

ALASKA UNDER THE RUSSIANS—BARANOF THE BUILDER

When Baranof, the Builder of Russian America, laid down the management of the Russian American Company in 1818 the dominion of the Czar in North America was at its greatest breadth. Its outposts were from St. Michael to Ross in California; from Sitka to Attu Island. For nearly 30 years he had been extending the limits of the possessions of his Imperial Master; enduring shipwrecks; fighting the wild tribes and reducing them to subjection; planting new posts; suppressing the sedition of the priests and the insubordination of his naval officers; his had been a busy life.

The popular picture of Baranof has been that of an iron handed tyrant; a drinking despot who plied his subordinates with rum and then punished their familiarities with the knout. The real man as shown in his letters and the writings of those who knew him best is a very different character.

We find him at Unalaska, shipwrecked at the beginning of the winter of 1791 and on an island; where the government expeditions

*In the preparation of this article I have drawn chiefly from the following sources:

Khlebnikof, K., in *Zhizneopisanie Aleksandra Andreevicha Baranova*, [Biography of Alexander Andreevich Baranof.] St. Petersburg, 1835. There is a copy in the Governor's office at Sitka, and one in the Bancroft Library at the University of California. Klebnikof was the chief of the countinghouse at Sitka under the Chief Managers following Baranof, remaining until about 1832. On the "Blarney Stone" at Sitka, are his initials, "K. KH. 1832."

Tikhmenef, P., *Istoricheskoe Obozrenie Obrazovanie Rossiisko Amerikanskoe Kompanii* [Historical Review of the Organization of the Russian American Company.] St. Petersburg, 2 vols. Vol. I, 1861; vol. II, 1863. In Governor's office and in Bancroft Library.

Materiali dlya Isotrii Russkikh Zaseleni po beregam vostochnavo okeana. [Materials for the History of the Russian Settlements on the Shores of the Eastern Ocean.] St. Petersburg, 1861. In 4 parts. The 1st part is by V. M. Golovnin; the 2d part by Captain-Lieutenant Golovin; the 3d part by K. Khlebnikof; the 4th part consists of extracts from the writings of Golovnin, Khlebnikof, Lutke, Lazaref and others. In Governor's office and in Bancroft Library. V. M. Golovnin was an officer of the Russian navy who came to Sitka in the sloop Diana, the first Russian ship of war to visit the colonies, in 1810. He returned in 1817 in the sloop Kamchatka. A copy of the voyage of 1815-'19 is in library of the University of Washington at Seattle. Captain Golovin, a naval officer, was sent in 1861 to make a report on the condition of the colonies. More complete description of the *Materiali* will be found in Bancroft, *History of Alaska*, pp. 515-16.

Davidof, Gavriila I., *Dvuknoe putashestvie v' Ameriku Morskikh Ofitzerof Khvostova i Davidova, pisannoe sim poslyednim* [Two Voyages in America by Naval Officers Khvostof and Davidof, written by the latter.] St. Petersburg, 1810. In two parts. In Bancroft Library.

Markof, A., *Russkie na Vostochnom Okean Puteshestvie Al. Markova* [Russians on the Eastern Ocean Voyage of Al. Markof.] St. Petersburg, 1856. In Bancroft Library.

Veniaminof [Bishop John.] *Zapiski ob Ostrovakh Oonalaskinskago Otdela* [Letters Concerning the Islands of the Unalaska District.] St. Petersburg, 1840, 2 vols. In Bancroft Library. The same is found in another edition in the library of the University of Washington, at Seattle.

preceding him, with all the stores of their ship at command, suffered and died with the scurvy; living with his crew on the animals they killed, boiling salt from the sea for use, he passed the winter without the loss of a life. Building boats, from the skins of the sea lions they killed, he made his way to Three Saints on Kodiak, 500 miles by sea, to take up the management of the colony placed there by Shelikof.¹ Hardly had he received the goods of the post until he passed on in a skin bidar to the Prince William Sound, the Chugach Gulf of the Russians, thence to the Cook Inlet, called by them the Kenai Gulf, to see his outposts, then back to Kodiak Island²; there he at once arranged to transfer his main office to St. Paul's harbor.³

He was short of every kind of supplies, his ship was wrecked and a total loss; he had to leave men to salvage the wreckage; his provisions were lost, his trading goods were expended. He chose a place on Voskressenski Harbor, near the present town of Seward, to build a ship to replace the one lost at Unalaska. The iron and anchors, the cordage and sails must be brought across Siberia,⁴ twice as far as from New York to Seattle, then shipped 3,000 miles across the Pacific Ocean.

The sea otter grounds of the Aleutian Islands had been swept clean of the fur that was the life of his business. The bays of Kamishak and Kenai and the Chugach Gulf were failing fast under the competition, of the Lebedef-Lastochkin Company who fought with Baranof's men and robbed them, and of the trade of the English who had for five or more years been frequenting those waters. He sent Purtof down the coast to the eastward to find new hunting

¹K. Khlebnikof, *Zhizneopisanie Alizandrova A. Baranova* [*Life of Alexander A. Baranof*], St. Petersburg, 1853, p. 8. Alexander Andrevich Baranof was born at Kargopol, Russia, in either 1746 or 1747. Bancroft, *History of Alaska*, p. 315, gives the year as 1747; Khlebnikof does not specify a date in his life of Baranof, but "72 lyetnii staretz" is said of him in 1818, indicating that he was 72 years old at that time. The encyclopedias give 1746 as the date of his birth.

²The first census taken of Alaska was by Baranof in the winter of 1795-96, which showed a native population of 6,206 on Kodiak Island.—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 33.

³Baranof to Shelikof, in Tikhmenef, *Istoricheskoe Obozranie Rossiisko Amerikanskoe Kompanii* [Historical Review of the Origin of the Russian American Company.] St. Petersburg, 1861-63, II, App., 42. "I myself departed in a bidar on the 7th of May, at Chiniak I made arrangements for the building of a harbor and gave orders that when the fort erected upon the harbor was completed it should be named Pavlovsky, in honor of the Prince Imperial."—*Ibid*, p. 35.

⁴Poortof, or Purtof, was sent during 1793 to search for new sea otter grounds to the eastward. With three Russians and 170 bidarkas of Aleuts he went to Yakutat. Baranof says: "I am very much obliged to Purtof, that he discovered this new hunting ground near Cape St. Elias."—Baranof to Shelikof, July 24, 1793, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 40.

grounds⁵ and set himself to the task of assembling the material for a ship.

A builder, the Englishman Shields, came on a ship from Okhotsk, with a meagre supply of materials. He was put to work and the keel was laid for the new vessel. Baranof gathered the iron from the wrecks, he searched for ore in the mountains, found it but could not smelt it; he made turpentine from the trees, and built a sawmill to cut the timber. He mixed his paints for the hull with whale oil, while he colored it with iron rust. He sent men out to search for the native copper of the Copper River, of which the Indians of that country brought pieces to him for trade. He burned bricks to build the Russian stoves in the houses and shipped others to Okhotsk.⁶

In August of 1794 the first ship, the Phoenix, was completed, the first to be built on the west coast of North America, north of Vancouver Island. He sent her to Okhotsk with furs, and set to work to build two small sloops on the little island near St. Paul's Harbor, called Elovoi, or Spruce Island, where there is a growth of timber. They were completed and named the "Delphin" and the "Olga," and were but about 40 feet in length, small craft for that stormy ocean.⁷

A settlement was to be made at Yakutat Bay, for which 30 families of settlers had been sent by Shelikof, intended for agriculture. They were quarrelsome and undisciplined; felt they were going to the end of the earth, and were rebellious thereat. They were sent in a boat commanded by a Lieutenant of the Imperial Navy who had been assigned to serve in the colony.⁸ The Lieutenant believed his dignity was lowered by taking orders from a mere trader so he sailed away to Nuchek and stayed there. A week later Baranof went to Yakutat in the "Olga" and found the settlers had not arrived. Weeks passed and no settlers, Baranof sailed to Sitka, passed in

⁵"I believe never has a ship been built under such difficulties as ours. To preserve the hull during the winter I had to contrive some kind of paint and finally made up a mixture of spruce tar, whale oil, and iron rust, which seemed to have considerable consistency, and with this the whole vessel was painted and impregnated.... Old pieces of iron from wrecks and broken up vessels had to be worked up into bolts and other articles necessary for the construction of the vessel and there were only two blacksmiths to do it. Though I did what I could to keep the laborers constantly employed, it could not always be done during the winter and then they would put their heads together for conspiracies, and come to me with complaints, crying for better provision. They were dissatisfied with the continual diet of youkali [dried salmon] of which they received 2 pounds per day each, whether working or idle."—Baranof to Shelikof, May 20, 1795, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 82.

⁶Ibid, p. 93.

⁷Zhizneopisanie, p. 25.

⁸Zhizneopisanie, p. 29.

through the strait at the north he named Olga Strait⁹ after his boat, anchored in a bay where he placed a cross and called it *Krestof Zaliva*, or Cross Bay, that still bears his name, then he crossed the six hundred miles of the gulf of Alaska to the post at Nuchek to find that his missing ship had been there, ostensibly to get water, and had then sailed back to Kodiak Island.¹⁰

Arriving at St. Paul's Harbor, he found that the priests and the insubordinate lieutenants had been sowing sedition and making the hunters and natives dissatisfied with their food, their pay, their houses, and attempting to undermine his authority. The hunters were not going out for sea otter the next year, the priests were not going to live on the *Yukali*, or dried fish, the Lieutenant had been knouting the natives to show he was the man in command and that they must obey him. His letters say he quelled the incipient mutiny "perhaps at the risk of my life," he writes to Shelikof. He sent the most unruly to distant stations and kept the rest under control for the winter. The situation was so unpleasant that he writes to Shelikof in the same letter: "Old age is approaching, my constitution cannot bear up much longer, at night I must use a glass to read and write, and my cheerful spirit is on the wane. I feel it is beyond my power to fulfil and attend in person to all the important duties imposed on me. Besides this I hear that you take heed of every breath of calumny and slander that reaches you against me. * * I should not be judged by hearsay only. * * If long and faithful services have not gained me your confidence it is better that they should be at once severed."¹¹

To the southeast coast he also sent a ship under Shields to reconnoitre the grounds for the sea otter, for that was the life of the colony. His own observations at Sitka told him that he must go to that region for a new station. Shields went to Bucarelli Bay and thence up the coast noting the bays and gathering skins to the number of 2,000.¹²

The next year, the number of 1796, he placed the colony at Yakutat, building barracks and storehouses; left hunters and settlers with their children to number of 20 persons; and named the colony

⁹K. Khlebnikof, in *Materiali dlya Istorii Russkikh Zaselennii po beregam vostochnavo okeana* [Materials for the History of the Russian Settlements on the Shores of the Eastern Ocean.] St. Petersburg, 1861, part iv, p. 41.

¹⁰Zhizneopisanie, p. 25.

¹¹Baranof to Shelikof, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 77.

¹²Khlebnikof, in *Materiali*, etc., part iv, p. 42.

New Russia.¹³ On the return voyage the ship "Three Saints" was wrecked at Kamishak Bay.¹⁴

Three years later with two vessels and 550 bidarkas of Aleut hunters he made his way to Sitka and buying of Chief Skay-cut-let a site for his settlement he built storehouses, barracks, and other houses, surrounding the whole with a stockade, protected by block-houses on the angles. The lieutenant commanding one of his vessels not liking the work of building forts, sailed away with all the furs gathered during the summer, went to Yakutat and took on board the agent of that settlement, went to Nuchek and loaded the finest furs that Kuskof had gathered, then lost his ship on Sukli (Montague) Island as he went to sea. Polomoshnoi, the Yakutat agent, and five men were drowned. Doubtless Baranof would have been gratified if the lieutenant, Talin, had also been drowned; his letters do not so mention; but he mourns the loss of 22,000 rubles of his finest furs.¹⁵

The winter was a trying one, for the provisions were poor and scanty. Sea lion and seal meat was the fare for most of the time. Of these they killed 45 sea lions and 250 seals. It was a stormy season and rain fell almost incessantly. Scurvy attacked the men and some died, but with spring and the herring run the rest grew better and no more deaths occurred.¹⁶

With the coming of summer he sailed in the *Olga* to Kodiak, where he first learned of the loss of the "Orel" under command of Talin, and of the loss of the furs. He left Medvednikof in charge at Sitka, at the station which he speaks of as "we intended to call the new fort Novo Arkangelsk, but on the request of the men it was placed under the special protection of the Archistrategos St. Michael."¹⁷

At Kodiak he heard that the coast was strewn with the wreckage of a ship. Various articles were cast up by the sea and finally a capstan was found that was identified as that belonging to the "Phoenix" and then they knew that their long expected supply ship was lost, and with all on board.¹⁸ There would be nothing with

¹³Tikhmenef, I, p. 54; *Zhizneopisanie*, p. 42.

¹⁴During the winter of 1797-98 he fell from a ladder and injured his leg so that he was confined to his bed for three months. Just as he was able to be up, the girl who was keeping his house came in the room with a samovar of hot water, stumbled, and spilled the water on his sore limb, scalding it so badly that he was again bedridden for a month.—Baranof to Larinof, agent at Unalaska, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 119.

¹⁵*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 49.

¹⁶*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 51; Tikhmenef, II, 130-132.

¹⁷Baranof to Rodionof, agent at Nuchek, May 14, 1800. in *Tikhmenef*, II, App., 130. "The fort was consecrated under the name of St. Archangel Michael."—Tikhmenef, I, 83.

¹⁸Baranof to Larionof, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 156.

which to pay his hunters for another year. But furs must be had. He sent out men to hunt sea birds with bright plumage and had the Aleut women to make gay parkas and other articles and when the summer came he paid his hunters in those articles, with the addition of what few stores he had remaining from the old stock. The next year there came to St. Paul's the American ship *Enterprise*, with a cargo of trading goods, and, with furs, they were purchased,¹⁹ and this carried them through another winter.

In May Councillor Banner arrived in a bidarka from Unalaska, having come 500 miles to bring the messages that a charter had been granted by the Russian government to the Russian American Company, that Baranof had been made a stockholder, had been raised to the rank of a nobleman and would be permitted to wear the gold medal of the order of St. Vladimir. Baranof was so rejoiced over the good tidings that he at once donated the sum of 1,000 rubles for the establishment of a school for the children of the Russians and the islanders.

By this message he also learned of the war in Europe and at once secreted his furs, fearing a raid from some vessel of the enemy. On the 21st of June the *Ekaterina* was despatched to Yakutat and Sitka with reinforcements and supplies,²⁰ but it was too late in sailing, for Sitka had already fallen before the attack of the Kolosh (Thlingit) warriors.²¹

On the 24th of June came from Sitka the English ship "Unicorn," commanded by Captain Barber, who had on board the survivors of the massacre of the post of Archistrategos St. Michael. He brought 3 Russians, 2 Aleuts, and 18 Kadyak women, rescued from the garrison left at Old Sitka. He claimed that he had bought the captives at a great expense of goods and time and asked the sum of 50,000 rubles as a ransom.

Baranof was at Afognak when Barber arrived but returned as soon as the news reached him. He found from the stories of the survivors that not only was nothing paid for the release, but that Barber secured most of the sea-otter at the post of which there were over 2,000 in the fur warehouses.²² He finally paid 10,000

¹⁹*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 62.

²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 66.

²¹"The Kolosh call themselves *Thlinkit*, adding to it *An-ton-kou-an*, i. e., people from everywhere, or people from all villages. But from where they receive the name of *Kolosh*, or *Kollozhei*, is not known."—Veniaminof. *Zapiski*, etc., part iii, p. 28.

²²*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 69; *Tikhmenef*, part i, p. 86.

rubles for the freedom of his people, and in addition bought guns and goods to the amount of 27,000 rubles.

This was a hard blow, the loss in men and munitions, in hunters and furs, could not be estimated, and the colony was not in position to endure losses. The situation was most unpromising, but with the magnitude of the difficulties his courage rose to meet them. The post must be reestablished in order to keep the prestige of the company and of the Russian people.

Fortune was now changing for Baranof. Banner had been sent to Unalaska in the sloop "Olga" to secure some supplies and returned safely. From Okhotsk came the brig "Alexander," the first supply ship for five long years, arriving the 13th of September, and on November 1st the brig "Elizabeth" dropped anchor in the harbor under command of Khvostof, a skillful lieutenant of the Royal navy. On these last two boats were more than 120 men, hunters and craftsmen, and supplies of all kinds for the stores. Orders came from the head office of the Company appointing Baranof as Chief Manager of the American Colonies. "*Glavnavo Pravitelya kolonii v' Ameriky.*"²³

With the coming of Spring in 1803 all was bustle and stir at the harbor of St. Paul; Banner was despatched to Unalaska with orders to send a ship to the Seal Islands to take seals, for these islands and the Unalaska station were now under the control of Baranof for the first time; Khvostoff was ordered to Okhotsk with a cargo of fur valued at more than a million rubles; Baranof went to Yakutat in the "Olga" and thence to Sitka to inspect the ruined post.²⁴ Plans were made for the reinstatement of the Russian rule on the islands in the coming year. Kuskof was instructed to build two small boats at Yakutat to use on the expedition, and Baranof returned to Kodiak to complete his arrangements, and assemble his forces.²⁵

At Kodiak was Captain O'Keen, of the American ship "Boston," who asked for a fleet of bidarkas and the Aleuts to man them, for a sea otter hunting voyage along the coast of California, offering

²³By this boat he also received the duplicate bills of lading for the ship Phoenix lost in 1799, and learned that on board the ship was Archimandrite Joassaf, who had gone to Moscow to be ordained a bishop and was returning to the colony. The boat was under command of the ship-builder Shields, who was lost with the rest of the passengers and crew.

²⁴The only passage that I have found in the Russian histories of Alaska that would justify considering the Thlingit people as being head-hunters is that which says: "There they found the mutilated bodies of their companions without heads; they wept over their remains, and hid them in the bosom of the earth."—Khlebnikof, *Materials*, part iv, page 49.

²⁵*Zhizenopisanie*. pp. 74.75.

half of the proceeds for the share of the Company. Baranof accepted and gave him 20 bidarkas and the men under charge of a trusted employe named Shoetzof. The ship left October 26th, sailed to San Diego Bay, California, then to San Quentin in Lower California, secured 1,100 sea otter skins and returned in March.²⁶

In April of 1804 Baranof gathered his forces, despatched 300 bidarkas with over 800 Aleuts under command of Demianenkof, while he sailed with the "Ekaterina" and the "Alexander" for Yakutat on the 4th of the month. At Yakutat Kuskof had ready the two boats ordered the previous year and they were named the "Ermak" and the "Rostislaf." The boats sailed down the coast toward Sitka, Baranof going in at Ledianof (Cross) Sound and hunting with the Aleuts in the passages among the islands, as far as Lynn Canal and then passing down Chatham Strait and through Peril Strait, called *Pogibshie*²⁷ by the Russians, securing 1,500 sea otter.

In the harbor at Sitka was the ship "Neva" under command of Lieutenant Lisianski, the first Russian vessel to circumnavigate the world.²⁸ She had come from Kronstad with a cargo of anchors, cables, guns, provisions, etc., for the use of the colony. Upon reaching Kodiak Captain Lisianski received a message from Baranof asking his assistance in the recapture of the post and he at once proceeded to the harbor.

On the Kekoor, or Katlean's Rock, as the Baranof Hill was called by the Russians, were the homes of the chiefs of the Sitka Kwan, Ska-yout-lelt, Ska-at-a-gech, and Ko-yough-kan, and on the top was a redoubt. Around the hill was the village. The inhabitants abandoned this position and went to the fort at the mouth of Indian River, *Kolosh Reka*, of the Russians,²⁹ situated in what is now the park where the totems are placed.

The Russian ships were brought into the bay facing the Indian fort and after a siege of several days the defenders abandoned their position and retreated to Hoots-na-hoo where there was another stronghold. In an attack upon the fort Baranof was wounded in the arm and several sailors and Aleuts were killed and wounded.³⁰ About

²⁶From 1803 to 1812 nine boats took 16,071 sea otter along the coast of California and on the way between there and Sitka.—*Zhizneopisanie*, pp. 76-77.

²⁷*Pogibshie*, or Destruction Strait, was so named by the Russians on account of the death of over a hundred Aleut hunters during 1799 from eating poisonous mussels while on a hunting trip.—Khlebnikof, in *Materiali*, part iv, page 43; *Zhizneopisanie*, pp. 78-81.

²⁸Tikhmenef, part i, p. 94; Lisianski, *Voyage Round the World*.

²⁹Khlebnikof, in *Materiali*, part iv, p. 42.

³⁰There were 10 killed and 24 wounded.—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 87.

30 Indians were found dead in the enclosure after the retreat.

They began the building of the new fort and the settlement was called Novo Arkangelsk,³¹ or New Archangel. A thousand timbers were squared in the forest by the axes, a storehouse for the supplies was first built, then barracks for the men, and a house for the Manager,³² all surrounded by a stockade of logs. The Neva sailed away to Kodiak for the winter, the Russians cleared away the forest and made the ground into gardens.

On the 10th of June, 1805, the Neva set sail for Kronstad, via Canton, and on board was a cargo of fur, 3,000 sea otter, 150,000 sealskins, and other fur to the value of 450,000 rubles.³³

On the 26th of August into the port came the brig "Maria" and on board was the Chamberlain of the Czar, N. P. Resanof, delegated by the Company to make a tour of the colonies, and invested with special powers. He shared the hardships and the responsibilities of the situation with Baranof during the winter of 1805-6.

Provisions became short and the Am. Ship "Juno" coming into the port was purchased for 68,000 Spanish piastres. She was then sent to Kodiak for dried salmon, sea lion meat, etc., and she made the voyage and returned on the 13th of November, with provisions and bad tidings. The brig "Elizabeth" was wrecked and most of her cargo lost; six bidars loaded with furs sank and the men and furs went to the bottom of the sea; the fort at Yakutat had been destroyed by the Kolosh; a bidarka fleet under Demianenkof, numbering nearly 200 men, had perished in a storm on the ice bound coast off Mt. St. Elias.³⁴

The winter was a miserable one as told in Resanof's letters and reports.³⁵ "The site of the fort was selected on a large rock, or ke-koor, which forms a peninsula in the bay. * * On top of the rock a temporary building has been erected, five fathoms long and three in width, with two rooms and alcoves. In one of the rooms I live and in the other both our ship's captains. * * We all live poorly, but worse than all lives the founder of this place, in a mis-

³¹"Baranof went ashore and ascended a high rock which was sufficiently level on top for the erection of a building, and there hoisted a flag, thus taking possession of the soil in the name of the Russian Government, and named the place the fort of **Novo Arkangelsk.**"—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 83.

³²The first Baranof Castle.—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 88.

³³*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 89.

³⁴*Zhizneopisanie*, pp. 99-100.

³⁵—Resanof to Directors of the Russian American Company, November 6, 1805, in Tikhmenef, II, App., 197 et seq.

erable hut, so damp that the floor is always wet, and during the constant heavy rains the places leaks like a seive."

On shore every one was busy, a wharf and landing was constructed, ways for the building of ships were laid and the keels were laid for an armed brig and a tender. Resanof continues, "Our cannon are always loaded and not only are sentries with loaded guns posted everywhere, but arms of all kinds constitute the principal furniture of our rooms." "The people employed as hunters are quarrelsome, drunkards, and so vicious that any community must call itself fortunate to have got rid of them." "I can tell you that more than once I have found Mr. Baranof in hot tears because the Bostonian Captain who is wintering here, and my Doctor, found only a drunken republic here when the Emperor, as they know, wished to establish his government here and sent me as a plenipotentiary." "The deeply rooted contempt of the upper classes (Naval Officers) for the commercial classes makes all of them play master here." "It is true the Chief Agent holds rank in the civil service, which he has earned by his distinguished services, but the fact that he formerly was a trader is never lost sight of, and to our country's misfortune that means that he is not far removed from a rogue, and thus to obey him appears a humiliation to them." "His brother sent him from Okhotsk, 9 vedras of French brandy and 3 vedras of table wine, they were drunk up. Mr. Kock sent him upon repeated request in the course of three years, two English watches, they were appropriated by officers and publicly worn, saying they were their own, and that they paid for them, and Mr. Baranof, glad to receive the gold watch sent to him by you, did not care to investigate the matter any farther."³⁶

On board the ships under command of the Naval Officers was pandemonium during part of the winter. The best one of the lieutenants in the service, Khvostof, "gets drunk and stays so for 3 months—drinks 9½ vedras of French brandy and 2½ vedras of strong spirits, and get his officers drunk. * * their insults and threats are incredible, they shoot off their cannon at night, all labor on the wharf is delayed on account of the drunkenness of the masters and mates." Midshipman Davidof asked to come ashore, "he could better live on the open beach than on the ship." Orders were given to shut off the liquors from the ships and Khvostof laid a plan to capture Baranof and Resanof,³⁷ but they heard of it and surrounded

³⁶Ibid, pp. 208-220.

³⁷Resanof to Directors, February 15, 1806, in Ibid., pp. 242-250.

the conspirators and disarmed them. When sobered Khvostof came and apologised.³⁸

The continuous insults caused Baranof and his chief assistant, Kuskof, to present their resignations to Resanof, but he refused to accept them and ordered them to return to their duties.

In February, 1805, the supply of provisions became low and Resanof went on the "Juno" to California to purchase breadstuffs. On his way he attempted to enter the mouth of the Columbia, with the view of establishing a settlement at that place. This was the year that Lewis and Clarke reached that point.³⁹

The tender "Avoss" and the brig "Sitka" were turned off the ways at the shipyard. The main countinghouse was transferred from Kodiak to Sitka. The American ships that were coming along the coasts to trade with the Indians were persuaded that it was to their interest to sell their cargoes at the post for furs rather than to attempt to deal with the natives direct. The insubordinate officers were gradually eliminated from the service.

Sea otter were hunted through the sounds by the brigades of Aleuts under convoy of armed sailing vessels. The summer of 1805 a party under Buikadorof went to Khoontzofsky (Chatham) Strait, and to Kinovsky Bay (Pr. Frederick Sound), securing 1645 skins, but they were continually threatened by the Kolosh, who were still hostile and revengeful. One year a party would go to Cape Ommaney, another year to the Bay of Islands or to the sounds. In 1810 Kuskof took a party to Dundas Island but met so much opposition from the Tsimpisien Indians and an American trader who threatened to join the natives against the Ruissians, that he was forced to return after losing 8 Aleut hunters.⁴⁰ He secured 1,400 skins but after this no parties were sent to hunt on the sounds.

Baranof kept looking toward extending his settlements. In 1808 he fitted out the schooner "Nikolai" and the ship "Kadiak" for a hunting trip along the southern coast. Kuskof, with a party of Aleut hunters, was sent with them. The Nikolai was to trade on the Columbia and then return to meet the Kadiak at Gray's Harbor. Somewhere on the harbor she met shipwreck, and the Kadiak after

³⁸When Lieutenant Khvostof became sober he went to Baranof and apologized. Three Aleuts who had heard Khvostof make threats against the Chief Manager thought that he was going there for the purpose of injuring him, so armed with knives they followed and secreted themselves near to protect him in case of need. After the interview was over they were found where they had laid in wait. *Ibid.*, p. 250.

³⁹Resanof to the Minister of Finance, June 17, 1805, in *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁴⁰Khlebnikof, in *Materials*, part iii, p. 7.

waiting for her was not able to enter the harbor and sailed to Trinidad, California, then to Bodega Bay, where he spent the winter with his hunters, securing 1,900 sea otter, and returned to Sitka October 4, 1809.⁴¹

Kuskof's report was so favorable that Baranof at once made preparations for placing a settlement on Bodega Bay which was done by Kuskof in 1812,⁴² at the place known thereafter as Ross, near the bay which they renamed Rumiantzof Bay.

The numerous dissensions among the hunters at the port and their unruly conduct ended during 1809 in a conspiracy headed by a man named Naplavkof. This was promptly suppressed by Baranof and the ringleaders sent to Siberia for trial.⁴³

Baranof still asked to be relieved and to be allowed to return to see about his family and property in Siberia. In 1811 Collegiate Assessor Koch was appointed as an assistant and to take the management in due course of time. He reached Petropaulovsk, on his way to Sitka, and died at that place.⁴⁴ In 1813 on board the "Neva" came round the world Collegiate Councillor Bornovolokof,⁴⁵ and at the very entrance of the harbor of Sitka on a stormy February day the ship was wrecked on Cape Edgecomb and the expected successor was among the lost.

Astor sent ships to trade at Sitka and Baranof bought the cargoes and traded him furs in return. He even sent cargoes of fur to Canton on these vessels to be sold on commission.

The Chief Manager was old and tired but as long as he held the reins of power he could not cease planning for new ventures. He bought both vessels and cargoes that came to Sitka. Some of them received their pay in sealskins for which they went to the Seal Islands. They then went to Canton, sold the fur, bought silks, teas, nankins, etc., and went on around the world to Boston.⁴⁶

Far down to the southward is a group of islands at the cross roads of the Pacific that were in those days known as the Sandwich Islands. Toward these Baranof began to look, and in 1815 he sent Dr. Sheffer, a German, as his agent to look over the ground in order to get a foothold if possible. Sheffer acquired plantations on Attuva and built houses, but owing to Americans and English objecting and

⁴¹Zhizneopisanie, p. 126.

⁴²Zhizneopisanie, pp. 145-46.

⁴³Zhizneopisanie, p. 129.

⁴⁴Zhizneopisanie, p. 145.

⁴⁵Zhizneopisanie, p. 149.

⁴⁶Baranof also tried to open trade with Manila, but his efforts were not successful.—Zhizneopisanie, p. 155.

fomenting trouble it was as Khlebnikof says "begun auspiciously, but ended in a very unhappy manner," and Baranof was compelled to withdraw with a loss of over 200,000 rubles on the part of the Russian American Company.⁴⁷

In July of 1817 the ship "Suvarof" arrived from Russia with supplies for the colonies. Baranof at once began making arrangements for her return trip. November 20th the ship "Kutusof" arrived, having on board a rich cargo of stores, under command of Lieutenant Hagemeister of the Imperial navy. The arrangements for the sailing of the Suvarof were completed, the furs were loaded, and she was ready to clear. Then Hagemeister announced to Baranof that he was commissioned to relieve him as chief manager of the Company, and held the "Suvarof" for three days, until January 14th, to prepare his despatches to the office in St. Petersburg.⁴⁸

The officers of the Russian navy had at last succeeded in supplanting the man who had built the Russian dominion in America. They despised his profession, and him as a merchant, but they were willing to accept his position for a consideration, whether they were able to conduct the business or would fail.

Baranof, with all his losses of ships and cargoes of furs, caused largely by the mismanagement of the naval officers under his command, had always paid a dividend for the Company. At the time of his withdrawal from the management the physical valuation of the goods and furs turned over to his successor at Sitka was 2,500,000 rubles, exclusive of those sent out on the Suvarof.⁴⁹ In that year the amount of fur in Russia in the hands of the Company was 900,000 rubles, and for that year and the next, out of the proceeds of Baranof's management, they paid 7½% dividends. To quote the words of the Auditor Golovin, writing in 1861, "At this time the Company began to decline on account of the want of system in the shipment of furs, and the shipment of provisions in the Company's vessels burdened it with a heavy expense, as the maintenance of the ships cost much and they sailed very slowly. The slow returns did not pay expenses, though the quantity of furs began to increase again, and the goods sent out by the Company were twice as dear as those traded from foreigners in the port. In 1820-21 the earnings were only 4% for each year and in 1822-3 a loss of 286,000 rubles was sustained."⁵⁰

Baranof was in his 72nd year, a strenuous life with its attend-

⁴⁷Zhizneopisanie, pp. 165-67.

⁴⁸Zhizneopisanie, p. 172.

⁴⁹Zhizneopisanie, p. 173.

⁵⁰Golovin's Report, in *Materiali*, part ii, p. 112.

ant hardships had severely taxed a frame naturally strong and wiry but not large; the sudden shock of the relief coming so unexpectedly was severe, but he rose to the occasion and at once began the transfer of the property which was completed in September, 1818. The change from the great responsibility, together with being separated so long from his family in Russia and the severing of all ties connecting him with that country, left him in doubt as to how building a house at the Ozerskoe Redoubt, by the shore of Globokoe Lake, in which to live, when Golovnin persuaded him that he should go to St. Petersburg where he would be a valuable counsellor for the Company and they would care for him in his old age.⁵¹

His wife had died in Kargopol more than 20 years before and his daughter there was married. His son Antipater, born in the colony at Kodiak, had been taken to St. Petersburg by the naval officer, Golovnin, and there died. His daughter at Sitka, a Creole, had married Lieutenant Yanovski, of the ship "Suvarof."

The representations of Golovnin prevailed and Baranof sailed in the Kutusof November 27th, 1818, he was detained at Batavia for 36 days, leaving that place April 12th, 1819. His stay in that tropical climate was fatal, for he was taken on board the ship, ill with a fever, and on the 16th of the month he died and was buried at sea in the Indian Ocean on the next day.⁵²

For nearly twenty-eight years he had been the moving and directing spirit over Russian America. When he came to the colony he found a post at Three Saints Bay, built of alder and plastered with clay and the substations extended only to the island of Kodiak and to Cook Inlet. He left an empire in extent whose outposts were at Ross in California, on the Pribylof Islands and the Kurile Islands. For the Shelikof Company he gathered furs from 1790 to 1799, to the amount of 1,123,600 rubles, and for the Russian American Company between 1799 and 1818 he collected nearly the whole of the amount of 35,000,000 rubles in value.⁵³ The capital of the Company in 1799 was 724,000 rubles. New shares were issued for 515,738.78 rubles and he added profits of 3,190,687 rubles 57 kopeks, besides paying dividends of 3,060,000 rubles, over and above all

⁵¹Zhizneopisanie, pp. 174-75; Tikhmenef, part i, p. 244.

⁵²Zhizneopisanie, p. 177.

⁵³V. N. Berg, *Furs, Historical Review of the Fur Trade*, St. Petersburg, 1823, p. 168.

losses and expenses. He built churches⁵⁴ and established schools. Ten vessels were constructed under his management in the territory of Alaska and four others in Ross. He introduced cattle at Kodiak, Unalaska, Unga, Sitka and Ross. There were 500 head of cattle at Kodiak during his time.⁵⁵ He extended his trade to California, to China and the Sandwich Islands. He gave to the church, the schools, and to his assistants. The Russian Possessions in the New World attained their widest extent under the direction of Alexander Andreevich Baranof.

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⁵⁴The first church in Alaska. "In Kadyak [Kodiak] meantime, a church was being built. Baranof was indefatigable in his efforts to push the undertaking and aid the Archimandrite Joassaf. In a letter he said: 'From my own resources I managed to give 500 rubles, and from various employes collected 500 rubles more.'"—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 33. On March 18, 1795, Joassaf, the archimandrite, wrote to Shelikof, complaining bitterly of Baranof for not building a church.—*Tikhmenef*, II, App., 101. "To Unalaska I have forwarded timber and planks for a chapel and they were taken by Ismailof. There is enough to finish it though some more will be required for the residence of a priest in course of time."—Baranof to Shelikof, May 20, 1795, in *Tikhmenef*, II, App., 93. "In Sitka arrive a priest in 1816 and commenced to perform church service. The building of a church was at once commenced and soon the first building of the kind on the northwest shore of America was completed."—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 170.

⁵⁵Cattle on Kodiak Island.—*Zhizneopisanie*, p. 205.