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The Conquest of Siberia
Gerhard Müller (1705–1783) is renowned as the first historian to specialise in the history and culture of Siberia. Born in Westphalia, Müller was invited to teach at the newly founded Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg in 1725. He joined the Second Kamtchatka Expedition to western Siberia in 1735, and on his return spent the remainder of his life publishing works on the history of Siberia. His co-author Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811) also served on several expeditions to Siberia. This volume, first published in English in 1842, contains the English translation of these authors’ detailed description of the Russian colonisation of Siberia and tensions with China. Combining ethnographic material with accounts of Russia’s trade with indigenous Siberian peoples and China, this volume presented one of the first scholarly accounts of Siberia to western Europe at a time when the region was little known outside of Russia.
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The Conquest of Siberia

And the History of the Transactions, Wars, Commerce, &c. &c. Carried on between Russia and China, from the Earliest Period

Gerhard Friedrich Müller
Peter Simon Pallas
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RUSSIA AND CHINA,

FROM THE EARLIEST PERIOD.

TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN OF

G. F. MULLER,

HISTORIOGRAPHER OF RUSSIA, AND OF

PETER SIMON PALLAS, M.D. F.R.S.

COUNSELLOR OF THE BOARD OF MINES TO THE

EMPERESS OF RUSSIA,

MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT SAINT

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1842.
TO HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR HENRY POTTINGER, BART.

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S PLENIPOTENTIARY IN CHINA,

THIS

BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE TRANSACTIONS, WARS,

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RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

HIS EXCELLENCY'S

MOST HUMBLE AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.
EXPLANATION

OF

SOME RUSSIAN WORDS MADE USE OF IN THE
FOLLOWING WORK.

Baidar, a small boat.
Guba, a bay.
Kamen, a rock.
Kotche, a vessel.
Krepost, a regular fortress.
Noss, a cape.
Ostrog, a fortress surrounded with pallisadoes.
Ostroff, an island.
Ostrova, islands.
Quass, a sort of fermented liquor.
Reka, a river.

The Russians, in their proper names of persons, make use of patronymics; these patronymics are formed in some cases by adding Vitch to the christian name of the father; in others, Off or Eff; the former termination is applied only to persons of condition; the latter to those of an inferior rank. As, for instance,

Among persons of condition — Ivan Ivanovitch, Ivan the son of Ivan. Ivanoff, of Ivan.

Michael Alexievitch, Michael the son
Michael Alexeff, of Alexey.

Sometimes a surname is added, Ivan Ivanovitch Romanoff.
# Table

of Russian Weights, Measures of Length, and Value of Money.

**Weight.**

A pood weighs 40 Russian pounds—36 English.

**Measures of Length.**

16 vershoks — an arsheen.

An arsheen — 28 inches.

Three arsheens, or seven feet — a fathom,* or sazhen.

500 sazhens — a verst.

A degree of longitude comprises $104\frac{1}{2}$ versts — $69\frac{1}{2}$ English miles. A mile is therefore 1,515 parts of a verst; two miles may then be estimated equal to three versts, omitting a small fraction.

**Value of Russian Money.**

A rouble — 100 copecks.

Its value varies according to the exchange, from 3s. 8d. to 4s. 2d. Upon an average, however, the value of a rouble is reckoned at four shillings.

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* The fathom for measuring the depth of water is the same as the English fathom — 6 feet.
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Chap. IX.—General idea of the commerce carried on the New Discovered Islands from Kamtchatka—equipment of the vessels—risks of the trade, profits, &c.

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Chap. XI.—Commencement and progress of the first Russian discoveries in the sea of Kamtchatka—general division of the New Discovered Islands, where furs were procured for the China market.


Chap. XIII.—Successive voyages, from 1747 to 1753, to Bering's and the Aleutian Isles—some account of the inhabitants.