

**Alaska Studies
Connection
Semester 2**

**Teacher's
Guide**

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Audiotapes -Semester Two

Mists of Time
Lesson 16

Age of Discovery
Lesson 17

Life in Sitka
Lessons 17 & 19

Folly or Fortune
Lessons 19 & 20

Gold
Lesson 20

Adventures of a Pioneer
Lessons 21 & 22

Alaska Becomes a Territory
Lesson 21

Rights of a Citizen
Lesson 23

The Silver Years
Lesson 24

It's Your Local Government
Lesson 25

For All the Future
Lesson 30

Videotapes -Semester One**Mists of Time**

Unit 3, Lesson 16

People of Ukpiagvik

Unit 3, Lesson 16

Spirit of the Land

Unit 3, Lesson 16

Age of Discovery

Unit 3, Lesson 17

History of the Act, ANCSA series

Unit 3, Lesson 19

Folly or Fortune

Unit 3, Lessons 19 & 20

Adventures of a Pioneer

Unit 3, Lessons 21 & 22

Women of the Alaska Territory

Unit 3, Lesson 21

Farming in the 49th

Unit 3, Lesson 21

The Silver Years

Unit 3, Lesson 24

**Telecommunications in Alaska,
Part II**

Unit 3, Lesson 24

It's Your Local Government

Unit 4, Lesson 25

For All the Future

Unit 4, Lesson 30

ADDITIONAL TEACHER RESOURCES

Lesson 17

The Russian American Period

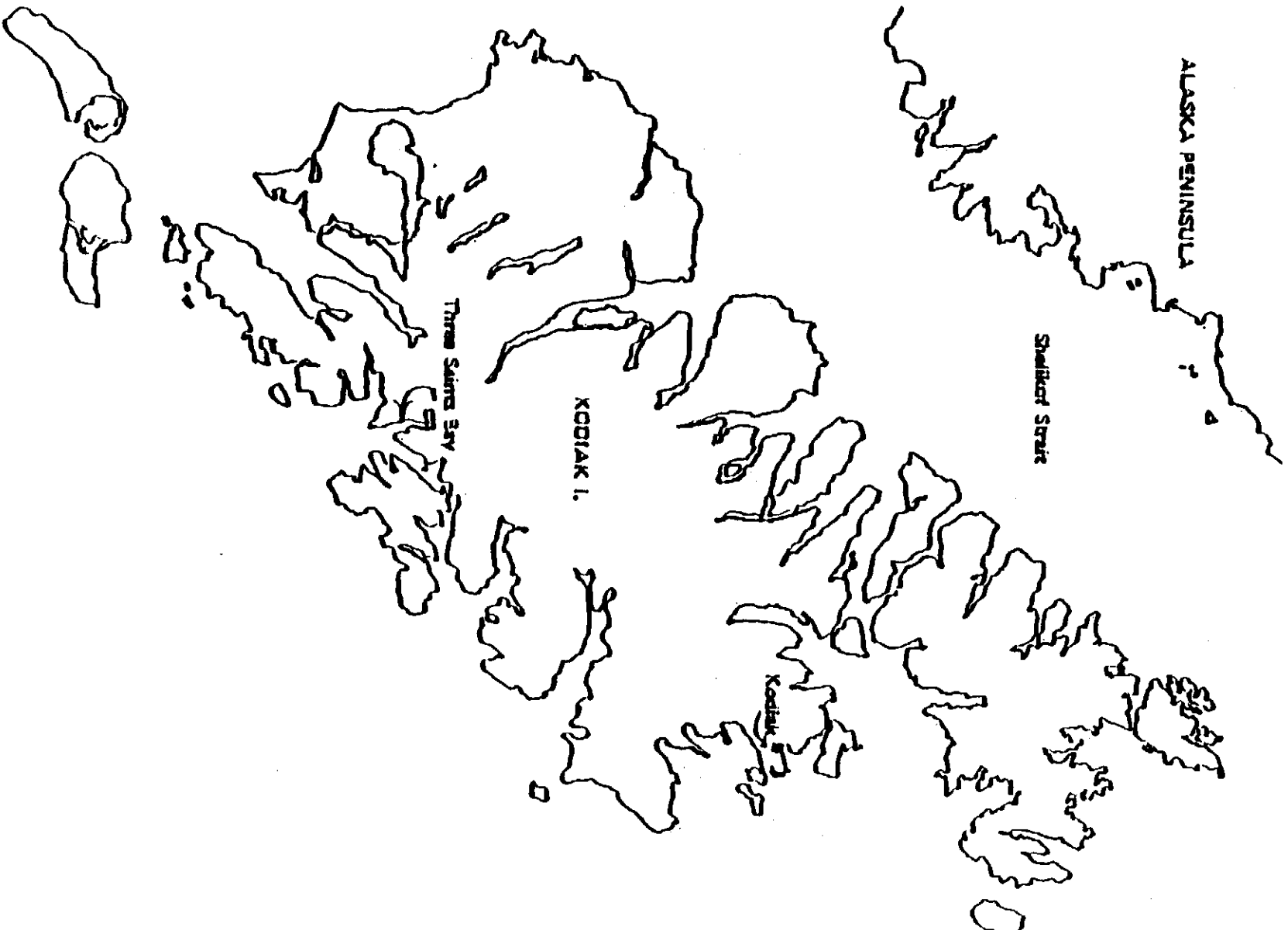
1. 1578-1761
 - A. Europeans Heard of Alaska for the First Time
 1. A salt miner and fur trader, Anika Stroganoff, was one of a family commissioned to exploit eastern Russia, which was later called "Siberia."
 2. During his flight from Russia in 1578, Yermak Timofeiev visited Anika when he heard of the "land to the east" from the Natives.
 3. Yermak and his band of Cossacks took Sibir, the fort which guarded the sole good route to "Siberia" within two years. He sent a personal gift to Tsar Ivan: all the yasak, or furs, paid in tribute by the Natives. Ivan responded by pardoning them all for their crimes.
 - B. The Century March of the Cossacks, 1578-1724
 1. The Cossacks pushed south to the Black and Caspian Seas.
 2. The promyshlennikis were hunters and trappers who also did some trading. They began an eastward expansion in their search for new trapping areas and were followed by the Cossacks. They occupied the Ob River, reached the Lena River, still farther east, established Yakutski Ostrag, and explored the Amur River. They discovered the Arctic Seaboard shores and founded Okhotsk.
 - C. The Kamchatka Expedition, 1725
 1. Peter the Great wanted to find a route to India and China via the Arctic Sea. He proposed and, in 1724, arranged an expedition to explore the area. Its purposes were:
 - a. To see whether America and Asia were separate or joined.
 - b. To test the new Russian ships and the new Russian discipline, as well as to see what the Austrian, Dutch, and Prussian men he had invited could do for him.
 - c. To chart the areas visited, to make landings, to find the names of the places he visited, and to get other reliable information prior to returning, as well as to find out if any other European ships were in the vicinity.

2. Though Peter the Great died before the expedition left, his work continued by Empresses Catherine I and Elizabeth.
 3. The Kamchatka Expedition originated in St. Petersburg. Vitus Bering, a Dane, commanded the expedition, and Alexei Chirikof was second in command.
 4. They finally reached Kamchatka where they built ships. From there they sailed north through Bering Strait, proving that Asia and America are separate. Bering was not sure of this fact, however.
- D. Michael Gvosdev saw the western tip of the Seward Peninsula in 1732, but did not report his sighting for many years.
- E. Bering's Second Expedition, 1733-1741
1. The Russian Senate was not satisfied with Bering's report that America and Asia were separate; however, they approved another expedition "for the glory of the Empire."
 2. This second expedition, though it left St. Petersburg in 1733, did not receive all the necessary supplies until 1740.
 3. The Russian Senate instructed that the Kuril Island be explored; and Martin Spanberg, a Dane, was delegated to this exploration.
 4. Prior to Bering's expedition to find the "land to the east," Spanberg returned from the Kuril Islands.
 5. In trying to locate Company Land, Gama Land, and Terra de Jeso, including special routes to America, Bering lost time. After he and Chirikof conferred, they finally began to sail to the southeast. Bering commanding the St. Peter and Chirikof commanding the St. Paul. The two were separated during a fog, which was followed by a heavy storm.
 6. Chirikof first sighted land on one of the islands of Southeastern Alaska on July 15; Bering sighted the St. Elias Range the next day.
 7. Bering's ship was wrecked in a storm, and Chirikof's ship returned to Kamchatka.
 8. In early December Bering died on the island which bears his name in the Komandorskiyes east of Kamchatka Peninsula. His crew buried him there.

9. Scurvy killed many members of Bering's crew. Those surviving managed to salvage enough materials from the wreck of the St. Peter to construct a smaller boat, which they sailed to Kamchatka.
10. When they returned, most of the crew were wearing handmade skin clothing and were carrying many pelts with them.
11. Though the Russian government had become disinterested in Bering's second expedition, their enthusiasm for obtaining more furs was rekindled by private initiative, led by the promyshlenniki.

F. Exploration of the Aleutian Islands

1. The first person to follow the footsteps of Chirikof and Bering was Yemelyan Basov, a sergeant in Lower Kamchatka Command and a fur hunter. He and A. Serebrennikov, a Moscow merchant, formed a partnership and sailed for Bering's Island in the summer of 1743.
2. In 1744, Basov again left for Bering's Island; he was subsidized by N. Trapeznikov, a merchant.
3. In 1745, a peasant from Tobolsk, Mikhail Nevodchikov, left for the Aleutian Islands in a boat which a group of merchants had built. He had previously participated in Bering's second expedition. On the return trip his ship wrecked.
4. In 1746, Adrian, of the Tolstoy family, commanded a ship built by a group of merchants. He was a seafaring merchant from Selenginsk and searched for new sources of furs.
5. In 1759, the first person after Chirikof visited Umnak and Unalaska Islands. He was a hunter, S. Glotov.
6. By 1761, the boat which belonged to Bechevin, an Irkutsk merchant, reached the Alaska Peninsula. Issanaskie Strait, also called Protassof Bay, was discovered. It is located at the southern tip of Bechevin Bay and is very suitable for anchoring.
7. For many years numerous fortune seekers made the difficult crossing to the Aleutians where hunters would stay for several years at a time. They obtained most of their pelts through barter with the Aleuts or through robbery.
8. By the 1750's, the Aleutians were thoroughly stripped. Then hunters began to look for new places where others had not yet been.



KODIAK ISLAND, SHOWING THE FIRST RUSSIAN SETTLEMENT AT THREE SAINTS BAY

II. Russian Occupation

A. Siberian Merchants and Traders

1. When Bering's crew returned (without him), there was much excitement in the Kamchatka area because of the furs they brought back.
 2. In 1777, Gregor Ivanovich Shelekhov became one of the Russian expansionists in America. He established the first Russian settlement in Alaska, Three Saints Bay, on Kodiak Island, in 1784.
 3. Russian traders were rivals.
 4. Shelekhov and Lebedef-Lastochkin formed a partnership in order to trade in the Kuril Islands.
 5. In the Aleutian trade, Luka Alin was one of Shelekhov's associates.
 6. Shelekhov also formed the Shelekhov Company with the Panof brothers and Solovief, in 1777.
 7. He joined Ivan Golikov in fitting out a vessel for the Aleutian trade, in 1778.
 8. In 1790, the Shelekhov-Golikov Company appointed Aleksander Baranov to be general manager. He reached Three Saints Bay in July, 1791. Because there was a better harbor and better access to timber for ship repair, he moved the settlement to what is now Kodiak, in 1792.
- ### B. Russian American Company
1. Baranov was responsible for the move of the Shelekhov-Golikov Company's headquarters to Paul's Harbor, as Kodiak was then called in honor of the Prince Imperial.
 2. There was constant friction among the rival companies who established trading posts along the Aleutian Chain and in other good fur-producing areas.
 3. Baranov discouraged the activities of rival interest by threats, force, or any other means he could find.
 4. Shelekhov attempted to interest the rival trade companies in forming one large company which could apply to the Imperial Government to get an exclusive charter to trade in the area. Before he knew the results of his attempt, Shelekhov died.

5. In 1799, a charter was granted to the Russian American Company, which was then controlled by the heirs of Shelekhov. That same year Baranov established a post in Southeastern Alaska now known as Old Sitka.
6. After the Company's employees had been killed by the Tlingit Indians in 1802, the settlement was moved to Sitka, or Fort Archangel Michael, in 1804. (See the narrative on Katlian which follows.)
7. The Russians had forbidden American or English ships within 100 miles of the Alaska coast. By treaties in 1824 and 1825, this restriction was lifted; they were allowed to enter territorial waters and to trade for furs in such areas as the Russians did not trade. Actually, the maritime fur trade had all but ended by that time and this trading privilege had little value.
8. Aleut Russian-American company employees explored the Yukon River as far upstream as Nulato in 1838; however, only a minor portion of the company's revenues came from the Interior.

C. Russian Impact on Alaska

There were never more than several hundred Russian men in Alaska at one time, and only a handful of women. The Russians were able to run the company despite this for several reasons:

1. They did not attempt to govern anyone but the company employees -- this was mostly an economic, not a political, pursuit.
2. The sphere of influence of the company radiated out from its various trading posts. Territory in between was not a concern to the Russians.
3. Russia encouraged intermarriage with Native women for the establishment of a Creole class made up of the offspring of these unions. Creoles were considered Russian citizens and were educated, sometimes in Russia, to be managers of Russian America. Thus, despite the small numbers of Russians, there were many loyal Russian citizens who planned never to leave the colony.
4. The education and conversion of Natives into the Russian culture was extremely effective in the Aleutians and Kodiak Island where the most prolonged and intense contact occurred.
 - a. This is the result of intermarriage, partially.
 - b. Some scholars have also hypothesized that Russian world view in the 18th century was not so very different from Native world view; hence the transition was made to another culture without the inner trauma associated today.

- c. The fact that Creoles and educated Aleuts were respected contributed to their acceptance of Russian language and religion.
- d. The charismatic personalities of a few exceptional religious men are remembered and respected even today. Examples are Father Veniaminov (later canonized St. Innocent), Father Herman (later canonized St. Herman) and Innokenty Shaishnikov (a Creole priest at Unalaska).
- e. Most Russians who lived in Russian America lived lives materially similar to the Natives. There was not a huge gap, in the second half of the Russian period, in wealth or lifestyle.

A breakdown of the population of New Archangel in 1821 is interesting. (Note: the Russian population was concentrated largely at New Archangel.)

Russian officials, civilian employees and promyshlenniki	235
Their wives and children	92
Creoles	76
Their wives and children	22
Aleuts	155
Their wives and children	83
School children (not stated with ethnicity)	<u>30</u>
	693

By 1860 the Creole population in Russian-American colonies had grown to 1,896 and the Russian population 595.

NATIVE POPULATION

The effects of Russian colonialism in Alaska on Native populations were far-reaching. Because it was not economically feasible to bring women from Russia, and because neither the Company nor the Russian government encouraged it, it was inevitable that Russian men would intermingle with the Native women. This was particularly true because of the character of the Russians who did come to Alaska: They were men used to adapting themselves to whatever environment they encountered and they were so far from the cultural centers of Russia that most of them had few emotional or intellectual ties with Russia. Also many were themselves offspring of Russian Cossacks and Siberian natives (although they considered themselves Russian and had loyalty to Russia).

The Aleut people were most affected by the Russians. First the promyshlenniki ranged through the Aleutians. They violated the women and murdered many of the Aleut people. As the larger, more organized merchant companies came on the Alaskan scene, they impressed work crews of Aleut men to hunt furs for them. Women and children were often held hostage. Gradually (especially after Baranov came to Alaska) the treatment of the Aleut and other Alaskan Natives became somewhat more humane although they continued to have a serf-like status with the Russian company.

Cohabitation and eventually marriages between Russian men and Native women (mostly Aleut, Kodiak, Eskimo) were common. For many years, the Russian Orthodox church did not sanction marriage between Russians and Natives. By 1818, the company began to sanction some of the marriages and as the Creoles (offspring of Russian-Native marriage) increased, there were more marriages.

CREOLE POPULATION

From 1821-1867, the proportion of Creoles increased dramatically. For example, on Atka in 1821, Creoles outnumbered Russians 7:1. By 1860 the ratio was 49:1. On Urialaska at this time the ratio was 60:1. The numbers of Aleuts declined rapidly during the time of Russian colonization as the population intermingled with the Russians.

The policy of the company was to encourage the Creoles to adopt the Russian religion and culture. They hoped in this way to create a truly Russian colony in which loyalties would be to Russia. To train and educate the Creoles to support the colonies was an additional goal.

Creoles were called "Russian subjects" and like the Aleuts, freed from state taxes and obligations. They were required to be registered and there were restrictions on where they could settle. Those Creoles who received education at company expense were required to stay in service to the company for 15 years. Many Creoles were sent to Russia for education and they also served in company institutions for ten years after their return to Alaska.

By the end of the Russian period in Alaska, the ambiguous status of the Creoles was causing concern. The company was accused by many of exploiting people to the detriment of human rights.

Under the Treaty of Cession of the Russian North American colonies, inhabitants of Alaska were to be allowed to return to Russia within a three-year period. The important part of this as far as the Creoles were concerned was: Those people who wished to stay in Alaska were to be given all rights, advantages and privileges belonging to United States citizens. However, "Savage native tribes" were denied these rights. Thus, both the Native population and the Creole population were put in a very difficult and ambiguous position. This was never resolved. Most Creoles stayed in Alaska. Of the few Creoles who went to Russia to live, apparently few adapted and survived. (Especially those who had spent their lives in Alaska and had never been to Russia.) The treatment by the Americans of Alaska's population the following 50 years was consistently poor and neglectful.

MATERIAL CULTURE AND CUSTOMS

The material culture called "Russian" in Alaska was a combination of Russian and Native cultures. It is surprising that so much that is primarily Russian has survived. Most of the elements of this culture were brought to Alaska by a peasant class and are still retained with amazing completeness by the Native and Creole descendants. Many words of Russian origin and devotion to Orthodox ritual as well as parallels in local and Russian peasant culture are still present in Alaska. Among many Alaskans there is still very evident pride in a Russian heritage. For example, the Kuskokwim Eskimos still call most whites "gussuks," but the Russian is called "gossuk piak" meaning true white! (There is some question as to whether this is a compliment!)

The following section will attempt to give a picture of Russian material culture and customs during colonial times in Russian-America.

Russians did not try to repress traditional economy and culture of Natives precisely because it usually represented the best adaptations to the environment as well as most successful ways of hunting sea mammals. However, the changes which did take place in Native cultures were very far-reaching; probably to an extent not realized by the Russians.

CLOTHING

In the 1760's and 1770's, promyshlenniki took shirts made of linen, cotton or silk and breaches of blue and green nankeen on long journeys. Captain Cook observed that on Unalaska, the Russian men adopted jackets of fox or marten skin and coats of thick skin. They made headgear from the guts of large animals. The Aleuts, according to Cook, adopted Russian-style clothing (to a modified extent).

After private fur hunting companies settled in the Gulf of Alaska, the Russians adopted almost entirely the clothing of the Natives because Russian clothing was so hard to get. It is probably true also that locally produced clothing was more comfortable and better adapted to the climates than Russian clothing.

From all reports, the Natives enjoyed wearing Russian clothing for special occasions. It was probably the same old story -- new styles! The Russian-American Company forbade use of animal pelts for clothing and shoes. Employees were obliged to buy goods from the company stores. In practice, many people could not afford to do this. Rules were relaxed for "voyaging" -- where it was deemed appropriate to wear Native clothing.

In the time of Nicolas I, everyone in service in Russia wore uniforms. However, a company uniform was never approved in Alaska. Both Russians and Natives wore a variety of clothing.

FOOD

On the early voyages of the promyshlenniki, it was impossible to take much food. Thus, from the beginning of Russian settlement in Alaska, it was necessary to adjust to the foods available wherever Russian settlers settled. In 1778, Captain Cook noted that the Russians had many ways of preparing fish, including one using fish and berry juices; also tarts with salmon filling. Fish remained the mainstay of diet for the Russians and often had to serve as a substitute for bread. Wheat was never readily available and attempts to raise it in Alaska were not successful.

Flour, liquor, and sugar were expensive and hard to get. Tea was the one thing that was easy to get and expensive. In 1794, Vancouver reported the Russians on Kenai Bay served boiled seal, . . . oil and boiled eggs.

Throughout the Colonial period, only the privileged people enjoyed imported food. For the most part, Natives and laborers subsisted on what food could be obtained locally.

Baranov encouraged vegetable gardening which met with varying success in different locales. He also got some food from Hawaii and traded with anyone from anywhere who had food to trade.

Attempts to raise livestock and chickens were not successful. Berries were available everywhere, but settlers in New Archangel did not use them much as they were fearful of the Tlingit people and would not venture out to pick the berries.

Russian settlers in Kodiak were somewhat more successful in raising livestock, pigs, chickens, and vegetables than in New Archangel. Russian settlers in the interior subsisted entirely on foods harvested locally. They also used mushroom, berries and game (mostly bear). Conditions on Unalaska were similar to Kodiak except for large game, which wasn't found there. The settlement of Ross had fruits, vegetables, some grain, and livestock. Some of the surplus was shipped to Alaska but there was never enough to provide any real relief from the lack of foodstuffs in Alaska. Rum became a substitute for money as it was highly valued. According to Chevigny, Baranov made a brew of fermented cranberries and rye meal. It was supposed to be a preventative against scurvy and had a high enough alcoholic content to be a very popular drink!

BUILDINGS

Vancouver visited a Russian settlement at Cook Inlet in 1794. He described the living conditions of the Russians as rude and rough. Rezanov in 1895 found Baranov living in a "hut with a leaky roof" at New Archangel. These and others recorded impressions indicate that for the most part, the Russians in Alaska in the colonial period lived in very primitive conditions. As in all other areas, the Russians were limited by materials and labor in the kind of buildings they could erect. In some cases, they built adaptations of Native dwellings, at the other extreme was New Archangel.

Early Russian buildings in Kenai Bay, Hinchinbrook and Unalaska Island were long huts with arched straw and grass thatched roofs, Aleut style. The settlements were enclosed with wooden palisades. Small windows were covered with membrane from whale intestine or mica, and wooden tables and benches were used. Beds were wooden planks covered with skins. In Kodiak, houses were built of logs with grass roofs and gut windows. Later, log houses were reinforced with iron shackles. Some houses had a layer of sand, several feet thick, covering the roof.

At New Archangel spruce and hemlock were used for lumber, roofs were made of bark of the Sitka spruce. Wood rot was a problem because of the dampness, and buildings rarely lasted over 20 years. In 1822, the new residence of the Chief Manager was covered with a roof of iron from Saint Petersburg. In 1820, paint was finally supplied to help prevent rotting. Houses were heated by Russian stoves (or poor quality brick made in Kodiak and Fort Ross).

GROWTH AND DECLINE IN RUSSIAN-AMERICA

DISEASE DESTROYS NATIVES 1836

A terrible smallpox epidemic spread from California to Alaska appearing first at Sitka in 1836. In the village near the Russian fort 400 Natives died within three months. Many died at Angoon and in other villages. Father Veniaminov, the Russian clergyman, estimated that by 1840 there were fewer than 6,000 Natives remaining in Southeast Alaska. In 1833 there had been as many as 10,000 Natives.

Here is a description of life and industry in Russian America from the Alaska State Museum Multimedia Education Program:

Because Alaska was so far from Russia, limited food production, mining, maritime activities (local ship-building and ship repair yard) and other industries were an absolute necessity. This is why over 80 percent of the Russian colonists were located in New Archangel and in Kodiak. The fur hunting was done mostly by Natives . . .

The Russians sought furs far and wide in Alaska. From the Pribilof Islands where fur seal were taken, to the Alaskan Peninsula, Alexander Archipelago and Aleutians where sea otter were hunted, to the Interior river systems of Alaska where beaver, bear, lynx and sable were hunted, the Russians obtained furs. Also exported (sent to be sold out of Alaska) were fox, polar fox, walrus tusks, squirrel, mink and wolverine.

ALASKA'S WACKIEST ENTERPRISE
by J. J. Stauter

One doesn't have to be wacky to do business in Alaska. But some ninety years ago it certainly would have helped to possess at least a faint streak of psychiatric instability to qualify you for the job of resident manager of the Russian-American Ice Company.

A few marbles missing in your mental makeup might have made it easier for you to supervise the cutting and storing of hundreds of tons of ice each winter, so it could melt during the next summer. In fact, it didn't make much difference what you did with the ice, so long as you cut it and made absolutely sure that none was sold or shipped.

A certain tendency to wackiness would have helped, also, in the operation of a small sawmill. You see, in the case of this particular sawmill, it made no difference what size boards were sawed -- in fact, the boards were thrown away, and only the sawdust was kept -- to preserve the ice that had to be thrown out each year to make room for a freshly-cut supply which would never be used.

Do you like horseback riding? Well, that would have helped too, because as resident manager of this particular firm, your principal summer duty was to exercise the company stable of horses on Alaska's very first road -- a bridle path extending all the way around your private island. Only during the winter were the horses used for work. That work, if you haven't guessed by now, was hauling the ice that could never be used.

Why couldn't the ice be used? Simply because the company was paid for not shipping ice. If the product should reach the Pacific Coast market, the crazy subsidy would cease, and your salary as manager would certainly cease too, if you sold that ice! This odd situation can be verified in every detail by looking up old official records and travelers' accounts.

Of course, this wasn't the first time in history this sort of farce has occurred, and from reviewing some events in the United States during the last decade or so, one can see this type of economic practice isn't extinct. When you consider how Uncle Sam has paid farmers not to grow certain crops and spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for other crops that were purposely destroyed, this wacky enterprise from Alaska's yesteryears doesn't sound so wacky at that.

This yarn goes back to the California gold rush of '49. The migration of thousands of fortune-hunters to California had created a great demand for all types of commodities, and a man-sized transportation problem as well. Vessels sailing around Cape Horn for California carried capacity loads of passengers and supplies, but once arriving in San Francisco, the crews would quit and the ships would be tied up. Hundreds of deserted ships clogged the primitive port facilities, lacking the manpower to make the return trip. Steamers, then an innovation, needed a much smaller crew to operate, so men could be found to man them, all right, but there was not coal available in California.

At the same time, the bulging pokes of some of the early miners were causing them to seek the luxuries of life -- including ice--cold beer and the cool tinkle of frozen lumps in rum punches and whiskey swizzles.

So a group of American businessmen conceived the idea of joining with the Russian-American Company in Alaska to bring coal and ice to California and clean up a fortune.

A good many thousand dollars were spent in developing a coal mine at Port Graham, Alaska, and soon a whole shipload of the stuff was on its way to San Francisco on board the American brig Cyane, a Captain Kinzie in command. The coal proved unsuitable for the boilers of that day, and the enterprising businessmen had to dispose of the entire cargo at a big loss.

After failing to commercialize on Alaska coal, the company redoubled its efforts to make some money on Alaska ice shipments. Cargoes were loaded at Sitka and Wood Island, near Kodiak. The Sitka supply was undependable, however, because sometimes it simply failed to freeze in that mild Southeastern Alaska climate. So, the main reliance rested on the Wood Island plant. Numerous ships carried cargoes of ice from this remote spot, and it found a ready market at about twenty-five dollars a ton.

But just about this time, in the early 1850's, the artificial ice machine was invented, and soon a supply of the expensive gadgets began to arrive in California. Few people would buy them, however, as long as they were assured of a supply of Alaska ice, at a much cheaper price.

The representative of the ice-machine manufacturers approached the Russian-American Company with a proposition. They would pay the company a set sum each year for not shipping ice!

This odd arrangement went on for a number of years, renewed annually. To make certain the ice-machine boys would "kick through" with the annual subsidy, the Russian-American Company maintained its plant intact, and cut ice each winter. Thus they were prepared at any time to crack the California market again if their subsidy was not promptly forthcoming.

There is a suggestion, too, that the same group of Americans who were interested in this coal-ice business also had their eyes on bigger stakes -- namely the seal and other fur trade of the Alaska Commercial Company, which held a Government monopoly between the years 1870 and 1880. This group of competitors wanted to maintain a permanent station in Alaska to check up on the fur trade, and watch for any opportunity to get in on these profits.

So if, in addition to your skill in cutting ice to melt, and sawing lumber for the sawdust only, and entertaining visitors with horseback rides, you could also pick up a rumor or two about the fur business, that was so much the better.

The island ice plant was finally abandoned in the 1880's. The exact date is not available from known records, and today its log storehouses, manager's quarters and private loading pier have rotted away and left practically no trace. There is a Native village nearby, known as Uuzinkie. Some of the people of Uuzinkie had great-grandfathers who once cut ice for the company.

All in all, the enterprise must have been one of the oddest of all time, anywhere. It was without a doubt unique in Alaska's history. The resident manager must have been an unusual fellow to hold the position. He didn't have to be wacky, and maybe he wasn't, but I'll bet it surely would have helped.

RUSSIAN EXPANSION IN ALASKA

RIGHTS TO THE TERRITORY

In 1825, a Russian-British convention (written agreement) defined their territories and established the Russian-American southern boundary at latitude 54° 40' (just south of Ketchikan).

RUSSIANS LOOK NORTH 1818-1829

In 1818 a party of explorer-traders crossed the Alaska Peninsula to the Bering Sea coast where they established the first post north of the Alaska Peninsula at the mouth of the Nushagak River in Bristol Bay. In 1829 a party from this post traveled up Nushagak and went across its source to the Kuskokwim River. The party then floated the Kuskokwim to the Bering Sea, and without knowing, came within 35 miles of the Yukon River.

BRISTOL BAY TRADING POST

Recorded history of the Bristol Bay area begins in 1818 with the expansion of Russian fur trading. During the 18th century, the Russians depleted fur resources in the Aleutians. To tighten their hold on Alaska, they tried to extend the fur trade north and to the interior. At Bristol Bay, the Russians built a trading post later known as Alexandrovski Redoubt.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

As a result of an 1838 treaty between Russia and England, the Hudson's Bay Company (British) gained control over a large area of southeastern Alaska until the American purchase.

MOVEMENT INTO THE INTERIOR

During the 1821-1829 Russians explored the lands by Bristol Bay, the country around the Tikchik Lakes and into the Yukon-Kuskokwim watershed. In 1832 Russians established the first interior trading station. Another trading post was established on the Kuskokwim River in 1841.

1829-1841

From these forts Russians tried to secure a hold over areas to the north and east of Bristol Bay. Alaska remained a Russian outpost for another quarter century (25 years). During this time Alaska was largely unexplored.

There were never more than a thousand Russians at any time in Alaska. Russian rule over their Native "subjects was weak where it existed at all. Creoles -- the children of Russian-Native marriages, provided the strength of the Russian-American Company."

RUSSIANS ON THE YUKON

THE BUILDING OF ST. MICHAEL 1833

In 1831, Lieutenant Tebenkov explored the Bering coast and was told by Natives of a mighty river which reached the sea just north of the Kuskokwim. Tebenkov did not reach the Yukon on this expedition, but he returned to the area in 1833, and found the "mighty river" of which the Eskimos spoke. Tebenkov reached the Yukon delta and built a fortified trading post, named Redoubt St. Michael, on a barren, windswept island offshore.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY ON THE YUKON

BELL/CAMPBELL TRADING POSTS

The Hudson's Bay Company of England was interested in exploring the Yukon region and establishing trading posts. Within a year of each other, two traders of the Hudson Bay Company reached the Yukon. The year after, Robert Campbell reached the Yukon, 500 miles upriver from the Porcupine.

ENGLISH TRADING POSTS IN ALASKA

Then in 1846 Alexander Murray arrived at Bell's Peel River post. During that winter Murray and Bell planned the establishment of a Hudson Bay post on the Yukon River, and in the spring of 1847, Murray set out from Peel River and established Fort Yukon. This was the far western post of the Hudson Bay Company. In 1852 Chilkat Indians destroyed the second Hudson Bay post at Fort Selkirk in Canada, and the upper Yukon was left to the Indians until the Americans arrived.

THE DECLINE OF RUSSIAN INFLUENCE

As we look at the gradual expansion of Russian influence in Alaska, trade and settlement, continued exploration into the interior, the question arises: Why did Russia sell Alaska? To get a picture of the period of time we are studying, you should have taken careful note of several facts:

1. The fur trade which had first stirred Russian interest in Alaska was declining --- the practice of taking very large harvests each year had gradually led to smaller and smaller herds of the fur-bearing animals.
2. Without the huge profits that were taken in the early days of the fur trade, there were no major industries large and profitable enough to bear the cost of large Russian settlements.
3. Efforts to develop agriculture in some of the settlements like Yakutat were not terribly successful. So there was also the cost of buying supplies for the settlements.

4. As the years passed, more and more the Russian monopoly over trade in Alaska was challenged by the British and Americans -- whaling was one example where the Americans now dominated.
5. Back in Russia, there were other problems -- like a conflict with the Chinese and the British over the use of a river in Siberia. Resources which might otherwise have been used in Alaska were diverted to this war.

NEW ALASKANS OF NIKOLAEVSK

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By Ed Fortier

The most accurate replica of a 19th century Siberian village to be found in North America -- and probably in Russia -- is nestled in the virgin spruce forest 11 miles east of Anchor Point in the rolling foothills of the Kenai Peninsula.

The name of Nikolaevsk doesn't appear on any current Alaskan map, but it will in years to come if the dreams of its 70 residents are realized.

So new and isolated that late spring visitors had to walk two miles over a power line trail and cross the North Fork of the Anchor River on a two-log bridge, Nikolaevsk is home for 20 families of happy, hard-working people who have sought religious freedom on three continents.

Founded in 1968 by an advance group of 10 adults and 12 children, Nikolaevsk is located on a 640-acre tract purchased from the State of Alaska in 1967. The former Russians have also leased an additional two and one-quarter sections of adjacent land.

"It's muddy and untidy now," said Victor Ikonen as he guided members of the ALASKA magazine staff through the village that looks like a stage set from the movie, "Dr. Zhivago." The young man, who serves a combination mayor-city manager for the community, added, "We're just getting the foundation started. Come back in five years and you'll see many changes."

Prokhor Martushev, 44, who represents the new Alaskans in all dealings with borough, state and federal agencies, expects the peak population of the village in several years will be 40 to 45 families. Most will probably live in Nikolaevsk, but some are settling in a satellite community several miles distant where three families already form the nucleus of a new village.

The trail followed by the refugees in their exodus from Communist Russia is best traced by the linguistic ability of Martushev.

"I can speak Russian, Chinese and Portuguese, and now I'm learning English," he said in recalling his travels around the Pacific rim from Siberia to China, Hong Kong, Brazil, Oregon and finally to the Old Russian colony of Alaska.

Devout in their religious beliefs, the Anchor River colonists describe themselves as Old Believers, strict adherents to the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic faith as it was practiced in the sixteenth century, and whose forefathers opposed the liturgical reforms of Nikon.

Each home in Nikolaevsk includes a display of attractively-framed icons. Among the treasures of the people who have traveled around the world to protect and preserve their religious beliefs are prayer books and hymnals passed down through many centuries.

Some of their religious songs can be traced back to the Second Century, and many of the hymnals are masterpieces of calligraphy done by hand in an ancient script. Prokhor Martushev recalls spending seven months in preparing a hymnal while he was in Hong Kong, employing the Slavic language which is derived from a Bible translation done in the Ninth Century.

There is no formally ordained priest in Nikolaevsk, but Kondraty Fefelov leads the singing which plays an important part in the life of the community. The worship of the Old Believers, according to one authority acquainted with their history, is a form of communal devotion dating back to the earliest days of Christianity.

Heart of the community is a small frame church bordering the village's main street. Victor Ikunen reported that it will be enlarged to meet the needs of the growing community. Another street is planned for homes of new arrivals.

When the vanguard of families arrived in 1968, they lived in tents, campers and trailers. A few trailers can still be seen, but each family now has its own snug frame home.

A community water system was installed late in 1969, and the new pioneers enjoy the blessings of electricity from the Homer Electric Association for light and cooking. Basic heating fuel is wood from the bountiful supply surrounding the village.

Key to the community's growth is the sawmill established in 1969 and operated by two brothers, Artemy and Laryvon Polushkin. It has produced the lumber needed for the village's homes, barns and sheds. Three men put up the rough framework for the enclosed sawmill in a single day.

Most ambitious product to the skilled woodworkers is a 32-foot boat for drift fishing. Built without a set of plans, the vessel was described by Outdoor Editor Jim Rearden as an "amazing piece of craftsmanship."

The dairy herd that provides milk for the village's healthy and happy children includes eight cows and four calves obtained from the Matanuska Valley. Chickens are also part of the village scene. Several homes boast greenhouses, and the summer of 1970 found nearly 10 acres of land cleared for growing potatoes, cabbages, carrots and other vegetables. Apple trees survived the winter of 1969-70, and there was hope that fruit may eventually be raised in the Anchor River Valley.

With most of the men away working, it is the women of Nikolaevsk who use scythes to cut wild hay needed to supplement the dairy herd's feed throughout the long winter.

During their brief residence in Alaska, the men have worked in construction, on oil platforms, in canneries and as boat builders.

THE OLD BELIEVERS

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by Jim Rearden

Editor's Note: In November of 1970, we reported on the "New Alaskans of Nikolaevsk," a 2-year-old Alaskan community of expatriate Russian Old Believers whose ancestors refused to accept reforms in the rites of Russian Orthodoxy that were introduced in the 1650's. Modern Old Believers, who have survived more than three centuries of religious persecution, continue to cling to their original beliefs, which date to the year 988.

The new Alaskans, seeking religious freedom, had fled Communism in Russia and Manchuria, lived briefly in Brazil, then moved to Oregon. Modern Oregon threatened their austere and devout ways, so they retreated to an isolated 640-acre tract on Alaska's Kenai Peninsula, which they purchased from the state, and where -- again -- they started their lives anew.

"Come back in 5 years and you'll see many changes," Prokhor Martushev promised ALASKA staffers.

This is the report on those 5 years.

After 7 hard-working years there are 40 families totaling 275 people living in Nikolaevsk and its 2 satellite villages of Nahodka (approximate translation: "we found it") and Kliuchevaya ("village on a brook"). Nahodka is home of the Reutov clan; Kliuchevaya is home for most of the Basargins.

In 1970 there were 20 families and 70 residents.

Some of the rawness is gone. Stump farms and virgin spruce stands have give way to homes and cropland. Some of the rough spruce board-and-batten houses -- from lumber sawed by the Poluskin brothers' village mill -- have been strikingly painted. One home is purple with green trim; another is yellow with pink trim and sports a blue door. Eaves are often scalloped in the Russian fashion. Fiberglass panels from porch roofs, and in at least one home, a crystal chandelier has sprouted from a ceiling that once held a naked electric light bulb.

Garages are being built next to some homes, and a number of the residents have decided that their original houses are too small and are planning new, much larger homes.

Instead of the part-time impassibility of a road which 5 years ago necessitated a 2-mile hike to reach the village most of the time, there is now a graded year-round road that permits villagers to drive directly to their houses.

Fifteen of the Old Believers formed the Russian Marine Company in 1971, built a shop in the village, and since have produced sixteen 34-foot fiberglass, diesel-powered commercial fishing boats. They learned boat-building by working at Kachemak Marine, a now-defunct boat works at Homer 25 miles distant.

The 80 school children (there were 20 in 1970) attend classes in the village in the several classrooms furnished by the Kenai Peninsula Borough. No one had kept track of the number of children born in the village, but 6 adults recently counted for me, on their fingers, "about 50." Women have their children in the village, assisted by midwives.

The village's tiny cemetery holds seven graves -- all children. One adult who lived in Nikolaevsk died in Oregon, and was buried there.

There is even a second church, built by villagers of all three communities at a pleasant site halfway between Nahodka and Kliuchevaya.

The three Russian villages still have more than a passing resemblance to a Dr. Zhivago movie set, if power lines, late model cars and the dozen or so plastic-covered greenhouses are ignored. Milk cows wander the streets (18 now -- 8 in 1970), chickens scratch contentedly in backyards and huge home vegetable gardens fill the wide spaces between most houses.

But changes in Nikolaevsk and its related villages come to more than pushing the forest back, gardens, paint on homes, new fences and a year-round road. Today there is a sureness in the attitude of the residents that wasn't there before.

Economic security is one reason for the Old Believers have prospered in Alaska. They are industrious and frugal. The fuel used in the homes is a good economic indicator; 5 years ago wood from the nearby forests was the primary fuel. Today virtually every home burns oil. "People are too rich to cut wood." Kiril (Karl to his Americansky friends) Martushev told me with a smile, at the same time pointing out that no one in the village is hungry, and no one wants to return to Oregon.

At least 35 of the villagers are successful commercial fishermen, seeking salmon, herring and halibut with their Nikolaevsk-manufactured boats. They fish Cook Inlet, Resurrection Bay, and Prince William Sound.

Villagers work in seafood plants at Homer or at construction in the now-booming little Kenai Peninsula town. Some commute as far as Kodiak for summer jobs, and at least two of the men have held jobs in 200-mile-distant Anchorage.

Although all Old Believers work elsewhere, Nikolaevsk, Nahodka and Kliuchevaya are home. Their life revolves around their church, families, homes and religion. Most Sundays, even during work-frantic Alaskan summers, see the men home, relaxing in the wilderness-surrounded haven.

There are no television sets, radio or musical instruments in the villages. "We don't believe they are necessary," church elder Kondraty Fefelov once told me. However, the Old Believers are not reluctant to use labor-saving devices, and most homes have automatic washers, dryers, deep freezers and refrigerators.

Alaska's Old Believers can always be recognized by their distinctive clothing. Men wear the traditional hand-embroidered rubashki, or shirt blouses of old Russia, held in by a poyas, or handwoven belt. The men are often bearded. Women wear colorful ankle-length skirts or sarafany, and they never appear in public without a paltok, or head scarf.

Changes in the lives of Alaska's Old Believers go even deeper than the physical conquering of the wilderness -- which they have done -- and economic security. These people of Russian origin, with a trail of religious persecution behind them around the world, now have a sense of belonging, for last June, in a simple but emotional mass naturalization ceremony at the Anchor Point school near their homes, 59 of the Russian, Chinese, South American and Turkish-born Old Believers became citizens of the United States.

All of the village residents attended the ceremony in an explosion of color -- the women sewed all of the clothing especially for the event. The ceremony was well attended by their American neighbors and by dignitaries from Anchorage.

Kirill Martushev, who in 1967 accompanied his father Proho and his grandfather Grigory, with Anacim Kalugin, to Alaska to search for a new home, spoke for all of the villagers after the ceremony:

"For a long time we have looked for a place in the world where we could live our own lives and be free in our beliefs in God," he said. "We have found what were looking for here, and that is why we decided to become citizens of this great United States."

There was scarcely a dry eye in sight when Kiril sat down.

Lesson 17

Native Explorer

1818 Petr Ustiugov was an Aleut educated as a mapmaker. He made the maps for the Creole explorer Petr Korsakovskiy when he explored the coast of Alaska to the mouth of the Yukon River. These areas had not been explored by Russians before that time.

Ustiugov had actually come close to being an outlaw rather than a respected mapmaker. He had tried to organize an uprising against the Russians on the Pribilof Islands. He was unsuccessful, but was not punished harshly because his brother, Andrei, was a navigator and explorer. Both men had been brought up on Unalaska.

1826-38 Stefan Kriukov was in charge of the Russian American Company's fur business on Umnak Island (Aleutian Chain), and was in charge of the sealing operations in the Pribilof Islands. He also built the first chapel in Nikolski (Umnak Island).

1829 Semeon Lukin, interpreter for Lt. Ivan Yakovlevich Vasilief, traveled up the Nushagak River to Tichnik Lake, the Holitna River, and the Kuskokwim. This was the first Russian party to travel the Kuskokwim.

1832 Semeon Lukin went with Fedor Kolmakov (the former manager of the Fort Alexander post on the Nushagak River) in the first "Russian" exploration of the Kuskokwim River. They built a new post for the Company on the Kuskokwim. It was later moved across the river and called the Kolmakovskiy Redoubt.

1834-35 Andrei Glazunov traveled widely throughout the Southwestern part of Russian America. He tried to establish a route through the mountains from the Kuskokwim River to Cook Inlet. His failure to do this convinced the Russians that this was not a feasible route. He is best known as the first Russian to see and explore the Yukon River (although he was a Creole, not a Russian). He went from its mouth inland to Anvik with his guide, a Yupik Eskimo named Tumanchugnak. Glazunov's job was to find out whether the company could make money trading with Eskimos and Athabascans along the Yukon River. He reported that they could, and established a settlement and trading post at Ikgomlut (now called Russian Mission). He was the manager of the post from 1842 until his death in 1846.

1838 Alexander Kashevarov explored and mapped the North Slope.

1819
1837-38

The Creole Andrei Klimovskii was sent to the Kronstadt Naval Academy where he studied to be a pilot. In 1819, he explored the Copper River for the Russian American Company. In 1837-38, during the disastrous smallpox epidemic that had struck the Yukon and Kuskokwim valleys, he was sent to inoculate the Natives against the disease. Because his coming coincided with the deaths of many people, he was not believed, and was thought to be spreading, rather than preventing, the disease.

1837-67

Illarion Arkhimandritov was an Aleut Creole born at Bel'kovskii and educated in Russia. His career as a mapmaker and naval officer began in 1837. In that year he began a two-year journey which was to take him around the world. For the next thirty years, most of his life was spent at sea. In 1842, as ship's navigator, he took command of a ship whose captain had been killed in a violent storm. He brought the ship safely into port. Between 1845 and 1850, he surveyed and made the first reliable maps of the coast of Alaska from the Kenai Peninsula, into Cook Inlet, and south beyond Kodiak. His map of Kodiak became the only map used by the Russians after the 1850's.

Despite his experience sailing, Arkhimandritov had his share of accidents. In 1862, as he was skipping a ship loaded with ice for San Francisco, he struck a rock in the harbor on Kodiak Island. His ship sank, but he managed to save himself and his crew.

After the United States purchased Alaska, Illarion Arkhimandritov was asked by other Aleuts in Unalaska and the Pribilofs to act as the spokesman when dealing with the United States government. Soon after the sale he moved to San Francisco, as did several other Aleuts and Creoles. He wrote about Alaska, and collected art and other material objects which were placed in various museums around the world.

1838-39

Petr Fedorovich Kolmakov (son of Fedor Kolmakov) and Aleksei Matrozov continued the exploration of the Kuskokwim River where Semson Lukin and Fedor Kolmakov had left off. They reached the divide between the Kuskokwim and Yukon Rivers, near the present-day village of Shageluk. Matrozov later married Lukin's daughter, Irena.

1838-40

Peter Vasil'evich Malakhov, after completing a journey of exploration to Barrow with Alexander Kashevarov, continued Glazunov's work of exploring the Yukon River. In 1838 he went as far as Nulato. He built a log cabin, then floated down the Yukon to St. Michael where there was a trading post. He arranged for trade between the Russians at St. Michael and the Athabaskans inland. The next year, Malakhov returned to Nulato and expanded the cabin, making it the first Russian post at Nulato. He was also one of the first explorers of the Susitna River (1834).

1842-44

Aleksei Markelovich Matrozov was one of the explorers with Lieutenant Lavrentiy Zagoskin, who traveled the Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and mapped them for Russia. Zagoskin said, "Matrozov is quick witted and brave. . . It is a shame that he is illiterate, but he is a master with the balalaika (a stringed instrument)." The interpreter on the expedition was Grigoriy Kurochkin, from Kodiak. Tatlek, an Athabaskan Indian, was also a member of the expedition.

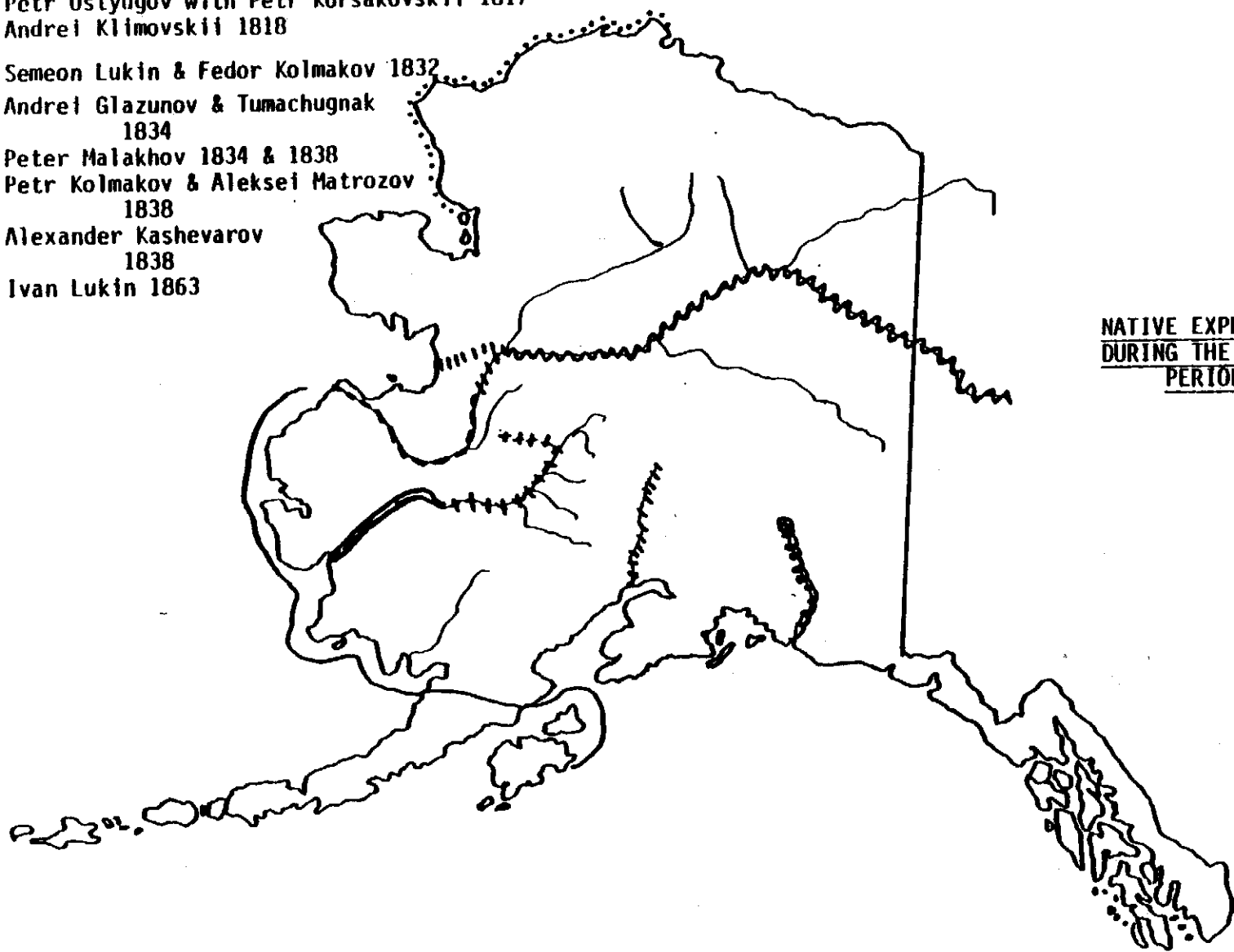
1847

A Creole named Serebrennikov traveled up the Copper River beyond the point reached by Kimovskii in 1819. He was apparently killed by the Ahtnas, although his body was never found. His notes were handed over to Russians by Ahtnas.

1863

Ivan Lukin was the first to travel from the mouth of the Yukon to the location of Dawson City, Yukon Territory.

- Petr Ustyugov with Petr Korsakovskii 1817
- ~~~~~ Andrei Klimovskii 1818
- ==== Semeon Lukin & Fedor Kolmakov 1832
- - - - Andrei Glazunov & Tumachugnak 1834
- ||||| Peter Malakhov 1834 & 1838
- +++++ Petr Kolmakov & Aleksei Matrozov 1838
- Alexander Kashevarov 1838
- ~~~~~ Ivan Lukin 1863



NATIVE EXPLORATION
DURING THE RUSSIAN
PERIOD

Lesson 18

There is a fascinating book called Conflict On The Northwest Coast by Howard I. Kushner, published by Greenwood Press. It deals with American-Russian rivalry in the Pacific Northwest, 1790-1867. The purpose of his book was to provide a new perspective on why Russia sold Alaska to the U.S. in 1867. Kushner presents a thought provoking change to what has been written about international rivalries in Alaska's history.

1. Background for a Rivalry, 1790-1815

A. The Chinese Market

1. Canton market in China was the only port open to foreign traders. American traders had no suitable means of exchange with which to purchase Chinese products. Specie and ginseng were acceptable as means of exchange but Americans could not always obtain them.
2. British traders were far ahead of Americans because they could obtain Canton favorites like opium, shark's fin, and edible birds from India and the Moluccas. They could also obtain silver specie to purchase tea and silks from the Chinese.
3. The Russians were not allowed to enter Chinese ports. They had to send furs back to Siberia and then to China overland or send furs to Canton on Yankee ships. The Russians chose the latter.

B. The Yankees

1. A Boston merchant, Charles Bulfinch, sent Robert Gray and John Kendrick to the Northwest Coast with a scheme to open a sea otter trade with the Chinese. He got his idea from reading Capt. Cook's Journals, published in 1784. In his journals, Cook told about the success he had in selling otter pelts from the northwest coast of the American continent to the Chinese.
2. Gray and Kendrick's first voyage (1787-1790) was so successful in selling the furs, it indicated that the sea otter trade might solve the problem and need for an acceptable, American means of exchange. During Gray's second voyage, he is given credit for discovering the Columbia River which flows through Oregon and Washington to the Pacific.

C. Trouble on the Northwest Coast

1. In exchange for furs, the Americans had traded guns with the Indians of the Northwest Coast. By 1800, the Indians grew tired of being cheated by the white man. They became hostile. In 1802, the Tlingits (or Kholosh), using American guns, destroyed the Russian settlement at St. Michael, near Sitka.
2. American ship captains would not trade with the hostile Indians. Americans started smuggling furs further south along the coast. The Spanish government did not like this and posed restrictions on all port commanders. Ports refused to supply American ships or aid foreign ships in distress. The American sea otter fur trade was hurting.

3. In 1803, Captain Joseph O'Cain, as a partner with the Winship brothers of Boston, landed in Kodiak, Russian America. O'Cain made a deal with the Russian governor, Aleksander Baranov. In exchange for some of the Russian-American Company's furs O'Cain would keep Baranov's colony supplied with necessities and skilled labor and provide transport for the remainder of Russian America's furs to Canton. Baranov agreed.

4. O'Cain asked for some Aleuts to be lent to him. He would take them to the California coast to hunt sea otter there. By hunting off the coast they could avoid Spanish regulations.

D. Conflict between Russia and the U.S.

1. Things were going well for the Yankee traders. By 1805 Russia was beginning to feel the need to limit the Americans. Russia feared an American takeover of the colony and her sea otter monopoly was being undermined.

2. In 1808 Russia decided that if she wanted to get a compromise out of the U.S. government, she needed to send an official representative. She sent Andrei Dashkov. Dashkov presented a letter to Secretary of State Robert Smith requesting the U.S. terminate the unlawful trade carried on by some American vessels on the Northwest Coast (firearms and powder to the Indians). The letter also stated that U.S. citizens had violated Russian territorial rights, and American vessels should trade only with Kodiak and Russian-American agents. Russia asked the U.S. government to pass such a law and sign a convention to prevent future complaints. Negotiations were terminated by President James Madison because Dashkov could not specify an exact boundary of Russian possession in the Pacific Northwest.

3. Negotiations moved to St. Petersburg where John Quincy Adams was the first American minister to Russia. Madison and Smith realized signing anything would recognize Russian sovereignty. Smith also argued that if the Indians were under Russian jurisdiction, then American citizens were under Russian law. If the Indians were independent, Russia could only prohibit trading in a state of war.

4. By 1810, Americans had a very important role in Russian-America.

An American was tutoring Baranov's children. New Archangel's shipyard manager was an American. The board of directors of the Russian-American Company had an American director.

D. John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company

1. The U.S. was not going to budge. By 1812, Russia decided that it would be smarter to keep the U.S. on its good side. So, in 1812 the Russian-American Company signed a four-year agreement with John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. Astor promised not to trade in territory belonging to the Russian-American Company. In exchange he would be the only supplier of Russian colonies and transport all Russian furs to Canton. Russia also had to promise not to trade with the Indians around the mouth of the Columbia River where Astor was planning a settlement (Astoria). Astor had to promise not to join any other American ventures in the Pacific Northwest. Russia's stalemate coming to an end.

2. Astor's scheme was to establish trading posts all along the route Lewis and Clark took from St. Louis to the Pacific. Doing this would undercut his British competitors in Canada who were trapping within U.S. boundaries. Astor knew the U.S. government would help him because he promised to deal with the Indians fairly, breaking down the wall between the U.S. government and the hostile Indians. Allowing him this monopoly was a small price to pay. President Jefferson was enthusiastic.

3. On June 18, 1812, the U.S. declared war on Great Britain. American maritime activities on the Northwest Coast were slowed down considerably during The War of 1812. Astor was driven out of the Columbia River region by the British. In fact, Astoria was sold to the North West Company of Canada.

F. Yankees Hold Firm

1. After the war it was still apparent the American commercial interest in the Northwest was still strong. Boston firms still dominated.
2. The North West Company's interest was not in supplying the Russians and her charter forbade her from trading with China.
3. Russian-American Company's dependence on American ships to Canton continued. There was no way to pry loose the Yankee grip on the Northwest.

Lesson 19

The American Purchase Study Guide

A. Russia's Attempts to Sell Russian America

1. Russia had tried to sell Russian America long before 1867. The first attempt was in 1855, but President Pierce said "not interested."
2. They tried again between 1856-1860 but rejected the 5 million dollar offer of President Buchanan.
3. It was not until after the Civil War ended that Russia tried again. This time, thanks to Seward and President Johnson, an agreement was reached for \$7,200,000. This purchase, while criticized by many, turned out to be Uncle Sam's greatest bargain!

B. Why did Russia want to sell Alaska?

An investigation of the records reveals the principal reasons for the Russian sale of Alaska:

1. If the Russian American Company was to continue, it would need a large subsidy paid it since it was no longer self-sustaining. The Russian Government could not afford this.
2. Russia would probably not be able to defend Alaska in the event of a war, and the enemy would be able to seize Alaska without much difficulty.
3. Russian finances were in poor condition to meet the above expenses, so sale for a fair price was considered the best move.

C. Russian Weakness in America

1. Russia's attitude was further modified by the advent of the Crimean War.
2. Had England not made an agreement with Russia not to extend the war to North America, Alaska, which lay open to seizure, would surely have fallen to the enemy. The British realized that American public opinion favored Russia and would not allow British domination to expand in North America, according to the Monroe Doctrine.
3. Russia could not rely on this favorable situation indefinitely. As soon as the Crimean War ended, there were new threats to Alaska.
4. There was a Polish uprising in 1863, and the Tsar was afraid that France and England might use it as a pretext for a new attack.

5. Russia's American possessions would not be protected since her fleet did not have appropriate support and lacked coaling stations and harbor facilities in the Pacific and since the United States was occupied with a civil war.
6. The Russian Pacific fleet was dispatched to the United States because of considerations of this kind. Two years earlier Russia had abolished serfdom, so a popular interpretation of her action was that it was to build good will toward the abolitionist North. It was also a protection for her ships in neutral ports.

D. Why Did the United States Want to Make the Purchase?

The Committee on Foreign Affairs made a report, "The Motive Which Led the United States Government to Make the Purchase of Alaska," dated May 18, 1878. The following reasons were in the report:

1. The laudable desire of the citizens of the Pacific Coast to share in the prolific fisheries of the ocean, seas, bays, and rivers of the Western World.
2. The friendship of Russia for the United States.
3. The necessity of preventing the transfer by any possible chance of the Northwest Coast of America to an unfriendly power.
4. The creation of new industrial interest on the Pacific necessary to the supremacy of our empire on the sea and on land.
5. To facilitate and secure the advantages of an unlimited American commerce with the friendly powers of China and Japan.

The American Period

Period of Neglect, 1867-1884

1. On March 30, 1867, Alaska was purchased from the Russian Government for \$7,200,000. Under the terms of the Treaty of Cessions, "civilized" tribes (i.e. Aleuts and others who had been Russified) and Creoles were to become U.S. citizens. In fact, the United States did not consider any Natives or Creoles civilized, regardless of the amount of education they had. The "uncivilized" Natives were to be treated as American Indians.
2. On October 18, 1867, Alaska was transferred, and the United States flag was raised at Sitka.
3. Alaska was under military occupation from 1867-1877.
 - a. President Johnson put Alaska under jurisdiction of the War Department.
 - b. The Army controlled Alaska from 1867-1877.
 - c. Because Alaska's area was so large and its population so sparse, civil government for it in 1867 seemed to government administrators in Washington, D.C. to be an impossibility.
 - d. Most of Alaska's white population were there on temporary basis. The biggest part of the white population was military. Permanent residents were Natives and Creoles.
4. The United States laws concerning navigation, commerce, and customs were extended to Alaska in the Customs Act of July, 1868.
5. The Customs Act provided for a Collector of Customs at Sitka and a number of deputies. These were stationed at first at Sitka, Wrangell, Tongass, Kodiak, and Unalaska. Others were added from time to time as business warranted.
 - a. The Customs Act became Section 1954 of the Revised Statutes, volume I, p. 95. It prohibited the importation of distilled liquors. Later, the Army, by regulation, prohibited the importation of wine. There was no prohibition of beer; and Sitka, from its very early days, had one or two breweries. John H. Kinkead, who later became the first governor, had an interest in one of them.
 - b. Permission or license from the Secretary of Treasury was required for killing fur-bearing animals.
 - c. The Oregon, California, and Washington Territory courts were to enforce the Act.
 - d. The Pribilof Islands were placed under the Secretary of Treasury's jurisdiction as a special reservation for governmental purposes, in 1867. The secretary could lease the Pribilofs if he wished.

e. One incident at Kake illustrates some of the problems of this period of history. Problems between Natives and whites were especially prevalent in this part of the territory where the most whites lived: "In 1869 when two Tlingits were killed by a soldier, Tlingit leaders demanded a settlement from the Army in keeping with their system of law. When the Army failed to pay for the loss of life with blankets or other articles of value, Kake Tlingits retaliated by killing two prospectors." (Arnold, Alaska Native Land Claims 1976: 63)

"Convinced that the Kakes must be punished, as much to warn other Indians as to quash any more Kake violence, General Davis called upon Captain Richard W. Meade, commander of the U.S.S. Saginaw, to assist him . . . Taking some two dozen soldiers aboard the Saginaw, the joint Davis-Meade force steamed for Kuiu Island and the Kake villages. In his official report Davis stated:

"I had determined upon my arrival there to demand the surrender of the murderers. If this was not complied with, I then intended to seize a few of their Chiefs as hostages till they were given up. Upon reaching the first village, we soon discovered that the Indians had all left, except a small party known as the Thickehanny family, who are quite well civilized, and have been known for some years past to be very friendly to the whites, and having almost lost their identity with the Kake Indians. From these friendly Indians I learned more of the particulars of the murder and the perpetrators. They reported the whole party who committed the murder as very bad Indians, but that two of them committed the deed; the others were only accessories. After committing the murder they all returned to their villages, and stated what they had done. This threw the whole tribe into a state of excitement, and they stampeded, in anticipation of our vengeance. Nothing was to be done. Their villages, containing in all twenty-nine houses, were destroyed. One house was left to the Thickehanny family, and the property they claimed as belonging to them. Quite a number of canoes were also destroyed. Where the Indians fled to we were unable to ascertain." (Hinckley, The Americanization of Alaska 1972: 101-2)

6. In 1877, the Nez Perce Indian uprising in Idaho caused the last American Military detachment in Alaska to be called to the United States.

7. The highest official of the United States in the entire district was the Collector of Customs at Sitka. Other representatives of the United States included his deputies, several postmasters, and people on the Revenue Cutters which cruised Alaskan waters each year.

8. The white residents became nervous without military protection. An incident at Sitka is described by Ted Hinckley (1972: 129-31):

"After the Army's withdrawal, the highest territorial official was the Collector of Customs. Supposedly he had recourse to Revenue Marine vessels in time of emergency. One week after the Army's departure, Sitka's segregated Indians acted to claim their civil rights. While horrified whites looked on, a large portion of the stockade was torn down. Once this was accomplished, the Indians occupied all of the empty buildings and removed doors, windows, and partitions. Chief Annahootz address the community:

"The Russians have stolen this country from us and after they have gotten most of the furs out of the country they have sold it to the Boston Men for a big sum of money, and now the Americans are mad because they have found that the Russians had deceived them, and have abandoned the country, and we are glad to say that after so many years' hard fight we get our country back again."

"Annahootz was a bit premature. However, for a society in which too many would have agreed with Fred M. Smith of Unalaska, who wrote, 'I am of the opinion . . . that an Indian is a good Indian when he is a dead Indian' -- well, one can imagine the consternation. The Collector appealed to John Sherman, Secretary of the Treasury, 'The Indians indulge in threats which no doubt they will put in practice when they find that no gunboat of any kind appears on the scene.' It was rank exaggeration, and of course a gunboat finally did appear. The Indians did not get Alaska back, but they enjoyed a victory of sorts. The stockade was never rebuilt, and henceforth some occupied houses whose facades matched those of the white Sitkans.

"Again in February of 1879, fear of an Indian massacre swept Sitka, and again there was a genuine basis for the hysteria. In both the red and white communities, hard types got drunk and threatened to precipitate serious trouble. 'Prospectors (often another name for loafers) hang about the place,' one visitor noted. With time hanging on their hands, they were frequently drunk. One 'gang of such rowdies and bummers' succeeded in getting an Indian woman intoxicated and then burned her up in her home. Street fights and random killings mounted. Afterward Annahootz claimed it was only his bared bosom, he had scars to prove it, that averted an 'indiscriminate butchery of the few whites.' Before matters quieted down, an English warship, the H.M.S. Osprey, had to be called in. John Brady got all of Sitka's merchants to sign a pledge to import no more liquor. It lasted until the ink was dry. Whether or not there was an imminent threat, the Osprey affair was humiliating. Thereafter, until the territory obtained its Organic Act, the United States Navy was given the task of maintaining law and order in the District."

9. The Collector of Customs, as representative of the Treasury Department, had exactly the same jurisdiction he had had under the Army -- to regulate commerce, navigation, and the customs. By order of the Army, certain buildings were transferred to his custody. He had no other law enforcement powers. To assist him in the powers he did have the Revenue Cutter Service, an arm of the treasury Department, under his command when it had vessels in Alaska waters.

10. From the time of the arrival of the USS Alaska (a steam-powered cruiser) on April 3, 1879, under Captain George Brown, USN, until the passing of the Organic Act of 1884, the territory was administered by a Navy captain and the customs collector. The USS Jamestown (a sailing vessel, without steam power) arrived at Sitka on June 14, 1879, whereupon the Alaska departed. The Jamestown was in command of Commander Lester A. Beardslee who became a captain on November 25, 1880, while stationed at Sitka. Brown and Beardslee were the only two senior Naval officers in Alaska during these years who held the rank of captain. All others -- Henry Glass, Edward P. Lull, Frederick Pearson, Edgar C. Merriman, Joseph B. Coghlan, Albert G. Caldwell, and Henry E. Nichols, who served prior to the appointment of the first civil governor in 1884, held the rank of commander.

The Beginnings of Industries

I. Fur Trade

1. Although the fur seal had been known and hunted in the southern hemisphere, it was not until 1742 that there was a scientific report on the North Pacific fur seal.
2. This report was made by Georg Wilhelm Steller, a German scientist who accompanied Vitus Bering and, following the wreck of the St. Peter, spent the winter on Bering Island, in the Commander Island group in western Bering Sea. There he found fur seals, sea otter, several varieties of foxes, and sea cows, which soon afterward became extinct.
3. Russian fur hunters began taking furs from the Commander Islands and the Aleutians to establish the Russian fur trade in America.
4. Each spring fur seals were observed swimming northward through the Aleutian passes, to disappear into the fog of Bering Sea.
5. In 1786 Gerassim Pribilof successfully followed the fur seals and found their rookeries on what are now known as the Pribilof Islands.
6. These fur seals were determined to be a completely different herd from those that breed on the Commander Islands. The latter travel up the Asiatic coast each spring, while the Pribilof Islands herd travels up the American coast. The two herds do not mingle.
7. The Russian fur trade depended heavily on sea otter, but all varieties of furs were taken. In the 122 years between 1745 and 1867, the reported Russian take of furs from Alaska included the pelts of 263,321 sea otter; 3,342,378 fur seals; 244,538 land otter; 71,659 black fox; 127,541 cross fox; 200,480 red fox; 86,339 blue fox; 413,356 beaver; and 48,187 marten.

8. In addition to these totals, a great many furs were taken by independent American and British fur traders, and by the Hudson's Bay Company, which established a fur trading post on the upper Yukon River and leased the mainland of southeastern Alaska from the Russians.
9. The sea otters of Alaska seemed well on the way to extinction when the Russian-American Company, in 1799, was granted a monopoly in the Russian fur trade in Alaska. Not long after that the independent American and British traders began to leave the field because it had become unprofitable. The Hudson's Bay Company confined its activities to the eastern part of Alaska.
10. The Russian-American Company, not long after it was granted a charter, began to institute conservation practices, particularly with regard to the fur seal and the sea otter. Hunting of these species was curtailed and regulated and the populations were gradually built up again.
11. In early years the fur seal skin was used more as a hide -- for making work clothing, mittens, and caps -- than as a fur. This was because each seal skin has many long guard hairs, protecting the soft fur underneath. At that time, the guard hairs could only be removed by a tedious hand process, and this could only be done profitably in China, where labor costs were very low.
12. By 1867, when Alaska was sold to the United States, the fur seal population of the Pribilof Islands had been stabilized. The total was estimated to be at least 2 million animals, and some estimates placed it as high as 3.5 million. The Russians were harvesting about 17,800 pelts a year.
13. With the sale to the United States, conservation practices were thrown to the winds. Although the taking of fur-bearing animals was at first prohibited entirely, then opened only to Native Alaskans, the slaughter was terrific. This is shown by a comparison of the fur catch during the last 23 years of Russian rule and the first 23 years of American rule.
14. In 1868, the first year of the American occupation, an estimated 240,000 seal skins were taken from the Pribilof Islands.
15. American firms took over the posts of the Russian-American Company.
16. In 1869, the sealing privilege on the Pribilof Islands was put up for bids and a San Francisco firm, the Alaska Commercial Company, won the contract and the right to harvest 100,000 seal pelts a year for 20 years. The contract went into effect in 1870.
17. At about that same time the fur seal pelt became recognized as a fine fur rather than as a utility hide. This was largely the work of one American and one English firm. Independently they developed methods of plucking, shearing, and dyeing the skins. The cost was still very high, however, and the market limited.

18. For centuries the Natives of Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska had hunted the fur seal as the herds passed by each spring, using dugout canoes and harpoons. Their catches were limited, however, by the distances a canoe could be paddled in a day, and by bad weather.
19. In 1878 an enterprising British Columbia sea captain, owner of a small trading schooner, experimented with taking Indian hunters and their canoes out to sea, where the seal herds were passing. The hunting was very successful, but the price was still low because of poor demand for the skins.
20. On April 12, 1881, Gustave and Ferdinand Cimiotti patented an unhairing machine for use on seal skins and similar skins. This immediately cut the cost of processing the skins and increased the demand for the fur. The price of raw seal skins rose sharply.
21. More and more small schooners, both British and American, got into the business of hunting seals at sea -- known as pelagic sealing. They carries from 16 to 36 men each, and by 1894 a total of 110 vessels were engaged in the business. Some of them hunted only along the American coast, others went to the coast of Japan to hunt the Commander Islands herds, and many finished the season in Bering Sea, hunting both herds. In 1894, the pelagic catch was 121,143 skins -- more than the number that had been allowed by the Alaska Commercial Company each year.
22. In 1889, when the Pribilof Island Lease was up for bids again, a new firm, the North American Commercial Company, won the award. This lease was also for 20 years, but the annual harvest was greatly reduced because the herds were obviously being depleted.
23. In 1897, Congress passed a law forbidding American vessels to engage in pelagic sealing. This, so far as the Americans were concerned, eliminated the small independent hunter in favor of the San Francisco monopoly. So angered were many Americans that they put their vessels under the Canadian flag and continued to hunt.
24. By 1910 the Pribilof Islands fur seal herds had declined to an estimated 125,000 animals. Canada, Japan, and Russia entered into an agreement with the United States not to engage in Pelagic fur sealing. This protected both the American and the Russian fur seal herds, the latter having also declined drastically. The American government until 1984 had a monopoly on the Pribilof Islands, but Japan and Canada were paid a percentage of each year's catch in return for the abstention. The American herd now numbers in excess of 1,500,000 animals.
25. In the meanwhile, the sea otter had also been hunted to virtual extermination. It, too, was placed under complete protection in 1911, and in the Aleutian Islands and a few other places the populations have again increased. The State of Alaska now harvests a limited number of these pelts.

26. Many of the other fur resources of Alaska were very greatly depleted during the first five decades under the American flag and only in the years since about 1910 have stringent and effective conservation measures been enforced.

II. Pacific Whaling

1. In the years when whale oil was burned for light and used as a lubricant, and when whalebone had many uses, whaling was a big business in the United States.
2. Whalers began to appear off the Alaska coast at an early date. In 1835, and American whaler hunted on the Kodiak grounds, and in 1848 the first whaler went through Bering Strait into the Arctic.
3. The American Civil War was hard on the whaling industry. Some ships were sold to the Federal Government for blockade purposes. Others were captured by Confederate privateers. One of these, the *Shenandoah*, followed the whalers clear to Bering Sea in 1865 and captured and burned many of them.
4. Most of the whalers sailed from New England ports until after 1884. By then so much of the whaling was being done in the North Pacific, in the Bering Sea, and in the Arctic Ocean north of Alaska that many whalers moved their bases to San Francisco.
5. Until 1880 the whaling fleet was entirely sail, but in that year steam entered the field. This was especially important in the Arctic, where steam power helped get vessels through the ice.
6. Many whalers were lost to the ordinary perils of the sea and the extraordinary perils created by Arctic ice packs. Between 1848 and 1870, 16 whalers were lost in the Arctic. Then in the single year 1871 a total of 26 vessels were caught and crushed by the ice.
7. The year 1897 was another bad one for the Arctic whaling fleet and although only four were crushed, many were trapped and their crews marooned without sufficient food for the winter. An appeal was sent to Washington, and the Revenue Cutter *Bear* was sent north on a relief mission. A herd of reindeer was reluctantly loaned by Eskimo herder *Charlie Antisarlook* and driven north to Barrow in time to save the whale hunters from starvation. Meanwhile, *Antisarlook's* family, left behind on the Seward Peninsula, almost starved to death. See biography of *Sinrock Mary*.
8. Although they took thousands of whales from the waters around Alaska, the whalers contributed almost nothing to Alaska's economy and often did a great deal of harm. When whales were scarce they hunted walrus, thus depriving the Eskimos of an important food supply. Whales were also a staple food of the Eskimos, and as whales grew scarce the Eskimos often had to rely upon caribou and seal, which were insufficient for their needs.

9. One contribution whalers made to Alaska was the blossoming and successful marketing of the art of Eskimo ivory carvings. See biography of Angokwazuk.
10. By 1915 the Arctic whaling industry was virtually at an end. This was partly because of the decline in the number of whales and partly because petroleum and steel had supplanted whale oil and whale bone.

III. Fishing and Salmon Canning

1. The Russians salted and dried salmon, but almost entirely for local use.
2. The first Alaska fishery engaged in by Americans was the cod fishery. In the 1860's, while Alaska was still Russian territory, American cod fishermen fished off the coasts of Alaska and Siberia. This business was expanded after the purchase of Alaska by the United States; and several shore stations were built, mostly on islands of the Shumagin group.
3. After the purchase of Alaska, American fishermen began salting salmon at Sitka and other locations for shipment to San Francisco.
4. The commercial canning of salmon commenced on the Sacramento River in 1864 and moved to Alaska in 1878 when a cannery was built at Klawock and another near Sitka.
5. In 1882 two canneries were built in Central Alaska, and in 1884 the first cannery was built on Bristol Bay. The business increased rapidly until in 1898 there were 55 salmon canneries operating in Alaska.
6. Several schooners from New England came around Cape Horn in the late 1880's to try halibut fishing in the North Pacific. Some of these fished off the Alaska coast. Halibut was salted for shipment to market, but later glacier ice began to be used to pack around and preserve the fresh fish. The first shipment of fresh halibut went south from Juneau in 1897. The halibut business increased gradually until 1908, when the first cold storage plant was built in Alaska, at Ketchikan. Thereafter it grew rapidly and has formed an important part of the Alaska economy.
7. The commercial fishing of herring began at Killisnoo in Southeastern Alaska about 1882 and was an important industry for many years. Herring were salted for food, processed into oil for industry and into fertilizer. Shipments of fertilizer went from Killisnoo to Hawaii and to England. In later years many herring reduction plants were built along the coast from Southeastern Alaska to Kodiak Island; but they have now been closed, partly as a conservation measure and partly because other fertilizers have taken the place of herring meal. Today many herring caught in Alaska are sold for bait. In addition, the sale of herring eggs to Japan is booming, as the Japanese herring harvest has declined.

8. Trolling for king salmon and the processing of the catch increased as cured salmon began to be an important industry in Southeastern Alaska soon after the turn of the century. The coming of cold storage plants also increased the market for frozen salmon and for other species of fish.
9. Although most early salmon canneries were owned by small companies, the large corporate structure began to appear in the 1890's and over the years such giants as Alaska Packers Association, Pacific Packing and Navigation Company, Northwestern Fisheries, Booth Fisheries, Libby, McNeill and Libby, and Pacific American Fisheries dominated the field. Of these listed, however, three went bankrupt and another retired from the field entirely, showing that it has been a precarious business financially. The "big" companies have often been criticized because of their "absentee" ownership and the fact that they hired most employees outside Alaska; but Alaska capital has never been available to finance the industry.
10. The salmon canners, like other businesses, resisted laws that levied taxes upon them; but they were not nearly as successful as some other businesses, especially mining. Commencing in 1899 the salmon canners were taxed upon every case of salmon they produced, and this tax was greatly increased by the Territorial Legislature after Alaska became a territory. The miners, on the other hand, were not taxed on gross production until 1936, and even then the first \$10,000 of production was exempt.
11. The largest pack of canned salmon was made in 1936 and amounted to 8,437,603 cases of 48 one-pound cans. The value was \$44,471,633 and exceeded the value of all minerals produced in Alaska that year.
12. The volume of the annual pack has declined since 1936, quite drastically in some years; but because of increased prices the value has gone up and has often been in excess of \$100 million a year.
13. The decline of the salmon pack is blamed on a variety of factors, including over-fishing and natural cycles. Better conservation practices now seem to be restoring the salmon runs.
14. Crabs, clams, and shrimp have for many years been a minor but locally important part of Alaska's total fishery production. Clam canning centered around Cordova, while Wrangell and Petersburg for many years were centers of the shrimp and crab industries. Since World War II, however, the king crab industry has become a major factor in the Alaska economy and has centered at Kodiak and points west of there.

History of the Revenue Cutter Service
and the U.S. Navy in Alaska

I. U.S. Revenue Cutter Service

The predecessor of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service was organized within the U.S. Treasury Department in 1790. From 1843 to 1880 it was known as the U.S. Revenue-Marine Bureau.

1. The first Revenue Cutter to visit Alaska was the Shubrick, in 1865. She came north to Sitka in connection with negotiations for the Western Union Telegraph Expedition.
2. After the treaty of purchase had been concluded in the spring of 1867, the Revenue Cutter Lincoln came north with a number of scientists, including geographer George Davidson, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. The scientists remained in Southeastern Alaska, but the cutter cruised as far west as Unalaska.
3. In 1868, the cutter Wayanda cruised through Southeastern Alaska and into the Gulf of Alaska, Cook Inlet, and Bering Sea.
4. Vessels of the Revenue Cutter Service and its successor, the Coast Guard, have been active in the waters of Alaska, including Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean, each year since 1868.
5. Some of the cutters in Alaska service included the Reliance, Oliver Walcott, Richard Rush, Thomas Corwin, Comodore Perry, U.S. Grant, Hugh McCulloch, Tallapoosa, Unalga, Alert, Cygan, and Northland.
6. The services performed by the Revenue Cutters were many in addition to their regular duties of enforcing the Customs laws, collecting duties and taxes, and preventing smuggling. These included:
 - a. Carrying government officials from place to place, including governors, officials of the U.S. Department of Education, fisheries inspectors, school teachers, and any others who could not find regular transportation.
 - b. Providing medical aid to isolated communities.
 - c. Delivering the U.S. mail.
 - d. Transporting reindeer from Siberia to Alaska. This service was performed by the famed Bear and by the Theitis.
 - e. Assisting in taking the U.S. census.
 - f. Guarding the fur seal herds and their rookeries on the Pribilof Island.
 - g. Transporting exploring and scientific expeditions.

11. From 1933 to 1936 the Navy conducted hydrographic and coastal surveys in the Aleutian Islands.
12. The Navy played a very important part in Alaska in World War II, establishing principal bases at Sitka, Kodiak, Dutch Harbor, and Adak and many smaller bases.
13. Today the Navy maintains bases at Kodiak and Adak and has jurisdiction over the Alaska Sea Frontier, an area of almost three million square miles including the North Pacific, Bering Sea, and the Arctic Ocean.

Mining in Alaska

A. Mining During Russian Occupation

1. A graduate of the Imperial Mining School of St. Petersburg, Peter Doroshin, was sent to investigate mineral potential at the Russian American colony at Sitka, as early as 1849.
2. Doroshin travelled widely and spent some four years visiting many coastal areas where there was lignite coal.
3. He found enough outcropping of coal to recommend that a mine be opened in Cook Inlet at Port Graham, though he did not uncover any big high-grade deposits through his investigations.
4. According to Furuhjelm, the engineer in charge of the Port Graham coal mine, the machinery for it was purchased in San Francisco.
5. The mine never did come up to expectations and hopes people had when it opened.
 - a. The coal deposits were inaccessible and of poor quality.
 - b. Costs of production proved to be extremely high.
 - c. The Creoles hired had had no experience in mining.
6. In 1852 the British opened mining operations on Vancouver Island at Nanaimo. This ended Russian hopes of developing an export trade.
7. Doroshin had directed gold prospecting, as well.
8. He did not investigate the Juneau area since it was leased by the Hudson's Bay Company and, therefore, was not available to him.
9. Doroshin's prospectors found some gold along Russian River on the Kenai Peninsula.
10. No lode or placer deposits which could be mined economically were found anywhere.
11. After two unprofitable years, the Russian-American Company compelled Doroshin to give up his search.
12. Although small quantities of gold had been reported from the Kuskokwim and the Yukon River, as well as those made by Doroshin, the first real discovery was made in 1861 by Alexander "Buck" Choquette near Telegraph Creek on the Stikine River.
13. The Stikine discovery was deserted largely because the amount of gold recovered there was actually rather small.

8. Mining During the American Period

1. Gold was discovered near Sitka as early as 1872, and at Windham Bay, south of present Juneau, about 1876; but the deposits were small. The first stamp mill in Alaska, to recover gold from quartz deposits, was built at Sitka in 1879 but was not a success.
2. Gold was discovered in the Cassiar district of British Columbia, north of the Stikine River, in 1872 and resulted in a big rush to that area in 1874 and subsequent years. This was not in Alaska, but it helped to build the economy of Wrangell and it sent many prospectors into Alaska.
3. Gold was discovered on Gastineau Channel in 1880 by Richard Harris and Joseph Juneau. Both had worked in the Cassiar area and at Sitka, and they were furnished a prospecting outfit by a Sitka merchant, N.A. Fuller, and the engineer who had erected the Sitka stamp mill, George Pitz. This discovery, which included both placer and lode deposits, resulted in the building of Juneau, the first town to be established in American Alaska.
4. Soon after the discovery at Juneau another find was made across the channel at what is now Douglas. The result was the Treadwell Mine complex, one of the world's great gold mines, which operated until it caved in in 1917.
5. Prospectors entered the upper Yukon River country as early as 1873, while the first prospector to cross Chilkoot Pass to the Yukon did so in 1874. Only small finds were made at first, in Canadian territory; but in 1886 there was a discovery on the Fortymile River, in Alaska. Many prospectors and miners began to go to the Yukon.
6. In 1894 a discovery was made on Mastodon Creek, near the Yukon and this resulted in the founding of Circle City and another small rush.
7. In 1895 gold in paying quantities was found in streams running into Turnagain Arm, Cook Inlet. This resulted in the founding of Hope and Sunrise and the production of a good deal of gold.
8. In August, 1896, George Carmack found gold in what became known as the Klondike. This was then part of Northwest Territories, Canada; but soon the area became Yukon Territory. It resulted in a great rush of people to the North, nearly all of whom came through Alaska, either by way of Dyea, Skagway, or Wrangell in Southeastern Alaska or St. Michael in Western Alaska. The White Pass and Yukon Railroad was built north from Skagway and dozens of steamboats began to ply the Yukon.

9. Although prospectors had been trickling into interior Alaska for two decades, it was the Yukon gold rush that brought rapid changes to the Athabaskan inhabitants of that region. Not only were hunting grounds overrun by miners; the newcomers also spurred the growth of trading posts, which brought more goods for the Athabaskans. A number of Athabaskans began to work for money, supplying goods and services to the miners. Trapping for money began to replace hunting for subsistence. Villages and fish camps began to appear on the main rivers, rather than side streams, with the import of the fishwheel.
10. Although several earlier discoveries of gold had been reported on Seward Peninsula in Northwestern Alaska, the discovery by Jafet Lindeberg, Erik Lindholm, and John Brynteson in September, 1898, touched off the Nome gold rush. The three discoverers were reindeer herders who had been brought over from Lapland by Sheldon Jackson.
11. No fewer than 15,000 people landed on the beach at Nome in 1899 and 1900. Much of the mining was carried on along the beaches, but most of the creeks in the area were also found to contain gold. A railroad was built from Nome to Anvil Creek to make claims there easily accessible. Later two more small railroads were built to reach mining areas on Seward Peninsula, and the railroad to Anvil Creek was greatly extended.
12. The Nome gold rush intensified cultural changes among northern Eskimos, changes which had first appeared as a result of the whaling industry.
13. In June, 1900, the Alaska court system was expanded by creating two new districts. Nome was named the headquarters of one of the new districts, and Alfred H. Noyes was sent there as District Judge. He immediately began to enter into conspiracies with a number of other men to gain control of valuable mining properties. These actions formed the basis for the Rex Beach novel The Spoilers, and resulted in the removal and fining of Judge Noyes, while one of his accomplices was sent to jail.
14. Prospectors had been searching for gold for a couple of years when, in the summer of 1901 E. T. Barnette landed on Chena Slough to establish a trading post. The following year Felix Pedro located a discovery claim on Pedro Creek on September 11, starting the rush to the Tanana. Before long a settlement had grown up around Barnette's trading post and was named Fairbanks in honor of Senator Fairbanks of Indiana, soon to become the vice-president.
15. Other discoveries were made in the Fairbanks area, and it soon became one of the best gold producers in Alaska. Most of the gold was at great depth, however, and its recovery required a good deal of capital. In later years huge dredges were put to use in both the Nome and Fairbanks gold fields.
16. In 1906 there was a gold discovery in the valley of the Innoko River, resulting in the founding of the settlements of Iditarod and Flag.

17. In 1907 gold was found near the Yukon and resulted in the founding of Ruby. This camp grew considerably after further discoveries in the district in 1911.
18. Other placer gold discoveries on the upper Koyukuk River, the Tolovana district of the Tanana River, and the Shushanna district of central Alaska all resulted in minor gold rushes known as "stampedes." Many of these discoveries were made by Creoles and children of Creoles who remained in the Yukon after the sale of Alaska.
19. After the easy-to-reach placers were worked out, big dredges continued the recovery of placer gold; while lode operations thrived in several areas. One was the Willow Creek District, just north of the Matanuska Valley. Another was the Prince William Sound area, and a third was in Southeastern Alaska. At Juneau the Alaska-Juneau Gold Mine, employing hundreds of men, operated until 1944.
20. Although gold was the principal mineral product, in point of value, there were other mines in Alaska. On Prince of Wales Island, in Southeastern Alaska, two copper smelters were built to smelt local ores; and these operated from around 1906 to 1910.
21. Marble quarrying was another branch of mining in Southeastern Alaska. Marble for the state capital at Olympia, Washington, and for many buildings in Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, Spokane, and other cities came from quarries in Alaska. The marble in the Alaska State Capital is also a native product. West of Juneau, there was a gypsum mine in operation for many years; while west of Ketchikan, at View Cove, a lime rock quarry provided a basic material for cement plants on Puget Sound.
22. In central Alaska, three large copper mines operated for many years. Two were on tidewater, at Latouche and Ellamar. The third was some distance inland and was reached by the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad, 196 miles in length. This was the Kennecott Mine, and the terminus of the railroad was Cordova. The railroad was completed in 1911 and operated until the mine closed in 1938.
23. Coal has been of importance in the Alaska mining industry for many years. In the 1890's and until about 1918, mines near Homer on Cook Inlet supplied coal for use in Alaska, as well as some for export. With the building of the Alaska Railroad, started in 1914, coal mines were opened in the Matanuska Valley and in later years in the Healy area south of Fairbanks. These supplied coal for the railroad, for power plants, and for domestic use. Coal is now being supplanted by oil and natural gas, and the coal mines are closing down.
24. Other minerals produced in Alaska have included platinum, at Goodnews Bay near the mouth of the Kuskokwim; tin north of Nome; mercury in the valley of the Kuskokwim; antimony near Mount McKinley; and chrome on the Kenai Peninsula.

Lesson 20

ERINIA PAVALOFF CHEROSKEY CALLAHAN about 1863-1955

The story of Erinia Pavaloff tells about a woman raised along the Yukon River. Although her mother was an Athabaskan, Erinia was not raised in the traditional Native way. Nor was she raised in a Russian culture. Instead, hers was the beginning of the new culture that still persists in the Interior today. It is a mixture of subsistence, being able to live off the land, respecting the Athabaskan teachings about the land, wage earning, or making money, and using store-bought goods and depending on money to help meet most basic needs.

Erinia Pavaloff was born at Nulato in about 1863, four years before Alaska was sold to the United States. Her mother was an Athabaskan woman named Malanka. Her father was Evan Pavaloff (also spelled Ivan Pavlov). He was a Creole from Sitka, who was placed in charge of the Nulato fort and trading post in 1865. He knew and worked with Ivan Lukin, the explorer. When the Nulato post was taken over by Americans, Pavaloff continued to work there.

Erinia married a Creole named Cheroskey Demoski when she was 16 years old. There is now a river, Chiroskey River, near Unalakleet which may have been named after her husband.

Erinia was a woman of many skills. She was confident in her ability to meet new situations, and seems to have been nearly fearless. She told of a time, shortly after her marriage, when she singlehandedly saved the lives of her father, sister, and another woman. The woman's husband had recently killed a Koyukon Athabaskan man. Her father-in-law, named Kosevnikoff, was the manager of the Nulato trading post. One report of the incident tells that he was a cruel man who had killed several Natives in the past.

When Kosevnikoff's son killed the Koyukon man, Kosevnikoff sent him away from Nulato. He knew that Indian law demanded that a person had to give either property or his life for killing someone. The relatives of the slain man soon came to the post. It is not clear whether they planned to kill Kosevnikoff or not. At any rate, one man did kill him. Then they walked toward the house where Erinia and the other three were hiding.

Erinia locked the door to the house and went out to talk to the men in the Koyukon language. She stayed with them for 12 hours, talking to them as they pointed their rifles at her. In the end, she convinced the men to go away without harming her family or herself. Later in her life, she said she had "died three times that day" of fright.

Erinia's life had always involved traveling up and down the Yukon for trading purposes. When she was still a young woman, gold was found in the interior of Alaska, and her traveling increased. Many new trading posts were started to sell food, ammunition, and supplies to prospectors. Erinia and her family (father, husband, children, brothers, and their families) traveled up and down the Yukon, working at the different trading posts. Since they could all speak English, Russian, and Koyukon, they were valuable as interpreters for the traders and American explorers. They worked on a steamboat that traveled from St. Michael to Eagle and Fortymile. They built a trading post. They panned for gold, and Erinia's brother Manook discovered the first gold near the village of Rampart. There are two creeks named after him. Her husband and other brother, Pitka, discovered gold near Circle.

At the time, most of the prospectors in the interior were non-Natives. Probably out of a combination of greed for the Pavloff brothers' success, and prejudice against Natives, one or more of the other prospectors challenged their right to mining claims. They reasoned that under the Organic Act of 1884, Natives were not permitted to hold such a claim. Manook took the case to court. The court ruled that he and his family were citizens, since their father, a Russian citizen, had been guaranteed citizenship in the United States when Russia sold its colony. Thus in the early 1900's, the only way a Native could claim citizenship was by producing a Russian ancestor.

Erinia's friends were the people of the trading posts on the Yukon, the white men who ran them and their Athabaskan wives. Erinia knew the Mayos, the Harpers, and the McQuestens. Many of today's Athabaskan leaders are descended from Erinia's family and those of the other traders of the last part of the nineteenth century.

In her later years, Erinia (who had married a prospector named Dan Callahan) lived in Fairbanks and was known as "Grandma Callahan." She was proud of her Native heritage and the exciting life she had led on the Yukon.

Here is one of Robert Service's well known
poems. You may enjoy reading it.

THE SPELL OF THE YUKON

I WANTED the gold, and I sought it;
I scabbled and mucked like a slave.
Was it famine or scurvy -- I fought it;
I hurled my youth into a grave.
I wanted the gold, and I got it --
Came out with a fortune last fall, --
Yet somehow life's not what I thought it,
And somehow the gold isn't all.

No! There's the land. (Have you seen it?)
It's the cussedest land that I know,
From the big, dizzy mountains that screen it
To the deep, deathlike valleys below.
Some say God was tired when He made it;
Some say it's a fine land to shun;
Maybe; but there's some as would trade it
For not land on earth -- and I'm one.

You come to get rich (damned good reason);
You feel like an exile at first;
You hate it like hell for a season,
And then you are worse than the worst.
It grips you like some kinds of sinning;
It twists you from foe to a friend;
It seems it's been since the beginning;
It seems it will be to the end.

I've stood in some might-mouthed hollow
That's plumb-full of hush to the brim;
I've watched the big, husky sun wallow
In crimson and gold, and grow dim,
Till the moon set the pearly peaks gleaming,
And the Stars tumbled out, neck and crop;
And I've thought that I surely was dreaming,
With the peace of the world piled on top.

The summer -- no sweater was ever;
The sunshiny woods all athrill;
The grayling aleap in the river,
The bighorn asleep on the hill.
The strong life that never knows harness;
The wilds where the caribou call;
The freshness, the freedom, the farness;
O God! how I'm stuck on it all.

The winter! the brightness that blinds you,
The white land locked tight as a drum,
The cold fear that follows and finds you,
The silence that bludgeons you dumb.
The snows that are older than history,
The woods where the weird shadows slant;
The stillness, the moonlight, the mystery,
I've bade 'em good-by -- but I can't!

There's a land where the mountains are nameless,
And the rivers all run God knows where;
There are lives that are erring and aimless,
And deaths that just hang by a hair;
There are hardships that nobody reckons;
There are valleys unpeopled and still;
There's a land oh, it beckons and beckons,
And I want to go back -- and I will.

They're making my money diminish;
I'm sick of the taste of champagne.
Thank God! When I'm skinned to a finish
I'll pike to the Yukon again.
I'll fight -- and you bet it's no sham-fight;
It's hell! -- but I've been there before;
And it's better than this by a damnsite --
So me for the Yukon once more.

There's gold, and it's haunting and haunting;
It's luring me on as of old;
Yet it isn't the gold that I'm wanting
So much as just finding the gold.
It's the great, big, broad land 'way up yonder,
It's the forests where silence has leased;
It's the beauty that thrills me with wonder,
It's the stillness that fills me with peace.

Lesson 20

Gold Rushes - Alaska and Canada

Gold discovery in Silver Bow Basin and Gold Creek by Dick Harris and Joe Juneau in 1880.

Juneau-Douglas
Gold Rush

The town grew, first called Harrisburg, later Juneau.

(S.E. Alaska)

Millions (180-200 million dollars) were taken from the Alaska-Juneau Gold Mine (A-J Mine) which operated until World War II (1944).

Treadwell Mine founded in Douglas (across Gastineau Channel from the A-J Mine) in 1882 -- was the biggest gold mine in the world until a cave-in flooded it in 1917. It never re-opened.

Gold discovered in the Circle Area (Yukon River, northeast Fairbanks) in 1888.

Fairbanks - Circle City Gold Rush: Felix Pedro struck the first major gold discovery in the Fairbanks area - July 22, 1902, on the Chena River.

(Interior of Alaska): In September 1902 more strikes were made on Fairbanks Creek, Little Eldorado Creek, Dame Creek, Vault Creek.

September 8, 1902, miners met and started the town of Fairbanks.

Klondike

Gold Rush

(Canada)

George Carmack struck pay dirt August 16, 1896, on Bonanza Creek (Klondike area near Dawson). This started the biggest Gold Rush in 1898.

Dawson City became a Boom Town -- 60,000-100,000 started North to strike it rich. Only 40,000 actually made it to the Klondike. Of those who made it, few ever struck it rich. Dawson grew to 24,000 in a year; a few years later there were only a few hundred left.

Between 1897 and 1904 more than \$100 million was taken from the Klondike.

Hope-Sunrise
Gold Rush

Russians had discovered gold on the Kenai Peninsula (Kenai Lake, Cooper Landing Area) in the late 1700's.

(Gulf Coast
of Alaska)

In 1890 Charles Miller struck it rich in the area of Hope and Sunrise on the Turnagain Arm. George Palmer hit pay dirt next on Palmer Creek near Hope. The area grew to 10,000 people between 1893-96. More than \$1 million was taken -- after 1896 Hope-Sunrise gradually became almost a ghost town.

Iditarod
Gold Rush

Harry Dychman and John Beaton struck pay dirt on the Iditarod River (north of the Kuskokwim Mountains) on Christmas Day, 1908. This started the Iditarod Gold Rush.

(Between Interior
and Bering Sea)

History of the
Iditarod Trails

A way was needed to haul men, supplies and mail, during the winter (during the summer supplies could travel by boat on the rivers) to the Iditarod Gold Fields. Also, a more direct winter trail was needed to haul supplies to the Nome Gold Fields (Seward Peninsula). The famous Iditarod Trail was constructed from the port of Seward to Iditarod and on to Nome --- a distance of about 1,150 miles (Anchorage to Nome -- 1,049 miles).

Between 1908 and 1912 the Trail saw heavy use -- adventurers and gold seekers moved over it by dog team, horse drawn sleds, or on foot. At times more than a half-million dollars in gold would be on the sleds. Roadhouses were set up about one day's distance apart along the trail. By the end of World War I (1918) most of the gold was gone and few people used the trail. Gradually the tripods that marked the trail fell down and many roadhouses were abandoned. Trees and bush grew over the once cleared trail. Not until the first Iditarod Race in 1973, was much of the trail re-established. The 1,049 mile race (Anchorage to Nome) is now an annual event. (The trail from Anchorage to Seward isn't used.)

Gold discovered on Anvil Creek and Snow Gulch in 1899.

Nome
Gold Rush
(Seward
Peninsula)

The rush began in 1900 and 40,000 people came. A tent city grew up on the beach. This Gold Rush spread over the entire Seward Peninsula. Another Gold Rush Town was Council. \$130 million in gold was taken from this area. Most miners were gone by 1910.

Importance of Gold Rushes to Alaska: Most gold rushes were in Alaska and routes to the Klondike Gold Fields went through Alaska, so arriving gold seekers learned Alaska wasn't "iceberglia" or an "icebox." Congress began to pay attention to Alaska's needs:

1. Laws for Alaska
2. Law Enforcement
3. Schools
4. Mapping of Alaska
5. New Towns
6. Made Alaska a Territory
7. Growth and Development

Trails to the Gold Fields

- I. Most gold seekers left for the gold fields from the ports of Seattle, Portland, or San Francisco, arriving at these ports by railroad or ship from other parts of the United States (and world).
 - II. Trails to the Klondike Gold Fields
 - A. Overland Route -- shortest, cheapest, most popular route, but also the most difficult.
 1. Seattle to Skagway -- 1,000 miles (by boat along the Inside Passage)
 2. Over one of the passes to Lake Bennett
 - a. Chilkoot Pass (Poor Man's Pass) -- 27 miles long, 3,500 feet high, very steep, no pack animals, 1,500 steps to the top, takes one man 30-40 trips to haul his year's supplies to the top. Start at Dyea.
 - b. White Pass (Dead Horse Trail) -- 45 miles long, 2,400 feet high, less steep than Chilkoot Pass, hundreds of pack animals used. Between 1897-1898, 3,000 horses died. Start at Skagway.
 3. Lake Bennett to Dawson by Yukon River -- 400 miles
- Total Distance -- 1,445 miles
4. Or take the railroad on White Pass and Yukon Railroad -- 110 miles long (after 1900 only); from Skagway to Whitehorse, then by steamboat to Dawson.

B. All Water Route --- longest, most expensive, but easiest

1. Seattle to St. Michael (near mouth of Yukon River) --- 2,800 miles
2. Up Yukon River to Dawson --- 1,200 miles

Total Distance --- 4,000 miles

III. Later Routes and Trails to Other Gold Fields

A. To Fairbanks (Interior) Gold Fields

1. Seattle to Valdez 2,000 miles
2. Over Valdez Trail 350 miles

Total Distance 2,350 miles

B. To Iditarod or Nome Gold Fields

1. Seattle to Seward (town) 2,200 miles
2. Iditarod Trail 1,150 miles

Total Distance 3,350 miles

C. To Hope--Sunrise and Tie into Iditarod Trail

1. Seattle to Cook Inlet and Turnagain Arm 2,500 miles

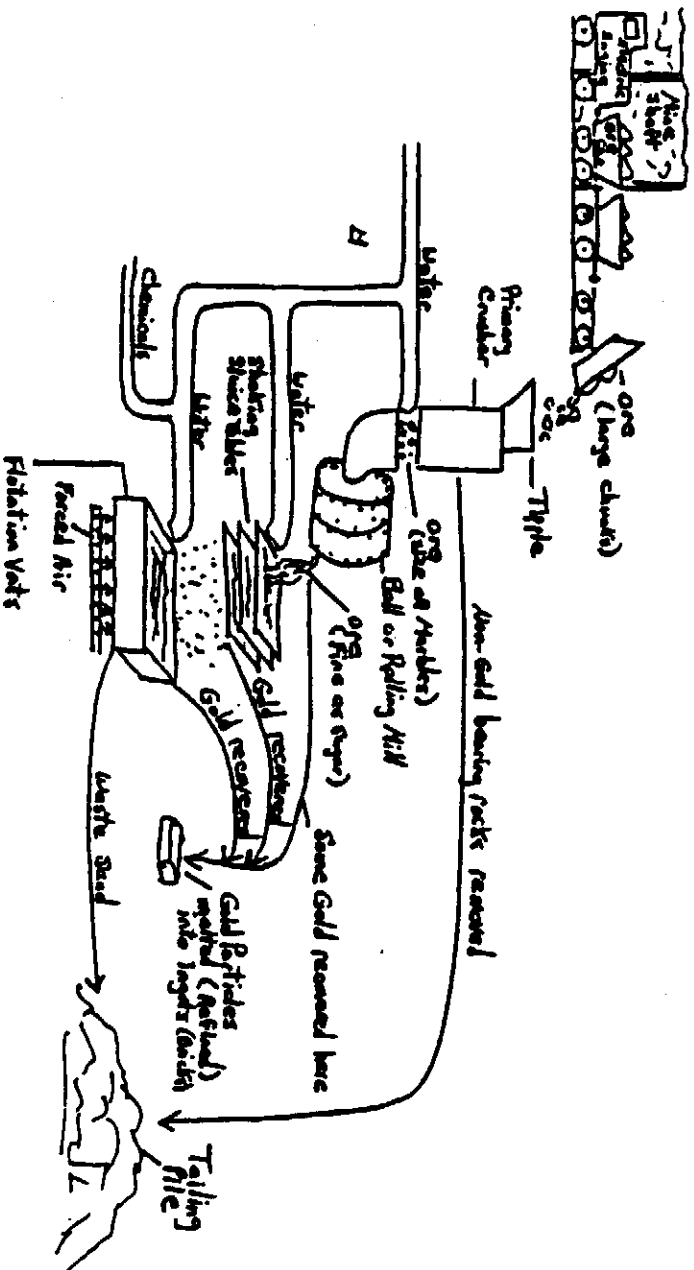
D. To Nome and Seward Peninsula Gold Fields (all water)

1. Seattle to Nome 2,950 miles

Ways to Mine Gold

- A. Placer Mining (using water) -- most common type, used in the Interior, Klondike, Iditarod, and Seward Peninsula
1. Panning (1 man)
 2. Sluice Box (1-5 men)
 3. Rocker Box (1-3 men)
 4. Dredging -- most expensive placer operation (usually done by large companies)

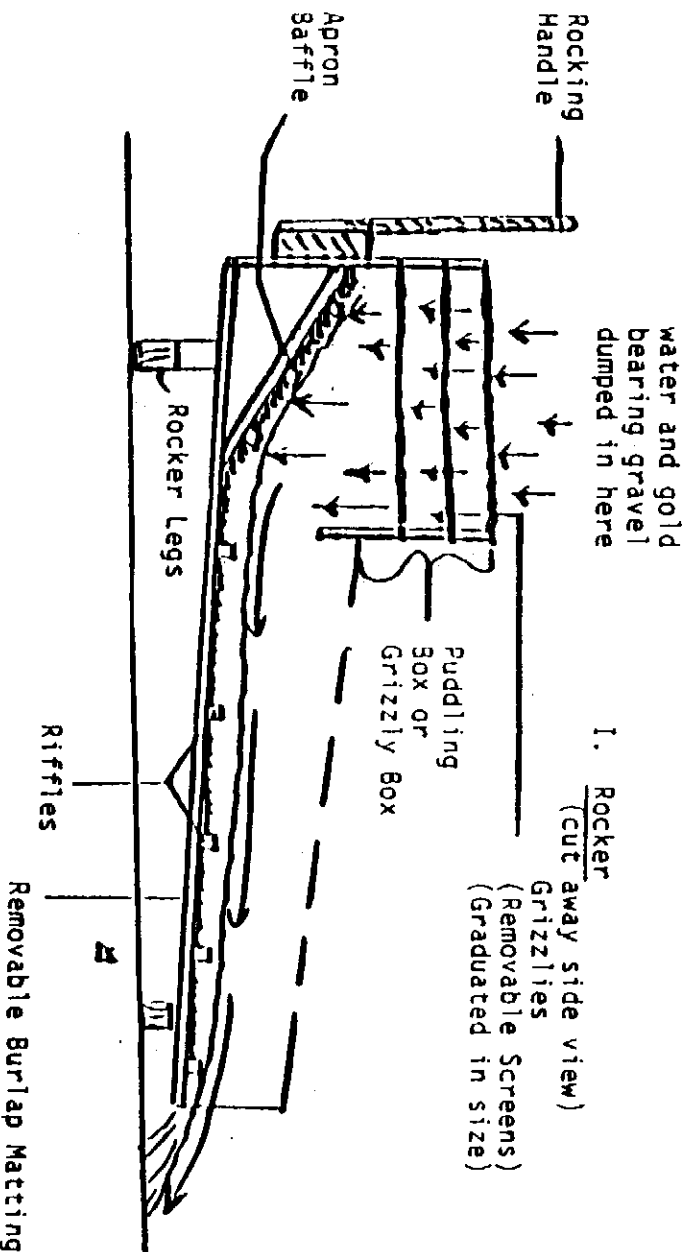
- B. Hard Rock or Lode Mining (tunnels) -- done in Southeast Alaska, Alaska Range, Gulf Coast, Chugach Mountains, Kenai Mountains; tunnels blasted to reach ore, ore hauled to mill to be crushed and processed to get gold; most expensive type of mining -- only big companies could afford to do it.



Cross Section of a Lode or Hardrock gold mine like the Alaska-Juneau Mine, which was a Ball or Rolling Mill, rather than a Stamp Mill

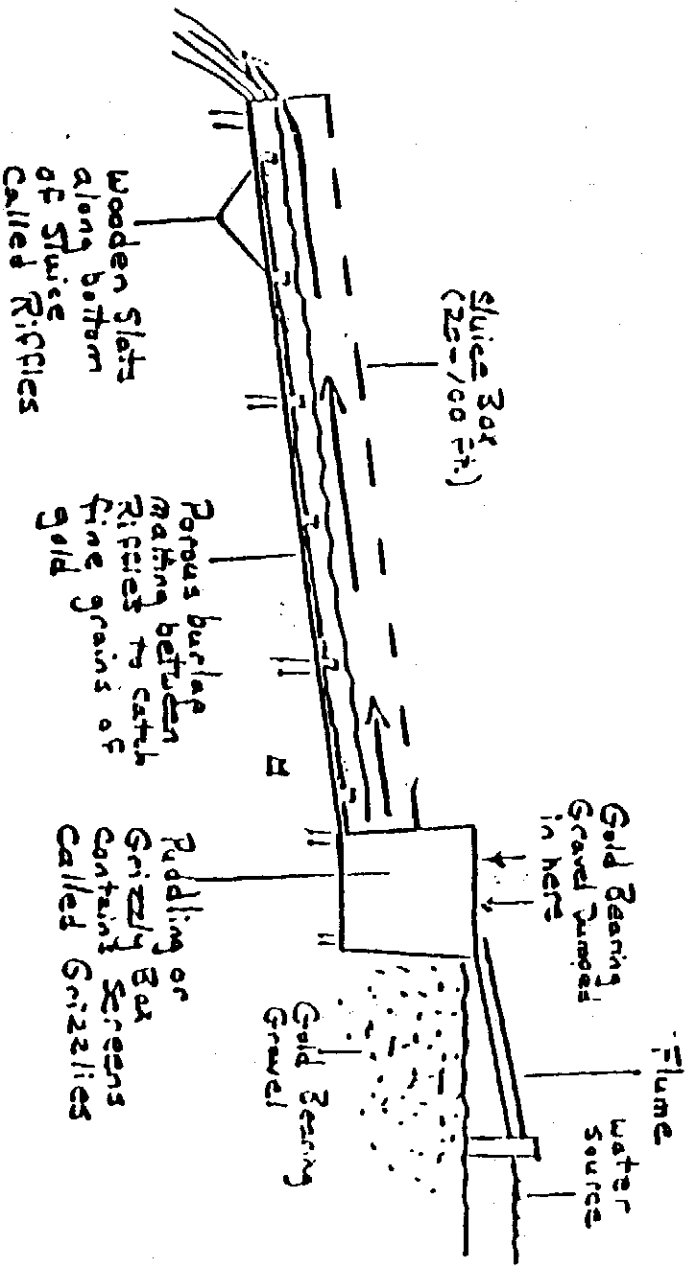
Placer Gold Mining Methods

The rocker (Rocker Box) was a small rocking sluice box, about 4-6 feet long and 4 feet high. Next to panning it was the cheapest method for Placer Mining. The rocker could be constructed cheaply and could be operated by 1-3 men. The grizzlies screened out the biggest rocks; fine gold bearing sand and gravel is washed and rocked down across the baffles and burlap matting. Gold, being very heavy, gets caught behind the riffles and in the porous matting. Periodically the bottom of the Rocker Box is cleaned out and fine gold-bearing sand is panned to remove everything but the gold.



Sluice Box
(cutaway view)

The Sluice Box was somewhat more expensive to build and operate than the rocker. Most sluice boxes were rather long (up to 100 feet or more) and required a crew of 5-20 men to operate them. The principle of a sluice box was much the same as that of the rocker, the exception being that the sluice box did not rock. (See rocker box diagram.)



Bucket Gold Dredge

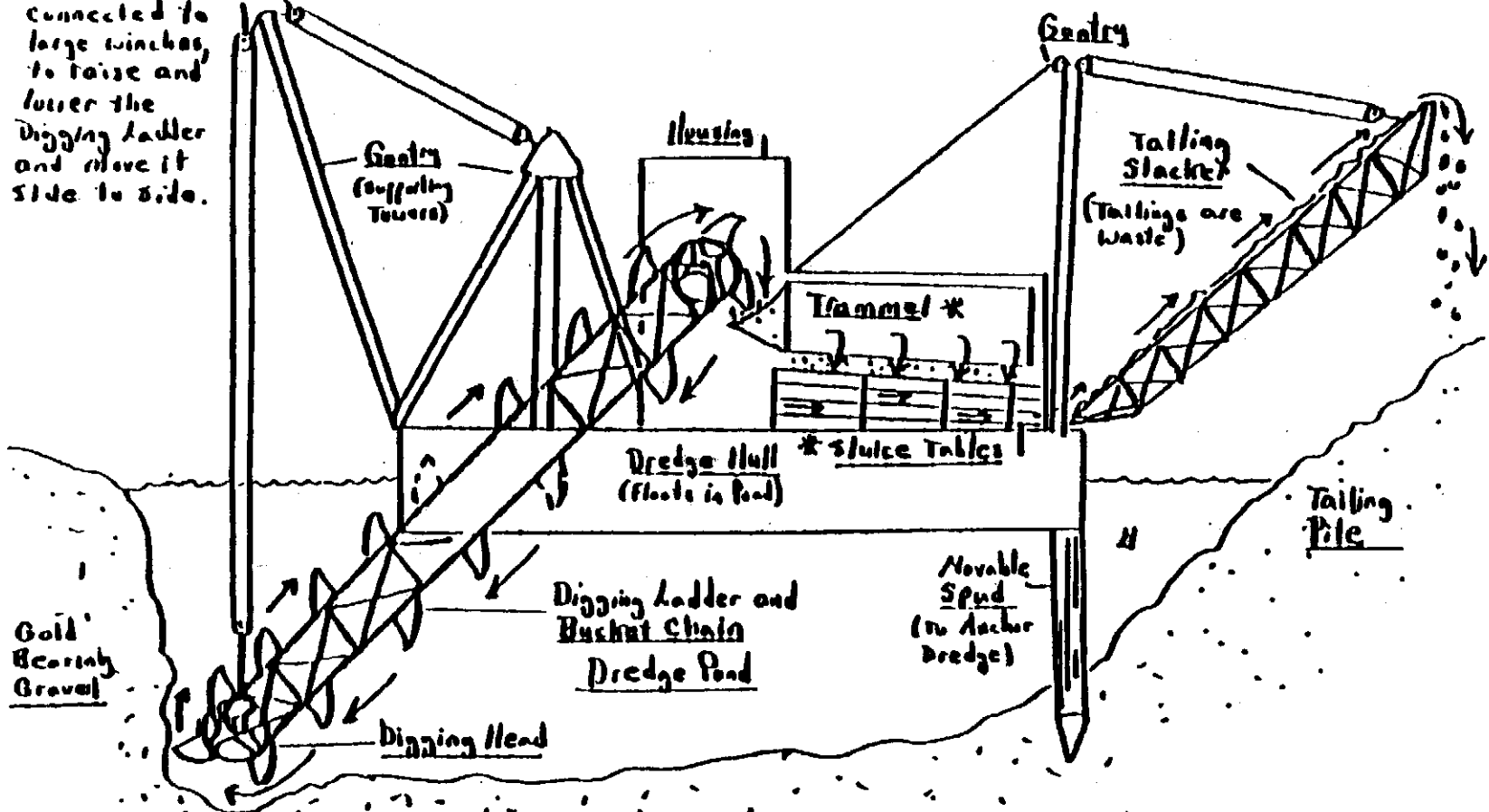
The gold dredge was the most expensive, yet effective, way to placer mine. Usually only a large company could afford to own and operate a dredge. It was, essentially, a floating gold factory with a crew of 20-30 men, electric generators, pumps, machine shop, bank and cook house -- completely self-contained.

Dredges operated in relatively flat terrain in "old" stream beds where fine gold was mixed with sand and gravel. The crew would first strip the trees and topsoil (overburden) away with tractors. Next using steam hoses the frozen gravel would be thawed, and a dredge pond dug and flooded. The dredge would be hauled in, set up in the pond, and set to work. The dredge would slowly dig itself along, the pond moving with it, and fill in the pond behind with waste rock (tailings). A crew would always work ahead of the dredge removing overburden and thawing gravel, preparing the ground for the coming dredge.

Dredging could only work during the warmer months when water would flow, for it required large quantities of water. Dredging was very effective but greatly damaged the land. By the early 1960's gold dredging stopped in Alaska, because of its expense, the low price of gold, and environmental damage. Recently, however, with the increase in the price of gold (about \$230 per ounce) dredging has started once again on the Seward Peninsula, near Nome.

Bucket Gold Dredge

Block and Tackle
connected to
large winches,
to raise and
lower the
Digging Ladder
and move it
side to side.



* Sluice Tables shake and contain Riffles and mottling - therefore act like a huge Rucker Box.

* Trammel is a series of Machines used to hold, Screen and crush the gravel before it drops onto the sluice tables.

Lesson 21

1920 - WWII

In many ways this period of time represented the "Bust" portion of the "Boom and Bust" cycles that have affected Alaska since the first European and American explorers arrived in the 18th and 19th centuries. These years were called by some influential American congressmen, "The Twilight Twenties and Thirties." One Congressman, A. T. Treadway of Massachusetts, complained that the United States Government was spending far too much money on the "mere twenty thousand white people in Alaska." Others shared Mr. Treadway's opinion, complaining that "there was nothing in Alaska to justify anyone's living there."

Since the newly completed Alaska Railroad (1923) was losing money there was serious consideration, in Congress, to scrap it. Even gold mining, which had drawn the world's attention to Alaska during the glittering gold rush years (1880-1920), was beginning to decline during the 1930's. This decline in gold mining was to steadily continue until the last lode mines closed in the 1950's and the dredges stopped operating in the 1960's.

Also during these "Twilight Years," all the military installations in Alaska (Fort Davis near Nome, abandoned in 1921; Fort Egbert near Eagle, Fort Gibbon at Tanana, Fort St. Michael on Norton Sound, and Fort Liscum near Valdez were disbanded in 1925) except the small garrison at Fort Seward (Chilkoot Barracks) near Haines, were abandoned. Members of congress and the military did not consider Alaska important to the nation's defense.

Therefore, it is true that the 20's and 30's were a time of relative neglect for Alaska; nevertheless it is also true that some very important events occurred during this same period of time. Consider the following:

1. The Alaska Railroad was completed in 1923 and did greatly help to open the interior and southcentral regions of Alaska.
2. In 1924, citizenship was granted to Alaska Natives and the next year the first Native legislator, William Paul, Sr., was elected to the territorial legislature. This is the second point at which Alaska Natives felt they lost control of their tribal lands. The Citizenship Act of 1924 stated citizenship would in no way affect the land claimed by Alaska Natives for traditional use. Many other people felt this was unfair. They felt that since we are all U.S. citizens, why should one group get something the other does not.
3. Gold mining was still important in Alaska, although beginning to decline. It should be noted that gold mining extended beyond the major "rush" towns of Nome, Dawson City, Juneau, and Fairbanks. There were mines scattered throughout the territory.

One mine in particular is described in a film (Gold By the Sea). It was the Hirst-Chichagof Mine on Klag Bay, north of Sitka.

In 1905, a Tlingit man of the T'akdeintaan clan, Ralph Young, found gold in a bay on the outer side of Chichagof Island. Young, who seven years later became a founding father of the influential Alaska Native Brotherhood, received nothing for the claim. However, the bay became the site of a profitable gold mine which operated from 1922 until World War II caused it to close in 1943.

The mine was named after a British store owner named Bernard Hirst. He, along with his Chinese-American partner from Seattle, prospered from the mine. The partner, named Goon Dip, had become wealthy earlier by arranging for Chinese laborers to work on the transcontinental railroad and in the Alaska canned salmon industry. He eventually became the Chinese consul in Seattle.

Today both men are memorialized in landmarks: Hirst Mountain, Goon Dip Mountain, and Goon Dip River, all on Chichagof Island, bear their names.

4. Coal mining developed during the early 1920's at Nenana and Healy.
5. Between 1902 and 1933 the oil fields at Katella, near Cordova, produced oil in commercial quantities.
6. The fishing (salmon) industry was still growing and very profitable.
7. Fur trapping in the interior and the Aleutians were thriving industries which allowed entry into the money economy by Alaska Natives, while also contributing to the continuation of many aspects of Native lifestyles and cultures.
8. Between 1911 and 1938 the Kennecott Copper Mine, near Cordova, operated.
9. In 1922 the University of Alaska was started in Fairbanks.
10. 1917-1925 Congress established Glacier Bay National Monument, McKinley National Park, and Katmai National Monument.
11. In 1924 the airplane came to Alaska; Carl Ben Eielson flew the first mail from Fairbanks to McGrath.
12. In 1935, during the Great Depression, the U.S Government decided to settle poor farmers, from the mid-west, in the Matanuska Valley. The town of Palmer was established.
13. Missionary activity continued apace, with the addition of numerous schools for orphaned Alaska Natives. Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Moravian churches had staked their territories in the teens or before, and became entrenched in this period. The number of educated and Christianized Natives who had no cultural ties to their backgrounds increased as a result of these schools and missions.

14. In 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act in an attempt to reverse the disintegration of Indian tribes brought on by previous, assimilationist policies. Extended to Alaska in 1936, it provided Native villages with the chance for legal recognition as tribal authority.

However, in spite of these signs of growth and development, Alaska was largely ignored by the outside world until 1942. The 1942 bombing of Dutch Harbor and the Japanese occupation of the Aleutian Islands of Attu and Kiska were the events that, once again, focused people's attention on Alaska. So it took the violent events of World War II to make the United States realize that Alaska was important and to help usher in the period we call "Modern Alaska."

ALASKA'S PIONEER JUDGE

by Clarence L. Andrews
published in Alaska Life, December, 1943

Judge James Wickersham, who will remain eternally in the memories of Alaskans as the man who eliminated Nome's first crime wave, was born August 24, 1857. He was educated for law, came west and established an office in Tacoma, Washington, which was then a rapidly growing center of population. His diligence resulted in his later being elected to the State Legislature.

He became interested in the Indian peoples through litigation over the Puyallup Indian Reserve near Tacoma, and he later made ethnological investigations of western Washington tribes. At one time, he became so intrigued by the Northwest Indians that he made a survey trip on foot around the Olympic Peninsula.

In 1900 the Second Division of the United States District Court was established with Nome as the place for the sessions, and the Third Division had its headquarters at Eagle, on the Yukon. There were about 1,500 people in the Division which extended from the Arctic Ocean to the Pacific, and from there along the Aleutian Islands, some 1,500 miles to the westward.

Scarcely had the Judge established his headquarters when he received orders to go to Nome, inquire into, and correct conditions there. It had been reported that the affairs in the division were tied up under a mass of injunctions, with no hope of action for eight months. The course of the actual proceedings had been put forth in "The Spoilers" by Rex Beach, and the proper names applied in his "looting of Alaska."

Judge Wickersham was the only man available for the task of eliminating the criminal element. He immediately made his way down the Yukon to St. Michael and across to Nome. He found that no written decisions had been filed during the incumbency of Judge Noyes. And he also found that the claims opened had been seized by jumpers and turned over to a receiver appointed by Noyes who filed a bond for five thousand dollars and took possession of the property, with all machinery and cash on hand. He took out unknown amounts of gold, as much as fifteen or twenty thousand a day, and placed it where he saw fit. Inspection of the court record showed about two hundred cases awaiting trial, the whole of the last year's business, with such additional as might be filed. The cases were peremptorily set for trial, and the work of cleaning house began. It was an herculean task. The trials went early and late. Before the ice broke in the Yukon, and Bering Sea opened to navigation, the docket was cleared. When the Yukon ran clear to the sea, Judge Wickersham returned to his post at Eagle.

On his way to Nome in 1901, the Judge was delayed at Tanana. There he met Mr. Barnette, a trader who had shipped up on the steamer "Lavelle Young" with a stock of trading goods for the Tanana River Valley. Barnette was stopped at Tanana by the Tanana River, its shifting sand bars not permitting the passage of a boat of the draft of the "Lavelle Young."

Upon Wickersham's return, in the spring of 1902, he found Barnette at St. Michael, employed in building a shallow draft boat, for the Tanana voyage. They discussed the probability of gold on the Tanana, and Wickersham promised Barnette that if he found a gold strike and placed a trading post, he would establish a recorder's office there. He suggested the name of Fairbanks, in honor of Charles W. Fairbanks, Senator from Indiana.

Meanwhile events on the Tanana River moved rapidly. Felix Pedro struck gold on what is now known as Pedro Creek, and Frank Cleary also struck rich pay. When Barnette came up the river he was pleasantly surprised to find a mining boom well under way, and he at once placed his trading post and named it Fairbanks.

The news soon spread to Eagle, and in the spring of 1903, Judge Wickersham set out with a dog team for the new diggings at Fairbanks. The snow road was full of stampedeers, all headed for the new strike. As he passed down Pedro Creek, he stopped in front of a shaft. Big Jack Costa came out of it on a ladder, his face wrinkled with excitement. He roared, "Oh, by Godd, I gotta de gold."

He had just struck gold in his shaft. He had prospected for years and this was his first good strike.

Farther down the Judge came to Pedro's claim. After being shown a pan of Pedro's dirt, Wickersham went on down the creek and across the ridges to the new town. Fairbanks was at that time a struggling assortment of cabins. The only mercantile establishment was Barnette's trading post which was described as looking like a disreputable pigsty. To complete the unattractive community, a half-finished two-story log building without doors or windows stood a hundred yards upstream. On it was hung a white sheet which bore the legend "Fairbanks Hotel."

Judge Wickersham set about to establish a recorder's office, so that the men might have a legal place for registering their claims. He also urged the men to cut the lumber and use it in the making of 200 new cabins which were built in the month after he arrived.

The abundant energy of Judge Wickersham was not satisfied by his trail work and town building. Mount McKinley, standing strong against the southwestern sky, filled him with a desire to attempt an ascent. He organized a party of four men and an interpreter. On May 16th the expedition boarded the "Isabelle" to be taken as far as the head of navigation on the Kantishna River. The party landed and moved to the foot of the peak. After they had climbed ten thousand feet, they found that their time was too limited to attempt a further hike, and so returned to Rampart on the Yukon, July 7th.

In July, 1903, Judge Wickersham held the first established court in Rampart. A large warehouse was rented, and barroom chairs were commandeered or constructed for seating.

Before this court adjourned, an order came down the river to hold a session on a ship bound for the Aleutian Islands, so the Rampart term ended on August 12th. The steamer "Herman" was boarded for St. Michael, where the revenue cutter "Rush" awaited the legal force and the juries which were to be taken to hold the "floating court." It held terms at Unalaska, Belkofsky, Unga, and other ports until Valdez was reached. To the Judge had been assigned the task of compiling all the legal opinions delivered by former judges of the Alaskan courts, and prepare them for publication, which he proceeded to do at once.

In 1904, before the expiration of his first term of office as judge, he was met by charges against him by Alexander McKenzie, who had been the receiver appointed by Judge Noyes in the notorious "Spoiler" cases. McKenzie had been sentenced to a prison term, but was later pardoned and proceeded to Washington to again play the game of politics. This new case against Wickersham called for an inquiry, and Hon. William A. Day was sent to Fairbanks to make an investigation as to the validity of the charge and of other complaints made against the decisions of the Judge.

Wickersham continued with his court during the time of the investigation, having received no notice, officially, of the matter. While he was holding court in the courthouse, Judge Day was investigating him in the Town Hall. It was a miners' meeting on a large scale, with everyone free to express his opinion in regard to the defendant. The results of the day's hearings were freely bet upon in the nightly gatherings in the poolrooms.

The legal business of Fairbanks was so much greater than that of Eagle, that on October 1, 1904, the headquarters of the court were ordered transferred from Eagle to Fairbanks.

In November, Judge Wickersham was reappointed as Judge of the Third Division of the Alaskan District. The decision of Judge Day had been that the Judge for the Third Division "is an able, honest, and upright judge."

In February, 1905, after closing court at Valdez, leaving by dog team over the Chugach Mountains, and through the Thompson Pass, he reached Fairbanks.

On the re-appointment of the Judge the same complaints were presented to the Judiciary Committee against his confirmation. A battle ensued before the committee, and finally it adjourned without a decision. Wickersham was given a recess appointment, and he went on with his official business.

Judge Wickersham supported the Cushman Bill for giving a delegate from Alaska to Congress, which passed on May 7, 1906. After 39 years without representation to Congress, Alaska was at last permitted to elect a delegate, but he had no vote.

In 1907, weary of the annoyance of the continuous attacks on his work as judiciary administrator, Judge Wickersham sent his resignation to the Third Division of the court, and resigned on December 31st.

The next year, believing that he could best serve Alaska as a delegate to Congress, he put his name before the Territory people for their votes. He was elected, and for fourteen years held the office. During all this time he was at the front of every measure that he believed to be for the best interests of Alaska. He was the chief worker in securing the Alaska Railway, connecting the interior valleys with the ocean ports. The bill was passed April 7, 1913, and in 1923 President Harding drove the last spike.

All through his nearly forty years of public life in the Territory, he was interested in the history, the natural life, and in the progress of Alaska. He continuously collected material pertaining to the land, and at his death possessed the greatest library on Alaska in the world. It has now been placed in the State Library in Juneau.

Wickersham is the author of innumerable pamphlets, historical, statistical, and scientific. In 1927 he wrote and published a Bibliography of Alaskan Literature, 1724-1924, containing more than seven thousand titles of printed books and matter of general or private publications, not including public documents, and in many languages, all relating to the region he represented in Congress. In 1938 he wrote and published a volume, Old Yukon, historical and biographical, of the land he had made his home, and in which his lifework had been done. He was also the editor of seven volumes of Territorial Courts Records.

Judge Wickersham had enemies, some of them virulent and bitter. People have said he made enemies when not necessary. It may be noted that he was not afraid to fight for what he believed right, regardless of whose toes he stepped on. And he must be credited with the fact that he always made a good fight.

The vindictive attacks of former receiver McKenzie, backed by certain senators from the Dakotas, were apparently inspired by the decision of Judge Wickersham in the cases of the "Spoilers," and which have never been legally reversed, and by which he prevented the gang of plunderers from absorbing the products of the rich mines of that portion of the mining region. Through his decisions the original discovers were protected in their rights.