

*Treaty of 1825—Correspondence Respecting the Boundary between Russian America (Alaska) and British North America.*¹

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The correspondence contained in the following paper is an interesting contribution to the inner history of the negotiations that culminated in the signing of the Treaty of 1825 and which determined the boundary between Alaska and Canada. For a proper understanding of these documents a brief statement of the occurrences prior to February 1825, is necessary. Anyone desirous of further information should consult the Case, Counter-case and Appendices of "His Majesty's Government before the Alaska Tribunal," 1903.

September 16, 1821, Alexander I, Emperor of all the Russias, signed a ukase granting "the pursuits of commerce, whaling, and fishery, and of all other industry" on the northwest coast of America between Bering strait and *latitude 51° N.* to Russian subjects exclusively and prohibiting foreigners, under heavy penalties, from approaching these coasts within less than 100 Italian miles (geographical miles).

In November following, this decree was officially communicated to the Government of Great Britain by Baron de Nicolai. Sir Charles Bagot, British Ambassador at Petrograd (St. Petersburg), was informed by Count Nesselrode that "the object of the measure was to prevent the 'commerce interlope' of the citizens of the United States," who not only carried on an illicit trade in sea-otter skins but traded prohibited articles, especially gunpowder, with the natives of Russian America. Sir Charles reported to the British Government that "this extraordinary pretension has been adopted from, and is supposed to be justified by, the XIIth Article of the Treaty of Utrecht."²

¹ A summary of the below paper was presented to the Royal Society of Canada in 1913. Through the courtesy of Dr. A. G. Doughty, Dominion Archivist, the correspondence which forms the paper was copied from the Bagot papers in the Archives. In the hope that it might be supplemented and the record thus made more complete, publication was suspended pending an attempt by Mr. H. P. Biggar to procure additional correspondence in England. As Mr. Biggar was unsuccessful, the contributor intended making a personal attempt to secure it when in Great Britain in the summer of 1914. Unfortunately, the outbreak of war necessitated the abandonment of the idea. The correspondence is, therefore, published as presented two years ago.

² By Art. XII, French subjects were excluded "from all kinds of fishing . . . within 30 leagues" of the coasts of Nova Scotia.