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## ФРЭНК А. ГОЛДЕР: КУЛЬТУРНАЯ МИССИЯ ВЫДАЮЩЕГОСЯ КОЛЛЕКЦИОНЕРА-АРХИВИСТА В РЕВОЛЮЦИОННОЙ РОССИИ

**Аннотация:** Статья, приуроченная к столетию Русской революции, посвящена американскому историку Фрэнку А. Голдеру (1877–1929), который был свидетелем революционных событий в России. Голдер остался в истории науки прежде всего как создатель выдающейся русской и восточноевропейской коллекции, которая хранится в библиотеке и архиве Гуверовского Института Стэнфордского университета. Голдер был в Петербурге в 1914 г., когда Россия вступила в Первую мировую войну; он был в Петрограде в 1917 г., когда Февральская революция положила конец правлению династии Романовых; он был в Советской России в 1921–1923 гг. — участвовал в оказании помощи голодающим, собирал книги, периодику и рукописи, наблюдал за политикой ленинского правительства; он часто и надолго приезжал в Советский Союз в 1925–1927 гг. и отмечал перемены, происходившие в советском обществе после смерти Ленина. Голдер вел дневник и обширную переписку; результатом его пребывания в России стало внушительное собрание документов и материалов, которые позволяют воссоздать деятельность Голдера по восстановлению российско-американских культурных связей после пережитого Россией исторического катаклизма. В статье рассматривается круг знакомств Голдера, его общение с деятелями культуры и интеллигенцией обеих столиц; в особенности его московские контакты в Российской Академии наук и в библиотеке Румянцевского музея (ныне РГБ).

**Ключевые слова:** Голдер, Гувер, Румянцев, Стэнфорд, АРА (Американская администрация помощи), Щукин, Владимиров, Бенуа, Ольденбург, Виноградов.

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# AMERICAN WRITERS AND THE SOVIET COUNTRY

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FRANK A. GOLDER:  
COLLECTOR EXTRAORDINAIRE AND CULTURAL  
LIAISON IN REVOLUTIONARY RUSSIA

**Abstract:** On the centennial of the Russian Revolution, the article recounts the remarkable experiences of an American eyewitness to the Revolution: historian Frank A. Golder (1877–1929). Golder is best remembered today as the man responsible for amassing the extraordinary Russia and East European collections housed at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University. He was in St. Petersburg in 1914 when Russia entered the Great War; he was in Petrograd in 1917 when the February Revolution brought an end to the Romanov dynasty; he was in Soviet Russia in 1921–1923 as a famine relief worker, a collector of books, periodicals, and manuscripts, and a political observer of Lenin's government; and he was in the Soviet Union for extended visits in 1925 and 1927, recording the changes in Soviet society after Lenin. Golder kept a detailed diary and was a prolific correspondent and thus left behind extensive documentation of his Russian sojourns. These record his personal efforts to reestablish Russian-American cultural ties suspended during Russia's time of troubles, to serve as a link and a lifeline. The article describes Golder's connections to artists and intellectuals in the Russian capitals and focuses on two cultural institutions: the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Rumiantsev Museum Library (today the Russian State Library) in Moscow.

**Keywords:** Golder, Hoover, Rumiantsev, Stanford, ARA, Shchukin, Vladimirov, Benois, Oldenburg, Vinogradov.

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“How fortunate for me that I came just in time to see the fun! It is only two weeks today since I reached this city and yet what a wonderful change! I did not expect it and few others did. It is unique in history. A Revolution of such importance accomplished with almost no bloodshed and with such good order. It does not seem true, but it is.”

*Frank Golder, Petrograd, March 5 (18), 1917*

“Our joy has turned to sorrow. I should not have imagined that a country could go to pieces in such a short time, and the end is not yet.”

*Frank Golder, Petrograd, May 4 (17), 1917<sup>1</sup>*

## Witness to Revolution



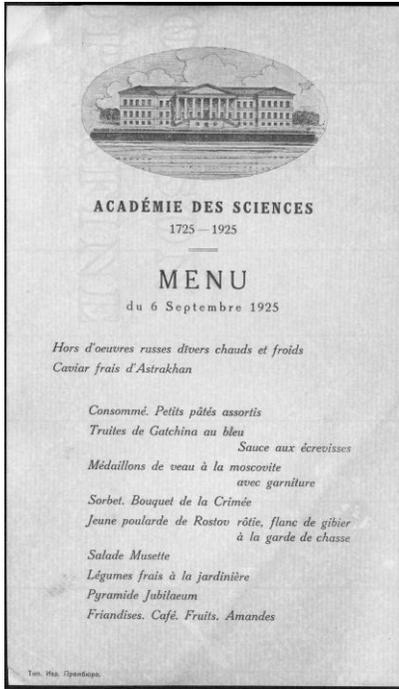
*Frank A. Golder, 1920s. Frank A. Golder Papers, Hoover Institution Archives*

In September 1925, Frank Golder, a Stanford University history professor, accepted an invitation to attend the ceremonies in Leningrad and Moscow marking the 200th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences in Russia. It was Golder's first visit to Russia in two years. The celebrations were lavish, including a series of unforgettable banquets, the first of them in the former Russian Museum of His Imperial Majesty Alexander III, recently renamed the State Russian Museum, where hundreds of people, both men and women, some in formal attire, feasted at tables covered with the choicest hors d'oeuvres, before sitting down to a lengthy dinner featuring innu-

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\* I wish to thank Edward Kasinec for his inspiration and his editorial suggestions in the writing of this essay.

<sup>1</sup> Frank Golder to Henrietta Elliot, March 5/18, 1917, Frank A. Golder Papers, Hoover Institution Archives (Stanford, CA) [hereafter: Golder Papers], box 12; Golder to Ernest O. Holland, May 4/17, 1917, From the office of the president; Ernest O. Holland records, 1890–1950, Washington State University Libraries at Pullman.



merable courses and interminable speeches, while the orchestra played on into the evening.

*Menu for a dinner in Leningrad marking the 200th anniversary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, September 6, 1925. Hoover Institution Records, Hoover Institution Archives*

On Wednesday, September 9, Golder attended a gathering of the Leningrad Soviet at the Uritsky Palace (formerly the Tauride Palace), where local Communist Party chief and Politburo member Grigory Zinoviev presided over a gathering of visiting local and foreign dignitaries, with Golder representing Stanford. A few days later, the proceedings

shifted to Moscow and, on September 14, an afternoon meeting of the Moscow Soviet chaired by Politburo member Lev Kamenev, whose protracted speech Golder characterized as “full of propaganda — worse than anything so far.” This was followed by remarks delivered by representatives of the Academy and by foreign visitors. “When it came to my turn,” Golder wrote, “Kamenev asked me to speak in Russian, which I did.” The meeting was followed by a sumptuous banquet in the Dom Soiuzov’s Hall of Columns.

Walking the streets of the Russian capitals, Golder recorded in his diary, “I was struck first of all by the outward material prosperity. . . . Now that the war, famine, and the bitterness of the revolution are over one begins to notice a return to normal life.” Yet, he expressed concern about the fate of members of the old intelligentsia, “the old professors” whom the Soviet government was intent on replacing with Communist loyalists. And he was troubled, as he had been for much of the previous decade, about the fate of Russian scholarship and culture. He wondered whether the last chapter of the Russian Revolution been written.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Golder Papers, box 4.

The centennial of the Russian Revolution is a fitting occasion to recall the benign interventions in Russia's affairs by Frank Alfred Golder (1877–1929). Golder was not among the royals, statesmen, generals, or diplomats who left their mark on the period; he was instead an American historian of Russia who happened to be in the right place at the right time, and therefore was able to make a difference. Golder is best remembered today as the man responsible for amassing the extraordinary Russia and East European collections housed at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives at Stanford University. Scholars may also recognize him as the author of pioneering studies on the history of Russian-American relations. Golder also witnessed some of the most important and dramatic developments in modern Russian history. He was in St. Petersburg in 1914 when Russia entered the Great War; he was in Petrograd in 1917 when the February Revolution brought an end to the Romanov dynasty; he was in Soviet Russia in 1921–1923 as a famine relief worker, a collector of books, periodicals, and manuscripts, and a political observer of Lenin's government; and he was in the Soviet Union for extended visits in 1925 and 1927, recording the changes in Soviet society after Lenin.

During his travels in Russia, Golder kept a detailed diary and was a prolific correspondent and thus left behind extensive documentation of his Russian sojourns. This provides a unique perspective on the tumultuous period from the last years of imperial rule to the beginnings of Stalinism, a sustained narrative of Russia's agony in war, revolution, civil war, famine, and their aftermath. Golder's diaries and letters also record his personal efforts to reestablish Russian-American cultural ties suspended during Russia's time of troubles, to serve as a link and a lifeline.<sup>3</sup>

Golder had little difficulty establishing professional and personal contacts among tsarist officials and the intelligentsia during his initial visit to St. Petersburg in 1914. Several factors explain his success as a collector, beginning with his Russian background and his education. Golder was born on August 11, 1877, in Odessa. His family emigrated from the Russian Empire when he was about eight years old, after the death of his German-born grandfather. His first language was probably Yiddish. As to the reasons for the emigration, we can surmise that this Jewish family of three was, along with many thousands of Russian Jews in the wake of the 1881 pogroms sparked by the assassination of Tsar Alexander II, seeking to escape anti-Semitic persecution. The

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<sup>3</sup> See *War, Revolution, and Peace in Russia: The Passages of Frank Golder, 1914–1927*, eds. Terence Emmons and Bertrand M. Patenaude. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992 [hereafter: *WRP*]. This article draws extensively on archival and other material published in that volume.

Golders eventually settled in New Jersey, where they endured severe financial hardship. With the help of a local Baptist minister, young Frank was able to get proper schooling, enabling him eventually to enroll at Bucknell University, in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania, where in 1898 he received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree. From 1900 to 1902 he worked for the United States government in Alaska, teaching English to Aleut public school children on a remote island settlement. This was the start of his fascination with “Russian America,” Russia's early settlements, beginning in the eighteenth century, in what would become the western United States: Alaska, California, and Hawaii.

Golder continued his studies at Harvard University, where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1903 and then began his doctoral studies in history. At Harvard he was the student of Archibald Cary Coolidge, the Harvard College librarian and pioneer of Russian studies in the United States and one of the great teachers of history who later launched the influential journal *Foreign Affairs*.<sup>4</sup> Golder received his PhD in 1909 with a dissertation, published in 1914, about Russia's expansion on the Pacific.<sup>5</sup> He taught at various institutions before landing at Washington State College in Pullman, where he was later promoted to professor.

From early on in his academic career, Golder attempted to get into Russia to investigate the libraries and archives. His opportunity came in 1914. He arrived in Russia in February and stayed until November. His research and his intellectual growth were facilitated by his connection with Aleksandr Sergeevich Lappo-Danilevskii (1863–1919), a lecturer in Russian history at St. Petersburg University and a member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, a man regarded throughout Europe as the representative of Russian historical science to the world. Foreign historians visiting St. Petersburg sought out Lappo-Danilevskii for introductions to other important Russian historians and to the directors of Russian archives and libraries, as well as for invitations to attend the weekly evening seminar at his home. “He has read widely in the literature of the world, he knows of music and appreciates art,” Golder wrote in his diary in the summer of 1914 after spending a weekend at Lappo-Danilevskii's dacha in Finland. “To be in his company is an education and delight.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> See Byrnes, Robert F. *Awakening American Education to the World: The Role of Archibald Cary Coolidge, 1866–1928*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press; London: Euromonitor Publ., 1982.

<sup>5</sup> Golder, Frank A. *Russian Expansion on the Pacific, 1641–1850*. Cleveland, OH: The Arthur H. Clarke Co., 1914.

<sup>6</sup> *WRP*: 13, diary entry for June 28/July 11, 1914. On Lappo-Danilevskii's

Golder found the short hours at the Russian archives and the many Russian national holidays to be a hindrance to his research. The situation was greatly exacerbated in July when Russia went to war, which not only caused more frequent interruptions in the archives but distracted Golder with all the excitement, a sense of which he conveys in his diary, as in the entry describing a landmark public appearance by Nicholas II on Sunday, July 20 (August 2):

About the middle of the afternoon the crowd moved towards the square in front of the Winter Palace to hear the Emperor declare war. [. . .] At 3:30 the square was crowded with thousands of people. The Emperor and his staff appeared at one of the windows and read his declaration of war. After which the guns of the fortress fired thirty shots. [. . .] After this ceremony the crowd cheered the Imperial family and all those who showed themselves at the window. The people seem to be with the Emperor in this war. All during the night there were processions. At each street corner on the Nevsky [Prospekt] there are little groups of men and women, discussing the coming campaign and dividing up the Central Empires.<sup>7</sup>

The patriotic fervor of the moment seemed to unite the Russians, yet Golder was not blind to the rising tensions in Russian society during that fateful summer, a time of mounting labor unrest. Golder perceived Russia as an internally stratified society united only in its cynicism about the tsarist government.

The war cut off Golder's supply of funds, so he had to curtail his research and return home, making his way through Siberia. The result of his archival investigations was the publication of a still valuable *Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives* (Washington, D.C., 1917), most of which deals with the history of diplomatic relations between Russia and the United States. He also published several articles — in the *American Historical Review* and other journals — based on his archival research on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Russian diplomatic history, specifically Russia's role in the American Revolution and Civil War. During his 1914 visit Golder also collected material, supplemented during a later trip, that he used to write his book *John Paul Jones in Russia* (Garden City, NY, 1927).

In 1917, Golder returned to Russia to continue his investigations in the Petrograd archives. This time he went as the agent for the American Geographical Society, by whom he had been commissioned to translate, edit, and prepare for publication the journals of the Danish-born explorer Vitus Bering (1681–1741). He arrived in Petrograd on

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role, see Vernadskii, G. "Iz vospominanii," *Novyi zhurnal* 100 (New York, 1970): 214–215.

<sup>7</sup> *WRP*: 19.

February 19 (March 4), eleven days before the fall of Nicholas II. His diary records the drama of the initial months of the Russian Revolution, most memorably the encounters of the Cossacks and the demonstrators on the Nevsky Prospekt. He made the acquaintance of some of the major actors on the political scene, notably Alexander Kerensky and Pavel Miliukov. A central theme of Golder's account is how the optimism and hope of the early period of the Revolution gave way to dark pessimism, especially as the end of autocracy failed to reverse Russia's military defeats at the front and the country began to descend into anarchy.



*Street demonstration in Petrograd, 1917. Photograph by Donald C. Thompson. Alexandre Georgievich Tarsaidze Papers, Hoover Institution Archives*

Against this turbulent backdrop, Golder continued his work in the archives, and he renewed his professional and personal relationship with Professor Lappo-Danilevskii. The two men agreed to edit a four-volume history of Russia to be written by Russian historians and published by the Macmillan Company. Golder became a minor player in the events of 1917, escorting, at the request of the U.S. ambassador to Russia, an American presidential commission of railroad engineers from Siberia to Petrograd and around European Russia. He departed

Russia in late summer, a few weeks before the Bolshevik seizure of power. Upon his return to the U.S., Golder conveyed his impressions of the Revolution in public lectures and in print.<sup>8</sup> During his stay in Russia, Golder had managed to accomplish his scholarly mission as well, the results of which appeared several years later as *Bering's Voyages: An Account of the Efforts of the Russians to Determine the Relation of Asia and America* (2 vols., New York, 1922–25). In addition, he published further archive-based articles on Russian-American relations.

Golder followed developments in Soviet Russia mostly from American newspaper articles. The reporting was unreliable, often featuring sensationalistic stories, but some brutal facts were undeniable, and they gave Golder reason to detest the new Bolshevik authorities and to fear the worst about the fate of Russian culture under their rule. On March 4, 1919, after learning of the death of Lappo-Danilevskii, he wrote to an American friend:

I have some sad news and my heart is aching and my eyes are full of tears. While in Petrograd I made a friend of one of the greatest of Russian scholars, a man of unusual ability and a beautiful character. He was highly cultured and refined and the visits to his house and family are the bright spots of my Petrograd days.[ . . . ] Last night I read in the *New York Times* that the man has starved to death in Petrograd. It is horrible! It haunted me all day. His great crime was being educated and a bourgeois. He did not meddle in politics. All he asked was to be let alone. Think of the fine men and women being sacrificed on the altar of bolshevism. If ever I return to Petrograd I shall probably find all my friends, all those who were with me, dead and buried like dogs. I close my eyes and see their starved bodies and their pitiful faces.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Petrunkevich, Alexander, Harper, Samuel Northrup, and Golder, Frank Alfred. *The Russian Revolution*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1918. Golder's experience in Russia helped earn him a place on The Inquiry, the committee of men called together by President Woodrow Wilson at the end of 1917 to gather information for the coming peace conference. Golder was attached to the committee's East European Division, which did its work at Harvard under Professor Coolidge. Golder wrote reports on Ukraine, Lithuania, Siberia, Poland, and the Don province for the committee.

<sup>9</sup> *WRP*: xxv. Lappo-Danilovskii died in Petrograd in 1919 of what Golder called “an abscess of the lungs” (probably tuberculosis) brought on by malnutrition. Among the prospective participants in the planned history of Russia that Golder and Lappo-Danilevskii were to edit were two Petrograd scholars: the historian and philologist Aleksei Aleksandrovich Shakhmatov (1864–1920) and the academician and historian Mikhail Aleksandrovich D'iakonov (1855–1920). Their deaths resulted from the deprivations of the Civil War period.

## Collector Extraordinaire

In 1920 Golder was teaching summer classes at Stanford when he was offered a position there at the recently founded Hoover War History Collection (later Hoover Library), established in 1919 by American humanitarian and statesman Herbert Hoover to serve as a repository of documents on the causes and course of the Great War. In 1921 he would be named associate professor of history, and in 1924 professor of Russian history at Stanford, at which time he was also made a director of the Hoover Library. On being hired as a curator for the Hoover War Collection, Golder departed on August 1920 on his first collecting trip, a journey of three years that would have an enduring effect on the field of Slavic studies in America. He traveled during the next year throughout central, eastern, and southeastern Europe and the Near East, collecting books, manuscripts, periodicals, government documents, personal papers, fugitive documents, and posters, and arranging their shipment to Stanford.

Golder's personality seems to have played a considerable role in his success as a collector. He was by all accounts soft-spoken and gentle in manner, able to get along with a wide variety of people. And he was a good listener, an important quality at a time when countless people were desperate to recount their tales of woe. Golder's collecting work was also facilitated by his association with the American Relief Administration (ARA), a private relief organization under the direction of Herbert Hoover. The ARA, which had been delivering lifesaving food across Europe since the end of hostilities, wielded enormous political clout. Golder found that in most places he visited, Hoover's ARA had spread good will and opened doors for him to officials, librarians, collectors, and others. At the same time, the depressed economic conditions enabled him to purchase literally tons of material at cheap prices.

All the while, Golder was hoping to get into Soviet Russia, an opportunity that finally arrived in August 1921, when the ARA signed an agreement with the Soviet government to provide famine relief on a massive scale.<sup>10</sup> Golder entered Soviet Russia with one of the first ARA parties at the end of August and remained there for most of the next twenty-one months. He went in principally as an agent for the Hoover collection. He served also as special investigator for ARA, in which capacity he spent much time on the road surveying famine con-

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<sup>10</sup> See Patenaude, Bertrand M. *The Big Show in Bololand: The American Relief Expedition to Soviet Russia in the Famine of 1921*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002.



*Frank Golder's identification card issued on September 1, 1921, by the American Relief Administration and the Central Commission for Aid to the Starving (Pomgol) of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet (Центральная комиссия помощи голодающим при ВЦИК). Frank A. Golder Papers, Hoover Institution Archives*

ditions.<sup>11</sup> During the second year of the ARA mission, Hoover, who was named U.S. Secretary of Commerce in 1921, asked Golder to serve as an informal political observer and submit weekly confidential reports on developments inside Soviet Russia. Golder described what the Soviet newspapers and citizens were saying and detailed his many conversations with a variety of Soviet officials, among them Karl Radek, the Bolshevik journalist and official of the Communist International, and Leonid Krassin, the Soviet diplomat and trade official.

Contrary to his worst fears, Golder discovered that many of his old intelligentsia friends and colleagues had survived the deluge of the Revolution. Yet he was shocked by the economic circumstances facing these shipwrecked men of letters and their families, whom he found to be physically weakened and utterly demoralized by the events of the

<sup>11</sup> Golder's travels are chronicled in his diaries, which, along with material provided by ARA colleague and University of California, Berkeley, economist Lincoln Hutchinson, were published as Golder, Frank Alfred and Hutchinson, Lincoln. *On the Trail of the Russian Famine*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1927.

past several years — all of this against the backdrop of a catastrophic famine in the Russian heartland that now threatened millions with starvation. “All of Russia is on the move and in search of bread, it thinks of nothing else, it talks of nothing else,” he observed in his diary on December 6, 1921. A life of the mind, Golder understood, was all but impossible in such a time of extreme want.<sup>12</sup>

As a collector, Golder maintained many relationships with officials from the vanquished classes of the old regime and initiated many new ones among the Bolshevik and Soviet establishment. He built on past contacts with archivists, scholars, librarians, and cultural figures to acquire an enormous amount of material — books, periodicals, manuscripts, documents, posters, and works of art — for the Hoover library. His collecting feat during this period would prove to be Golder's most important professional achievement. He not only collected materials for Stanford but also acquired duplicates for the Harvard Library and the Library of Congress. During the first months of his stay, a time when books from the private libraries that had been nationalized were still being sold off, Golder found the prices of books on the private market to be very low and he purchased aggressively. On October 6, 1921, he wrote to fellow Stanford history professor and Hoover curator Ralph H. Lutz: “I have been watching the book market and it makes my intellectual mouth water. Rare editions, beautiful bindings, heirlooms of great value are thrown on the market. I have decided to cast prudence aside and spend a part of the 2000 dollars on purchases here.”<sup>13</sup>

The essential ingredient to Golder's success as a collector in Soviet Russia was his ability to establish connections with key figures in the Bolshevik establishment, most important the Marxist historian and Deputy People's Commissar of Enlightenment Mikhail N. Pokrovskii, who assisted him in collecting, free of charge, most official publications since 1917, including complete runs of many newspapers and journals. Golder also acquired the personal papers of individuals, notably the diaries kept during the Revolution by a Petrograd archivist and a Moscow historian. The Petrograd archivist was Georgii Alekseevich Kniazev (1887–1969), an officer of the Imperial Naval Archives, later director of the Archives of the Academy of Sciences of

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<sup>12</sup> *WRP*: 112.

<sup>13</sup> *WRP*: 94. On April 21, 1922, Coolidge, having recently returned to Harvard from Moscow, wrote to Golder: “I think your acquisitions of Russian works for Stanford and Harvard at this particular juncture will go down to posterity in the annals of book buying.” Harvard University Archives, A.C. Coolidge papers, “Correspondence, A–Z 1922/23 — A–Winship 1923/4.”

the USSR. Kniazev was a major source of archival and other historical materials for Golder beginning with his 1914 visit to Russia. In 1922 Kniazev handed Golder a typescript of his Petrograd diary for the years 1915–1922.<sup>14</sup> The Moscow diarist was Iurii V. Go'te, a historian and Rumiantsev Museum Library director, who turned over to Golder the handwritten original of the diary he began keeping in the summer of 1917.<sup>15</sup>

Golder's connections extended to the world of art. As an official of the ARA, Golder was billeted in the former home of art connoisseur and collector Dmitry Shchukin (1855–1932), brother of art collector Sergei Shchukin (1854–1936), famous today for his collection of French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art. Dmitry Shchukin's residence, on Starokonniushenii Lane, in Moscow's Arbat neighborhood, was for Golder more than merely a living quarters; it was a daily reminder of the perilous vulnerability of high culture in Russia. Shchukin's art collection, mostly European old master paintings, but also miniatures, bronzes, sculptures, majolica, and stained glass, had been nationalized by the Soviet government. At the time the American relief workers were allowed to occupy the building, the collection's fate was uncertain. Shchukin was allowed to remain in the house with the Americans and tend to his collection. The idea of the ARA taking over Shchukin's home initially met with resistance from Natalia Sedova (wife of Lev Trotsky), the head of the Department of Museums, but permission was granted after the ARA agreed to guarantee the safety of the artworks.<sup>16</sup> Golder described the scene in a letter to a friend in the U.S.

The conditions under which one lives are not the most comfortable from the American point of view. A few of us are unusually well off. We are quartered in a beautiful picture gallery which is now closed. A very wealthy

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<sup>14</sup> Kniazev's diary is in the Golder Papers, box 21. Kniazev's remarkable diary of the 900-day Nazi siege of Leningrad is the centerpiece of Adamovich, Ales and Granin, Daniil. *Blokadnaia kniga*. Moscow: Sovetskii pisatel' publ., 1982.

<sup>15</sup> Go'te's diary has been published in English translation as *Time of Troubles: The Diary of Iurii Vladimirovich Go'te, Moscow, July 8, 1917, to July 23, 1922*, trans., ed., introd. by Terence Emmons. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988. For more on Go'te, see Kasinec, Edward. "The Soviet Library as Victim: Five Hitherto Unknown Letters to Iu. V. Go'te," *Bulletin of Research in the Humanities* 87 (1986–1987): 172–181.

<sup>16</sup> Shchukin's collection included 127 paintings: 78 by Dutch, Flemish, and Netherlandish old masters, 26 by French, 10 by German, 6 by Italian, and 3 by English artists. These paintings hang today in the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts. See Natal'ia Semenova, "Sobirate!' do podoshvy galosh," *Artkhronika* 7–8 (2010): 100–107.

merchant of Moscow spent much of his money in buying beautiful pictures. The [Bolsheviks] nationalized his collection, put him in jail, but now he is free but has lost his property. Not having any other place to put us the Soviet put us here. A number of beautiful pictures watch over me as I sleep, to be sure they are not all Madonnas, but my sleep is not disturbed. In the other rooms there are other pictures of equal beauty.<sup>17</sup>

Golder collected works of art of a different sort for the Hoover Library: some three dozen paintings made by Petrograd artist Ivan Vladimirov (1869–1947), whose work depicted scenes of the Revolution. Vladimirov's name is listed in the standard Soviet biographical dictionaries as a celebrated artist of the Revolution. His painting *Down with the Eagle* (1917) depicts peasant soldiers tearing down the imperial emblem from atop the roof of an apothecary shop during the February Revolution. Like many Russian artists, Vladimirov later contributed to the cults of Lenin and Stalin. The Vladimirov paintings Golder acquired—most of them done in gouache—reveal the Revolution's unheroic side: the brutality and vulgarity of the winners, the poverty and humiliation of the losers. Many are of Petrograd street scenes, under leaden gray skies, where the desperate search for food and fuel takes many forms, including, in a scene familiar during the years 1919 and 1920, a house being dismantled for use as firewood. There are village dramas—a landlord and a priest are sentenced to death; thuggish Bolsheviks come to requisition cattle and wood from distraught peasants—but Vladimirov's main theme is the tragic fate of former aristocrats and bourgeois, hungry and cold and struggling to stay alive.<sup>18</sup>

Golder's most important personal contact in Russian cultural circles was Petrograd-based artist Alexandre Benois (Aleksandr Nikolaevich Benua, 1870–1960), a Russian painter, illustrator, theatrical designer, and leading art historian and critic. Benois served as Golder's guide in interpreting the evolving transition from the old to the new cultural regimes in Russia, and he introduced Golder to other artists and writers. Golder's diary entry for January 19, 1922, records his presence at a performance in Petrograd of Molière's *Les Précieuses Ridicules* and *Le Médecin Malgré Lui*, for which Benois's son, Nicola,

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<sup>17</sup> Golder to Miss Elliot, October 8, 1921, in Golder Papers, box 12. Among the relief workers in residence was Professor Coolidge, who served as the ARA's chief diplomat during the first year of the relief mission. From Moscow, Coolidge wrote to his father in Boston on October 1, 1921, that Shchukin's house contained “a first class lot of pictures, including a Memling, several Teniers, a Correggio, etc.” *Archibald Cary Coolidge: Life and Letters*, ed. by Harold Jefferson Coolidge and Robert Howard Lord. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1932: 217.

<sup>18</sup> See Patenaude, Bertrand M. *A Wealth of Ideas: Revelations from the Hoover Institution Archives*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006: 66–68.

did the stage design. The experience reminded Golder of an evening at the Comédie Française. “The acting was very good and a credit to the Russian stage. Our hosts were most charming and introduced us to the principal actors who were very gracious. We had the loge of honor and were invited to come next Tuesday to ‘The Merchant of Venice.’”<sup>19</sup> Benois père, who would emigrate to France in 1926, remained Golder's friend to the end of his life.

## Cultural Liaison

“To live in Russia now and to see [the] bearers of Russian culture and tradition dying one after another and to realize that no others are coming to take their place is like living in a community struck by the plague,” Golder wrote in 1924.<sup>20</sup> Playing multiple roles in Russia — book, periodicals, and manuscript collector, famine relief worker, political observer — and with his extensive knowledge of Russian scholarship and culture, Golder was uniquely positioned to serve as a bridge between Russian and American scholars and cultural figures, to act on his instinct to help sustain Russian culture in its hour of great need.

Here one must note the vital role of American largess in the form of ARA food packages, which proved to be morale-saving, when not lifesaving. In December 1922 the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund donated \$230,000 to the ARA for intelligentsia relief, and a portion of this charity, in the form of ARA food packages, was made available to Golder and Coolidge to use at their discretion.<sup>21</sup> The moment of impact was captured in the diary of the Moscow historian Iurii V. Got'e, who wrote on December 26, 1921: “A Christmas present from the Americans, Coolidge and Golder: a *food packet* with a very kind letter. . . . One [pood] of the finest wheat flour, twenty-five pounds of rice, fifteen pounds of sugar, three pounds of tea, a tub of lard, twenty jars of condensed milk. I admit I was touched, and contented, and a little upset.”<sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> *WRP*: 139–140. On this occasion Golder was in the company of several ARA colleagues enjoying their privileged position as humanitarians. “During the entreacts Benois took us to one of the studios, the director's, where tea was served. People of literary and artistic distinction were called in to meet us and we were treated like Grand Dukes or persons of note, ‘our friends from America.’ There is great interest in America and so many people are learning English who formerly studied French or German.”

<sup>20</sup> *WRP*: xxv.

<sup>21</sup> Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand*: 179.

<sup>22</sup> Got'e, *Time of Troubles*: 440.

One especially grateful beneficiary, the influential Petrograd writer Kornei Chukovskii, could hardly express the depths of his gratitude:

Do you know what these three ARA packages meant to me, my dear Rockefeller? Do you realize how thankful I am to Columbus that he one day discovered America? Thank you old mariner. Thank you old vagabond. Those three packages meant more to me than simply a reprieve from death. They made possible a return to my literary work. I felt myself again a writer. . . . I doubt if any American will ever understand our poetical happiness on the great day when, dusted with flour, my whole family dragged home the cart with the long awaited ARA packages and carried them up to our lodging on the third floor.<sup>23</sup>

Golder also took steps to help alleviate the shortage of basic necessities that afflicted most cultural institutions in Soviet Russia at this time. In letter to an American colleague in the U.S. he described the parlous conditions at academic and cultural establishments in the Russian capitals: “The buildings are not heated. The Public Library in Petrograd which houses so many valuable books and manuscripts is leaking and is causing much damage.” At the Academy of Sciences, Golder established a friendship with Sergei Fedorovich Oldenburg (1863–1934), an orientalist who served as Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences from 1904 to 1929. Golder characterized him as “one of the finest Russian scholars and cultured gentlemen that I have ever met . . . During the last four years he has worked like a giant trying to keep up the Academy, trying to find something to eat for the academicians, trying to keep on good terms with the Bolsheviki and not to alienate the antibolsheviks. As a result he has been abused by all.”<sup>24</sup>

Especially dire was the shortage of paper, vital to the scholarly enterprise. On January 15, 1922, Oldenburg, together with two members of the Academy, Aleksandr Fersman and Vladimir Vernadsky, addressed a letter to Golder appealing for his help in securing paper for the publication of scientific works.<sup>25</sup> Before the First World War, the letter explained, the Russian Academy of Sciences had published about one hundred books per year across all departments. By 1922, although manuscripts were being written, there was insufficient paper on which to publish them. The academicians asked for the help of “our American friends” to obtain paper from Finland, at a cost of 250,000

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<sup>23</sup> Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand*: 610.

<sup>24</sup> WRP: 150, 158, 181–183.

<sup>25</sup> Aleksandr Yevgenyevich Fersman (1883–1945) was a prominent Soviet geochemist and minerologist; Vladimir Ivanovich Vernadsky (1863–1945) was a prominent biogeologist and thinker (and father of the historian George Vernadsky).

Finnish marks, a sum estimated to be sufficient to cover a supply of paper for one year and which would be paid back over the course of five years. Golder immediately went to work. He passed along the original of this letter to Vernon Kellogg, who had been in Soviet Russia in autumn 1921 as an ARA special investigator and now served as secretary of the National Research Council in Washington, D.C. He also sent an English translation to J. Franklin Jameson (1859–1937), head of the Department of Historical Research of the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., and editor of the *American Historical Review*. In a cover note to Jameson, he expressed “the hope that the scholars of America will lend a hand to these brave men. Their lot is hard and their suffering great, some have died under the strain but those who survived have managed to work and to accomplish great things.”<sup>26</sup> Golder's efforts paid off, and the desired paper was shipped to Petrograd and delivered to the Academy of Sciences.

Another major Russian institution Golder advocated for was the Rumiantsev Museum Library. Here Golder's most important contact was Anatolii Kornelievich Vinogradov (1888–1946), a writer who had been appointed director of the Museum in March 1921.<sup>27</sup> On March 24, 1923, Vinogradov wrote to Golder to ask for help from the ARA to secure a supply of printing paper. The request was made specifically on behalf of scholars working in the Museum's Ethnographic Department and its Art Department and on library science. The letter requested an outright donation, although if absolutely necessary the Museum would pay the shipping cost.<sup>28</sup>

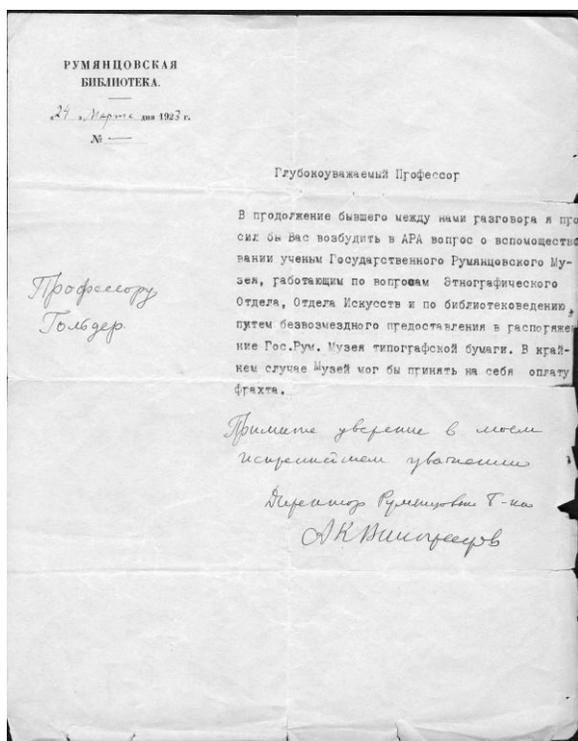
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<sup>26</sup> Golder to Jameson, January 22, 1922. J. Franklin Jameson Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, box 86, file 626. Golder's reference to “brave men” is, like the ubiquitous expression “men of letters,” a reminder that at the time women scholars in leading positions were comparatively few.

There was nonetheless a female scholar of considerable accomplishment in Golder's circle in Russia in 1922: the Orientologist Zinaida Alekseevna Ragozina (born Verderevskaja, 1834 — after 1922). Ragozina came from noble family of Tatar origin. In 1874 she emigrated to the United States, where she became an internationally renowned expert in Asian history and ethnography. Returning to Russia in 1900, she published major studies of the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Media, and India. See Andreyev, Alexandre. *The Myth of the Masters: The Occult Lives of Nikolai and Elena Roerich*. Leiden: Brill, 2014: 51.

<sup>27</sup> Vinogradov was removed from his position in 1924. He went on to become a well-known writer of historical novels. See Got'e, *Time of Troubles*: 88, n. 208. See also Kasinec, “The Soviet Library as Victim”: 175–176, n. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Hoover Institution Records, Hoover Institution Archives, box 94C. Due to the lateness of the request (the ARA was preparing to depart Soviet Russia in the summer of 1923), Golder was unable in this case to arrange a purchase of the desired paper. The Americans were reluctant to send paper (or anything valuable)



Letter from A.K. Vinogradov to Frank Golder, March 24, 1923. Hoover Institution Records, Hoover Institution Archives

Golder's connection to Vinogradov explains the presence in the Hoover Archives of a remarkable document: a short, illustrated, bound typescript, in English, titled "The Fortunes of the Roumiantzow Museum," authored by Vinogradov and dated November 27, 1922. The Hoover possesses what is likely the only extant copy of what appears to have been a very limited circulation. The text provides an overview of the history of the Rumiantsev Museum (later the Lenin Library, today the Russian State Library) from its founding through the recent time of troubles. It describes the reorganization of the Museum begun in 1917 against the backdrop of the nationalization of private collections, which introduced the challenge of absorbing and cataloging newly acquired books. The photographs that accompany the text dis-

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into Soviet Russia without being on the scene and thus able to ensure its proper delivery.



*Pashkov House, home of the Rumiantsev Museum, circa 1922 (today the Russian State Library). From "The Fortunes of the Roumiantzow Museum," Hoover Institution Archives*

play the Museum's sumptuous rooms, but also evidence of an overflow of uncataloged and unshelved books.<sup>29</sup> "Fortunes" contains a direct appeal for foreign assistance, invoking "the ancient bonds of civilization uniting the chief book treasuries of the world." Vinogradov gave a copy to Golder in the hope that he would be able to find a publisher for it abroad and thereby draw attention to the plight of the library.<sup>30</sup>

## Epilogue

Golder returned to Stanford in the autumn of 1923 keen to build upon the solid foundation he had established at Stanford in the form of the Russia collections at the Hoover Library. In 1925 the Laura Spel-

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<sup>29</sup> Edward Kasinec has summarized the general state of affairs: "World War I, the Revolution, and the Civil War caused immense dislocation to the holdings of Russian and Soviet libraries and archives. Collections that were nationalized had to be catalogued and integrated into the extant holdings of Soviet research libraries. The resulting collections had to be further developed, in part through the purchase and exchange of foreign literature. Finally, new cadres of Marxist-oriented librarians had to be trained to accommodate the growing number of researchers that crowded Soviet libraries during the early Twenties, while the old, non-Marxist librarians, such as Got'e, had to be re-educated in the precepts of a new Marxist librarianship." Kasinec, "The Soviet Library as Victim": 173-174.

<sup>30</sup> Vinogradov to Golder, December 14, 1922, Golder Papers, box 23.

man Rockefeller Memorial Fund awarded Stanford a grant to establish a Russian institute, the first award by an American foundation for Russian studies.<sup>31</sup> When Golder returned to Soviet Russia in 1925 to attend the jubilee of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, he intended to use his visit to enlist Soviet scholars in the new institute. In Moscow, Golder arranged a preliminary agreement between Stanford University and the All-Union Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (Russian acronym VOKS), a department of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs, to establish a Russian Revolution Institute based at Stanford. The parties agreed to sponsor the research and publication of works by American and Soviet scholars on the Russian Revolution. The idea was that the Russian Revolution Institute would publish these studies in English in the United States.<sup>32</sup>

Golder returned to Soviet Russia in the autumn of 1927 in an attempt to further this project. On this occasion the ostensible reason for his visit was an official invitation to the celebrations marking the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Golder experienced considerable frustration in Moscow, where he found his path blocked at every turn. The head of VOKS was Olga Kameneva, the wife of Lev Kameney and sister of Lev Trotsky. Both men were leaders of the Communist Party's Left Opposition, which at that moment was being routed by Stalin and his allies. Kameneva, Golder understood, was in "deep trouble." He had numerous and lengthy meetings with officials from the Foreign Affairs Commissariat about his institute, but those officials were afraid to take initiative and assume responsibility while scholars were fearful of even applying to go abroad. This xenophobic trend was only the beginning, of course. Just a few years later, most of the scholars Golder intended to enlist in his study of the Revolution would be arrested and imprisoned.

Golder was spared the upheaval to come by his death from lung cancer, after a brief illness, on January 7, 1929. The kind of Russian-

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<sup>31</sup> The first fruit of the institute was the publication of *Documents of Russian History, 1914–1917*. New York: Century Co., 1927, a selection of official decrees, speeches, newspaper articles, and extracts from memoirs, edited by Golder. Golder served as editor of an English-language translation of Sergei F. Platonov's *History of Russia*. New York: Macmillan, 1925.

<sup>32</sup> As a result of the agreement, a Soviet economist named Lev Nikolaevich Litoshenko spent the 1926–27 academic year at Stanford. There, together with U.C. Berkeley economist Lincoln Hutchinson, he began to work on what was to be the first book published by the Russian Revolution Institute: an expanded version of an unpublished study of his on Bolshevik agricultural policies since the Revolution. After completing the work, Litoshenko returned to Moscow. His fate and the fate of Golder's institute are recounted in Litoshenko, L.N. *Sotsializatsiia zemli v Rossi*. Novosibirsk: Sibirskii khronograf, 2001.

American collaboration that he had sought to foster would remain impossible for decades to come. Yet it is largely thanks to Golder's passage through the Russian Revolution, and his dedication to the strengthening of Russian-American ties, that the Hoover Library & Archives became a premier research center for the study of Russia and the Soviet Union, attracting researchers from around the world to the Stanford University campus. Most are unaware of the debt of gratitude they owe to the unassuming historian of Russia who witnessed — and then collected — the Revolution.

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# Americans in Revolutionary Russia

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