Beginning of the Russo-Japanese Relations in the 19th Century

The following two items were selected from the USC collections to illustrate the beginning of the Russo-Japanese relations in the 19th century.

Title: 環海異聞Kankai ibun
Translated Title: [Description and circumnavigation of the world]
Responsibility: 大槻玄沢 Ōtsuki Gentaku (1757-1827), 志村弘強 Shimura Hiroyuki (1769-1845)
Publications: 1807 (copy date unknown)
Description: 8 v. : ill. ; 31 cm.
Descriptor: Voyages around the world, Russia--Description and travel
Note: Written by Ōtsuki Gentaku 大槻玄沢, a scholar of Rangaku 藍学 (Western studies) during the Edo period, it is a document about Russia and about Japanese shipwrecked survivors who set sail from Sendai for Edo in 1793. Having spent eleven years in Russia, they were brought back around the globe to Japan in a Russian warship Nadeshda in 1804. Onboard with them was Nikolay P. Rezanov, the first Russian envoy to Japan. The Nadeshda reached the shore of Japan half a century before Commodore Matthew Perry’s arrival in 1853, who ended Japan’s foreign policy of seclusion for over two hundred years (1639-1854). Available online:
http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/search/controller/view/rbm-m817.html

Title: 日本古地図大成 : 世界図編 Nihon kochizu taisei : sekaizu hen
Translated Title: The World in Japanese Maps until the mid-19th Century
Responsibility: 織田武雄 Oda Takeo, 室賀信夫 Muroga Nobuo, 海野一隆 Unno Kazutaka
Publications: 東京 : 講談社 Tōkyō : Kōdansha, 1975
Description: 2 v. in 1 case : col. Ill. ; 43 cm.
Descriptor: World maps--Early works to 1800
Note: The plate no. 84 (pp. 194-195) is a facsimile copy of a handwritten and translated copy of 露西亞圖 or 魯西亞圖 Roshia zu (Map of Russia, 1808), by 藤良道 Tō Ryōdō. The original map was brought to Japan with the party of Rezanov in 1804. Next to the map (p. 195), there is a picture of Envoy Rezanov and Captain Kruzenshtern, a German Admiral of the Russian Imperial Navy. Roshia zu is held in the Kano Collection at the Library of Tohoku University (東北大学狩野文庫 Tōhoku Daigaku Kanō Bunko: http://dbr.library.tohoku.ac.jp/infolib/meta_pub/G9200001CROSS). The latter, 萬國人物圖纂 Bankoku jinbutsu zusan, is held by the Kyoto Prefectural Library and Archives (京都府立総合資料館 Kyōto Furitsu Sōgō Shiryōkan: http://www.library.pref.kyoto.jp/).

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1 Prior to Rezanov, Adam K. Laxman, a lieutenant in the Imperial Russian Army, was delegated to Japan in 1792.