



# Exploring and Mapping Alaska: The Russian America Era, 1741-1867 (Rasmuson Library Historic Translation)

*Alexey Postnikov, Marvin Falk*

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Russia first encountered Alaska in 1741 as part of the most ambitious and expensive expedition of the entire eighteenth century. For centuries since, cartographers have struggled to define and develop the enormous region comprising northeastern Asia, the North Pacific, and Alaska. The forces of nature and the follies of human error conspired to make the area incredibly difficult to map.

*Exploring and Mapping Alaska* focuses on this foundational period in Arctic cartography. Russia spurred a golden era of cartographic exploration, while shrouding their efforts in a veil of secrecy. They drew both on old systems developed by early fur traders and new methodologies created in Europe. With Great Britain, France, and Spain following close behind, their expeditions led to an astounding increase in the world's knowledge of North America.

Through engrossing descriptions of the explorations and expert navigators, aided by informative illustrations, readers can clearly trace the evolution of the maps of the era, watching as a once-mysterious region came into sharper focus. The result of years of cross-continental research, *Exploring and Mapping Alaska* is a fascinating study of the trials and triumphs of one of the last great eras of historic mapmaking.

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