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FROSTED WINDOWS

300 YEARS OF
St. Petersburg

Through Western Eyes

AN EXHIBITION CURATED BY

SALLY HAINES

University of Kansas Libraries
Kenneth Spencer Research Library

2003
I love thee, city of Peter's making,  
I love thy harmonies austere,  
And Neva's sovereign waters breaking  
Along her banks of granite sheer;  
Thy traceried iron gates, thy sparkling  
Yet moonless, meditative gloom...  

Alexander Pushkin, The Bronze Horseman (1833/1837)

The most abstract and premeditated city on earth...  
Fedor Dostoevsky, Notes from Underground (1864)

In May 2003, the world celebrates the 300th anniversary of the founding of the city of St. Petersburg, Russia, in the swampy delta of the Neva River in the Spring of 1703. This magnificent imperial city, built on Russian soil by Italian, French, and Russian architects, is today an international capital of culture where East meets West and Past meets Future.

For over 200 years this urban “symphony of marble, malachite, and gold” served as the capital of the Russian Empire (1712 to 1922) and the seat of the powerful Romanov dynasty. The city’s builder was the extraordinary and still controversial Tsar Peter the Great, whose rule marked the end of Old Russia and the emergence of the Russian Empire as a world power. Tsar Peter shaved Old Believer beards, created the Academy of Sciences, introduced European fashions and dancing, and defiantly imposed the Age of Enlightenment on a still-medieval culture. The city he built stands as a monument to imperial will, with all the ambivalencies that notion must carry.

The city of St. Petersburg, with its state-of-the-art Baroque fortress and buildings of stone, became Tsar Peter’s “window to Europe.” Etienne Falconet’s magnificent statue of the Bronze Horseman, a tribute to Peter’s achievement from his greatest admirer, Catherine II the Great, dominates the cityscape and serves as one of the most powerful visual emblems of St. Petersburg.

A city of mind (Dostoevsky lamented its intentionality and abstraction) and mythologies (Nikolai Gogol claimed that the devil himself lit the street lamps of Nevsky Prospekt), St. Petersburg has inspired a vibrant and exciting “Petersburg text” for us to read, to view, and endlessly to decipher. Every major Russian writer, artist, and musician has contributed in some way to this Petersburg text. The city anchors one end of the “East or West?” paradox that is central to the issue of Russian identity (Moscow anchors the other).

In commemoration of the Tercentenary of St. Petersburg, the Kenneth Spencer Research Library is pleased to present a major exhibition, “Frosted Windows: 300 Years of St. Petersburg Through Western Eyes.” Nine cases of treasures from the Department of Special Collections trace the city as it moves from being Sankt Pieter Burkh, to Peterborough, St. Petersburg, Petrograd/Leningrad, and finally St. Petersburg again. The exhibition gives a tantalizing view of what Westerners have seen as they have looked in, from the other side of Peter’s “window to Europe.”

The exhibition team was coordinated by Richard W. Clement, Special Collections
Librarian, but the major effort of selection and interpretation was achieved by Sally Haines, Associate Special Collections Librarian and the Spencer Library's Slavist. Exhibition design was by Darren Moore of Titus d. Co. Conservation and mounting of the exhibition was by Whitney Baker, the University Libraries’ Conservator. Further assistance was provided by Geoff Husic of the Slavic Department of the University Libraries, Sarah Goodwin Thiel, Spencer Library’s Digital Projects Librarian, and Brad Schaffner, Head of the University Libraries Slavic Department. Providing inspiration from the exhibition’s conception were Marilyn Stokstad, Professor of Art History Emerita, Maria Carlson, Director of the Center for Russian and East European Studies, and William J. Crowe, Spencer Librarian. Funding for the exhibition was provided by an anonymous donor.

The Spencer Library exhibition was part of an international celebration of the St. Petersburg Tercentenary. The University of Kansas made its own contribution to the celebration by offering a broad array of special activities for the “Petersburg Semester.”

The Center for Russian and East European Studies presented a special lecture series on the City, presenting William C. Brumfield on “St. Petersburg: City of Imperial Design,” featuring Dr. Brumfield’s own exquisite slides (17 February); Timothy Scholl on “The Dancing Tsar: Music, Dance, and Peter’s “Window to Europe” (10 March); David Stone on “The 900 Days: The Siege of Leningrad” (2 April); and Alan Holiman on “Life and Politics: Petersburg in 2003” (21 April). The Center also featured St. Petersburg in a plenary session of the Central Slavic Conference (3-5 April) that included guest lectures and a multi-media performance. A special offering was a concert of an authentic 19th and 20th century Russian repertoire for the Russian seven-string guitar by guitarist, lutenist, and musicologist Dr. Oleg Timofeyev (co-sponsored by the School of Fine Arts and the Kansas City Guitar Society) on 10 April.

The Lied Center offered an extended and various program of Russian performers and Russian music to complement the other activities of KU’s St. Petersburg Semester. These included performances by the Trio Voronezh, a folk instrument ensemble that offered a program that ranged from Bach to Russian folk songs; David Finckel and Wu Han, performing Prokofiev, Shostakovich, and Rachmaninoff; Olga Kern, winner of the Gold Medal at the 11th Van Cliburn International Piano Competition.

Supporting events in the region included “Czars: 400 Years of Imperial Grandeur,” at the Kansas International Museum in Topeka, which featured 267 artifacts from the Armory Chamber of the Kremlin Museums, exhibited in eleven stunning galleries and depicting the lives of the Russian tsars, including the ill-fated Nicholas and Alexandra; and a performance by the Topeka Symphony Orchestra of Dmitry Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 7, Opus 60: The Leningrad Symphony, a massive work dedicated to Leningrad’s 900-day resistance to the Nazi siege of the city during the Second World War.

Sponsors of the KU St. Petersburg Tercentenary are: the Center for Russian and East European Studies, the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures, the Lied Center, the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, and the Hall Center for the Humanities.

Additional funding for campus events has been provided by an anonymous donor and by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center Program.

For more information on the “St. Petersburg Semester Events” visit the Center for Russian and East European Studies home page at www.ku.edu/~crees or contact crees@ku.edu. For the Kenneth Spencer Research Library and a web accessible version of the exhibition, see: spencer.lib.ku.edu.

Maria Carlson

Richard W. Clement
INTRODUCTION

A window lets in light from both sides. But in damp northern climes, it’s often through a glass darkly, be it during the foggy days and White Nights of mid-summer or on snowy evenings surrounding the Winter Solstice when window-panes are frosted and folks darken the chandelier or blow out the candles and crawl early into feather-beds.

Peter the Great’s Sankt Pieter Burkh, founded 300 years ago this year as his “Window on the West,” tempted Europe and the West, much like The Little Match Girl on the coldest night of the year, to come in spiritual and intellectual hunger and in hopes of feeling the warmth and seeing the light-in-the-East they could make out through the almost opaque Petersburg crystal.

In our exhibition you will see just a small sample of what western eyes have seen of St. Petersburg. We’ve cleared the snow off the glass, so put the matches back in your pocket, come in and get just a taste of the sumptuous spread of delectables to be found here. Needless to say, we hope you’ll go away with an even greater appetite for exploring our considerable holdings on Peter’s glorious city and on Russia itself.

Some of the great strengths of our collections here are in the literature of voyages and travels; of natural history; of geography and cartography; it also happens that our Russian materials are strongest in these areas as well. In fact a whole exhibition – or term paper – or book – could be written here on the connections between European science and the Russian Academy of Sciences; another on the economic, social, and political history of European/Russian relations, especially from the English perspective of the 18th and – using the Novikoff correspondence – the 19th centuries; one can study maps of Russia; or travelers’ accounts. Or find an old recipe for borshcht.

Readers from all points on the compass are welcome to use the Spencer’s collections, and best of all, you can study these wonders hands-on.

Patron Saint of “Russian” Librarians...
Friedrich von Adelung was a Prussian historian, linguist, and bibliographer, a.k.a. Fedor Pavlovich Adelung when he pulled up roots and moved to Russia at age 26. He was dubbed patron saint of Russian librarians when he compiled — with statistician K. Storch — a five-year review of Russian literature, 1810-1811, that marked the beginning of Russian bibliographical statistics. He also wrote a literary review of travelers to Russia up to 1700, western and otherwise, compiled a universally celebrated bibliography of Sanskrit, 1811, and another of foreign maps of Russia, 1306-1699.

This portrait of Sigmund von Herberstein — whose map of the site of the future St. P. can be seen to the right — is from Adelung’s biography of that early German traveler to Russia. Among other important bibliographical works, Adelung published, in 1827, the Austrian Augustin von Meyerberg’s account of his travels in Russia in 1661 and 1662. Adelung died during his presidency of the Petersburg Academy of Sciences.


Put Her in a Pumpkin Shell... The palatial Peterhof or Petrodvorets, Peter’s favorite home, was 30 versts or about 20 miles from the old St. Petersburg. Was it indeed still part of larger Petersburg today? We discovered that although it’s still outside the city limits, the palace complexes (Peterhof, Lomonosov, Gatchina, Tsarskoie Selo) to the south of the city are associated with St. Petersburg as architectural objects in the city itself, as much as Polish king Jan Sobieski’s summer residence, Wilanow, has always been associated with Warsaw, in its day well outside the Warsaw city limits.

Indeed, the foundation for town planning was laid during the building of St. Petersburg and fundamental principles were then established for buildings such as the Peterhof and other cultural, government and residential buildings. This plate shows the old-style onion domes in the distance and extensive gardens, playgrounds, water fountains surrounded by the walls of the palace itself. At night the gardens were illuminated, and from the fleet in the harbor, guests were entertained with fire-works and “flaming meteors.”

Nicolas-Gabriel Clerc was physician to the Corps of Cadets at St. Petersburg. This beautiful volume, the atlas to a set extremely scarce in a complete state, has the extra plates and maps intended for subscribers only.
This is the history of Russia before the founding of St. Petersburg ... Published originally as *Of the Russe Common Wealth*, 1591, this is the second edition of the first English book about Russia. Well more than a century before Sankt Pieter Burkh would still be swampland for another 650 years (a second chronicle brought Russian history up to the reign of Peter the Great). And this is said to be the first Russian book of which an English translation was published.

Lomonosov was the son of a peasant and had to overcome great difficulties on his way to becoming the distinguished scholar. He was appointed professor of chemistry at St. Petersburg in 1745, but was also top-notch in geology, geography and other areas of the natural sciences, astronomy, the arts, linguistics, mining and metallurgy, history, and education; he wrote verses and plays, and developed a new method of making colored glass, using it to create mosaic pictures and portraits, including one of Peter the Great.

Named after him is a museum in Petersburg as well as a University in Moscow; a single-mirror telescope; an underwater ridge in the Arctic Ocean; a plateau in Norway; a city in Leningrad Oblast; and a mountain range on Novaia Zemlia.

This is the history of Russia after the founding of St. Petersburg... although that's not quite true, because although it was written after the founding, Lomonosov's History takes us only to the year 1054. Maybe the reason for the discrepancy in size between this tome and Mr. Fletcher's little book has to do with the glory of St. Petersburg.

Librarians and booksellers are used to seeing "firsts" among the descriptions in booksellers' catalogs, and even though there can be only one "first," Lomonosov uses up a lot of them. He has been called the first great universal genius in Russian history — Pushkin called him "our first university." This volume is the first history of Russia to be written with a western approach, even though the site of the future Sankt Pieter Burkh would still be swampland for another 650 years (a second chronicle brought Russian history up to the reign of Peter the Great). And this is said to be the first Russian book of which an English translation was published.

Possibly antediluvian; or, Floods looking for a city ... Long before the founding of St. Petersburg, Europeans looked towards Russia like rabbits casing the carrot patch, especially those travelers such as Sigmund von Herberstein in the 16th and Adam Olearius in the 17th century who recognized the importance of that unexplored area for scientific research. Herberstein spoke Russian and as ambassador of, respectively, Emperor Maximilian and Charles V, visited in 1517 and 1526 in an attempt to influence political affairs in the struggle against Turkey. Failing in both those missions he nevertheless collected and published in this work a vast amount of geographical material, historical information, and descriptions of the economics, trade routes and rivers, ways of life and religion in cities and villages.

In this map one can see the site of the future Sankt Pieter Burkh south of Lake Ladoga and on the delta of the Neva River. This area was coveted by all the northern powers for access to trade routes to all points East. Peter couldn’t have chosen a better – or a worse – spot on which to build a city.

Joann Georg Korb. *Diarium itineris in Moscoviam*. Viennez Austriæ: typis Leopoldi Voigt, 1700?

Crime and Punishment ... Austria’s attitude towards pre-Peterburgian but nevertheless Petrine Russia can be seen in this diary of the journey to Moscow of the Count of Guarient and his secretary to the mission, Johann Georg Korb. While Peter was on a tour of Europe near the end of the 1690s, the strelsy, or musketeers, revolted. This reactionary majority, judged to be anti-West, was subsequently tried and executed at Peter’s order. Korb was an eyewitness to the bloodletting, and his account of the revenge so angered Peter that the latter complained to the court of Vienna and had all unsold copies of the Diarium destroyed. This copy once belonging to Prince Liechtenstein is one that escaped and survived.

Korb had made other insulting observations: noting the huge gap between Russia’s rich resources and the bad production record of its impoverished peasant farmers, he said, “The land is fertile enough, if it were not left in uncultivated sterility by the laziness of the people.”

For Peter, this had to have been the last straw: Russia WOULD have a window onto the West. Sankt Pieter Burkh was about to be founded.
All of 6-foot-6 in Stocking Feet... The following quotation is from the column, “Who am I? Test your biography I.Q.,” in the pop-magazine Biography for Jan. 2002:

One of the most controversial figures in Russian history, I brought many reforms to my country, while crushing those who objected. Convinced that Russia needed to modernize, I toured Western Europe and convinced many craftsmen and technical experts to come to our country; I also sent many citizens abroad to learn Western skills. Proclaimed emperor in 1721, my reign saw Russia's first navy, and my wars against the Ottoman Empire established our nation as a formidable military power.

Biographers are in general agreement about Peter's character and intelligence. He was strong willed, energetic, purposeful, curious, with a strong work ethic. He was also hot-tempered and cruel and had his own son, Aleksei, put to death (1718). He was a statesman, military man, and the founding of Petersburg was a first step in carrying out major reforms aimed at overcoming Russia's backwardness relative to the West, and affected all aspects of Russian life. Diplomatic consulates were established abroad for the first time in Russian history; teams of scientists were sent out to survey and develop Russia's vast natural resources; the first Russian museum, the Kunstkammer, was established in 1719 and included a public library; the Petersburg Academy of Sciences, founded in 1725, included a Gymnasium and a university; peasants were mobilized for the new armies and for building towns, canals, fortresses.

Mauvillon apparently was not a particular admirer of things Russian (we couldn't ascertain if he'd ever visited Russia, let alone Petersburg). He did spend time as a translator and French teacher in Germany, and served for a while as secretary to the king of Poland. One French biographer wrote that he was cold and opinionated and abusive to his wife and child (just like Peter).

Coming in 1703 to a Swamp Near You... In the 10th century the marshes where Sankt Pieter Burkh would begin to be built almost 800 years later were a part of Novgorod land, originally the area around Lake Il'men, home to the Il'men Slavs. The town of Novgorod, seen here, was the largest settlement.

In 1240 Alexandr Nevsky quashed the Swedish army very near the location of the future Russian capital. Between the 12th and 15th centuries the term Novgorod referred to the federal republic, the only true republic in all of Russian history.

A German scholar born in Saxony, Olearius was mathematician and librarian for the Duke of Holstein, knew both Russian and Arabic (where is he when we really need him?) and traveled to Russia as a member of the Schleswig-Holstein...
embassy. Like Sigmund Herberstein’s earlier accounts, Olearius’s contain maps, drawings, town views, and are rich in descriptions of the geography, history, and lives of the people in the settlements he visited.


T he Emperor’s Wearing Clothes! An Internet search under August Racinet will bring up beautiful reprints of *Le costume historique*, a prime resource for theatrical designers. This set is of the “Grand édition,” published in 1888, the plates in this exhibition all from the section “Russia: 16th to 19th centuries.” Nos. 1 and 6 (in the bottom plate) are after engravings in Olearius’ *Voyages en Moscovie*, 1647; nos.2 and 5 show the Cossack Brechka in a caftan of honor received from Peter The Great; no.3 is the chief Cossack in Peter’s time; nos.23 and 26 (in the upper plate) are Peter himself in habit de marin and a Polish costume.

From the Land of the South Slavs... Published in Vienna, this calendar of the world’s happenings from its beginnings uses the Russian civil alphabet, introduced to the Russians by Peter The Great. The author, Serbian school teacher, writer, historian, and civil servant Zahariah Orfelin used it to write mostly patriotic Serbian and religious poems in Russian Slavonic, even as he touted the Serbian vernacular as the preferred language for his country’s literature. His Serbian nationalism – or rather his desire for Serbia’s freedom from the Turks – did not deter him from singing Peter’s praises in *The life and glorious deeds of Peter The Great*, in 1772.


Господи Помилуй ...Kyrie Eleison...Lord Have Mercy... The following list of complaints and the engraving on the right provide the reader with the English view of Russian Orthodoxy:
Of the Muscovites and the Russians

The Muscovites, and Russians as they were converted to Christianity by the Grecians ... so have they ever since continued of the Greeke communion and religion.

1. Denying the Holy Ghost to proceede from the sonne.
2. Rejecting purgatory, but yet praying for the dead.
3. Believing that holy men enjoy not the presence of God afore the Resurrection.
4. Celebrating the sacrament of the Eucharist, with leavened bread, and requiring warme water to mingle with the wine.
5. And communicating in both kindes.
6. But mingling both together in the chalice, and distributing it together with a spoone.
7. And receiving children after 7. yeeres old to the communion, saying that at that age they begin to sinne against God.
8. Omitting confirmation by the Bishop.
9. Denying the spirituall efficacy of extreame unction.
10. Excluding the fourth marriage as utterly unlawfull: whereas they approve not the second, as perfectly unlawfull, but onely permit it, but tolerate not the third, except on very important considerations.
11. Dissolving marriage by divorcement upon every light occasion or displeasure.
12. Admitting neither deacons nor priests to orders, except they be married: but yet prohibiting marriage to them being actually in orders.
13. Rejecting carved or masse images, but admitting the painted.
14. Reputing it unlawfull to fast on Saturdays.
15. Or, to eate of that which is strangled, or of bloude.
17. Refusing to communicate with the Roman Church.


The Grand Inquisitor... Peter the Great had no love for Catholicism, but in the early days of his reign he showed deference to the church. Unfortunately his reforms did little to improve conditions for Catholics, and under Catherine II their situation was made worse, even though she promulgated religious tolerance and proposed a national church independent of Rome.

The three partitions of Poland brought thousands of Polish Catholics to Russia, including this ambitious Polish bishop, Siestrzeńcewicz-Bohusz, descended from a family of Lithuanian Calvinists. Historians are in agreement about the evil character of the man Catherine appointed to the administration of a new diocese (Mohileff) as Catholic Metropolitan of St. Petersburg and later Primate of Lithuania. He was without scruples or honorable motives, wanting only complete despotic power over the Catholic Church in Russia. It was said that during his long episcopate (1774-1826) he was the scourge of both rites.

As for the subject of his book, some historians believe the original Slav stomping-grounds were the Pripet marshes (southern Belarus, northwestern Ukraine), whence the Slav tribes (the Sarmates, Esclavons, and Slaves of the title) migrated north across the Great Plain, northwest into Poland, and south into the Balkans. Sarmatia is the name the Romans gave to the steppes beyond the Carpathians and the Black Sea.
Finding themselves caught between horse traders and Byzantine culture, without natural frontiers and constantly threatened by invasion, the people remained semi-barbarous, having no leisure for building cities or becoming politically savvy or choreographing ballets. Other historians contend that these southern drifters were a later group, that the original home of the Slavs was to be found not in the steppes, but farther north, in the forests, and that they were closely related to the Swedes, Angles and other northern peoples.


Beginning of Russian Bibliographical Statistics... The Great Soviet Encyclopedia adopts as Russians many of the European admirers of St. P. who spent much of their lives in Russia. H. F. Storch, a German born in Riga and called Andrei Karlovich Shtorkh in his adoptive country, is, according to the GSE, a Russian economist, historian and bibliographer. It was he who compiled – with the “Patron Saint of ‘Russian’ librarians” Friedrich von Adelung – the five-year review of Russian literature, 1810-1811 that marked the beginning of Russian bibliographical statistics.

Lambs to the Slaughter; or, I Love Your Hat... Both the French and the Germans were intrigued with Russian military uniforms and with good reason. But one would think the tassels and plumes and chinstraps would have slowed a guy down and made him want to scratch rather than fight. And imagine the combatants’ manly gossip: “Tsk tsk, Yuri’s frockcoat is full of moth holes and he doesn’t know his skako from his kepi.”

When Peter I created a standing army early in the 18th century he introduced standard uniforms for each branch. These uniforms evolved through the decades with each change of the guard, most starting out quite complicated and later becoming simpler and more comfortable. But how much time and energy was spent just getting fitted for these elaborate get-ups? And since the purpose of the covering was to distinguish the enemy from the fellow-traveler, how much fashion schooling did a soldier need not to take out his brother with friendly fire? Indeed sometimes the designs backfired when the color of a coat in certain terrain exposed its wearer on the battlefield. Camouflage became the order of the day in the early 20th century, 1904 in Britain, 1906 in Russia, but not until 1908 in the USA. WWI saw the re-appearance of metal headgear: the steel helmet, but the Soviets didn’t begin wearing it until the 1930s. As for hair, compare the powdered wigs of officers and the braids of infantrymen under Paul I (1796-1801) with the buzz cuts of today.

In our collections is an Austrian publication with equally attractive plates, Die Russische Armee im Felde, Wien; 1888.
Peter Principle, Catherine Principle...

Education in Russia, woefully inadequate until Peter's reforms, had theretofore been under the authority of the church. The secularization of thought that came to Russia from the West with the Enlightenment was nowhere more evident throughout the 18th century than in the Russian educational system.

The Empress Catherine II (1762-1796) continued educational reforms, embraced the pedagogical views of such men as Rousseau and Diderot in France and others in Germany. When she appointed Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi to be Director of the Academy of Arts he drafted a general plan for the education of all young Russians, regardless of sex or social standing (he was himself a foundling). After Diderot's visit to Russia in 1773 Betskoi honed this idea further, making a distinction between the basics that no one can do without (the 3 Rs) and the skills that are based on one's station in life: an individual does need specialized training (shop), but should also have a sampling from all fields of knowledge (liberal arts). At the behest of Diderot this French edition of Betskoi's plan was published one year after the Russian original.

French sculptor Etienne-Maurice Falconet, whom Catherine commissioned to create the statue of Peter the Great that came to be known as The Bronze Horseman, found himself at odds with Betskoi on the form the statue should take. In spite of Betskoi's impressive contributions to Russian culture over his thirty-year presidency of the Academy of Arts, Falconet considered him a very conservative man of no imagination or artistic vision whatsoever.

A Gentle Soul...

Before the Industrial Revolution St. Petersburg's visably wealthy lived side by side with her hidden impoverished, often in the front and the back of the same building! This "illusion" of what the city represented, the pretense that there was no seamy underbelly, came to be grist for the mill of one of Russia's most revered and interesting writers. Fyodor Dostoyevsky is still relevant today on account of his understanding of the pathological mind and the complexities of the human soul and character.

As Dostoyevsky matured he abandoned the atheism of the West, came to deplore capitalism and to believe that Russian Orthodoxy would become the spiritual leader of the world. His powerful narrative style is evident from his first published work, Poor Folk (1846), to his greatest literary achievement, often considered to be one of the finest novels ever written, The Brothers Karamazov (1879-1880).

Published two years after his death, this was the first attempt at a biography of Dostoyevsky.
An English Lady: An anonymous manuscript travel-dairy, a detailed account of the sights, costumes, social services, village and town life, war aftermath, travel mishaps in Russia and Poland. Covers 22 June to July, 1828, Warsaw-Smolensk-Moscow-Novgorod-St. Petersburg, by way of Austria, and looking for permanent lodgings in Peterborough.

Notes From Underground... If you're interested in matters Polish and Russian or in travels in Slavic lands and in sights seen through western eyes AND if you can read this page from the manuscript diary of an Englishwoman traveling in the summer of 1828 (175 years ago!) then YOU may be the person to transcribe the contents of this little volume. You will get to know "Roberta" and "Mr. Sayer" (their real names), who were her companions on the trip. We can picture Ms. English Lady settling into the pension at night to write ... Inside the front cover she begins, "The weight of the statue of Peter The Great ..."

You've seen the blurb; now read the book!

The Englishwoman in Russia: impressions of the society and manners of the Russians at home. By a Lady, ten years resident in that country. London: J. Murray, 1855.

Mad Dogs and Englishmen... During Catherine's reign, the British had established themselves as a powerful minority in "Peterborough," as it was called by some of the Brits. They ran factories and were fully involved in the intellectual and social life of the city, as merchants, craftsmen, physicians, technicians, administrators, and bankers, and had positions of influence that benefited both the British and the Russians. In one sense they isolated themselves, living in their own self-sufficient communities, but they still took part in every aspect of the social and business goings-on of their new home city.

The Department of Special Collections houses many accounts in English as well as in French, German, and other European languages, of western transplants and sojourners to the East.
The Double... The statue of The Bronze Horseman (= Peter the Great, the inspired hero, rash, speedy, proud, majestic, handsome, and yes, six and a half feet tall in real life!) symbolized a powerful upsurge in Russian energy (and the horse and his rider are pointed westward). Indeed it is the subject of many a frontispiece in our St. Petersburg travel literature, and is immortalized in Pushkin’s poem, “The Bronze Horseman.”

French sculptor Etienne-Maurice-Falconet was commissioned by Catherine II on recommendation of Diderot to erect a memorial to Peter I. Falconet apparently had only unhappy experiences during his Russian years and never came back to see his masterpiece in place and ready to leap into the no longer frozen future. Falconet knew that Catharine abhorred allegory and he himself did not want a “Peter in Roman armor.” On this matter he locked horns with Ivan Betskoi of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. In the end he had his way artistically, but we have seen no images amongst our holdings that do it justice for display. Obviously this is one statue that must be seen “in the flesh.”

The story of the hauling from Finland of the granite block on which this saddle-sore Peter and his horse are erected is as dramatic as the story of obtaining the rock and wooden underpinnings of St. P. herself in 1703. Both were the death of many a good Russian.

Granville’s bio reads like Candide: his Cornish mother’s death-bed wish was that he take a British last name, but in fact he was an Italian patriot and political rabble-rouser, journalist, actor, and eventually physician. He first visited Petersburg in 1827, a second time in 1829 as physician, when he predicted Nicholas would die before July 1855.
Diary of a Diplomat... This manuscript is a report by a high ranking but unidentified French diplomat of the men and women peopling the Russian court, and on military, economic, religious, political, and social conditions in Russia, 1745-1746.

For one who would see the mid-18th century Russian court at Petersburg through French eyes, this is a grand opportunity for a research project. The first 22 chapters (of 30) form a remarkable portrait of the Empress Elizabeth (1741-1762), second daughter of Peter I and of those who played important roles in her surroundings: Russian and French counts, the ambassadors from Denmark, Hungary, England, and France. Intrigues abound.


D1213, v.1

Postal in Petersburg; or, Hail-Mail. There’s enough sleet, snow, and dark-of-night in St. P. in the winter to earn any postal worker an honest wage. Add to that a trek of eleven time zones. Trans-Siberian rail-mail speeds things up considerably.

The difficulties of distribution of anything in as large an area as Russia in the 18th and 19th (and even the 20th and 21st) centuries has to have been overwhelming, even on a sunny day. It is said that in the old days a one-hour delay could be punishable by death, especially if military communication depended on it, and there was a need to keep those nosy western foreign dignitaries traveling in mail-coaches from having the chance to see more than they ought to, frosted windows or not.

The postal system or iam, did become very speedy, but at a cost. The St. P. to Moscow route employed 13,000 iamschiki in the 1760s. By 1843 there were 7,700 miles of gravel road, 1/3rd of those of Britain and 1/20th of what France had. Russian Butch Cassidys waylaid coaches, killed horses and pillaged goods so that thousands of horses were required yearly to keep any route going. But the route from Moscow to St. Petersburg was shortened from five weeks to one over the course of the 18th century.

Robert Ker Porter was one of the brothers of English novelist Jane Porter. Invited by the Tsar to Russia in 1804, he married a Russian princess and after a stint in Venezuela as British consul returned to Russia where he died in St. Petersburg. The Department of Special Collections has a large collection of the Porter family papers.

И. М. Радецкий. Альманах гастрономов. Санктпетербург, Москва, 1877. D790

As good as the real thing... When it comes to western eyes looking through frosty Russian dining-room windows like the little match girl, the eyes are never too big for stomachs wanting dishes we can find nowhere else. Even a potato tastes Russian in the form of vodka, the Russian national drink (except that it’s no longer made with spuds).

Caviar, however, is more difficult to come by. Over-harvesting has almost wiped out the sturgeon and other Russian species that provide us with the delicacy. But we’re happy to say that all is not lost, because those enterprising cooks in
Leningrad a decade ago came up with a synthetic substitute for caviar and fish roe that they say, "is every bit as good as the real thing, except for the taste."

A hungry student (and aren't they all hungry?) could translate some of these recipes, modifying the list of ingredients for what's available in western groceries (the calf's head looks a little daunting, but in the Mid-West they ought to be plentiful), try them out in KU's Russia House (if it still existed) and make them available to local chefs. Students, don't perish, publish! The world needs another Russian cookbook.

Although we could find out nothing about Radetski himself, the British Museum Catalog lists an 1852 edition of this mouth-watering cookbook.

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Ma, Chieh. Описание Тибета в нынешнем его состоянии. С картой дороги из Чен-ду до Халассы. Перевод с китайского.
Санктпетербург: в тип. Имп. Воспитательного Дома, 1828. C8720

Ever The Twain Shall Meet. If one goes far enough west one will arrive at Petersburg's eastern back door, and by such machinations of the imagination we were able to include this beautiful aquatint of Tibet from a volume translated from the Chinese by Russian Sinologue Nikita Iakovlevich Bichurin, a.k.a the monk Iakinf (1777-1853). A Chuvash by nationality, Iakinf was born in the Kazan province but died in St. Petersburg. He was a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and it was he who set up the first Chinese language school in Russia in Kiakhta. Kazan became a major center for Oriental studies. In 1855, two years after his death, a faculty of oriental studies was set up at St. Petersburg University.

We don't know what Iakinf thought of St. P. per se, but he had contact with Pushkin and other Petersburg intellectuals and was said to be well ahead of his western contemporaries in erudition in Sinology. All of his most important works and translations were published in that fair city.

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*Scenes in Russia* describing the manners, customs, diversions, modes of traveling, &c. Of the inhabitants of that country. London: printed for J. And E. Wallis, 1814.

Children A933

St. Petersburg High... The only image of St. P. more plentiful in western books about 19th century Russia than the bronze horseman, is the ice hill, or "flying mountain," a peculiarly Russian entertainment that may have something to do with the fact that Petersburgers are flat-landers. Paris, Rome, Athens, and Lawrence have their high points, hogbacks, and hills, but at no point on the delta on which Peter built his city is there a spot over thirty feet above sea-level. Of all the ailments that have plagued that city — typhoid fever, typhus, cholera, giardia, influenza, malaria, diphtheria, syphilis, smallpox, and the common cold — altitude sickness has not been one of them, and actually the hill provides some relief from high barometric pressure if not from a queasy stomach.

This contraption seems to be a combination of ski-jump and roller coaster: each person climbs into a small 4-wheeled shallow sided box at the top of a platform and careens downhill on a track. Sometimes ridges (moguls?) are added to
increase velocity coming down enough to send them up the other side. When the River Neva is frozen the flying mountains are erected on the ice.


The News From Lake Ladoga... Arthur Sketchley is the pseudonym of English dramatist, novelist, and entertainer George Rose. His "Mrs. Brown" novels – 32 volumes in all – purport to be the slightly dotty ravings and rantings of an illiterate little old British lady of the lower middle-class who gossips about all the topics-of-the-day, and the Russian royals, of course, do not escape her watchful and highly prejudiced eye.

In a News From Lake Woebegone style Sketchley would read parts of his Mrs. Brown monologues in public entertainments supposedly "all over the world," but we can find no evidence of his taking his shtick to the Borshcht Belt of Petersburg. He seems to have traveled mostly in English speaking countries: Australia, South Africa, India. In the absence of tomatoes in Russia – at least at this date – either for eating or for heaving at the entertainment, what would have been the missile of choice? Cabbages? Dumplings?

The Elephantine Russian Empire... Johann Friedrich Brandt, known as well by his Russian moniker Fedor Fedorovich Brandt, was a native of Saxony, educated in Berlin as zoologist, surgeon, botanist and pharmacologist. He moved to St. P. just short of his 30th birthday to head the Zoological Museum of the Academy of Sciences, where he authored many scientific books and papers of which this department has quite a stash.
Alas, the woolly mammoth is now extinct (as of ca. 10,000 years ago) but before that he was a contemporary with Lower Paleolithic humans in the second half of the Pleistocene, inhabiting Europe, northern Asia and America. At least 40 mammoths have been found in the permafrost of northern Siberia and Alaska (possibly many more now with global warming). An expedition of the Academy found the most complete specimen to date in 1901-02 (again, this record may have been bumped by now). All parts of the animal, including stomach contents, were analyzed, and the skeleton can be viewed today in the Academy’s Zoological Museum.


“Leave Northern Siberia to the Bears,” he said... Among the westerners who achieved scientific immortality for their courageous forays into the frozen parts of Russia, was a Frenchman with equal passion for both religion and science: priest and astronomer Abbé Chappe d’Auteroche. Sent out to Tobol’sk by Louis XV to observe the transit of Venus across the sun, he was later sent on a similar mission to observe Venus in Baja California, where he died of yellow fever.

This wonderful three volume travelogue is filled with detailed descriptions of climate, flora, fauna, mineralogy, and the mining trade, as well as manners and customs of the inhabitants, and an astute geopolitical assessment of the areas the abbé was in, all accurately represented in engravings. Included is Chappe’s translation of Krashenninikov’s text on Kamtchatka and thus is one of the earliest printed accounts of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands.

The *Voyage* didn’t “play” in Petersburg, however, and Catherine is said to have found much of it highly offensive and may have had a hand in the answer to it, entitled, *The Antidote*, a scathing treatise longer than the *Voyage* itself.

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_The Trotskys and Other Awful Diseases; or, Bring Out Your Dead..._ One advantage of living in a frosty clime is that when the temperatures dip, the vectors for plague disappear: rats die and fleas become inactive. For this reason, in part, Petersburg was spared the succeeding waves of bubonic plague that have stuck other parts of Russia during much of her history.

Nevertheless, the threat to homeland security that Catherine the Great felt near the end of the 18th century when plague was raging in Moscow, was as large in her eyes as this flea (carrier of the plague bacterium, *Yersinia pestis*) and caused what John T. Alexander of the Kansas University History Department and author of *Bubonic Plague in Early Modern Russia: Public Health and Urban Disaster*, calls “Trepidation in Petersburg.” Money, luggage, goods of all sorts coming from outlying areas were fumigated, wrappings were burned, people coming through the checkpoints surrounding the city obeyed strict rules or were quarantined. On the other hand Catherine worried about disruptions to the economy, paralysis of her government, and stumbling blocks for her armies. Whether it was these...
preventive measures, or the frosts of winter or a combination of many things, old “Piter” came through virtually unscathed.


**Hunting the White Siberian Taiga...** The “Academic Expeditions,” so-called, had been organized between 1768 and 1774 by the tsardom and would demonstrate the high standards of the Academy of Sciences. The Empress Catherine II, however, wanted prestige as well and to this end had explorers assigned to three main groups that would survey and describe geographically different parts of the country. Johann Peter Falk, a pupil of the great Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus, was one of the leaders, with Pallas, of the most important, the Orenburg Expedition. The task was to make a record of observations on mineralogy, botany (the plants are arranged according to the Linnaean sexual system of classification), zoology, history, ethnology, agriculture and animal husbandry, illnesses, both human and animal, trading and fishing industry, commerce, customs and traditions, archaeology, and more. Reports were sent back to Petersburg and published as soon as received.

Unfortunately the stresses of these expeditions were great and many of the participants came to a sad end; some were imprisoned or murdered in places far from home (with no embassies!) Falk himself, completely exhausted and distraught, committed suicide.

**Bernard de Bovier de Fontenelle** (1657-1757). *Разговоры о множестве миров.* Саентпетербург: При Императорской Академии Наук, 1740. C1853

The Midnight Sun revolves around St. Petersburg... Fontenelle’s *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes,* or, On the plurality of worlds, is not a seething exposé of 18th century mystical Blakean religious fervor as we thought it must be from the frontispiece, but an elucidation of the Copernican system. Although Fontenelle wrote poems, operas and plays, his real talent was in the sciences. He was one of the auslanders who paved the way for the scientific and philosophical ideas of the Enlightenment to gain foothold in Russia. His Russian poet counterpart, Prince Antiokh Dmitrievich Kantemir, spent time in both England and France as an envoy and translated Fontenelle’s works, including this one, into Russian.


Into the Hinterlands of the Mother of all Hinterlands... Johann Georg Gmelin, born into a famous family of German scientists, came to St. Petersburg at the age of 18 (in 1727) and 6 years later took off with German historian
Gerhard Friedrich Müller and French astronomer Louis Delisle on a long, difficult, but ultimately extremely important journey into Siberia. With these 3 expedition leaders were 6 students; 2 artists; 2 hunters; 2 mountaineers; 4 surveyors; 12 soldiers including a corporal; a drummer; and a Pallas's owl in a pine tree.

The expedition would return to St. P. ten years later and from it would come this four volume botanical work, the first large flora of Siberia and of the utmost rarity when complete, as is our copy. The last two volumes were published after Gmelin’s death and in a much smaller edition. It is his most important work and comes from our collection of Linnaeana (the first two volumes are cited in Linne’s *Species Plantarum*, 1753, the most important work in the history of botany). Gmelin’s own journal of the expedition was published in four volumes in 1751 and was subsequently translated into several European languages.

The grass shown here is from the genus *Triticum* whence cometh our Kansas Volga Geman brand of Turkey Red wheat.

Not Just Another Pretty Math Book... Peter Simon Pallas was German born and studied in Germany, the Netherlands, and Great Britain before he came to St. Petersburg at age 26, and a year later was leading (with Falk and Delisle) an expedition as a member of the Academy of Sciences, through central Russia, the Lower Volga, the Caspian lowland, Altai, Lake Baikal, and Trans-Baikalia, collecting geographical, botanical, geological, paleontological, zoological and ethnological data. He discovered and described many new species of animals and plants, including this owl, and many animals and plants have been named after him. He was the first to depict the relationships between animals in the form of a family tree. In his *Zoographia rosso-asiatica* he summarized the many 18th century expeditions.
Today, one of the largest ornithological collections, so important for taxonomy, morphology and zoogeography, is St. Petersburg's Zoological Institute of the Academy of Sciences. This volume, plus many more by Pallas, are from our own Ellis collection of natural history consisting of 15,000 bound volumes as well as pamphlets, letters, original drawings, and manuscripts, one third of which is ornithological in nature, with another third of travel literature, mostly scientific voyages and travels.

The Great Soviet Encyclopedia lists 3 species of the genus Strix in the former USSR: S. aluco (tawny owl), S. uralensis (Ural owl), and S. nebuloosa (Great or Lapp owl). Unless the nomenclature has changed for one of these and it wasn’t really first described by Pallas, this would be a 4th species, S. barbata.


Atkins 9

**Hey Baba Reba, Rhubarb Pie!** Scottish doctors, surgeons, and naturalists played a pre-eminent part in Anglo/Russian natural history in the 18th and early 19th centuries, for example, John Fraser (1750-1811) as royal botanical collector to the Tsar; Matthew Guthrie as physician in St. P.; John Rogerson at the Russian court; Robert Erskine (1677-1718) as Peter the Great’s chief physician. And then there was James “Rhubarb” Mounsey, physician to both the Empress Elizabeth and Peter III, and finally, director of the medical chancery, responsible for all medical affairs throughout Russia.

Since the Renaissance, rhubarb (a.k.a. Mongol Metamucil), native to far eastern Russia and China, had resisted Europe’s attempts to get a handle on importing it successfully and on its very special botanical and chemical properties.

Known and highly valued at least since 2700 B.C. as a cathartic, explorers, botanists, physicians, and pharmacists attempted to adapt it for use in the West, but there were many varieties and it didn’t breed true by seed. James Mounsey was to play a big part in acquiring the “real” rhubarb for the English pharmacopoeia. Woodville’s account is a good beginning to the story of how it became a state monopoly for Russia and an important commodity for the East India Company. Historian Clifford Faust has written a whole book on the subject.

**A. Покорский Жорабко. История усовершенствования зая. Санктпетербург: в Тип. Эдуарда Праца, 1840.**

**D r. Atkins’ Nemesis...** Forget the killer bees; what about killer honey and beebread? Diabetics both western and eastern have A.I. Prokopovich to blame for making honey more harvestable by his invention in 1814 of beehives with removable frames. In earlier times artificial hives imitating the real thing were hollow logs, or imitation hollow logs, straw hives of all shapes covered in clay, and the classic box-with-a-hole, all placed strategically to get the attention of bees harvesting pollen from nearby bee-plants.

This Petersburg imprint is apparently a very rare little pamphlet. In addition to this illustration of different kinds of hives, there’s a plate with enlarged images of Prokopovich boxes, with cross-sections, and a lovely chromolithograph of *Echium vulgare* (viper’s bugloss), a valuable source of beebread. There are five species of the genus *Echium* in the Russian Republic and beebread comes from the pollen that bees gather from it, pack into honeycomb cells and cover with honey. In these aerobic conditions is formed the absolutely necessary protein-carbohy-
drate food for bees, without which the development of bee colonies is retarded and honey yield greatly decreased.

Petrograd / Leningrad


Love and Death. Everywhere in the world, Russian ballet = Russian soul. On the eve of World War I Petrograd’s avant-garde artistic community revolted against the stuffy, rigid conservatism of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in what one person called “the revolution before the revolution.” It was the period of time when Sergei Diaghilev would put Russian musicians and other artists to work turning Russian music, movement, theater design, painting, and intense drama into sumptuous ballets.

The royal family, decidedly NOT ahead of its time, however, didn’t think much of these productions and before long Diaghilev was forbidden to perform in the city’s imperial theaters. Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* was yanked up and moved with Fokin’s Ballets Russes to Paris. Petrushka, the puppet who comes to life, had been a favorite carnival character of the young Aleksandr Benois, but the people of Petrograd in those days never got to share the nostalgia and longing of this story embodying the soul of Old St. Petersburg.

It Takes a Village... When there’s talk of Russia – and especially of Petersburg – there’s talk of contrasts, opposites, contradictions. This theme is a constant in Biely’s novel *Petersburg*. Petersburg is fog, Moscow is sunshine. Moscow is medieval stave churches and onion domes, Petersburg was planned and executed by the Italians and French. Petersburg is modern.

Born on the eve of World War II into a leftist/pacifist family (my uncle sold tractors in Russia in the 30s with a fellow-traveler from Eureka, Kansas), this exhibit-maker was one westerner who grew up with a fascination for the fabrics, wooden toys, phonograph records, and other objects around the house that had been sent from that magical place. My uncle returned, disillusioned with the Communist Experiment. Came the war and my confusion over the contrast of the violent images in the newsreels with the colorful villages of the books like this one of Celli’s; the dull black and white images in our *Weekly Readers* at school against cheery stories of Baba Yaga in my *Jack and Jill*. (My uncle explained that the real Russian Baba Yaga was not so child-friendly!)

If you had shown me pictures of Petersburg in 1945, when I was 7, and told me it was Russia, I would have cried and argued with you that *it did not look like the Russia I knew*. P-burg was gray, Moscow was red. I might still argue with you. One of these summers, I’ll see Petersburg with the frost melted from my glasses.
When Irish Eyes Aren't Smiling. This little pamphlet contains the impressions of an Irish delegation of their six-week tour at invitation of the All-Russian Trade Union Council to investigate conditions in the Soviet Union. A number of days were spent in Leningrad at both beginning and end of the trip. It is reported that on the boat trip back to that city they sat in the "Lenin Corner" of the recreation room, along with a bust of Lenin and a piano. "They ... put us ashore early one morning at Leningrad, to, I believe, the regret of the entire delegation." The writer remarks further, that, "It [Leningrad] lacks the life and colour of Moscow, but architecturally it is a much finer city."

The Possessed... If you, like the Russian authorities, dislike "the distortion of the images of the Russian peasantry and their social life," in Grigorev's edition of Rasseja, then look to Shchedrovskii's more realistic but much earlier view. This volume was published simultaneously in St. Petersburg and Berlin and the artist was criticized in Petrograd/Leningrad for his "distortions." He had emigrated in 1919 to the West, and this German edition differs from the Russian edition printed in Berlin, and printed there again in 1922 in that it has three times more oils and graphics. Can we assume there was some bowdlerizing of the Russian edition?

Alexander Benois, from whose private library our copy comes, wrote part of the text. The art of Grigorev is said to be rather close to the work of later German expressionists such as Otto Dix and George Grosz, and he was one of the first Russian artists to have an exhibition in the U.S. after the war, a successful one at that, at the Brooklyn Museum.

The Department of Special Collections had an opportunity some years ago to buy a few of the books from the library of Aleksandr Benois of the Benois dynasty of intellectuals in art and architecture. Benois felt that Petersburg's architecture was not derivative, but rather was unique within the tradition of neo-Classicism and that Petersburg itself should become the subject of Russian art, that it was not inimical to native Russian styles. He was a preservationist of the Old-Guard, a member of the Society for Old Petersburg. But he became a westerner when he emigrated in 1926.

Shoeless Yosuf... One of this westerner's childhood memories is children's books from Europe. They were in French, German, Russian, and thus "unreadable" but beloved just the same, and linguistic barriers contributed to their mystique. This department has a good collection of children's books, many in languages other than English, like this one perfect for the beginning language student.

Samuil Marshak was a leader of the Leningrad producers of children's books. He founded, in 1920, one of the first children's theaters in the
Soviet Union, and wrote plays for it. But even this group of authors did not escape interrogation, deportation and execution in Stalin’s purges of the 1930s when 30,000 Leningraders – scholars, scientists, poets, artists, writers, composers – were sent to labor camps in Siberia and the Arctic. “Kiddie Lit” would not in general serve as a good cover for clandestine operations.

Marshak had taken coursework in the art department at the University of London, had translated Shakespeare, Burns, Blake, Wordsworth, Keats, Kipling, Lear, and Milne (as well as verse of Ukrainian, Belarusian, Lithuanian, and Armenian poets) and so was as suspect as those Russian ballerinas who might have had a second dance or lingered too long with a western diplomat at an official Leningrad reception.

For many Soviet intellectuals, life was nasty, brutish and short. Marshak was one of those who in spite of torture and exile managed to survive, ultimately to receive two Orders of Lenin and a number of medals. AND to live until late into his 70s.

**We’ve Come a Long Way, Baba.** Leningrad, aiming as it was to be a new place in a new time with a new government and society was a natural for the ferment of a literature of science fiction. Strongly influenced by H.G. Wells and Jules Verne, 20th century Petrograd/Leningrad/Petersburg represented to the literary avant-garde a futuristic, revolutionary utopia. It’s fun to contrast this image with that of a hot air balloon in a Russian physics manual in our collections, by Petr Ivanovich Gilarovskii, published in 1793. We have come a long way, in spite of the recent Columbia disaster.

Spencer Library began collecting science fiction in 1969 with a gift from lunar geologist Larry Friesen and through the efforts of Kansas University’s own James E. Gunn, writer and head of the KU Center for the Study of Science Fiction, the Department of Special Collections is now the North American repository for world science fiction; it includes many Leningrad/St. Petersburg imprints. Both the printed books and manuscripts get heavy use by scholars from around the world. This diagram, from a volume about the Russian space station “Saliut,” is, of course, science fact rather than fiction.

“Saliut” was actually the name of a series of Soviet space stations orbiting Earth since 1971. Cosmonaut V.I. Sevastianov, who was one of the crew of Soyuz 18, launched to deliver cosmonauts to the station, spent 63 days in space and inscribed our copy to Sci Fi writer Frederick Pohl who in turn gave it as a gift to our WSF (World Science Fiction) collection.
The Last of the Warmenoughs... It is said that 1913 had the cold feel of revolution in St. P. The weather told the story as it had before in Russian literature (the setting for the events in Pushkin's poem "The Bronze Horseman" was the calamitous flood of 1824, the worst of many). Biely's novel *Petersburg* appeared that year and foretold the Great War; his oft repeated "oo-oo-oo" symbolizes, of course, the wind. In one of Alexander Blok's poems the October Revolution is depicted as a snowstorm. And 1913 was the 300th anniversary of the founding of the Romanov dynasty and it was observed that in proper Russian irony wind blew down the decorations on the eve of the anniversary celebration. It was just a sign of the times, then, when Stravinsky's 1913 production of "The Rite of Spring," danced by Nijinsky, blew into Paris and took it by storm and scandal.

Coal From Newcastle. Near the end of the 18th century the English replaced the French in Peterborough as the ethnic group to imitate. The English were fewer than the Germans and French and they were almost non-existent in the provinces, that is to say, anywhere but Peterborough. Scots naturalists and physicians were of great significance, if not in great numbers.

The British brought everything with them and set up their own quarters with their own churches, social clubs, and even their own coal for their own use, and yes, it was from Newcastle. It is said that English imports (with the exception of coal), e.g. horses, beer, fabrics, pottery, optical instruments, all to sell, soon became necessities rather than luxuries for the Russian upper classes and began to be produced in factories founded and run by the British. It was even said by the Brits themselves that beer and porter brewed in Peterborough was superior to the English product. Other sorts of British craftsman were in great demand in the city: watchmakers, stonemasons, shoemakers, saddlers, and, of course, teachers of the English language.
A Raw Youth ... This samovar-table book compiled from material in the Central Lenin Museum in Moscow is chock full of wonderful color as well as black and white plates, facsimiles of party documents, and photographs, with uniformly high-quality reproductions. A student of the art of agitation and propaganda should begin with perusal of this volume and then of the revolutionary posters. Journalists consider it a milestone of the genre. The book was produced “not for sale,” but for distribution at the New York World’s fair and was aimed at a western audience.

Our copy was a gift from John H. Langley, former Director of the Regents Press of Kansas.

Romer Wilson (1891-1930). The social climbers: a Russian middle-class tragedy in four acts seen through western eyes. London: Ernest Benn, 1927. B6125

Feodor: Verochka, do you remember those evenings we spent in the cornfields? British writer Romer Wilson’s novels and novellas and in this case, a play, deal with the issues of art, love, and contemporary issues – contemporary with the first quarter of the 20th century in Leningrad in this instance. This is one of 250 copies signed by the author, a fine bibliographical prize for a middle-class social-climbing book-collector.


First appearance in print of Andrei Biely’s great novel Petersburg. Found in a Russian bookshop by Professor Maria M. Carlson when she was a student in that city.


Come on Baba, Light my Fire... The Zhar Ptitsa, or Firebird, is one of the most important of the ex-patriot magazines of art, literature, and dance published in the Russian diaspora after World War I. The title is a no-brainer: it’s one of the best known images from Russian folklore known around the world in Russian literature, painting, folk-art and, of course, music. The firebird’s fiery feathers glow in the dark. The tale of the firebird was first published in an
18th century Russian folktale in which three brothers are sent to catch the bird (to help keep the frost off the windows?) How many of you Lawrence Free State High Scholars know the story behind your mascot?

**Defend to the End Petrograd!** Or more loosely translated, “Defend Petrograd with your life!” This poster is from the “other side” in the Revolution, not to say the West, but the anti-Bolshevik White Guards. General Nicolai W. Yudenich, leader of the White Army in the Baltic, began an offensive from Estonia in October of 1919, made it to within 30 miles of Petrograd but was rebuffed by the Bolsheviks. Whether or not the image of the man with the bayonet purports to be a likeness of Yudenich – we don’t know.

More than 3600 such Soviet posters are known to have been preserved. This reproduction is from a collection at the Lenin Library in Moscow.

**Anteaters for the Tsar!** If this New World native, the anteater, could write an account of how he made it to the Kunstkammer in
Sankt Pieter Burkh in the early 18th century, it would be a best-seller. Peter the Great had begun to purchase natural history collections (birds, fishes, insects, monsters, anatomical preparations) during his pre-Petersburgian travels in the West, with an eye to the development of medicine in Russia. Albertus Seba was a wealthy Dutch apothecary, merchant and traveler whose collection of natural history objects was the largest of its kind in his day. His collection would form the nucleus of the Russian national collections in St. Petersburg after purchase by Peter.

This work was produced simultaneously in Latin-Dutch and Latin-French editions, in both colored and uncolored versions. Ours is one of the few copies with colored plates.

Rudolph Ackermann (1764-1834). *Historical sketch of Moscow: illustrated by twelve views of different parts of that imperial city, the Kremlin, &c.* London: R. Ackermann, 1813.

![Image of Moscow view](image)


The Moscow volume is considered to be "a very rare Ackermann" in any case, and is one of the very rare colored copies: it's usually found uncolored.

Blue Boy... Although this volume of plates is attributed in the British Museum Catalogue to William Alexander, nowadays it is usually cataloged under the name of the artist, E. Harding. It has a complicated bibliography: the plates were apparently copied from a series of engravings begun in St. Petersburg in 1776 and completed under the care of C.W. Muller for a work of J.G. Georgi. The plates are derived from both Georgi and Pallas, and the descriptions are said to have been adapted from various sources: mostly Muller, but also Chappe D'Auteroche, Krashenninikov, Plescheï, Pallas, and Saur.
To Russia With Love... The Demidov family of mine owners rose to prominence under Peter I when they were granted extensive landholdings for construction of metallurgical factories in the Urals. Master craftsmen were brought in, factories were built, extra lands and serfs were bought, and the family ultimately produced more than 40% of the cast iron in Russia. However, by the beginning of the 19th century they were producing only 25% and subsequently holdings began to decline.

The Demidovs nevertheless became part of the court aristocracy and came to be known no longer as “the famous old Russian family of Urals mine owners” but as “the famous old Russian family of writers and travelers,” of which Anatolii, born in 1812, was a prime example. And the West noticed him. His uncle had commanded a regiment to oppose Napoleon, but love ultimately proved the more powerful force than war and Anatolii married Jerome Bonaparte’s daughter Mathilde.

This work, from the Ralph N. Ellis Collection, is part of our larger collection of illustrated herpetological books spanning five centuries.

Location, Location... One can see from looking at a map that the piece of real estate Peter chose on which to plant a city might have been an ideal gate for trade from West to East and East to West for centuries. But most maps don’t show what a sodden, marshy, insect and disease-ridden, unhealthy-for-humans swamp were the waterways at the mouth of the Neva at the beginning of the 18th century. It was poor land, sustaining a few fishing villages and trading posts; there was no source of fresh water here; the Neva was frozen from November through March. For those who did inhabit the area, timber was scant and had to be floated down the river for even the simplest of structures.

But Peter had cast a determined eye on it and multitudes died in the process of turning the site into a city with more or less (mostly less) solid underpinnings that gave way nevertheless flood after flood, year after year. Pushkin’s great poem, “The Bronze Horseman” has to do with the great flood of 1824, the worst one of all time. We don’t learn, do we?

Frankland’s lithograph map of a flood control project shows how devoted was Peterborough’s attempt to understand and control nature through science.
My Big Fat Russian-French-German Dictionary


My Big Fat and Mighty Kingdom of Muscovy


Winter Notes on Summer Impressions...
Austrian diplomat Augustin de Mayerberg was sent 1661-1662 by Emperor Leopold I to mediate in the fight between Russia and Poland over the Ukraine. The diplomatic mission failed but one happy result was this beautifully illustrated account of the sojourn published 165 years later and containing valuable information on the political history, government, and way of life in 17th century Russia.


Ellis Omnia E10, v.1

Ur-Land of Oz... An aquatint view – from one of our most beautiful printed volumes – of the pre-Kansas homeland of our local Volga German population, who brought to western Kansas the Turkey-red wheat (as well as the noxious and pesky Russian thistle and bindweed) and by the former helped fashion us into The Breadbasket of The World.
Poor People... Ignatii Stepanovich Shchedrovskii, graphic artist, lithographer and painter, was born in Lithuania, studied in Vilna, and attended the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts at age 18 to 21. His Scenes from Popular Life of 1839 was republished in 1846, 1852 (our copy), and 1855.

The rural element still existed in St. P. in the early 20th century just as it did in South Slavic lands throughout the century. This was not seen to a great extent in London, Paris, Berlin, and not much in New York City at the turn of the 20th century, except in ethnic neighborhoods, but in St. Petersburg peasant peddlers still played a role in commerce, and the village way of life was still evident in the bazaars where P-burgers bought more than in the retail emporiums. Our Lawrence farmers’ market has the rural spirit.

Петроглифы к Петрограду ... This little volume was published in St. Petersburg, but Spasskii’s eyes were not western and the windowless caves in which he discovered these hieroglyphs had no frosted panes of the famous Petersburg glass. However, that city houses in the Hermitage a fine collection of ornaments, implements, and pottery of Siberia’s earliest (Bronze Age) inhabitants, and of those still ancient peoples that followed after them. In this attractive little book Spasskii attempts to relate the Siberian cave paintings and hieroglyphs to those found in other parts of the world, a popular but still largely futile exercise. He wrote several studies on antiquities and numismatics, this the only one in Latin rather than Russian.

Picture of more than a thousand words...

Storch’s Picture of Petersburg, 1792, set a standard for European accounts of the city and is still quoted today. Storch says, “One of the most important phenomena of this period [the 18th century] is without a doubt the moral and political transformation of a vast and powerful people, whose latent powers were awakened as if by an electric shock, and were transformed into the most astounding activity. Russia, which had previously been a little known and little feared empire, suddenly made an appearance among the European states at the beginning of this century and, after a short test of its strength, became the arbiter and decisive power of the North.”