

TRANSPLANTED TO A NORTHERN CLIME: CALIFORNIAN WIVES AND CHILDREN IN RUSSIAN ALASKA

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ABSTRACT

For nearly thirty years (1812–1841) the Russian-American Company maintained an outpost, Ross, in northern California. During that time, a number of the company's Alaska Native, Creole, and Russian personnel formed unions with California Native women and fathered children by them. With no priest in residence and priestly visits rare, most of the unions were sanctified by marriage only retroactively, if at all. This paper traces the evolution of Russian-American Company policy toward such unions and the children born of them, as well as the fate of some of the families who braved the trip north and made Russian Alaska their home.

Ross¹ (Fig. 1), the Russian colonial outpost in northern California (Fig. 2), has long interested archaeologists, historians, and ethnographers alike (Hussey 1979). Multidisciplinary research, particularly the Fort Ross Archaeological Project (Lightfoot et al. 1991; Lightfoot et al. 1997) and recently published compendia of archival documents (Gibson et al. 2014a, 2014b; Istomin et al. 2005, 2012) have greatly enhanced our understanding of the development and daily life of the multiethnic community that grew up in Ross's vicinity and cultural interactions between that community and surrounding California Native populations. Less well studied is the place of Ross within the fabric of Russian colonial society as a whole.

Ross was not only geographically separated from Russia's other North American colonies, but stood somewhat apart both economically and socially. Although the work performed there figured into the broader colonial economy, during the final two-thirds of Ross's existence its workforce was more heavily involved in agriculture than in the fur trade per se (Gibson 1976:112–139). And though Ross's Russian,² Creole,³ and Alaska Native residents were there only at the will of the Russian-American

Company, subject to recall at any time, many were retained (and some detained) for years on end. Far from friends and family in Alaska, they formed ties of friendship and kinship among themselves and with the local California Natives. When they did eventually return to Alaska, some of those ties persisted, coloring individuals' and families' social relations long after California was left behind. This paper focuses on one subset of such ties: liaisons of Ross's Russian, Creole, and Alaska Native men with California Native women and the children born of those unions.

Throughout the three decades (1812–1841) during which the Russian-American Company maintained a presence at Ross, it faced a continual social problem: how to deal with the families fathered by its male employees outside the bonds of church-sanctified marriage. Cases in which the unwed mothers were Russian, Creole, or Alaska Native were handled according to the norms of colonial society in Alaska, to which society the women and their children inevitably returned if they survived their time in California. More difficult to resolve was the question of the company's relationship to and responsibilities toward the children of common-law wives drawn from the local Native population—the Kashaya Pomo, the Coast Miwok,



Figure 1. View of Ross, 1828, by Auguste Dubaut-Cilly (1835:frontis). Courtesy Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, Rare Books Collection, A0925, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

and the Southern Pomo. As long as such families remained in California, they fell neither fully under nor fully outside the Alaska colonial norms and rules governing marriage, legitimacy of birth, and the company's relationship to the children of its employees. Below I discuss some of the policies the company implemented to ease the return of such families to Alaska and their incorporation into colonial society there. Following the section on policies, I cite specific examples of families and individuals who made the transition with varying degrees of success.

RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY POLICIES

While I have not located any information regarding the Russian-American Company's official policies toward children born of liaisons between its employees and California Indian⁴ women in the first years of Ross's existence, a single case reported in the Spanish mission records suggests that they were quite lenient. According to Robert H.

Jackson (1983:240), the San Rafael Arcangel (sic) Mission baptismal register reports that a certain

Talia Unuttaca, a native of Geluatamal [Bodega] *ranchería*, married a 'Codiaca' [Kodiak Aleut] named Andres Aulancoc during the administration of 'Alexandro Koscoa' [Ivan Aleksandrovich Kuskov, 1812–1820]. Aulancoc took his wife to 'Sitica' [Sitka], where a Russian Orthodox priest named Malanoc⁵ baptized the woman. Aulancoc died about 1819, and Talia returned to Bodega. The couple had one daughter, Maria, born about 1815 at the 'Presidio de Ros' [text in brackets inserted by Jackson].

After the widowed Talia's return to California, she entered a relationship with a Coast Miwok man and bore him a daughter. Both father and daughter were baptized at San Rafael Mission, but the Catholic missionaries found no reason to redo the Orthodox baptisms of Talia and her elder daughter (Jackson 1983:240). If we accept this account at face value it tells us that, sometime between

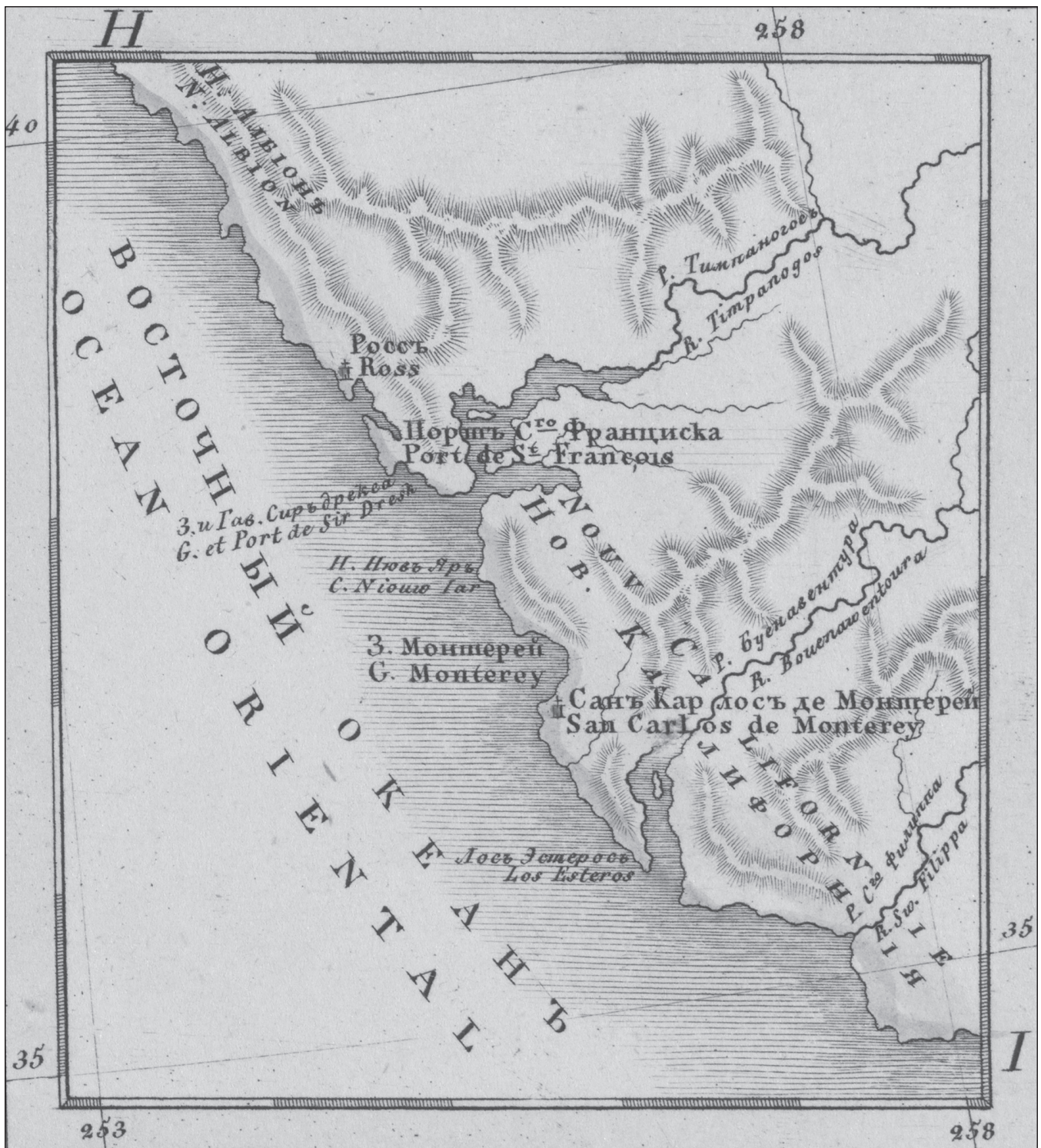


Figure 2. Location of Ross on the coast of California. Inset detail from a map by Vasilii P. Piadyshev (1826). Courtesy Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, Rare Maps Collection, M0544, University of Alaska Fairbanks.

1815 and 1819, the Russian-American Company not only allowed a Sugpiaq⁶ man to bring his common-law wife and illegitimate daughter to Alaska with him, but transported the widow and her daughter back to California on the husband's death.⁷

The earliest Russian data suggesting an informal policy come from Ivan Kuskov's census of Ross recorded in 1820, with annotations dating to 1821 (Gibson et al. 2014a:420–441; Istomin et al. 2005:412–427). While many children born of California Native common-law wives are listed therein, I focus here upon Kuskov's notes concerning the six families whose fathers died or left for Alaska. The fathers of five of the families were "Aleuts"⁸ (Sugpiat) from various villages in the Kodiak Archipelago. In one case, the father died, his son was adopted by another Ross Sugpiaq originating from the same village, and the child's mother returned to her homeland.⁹ In two cases, a father's sons and their mother accompanied him to Alaska.¹⁰ In one case, father and son returned to Alaska, but the child's mother remained with her relatives; in another case, father and son returned to Alaska, while mother and daughter returned to the mother's native place.¹¹ The sixth case noted by Kuskov involved the family of a Russian. Upon the Russian's death, both the woman living with him and the couple's daughter returned to the woman's native place.¹²

This extremely small sample suggests that, when such families faced dissolution due to the death or departure of the father, the sons remained with their fathers' people and the daughters returned to their mothers' people. Until further genealogical information comes to light for the remaining families in the census, this pattern remains only a hypothesis. Any pattern with regard to the mothers of the six families is less clear. Two returned to their people along with their daughters; two, who had only sons, returned to their people without their children; and two accompanied their husbands and sons to Alaska. Attempts to trace the fates of the Alaska returnees have so far met with little success, for the Alaskan Russian Church records, the best source of this type of information, are sparse for the 1820s and early 1830s.

Judging from the Kuskov census, it was customary for childless unmarried couples to split up upon the man's departure for Alaska. In six of the seven cases noted in the 1820 census, the Californian woman returned to her

native place, and in one case she remained working on the Farallon Islands, in the latitude of San Francisco Bay, where the Russians maintained a fur seal and sea lion hunting station (Gibson et al. 2014a:421, 429, 431, 433, 436, 440; Istomin et al. 2005:413, 419–422, 424, 427).

We have a hint that attitudes toward "Indian" common-law wives were changing by the end of the decade. Early in 1829 the Yakut Petr Popov petitioned permission from colonial chief manager Petr E. Chistiakov to marry Katerina Stepanova, an Indian woman native to California shores (Rossiisko-amerikanskaia kompaniia [RAK] 1942a: v. 6/n. 1:234, 7 Jan 1829). The fact that he petitioned the chief manager was not out of the ordinary—all employees who were in the colonies on Russian passports needed to notify colonial authorities of their desire to marry so that the petitioner's marriage eligibility could be verified against his passport. What was unusual was Popov's choice of marriage partner (no earlier petitions had specified a California Native) and the length of time between the date of the petition and the date of the marriage.

We do not know exactly when Popov brought his fiancée to Alaska from California, but Katerina (Ekaterina) was chrismated¹³ in Sitka on 12 January 1831 along with Popov's children: son Pavel (age one year), daughter Matriona (age fifteen), and daughter Irina (age seven) (Russkaia pravoslavnaia tserkov' [ROC] 1962b: reel 21, 1830–31:4 verso, chris. 2 through 5).¹⁴ The couple married there two days later (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1830–31:7, marr. 8).¹⁵ Sadly, Katerina died in Sitka of chest pain and inflammation of the throat in September 1835 (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1835:9 verso–10, female 7). Of the children, Matriona married Yakut Dmitrii Mikhailov just four days after her parents' marriage and, as the wife of someone holding a Russian passport, presumably left for Russia with him in 1836 (RAK 1942a: v. 13/n. 70 and 287:43 verso and 181, 1 April and 4 May 1836; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1830–31:7, marr. 9).¹⁶ Irina married Creole Nikolai Kotel'nikov, a Ross veteran, in 1842 and bore him two children before dying of tuberculosis in 1848 (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:26 verso–27, marr. 29, 1962c: reel 8, 1848:44 verso–45, female 23). I have located no information concerning the fate of Pavel Popov.

Petr Popov was apparently not the only company employee who wished to return to Alaska with a California

Indian woman and his children by her. In November 1831, the Ross office wrote to colonial chief manager Ferdinand P. Wrangell specifically requesting authorization to allow departing employees to take with them their common-law Indian wives and the children born of them. In January 1832, Wrangell responded that the office could let such employees (*sluzhiteli*) bring their families to Sitka, but cautioned that they would not be allowed to take them out of the colonies (RAK 1942a: v. 9/n. 6:3 verso, 23 Jan 1832).¹⁷

I have found no evidence that any of the Ross employees took immediate advantage of this permission. Indeed, they had only to wait until the autumn of that year for an alternative that would allow them to take their wives all the way back to Russia if they so chose. In mid-September 1832, Sitka priest Aleksei P. Sokolov sailed for Ross to perform church rites and otherwise minister to the population of a post that not only lacked a resident Orthodox clergyman but had never been visited by one. In his brief time there, Sokolov sanctified a dozen marriages, five of them between company employees and California Indian women. In the latter group, at least three of those unions had already produced children (RAK 1942a: v. 9/n. 352:268 verso, 11 Sep 1832; Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of America, Diocese of Alaska [ROGC] 1984b, translated in Gibson et al. 2014b:215–224).¹⁸

Of the five men who legitimized their marriages to California Indian women during Sokolov's visit, four (three Russians and a Yakut) had every expectation of someday returning to Russia, and the fifth, a Creole, had at least a theoretical right to leave the colonies. Their marriages removed any uncertainty about their right to take their families with them. Interestingly, none of the Ross "Aleuts" took advantage of Sokolov's visit to have their unions with Indian women solemnized, even though at least fifteen of them brought their children born of Indian mothers to the priest for baptism and/or chrismation (ROGC 1984b, translated in Gibson et al. 2014b:215–224).

No Orthodox clergyman visited Ross again until priest Ioann Veniaminov traveled to California from Sitka in the summer of 1836. While there, Veniaminov solemnized sixteen marriages, five of them involving California Indian women. In the latter group, at least four of the unions had already produced children. This time, only three of the men marrying Indian women (two Russians and a

Finlander) had expectations of returning to Russia. The other two men were Ross "Aleuts" (RAK 1942a: v. 13/n. 376:254–254 verso, 15 June 1836; ROGC 1984c: 1837, reel 264:229–235, translated in Gibson et al. 2014b:375–384; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–37:5 verso–12 verso). One other marriage from Veniaminov's visit bears mentioning here: baptized California Indian Ivan Pavlov wed the young "Aleut" woman Elena, daughter of Ivan Tuchik, a Sugpiaq from Aiaktalik in the Kodiak Archipelago, and the Slavianka (Russian) River Indian woman Tsullua (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–37:12 verso, marr. 16).¹⁹

The last visit to Ross by an Orthodox priest took place in July and August of 1841, when all but "a few tens" of company personnel were being removed to Alaska prior to the Russians' complete withdrawal from the post and its environs. Sitka priest Andrei Sizykh performed only two marriages on this trip, both of them joining Russian men to Creole women (RAK 1942a: v. 20/n. 310, 321, 376, and 423:318 verso–319, 337 verso–341 verso, 508–509 verso, and 362 verso, 30 May, 4 June, 19 July, and 18 Sep 1841; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1841:13 verso–14). In these final days of the Ross settlement, however, a number of men apparently took advantage of the company's old policy of allowing them to bring their common-law California Indian wives to Sitka. At the end of January 1842, just over three weeks after the return of the vessel bearing the last personnel from Ross, colonial chief manager Adol'f K. Etolin (Arvid A. Etholén) received petitions from two Ross "Aleuts" seeking permission to marry California Indian women; both unions had already produced children (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 18 and 240:18 and 165 verso, 29 Jan and 9 May 1842; ROGC 1984c: 1837 and 1838, reel 264:229–235, 257–262). In the first half of June, Etolin received similar petitions from two Russians and another Ross "Aleut," but those couples were still childless (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 422–424:326 verso–327, 6, 11, and 12 June 1842).

Marriage, either sanctified or common-law, was the primary means through which California Indians and/or their children made their way to Alaska up to 1840.²⁰ In the final year of Ross's existence, however, the company's colonial administrators began to think more broadly about the people who would be left behind upon the company's withdrawal from the region. Formulation of policy fell to Etolin, who had taken over as colonial chief manager on

1 June 1840 (RAK 1942a: v. 18/n. 335 and 385:314 verso and 361, 25 May and 1 June 1840).

In a letter dated 6 July 1840 (RAK 1942a: v. 19/n. 66:74–76 verso), Etolin notified Aleksandr G. Rotchev, manager of the office at Ross, that the company's board of directors had decided to close down operations there. Rotchev was to commence preliminary steps, such as compiling a property inventory, but was to keep Ross's intended abandonment a secret from all but the man in charge of planning the next season's sowing. Among Rotchev's responses was a letter in which he expressed concern for California Indians who had grown accustomed to the Russians and, through their long residence at Ross, had become as if they were Creoles (*sodelavshikhsia kak by Kreolami*). Rotchev thought that such people might wish to go with the Russians when they left Ross. Finding the concern valid, Etolin authorized Rotchev to accept deserving Indians into company service and, on abandonment of Ross, to transport them to Sitka along with the rest of the employees if they so wished. If they later wanted to return to their homeland, the company would send them back when opportunity offered (RAK 1942a: v. 19/n. 222:287 verso–288, 28 Oct 1840).

It is not clear whether this policy pertained to California Indian men and women alike, or solely to men, nor is it clear whether those with families were allowed to bring their dependents with them. So far, I have been able to identify at least three men who appear to have come to Alaska under its provisions, two of them unmarried. I discuss them in greater detail below. The records also mention two unnamed Native Californian women who, at their own request, were authorized to leave Sitka for California aboard a company vessel in 1844 (RAK 1942a: v. 23/n. 605:443 verso, 13 Sep 1844). The date of their arrival in Alaska, and whether they had come as employees or in some other capacity, are unknown.

In this context it is also appropriate to mention the peculiar case of California Indian Ivan Pavlov, a company employee who chose to remain in California rather than travel to Alaska when Ross closed. At the request of John Sutter, the man who purchased the company's Ross assets, Pavlov remained with him on departure of the last contingent of company employees to leave the post. When a company vessel stopped to pick up Pavlov in the autumn of 1842, its commander learned that he had disappeared

and was rumored to be with Vallejo, the commandant-general of California. In a letter reporting the incident to the company's main office in St. Petersburg, Etolin referred to Pavlov as a fugitive or runaway and assured the office that measures would be taken to effect his return. The commander of the vessel dispatched to California in September of 1843 did indeed have orders to try to get Pavlov back, but only if it would not detain the vessel too long (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 485:355 verso–356, 16 Aug 1842, v. 22/n. 304 and 543:295 and 527, 10 May and 27 Sep 1843). There is no evidence that the effort was successful, and the matter appears to have been dropped.

What makes this case so unusual is that there is nothing in Etolin's statement of the hiring policy to suggest that Indian employees were *required* to come to Alaska upon abandonment of Ross. Quite the contrary, the colonial chief manager wrote that their travel to Alaska was to be "in accordance with their desire and consent" (*po zhelaniiu i soglasiuu ikh*) (RAK 1942a: v. 19/n. 222:288, 28 Oct 1840). Several possible explanations for Pavlov's treatment come to mind—some special clause in his employment agreement, some debt to the company, perhaps even the fact that he was married to the daughter of a Sugpiaq man (see above). The most plausible explanation, however, is that company officials seem to have been undecided concerning the colonial social category to which Pavlov belonged. Two of the three letters mentioning his case referred to him as Creole, that is, a member of a particular social estate in the colonies, whereas only one referred to him as a baptized Indian, a person who, under the stated conditions of Etolin's hiring policy, could choose between participation in colonial society and a return to his homeland. Still, this cannot have been the whole reason behind the company's eagerness for Pavlov's return, for it is the very letter that referred to him as an Indian that also called him a runaway. The question remains unresolved.

One other segment of the Ross population drew Etolin's attention as he made final arrangements for the post's abandonment: orphaned girls of illegitimate birth. In a letter to the company's main office in St. Petersburg dated 13 May 1841 (RAK 1942a: v. 20/n. 257:272–272 verso), he requested an enrollment increase, and by implication a budget increase, for the girls' school in Sitka because, "with the abolishment of Ross settlement, it will be unavoidably necessary to accept into [the school] a significant number

of illegitimately born orphan girls left without fathers and mothers.” The main office approved the request without argument (RAK 1942b: v. 14/n. 460:255, 3 April 1842).

Unfortunately, we have only this hint that Etolin was considering a policy with regard to the transport of such girls from Ross and their care upon reaching Alaska. Based on the company’s records alone, we do not know what final form it took, nor even whether it was implemented. That the plight of these girls was given any consideration at all, however, raises some interesting questions: who were the girls’ parents, who had been taking care of them at Ross, and why could those arrangements not continue in Alaska?

With regard to the girls’ parentage, we can make an educated guess. Under the company’s then-prevailing policies concerning orphans, their fathers were most likely company employees who were either in the colonies on passports (Russians, Yakuts, Finlanders, etc.) or classed as Creoles. It is less likely that their fathers were “Aleuts” or other Alaska Native workers, for their children tended to be sent back to their extended families, or at least to their parents’ home villages, rather than to a company boarding school or orphanage. In either case, the origins of a girl’s mother (Russian, Creole, or Alaska Native) were of little consequence if the mother had died, but we do not know whether daughters of California Indian mothers continued to be treated differently, as they had been earlier in Ross’s history.

Concerning the girls’ care at Ross, both the company correspondence and church records show that it was quite common for children of either sex to be taken in by foster parents. As to why such an arrangement could not continue once a family returned to Alaska, it may have had something to do with the company’s prohibition against removing illegitimate children from the colonies when their father, or even their foster father, left for Russia. Exceptions were sometimes allowed, but the company did not take such matters lightly.

CALIFORNIAN FAMILIES IN ALASKA

I turn now to specific examples of California Indian women and/or their children who came to Alaska from Ross. Regrettably, most of the cases described below concern the families of men with Russian or other European sur-

names, while the families of men with Sugpiaq or other Alaska Native names are under-represented in proportion to their actual numbers. This is due entirely to differences in the ease with which such families can be traced in the records at hand.

In both the Russian-American Company correspondence and the Alaskan Russian Church records, a man’s European surname remains stable through time, with perhaps some minor variations in spelling, and his surname is shared by his wife, his children, and all his descendants in the male line. Alaska Native names are quite another matter. In both company and church records we find a Native name plus a Christian name, or sometimes a Native name alone (usually an indication that the person had not been baptized). In most cases, the Native name does not function as a surname, that is, it is not shared by a man’s wife and children.²¹ Instead, each member of a man’s family has his or her own Native name plus Christian name. This, combined with variations in phonetic spelling and the usual problems of legibility in handwritten documents, greatly increases the difficulty of tracing Alaska Native family relationships through time. It should eventually prove possible to trace more of the Alaska Native families who arrived from Ross, but to do so will require much additional research.²²

The experiences of the families described below fall into four general categories: Russian fathers who eventually returned to Russia with their California Indian wives and children; Russian fathers who returned to Russia, leaving their children in Sitka; Russian and Creole fathers who retired in the colonies with their families; and Native (Sugpiaq and California Indian) workers who remained in the company’s employ.

At least three Russian men returned to their homeland accompanied by their Californian families. Tobol’sk peasants Fedor Mandarov and Marko Marenin both married California Indian women at Ross in 1832. Both men left Sitka for Okhotsk aboard the company vessel *Sitkha* in the spring of 1835, Mandarov with his wife Ekaterina and son Ivan, Marenin with his wife Agrafena (Agripina), sons Maksim and Luka, and daughter Natal’ia (RAK 1942a: v. 12/n. 219:227–229, 30 April 1835; ROGC 1984b:268–269). Tver peasant Vasilii Petrov married the California Indian woman Praskov’ia in Sitka in 1842 and remained in the colonies until 1849, when the couple

sailed for Kronstadt aboard the *Sitkha* (RAK 1942a: v. 30/n. 424:258–258 verso, 10 Oct 1849; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:23 verso–24, marr. 19). It should be noted that company records rarely list all the passengers aboard departing vessels after the 1830s. Consequently, further research among the church records may reveal additional families who fall into this category.

At least one Russian father returned to Russia without his children born of an unnamed California Indian woman (or women—we do not know whether all the children had the same mother). Tobol'sk peasant Nikita Eremin was originally scheduled to leave for Russia on expiration of his company contract in the spring of 1841 but was apparently detained in the colonies due to unpaid debts. By early 1844, he was disabled, and colonial chief manager Etolin added him to the list of men who were to leave for Russia under a company directive aimed at ridding the colonies of employees who were no longer fit for service. The company was willing to forgive their debts and transport them all back to Russia at its own expense, but no one was allowed to bring a common-law wife or illegitimate children with him (RAK 1942a: v. 20/n. 194:206, 3 May 1841, v. 23/n. 51 and 258:39–39 verso and 192–192 verso, 11 March and 8 May 1844). This likely left Eremin with little choice—the births of his children had been recorded as illegitimate (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–37:2 verso and 8, male 5 and female 16);²³ a search has turned up no record indicating that he subsequently married their mother(s);²⁴ and the children, who were still minors, were in no position to support him as a pensioner in the colonies. When he sailed for Russia in the spring of 1844, he left son Leontii and daughters Ekaterina and Mariia in Sitka as wards of the company.

Leontii Eremin died in Sitka in 1847 at the age of fifteen, but both of his sisters married. Ekaterina wed Gavriilo Lipatov, a member of the Corps of Naval Artillery, in 1848, and Mariia wed Arkhangel'sk peasant Kirilo Plotnitsyn in 1849 (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1847:42 verso–43, male 10, 1848:43 verso–44, marr. 8, 1849:51 verso–52, marr. 9). As wives of Russians, they would have had every right to accompany their husbands to Russia someday had not events dictated otherwise. On a voyage to California in the autumn of 1849, Plotnitsyn jumped ship to join the gold rush and was never heard from again.

Abandoned by her husband, Mariia spent a decade in an ambiguous marital status, during which time she bore two children whose father(s) remained nameless. She was finally granted an annulment in 1860; her subsequent fate remains a topic for further research (RAK 1942a: v. 36/n. 147:97 verso–98, 14 June 1855; ROGC 1984f; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1852:13 verso–14, male 15, 1856:6 verso–7, female 9). Ekaterina fared even worse. Late in the summer of 1855 she and her young foster son (her nephew Ioann, Mariia's firstborn) were passengers in a canoe that was attacked by a party of Stikine Tlingit. The Stikines, engaged in a long-running feud with the Sitka Tlingit, targeted the canoe's Sitka Tlingit paddlers, but Ekaterina and one of the other passengers were also killed. Initially, it was thought that little Ioann, too, had died, but there were soon persistent rumors that he had been saved and taken away to be raised by the Stikines. Russian attempts to find and repatriate the boy were unsuccessful (RAK 1942a: v. 36/n. 201 and 215:127–127 verso and 136 verso–137, 13/25 and 30 Sep 1855, v. 42/n. 289 and 438:81 and 164–164 verso, 13 May and 19 Sep 1860).²⁵

At least four Russian and Creole fathers retired, or attempted to retire, in the colonies with their Californian families. Of these, the most extensively documented is the family of Kodiak Creole Filipp Kotel'nikov. Filipp already had two sons and two or three daughters by the California Indian woman Varvara Amochemen (Amachamin, Amichamin) when he married her at Ross in 1832 (Gibson et al. 2014a:423, 467; Istomin et al. 2005:414, 431; ROGC 1984b:265, 269).²⁶ Judging from the dates of their appearance in the Sitka church records, the family arrived in Alaska aboard the last vessels carrying personnel from Ross: married son Stefan (Stepan), with his own wife and child, late in 1841, and Filipp, with his wife, minor daughter Marfa, and unmarried son Nikolai, at the beginning of 1842. Filipp returned to the Kodiak region with his wife and daughter in August 1842 and retired on a company pension in the spring of 1843.²⁷ Though both sons were initially in company employ, they and their growing families soon joined their parents to settle in the Creole village Seleznevo (Malyi Afognak, Little Afognak) on Duck Bay, Afognak Island. Filipp and his wife died there in the early 1860s, but many descendants still live in the Kodiak region (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 474:443, 1 Aug 1842, v. 22/n. 126:82 verso, 16 April

1843; ROGC 1984d: 1844–1863, reel 175 and 176:614–805 and 12–634; ROC 1962c: reel 9, 1861:32 verso–33, female 7, 1862:28 verso–29, male 11; Vlasoff 2007).

One of the Russian men with a Californian family was to be pensioned to Ninilchik, the retirement settlement the company was trying to develop on Alaska's Cook Inlet (Arndt 1996), but died before that could be accomplished. Gzhatsk burgher (*meshchanin*) Fedor Chernyshev fathered four children at Ross: son Aleksei and daughter Evdokiia (Avdot'ia), whose mother(s) remained unnamed, and daughters Nataliia and Ul'ianiia, whose mother was the California Indian woman Mariia Roza. Chernyshev married Mariia Roza at Ross in 1836, at which time she converted from Catholicism, and subsequent confessional lists identify all four children as "their" children (ROGC 1984b:265, 1984c: 1837 and 1838, reel 264:229–235, 257–262; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–37:6, 8 verso, and 11, females 1 and 2, female 19, and marr. 1). Mariia Roza apparently died in California, for her husband remarried there in 1841.²⁸ He returned to Alaska with his children and their Creole stepmother later that year. Early in 1842, the company dispatched Chernyshev and his family to Kodiak with the intention that they should settle on Cook Inlet, but within months Chernyshev's serious illness brought them back to Sitka. There Chernyshev died before the end of the year (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 38, 464, and 580:34, 436, and 413 verso, 11 Feb, 11 July, and 30 Dec 1842). Of his children, son Aleksei became a ward of the company and may have trained as a physician's apprentice, while daughter Avdot'ia married Creole Maksim Maliutin, and daughter Ul'ianiia married quartermaster Zakhar Patov of the Tenth Fleet Detachment (RAK 1942a: v. 25/n. 8:245–246, 1 Aug 1845, v. 27/n. 683:95 verso, 8 Oct 1846, v. 35/n. 268:130, 14 Oct 1854; ROGC 1984c: 1843, reel 264:434).²⁹

Two other Russian men with Californian families applied for colonial citizenship in order to retire in the colonies. Vitebsk peasant Miron Timofeev had married the California Indian Nadezhda in Sitka on his return from Ross in 1842. He was granted colonial citizenship in 1848 and he and his wife settled in Sitka, where they lived out their days (RAK 1942a: v. 29/n. 138:152 verso, 22 April 1848; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:24 verso–25, marr. 22). Less happy was the outcome for Tobol'sk peasant Trifon Akat'ev, who returned from Ross with his common-law

Indian wife Afanas'ia and infant son Zakhar in 1841. The next year the family was transferred to Kodiak, where Akat'ev worked as a carpenter, and in 1843 retired to Spruce Island in the Kodiak Archipelago, where son Mikhail was born. Akat'ev applied for colonial citizenship, but when the paperwork was being processed it was discovered that he still had a wife living in Russia. He was shipped out of the colonies to Russia in 1845, leaving his Alaska family behind on Spruce Island. There Afanas'ia died of head pain in 1850, and Zakhar succumbed to bloody flux (dysentery?) in 1851. The fate of the orphaned Mikhail remains a topic for further research (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 431:338 verso, 19 June 1842, v. 22/n. 115:76–76 verso, 16 April 1843, v. 24/n. 222:285–285 verso, 7 May 1845; ROGC 1984d: 1844, 1845, reel 175:610, 655, 1984e; ROC 1962c: reel 8, 1844:12 verso–13, male 6, 1850:40 verso–41, female 8, 1851:34 verso–35, male 1).

Of the Native (Sugpiaq and California Indian) workers who remained in the company's employ after leaving Ross, at least two men of Sugpiaq descent resided with their families in Sitka. Aleksei Nariadov from Karluk had worked as an agricultural apprentice at Ross under the supervision of Egor Chernykh. Upon his return to Alaska at the beginning of 1842, the company hired him to work in its Sitka gardens on Chernykh's recommendation. He later worked in the Sitka furrier's shop preparing furs for shipment, but whether that was in addition to, or instead of, his gardening employment is unclear (RAK 1942a: v. 16/n. 13:347 verso, 10 Aug 1838, v. 21/n. 87:61 verso, 24 Feb 1842, v. 27/n. 161:260 verso, 6 May 1847). In June 1842 Nariadov married the young California Indian woman Olimpiada (Evlampiia), who had converted from Catholicism several months earlier. Over the next several years, the couple had two sons, both of whom died in infancy. Olimpiada died of tuberculosis in 1852. Aleksei remarried in 1854, but succumbed to tuberculosis himself that same year (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:11 verso–12 and 27 verso–28, female 4 and marr. 33, 1844:3 verso–4 and 22 verso–23, male 5 and male 8, 1846:1 verso–2, male 2, 1849:63 verso–64, male 16, 1852:78 verso–79, female 11, 1854:24 verso–25 and 42 verso–43, marr. 2 and male 25).

More complicated is the family history of Sozon (Sozont) Shaia, who also worked in the Sitka furrier's shop after returning from Ross (RAK 1942a: v. 27/n. 161:260 verso, 6 May 1847). His father, Osip (Iosif) Shaia, a Sugpiaq

man from Kiliuda, is listed in Kuskov's Ross censuses of 1820 and 1821 as Taia Osip (Osip Taya). At that time he had a common-law Indian wife, Mys'salaia (Myssalaya), who came from the Slavianka River area (Gibson et al. 2014a:432, 467, 468; Istomin et al. 2005:421, 432, 435). The baptism of Osip's illegitimate son Sozon (mother unnamed) was recorded in the Sitka metrical book for 1822. The family next appeared in the church records during Veniaminov's visit to Ross in 1836, when Osip married the California Indian woman Aleksandra (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1822:2, male 5, 1836:12, marr. 11). Whether Aleksandra and Mys'salaia were one and the same person, or one of them was Sozon's biological mother, we cannot say. It does appear, however, that Aleksandra, Sozon, and Sozon's full or half sister Mariia (born 1838) remained a family unit at Ross after Osip's drowning there in 1838. The family's cohesiveness may have been facilitated by the fact that Sozon was by that time old enough to be employed in his own right and could contribute to its support. Sozon arrived in Sitka from Ross in 1841. He was included in the Sitka confessional lists together with Aleksandra and Mariia from 1842 through 1858, and with Aleksandra alone in 1860 and 1861. Never married, he died of pneumonia in the spring of 1862 (RAK 1942a: v. 17/n. 406:388–388 verso, 5 July 1839; ROGC 1984c: 1838, 1842–1856, reel 264:257–262, 396–794, 1857–1862, reel 265:21–143; 1984e; ROC 1962b: reel 22, 1862:24 verso–25, male 7).³⁰ Further research is required to determine what became of Mariia and Aleksandra.

At least three descendants of California Indian mothers spent their working lives in far northwestern Alaska. With the colonies short of personnel, the company was eager to deploy any able-bodied men returning from Ross to the posts where they were most needed (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 289:223–223 verso, 9 May 1842). St. Michael redoubt on Norton Sound was one such post. At the same time, the Orthodox Church was staffing its new mission at the Yukon River village of Ikogmiut (present-day Russian Mission), located within the St. Michael trading region.

Pavel Agliaiuk was the son of Aleut Matvei Malikhnak, a Sugpiaq man originally from Ugatatskoe settlement³¹ in the Kodiak Archipelago, and an unnamed California Indian woman. He was usually classed as an Indian in church records, but as a Kodiak Aleut (i.e., Sugpiaq) in company records. Having grown up at Ross,

he arrived in Sitka in 1841 at the age of about nineteen. The following spring he was sent to St. Michael redoubt to join the Zagoskin expedition, which was exploring the Alaska interior east and south of St. Michael. On conclusion of the expedition, he remained in company service at St. Michael and its subsidiary posts, and married a local Yup'ik woman (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 167:108 verso, 29 April 1842; ROGC 1984b:266, 1984e:350, 1984g: 1846, reel 160:743).³²

During the Franklin search expeditions that visited St. Michael in the late 1840s and early 1850s, Agliaiuk displayed a hidden talent that cast him in a new role. The Franklin search personnel spoke no Russian, and the St. Michael personnel spoke no English, but it was discovered that the two parties could communicate through Agliaiuk, who knew a little Spanish. From 1848 to 1851 he was loaned to the visiting Englishmen whenever they needed his services as interpreter.³³ Indirectly, this led to his untimely death. Early in 1851 he served as Lieutenant John Barnard's interpreter during a trip to Nulato. While they were there, the outpost was attacked by Koyukon Athabaskans whose primary target was the nearby Native village.³⁴ Both Barnard and Agliaiuk were mortally wounded. Agliaiuk was survived by his wife and a young daughter, Apolinariia, who was still living in the region in 1876 (ROGC 1984g: 1876, reel 161:647).

Nikolai Nikolaev Gol'tsyn, namesake and possibly son of St. Petersburg burgher Nikolai Andreev Gol'tsyn, was listed as an Indian in church and company records in his boyhood but as a Creole throughout his adult life. Like Agliaiuk, he had a talent, learned in California, that proved useful in his new home. At the end of August 1846, the Sitka seminary, where he was a student, sent out a fishing boat to stock the seminary larder. The small craft capsized in a gust of wind while crossing Katlian Bay. Of the nine boys and three adults aboard, all drowned except for Gol'tsyn, the only one of the party who was an excellent swimmer. The Tlingit found him on the beach and brought him safely back to town (RAK 1942a: v. 27/n. 589 and 217:38–38 verso and 324–324 verso, 23 Sep 1846 and 12 May 1847).

In March of 1848, when he was of an age to choose his vocation, Gol'tsyn expressed a desire to join the clerical estate, and received Chief Manager Teben'kov's permission to do so (RAK 1942a: v. 29/n. 31:41, 9 March

1848). By late summer of that year he was at Ikogmiut on the Yukon River serving as sacristan to missionary Iakov Netsvetov. He continued in that capacity until 1860, when he requested release from the clerical estate to become a regular Russian-American Company employee. A few months later, he married Pavel Agliaiuk's widow (Netsvietov 1984:104, 408; RAK 1942a: v. 42/n. 187:48, 29 April 1860). He remained in the company's employ at St. Michael and its outposts through 1867. The couple's children Petr (b. 1860) and Mariia (b. 1864) still lived in the region in 1876 (ROGC 1984g: 1876, reel 161:646–647).

Nikifor Talizhuk, son of Aleut Kuzma Talizhuk, a Sugpiaq man originally from Shashkatskoe settlement³⁵ in the Kodiak Archipelago, and an unnamed California Indian woman (ROGC 1984b:266, 1984c: 1837, reel 264:233), was classed as a Kodiak Aleut (Sugpiaq) in both church and company records. Following a boyhood at Ross, he arrived in Sitka sometime between 1838 and 1842, when he was in his late teens. Like Pavel Agliaiuk, he was dispatched to St. Michael in the spring of 1842, assisted in the Zagoskin expedition, and then remained in company service at St. Michael and subsidiary posts (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 167:108 verso, 29 April 1842, v. 24/n. 61:49 verso–50, 2 March 1845). Also like Agliaiuk, he appears to have had some knowledge of Spanish, for he served as substitute interpreter for the Franklin search expeditions when Agliaiuk was unwell (RAK 1942a: v. 32/n. 572:419 verso–420, 7 June 1851; Seemann 1853:144). In 1851 he married a “Maleimiut” (Inupiaq) woman,³⁶ with whom he subsequently had two daughters, Melaniia and Mariia (ROGC 1984g: 1867, reel 161:594; ROC 1962d: reel 12, 1851:37, marr. 3, 1853:5 verso–6, female 9, 1857:7 verso–8, female 9). Talizhuk remained a company employee and resided in the St. Michael region with his family through at least 1867.

I end this series of examples with a discussion of three men who arrived in Sitka under the company's policy allowing California Indians who had become “as if they were Creoles” to come to Alaska as company employees when Ross was abandoned. The sparsely documented histories of two of them, Ieronim Murav'ev and Egor (Georgii) Kuzmin, can be easily summarized. Murav'ev, who had been a day-laborer at Ross, was accepted into salaried company service at Sitka in January 1842. Although

he appeared with his wife and two children in the Sitka confessional list for 1842, attempts to find definite mention of him in later church or company documents have so far proven unsuccessful (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 11:14, 22 Jan 1842; ROGC 1984c: 1842, reel 264:396).³⁷ Kuzmin remains nearly as mysterious. Formerly a Catholic from Malaia Bodega,³⁸ he received Orthodox chrismation at Sitka in April 1842 at the age of about twenty-five. Judging from church records, he resided within the Sitka parish from 1842 until his death in February 1847, but how he was employed is unknown. Company documents mention him only in connection with the credit balance he left at the time of his death: the commander of the next company vessel sailing for California had instructions to find out whether Kuzmin had any relatives there to whom the credit balance could be paid (RAK 1942a: v. 29/n. 16:27 verso, 10 Feb 1848; ROGC 1984c: 1843–1847, reel 264:426, 497, 529, 553; ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:13 verso–14, male 10, 1847:41 verso–42, male 4).

Rodion (Irodion) Zakharov's history is much better documented and all the more interesting in that Zakharov tried to exercise his right to return to California. Born around 1822, he was chrismated by priest Ioann Veniaminov in 1836. His godfather was Zakhar Chechenev, from whom he received the name that thereafter served as his surname, Zakharov (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–1837:9 verso).³⁹ Like Ieronim Murav'ev, Zakharov became a day-laborer at Ross, came to Alaska with the Russians when Ross was abandoned, and was accepted into salaried company service at Sitka in January 1842. Other than one mention of his employment in the furrier's shop, the record is silent as to the nature of his work in Sitka. He most likely served as a common laborer (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 11:14, 22 Jan 1842, v. 27/n. 161:260 verso, 6 May 1847).

In late 1847 or early 1848, Zakharov petitioned to be released from company service and to be allowed to return to California. Unfortunately for him, there had been a change in colonial administration in the years since he first arrived in Sitka. Colonial chief manager Mikhail D. Teben'kov was not necessarily ignorant of his predecessor's assurances that California Indians who came to Alaska in company service would be transported back to their homeland if they changed their minds. The problem was that he did not recognize Zakharov as a California Indian at all.

In his letter requesting guidance from the company's main office, Teben'kov characterized Zakharov as a California Creole born of a Russian and an Indian. Not considering himself to have the right to allow Russian natives (*russkie urozhdentsy*) brought from California to return there now that the company no longer had any possessions in the region, he postponed action on Zakharov's petition pending the main office's instructions (RAK 1942a: v. 29/n. 249:285 verso–286, 10 May 1848).⁴⁰ Thus, a California Indian who had originally been allowed to come to Alaska as a company employee because he had become “as if” he were a Creole was subsequently detained in Alaska against his will because he had blended in too well—in the eyes of the colonial administration, he *was* a Creole.⁴¹

The main office readily authorized Teben'kov to send any California Creoles back to the land of their birth if they so wished. Citing Teben'kov's own repeated complaints about the difficulties of supporting a large Creole population and noting the Creoles' tax-exempt status, the main office concluded that, from both the company's and the government's perspectives, there was no valid reason to detain the Californians in the colonies (RAK 1942b: v. 17/n. 305:449–449 verso, 10 March 1849). This decision reached Sitka in mid-September 1849 but, perhaps because the gold rush had already greatly altered the situation in California, Teben'kov does not appear to have acted upon it and there is no evidence that Zakharov continued to press for release. Remaining in the company's employ, Zakharov wed the widow Matrona Larionova in January of 1850. The couple had three daughters, two of whom died in infancy. Zakharov died of a pulmonary stroke in Sitka in January 1856, survived by his widow and daughter Mariia (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1850:58 verso–59, marr. 2, 1851:4 verso–5, female 7, 1852:78 verso–79, female 12, 1853:13 verso–14, female 15, 1854:41 verso–42, female 14, 1855:15 verso–16, female 20, 1856:31 verso–32, male 2).⁴²

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While the information presented in this paper is too anecdotal in nature to yield broad generalizations, it does highlight several important points and suggest some interesting avenues for further exploration.

First, concerning the children born of unions between California Native women and the men of Ross, it is an oversimplification to say that the women and their daughters tended to return to the women's own people on the breakup of such unions while sons remained with their fathers. It is understandable that one could draw such a conclusion from the data found in the Kuskov censuses, but the sample is very small and, more importantly, the censuses are but snapshots of the state of affairs at two points in time. We are left wondering whether the women's own people accepted their return and how many of those women and their daughters later came back to Ross to form family units with different Ross men. The case of Petr Popov, described above, is but one example of a man who was stepfather to his California Native wife's daughter from a previous relationship. Surely there were others.

Second, Russian-American Company policies concerning families born of California Native women changed over time and differed depending upon whether the family's father was a temporary (passport-holding) or permanent (Alaska Native, Creole) resident of the colonies. Most of the policies outlined above pertained to families whose fathers were still alive. With regard to widows and orphans, we know that some widows remarried or entered into common-law relationships, and that some orphans were adopted by other Ross families, but the frequency of such arrangements and particularly the fate of those who remained unattached require further documentation. While the company routinely provided support for the legitimate widows and minor children of deceased employees throughout the colonies from the 1820s onward, its solicitude usually did not extend to families formed outside the bonds of marriage. It is therefore somewhat surprising that colonial chief manager Etolin proposed, and the company immediately approved, support for illegitimately born female orphans of Ross employees on abandonment of the post. I should say surprising, but not out of character—the company was ever mindful of the image it presented to the outside world, and to abandon any appreciable number of orphaned girls in California was potentially damaging. Estimation of the number of girls affected and documentation of their parentage will require considerable additional research in the Alaskan Russian Church records, where the Sitka confessional lists include separate sections

for the charges of the local schools/orphanages. Equally interesting are questions of the fates of California Native women who remained widows of former Ross employees at the time of the post's abandonment. Some accompanied their children to Alaska, but perhaps not all.

Third, social relationships formed at Ross often carried over into life in Alaska. Though the focus of this paper has been upon California Natives who were cut off from their extended families once they transferred to Alaska, most of the marriages contracted at Ross (whether solemnized or not) either linked a transient (passport-holding) man with an extended Alaskan (Native or Creole) family or linked two extended Alaskan families. Relationship through marriage aside, we should not lose sight of friendships forged and acquaintances made at Ross, whether among individuals or families. Depending upon a Ross veteran's subsequent posting, there was ample opportunity to maintain and deepen such ties. By far the largest contingent of former Ross inhabitants settled in the Kodiak district (as returnees to their native villages, as employees at district posts, or as retirees), while a smaller number remained in Sitka and a few were even dispatched to serve in Northwest Alaska. Subsequent intermarriages among these families are readily attributable to residential proximity, but we cannot rule out their shared Ross experience as a contributing factor.

Fourth, some very important lingering questions concern the Ross-born sons of Sugpiaq fathers, particularly those boys who had attained adulthood or near adulthood before leaving for Alaska. Most of the Sugpiaq men who served at Ross were expected to return to their home villages eventually, but what, other than family, tied a son born and raised in California to a place he had never seen? Certainly he would have learned many traditional skills in the "Aleut" community at Ross, but on arriving in Alaska he would have been far behind his contemporaries in his knowledge of the local environment, a knowledge important to subsistence success and, on occasion, crucial to survival. Sozon Shaia, Pavel Agliaiuk, and Nikifor Talizhuk, whose biographies are summarized above, all fell into this category. None of them returned to his father's home village to live. It would be interesting to trace the Alaska careers of other Sugpiaq men who were born and raised at Ross to see whether they ended up in their fathers' home villages or elsewhere, whether they took their places among

their villages' hunters or worked for the Russian-American Company in some other capacity.

Fifth, the biographies outlined above provide further evidence that, in Russian America, the term "Creole" was not necessarily a racial designation but was in fact quite fluid in its application (cf. Black 2004:209–219; Vinkovetsky 2011:142–149). In Russian-American Company documents, the term most often indicated the social class to which a non-taxable person was perceived to belong, particularly with respect to the nature of his work for the company. In church records, on the other hand, application of the term more strictly adhered to racial lines insofar as they could be determined by a document's author. Consequently, a person labeled a Creole in the documents of one entity might receive an entirely different designation in the documents of the other, and the labels applied by both entities were always subject to change.

Sixth, though the family histories summarized above include many early deaths, the sample is far too small to draw any conclusions about the relative hardiness of California Natives and their children in northern climes. Some of the California families did indeed thrive in Alaska and have descendants living there today. The same may be true of some of the California families who traveled on to Russia.

These represent only a sampling of the topics begging for further documentary research. The work can be frustratingly slow, but it is richly rewarding in the detail it can add to our conception of the social environment at Ross and in the Alaska colonies.

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NOTES

1. Contemporary Russian documents consistently refer to the site as Ross, the name I use here, or *selenie Ross* (Ross settlement) and to its administrative unit

- as *kontora Ross* (Ross Office, sometimes translated as Ross Counter) or *koloniia Ross* (Ross colony). “Ross” was an eighteenth-century poetic synonym for “Russian,” and this may be the name’s origin (Gibson et al. 2014a:23n2). The site consisted of a fortified compound with an extensive settlement area outside its walls. After the Russians’ withdrawal from the site, remnants of the fortification remained visible long after less substantial manifestations of the occupation had disappeared, and “Fort Ross” became the object of preservation and restoration efforts early in the twentieth century. Today the fort and much surrounding acreage constitute Fort Ross State Historic Park, part of the California State Parks system.
2. In this context I use the term “Russian” as shorthand to refer to all who were in Russia’s North American colonies on a Russian passport. They included not only ethnic Russians, but Finlanders, Yakuts, and others.
 3. The term “Creole” refers to a particular social estate within Russia’s North American colonies. The term often, but not necessarily, had a racial connotation, implying that a person was of mixed Native and Russian or European descent, with the non-Native ancestry in the male line (Black 1990).
 4. In the records of the Russian-American Company and the Alaskan Russian Church, Native people from California are most frequently referenced simply as “Indian [male *indeets*; female *indeika*] from the shores of California” or some similarly vague term, without attribution to any specific Native cultural group.
 5. Unidentified. The first Russian Orthodox priest to reside at Sitka was Aleksei P. Sokolov, who served there from the autumn of 1816 to the spring of 1834 (Grinev 2009a:499; Pierce 1990:476).
 6. Following Haakanson (2012:391n19) I use the autonym Sugpiaq (pl. Sugpiat) to refer to the Native people of the Kodiak Archipelago. In Haakanson’s usage, the term “Alutiiq” (the Sugpiaq people’s rendering of “Aleut”) is retained only as the currently common name for Sugcestun, the language of the Sugpiaq people.
 7. Efforts to identify Talia (Natalia?), Andres (Andrei?), and their daughter Maria in the Russian Orthodox Church records for Sitka have so far proven unsuccessful. That the couple was not in a church-sanctified marriage at the time of departure from Ross is an assumption based on the statement that wife Talia was baptized in Sitka after her arrival there. Though there is no evidence that anyone authorized to perform the sacrament of marriage had been at Ross up to this time, if such a person did in fact visit he would not have performed the marriage without first ascertaining that both parties had been baptized as Christians.
 8. In documents of the period, “Aleut” was a general term referring to the Alaska Native peoples from whom sea otter hunters were recruited. The Russians were not ignorant of the ethnic diversity covered under the term and added either a modifier or a second term when it was necessary to distinguish between peoples. For example, Atkan Aleut and Fox Aleut referred to Unangan people of the Atka and Fox Islands regions of the Aleutian Islands, while Kodiak Aleut referred to Sugpiaq people of the Kodiak Archipelago and the secondary term Chugach specified the people of the Prince William Sound region, who spoke a dialect of Alutiiq (cf. discussion of terminology in Luehrmann 2008:3).
 9. Agchiaesikok Roman [Roman Agchyayesikok], a Sugpiaq from Chiniak, was presumed drowned in March 1821. His common-law wife Kobbeya [Kobbeya], from the Slavianska (Russian) River, was released to her homeland. The couple’s son Kiochan Mitrofan was put in the care of Sugpiaq Chiunaguzhii Aleksei [Alexey Chyunaguzhy], also originally from Chiniak (Gibson et al. 2014a:435; Istomin et al. 2005:423). Here and in subsequent notes, spellings of names are my transliteration of the Russian text using a modified Library of Congress system, while spellings enclosed in brackets are Gibson’s transliteration of the Russian using the American Council of Learned Societies system. Note that in the Russian text of this particular document the Native names of Alaska and California Natives are given first, followed by their Christian

- names, if any. This was the usage of the time. Native people baptized in the Orthodox Christian faith retained their Native names in everyday use, while their Christian names were primarily for church purposes. In Gibson's translation the Native name follows the Christian name as if it were a surname.
10. Sugpiaq Ikhuilnok Ivan [Ivan Ikhuylnok] from Kiliuda, his common-law wife Kileilok [Kilyoylok] from the vicinity of Ross, and their two unnamed sons all left for Novo-Arkhangelsk (Sitka) aboard the *Golovnin* in March 1821, as did Sugpiaq Aminnak Arsenii [Arseny Aminnak] of Aiaktalik, his common-law wife Libui from the Slavianska River, and their son Fedor [Fyodor] (Gibson et al. 2014a:433, 438; Istomin et al. 2005:422, 426).
 11. Malikhknak Sava, a Sugpiaq from Kiliuda, and his son Asiavikhtok Fedor [Fyodor Asyavikhtok] left aboard the brig *Golovnin* in March 1821, while the child's mother Agachpuchie, from the vicinity of Ross, remained with her relatives. Ataliakin Danila [Danila Atalyakin], a Sugpiaq from Paiskoe settlement, and son Ivan left for Novo-Arkhangelsk aboard the same vessel, while the child's sister Marina and their mother Katya, from the vicinity of Ross, returned to Katya's native place (Gibson et al. 2014a:432, 437; Istomin et al. 2005:421, 425). It is unclear whether Gibson's transliteration of the name Katya as Katya is in error or instead an alternate reading of the original handwritten manuscript. Paiskoe settlement was located on Kodiak Island, likely on Sukhoi Lagoon (Luehrmann 2008:27).
 12. Rodion Korolev [Rodion Korolyov], a peasant from Tiumen', died at Ross in December 1820. The woman living with him, Aiumin Mar'ia [Mar'ya Ayumin] from the vicinity of Ross, and their daughter Mar'ia [Mar'ya] were both released to their native place (Gibson et al. 2014a:421; Grinev 2009a:256; Istomin et al. 2005:413).
 13. Chrismation (sacramental anointment with oil) is the sacrament of confirmation, administered by a priest after baptism (Black 1980:307–308). Although baptism in the Russian Orthodox faith could be administered by any Orthodox layman, only a priest could perform the sacrament of chrismation.
 14. Based on her age, Matriona does not appear to have been Popov's biological daughter, for he arrived at Ross only in 1819. She was likely Katerina's daughter from a previous relationship, the girl listed as the daughter of the Bodegan Indian woman Katerina Uk'keli [Katerina Ukkeli] in Kuskov's 1821 census (Gibson et al. 2014a:466; Istomin et al. 2005:431).
 15. Grinev (2009a:436) mistakenly states that the marriage took place in California in 1829, the year of the petition.
 16. I assume that Matriona left for Russia with her husband only because I have not located any Alaskan record of her death; further research may prove this wrong.
 17. In this context the term *sluzhiteli* refers to salaried employees, a class that included only a few of the "Aleuts" at Ross. There is no reason to doubt, however, that the Ross "Aleuts" retained the right, evidenced in the Kuskov census, to bring Indian wives and their children back to Alaska.
 18. While I disagree with a few parts of Gibson's translation of this document and some of his transcriptions of the names it contains, his English rendering is a generally reliable resource for those who do not read Russian.
 19. Elena's mother is identified in the Kuskov census of 1820, where Ivan Tuchik's name is recorded as Kaskak Tuchin Ivan [Ivan Tuchin Kaskak] (Gibson et al. 2014a:438; Istomin et al. 2005:426).
 20. Over the years, at least eight California Indian men were sent to Sitka to work for the company as punishment for crimes committed at Ross, five of them for killing livestock and three of them for murder (Gibson et al. 2014a:428; Istomin et al. 2005:418, 419; RAK 1942a: v. 16/n. 403:129, 7 Sep 1838, v. 17/n. 518:506, 25 Oct 1839). I have found no information concerning their subsequent fate.
 21. The Alaskan Russian Church records can sometimes lull one into thinking that a man's Native name did indeed function as his family's surname—infant baptismal records mention only a child's Christian name and listings of families within a parish often include only the Christian names of a man's wife and children. This illusion is shattered when a son's Native

- name suddenly appears in the written record at the time of his marriage or when he in some other manner has established a household of his own. After 1867, the Native name of a head of household increasingly began to function as a family surname in the written record, first in American governmental and civil records, and eventually in Orthodox Church records as well. The date of this change varies from parish to parish, the most conservative changing only around the end of the nineteenth century.
22. For the period up to 1867, when Russia sold Alaska to the United States, genealogical research for Alaska Native families through means other than oral history relies heavily upon the use of Alaskan Russian Church parish confessional lists in combination with church vital statistics records. The basics of such an approach can be summarized as follows: The purpose of the confessional lists, compiled annually, was to record whether parishioners had given confession and partaken of Holy Communion, as was expected of every Orthodox Christian at least once per year if at all possible. The lists essentially serve as an annual census of each parish, by village, usually grouping its members by nuclear family or household, recording each person's age, and noting whether he or she had participated in confession and communion. Confessional lists in this format are available for the Sitka parish, which included Ross, only from the mid-1830s onward; earlier lists include only the names of those who had actually participated in confession and communion (ROGC 1984c). For the Kodiak parish, the home of most of the "Aleuts" who served at Ross, lists are available only for 1830–1832 and then from 1840 onward (ROGC 1984d). To make use of the lists, one must first identify the village or villages in which a person was registered. Once that has been accomplished, it is a matter of following his or her documentary trail year by year, supplemented with vital statistics records for baptisms, marriages, and deaths. For regions of Alaska where the Orthodox Church remained active after 1867, this line of research can be followed through the late 1910s or, in a few parishes, even into the 1930s (e.g., ROC 1962a; ROGC 1984a).
 23. No record of the birth/baptism of Eremin's elder daughter, Ekaterina, has been located, but it is possible that she is the two-year-old Ekaterina, daughter of the baptized Indian Elizaveta, whose christening was recorded by priest Sokolov in 1832 (ROGC 1984b:266).
 24. Eremin may have been prevented from marrying in the colonies due to an existing marriage in Russia. Money for the support of his wife in Russia was being withheld from his salary at least as late as 1831 (RAK 1942a: v. 8/n. 315:237 verso–238, 22 May 1831).
 25. Some believe that the boy Ioann came to be known in adulthood as David Roberts ("Russian Bob"), who still has many living descendants among the Tlingit (Dauenhauer et al. 2008:410–411).
 26. Filipp Kotel'nikov's eldest daughter, Ekaterina, married Anton Pagil'nok, a Sugpiaq from Kolpakovskoe settlement (on Sitkalidak Island), at Ross in 1832 (Luehrmann 2008:33; ROGC 1984b:269). It is unknown whether she had the same mother as Filipp's younger children. His second daughter, Paraskeva, whose mother was Varvara Amochemen, had disappeared from the record by the time of Veniaminov's visit to Ross in 1836.
 27. Filipp Kotel'nikov's annual pension for "nearly 40 years" of service was initially set at 80 rubles, but two years later was raised to 100 rubles. In addition, in June 1847 he was granted a one-time payment of 100 rubles which he could choose to receive either in cash or in things he needed (RAK 1942a: v. 21/n. 474:443, 1 Aug 1842, v. 24/n. 76 encl.:71–71 verso, 9 March 1845, v. 28/n. 457:61, 22 June 1847). These payments, only a fraction of a common laborer's 350-ruble base salary, were meant to supplement what Kotel'nikov and his family could provide for themselves through subsistence pursuits or through selling or bartering the fruits of their labor (fish, garden produce, etc.). For details of company support for retirees in the colonies see Grinev (2009b) and Sarafian (1970:115–133).
 28. Chernyshev married the Creole Afanasiia, daughter of the Russian Stepan Gavrilov, a retired subofficer, and his Creole wife Anna, on 17 August 1841 at one of Ross's farming outposts (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1841:13 verso–14, marr. 15).
 29. As the wife of a Russian, Ul'ianiia would have had the right to leave for Russia with her husband if they

- both survived their time in Alaska. Further research is required to determine whether she left the colonies.
30. Interestingly, church records identified Sozon as Aleut (i.e., Sugpiaq) in 1841 through 1845, as Indian from 1846 through 1858, and as “settled native” in 1860 and 1861, while Aleksandra was identified as Indian in all years except 1860, when she, too, was listed as a settled native.
 31. Ugatatskoe settlement was likely located somewhere on the embayment between present-day Gull Point and Dangerous Cape, Kodiak Island, where a 1784 map by Bocharov and Izmailov indicates “Bukhta Ugatatskaia” [Ugatatskaia Bay] (Efimov 1964:116 and map 178).
 32. Agliaiuk’s wife was the Chniagmiut (St. Michael area Yup’ik; Black 1984:unnumbered p. 492) woman Gaituak from Tachik settlement (*Taciq*, present-day Stebbins). She was baptized Ol’ga in 1843 at the approximate age of 21, and married Agliaiuk in July of 1844. The couple had three daughters, the first two of whom died in infancy (Black 1984:unnumbered p. 492; ROC 1962e: reel 23, 1843:16 verso–17, female 18, 1844:14 verso–15, marr. 16, 1962d: reel 12, 1846:5 verso–6, female 4 and 42 verso–43, female 9, 1848:7 verso–8, female 1 and 41 verso–42, female 2, 1850:4 verso–5, female 7).
 33. Berthold Seemann (1853:8) characterized Agliaiuk, whom the Englishmen nicknamed Bosky, as “a half-caste, and [who] had been brought from Bodegas, in Upper California. Although ignorant of English, he had a slight knowledge of the Spanish language, by means of which our intercourse was carried on.” Richard Collinson (1889:80), reporting on his visit to St. Michael in 1850, noted in turn: “by means of Boski (a Californian, who had served last year in the *Herald* and *Plover* as interpreter, and accompanied Mr. Pim across from Kotzebue Sound), and doggerel Spanish on my part, I made known the object I had in view, and found every disposition on the part of the chief trader to afford us assistance.”
 34. On the “Nulato massacre” see Loyens (1966:104–107) and Wright (1995).
 35. On present-day Pasagshak Bay, Kodiak Island (Clark 1987:108, 122).
 36. Talizhuk’s wife was the “Maleimiut” (Inupiaq) woman Kunuglina from Shaktoolik, baptized Anna. She was the widow of Creole Grigorii Kurochkin (ROC 1962d: reel 12, 1848:33 verso–34, marr. 1, 1851:36 verso–37, marr. 3). On definitions of the ethnonym Maleimiut and its variants, see Ganley (1995).
 37. A record of Orthodox baptism for Rodion (no surname), age 38, an Indian of the northeast (*sic*) shores of California, formerly the Catholic Ieronim, possibly refers to this same man (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1842:14 verso–15, male 14).
 38. Malaia Bodega (Little Bodega) refers to present-day Bodega Harbor, on the shores of which were several Coast Miwok villages (Gibson et al. 2014a:lxix; Kelly 1978:415).
 39. Several other California Indian males chrismated by Veniaminov in 1836 acquired their Russian surnames in a similar manner: Ermolai, age 20, godfather Nikolai Gol’tsyn, became Ermolai Nikolaev; Feodor, age 35, godfather Miron Timofeev, became Feodor Mironov; Nikolai, age 32, godfather Efim Munin, became Nikolai Efimov (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1836–1837:9 verso). These names had absolutely nothing to do with biological parentage.
 40. Teben’kov referenced a departure request from Sergei Maliutin, another “California Creole,” in the same letter. Although there is strong reason to believe that he, too, was a California Indian, I have omitted him from this discussion because of conflicting evidence concerning his ethnicity. I can say with certainty, however, that Sergei Mliukin (or Mliukik?) Maliutin, who was born sometime between 1810 and 1812, was not the Creole son of Iakov Maliutin, who arrived at Ross only in the 1830s (ROC 1962b: reel 21, 1840:16 verso–17, male 2, 1855:24 verso–25, marr. 9, 1860:27 verso–28, male 11; cf. Grinev 2009a:330–331).
 41. In church confessional lists, Zakharov was identified as an Indian in 1842, as an “Aleut” in 1843 and 1844, as a Creole in 1845 and 1847, and as an Indian in 1846 and from 1848 until his death in 1856 (ROGC 1984c:1842–1855, reel 264:347, 434, 465, 471, 529, 551, 580, 606, 627, 654, 678, 705, 742, 764).
 42. Rodion’s wife is identified as a Tlingit in their marriage record but as a Creole in the birth records of their children.

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