

The Long Arm of Hood
By Robert Heacock

Captain Robert Gray departed Long Warf in Boston, Massachusetts on the sloop *Lady Washington* on September 30, 1787, in the company of Captain John Kendrick on the *Columbia Rediviva*. They were the first Americans to depart the east coast on a privately funded fur trade expedition to the Pacific Northwest.

A few days later, on October 4, Captain William Bligh and the HMS *Bounty* departed Deptford on the Thames River bound for Tahiti to collect breadfruit plants. The plants were to be delivered to the British West Indies, as the breadfruit was felt to a good potential food source for the slaves who were laboring in the British plantations there.

After departing Brett Harbor in the Falkland Islands, Captain Gray 'doubled' or passed by Cape Horn at the far southern tip of South America on April 1, 1788. He was separated from Kendrick and the *Columbia Rediviva* but continued to Hawaii for supplies and then the Pacific Northwest for furs. Captain Bligh was also approaching Cape Horn at that time, and on April 2 wrote in his log 'the worst weather ever' as he was having significant difficulty with rough weather. Bligh finally abandoned the westbound route to Tahiti on April 17 and headed east for Cape of Good Hope and the Pacific Ocean.

The *Bounty* and Captain Bligh reached Tahiti October 16, 1788, having already spent a year traveling more than 28,000 miles. They spent more than five months in Tahiti, resting from their arduous voyage, making repairs, and then loading 1,015 breadfruit plants. Some of the crew members were unhappy to be leaving their lush and welcoming paradise to again be under the shipboard discipline of Captain Bligh. Their departure on April 5, 1789, and a short-lived voyage culminated in the April 28th mutiny where Captain Bligh and eighteen others were set adrift in a twenty-three-foot launch, with minimal navigation equipment and provisions. They had landings on local islands, but hostility from the natives forced them to sail west to the Dutch settlement at Kupang, Timor. This 3,618-mile trip over forty-seven days is considered an epic feat of seamanship and survival.

At this same time, Captain Gray was trading for furs at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island.

Fletcher Christian and the mutineers, plus some loyal to Bligh who would not fit in the launch, took the *Bounty* to locations around the South Pacific Ocean. They returned fourteen men to Tahiti and then eventually settled on remote Pitcairn Island, where they destroyed the *Bounty* and lived there until discovered in 1814, their community having grown to forty-six people but with only one of the surviving mutineers.

Captain Bligh and eleven men eventually returned to England March 15, 1790, and provided an account of the mutiny and their voyage. The HMS *Pandora* was then dispatched to Tahiti to hunt for mutineers and return them to England for trial. The *Pandora* arrived at Tahiti March 23, 1791, and soon rounded up the fourteen mutineers, but after several months was unable to locate the remaining mutineers who by then were on Pitcairn Island.

A steel box 11 x 18 feet was built on the deck of the *Pandora* to house the prisoners until they returned to England. Though it did not equate to the 'Pandoras Box' of Greek mythology, this steel box was used until the *Pandora* was wrecked on the Great Barrier Reef northeast of Australia on August 29. The crew

made efforts to save the ship, and eventually some of the prisoners had their shackles unlocked but four mutineers and thirty-one crew were lost with the ship. The surviving crew and prisoners were in four small boats and arrived at Kupang, Timor, on September 17, 1791, retracing the path taken by Captain Bligh two years before.

One week after the *Pandora* arrived at Tahiti, Captain George Vancouver departed England on April 1 for his 'Great Survey' of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska of 1792–1794. When the *Pandora* survivors arrived at Kupang on September 17, 1791, which is northwest of Australia, Captain Vancouver on the HMS *Discovery* and Lieutenant William Broughton on the HMS *Chatham* were at the southwest Australian coast. In the meantime, Captain Gray and *Columbia Rediviva* had arrived at Clayoquot Sound on Vancouver Island on September 20, 1791, and was still trading for furs.

The *Bounty* mutineers arrived in England on June 19, 1792, the same time Captain George Vancouver and Lieutenant William Broughton were surveying the southern part of the Strait of Georgia after leaving the San Juan islands. Their ships were anchored at Birch Bay, Washington and Captain Vancouver himself was returning from an arduous 11-day, 330-mile survey by small boat of Howe Sound and Jervis Inlet.

On September 12, the courts martial of the ten *Bounty* mutineers was begun aboard the HMS *Duke* in Portsmouth Harbor with Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief Lord Samuel Hood presiding.

At that same time, Captain Vancouver was at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island, trying to negotiate settlement terms of the Nootka Controversy with Spanish commissioner Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra. Their close friendship was solidified with lavish hospitality in between letters of negotiation. While meeting with Bodega, Captain Vancouver was provided a copy of Captain Robert Gray's map of the mouth of the Columbia River which Captain Gray had entered on May 11, 1792, naming the river after his ship.

The *Bounty* courts martial verdicts were returned on September 18, with four men acquitted, two guilty but pardoned by King George III, one found guilty and released on a technicality, and three were found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. At the same time but a world away, Captain Vancouver and Francisco Bodega concluded their negotiations with the last of their thirteen letters of negotiation.

Because of Captain Gray's confirmation of the location of the mouth of the Columbia River, Captain Vancouver sent Lieutenant William Broughton on the *Chatham* to perform their own survey of the Columbia River. This survey eventually took Lieutenant Broughton 128 miles up the Columbia River, past the mouth of the Willamette River to Vancouver Point.

The sentences of the three condemned mutineers were carried out on October 29, 1792, with the men hung from the yardarm of the HMS *Brunswick* in Portsmouth Harbor, more than five years after they originally departed England. That same day, Lieutenant Broughton was at the mouth of the Willamette River and spotted a large cone shaped mountain to the east. His evening camp was at Broughton Beach and the next day he reached his turnaround at Vancouver Point. It was from here that Lieutenant Broughton named the large cone shaped mountain as Mount Hood, after Vice Admiral and Commander in Chief Lord Samuel Hood.

Mount Hood was one of the volcanic mountains the members of the Lewis and Clark Expedition were searching for after they left the Rocky Mountains and Lolo Trail and headed down the Clearwater and

Snake Rivers. Near what is known as Wallula Gap, Captain Meriwether Lewis finally spotted Mount Hood on October 18, 1805, as Captain Clark wrote: *Saw a mountain bearing S. W. conical form Covered with Snow.*

This culmination of events, directly or indirectly related to the Lewis and Clark Expedition, provides a good example of how historical events were built upon the prior efforts of others, and how so many people and events are intertwined with the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

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