

De: Serge Plantureux serge@plantureux.it

Objet: мир очень маленький, or a Little Known Chapter of Russian America, Orthodox Community in the Pribilof Islands, Long After the Alaska Purchase

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À: sc@biennaledisenigallia.it

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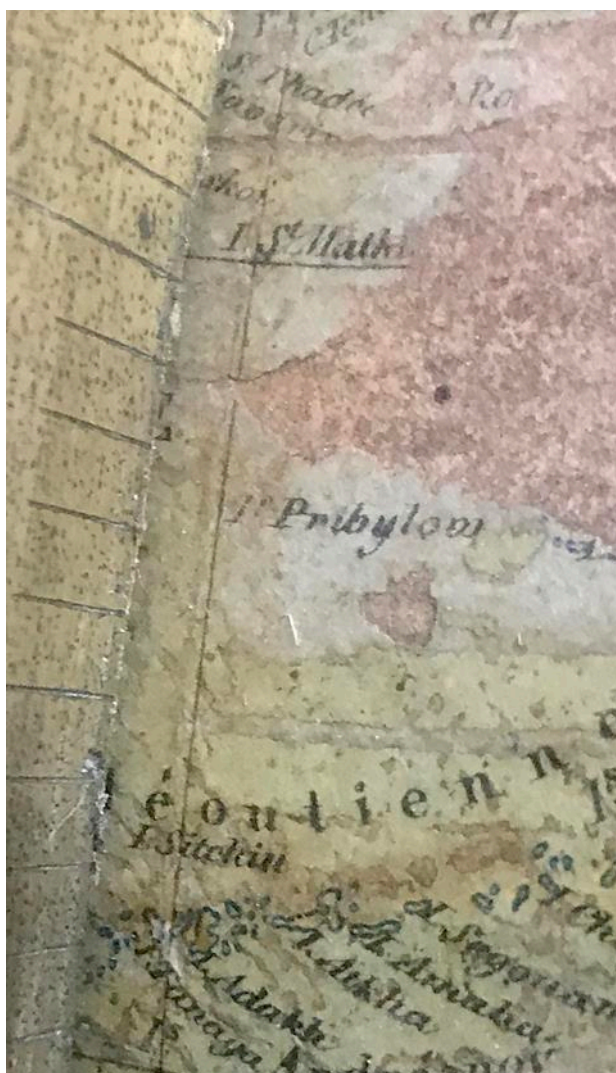
La fotografia e la piu bella delle  
collezioni

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## мир очень маленький

### *It's a Small World, #101*

This month's featured transmission is about a little known persistence of Russian America, an Orthodox community in the Pribilof Islands, long after the 1867 Alaska Purchase, as seen in 1919 by a young paleontologist and fur-seal census-taker G Dallas Hanna (1887-1970)

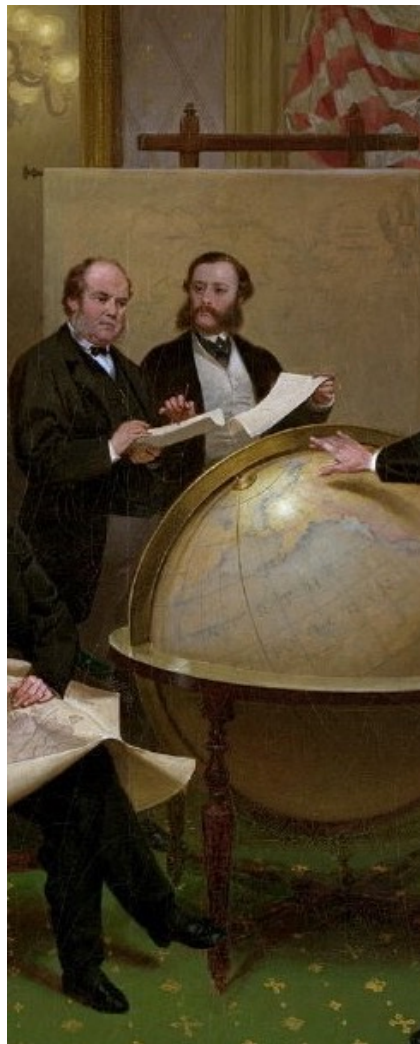




## The Russian Exploration

On roughly 16 July 1742, Bering and the crew of *Sv. Petr* sighted [Mount Saint Elias](#) on the Alaskan mainland; they turned westward toward Russia soon afterward. Meanwhile, Chirikov and the *Sv. Pavel* headed back to Russia in October with news of the land they had found. Beginning in 1743, small associations of [fur-traders](#) began to sail from the shores of the Russian Pacific coast to the [Aleutian islands](#). As the runs from Asiatic Russia to America became longer expeditions (lasting two to four years or more), the crews established hunting- and [trading-posts](#). By the late 1790s some of these had become permanent settlements, especially in the Pribilof islands, in what later became [Russian America](#).

### Russian America





*The signing of the Treaty, March 30, 1867 (detail)*

## **One cottage, 216 log cabins, 23 isolated posts and a large piece of land sold for 7,2 M\$**

Seward told the nation that the Russians estimated that Alaska contained about 2,500 Russians and those of mixed race (that is, a Russian father and native mother), and 8,000 indigenous people, in all about 10,000 people under the direct government of the Russian fur company, and possibly 50,000 [Inuit](#) and [Alaska Natives](#) living outside its jurisdiction. The Russians were settled at 23 trading posts, placed at accessible islands and coastal points. At smaller stations only four or five Russians were stationed to collect furs from the natives for storage and shipment when the company's boats arrived to take it away. There were two larger towns. *New Archangel*, now named [Sitka](#), had been established in 1804 to handle the valuable trade in the skins of the sea otter and in 1867 contained 116 small log cabins with 968 residents. [St. Paul](#) in the [Pribilof Islands](#) had 100 homes and 283 people and was the center of the seal fur industry. After the transfer, a number of Russian citizens first remained in Sitka, but very soon nearly all of them decided to return to Russia. The Aleutian and Métis population of *St. Paul* became the main persistence of the Russian presence.

### **Alaska Purchase**





St. PAUL ISLAND native women



A- Company house.  
 B- Bankhouse,  
 C- Greek catholic church,  
 D- Only firehose on island  
 used as main water line.



A - Chickenhouse,  
 B - Government house (1875)

## Summer Expedition to St.-Paul Island

G Dallas Hanna (1887-1970)

Pribilof Islands, Bering Sea, 1919

*Album with one map, a manuscript table, recent censuses of the seal hord and 68 vintage silver prints, mostly 180x240 mm, several signed in negative, with a printed booklet, Geological Notes on the Pribilof Islands, Alaska, with an Account of the Fossil Diatoms, excerpt from the American Journal of Science,*

September 1919, stamp: "private library of John P torsch"

His first name was G, just that, no period, G Dallas Hanna (1887-1970) worked for the *U.S. Bureau of Fisheries* as Assistant Warden, Teacher, Radio Operator on St. George Island (1913—1914), then Agent, Teacher, Storekeeper, fur-seal census-taker on St. Paul Island (Summers 1913—1919), before becoming paleontologist and curator at the *California Academy of Sciences*, (1919-1970).

This album includes photographs made by Hanna to illustrate his own manuscript, *The Alaska Fur-Seal Islands*, as well as photographs made by others that were collected by Hanna. Images show wildlife on St. Paul and St. George islands including seals, sea lions, and birds. They also depict aspects of the fur-seal census, and sealing operations, including fur-seal harvests, and buildings, and Pribilof Islands native villagers with their orthodox Pope - presented as *Greek Catholic*...

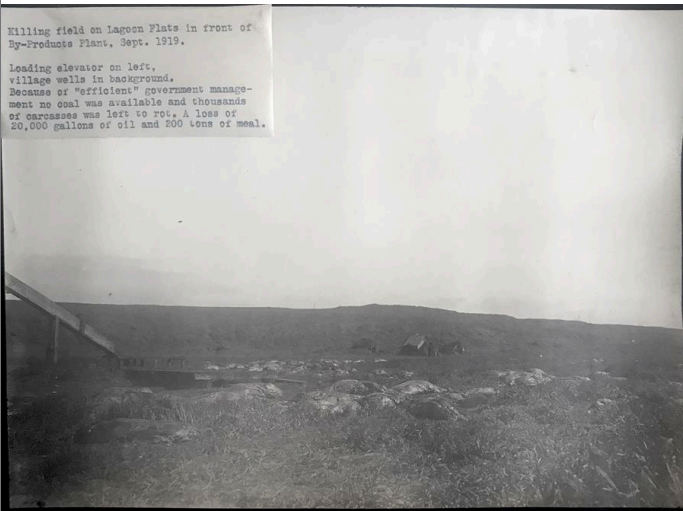
The last images illustrate the hellish activity of the island, mass killing of arctic animals. *Killing fields*, "thousands of carcasses were left to rot..."

Further reading: John A. Lindsay, Gina Rappaport, and Betty A. Lindsay, *Pribilof Islands, Alaska Guide to Photographs and Illustrations*, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, August 2009





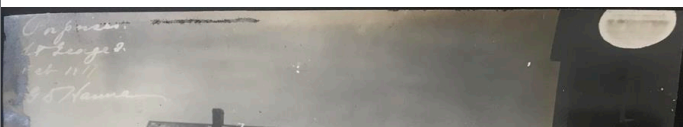
Front view of barn  
with collection of old wagons  
from A.C. Co's time (1870-1890)  
Background:  
left - By-Products Plant,  
right - Wireless station.  
Sept. 1919



Killing field on Lagoon Flats in front of  
By-Products Plant, Sept. 1919.  
Loading elevator on left.  
village wells in background.  
Because of "efficient" government manage-  
ment no coal was available and thousands  
of carcases was left to rot. A loss of  
20,000 gallons of oil and 200 tons of meal.



BY-PRODUCTS PLANT  
(Sept. 1919)  
Ground floor, showing digesters,  
oil-settling tanks, sack-eleva-  
tor etc.



*On page  
at page 2  
at 11  
Name*



Serge Plantureux  
Cabinet d'expertises et d'investigations  
Palazzo Augusti Arsilli  
Via Marchetti 2  
60019 Senigallia

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