

The First Chapter in Alaskan Lutheranism:
Russian America

Paul A. Ibisch
Church history A
April 15, 1981

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library
11831 N. Seminary Drive. 65W
Mequon, Wisconsin

Acknowledgments

I owe an immeasurable debt of thanks to Prof. Toivo Harjunpaa of Pacific University, Berkley, and Mr. Hugo Makinen of Siirtolaisuusinstituutti, Helsinki, whose articles and correspondence let me have access to otherwise unattainable Finnish records; to Rev. Jaakko Launikari, general secretary of the office of foreign affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, who put me in touch with the Institute on Migration and other valuable documents; to Rev. Joel W. Lundeen, associate archivist of the LCA, for researching their archives for me; to Rev. John Lindsay, former pastor of the presently vacant Sitka Lutheran Church, LCA, for setting me straight about a number of topics; to Rev. David Laabs, pastor of Grace Ev. Lutheran Church, WELS, for present Sitka resource helps; and to the many other people who were willing to correspond with me. These people were my eyes and ears in researching areas which I would otherwise have been unable to cover.

Today while casually browsing through a Sitka Visitors Bureau pamphlet under things to see, one's eye might catch this notice,

The Sitka Lutheran Church was the first protestant church established in Alaska and possibly the first on the Pacific Coast. It was preceded only by the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1839....¹

A Lutheran church in Alaska already by 1839 is pretty hard to even imagine. That would have been during the Russian occupation of Alaska, and the harsh prohibitions against conversions to any other religion besides the Russian Orthodox is a fact of history. If this notice in the tourist guide is true, where did this Lutheran church come from and who was it serving in Alaska?

I. The Coming

The story of Lutheranism in Alaska is only a small segment of the history of Lutheranism in general. As such, its roots can be traced from that "sola gratia, sola fide, sola scriptura" statement of the Christian faith that issued from Germany in the 1500s. From Germany the message spread through Europe. Largely due to the efforts of men like Olavus Petri and Martinus Skytte, the Reformation was allowed to enter the land that was to become the nation of Finland. When Mikael Agricola became bishop of Turku, the die was cast that would eventually make Finland an officially Lutheran land. This Lutheran nation of Finland

was to be the basic link between Lutheranism and Russian America.

During its early formative years, Finland had close ties with the kingdom of Sweden by way of religion, Swedish colonization and the Swedish language which officially served the role of "lingua franca." But, during the Age of Napoleon all of this changed. Czar Alexander I, perhaps frustrated by Napoleon's desire to take the Balkan area for himself, seized Finland during the war of 1808-09. His acquisition was sealed by alliance with the Swedish Crown Prince Charles John (Bernadotte) in 1812, an alliance which guaranteed Norway to Sweden and Finland to Russia.

At this point, the lot of the Finns changed from that of second class citizens under the thumb of Sweden to autonomous citizens of a Grand Duchy under the czar. As part of their agreement in 1809, the Russians pledged to honor the native Lutheran faith and the privileges of the various estates as well as promising to convene the ancient Finnish Diet. This privileged position was further reinforced with the ascension of Nicholas I.

"It is not necessary to speak Russian," he said, "to serve the sovereign loyally...." Viewed from the lofty perspective of the imperial throne, all the nations resting at its foot, both large and small, appeared equally estimable; and this ideological basis provided a favorable point of departure during the autocratic period for the creation of close relations marked by mutual confidence between the Finns and Russians. Members of the Finnish class entered the service of Russia in a steady stream, seeking in the imperial realm opportunities to rise to the highest levels of society, where, in their own small native land there was little room.²

The Finns were one of the few subject people who were

viewed as being entirely loyal and trustworthy. Their Lutheran pastors had successfully preached peace and order during the July revolution of 1830, and a Finnish unit had taken part in crushing the Polish rebellion. For this reason the Lutheran church not only was tolerated, but was allowed to set up a consistory in St. Petersburg to serve the needs of Finns and other Baltic peoples loyal to the czar. Sadly enough, though many of the laity were resolute about their faith, the Finnish state church had imbibed much of the spirit of the Age of Enlightenment. Perhaps the Russian Orthodox church did not even feel threatened by the privilege of the Lutherans.

Even as Russian campaigns lead to adding the Finnish territory in the west, Russia was expanding eastwardly. In 1574 Ivan the Terrible had conquered Siberia. During the time of Peter the Great, they had made the peninsula of Kamchatka a part of their permanent possessions. On July 15, 1741, Vitus Bering, a Dane in the employ of Russia, landed on the southern coast of Alaska. Exploration and colonization soon followed. Finland and the Baltic states provided Russia with people who had the skills necessary for Russian expansion in this area. With carpenters, shipwrights, sailors, and officers for the navy and merchant marine, it is no wonder Russia viewed the Finns as valued citizens of their Russian America.

From 1823 on, the Finns made up a significant number of the men entering the service of the Russian American Company. According to statistics published by Gov. von

Wrangell in 1823 possibly a fifth or more of the white population were Finns from a total of 406 Europeans in Sitka and 246 in other settlements.³ The Lutheran faith was well represented in Alaska. Of the governors of the Russian colony, Ferdinand P. von Wrangell, a Baltic baron from Estonia; Arvid Adolph Etholen, son of a town councilman from Helsinki; Johan Hampus Furuhjelm, the son of the Finnish State Councillor; and their wives were all Lutherans. Each of the men served for five year terms; von Wrangell, 1830-35; Etholen, 1840-45; and Furuhjelm, 1859-64.⁴ Also the first wife of Prince Dimitri Maksoutov, the last Russian governor, was Lutheran and her grave today is a landmark in the city of Sitka where the Lutheran cemetery once stood.

During the early years of the Sitka settlement, then named New Archangel, the Lutheran faith did not fare too well. The Lutherans that came were often young single men who served the settlement by some office or trade. There was no spiritual supervision for them and frontier life was hard on their spiritual life. Some of these men married native women who had been converted to the Orthodox religion. Even though the man did not have to convert to be married, all the children raised in such a family were by law brought up in the Orthodox faith. So dominant was the Russian Orthodox church, that one of the acting governors by the name of Rosenberg, who had been Lutheran, was suppose to have been received into the Orthodox faith during his time of service in the Russian American Company.⁵

As late as the governorship of von Wrangell, no steps toward organizing a Lutheran congregation had been taken. Baron von Wrangell, though nominally Lutheran, did not become actively involved with his faith until late in life. He was concerned about the moral life in the Sitka settlement and warmly welcomed Father Veniaminov in 1830. This industrious priest promptly transformed Sitka into the hub of the Russian Orthodox missionary efforts.

In one sense von Wrangell also furthered the Lutheran cause, in that after moving from chief manager to director of the Russian American Company, he secured the appointment of his deputy assistant manager as governor. Captain Etholen became governor of the colony in December of 1838. He had been one of the first Finns to enter the service of the Russian American Company and had arrived in 1818. With the exception of Alexander Baranov, the first governor, no governor would exceed Etholen's years of service in Alaska either in length or in significance.

II. The Organizers

While the newly appointed governor was visiting his family in Helsinki during the early months of 1839, he met Margaretha Sundvall, an outstanding young lady who was most attractive and well-educated. Her father was a prominent judge from Oulu in the north of Finland. After only a few weeks the couple celebrated their engagement and were wed in June of that year.⁶

The governor's wife, then twenty-four years old, was

a deeply religious person with pietistic leanings. She would not have considered living in a strange land for five years without spiritual guidance and the ability to worship in a church of her own faith. For this reason Etholen negotiated with the government and the Russian American Company to provide the Lutherans with a pastor of their own.⁷ The governor's wishes were met with the company providing the pastor's salary and leaving the choice of a man up to the governor.

A suitable candidate, the Rev. Uno Cygnaeus, was secured on April of 1839 on the recommendation of Prof. C.R. Sahlberg under whom Cygnaeus studied zoology and botany before beginning his theological studies. Uno Cygnaeus was born in 1810 at Hämeenlinna to a family well known for producing clergymen. Cygnaeus himself at first desired to be a medical doctor and received his masters in 1837, but partly because of a lack of funds he discontinued his studies. He pursued theology at Helsinki at a time when a form of rationalism called "neology" colored the teaching. He perhaps was less influenced by this theology than his two successors. After spending two years as an assistant pastor and prison chaplain in Viipuri, as well as being offered 2,500 rubles a year, free housing, a male servant, etc. for a five year term in Alaska, Cygnaeus agreed to become the first Lutheran pastor in Alaska.⁸

The Nicolai left Helsinki on September 12, 1839 to begin a long voyage around the Cape of Horn to Alaska. Among the passengers were Gov. and Madame Etholen, Pastor

Cygnaeus and about a dozen other Finns for whom services were regularly held during the trip. Among the cargo was everything the consistory in St. Petersburg felt was necessary for the establishment of a congregation: Bibles, New Testaments, and religious tracts in Finnish, Swedish, and German; candlesticks; and a large painting to be placed above the altar in a church. Before docking in Sitka on May 12, 1840, Rev. Cygnaeus had performed a wedding and baptized the Etholen's first child, Adolph Edward.

The day after the Nicolai docked, the young pastor went to meet his congregation,

I went to the worker's barracks and some twenty or thirty Swedes and Finns gathered around me and rejoiced at my coming; this was a very pleasant occasion.

During the next three months Cygnaeus held informal meetings with small groups in his apartment. The moral and spiritual condition of the residents of Sitka at the beginning of Etholen's governorship and Cygnaeus' pastorate was deplorable. Excessive drinking, heavy gambling, and living side by side with the native Tlingits had largely destroyed the moral fabric of the settlement. While preparing for Holy Communion shortly after arriving, Cygnaeus lamented,

Some of the participants didn't know how to read at all and they didn't have the slightest notion of what religion meant.... I took them in for a few evenings and endeavored to plant in them some idea of the sacred rites they were to take part in, but I noticed little to be achieved in this respect.¹⁰

Although Cygnaeus may not have socially felt very close to the high standard of Russian etiquette the

Etholens maintained, their pious devotion and dedication to the Lutheran faith made them invaluable contributors to the church. By August of 1840, arrangements had been made for the first regular church service. One of the larger rooms in the governor's residence was fitted and furnished as a chapel. The fourteenth Sunday after Trinity, August 23, 1840, the first formal service was held. The following Sunday was a communion service which Madame Etholen records in her diary as a personally joyful event. The Etholens were not shy about talking to their pastor about the content of his sermons, a trait that sometimes irritated Cygnaeus, but one which also may have helped his preaching. Between their comments and the sort of Biblical instruction Cygnaeus had to give in these circumstances, there was a noticeable change in Cygnaeus' sermons. Their viewpoint changed from one of neology to a solidly, Biblical view. Many of his sermons have survived.

Their content revolves around the Christian message of salvation and the fruit of the Christian faith as an inwardly and outwardly blameless life--based as they were on the appointed liturgical scripture texts, according to Lutheran custom.¹¹

Cygnaeus as well as his successors found it beneficial to extend catechetical instruction on a regular basis to the adult members of the congregation. Each communicant had to declare his intentions to receive the Sacrament days in advance and was then examined on the Catechism. Those that passed gathered on Friday evening for a service of public confession and absolution. Although Communion occurred infrequently, the preparations for it were

considerably more careful than present practices.

The preaching duties of the pastor were quite interesting in that the congregation was multilingual. One Sunday the sermon would be in Finnish, the next Sunday, Swedish, but if there were five Sundays in a month, the fifth would be in German. The liturgy and hymnal for the German services was the one used in the consistorial district of St. Petersburg and considerably different than those used by the Finns and Swedes. On the other hand, the Swedish and Finnish liturgy was the same while both used very different hymnals. Nor was the pastor confined to just serving the needs of the Sitka group. Cygnaeus also made trips to fellow believers in the southeastern islands of Alaska, Kodiak, the Aleutian and sealislands of the Bering Strait, and even went as far as the Kuriles near Japan.

In spite of a number of drawbacks, the congregation grew. The exact numbers are difficult to establish because of conflicting testimonies. By the end of 1840 Cygnaeus reported his membership as 90, and by the end of 1844 there were between 130 and 203 registered Lutherans in Sitka of which at least 130 were in Cygnaeus' church.

One of the drawbacks that faced the Lutherans was Father Veniaminov who by now had been consecrated Bishop Innocent, the First Bishop of Sitka, and would eventually rise to become Metropolitan of Moscow. Already in 1839 Gov. Etholen had gotten approval from the Russian American Company to donate the land and pay for the building of

a Lutheran church structure. But Bishop Innocent would not have a sectarian church in Sitka especially as it would be only a half block away from where he was planning to build his cathedral. With his influence he managed to block the construction.

It was not until 1843 that Etholen managed to work out a compromise with the bishop. The bishop would allow the church to be built, but the new plans called for the exterior to look like a large, one-story building. An article in the "Alaskan Weekly" of 1890 describes the building and its furnishings,

Although the outside of the church was humble in appearance, the interior was richly decorated. It contained an altar, decked with valuable lace and was further adorned by an oil painting of the Transfiguration.... The space in front of the altar separated from the auditorium by a velvet-topped balustrade edged with fringed gold and silver, was richly carpeted. From the ceiling were pending two gilt chandeliers of fine workmanship, and as is generally found in Lutheran Churches, it contained the fine organ which is now on exhibit.... The main body of the church was furnished with a small¹² chancel and comfortable seats for the congregation.

It also housed a 700 volume theological library which Gov. Etholen had acquired for Cygnaeus' use and a meeting room for smaller groups. Of all the things accomplished during the five year stay of Cygnaeus and the Etholens, the dedication of the new church was the most personally gratifying for both pastor and governor. The dedication of the church occurred on the nineteenth Sunday after Trinity in 1843 and Pastor Cygnaeus addressed a "standing room only" crowd.

Cygnaeus, though quiet and studious, gradually won the confidence of most of the Lutherans in the community.

During his stay he performed three baptisms, two weddings, five confirmations and buried fourteen of his parishioners. In May of 1845, the Etholens and Cygnaeus bade farewell to what many a visitor during this time had come to call the "Paris of the Pacific." Among those at the farewell was Bishop Innocent who had come to respect the Lutherans and even expressed the hope that a new Lutheran pastor would soon come to take Cygnaeus' place.¹³ Cygnaeus went on to become the organizer and father of the Finnish elementary school, and Gov. Etholen became a vice-admiral and an influential member of the Russian American Company's directorate.

III. The Caretakers

In July of 1845, Rev. Cygnaeus met Rev. Gabriel Plathan in Ohotsk, the one returning to St. Petersburg, the other on his way to assume his new duties in Sitka. The new pastor was from a line of cantors in the rural parish of Saarijärvi. He too had a good voice and a love for music. He had been a student at Helsinki and was ordained in 1843. Now he had passed the required examinations and was close to the end of an almost nine month overland journey from St. Petersburg to the Pacific coast. The meeting of the two pastors no doubt aided a reasonably smooth transition.

After only a few months vacancy, the parish returned to normal with Rev. Plathan guiding it. His ministry lasted for eight years and was closely patterned after his predecessor's

term. But unlike his studious predecessor, he was extremely sociable. Not only could he be seen at the obligatory social functions at the governor's house, but hardly a day passed when he didn't visit the officer's club. There he developed a passion for gambling at which he found he was quite good, and regularly recorded his winnings in his diary. He also recorded periodic resolutions to stay away from the club,

November 17, 1847: "...it occurred to me that I too, should use more worthily the time of grace which God gives me...that I might become, with God's help, worthier of the calling I have."¹⁴

Most of his days appear filled with social visiting, seeing the company's doctor, Frankenhauser, almost every day. This doesn't mean that he shirked his sermon preparations. In fact he spent a great deal of time laboring over very lengthy sermons which he delivered from his manuscript. He was not a natural preacher, and filled his diary with merciless self-criticism, especially if the service had to be done in German. In spite of early popularity, Plathan's parishioners gradually faded from the pews and the remarks about poor church attendance are frequently noted in his diary.

During Plathan's ministry in Sitka, the European traffic through Sitka greatly increased. Many captains and officers were his guests while their ships were in port. By the end of Plathan's term a new group of Finnish visitors began to make their stops in Sitka: the crews of the Russian-Finnish Whaling Company. The company had

been organized in 1850 and visited Sitka in November of 1852.

Like Cygnaeus, Rev. Plathan made it a point to visit Lutherans in outposts and other communities in Alaska. Unlike Cygnaeus, he did not enjoy the advantage of having a governor of the Lutheran faith. His ministry was marked by a decline in overall church attendance, a fact over which Plathan agonized. Though having some personal flaws, he was certainly not vain and was sincere in his pastoral efforts. He applied for a return home in June of 1852, but probably did not leave until the spring of 1853.

The third and last of the Lutheran pastors in Russian America was Georg Gustaf Winter who served between twelve and thirteen years in the Alaskan field. He was the son of a Lutheran pastor at the rural parish of Juva in eastern Finland. Following his training in Helsinki, he was ordained in 1847. When Sitka became vacant he was accepted as Plathan's successor. He arrived in Sitka on July 25, 1853 aboard the Finnish whaler, Turku.

Though his tenure was the longest of the Lutheran pastors, it is also the most obscure because of a lack of any record keeping. The Lutheran congregation has been estimated during this time to number between 120 and 150, but with occasional influxes of whalers, the number was not stable. He too made at least one trip to visit Lutherans in outlying areas of Alaska. He did enjoy the friendship of Johan Hampus Furuhjelm, who when Winter first arrived

was one of the naval officers and later rose to be governor of the colony. Winter also presided over the funeral of Princess Maksoutov, a lady of German-English ancestry who retained her Lutheran faith. She was the first wife of Prince Maksoutov, who became interim governor during the sale of Alaska to the United States.

Rev. Winter did not stay in Sitka until the end of the Russian period. It seems that due to poor health, he was forced to leave around 1865. He was back in St. Petersburg by March of 1866.¹⁵ From there he went on to be a prison chaplain in eastern Finland. The most memorable recorded action of his will be noted in the concluding section.

IV. The Remnant

Quite a number of reasons can be assigned to the selling of Russian America to the United States. Politically Russia had just seen the superior force of the British navy during the Crimean War. Russian interests in Alaska could not be guaranteed in the event of renewed hostilities with Britain. It would be better if the land were controlled by the Americas who were at odds with Great Britain at this time, than for it to fall into the hands of the British. Besides such a deal was hoped to strengthen the diplomatic ties between Russia and the U.S.

At the same time, the Russian American Company and the Russian-Finnish Whaling Company had decimated the seal

and sea otter population while market prices for the pelts declined. The government was more and more reluctant to bail out businesses that were no longer profitable. Alaska had become a burden to Russia which was already suffering under a weakened economy.

Finally the Russian ambassador to Washington, Baron Eduard de Stoeckl, was commissioned to negotiate the sale of Alaska to the United States. Secretary of State, William Steward, negotiated for the U.S. After prolonged talks, Czar Alexander II cabled his approval and at 4:00 A.M., March 30, 1867, a treaty was signed.

With this action, the members of the Lutheran church in Sitka were faced with a number of dilemmas. Their pulpit had been vacant for nearly two years, and the numbers of people who remained loyal to the congregation dwindled rapidly. With the impending withdrawal of the Russian American Company and the Russian-Finnish Whaling Company, what was going to be the future of those that remained? The U.S. government offered the residents of Russian America a three year grace period during which they had to either return home or become U.S. citizens. The overall outlook was not optimistic.

To complicate matters for the remaining members of the Lutheran church, the Rev. J.O. Rainer, a Methodist minister, entered the scene along with the U.S. occupation troops. In a dispatch dated Oct. 17, 1867, a special correspondent of the Alta California newspaper records this information,

The next day, October 13, was the American Sunday. The day was drizzly till late in the afternoon. The Lutheran church in town has had no pastor for two years, and permission was given to Rev. Mr. Rainer, the army chaplain, to hold services there in the afternoon. It is not so large and pretentious an edifice as the Greek church, but has pews after the English fashion, an organ, and an air of neatness and comfort. The occasion was worthy of note. It was the first service ever held by an American clergyman in Alaska. The audience was typical of the mixed population of the region. There were eleven Americans, fifteen Finland Russians, and, more numerous than both, the dusky natives of the island. Though catching not an idea from the words uttered, they seemed to appreciate the event as one of moment--the beginning of an era in the history of the country. The discourse had for its text the words "Worship God." "Today," said the preacher, "we can say that the influence of Luther has encompassed the world, crossing both continents, it now unites in one faith and practice men of diverse origin, habits, and culture." The speaker alluded to the important change which was soon to occur in the government of the country. He felt that he uttered the sentiment of the American people when he extended the hand of fellowship, heartfelt and sincere, to the residents of the territory.... He believed that between them there would be a generous and prevailing harmony; and that under the guidance and worship of the same God, aided by the influence of free schools and republican institutions, there was a prosperous future awaiting Alaska.¹⁶

Rev. Rainer had ambitious plans to buy the Lutheran church and incorporate a community Protestant church. The newspaper in town picked up on this idea, reporting on May 1, 1869 that the property had been purchased by subscription.¹⁷ Whatever really happened is a matter of conjecture as Rainer left Sitka on October 30, 1869, the church remained in Lutheran hands, and whatever following Rainer had soon disintegrated.

What is known is that Prince Maksoutov, acting governor of the colony, made every effort to make things

easier both for the incoming administration and for those who wished to stay in Sitka. Even though nothing was specifically said about continued ownership of the Lutheran church property in the treaty, about a week after the Oct. 18, 1867 transfer, both acting representatives of the two nations signed a "Protocol of Transfer" which included this paragraph,

This is to certify that the House No. 33 with the lot of ground attached to it, as marked on the plot annexed and made part of the protocol of Transfer, was built by the Russian-American Company for the use of the members of the Lutheran Church in New Archangel, Sitka, and that they are entitled to the use of the same for church purposes forever. In witness whereof I have set my hand and seal of the Governor of the Russian Colonies in America this fourteenth day of October, 1867.

(signed) P. MAKSOUTOFF, Governor of Russian Colonies
in America.

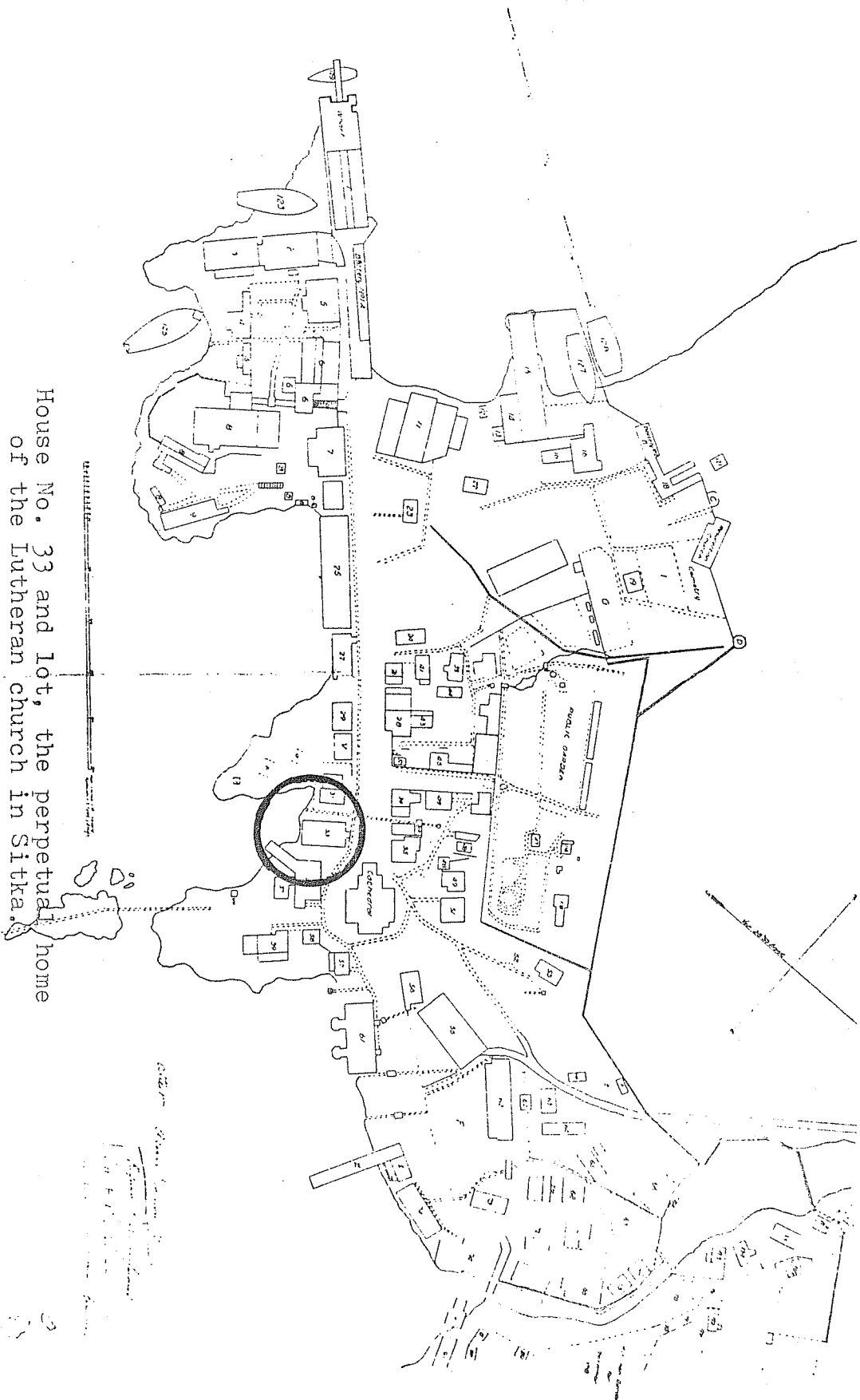
Approved (signed) ALEXIS PESTCHOUROFF, Russian Com-
missioner;
LOVEL H. ROUSSEAU, U.S. Commissioner.¹⁸

On Nov, 14, 1867, the congregation did meet to consider what should be done with the movable property of the church. The majority's decision was to sell it or send it back to Finland and St. Petersburg, so we have the notice,

Upon transfer of the territory to the United States, Prince Maksoutoff shipped all the valuable moveable belongings of the church to the consistory of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.¹⁹

This action was officially protested by seven dissenters on Nov. 15, 1867: Joseph Lugabil, A. Belitz, K. Asher, A. Lankermann, O. Osche, A. Bahrd, and A. Hildenhage.²⁰

At this point many would close the book on the Lutheran faith in Alaska. One that did just that was Rev.



House No. 33 and lot, the perpetual home of the Lutheran church in Sitka.

MAP OF SITKA — OCTOBER, 1867

- A. Battery No. 1.
- B. Battery No. 2, Valaskian Battery.
- C. Blockhouse No. 1.
- D. Blockhouse No. 2.
- E. Blockhouse No. 3.
 - 1. Warehouse.
 - 2. Shop and Store.
 - 3. Subsistence Storehouse.
 - 4. Tannery for Furs.
 - 6. Barracks, three stories.
 - 7. Office Building, two stories.
 - 8. Governor's House.
- 9. Wash and Bath House
- 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 22, and 23. Dock Yard and Buildings.
- 16. School Building.
- 18. Market for Indians.
- 19. Lime Kiln.
- 20. Unfinished Barracks.
- 25. Bakery, Joinery, etc.
- 61. Officers' Lodgings, two stories.
- 66. Laundry.
- 74. Sawmill.
- 75. Tannery.
- 76. Unfinished Bath House
- 77. Water Flour Mill.
- 96. Aleutian Dwellings.
- 102. Bishop's House, two stories.
- 103. Hospital, two stories.
- 116, 117. Arbors on Public Gardens.
- 118. Powder Magazine.
- 121. School Building for Indians.
- 122. Observatory on Japanese Island.
- 123. House for Observer, Wharf, Garden, Hotbeds, etc. Cathedral of St. Michael, Church of the Resurrection (Kotoshan Church).
- 129. Hulk and Movable Bridge.

Winter. Sometime around 1870 inquires were made to the Finnish Missionary Society by Hasselquist and Fritschel, well known American Lutheran leaders, about sending a Finnish clergyman to Sitka. The society consulted Pastor Winter in 1871 and upon his recommendation that there were no longer Lutherans in Sitka, the matter was dropped.

Reluctantly, the story of this paper must at this point come to a close. It is the fading rather than the slamming shut of a chapter of Alaskan Lutheran history, for the truth is, the Lutheran faith continued. The Lutheran church over the years gradually fell into disrepair. It was vandalized, used as a meat shop and a joiner's workshop, and finally in 1889 a grand jury and Judge Lafayette Dawson ordered it to be pulled down.²¹ In 1890, there was still a board of trustees from the Lutheran congregation who finally carried out the order. Following that, no records remain of the faith. It is not until 1940 that any effort at reconstituting a congregation was made in Sitka. Here an interesting note arises. A descendant of A. Bahrd, one of the minority dissenters in 1867, became a member of the new Lutheran congregation. But that story belongs to another chapter in Alaskan Lutheranism.

End notes

1. Sitka Visitors Bureau, "A Sitka Welcome" (Sitka, Alaska, 1979), p. 11.
2. Eino Jutikkala and Kauko Pirinen, A History of Finland (New York, 1974), p. 196.
3. Toivo Harjunpaa, "The Lutherans in Russian America," Pacific Historical Review (May, 1968), p. 126.
4. Clarence C. Hulley, Alaska: 1741-1953 (Portland, 1953), p. 384.
5. Harjunpaa, op. cit., p. 126
6. Ibid., p. 128.
7. The original diary of Madame Etholen is in the library of Abo Academy, Finland.
8. Cygnaeus' large correspondence is in the Finnish State Archives.
9. Hugo L. Makinen, "Uno Cygnaeus in Old Sitka, Alaska" (article sent in correspondence), p. 1.
10. Ibid., p. 2.
11. Harjunpaa, op. cit., p. 133.
12. Makinen, op. cit., p. 137.
13. Harjunpaa, op. cit., p. 137.
14. Ibid., p. 139.
15. Winter was decorated in St. Petersburg by the government for his service in Alaska.
16. Quoted in a letter from the U.S. Dept. of the Interior, dated April 11, 1957, on file in the LCA archives. Taken from House Executive Documents, 40th Congress, 2nd Session, Vol. 11 and 13.
17. From the "Alaska Times," April 30, 1869.
18. Christian H. Schaap, "Historical Sketch of Evangelical Lutheran Church at Sitka," The Alaskan (Sitka, Aug. 9, 1890), p. 239.
19. Makinen, op. cit., p. 10.
20. From State Building in Sitka, Old Records, Book I, p. 391.
21. F. Eppling Reinartz, "More Gold in Alaska," The Lutheran (Feb. 12, 1941), p. 7.

Supplemental Reading

- Bancroft, H.H. History of Alaska: 1730-1885 (The Works of Hubert Howe Bancroft, Vol. XXXIII). San Francisco: A.L. Bancroft and Company, Publishers, 1886.
- Chevigny, Hector. Russian America. New York: Viking Press, 1965.
- De Armond, R.N. Early Visitors to Southeastern Alaska: Nine Accounts. Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1978.
- Gibson, James. Imperial Russia in Frontier America. New York: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Harjunpaa, Toivo. "Education and Schools in Russian America," article received in correspondence, 19^o1.
- Harjunpaa, Toivo. "Lutheranism in Russian America," Pacific Historical Review, Vol XXXVII, No. 2 (May, 1968).
- Holmio, Armas K. E. "The Beginnings of Finnish Church Life in America." The Faith of the Finns (R.J. Jalkanen, edit.). Michigan State University Press, 1972.
- Hulley, Clarence C. Alaska: 1741-1953. Portland: Binfords & Mort, Publishers, 1953.
- Jackson, Sheldon. Facts about Alaska, its People, Villages, Missions, Schools. New York: Woman's Board for Home Missions, 1894.
- Jutikkala, Eino, and Pirinen, Kauko. A History of Finland. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974.
- Maakestad, J.L. (ed.) The Lutheran Church in Alaska. Anchorage: Ken Wray's Print Shop, Inc., 1978.
- Makinen, Hugo L. "Uno Cygnaeus," article received in correspondence, 1981.
- Reinartz, F. Epling. "More Gold in Alaska." The Lutheran, Vol. XXIII, No. 20 (Feb. 12, 1941).
- Teichmann, Emil. A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868. New York: Argosy--Antiquarian Ltd., 1963.
- The minutes of the ULCA Board of American Missions and Ecclesia Plantanda from 1940 on.