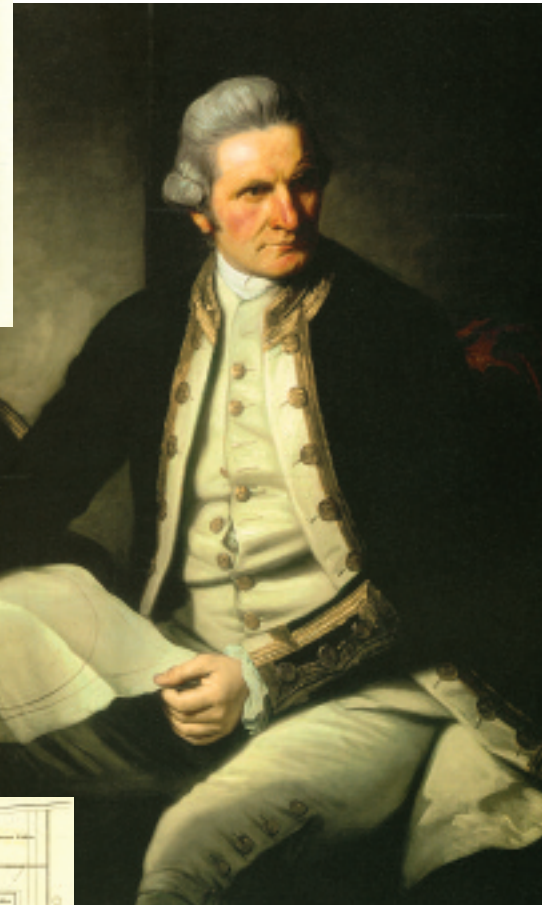


AT THE CLASS OF 1945 LIBRARY: CAPTAINS COOK, BLIH AND VANCOUVER

By Henry Bedford '48

Through December 14, the Class of 1945 Library is presenting the exhibition *Expanding the Known World: Explorations of Cook, Bligh and Vancouver*, featuring 18th-century books, maps and illustrations drawn from marine and exploration materials held in the library's Special Collections.

ACADEMY LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

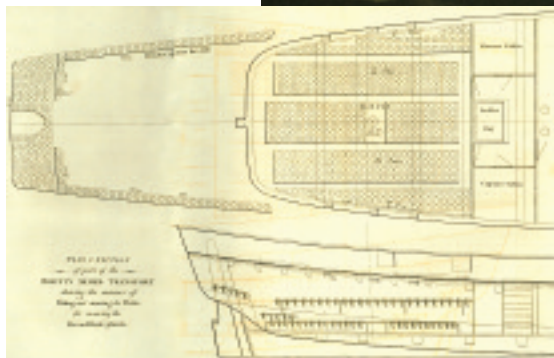


Many of these voyages were undertaken with objectives quite different from those of earlier explorers who sought territory, treasure and converts. Voyages reported in these accounts sought data to add to the knowledge of European scientists and natural historians or to find, describe and study new and exotic plants—and often to import them. These captains wrote to inform their sponsors and a larger public in Europe and its outposts in North America about uncharted seas, unfamiliar peoples and unusual plants and animals. The accounts allowed readers to share the great adventure of learning new information about the planet and life on it.

The exhibit focuses on the explorations of Captain James Cook, Captain William Bligh and Captain George Vancouver. One object of James Cook's first Pacific voyage in 1769, for instance, was astronomical observation to aid the effort to measure the distance of the earth from the sun; another was collection of botanical specimens of which thousands were carefully returned to England for study.

Captain William Bligh, best known as the target of the mutiny on the *Bounty*, intended to move breadfruit trees from the South Pacific to sugar plantations in Jamaica. He accomplished

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The 18th-century explorers featured in the Academy Library's fall exhibition "sailed to add to human knowledge, not to expand imperial power or religious dominion," writes former Academy Librarian Henry Bedford '48, in his essay for the exhibition catalog. (Top, left) Prince William Sound; (above) a portrait of Captain James Cook; (left) a cross-section of the H.M.S. Bounty.

when the voyage ended.

The collection featured in this exhibition stems in part from the James N. Hill Marine Society, an extracurricular student organization at the Academy begun in 1934. Established to foster interest in maritime history, the club met weekly to present and discuss papers on topics ranging from privateering to submarine warfare, and from whaling to the Asian fur trade. Exeter students wrote essays—some exceeding 15,000 words—based on the library's extensive holdings, as well as on materials from the special collections. At least one of those papers found a larger audience in a national magazine, and some of the authors went onto careers as historians.

The Hill Marine Society did not exist when Austin Lamont graduated from Exeter in 1923. But he was interested in the history of exploration and collected important volumes on the topic. Over the course of several years, impressed by the work done in English and history classes, as well as by the papers of the Hill Society, he gave the library important letters, several ship models, and hundreds of books, some of which are featured in this exhibition.

Sponsored by the Charles J. Tanenbaum Library Fund, the exhibit was installed by Andra Crawford and Edouard Desrochers '45 (Hon.). A complementary slide presentation created by Joseph Montibello and Thomas Wharton can be viewed in the Kaplanoff Periodicals Room. The original manuscript of *The Mutiny on the Bounty* is located in the Tanenbaum Reference Area's map alcove. ●

Henry Bedford '48 served as Academy librarian from 1973 to 1977.

He is also a past dean of faculty and chair of the history department.

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that objective on a later trip, though Caribbean slaves found this Pacific dietary staple distasteful.

George Vancouver was assigned several tasks for his expedition to northwestern North America. His diplomatic mission was to prevent conflict with Russia and Spain over conflicting territorial claims. He was to continue the effort to locate an east-west passage through the continent. And he was instructed to report to the Royal Society of London about plant and animal life in the region. The captain regarded that task as a distraction, and he and his accompanying botanist sometimes disagreed about objectives that seemed to clash. The conflict persisted in reports each issued