & type:	Leda class Fifth-rate 44 gun frigate
Tons burthen:	1,079 ton bm
Length:	149.1 feet (45.4 m)
Beam:	40.2 feet (12.3 m)
Draft:	14.1 feet (4.3 m)
Propulsion:	Sail
Sail plan:	Fully rigged barque
Complement:	284
Armament:	Upper deck: 28 x 18 pounders.

Quarter deck: 8 x 9
pounder. and 6 x 32
pounder carronades.
Forecastle deck: 2 x 9
pounders. and 2 x 32
pounder carronades.

HMS Briton was a 38-gun fifth-rate frigate of the British Royal Navy's Leda class. She was ordered on 28 September 1808 and her keel laid down at Chatham Dockyard in February 1810. Navy veteran Sir Thomas Staines was appointed her first captain on 7 May 1812 but did not join the ship until 17 June 1813 owing to his being at sea aboard HMS Hamadryad.^[1] After a period of privateering in the Bay of Biscay, the vessel set sail for South America where during the course of several missions she unexpectedly encountered the last member of the crew that had seized HMS Bounty from its captain Lieutenant William Bligh during the 1789 mutiny aboard the ship. With the coming of the Pax Britannica in 1815, Briton undertook

Privateer

At the time of HMS Britons launch, the United Kingdom was at war with the United States and France such that vessels of either country were considered legitimate prizes of war. As a result, on 11 December 1812 together with the frigate HMS Andromache, HMS Briton took the American brig Leader from Boston bound for Bordeaux, France with a cargo of fish as a prize then on 15 December the 14-gun French privateer Le San Souci from St Malo.

On 17 December the two frigates captured the American brig Columbia, loaded with coffee and sugar en route from Philadelphia to Bordeaux then the brig Stephen carrying cotton, potash and skins from New York to Bordeaux, shortly followed by the brig Exception on 20 December, underway from Philadelphia to Bordeaux loaded with cotton.

In January 1813 the Briton and Arromache linked up with HMS Rota and on the 6th the three ships captured the brig Brutus travelling from New York to Bordeaux carrying cotton, coffee and sugar. After her boarding by a prize crew the Brutus was not seen again, and it was assumed that she had either been recaptured or had foundered at sea.

After a chase lasting seven hours, on 9 September 1813 HMS Briton captured the fast sailing four gun French privateer La Melance and her 26 man crew off Bordeaux.

Convoy escort and other duties in the Pacific

On 31 December 1813 HMS Briton sailed from Spithead off the south coast of England for the East Indies as part of an escort for a convoy of 49 merchant ships. Briton left the flotilla to assist the disabled East Indiaman Fort William and sailed to Funchal on the Portuguese island of Madeira where the merchant vessel underwent necessary repairs.^[2] Eight days later the two ships set sail for Rio de Janeiro via Cape Verde, arriving on 20 March 1814. After docking at Rio, together with HMS Tagus

under the command of Captain Philip Pipon, Briton received orders to proceed to the Pacific around Cape Horn where HMS Phoebe and Cherub were engaged in a hunt for the American frigate USS Essex, which had attacked British whalers in the area. When the Briton and Tagus arrived in Valparaiso on 21 May the two other British ships had already captured the American vessel following the Battle of Valparaiso.

The four British ships left port on 26 June 1814 arriving at Paita further up the coast of Peru on 2 July. They left the same night and continued northwards close to the shore then anchored near the mouth of the Tumbes River on the border with Ecuador.

"It was on this place a boat belonging to the Phoebe was upset, which occasioned the death of Lieut. Jago, and the Purser, but whether they were drowned or eaten by the Alligators is uncertain. Several of these frightful creatures were seen next morning basking themselves in the sun, and both these gentlemen being good swimmers, one may be led to conclude they reached the shore only to die a more wretched death."

Galápagos Islands & Nuku Hiva

On finding nearby Isla de la Plata devoid of water, the Briton and Tagus headed south to Salango Island where they anchored overnight before setting sail for the Galápagos Islands, arriving at Floreana Island, then known as Charles Island, on 25 July. The following day the two ships visited San Cristóbal Island (then Chatham Island) before proceeding to Santiago Island (then James Island). After a ten day stay in the Galápagos and a 3,000-mile (4,800 km) journey westward, on 28 August 1814, the flotilla anchored off Nuku Hiva (then called Sir Henry Martyn's Island), one of the Marquesas Islands, which Commodore David Porter of the Essex had previously claimed for the United States and renamed Madison Island after the then US President.^[4] Porter had built a fort and a villa on the island, which were destroyed by the natives after his ship left.

Before departure, Sir Thomas Staines, with the consent of the local tribes excepting the "Typees" from the Tai Pi Valley, took possession of Nuku Hiva of behalf of the British Crown.^[5]

Pitcairn Islands



HMS Briton at Pitcairn Island

Nearly three weeks later, on the return journey to Valparaiso, Briton and Tagus made landfall at the then little known island of Pitcairn.

"On the 17th September, 1814, at about half-past two o'clock in the morning, to my surprise and astonishment, land was discovered, both by the Briton and Tagus, and nearly at the same moment. The ships were hove to, and, on hailing the Briton, it was determined to continue in that situation until daylight in the morning, to ascertain the exact position of the land in view, and, according to circumstances, to reconnoitre (sic) it, if necessary. We were then, by our reckoning, in the latitude of about 24° 40' S., and longitude 130° 24' W., the land bearing S.S.E. five or six leagues. As in all the charts in our possession there was no land laid down in or near this longitude, we were extremely puzzled to make out what island it could be, for Pitcairn Island being, according to all accounts, in the longitude of 133° 24' W., we could not possibly imagine so great an error could have crept into our charts with respect to its situation."

—Captain Philip Pippin, HMS Tagus.

Unbeknown to anyone aboard the two visiting ships, the only surviving mutineer from the Fletcher Christian led 1789 Mutiny on the Bounty, John Adams, remained alive on Pitcairn. Although Mayhew Folger aboard the American trading ship Topaz had paid a brief visit to the island in 1808 and the Admiralty in London were aware of the situation on the island from his subsequent report, neither Staines nor Pipin had been informed. The Royal Marine Commander aboard the Briton, Lieutenant John Shillibeer, wrote in his account of their arrival:

"At this moment I believe neither Captain Bligh of the Bounty, nor Christian, had entered any of our thoughts, and in waiting the approach of the strangers, we prepared to ask them some questions in the language of those people we had so recently left. They came—and for me to picture the wonder which was conspicuous in every countenance, at being hailed in perfect English, what was the name of the ship, and who commanded her, would be impossible—our surprize can alone be conceived. The Captain answered, and now a regular conversation commenced. He requested them to come alongside, and the reply was, " We have no boat hook to hold on by." "I will throw you a rope" said the Captain. "If you do we have nothing to make it fast to" was the answer. However, they at length came on board, exemplifying not the least fear, but their astonishment was unbounded."

The first man from Pitcairn to board the Briton soon proved who the islanders were. His name, he said, was Thursday October Christian, the first born on the island and son of Fletcher Christian.

"He was then about twenty-five years of age, a fine young man, about six feet high, his hair deep black, his countenance open and interesting, of a brownish cast, but free from all that mixture of a reddish tint which prevails on the Pacific islands; his only dress was a piece of cloth round his loins, and a straw hat, ornamented with the black feathers of the domestic fowl ... we were glad to trace in his benevolent

countenance all the features of an honest English face. I must confess, I could not survey his interesting person without feelings of tenderness and compassion."

From Christian and Adams, the visiting Captains received an account of what had transpired since the mutiny but as they had no instructions to take any action, they returned to Valparaiso, a journey that took about 25 days.

Return to the UK and later voyages

After three months cruising in the Pacific, on 12 February 1815, Briton and Tagus anchored off the Juan Fernández Islands to take on supplies. Briton remained in the Pacific until the end of April 1815 when she returned to Rio. At this time British merchants in Chile requested that a British warship should continue to protect their interests and nominated Sir Thomas Staines as their preferred commander; instead he received orders to return home, arriving at Plymouth on 8 July 1815. Shortly afterwards Briton was put out of commission at Portsmouth as a result of cuts in the Royal Navy following Wellington's victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo.

*The Names of Officers belonging to the Briton,
of 44 Guns and 300 Men.*

Sir T. STAINES, K. C. B.	Captain.
JAMES WILKIE, . . .	1st Lieutenant.
J. W. PROWSE, . . .	2d Ditto.
RODNEY SHANNON, . . .	3d Ditto.
C. B. LOUIS, . . .	4th Ditto.
JOHN SHILLIBEER, . . .	1st Lieut. commanding R.M.
H. BENNETT, . . .	2d Ditto.
ALEX. BARR, . . .	Surgeon.
E. TUTTLETT, . . .	Assistant Surgeon.
PETER FORREST, . . .	Purser.
— BLAKE, . . .	Clerk.
THOS. STUART, . . .	Master's Mate.
GEO. LE PINE, . . .	—
— ROBERTSON, . . .	Carpenter.
— ROBINSON, . . .	Boatswain.
JOHN BROWN, . . .	Gunner.
Mr. CROZIER, . . .	
— WOODTHORPE, . . .	
— SKYRING, . . .	
— BROOMAN, . . .	
— BLACKMORE, . . .	
— TYLDEN, . . .	
— GANETT, . . .	
— GALINDO, . . .	
— SMITH, . . .	
— RIDOUT, . . .	

} Midshipmen.

Crew list of HMS Briton c. 1813

In 1829, she transported Sir Henry Chamberlain, 1st Baronet to Portugal to take up his appointment as consul general.

On 10 August 1829, HMS Briton left Portsmouth under the command of Capt. Hon. W. Gordon and returned to the same port on 13 August, departing again the following day.

According to the Charleston Courier, on 2 June 1831 a bottle found off the coast of Florida at latitude 25° 52' N and longitude 80° 9' W contained a note that read as follows:

"Current Bottle, No. 37. —This bottle has been thrown overboard, to determine the current, by Mr. W. H. Hale, of H.M.S. Briton. Whoever finds it, is requested to give intelligence of the same, in writing, to Mr. Harrison, the editor of the Hampshire Telegraph, at Portsmouth. —H.M.S. Briton, Captain the Hon. W. Gordon, Gulf of Mexico, 2nd February, 1830, from Tampico to England, in lat. 27° 50', lon. 84° 40'. Tortugas S. 18°, E. 230 miles."

Briton was used as a convict ship from 1841 onwards and a target ship from 1850 before being broken up at Portsmouth in 1860.

