

Introduction

This volume comprises a collection of documents from the Russian consuls in Australia over a period of more than half a century, from the establishment of a Russian consular service in the settler colonies in 1857 to the closure of the consulates after the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. These documents do more than shed light on the history of the establishment and development of relations between Russia and Australia, and serve as a foreign source on Australia's history. They are also of great interest for a number of other reasons.

Among students of history, it is widely recognised that foreign sources on the history of any country have special value. The importance of documentary material of this kind lies above all in the fact that they offer an opportunity to view the development of a country from an unusual and often unexpected perspective, through the eyes of an outsider who represents a foreign and sometimes completely alien culture. With reference to Alexis de Tocqueville's renowned *Democracy in America*, the eminent American political commentator George F. Will has emphasised 'how much can be learned about one culture seen through the lens of someone intelligent and sympathetic from another'.¹ The dispatches sent by the Russian consuls in Melbourne and Sydney, generally sympathetic, though not uncritical, bear this out. It is clear that the particular nature of the picture thus formed derives from the difference between the traditional systems of values in the country observed and the native country of the observer. The publication and study of foreign sources therefore allow one to identify differences in mentality, cultural codes and behavioural archetypes between the bearers and representatives of different cultural traditions and social institutions. In other words, the study of such sources is of great interest at the level of perceptions and opens new avenues for

1 George F. Will, review of Joshua Mitchell, *Tocqueville in Arabia*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2013, press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/T/bo16956679.html (accessed 4 April 2018).

the investigation of the cultural, demographic, social and other features of the society represented by the outsider, as well as those of the society which the outsider seeks to understand.

The surprisingly rapid and generally successful economic and social development of Australia in the last decades of its colonial history and the early years of federation attracted much interest throughout the world and did not pass unnoticed in Russia. The 'lucky country', a 'working man's paradise' and a 'social laboratory of humanity' were titles conferred upon the country by visiting foreigners, and often quoted by Russian visitors. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Tsarist Empire was undergoing a new stage of economic and political modernisation, which was accompanied by a sharp polarisation of society and accentuation of class contradictions. The educated strata of Russian society – the liberal intelligentsia and the country's ruling circles – paid close attention to the way political and social problems were resolved in Australia, and sought to adapt it and, where possible, apply it to Russian realities.²

An analysis of this nationally determined aspect of the consular dispatches presented here, and a study of them from the viewpoint of a peculiarly Russian perception of Australian reality, allows us to pay particular attention to one further important fact. With regard to its civilisation, for the past three hundred years Russia has been, and remains essentially, a state with an incomplete sense of self-identification. Its internal development and foreign policy have fluctuated constantly between a Western and an Eastern way of life, in both its fundamental principles and their day-to-day application in practice. Any drive towards economic and political modernisation along European lines invariably collides with resistance from the traditional Russian value system, which appeals to an autocratic model of authority and a centralised economy, largely dependent upon the state. The fluctuations between these two value systems can clearly be seen in the documents produced by the Russian diplomats. The study of the Russian perception of Australia as represented by the political class, of which many Foreign Ministry staff were members, enables us not only to better understand the attitude of Russia and Russians to Australia; in the wider context it allows us to bring out and explain some features

2 See Elena Govor, *Australia in the Russian Mirror: Changing Perceptions 1770–1919*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1997, p. 244; also N. S. Skorobogatykh, 'Russkie dorevoliutsionnye issledovaniia ob osnovnykh problemakh Avstralii kontsa XIX – nachala XX v.', in *Piatnadsataia nauchnaia konferentsiia po izucheniiu Avstralii i Okeanii*, Moscow, Nauka, 1984, pp. 56–62.

of Russian foreign-policy thinking and thus of some features of the way that policy is shaped. An understanding of this foreign-policy paradigm is topical not only for the study of Russia's actions in the international arena in the past, but also for the evaluation of its behaviour and its role in the system of international relations in modern times.

All nations view foreign observers' opinions of their country with interest, noting how perceptions change with the passage of time, and Australia is no exception. In Australia in 1977, an English translation was published of a book by Albert Métin, the French historian, geographer and politician, *Le socialisme sans doctrines*, first published in 1901. In it Métin expressed a high opinion of social policy in the British settler colonies.³ Between 1909 and 1912, the German scholar Robert Schachner, who had spent eighteen months travelling the continent and working at labouring jobs (shearer, prospector, coal miner, factory worker), produced his comprehensive study of Australia in three volumes.⁴ In 1990, a small selection of his writings on the subject appeared in English.⁵ In our view, the Russian consular dispatches concerning the development of the colonies and the Commonwealth of Australia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries constitute a substantial and no less valuable contribution to the tradition of the study of outsiders' perceptions – this time Russian perceptions – of Australia. It is the editors' hope that the materials presented here will be of interest not only to specialists in the history of Russia and Australia and the relations between them, but also of value to historians of international relations and naval policy. The questions raised in the consuls' dispatches, concerning the constitution of the Australian Commonwealth in comparison with Russia's state structure and other parts of the British Empire and the US, their reflections on the resolution of social problems in Australia and the reasons why Labor and

3 Albert Métin, *Socialism without Doctrine*, trans. Russel Ward, Chippendale, NSW, Alternative Publishing Co-operative, 1977. (*Le socialisme sans doctrines: la question agraire et la question ouvrière en Australie et Nouvelle-Zélande*, Paris, F. Alcan, 1901). It was Métin who first called Australia 'the working man's paradise'. It is noteworthy that this work was translated into Russian and published in Russia as early as 1903, reflecting steadily growing Russian interest in developments in Australia and New Zealand. See A. Meten, *Agrarnyi i rabochii vopros v Avstralii i Novoi Zelandii*, Moscow, M. V. Nemchinov, 1903.

4 Robert Schachner, *Australien in Politik, Wirtschaft und Kultur*, Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1909; *Die Soziale Frage in Australien und Neuseeland*, Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1911; *Australien und Neuseeland: Land, Leute und Wirtschaft*, Leipzig, B. G. Teubner, 1912.

5 *The Workers' Paradise? Robert Schachner's Letters from Australia, 1906–07*, eds John Lack, Frederick Ohles and Jurgen Tampke, with an afterword by Robert Schachner Jnr, Parkville, Vic., History Dept, University of Melbourne, 1990.

left-leaning tendencies took root there, and their views on the economic and demographic development of the country will interest a broad spectrum of readers. These may include political scientists, sociologists, economists, demographers, and legal scholars studying the history of the state and the law.

Here it is necessary to provide a brief outline of the current state of research into Russian–Australian contacts. Historians in Russia and Australia alike have explored this field to some extent, but it is hardly an exaggeration to say that until recently the history of Russian–Australian relations has received less attention than it merits from researchers in both countries.

Historians in Australia have dealt mainly with topics related to the history of the Russian diaspora there, paying particular attention to those pro-Soviet members of the Russian community who sought to radicalise the labour movement and played a key role in the formation of the Communist Party of Australia (see various works by Raymond Evans, Frank Farrell, Eric Fried, Stuart Macintyre, David Lovell and Kevin Windle).⁶ Over the past two decades, the field has broadened somewhat with the publication of Elena Govor’s work on Russian perceptions of Australia and her two other books, which have been favourably received. The first is her biography of Nikolai Ilin and his descendants in Queensland, exploring their family links with the Indigenous population of Australia. The second deals with the Russians in Australia who enlisted as Anzacs and fought in the First World War.⁷ For a long time, the political aspect of the history of Russian–Australian relations lay on the outer fringes of the field of interest of Australian scholars. There was little more than the brochures of Constantine Hotimsky and Clem Lack, an article

6 Raymond Evans, *The Red Flag Riots: A Study of Intolerance*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1988; Eric Fried, ‘The First Consul: Peter Simonov and the Formation of the Australian Communist Party’, in John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Russia and the Fifth Continent: Aspects of Russian–Australian Relations*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1992, pp. 110–125; Kevin Windle, *Undesirable: Captain Zuzenko and the Workers of Australia and the World*, Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2012; Kevin Windle, ‘“Trotsky’s Consul”: Peter Simonoff’s Account of His Years as Soviet Representative in Australia (1918–21)’, *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 2015, pp. 493–524, doi.org/10.5699/slaveastorev2.93.3.0493; David Lovell and Kevin Windle (eds), *Our Unswerving Loyalty: A Documentary Survey of Relations between the Communist Party of Australia and Moscow, 1920–1940*, Canberra, ANU E Press, 2008.

7 Elena Govor, *Australia in the Russian Mirror: Changing Perceptions 1770–1919*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1997; Elena Govor, *My Dark Brother: The Story of the Illins, a Russian-Aboriginal Family*, Sydney, UNSW Press, 2000; Elena Govor, *Russian Anzacs in Australian History*, Sydney, UNSW Press, 2005.

by Duncan MacCallum and two short articles by Verity Fitzhardinge.⁸ Unfortunately, all these relied on a slender body of source material, and those of MacCallum and Lack on Russia's supposed hostile designs on the settler colonies were plainly ill-founded and therefore unconvincing.⁹

The Soviet historiography of Russian–Australian relations presents a fairly similar picture, while reversing the ideological interpretation of the history. Soviet specialists said nothing at all about the political aspect of relations between the two countries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and relations between the Commonwealth of Australia and the USSR were viewed through the prism of confrontation between ‘the world’s first socialist state’ and the reactionary ‘world of capital’. Soviet Australian studies also offered numerous publications about the revolutionary element in the diaspora, presenting the revolutionaries as heroes in a struggle, fraught with danger, for the interests of the working class.¹⁰

The situation underwent some change after the collapse of the USSR, when it became possible to conduct research without constraints of ideology or dogma. The post-Soviet period has seen the publication of scholarly works of high quality. These include Galina Kanevskaya's monographs on the history of the Russian diaspora in Australia, Alexander Massov's history of Russian–Australian relations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Alla Petrikovskaya's history of cultural contacts between the two countries, and Artem Rudnitsky's works on Peter Simonoff, Soviet

8 C. M. Hotimsky, *The Russians in Australia*, Melbourne, Topic Publications, 1957; Clem Lack, *Russian Ambitions in the Pacific: Australian War Scares of the Nineteenth Century*, Brisbane, Fortitude Press, 1968; Duncan MacCallum, ‘The Alleged Russian Plans for the Invasion of Australia, 1864’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 44, Pt 5, 1959, pp. 301–322; Verity Fitzhardinge, ‘Russian Ships in Australian Waters 1807–1835’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 51, Pt 2, 1965, pp. 113–147; Verity Fitzhardinge, ‘Russian Naval Visitors to Australia, 1862–1888’, *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 52, Pt 2, 1966, pp. 129–158.

9 A more thorough and objective treatment of the Russian naval presence in the south of the Pacific basin in the nineteenth century and the potential danger posed to Australia and New Zealand is given by the Canadian historian Glynn Barratt, making use of Australian and Russian sources, in his monographs: *The Russian Navy and Australia to 1825: The Days before Suspicion*, Melbourne, Hawthorn Press, 1979; *Russophobia in New Zealand, 1838–1908*, Palmerston North, Dunmore Press, 1981; *The Russians and Australia*, Vancouver, University of British Columbia Press, 1988.

10 For example: P. Gutsal, ‘Artem v Avstralii’, *Donbas*, No. 1, 1958, pp. 119–128; M. E. Privalenko, *Bol'shevik Artem. Oчерk o zhizni i deiatel'nosti F. A. Sergeeva (1883–1921)*, Kursk, Kn. izd., 1964; A. M. Chernenko and V. V. Gotsuliak, *Rossiiskaia revoliutsionnaia emigratsiia v Avstralii (1900–1917)*, Dnepropetrovsk, Dnepropetrovsk State University, 1978; K. V. Malakhovskii, ‘Uchastie russkikh revoliutsionerov v rabochem dvizhenii v Avstralii’, in *Idei sotsializma i rabochee dvizhenie v Avstralii*, Moscow, Mysl', 1981, pp. 67–85.

Russia's first consul in Australia.¹¹ New sources have become available: in 1993, a collection appeared of documents pertaining to Russian seafarers and travellers in Australia; and, in 2007, a selection of materials on the Russian perception of Australia.¹² In 2014, there appeared a collection of Russian consular dispatches about Australia in the period 1857–1917, the work which provides the basis for the present volume.¹³

Some rekindling of interest in Russia was also seen in Australia. It was reflected in a broadening of themes and the publication of new works on the history of Russian–Australian contacts. Thomas Poole published articles on the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1942 between the USSR and Australia, and on cooperation between the two countries during the Second World War.¹⁴ In 2008, a collection of articles appeared on Australian intellectuals who visited the Soviet Union.¹⁵ The bibliography, *Russian Sources on Australia, 1788–1990*, listing 1,118 titles published in pre-revolutionary Russia and the USSR on Australian topics, was an important aid to the study of Russian–Australian relations.¹⁶ It was based on Elena Govor's *Bibliography of Australia*, published in Russia.¹⁷ In 1992, the first joint volume by Australian and Russian historians appeared, *Russia and the Fifth Continent*, compiled and edited by Thomas

11 G. I. Kanevskaia, *Ia bezdomyi, no zato ia na vole ...*: *Russkie peremeshchennye liitsa v Avstralii (1947–1954 gg.)*, Vladivostok, Izd-vo Dal'nevostochnogo universiteta, 2005; G. I. Kanevskaia, *My eshche mechtaem o Rossii*. *Istoriia russkoi diaspory v Avstralii (konets XIX v. – vtoraiia polovina 80-kh gg. XX v.)*, Vladivostok, Izd-vo Dal'nevostochnogo universiteta, 2010; A. Ia. Massov, *Andreevskii flag pod Iuzhnym krestom (iz istorii rusko-avstraliiskikh sviazei pervoi treti XIX veka)*, St Petersburg, Izd-vo SPbGMTU, 1995; A. Ia. Massov, *Rossiia i Avstralii vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka*, St Petersburg, Izd-vo SPbGMTU, 1998; A. S. Petrikovskaia, *Rossiiskoe ekho v kul'ture Avstralii*, Moscow, IVRAN, 2002; A. Iu. Rudnitskii, 'Sud'ba pervogo konsula: K istorii rossiisko-avstraliiskikh otnoshenii', *Istoriia bez kupiur* (special issue of *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*), Moscow, 2012, pp. 5–26; Iu. Artemov (A. Iu. Rudnitskii), *Ruskaia revoliutsiia v Avstralii i seti shpionazha*, St Petersburg, Aleteia, 2017.

12 E. V. Govor, and A. Ia. Massov (eds), *Rossiiskie moriaki i puteshestvenniki v Avstralii*, Moscow, Vostochnaia literatura, 1993; second edition Moscow, Vostochnaia literatura, 2007; I. N. Vasil'eva-Iuzhina (ed.), *Avstraliia v russkom vospriiatii, 1907–2007. Vpechatleniia. Obrazy. Idei*, Moscow, 2007.

13 A. Ia. Massov and M. Pollard (eds), *Rossiiskaia konsul'skaia sluzhba v Avstralii, 1867–1912 gg. (Sbornik dokumentov)*, Moscow, Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniia, 2014.

14 Thomas Poole, 'The Establishment of the First Australian Diplomatic Mission in the USSR: Outstanding Landmark or Great Embarrassment?', in John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Russia and the Fifth Continent: Aspects of Russian–Australian Relations*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1992, pp. 172–209; Thomas Poole, 'Comrades-in-Arms during World War II', in Alexander Massov, John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Encounters under the Southern Cross: Two Centuries of Russian–Australian Relations 1807–2007*, Adelaide, Crawford House Publishing, 2007, pp. 204–230.

15 Sheila Fitzpatrick and Carolyn Rassmussen (eds), *Political Tourists: Travellers from Australia to the Soviet Union in the 1920s–1940s*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2008.

16 Thomas Poole, John McNair and Lyndall Morgan (eds), *Russian Sources on Australia, 1788–1990*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1993.

17 E. V. Govor, *Bibliografiia Avstralii (1710–1983)*, Moscow, Nauka, 1985. A supplement was published in 1989: E. V. Govor, *Bibliografiia Avstralii 1984–1988*, Moscow, Nauka, 1989.

Poole and John McNair at the University of Queensland.¹⁸ In twelve chapters it covered various aspects of the history of Russian–Australian relations – political, economic, demographic and cultural – as well as the study of Australia in Russia up to that date. For the bicentenary of the inception of Russian–Australian contacts, marked by both countries in 2007, another joint Russian–Australian volume was compiled and edited by Alexander Massov, Thomas Poole and John McNair: *Encounters under the Southern Cross*,¹⁹ a largely successful attempt at an integrated all-round study of Russian–Australian contacts throughout their history. The year 2016 saw the publication by Australian and Russian historians of a collection of articles, travel notes, memoirs and letters by Russian seafarers and travellers who visited Australia in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁰

The first contacts between Russia and the British colonies on the Australian continent were established at the beginning of the nineteenth century: in June 1807, the Russian-American Company's sloop *Neva* called at Sydney during a voyage from Kronstadt to Russian America, as Alaska was then known.²¹ During the first third of the nineteenth century, a further fourteen Russian vessels visited Australia. All of them called at Sydney and Hobart in the course of voyages round the world, or half way round it, and Australian ports were important transit points for them, where they could rest their crews, take on stores and water, and repair their ships. Those who sailed on those voyages and visited Australia in the first third of the century included Leonty Hagemeister, Mikhail Vasilyev, Gleb Shishmarev, Thaddeus Bellingshausen, Mikhail Lazarev, Pavel Nakhimov, Yevfimy Putiatin, Vasily Zavoiko, and many other outstanding Russian navigators and naval commanders. The officers of the Russian Navy were highly educated men. They took a close interest in the life of the young British colonies and observed their rapid development. They studied the natural history and ethnography of the exotic and little-known continent, and the botanical, zoological and ethnographic material they collected enriched the collections in Russian museums. After their shared victory over Napoleon, Britain and Russia established stable if not friendly relations, which endured at least until the end of the 1820s.

18 John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Russia and the Fifth Continent: Aspects of Russian–Australian Relations*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1992.

19 Alexander Massov, John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Encounters under the Southern Cross: Two Centuries of Russian–Australian Relations 1807–2007*, Adelaide, Crawford House Publishing, 2007.

20 Kevin Windle, Elena Govor and Alexander Massov, *From St Petersburg to Port Jackson: Russian Travellers' Tales of Australia 1807–1912*, Melbourne, Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2016.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 1–4.

Anglo–Russian accord meant that the Russians could expect a warm and cordial welcome in Australia, and Russian naval officers were sought-after guests in the homes of Sydney’s and Hobart’s high society.

For a long time, however, visits by Russian ships were the sole channel of communication between Russians and Australians. We may say that, in the first third of the nineteenth century, any acquaintance between the two countries remained on a general human level. There were no commercial or economic links, and political interaction did not yet reach beyond the framework of Anglo–Russian relations.²²

In the mid-nineteenth century the situation changed. The discovery of gold in Australia in 1851 laid the ground for a gold fever, which led to a steep rise in the population and provided the stimulus for a powerful and long-lasting surge in the economic development of the British colonies, lasting until the 1890s. In the years 1851 to 1860, 25 million ounces of gold were mined in Australia, or 40 per cent of the worldwide output.²³ Gold became Australia’s principal export commodity. The influx of prospectors led to a rise in the population of the Australian colonies to 1,168,000 in the first decade of the gold rush alone (until 1861). That of the colony of Victoria increased from 77,000 to 540,000, and that of New South Wales from 200,000 to 350,000.²⁴ Among those who came seeking gold were numerous emigrants from the Russian Empire. In 1863, Pavel Mukhanov, a midshipman on the Russian corvette *Bogatyř*, observed that ‘in Melbourne one can hardly walk the street without encountering somebody speaking Russian’, and pointed out that in the city there were ‘quite a number’ of Poles, Germans and Jews from Russia’s western provinces.²⁵ Australian folklore preserves a legend, which undoubtedly has a basis in fact, of a certain ‘Russian Jack’, a prospector who worked in the goldfields of Western Australia in the 1880s.²⁶

Farming continued to develop: the number of sheep and the output of wool in New South Wales, the stronghold of Australian sheep-breeding, increased eleven- and seventeen-fold respectively between 1860 and 1890.

22 For more detail, see A. Ia. Massov, *Andreevskii flag pod luzhnym krestom. Iz istorii rusko-avstraliiskikh svyazei pervoi treti XIX veka*, St Petersburg, Izd-vo SPbGMTU, 1995.

23 N. S. Skorobogatykh, *Istoriia Avstralii*, Moscow, 2011, p. 40.

24 P. I. Puchkov, *Etnicheskoe razvitiie Avstralii*, Moscow, Nauka, 1987, p. 41.

25 P. S. Mukhanov, ‘Avstraliia. Opisanie plavania v Avstralii s istoricheskim ocherkom ee’, Manuscript Department, Russian National Library, 608-1-3031, f. 63.

26 Peter J. Bridge, *Russian Jack*, Perth, Hesperian Press, 2002.

Industry also emerged in Australia: by 1890, there were over 10,000 industrial enterprises employing 133,000 people.²⁷ Foreign trade increased markedly, and the geographical range of the colonies' exports and imports expanded significantly. By the beginning of the twentieth century, up to 30 per cent of Australia's foreign trade was with countries which were not part of the British Empire.²⁸ Britain's settler colonies were becoming important players in the world market. In 1855, the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia secured from the British Government the right to full internal self-rule. In accordance with an act passed in the British Parliament, a legislative body was established in each colony, consisting of two chambers: a legislative council (the upper house) and a legislative assembly (the lower house). From 1856, the colonies had their own governments. The same constitutional model was adopted when the new colony of Queensland was established in 1859. From that time on, a democratic system of government began to operate successfully in the self-governing Australian colonies.

Australia's rapid socioeconomic and political development caused other countries to pay increasing attention to the position there. The need for information about the internal situation and foreign policy matters in the settler colonies, together with the need to protect the rights of their citizens abroad and their growing commercial interests in that part of the world, led to the opening by foreign powers of consular services in Australia. By 1890, Melbourne and Sydney, the capital cities of the most heavily populated and developed of the colonies, hosted twenty-seven and twenty-one foreign consulates respectively.²⁹

Along with other countries, Russia also established consular representation. The decision to open these services in Melbourne and Sydney was taken at the end of 1856, and as early as the beginning of 1857 two Australian merchants were appointed to consular office: James Damyon in Melbourne and Edmund Paul in Sydney.³⁰ Until 1875, they were honorary vice-consuls, and subsequently Russia's honorary consuls in Victoria and New South Wales respectively. Damyon served until the end

27 Brian Fitzpatrick, *The British Empire in Australia: An Economic History 1835–1939*, Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1949, pp. 137, 182–183.

28 *A Statistical Account of Australia and New Zealand, 1903–1904*, Sydney, 1904, pp. 258–259.

29 *The Australian Handbook (Incorporating New Zealand, Fiji and New Guinea), Shippers' and Importers' Directory and Business Guide for 1890*, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, 1890, pp. 148, 224.

30 Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Empire (hereafter AVPRI): 184-520-137, ff 1, 7, see Documents 1 and 2.

of 1893 (unofficially until the beginning of 1894) – that is, until Russia's diplomatic representation in Melbourne was made professional and a serving member of the diplomatic service appointed full-time consul. Paul retained his post of honorary consul in Sydney until 1913.³¹

The honorary consuls in Australia came under the jurisdiction of the Russian Consulate General in London. In addition to their representative functions, they performed assignments on an occasional basis for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the London embassy and Consulate General, at intervals collecting and forwarding to London all manner of statistical information on the development of the Australian colonies, and were also called upon to protect the interests of Russian nationals in Australia. The consuls' duties included rendering legal and other assistance to the commanders of Russian naval vessels and the masters of Russian merchantmen while these were in Australian ports.

The work of the honorary consuls to protect Russian interests may be judged by their dispatches to the Russian consul general in London. These dispatches were sent at irregular intervals; sometimes several of them bore the same date. Their preparation and timing was usually linked to the timetable of the mail-and-passenger ships sailing to Europe. Since many of these dispatches were laconic in the extreme, and often the content did not extend beyond formalities, they are of little enduring interest. While James Damyon sent his dispatches to London fairly frequently and endeavoured to provide relatively detailed accounts of everything that bore on his duties as Russian consul, Edmund Paul's reports were considerably less frequent, he did not number them, and sometimes merely acknowledged receipt of instructions and information from the consul general in the British capital. For this reason, the compilers of the present edition felt it advisable to include only those which clearly show the nature and scope of Paul's and Damyon's work as honorary consuls – that is, mainly those from the years 1862–1864.

The honorary consuls in Melbourne and Sydney coped well with the tasks of protecting the interests of Russian nationals in Australia and looking after Russian seamen. The collection of economic and statistical information also proceeded without difficulty. However, the honorary status of these diplomatic representatives made it harder for them to perform political duties, especially the collection of political information.

31 *Ezhgodnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1914*, St Petersburg, 1914, p. 192.

Furthermore, the Russian Foreign Ministry could not entrust any important assignments which had a political colouration to foreign nationals (such as the honorary consuls). Damyon did try, of his own accord, to collect some political intelligence, guided by his own views on the significance to the Russian Government of particular questions. In 1863, he conveyed to Russia some material concerning a new plan, approved by the Government of Victoria, for defensive installations at Port Phillip; he also reported on the progress of Britain's Maori wars in New Zealand, and fairly regularly informed the Consulate General in London of anti-Russian propaganda being conducted by Polish emigrants in Australia.³²

By the beginning of the 1890s, the Russian Foreign Ministry no longer found that state of affairs satisfactory. New circumstances dictated the need to establish professional diplomatic representation in Australia. In Russia, there was increasing interest in the development of the domestic political situation in Australia, in particular military construction and the rapid rise of federalist tendencies aimed ultimately at effectively establishing a unified Australian state, a dominion within the framework of the British Empire. The new state structure would embrace the entire continent, and it already had its own fully formed foreign-policy priorities. The Australians were also moving steadily towards the creation of their own colonial sphere of influence in the South Pacific. In 1874, under pressure from the Australian colonies, Britain annexed the islands of Fiji, and in 1884–1885 forced Germany into a colonial partition of the eastern part of the island of New Guinea. Australia's colonial ambitions, together with its efforts to create an army and a navy, substantially altered the balance of power in the Pacific in favour of the British Empire. All this was taking place at a time of extreme strain in Anglo–Russian relations since the Crimean War, at times teetering on the brink of renewed armed conflict. Rivalry between other great powers was also intensifying in the Pacific. With the rapid entry of this once remote region into the orbit of world politics, the importance of Pacific problems for Russian diplomacy increased and demanded an urgent expansion and strengthening of Russia's diplomatic presence there. As Vladimir Oltarzhevsky has written, in the 1890s, several Russian honorary consular missions in Pacific countries were made

32 AVPRI: 256-555a-1264, ff 29–43; 256-555a-1279, ff 121–122, 147; 256-555a-1146, f. 29; 256-555a-1279, ff 115., 117, 130–143, 148–156; 256-555a-1264, ff 6, 14, 36.

professional. These included the consulate in Melbourne.³³ In 1894, it began to function in a permanent capacity, directly subordinate to the Imperial Embassy in London. It would now be headed by career diplomats in the employment of the Foreign Ministry.

Owing to the importance of the social and political processes in train in Australia, the duties of the representative in Melbourne went beyond purely consular services. In this respect, they might well be compared with those of the Russian consul in another British colony, Canada, which by this time had already become a dominion. There the consul's range of duties were defined as follows in the instructions from the Foreign Ministry: 'The duties of this consular agent are of a dual nature: on the one hand, he is a consul in the strict sense of the term ... while on the other he is to perform the duties of a political agent, closely observing any change which may come about in the attitude of the Canadian Government to the metropolis ... and observing the mood of the country itself'.³⁴

The very first professional Russian consuls in Melbourne, Alexis Poutiata (who took office in 1894), Robert Ungern-Sternberg (consul in 1895–1898), and Nikolai Passek (consul in 1900–1902),³⁵ substantially extended the range and volume of the consulate's work by including a political component. Besides traditional consular services – protecting the property rights and other interests of Russian nationals, issuing documents and passports, affording legal assistance to distressed Russian emigrants – the consuls sent the London embassy information on the domestic political development of the Australian colonies. Here Poutiata's regular detailed reports on the socioeconomic situation, the political struggle and social movements in Victoria as it endured a severe economic crisis are of great interest. The consuls' dispatches meticulously trace the progress of the movement towards a federated Australia, report on plans to build up the colonies' defence capacity, and the earliest evidence of an independent foreign policy. It should be noted, however, that although the Russian consuls could see the growth of centrifugal tendencies within the British Empire, at first they clearly underestimated the strength of the federation

33 V. P. Oltarzhevskii, 'Nachalo deiatel'nosti rossiiskogo konsul'stva v Mel'burne (Avstraliia)', *Problemy istorii Avstralii i Okeanii*, Irkutsk, 1990, p. 29.

34 AVPRI: 184-520-951, f. 72.

35 Personal considerations prevented Nikolai Matiunin, who was appointed Russian consul in Melbourne in 1898, from taking up his post. In 1898–1899, the duties of the Russian representative were discharged by the French consul in Melbourne, Léon Adolphe Dejardin. Nikolai Passek, who was posted to Melbourne in 1899, did not arrive until March 1900.

movement in Australia and overstated the disagreements between the colonies with regard to the principles and the terms of unification. Thus Poutiata, when he considered the possibility of federation in January 1894, thought that ‘the ruling circles of Australia will delay federation, rather than promote it’, and Ungern-Sternberg, reporting in February 1896 on difficulties arising during the discussing of terms, even asserted that ‘the important plan to form an Australian federation may now be considered buried’.³⁶

The consuls’ efforts to improve the image of Russia in Australia were of great importance to the development of Russian–Australian relations. Since the time of the Crimean War, Russia had been seen in Britain and most British overseas possessions as its main rival and the British Empire’s most dangerous foe in the international arena. Furthermore, in Australia there was a widespread belief that, in the event of war between Britain and Russia, the Russian Navy would be sure to launch an attack on Sydney, Melbourne and Australia’s other major ports. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Russophobia was a notable factor in the country’s internal political life.³⁷ In an attempt to dispel prejudice against his country, the first permanent consul in Melbourne, Poutiata, began a campaign in the Australian press as soon as he arrived to try to convince the public of Russia’s peaceful intentions. The same purpose was served by the receptions which Poutiata and other Russian consuls held on Russian national holidays for representatives of the Australian establishment. Their participation in the life of Orthodox believers in Australia – besides Russians and South Slavs there were Greeks, Syrians and Lebanese – also served to enhance Russian renown. The efforts made by the Orthodox community and the Russian consuls in 1894–1900 to build the first Orthodox church in Australia were crowned with success. In December 1900, on the name-day of Tsar Nicholas II, in a solemn ceremony attended by representatives of the Victorian Government and the Australian press, the foundations were laid of an Orthodox church in Melbourne. Nikolai Passek, the then consul, lent a political hue to the event and managed to turn it into a demonstration of Orthodox Russia’s concern for her co-religionists.³⁸

36 AVPRI: 184-520-692, f. 22, see Document 23; 184-520-820, f. 7, see Document 50.

37 See A. Ia. Massov, *Rossii i Avstraliia vo vtoroi polovine XIX veka*, St Petersburg, Izd-vo SPbGMTU, 1998, pp. 12–29.

38 AVPRI: 184-520-1004, ff 10–17, see Document 85.

The Russian consuls endeavoured to develop Russian–Australian trade. Poutiata encouraged the participation of Russian entrepreneurs in the Tasmanian International Exhibition in Hobart in 1894–1895.³⁹ Ungern-Sternberg wrote a large number of dispatches for the Department of Trade and Manufacturing, describing the current condition of various branches of the colonies' economy, and pointed out the opportunity and the need to build up Russian–Australian trade and merchant shipping links.⁴⁰ Passek did the same, remarking in particular on the prospects for the sale of Russian kerosene in Australia.⁴¹ It should be noted, however, that in the late nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth, Russian–Australian trade did not reach any significant volume. The only Russian manufactured wares to be found in Australia were soap, candles, linen and furniture. Insignificant quantities of Russian timber also reached Australia. From the beginning of the twentieth century, kerosene from Baku, on the Black Sea, began to reach Australia, while Australian frozen meat exports were sent to Vladivostok. In addition, Australia supplied Russia with some of its traditional export commodities – wool and lard – again in insignificant amounts. Matvei Hedenstrom, Russia's consul general in Australia from 1908 to 1910, noted in a dispatch in December 1908: 'There is hardly any trade between Russia and Australia ... For trade to develop between Australia and Russia, it is essential that Russian traders come here themselves to study the market conditions on the ground'.⁴²

In view of the fact that the range of interests of the Russian diplomatic mission in Victoria increasingly extended to the other colonies, in 1896, on Ungern-Sternberg's initiative, the jurisdiction of the consul in Melbourne was extended to the other colonies and to New Zealand.⁴³ In 1899, a further Russian mission in Australia began to function, in the port of Newcastle, which was often visited by Finnish merchant vessels flying the Russian flag. Here an honorary consul, Robert Wallace,

39 See Russian State Historical Archive (hereafter RGIA): 20-2-1867, ff 17–18, 32–33, 38.

40 Some of Ungern-Sternberg's dispatches on the state of various branches of Australian industry and the prospects for developing Russian–Australian trade were published in the journal *Vestnik finansov, promyshlennosti i torgovli*.

41 RGIA: 23-25-88.

42 AVPRI: 184-520-1300, f. 107, see Document 102.

43 AVPRI: 184-520-820, f. 126. Ungern-Sternberg's request to extend his consulate's jurisdiction is at AVPRI: 184-520-820, f. 139, see Document 49. See also *Victoria Government Gazette*, 22 January 1897. Only New South Wales lay outside the jurisdiction of the consul in Melbourne, but Edmund Paul, who represented Russian interests there from 1857, as honorary consul in Sydney, had instructions 'to achieve a unified *modus operandi* among our consular agents as far as possible' (see AVPRI: 184-520-779, f. 180).

took office.⁴⁴ In 1900, on the eve of federation, Passek, the consul in Victoria, was granted the status of Russian consul in Australia and New Zealand. Thus, by the time the settler colonies were united in a dominion of the British Empire, a fully formed Russian consular service was operating there.

After federation and the ceremony to mark it on 1 January 1901, attended by Passek along with other foreign representatives, the status of the Russian diplomatic mission in Melbourne was raised again: in 1902, it became the Russian Consulate General in the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand, Melbourne having been designated the temporary capital of the new Commonwealth.⁴⁵ In St Petersburg, an awareness was gradually taking hold that the Commonwealth of Australia was something more than a simple assemblage of colonies, and that the new dominion was approaching the status of an independent state. Suggestions that political and commercial relations with Australia might be expanded were viewed with greater favour. Here the view of the Chairman of the Merchant Shipping Council, the Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich, is typical. In support of a plan for a passenger service between Australia and Europe by sea from Darwin to Port Arthur, then via the Trans-Siberian Railway, the Grand Duke wrote in 1902: 'It is highly desirable to establish close relations with Australia, without reference to Britain'.⁴⁶ With the increasing numbers of Russian emigrants in Australia came an increase in the Russian consular network. The consul general in Melbourne, the honorary consul in Melbourne and the honorary vice-consul in Newcastle were joined in 1909 by honorary consuls in Adelaide, Brisbane and Port Elizabeth, and in 1914 by honorary consuls in Hobart and Perth. The title of the consul general in Melbourne now became 'Consul General to the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand'.⁴⁷

During the first decade of the twentieth century, the disposition of political forces in the Pacific was undergoing a perceptible change. Russia's defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 weakened her position in the region. British influence there was also diminishing somewhat: alarmed by the rapid growth of German naval power, Britain, then allied to Japan, was forced to transfer part of its fleet from the Pacific to European waters.

44 *Ezhegodnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1900*, St Petersburg, 1900, p. 340.

45 AVPRI: 184-520-1076, f. 90.

46 RGIA: 95-4-110, f. 12.

47 *Ezhegodnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1909*, St Petersburg, 1909, p. 44. *Ezhegodnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1914*, St Petersburg, 1914, p. 45.

Japan was becoming the dominant political power in the region. None of this could fail to affect Australia's geopolitical situation. Having supported Britain's anti-Russian stance at the beginning of the Russo–Japanese War, Australians now became fearful, after the Russian defeat, not of the weakened Tsarist Empire, but of Japan, which had strengthened its international position. They were fearful, moreover, not only of its military might, but also its increasing competition in Australian markets. That apart, Australia was no longer sure of Great Britain's capacity to provide due protection in the event of a threat of conflict in the Pacific basin. In these circumstances, Australia began, first, to set about establishing its own navy, and second, to take steps to acquire new foreign sponsors, above all the United States of America. These were the aims of the US Navy's visit to Sydney and Melbourne in 1908, and moreover the invitation was conveyed to the Americans by the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia, effectively without any approval from the British Government.

The Russian consuls in Melbourne followed all these changes closely. Mikhail Ustinov, *de jure* consul in 1902–1907 but in effect operating there from 1903 to 1906 only, kept St Petersburg informed of the anti-Russian stance held by the Australian Government since the beginning of the Russo–Japanese War, sending information on deliveries of Australian horses (15,000) via Hong Kong for the Japanese mounted infantry, and on the supply of forage and grain on British freighters chartered by local companies.⁴⁸ He also protested vigorously against the anti-Russian motions passed by the Australian federal parliament over the Dogger Bank incident.⁴⁹ However, after the Russian defeat and the obviously increased strength of Japan, anti-Russian feeling effectively evaporated. Hedenstrom, the next Russian consul, took note of this and drew particular attention to the evolution of Australian attitudes to Russia and Russians. In September 1908, he reported:

Prior to the Russo–Japanese War, public opinion in Australia clung to the belief that ... Russia had designs upon Australia, and the fear of an invasion by the Russian navy intensified even more the age-old hatred that the British harbour towards Russians. After the unfortunate war this fear passed ... However, a new enemy arose before the anxious eyes of the Australians. This enemy is Britain's ally Japan ... Both the public and the Federal Prime Minister Mr Deakin himself state this quite openly.⁵⁰

48 AVPRI: 133-470-77, ff 32, 48, 52–53.

49 On the Dogger Bank incident, see AVPRI: 183-520-1162, see Document 91.

50 AVPRI: 184-520-1300, f. 77, see Document 100.

Hedenstrom, whose long dispatches are notable for their wealth of factual material and his desire to analyse events as they happened, reported in detail to St Petersburg on Australia's attempts to acquire new foreign-policy sponsors, on reactions to events in Europe, in particular Germany's build-up of naval armaments, on Australian steps to build up its defence capacity and its desire to turn the South Pacific into an exclusively Australian sphere of influence. Surveying the geopolitical landscape in December 1908, in a detailed study of Australia's present and future place in the world, he spoke of its prosperity, which 'would be the envy of any European country', and posed what he saw as a fundamental question, the question which prompts the title of this volume: 'What kind of rivalries – and between whom – may be provoked by this new state?'⁵¹ He also pointed out the 'virtual independence that the Australian Federation (Commonwealth) enjoys' and the weakness of the constitutional ties binding it to the metropolis.⁵² He paid no less attention, often sharply critical attention, to Australia's domestic problems: feverish legislative attempts to lend judicial underpinning to all aspects of the life of the young Australian state, as well as problems of its political, social and economic development. Progress along the road to full sovereignty and rapid economic growth which would lay the ground for enhanced military power and weight in foreign policy – that was the path mapped out, in Hedenstrom's view, for Australia in the twentieth century.

With the dawn of the twentieth century came an expansion of the strictly consular work of the Russian representatives, above all to protect the interests of Russian nationals. This was linked with the rapid rise in the number of immigrants from Russia settling in Australia. By 1914, according to the Melbourne consulate, they numbered about 11,000. Furthermore, the Russian community was increasing by approximately 120 to 150 per month, and the amount of work of the consulate with these expatriates 'doubled every three years'.⁵³ Work with the Russian diaspora claimed the foreground in 1911 when Alexander Abaza assumed the office of Russian consul general in Melbourne. A substantial proportion of the Russian immigrants were from the peasant class, and their main reason for choosing the Australian colonies was a shortage of available land in

51 AVPRI: 184-520-1300, ff 84, 85, see Document 102.

52 Ibid. f. 115, see Document 102.

53 AVPRI: 155-408-1274, f. 6, see Document 121. For more detail, see G. I. Kanevskaia, *My eshche mechtaem o Rossii ... 'Istoriia russkoi diaspory v Avstralii (konets XIX v. – vtoraiia polovina 80-kh gg. XX v.)*, Vladivostok, Izd-vo Dal'nevostochnogo universiteta, 2010, pp. 14–42.

Russia. After the Russian revolution of 1905–1907, some revolutionaries who had fled government persecution also found their way to Australia. These latter made up for their small numbers by their prominence and energy and did their best to carry out their work of propaganda and agitation both among Russian immigrants and Australian workers. To combat the revolutionaries, the Russian consulate sometimes resorted to the services of the Australian police: in 1912 and 1916, at the consul's urging, the Australian authorities closed down the radical Russian-language newspapers *Echo of Australia* (*Ekho Avstralii*) and *News of the Union of Russian Emigrants* (*Izvestiya Soyuza russkikh emigrantov*).⁵⁴ At the same time, Abaza thought that the best way to counter the influence of the 'political criminals ... who have fled Russia' was to create conditions in which Russians 'in faraway Australia do not lose their living connection with their homeland', so that they could all find 'warm sympathy and sincerely-given assistance from the people dear to them'.⁵⁵ To this end, he developed a plan to extend and reorganise the consular service in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania. This plan made provision for a whole network of permanent Russian consulates in addition to the consulate general in Melbourne. These were to be in Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth. In Brisbane, which at the beginning of the twentieth century was the focus of the Russian immigrant population, Abaza proposed to situate the principal residence of a Russian Orthodox priest, relying – with good reason – on the role of religion in fostering unity and conciliation among the community and preserving their spiritual links with their homeland. His proposals would, he wrote:

serve to greatly assist our Russian community, raise our national prestige and thus be of benefit to Russian statehood by retaining thousands of our respectable fellow-countrymen, who would otherwise ... lose all connection with Russia and become loyal Australians.⁵⁶

54 E. Fried, 'The First Consul: Peter Simonoff and the Formation of the Australian Communist Party', in John McNair and Thomas Poole (eds), *Russia and the Fifth Continent*, Brisbane, University of Queensland Press, 1992, p. 112.

55 AVPRI: 155-408-1274, see Document 121, f. 4; AVPRI: 153-408-1404, ff 57–58.

56 AVPRI: 155-408-1274, f. 10, see Document 121.

The Foreign Ministry did not reject Abaza's plan, but the onset of the First World War prevented any action being taken. In 1917, the consulate general in Melbourne remained the sole permanent mission, but honorary consuls, mostly local businessmen, operated in Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Hobart, Newcastle, Perth and Fremantle.⁵⁷

The war brought its own alterations to the work of the Melbourne consulate general. Russia and Australia, by the terms of the Entente, were now allies. The consulate took active measures to return any army reservists living in Australia to Russia by the first transport. Russian nationals of military age who could not return were offered the option of enlisting in the Australian army. At the same time, the consulate attempted to extend its protection to 'Austrian Slavs'. As citizens of a state at war with the British Empire, they were faced with the threat of internment. The Russian consul issued temporary certificates of consular protection to them, in which they stated their intention of taking Russian citizenship.⁵⁸

The revolution of February 1917 and the overthrow of Tsarist rule, seen in Australia as a long-awaited bid for freedom, provoked a surge of interest in that distant northern country. The Russian consular staff in Melbourne were untroubled by events in Petrograd (as St Petersburg was known in the years 1914–1924), and expressed their willingness to serve the Provisional Government. It seemed as if the overthrow of the monarchy would open new opportunities for the development of Russian–Australian relations. Only a few weeks before that revolution, in early February 1917, on the initiative of the Russian consul, backed by political and business circles in Australia, a Russian–Australian Commerce and Information Bureau was founded.⁵⁹ The intention was that it would foster Russian–Australian trade to the point where Russia could take the place of Germany in the Australian market. Abaza sent his report on the establishment of the Bureau to the Foreign Ministry in April, when the fall of Tsarism was already a *fait accompli*. His tone exuded optimism, and full confidence that the plan would come to fruition. That, however, was not to be: the October revolution in Russia put an end to all such initiatives. When the Bolsheviks took power, the staff of the Melbourne consulate adamantly opposed them. At the beginning of December 1917, when it became quite clear what was happening in Petrograd, Abaza wrote

57 *Ezhgodnik Ministerstva inostrannykh del Rossii, 1916*, St Petersburg, 1916, p. 53.

58 National Archives of Australia (hereafter NAA): A11803, 1914/89/241.

59 AVPRI: 155-408-905, ff 49–53, see Document 123.

to William Morris Hughes, the Prime Minister of Australia, to dissociate himself categorically from the Bolshevik Government.⁶⁰ The response to his letter was the immediate refusal of the Australian Government to recognise any documents issued by the consul general to Russian subjects. At the end of December 1917, Abaza informed Konstantin Nabokov, the Provisional Government's ambassador in London, of his decision to step down from his post in Melbourne.

Abaza's resignation effectively marked the end of consular relations between Russia and the Commonwealth of Australia. The Soviet Government's attempt to appoint a member of the Russian community in Australia, the Bolshevik Peter Simonoff, as Soviet Russia's consul in January 1918 was unsuccessful. Since the British Government did not recognise the Soviet regime, the Australian Government was unable to grant him *de jure* recognition. Having failed to establish his credentials as consul, Simonoff left Australia in 1921.⁶¹ A prolonged hiatus ensued in Russian–Australian relations. It did not end until 1942, when, as allies in the anti-Hitler coalition, the USSR and the Commonwealth of Australia would establish diplomatic relations.

In the second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, the Russian consular service in Australia played an important and positive role in maintaining and fostering Russian–Australian relations. At a time when commercial, economic and cultural relations were at the embryonic stage, it was precisely the consular service that signalled a Russian presence in Australia. The consuls successfully protected the interests of Russian emigrants and Russian subjects who found themselves in Australia. It was they who worked to enhance the image of Russia in the Australian community when Anglo–Russian relations were difficult and growing Russophobia was rife. As professional diplomats, the consuls provided their government with a fairly full and objective picture of the

60 NAA: A981, CONS 241.

61 For more detail, see P. Simonov, 'Tri s polovinoi goda sovet'skogo diplomatičeskogo predstavitel'stva', *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*, 1922, No. 15 (133), pp. 61–66. An English translation may be found in Kevin Windle, "'Trotskii's Consul': Peter Simonoff's Account of His Years as Soviet Representative in Australia (1918–1921)", *Slavonic and East European Review*, Vol. 93, No. 3, July 2015, pp. 493–524. See also A. Rudnitskii, 'Sud'ba pervogo konsula. K istorii rossiisko-avstraliiskikh otnoshenii', 'Istoriia bez kupiur' (special issue of *Mezhdunarodnaia zhizn'*), Moscow, 2012, pp. 5–26; Kevin Windle, 'Pervyi konsul Sovetskoi Rossii v Avstralii P. F. Simonov i ego druž'ia i nedrugi', *Klio*, No. 6 (114), June 2016, pp. 176–188.

processes of Australia's domestic political development, the evolution of its foreign-policy perspectives and preferences, and of the international situation in the South Pacific.

The documents showing the work of the Russian consular service in Australia – that is, primarily their dispatches – now constitute an invaluable source on the history of Russian–Australian relations, as well as being an informative foreign source on the history of Australia as a whole. It is hoped that the present collection will open new avenues and serve as a stimulus and foundation for further and deeper scholarly study of the history of Russian–Australian relations.

Alexander Massov
St Petersburg
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