

It was the year that Pitcairn Island, of Fletcher Christian and “Mutiny on the Bounty” fame, entered the shortwave consciousness. The existence of tiny station “PITC,” first discovered in 1930, was confirmed by ham operator Alan Eurich, W8IGQ, who met Pitcairn operator Andrew Young when Eurich went ashore in January 1937 during a world cruise of the *Yankee* schooner. Young was found to be operating intermittently on 500 kc. using a low power, battery-powered spark transmitter which had been brought to the island years before, and a crystal receiver (with which Young was able to hear KFI, Los Angeles). The absence of a steady supply of gasoline made generator charging of the battery impossible, and the station was off the air for long periods while the battery was sent to New Zealand for recharging.

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Eurich’s description of the Pitcairn setup in *QST* captivated the ham world, and a movement to replace Young’s ancient equipment with new gear ensued. Soon, thanks to the contribution of parts and equipment from numerous manufacturers, a new 60-watt station, including a wind-driven generator, was on its way to the island in the custody of two engineers, Granville Lindley and Lew Bellem of Coto-Coil, Inc., the Providence, Rhode Island, electronics firm that built the station. **VR6A** went on the air on March 5, 1938, but then went silent for lack of a license, which was finally received in April, whereupon the station resumed operation as **VR6AY**. Numerous hams worked the station at night, usually on 14346 kc., and additional equipment enabled several NBC broadcasts to originate from the island while the engineers were still in residence. These broadcasts were sent through the RCA commercial facility in **Bolinas**, California and relayed nationwide. Bellem and Lindley left Pitcairn on May 5. Although equipment faults put the station off the air at times, Young persevered and Pitcairn would remain on the amateur radio map, and on DXers’ want lists.

PITCAIRN ISLAND
STATION PITC

VR6AY

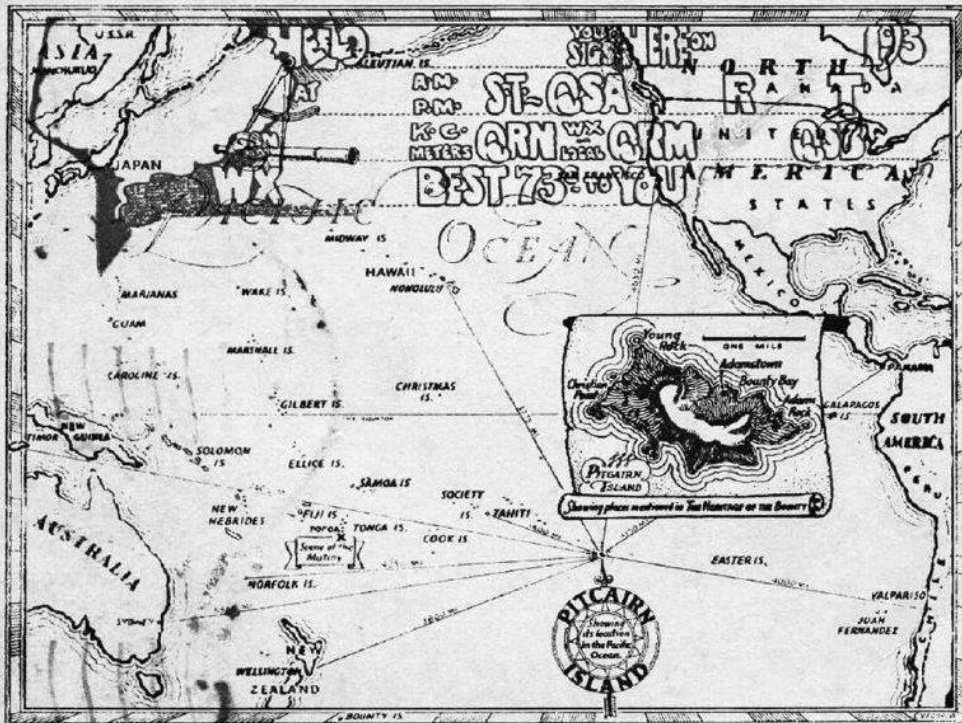
MADE BY
PARRIS-DUNN CORP
CLARINDA, IOWA
U.S.A.



PITCAIRN ISLAND

This station, designed and built by Coto-Coil Co., has been a gift from these manufacturers who have donated their parts and equipment: Aerovox Corp., Amer. Lava Corp., Amperex Electronic, Bassett Research, Bliley Elec. Co., Cardwell Mfg. Co., Coto-Coil Co., Kenyon Transformer Co., Ohmite Mfg. Co., Par-Metal Products, Parris-Dunn Corp., Pioneer Genemotor Corp., RCA Radiotron, E. M. Sargent Co., Shure Bros., Triplett, Willard Storage Battery Co.

LOCATED IN



S. O. PACIFIC OCEAN

LAT. 25.04 S.
LONG 130.06 W.

Operator *Andrew C Young*

Map printed by permission of Simon and Schuster

The QSL cards that were brought to Pitcairn with the donated equipment in 1938 reflected the call letters VR6A. The "Y" was added by hand after a proper New Zealand license with that designation was finally obtained.