

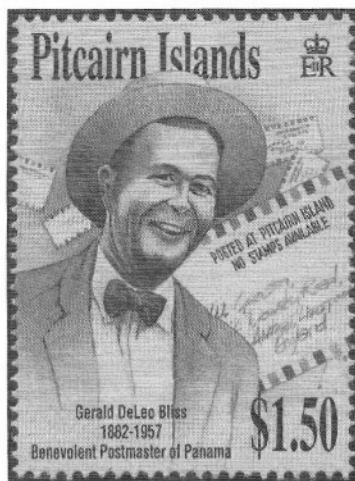
Gerald D. Bliss

Pitcairn Islands Stamp

On April 5, 2002 Pitcairn Islands issued a stamp to honor the contributions of Gerald Bliss, and his wife Marbelle Anna, to the Pitcairn Islands Postal Service and history. The 40x30mm multicolor (vertical) stamp, is one in a set of five called "Notable Figures of Pitcairn". The illustrated stamp has a value of \$1.50 (NZ), was designed by Dave Gunson, Auckland, NZ, printed by BDT Security Printing, Dublin Ireland by Offset Lithography and is perforated 13.

The story behind the Bliss's involvement and contributions to Pitcairn Islands is as follows:

On a day in 1920, Gerald DeLeo Bliss, postmaster at Cristobal, Canal Zone, was enjoying a meal with a ship's captain in the Strangers' Club. In his pocket, Bliss had a letter from England addressed to Pitcairn Island. Learning that the captain's upcoming Pacific voyage would take him



close to the island, Bliss asked if he would deliver the letter. The Captain's willingness to assist caused Bliss to send word to postmasters world wide advising that mail bound for Pitcairn would be given the quickest service if sent through him. Previously mail could take six months or longer to reach the island. Through Bliss, the time was reduced to less

than two weeks. As a consequence, captains agreed to take on mail from Pitcairn, knowing that Bliss would receive and sent it on from the Canal Zone. Bliss sent hand-stamp informational markings for use on Pitcairn, which read Posted at Pitcairn Island/No Stamps Available. Not only did Bliss revolutionize Pitcairn's mail service, together with his wife Marbelle Anna, he served as the island's purchasing agent for more than a decade. Mrs. Bliss became an indefatigable bargain hunter for the always-cash-short islanders purchasing, among other large items, Pitcairn's first wood-fired domestic stove.

When he retired in 1934, Gerald D. Bliss could look back on a distinguished postal career. The last 14 years of which included providing a valuable service to Pitcairn, which not only sped the delivery of mail but enabled increased opportunities for Pitcairners to sell their crafts and obtain all manner of supplies.

CZSG Officers Election Report

A report has been submitted through Secretary John C. Smith regarding the complete ballot results for CZSG Officers and Directors elections.

The successful candidates will serve for the period Jan. 1, 2002 through Dec. 31, 2003.

Results are as follows:

President

James W. Crumpacker .. 435 votes

Vice President

Richard H. Salz 435 votes

Secretary

John C. Smith..... 435 votes

Treasurer

Richard F. Larkin 435 votes

Directors

Richard D. Bates, Jr. 435 votes

Gary B. Weiss 435 votes

Alan P. Bentz 435 votes

Respectfully submitted,

James W. Crumpacker, President

Book Review

by David Farnsworth

Prize Possession: *The United States and the Panama Canal 1903-1979* by John Major (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1933) (ISBN 0-521-43306-1), 432 pages, hardbound, \$57.95.

The main foci of this book are the governance of the Zone, non-canal commerce in the Zone and its effect on the Panamanian economy, U.S. involvement in Panamanian governance, and defense and military use of the Zone. The backdrop is U.S.-Panama relations including the negotiations that lead to the treaties of 1977.

The author is a senior lecturer in History at the University of Hull in Québec Province. The historical method is used throughout. Original United States documentation is the basis of the book. There is complete and extensive footnoting.

This book does not have the dash of books by journalists, so it may not be a good first-book to read about this subject. However, it is authoritative

and gives a fuller picture than many comparable books. Many books about U.S.-Panama relations that have been reviewed here are one-dimensional, somewhat self-serving, or obviously from one-sided or partisan viewpoints. This book has none of those weaknesses except that only U.S. sources were available to the author, which he discusses. Also, it is written in a very fluid and easy-to-read style in plain English that is free of academic lingo.

Because this is not a trade book, the price is steep. However, this book seems to be easy to find in public and university libraries.

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