

attempt to reclaim Fletcher's reputation and sink Bligh's. These seldom used documents have a central role in this story. Christian believes they give an accurate picture of the situation aboard *Bounty*. He also combed through the Bligh-Banks correspondence in the Mitchell Library, Sydney, to good benefit, though he claims more is there to be found. Much of this material has a certain amount of self-preservation and promotion within it. Christian sees more truth in the pro-Fletcher perspective than Bligh's.

Christian has a clear disdain for Bligh's command abilities, and his subsequent career. Yes, Bligh was to have two more mutinies, but he commanded HMS *Director* at the Battle of Camperdown, grappling with three Dutch ships, and fought bravely at the Battle of Copenhagen, in 1801, on HMS *Glatton*, earning Lord Nelson's praise. Bligh's singular feat of sailing an open boat the distance he did, with a potentially less than supportive group of men in it, is a mark of not only seamanship, but command. This is not to overlook Bligh's shortcomings.

There are thirty-two illustrations in the centre of the book, two of which are maps. A chronology of events appear at the beginning of the book, as does a list of the crew. A list of the people who settled on Pitcairn Island is also provided. There is a genealogy list for the author's connection to Fletcher but it needs some interpretation to make it actually useful. Bibliographic notes on sources provide a quick overview of the original and contemporary writings used, and a few of the more recent publications. Many of the secondary sources are pre-1990, none are after 1999. Christian's use of John Masefield's *Sea Life in Nelson's Time* (1905) to provide information on life in the navy in 1790, is problematic. Masefield had a one-sided perspective, which has been critiqued in detail in much more current work.

It may not be the final 'truth' about the story, but the book has much to offer the historiography of the *Bounty* and its mutiny, especially adding to our potential understanding of life on Pitcairn Island. Christian's work will appeal to those who study the *Bounty* mutiny, mutiny in general, order and disorder aboard ships, and the interface between Europeans and Indigenous cultures in the Pacific, in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries.

Thomas Malcomson
Toronto, Ontario

Cathy Converse. *Frances Barkley, Eighteenth-century Seafarer*. Victoria, BC: Heritage House, www.heritagehouse.ca, 2023. 137 pp., illustrations, maps, glossary, notes, bibliography, index. CDN \$12.95, paper; ISBN 978-1-77203-441-7. (E-book available.)

Cathy Converse's novella reconstructs the life of Frances Barkley, who shipped out to sea with her new husband, a captain in the merchant trade, not long after the completion of her education at a convent in France at age seventeen. Aboard *Imperial Eagle*, a 400-ton, three-masted sailing ship under her husband's command, Frances became the first European woman to openly circumnavigate the world and visit the Pacific Northwest and the Hawaiian Archipelago after eight years and two global tours. In a period where most captains' wives and families lived distantly ashore, Barkley embraced the uncomfortable confinement of the ship to be at her husband's side.

Converse's work is based on Barkley's memoir, *Reminiscences*, which was penned shortly before her death in 1832 and chronicles her travels from 1786 until 1794. The limitations of relying on a memoir are clear and Converse candidly states these drawbacks: Barkley wrote down her experiences at sea over forty years after she first shipped out, and admits multiple times in her own retelling that her memory fails her about certain trips. Thus, where there were "gaps" and "holes" in Barkley's reminiscences, Converse relies on the oral history of the Barkley's descendants, the technical expertise of modern ship masters and maritime historians, and her own research to create a more holistic story of Frances travels using a "mixture" of both their words.

In her short chapters, Converse uses visuals to contextualize her and Barkley's narrative. Naturally, these visuals are predominantly illustrated by European artists who idealized and exoticised foreign peoples and landscapes according to contemporary styles (i.e. the portrait of Winée, 1794, (26)). While these images inescapably depict the merchant trade's imperialist agenda that the Barkleys were in partnership with, they give the reader an informed idea about the geopolitical landscapes of the late-eighteenth-century preindustrial world. In this globally saturated capitalist industry, Converse notes that few vessels in the merchant trade by the Barkley's time had circumnavigated the world (4). Frances and her husband, Charles William Barkley, with their two small children, were among the first.

Converse's work is critical to the history of women at sea during the late early-modern period. Constructing *Reminiscences* from original notes during her years at sea (which are now lost), Barkley's source provides a woman's invaluable outlook, first-hand impressions, happenings, and experiences that are normally recorded and described by men. Sailing during a period where it was superstitiously alarming to be in the company of women, Barkley weathered storms, pirates, sexual harassment, illness, betrayal, shipwreck, disease, death, hunger, tropical climates and even birth aboard the *Imperial Eagle* and the *Halcyon*. Demonstrating an aptitude for the sea that rivalled that of the crew (i.e. she did not suffer seasickness), her presence aboard ship likely saved her husband's life on numerous occasions, such as when she

nursed him back to health after contracting rheumatic fever with “a mixture of laudanum, camphorated spirits, ginger, and capsicum” (17). Far from harming the ship and crew with her presence, Barkley’s medicinal knowledge, French proficiency, natural sea-legs, constitution, and enterprising spirit were likely key in facilitating Captain Barkley’s fame and name, which is still inscribed on the maps of Vancouver Island’s west coast to this day (i.e. Barkley Sound).

Female voices are far and few in maritime historical scholarship. As such, Converse and Barkley’s joint stories put words to a world (and a subfield) that has largely barred women from the record. Be that as it may, as British colonists by nature, Converse acknowledges Frances’ account of her and Captain Barkley’s voyages as one “filtered through the lens of British merchant seamen” (115) who held colonial prejudices and benefited from colonial activities, although they were not directly involved in colonizing the land (5). Therefore, while Converse reports that Barkley did not voice her opinion in her original notes (5), her memoir’s inclusions and omissions implicitly demonstrate her innate motive, subjectivity, and bias from the perspective of an educated Briton, exposed to the luxuries and etiquette of the elite while abroad. This does not nullify the value of Barkley’s record, but this subjectivity serves to clarify Converse and Barkley’s stylization, grammar, descriptions, anecdotes, and other literary choices and allows the reader to think critically about their story’s depictions.

In sum, Converse’s work breathes new life into Barkley’s understudied two-hundred-year-old tale. As the first European woman to circumnavigate the world with her husband, Frances’ life is certainly remarkable, and her first-hand testimony aboard the *Imperial Eagle* and the *Halcyon* contributes critically to women’s experiences at sea during the early modern period. It also includes valuable information pertaining to the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific, such as their adornment, customs, trading practices, and relationships with Europeans. If readers are curious about histories of capitalism, women, shipping, Indigeneity, geopolitics, and imperialism’s pervasive effect on the early modern world, Converse’s reconstruction of Frances Barkley’s life encapsulates all these facets and much more.

Bethany Henderson
Fredericton, New Brunswick

Terry Crowdy. *Formidable. Arthur Flint’s War Against Tirpitz and the Kamikazes*. Barnsley, S. Yorks: Pen and Sword Maritime, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk, 2023. xv+236 pp., illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. UK £25.00, US \$49.95, cloth; ISBN 978-1-39908-766-7.