

# PITCAIRN ISLAND

*Only settlement:* Adamstown  
*Population:* 57 (1986)

**HISTORY.** It was discovered by Carteret in 1767, but remained uninhabited until 1790, when it was occupied by 9 mutineers of HMS *Bounty*, with 12 women and 6 men from Tahiti. Nothing was known of their existence until the island was visited in 1808. In 1856 the population having become too large for the island's resources, the inhabitants (194 in number) were, at their own request, removed to Norfolk Island; but 43 of them returned in 1859-64.

**AREA AND POPULATION.** Pitcairn Island (1.75 sq. miles; 4.6 sq. km) is situated in the Pacific Ocean, nearly equidistant from New Zealand and Panama (25° 04' S. lat., 130° 06' W. long.). Adamstown is the only settlement. The population on 31 Dec. 1986 was 57.

The uninhabited islands of Henderson (12 sq. miles), Ducie (1½ sq. miles) and Oeno (2 sq. miles) were annexed in 1902 and are included in the Pitcairn group.

**CLIMATE.** An equable climate, with average annual rainfall of 80" (2,000 mm), spread evenly throughout the year. Mean monthly temperatures range from 75°F (24°C) in Jan. to 66°F (19°C) in July.

**CONSTITUTION.** Pitcairn was brought within the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in 1898 and transferred to the Governor of Fiji in 1952. When Fiji became independent in Oct. 1970, the British High Commissioner in New Zealand was appointed Governor.

The Local Government Ordinance of 1964 constitutes a Council of 10 members, of whom 4 are elected, 5 are nominated (3 by the 4 elected members and 2 by the Governor) and the Island Secretary is an *ex-officio* member. The Island Magistrate, who is elected triennially, presides over the Council; other members hold office for only 1 year. Liaison between Governor and Council is through a Commissioner in the Auckland, New Zealand, office of the British Consulate-General.

*Governor:* R. A. C. Byatt, CMG (resides in Wellington).

*Island Magistrate:* Brian Young (elected Dec. 1984).

*Flag:* British Blue Ensign with the whole arms of Pitcairn in the fly.

**TRADE.** Fruit, vegetables and curios are sold to passing ships; fuel oil, machinery, building materials, flour, sugar and other foodstuffs are imported.

**ROADS.** There were (1987) 6 km of roads. In Aug. 1987 motor cycles provided the sole means of personal automotive transport; there were 9 2-wheelers, 16 3-wheelers and 1 4-wheeled motor cycle.

**JUSTICE.** The Island Court consists of the Island Magistrate and 2 assessors.

**EDUCATION.** In 1987 there was 1 teacher and 12 pupils.

## Books of Reference

- A Guide to Pitcairn.* Pitcairn Island Administration, Auckland, revised ed. 1982  
Ball, I., *Pitcairn: Children of the Bounty.* London, 1973  
Ross, A. S. C., and Moverly, A. W., *The Pitcairnesse Language.* London, 1964