

being more clear about the scope and limitations of a book such as this, but in the absence of such a discussion the reader is left to conclude that Thomas' choices represent only his particular and very personal tastes.

In summary, *Songs of the Pacific Northwest* is many things, and it is not many others. It is interesting, it is complex, it is provocative, and it is confusing. Above all, it is idiosyncratic. It is an admirable first contribution to the field of B.C.'s folk songs. One hopes, however, that a second volume, which Thomas mentions in his introduction, will take note and avoid some of the shortcomings of the first. One especially hopes that Thomas will take the time to discuss what a folk song is, what folk music is, what one can — and cannot — learn of folk music of the past, and what one can gather today. A future volume might then avoid some of the comments that the present one prompts. And the reader would derive much more from Thomas' obvious knowledge and experience of the field.

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*The End of Russian America: Captain P. N. Golovin's Last Report, 1862*, translated with introduction and notes by Basil Dmytryshyn and E. A. P. Crownhart-Vaughan. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1979. Pp. xxii, 249. Illustrations, maps, appendices, glossaries, bibliography, and index. \$21.95 U.S. in hardcover.

This title is the fourth volume in the Oregon Historical Society's series of English translations of rare and obscure sources on the North Pacific and its borderlands in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is a laudable choice, being the result of an official fact-finding mission to Russian America at a critical juncture in its history by the Naval Ministry's Captain-Lieutenant Paul Golovin, a career officer and petty nobleman who was sent with State Councillor Serge Kostlivtsov of the Finance Ministry to inspect the territory of the Russian-American Company, a joint-stock concern that monopolized the economy of Russia's only overseas colony. The two men spent nearly six months of 1860-1861 interviewing residents, inspecting establishments and examining records at the colonial capital of New Archangel (Sitka) and vicinity on Baranof Island, St. Paul's Harbour and vicinity on Kodiak Island, St. Nicholas Redoubt and Coal Cove on the Kenai Peninsula, and St. Constantine Redoubt on Nuchek (Hinchinbrook) Island in Prince William Sound.

Golovin's report on the condition of the colony is comprehensive and detailed, although curiously he says nothing about the Russian-Finnish Whaling Company and next to nothing about agriculture. Generally, however, he presents much valuable information on the gamut of Russian American life, and in some instances he sheds welcome light on interesting questions such as the disruption of Russian-Tlingit trade during the 1850s, the suitability of Peter Kostromitinov as the company's commercial agent in San Francisco during the same period, and the profitability of the ice trade with California. At the same time the company was coming under increasing fire at home for allegedly abusing the natives and missing economic and political opportunities, but Golovin's report is remarkably balanced and fair. In fact, his visit seems to have made him think more rather than less of the company and its territory (much to the dismay, I suspect, of the naval officials in St. Petersburg who had entrusted him with the mission). En route to the colony on the company's vessel *Tsaritsa*, Golovin remarked on the death of one of the crew: "the poor seaman, for want of help, passed from this world to the next, *where he will undoubtedly be better off than in the service of the Russian-American Company* [Golovin's italics]." Following his inspection, however, Golovin declared that public health was "quite satisfactory" and the Aleuts had not been reduced to slavery; indeed, "the Company should be given credit for never having abused its authority." And in foreign countries the company enjoyed unqualified trust and respect.

This is not to say that Golovin did not find problems. For example, he concluded that the colonial governor had too much arbitrary power, that the company had been too preoccupied with the fur trade at the expense of other activities, that the Aleuts had been mistreated, and that American poaching and smuggling went unchecked, and he made a number of recommendations that were designed to resolve these problems, including the establishment of a colonial judiciary to temper the governor's authority, the restriction of the company's monopoly to the procuring of sea otters and fur seals at its existing settlements, with others being allowed to engage in business and take up land privately, the replacement of obligatory by voluntary labour for wages on the part of the dependent natives, the shortening or abolition of the term of obligatory service to the company by creoles (crossbreeds), the patrolling of colonial waters by Russian cruisers stationed in the Hawaiian Islands, the opening of two colonial ports to free trade, and the establishment of

faster and easier communication between the colony and the mother country via California.

Overall, however, Golovin's report was sanguine. In fact, so optimistic was he for Russian America's future that after several weeks in New Archangel he asserted flatly that stockholders were "fools" to sell their shares in the company and that if he had the money he would buy as many as possible in the certain expectation of a "large profit." Why, then, did the Russian government in effect reject Golovin's outlook and sell the territory five years later? One reason was the refusal of the company to accept Golovin's recommendations, although it probably could have been pressured by the government to do so. Three other reasons are posited by the translators/editors, namely, the insolvency of the colony, its indefensibility, and the government's preoccupation with European rather than Asiatic Russia in the wake of the Great Reforms of the 1860s. I would disagree. There was really no compelling reason why the peasant, zemstvo and judicial reforms (as well as the later educational and military reforms) could not apply to all of the empire or why the government could not pay attention to European and Asiatic Russia simultaneously; indeed, one of the reforms — the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 — promised to alleviate one of Russian America's chronic weaknesses, namely, its labour shortage. During the Crimean War, moreover, the colony was not indefensible, being neutralized by treaty (and the Allied bombardment of Petropavlovsk was more embarrassing than glorifying). And Russian America had not become an economic liability, as Golovin's report itself demonstrates. In a letter to his mother and sister Golovin records that the value of company shares on the Russian bourse did not fall until he had left for the colony, that is, until the government's loss of confidence in the Russian American venture had been revealed by the dispatch of two high-level inspectors. The loss of financial confidence immediately ensued. Only then did the colony become an economic liability, thanks to official clumsiness or, more probably, design on the part of Grand Duke Constantine, the tsar's brother and the man who had personally selected Golovin for his mission. Constantine, who headed the Naval Ministry, firmly believed that Russia's Pacific future lay in Asia, not America. To him the vast valley of the Amur River — Kropotkin's "Mississippi of the East" — promised much more than remoter and harsher Alaska, which he felt was bound, like the rest of North America, to be overwhelmed by the American steam-roller. So Russian America was sold to the country that would have seized it anyway, and Russia was free to concentrate her limited Pacific

resources on taking advantage of an enfeebled China, just like other European imperialist powers, whose extraterritorial gains, however, were to be much less extensive.

The translators/editors have done their painstaking and tedious job ably and smoothly. A random check revealed few infelicities (e.g., p. 12: "Bering Sea to [the Gulf of] Alaska" should be "Bering Strait to [the] Alaska [Peninsula]"; p. 33: "cabbage . . . has never been grown" should be "cabbage . . . has never headed"; p. 84: "there are also three ice houses each of 3,000 tons capacity" should be "there are three ice houses, also each of 3,000 tons capacity" and "also by hired Aleuts from Kodiak; in New Arkhangel the Kolosh do this work for one paper ruble per day" should be "also by hired Aleuts on Kodiak and hired Koloshes at New Archangel for one paper ruble per day"; p. 97: "freighters" should be "chartered ships"; pp. 102-103: "American-Russian Trading Company" should be "American-Russian Commercial Company"). Inconsistencies are likewise minimal (e.g., Ferdinand von Wrangell but Ivan Furuhelm [Johan Furuhjelm], Kodiak and Sitka but New Arkhangel and Kuskovym, Russian[-]American Company but R. A. K., Kolosh natives but Koloshenko Archipelago, Muskovite, and Serebriannikov or Serebrennikov Bay?). Typos are rare (e.g., p. 21: "condered," p. 80: "commitments," p. 93: "drunkenness," p. 119: "cemetary," and p. 234: "Sitak Island"). The offset printing from typescript is economical but sometimes sloppy, particularly in the bibliography, where letters frequently overlap. The book is lavishly illustrated, but many of the views are post-Russian, and the maps are poorly reproduced. There are eighteen useful appendices (mostly economic tables), which comprise one-third of the volume.

Anyone who is seriously interested in Russian America will derive a great deal from this prime source and be indebted to Basil Dmytryshyn and Sherry Crownhart-Vaughan and the Oregon Historical Society for making it accessible.

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