

In spite of these negative comments *Indian Families of the Northwest Coast* is easily read and worth reading. Throughout the book the hand and heart of the author are apparent. Her biases are obvious, so too is her humanity. And this has made the difference — she openly shares with us what she saw and heard and what she thinks.

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When Russia was in America, by Mykhaylo Huculak. Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1971. 149 pp. \$6.95.

In 1799 the newly chartered Russian American Company was granted monopoly rights to all Russian territory in North America north of 55° latitude and authorization to extend its control as far south as possible without violating the already established rights of other nations. Under Governor Alexander Baranov, Sitka was established and the Russian flag was planted at Fort Ross in Spanish California. Between the two plantations lay the vast Oregon Country, claimed by both the United States and Great Britain. The vigorous Baranov developed a thriving fur empire the prosperity of which might be measured by the 80,000 sea otters and 1,493,626 fur seals procured between 1797 and 1818. This lucrative trade was threatened by American ships which coasted Russian America, trading directly with the natives. The Russians countered the American encroachment in 1821 by publishing an Imperial ukase which established a *cordon sanitaire* around Russian Alaska for 100 miles from the coastline and reaching as far south as 51° (northern tip of Vancouver Island). The object was to forbid American traders the approaches to the much-prized Russian peltry areas.

Mr. Huculak's detailed research is chiefly concerned with the negotiations which followed the protests of both Great Britain and the United States. As joint occupants of the Oregon Country they vigorously disputed both the Russian territorial claims and the commercial and maritime restrictions of the ukase, but it was abundantly clear to all disputants that no party was in a bellicose mood and that flexibility of approach would be exercised by the two great powers, who had bigger fish to fry in the European theater, and by the new republic, which was busy consolidating an empire in Louisiana.

The amicable working out of an acceptable solution was largely the

work of Pierre de Poletica and Nesselrode for the Russians, John Quincy Adams and Henry Middleton for the United States, and Stratford Canning for the British. According to two separate treaties signed in 1824 and 1825 the Russians withdrew all claims to territory south of $54^{\circ} 40'$ in return for formal recognition of their right to all the coast north of that point. They received also all the territory west of the 141st meridian (present-day Alaska-Yukon boundary), a territory to which the Russians had made no claim based on exploration or settlement. The United States received free trade concessions in Russian Alaska for a period of ten years. The British were granted similar trading rights, and, more important for the Hudson's Bay Company, British subjects were guaranteed the permanent right to travel through the Russian coastal strip to their fur areas in the northernmost Columbia. That concession allowed the British to establish unchallenged control over the fur trade of New Caledonia and to carry out through the Russian panhandle furs which might have gone to the Russian company. In the long run, of course, the United States proved to be the major victor, for she eventually fell heir to the generous boundary provisions granted the Russians, but that is another story that does not concern us here.

The author evinces a special pride in the Ukrainian nationality of Count de Poletica, and not without reason. Still, it was not an unusual practice at the time for strangers to occupy high positions in the imperial undertakings of the great nations. The Hudson's Bay Company was dominated by Scotsmen who held half a continent for London; and Astor's Scotsmen in the Pacific Fur Company might have served the United States equally well had the War of 1812 not destroyed any chance of success for their undertaking. Bering, the explorer who made possible the Russian drive into North America was a Dane, and Baranov, who made Russia a force in the Northwest, was a Finn. For that matter, Nesselrode, the conciliatory Russian foreign minister, was a German.

This worthwhile book suffers from inadequate editing and proof-reading. Was it really necessary to begin the story of the Alaska boundary negotiations with Columbus' landfall? And surely the presence of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Northwest Coast could be accepted without going back to John Cabot's voyage to Labrador. And Joel Colton is not Yoel Colton and was the *American Historical Review* really published in London by Macmillan? If local publishers are to be taken seriously they must offer their authors better editorial service than Mr. Huculak received. Despite these stylistic lapses we owe a real debt to the author for presenting a mine of valuable information about the little known Poletica

and the role he played in negotiating the boundary treaties. Heretofore it was available only in Russian or Ukrainian.

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Aboriginal Man and Environments on the Plateau of Northwest America,
edited by Arnoud H. Stryd and Rachel A. Smith, Calgary: The
Students' Press, 1971. 261 pp.

This small volume containing 17 papers from the third conference on Early Man and his Environments held at Calgary in 1970 is a useful contribution to our knowledge of the prehistory of the interior of British Columbia. The papers range from preliminary reports on recent excavations to discussions and applications of particular archaeological methods and theoretical models. Six of the papers are concerned specifically with archaeological research in British Columbia and report on excavations at Adams Lake, the Arrow Lakes, Anahim Lake, and the Nicola Valley. Two papers cover recent research in Washington and Montana and one is concerned with the Waterton Lakes area in Alberta. Four other papers relate more to paleoecology and geology and of these the report by Brian Reeves on the coalescence of the Laurentide and Cordilleran ice sheets should be read by all archaeologists because of its implications for the peopling of the New World. One paper compares aboriginal burial practices between the Canadian and American Plateau regions, and the others are largely method and theory.

The volume is generally well edited, although there are some incorrect figure references, and some of the illustrations have been reproduced badly. The papers are by and large technical in nature and will appeal to the professional archaeologist more than to the casual reader.

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