



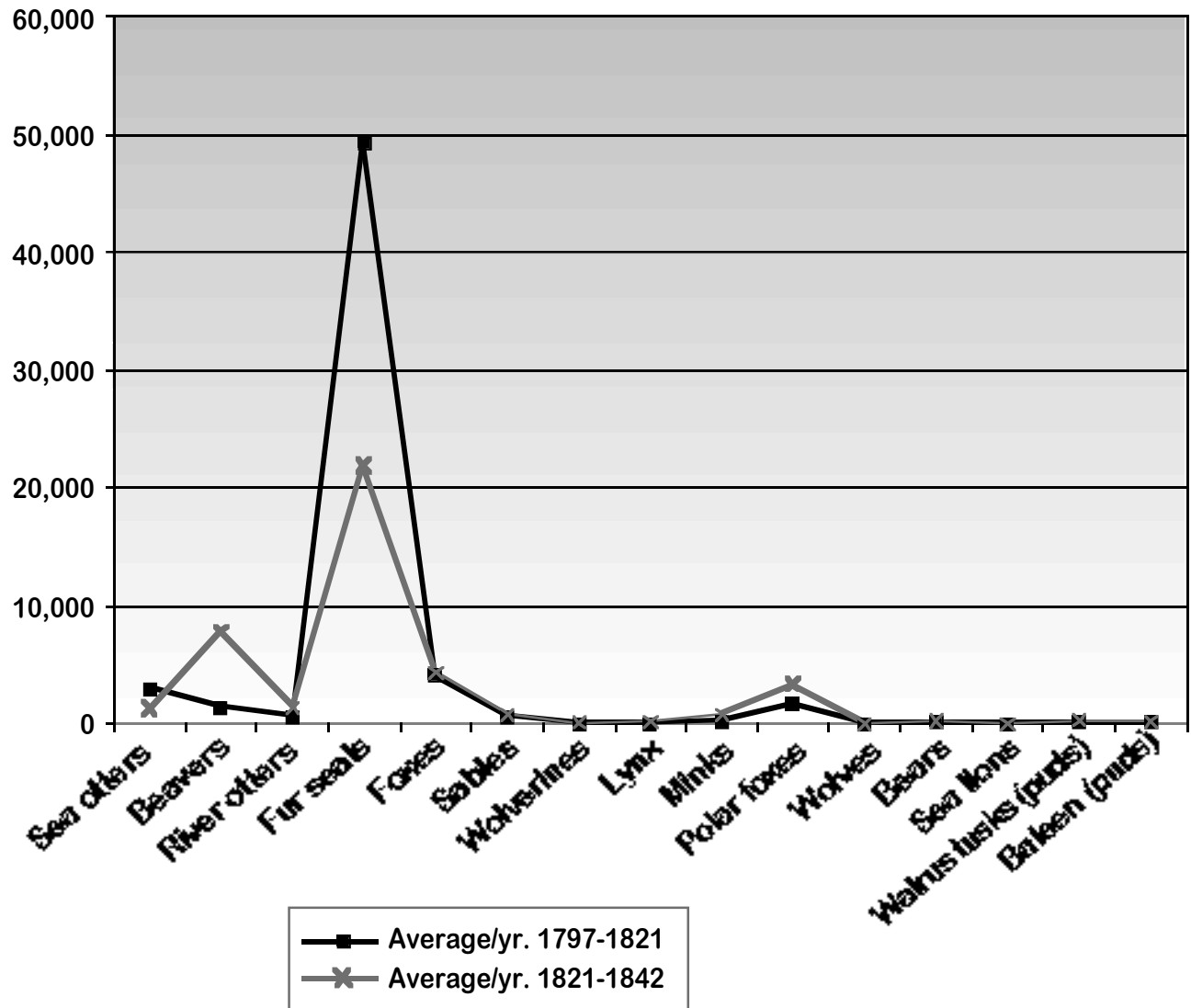
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Fur Harvests, Russian-American Company

	1797-1821	Average/yr 1797-1821	1821-1842	Average/yr 1821-1842
Sea otters	72,894	2,916	25,416	1,210
Beavers	34,546	1,382	162,034	7,716
River otters	14,969	599	29,442	1,402
Fur seals	1,232,374	49,295	458,502	21,833
Foxes	102,134	4,085	90,322	4,301
Sables	17,298	692	15,666	746
Wolverines	1,151	46	1,564	74
Lynx	1,389	56	4,253	203
Minks	4,802	192	15,481	737
Polar foxes	40,596	1,624	69,352	3,302
Wolves	121	5	201	10
Bears	1,602	64	5,355	255
Sea lions	27	1		0
Walrus tusks (puds)	1,616	65	6,501	310
Baleen (puds)	1,173	47	3,455	165
1 pud = 36 pounds				

Fur Harvest Averages, Russian-American Company



Letters between Russia and Kodiak

1794-1795

Background

From 1790 to 1818, Alexander Baranov served as Manager, first of the Golikov-Shelikhov Company, and, after 1799, of the Russian-American Company (which was the reorganized Golikov-Shelikhov Company, granted a monopoly over all fur trade in Alaska by the tsar).

Following are excerpts from three letters, the first from Baranov's boss Shelikhov, the second a response from Baranov, and the third sent by Archimandrite Ioasaf on the same ship as Baranov's response. In the Russian Orthodox church, an archimandrite is a priest just below the level of a bishop, and is often the head of a monastery.

Note the time lapse between the letters.

Excerpts are from *A History of the Russian American Company, Volume 2* by R. A. Pierce and A. S. Donnelly, translated by Dmitri Krenov, Limestone Press 1979, pp. 52-85.

Letter from Shelikhov and Polevoi (a co-worker of Shelikhov) to Baranov, sent from Okhotsk in Siberia

August 9, 1794

Dear Sir
Aleksandr Andreevich.

. . . We have received your letter of April 28, 1792, from Kodiak, on the ship Mikhail, and another of July 24, 1793, from Chugach. With the first letter we have received the shipment of furs, for which we are deeply grateful. We beg you not to forget us with your letters and furs in the future. We hoped that the ship Simeon sent by you, even if it would not bring us something cheerful, at least would not cause any troubles, but the opposite happened because the above-mentioned ship arrived at a time when we had to put up the rigging and armament on two new ships. You know how hard it is here to have such work done on account of the usual drunkenness, laziness, and other vices. . . .

Thus, even your dispatch of the ship Simeon brought lots of grief because in the first place even though you gave your orders in July the ship left Kodiak only in August. This is too late. The ships must be made ready in the fall and should start on the voyage in April so that the cargo shipped here can be transported to Irkutsk. If you are unable to send the cargo in April it would be better to wait till the next year. . . . In the future, send ships earlier and do not think that ordering a ship here is just as easy as sending a boat across the river. The very best and most trustworthy men should be assigned, not drunkards.

. . . Also, you should not have sent your papers about troubles at Kenai to the government, but rather should have sealed them and had them delivered to us so that we could use them as we think fit. Do so in the future. . . .

Your strength now is in your right to build settlements anywhere that you find an unoccupied territory. You can build settlements even on Kenai, and have 500 square versts* of land on which nobody else has the right to set foot. That would stop the wildness of the Kenai gentlemen [of the competing Lebedev-Lastochkin trading company]. If you will show better judgment and act more carefully than you did when you became frightened by mice, the gentlemen and owners of Kenai who interfere in the Chugach territory will have nothing else to do but get out of Kenai. . . .

You also made a mistake in writing to the government about an insufficient number of men, as if complaining. To end your dissatisfaction and to make you feel better, we are sending you 123 men. . . .

We have to thank you for moving to another harbor [on Kodiak Island]. Pray

God that this new place will be quiet and more profitable than the old. . . . It remains now, after finding a good location on the mainland, to build a well planned settlement, one that will look like a town instead of a village, even at the start. In case it cannot be avoided and some foreign ship comes, let them see that the Russians live in a well organized way. Don't give them reason to think that Russians live in America in the same abominable way as in Okhotsk.

. . . To give the place an air of importance and to impress foreigners and the natives, it wouldn't be bad to dress the hunters in some coats of military pattern and give them when needed some weapons to carry, such as, for instance, bayonets to be worn on the side. . . .

If possible, invite the peaceful natives to live closer to the settlement. From them you can always obtain required information, and you can use their labor, though not, of course, without pay or favor of some kind. Coming often to the settlement, they will get used to our way of living. They will bring berries for sale, and other products.

The Russians should be in close contact with the natives, but one important rule must be observed. At night, there should be very few natives in the settlement, and the sentries should let nobody in. They also should have signals, and beat iron plates at regular intervals, by hourglass. . . .

The settlers, hunters, and the Americans should be under strict surveillance. Devise police regulations for them. If a settler becomes turbulent, punish him by sending him to work for the company in some other place, give his job in the settlement to one of the hunters, and drag him from job to job for about a year so that the others will know what will happen if a man becomes troublesome. . . .

We are very much astonished at your unconcern about the visit of the English ship [Phoenix, Capt. Hugh Moore]. You knew, even before you got the new regulations, that visits by foreign vessels cannot be tolerated. . . . Their trading with natives is thievery, and we have suffered enough losses on account of it. . . . In the future, please act according to instructions of His High Excellency, and be bold enough to tell the foreigners that they have no right to trade.

. . . The French [in the midst of their Revolution] are forcing the whole world to fight them. . . .

In sending ships for exploration and survey, try to send not more than five Russians on each of them, but add to their number American [Native] boys sent by me and Polevoi to study practical navigation. . . .

After writing all this, we wish you sincerely good health, luck and happiness. God's blessings on all your exploits, civil and military. We remain, Dear Sir, your obedient servants,

Grigorei Shelikhov
Aleksei Polevoi

1 verst = 3500'

Letter from Baranov to Shelikhov and Polevoi, sent from Paul's Harbor (present site of the town of Kodiak)

May 20, 1795

Dear Sirs:

Grigorei Ivanovich! Aleksei Evsev'evich!

I had the honor to receive your letter with a very long number but without month and date. The letter arrived on the vessel *Tri Sviatiteliia*, with Father Archimandrite, on September 24th. I read it with extreme politeness, in spite of the fact that you consider me not as a friend, but as a lowly slave who serves only for his own interest and gain, and is not worthy of the important position of manager of the colonies. If you think that I do not know the difference between sending a boat across the river and a ship to Okhotsk, and so on and so forth, I am going to answer every part of your letter following my rules of righteousness to which I have always adhered without fear of the strong and powerful of this world.

As to the first part of your letter, I will speak only about the shipping of furs. You repeat several times that the Simeon left with a cargo of stones [ballast?] instead of sea otters. Sea otters are not caught in the same way that humpback salmon are caught in Okhotsk, but over a distance of 2,000 versts, from Unqa to Yakutat.

At Sutkhum and at Kenai Bay the hunting has been getting constantly poorer, and now amounts to nothing as the experiences of last summer and of this spring demonstrated. Without speaking of other places the route to Yakutat alone is hard on the natives. Imagine the poor natives making this journey both ways, 2,000 versts in narrow baidarkas [kayaks] without sails – using only paddles. They have to endure hunger on the way and often perish in stormy seas because this coast offers no adequate shelter. In places where the natives are not subjugated they are always in constant danger of attack by the bloodthirsty inhabitants of these regions. It is under these conditions that they have to hunt sea otters. . . .

In April of . . . 1794, an English expedition showed up here. It consisted of two ships, one under command of Captain Vancouver and the other under Lieutenant Puget. They passed Kodiak and without stopping sailed to Kenai Bay [Cook Inlet] and to Kamyshak Bay, making a thorough survey. They were looking for a passage or a strait to Hudson's Bay that does not exist. They were very eager to get information from our people and wanted to see me but I was detained at Kodiak on business and could not see them. . . . They were friendly and fair with our men.

. . . Beyond Bristol Bay, from the big Aglurmiut [Yup'ik] village, we got by accident from the northern Alaska Peninsula two girls, prisoners. They were brought to me, and after obtaining from them all the information needed, I ransomed them, gave them presents, and sent one of them with Grigorei Raskashchikov, and with some of the bravest of the newly baptized natives for a peace parley. I don't know the result of it yet – judging by what I have heard from the girls, there are no great opportunities for trade there – but from them we can find out about the Kwikpagmiut [people of the Yukon River] and others farther on. Perhaps there is something there, but there is no hope as to sea otters. One does not see even a small piece of this fur in their dress. Perhaps there are river beavers there and farther on the much wished-for strait connecting the north sea between Hudson's Bay and our sea between Alaska and Bering Strait. . . .

I am shipping to you the samples of iron ores, ochre from which the paint is made, and iron, also others of a different kind, three rods of iron forged by me last winter, 1793. . . There was no time to smelt cast iron and do forging, and to tell you the truth, I do not know how to do it. . . . I think that you should send two men who know how to smelt and manufacture iron on a small scale. . . .

I do not care what the hunters leaving these parts tell you. You can judge by what has been accomplished if I have spent my time in idleness and debauch or not. . . .

It is true that we are having good, clean fun on some of the holidays. For example: we have music in the evening, and dancing with the Americans, six or eight couples dancing the kazach'ka, the contredanse, and others. The islanders watch these dancers with interest. Some of them are learning different steps, and astonishing others. . . . Of course, this pastime has been criticized.

It is not true that we drink vodka all the time. Nobody with the exception of myself and Izmailov makes it, or at least if the hunters make it too, it is done in such secrecy that I never hear of it. But when I make it I do so only once or twice per year: first when I return from a tour of inspection or a journey and find a barrel or two of raspberry and bilberry juice prepared for this occasion, and second, on my birthday, I make a bucket of vodka and treat everybody to it. Sometimes on Christmas and Easter I make half a bucket out of snakewood roots, and this is all. We get so used to living without it, that we do not even think of it. It seems that the law does not prohibit the manufacture of wine from berries and roots if it is for one's own use. Besides, it is beyond the Russian boundaries and in a new part of the world. Making wine with mercury, I have rescued from death many who were perishing from venereal diseases. . . . [Once] I was drunk. . . . If you can call it vice, then it was vice. . . .

In all there are about 1,000 men on ships and baidaras [large open skin boats], including natives. Besides these the hunters in baidarkas, counting two men to a baidar-

ka, number 1,400. Out of this number, some men are used for fishing and trapping. . . . [M]any are killed or drowned, too old or too young, or rotten from a disease well known here. The hunting party in baidarkas is getting smaller every year and in summertime the villages are almost abandoned. . . .

It seems to me there is nothing more to write, unless I forgot something in a hurry. I will wait either for a change in your attitude toward the men and me, or for the arrival of my successor who will be better than I am. I remain, willing to do my best.

Your obedient servant, My dear Sir,
Aleksandr Baranov

As for the vodka shipped to me, or the white brandy or alcohol, Pribylov while on the high seas swallowed a whole flask without leaving a drop. . . . It seems that I have to suffer through no fault of my own, receiving instead of thanks a reprimand and suspicion.

. . . Your plans for the construction of settlements seem to surpass human strength and especially the strength of our settlers.

. . . I forgot to answer your accusation of being friendly with Captain Moore of the English trading ship [Phoenix]. Your rebuke astonished me. It shows greed and cupidity without limit. How can you hope that I would break the holy laws of hospitality and philanthropy . . . who instead of being called civilized would be called barbarians and in the world's history a stain would remain of a baseness that could not be forgotten. . . . Keep in mind, my Dear Sirs, that we have not received any information that the English are our enemies and are at war with our country. . . . I consider the French our enemies; but I do not take it upon myself to repulse the English by force from places that are not defined by

our government as being part of the Russian Empire, without getting first an official order.

. . . Speaking again of economy I do not know what more to say but are you hinting embezzlement that you repeat so often “I have not enough capital”?

Letter from Archimandrite Ioasaf to Shelikhov, sent from Kodiak Island

May 18, 1795

Dear Sir:
Grigorei Ivanovich.

My dearest friend and benefactor!

I can better feel than express in words the loyalty, respect, and love that I feel towards you. . . .

To this day I do not know if it was my arrival or your biting remonstrance that so enraged Baranov. He incites all the hunters against you, writes calumnies, and persuades everyone to sign them. He dissents from you in everything. . . .

I see nothing good in his business management. There was starvation from the time of our arrival here and throughout the winter. We cleaned out yukola [dried fish] that was three years old and rotten. . . . Mister Baranov and his favorites do not go hungry. They shoot birds, sea lions, and seals for him. . . .

The members of his staff, following his example, are not ashamed to scoff publicly at the church regulations and to dispute with me. They say: “We are not such hypocrites that we do not see that these regulations are made for fools.” Besides being licentious himself, he and Iakov Egorovich spread French free-thinking among others. . . .

If I had to describe all his acts in detail, it would fill a book. . . . I do not want him to know that I am writing to you, not because I am afraid of him but because I do not want to make matters worse. If he finds out that I wrote to you he will do his best to provoke me and if I lose patience I will answer him back. At present I have not shown anyone my displeasure with Baranov, but he already has told his friends that he does not like me. . . .

I remain forever your friend and will always pray God to give you good health.

Archimandrite Ioasaf
With brothers [fellow monks]

Epidemic Timeline

(Selected Dates to 1900)

From Robert Fortune's *Chills and Fever*

Russian Period

- 1791** Respiratory illness in the Aleutians and Kodiak Island
- 1802** Deadly fever brought to Atka on the Russian galiot *Aleksandr Nevskii*
- 1804** Respiratory disease in Kodiak brought by the Boston ship O'Cain
- 1806-07** Respiratory disease in the Aleutians that killed so many people that there were not enough men left to bury the dead.
- 1807-08** Dysentery in Unalaska and the Aleutians
- 1819** Influenza or measles in Sitka brought by an American ship from Java, spread to Kodiak by the *Finlandia*
- 1827-28** Likely influenza, in Kodiak
- 1830** Respiratory disease on the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands
- 1830s** Probably typhoid in Sitka
- 1832** Severe deadly epidemic of unknown type on the Nushagak River
- 1835-1840** **Smallpox epidemic throughout Alaska: killed between one quarter and two-thirds of the people in all villages; survivors were scarred and easy prey to secondary infections.**
- 1841** Possibly diphtheria in Sitka
- 1843-44** Mumps in Southeast Alaska
- 1844** Probably whooping cough on the lower Yukon River
- 1845** Whooping cough in Sitka
- 1848** Measles in Southeast Alaska
- 1851-52** Influenza in Barrow
- 1853** Coughs and stabbing pains on the Alaska Peninsula
- 1859** Respiratory disease up and down the Yukon

Epidemic Timeline, cont.

- 1860** Coughs and stabbing pains on the Alaska Peninsula
- 1860** Measles throughout Russian America
- 1860** Scarlet fever epidemic among Gwich'in, probably introduced by Hudson's Bay employees
- 1862-63** Influenza in Sitka
- 1867** Pleurisy and bronchitis in Nulato

American Period

- 1874-75** Measles in Prince William Sound and Kodiak
- 1881** Respiratory disease in the Aleutians
- 1882** Measles in Southeast Alaska
- 1882** Diphtheria along the Yukon River, from Canada to the lower Yukon
- 1883** Pneumonia and whooping cough in Ingalik villages
- 1888** Influenza in Unalaska, striking virtually all residents
- 1888** Pneumonia in Lake Iliamna area
- 1888-1890** Pneumonia in Bristol Bay
- 1890** Influenza wiped out more than a hundred Nunamiut Eskimos
- 1894** Bronchopneumonia struck 3/4 of the population of Point Hope
- 1896** Influenza in southwestern Alaska Yup'ik areas
- 1900** **Influenza-measles epidemic spread like lightning throughout western Alaska from Atka to Point Hope; its severity during the summer prevented people from putting up fish for the coming year. In many villages, every person was stricken with one or the other of the illnesses within days. At one Ingalik village the only living creature found was a dog. Mortality is believed to have been a least 2000, in some villages from 25 to 50% of the population.**

Confessional Lists of the Russian Orthodox Church

Translation of Photocopied Lists

# in the parish		In the year 1831 <i>Katmai Artel' [Post]</i> <i>Russians</i>	Age	
Men	Women		Men	Women
181		<i>Yakov Shangin</i>	63	
	161	<i>His wife Irina</i>		44
182		<i>Ivan Shangin</i>	26	
	162	<i>His wife Feona</i>		29
183		<i>His brother Stepan</i>	20	
	163	<i>Nadezhda</i>		14
	164	<i>Daughter (name not legible)</i>		12
184		<i>Patrikei Sofronov</i>	54	
	165	<i>Marfa</i>		47
	166	<i>Maria</i>		20
	167	<i>Lydia</i>		15

# in the parish		In the year 1845 <i>In the Katmai Settlement</i>	Age	
Men	Women		Men	Women
1040 to	1138 to	<i>The list consists 7 pages of names and ages for 99 males and 96 females</i>		

[illegible]

1035	Медведь	белый	10
1036	Медведь	белый	10
1037	Медведь	белый	10
1038	Медведь	белый	10
Всего			
1039	Медведь	белый	10
1040	Медведь	белый	10
1041	Медведь	белый	10
1042	Медведь	белый	10
1043	Медведь	белый	10
1044	Медведь	белый	10
1045	Медведь	белый	10
1046	Медведь	белый	10
1047	Медведь	белый	10
1048	Медведь	белый	10
1049	Медведь	белый	10
1050	Медведь	белый	10
1051	Медведь	белый	10
1052	Медведь	белый	10
1053	Медведь	белый	10

The Story of the Shaman who Became a Christian

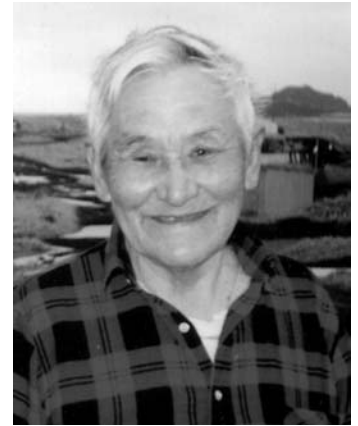
—Told by Ignatius Kosbruk of Perryville, Alaska, 1992

Introduction

The following story was told mostly in the Alutiiq language, although the parts that are in italics were spoken in English. The Alutiiq portion was translated by Ralph Phillips of Perryville and Dr. Jeff Leer of the University of Alaska Fairbanks.

Mr. Kosbruk was in his 80s when he told this story. Since his first language was Alutiiq, readers will find that his English, though fluent, is not always standard.

As you read the story, imagine it being told aloud.



Ignatius Kosbruk, 1992.
Photo courtesy of Lisa Scarbrough-Hutchinson, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Subsistence Division.

The Story

I used to hear this story in the past from that old man, his name was *Wasco Sanook*. *He used to tell me stories.* He used to tell me stories there in the trapping grounds. Then I didn't understand what he told me. He was really talking about a shaman. Later, when I thoroughly understood it, he made me tell that story back to him.

From Naknek to Katmai, a maternal uncle went down to see two old people. They had only one son — one. Then that uncle made that son into a shaman — but the uncle didn't tell the nephew's two parents anything.

When he was about to go home, he took that boy out, the one he had made into a shaman, and he put him into a garbage pit. *It was about in the fall, in September, I guess or October, whatever.* So he made him stay there the whole winter, through the entire winter, in the back of the pit. We call it a garbage hole. He was there the whole winter. Then when spring came, that uncle went down from Naknek to Katmai. Then he asked the two parents, "Where on earth is your son?" Then his mother got all excited, not having known where he was since the fall; she had lost him, her *boy*. Then that uncle told her to look for him out there in the garbage hole. *In the pit — the garbage pit.* His mother did as she was told, she went down to that pit. Then she saw him there in the pit, in the process of leisurely cleaning his teeth, taking fish eggs out from his teeth. She took him down to his father, to his dad.

Now that boy knew every last thing in the world. He knew what was on everyone's minds. He knew how people would live in the future. He was a person who knew things. Now that uncle was just beginning to make him a shaman.

From then on, being a shaman, he didn't hurt his fellow humans, he just helped his fellow humans. He became a shaman. People in those villages didn't know what kind of person he was. That Pugla'allria, *he knows everything what was going on.*

[Many shamans were known for being evil and using their power to kill people. But

Pugla'allria] killed only his uncle. He killed him because of the fact that he had made his parents cry. The only person he killed, that was the only one. When he was just leaving, when that uncle got ready to go home again, Pugla'allria tied a hair around the uncle's neck. That uncle didn't know it, *he didn't know he tied a hair around his neck. He didn't know. So he went back, back to Naknek, and one year after that, he was almost cut by the hair what he put around his neck.* As a shaman, the only person Pugla'allria killed was his uncle. On the way, he helped people out.

Now one time when people were hunting for sea otters in the sea, when they were way out in qayaqs, in three-man baidarkas, there were lots of them hunting sea otters. The wind came up, it blew really hard, and they had absolutely nowhere to go. Then that Pugla'allria, he called those who were hunting sea otters, *the ones that went out for sea otters. And all of a sudden* all the qayaqs went towards each other, they gathered without anyone doing anything. Nobody touched them.

They were out in the storm. They didn't know. And they all gathered in one place and made a path for them to go up to — back to Katmai.

There was no human agent — *nobody touch them and they didn't know what happened. They all go through that one path — right up to Qa'irwik [Katmai], right where they live. And when they landed, Father, Apawak, [the Russian priest told Pugla'allria not to do that any more].*

Then he, that shaman, lived among the people. He was kind and nice to the people. He only helped those people. He used that magic.

Now, once, unexpectedly, this couple's child got a fish bone stuck in his throat — in the village — a bone got stuck in his throat. His parents asked shamans to come help. That Pugla'allria watched all those shamans from somewhere or other, *in their home. They couldn't do nothing to him. And Pugla'allria was watching them from his home — and wondering what kind of kallagalek [shaman] are they.*

At last, finally they think of him. They call Pugla'allria down. And he went out. And when he entered the house he told them, "What are you shamans good for anyway? You just torture people in their minds, you're just killing people instead of helping. Is this child suffering here? You can't seem to help him." So he just take the child and put him on his lap. I don't know what he did. And he take the bone out and show it to them kallagaleks every one of them. "Was this hard?" He take the bone out and show it to them — every one of 'em. Then he told them to look. He said, "A person who pays attention to himself can be a shaman. He helps people, doesn't do anything bad to them." *And they said some of 'em were real criminal, in that group. He seen them, [inside] their minds.*

And then after that the shaman continued lived there helping people.

This chief there, *he never hired nobody, only Pugla'allria for partner. He say he never carry no gun. And fall of the year when they watch for bears at night, he let the bear come right close to them, up to them right there. He had no gun. That's something amazing. He never let the bear see him.*

Then Pugla'allria used his shamanism as a means of helping people out. He helped people out with his shamanism. Then he lived and just helped people.

But one day he started to ponder, “Am I doing the right thing?” When he started to think about it, he started to think he wanted to quit being a shaman. He started to become sick. Then all of a sudden his shaman helpers came back to him. They broke his joints. *Arms and legs were broken up without nobody touching ‘em . And he hollered, “Whoa! I wouldn’t come with you guys!” And his arms and legs started to break up without nobody touching them.*

And he hollered, “I wouldn’t come with you guys, because I think that we are doing something that is wrong.” He screamed that it wasn’t right. *“It’s not right. It’s all devil’s work.” And it got worse and worse and worse. His legs start to break without nobody touching them.* Then it got worse and worse. *His arms and legs start to break without nobody touching them.* Then he screamed, saying he will not go with his spirit helpers, they’re not doing right. He said he would follow only the true God.

Then the poor thing died. He just vomited blood until Good Friday. I heard this, that the poor creature died on Good Friday, vomiting blood.

That’s the end, it’s all done.

Discussion

In this ancient story, Pugla’allria became a *kallagalek* or shaman in a way that was typical for Alutiiq shamans: his mother’s brother — the male relative most responsible for the education of a young man — who was a shaman, initiated Pugla’allria through a strenuous ordeal. At the end of a year of initiation spent in a hole in the ground, nowadays called a “stink-head pit” because it contained fermenting fish heads ripening for a feast, Pugla’allria emerged a clairvoyant, healer, and controller of weather. He is shown as a model Alutiiq man in performing deeds for the good of the people, in contrast to the work of other shamans who benefited themselves or harmed people. The story merges with Christian motifs and values when it tells of Pugla’allria’s deathbed realization that shamanism was essentially evil and that his spirit helpers were agents of the devil. He threw them off, dying in excruciating pain. As with shamans from other Alaska Native cultures (especially Yup’ik culture), his spiritual power was located in his joints, which burst open when he expelled his spirit helpers. He died on Good Friday, which, according to Orthodox tradition, assured that he would go straight to Heaven.

This story shows that shamans could benefit the people, but did not always do so. It also shows that Christianity incorporated and eventually overpowered — but did not eliminate — the beliefs that existed in precontact days. As Ignatius Kosbruk tells it, Pugla’allria’s story symbolizes not just one shaman’s conversion, but the conversion of all Alutiiqs. Most Alutiiqs from the Katmai and Naknek areas, Pugla’allria’s home, had become Russian Orthodox Christians by the middle of the 19th Century. The reader can imagine, through this story, that the decision to become a Christian might have been painful and difficult for many people.

Finally, readers can see in Pugla’allria a hero who lived during the time of transition between precontact and Russian times. Kosbruk describes the shaman as Christ-like. To him, just as Christ is a model for future generations throughout the world, so Pugla’allria should serve as a model for Alaska Peninsula Alutiiqs in the present.

Native Population of Southwestern Alaska, 1741 to 1834

Based on estimates and Russian-American Company Censuses

	Aleutian Island	Kodiak, Cook Inlet, PWS	Kodiak Island Only	Cook Inlet, PWS Only
1741	8000			
1784		10000		
1791	6000		6510	599
1804			4850	
1806	1898			
1813	1508			
1817			4098	2544
1821	1700			
1834	2000			

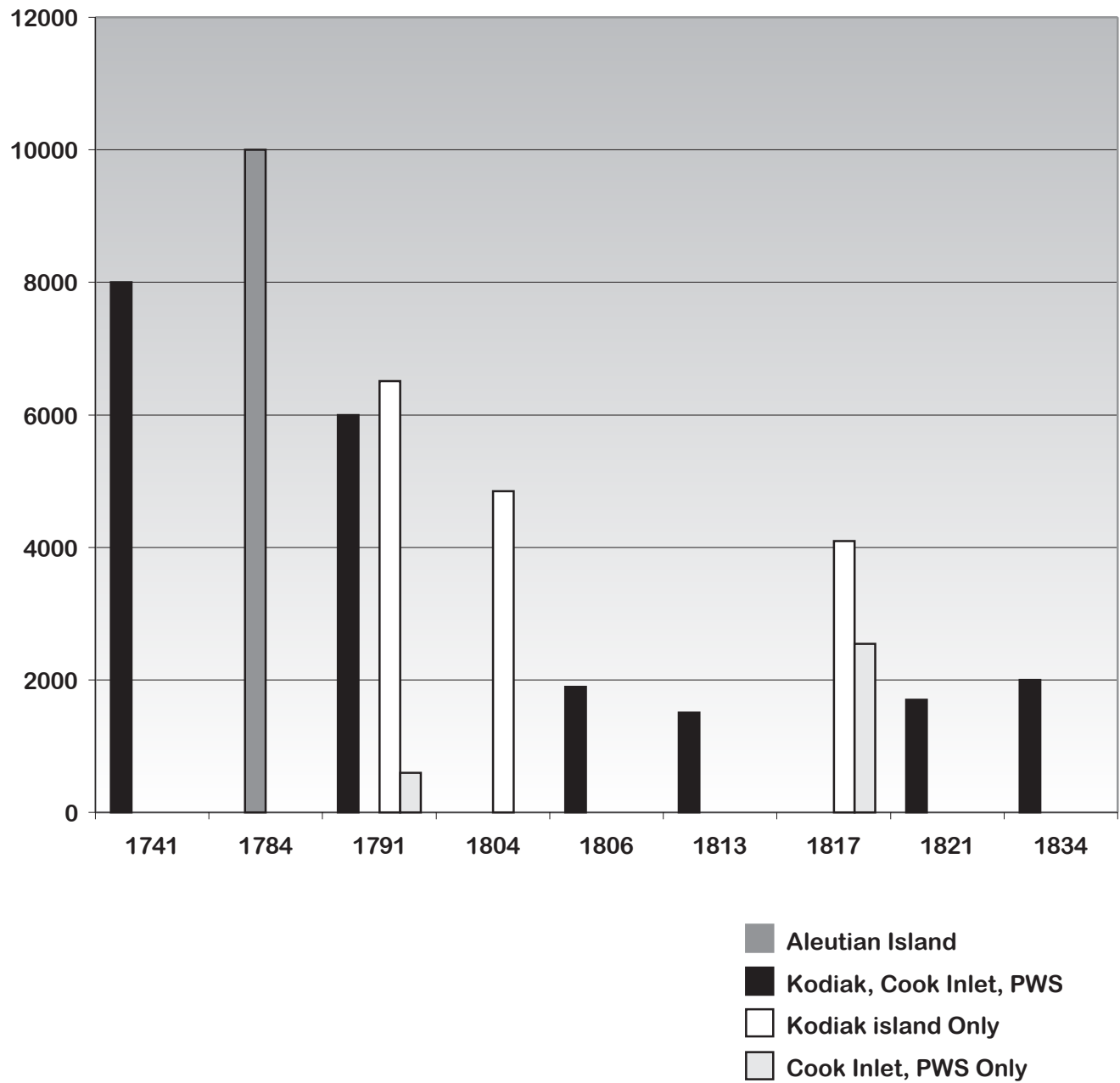
Reasons for population changes:

1. Movement of Aleuts to other places by the Russian-American Company
2. Illness
3. Accidental death
4. Starvation and hardship through lack of hunters

Russians in Russian America, 1819

	Russian Men	Russian Women	Creole Men	Creole Women	TOTAL
New Archangel (Sitka)	198	11	93	111	413
Kodiak	73		39		112
Ukamok Is.	2				2
Katmai	4				4
Sutkhum	3		1		4
Voskresenskii (Seward)	2				2
Konstantin-ovskii	17				17
Nikolaevskii	11				11
Aleksandrovskii (Kenai)	11				11
Ross (California)	27				27
Pribilof Is.	17				17
Nushagak	3	2			5
Total	368	13	133	111	625

Native Population of Southwestern Alaska, 1741 to 1834



Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844

Excerpt (p. 87): Iliuliuk settlement (the present location of the town of Unalaska) on Unalaska Island, describing a visit in May 1842

Here, as at Unga, there was nothing growing to be seen; not only the cliffs surrounding the harbor but also the slopes of the beach were covered with snow. The older Russian inhabitants and the old people among the Aleutians said that within their memory only the winter of 1821 could compare with this past one in severity. It was only two weeks prior to our arrival that the pack ice had finally gone out to sea, and the seasonal run of fish had only just begun.

In our more important settlements in the colonies, as in the capitals, the native type is less and less noticeable. The Aleuts go about in jackets and frock coats, their wives and daughters in calico dresses and kamleya [parka covers], which are long shirts made of ticking or nankeen [unbleached cotton] with red cloth trimming around the collar and hem. The married women, guarding against sin, keep their heads always covered while the girls wear their hair long, tied at the back of the neck with a ribbon. The greatest desire of every girl is to marry a Russian or perhaps a Creole [a person with one Native and one Russian parent], or in other words to marry out of the native condition into which she was born.

With all their reading and writing the Aleuts of the Unalaska division are losing their national characteristics faster than their brothers [living elsewhere]. The publication of the special syntax of their language, a fine thing for the present, cannot maintain their language in the future. The Christian faith has brought the Aleuts closer to us spiritually, and they eagerly absorb our ways. The introduction of the study of Russian would give them a better basis for education and would facilitate their making direct contact with the colonial government.

Lieutenant Zagoskin's Travels in Russian America, 1842-1844

Excerpt (pp. 96-100): Account of the history and topography of Fort St. Michael, described as it appeared from 1842-1844

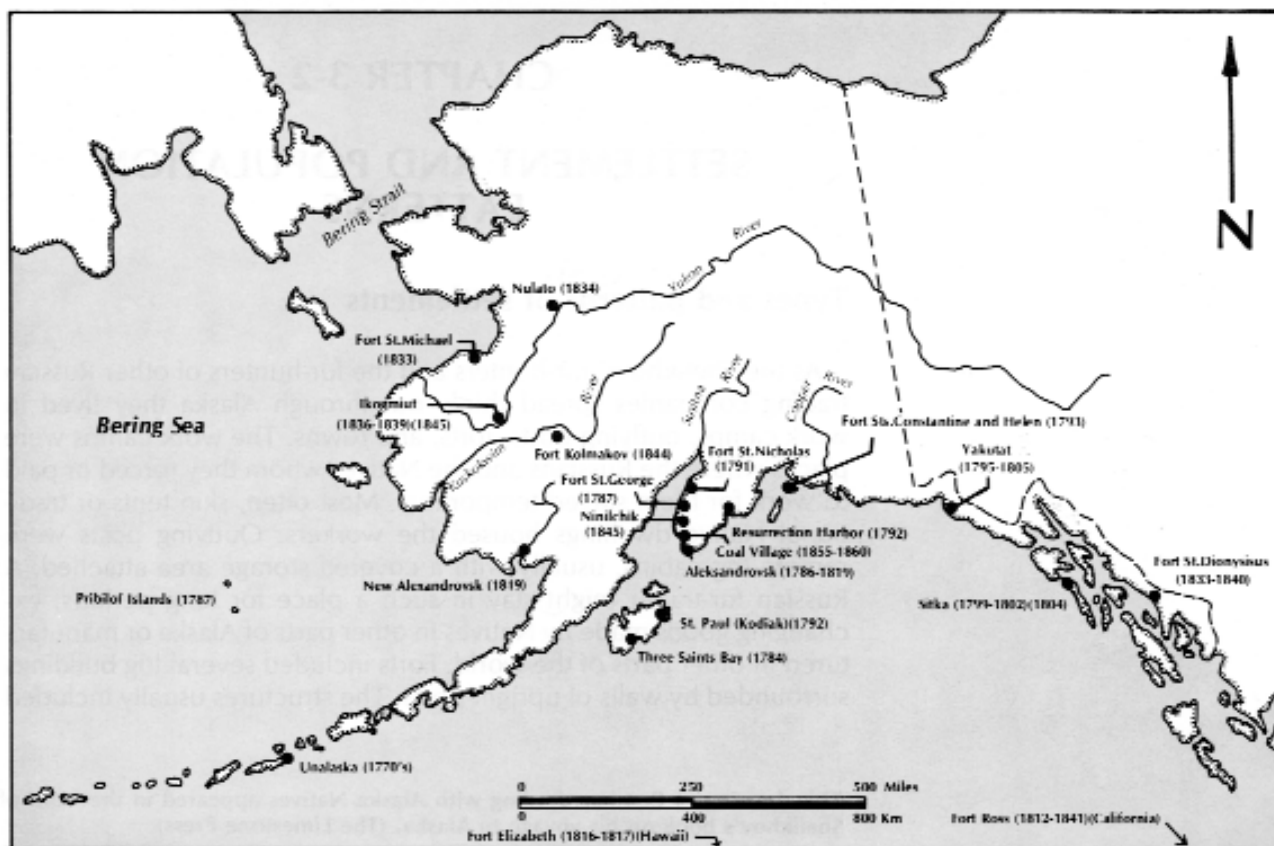
Fort St. Michael was established in 1833 and named in honor of Mr. Tebenkov to whom the previous year the task had been assigned of finding a suitable location of a settlement on Norton Sound. . . . At its establishment the fort was manned by 25 workers who were housed, together with the trade goods to be bartered with the natives, in a barracks constructed expressly for that purpose and shipped from Novoarkhangelsk [Sitka]. From the watchtower on top of the barracks watchmen could see over the whole countryside. At present there are the following structures at the fort: a house for the superintendent, barracks for the workers, two warehouses, one for merchandise and one for food, a storehouse for native supplies, and a connected bath and kitchen. All these buildings in an area of 25 square sazhen are surrounded by a stout wooden palisade 5 arshins** in height; two watchhouses at the southwest and northeast ends of the palisade are supported by six 3-pound cannons, intended to defend the so-called fortress. Outside the palisade are the forge, the kazhim for visiting natives, and a chapel established October 1st, 1842. . . .*

There are two native villages on St. Michael Island, one near the fort and one at Cape Stephens. The first was populous before the smallpox epidemic but now consists of only 19 persons of both sexes. It is called Tachik or Agakhkhlyak, that is, "a place suitable for a settlement." Actually in ancient times the Azyagmiut [local Yup'ik] and Yukon tribes used to hold meetings here for exchanging products. This place is not without advantages for the native today: the proximity of the Russians makes it easy for them to obtain European goods and secures them everything for their daily needs. The second village is Atkhvik [present-day Stebbins], with 45 inhabitants. The villagers are occupied exclusively in getting food, and sell their surplus supply to the fort.

* 1 sazhen = 7'

** 1 arshin = 2'4"

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Principal Russian settlements in Alaska.

The Battles of Sitka 1802 and 1804

From Tlingit, Russian, and Other Points of View

Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer

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This is a report on research in progress on various accounts of the Battles of Sitka of 1802 and 1804 from the Tlingit, Russian, and other points of view, as documented in writing and oral tradition. Many of the major texts we are working with are new in English, and are being prepared for publication in English translation for the first time. . . .

Tlingit Oral Tradition

The Tlingit oral tradition is represented by two fairly long narratives tape recorded almost 30 years ago: Alex Andrews (1960) and Sally Hopkins (1958). . . .

Alex Andrews

The Tlingit narrative by Alex Andrews provides a good introduction to the Battles of Sitka of 1802 and 1804. After describing his historical overview, we will turn to the Tlingit account by Sally Hopkins for commentary on the complexity and social impact of the battles. Then we will look at the Russian and British perspectives.

Alex Andrews presents his history in an exciting manner. His delivery has a song-like beat, and is characterized by skillful use of repetition. . . . Alex Andrews, a man of the Kaagwaantaan [an Eagle clan] and child of Kiks.ádi [in other words, his father was a member of the Raven Kiks.ádi clan], begins his account with a brief genealogical frame, about 16 lines, explaining that he is passing on a narrative tradition received from his father.

The first major section treats the very complicated background that led up to the Tlingit decision to destroy the Russian settlement. Briefly stated, there is an accidental food poisoning. The two Tlingit accounts at hand differ slightly in detail, but agree on the main points. For reasons unclear to us at the present stage of our research, the face of the poisoned man is painted with ochre – possibly as part of a healing ritual. The man dies, and the Russian officials inquire, “Who painted the face of the little old man?” The man who had painted the face, a Kiks.ádi named Héendei, admits to having done it, probably not knowing the man had died, and thinking he would be honored for healing him. Instead, he is jailed, and further insulted by being given flesh cut from the dead man’s thigh to eat. His spirits warn him of the danger, and he fasts. Later, a Kiks.ádi aristocrat, Stoonookw, child of

the Chilkat Kaagwaantaan, travels to Chilkat, where he is insulted by a co-clan child who taunts him because the Russians jailed Héendei, one of their relatives. He is goaded into taking action. He returns from Chilkat, and they start training for battle.

This sequence is important, and raises several questions. In the Tlingit literary tradition, this is the motivating factor for the entire war, and sets all the other action in motion. Historically there were certainly other factors as well, such as those mentioned in Kuskov's account, such as grave robbing, exploitation of hunting grounds, and general physical and social abuse of the local population. Perhaps the Russian reaction to the accidental food poisoning was the proverbial straw that broke the camel's back. Although it is in both Tlingit accounts, and also in Khlebnikov's accounts, the food poisoning remains somewhat of a puzzle. Is this the same event in both traditions, or two separate food poisonings? At present, we are inclined to think they are separate. However, the 1799 date given by Khlebnikov and the journey of Soonookw to Chilkat coincides with the time needed to develop the Tlingit alliances described in Khlebnikov and his sources.

The next sequence deals with the immediate battle preparations and destruction of Old Sitka. This includes description of K'alyáan's [usually spelled Katlian in English] hammer (obtained from a blacksmith), his dagger, and his hat. There is also an important passage of distributing sashes before the battle. There is an exciting description of the storming of the blockhouse, with three men in the lead: Duk'waan, Stoonookw, and K'alyáan. This part is told in great epic tradition, with names and genealogies, description of the regalia, the weapons, and the wounds. From a comparative point of view, this section is interesting because we can see Tlingits with names and genealogies fighting nameless Russians and Aleuts, complement Khlebnikov

and his sources, who understandably name the defenders in great detail, and only a few of the attackers. Also, no absolute dates are given in the Tlingit tradition, but from Khlebnikov and his sources we can pinpoint the battle on Sunday afternoon, June 18 or 19, 1802.

The next action treats the capture and execution of the Aleut or Russian sharpshooter Gidák. This is a fascinating section, highlighted by Sally Hopkins as well as Alex Andrews. The Tlingit are holding off lighting the funeral pyre until they can add Gidák to it, but he was out hunting sea lions at the time of the attack. Both Alex Andrews and Sally Hopkins imply, but do not explain the source of the great animosity the Tlingit have toward Gidák. According to popular tradition, Gidák had an assistant with an injured or deformed left hand, so that the curve of his forefinger created an ideal pocket or cup for molding bullets and loading muskets. It is unclear to us at present whether the Gidák episode is the same event as one of the chase sequences in Khlebnikov and his sources.

Next in the sequence of events, the Tlingits at some point abandon their settlement at Noow Tlein (Castle Hill) and relocate at Indian River [some time before the 1804 battle]. . . . The action continues [according to Russian sources, in 1804] with K'alyáan's journey to the south for powder. On the return trip, after he is set off on the shore, the canoe carrying the gunpowder explodes. This is an important event in both Tlingit accounts and is also described in Lisianskii and Khlebnikov. Both Alex Andrews and Sally Hopkins suggest that the explosion was caused by a spark from the Tlingits exploding their own powder, but Lisianskii understands that his gunners hit the canoe. The Russians pick up the survivors.

The next major event described by Alex Andrews, also highlighted by Sally Hopkins and Lisianskii, is the famous sortie by the Tlingits, who leave the Indian River fort and attack the Russians

on the beach. K'alyáan floats down the river, and uses his hammer in the surprise attack, because it is more effective than the dagger or rifle.

The next motif is the white flag raised by the Russians. This is a significant and moving passage in both Tlingit accounts. In short, the Tlingits did not understand the symbolism of the white flag, and decide to evacuate. Alex Andrews suggests general misunderstanding, and Sally Hopkins mentions problems with their interpreters. In any event, both elders emphasize that the tragedy lies in the miscommunication, and is made more tragic by the hindsight or later understanding that the evacuation could have been avoided. Many lives would have been saved; so many of the old and young would not have died. Lisianskii also mentions the white flags of truce flown by both sides, but with no suggestion of any cross-cultural miscommunication.

The Tlingit evacuate the Indian River fort [after the 1804 battle], retreating through the woods at night, eventually to a settlement on Chatham Strait called Chaatlk'aa Noow. This retreat is a major tragedy in Sitka history, because so many people, especially the young and the old, died on the way. In the Alex Andrews account, babies were killed because their cries would have betrayed the Tlingit position to the Russians. For both Alex Andrews and Sally Hopkins, this great and tragic loss of life devastated the Tlingit population of Sitka, especially the nobility of the Kiks.ádi, who never fully recovered. . . .

Next, Alex Andrews deals with peace negotiations. This sequence, also highlighted in Sally Hopkins is one of the most interesting to compare to Lisianskii, who records the events in the

Russian camp, and the sending of peace envoys to the Tlingit. Alex Andrews describes how the Russian delegation was received in the Tlingit camp. When the two accounts are joined, the picture is complete. . . .

The Alex Andrews account continues, briefly treating the period after the peacemaking. The narrative concludes with the death of K'alyáan. This is a very interesting section, a difficult and puzzling passage in the text, and one that needs more research. It appears at variance with the Russian tradition, and raises questions of chronology in the Tlingit tradition, and how many different men may have been given the name K'alyáan. If we understand the Alex Andrews history correctly, K'alyáan at one point floats the box containing his hat to the shore. He then kills himself, letting his blood pour out as a marker, leading his people to the box with the hat. . . .

There is no indication of K'alyáan's death in the Russian sources. According to Lisianskii, K'alyáan visits Baranov at New Archangel in July 1805. He notes that in August he is replaced by a new Sitka leader. According to Khlebnikov he is alive and bids farewell to Baranov in 1818. He writes, "the famed toyon Katlian, respected by Baranov for his intelligence and bravery, and who had harmed Baranov more than anyone by destroying the fort – even he appeared before him, and they made peace." There is also a portrait of K'alyáan, wearing a Chilkat robe with geometric design, with his wife, painted by Tikhanov in 1818.

Of major concern to Alex Andrews is the fate of the hat, acquired from clan members by the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and now located at the National Park. . . .

Sally Hopkins

Alex Andrews recounts historical events in chronological order, and in great detail, but with very few names. In one sense, he sees the history capsulized and embodied in the clan regalia that survives, and he is concerned with its welfare. For Sally Hopkins, the history is carried in the names and the social impact of the Battles of Sitka on her people. Asked by the collector, Peter Nielson, one of her younger relatives, to recount their ancestry “from the point we became human,” Sally responds with a magnificent genealogy of the Battles of Sitka, describing the family heritage to her relatives and children. . . .

Sally Hopkins was a remarkable woman. She died in 1968 at the age of 103. This makes her 93 at the time the history was recorded in 1958, and she was born in 1865, about 60 years after the battles she describes. She was of the Orthodox faith, was educated in Russian schools, and spoke and read Russian. . . .

The history opens with a genealogical frame about one quarter of the total length of the narrative. This includes personal and place names, clans, and clan houses. She then moves to the highlight of the Battle of 1804, and *K’alyáan’s* sortie with the hammer and the hat. Then, there is a flashback to the Battle of 1802, relating the food poisoning, the trip to Chilkat, preparation for battle, the taking of the fort, and the death of *Gidák*.

Two features of the story are unique. In the Battle of 1802, Sally Hopkins maintains that the actual burning of the blockhouse was done by two old women, named *Séikw* and *X’waal’k*. She also indicates that no small part of the confusion and cultural misunderstanding (regarding the white flag, for example) was due to the incompetence of the women interpreters. At least one of these is identified as a Tlingit woman who had been captured as a slave by a war party from the south, then acquired by the

Russians as an interpreter. This pattern seems in keeping with other documentation of the period, for example *Bocharav* and *Izmailov* who describe their use of slaves as interpreters, because slaves have had the unfortunate experience of being traded up and down the coast, with resulting exposure to and some fluency in many languages. Unfortunately, the women Sally Hopkins describes were more interested in socializing with the Russians than doing their job well.

The history continues with a flash forward to the period of peace, including the time from the settlement with *Baranov* to the period when Sally Hopkins was in her teens. There are serious things to be reckoned with: initially payment for the dead, but ultimately when the people and culture start to die. Alcohol is mentioned as a specific problem.

The narrative concludes with a second genealogical frame, again about a quarter of the length of the history. . . .

The Russian Tradition

The Russian tradition for the Battles of [are] synthesized in part in *Khlebnikov’s* books. . . . In turn, *Khlebnikov’s* sources are various reports and depositions.

Khlebnikov

. . . *Khlebnikov* describes *Baranov’s* arrival in Sitka, and Tlingit activity, and ships of other nations. As early as 1796 we meet Captain Henry Barber. *Khlebnikov* and his sources are outstanding for the use of Tlingit personal and place names, in contrast with most Anglo-American documents, which make little or no effort to do so. . . .

A shellfish poisoning of 1799 is described. One hundred men died, and the Tlingits, fearing they would be blamed for witchcraft, fled into

the woods. Khlebnikov describes general animosity between the Tlingit and the Aleuts, noting that the Aleuts had killed several Tlingit men the year before and the Tlingits wanted revenge.

The Khlebnikov account then turns to great detail on the construction of the Old Sitka settlement, and who the defenders were, by name. The date of the attack is Sunday afternoon, June 18 or 19, 1802. Dedicated to Baroness Wrangell [the wife of the Chief Manager Khlebnikov served under], the history is a classic of its genre – the account of the destruction of a European settlement by hostile Natives. With great dramatic intensity he describes the heart-rending screams, the attackers chopping through the door in the face of cannon fire. He describes in vivid detail the wounds and fatalities, the torture and death of the defenders, the plight of the women being carried off to the Tlingit boats. He writes, “Only the infants at the breast, those innocent beings taken from the arms of their mothers, remained without the precognition of their imminent destruction. Infants have their own peculiarities; they cry at the mother’s breast and smile at the dagger that glistens.”

We were delighted to learn in the course of our research that not all of the babies were killed. In an interview with Joseph Demmert, a delightful 92-year-old gentleman living at the Sitka Pioneer Home, . . . we were told a family history [about the survival of two Russian babies who were raised as Tlingits and whose descendants are alive today]. . . .

Khlebnikov continues with a description of the burning of the building and tossing the furs out of the upper stories – details also featured in Alex Andrews. He also describes how “Shk’awulyeil, that false friend of Baranov, whom the Russians called Mikhail, stood on a hill across from the house of the manager and was in charge of the battle.” He places K’alyáan second among the attackers, and Alex Andrews places him third. Khlebnikov then turns to the

adventures of the Russian and Aleut survivors, based in turn upon their depositions, which also supplied him with details of the battle itself.

Survivors

. . . One of the most interesting survivor adventures related by Khlebnikov is of Baturin, who had been sent out to hunt sea lions at the time of the attack. Upon his return, he is chased. He eventually ends up at a cliff, where his companions are tortured to death by the Tlingits. Baturin is ultimately rescued. While it is uncertain at this stage of our research, it is possible that Baturin is the same person as Gidáḱ. . . . A major problem with the Baturin theory . . . is that in the Tlingit accounts, Gidáḱ is killed, whereas Baturin is rescued by Barber. . . .

The British

The British account is by Captain Henry Barber. . . . Barber tells how he sailed in – quite by coincidence – on the smoldering ruins of the Russian settlement, captured the ringleaders, confiscated the captured furs, rescued the prisoners of war, and delivered them safely to Kodiak. The elusive Captain Barber is, by his own account, the humanitarian savior of the Sitka survivors, especially of the women, “who were reserved only to gratify the brutal desires, and glut the fancy of their conquerors.” Barber describes how he captured the Tlingit leaders who came on board his ship, and held them hostage in exchange for the prisoners and furs taken by the Tlingit.

All of this is also documented in the Plotnikov deposition and in Khlebnikov’s accounts. Typical of the Anglo-American tradition, Barber mentions no names, but only how he seized “three of the chiefs” and threatened to hand them. The Russian tradition identifies

Shk'awulyeil and his nephew K'alyáan, who come to the Russian ship, and are put in irons. A noose is put around the neck of one, and he is threatened with death unless the prisoners and furs are returned. By this time, Plotnikov had been rescued and was on board to witness all of this.

Barber succeeded in regaining the prisoners and furs from the Tlingits, and sailed to Kodiak, where [he generously delivered all to Baranov]. . . According to Khlebnikov, Barber was an entrepreneur who ransomed the captives to Baranov for 10,000 rubles' worth of furs, and then sold the furs to the Chinese. The evidence strongly suggests that Barber was a pirate or double agent of the first magnitude, dealing with and double crossing both the Tlingits and the Russians. Why, for example, would the Tlingit leaders, having just burned the Russian settlement to the ground and taken all the furs and captives, willingly board a European ship, unless they knew the captain and had no reason to fear reprisal? Barber was probably in on the plan of attack. Barber almost certainly sold guns to the Tlingits as well as survivors to the Russians.

Khlebnikov and His Sources

. . . The most significant feature of the reports and their synthesis by Khlebnikov is that the Tlingit war effort was a well planned, well supplied, coordinated attack on several fronts from Kake to Yakutat. . . . He describes a general conspiracy from the Queen Charlotte Islands north to Chilkat and Yakutat, with Xutsnoowu [present-day Angoon] as the center of operations and storage depot. "Foreigners" were happy to supply arms and ammunition to the Tlingit to wipe out the Russians and Aleuts. . . .

Lisianskii

The log dealing with Lisianskii's involvement in the recapture of Sitka in 1804 offers fascinating reading. Lisianskii was an eyewitness, in command of the operation.

He sailed from Kodiak to Sitka, arriving August 20, 1804 We will focus on those parts of the log that have correspondence in the Tlingit sources.

September 28, 1804. Ships are towed into position by the present townsite of Sitka. . . Baranov lands and raises his flag on Castle Hill, the now abandoned Tlingit village site of Noow Tlein, fortifies it, and renames it New Archangel Fortress.

September 29, 1804. Lisianskii sights a Tlingit canoe and orders one of his longboats to attack and engage in combat. They exchange fire, the Tlingit canoe explodes. Lisianskii writes, "one cannon ball hit the powder in the enemy boat." His log parallels the Tlingit tradition that K'alyáan had been on board, but had been put ashore. He writes, "On this boat was also the chief Sitka toyon Katlian. But when he saw our vessels, he went ashore in good time and entered his fortress by way of the woods. If he had fallen into our hands, this war would have ended with peace, without any bloodshed. The longboat brought six prisoners, of whom four were heavily wounded. It is amazing that they could defend themselves for such a long time and at the same time paddling. Some of the prisoners had up to five wounds on their thighs from the bullets."

Detailed description of the ongoing negotiations follows. Lisianskii thinks the Tlingits are stalling for time. White flags are flown on certain days.

October 1. Boats are towed into position by the Indian River Fort. Lt. Arbuzov, Baranov, and Povalishin land with troops and artillery. There

is unceasing fire from the fort. . . The Russians decide on a night attack. The battle is described in detail, including the Tlingit sortie and the Russian retreat. Baranov and all the Russian sailors are wounded. . . Baranov turns command of the battle over to Lisianskii, who shells the fort. . .

October 2- 5. More negotiations, more white flags. Lisianskii becomes aggravated because the Tlingits come out at night and gather cannon balls. He claims the Tlingits are stalling, awaiting reinforcements from Angoon.

October 7. Tlingits abandon the fort.

October 8. Lisianskii goes ashore. He describes the fort in great detail, including the sight that greeted them: “Believing that by the voice of infants and the dogs we could pursue them in the forest, the Sitkans [Tlingits] put them all to death.”

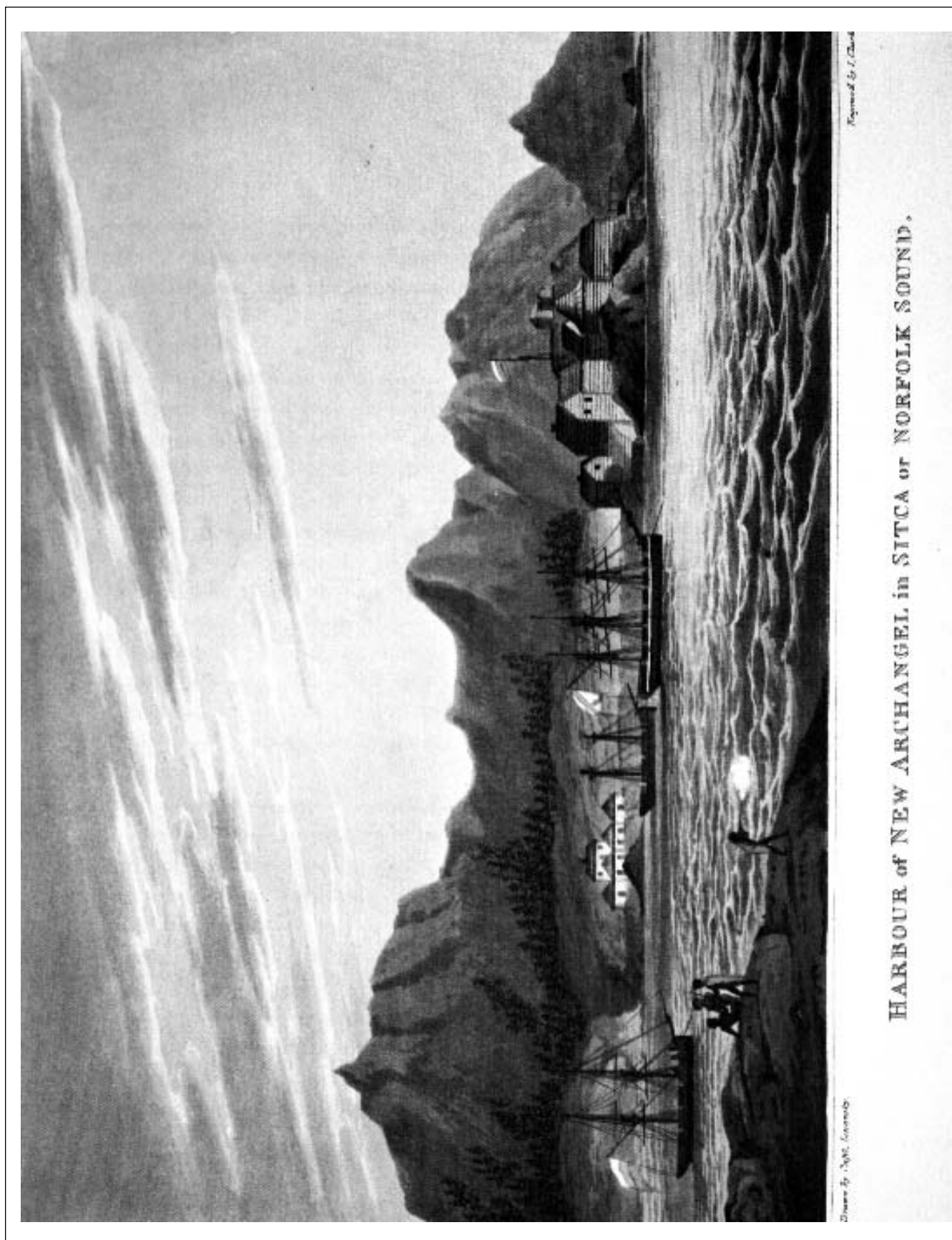
October 23: Xootsnoowu people arrive in Sitka. . . .

In July of 1805, The Tlingits finally meet the Russians. . . . K’alyáan arrives at New Archangel and is received by Baranov in a kindly fashion. Discussion follows. . . .

Conclusion

As we examine Tlingit, Russian, and British documents, stereotypes on both sides begin to dissolve. For example, the Battle of 1802 is easily stereotyped as a classic Indian massacre of helpless white settlers by a few disgruntled Sitka Tlingits. Tlingit evidence suggests that the causes were much more complex, and both Tlingit and Russian sources show that the Tlingit attack of 1802 was part of a major military effort, a well planned, well coordinated and well armed simultaneous attack on Russian positions from Yakutat to Kake, and including foreign arms trading. Likewise, the retaking of Sitka in 1804, often stereotyped as the Russians and their Aleut slaves taking revenge, is shown to be a major confederation of the Russians and their allies, well organized and concentrated.

In the Battles of Sitka, more was at stake than the Sitka real estate alone. Like Gettysburg or Stalingrad, Sitka was a turning point in American history. Like the Battle of Midway, it was fought for control of the North Pacific. The Native and Imperial forces jockeying for control of the Pacific Northwest fur trade met in Sitka, where the issues came to a head. Would the Tlingit people harvest their own natural resources and trade as free agents with whomever they wished, or would the resources of Southeast Alaska belong to and be harvested by the trading companies of the British or Russian empires? . . .



Watercolor of Sitka, 1804 - 1805, Lisianskii