

# Where's the Polly?



POLITKOFSKY 1862-1898

The answer to "Where's the Polly?" and other Alaska shipwreck questions may be found at the Minerals Management Service (MMS) Alaska Shipwreck Database. There are more than 4,000 records documenting wrecks and strandings in Alaskan waters from 1741 to the present.



Above: Donald Clark, of Cannon Hunters Association of Seattle (CHAOS) and Martha Flahart of the Seattle Historical Society examine a cannon off the Politkofsky. Note the Russian imperial double eagle crest design cast on the barrel. The cannon is now at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle, Washington.

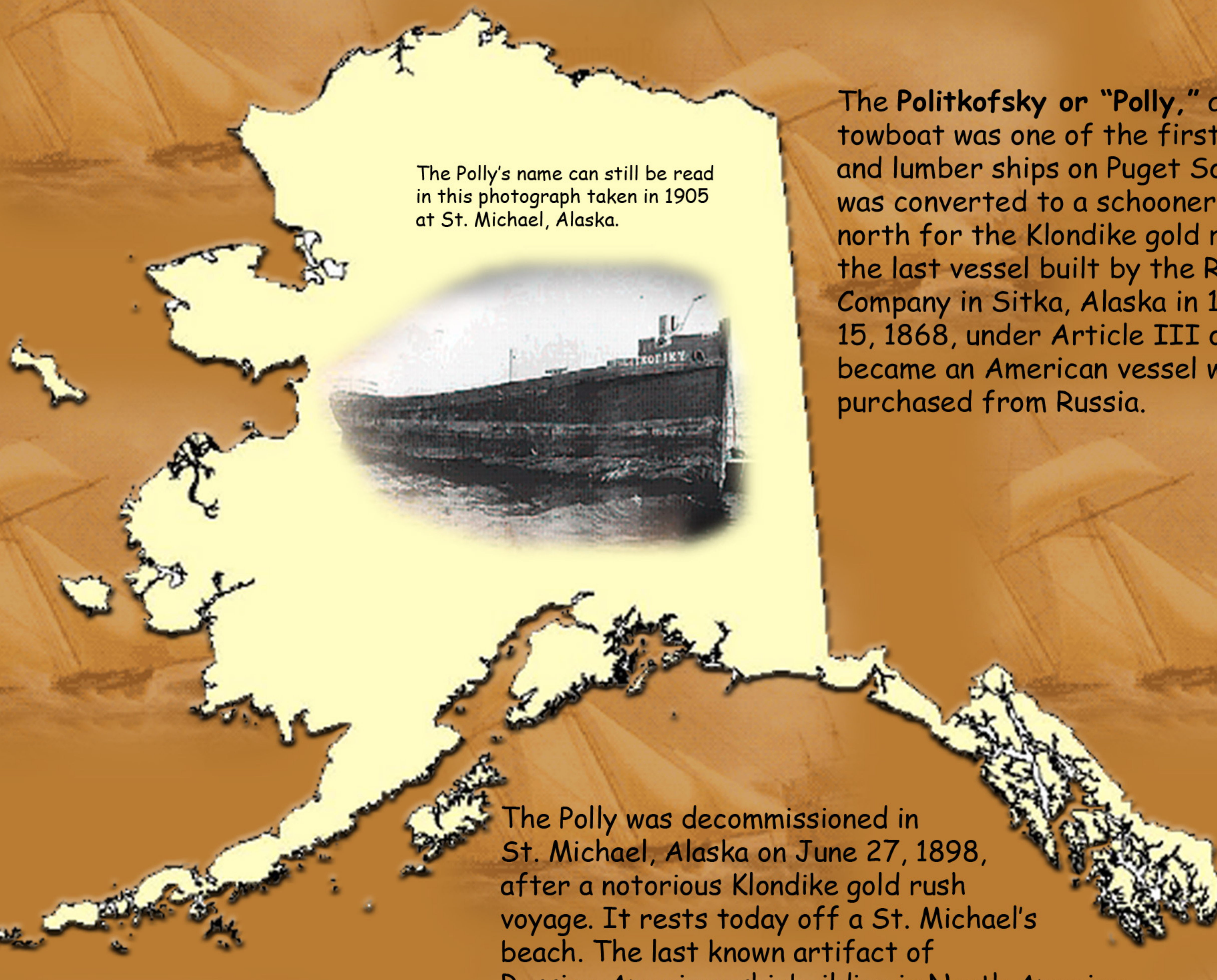
Congress passed the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in 1966 to ensure that our Nation's historical and archaeological relics are not lost through neglect or inadvertently damaged by activities permitted, conducted, or funded by Federal Agencies.



U. S. Department of the Interior  
Minerals Management Service

[www.mms.gov/alaska](http://www.mms.gov/alaska)

MMS Public Affairs-Alaska 1-800-764-2627



The Polly's name can still be read in this photograph taken in 1905 at St. Michael, Alaska.

The **Politkofsky** or "**Polly**," a sidewheel tug and towboat was one of the first tugs to tow logs and lumber ships on Puget Sound. In 1897, she was converted to a schooner barge and taken north for the Klondike gold rush. The Polly was the last vessel built by the Russian-American Company in Sitka, Alaska in 1862. On January 15, 1868, under Article III of the treaty, she became an American vessel when Alaska was purchased from Russia.

The Polly was decommissioned in St. Michael, Alaska on June 27, 1898, after a notorious Klondike gold rush voyage. It rests today off a St. Michael's beach. The last known artifact of Russian-American shipbuilding in North America, it is partially preserved beneath the waters of Alaska's Norton Sound.



The Polly's large bronze whistle was blown at the opening of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909 and the Seattle Worlds Fair in 1962. It is now at the Museum of History and Industry in Seattle, Washington. Many of the Polly's handmade copper spikes that held her handhewn cedar planks to ribs and keel were collected by tourists in St. Michael waiting for steamships to take them south.