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Press Release

SHELDON JACKSON MUSEUM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: **September 22, 2010**

October Artifact of the Month: Framed print of Innocent Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna

The Sheldon Jackson Museum's artifact of the month for October is a framed print of Innocent Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna. In Sitka, he was known as Bishop Innocent of Kamchatka, the Kuriles and the Aleutians. From the Sitka National Historical Park Service's brochure:

"In 1841 Bishop Innocent arrived in Sitka to assume leadership of a vast new diocese that included both Alaska and Kamchatka. As the center of authority for the Orthodox Church in Russian America, he had the power to shape the church's presence. He also had a strong interest in native cultures. Under his direction, these came together in an approach to missionary work that incorporated native language and clergy." In 1977 Innocent was glorified as a saint in the Russian Orthodox Church.

The print was donated to the Museum in 1897 by George Kostromitinov. Kostromitinov was a "citizen by purchase." He was born Sergei Ionavitch in Sitka on July 18, 1854. His father was employed by the Russian America Company in Kodiak and died an early death when he fell off a gangplank. His mother, Anna, then moved the family to Sitka where she served in the house of Princess Maksutov. At the sale of Alaska in 1867 his mother was asked to return to Russia by Princess Maksutov which she declined, not wanting her two sons conscripted into the Russian army. Kostromitinov attended both Russian Colonial Schools and American schools. At the transfer, he switched his name to George. He could speak English, Russian, and Tlingit possibly other native languages. Kostrometinov was an active member of the Russian Orthodox community and staunch supporter of St. Michaels Cathedral. He became court interpreter, Deputy United States Marshall, a Lieutenant Colonel in the organized district of Alaska and priest. He was one of the founding members of the Alaska Historical Society in 1890 and served as recording secretary. His interest in Sitka's history is documented in his scrap book which is on microfilm at the Kettleon Library.



The date the print was given to the Museum coincides with the 100th anniversary of Innocent's birth in August 1798. The script beneath the portrait is in Russian and is symbolic of the ties Kostrometinov continued to retain to his Russian heritage.

The picture can be seen at the Sheldon Jackson Museum from October 1 through October 31. The Museum is open from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. from Tuesday to Saturday. Winter admission is \$3 for adults.

The image can also be viewed on our website at

http://www.museums.state.ak.us/sheldon_jackson/artifact_of_month.html

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Phone (907) 747-8981 Fax (907) 465-3004

www.museums.state.ak.us

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Framed print of Bishop Innocent of Kamchatka



Инноцентій, Митрополитъ Московскій.

Venamineff first Missionary
in Russian North
America 1797.

Presented by George Kastromittenoff
Sitka July 2nd, 1897.

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