

Quality Sea Otter Pelts \$2300 Apiece

High quality Alaska sea otter pelts sold at auction in Seattle this week at \$2,300 per skin.

Known as the most glamorous fur the world has known, the sea otter came back into fur market after forced absence for many, many years.

Back 57 years ago, the valuable animal was thought to be extinct after being methodically slaughtered by professional hunters, principally Russians.

For a century and a half, the Russians killed the animals by the thousands employing Aleuts of the Aleutian Islands as hunters and whom they had enslaved for the purpose.

That was 200 years ago when the Russians furnished their royalty, the Czars, the Mikados of Japan and the Mandarins of China with the fabulous fur and for which the royalty paid ransom prices.

The hunting pressure finally dwindled the sea otter herd almost to nothing and the

disappearing fortune from the sea otter is said to be one factor why the Russians decided to sell Alaska to the United States.

In 1911, this country, England, Russia and Japan signed a treaty to protect the Pribilof Island fur seal which was also in danger of being over-hunted. Luckily, as an afterthought, the treaty signers also included a ban on the taking of the sea otter in the international waters.

This proved to be the salvation of the fabulous animal and the remnants of the herd were saved for the perpetuation of the species.

Just until recently, the culling of the herd on Amchitka Island on the Aleutians became necessary because it was in danger of overgrazing the marine life the animal depends on in the area.

The culling resulted in some one thousand pelts sold at auction in Seattle last Tuesday and a hundred per cent sale was realized.

Buyers from all over the world attended the auction including Frank Donalson of the Donalson Co. of Anchorage and David Green of David Green and Sons of the same city.