

## 5. Nicholai Galaktionoff

June 2, 2004

[John Galaktionoff (his son) was present at the beginning of the interview.]

Ray Hudson: June 2, 2004. A recording with Nick Galaktionoff of Unalaska. Okay. I'll see if this is going to work here. Yeah, it's recording. It's picking up. Ah, ah, I need to have you sign this oral history release agreement. It says. . . . [See copies of Oral History Release Agreements] . . . . So, is that okay? [Laughs]

Nicholai Galaktionoff: I think it's okay, I guess. . . .

John Galaktionoff: I'm his power of attorney.

RH: Oh, are you? Okay. So, why don't you sign there, then, for that. Sure. Sure.

Being signed by John Galaktionoff. Nick, why don't you say something and let me check to see if this is coming through. Go ahead.

NG: Well, I don't know. I'm going to say something about these Aleuts start to grow up here.

RH: That's great. Now let me, let me just check this and see if it's working. Okay. We're all set.

JG: I'll be in my room, dad.

RH: Okay, it's working. Great. So, Nick, let's start out with just some fundamentals.

When were you born?

NG: I born in Makushin.

RH: And what date?

NG: 1925, December 19.

RH: All right. And who was your father?

NG: My father Akim Galaktionoff.

RH: And your mother?

NG: Perscovia Lekanoff, but they come to Galaktionoff.

RH: Ah-ha. And you were raised in part by your grandmother?

NG: Yeah, my grandmother her name Marva.

RH: What was her last name?

NG: Ah, Borenin, I knew, before. But before that they got different last name anyway. Before she got married. [In 1978 Nick recalled that her name was Marva Petikoff and that she had been born around 1865.]

RH: Was that your mother's mother or your father's mother?

NG: My father's mother. My dad he got different dad, got a funeral. And Borenin, that's my uncle, my dad's brother. Same mother but different dad, so he's got a last name that's Borenin. And Japanese drowned it. There was 3 people: Matfey Borenin and John Borenin and,— I can't—forgot the other one. That Matfey Borenin was Elia Borenin's brother. . . . three of them disappeared in one day. But we find out they must be drowneded, 'cause Elia Borenin he find a halibut line all the way down the bay. He didn't have no boat. Walk all the way there, beach combing. He find that rope and he try and pull it and break it. God-damn, I don't like it. I don't like Japanese for that.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: And my father's mother died in 1939, here in Unalaska after we move up here.

RH: Marva.

NG: Marva Galaktionoff. Her last name was Borenin then because she was married to Borenin, second time. And my mother died 1946. Real mother. Died from TB up in Juneau. Came to the hospital, but didn't stay there. Died.

RH: So she didn't come back after the war.

NG: No. We bring it back as far as Juneau from Wrangel. So. That's it. The last time I seen him. My brother died in Petersburg. My youngest brother.

RH: What was his name?

NG: Anatoly. That was Borenin, he got from second husband. And my mother is buried down in Juneau. My mother, yeah. And my other brother, John Borenin, Innokentii Borenin's son, that's my stepfather, he died in Seattle. The doctors tried to—. I could have made money on it, but I didn't say nothing about it, too late. When they working the pipes come down on his head.

RH: Oh.

NG: Way after the month he died from his head.

RH: He was in construction then?

NG: Yeah. That's it. And my brothers and my sister's up there in the graveyard.

RH: Here in Unalaska.

NG: Yeah. Two brothers. Named, first one is Paul and my brother, other brother, is Peter. His wife is Gussie. And my mother—my wife, Irene. And my daughter Marva. I named her after my grandmother. She was the first girl to have surgery down in San Francisco. Take her to the heart specialist. She got a heart valve leaking. I don't know how much time it take 'em to Anchorage from here. She didn't want to go with nobody except me, so I do it. Last time I went out to have a dinner with her and after about four months she died.

RH: Marina was your sister, too?

NG: Yeah. Her [Marva's] sister Agnes died in . . . Kodiak. . . . I lost all those loved ones I had. . . . I lost two boys and two girls. Marva, Agnes, other one is Michael. First boy is named Michael. Other one didn't have a name; he died on the plane. Reeve.

RH: And was Molly Lukanin your sister also?

NG: Oh, yeah. Molly Lukanin was my sister.

RH: So, Nick, you grew up in Makushin pretty much.

NG: Yeah, we all grew up in Makushin until 1939 when I was 14 years old when I come up here.

RH: Was it a good place to grow up?

NG: Not here.

RH: No, but I mean Makushin.

NG: Makushin that's a good place for young kids. On the sand. Because Makushin face south, sunshine hit em every day. But lot of grass right in the front. Grass tall enough to play under, but somebody always scared us. Old Yakeem, Matfey's brother. All dressed up with a horns on it, making funny noise. We run like hell from the beach to home. I remember that. He didn't want us to be on the beach too late but kids we'd stay on the beach and play around in the sand.

RH: Was it a sandy beach or a gravel beach?

NG: Nothing but sand. At Makushin Village part; but half way it's gravel on the west end. I supposed it's changed, too, on the beach. Because sometimes, west wind—the only thing west side is, the waves come in 'cause Anderson Bay right across. That Anderson Bay used to be Bristol Bay cannery.

RH: Ah.

NG: They moved the Makushin cannery there. The Makushin cannery quit— Anderson Bay. But that's a good place to boat, any boats, smaller boats. Even a storm there but no waves go in there. That's why Pete Olsen keep his boat there all the time.

RH: Oh yeah. Then how would he get to Makushin? There was no dock at Makushin, right?

NG: No. Anchored in Makushin. But Makushin Bay village has big sea running from west, all way to the top of the bank. That's why boats they can't anchor there. That's why he kept his boat in Makushin, I mean Anderson Bay.

RH: In Anderson Bay.

NG: After that he take a dory and go to Makushin Village. He wanted to go to Unalaska, he got to take a dory and go out to Anderson Bay he went to his boat. Sometime he come in to Unalaska with a few people. Not really big boat, but a 35 footer, double-ender. Come and get some few groceries anybody want it. Well, we got a little store in Makushin. Didn't have no candies. But he got mixed candies. We didn't know what a bar of candy looked like.

RH: Where would people get the money from to buy at the store?

NG: Only fox and work up at St. Paul every summer. First people start working St. Paul \$20 a month. Way long time ago people. After that come up to \$40 a month. My dad started working in \$40 a month and after that \$80 a month and I would start working. I was 15 years old. My mother get the money from out there all the time, every month. But \$20 it can't support us. We got 9 of us, 9 kids. So my mom needed money all the time so I went up to St. Paul. I was 15 years old, but I signed my name and I said 15 years or 16 years old. But I'm been sorry afterwards. [Laughs] Got to St. Paul, gee, [unclear, perhaps *southeaster*] every day.

RH: What job did they give you?

NG: Well, I was work on the road. Shoveling, and shovel sand up in North East Point way. Just like snow, blowed in some wintertime. All the way to North East Point, not on this side of it, as far as Half Way Point, just sand. One lake there, no creek but rain water, that's all, you know. That's the place we used to cook kettle and drink tea outside, 3 o'clock. They told us to do it anyway, so. St. Paul laborers, really, you can't play with them. Pretty strong people. The time I started working there, a guy named MacMillian.

RH: Oh, yeah.

NG: He died in 1944. Died by table, heart-attack. After that Dan Benson take over. Jesus Christ, that guy was worst than anybody else. He's at St. George. Somebody got shot gun one time and shot him from window, but didn't hit him, though. Breaking glass, that's all that hit him.

RH: Now, when you were in the Pribilofs, that would be just in the summer time.

NG: Summertime.

RH: During the seal harvest.

NG: Six months or three months. 1943 I was there in St. Paul

RH: Oh, during the war when the men went back to harvest?

NG: Um-hmm. Traveled all the way from Juneau all the way to St. Paul. We stopped there and fueled up though. Wearing goddamned life jacket, take it off and put it by you when you go to bed. Stand up and eat by a table. Wear your life jacket.

RH: Life jacket or a vest?

NG: Life-vest. Anyway, just like a jacket.

RH: Yeah, right, right.

NG: Wearing it everytime. Bathrooms outside. Guard outside. Everytime you go outside check your vest if you tied it good and everything. Otherwise they holler at you to tie 'em good. Well, it was tough. Winter, St. George people can't land there so take 'em to St. Paul. Got at St. Paul, we landed there. Army guys come out and take us in, over 100 of us, about 150 of us. From St. Paul, from here, from Burnet Inlet, I mean Ketchikan, Ward Lake.

RH: There were other Unalaska people who went—

NG: Um-hmm. Akutan people, Kashega, Biorka people. Nikolski people. And those people I was up in St. Paul with I don't think none of them livin'. One did live for awhile but he died. Name is Alec. . . .

RH: Yeah.

NG: Me and him was the young guys working there, but he was in St. George and I was in St. Paul. . . .

RH: Yeah.

NG: Army guys working different hours. Coast Guard working different hours. Pretty soon stage players got in. No woman there. Only three womans got there from State-side. Goddamned, you can't stay in the window! These people pile up on you! [Laughs] You can't breathe. Goddamned. They got different shows for us, civilians, and Coast Guard, Army guys. Goddamned, those woman, I don't think they got bones on 'em. They play with us, playing every night till two weeks all gone. [Laughs] I have to laugh. Every time somebody open a window, stay in a window, people pile up on 'em. I remember all these. I been there six months, 1943. We stopped here on the way, unload the stuffs we picked from St. Paul, Unalaska then at Captains Bay dock and from there all the way down to Wrangel. Well, they stopped us in Juneau anyway.

RH: Now, back in the time when your dad worked up in the Pribilofs, he would be there in the summertime and then when he came back to Makushin, what would the men do when they came back to Makushin?

NG: Well, them guys start working, get some woods, pile of woods for winter, and from there trap season open they start go trapping. 'Cause didn't have much money. Three months sometimes those guys make a hundred-and-twenty dollars. \$40 a month.

RH: Where did they trap fox at Makushin? Where would they go for that?

NG: Pete Olsen take it.

RH: Hmm.

NG: He didn't give money but people would buy groceries.

RH: Ah, give credit?

NG: Um-hmm. But if you want to sell it, bring it up here, sell it to N.C. Company. N.C. and Alaska Salmon Company there. They tear it down, right in front of that, little ways up from that Russian School, used to be there. Guy tried to make a restaurant out of it

after we come in [after World War Two], but don't make much money. Ten cents a cup. After them young girls anyway, that guy. I think he died anyway. So he worked in there a while and then he quit. Can't make money. But this Russian School, other end, used to be a restaurant there. And the Shoreline down there, Patterson owned it.

RH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

NG: Used to be restaurant running the war-time.

RH: There were quite a few places running here during the war I guess.

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. In front of that Chiplap's house, used to be on the beach, used to be restaurant and baking bread there. Mr. Patterman, I think, owned it. Pop Hortman?

RH: Oh, yes.

NG: He owned that place, making bakery bread, bakery shop. And that bar, that Elbow Room, used to be there all the time, but they got Blue Fox. That's the name of it that time. That was the Blue Fox name 'cause Patterson owned that Unalga Island. He got blue foxes on there.

RH: Oh, okay. Unalaska must have seemed like a pretty big town when you moved here.

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. In Makushin, I think, only nine houses there. Pete Olsen's house, ten. One barn for sheeps, sheep ranch. Power house long ways from the village.

RH: Now the power house that was, ah, that was run by, that was a water generator?

NG: Um-hmm. Water, yeah. That's why they got it below the cliff.

RH: There's a thing in the records that in 1932, I'm reading this, J. P. Olsen and Makushin Native Community join to purchase and maintain an electric light plant. There were 14 shares. Four owned by Olsen and ten by members of the community and these are the people that had the shares. And I don't know if I'll get these names correct.

Akenfa Galaktionoff.

NG: That's my dad, yeah.

RH: Philip Galaktionoff.

NG: Yeah, that's my uncle.

RH: John Borenin.

NG: That's my uncle, too.

RH: Peter Petikoff.

NG: That's my grandfather—grandmother's brother. Lived right next door to me.

RH: And Simeon Petikoff.

NG: That's his son.

RH: Ah. And Matfey Petikoff.

NG: Next to him that was Matfey Petikoff, was here before.

RH: Yes, I remember him.

NG: His brother named Yakeem.

RH: Yes, he's in this list, too. Yakeem Petikoff. And Matt Borenin, Mathew Borenin, or Matfey Borenin.

NG: Yeah. Nick Borenin's dad.

RH: Okay. Elia Borenin.

NG: That's Matfey's brother.

RH: And Simeon Lekanoff.

NG: My grandfather.

RH: Nick Lekanoff.

NG: That's my godfather.

RH: And Arthur Lekanoff.

NG: My uncle.

RH: And Frank Galaktionoff.

NG: Yeah. All of them. Yeah.

RH: Yeah.

NG: That was how we lived then.

RH: Yeah.

NG: My dad take me out in a baidarky one time when I was about three years old.

Barely had my head sticking out. My eyes about brought up to there. I turned around to watch. Just give me a ride to the creek and come back. My poor grandmother holler at him, "Don't take him so far out!" I used to have a lot of fun riding out in baidarky.

Take me all the way to the creek and turn back up to West End, come back and he landed. My poor grandmother, boy, she sure liked me. She never forget me.

RH: How many baidarkies were there in Makushin?

NG: Only four. Four baidarkies.

RH: Who owned them?



NG: My dad and—no, five baidarkies. Yeah. And Peter Petikoff. And Matfey Borenin with his brother. Elia Borenin with his brother. And Simeon Lekanoff with Kusta—that was his oldest boy. My grandfather married twice. First time he got two girls and two boys. One of them is my mother, Periscovia. Natalia is another one, just buried up there. Bring ‘em out from Sitka.

RH: Ah.

NG: Body. With his husband Peter Yatchmenoff from Kashega. ‘Cause Kashega’s not too far from Makushin.

RH: I know. I was listening to a recording of Sophie Pletnikoff and I guess after her father died they moved, they were in Chernofski, and they moved to Makushin for a short time and then they went back to, ah, they went to Kashega.

NG: Who is this?

RH: Sophie Pletnikoff.

NG: Sophie. Yeah. Sophie born in Chernofski. That’s what I hear. That little Sophie used to be right over here.

RH: Right, right. I think her uncle was Elia Shapsnikoff?

NG: From Kashega, yeah. Shapsnikoff was from Kashega and Attu. That’s why Anfesia Shapsnikoff was from Attu. But she learned our language. Long time ago people didn’t know where them Attu and Atka people come from. Different part of the mainland. ‘Cause these Aleuts here come from mainland.

RH: Uhmm.

NG: That ice age?

RH Um-hmm.

NG: ‘Cause it can’t save no more food. Animals come around bothering people, taking food away from people. Sometimes they kill somebody. So chiefs talk to them. They got chance to go on the ice, but they got no way to—the kids want to know how they are going to survive. But they got about 20 baidarkies from mainland. Put the seal skin in the bottom and pull it on the ice all the way. People together, all two or three thousand people come from mainland. But I don’t know why. People ask where we come from. I don’t know. If they ask me, I told them tomorrow I come from Makushin! [Laughs] I come from there anyway. I was right, ‘cause I was born there.

Yeah, they coming and the small kids in baidarkies only ones sleeping but crying. Somebody drinking his mother's milk once in awhile, but mother didn't have any milk, cause he don't eat, starving on the ice. But seal-skin/seal fat, before, 'cause cut the small seal fat and wood go right through and keep it in its mouth. He suck it in and quiet and go to sleep. Everybody start to do that with their kids. Sometimes people died on the ice, but can't do nothing so leave them there. Leave 'em by the ice.

This land, these Aleutian Islands, people when they were fishing in their baidarkies, when it was good clear weather, spotted one time. That's why they knew where the islands were on this side. And people know no mean animals on this side like on mainland. Kill a lot of Aleuts and can't even keep his food out, outside. They don't like them animals, come around and take it away. So they don't like it no more, so they started coming. They didn't know how many days they coming, but finally they reached on this side. By that time, ice started melting. By the time they come to the islands so they got baidarkies, way way long time ago, I guess, because, raspberries grow on this islands, from volcano acid, flying on the ground, from this something grow on them, finally grass grows another hundred years, I guess. Started making mud and grass. People started happy and built themselves underground houses more. The babies started getting bigger. That's why they can't tall houses no more, people can stay under it, stay warm wintertime, especially for the children.

RH: Did they have barabaras at Makushin?

NG: Well, Volcano Bay. Lot of them there. That's all underground houses from nobody's got woods. If you got woods, split woods and frame them inside. Well, last time I used to camp there, three houses left, good ones left.

RH: At Makushin? or at Volcano Bay?

NG: Volcano Bay.

RH: Volcano Bay.

NG: Nothing in Makushin. Well, after that, after Anderson Bay cannery started and they got wood from there. You know, make a little money from St. Paul, bring it in, buy some lumbers. Started building smaller house. Make them bigger after that. Wooden houses. You get after somebody died. After the Christian come out, that's what they do. But before Christian, before Christian, it seems on this islands, people started getting happy

because there's a lot of mud and a lot of grass coming out, grow after a hundred years, some people died. Some family died and got them rolled them under a seal skin and sealion skin and put them in a cave all the time. That's why a cave got a lot of people's bodies there. Unalga Island, I mean, ah, yeah, I think it is Unalga Island, past that Nikolski—

RH: Ah, yeah, ah, Kagamil. Kagamil?

NG: Some people there, this Unalaska chief sent people out there to talk to the other chiefs. Other chiefs come to town and have a meeting with that chief of Unalaska, tell 'em what to do. He wants to send some guys to stay on top of the mountain and—Four Mountains—and watch the west. Because the west people they don't like us. They want to fight the war with us. And they start to do that, down the Four Mountains, and sometimes they spot baidarkies long ways and baidarkies left Four Mountains and meet them. That's a long ways, that's why.

RH: Yeah.

NG: People starving. Baidarkies come from the west. So, even the baidarky come didn't have no weapon they want to know. Those people come from the west, they stand the paddle straight up and hold it. That other boats come from this side, they know they don't have no weapon. So they got there and talked to them, starving. Told them to go back to where he come from, said he's gonna give him some food. So he take some food and go back to Atka and Attu. That's why most of it keep watching it for years and years. That Four Mountain chief talks to them people—watchmen—but every week changing around. Lot of dead skeletons there, Four Mountains. Some of them Russians killed.

RH: Yeah.

NG: And the chief told them, "A different people somewhere else. They gonna come to us some day." So he watch it all around when it's good weather. One morning it was good clear weather, they spot a Russian sail boat, couple of 'em. One to the west side. He know they didn't have that kind of boats, Aleuts. So they come down and tell chief, "We spot a boat, two boats, one to the west, but it's not traveling good weather. Got sailboats." The chief sent the four baidarkies coming this way to Unalaska, so Nikolski, Kashega, Makushin, Chernofski, one baidarky there, one baidarky come in, one to the

southside, one to Akutan and False Pass, King Cove. "Something coming from somewhere else." So, he keep watching it and he call people from other places, Biorka people and Akutan people come in. Lot of people. When the boats come in they got only four man on the beach. Second chief on the bank. That's what chief tell them that. He been that way for a while, pretty soon one Russian boat come in. Pretty slow, but it come in. Pretty close to the beach and it dropped its anchor. Them Aleuts can't say anchor in its own language. *Qayux^tan*. *Qayux^tan acheeko*. That's what they call that *qayux^tan*, using it for line all the time, sinkers. [retrieving hook]

RH: Yeah.

NG: Anchors. And watch people. They said there was over 3,000 people hide away on this side with baidarkies.

RH: Hm hm.

NG: Wait for that second chief's signal with his hand. If he do it, all them baidarkies going to go to launch their baidarkies and go to the boat. Let them know how many guys left on the boat, only four guys left on the boat. There were nine people launch that life boat off the boat. They counted how many people got in the boat, life boat. The life boat is five people got in there, started row coming in, one guy back, three guys in the front. No, two guys and two guys row. Those guys on the beach, four guys on the beach, one of them, too, supposed to signal this guys. Waive his hands. He do it first time, no one waved. "*Tayax^kusutuungin*." The one guy say this off the beach to that chief, second chief. "Mad people." Finally, getting closer again, another guy raise his hand. Them two guys got a rifle in his hand waive. "Well, it's okay now." The boat come in on the beach, this guy grab it. This Aleut start talking to him. The Russian guy talked to him, he can't understand it. He gets the gun out and shoots the two guys. Kill 'em and second chief waive out his hand. This guy taking off to the other boat and he got all two guys, saved three guys, tie his hands and take him up to the chief. The chief happy for it. Going to keep 'em and learn from him, learn his language. Let him learn her language. That's what they do. And them other baidarkies out there, killing people off the boat. Four people, only three they say they killed them, cause they shot one and have to work on their gun, you know. And Aleuts got in the boat and two guys, two guys baidarkies, one guy in the boat and killed them other ones. They didn't find one of them. One guy

told 'em, "Hey, there's another guy on the boat I can't spot it." And watch it—pretty soon he come out from the front. He got a big knife. He wants to kill this Aleut but the Aleut spear him and kill him. Aleut wants to save the knife. He happy for that knife. And he got to take it up to the chief first. And he looks around on the boat and finds nothing but groceries, few groceries. Fifty pounds flour, few boxes of cans. He went up and let the chief know. Chief said, "You guys don't eat nothing off the boat. Dump it and save the boxes and bags." That's what they do. And way after that save all those sails, ropes, take 'em to the beach. Knives. Still got the guns, too. Gunpowders. 'Cause they know how to fill 'em. Aleuts watch them how to fill the guns up. "How am I doin'?" One guy bend down, fill his gun up, and put the beebee in there pull the trigger and almost shot his head.

RH: Umm.

NG: Other guys laugh at him. And the chief told him to take em, fill em up with the gravel, take him out to Priest Rock and put a hole in it. So he did. After he sank the boat, he come in and happy and another boat come in.

RH: So, this happened here at Unalaska?

NG: Unalaska, yes. Another boat come in and find out what going on. From a Russian priest come in. Bishops and priests. Ask these Aleuts what they do, if they kill anybody. Said they killed about 20 people. That Russian priest he don't like it. And second boat come in was the war ships Come in and start shooting people but priests stop it. "Don't do that. We'll learn from them and they'll learn from us." So, they start do that war one and they killed over 20,000 people in Attu and Atka. Lot of islands out there, this side of Atka and Attu.

RH: Ah um-hmm.

NG: All got families living there.

RH: Yeah.

NG: So, them Russian boats out there and rowed them, took them out of Kashega and let them jump overboard. Drowned them. They got 300 of them take them to Russia, young ones. That's the ones I seen when I went up in Russia.

RH: Ah. Um-hmm.

NG: They like to hear me. See, they are from Atka. He know that place, his great-grandfather come from, but he don't want to tell the story about it. He's not supposed to. Pretty strong with an American. Not supposed to tell what we done to the Aleuts before here but [unclear] making Christians out of them. One Russian boat come in got Christians. Now they travel with three men baidarkies. Go to place to place, making Christians. Put them Aleuts in one place, and families live in a different places.

RH: Yeah, there was that relocation of villages and moving of Aleuts.

NG: Yeah. Even Aleuts in different villages.

RH: Now, in Makushin, the Makushin people were whalers. Is that right?

NG: Akutan people. Not Makushin.

RH: Not Makushin people?

NG: No. That's why they call them *Qawalangin*. Akutan people. I told these guys about it, but they made that place [tribe headquarters] *Qawalangin*'s place, that other place down there.

RH: Yeah, yeah. The tribe.

NG: Hm hmm. *Qawalangin* are Akutan people. We're *Qigiig^un*. *Qigiig^un* Makushin and Kashega people. Biorka people.

RH: Biorka people are *Qigiig^un*?

NG: *Qigiig^un*. And Atka, Atka's *Sashiinan* and Attu was different, too. I forgot the name. Unalaska people are *Tayag^ungin*. That's Unalaska Aleuts' name before. But they made them *Qawalangin*, not so good. [Laughs] Something to pronounce good anyway.

RH: Yeah. So Akutan people were *Qawalangin* because they were whalers.

NG: That's why they call that *Qawalangin*. All the way down False Pass and King Cove. *Qawalangin*. *Sashiinan*. *Sashiinan*, that's Attu.

RH: Attu, yes.

NG: I couldn't understand it. One old guy, Nick Levigne, Nick Lekanoff, when I was out there. I was in one room with Nick Lekanoff. Two rooms, two people in each room.

RH: You know, in this list of, talking about Attu, this is a 1940 census, it mentions Mike Borenin from ah, let's see if I get this right—

NG: Mike Lukanin

RH: Ah, this one says Mike Borenin, ah, Innokentii Borenin and then Mike Borenin. And Mike Borenin, it says, Mike Borenin has two sons, Sergie and John.

NG: Yeah, yeah.

RH: And John lives at Attu with the chief. That would be with Michael, Mike Hodikoff, I guess.

NG: Yeah, Mike Borenin used to be here. Lived down there next to that Lekanoff Jr. place. He passing there. Right over by creek bank. Mike Borenin, I don't know when he come here, but he was here when I come. He died way after that. Yeah, I knew the guy named Mike Lukanin that's from Attu, related to Peter Lukanin from Biorka.

RH: Okay. And Peter's the one who married your sister, Molly.

NG: Yeah. That's why she hung around with my wife because she know that Peter Lukanin's sister. Because she was Lukanin and afterwards got adopted by Ermeloff. I had to ask him to get married to her. I like that girl. I got about over 100 girls that time. That's why I make one extra girl. That was not my wife, but my girlfriend.

RH: Okay. [Laughs]

NG: St. George.

RH: Back to Akutan and the whalers. How did people go, What did people do when they went whaling? How did they hunt whales?

NG: Well, not Attu people, but—

RH: But Akutan.

NG: Akutan is, ah, they got big boats, whale hunting there. They bring a whale there, six at a time. Used to be anchored right outside of Makushin Bay, with the whales floating, when they got enough, three on each side, tow them right to Akutan.

RH: Oh, this is when they had the whaling plant over there.

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. In Akutan. Yeah. So they start butchering, Akutan people start butchering 'em, and they go through all different ways, cooked that fat different, cook the meat different.

RH: But I was thinking more, Nick, more about the long-time-ago people.

NG: Yeah, long-time-ago people just use their baidarkies, that's all. But pretty hard in the beginning of the baidarkies. No drift wood on the beach. After building one baidarky, one baidarky traveling around, one-man baidarky, he gets some little wood,

loads his boat up and brings it in here, gives it to his chief. If he makes enough, I think, chief give it to somebody, make baidarky out of it. Finally started making two men baidarkies. Two men baidarky go a long ways, get more woods. Bring it to them, bring it into town, village, and start making three men baidarkies. The three men baidarky, the chief used to be taken to other village for a meeting. That's the same way when the Russians come up here, priest would be in three men baidarky, take him to different village. Some places it's pretty hard to come to a village. They don't believe in God. They don't believe what the bishop, priest says to them. He don't understand him, but these Unalaska people understand him. So let them explain, you know, let them know, just read a Bible to them, and bless them with holy water, make them Christians out of them. They let them do that. Them Aleuts say, "*Wan tag^agin!*" It means, "I'm going to try!" [laughs] They don't trust. [*tag^a-lix* means to try, test, or check something.] After that, name 'em and bless 'em, and use holy water on 'em, let 'em kiss the Bible and cross. They'd turn around and ask, those Aleuts, "*Alqut maludg/umchulix?*" He wants to know why he kissed the cross and Bible. "I'm pretty sure you're going to find out about it." That's what the Russians told him. And from there, they're Christians all the way. They want to stay together. And from there they found out where the families stayed. So, they'd send a baidarky there to get them and put them in a baidarky and bring them to the same village to be made a Christians. That Wislow was pretty hard. That's the only one that was pretty hard for the priest. Whale hunting, trying to sink baidarky, using harpoons, almost did it once and finally Christians from here stopped. They talked to them. "They're just want to make a Christians out of you guys."

RH: These would be the Four Mountain people or, ah, further west?

NG: No, Wislow.

RH: Ah, Wislow.

NG: That Four Mountains, he takes a long time to come to Christians, too. He don't believe a god. He never see God in his life, anyway. But the old timers used to have a pole at the end of his house, in the camp, always talk to them before he go out hunting. When he come in to the beach and bring something, he'd land in his place, his camp, take some stuff he find off the beach, take it up to that post. "*Wayam haqaasax^nkin.*" He'd hold that post for awhile, give me that thing by himself. Leave it by himself. Because he



told him, “I bring this to you.” “*Haqasukin*.” “Oh, we’re running it for the chief, or the big boss.” Because in the Aleut, they knew this chief, but people never think about a god. The Russian made it.

And a one, after that one guy hide away and disappear in Wislow. Never did find him until after Christians. That guy starving, got to come out. When he come out of his—he got a name, already named—he going to bless him, bless him and name him, and this guy run away. He was, I understand his last name was John Sherebernikoff. I asked Sophie one time if this was her grandfather! [Laughs] He didn’t know it either. Finally, he come to a Christian. After Christian come out everything start good. That’s why that Bible had been, story, built John Veniaminov and Innokentii something. Because he looked at the people; they don’t live right. But he want to live right, that’s why he make a note, stories in the Bible.

RH: I know Veniaminov spoke very highly about Aleuts. He said they were excellent people, good Christians.

NG: Yeah, that’s the one that be there.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Yep.

RH: Now, who did you hear the story about the Russians fighting here.

NG: That was from that Shelikoff.

RH: Luke Shelikoff? [This was, I think, a wrong assumption on my part although Nick repeatedly referred to Luke Shelikoff. Luke Shelikoff was the last chief of Akutan. He was a noted story-teller. Luke’s father was Kyril Shelikoff. The 1900 census gives his birth date as February 26, 1874, which would have made him 73 in the summer of 1947. Luke Shelikoff would have been only about 40 years old and Nick states below that the story teller was about 80.]

NG: Um-hmm. We used to give him ten dollars a night. Not every Saturday, because we didn’t work Saturdays and Sundays.

RH: In the Pribilofs?

NG: Um—hmm. He was there, last time he was there, 1940—‘47. That time he was 80-some years old. He said he heard those stories from other old people. Those other old people told me they got them from the other old people to the beginning of the Aleuts.

Those really old people they didn't know. He wanted to tell stories, tell other people, younger people, keep 'em going. So that's what I'm trying to do, but gee, I don't know. But I teach a lot of people.

RH: Yeah, you did, you have. Yeah.

NG: I teach a lot of people that story I hear before. That's a good story, them Four Mountains, started, Russians coming all the way in. Start coming visit. Still watching Atka but he finally find out boat come in from—Russian boat come in from Atka and Attu, plain Attu and Atka. That's why that Atka got different language, different dialects. That comes from brother and sister, small, been hide away from the Russians people taking people, drown them and killed them. Shoot some of it. Two or twenty thousand Aleuts, they took three hundred of them out of there. One Russian I talked to said pretty close to 400 Aleuts there in Russia now, kids—

RH: In the Commander Islands, yeah.

NG: We stayed in that Petropavlovsk. That Russians Second World War Two is pretty hard there in Russian, still starvation. And I think to eat, Russian give them one cabbage a day for three-days' supply. Cut it four places, pieces, and cook it and boil it, eat it with a soup, piece of cabbage. Got nothing to eat; they don't give away. It's not like American, you know, give some food away for people. They don't do that there. Still do that, anyway, but there's a store there. You can't buy two at a time, got to buy one thing, that's all. Goddamned big bottles of goddamned pop. Goddamned, that one girl was with us from Anchorage, she can't even carry the bottle. I have to carry it for her, goddamned heavy. . . .

RH: How long were you over there?

NG: Ten days.

RH: Ten days.

NG: Goddamned, I loose ten pounds.

RH: [Laughs]

NG: When I left, 170 pounds, 73 pounds. When I come in I try myself, 160 pounds. That girl coming this way asked, "How much hamburger are you going to buy?" She wanted to get a dozen hamburger pieces.

RH: I want to ask you a different question about, ah, about Makushin. Why don't you think people tried to resettle Makushin after the war? After the war they went to Biorka and to Kashega. But they—

NG: Well, they don't mean to. They don't mean to leave Makushin. They don't mean to leave Kashega. But Chernofski was empty before the war.

RH: Right.

NG: Sickness going on. They were only left with Korella Borenin, Innokentii Borenin, and Sophie [Pletnikoff]. I think five people left when they moved into Kashega. My step-dad, Innokentii Borenin, he said he remembered all that sickness that time, 19—, nineteen-hundred something year. People dying off. That's what he told me that.

RH: And your step-dad, Innokentii Borenin, moved to Kashega?

NG: Um-hmm. From Chernofski. That Kashega people go there again and burn the church-house. They got a small church. They burned it up. Took some old pictures out of it. Goddamn, that a goddamned good place, that Chernofski. That's the only place the army built a dock, there. And a big warehouse, end of the shore-side of the dock.

RH: They used it to take supplies over to Umnak.

NG: Uh huh. In that cove. That's where we used to take a horse, from the horse and wagon, from that sheep ranch side to go around inside the bay and load our wagon up with that coal, take it into the village. They were using it for firewood. For steam-bath, not steam-bath, but shower. They got it goddamned good there in Chernofski. . . .

RH: . . . . Nick, I don't want to keep you talking too long.

NG: That's okay.

RH: Is it okay? I mean, I don't want to wear you out. [Laughs]

NG: I'm not doing nothing anyway.

RH: Okay. Good. After, let's see, after the war, you went back to, you came to Unalaska after the war?

NG: Um-hmm. Because I'm from here.

RH: Right, right.

NG: But the boat bringing us stopped in Akutan first.

RH: Okay. And did, where did the Biorka people, did they get off at Akutan or—

NG: Um-hmm. Akutan, too. Kashega, Makushin. They didn't have much people in Makushin, this family, Borenin family.

RH: Yeah.

NG: And Kashega [unclear] ten or nine families, but they got five man and six woman. We got on, later on that goddamned boat, I told him to talk to them and tell them we didn't want to live in Akutan. We wanted to come over from Akutan. They pick them up from Kashega and Nikolski. Nikolski used to be different name before the war. Biorka. 'Cause Andrew Makarin didn't want to stay there, Akutan.

RH: Ah.

NG: He didn't get along with that, you know, Nick, Nick McGlashan.

RH: Oh, yes.

NG: He used to be up here, that time. Used to live here. He died. He died in Anchorage, at a home.

RH: And so Andrew wanted to go back to—

NG: Yeah, he come from Akutan with his own dory. Landed over Biorka, check it first. Check them houses. Then me and Alec Zharaoff, Victor Tutiakoff—I guess, Victor, Tracy's brother—

RH: Oh, yes, yeah.

NG: They was over there trapping, for the church down there, because they got a fox island over there. Biorka's got a longer fur from those red fox. So they were living in Andrew Makarin's house. Andrew Makarin's house okay. Well, four houses was okay. So they come in and talked to that Verne Robinson. Verne Robinson talked to them army boats. So the army boats, them barges, was going to Akutan and was going to take the rest of the Biorka people to Biorka. So Andrew went back to Akutan again. After three days barge got there and most of the people got in the barge, food, mostly Army food they were going to give anyway. And a few lumber, take 'em over to Biorka. So when the Biorka people come back, then I told Nick Borenin, but Nick Borenin got a girlfriend there. Don't want to go back. There was only three Makushin guys there then. Ilia and Nick Borenin, other guy named John. No, no. Victor, Victor Borenin. That's Nick's brother.

RH: Okay.

NG: And his mother died in Makushin, I guess around, or else down by the Ketchikan. Goddamned, he should have got chance to take it [her body] home. Never do it for St. Paul people, too. More people died in St. Paul people. St. George has got about two or three. And Nikolski people—Jesus Christ, more fucking people died in Nikolski, man. By TB. One goddamned family got six brothers and loose them all. One of them maybe lived for awhile. He married and then he died. Die with his wife. Husband got a cancer, Martin, that's his name. He used to be living, working with Reeve Airlines.

RH: Ah, Martin Krukoff.

NG: Martin Krukoff, yeah. He's married from St. George. Those people married from St. George, I know his wives. Because I got there before them guys. But I don't want married. I don't want stuck with a girl because I'm already married. . . .

RH: So, the Biorka people, ah, when they got to Biorka the military hadn't been over there, so their houses were pretty much okay?

NG: Okay, yeah. They gave us more lumber. So we got an extra another house. We built another house for Peter Lukanin. That's why they got five houses there.

RH: Peter was married to your sister.

NG: Yeah. My Molly. . . .

RH: How long did the people stay at Biorka after the war?

NG: Till 1965, I think. Some people move 'em over here.

RH: Uh-huh.

NG: Good thing, I think, moved in. Some kind of tornado hit the Biorka. Peter Lukanin's house, goddamned heavy, it's a bigger house, wind lifted it. I see it hit the bank and fell in a little bit.

RH: Wow.

NG: And blow out to sea. Akutan people find their roof on Akutan, Akun Island. That old George Yatchmenoff house, half in the water. Goddmaned, that's a pretty long house, too, two houses together.

RH: This was after people left.

NG: After. Nobody there. That Andrew Makarin house, half of it all tear down. My wife's house and Ruff's house, there's nothing wrong with them. I was there. It was after that I got there. Ruff with us. He spotted, good anyway. Laughing away. We

wanted to know what the hell he was laughing about. Finally I get a little closer and I see what the hell they're laughing at. Laugh at George Yatchemenoff's house on the beach. The Church. Church. Wind blow it away, Jesus Christ, pretty high. Push this gravel, push it all the way right up to the window.

RH: Wow.

NG: All the way part even blown away. Last Andrew Makarin was there was in '46. Andrew Makarin he was still living, '45 or '46. No, '50, '66.

RH: Oh, yeah. Because I remember him. Yeah. Yeah.

NG: He tear down church and burn it all up. And that middle table. That's big for us, anyway. Middle table. Not supposed to touch it.

RH: Oh, the altar. Yeah.

NG: Um hmm. Make a house over it and cover it all up. Goddamned someone put a hole in it. Want to peek in it; want to know what's in it. God. They do the same way in Makushin. Wind blow 'em away I think right now.

RH: Do you remember what the name of the church was in Makushin?

NG: Makushin church. I used to go there. I know that. He got a name, but. . .

*Blavaseenveh*, I think is the name of the church. Kashega, I mean Biorka people Nicholai. And Kashega is Vasillii, I guess. They all got names.

RH: Yeah. Yeah. Now, was Andrew Makarin, he wasn't the chief at Biorka or was he? Was he the chief?

NG: No. Alec Ermeloff was the chief.

RH: Okay, but, but—

NG: Andrew Makarin was running the service.

RH: Oh, the reader for the church. But Andrew seemed to really the leader there in getting the village resettled.

NG: Um-hmm. That's what he do. Now all Biorka men died, now. Last one was living down in Petersburg, Fede. He was Coco's brother, younger brother.

RH: Yatchmenoff?

NG: Um-hmm. He got pneumonia and he died. He supposed to move here. Before that he died. . . . He got two kids. He got two girls. The two girls old enough to get married. But he buy a house, that Fede, 'cause he got settlement money. He work in the cannery

20 years. Some Norweigan pay him so he retire. That's why he bought himself a house for his daughters, and live in it.

That Kashega, [unclear] fought for it, but they didn't get it. All these men they can't leave the girls in Akutan, but two are. One guy named Mike Kudrin and guy another, named Borenin.

RH: George Borenin?

NG: Ah ha. George Borenin and the third one is, ah—

RH: Cornelius—

NG: Cornelius Kudrin. Yeah.

RH: I didn't realize that Mike Borenin went back to Kashega, too.

NG: Yeah. Mike, Mike Kudrin!

RH: Yeah, sorry, Mike Kudrin.

NG: He died of heart problems. He went to Anchorage, let them check his heart lot of times. Didn't have them heart protectors. Didn't have them that time. Walter got one of 'em. And Larry Shaishnikoff, he got one. That Lottie's husband got some. Got heart problem. Larry, his heart almost killed a couple times without one. On his boat. Fall down and he can't stand up and got to stay. Take him all the way to the doctor's. Take him to Kodiak and shipped him to Anchorage. Lucky he's living anyway, that guy, Larry. Rich people, they don't want to die, I guess. [Laughs] I told some girl a lot of times, that a girl work down there, the bar. Don't work today. I went down there and seen him yesterday. The one girl is nice to me, the one that left. She went to Ketchikan, I mean Juneau, forgot her name. Kid knows her name. Her mother got sick, she got to quit and go out. I told that girl quit, too. Goddamned, they're young but they inhale cigarettes. Don't have to smoke it, you know. Piles up in your lungs. Lot of people died from his lungs.

RH: What did people used to do for medicine around here?

NG: Way before called "Medicine, Medicine Man." Used to have a lot of medicine but not for TB, not for cancer. He could work on people. Only thing is, he can't operate on people. Because of his headaches, because of his pain on his side, back. All kinds of plants grew up here, on Unalaska. Makushin, mostly. All kinds of medicine grow there. I understand people used to saving it, but people they don't save it no more. Them roots

they used to use, some Biorka people used, some of 'em, used. Goddamned people, used to be heavy pack, take it over the trail all the way. Used to be pick some from up there in the valley, going up. Looked like real putchkies but it's not real putchkies.

RH: Oh.

NG: The roots is pretty big but about this long. Pretty thick.

RH: A strong putchkie. [*Angelica lucida* L.]

NG: Un-huh.

RH: Yeah. Bitter.

NG: That's what people are using in the steam bath. And you can't touch the skin with it because that milk come out of it. Got thin grass over your skin and put it right on, keep it really warm. I know they used it, the front of me. I know a lot of medicine to be used before but I can't tell people. I don't know how to fix it. Anybody use it, get in trouble and I get in trouble.

[CD 1 ends here and CD 2 begins in mid-sentence.]

NG: . . . boil them and after you boil them drink it like tea, drink one cup.

RH: Now, what do you, what do you boil?

NG: Them stuff. I don't know the name of it.

RH: Oh, yeah.

NG: That's why I was going to— people they didn't know it. I was going to pick some for little Sophie down there, some time got sore breathe—

RH: I know Jennie Krukoff used to pick, ah, ah, oh, I can't say it in Aleut.

[mispronounces] *ulngig^dagan* or something It's yarrow. It's a very fuzzy, hairy, little plant. It smells really good when you rub it, when you break it up in your hand.

NG: Yeah, I think I know them. I'm not sure though.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: Them plants I'm talking about are about this long.

RH: Ah. About 2 inches. [I think Nick was referring to *Leptarrhena pyrolifolia*, Leather-Leaved saxifrage – *alix^siisix^*.]

NG: Just like airport kite. Grow right in the small creeks, edge of the small creeks. You can keep them, they live all winter long. So, I know my sister used to pick it. 'cause my sister got one lung. She used to take it. She told me, "You going to cook your whiskey



again!” [Laughs] Laugh at me. People used to make a tea. Long time ago tea called kipriyan [fireweed, *Epilobium angustifolium*] That’s a good tea.

RH: How did you move from Makushin over here? How did you get, you didn’t walk over. You must have come by boat.

NG: I did before, I walked, but the Coast Guard bring us here. I’ve been through there one time.

RH: Through the pass there, yeah. It’s a long pass.

NG: Four hours walking. Could be faster but we didn’t know which way to turn. This side, okay, but other end—

RH: Ah.

NG: —you got to turn to the village. Me and my brother, my brother’s not big, but we used to go through it. Anyway, it’s got a name. The name of that place is Portage Bay and Anderson Bay. I was there. Dug on the beach for awhile, no cabin. People used to use tent anyway. Long ways Makushin way, from there on the beach. One climb hill, one hill, climb it over, from there you got to walk sand all the way. Below that volcano?

RH: Yeah.

NG: Goddamn, a lot of hot spring water there. That’s the one people used to get kids get some water from there, five galleon. Bring it to me. They’d use it on me ‘cause I got sore all over. My hair, can’t heal up. I’d have to wash my face from it.

RH: This is when you were living in Makushin?

NG: Um hmm. I used to, I was a kid anyway, goddamned crawled on the goddamned ground, hide away. Play hide out, other guy looking for us. Sometime looking for half a day. Called him *Kuukalax*<sup>^</sup> in Aleut. *Kuukalax*<sup>^</sup>. Funny them Aleuts named things anyway before. Yeah, the way before people living different people before Russian Orthodox now. Yeah, people pretty tough living. But happy for them could be tough for us if we didn’t know it.

RH: Yeah

NG: We didn’t know it. People living on ducks, seals. Summer come, they live vegetables grow. Did you try pickled salmon—pickled putchkies?

RH: No. No.

NG: I tried some last time. Goddamned, it was good.

RH: Was it? Yeah?

NG: First time, too. One lady and one guy, one Aleut guy, lady. I told them to go Eider Point because Eider Point putchkey long before it gets stiff. They give me jar of it once. I tried once, but I finished it all! [Laughs] It was good. I like it. I told them people use it for vegetables. Petruskies. Same kind petruskies in Russian. Putschkies. I don't know if they got salmon berries, but blueberries. Different shape, though. Ours are round. Those Russian blueberries from Russia look like little candy, those bent ones.

RH: Oh, yeah.

NG: Same kind. Make jam out of it. Families, how many people in your house, you get a pound. He gave one to Nick Lekanoff, that Attu guy. Nick Lekanoff, he don't understand him but smiles all the time. Make me laugh. [Laughs] Well, I know some of it, but I can't talk it.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Yeah. But he told Nick Lekanoff, "*Qawaalimax*." I know that word, anyway.

*Qawaalimax*. Sea lion flipper. Sea lion flipper. Sea lion flipper in dry fish.

Goddamned, everybody making dry fish. Good dry fish because there are no flies, not really windy, not really warm. Goddamn, dry fish dry good. Like up in north. I wondered when it was going to dried up, I was thinking, but no it don't take long. Take one week, take 'em home. Goddamned, keep it good winter. Not moldy. I used to get from the north, one lady. Must be died or somebody quit em. Used to send me some dry fish. Forgot his name anyway. When I was up in north, I find it.

Goddamned that Fede was taking my place on a boat. I was a cook on a boat, Alaska Housing boat. I used to cook for 20 people. That's all I'd do on the boat. Didn't anybody like em cooking, so that's okay then. The goddamned, the Norweigan skipper, the skipper was on the boat. He wanted boiled fish. I have to boil fish for him. I got to boil potato for him. Give it to him, boy, he liked. He don't like to clean 'em by knife. He'd pulled the skins off.

RH: Ah, yeah.

NG: "You're thrown the vitamins away," I told him. I should have give him seal oil but I didn't! [Laughs]

RH: Where did people in Makushin get their salmon from?

NG: Volcano Bay.

RH: Ah ha.

NG: In that Pumicestone Bay. Pumicestone Bay got nothing but dog salmon. One bay between Kashega. People, ah, big dory used to go there, rowed up. One time, my grandfather inboard engine used to run. Two of the dories go there, seining.

Goddamned, the only other kind of fish we got there for seining. I didn't go there that time. Nothing but mans go there fishing. Jesus, boat load of goddamned fish, good for salting and drying.

RH: They'd bring them back to the village then?

NG: Um-hmm. Everything we get we deliver to the aged's house. But after he [Pete Olsen] come in I don't like it. Sometime, ah, sometime bald out. Come in I watched him coming in, so, I helped him pull his boat up. Goddamned, what he get he put it in a bag, take it home. He didn't give me nothing. I didn't like him. I always said, "*Tayamiklinax*" —stingy man. Yeah. I used to sit down on the beach, eating bar of candy. I used to throw half of it in the water, for my dad. Pretty hard to get over it. He used to teach me. Goddamned, he used to read Aleut books.

RH: Your dad used to read Aleut books? Yeah.

NG: If forgot all about it. He teach me. After Russians, Aleut talk, made it, John Veniaminov, Innokentii.

RH: Who read the services at the church in Makushin?

NG: Simeon Lekanoff.

RH: Ah.

NG: Simeon Lekanoff, my dad, Matfey used to be running it. Whoever wanted go, do it, you know. That's the way the people used to do then.

RH: And who was the midwife in Makushin? Did you have a midwife there?

NG: What do you mean?

RH: To help with babies, delivering babies.

NG: My grandmother and Nick Borenin's grandmother. Because they've been training way before from other people. Yeah. She born me, too, I know—I didn't know!

RH: Right.

NG: [Laughs] That's the way they do it, all along. Everybody can help. Anybody help. They used to teach them other young girls, two young womans. They told the other young womans we're not going to be that way all the time, we might be gone. . . .

RH: In Makushin, who was the chief in Makushin? Was there a chief when you were growing up?

NG: Elia Borenin.

RH: Elia. And the second chief?

NG: My dad.

RH: Your dad. Did they have third chiefs, too, or mostly first and second?

NG: First and—them chiefs used to come in and talk to this chief. Unalaska chief used to be the big for other people

RH: Alexei Yatchmenev.

NG: Um-hmm. His other son named Alexei Yatchmenev, his youngest son?

RH: Um-hmm.

NG: He died. Goddamned, he been out, his brother John Yatchmenov and Nick Lekanoff. Nick Lekanoff is not really big. Went down in a skiff. That's the time I went out, too, that day. Matfey and Steve Lekanoff. We went halibut fishing. I mean, fishing over there in the pass. Them east wind picked up so we turned back and we got home. I don't know when he left but I heard him he didn't come back. When you come this way from that dock, so he stopped in his camp, that's old Kusta's camp, used to be Alec Yatchmenev's for fishing ground. 'Cause way inside [at the head of Captains Bay] is Nick Lekanoff's—Nick Shaishnikoff's dad's fishing grounds. That Alexei Yatchmeev used to camp over at Eider Point.

RH: Yes.

NG: I told Ruthie about it. She just now find out about it. Must be a lot of village over there, big village before.

RH: Yeah, that's what I've heard. Yeah.

NG: Yeah. Goddamned, lot of skeleton under it, way under.

RH: Nick, at Makushin, when you were a child, what was your house like? I mean, ah, you know, where was the door? Did you have an entry way?

NG: Yeah, we got almost like this next house. Our roof we got a bedroom, two big rooms and no living room. Living room was where we used to eat, kitchen stove there.

RH: How did you, what kind of, was it a wood stove or coal?

NG: Wood stove.

RH: Wood stove. Uh-uhh.

NG: We didn't get no oil. Pete Olsen used a wood stove, too.

RH: Where did you get the wood from because—?

NG: Lot of wood on lot of bays. That's the place we used to go. Makushin didn't have no wood. People used to, ah, whoever find wood first they hauled it. That's what it seemed like it in Makushin. Long as I been in, I liked it 'cause it's the only one I know, when I was a kid. Go in there and go to bed. Go in there and eat. Hang on to my grandmother. I don't like people. Maybe I was jealous, jealous of other boys. My dad come around sometimes, "That's not your mom. That's your grandmother!" I don't like it! [Laughs] "No, that's my mom!" I used to call my real mom *ayagax*^, 'cause I'm daddy's atcha. "Ayagax^, that's my wife."

RH: Ah ha.

NG: I used to call her my wife. [Laughs] Well, anything I call anybody something.

RH: Did you have a steam bath in Makushin?

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. That's better than these. Really good steambath.

RH: Was it owned by everybody?

NG: Everybody, yeah. Whoever started it first. This family clean it the next morning. That's how they do that. Sometimes there's no wood so everybody donate wood. Cook 'em. I used to take bath there, I know. But I can't stay inside with those big guys, too Goddamned hot. People said one time Pete Olsen, goddamned drinking, he wanted steambath. "I'm going to steambath." And he got there and laid down and he went to sleep. And I got up and hurry up and took off. Too goddamned hot in there when they use it.

RH: Did it have different levels?

NG: Yeah. Used to have two beds and one different place you can put hot water on it. Man take a bath first and woman take a bath next but when woman take a bath, got to

have a watchman. These people used to watch around there. We don't trust those goddamned gold-miners.

RH: Ah.

NG: Stay there late. That's when they killed one lady in Makushin. Right after service. She went over to the warehouse, she was going over to the warehouse to get something. Dark. She never come home so people looked for her. They didn't find it. Find her next day, right in the creek. Somebody stop blood on the side of it. Goddamned, them Norwegians.

RH: What were they doing there?

NG: I don't know. Killing people, I guess. There was gold mining, but they're quitting but they didn't come in this way. I know a guy named John Reinkin.

RH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

NG: I meet him in the Native Hospital one time. He was there. That's all. Everybody know him really because he'd come to town to get something to eat once in awhile. Pete Olsen not to give him food. I don't care about Pete Olsen. I'd give him some food. And those old Makushin people they could stay there that time. They don't like Pete Olsen, that's why my Grandfather and family go.

RH: I think John Reinkin was related to Henry Swanson, ah, because Henry's grandfather was a Reinkin.

NG: Yeah?

RH: Was a Reinkin, yeah.

NG: I think Henry Swanson Orthodox?

RH: Yes, I think so.

NG: Yeah, I think so, too, but he never go to church.

RH: No, no. Except to be baptized and buried, I guess.

NG: [Laughs] That's what he do! Like Larry's father. He never go to church. Wait 'till he died—he go to church.

RH: After the war, this, the houses in here, New Town—

NG: Yeah?

RH: How did people get this property?

NG: Well, some people had properties there anyway, you know, those old houses.

RH: Uh-uhh

NG: Some of them all beat up; most of them. Them army guys in there drinking, making a mess all over our house.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Some of the houses tear down.

RH: But here in New Town, these were people from the other villages, mostly, right?

NG: Makushin, Biorka, Makushin village. Not any more.

RH: No, no, but it used to be.

NG: Only two Kashega people on this side.

RH: So there was Mike and Dora Kudrin over here.

NG: Yeah, Mike Kudrin.

RH: And then next to them was Kusta and Helen Lekanoff?

NG: Kusta and Helen, Helen Lekanoff, that's Kusta's wife.

RH: Yeah.

NG: That lot over there used to be Henry, Henry, Henry Peter's.

RH: Oh, Ok.

NG: That's the one I took it away from him. The last one over there was Sophie's.

RH: And Henry Peter's. Is that where Molly lived? Molly Lukanin.

NG: No, it was my house last. He was there after my stepfather drowned and I took his place. My mother paid, my wife paid for it. But I can't prove it. I told her to get that pass, the receipt, from Mr. McNiece. McNiece was selling them, that's the time. And he paid only two hundred fifty dollars for his property. I think some said forty dollars.

RH: Ah ha. For the deed.

NG: From outside

RH: Now on this side there was Andrew Makarin down by the creek.

NG: Creek, yeah.

RH: And then—

NG: And next was Peter Samokinsky.

RH: Ah.

NG: Right next door.

RH: Where was he from?

NG: Peter Samokinsky I think was from here. Somebody asked me that. I don't know nothing about him. When he was young he used to go Makushin, go fishing, for that cannery. That time, Volcano — Makushin cannery is gone. My dad used to take me there, about this high, in a dory sometime but no local people working there.

RH: No.

NG: Philipinos and Chinese. He told me, "Watch Chinese after lunch. They're going to smoke a pipe." I don't know what "pipe" means. *Truuvkax*^, he told me then. After a while he, goddamned, he got a long pipe. Fill it up and light it up, put it between his tooth, nail it down and went to sleep. Couple puffs and he went to sleep. Sleep for a while, working hours, he wake up, clean his pipe and put it away, and start working. I think it's got some kind of drug.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: That's the way they do that.

RH: Wow. Then next to you, was that Arthur and Elsie Lekanoff?

NG: That's from Makushin, that's my uncle, my real uncle.

RH: Ah. Okay.

NG: That's his sister was my mother. Periscovia. Her sister was Natalia, the one who bring the body in. [The one whose body was brought in recently.]

RH: Oh, okay. . . .

NG: . . . . Goddamned, that graveyard don't have no place up there left.

RH: Up here?

NG: Um-hmm. The people on this side here are on top of the other people.

RH: Yeah. It's been used for quite a while.

NG: Oh, yeah. Well, one time, long time ago, I don't know his name, but the top box was open, open, opened it up. Nice clean box inside. All the meat come off from the body. Looked like somebody swept it on one side. I looked at him. Goddamned wondered who that skeleton guy in the middle, not even meat pretty close by.

RH: Wow. Wow.

NG: I don't know. Long time ago people buy books, said angel come around and cleaned them. That one, on both sides got look like meat in there. I don't know, looked



like mud. Some kind of plant grow on it, got water on it. I didn't touch it. I don't want to break it.

RH: Right.

NG: Last time I dig a hole up there for Hope, Charlie Hope.

RH: Oh, yeah.

NG: The whole family's up there. His wife and his daughter. I don't think they bring his son up here. Oh, yeah, he's got a son up there, too, the oldest one. . . .

RH: Hmm.

NG: But he got one brother died out there, somewhere. He wasn't married, too, but he died. He went out. Oh, somewhere around San Francisco.

RH: Oh.

NG: There's Russian Orthodox there, I guess.

RH: Oh, yeah, yeah, in fact, yeah.

NG: And the priest up there before, too, he died there. He the one married to Sophie. Yeah, he was blessing people.

RH: Hmm.

NG: After American got this from Russian, before Russians leaving from here, got nothing to give us, these Aleut peoples. So they give them that church, a present.

RH: Hm hmm.

NG: Ever since Aleut take care of it and use it.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: That's the way it's supposed to be.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Same thing they do that up in Russia.

RH: I saw Father Bourdukofsky this morning—

NG: Yeah

RH: And he said that, ah, 300 people went into the church yesterday off of a tour boat.

NG: Yeah.

RH: Yeah. So I hope they, I hope they left an offering, that they paid to go in and —  
[Laughs]

NG: Yeah. That's what a father do that, in Russian, and blessing people. People not blessing when I was a kid.

RH: Hmm.

NG: Second World War Two moved from that place, the Russian side. They moved in, oh, Jesus Christ, over 2 – 300 people.

RH: Ah. Now when you were in Makushin, did a priest ever come to Makushin?

NG: Once a month. Not once a month. He's supposed to but sometimes only boat running he go there. Yep. Only time bishop go there, bless the town. Ah, no one tell father about it. He used to bless this town. Go around the town, this side. Never do it for many years now. Doctor, I mean, priest done that after war. Bless them and everything. Even you better trust the blessing. That's what he told us.

RH: Ah. And that was Father Baranov?

NG: Uh huh.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Yeah, that Father Baranov, he's a strong father. Both died, too, after they got down there. [San Francisco] His wife. His wife holler at me in Russian one time and I don't know what the hell talking about! [Laughs] Chickens over there. Chickens in St. Paul.

RH: Hmm.

NG: Goddamn, one chicken, Jesus Christ, rooster, hollering like hell. He come out of his house and he talking American, I don't know what the hell he's saying. Maybe, "Who ate my chicken?", maybe. [Laughs] I told him, "Nobody bother it." . . .

RH: Well, Nick. Thank you very much.

NG: That's okay.

RH: I don't know if I can stop this machine now. I'll try it.

NG: I could tell stories. Maybe make a story some time. Maybe I'll send it to you.

RH: Yeah, or, you know, I'm going to be here for ten days. Maybe I could come back.

NG: Yeah, you could do that.

RH: That would be good.

NG: I want to tell you the story how them Russians come. How the people for the lucky charm they come in this Unalaska.

RH: That would be wonderful. Yeah. Okay.

## 6. Nicholai Galaktionoff

June 4, 2004

[The CD begins in mid-sentence with Nick talking about the men who used to gather outside in the morning to observe and predict the weather.]

Nick Galaktionoff: . . . what time it's going to start storm.

Ray Hudson: How did they do that?

NG: Well, in the morning, those storm people used to get up early in the morning and look at the clouds, what it look like and which way running and how fast I don't know.

RH: Um hmm

NG: He knew. Pretty close, people used to be right. But this time it's going to be wind is going to pick up—pretty close. Goddamn, it starts windy.

RH: Yeah.

NG: 'cause they don't want people too far out, long ways out, cause didn't have no engine, and after that dory come out, cod fishing.

RH: Oh, yeah. When did the first dories arrive? Like at Makushin?

NG: Well, my dad got a brand new dory. Everybody got dories; about 5 dories there.

RH: Huh.

NG: My grandfather got two. One got an inboard engine, one skiff with no engine.

RH: And they gradually took the place of baidarkies?

NG: Oh, yeah. . . . They got good place. [Nick misunderstood my question and thought I was referring to sea eggs, known as baidarkies.] Over Biorka same thing. Sea eggs and baidarkies. I knew them too. But I was over there nine years. Biorka.

RH: So what was it like at Biorka when you were over there?

NG: Oh, I like to go out hunting, fishing. That was my life that time.

RH: Ah, yeah.

NG: I still do, but I can't go out. I could go out now but—I always go with Sam Svarny.

RH: Oh, yeah.

NG: But his wife he don't want to let me go. Told his husband about it that's why he don't want to take me out. He don't want me to fall off the boat.

RH: [Laughs]

NG: I got a good life jacket anyway. I always wear it. Looks like a coat.

RH: Ah, Nick, . . . how about some information about Biorka and Andrew Makarin and the folks that lived over there?

NG: Yeah, the first time I stay there I stay with Andrew Makarin. She's a blind lady used to be there.

RH: His wife.

NG: Andrew's wife. She's blind. She's got one eye. That thing happened when she was small. So she was blind the rest of the days, rest of the years. Well, that lady can't even see nothing but he do something for himself. Wash clothes, clean his house. Used to call me different name. . . . Called *Aagliichanax^*. *Aagliichanax^* is Germany. We'd call each other *Aagliichanax^* in Aleut.

RH: What does that mean?

NG: *Aagliichanax^* means Germany.

RH: Germany, hah. Why did she call you that?

NG: Well, we used to call em, call each other, like, everybody call Ruff Ermeloff—you know him—

RH: Yeah.

NG: That's the one they called *Aagliichanax^*. I'm his atcha, that's why he called me *Aagliichanax^*. And the same time I'm after a girl, too, then. That was my wife, Irene. He want me to stay on this side. I don't like to stay on this side. I don't like people drinking. Sometime people get in that trouble.

RH: Was it hard here after the war?

NG: Oh, everybody, everybody working. Clean the houses, fix the houses, mostly roofs. Paper all blowed away. Army guys split the door. Some people locked their door.

[John Galaktionoff speaking on the radio: Dad, you got your radio on?]

RH: Oh, just a second. I'll stop this.

[There is a break and the tape resumes with Nick speaking about his dog.]

NG: I got em from Nikolski.

RH: Oh, yeah?

NG: Irene bring it, I mean, Julia bring it in.

RH: Ok.

NG: Goddamn, about 16 years ago.

RH: Man. He's an active little dog.

NG: Lot of people call him "puppy." [Laughs]

RH: [Laughs] He looks like it. . . . So, Nick, after the war, when did you first go over to Biorka?

NG: Well, I was here more than two years. I used to work in the church. I helped Joe Chagin. Find the people to fix the roof.

RH: Oh, here in Unalaska?

NG: Uh hah. Got to work on it. Finally we got it fixed. Now they changed it all, last time, last couple years ago. Take 'em two years to work on it. All the lumber start getting, 2 by 4s, all rottin' away, ends rottin' away. Change all around! There were carpenters in town.

RH: How was the church in Biorka when they got back?

NG: Well, it was just about the same. It's not too bad, not really big anyways. It was all right. Makushin it was already started leaking.

RH: Ah.

NG: That's what I hear from that Elia Borenin. They fix every church after war.

RH: Did Elia Borenin go back to Makushin after the war?

NG: No, he went to Akutan.

RH: Akutan.

NG: We got a head guy on a barge, on a boat, that went take care of us, but not, not other villages. Unalaska people got different, different leader. Guy named Mr. Long. . . .

RH: . . . after World War II, after the people came back from Southeastern Alaska and they came here to Unalaska, how did the people from the villages, from Makushin and Kashega and Biorka, how did they fit in with the Unalaska people?

NG: Well, they leave them all in Akutan.

RH: Ah.

NG: Three village people: Kashega, Makushin, and Biorka.

RH: Do you know why they picked Akutan to leave them there?

NG: Well, I don't know why. Goddamn, the leader on there was not really a good guy. Those small villages they don't want to go there. I told them to talk to him, they don't give a damn. But this is mostly young man, he's got a lot of girls over in Akutan that time. He be after the girls, I guess.

RH: Hmm.

NG: But Andrew Makarin, after he got there he stay there one week and—summer or spring time—he come in his own boat.

RH: Hmm.

NG: A dory.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Go all the way from Akutan to Biorka. And he got two guys in the boat with him, Alec and Victor.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Trapping for Unalaska church. They lived in Andrew Makarin's house and check all the houses. Houses okay, in good shape yet. So they come in, put his boat over there in Ugadaga Bay, and walk from there, come in and talk to Verne Robinson. What he want to do. So that Verne Robinson asked him to Army doctors, Army people, Army leader. So he went down with him and talked to them and said he don't want to live in Anchorage, I mean Akutan. So he tell him he could use a barge, them barge that run themselves, make a boat out of barges, for using in wartime.

RH: Um hmm

NG: So he give him ten days. Said he's going to Akutan and pick up Akutan people and went to Biorka. So Andrew went to Akutan and told all the Biorka people pack up everything ready and he got supplies, too. Shore lumber. Unload over Biorka and Army barge come in and bring some more lumber over. And that's why he built that Peter Lukanin house.

RH: Ah.

NG: Used to be only four houses there. And the wind picked it up.

RH: Hmm.

NG: Brand new house. Goddamned pretty big sized house. Sometime big storm hit.

Biorka people, no, no Biorka people over there that time.

RH: They had moved to Unalaska?

NG: Yeah, moved in. After about three or four years.

RH: Hm hmm

NG: I don't believe it. Jesus Christ, houses I used to stay in, goddamn, all blown away.

RH: Wow. So what did the people do over there after the war?

NG: Well, they started living like they used to, I guess. People go out and go fishing, duck hunting, seal hunting. Sometimes come over every month and take some groceries over to Beaver Inlet. From there they cut across 'cause they got inboard engines. Well, they're not starving over there. . . . we used to have a lot of food. That's why I like to stay there. Go out hunting.

RH: Ah.

NG: Well, me and Coco, we used to be duck hunting. His brother is smaller. His sister is still living in Anchorage.

RH: Really?

NG: Margaret. . . .

RH: How many, who were the families that went over to Biorka after the war?

NG: Well, everybody. Biorka people about 30 people.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: That's all.

RH: So it would be Andrew Makarin's family and Ruff Ermeloff's family.

NG: The two families, like Peter Lukanin's, got one boy.

RH: Ah ha.

NG: Him and his wife. . . . He's married to my sister.

RH: Okay, to Molly.

NG: Molly, yeah.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: And Nekefer Ermeloff married to that other girl. Used to grow up in Anfesias's house. Catherine.

RH: Oh, Catherine. Okay.

NG: Catherine died in Seattle. . . .

RH: How long after the people came back from Biorka did Andrew, Andrew—go ahead—

NG: All of them come in 1956.

RH: '56, ah.

NG: Yeah, I think that's the time I got married.

RH: Hmm.

NG: '56. If I'm still married I could be more than 50 years. . . .

RH: Nick, after World War Two, here at Unalaska, the chief was Bill Zaharoff? Is that right? Do you know?

NG: Yeah, I think Bill Zaharoff. Yeah.

RH: But he wasn't here too long, huh?

NG: But he died.

RH: Yeah. Yeah.

NG: After that Doc.

RH: Doc. Yeah, right, right.

NG: Old Man Doc.

RH: Bill Dyakanoff.

NG: Bill Dyakanoff, yeah. Damn Anfesia, you know, Anfesia running, goddamn, trying running this town people.

RH: Yeah, right, right.

NG: That's what he do. Burnett Inlet he do the same way.

RH: Ah, ah.

NG: I don't like it.

RH: Hmm.

NG: But I didn't against him, you know, but he be talking about people. Got himself a better house. Everybody got poor house. Goddamn, St. Paul people, that's the worst.

Big warehouses, no partitions. People hanging blankets [for] partitions.

RH: In Southeastern, yeah.

NG: Sleep on the floor.

RH: Um.



NG: 1944, I been there one week.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Heading for St. Paul.

RH: Ah, okay.

HG: Coming back we stayed in the St. George side another week. St. George side is not too bad. That's a bay, bay with two canneries. Cannery on this side, cannery on this side. Old canneries. Well, everybody got bed and everybody got good place. . . .

RH: Nick, one time you told me something about Beaver Inlet, ah, and about how there was a chief out on the point of Beaver Inlet. [See *Cuttlefish Two: Four Villages*.

Unalaska City School District. 1978:54-55]

NG: *Chaluuknax*^ Bay. Right across that Beaver Inlet. Different guy owned that place. One time, can't do nothing so he give it to Bill Brown. Supposed to be a gold mine there. That gold is not really good. Mostly gold rocks. But anybody dig it could be pretty good.

RH: Now, what about a long time ago. There must have been Aleut villages over in Beaver Inlet.

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. Way in Beaver Inlet. You know, like this Unalaska's got 40 villages on this island, way before. That's what I heard. Family and his friends, moved into a place he could get sea food in wintertime easy. That's why the people after, before American and Russian. That's why people find a place they could stay and get some sea food, make himself hooks out of bones. They be fishing for pogies and other fish by 'em, too, with them pogies, looks like sculpin, but they got a different color. They are good eating. When I was on Biorka used to fishing and eat 'em. When I was tring to go fishing with mom in Makushin I was too small, want to keep me on the rock. So, sit down on the beach, play rocks, that's all. Small rocks. Then over Biorka, goddamned big sea eggs there that old village.

RH: The old village—

NG: Old village outside, another village on the inside. Just like they do that to Makushin. Volcano Bay people live on it before, especially on this side of that cliff. They got more people lived there before, way underground. And after Makushin cannery

open, they got lumber from there, little lumber, try to build the houses in that village.

Village name is *Ignichiinax*^. In Aleut. Nowadays what they call Makushin.

RH: Was that the name for Volcano Bay, too?

NG: No. Volcano Bay just Makushin. [*Magusim tanadgusii*: Makushin Village] Cause they come from Makushin over there [to the new site] they call it Makushin. The name of it in Aleut is *Ignichiinax*^. I don't know what that means, that *Ignichiinax*^. That Nikolski used to be *Umnak*.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Before the war. Wartime they changed its name. There are mostly top people, top people used to be in the west. Nikolski all the way to Attu.

RH: Hmm.

NG: Nikolski and the Four Mountains, in front of us on this side. But that chief, he know something is going to be happen some day. He called the chief, the Four Mountain chief, to here. Finally come in to have meeting with that other chief, and the chief he wanted people on high mountain, high hills, watch the west. Them baidarkies, I mean, baidarkies come from Atka and Attu. But I don't think they're going to really fight, I guess. They going to fight, come in to this island and guy on top side see 'em and so he went down and tell the chief. Chief send them baidarkies out, two or three baidarkies out, food on the water even for them. He knew he's not fighting. When they're close by 'em that baidarky come from west he quit. He stand his paddle straight up on his baidarky. Hold it and wait for the baidarky to come right against him. "What you want? You want anything from our chief?" "No." Everybody was starving. Water. Food. So he give him what he got, and give it to him. Time to go back. That's what he do. Many years before he find Russian, Russian ship.

Finally find the two boats on the sea. Calm weather, them boats are not running but stay in one place, rolling, that's all. See a couple guys come down, told that other chief, Four Mountains chief. That chief he don't want to take a chance so he sent baidarkies this way. One for Nikolski, one for Kashega, one for Makushin, one to come in, another baidarky going to Akutan and Biorka. King Cove, Sand Point, False Pass. "Well, I'm not sure, them boys see something different. It's not our boat." From there he

got people, Unalaska people, collect some other people. There were 3,000 people hide away here. That's what I hear.

RH: Hmm

NG: I wasn't around then. I was not even baby then! [Laughs] That's what that Luke Shelikoff told us anyway. Maybe that's the time just baby, maybe. That's what he told us. I think after the Russian left from here not more than 100 years.

RH: Yeah.

NG: 'Cause people find out about that church. It was there. They give it to us and finally went 100 years. They changed it around. Other people went to watch, finding that boat come in—I think I told you this—

RH: That's okay. It's interesting.

NG: Yeah. Boat come in, come closer and that chief talked to this guy. He wants second chief stay on top of the bank and give order to this other guys. Still have to raise his hand up, the four man on the beach. Got weapons right behind 'em. People used to have, called *saigiqax*<sup>^</sup> [Bergsland: *igiqax*<sup>^</sup>] *kayloox*<sup>^</sup>. People that's the way they used it. Harpoon, *saigiqax*<sup>^</sup>. Got weapons in him. Didn't have a knife. Got half-moon knives, out of black knife, black rock. Finally count them guys on the boat. They only count nine people work on that lifeboat. After lifeboat landed and start counting people going out of the life boat. Only five of them. Four man left in the boat. Some people hide away way up there and watching for that second chief hand, raise it up. Them two guys supposed to wave his hand went half-ways. So they do, but no one waved from the lifeboat. *Tayax*<sup>^</sup>*kusutuungin*, called mad people. And after that close almost went to shore and wave his hand again and two guys wave his hand, them guys got a rifle with them. And one guy in the back turning the boat. Two guys sit down together and row the boat. And in a little while, goddamn, that guy shot one guy. One guy on the beach kill em. And the second chief raise his hand and warn. Baidarkies got on the water and go to the boat. Them guys on the boat shoot once and quit. 'Cause he got to load his gun up. That time these guys get them by harpoon. Sink down the boat and then got three guys, didn't find one guy. Finally look for him, finally come out on the bow. He got a big knife and swinging it all over. But there's one Aleut would like that knife. Anybody kill 'em he take that knife. And some people come in and tell chief what he find on the

boat. Only four guys that he killed there. Five altogether they killed. Six, I think, yeah, six killed. The chief he don't want no more killing. He want teach from them. He told these other guys you want teach his language, let him teach you language. But a long time, after six months, they understand each other then.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: From that they know another boating coming this way. He told that chief, "*Sunax^ wangudax^*." Boat is going to come in, he told the chief. And finally boat, army, them war ships come in. He try and kill this people, too, but it still the same kind of guns. They have to load it up and put beebie in it and pull the trigger. Already done that at Attu and Atka. Kill over 20,000 people out there. Get some guys off some islands and take them out and kill them. The youngest people on the boats. Over 300 people on three boats. Take them all the way to Russia.

RH: Hmm.

NG: But that one lady told me there's over 400 people now. Could be still healthy but Russian didn't have no good medicine. Eat the food, what kind of food they kill and eat, seal, ducks. Some sea lions in Russia, too, no ice. That island I'm talking about it they said they got good meat. . . .

RH: Nick, would you tell that story that you just told me, about the Russians and the Four Mountain people, would you, would you tell some of that in Aleut?

NG: I'm just about part of it now.

RH: Oh, okay.

NG: After that Russian people and Aleuts stay way up on top side, watched all the time. They saw that Russian boat and they come and report it, come down and report it, and send baidarkies this way. So many days the one boat come in, that's the one they take three out of it and kill the rest of it, nine people. But three survived. The one who teached the Aleuts Russian language, and Aleuts teach him Aleut language. 'Cause there Innokentii, Adan ["Father" in Aleut] Innokentii and John Veniaminov, he got Aleut language themselves before, before these Aleuts. Because these Aleuts didn't even have no names. *Agunaachixnax*, they called themselves each other. Names seafood names, fish names: *Ikeethuganux^*, other one. *Aateethakathax^*. Cod, just like codfish but you can see its skinny, thin one most of the time all the way. The Russians, he said he's

gonna come, the Russians going to come in some time and so they do, they come in and start killing Aleuts. Not very many, though. But some. The priest and bishop both come in fast enough, stop everybody. Start making Christians and from there we find out what they do up in the west. They're killing, killing, twenty-thousand Aleuts, woman and children, old people.

I talked to them Aleut people in Russian. They know about it but they don't want to talk about it.

RH: They were from Atka and Attu, right?

NG: Um hmm.

RH: Uh uh.

NG: All Attu and Atka. And other Native people live there, too.

RH: Hmm.

NG: But that's a different name, not Aleut. . . .

RH: Would you mind telling some of that story about the Four Mountain people in Aleut.

NG: That's a different story. Different from Russian, but it's from Four Mountains.

RH: Right. Yeah.

NG: Well, those people looking for lucky charm. Didn't have nothing no more. Just like they want to buy something didn't have no money to buy. Them Aleuts do same way. Their lucky charm is not working no more. And most people didn't know how to make lucky charm. He was there, that time, the chief come to that Unalaska, meeting with the Unalaska Chief. He see one guy almost like his one guy, his hunter, but he never think of it this way then, he looked at him and he know it. Second house from the chief's house. And after he got down there [Four Mountains] people can't get no more seal, can't get no more ducks. Well, they catch some once in awhile anyway but don't get them like they used to. But that chief want a lucky charm.

[Telephone rings]

RH: I'll stop this.

[Recording begins]

NG: Call his people and have a meeting and he told them got to go looking for lucky charm cause they knew the chief is got good lucky charm. So, he notice somebody

almost like his hunter there. He could change it around. He's got all kinds of things he could stop your brains and everything. That's what he's trying to do there.

[Nick aside, "Wait, I'll call Nicky's house." Ray, "Okay."]

[Recording continues] Four people going to come this way. People used to make himself a fox. And they got no place to land but a goddamned big sea. They're out there landing at that No Name Cove—you know No Name Cove.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Landing and cover up his baidarky good and up in the hills they walked this way first. Little while and it got evening. Got three red fox and one cross fox. Make themselves all foxes and start coming this way. Cause he told them not to walk on the bank. Got people out there, too, Morris Cove. They come this way, all the way, finally come in in the morning. See that fox all up above the graveyard. They been there all day, sleeping. He talked to them fox, they know what they got to do. That one guy is going to come in, come out of his fox, and he's got one fox with him, night time, come to town, to that place a little ways from the chief's house, standing up, looking around, looking for that—his chief told him, right next to the chief's house. He's not sure it's the chief's house. But the chief always do that. He can't settle down, so he climbed the roof, got look-out window up on top side, just the grass. And he look around, finally he find somebody standing up, fox with him. "I wonder why my seal hunter [is] with a fox?" He come down and he got on his bed and sit down for awhile, can't stand it no more so he went up again. Then that one guy with the fox is gone. One guy with the fox was beyond the house and he went to that house, other house, and he told that other guy, told fox, he said the chief told him about next to chief's house they got dead man's bone, got to poke it with him in his back. And this guy didn't know nothing then.

And, he told that fox, "Go move around. Make a noise for me. If he hear you, he'll come out."

When the fox do that he got windows there but you can't look out of 'em, you know, seal guts, dry seal guts for his window. These houses used to use them before, that's what I hear. Seal guts. Pretty soon somebody open the door from inside, look out, and that guy is standing right behind the house. Finally he went in again awhile then he come out, this guy stabbed him right behind him. Not killing him; he's going to come to

later. Then he took it over to his other fox and he told that fox, “Okay, you watch, you watch real good. You know what to do,” he told him. He’s going to see if he’s going to call this guy in, maybe take him over to the place he’s standing up, you could run in and get the chief’s lucky charm. We’re going to get one now.” He take his top clothes off and put it on, put his jacket right on and went inside. He see one lady sewing kamlaika on his bed, his wife ask him, it’s not the same guy but can’t recognize him, “What’s outside?” “Oh, nothing. Nothing like that but I got to stay out there and watch for awhile.” He went over. He know where the lucky charms are, right above the door. There’s a little cupboard there. Each house has got a little cupboard right above the door. Took his jacket, hanging coat and put it on, put his hand in there and feel around, and he find the lucky charm and put it in his pocket, and he went out.

He went out and he told that fox, “I got one! I got one lucky charm. Try to get the chief’s. That’s the one our chief wanted.”

So, Unalaska people used to make himself an eagle.

RH: Ah.

NG: He could fly. That fox went over to the chief’s house. He hide away behind the chief’s house. He could hear him what he’s doing. In the morning started anyway, that guy he went up with the lucky charm he got into the fox hole. “Well, we got one,” he told them other guys. “I got one. We’re going to have two maybe in a little while.”

At the same time the second chief come in into the chief’s house. And the chief told him, “Boy, I know something is going to happen. I can’t lay down in my bed so I went up to my lookout window and look. My seal hunter over there standing by the mud pile there. He went with a fox, a blue fox, red fox, go and get him. Tell him to take his fox too.” Fox! [Laughs]

Second chief he went over to that guy. Guy get up and have a tea, keep praying for tea and eat fish. I don’t know how in the hell those people cooking fish, hang it below the fire. And he told him, “Chief wants you. Chief wants to see you bad.”

“What for? I can’t go seal hunting today.”

“That’s okay. You can see him. He told to take your fox.”

“Fox? I don’t take care of fox. I don’t have no fox.”

“Well, it must be. He see you last night.”

“He didn’t see me.”

And he went over to the chief’s house. The fox get ready to steal the lucky charm, but later.

“Did I see you standing over there after midnight? Where’s your fox?”

“I don’t have fox. I don’t have a live fox.”

“He was right against you.” [Laughs]

“Come. Let’s go. I’m going to take you over there and see your tracks.”

He take him over there. The fox went in there, take the lucky charm and tried to go out, hide away, and go up to that other fox hole. He got that lucky charm up there and the guy is happy. And he eat and wait for dark to come tonight.

And the chief he got the second chief and he told him, “I see your tracks right there and fox tracks there too.”

“Must be somebody else been there. About what time?”

“After midnight.” Didn’t have a time but people [knew]—

RH: Um hmm

NG: [Nick interrupts the story here.] I know Peter Lukanin make a time by sun.

RH: Ah.

NG: Before he got a big cratch [combination of crack and scratch] on his window. Sunshine hit the window, you know, just before it goes in that cratch he knows it’s twelve o’clock.

RH: Ah.

NG: I know he has to fix his time all time. [Nick resumes the story.]

And this guy, “No, not me. Somebody else must be in town.”

Chief, he didn’t say nothing. He went in. After awhile he, one guy and second chief, “Come on. Let’s play *agathan*. I know somebody in town.”

They went in there and Second chief fix everything up. Put tea and chief goddamn holler, “God damn it! Where’s my lucky charm? Somebody took it. God damn.” He been looking all around. He been looking through town. All the houses have been checked if they got a blue fox, I mean red fox. No one had no red fox. Live fox.



But this tracks looks like a second man's tracks but he's got fox with him. That other guy, "No, I didn't have no live fox."

Finally, evening comes. Little bit late them guys taken off from here. They went out past Morris Cove and he see two guys legs stick out under a bank. A brother and sister. They've got sea otter skin clothes, sea otter skin blankets. They been there a long time, they could see that, because it's nice digging. That brother and sister, they like it. They went down go to his baidarky, take his baidarky out on the gravel, and them guys took off right away.

He told them, "Are we going to eat something or are we out?" They were riding way out. He don't want to get caught from other points. All the points got people living in it. Watchmen. Keep going all the way and next day Unalaska people, two guys Unalaska people, two guys moving to the west, flying out. They could see those two kids on the beach, but they landed. The boy seen them guys over there. He told his sister, "Hey, they start coming this way, Unalaska people." The Morris Cove people he know it. "They're going to ask us questions. Don't tell them until they fill up our seal bag with sea food."

He come in and ask this boy, "You see anybody pass here?"

"If you want to know something about like that, you fill this seal stomach. Fill it up with sea eggs and gumboots, blue mussels. Bring it to me and I'll tell you what I see."

Those two guys filled that seal bag, seal stomach—goddamn, pretty big—he got enough so he took it in and give it to 'em. He tell him, "Well, I didn't see nobody, but I seen four foxes pass here. After that I went over that hill and looked and two baidarkies, this time with man, four man left, two baidarky left, two [men] on one baidarky on sea."

Thank that kid and they went looking at Ruff's Bay, I mean No Name Cove, and they went back and tell their chief. Other people come up from the west, too. He didn't see nothing. So he told him, "You two guys better go out and watch. He going to land out there somewhere. He got to rest. He going to land and rest."

The two eagles got down and land different sites, watch maybe another two days. They just about giving up but two baidarkies coming in. He was so happy. He landed and pulled the baidarky in the grass and cooking something and started eating it. Night comes anyway soon. The four man went to go asleep in the grass. And that time the two

eagles come down and look around in the baidarky, find them lucky charms. Take it and cut up the baidarkies. Leave them there and they went up to their place, stay, and watch them guys in the morning.

One guy up early in the morning and he look at the baidarky and he start hollering. He sees them cuts in the bottom. Well, they been there a long time and make one baidarky out of two baidarkies. And load up two guys inside and two guys outside, paddling back to the west, Four Mountains. Take them all day to pass Umnak Island, Nikolski, and from there to Four Mountain. Finally they got to Four Mountains. Four girls sit down on the beach waiting for them baidarkies to get there. One guy's lady said, "There's only one baidarky. I wonder where's that other one?"

Another lady started crying, "Maybe my husband."

Finally baidarky landed, people come and meet them and two guys come out. After awhile his husband come out. She happy. Tell them what happened.

Chief ask them, "You got your lucky charm now?"

"No, they took our lucky charm and tear our baidarkies out. So lucky we made one baidarky and we reached this far."

Boy, the chief get mad, but the people in those days no cussing. He didn't know cussing.

[On June 8 Nick recorded this story and one about the arrival of the Russians in Aleut. Transcriptions of those are not included in this report. Copies of the recordings have been given to the Alaska Native Languages Center and to the Unalaska City School District's Aleut program.]

So they found out what cussing after Russians come up here. Make Russian bad words. *Sutanatha*. That's the first word that come out. Start teaching from Russian after that, after Russians come to Unalaska. So they start teaching and from there they take another 60 people from here. Two boat loads, 30 people, 300 people. Take them all the way to St. Paul. St. George, St. Paul. Unload them at Northeast Point. That's what one guy told me one time at St. Paul. He heard a story about them. But no one there. They

got there nothing but seals. Aleuts happy there. “Oh, we’re going to go out and grab a seal.” You can’t grab a seal! [Laughs] Boy, they sharp bite them, fur seal.

RH: Now, Nick, was this before the Russians came?

NG: Before Russians. I think way before Russians people lived there. St. Paul, cause they find dishes, plates. But this Aleuts I’m talking about, Russians take them there.

RH: Ah. Okay.

NG: Already made a Christians out of them. That time made a church at Northeast Point. Russian help them make a church there and they know somebody going to run it. Reading and everything in the church. They name it St. Nicholas.

RH: Ah, St. Nicholas.

NG: Um hm. And after that build St. Paul and after Americans take over built St. Paul wooden, cement houses. Nothing but cement houses there. I don’t know about those new houses they build up there.

RH: Right.

NG: Petropavlovsk the name of the St. Paul church.

RH: Ah.

NG: Petropavlovsk. They got holiday, summertime, they got holiday Northeast Point holiday.

RH: Ah.

NG: St. Nicholas. That’s Nick Lekanoff’s holiday, too. I think he’s 78 now, I think.

RH: Oh, yeah, yeah?

NG: 79.

RH: 79. Yeah.

NG: 79, I got one year behind him. Mine is December.

RH: December.

NG: December 19. Well, I didn’t born that day though. People used to be by church names.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: My mom told me I was born November 30<sup>th</sup>.

RH: Ah.

NG: So you could take me on December name.

RH: For chrismation, yeah. Yeah.

NG: So, maybe I was one month young. Yep. I tell about people making Christians. That's why some people have a two names. I always used to laugh at John Gordieff. John Gordieff and his brother is John Gordieff, too.

RH: Ah.

NG: I seen him just once. That's when they were young. Used to working with Patterson. Used to cook for Patterson.

RH: Oh, yeah?

NG: In a restaurant.

RH: So there were two John Gordieffs and they were brothers.

NG: Yeah. Other one named John Gordieff, he got—that other one was married one time, that's why he's got Victor Gordieff.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: After he died he called that other John, daddy. So, that's the way he grow up.

RH: They were from Chernofski?

NG: Yeah, from Chernofski. Chernofski people.

RH: Because I think Anfesia one time said that John Gordieff knew a lot about whale hunting, oldtime whale hunting. Go ahead, I'll stop this.

[I stop and then restart the recording.]

NG: But get some ducks, though. Can't get no more fish except rock fish, pogies and sculpins. Get em between rocks. I used to like goddamned pogies.

RH: It used to be, I know, when I first came here in 1964, at that time there would still be Makushin people, and Biorka people, Unalaska people.

NG: Yeah, Walter used to bring me a lot of it over from inside Arthur Lekanoff's camp.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: That's the Lekanoff camp now, Nick Lekanoff.

RH: Oh, okay

NG: Arthur build that steam house.

RH: Was that Broad Bay or Wide Bay?

NG: Between Eider Point and one bay, next bay. From there you've got reefs down right against the beach. He stay against with his boat and pick some gumboots, fishing

with his fish pole and get some pogies. Walter did that all the time. But Arthur's camp—

[The door opened and John returned and I stopped the recorder.]

## 7. Nikolai Galaktionoff

June 7, 2004

[In 1984 Nick Galaktionoff gave Unalaska Island place names to Knut Bergsland and these were included in the *Aleut Dictionary*. Whenever possible, the spellings in this transcription are taken from that work.]

Ray Hudson: Okay. This is June 7<sup>th</sup> with Nick Galaktionoff. Nick, I brought these charts, ah, of Beaver Inlet.

Nick Galaktionoff: Uh ha.

RH: And I thought maybe I could name some bays or something and you could comment on it? Ah, this first one [Army Corps of Engineers, Unalaska C-1, Alaska, Sheet 4228 I] is the mouth of Beaver Inlet. It shows English Bay on the Unalaska side and Deep Bay, and then over on the Biorka side it's got—Sisek Cove?

NG: Sisek Bay. Used to be there, Biorka side.

RH: Yeah, on the Biorka side. Yeah.

NG: Aleuts call it Sisan.

RH: Sisan. Now the old village was further out?

NG: Yeah. Achuug<sup>ix</sup> Tanax<sup>taqax</sup> that's what they call that. Didn't have no name. Achuug<sup>ix</sup> Tanax<sup>taqax</sup>. That's old long time ago village.

RH: . . . . Why did people move? Did you ever hear any stories why they moved?

NG: Which way, where?

RH: From the old village to the new village.

NG: I don't think so because I'm not happy when I leave Makushin.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Cause I can't do nothing much. I was 13 years old.

RH: No, I was wondering why the people at the old Biorka village moved to the new Biorka village.

- |                    |                             |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Unalaska Bay    | 12. Erskine Bay             |
| 2. Kalekta Bay     | 13. Kisselen Bay            |
| 3. English Bay     | 14. Fiinal Bay              |
| 4. Unalga Island   | 15. Tanaskan Bay            |
| 5. Baby Islands    | 16. Aasxiyuux               |
| 6. Deep Bay        | 17. Amugul Bay              |
| 7. Agamgik Bay     | 18. Udamat Bay              |
| 8. Chaluuknax^     | 19. Biorka                  |
| 9. Ugadaga Bay     | 20. Sisek Cove              |
| 10. Unikтали Bay   | 21. Achuug^ix^ Tanax^taqax^ |
| 11. Dushkot Island | 22. Egg Island              |

NG: Well, they make a village there. Used to have that, live in that old village, and from there they find a place got a lumber to make a house, so they make a house and church there. From there everybody moved there, but it's not a good landing. Big sea running, storm pretty strong. Because the mountain, too, pretty close.

RH: Ah.

NG: Too close there. Hill on this side, call 'em Kiichxix^ Kangax^tax^

RH: On the right side. [Note the different location for this in the dictionary. Later in the interview, Nick states there were two mountainsides where this braided rope was made.]

NG: Kiichxix^ Kangax^tax^ people used to call that. That's the name of it, Kiichxix^.

You know, you can do it by [moves his hands] I don't know, I can't see—

RH: Oh, by braiding?

NG: Uh ha. You went down all the way up, from up there down couple times, and watch the seals. When they done the work when the woman do the month period, that's when they work on it.

RH: Ah.

NG: So that whale can't go under.

RH: Ah, they would stretch that grass rope across?

NG: Um hm.

RH: Across Beaver Inlet.

NG: And they cut 'em across and block all the whales go inside, and whale hunters inside whale hunting. Well, that's the way long time ago, way before Christians.

RH: Right.



NG: Because before Christians no any kind of superstition anywhere from anybody. But said they make it that way in two places. One on that Chaluuknax^ Bay [opposite Biorka Village], [and the other] that was Andrew's camp, Andrew Makarin camp. No, Aasxiyuux, yeah, Aasxiyuux, that's the name of it. . .

RH: . . . Irene Makarin was saying that there was a difference between "Biorka" and "Borka".

NG: Well, "Borka", that's all they call that. Or else somebody calls "Sedanka."

RH: Sedanka, yeah.

NG: But that Irene doesn't know nothing much about Biorka because, I didn't know either, because . . . Irene is Andrew Makarin's adopted [daughter] from here, Mike Borenin's daughter. Got brothers Sergie Borenin and John Borenin.

RH: From Makushin or Kashega?

NG: From here. . . .

RH: Which bay did you say Andrew had his camp in?

NG: Aasxiyuux. Yeah. The next one was Tanasxan [Tanaskan Bay].

RH: Tanasxan. Yes, okay.

NG: Next after Tanasxan was Ulg^umiix [Final Bay]. Pretty hard to pronounce.

Ulg^umiix. That's my red, silver salmon place. They used to gaff fish there. Live on the fish all winter. They got a big creek there.

RH: It shows a big creek going out of there. That's Final Bay, yeah.

NG: And that right across that Aasxiyuux was Ruff's [Ermeloff] camp island. Little island there named Duxsxn. . . .

RH: Let me get my other smaller map here. I think it's got. . . . [Unfolds "Geologic Map of Unalaska Island, Alaska, and Adjacent Submarine Areas", United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, bulletin 1028, Plate 75]. Right. Okay. Right. Yep.

NG: Duxsxn.

RH: Yes. I see it here. It is a little island just before Uniktali?

NG: Um hm.

RH: Now when people would take a skiff from Biorka to Ugadaga Bay.

NG: Ah, them people they don't used skiff. They used baidarky and double-ender.

RH: Ah, baidarky and double-ender.

NG: . . . . I can't stay in them one man baidarky. Too cranky for me.

RH: Yeah? You tried it thought?

NG: Hm hmm. I used two man baidarky. It's all right. I shoot fox.

RH: Really?

NG: Yeah. But the told me if you shoot a shotgun in a baidarky, you got to shoot way in the front. Don't shoot on the side. That's what I do. I got red fox. In that Sisek Bay. Sisin.

RH: Sisin. When you went from Biorka to Ugadaga, ah, how would you go. What route would you go? . . . . Did you just cut straight across Beaver Inlet?

NG: No, we used to go travel on other side all the way far as that Aasxiyuux. We'd cut across from there.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: That's a short one anyway.

RH: Okay. So you'd stay along the shore a bit.

NG: Yeah.

RH: And then cut across.

NG: Um hm.

RH: Okay.

NG: The other two are bays, but I don't know the name of it.

RH: On Sedanka?. . . . The only ones on this map, they show Udamat Bay. It has an island in it.

NG: Udamax.

RH: Udamak?

NG: Udamax.

RH: Udamax.

NG: Goddamn. I forgot the places already! And the next bay to Chaluuknax^ Bay . . . Agamgix^. Oh, I'm going out that way. Ugadaga Bay, the next bay is Chaluuknax^.

RH: That's where Zharoff's had a camp?

NG: Um hmm. Bill Zharoff camp used to be. . . . Then next bay is Agamgix^.

RH: Agamgix^. That's a pretty bay.

NG: Yeah, . . . that's a good place. Low tide sand bar stick out right in the middle.

Goddamn, we used to dig clams there. And the Deep Bay is called Chamax^.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Chamax^ has no landing there when the wind pick up, southeast wind, That's a way outside point. Big salmon berries. Big creek there. Before the war, I stopped there. Me and Andrew Makarin, Peter Lukanin. We ate some dry fish, outside one time. Somebody leave those long knives. Can't rusted up. We leave them there. We forgot all about it. Then after the war when we come back, we find that knife! Candy find that knife. Right in the creek. But handle fox chew 'em up. Because they smelled dry fish, I guess.

RH: Now Candy, what was Candy's name.

NG: Akeefa.

RH: Akeefa.

NG: Kenny, I think. That the guy shot himself.

RH: Oh.

NG: Shot top of his head. . . .

RH: Where did Leonty Merculief—Helen, his mother, came from St. Paul?

NG: I think so, yeah.

RH: And his dad was from here or?

NG: No, from Akutan.

RH: From Akutan, ah. Okay.

NG: And that name is not really Akutan. . . . Sea otter hunters named that Akutan.

When they're coming from that mainland, between mainland, and they find it.

Akuntanax^. They say that it Aleut. Ever since they called it Akuntanax^. "Akun" is "over there."

RH: Ah.

NG: Maybe Americans hear them so they call it Akutan.

RH: Yeah. Ah.

NG: Yeah, them sea otter hunters come and name it Akutanax^ . . .

RH: Now, did you ever go into English Bay.

NG: English Bay. Where's English Bay?

RH: You know, out past Kalekta, at the head of, at the mouth of—

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. I been all around. I been walking all around. . . down on the beach.

RH: Oh, really.

NG: Me and Coco [Yatchmenoff]. But not all the way, but half way.

RH: Yeah? What's on the south side?

NG: There's a good bank on the south side, you can walk right edge of it. We went over there by that Chaluuknax^, got on the beach and started to go around and come out by [across from] that Sisek Bay, but Cocoa gittin' tired. Can't do nothing. But I got a half a sandwich on me, so I let him eat half a sandwich. Boy, I hear him, he got home and went to bed. I was tired but I wasn't that tired.

RH: Now, on the Pacific side, do they have good beaches over there. On the Pacific side?

NG: What's that?

RH: Any good beaches? [I had not made clear that I was asking about the south side of Sedanak Island and Nick continued explaining about the bays on the north side of Beaver Inlet.]

NG: Not really. That Chamax^ has got a good beach there, nothing but sand. Sand beach.

RH: Is that the first one?

NG: The first one is coming in from the bay. The next one is Agamgix^. This is a good place. It's got an army camp there. You know 'em.

RH: Oh, yeah. Right, right. In Beaver Inlet.

NG: You camped there. The next one is Chaluuknax^. That's another sandy beach.

RH: They have red salmon there.

NG: Um hmm. Lot of humpies, silvers. And that next bay is, ah—

RH: Ugadaga?

NG: Um hmm. Ugadaga. And that other bay, I don't know.

RH: They say—

NG: It's got names but I don't know the names.

RH: Yeah. On the map it's Small Bay, but—

NG: They've got army camp there. [Nick is referring to Uniktali Bay, not Small Bay]

RH: Ah.

NG: Goddamn a big army kitchen and hut housing. Goddamned big snow rolled from that high hill and hit that big goddamned kitchen, through and through, both ends. . . .

That other bay I can't understand it. From Agamgix^ Tanasxan.

RH: That's a deep one.

NG: Yeah. There are three islands inside it, I guess. Used to be a lot of sea gull islands there. In the war time, all the sea gulls go away.

RH: Oh, yeah?

NG: You know why?

RH: Why?

NG: Japanese digging holes there, dig underground, tunnels. Same thing with that one called , one island, used to have a name, used to have a lot of . . . sea gull eggs. No. Nothing there, too. I was on there looking for sea gull eggs. Found an underground house there, Japanese. . . . that's why sea gulls left that island, moved into. . . Duxsxn Island. Jesus Christ, nothing but sea gulls there now.

RH: Yeah, and that's a tiny island.

NG: I used to camp there with Ruff [Ermeloff]. Last time 1956. I was seal hunting with Paul Merchenin.

RH: Yeah.

NG: We got a hundred seals that time, yeah. We used to camp on that island. In the same house. Goddamned, still good. 1950—yeah, 1956-57, I think, when I was over there. Goddamned, housing hanging over the cliff! Ruff cable it—used cable on it in case it blew away. It did blow away, hanged up! [Laughs]

RH: Did he build the cabin there?

NG: Yeah. We didn't, but Ruff did.

RH: Yeah, yeah, Ruff did.

NG: He used to have a house down below.

RH: Ah.

NG: But too far from the water. But water on the side of it.

RH: That would be a long place to carry lumber to.

NG: Yeah, but he got lumber from that bay you're talking about, next to Ugadaga.

RH: Yeah. Oh, where the army camp was. Okay.

NG: You can walk. If you go up this way [gesturing toward Captains Bay and the route up through Pyramid Valley], you can go in it.

RH: Yeah.

NG: If you go this way [gesturing up Unalaska Valley], that's Ugadaga Bay.

RH: Right. Okay. I've only been down in Uniktali Bay once . . . .

NG: I've been through there. Road all the way around there that goes to Summer Bay. I did that once, twice, I think, John driving.

RH: I don't know if that road is open now or not.

NG: Yeah, but just about gone 'cus both sides got slides and the road is still good but not wide enough.

RH: Yeah, there are some washouts. There were anyway.

NG: You could slide down, yeah. By god, if you build a road you've got to use big rocks to fill both sides up.

RH: Did you ever go out to Egg Island, out past Sedanka?

NG: . . . . Biorka village is right here but way out there is that island, another island, tall island. That's the one called Old Man Rock.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: Used to have one cabin there, but you can't go on the beach. That little place is open, about as long as this house, gravel. Big rocks there, not easy to walk on.

Somebody built that cabin there. Water running from up there. I don't know how it is that water's running. Got a small lake on top there.

RH: Yeah, it shows that here. Here it's actually calling it Egg Island and it shows a little, a little lake there. . . . .

NG: Yeah, you got nothing but them birds always go together, them big ones, big wild ones. Laying eggs right on that island. Them sea gull eggs pretty close to the water but you have to go get them. But good landing, you can, we used to shoot seals, sea lions, on that there, unload a couple guys.

RH: Yeah.

NG: We used to be out, anchor out, not anchor but stay outside and wait for them when they cut it all up, tie a rope on them seals and cut the meats, and throw them in the bay

and we go and get it and pull that meats out into the boat. Goddamned, too rough. The only place you can land used to be a cabin there.

RH: Who built the cabin?

NG: I don't know who.

RH: It was a long time ago.

NG: Long time ago.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: But Unalga Island, one outside, little inside before that mainland, main island, John Yatchmenef used to be have a—

RH: Ah, one of the Baby Islands?

NG: Um hmm, Baby Islands, yeah. Well, I didn't know John Yatchmenef. Andrew Makarin told me John Yatchmenef used to have blue foxes there. And that other island didn't have no fox go on there 'cause birds have nesting there. And from there that mainland, main island, on this side of it is—what the hell's its name? I forgot the name.

RH: Ah, not Unalga, ah—

NG: Unalg^an. Unalg^an. I think.

RH: Okay. One of the Baby Islands?

NG: The big one [i.e. Unalga Island].

RH: The Baby Island, the names of the Baby Islands in English are very strange. I don't know where they got them.

NG: There is blue fox on that. Patterson owned that island for a while, kept fox on it.

RH: Unalga Island?

NG: Um hmm. And John Yatchmenef was a little bit east side of it, another island. There's four islands there but them other ones got nothing on it, way outside of it, high ones. Akutan people used to, when come on this side, used to go there. Army camp there on that big island. Got a cove. Lot of gas. Akutan people take it to Akutan. Come and fill the bags up, load a drum.

RH: I want to ask you a question about Makushin. Between Makushin and Volcano Bay, when people walked there, ah, what side of the lake would they go on? Or, how would they walk from Makushin to Volcano Bay?

NG: Ah, you go on the left side only. Left side, two lakes all the way down. Used to be a trail there all the way. From all the people lived way before me making trails.

RH: And would you stay close to the lake or would you go up higher?

NG: Oh, not high. Just about, ah, about 20 feet high, that's all. You go by the lake.

RH: Hmm. Okay.

NG: But you can't walk on the beach. Goddamned, too rough, rocks, slippery.

Way long time ago, that's what I hear, people used to take care of his baidarky there. Far as that Agiis Bay, go through there and from there take a baidarky all the way to Volcano Bay. But you got to cut through two lakes, though.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: Middle is goddamned crazy creek there.

RH: Oh, yeah, right in between the two lakes?

NG: . . . [Laughs] Yeah, I know. People used to go there. Pack some wood off the beach and load the baidarky up and go to Makushin again. That place is—used to pull baidarkies on a seal skin, winter time.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: I used to go there. But it's not really far. And that used to be my fishing ground anyway, that place. Small creek. Use homemade hook and fishing for trouts. Used to be a lot of fun.

RH: Now in Humback Bay there's quite a big river going down into Humback Bay. Was that a salmon stream?

NG: Oh, yeah, every creek salmon. There're three creeks running there from that last lake on Makushin side.

RH: Um hmm

NG: All salmon creeks. That's why the other lake from Volcano Bay—

RH: Yeah.

NG: The fish go through there, that's all. It's funny. The fish don't stop there. Got three creeks right in that second one. One smaller one, that's the one people used to go launch his baidarky to Volcano Bay. I don't think I could go through that creek. I look at it a lot of times. Crooked creek. *Qitukagaangax*. People used to name that *Qitukagaangax*.



RH: What did they call Anderson Bay?

NG: . . . . Anderson Bay was Makushin Cannery, end of it is Makushin Cannery.

Makushin Cannery was a Bristol Bay cannery now.

RH: That didn't operate for very long, I don't think, right?

NG: No. That's got Chinese and Japanese that's all that's working there. No Americans, no Aleuts. Them boats bring salmon all the way up from Bristol Bay to go

there. But little bit too far for them. 'Cause the fishermen out there waiting for boats to come in, but all on this side. So started building cannery in Bristol Bay and when they finished, they take everything out. That's what I hear.

RH: That's what I've heard, too. I guess there are ruins, a couple of buildings left, but all the canning equipment they took up to Bristol Bay.

NG: Goddamned big warehouse there, I know that. That time, my dad sometime take me there couple times. Look at fishermen. He told me to watch Chinese. "*Kitaayichax*^, *Kitaayichax*^ *amgix*^*talix*." *Kitaayichax*^ is Chinese. After lunch, goddamned long goddamned pipe, get it out and put it between two nails and take a couple puffs and shut up. Boy, that's the way all of them do that. Mostly them older people. And it's time to work, got up and hit its pipe and put 'em away and started working. Them days, it's a good weather anyways. Nowadays, we don't have them kinds of weathers.

RH: You think the weather's getting worse?

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. After Second World War Two believe it or not. After Second World War Two. We got a 130 mile an hour wind here.

RH: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Even stronger, I think, at times, yeah.

NG: 173 one time. Two or three boats landing up here on the beach. . . .

RH: Now in Anderson Bay there's that island, Peter Island? In Anderson Bay they show this island—

NG: Yeah. They got three islands there.

RH: Oh, yeah, right. You're right.

NG: . . . . Used to be good egg islands. . . . From Makushin Village if you look out there, rocks there—

RH: Oh, yeah, Cathedral Rocks.

NG: Called them *Unglun*. Named them *Unglun*. *Qadamungludan* people used to say that. That one high rock, look like Priest Rock, on west side, people used to call them *Chuchxumax*. Could you say that?

RH: *Chu-chuu-max.*

NG: Chuchxumax. One on Makushin side, real low tide used to be stick out about four or five feet long and about three feet wide, my dad start calling *Udg^inux^*, because it stinks all the time. [Laughs] The shags go in there and go bathroom. Ah, my dad start calling it *Udg^inux^*. Well before that people I guess name it *Udg^inux^*. And in that, from next to there Pumicestone Bay between Kashega and Makushin.

RH: That's a very deep bay. [Telephone rings.]

NG: Answer that, please.

RH: Nicky's going to do that.

NG: Oh.

RH: Here, I can stop this, or hit a pause.

NG: I didn't know Nicky's here.

[Pause and then the recording starts again.]

NG: Good silver salmon or, I mean, dog salmon bay.

RH: In Pumicestone?

NG: Ah ha. . . That's my grandfather's hunting ground.

RH: Pumicestone or—

NG: Pumicestone Bay. Well, this time of year, . . . it's got a lot of dog salmon.

Sometime a dory go there and load up and take it right into Makushin. Yeah, I remember that from there to Kashega. That Kashega people used to be in Makushin. [Unclear]

RH: Now, say that again?

NG: George Borenin. He used to be in Makushin.

RH: Uh huh.

NG: That's why one of his man got married from Makushin. Peter Yatchmenoff.

RH: Oh, yeah, yeah.

NG: He bring his body here and my mom's sister, too. From, southward. They buried him pretty close to the road. But they're going to build something there, I guess, but two of them are pretty close, so dig them out. Told them which way they go, but somebody in Unalaska say bring him in. His wife's named Natalia. His husband's Peter, Peter Yatchmenoff.

RH: Peter Yatchmenoff, huh.

NG: Lot of Kudrins. Goddamn, all of them died in Akutan. . . .

RH: . . . There are so many bays on this island. It's really amazing. Kuliliak Bay.

NG: Some good, some you don't. You can't find a better place on this side, summertime or wintertime. Too cold or too rough. Summertime you go there, goddamn mosquitoes! Run away from mosquitoes. Goddamn blue flies on the beach. I wonder where he go now. Hide away someplace.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Mostly stay under rocks.

RH: I always wondered about those bumblebees.

NG: Yeah.

RH: They're so big and I wonder where they go.

NG: *Aanasnaadan*.

RH: How do you say it?

NG: *Aanasnaadan*.

RH: *Aanasnaadan*.

NG: That bumblebee, that's *aag^umikaadax*. [blowfly] Those other ones I always call them *alixusunax^*, warships. Them little bugs. They don't fly, but they go under water. If you touch them, goddamn, lot of goddamn little ones come out! [Laughs]

RH: [Laughs]

NG: Bugs! Small, little ones! Damn little ones. I know its name. I forgot.

RH: I don't know them.

NG: Me and Ruthie [Shaishnikoff] talk about it. . . .

RH: Well, thanks, Nick. Maybe we could do one more session sometime, all in Aleut?

NG: Ah?

RH: Would that be okay?

NG: That's okay.

RH: And, ah, you can decide what you want to talk about or what you want to say. Ah, that would be good. Maybe you could tell that Lucky Charm story in Aleut.

NG: Yeah.

RH: That would be great.

NG: Lucky Charm story.

RH: It would be good to do a good recording of that. Should I come over tomorrow?

NG: Any time, I guess.

RH: All right. I'll do that and we can record that in Aleut.

NG: Way before, people no radios, no TV. So that's why that Luke tell me, somebody tell me from long time ago people. Long time ago people family stay in one family underground house. You can't stand up in it, enough to sit down. When the people go to bed then they make story themselves, report it, they talked about it. Other guys sleeping, listen to it, and go to sleep. That's what they used to do, that Luke Shelikoff up in St. Paul, telling them stories and they went to sleep. Ten dollars a night. We got to walk back for a dance next day, Sunday.

RH: That was good, that was good to do.

NG: St. Paul people never take day off except Sunday.

RH: That Luke Shelikoff must have been a good storyteller.

NG: Yeah, and that guy from St. Paul, that's a good—well, he's reading anyway, reading them Aleut books. Tell a story about it. In Makushin, three people used—four people—used to telling Aleut stories.

RH: Who were they?

NG: My dad and Matfey Borenin, another Matfey Petukoff, and my grandfather Simeon Lekanoff. Goddamned! There's no people left except me and Nick Lekanoff! [Laughs] Were three of us, for awhile. Nick Borenin, me, and Nick Lekanoff. But Nick Borenin died. Last time I went to Anchorage, he looked pretty sick.

RH: Was he living in Akutan?

NG: Yeah, he moved to Akutan. Coming back from after war?

RH: Um hm.

NG: 'Cause they didn't have enough people in Makushin that guy told them to stay there, but Nicky want to because Nick got a girlfriend. He didn't care about Elia Borenin, though. He, if anybody want to go back from here, he want to go back.

RH: Back to Makushin?

NG: Um hmm. We could, too, but I was, I was alone. My brother trying with me but my brother's way younger than me. Well, I told them other people, no. Well, maybe them guys right but I don't care for this town that time.

RH: Yeah, I'm sure it was different from, you know—

NG: Yeah.

RH: But you went over to Biorka for awhile after the war.

NG: Oh, yeah. Nine years I been over there. Most of the time summertime—I mean, winter-time.

RH: Because summertime in the Pribilofs?

NG: Yeah. Summertime chasing girls in St. Paul. [Laughs]

RH: Now the last time, the last time, when they moved away from Biorka, was that—I'm confused about the year. 1952 or 1956?

NG: Goddamn, I don't know. Maybe—I was start working for Hortman, so—

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: Pop Hortman?

RH: Yeah. Yeah.

NG: So I'd stay on this side and I think, yeah, '56, I think.

RH: Okay.

NG: And from the Biorka people come in and they want to stay in town.

RH: Irene said that it was getting harder and harder to carry groceries.

NG: Yeah.

RH: You know back, they were getting older.

NG: That's what he do, that's for sure. That's what Andrew Makarin and them others, George Yatchmenoff, all of them got packing groceries. Ruff, Peter Lukanin, Candy, me. I used to. I used to live with Peter Lukanin because my sister there. He married to my sister. My brother's there, too, most of the time, Peter. And I've got another brother up there [the cemetery], name is Paul. The one in the hospital that time the Japanese hit the hospital. My brother Paul.

RH: Oh, okay.

NG: I don't think them Japanese did tried to bomb the hospital. Trying to gun up the guns up on Haystack.

RH: That's right. Yeah, yeah.

NG: Bomb must be stuck some way.

RH: Was your brother in the hospital then, did you say?

NG: Yeah, my brother and my sister Molly and another six guys there. She did put them down in the basement, put them up in the other end. The right end, too.

RH: Wow.

NG: Then all of them could be killed. I know they didn't try to bomb it, but they—

RH: But they hit it even though they were aiming for something else.

NG: But first thing when they come in, in the morning, people still sleeping. Bombed Margaret's Bay, Army barracks. Goddamn, twenty new people just got there last night, killed them next morning, Army guys.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Yeah, and bombed Dutch Harbor. Didn't do nothing much on this side, but machine gun bullets. Goddamn, I used to stand right behind the light post, watch the bullets! Dumb me.

RH: It was probably pretty exciting.

NG: I got—yeah! Exciting for me but I seen guys got hit on that truck. A guy named Blackie Floyd.

RH: Oh, yeah. I've heard of him. He had a bar here.

NG: Right in front [on the beach side] of that Elbow Room. Used to have it there. He got four people on that truck. He went up or go down. Goddamn, one guy hit, goddamn, fall backward. Well, I run for my life then. After Japanese left, everybody started digging for fox holes.

RH: Now, did you have a fox hole that you went to? A particular one?

NG: Hm hmm. I got one down—I made one by the creek. I didn't reach 'em, 'cause Japanese already here.

RH: Hmm.

NG: I was on dock, way down, down dock, me and John Bereskin from Akutan. He died, too, cannery. . . . fall overboard. They find his body anyway. Those people drink too much beer must be don't sink.

RH: Ah.

NG: Floating.

RH: So, was that the first day or the second day of the bombing?

NG: Second day. They bombed that oil dock and that one boat, in Captains Bay.

RH: Oh, yeah, the *Northwestern*.

NG: Hm hmm. And the Captains Bay, or the oil dock. But a bomb went right through. Goddamn, they bombed it but they didn't know nothing much about it, I guess. Because otherwise, they could dump a lot of oil. Pretty soon them oils coming down from that big tank.

RH: I guess it burned for quite a few days.

NG: Yeah. Goddamn big fire up there, that tank. Goddamn, on the beach, oil about this thick all the way.

RH: Almost a foot, wow.

NG: Goddamn, I suppose all of it went down.

RH: I never thought of that, but you're right. It would have leaked all over the place.

NG: Oil tanks, four or five tanks of oil, all over. And that place up there, dump way—  
[across the bay from the oil tanks on Amaknak Island]

RH: Yeah.

NG: It used to be nothing but blue mussels, sea eggs. All that grease all clean them all out.

RH: Wow.

NG: 'Till after the war they started building a little bit. Jesus Christ, people they don't want to go around no more afterwards. They kill only about 30-40 people, all military men.

RH: All military people, I think.

NG: But I hear two guys by that oil dock, oil tanks, working. They were the only ones they didn't find. Must be threw them in the bay somewhere. Bomb.

RH: Now, was there anybody at Makushin when the bombing took place? Was anybody living over at Makushin still?

NG: No, not now.

RH: No, not now, but I mean in 1942, in the—

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. Everybody there. Kashega people there. Kashega people in Kashega. St. Paul people in St. Paul.

RH: Who was in Makushin?



NG: Pete Olsen. His wife Tatiann. Anna, his adopted daughter [She had actually died on June 19, 1936.], and that adopted boy John Borenin. That was Nick Borenin's brother. And, ah, Nick Borenin, I mean Matfey Borenin with his wife and kids.

RH: Ah, what was his wife's name?

NG: Borenin. His name is Borenin.

RH: Ah, okay. Matfey Borenin.

NG: With his wife and three kids—two kids, Nick Borenin and— I don't think that Nick Borenin is Elia's son. But Natalia, the one Elia's daughter.

RH: So there were quite a few people at Makushin at that time, at the time of the bombing.

NG: Well, nothing bother them.

RH: No, right. Right.

NG: Biorka, too. Biorka people over there. But they see the planes fly over here.

RH: The Biorka people did.

NG: Um hmm. The Makushin people. They went in there. Nick he didn't see them either but he heard about 'em on radio.

RH: Oh, did Pete Olsen have a radio? Is that how—

NG: Oh, yeah, yeah. Well, almost everybody got a radio but no TV.

RH: Oh, sure.

NG: Using by battery, radio.

RH: Um hmm.

NG: Used to be a lot of them around, but not anymore.

RH: Now Eva was telling me about Kashega. I think she got it a little bit confused because she said that, ah, the Japanese flew over Kashega and then the Army came and evacuated them on the same day. But it was a couple weeks later, I think, they were evacuated.

NG: Yeah, we been waiting two weeks.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

NG: 'Cause that's what I hear. This place the only one got a gun and everything so got to get those other villages out first. That's what I hear.

RH: Ah, okay.

NG: But me, I don't care about it. I'm not scared or nothing. [Laughs] Well, I was fuckin' dumb. Finally we took off. We didn't even see which way we're going.

RH: Yeah.

NG: Took as all the way as far as that Jap Bay in Kodiak. Bury one little girl.

RH: Oh, yeah. Was that Helen Lekanoff's—

NG: Um hmm. Lekanoff's daughter. And from there all the way to Wrangell. Just like Army. Two Army trucks looks like on the dock. Come out and we got small thing in our hand, our luggage. Didn't have a chance to get our luggage. Got on the truck, stand up on the truck, load truck, and we went down to Institute, Wrangell Institute.

RH: Okay, all right, yeah.

NG: There was a high school there.

RH: Right, right, yeah.

NG: When I got there I thought there were Army guys on the ground. Other villages using Army tents.

RH: Oh, okay.

NG: Unalaska people, all the boys hotel and girls hotel.

RH: Okay.

NG: We been there goddamn month and a half.

RH: Yeah, before you went to—

NG: Burnett Inlet.

RH: Burnett Inlet, yeah.

NG: But boat going Burnett Inlet every day, though.

RH: But the Biorka people didn't go to Burnett Inlet, though?

NG: No. Up in Ketchikan, Ketchikan.

RH: At Ward Lake?

NG: Ward Lake, yeah. Ketchikan. They used to . . . take care of them good, too, Biorka people, Akutan people, Nikolski. Kashega people, Makushin People.

RH: All at Biorka, I mean at Ward Lake.

NG: I was visit them a couple times. Got a lot of goddamn place by the lake, about eight or ten miles from Anchorage.

RH: No, from Ketchikan.

NG: Um hmm. Ketchikan, yeah. Bus go there a couple times a day. Taxis running. . . . I used to see a lot of people drunk. I just went there. My girlfriend want me so I got there but I was late. My girlfriend died.

RH: Ah.

NG: Irene Sovoroff. Sergie Sovoroff—you know Sergie Sovoroff—

RH: Yeah.

NG: That's his daughter. Goddamn, mail boat didn't go there. Finally, got mail boat got there so I went out on the mail boat and I got there. Well, I asked that Irene, my wife—I didn't know she was going to be my wife—he come to me, tell me, "I know you're looking for something." And after awhile she said, "She's gone." Goddamn, it hurt me. Four days after they buried her, I got there.

RH: Wow. Wow.

NG: I got there.

RH: Wow.

NG: That other Irene's, that's from Biorka.

RH: Yeah.

NG: That's the one I was married to. Maybe that's what I was after, why I went there!

[Laughs]

RH: [Laughs] Always Irene! Yeah. Well, thanks. Thanks, Nick. I'm going to give you a break, but I'll come back tomorrow and maybe we'll do just an Aleut recording. Okay?

NG: Okay-dokay.

RH: And that will be good. Let me see if I can figure out how to stop it.

