Chapter 5
Ends and Beginnings

Kashega, Makushin, and Biorka waited more than a decade after Veniaminov left the Aleutians in 1834 before building their first chapels. The early priest was effusive in praising his parishioners' devotion to orthodoxy. Chapels had been constructed at Atka, Nikolski, and Unalaska during the first decade of the 19th century, and churches had followed in the 1820s at Unalaska, St. Paul, and Atka. So why had it taken so long for chapels to appear in the three villages? Unlike larger population centers, these smaller villages had neither the resources nor the leadership for such projects. Early in the century, Atka and Nikolski had Unangax̂ who were literate and in positions of relative authority where they could initiate projects and recruit workers. Unalaska's chapel had been constructed through the efforts of the local manager of the Russian-American Company. The subsequent churches at Unalaska and Atka were constructed during tenures of priests while that on St. Paul was initiated by Kas'ian Shaiashnikov, an influential Unangax̂ manager for the Russian-American Company. Veniaminov's installment as bishop of Alaska in December 1840 and his return to the territory the following summer focused attention on the smaller communities that he knew so well.[1] Another factor may have been encouragement for such construction by officers and managers of the Russian-American Company as it came under increased scrutiny during its third and last charter, received in 1844.[2] The most significant factor, however, was that by the mid-1840s the generation educated during Veniaminov's ministry in the islands had reached adulthood. A cadre of young men was available to initiate construction of local chapels as a natural extension of Orthodoxy into villages. Just as important, literacy had become comparatively widespread and there were now Unangax̂ who could serve as readers and *starostas*, or church wardens, and who could conduct services throughout most of the liturgical year when a priest was

absent. Among Unangaŝ employed by the Russian-American Company—whether classified as Aleut, creole, or islanders—were Abraham, Maxim, and Andrew Yatchmenev, Ivan and Stephan Kriukov, Iakov Kudrin, Joseph Petelin, Gregory Petukhov, and Alexei Makarin. Once again, however, detailed information is lacking. We do not know, for example, why Joseph Petelin was stationed at Makushin and Alexei Makarin at Biorka. Perhaps their wives were from those villages; perhaps they themselves had ancestral ties to those locations. Nor do we know the familial ties, if any, between men with the same surnames. Some of these men lived out their lives in the villages; others retired to Iliuliuk (Unalaska). Several of them married more than once and their complex families in succeeding generations were found in multiple villages.

The first village chapel in the eastern Aleutians was the Chapel of the Dormition of the Mother of God on Akun, built in 1843 by Chief Ivan Pan'kov "with comrades."[3] Gregory Golovin, Veniaminov's successor at Unalaska, consecrated it the following year, shortly before his position was filled by Andrei P. Sizoi, a native of Irkutsk.[4] Pan'kov was also instrumental in the construction in 1844 of the chapel on Tigalda consecrated in the name of St. Ioann Listvinnik. Construction of both the Chapel of the Epiphany of Our Lord at Chernofski and the Chapel of the Transfiguration at Kashega was initiated in 1848.[5] Abraham Yatchmenev, who had worked for the RA Company since the 1830s, served as the baidarshchik at Kashega and when the chapel was completed in 1850 he became the starosta. He had married Lukerya Tcheripanoff in 1830, and at least eight of their ten children lived to maturity.[6] Iakov Kudrin was another Unangaŝ at Kashega who worked for the RA Company. In 1850 he married Marianne Semyonova Petelin and they had two children, Nicholas (born in 1855) and Elena (born in 1859).[7] Two younger Kudrin men, Ioann and Joseph, also had families at Kashega.

The Chapel of St. Nicholas at Biorka was dedicated in 1855. This chapel was under the direction of Alexei Makarin, yet another Unangaŝ employee of the RA Company in the 1830s.[8] Among his children was Terentii Makarin, born in 1854, who became a sea otter hunter and, in 1889, the father of Andrew Makarin.

A record of icons suggests Makushin may have had a chapel as early as 1846, although the first known inventory for the Chapel of St. Gregory was made May 14, 1853, by Father Innokentii Shaiashnikov and witnessed by Gregory Petukhof and Joseph Petelin. Both the Petukhof and Petelin families had long-established ties to the Russian-American Company. Gregory had served the company aboard ships in California and at New Archangel before marrying a woman from Unalaska. He died in 1865. Although he had a son, also named Gregory, who became a noted iconographer in Sitka, it was probably the elder Petukhof who resided at Makushin. The extended Petelin family had roots on Kodiak Island. Joseph Petelin was born on Unalaska in 1825 and worked for the Russian-American Company. He and his wife, Liubov [Lubova]

Chapel of the Dormition of the Mother of God at Attu. ASL-P277-008-027, Wickersham State Historic Sites Photograph Collection.

Borenin, had a large family (at least five sons and five daughters). Petelins resided at Makushin throughout the 19th century.[9] In an important 1878 census, Joseph Petelin's family is listed first, followed by that of Gregory Petukhof—suggesting the two men held leadership positions, perhaps first and second chiefs.[10]

These chapels, sometimes described as "wooden," were probably modified barabaras. Rough plank boards provided the sides of the building while the roof was a modification of beams and sod found in the barabaras Unangax̂ were so adept at constructing. They were perhaps much like buildings at Unalaska described in 1868 as "plank sided…with thatched roof."[11] The frequently photographed Chapel of the Dormition of the Mother of God at Attu was of such construction.

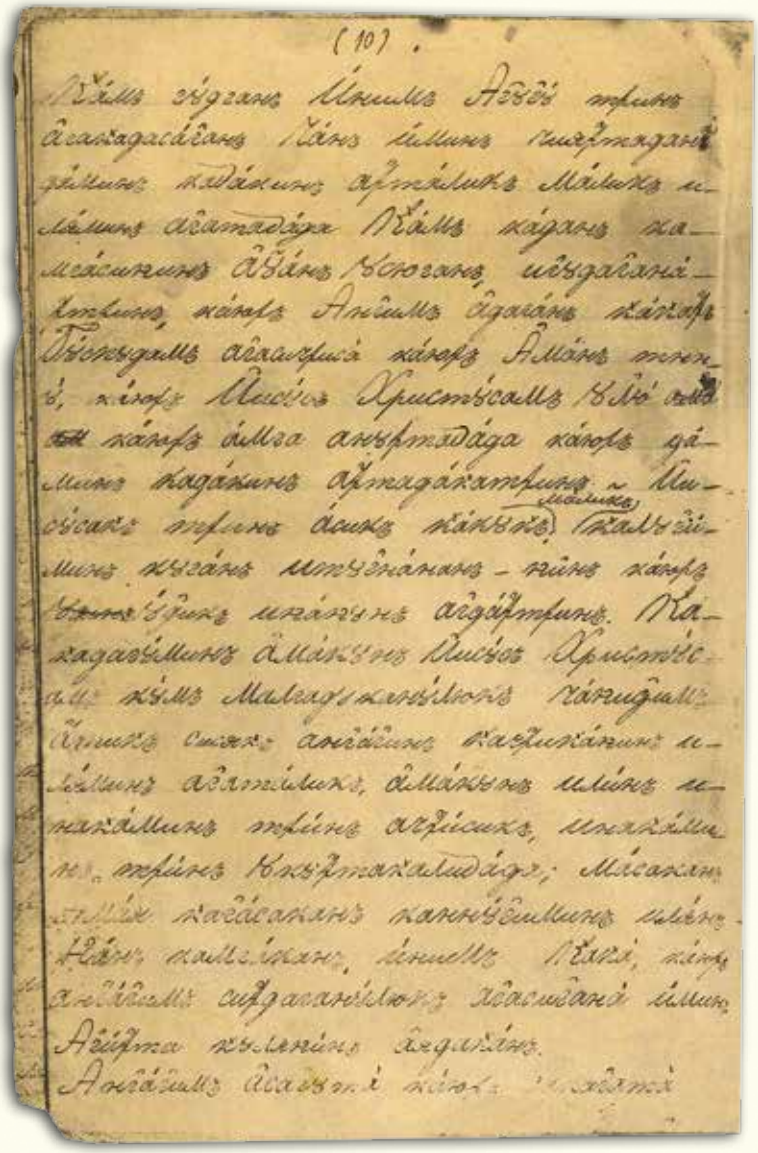
As the century neared its midpoint, the RA Company once again shuffled its administrative centers. Decentralization in the eastern Aleutians occurred as the manager of the Unalaska district became subordinate to the Novo-Arkhangel'sk office.[12] Between 1846 and 1847 the western district of the Russian-American Company was disbanded and individual settlements that comprised that district—Atka, Attu, Amchitka, Bering, and Mednoi—fell under the direct jurisdiction of New Archangel (Sitka).[13] A similar reorganization occurred at Unalaska. What this meant was that "instead of offices and their staff in Unalashka and Atkha there now were managers of Unalashka, Unga and Atkha subordinate to the

Novo-Arkhangel'sk office."[14] The Unalaska manager, responsible for villages including Biorka, Makushin, and Kashega, from 1848 to 1865 was Emel'ian Vlasov.[15]

Governor M.D. Teben'kov had the territory surveyed between 1848 and 1850. The Teben'kov atlas and its accompanying *Hydrographic Notes* owe much to Alaska Native sailors and craftsmen.[16] While none of our three villages appear on these charts, two of them are mentioned in the *Hydrographic Notes*. Makushin was said to be at latitude 53˚ 48' 5" and longitude 166˚ 51' 0". Biorka was given a less precise location, "on the NW side of the island." Interestingly, the *Hydrographic Notes* state that "Secha" was still in existence "on the opposite shore" while Bobrovskoe in Deep Bay is not mentioned.[17] Sechkinskoe, between Ugadaga and Agamgik bays, had never been large but had the advantage of being located at a fine red salmon stream and in the late 1840s it may have been primarily a summer fish camp. Before long, however, only Biorka was left from among the former complex of villages in the Beaver Inlet region. Apart from Biorka, none of these small villages is known to have constructed a chapel. For various reasons, the RA Company encouraged village consolidations, at times enforcing it and always welcoming such consolidation when done voluntarily.

In 1848 Innokentii Shaiashnikov became the priest for the eastern Aleutians and the Pribilof Islands. He oversaw chapels at Biorka, Makushin, and Kashega (along with other villages) until his death in 1883 at the age of 59. Born in 1824 and raised on St. Paul Island, he was directed into church service by his father, Kas'ian Shaiashnikov, the manager of sealing operations on St. Paul. After an apprenticeship with Iakov Netsvetov both at Atka and the Kvikhpakh mission at Ikogmiut (Russian Mission), he was ordained following a trip to Sitka where he married Mariia Alekseev, the daughter of Nicholai Alekseev, the RA Company manager at Unalaska from 1832 to 1847. One of several Unangax̂ girls sent to the capital of Russian America to be educated, she lived with a high-ranking officer of the company, Johann vonBartram, and his wife, Margaretha.[18] The young priest became an ardent and effective pastor. He trained sub-clergy and conducted schools. He translated scriptures into *Unangam tunuu*. His earliest extant translation, the Gospel of Mark, is dated Jan. 12, 1860.[19] Around 1870 he made extensive retranslations of all four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. These were not, however, published until the turn of the century and even then only in part. He translated a lengthy article, "Short Rules for the Conduct of a Godly Life," which was also published posthumously. He was, as a contemporary wrote, "both a temporal and spiritual guide."[20]

The new priest must have thrown himself into his duties with the vigor and enthusiasm that had recommended him to Netsvetov and



A page from Innokentii Shaiashnikov's "Short Rules for the Conduct of a Godly Life" written by Andrew Makarin in long-hand Unangam tunuu. Image courtesy Ray Hudson.

Veniaminov. Only four years after ordination, he was awarded a silver medal of the order of St. Anne for the "zeal" with which he undertook his duties.[21] In addition to rendering assistance to the construction of village chapels, he oversaw a school, initiated by Veniaminov, in which he both taught and supervised sub-clergy as teachers. Mariia Shaiashnikov was the language arts instructor for about fifteen years beginning in 1848.[22] While literacy was concentrated at Iliuliuk, it had also spread to smaller villages. "Every Aleut on the island of Unalaska is literate," wrote a visitor in 1860.[23]

In May 1851 Nikolai Rozenberg, chief manager, reported that all the company buildings at Unalaska were dilapidated and Unangaŝ dwellings were "very dilapidated."

МАТѲѢѢМѪ НАѢѢНѪ
ТѪНѪСАЧХѢСАѢМѪ
АГАЛАГѢАНГА[1].

ОТЪ МАТѲЕЯ
СВЯТОЕ
БЛАГОВѢСТВОВАНІЕ.

КАѢГНКѪ А.

А. Іисѹсѫ Христѹсаѣмѫ, Давѣдаѣмѫ Ѣьлаганѫ, Авраамаѣмѫ Ѣьлаганѫ, кнглахтиганѫ, тѹнѹса[2].

Б. Авраамаѣмѫ агѹка Исаакаѣнѫ; Исаакаѣмѫ агѹка Наквьаѣнѫ; Наквьаѣмѫ агѹка Ндаѣнѫ агнтѹдангинѫ каюхѫ;

В. Ндаѣмѫ агѹпа Фарисаѣнѫ каюхѫ Зараѣнѫ, Ѳамарѣнѫ, ѣаѣнѫ; Фарисаѣмѫ агѹка Есрѹмаѣнѫ; Есрѹмаѣмѫ агѹка Арамаѣнѫ;

Г. Арамаѣмѫ агѹка Аминадавѣнѫ; Аминадавѣмѫ агѹка

ГЛАВА I.

Родословіе Іисуса Христа, сына Давидова, сына Авраамова.

Авраамъ родилъ Исаака; Исаакъ родилъ Іакова; Іаковъ родилъ Іуду и братьевъ его;

Іуда родилъ Фареса и Зару, отъ Ѳамари; Фаресъ родилъ Эрома; Эромъ родилъ Арама;

Арамъ родилъ Аминадава; Аминадавъ родилъ

[1] Сиганда. [2] Іисѹсѫ Христѹсаѣмѫ, Давѣдаѣмѫ ѣьлаганѫ, Авраамаѣмѫ ѣьлаганѫ тагига.

А Наставнакѫ

First Page of the Gospel of St. Matthew by Innokentii Shaiashnikov. Russian (right); translation in *Unangam tunuu* (left). Image courtesy Ray Hudson.

> The board walls inside the yurts and the roofs under the grass covering are rotten. Rain and dampness penetrate into the yurts from everywhere. For lack of firewood, it is impossible to dry out the yurts by heating them…. The consequences of this condition of the company and Aleut buildings and dwellings is very apparent: spoilage of goods, provisions, and furs, and what is still worse, ruining of the health of the inhabitants of Unalaska, both Russian and Aleut.[24]

We do not know what conditions were like at the three villages, but at Atka and on the Pribilof Islands things were said to be even worse.

"...all the buildings on Atka without exception are in incomparably worse condition than on Unalaska," the report said. The company asked former Governor Teben'kov to respond. "On the islands the native inhabitants lived and live without demanding the least care for themselves in respect to lodging," he wrote. "Lumber and conveniences are needed for Russians and the russified, which is fulfilled as possible."[25] In 1850 he had sent 112 logs to Unalaska to be used in construction. Carpenters, he wrote, were not needed because local men could do the building when not hunting sea otters. Buildings should be constructed from local materials, "unfired bricks (with grass), banking the building with earth, clay, and sod" because it will never be possible to deliver the quantity of lumber required.

The church built by Veniaminov was also in need of major repairs. Shaiashnikov received permission to replace the structure and construction commenced in 1853. The new church was not completed and consecrated, however, until 1858.[26] Just as they would do forty years later when the church was again rebuilt, the smaller villages within the parish supported construction through whatever donations they were able to make.

Village chapels also fell victim to Aleutian weather. A particularly dramatic example occurred in 1861 when Shaiashnikov visited Chernofski. In October he and his companions took two three-hatch baidarkas and trekked overland to Makushin Bay. Bypassing Makushin Village, they arrived at Kashega on October 5 where stormy weather confined them for eleven days. During this time, in addition to regular

A later view of the church at Unalaska built under Father Innokentii Shaiashnikov. U.S. Custom's house on right. Alaska and Polar Regions Collections, Elmer E. Rasmuson Library, University of Alaska Fairbanks UAF-1958-1026-481 Charles E. Bunnell Collection.

church services, he worked on his translation of "Short Rules for the Conduct of a Godly Life." For eleven days bad weather kept them in the village, until, finally, they reached Chernofski. Their attempt to cross to Umnak, however, was thwarted by storms and they returned to Chernofski where the wind tore the roof off the Chapel of the Epiphany of Our Lord. Unangax̂ rushed to cover the structure with canvas and whatever material they could find.

The priest reached Kashega at the end of the month, where weather prevented people from even securing food. On the 8th he set off for Makushin. The wind rose; snow flurries obscured their route and they camped on the beach, forced to gather kelp for nourishment. At last they reached what was called "Old Harbor," the area inside Makushin Bay where a village had once existed. Setting off on foot, they arrived at the village at Volcano Bay hoping the RA Company employee who lived there would have food he could share. Neither the agent, probably either Gregory Petukhof or Joseph Petelin, nor the local people could supply anything more than a small quantity of dried fish. On the 13th he began the long trip down Makushin Bay by baidarka and then overland to Unalaska.

Population statistics collected from Shaiashnikov by George Davidson in the summer of 1867, the year of the Alaska purchase, show a sizeable population still existed east of Iliuliuk, even though the villages in the Krenitzin Islands and on the eastern side of Unalaska Island continued to wither away.[27] Biorka and Akutan—once Akutan was established in 1876 or 1877—gradually became the primary villages in the area.

Populations in 1867

	Male	Female	Total
Biorka	43	42	85
Akun	50	49	99
Avatanak	22	23	45
Tigalda	21	22	43
Total	136	136	272

Makushin and Kashega remained part of a complex that included Chernofski.

Populations in 1867

	Male	Female	Total
Makushin	23	26	49
Kashega	36	33	69
Chernofski	33	29	62
Totals	92	88	180

Iliuliuk, with small settlements in nearby Morris Cove and on Hog Island, dominated the region with over 360 residents.

By the time the RA Company left Alaska, many Unangaŝ viewed themselves as integral parts of the tapestry of Russian America. They had been educated by the company and had found roles within it as navigators, company agents, clerks and priests.[28] Although all Unangaŝ were grouped together as "dependent" or "civilized tribes," there was a vast difference between villagers in Biorka, Makushin, and Kashega and those residents of Sitka or Unalaska who had economic, educational, administrative, and cultural ties to Russia and the RA Company. Villagers may have been literate and had strong attachments to the Orthodox church, but their lives centered on subsistence and sea mammal hunting. Their economy and culture were tied to the Bering Sea and the North Pacific Ocean. They were more dependent on the sea and land than on any European government or economy and they could survive well if they never again saw a trader or an official. A good example was found at Biorka where in 1869 traditional whaling was still practiced. When Captain John A. Henriques, commanding the Revenue Cutter *Lincoln*, visited in 1869, the village had just landed a whale. "At the village of Biurka…I saw forty-three persons cutting and carrying a whale—young and old, male and female, while a boy of maybe ten years of age was sitting in the whale's mouth eating fatty portions of the tongue, his one garment completely saturated with oil, hatless, shoeless, but seemingly one of the happy ones of this world." He referred to Unangaŝ as "this truly wonderful people" and considered their character "astounding."[29]

Although the Alaska treaty was signed on March 30, 1867, the implementation of the transfer occurred over a period of several months and was not completed until after the 1867 summer sea otter hunt. The sale initiated an economic boom for Aleutian villages because it lifted restrictions the RA Company had set on sea otter hunting. Hunters were now free to take as many animals as they wished. The 1868 summer hunt also went as scheduled. During the twenty years from 1842 to 1861, the company had taken a total of 18,536, or a little over 900 each year.[30] In marked contrast, the years 1868-1870 saw a staggering 12,208 sea otters taken in the territory. They sold for $1,220,800 in London.[31] The breaks were soon applied, however, and on July 27, 1868, the Fortieth Congress extended the laws of customs, commerce and navigation to Alaska and placed enforcement under the Treasury Department. It specifically outlawed the killing of "any otter, mink, marten, sable, or fur seal, or other fur-bearing animal." This was primarily intended to protect the Pribilof Island fur seals from decimation by voraciously competing firms. Ten days later, Treasury Secretary Hugh McCulloch issued his own order prohibiting the killing of all fur-bearing animals, including sea otters.

As the 1869 sea otter hunt was about to begin, Captain Charles Bryant and Dr. Hugh Henry McIntyre, both special agents of the Treasury Department, were in the Aleutians. They understood the impact

McCulloch's order would have on communities and therefore allowed Unangax̂ to hunt sea otters as to prohibit this "would create much suffering among the natives." The pelts, however, had to be retained by the fur traders pending a decision by the Treasury Department or Congress. Hunting continued at full speed. According to Frank M. Brown, deputy Collector of Customs at Unalaska, during December 1869 alone Unalaska hunters delivered to different traders 18 sea otters, 66 fur seals, 47 red fox, 1 black fox, and 16 cross fox skins.[32]

What this meant for Biorka, Kashega, and Makushin must be inferred from reports that center on Unalaska (Iliuliuk), Attu and Atka. "I first visited these people in 1868, the year after the purchase [as a 1st lieutenant aboard the *Wayanda* under Captain J. W. White]," wrote George W. Bailey in 1879 during his last visit to Unalaska. He was captain of the U.S. Revenue Cutter *Rush*. "Then many of the old rules and customs governing them were still adhered to," he continued, referring to the limits the RA Company had placed on sea otter hunting,

> but, as soon as the different trading companies came among them, there was of course a competition for the trade. The price of furs went up to a ruinous figure for the traders, only the wealthiest ones being now left to continue the trade. The people consequently reaped the harvest. Money was plenty with them, and everything for sale in the way of life's luxuries was indulged in by them. This naturally introduced an entire change in their mode of living, the good times continuing sufficiently long to create certain wants never before known. They adopted the European style of dress, began to furnish their houses with articles never before considered necessary, thinking no doubt…that the improvement in their condition would be permanent.[33]

As a result of their 1869 visits, Bryant and McIntyre submitted reports that were at odds with each other. Confusion was indeed rampant. William Healey Dall found Unangax̂ were "in a state of bewilderment."[34] General George H. Thomas wrote that people "did not know who or what to believe, nor what their rights and privileges were."[35] This was repeated in a statement given to Illarion Arkhimandritov, a former captain for the RA Company and a man of Unangax̂ descent; Mariia Shaiashnikov was his niece. He was an experienced navigator who had been born in 1820 on St. George Island. He had attended Veniaminov's school at Unalaska and had a distinguished career aboard RA Company vessels. After the sale he became a supporter of the Alaska Commercial Company. In October 1868 he collected petitions from Unalaska and the Pribilof Islands. The islands mentioned in the Unalaska document encompassed the traditional hunting grounds of the eastern Aleut and included Kashega, Makushin, and Biorka.

Captain I. I. Archimandritoff—

> We hereby request you to protect the interests of all the people living on and around the island of Unalashka and the neighboring islands as far west as the island "Umnak" and North East as far as the islands "Akoon, Tigalda, Avootanak, Unimak, and Unga".
>
> Everything is wrong in our parts and there is no order at all on the island of Unalashka since the Americans arrived. Our interests are in danger and we request the Government to put a stop to the molestations of different Companies of Americans who arrive here. We also beg you to put before the government a petition that it should reserve to us our trade and fisheries.
>
> Your obedient servant,
> Toien Kondroity Kutchutine
> October 19, 1868[36]

The 1868 regulations were amended on July 1, 1870, under a new and frequently recycled title: "An Act to prevent the Extermination of Fur-bearing Animals in Alaska." Later that summer, this revision led to the lease of the Pribilof Islands to the AC Company for twenty years. The law was further refined to address the prohibition against distilled liquor (wine and beer were permitted) and the importation of firearms. The AC Company, however, was allowed to bring guns and ammunition to the Pribilofs. Their use was forbidden when harvesting fur seals or hunting sea otters from June through October. From 1873 to 1875 approximately 2,500 sea otters were secured each year. On July 3, 1875, the acting Treasury secretary banned rifles but this did nothing to reduce the number of otters taken. In fact, the overall catch increased.[37]

In 1868 sea otter pelts had brought between $22.50 and $55.00 (prime brown to prime dark silver) on the market.[38] In 1870 Unalaska hunters received between $15 and $35 for each of the 300 to 400 sea otters taken.[39] In 1872 "a good hunter" secured "from five hundred to a thousand dollars worth of skins."[40] Biorka, in particular, seems to have benefited from this economic boom. Unfortunately, the best eyewitness report for conditions there, made near the end of this brief period of prosperity, came from the worst possible witness: Ivan Petroff. His notoriety stems from the documents he fabricated with maniacal regularity during and after his 1878 visit to Alaska when he collected information for the 10th U.S. census and for the history of Alaska that was being assembled by Hubert Howe Bancroft. A logbook kept by Unalaska agents at the AC Company confirms Petroff's visit to Biorka on September 9-10, 1878. He described the village as "a prosperous little settlement"[41] with a "neat church, and store, and comfortable dwellings, nestling on a strip of sandy beach, hemmed in

on three sides by towering cliffs…."[42] He attributed the success of the village, not to income from sea otter hunting, but to the local trader.

> The strange and subtle influence of the method and manner of living practiced by an old trader who was and is their leader, one Gregory Krukov, is strikingly illustrated there to-day. This man and his wife are singularly neat in their manner of living; they keep everything clean about them, and in the summer decorate their house tastefully with wild flowers. The natives, under the influence of his example, are living in their barrabaras, the neatest and cleanest of their people in all Alaska. They are living so without an exceptional instance, every house being as orderly and as tidy as its neighbor. They put large windows into their barrabaras, sand and scrub the floors, and their furniture, their beds, and window-panes tidy and bright, while pots and tumblers filled with wild flowers stand on the tables and window-sills.[43]

Gregory Krukoff was a grandson of Ivan Krukoff [Kriukov], the old voyager who had recruited Veniaminov in 1822. Ivan's son, Stefan, had held positions with the RA Company in the Pribilof Islands and been their manager at Nikolski. In 1849 he was appointed paramount chief for the Unalaska district.[44] Stefan's son, Gregory, was born in 1828 and entered company service at a young age and, working out of the Unalaska office, eventually became their agent at Biorka. After the sale, the AC Company hired as many former employees of the RA Company as possible, and Gregory was one of these. His first wife, Evdokiia Petikoff, had died in 1870 and a few months later he married Anna Mukhoplev. In 1878 his household consisted of himself, his wife, his twenty year-old son Lazar, and Lazar's wife. On October 30, 1879, Krukoff wrote to the general agent of the AC Company at Unalaska that he was sending $46.55 (in dollars) to Father Innokentii Shaiashnikov on behalf of Biorka village and its chapel. Henry W. Elliott was in the Aleutians in the early 1870s. His description of Biorka, however, is derivative, owing many of its details to Petroff while inserting his own peculiar disdain for Unangax̂.[45] By the time he published the popular *Our Arctic Province* in 1886, Gregory Krukoff had died.

One of the mysteries surrounding the three villages is the dramatic population increase at Biorka in the years immediately after the sale of Alaska. From 85 residents in 1867, the community mushroomed to 141 by 1878. Fortunately, we have the 1878 household census compiled by Alfred Greenbaum, the AC Company general agent at Unalaska, to compare with Petroff's 1880 census, both of whom received data from Innokentii Shaiashnikov. As dramatic as the Biorka increase might seem, the regional population actually declined by about nine percent.

Population change between 1867 and 1878

	1867	1878 Greenbaum	1878 Petroff	Loss or Gain Greenbaum/Petroff
Biorka	85	141	139	+38/+54
Akutan		86	63	+86/+63
Akun	85	53	54	-33/-31
Avatanak	99	15	19	-84/-80
Tigalda	43			-43
Total	312	295	275	-17/-37

Continual movement between villages is reflected in the 1879 census George Bailey received from Shaiashnikov in which there are seven residents identified with Tigalda (supposedly completely abandoned by 1878). Whatever the exact numbers, Akun, Avatanak, and Tigalda were clearly in decline while Biorka and the newly established Akutan were growing. Moves to and from a village were determined by a number of factors including available dwelling sites and materials, proximity (Akun is relatively close to Akutan), and the wish to retain family ties within a settlement. Lacking year-to-year changes for these villages, the impact of the establishment of the modern village of Akutan cannot be ascertained. The fact that it was established as a commercial center for the AC Company and the Western Fur and Trading Company may suggest that people who wished to have less contact with such businesses may have settled at Biorka.

Makushin and Kashega's populations, along with Chernofski's, increased by 25 percent. One factor may have been the reduction in infant mortality due to the relative prosperity of the 1870s.

Population change between 1867 and 1878

	1867	1878 Greenbaum	1878 Petroff	1878-Children 12 and under
Makushin	49	59	61	20
Kashega	69	76	73	18
Chernofski	62	86	98	24
Total	180	221	232	62

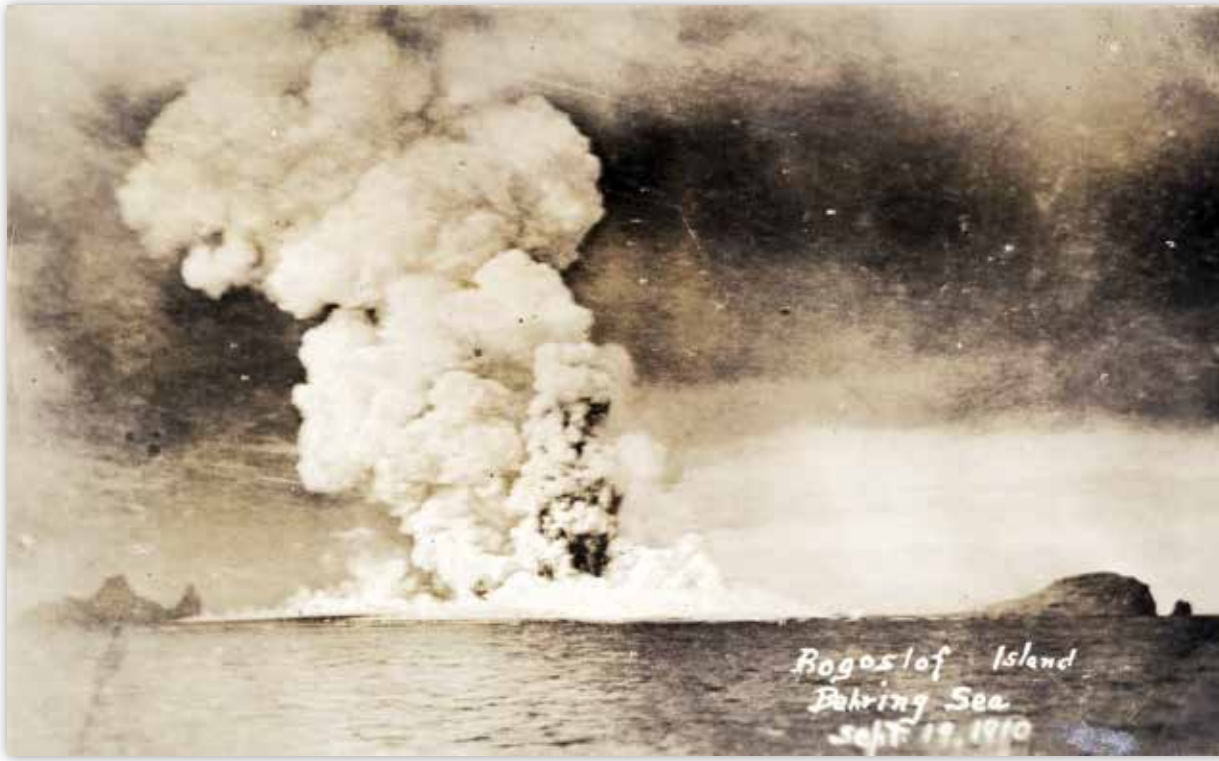
While the number of Russians in the territory had never been large, the years following the purchase saw a steady influx of white hunters, most frequently in communities along the Alaska Peninsula, where they used rifles, ignored accepted rules of behavior around sea otter sanctuaries, and temporarily married local women in order to be classified as "native hunters." The sea otter population was reduced. In

October 1876 Unangaŝ hunters from several villages met at Unalaska, probably in preparation for leaving on the winter hunting party. A petition was drafted in which they stressed that sea otter hunting was their "sole means of procuring bread and clothes." They acknowledged the "great injury" hunting with rifles had done to otter populations, noting that its prohibition had come too late. Specific charges were made against white hunters who had infiltrated the hunting grounds during the previous two years. In contrast to Unangaŝ who showed "great care and caution," outsiders cruised the area in schooners, made fires on beaches, disrupted the otters' breeding grounds, and hunted with rifles. Written by Father Innokentii Shaiashnikov, the petition was sent to the Secretary of the Treasury with signatures of thirty-five men from several villages.

> Therefore we, zealous to sustain ourselves, turn to Your Excellency, that you with your sentinels enforce caution and care upon those schooners now hunting around our shores, with especial reference to the sea otter grounds of the Shumagin Islands, Saanack and Oomanak, and protect these animals from the use of fire arms when hunting them, and also that vessels unless in distress shall not anchor on these grounds except such schooners as may carry our hunting parties to and from these places with all the requisite care and caution, like for instance those of the Alaska Commercial Company.[46]

Enforcement of any regulations, however, was nonexistent. In 1875 the only Revenue Service cutter in Alaska, the *Wolcott*, had been restricted to southeast Alaska. The following year, no cutter was sent to Alaska. In 1877 the *Rush* was in Alaska from April to November. When cutters intercepted sealers who were suspected of illegally taking fur seals, a thorough inspection was impossible. There was never room on the decks to break out the entire cargo consisting of provisions, sealing outfits, spare rigging, sails, blocks, the effects of the crew, etc. Rifles were easily concealed in corners of the hold, chain lockers, and storerooms. They were even stowed in the furled sails.[47]

As the second decade of U.S. rule began, residents at Biorka, Kashega, and Makushin faced a variety of problems brought on by declining sea otter populations. These difficulties, however, were minor compared with the catastrophe that overtook Makushin. Throughout 1878 volcanic activity along the chain had noticeably increased. Whalers returning south to Hawaii reported seeing "gigantic columns of smoke" as they maneuvered through passes "and copious streams of lava" descending island slopes.[48] On the last day of August, Unalaska Island was struck by a severe earthquake about two in the morning. Ivan Petroff was at Iliuliuk and two days later he wrote in his journal, "Some



A later eruption of Bogoslof (1910). ASL-P277-008-066, Wickersham State Historic Sites Photograph Collection.

natives arrived at the village this morning from Makushin village with news of disaster caused by the over-flowing of rivers and lakes from volcanic action." [49] Petroff's unreliability has already been mentioned. Although the magazine *Nature* confirmed "an earthquake accompanied by a tidal wave totally destroyed the village of Makushin on August 29," it is likely the information came from Petroff.[50] The extant AC Company journal (January 1, 1878 – June 30, 1879) provides no information. Nevertheless, we can be fairly certain that the village was shaken to its core because the people began tearing down their barabaras, salvaging whatever lumber they could, and constructing homes at a site just inside the bay.[51]

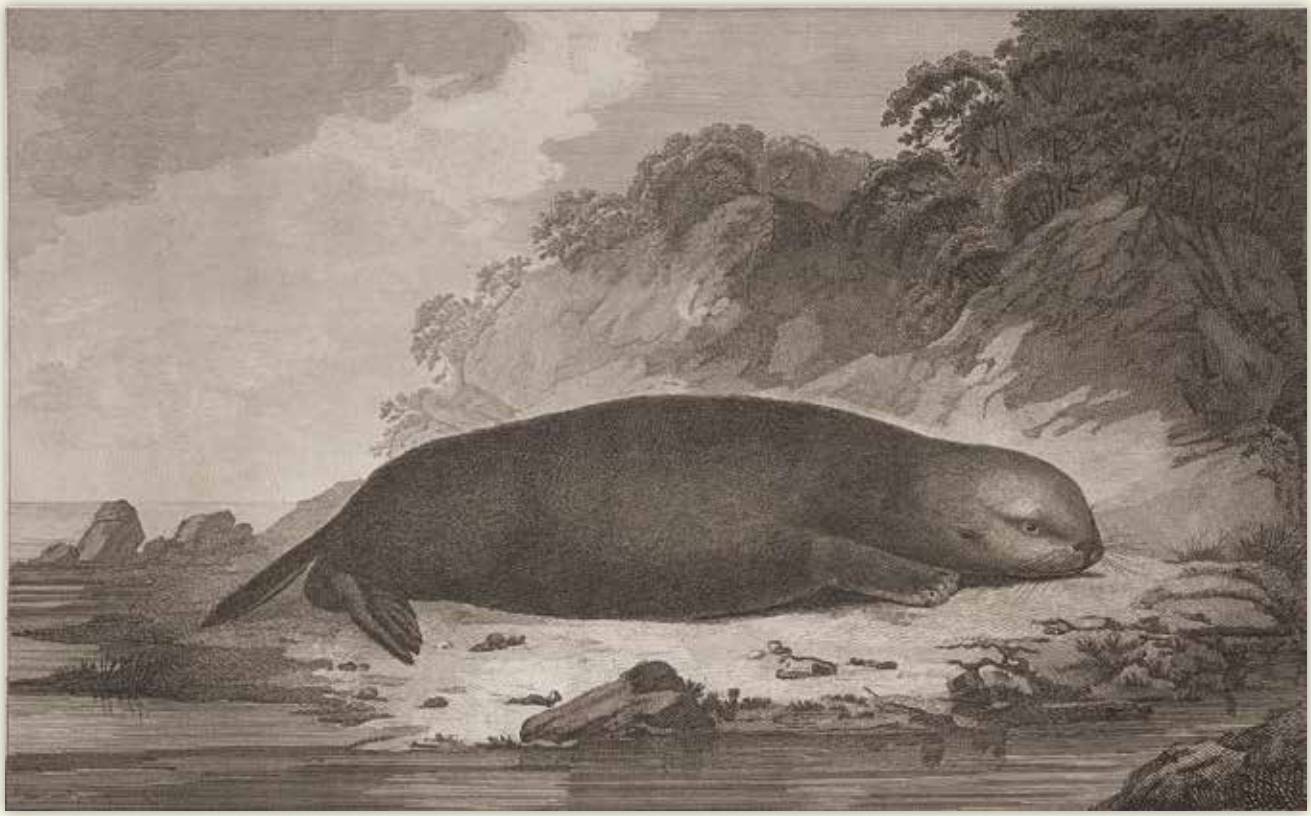
Villages along the western coast of Unalaska Island had experienced volcanic disturbances before. The most dramatic recorded occurrence had been the appearance of Bogoslof Island, northwest of Makushin, in the late 18th century. Alexander Shaiashnikov, son of Innokentii Shaiashnikov, recalled that his great-great-grandmother was about sixteen or seventeen and living at Chernofski at the time. "There was a great quaking of the earth," he told Samuel Applegate, "and for three days and nights the atmosphere was very dark. The water in the sea was so hot that it killed all the sea eggs and fish and for some time after the people were starving." Then he added the interesting comment, "When this disturbance was going on the people at Tchernofski who had embraced Christianity were praying to God in fear while those who

Nick Lekanoff, Sr. at Makushin beach. Photograph by Josy Shangin. Watercolor tint by Mary C. Broderick.

had not yet done so resorted to shamanism." Shaiashnikov also relayed information from Klement Borenin, a resident of Kashega. (The 1878 census indicates he was born in 1842.) Borenin's grandfather "heard from old people" that near where Bogoslov arose there used to be a pinnacle rock with a small sandy beach around it, just large enough for a few baidarkas to land. Seals hauled out on the rock and when hunters from different villages arrived at the same time, the first to land were given precedence while the others had to return home. It was a favorite site for Chernofski hunters.[52]

The new Makushin Village faced south, toward a dramatic outcropping called Cathedral Rocks. A stream at the eastern end of the beach provided fresh water. Nick Galaktionoff recalled that it was "a good place for young kids." The beach at the village was "nothing but sand" and covered with tall wild rye where they could play for hours. "Because Makushin face south," he said, "sunshine hit 'em every day."[53] Nick's grandmother, Marva Petukoff, probably also played with her two sisters in the tall grass as they settled into

their new village while their father, Gregory, and their older brother, Basil, worked to ready their home. The wisdom of the 1878 move was confirmed when on October 20, 1883, Bogoslof again went into action, and this time Unalaska village itself was carpeted with "vast quantities" of ash.[54]



Sea Otter. Engraving after John Webber, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, 1780. Image courtesy Francis Broderick.