

threshing was done in this manner: A layer of grain in the straw, of a foot or two in thickness, was placed on the floor. Oxen were then driven over it hitched to a log with rows of wooden pegs inserted into it. As the log revolved these pegs acted well the part of a flail, and the straw was expeditiously relieved of its burden of grain. It was doubtless no hard job to winnow the grain after it was threshed, as the wind blows a stiff blast at that point during the autumn months.

The Russians also constructed a wharf at the northern side of the little cove and graded a road down the steep ocean shore, the line of which is still to be seen, as it passed much of the way through solid rock. This jetty was made fast to the rocks on which it was constructed with long iron bolts, a few of which still remain, but nothing of the wharf is extant. These old Muscovites, perhaps, made the first lumber with a saw ever manufactured north of the bay of San Francisco. They had a pit and whip saw, the former of which can be seen at this day. Judging from the number of stumps still standing, and the extent of territory over which they extended their logging operations, they evidently consumed very large quantities of timber, the forest being only about a mile distant from the shipyard and landing. The stumps of trees cut by them are still in view, while beside them from one to six shoots have sprung up, many of which have now reached a size sufficient for lumber purposes. This growth has been remarkable, and goes to show that if proper care were taken each half century would see a new crop of timber sufficiently large for all practical purposes, while a hundred years would produce gigantic trees.

As stated above, the cemetery lay to the eastward of the fort and across a deep gulch, near the church for the peasants. There were never more than fifty graves there, all traces of which, except of a dozen, are now obliterated. Each of these still remaining shows signs of having had a wooden structure built over it. One manner of constructing these tombs was to make a series of rectangular frames of square timber, each being a certain degree smaller than the one below it, which were placed one above another until an apex was reached, and the whole surmounted with a cross. Another method was to construct an oblong frame of heavy planking, the top being covered with two heavy planks placed so as to be roof-shaped. Other graves had a simple rude cross, and others, again, a cross on which some mechanical skill was displayed, while one has a very large round post standing high above the neighboring monuments. The dead were all buried in graves dug due east and west, with their heads to the latter point. While there are no inscriptions now visible, judging from their size many of the pits contain the dust of little children. In an easterly direction, about a mile from the post, was an orchard, of which only a few apple and cherry trees remain, moss-covered and gray with age.

Let us now trace the causes that led to the departure of these intruders from the vernal shores of California. It is stated that the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine

caused them to leave, but that is hardly the fact, for they remained seventeen years after this policy was announced. One thing, however, is evident—that they did not depart at the request or behest of either the Spanish or Mexican governments. It is almost certain that the Russians contemplated a permanent settlement at Fort Ross and Bodega. Of course, as soon as the Spanish authorities came to know of their permanent location, word was sent of the fact to Madrid. In due course of time a reply came ordering the intruders to depart, to which peremptory command their only answer was that the order had been forwarded to St. Petersburg for the action of the Czar. Some time later, about 1816, a Russian ship-of-war anchored in the harbor of Yerba Buena, and to the commander the Spanish authorities complained of Koskoff, but nothing came of it. In subsequent years the Mexican commandants organized several military expeditions for the purpose of ousting the aliens, but no real step was ever taken. For more than a quarter of a century they continued to hold undisturbed possession of the disputed territory, and prosecuted their farming, stock raising, hunting, trapping and shipbuilding enterprises; but whatever were the causes that led to it, there finally came a time when the Russian authorities decided to withdraw their colonies. They now made a proposition to the authorities at Monterey to dispose of their interests, including the title to the land, but inasmuch as the Mexicans had never recognized such right or title, they could not well become purchasers thereof. Application was next made to General M. G. Vallejo, but on the same grounds he refused. They then applied to the late General John A. Sutter, and persuaded him that their title was good and could be maintained; so, after making out a full inventory of the articles they had for disposal, including all the land lying between Cape Mendocino and Point Reyes, and one league inland, as well as cattle, farming and mechanical instruments, a schooner of 180 tons burthen, some arms, a four-pound brass field piece, etc., a price was decided on. The amount paid by Sutter was \$30,000 in cash, and he became, as he thought, the greatest landholder in California. The grants given by the Mexican Government seemed mere bagatelles when compared with this provincial possession. But, alas for human hopes and aspirations! In reality he had paid an enormous price for a very paltry compensation of personal and chattel property.

Orders were sent to the settlers at Fort Ross to repair at once to the harbor of Yerba Buena, and there take passage in vessels bound for the northwest whaling grounds. The ships sent to convey them from the settlement arrived at an early hour in the day, and the orders shown to the commandant, Rotscheff. The bells were immediately caused to be rung in the chapel towers and the cannon discharged, the usual method of convoking the people for some special purpose. Everything was suspended just there; the husbandman left his plow in the half-turned furrow and unloosed his oxen, never again to yoke them, leaving them to wander at will; the mechanic dropped his planes and saws on the bench, leaving the