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Old Records, Newspapers, and Government Files.
and the Story they Reveal.

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When Alaska Territory with its government buildings was formerly ^{ally} transferred to the United States government there remained to the Russian American Fur Company an immense quantity of all sorts of trading goods and a vast amount of other property not included in the government transaction. This consisted of ships, work shops, machinery with tools, foundry, ship supplies, saw mill supplies, chandlery, copper ^{and} ~~in~~ tin ⁱⁿ and sheets and bulk, flour, flour mill accessories, finished articles from the foundry, such as bells, anchors, and cables and a very large amount of dry goods and other articles for trading that were kept, not only in Sitka, the supply depot, but in all the principal trading posts. There were also thousands of dollars worth of furs and hides. Prince Maksoutoff was the last governor of Alaska under the Russian rule and he was also the chief executive of the Russian-American Company.

Shortly after the transfer American merchants began sending up ships to Alaska. All the ships that were under the Russian flag were registered in the American customs house. These were the steamer Constantine, Brig Shelikoff, Ceasarevich, Menshikoff, steamer Politkofsky, steamer Alexander and a number of other crafts.

It will be of interest to name some of the captains that were in command of the ships at that time, men who later were so closely associated with the progress of the country. Captain Sandman who first came to Alaska on the American schooner Growler, in 1867, married a Miss Bolman of Sitka and made his home in San Francisco. He was employed by the Alaska Commercial Company for years and ran between San Francisco and Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands as master of the steamer Alexander, one of the vessels formerly belonging to the Russian-American Company.

Captain A.T. Whitford first came to Alaska on the schooner Northwest, on January 21, 1868. Captain Whitford was closely associated with Governor Brady in the Sitka Trading Company which carried on its bu-

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business in the old trading post building at Sitka.

Captain *M.* S Erskine came to Sitka on his first trip on the steamer Fideliter on May 30, 1868. He was employed later by the Alaska Commercial Company and made a number of trips between San Francisco and the western coast of Alaska.

William Kohl was the master of the steamship Politkofsky when it came back to Sitka under American register on April 11, 1868. Captain Kohl was a charter member of the Hutchinson, Kohl & Co. which later merged into the Alaska Commercial Company.

Captain John R Sands was the master of the American ship Winged Arrow; he made his first trip on July 17, 1868. Winged Arrow was the ship that carried most of the Russian ^{subjects} ~~ships~~ back to Russia who did not wish to remain ⁱⁿ Alaska after the transfer.

William George first came to Sitka on the steamer Constantine on March 23, 1869. Captain George was the veteran pilot of the Pacific Coast Steamship Co. and made trips between Alaska and the Pacific coast for a great many years. Of the captains who were in the employ of the Russian-American Fur Co. and who were later in charge of the ships that were employed in the coastwise trade between Alaska and San Francisco we see such names as I L. Archimandritoff, who was in the employ of the Russian American Co as the Commodore of the fleet

There are two Kashevaroffs, Ivan and Nicholas, both were educated first at Sitka School of Navigation and later were sent to St. Petersburg to finish their nautical education. There are also captains who came here and remained in Alaska making their homes here. These are captain Anton Cozian who was one of the first pioneers in the ^{gold} Cassiar Mines, I cannot refrain from mentioning Vincent Baranovich and Wm. Phillipson. Captain Neibaum and H M Hutchinson both came to Sitka as masters of ships. Both of them were members of the Alaska Commercial Company in later years.

Prince Maksoutoff did not advertise the vast belongings of Russian interests for sale for he had previously arranged with moneyed interests in San Francisco and employed methods in disposing of the property whereby he was benefited to a very great degree. The parties in

San Francisco sent Mr. Hutchinson to buy all the property which was sold to them for \$150,000 and which was worth five times as much. The firm, Hutchinson Kohl & Co was formed to take over the fur trading business of the Russian Fur Company.

The new company styled itself as the successor of the Russian-American^{Co.}, the members of which were H M Hutchinson, William Kohl, Louis Sloss W. A Wassermann, L Gerstle and L Boskovich.. Later these men and Capt. G Neibaum formed the famous Alaska Commercial Company. It was not a hard matter for the new company to get rich. They acquired property worth thousands of dollars for a song. Hutchinson Kohl & Co. retained Prince Maksoutoff in their employ for the two years he remained in Alaska after the transfer. He was a sort of a silent partner in the concern. His share on all transactions where he was personally interested was 30 per cent of the moneys received.

Ships came to Alaska for trading and the ships of the new company brought goods but took away more goods than they brought. From the customs house records of 1867 we see that in one shipment on the brig Caesarevich dry goods, hardware and skins were shipped valued at \$25,873, 03. This shipment is only a small part of the whole. On another shipment we see that 23 casks of spirits, aggregating 2,739 gallons, 91 gallons of sherry wine, 146 gallons of maderia wine and 79 gallons Jamaica rum were sent to San Francisco from Sitka.

This is almost unbelievable but it is on the manifests. From January 1868, and for the whole year, tons upon tons of iron, copper and tin went out from Sitka. Copper was sent in bars, in sheets, in casks and as junk. As an illustration on January 21, 1868, on the schooner Growler, Horace Coffin master, the following was sent to Schloss & Co. of San Francisco: 10,537 pounds of sheet metal, 3,076 pounds thin sheet metal, 1250 pounds of sheet lead, 23,150 pounds of sheet copper, 6,107 pounds of calf skins and 3,389 pounds of Russian leather. On another occasion a ship carried away from Sitka, ten anchors, 10 cable chains, 110,737 pounds of hoop iron manufactured at the ~~local~~ Sitka foundry. Later there was shipped 46 anvils, 18 anchors, 21 mill stones, 70 fathoms of cable chains and old copper in barrels and in bulk. There were two separate shipments of bells, one of 8 bells weighing 2,509 pounds

and the other of 9 bells weight not given. There was a shipment of 900 barrels flour milled at Sitka. On November 16, 1868, on the American ship Alexander, there was a consignment of 25,000 fur seals skins, valued at \$2.00 per skin. and 354 sea otter skins valued at \$20 per skin, and 41 casks of brandy, all shipped to to Hutchinson Kohl & Co. of San Francisco. These shipments were made for two years until ^{all} the goods ~~all~~ ^{were} transferred to 'Frisco. It is a significant fact that at the same time American goods were shipped in, and American liquor came in in large quantities, and was allowed to enter into the Territory and to be carried to other parts of the country on custom house permits. I understand that the reason this was done was because the liquor was supposed to have been ordered before the United States took possession of the territory.

Hutchinson Kohl & Co., as the successors to the Russian-American Co. and with the protection of the former officials of the Russian rule, ^{had} been very early to exercise arbitrary ~~power~~ methods toward the unprotected people of the territory and especially as far as the Aleuts of the west were concerned. The Company from the start tried to usurp the whole ~~country~~ Western Alaska fur trade. They could not tolerate any competition. On April 13, 1868 a bark belonging to Williams & Haven of New London, named the Peru, and commanded by capt. E Morgan arrived at St Paul Island. one of the Prybilof group. As soon as he landed his men with building material, provisions ~~and~~ salt and utensils, and hoisted for the first time the American flag, he commenced the erection of some twelve or fourteen houses for dwellings, stores, and warehouses. Of course the party met with violent opposition from Hutchinson Kohl & Co. who claimed the exclusive right to hunt on the Island as successors to the Russian Company. They tried to dislodge the New England ^{seamen} Co. but found that the ~~seamen~~ were not to be coaxed or driven away. Then the Company tried to have the government assist them in this. There was a bill introduced in the senate by Senator Cole which virtually gave the islands away to the Hutchinson Company. A storm of protests arose from merchants in San Francisco and all along the coast as far as Sitka. Of course later the Company was able to lease the Islands for a period of twenty years from the United States government.