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**Title: Account of a Visit to Bodega Bay and Fort Ross, September 1818 by Friedrich Luetke**

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**ACCOUNT OF A VISIT TO BODEGA BAY  
AND FORT ROSS, SEPTEMBER 1818**

**Excerpts from Friedrich Luetke's Diary  
from a Voyage on the Sloop Kamchatka**

S. Watrous  
Sept. 1992

F. P. Litke. [*Kaliforniia, 4-28 Sentabria 1818 g.*], from *Dnevnik, vedennei vo vremia krugosvetnogo plavania na shliupe "Kamchatka" (California, September 8-28, 1818, from Diary written during the round-the-world voyage of the sloop "Kamchatka")*, in L. A. Shur, *K beregam novogo sveta (To the Shores of the New World)*. Moscow: Nauka, 1975. pp. 135-38, 152-63.

[September] 4. At this time the overcast skies began to clear up a bit, and at 1:30 we saw directly in front of us on shore a few puffs of smoke and the flag of the Russian-American Company. Seeing it made us quite happy. We fired two cannon to announce our arrival to our compatriots, and after a short while we fired a few more rounds. We soon saw three baidarkas coming toward us from shore, and so we lay to under the main top-sail. By two o'clock the baidarkas were alongside us, and in one them we detected the settlement's commandant [*nachal'nika*], Commerce Councillor Kuskov. As soon as he recognized who we were, he sent his baidarkas ashore to bring us fresh provisions; we continued to tack about, off the settlement at a distance of no more than three cables' length from shore [ $3/10$  of a nautical mile]. During this time we fired our cannon a few times to hurry along those who had gone to get fresh provisions. They showed up no earlier than 8 o'clock, notwithstanding. They brought us two steers, with about 44 poods of meat on them [over 1500 lbs.], four large pigs, and 12 large rams, as well as potatoes and cabbage. In return for all of this, they took nothing, of course. Kuskov even declared his regrets that he could not supply us with melons and watermelons, for this year he had none; they had done poorly, in contrast to the usual.

When it got completely dark, we were treated to a very entertaining spectacle: everything was on fire along a certain stretch of land not far from the settlement. The Indians who live in these parts eat a certain type of wild plant similar to rye, which our settlers call *rozhnitsa* [wild-rye]. After the Indians gather up this wild-rye, they usually burn all of the remaining plant. As a result, the wild-rye is all the bigger and tastier the next year around. They

undertook such a burning this very night. At 8:30 we bade farewell to Kuskov, who had been so kind to us, and we set out to sea. At this time Fort Ross was about  $50^{\circ}$  northeast of us, at a distance of three Italian miles away. According to our figures, its location was at  $38^{\circ} 32'$  N. Latitude, and at  $122^{\circ} 51' 00''$  W. Longitude.

The settlement of Ross, or Slaviansk, is built on a level site on a mountain side, at a distance of about a [quarter mile] from the sea shore. With respect to maritime considerations one could hardly find a place less suitable. The shoreline is completely straight, without the smallest bay or even inlet that might provide some shelter. Thus the usual oared craft can rarely pull up close to Ross settlement without danger; and with moderate gusts of wind from the south, southwest, west, or northwest, the waves can be so strong that it's even impossible for baidaras as well. Nor is the depth very favorable for an anchorage. About a mile from shore it is over 200 feet deep and increases regularly as you go out to sea; three miles off shore it's over 550 feet deep. The bottom is silty everywhere, but this can hardly be determined without the urgent need of staying anchored, especially during daylight hours, and even under the most favorable circumstances.

Moreover, there is absolutely no fresh water near the settlement. Above all, there is nothing conspicuous about this place. Without taking observations for a few days, and in foggy weather too, it's very hard to find it right away. On a clear day a few white rocks, which lie along the shoreline somewhat north of the settlement can serve as a fairly good marker. Moreover, there is less forest around the settlement than elsewhere, so that it seems as though it lies on a sandy plain. With an error in latitude of over ten minutes these factors become almost totally worthless. Only necessity or complete ignorance could have forced one to choose this site as the settlement of a maritime trading company.

We learned from Mr. Kuskov that the *Kutuzov* had been anchored in Bodega Bay for some

time prior to this, and is now in Monterey. Thus, our captain [Vasily Golovnin] decided to go there directly.

[Sept.] 5. A contrary wind blew against us all day amidst fair weather. At 7:30 a.m. we saw the Farallon Islands, lying at the entrance to San Francisco Bay. These islets, or rather rocks, lie west-southwest of Point Reyes about 15 miles. Four or five of them in all, they are composed of two groups, southeast and northwest of each other. In almost the very middle of them is a separate low, small rock which could perhaps provide a reason why some claim that there are three groups. But this is incorrect, for this rock cannot be considered a special group. They are white in color and are visible 25 to 30 miles away. The southernmost of them are larger than the others. A party of promyshlenniks, who hunt seal between the coastline and the Farallons, lives there. But one might thereby conclude that the Farallons produce something themselves. Indeed, they are nothing more than completely naked rocks. If it doesn't rain for long, then the promyshlenniks even go without water; in that case they are forced to go to the tip of Point Reyes.

At 3:00 p.m., about 3 miles from the southern group of Farallons at 67° SW, we did not touch bottom at 840 feet [120 *sazhen*]. The wind, gradually abating, finally became calm. At 8:30 a.m. we let out the lifeboat, on which our navigator went to measure the current. We lowered the lead to about 50 feet, but there was no sign of a current.

Around 10 o'clock we saw a sea otter sleeping on the water. Since it was completely calm, we let out the lifeboat again. In climbed Mr. [Antipater] Baranov (who had completely recovered to our satisfaction) and our naturalist Mr. Wormsjöld to catch it. They were unsuccessful, however, for the sea otter, who was out of rifle-fire range, began to dive. Instead, they caught a very unusual fish on a hook. Mr. Wormsjöld could not exactly determine its species,

for he lacked the necessary books for this, but he assumed it belonged to the shark family. It was quite similar to a rasp (*Angelot de mer. Krötenhai. Meerengel*), but differed in that it had a small mouth and a back abdominal fin. (Its tail was eaten, probably by another shark, and for this reason it was impossible to say anything positive about this part of its body or about its length overall.

[Sept.] 7. At noon we were 23 miles from the southern group of Farallons, SW at 41 1/2 °. At 4:00 a soft wind blew from the Northwest. Toward evening it turned into a WNW wind so gusty that, to keep sailing through the night, we had to go with a single fore-marsail.

(pp. 135-38)

\* \* \* \*

[Sept. 22] At 2:00 a.m. we sailed by a southwest wind. At dawn we turned about (at a depth of 550 feet [80 *sazhen*], the sea floor was a thin silt) and came directly upon Bodega. At 7:45 p.m. we approached the shoreline, hove to, and sent our Aleuts straight off to Ross settlement to announce our presence to Mr. Kuskov. We lay to the southeast so as to sail around the shallows, which extended out from the island that lay in front of the entrance to the bay. At 9:00 we raised the flag, accompanied by gunfire, and at 9:30, we laid anchor at a depth of six fathoms on a sandy bottom.

Our first concern was, of course, the very reason we had come here: to get water. Thus we wasted no time in loading empty barrels, as many as would fit, into two rowboats and sent them ashore. Meanwhile, we began to lower the longboat, which we always used afterward.

Toward evening we were glad to witness the unexpected arrival of Ivan Kuskov. We had not anticipated this at all, for the Aleuts we had sent off could not have reached him so quickly that he would have arrived here so soon. However, they had met him halfway to Bodega, off on

his own business.

[Sept.] 22. We went ashore and visited an Indian settlement located some distance to the north. I think it is hard to find a people which has attained less political development than have these Indians. Their housing looks more like beehives or anthills than the homes of human beings. Dwellings are made out of twigs driven into the ground in a semi-circle and joined together about 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> feet above the ground, and then they are covered by dry weeds or wooden branches. They provide no protection from rain or any bad weather, which, in the land where these people live, fortunately occurs very rarely. Here they drag out their miserable existence, which does not provide them, apparently, with any satisfactions except those in common with cattle. They remain completely indifferent to matters they are not used to. Our arrival did not attract their attention in the least; and out of all their number not more than two or three visited our sailors, who were loading water and washing clothes along the shoreline.

When we dropped anchor, they then began to observe for the first time the objects around us. At the same time two Indians happened to go beyond the dunes to the shoreline. We followed them with our telescopes until they disappeared inland, and not one of them even looked around toward our ship. It seemed that our ship attracted their attention as much as did the shrubs through which they were walking. When we reached their village, not one of them left his own business or even his own spot to come look at us. And even when we began to speak with them, they did not glance our way.

Serving as our interpreter was a Kodiak Aleut who had defected when Mr. Kuskov first sent a hunting party into San Francisco Bay. He lived among the Indians for almost a year, and then when a subsequent party arrived to hunt, he appeared and began to hunt sea otter side by side with the others. From his stories one can conclude that the Indians are of a cantankerous

but not mean disposition. He said that they often quarrel among themselves and even harass each other, but him they never touched.

There are never any traces of respect for God among them, and it generally appears that they have no conception at all, nor even think, of how and why they and all that surrounds them were created. Such people, of course, cannot have any laws. However, among them was one who called himself their leader and whom we usually called a chief [*taion*]. But we could not determine how far his power extends over others. We did not even see any external signs of respect given to him, and he would have been in no way distinguished from the others, should some of our men not have given him two shirts the day before, both of which he did not fail to wear. It also seems that this dignity is inherited, for his father was also a *taion*, and he stepped up to this position.

Despite the fact that they have dwellings, their life is almost nomadic, for there are hardly ever more than 50 of them in a settlement, and sometimes no more than ten. This is indeed not surprising, for whatever they possess here they can find anywhere. Nowhere are there twigs and dry grass lacking for housing. Their food consists only of acorns and wild-rye, and in summer whatever the sea provides. They roast the acorns, as we do coffee, and then grind and mix them with water and heat. This sweet porridge serves as their main diet. Instead of a sauce pan, they use baskets made of reeds or grasses, and they toss incandescent rocks into them. Along with these baskets and their own mouths, they have no utensils other than their fingers, which they dip into the porridge. Then they lick them clean and thereby satisfy their hunger. Although this way of eating is not likely to arouse an appetite among others, I decided nevertheless to have a taste and found that this food is none other than a bitter, unpleasant mash. We had no chance to see how they prepare wild rye. At this time of year there probably isn't any, for we saw no one doing it. The fields, however, were burned over in many places, probably for



the same reason spoken of above.

Besides this, they eat all kinds of shellfish and fish, although not so much of the latter, for they lack means of catching them. We saw, however, one family eating some small, broad fish about two inches long, which they probably get right along shore. All of their food preparation consists of burying these items in hot ashes and, after leaving them awhile, eating them all together: along with the skin and the ashes left on it. Although this does not make a very splendid meal for them, so that they, however, may not go lacking, they always set up their dwellings along the shoreline. The settlement we saw was located along the lagoon, or rather the lake that joins up with the bay. They drink only the water which they get from a hole about four feet deep; this water is dirty and tastes bad.

The productivity of these Indians is still in its complete infancy; indeed it is altogether non-existent. They go around completely naked. Some of them make for themselves a kind of shirt out of the blankets they get from the Spanish or the Russians. However, these do not even cover their shameful body parts. But there is no need to wear these garments, for the Spanish don't like to give them away, and there are few Russians here. Among them we also saw a certain kind of cape made from the skins of sea-gulls, which covered no more than half their back. Since they try more to cover their back than any other body part with this garment, one may conclude that they lack the slightest idea of shame. This is in regard to the men only; women wear the skins of wild sheep, which they tie around their waist and let hang below the knees. Very rarely did we see objects of their own handiwork in their midst. I have already mentioned their grass cooking baskets. Among all their things, these deserve the most attention, for they are woven so tightly that water cannot pass through. All their weaponry consists of bow and arrows, quite crudely fashioned. [Luetke's footnote comment: They willingly sold us a full set of

these for a few needles and metal sheets or for two tobaccos.]

Although they live for the most part by the sea, they have no boats at all. On the shoreline near their settlement there lay something like a raft, i.e. several bunches of reeds bound together once again. They use this object, which cannot support over two men at a time, and which can truly be called fragile, when they need to cross a river or something similar. Small nets, coarsely woven out of weeds, must conclude this list of their handmade objects.

These Indians are dark copper in color. Their hair is completely black, and they all wear it in top knots. In height they are less than average and are generally awkward in body frame. Their eyes, however, are animated. Besides, one can say that the women are quite handsome. Their round, full features, rather regularly set, their small mouth, small nose and live eyes are quite agreeable. They get their above-mentioned body color, it seems, more from the dirt in which they live than from nature, for they convinced us that when they wash themselves they become quite white.

Some of our promyshlenniki and Aleuts are married to these Indians. Our translator, who also has a wife from among this people, told us that she learned very quickly both the language and all the Aleut jobs, such as sewing raincoats out of intestines, etc. I saw a rather comely young woman preparing food at one of their huts. Approaching her, I was surprised when she began to invite me in pure Russian to eat her corn mash. Then she complained that it was going to rain, etc. In fact it turned out that she had lived for a while at Fort Ross with a promyshlennik and then returned to her home territory. Consequently, she could still do some of those things.

But these unfortunate creatures among their compatriots (as it is with nearly all uncivilized peoples), it seems, constitute the lowest class. They have no rights which would call them forth. An Indian man will take an Indian to wife who pleases him, keeps her as long as he wants,

and forsakes her when he feels like it. They tend to all jobs. We saw only one man from the entire settlement who was busy mending nets - and then, perhaps, out of boredom; all the others either played or did nothing at all. It was a rare woman who was not busy with something.

These Indians use a certain kind of bath house, which is none other than an underground yurt. They make an opening on one side through which one can crawl. On top is an air hole. After heating this bath house, they get inside and play. Their play is just as it was among the Tlingits and Kodiak Aleuts. It consists of a few pointed sticks which some of them mix and hide, while others try to guess how many. Idleness causes these people, who have almost nothing [material] to lose, to give themselves over to gambling. It is both remarkable and astonishing that among the peoples who live all along the northwest coast of America, from Kodiak Island down to 38°, the games of chance are one and the same. In all other respects, however, there is not the slightest similarity, and they lack even marginal communication among themselves.

Moreover, one could almost reach the same conclusion about the peoples of Europe - the various languages, religions, customs, yet playing cards are identical. Perhaps some philosopher will find in this only evidence of a greater deficiency in human nature, and conclude that man is more disposed to imitate the bad than the good. Their language is very pleasant to the ear, and this is all that we can say about it. It has no harsh nor heavy-sounding syllables at all; they speak very quickly.

\* \* \*

Little Bodega Bay (or, as it is called by our settlers, Rumiantsev Bay, and by the indigenous inhabitants, Chok-liva) lies at a latitude of 38° 18' 45" North (our anchorage), according to the sun's elevation at midday, and at a longitude west of Greenwich, averaged by two different observations of lunar distances at \_\_\_° \_\_\_' \_\_\_" [left blank in text], and averaged by our chron-

ometers at \_\_\_° \_\_\_' \_\_\_" [left blank].

It forms an inlet to the northwest and is bordered on the east by the mainland shore, extending southeast toward Greater Bodega [Tomales] Bay and westward to Cape Rumiantsev (so named by our settlers; it does not appear on Spanish maps with any name). To the north it is bordered by a low strip of land or knoll which forms the shoreline to the east. It extends toward the western shore, where, bending somewhat to the southeast, there is a narrow passage no more than 280 feet across that leads into an extensive bay facing northeast and about ten miles in circumference. An Indian village, which we mentioned earlier, is situated on the shoreline of the bay. This bay would be the most splendid harbor in the world if ships could enter, but the depth allows only small oared craft to pass through. Its larger part, which begins from the knoll and goes almost to the middle, dries up during low tide; thus it remains useless for navigation. From the tip of the above-mentioned knoll, and almost parallel to the shoreline, a sandy spit extends to the southeast, against which the surf keeps pounding.

The shore itself has a little indentation right here, and thus a small, but good harbor has formed, in which two or three small ships moor without danger. But it has many disadvantages. Passage into it, between the extremities of shoals and the shoreline of Cape Rumiantsev, is narrow, and above all, the depth of this channel at low tide is no more than 4 feet. At high tide it runs from 10 to 11 feet deep, and during spring tides it reaches 14 to 15 feet deep. As a result, this harbor can be useful only for small craft, but even those which enter it should choose a high-tide period and favorable conditions. Most ships should stay in the outer bay. This is completely protected from the southwest, west, and north, and almost so from due east. From the south and south-southwest it is protected by a small island that lies south-southeast of Cape Rumiantsev and by shoals which extend out from this island into the sea; it is protected by other islands which adjoin the Cape. From east to south-southeast it is screened somewhat by the

mainland shore, which turns somewhat to the southwest and terminates at Point de los Reyes. It is completely protected from the other three directions. Such a description would indicate to anyone that Rumiantsev Bay is a rather poor harbor. In summer months the risk is not great, but in winter only necessity would force a ship to seek shelter here.

From the sea Rumiantsev Bay has few landmarks. Its most distinctive part is Cape Rumiantsev, which appears tall, gritty, and chopped off, whereas the contiguous coastline is low, gently sloping, and covered with vegetation. For some reason or another, it juts out into the sea from the rest of the shoreline, and from a distance looks like an island. The little island that lies somewhat southeast of it is also a good landmark, when you get rather close to it.

When seen from the interior, Cape Rumiantsev is just as differentiated from the surrounding shoreline as it is from the sea. From its low sandy shoreline, which has a breadth of about 40 paces, it rises suddenly in choppy fashion to a height of 70 feet, and then, not quite so steeply, it ascends another 100 feet. Across from it, on the eastern shore, an imperceptible slope rises to small hills, after which an extensive treeless tundra ensues. All the surrounding areas are unforested; only on the hills beyond the tundra are trees visible in a few places. Nearer in, there is nothing but small shrubs. The grasses were all burned out, just as they were around Monterey, but the soil is a very rich chernozem.

Taking this into consideration, along with the excellent climate of this location, one can confidently state that all kinds of fruits and vegetables could grow as well here as anywhere. This is also confirmed by the amazing fertility of the land around the settlement of Ross, no farther than 18 miles away. All the vegetables there grow in two crops a year: they sow in November, and in April they harvest; in May they sow again, and in October they harvest a second time. As an example of how well everything grows there, suffice it to say that Mr. Kuskov

once harvested 50 lbs. of radishes from his garden. This might be regarded as a tall-tale, except that Kuskov is in no way a man led to tell a lie. This territory would not lack for anything in the world, if only it had people.

But now at Port Rumiantsev a navigator can find nothing but water which is pure and tasty; it gushes forth into the harbor from a creek that flows from the hillside. It is easily and conveniently accessible, and one needs only a conduit leading to a barrel and to wait for it to fill up. Except for this commodity, of great importance indeed, there is no reason to stop here. True, in the inner bay there are lots of wood grouse, and always quite enough of them for daily needs. There are not many fish, and firewood would be hard to collect, even for everyday use.

Regardless of this port's bad features, it is not without advantages for the [Russian-] American Company. It is a natural anchorage, where ships bringing things to Fort Ross can unload - and for this they even have a warehouse here, or rather more simply put, a shed, which was completely empty, however, at the time of our visit. Besides this, Ivan Kuskov has constructed a wharf at Fort Ross, where he is building ships which are brought to this port for their final outfitting and loading. Here we found the first of the ships he has built; this was a schooner of about 80 tons called the *Rumiantsev*. They were getting it ready to go to the Farallon Islands. A second ship, the *Buldakov*, was still in its slip at Ross, but was already getting set for completion.

The construction plans for these ships were done by a English shipmaster in the service, whom we did not find there. They were built by simple artisans from Irkutsk [editor's endnote: Luetke is evidently thinking of Vasily Grudinin] who had formerly never seen seagoing ships, but who just knew how to work with an axe. Above all he was perhaps able to work since the Company began to built ships, and his preliminary expertise consisted entirely of this. When the plans were sent to Ross, he looked them over and at first tried to make models of them.

When they were approved, he then began to construct the ships themselves. The *Rumiantsev*, which we saw, was very well built, inasmuch as one could judge from its outside appearance. It did not look at all as though some simple promyshlennik had built it. It does as little honor to the talents of \_\_\_\_\_ [gap in text] as it does to the Company that this useful man received only 400 rubles in wages. How can the Company expect reliable people to begin serving in it, if it rewards them so poorly.

Considering the disadvantages that Fort Ross puts up with, due to its location, it is only natural to ask the question: why didn't the Company locate the settlement on the shores of Bodega harbor, which even if mediocre, still has more advantages than does Ross. It would not have been out of line to have done this, if ordered, but the Spanish authorities, who allowed the settlement, apparently, feared giving it too many advantages, and although they wanted to have the Russians as their neighbors, they preferred a distant association to a close one. One should know that all of these matters became a kind of joke, without the knowledge of either of the two home governments.

[In founding a settlement] the Company acted on the strength of its charter and did not consider itself obliged to request the preliminary permission of the government.\* But the Spanish governor had other reasons. It was in 1812 when news arrived that Ferdinand VII had been deposed from the throne and that a new dynasty had ascended. [The new dynasty's] rights throughout all Spanish America were renounced. And the Governor of California, Arrillaga, along with the others, did not regard himself as subject to the government then and considered himself justified in acting in the name of the legitimate king, Ferdinand VII.

When the Company received permission to found a settlement, it then sent Mr. Kuskov off to do this with a work party. When they reached the designated location, they began to build

dwellings, warehouses, and a settlement in general. They bought from the Spanish all the necessary domestic cattle, which were driven to the settlement by the very officers of the San Francisco presidio, who above all, as Mr. Kuskov claims, imagined that the Russians did not know how to milk cows, and they sat down and showed them how it was done. With the foundations established, Kuskov began to build the fort, which now has . . . [gap in text] guns, which consequently are stronger than those at Monterey. The Company regards all these circumstances, including the last two, as worthy evidence of its rights to the site.

When the legitimate king was again restored to his rightful place, the Spanish government received news of the fact that this had been done without its authority. It made an agreement with the former governor, who in the meantime had passed on (and according to Kuskov surely went to Heaven), and de Sola, appointed in his place, was given strict instructions to remove the Russians from California. But such a state of affairs was decided upon nowhere other than in the ministries of the governments themselves. The Spanish government thought perhaps that our government had gone ahead with this, and it made no presentation because our government was also silent. However, in the instructions to our captain [Golovnin] one of the most important points was the explanation of this entire matter and a consideration of the Company's rights. Our tsar is little disposed to recognize as legitimate that which is not lawful, that recognizing the entire matter in its present context, with minimal protest from the Spanish government, in no way should he waver by ordering the Company to abandon its site. This could be perhaps even more convincing if one knew just how His Majesty viewed such matters in general.

Meanwhile the Company has added new rights to the ones mentioned above. Mr. Kuskov has concluded a pact with the chief of the Indians who live nearby. The latter has thereby ceded all the land they occupy (though hardly all of California) to the Russian emperor's possession, and he subjects himself and his subjects to the imperial government. Mr. Hagemeister asked



our captain to take this document back with him and, upon arrival in Russia, deliver it to its proper destination. But a pact with an illiterate man who doesn't know the language and lacks the slightest conception of what the agreement is all about can only serve for fault-finding, and not as a fundamental right, and it will probably be of service to no one.

For the time being everything remains on hold. Kuskov continues to petition that the Spanish indulge them: "And thus perhaps they will decide to drive us out." The Spanish governor continues to declare his hope that Kuskov will voluntarily leave his place, for he lacks the forces to drive him out (perhaps serving as a good pretext for letting him live as before, and making use of him as a neighbor), and the Russians and the Spanish remain friends. Perhaps much will pass by, as in past years, rather than matters taking a bad turn, for Spain does not see any harm for herself from this. Her revenues would not decline, for she receives nothing from California anyway. Moreover, the governors will not resist too much. Proximity provides them with the advantage that ships will come to them more often and bring them all that they need.

On the other hand, the Company gets few benefits from its settlement. Its chief hope has been for it to allow for sea-otter hunting, but the Spanish have been obstinate about this, and now the Company benefits only in that its ships which approach or sail past can make use of fresh provisions. Of course, even this advantage will mean all the more when the settlement's upkeep costs the Company nothing.

Another item regarding Indians. Some of the men have incisions (*tatouage*) on their chest, both straight and zigzag lines, extending from one shoulder to the other. Also their ear lobes are pierced, and they insert in the opening small pieces from the transparent part of a feather. The women, however, did not have any ornamentation at all.

[Sept.] 24. All of our business was finished in two days. A strong west-northwest wind kept us from lifting anchor. Toward nightfall it calmed down, as usual, and at 6:00 a.m. we began unmooring. By 9:00 we were fully underway and sailing southeast with a quiet northwest wind. The captain needed to approach Fort Ross once more, in order to get the above mentioned document [the Indian "treaty"] from Kuskov and, if possible, to go on shore and inspect the settlement. Ivan Kuskov had left at daybreak in a baidara, so as to precede us with his presence there, and to prevent our waiting in vain should the wind favor our speedy arrival. In any case he left for us two Aleuts and a baidarka.

25. Exiting into the sea, we ran into a strong swell from the northwest, and toward noon the wind became quite strong; soon we turned into a strong top-sail reef. By 5:00 p.m. it had gotten even stronger. The folk-marsail tore in two, and we were left alone under a mainsail and a foresail. Toward morning the wind died down such that we could attach a new foresail and set it up, as we did the mainsail.

26. We attempted, as much as possible, to keep close to the wind, so as to maintain our position. But with the swell we were carried along such that by noon we were off Point Reyes  $8\frac{1}{2}$  miles, northeast of it  $63^{\circ}30'$  (right). About 6:00 the wind became calm, but from the earlier choppy waters a severe swell continued. Our attempts to gain the wind were as futile as they were the day before, since at 10:00 a.m. we were northeast of Point Reyes  $51^{\circ}31'$  (by the compass), and the depth was 350 feet. The bottom was of small stones and mussel shells.

[27]. At noon we were almost on the same compass point vis-à-vis Point Reyes as we had been the preceding noon, but the distance away was 15 miles (namely northwest  $61^{\circ}52'$  right). This delay began to bother the Captain, and he decided to utilize the wind, which was then blowing west-southwest, and to go back to Bodega Bay, so as to leave off there the Aleuts we had so that they would not keep us from sailing straight south, in case the wind held us back

any longer or took us far from shore. At 3:00 p.m. we set out; by 7:00 the depth was 400 feet, and the bottom a thin silt. The wind was completely quiet, and this did not allow the Captain to carry out his intention. But at 10:00 the wind was blowing from the southeast, and we left in a northwest direction parallel to shore. At first it was completely clear, but with the southeast wind came an overcast sky, and finally a fog set in with some humidity.

At 4:00 a.m., according to calculations, we were opposite Fort Ross . . . The depth was 315 feet, and the bottom a greenish silt. We were so close to the shoreline that in clear weather we could have seen each tree quite well, but now with overcast, murky skies, we saw nothing. We could not but be upset that circumstances had not favored us and the clear skies were with us when we needed them least. When we needed them most, visibility became poor.

By 8:00, however, we spotted the shoreline and the white rock which is considered as two miles below Fort Ross at northeast 37°. From this it followed that we were farther south than we had thought; the reason for this was probably the current. We fired two cannon, one after the other, and continued to tack about. The depth was 360 feet, and we were about 500 feet off shore; the ocean floor was a scanty, greenish silt.

At 9:30 we finally saw a large baidara under sail coming our way, accompanied by several small ones, and consequently spotted the settlement itself, at northeast 58°. The baidara reached us, as they say, with empty arms. It was all the same for us, even if it hadn't arrived, and therefore the Captain sent it back with a letter for Kuskov, probably asking him not to delay in dispatching the document. We continued to tack about all the while.

28. By noon we were 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> miles west-southwest of Fort Ross. The depth was 260 feet, and the bottom was thick silt. By 1:00 it was 315 feet deep. Time had passed, during which we expected the baidara to return, but it didn't arrive. The Captain's impatience was inexplicable.

Meanwhile, the wind from the northwest calmed down and became very quiet. At 3:30, a thick cloud cover with rain spread all along the coast. To spend the night so close to land in such weather, and with a northwest wind, which, as we had already experienced, could blow quite strong, was rather dangerous. For this reason, the Captain decided to give up everything and to start out on the voyage south. Before the cloudiness had set in it had indeed seemed to us as if something had pushed us away from shore, but no one dared say this affirmatively. Thus we positioned port-side, set up the studding sails, and sailed south-southwest.

Four days of work for nothing; one of the most important parts of our voyage left behind in vain; the fate of a baidara, which, if it really did set off, could have searched for us all night: all of this roused in us very serious thoughts, when suddenly a voice called out from the top that the baidara was visible beyond the stern. Immediately we lay to and soon got the satisfaction of seeing the estimable Kuskov himself once again.

He noticed, it seems, that he had delayed us and that we had wanted to leave, for his face showed an embarrassment which we were not used to seeing. But perhaps the reason for his delay was none other than a desire to be hospitable to us, for he brought along for us pigs, rams, and live steers, and many different vegetables, such that we had almost no place to accommodate all of it. To gather up all of this he needed only a little time, of course. He did not even forget our naturalist, for he brought him some tree [specimens] about which he himself was unaware. But Mr. Wormskjöld could recognize very little of this, for since the examples had neither fruits nor flowers, but rather only leaves and branches, it was impossible to identify them.

At 6:00 o'clock we bade farewell to this honorable gentleman for the last time. We will always remember his kindness and attentiveness. I could not think indifferently about the fact that we had almost made fools of ourselves due to his generosity. We took our leave and raised all our sails, heading south-southwest. We were then four miles southwest of Fort Ross at 45°.