

Russian Fortress in the Heart of the Pacific: Russia's Footprint in Hawaiian History

Mirskaia Anastasiia

Historical context

- At the beginning of the 19th century, the Russian Empire was actively expanding its influence in the Far East and the Pacific Ocean.
- Russian industrialists and merchants explored Alaska and the Kuril Islands, looking for new trade routes and opportunities.



The romantic adventurer Georg Schäffer

A key role in the history of Russian Hawaii was played by the German physician **Georg Schäffer** in the employ of the Russian-American Company.



Schäffer's influence

- **gained the trust of Kaumualii**, the King of Kauai.
- promising protection, Schäffer **obtained land and building rights** for fortifications from Kaumualii.
- signed a **trade treaty** and raised the Russian flag on Kauai. This effectively made Kauai a Russian protectorate.



The interests of the Russian Empire in Hawaii

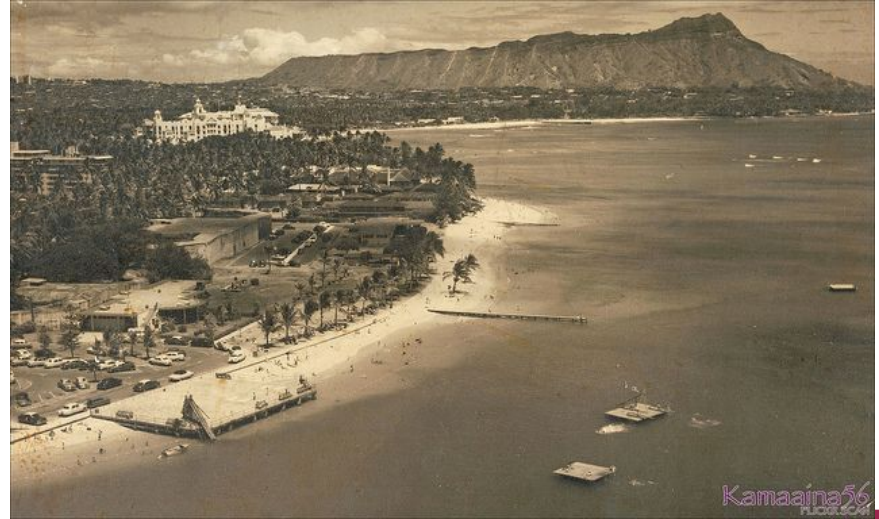
- A stronger Pacific presence
- Trade route control
- A valuable resupply point
- Natural resources



The Geopolitical context: The Game of the Great Powers in the Pacific Ocean

The Pacific Ocean was also a point of intersection of interests of other powers as:

- Great Britain
- Spain
- United States

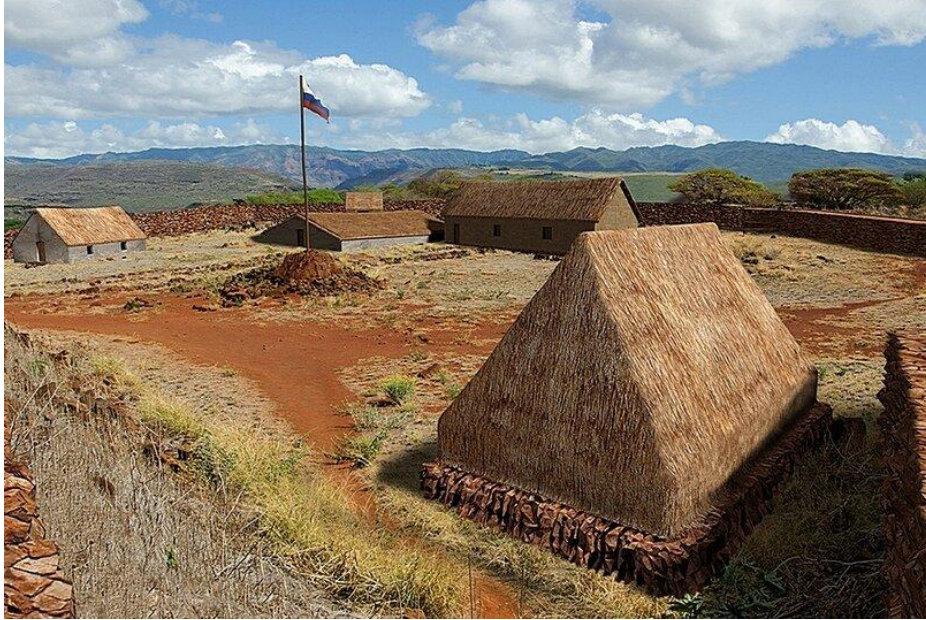


Increasing tension and loss of support

- Lack of promised military assistance and weakened relationships with The King of Kauai
- Economic problems to establish the profitable trade
- External pressure on Kamehameha I, inciting him to get rid of Russian influence



Why was the "Russian presence" so brief?




- Lack of support from St. Petersburg
- Poor logistics
- Pressure from the United States and local resistance

How did Schäffer's mission end?



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Thank you for your attention!

