

District of Alaska 1884-1912

1884

1890S

1912

YOU
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The way I look at it is I'm a medicine man—don't forget my word. Remember my word. Someday it may help you. I'm going to be gone too. And pretty soon measles gonna be come. And this your skin be stretched all over your body, see. [He don't know that was measles]. Your body gonna be crippled all over. Some of them gonna make them blind. Quite a few gonna die of that sickness, and after that pretty soon you people gonna hear about a fight down in the States some place [World War I]. And that sickness come from down south. And that gonna kill lots of people.

—Ts'inst'a gga Tukda'

1890S. A SHAMAN'S PROPHECY

Ts'inst'a gga Tukda', a Dena'ina shaman from Susitna Station, predicts that the village will cease to exist due to diseases brought by Euro-Americans. He warns his people that they will face many rapid technological changes, and that one day money will be

worthless. He says people must have basics like guns, files, matches, and axes in order to live off the land once again. During the 20th century, elders from other Dena'ina communities tell similar prophecies.

From *Susitnu Htsukdu'a: The Susitna Story*, Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks, 1975.

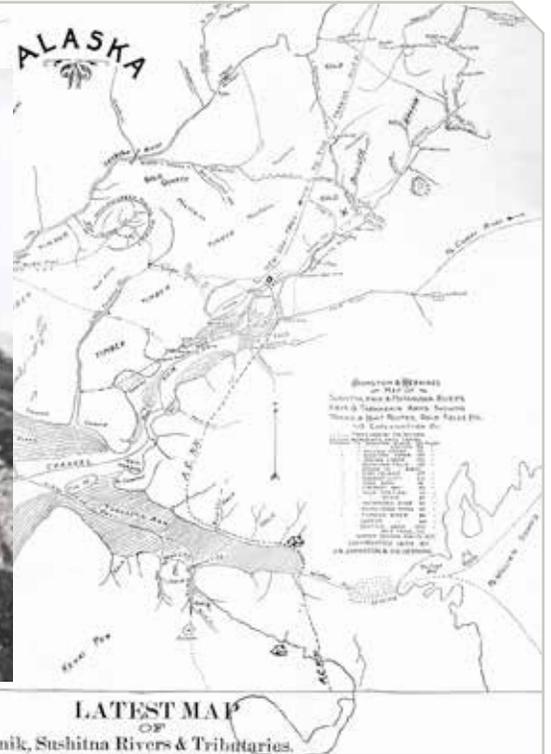
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1880S - 1890S

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1880S – 1890S. AMERICAN GOLD-SEEKERS, EXPLORERS, AND SPORT HUNTERS ARRIVE

Following the discovery of gold at Resurrection Creek on Turnagain Arm in 1888, thousands of prospectors, mostly men of Euro-American origin, stampede into the Dena'ina homeland, accompanied by military expeditions that explore and map

the country. A permanent, non-native population becomes established at commercial centers such as Knik and Kenai, adding pressure on the fish and wildlife resources upon which the Dena'ina depend for subsistence.

Left: Dena'ina men served as guides to sport hunters for many decades. Gabriel Trefon of Nondlaton is seen retrieving two Dall sheep for sport hunter Colonel A.J. Macnab in Gladiator Basin east of Kontrashibuna Lake (Qen'ghishi Vena). Photo courtesy of National Park Service, H-760

Right: Reproduction of 1899 miner's map of Cook Inlet, Louise Potter, *Old Times on the Upper Cook Inlet*

District of Alaska **1884-1912**

1884

1908

1912

YOU
ARE HERE



1908. US ESTABLISHES SCHOOLS IN ALASKA

The US Bureau of Education establishes a school at Susitna Station. This school is the first American school established outside of Kenai for the education of the Dena'ina. With the school also come the strict English-only policies of the day, which prove challenging

for many children. Shem Pete, who attended the school shortly after it opened, said, "And I went to school. I'd never heard no white man English talk. I learned about three years. ABC's. All by myself."

School children at Susitna Station, winter 1915. Anchorage Museum, 2012.031.27