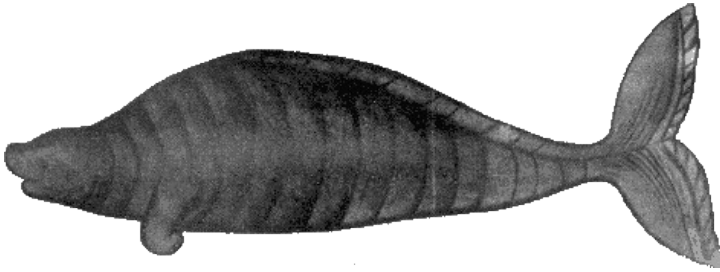


## Alaska Historical Timeline

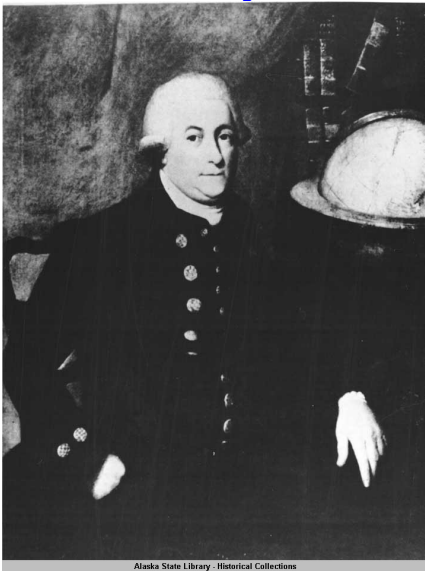


Sketch of Steller's sea cow, from the journal of Sven Waxell, "Kamchatka Expedition 1741-1742."

### 1741

Naturalist Georg Steller identifies many previously unknown species during the second expedition of Capt. Vitus Bering in Alaskan waters. Among Steller's discoveries was the "sea cow," which was declared extinct by 1768.

[ASL-Vancouver-George-1](#)



George Vancouver, English naval officer and expedition leader. Painting by Lemuel Abbott. Alaska State Library Historical Collections

### 1794

Mount McKinley sighted by George Vancouver.

[Fur Seal "Rookery" or Harem](#)



© UA Museum of the North  
Fur seal rookery, watercolor on paper, by Henry Wood Elliott, 1846-1930. University of Alaska Museum of the North

**1821**

Russian-Alaskan Company gains monopoly on fur trading in Alaska.

[ASM-98-7-197](#)



Alaska State Museum - Juneau

Model of a steam whaling ship made entirely of walrus ivory, bone (foremast) and twisted reindeer sinew, by Inupiat carver Angokwazhuk, also known as Happy Jack. Alaska State Museum

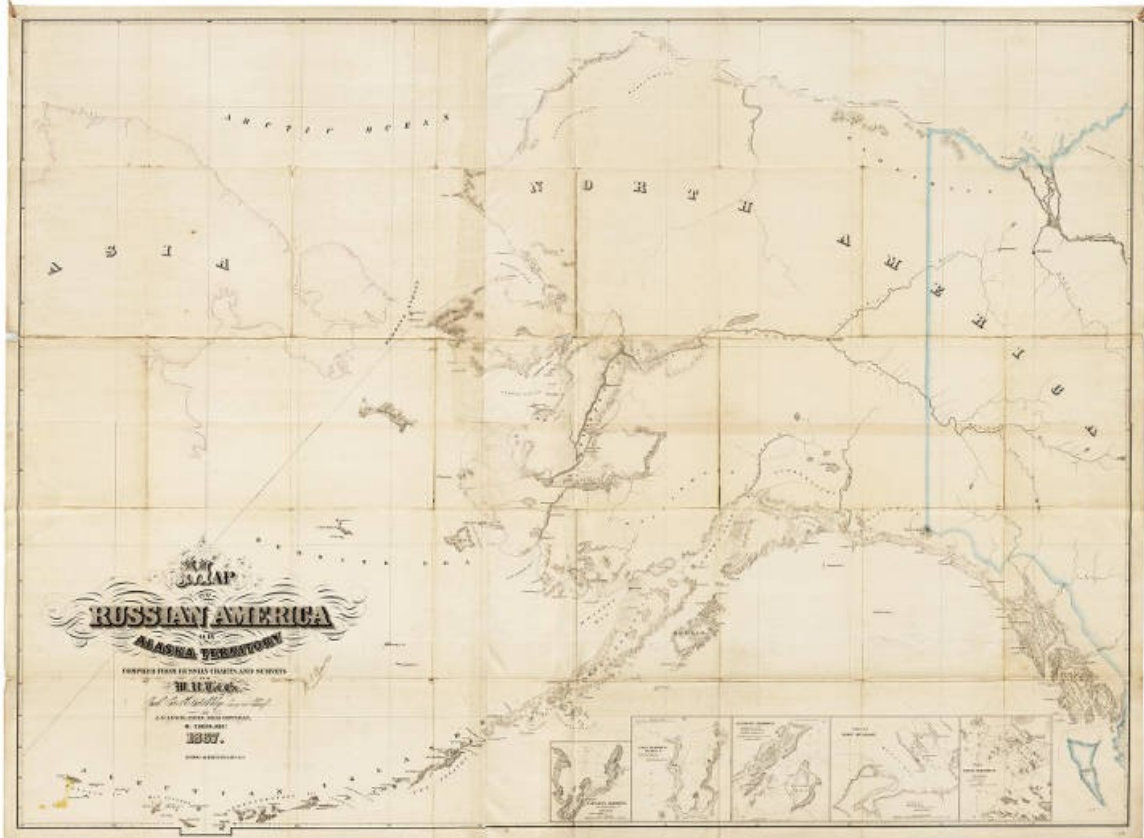
**1848**

American whalers begin hunting in the Arctic Ocean.

**1865**

The last shot in the Civil War occurs in Alaskan waters on June 22. More than two months after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Confederate raider CSS *Shenandoah* attacks the Yankee whaling fleet in the Bering Strait.

[G4370 1867 L481](#)

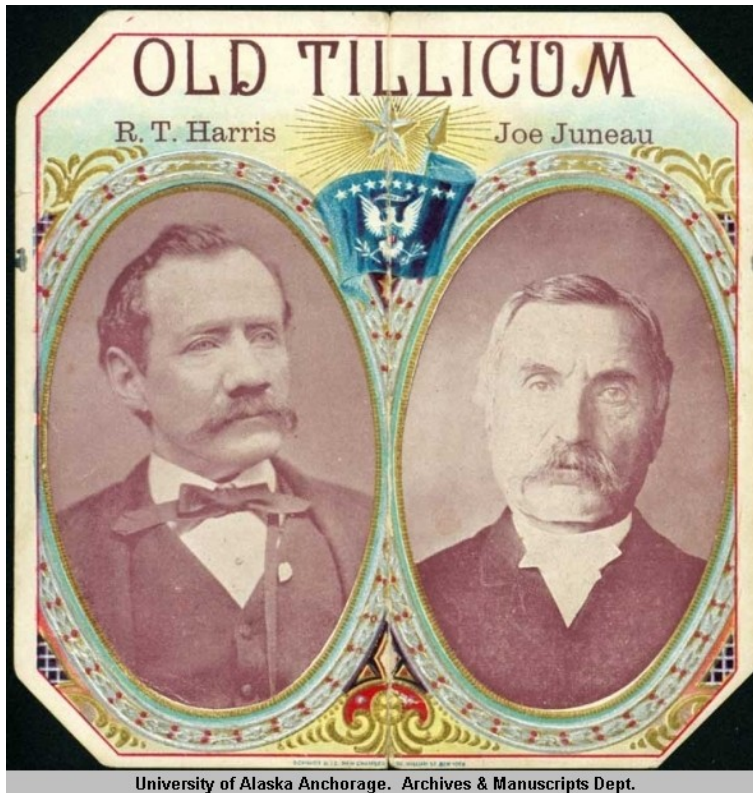


Map of Russian America or Alaska Territory, published in San Francisco by Britton & Rey in 1867. Rare Maps Collection, Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks

**1867**

Russia sells Alaska to U.S. for \$7.2 million; formal transfer ceremony held at Sitka on October 18. Alaska operates under jurisdiction of U.S. Army.

[UAA-hmc-0131-series5b-59-2](#)



Portraits of R.T. Harris and Joe Juneau, gold discoverers, on Old Tillicum cigar box, ca. 1900. University of Alaska Anchorage, Archives and Manuscripts Department.

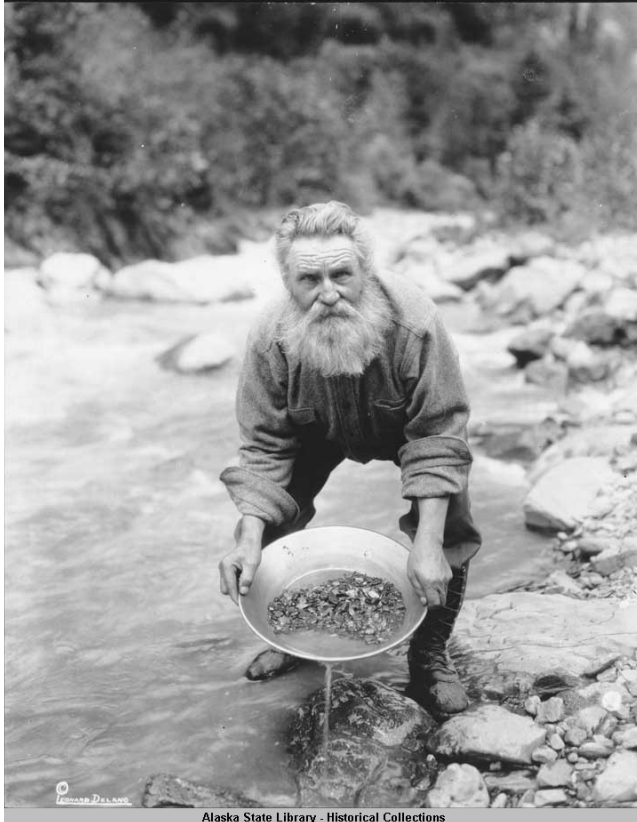
### **1880**

Gold discovery at Juneau.

### **1884**

First Organic Act establishes civil government

[ASL-P44-03-015](#)



A prospector looking for "color." Alaska Steamship Company Photographs Collection, Alaska State Library.

**1896**

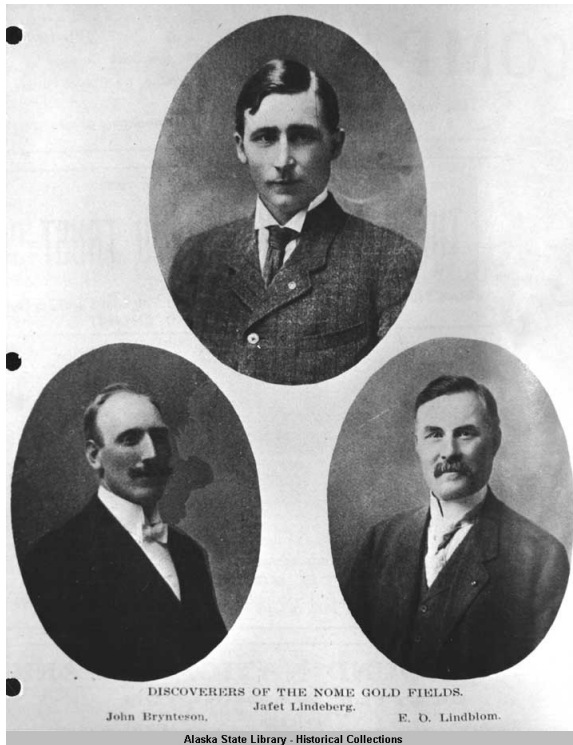
Gold strike in the Klondike

**1898**

Alaska's first exploratory oil well drilled on the Iniskin Peninsula in Cook Inlet by Alaska Petroleum Company.

[ASL-P20-088](#)



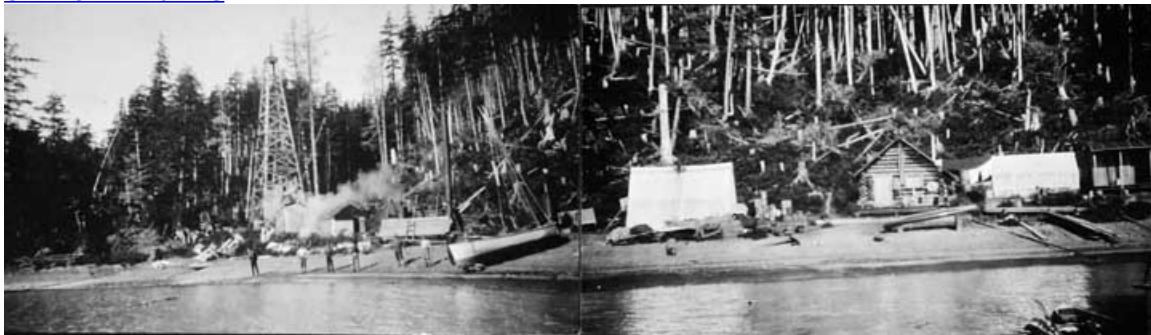


John Brynteson, Eric O. Lindblom, and Jafet Lindeberg were dubbed the "Lucky Swedes," even though Lindeberg was Norwegian. Alaska State Library Historical Collection

## 1898

"Lucky Swedes" find gold at Anvil Creek near Nome, setting off a rush that led to the discovery of gold on the beach in 1899. Local oral history states that an Inupiat man named Gabriel Price, among many other Natives, already knew there was gold at Anvil Creek, but racist laws prevented them from making a claim. See more at <http://litsite.alaska.edu/aktraditions/alaskool.html>.

[UAF-1972-116-215](#)



Cudahy Company's oil prospecting camp on the shores of Bering Lake, near the Bering River Coal Fields. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, Barratt Willoughby Collection

## 1902

First commercial oil discovery at Katalla, near Cordova.

Felix Pedro discovers gold near Fairbanks, setting off a rush to the Interior.

[ASL-P414-0073](#)



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

View of Mount McKinley; photo by Maynard C. Dahlstrom, 1951.  
Alaska State Library Historical Collection

### **1910**

Two members of the Sourdough Expedition summit the north peak of Mount McKinley

### **1912**

Alaska gains territorial status.

[ASL-Groups-Legislature-1913-1919-2](#)



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

The first Territorial House of Representatives met in Juneau's Elks Hall, March 1913.  
Alaska State Library Historical Collections

**1913**

Alaska legislature gives women the right to vote.

[AMHA-b83-146-266](#)





Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

Anchorage's first hospital was a two-building compound operated by the Alaska Railroad in 1915. At left is Government Hill; this side of the hospital faced Knik Arm. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

## 1915

The Alaska Railroad begins construction.

Anchorage grows from a railroad construction tent city to a town.

[UAA-hmc-0396-14f-316](#)



University of Alaska Anchorage. Archives & Manuscripts Dept.

The national park entrance in 1938. Photo by Russell Dow. University of Alaska Anchorage, Archives and Manuscripts Department

**1917**

Congress creates Mount McKinley National Park

[UAF-1967-42-9](#)



Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

"Old Main," as it was known, was the primary building on the early campus. It included the president's office, the gym, and classrooms. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks

**1922**

Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines opens its doors in Fairbanks with six students and six faculty members.

Native Alaskans gain the right to vote.

[AMHA-b64-1-744](#)



Togo was a leader in the kennel of famed Nome musher Leonhard Seppala. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, John Urban Collection

## 1925

Diphtheria epidemic in Nome galvanizes mushers across the state to transport serum in a relay from Nenana to Nome. Lead dogs Togo and Balto gain national celebrity.

### [ASL-Benson-1](#)



Benny Benson poses on the steps of the Jesse Lee Memorial Home in Seward, where he was living when he designed the Alaska state flag. Alaska State Library Historical Collections

**1926**

Seventh-grader Benny Benson designs Alaska's territorial flag in a statewide competition among schoolchildren.

Umberto Nobile successfully flies the airship *Norge* over the North Pole, landing at Teller.

ASL-P270-224



Same as 335

Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

New Alaskans arriving at the railroad station in Palmer, May 23, 1935. Alaska State Library Historical Collections, Mary Nan Gamble Collection

**1935**

Colonists from Midwest arrive to settle in Matanuska Valley

[AMHA-b62-x-15-17](#)



Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

The first truck to make the trip from Dawson Creek to Whitehorse was photographed in September 1942. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers photo. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

### **1942**

Dutch Harbor bombed; Attu and Kiska Island occupied by Japanese forces.

The 1,520-mile Alaska Highway (the Alcan) is completed in 8 months at a cost of an estimated \$66,160 per mile.

### **1955**

“Alaska’s Flag” adopted as official state song.

### **1957**

The Denali Highway opens. For the first time, visitors can access Mount McKinley National Park by road.

[AMHA-b63-14-3](#)





Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

In Anchorage, a single oversized star was added to this massive 48-star flag on the side of the Federal Building, just after the statehood bill was signed on. June 30, 1958. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

### **1959**

Alaska named 49th state on January 3.



Edward Teller, 1958, as director of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Teller was a leading proponent of Project Chariot. U.S. Government photo

### **1961**

Alaska Natives protest “Project Chariot,” a proposal by the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission. The AEC experiment would have used nuclear explosions to create an artificial harbor near Cape Thompson.

[UAF-1992-202-11](#)



Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

*Tundra Times* editor Howard Rock, left, with Tom Snapp and Theodore Hetzel in the newspaper's backshop. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks

## 1962

The *Tundra Times*, the first statewide newspaper addressing Alaska Native news and views, is launched with editor Howard "Weyaok" Rock at the helm.

[UAF-1976-21-57396](#)



Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

The *Malaspina's* maiden voyage. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks

## 1963

Ferry service initiated in Southeast Alaska.

[AMHA-b69-11-13](#)



Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

A car is smashed beneath a house in the Turnagain area of Anchorage. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

**1964**

Devastating earthquake on March 27, Good Friday, measures 9.2 on Richter Scale.

[AMHA-b85-27-2375](#)



Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

Dancers perform at an early AFN convention as spectators look on. Frank Whaley photo. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

**1966**

Alaska Federation of Natives established, creating more cohesion among various groups and further strengthening Native voices in Alaska politics.



An aerial view of downtown Fairbanks on August 15, 1967, as the Chena River nears crest levels. This Alaska Railroad photo shows an arrow for direction of the water flow. Photo courtesy USGS

**1967**

Chena and Tanana Rivers flood Fairbanks.

[UAF-1982-146-14](#)



Prudhoe Bay discovery well, 1969. Atlantic Richfield Company photo. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks



**1968**

Prudhoe Bay oil and gas discoveries.

[ASL-Groups-NativeLeaders-7](#)



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

In the Fall of 1970, then Secretary of the Interior Walter Hickel met with prominent figures in the Alaska Land Claims dispute in his Washington office. Alaska State Library Historical Collections

**1971**

Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act grants Alaska Natives 40 million acres of land and \$962.5 million in cash.

Parks Highway opens.

Record low temperature of  $-80^{\circ}$  F at Prospect Creek pipeline construction camp.

[AMHA-b90-4-49](#)





Anchorage Museum of History & Art. Library & Archives.

Commercial fishing boats in Kodiak harbor. Anchorage Museum of History and Art, Library and Archives

**1973**

Limited Entry permit system established to manage commercial fisheries.  
First running of the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race.

[ASL-P427-71](#)



Alaska State Library - Historical Collections

The Industrial Training School at Sitka's Presbyterian Mission was the precursor to Mount Edgecumbe Boarding School. For decades, rural Native students had no choice but to leave home for schooling. Alaska State Library Historical Collections

**1976**

Passage of the “Molly Hootch Act” requires State of Alaska to provide local schools for Native students in villages all over the state.



More than half of the 800-mile pipeline is elevated. Trans-Alaska Pipeline, BLM Alaska photo

**1977**

First barrel of oil moves through Trans-Alaska Oil Pipeline

**1978**

The 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) off Alaska is established, giving the North Pacific Fishery Management Council jurisdiction over 900,000 square miles of Alaska waters.



Photo courtesy Jimmy Carter Library

### **1980**

President Jimmy Carter signs the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA), protecting an additional 56 million acres in federal lands.

Alaska Legislature votes to repeal state income tax.

### **1982**

First Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend check of \$1,000 mailed to every adult with at least six months' residency

### **1983**

State of Alaska reorganizes its time zones, placing nearly all of the state into one zone: Alaska Standard Time. Formerly, there were four zones: the Panhandle was on Pacific Time, Yakutat on Yukon Standard, the Interior on Alaska Standard, and Nome and the Aleutians on Bering Standard.

((IAN, photo request is being processed))

### **1984**

First running of the Yukon Quest, a rugged, 1,000-plus-mile sled-dog race between Fairbanks and Whitehorse, B.C.



Mount Augustine. Photo courtesy Alaska Volcano Observatory

### **1986**

Mount Augustine erupts.

### **1989**

*Exxon Valdez* oil tanker runs aground on March 24, spilling 11 million gallons of crude oil into Prince William Sound, the worst spill in U.S. history.

### **1991**

Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race musher Rick Swenson seals his place in the record books by winning his fifth championship. The record still stands in 2006.



A special VIP train, the "Maiden Voyage," introduces double-deck dome cars. Ron Niebrugge photo courtesy Alaska Railroad Corp.

### **1996**

Ridership on the Alaska Railroad reaches a high of 512,000 passengers as the state-owned corporation records profits of \$8 million.



### **1998**

British Petroleum acquires Amoco for \$57.8 billion.





The Whittier Tunnel, formally known as the Anton Andersen Memorial Tunnel. Photo courtesy Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

**2000**

Anton Anderson Memorial Tunnel opens to automobile traffic between Portage and Whitter. At 2.5 miles, it is the longest highway tunnel in North America.



A firefighter works the line during the 2004 Alaska Solstice Complex fire. Photo courtesy Alaska Fire Service.

## **2004**

A record 6,590,140 acres are burned in 701 separate wildland fires.

[UAF-1984-200-1](#)



Archives, University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Jay S. Hammond, January 1978

Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, University of Alaska Fairbanks

## **2005**

Alaska mourns the death of popular former governor Jay Hammond. Among many memorials to honor Hammond, float planes fly a “missing man” formation over downtown Anchorage.

## **2006**

North Slope crude oil exceeds \$73/barrel for the first time.