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Fort Ross and Salt Point parks have benefited greatly from many dedicated volunteers and staff who have given generously to these parks. Board of directors from FRIA and FRC have fundraised, organized events, overseen volunteers, spearheaded interpretation and restoration projects, and offered substantial support to California State Parks across many decades.

These digitized newsletters capture the activities over the following historic periods:

- Fort Ross Interpretive Association (FRIA): 1976 - 2012
- Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC is the same legal entity as FRIA but the organization changed its name): 2012 - present

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КРИШОЕТЪ РОСЕТЪ

FORT ROSS

STATE HISTORIC PARK



LIVING HISTORY DAY

Saturday, July 25, 1992

10:00 am to 5 pm

NEWS NOTES!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE *UPDATE ON THE RUSSIAN ORCHARD

A small volunteer crew met Saturday, May 29 to remove the suckers from the base of the young fruit trees in the Russian orchard. John Smith gave excellent instructions by phone, and Jens Shelby came by to check the tools and procedure. Work started late and slowly. Maybe it was the high fog that kept us huddling. The orchard had been disked in late spring, but once again the tall grass was all around. Another diskings has been ordered. We had an early lunch, sitting with the tall grass all around, the fog burning off, and the few original Russian fruit trees looking on. As midday turned sparkling blue, we heard stories of how John and Margaret Smith, in 1978, worked diligently getting 150 apple and pear trees started from the original Russian trees.

The story began in 1977 when the Tomlins stopped by a Sonoma County Farm Trail sign to buy Gravenstein apple cider. As usual with the Tomlins, stories of the Fort unraveled and soon the orchard owner, John Smith, retired U.C. Davis Horticulturalist, was asked if he knew the origin of the Gravenstein. The right question to the right man. Then came more visits, followed by letters, phone calls, and John and Wally Winkler grafting the original Russian fruit trees at Winkler's nursery in Graton. A new Russian orchard was born. A large crew helped plant the trees. Too soon the deer found the young trees, so a high Australian solar type fence went up. However, the tastiest meal was on the inside; the deer learned to maneuver through the strands of wire. More work was done on the fence by volunteers and the State maintenance crew. Next came the wild pigs and the fence had to be reinforced to keep them out. Today the deer are out, the pigs are out, and the trees look healthy.

Work on the suckers began in earnest right after lunch. It takes a strong hand to saw through the suckers once the soil is removed from around the trunk of a tree. To everyone's satisfaction, the job went quite smoothly. To all the participants, a heartfelt THANK YOU! This thank you extends to John and Margaret Smith, Wally Winkler and all other volunteers who have worked to help this Russian Orchard come alive again. Frieda Tomlin

ROSE GARDEN WORKDAY

Saturday, May 16th, we held our first Rose Garden Workday. The roses in question are located in the field outside the Fort's West Gate. Three of them, planted by the Call family, were surrounded by an inadequate and rotting fence. Outside the fence is another rose, which, unprotected for years, has grown far up into a redwood tree. This rose is reputed to have been planted by Elena Rotcheva. Our goal is to rebuild the old Call fence, and place a new one around the Elena rose. This will allow us to care for and propagate these historic plants. Thanks to Mary Lynn and Michael Hallett, Terri Ann Tomlin, Mark LaRue, and the Maintenance folks at the fort. Work on the Call fence will hopefully be completed June 27th by boy scouts. Robin Joy

MT. SAINT HELENA COMMEMORATIVE ASCENT

June 7, 1992, FRIA members Robin Joy and David Kenly met outside of Calistoga with a small interested group of hikers, and, after a brief introduction by Robin, set off on a three hour climb to the summit of Mt. Saint Helena in commemoration of the climb by Rotchev, Chernikh, and Voznesenskii in June of 1841. Even though the day was sunny, and the shade sparse, the walk was relatively easy. After a lunch at the gazebo near the top, the group was met by local Ranger Bill Grummer, who offered additional history, anecdotes, and refreshments to the intrepid climbers before taking them to the summit. The day was unfortunately too hazy to view Mts. Lassen and Shasta, but they did see a replica of the plaque left by the Russians 151 years before. This FRIA sponsored adventure was voted successful by all who participated, and it generated interest and possible new memberships in our Association. It was interesting to meet new people who hold a historical interest in common with FRIA, and it was noteworthy that many are looking forward to a similar ascent next year. David Kenly



State Hermitage, Division of Russian Cultural History. The overall size of the flag is 94 x 168 sm.; the width of the lower red stripe is 18.5 sm., the blue stripe 19.5 sm., and the white 56 sm. The flag was received by the State Hermitage in 1848-1849 from the Historic Artillery Museum where, in turn, it had probably come from the old Hermitage collection in the 1820's.

FLAGS AT ROSS

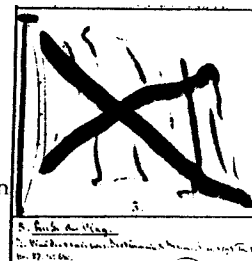
Established by a maritime trading company and supplied by both commercial and naval means, Fort Ross, along with the other coastal colonies in Russian America, based their use of national symbols on contemporary maritime customs and usage. Flag use developed from the necessary identification requirements needed to discern friend from foe, and act accordingly. The founder of the Russian American Company, G. I. Shelikov, writing to the first Chief Administrator, A. A. Baranov, about the shipyard in Slavo Rossiya, directed him to "Paise over it the national commercial flag of Russia, particularly when foreigners come in." (1) The inference of this directive is, I believe, to show the flag only upon the occasions necessitating it. Contemporary naval practice was to fly the flag at sea only when encountering another vessel, or in port to show the ship's nationality. This custom was followed on shore by the Russian American Company, who flew the Company flag "on holidays, and also on arrival of ships in the harbor". (2) This practice was no doubt an economic necessity, as flags then, as now, were expensive, and to leave them up only quickened their wearing out. As the primary intent was to identify the ship or colony, the flag was only flown when there was someone who needed to see it.

Shelikov's instructions to Baranov predate the 1806 edict (3) establishing a special flag for Company use. This flag, referred to as "the flag granted by his majesty" in Company correspondence, is the Russian commercial flag with the "all Russian state coat of arms" granted by Aleksandr I. The Imperial eagle thus gave official sanction to the activities of the Company. This produced some concern among Russian naval officers who, ever conscious of naval etiquette, were confused as to how to treat this flag. Anchored in New Archangel in 1808, V. M. Golovnin reasoned that "Taking into account that the Company, although a commercial venture, nevertheless owns extensive territory, enjoys sovereign patronage, and has the Imperial Russian coat of arms on its commercial flag. A Company flag ... in many ways deserves preference over the ordinary commercial flag." (4) Golovnin returned the cannon salute of the Sitka fort with an equal number, an honor usually reserved for state vessels, and not covered by the naval regulations of Peter I. A precedent had been set to regard the Company's flag with the same respect due to the naval ensign. At times they almost

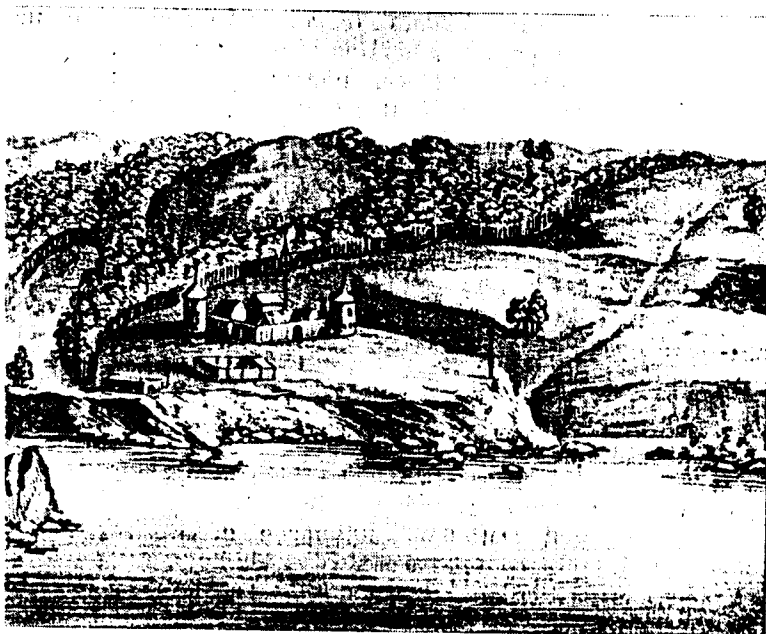
seemed interchangeable as national symbols. In 1818 Chief Administrator, Captain-Lieutenant and Cavalier Hagemester, instructed the Ross Office that "If the vessel is Russian or sent from the Chief Administrator, order the white Russian naval flag, with the blue cross of St. Andrew, or the Company flag to be raised on the fore top gallant. Any foreign vessel arriving with permission will have one of these."⁽⁵⁾ The date of these instructions is interesting, because it pre dates by some twenty years the custom of the courtesy ensign thought to have been begun by the "Great Western" and "Sirius" during their transatlantic crossings in 1838.⁽⁶⁾ As these instructions appear to be the only ones issued to Fort Ross concerning flags, the mention of the naval ensign being given preference to the Company flag would seem to indicate the attitude of the current and future chief administrators, all naval officers, who retained their navy titles and rank while in Company service.



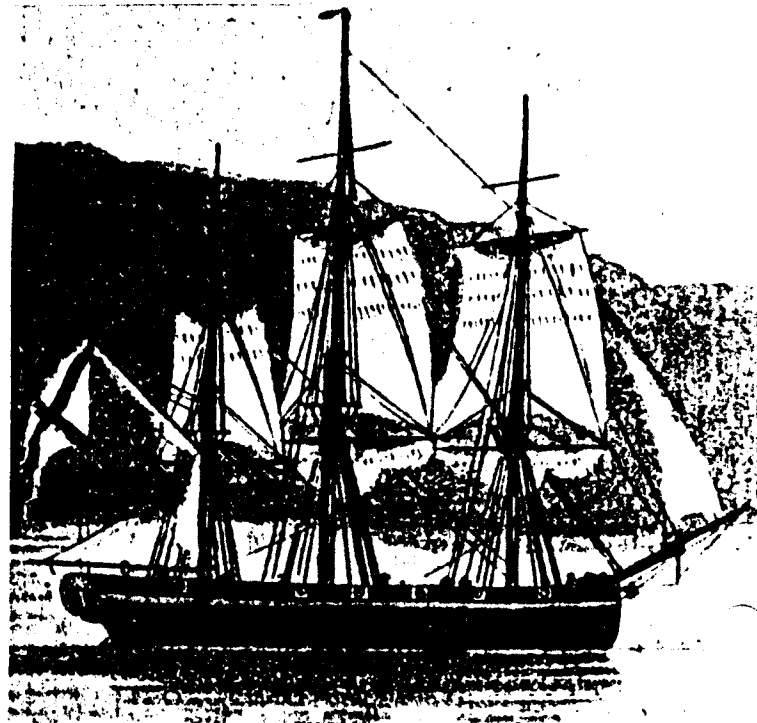
The national flags used in the colonies were the Company flag, the naval ensign, and the naval jack. The ensign and jack were designed by Peter I (as well as the commercial flag, a reorganized Dutch flag). The naval ensign mentioned in detail above, is also incorporated in the jack. Like the British jack, it is a combination of crosses, in the Russian case, the red and white cross of St. George with the blue and white cross of St. Andrew superimposed. The color scheme of each cross is the reverse of the British flag, as is the precedence of crosses. When flown on land, the jack also identified a fortress. This flag is shown flying from the Kodiak Harbor fortress in a drawing by Lisianskii in 1805. All three flags, in fact, are represented. The authenticity of this drawing is supported by the absence of the all Russian state coat of arms in the commercial flag flown from the administrator's house, center left. Lisiansky's drawing pre dates the edict of 1806 establishing the Company flag. The depiction of the fortress flag poses an interesting question for Fort Ross. As the instructions from Novo Arkhangelsk show, the Company expected the colonies to adhere to naval flag etiquette. The fortress flag identified armed bastions or fortifications usually manned by naval crews, or having a certain percentage of naval personnel.⁽⁸⁾ The annual reports usually mention a number of naval personnel at Fort Ross⁽⁹⁾ so this flag would seem to qualify for use here. In addition to these three flags, signal flags were used.



The Ross settlement contained four flag masts, three in the Fort and one at the headland in front of the fort. The main flag mast was equipped by a yardarm which may have been used as a signal hoist. Each blockhouse had a flag mast. The placement of the masts may have been intended to produce a navigational range to aid ships in their approach to the cove. From the sea it is possible to line up the three masts (or would have been in the 19th century when the main flagmast was in its true position) and brightly colored flags (fortress?) would line up, one atop the other to form a range.



*Селение Росс в Северной Калифорнии
абота неизвестного художника. Литография. 1835 г.*



"Harbour of St. Paul in the Island of Cadiak," 1805

From a color lithograph based on a drawing by Yuri Lisianskii, in his *Voage*, facing p. 191; courtesy Pacific Northwest Coast Library.

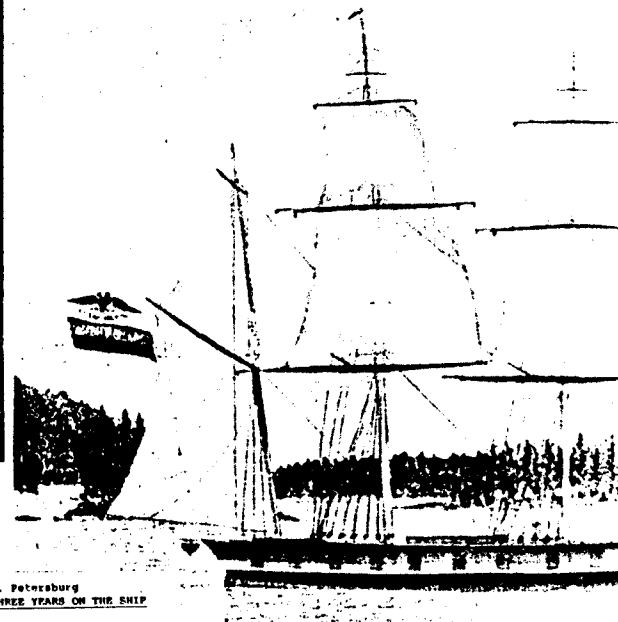
There continues to be much discussion concerning the design of the Company flag, mostly centered around the design and placement of the eagle. Between 1806 and 1867 the all Russian state coat of arms changed officially at least four times in Russia, and judging from paintings by eyewitnesses in Russian America, as many times here. These changes were mostly to the position and shape of the wings. One monarch preferred the wings up, another sloped, another up and fanned. The one existing example in the Hermitage Museum shows the wings half up, but still showing the sloped look of Nikolai I's reign. Early depictions of the flag in America show the wings up in 1805-6 and 1808 and the eagle in the upper quarter of the flag, as in the original edict. In 1827 the eagle has moved to the middle of the white stripe and the wings are sloped. Johann Bartram also shows the wings sloped in 1840, and the eagle in the middle of the flag. By 1842 the all Russian state coat of arms changed to the wings up position and shields of the provinces were added to the wings. This change is reflected in a drawing of the Company's flag on a certificate in 1845. In 1857 the Russian eagle changed again by royal edict. This time to a "wings up and fanned" design, again with provincial shields. This design was probably incorporated into the Company flag, though no representation is known. This would have been the flag lowered at Sitka in 1867.

As more information is translated and published, no doubt more details on the questions of vexillology will appear. Especially of interest will be the naval officer's journals and correspondence of the main office between 1830 and 1840. This is the period chosen for interpretation by State Parks. Unfortunately, much available information is some twenty years out of date for this period.

The commercial flag, the naval ensign, and possibly the jack, have been restored to the original designs of Peter I by an act of the Russian Parliament earlier this year. 1996 will mark the 300th anniversary of the Russian navy. It seems appropriate their ships have now, and will have in 1996, the same flag flown at the creation of their navy. by John Middleton



4 The flag of the Russian-American Company with the imperial double eagle. Detail of painting on page 67.



43 Watercolor of Sitka in 1840-1845 by Johan Bartram. At the right is the governor's residence and St. Michael's cathedral. Private collection.

- (1) V.G.A.V.M.F.F. 198 of Id 791.38 Central Navy Archives, St. Petersburg
- (2) Kerebitsyn, Nikolai, NOTES ON NINE YEARS IN SIBERIA AND THREE YEARS ON THE SHIP *SWAN* 1795 - 1806
- (3) V.G.I.A.S.S.S.R. P. 13, of 1, 1806 G.D. 304.1.25 (Central State History Archives, Moscow)
- (4) Pierce, Richard A., THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN COMPANY CORRESPONDENCE OF THE GOVERNORS COMMUNICATIONS SENT, 1818, p. 5, No. 17
- (5) *ibid.*, p. 60, No. 98
- (6) Greenlich, SLAZES AT SEA, 1986, p. 35
- (7) Halyshov, VIKTOR, 1991, personal communication
- (8) Elatich, Marko, letter to Wayne A. Colwell 6/11/1961
- (9) Khlabnikov, NOTES ON RUSSIAN AMERICA, Moscow, 1985 (English translation p. 103)

Illustrations (Some not included because of space limitation)
 Varjola, Vijo, THE SWEDISH COLLECTION, National Board of Antiquities of Finland, 1990, p. 12 Russian American Company flag by unknown artist
ibid., p. 60 "Watercolor of Sitka" by Bartram
 Fedorova, Svetlana, RUSSIAN AMERICA NEW ARCHANGEL ENLEBNIKOV, Moscow, 1985, p. 49 (text in Russian) Russian-American Company flag
ibid., p. 110 "Fort Ross, 1818" showing flag poles
ibid., p. 212 Company's flag on 1845 certificate
 Henry, John Fraxier, EARLY MARITIME ARTISTS, University of Washington Press, 1984, Plate 1 "Harbour of St. Paul...1805" by Lisianskii
ibid., p. 30, "View of the Establishment at Norfolk Sound" 1805-1806 von Langsdorff
ibid., p. 37, "The Main Russian-American Settlement...Fad'lek 1808" by Vasiliev
ibid., p. 55, "The Establishment of New Archangel" Sitka, 1827 by von Kittlitz

FIVE KOPEK COIN OF 1779

"I HAVE A QUESTION. CAN ANYONE IDENTIFY THE PARTICULARS CONCERNING A SIBERIAN 5 KOPEK COIN OF 1779 ON WHICH APPEARS "FORT ROSS" ON THE REVERSE? MAYBE IT IS SIMPLY A SOUVENIR FOR TOURISTS IN FT. ROSS." YURI BARSHAY, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

June 18, 1992

(916) 327-2089

Colin R. Bruce, Senior Editor
WORLD COIN NEWS
700 E. State Street
Iola, WI 54990

Dear Mr. Bruce:

This is in response to a question posed in the Letters Column in the June 22, 1992 issue of WCN. Mr. Yuri Burshay of St. Petersburg, Russia provided a photo of a 5 kopek piece of Catherine II dated 1779 but also marked with the words "Fort Ross" in English.

Mr. Barshay is quite right in guessing that it is a souvenir from the Fort Ross State Historic Park located about 80 miles north of San Francisco on the coast of California. Fort Ross was a Russian fur trade settlement which was held by Russia from 1812 to 1841 when the Russian government decided to sell out and leave.

A real version of the pictured 5 kopek coin was found during archaeological work at Fort Ross and subsequently the Fort Ross Interpretive Association decided to make copies marked Fort Ross for sale as souvenirs. The coin was a remarkable find because there was virtually no hard money circulating in Russian America. Instead the Russian American Fur Company issued scrip. This had the dual purpose of providing a currency which could only be used in company stores as well as making it difficult for someone inclined to desert to the Spanish colony of California to take negotiable money with him. Therefore, the original coin was probably itself a souvenir brought by one of the people assigned to the settlement.

Please pass this information on to reader Barshay.

Sincerely,



Glenn Farris, Associate Archeologist
Archeology Lab
2572 Port Street
West Sacramento, CA 95691

Enclosed is a letter to the editor of a collector's newspaper called "World Coin News" from a Russian reader who was puzzling over the Fort Ross souvenir 5 kopek piece. I am also including my response. It might be amusing to the readership of the FRIA Newsletter.

KASHAYA ACCOUNTS

Among the many stories in the Kashaya Texts, nine of them appeared to clearly touch on the lives of the Kashaya at settlement Ross. The overwhelming majority of the accounts come from Herman James who learned them from his grandmother, Lukaria. This woman was said to have been born eight years before the Russians came which would have been about 1804. By contrast, only one of the stories told by Essie Parrish, who learned them from her father, relates to the Russian period. This would seem to be in line with the closer integration of Kashaya women into the Ross community than the men. Following is a brief synopsis of these nine stories:

The First White Food [Essie Parrish]--the new arrivals offered the Indians food. At first the Indians feared this food would be poisonous and so dumped it out, buried it at times and kept to their traditional foods (Oswalt 1964:251).

This followed a pattern of fear of poisoning by strangers among the Pomo which is still found to a small degree today. However, over time the Indians became used to many of the introduced foods, especially as many of their own native foods were becoming harder to obtain.

The Big Expedition [Herman James]--When a Hudson's Bay Company expedition consisting of 163 men, women and children passed Fort Ross on April 19, 1833 both the Indians and the Aleuts were puzzled and fearful of it. When they came close to where the Undersea people [Kashaya name for the men of colony Ross] were living, a few people straggled out and gave them some of what they [Indians and Russians (sic)] had to eat. They gave flour, being afraid. The strangers took it willingly at that time. After three or four days had passed some Indians having gone northwards saw what they had given all dumped out on the ground. They hadn't known what it was for. Everything they had received from the Undersea people, all of the food, had been dumped out. They had apparently just left it there on the trail.... After the people had passed the Indians and Aleuts asked one another who they had been. When they asked the Russians they received the response, "How come you don't know that the people you are asking about are your kind of people." "No, we don't recognize those people," said the Kashaya. (Oswalt 1964:253-255).

Elsewhere (Farris 1989) I have dealt with this story at greater length, however, one of the telling points is the gulf between the native peoples (California and Alaskan alike) and the Russian authorities who seemed to take the attitude that all Indians could be lumped together. Another point is that the food which was offered by the native peoples to these strangers was the flour, possibly in the form of a gruel ("kasha") which was the staple food provided the Indians by the Russians at this time, a point which was brought up to the Managers of the Russian-America Company by Baron Ferdinand Von Wrangel who visited a short time later (Gibson 1969). It is confusing to most English readers to read that the Indians were subsisting on flour when it was likely a coarser form of ground seed not unlike their favored pinole which was a normal staple.

The Last Vendetta [Herman James]--This story begins by relating a tale of a feud between two groups of Kashaya which is suggested to have been common before the coming of the Russians. However, on this occasion, an "Undersea boy" mounted and armed with a rifle interrupted their rejoicing over the vengeance killing. The old people then decreed that they were done with the feuding. Some of the Indians then began going into the "cross-house" which belonged to the Undersea people [the Fort Ross chapel]. Thereafter there was no more enemy killing (Oswalt 1964:255-259).

This is a tribute to the Russian attempt to keep peace among the peoples with whom they associated by suppressing an age-old form of vengeance feuding which was not infrequently found among the California Indians. It also suggests that some of the Indians became interested in the orthodox religion. Late in the 19th century, when an orthodox bishop visited Fort Ross he was told of Lukaria who evidently still retained an affection for the Russians.

Hunting Sea Otter and Farming [Herman James]--This is a somewhat confused tale of the comings and goings of the Aleuts and Russians to Alaska and elsewhere. Somehow the story became reversed in which people were initially at Fort Ross and then went to Alaska with the intention of hunting sea otters. The Indians came to realize how valuable the sea otters were to them. The Aleuts would pursue the hunt despite the considerable danger and privations (Oswalt 1964:261-265).

The only occupation described in this story for the Russians and Aleuts was the hunting of sea otter. The story suggests that when the rigors of sea otter hunting became too great, the "Undersea people" turned to growing crops in the vicinity of Fort Ross, aka Métini .

Grain Foods [Herman James]--Wheat was planted in all the flat lands near Métini (Colony Ross). When ripe the people cut it by hand, tied it up and lay it there. Then they packed the sheaves in sea lion skins and dragged it to their houses. The grain was taken to a threshing floor "of earth packed down hard by wetting." The sheaves were placed there and horses driven in to trample the grain. When it was threshed they loaded it in sacks which were taken off to their warehouse. To make it into flour they

KASHAYA ACCOUNTS (PAGE TWO)

took it to a big machine called a "flour grinder." The sacks were tossed up and the grain was poured into the grinder. The resulting flour was then poured into sacks which were piled in a building to provide food for winter. An accident occurred when a woman got too close to the machinery and her hair was caught. She was spun around and killed. The woman was then taken home to be cremated in her traditional way. The story then compares the Indian way of gathering grain, knocking it into a tightly woven pack basket when it was ripe. This they would store in their own houses to use as pinole for winter use. The Indians observed the Russian methods and used the ground flour but also continued to use their pinole in their own way (Oswalt 1964:267-269).

The evident sense of continuity of their own methods of harvesting grain and those used by the agricultural Russians was evidently appreciated by the Kashaya. Their description of the threshing floor being of beaten earth differs from the tightly laid plank floors said to be used for this purpose in all the European accounts. The description of the use of stampeding horses to thresh the grain is substantiated by numerous other accounts of observers both at Fort Ross and in Spanish California. The story of the woman who got her hair caught and was killed brings up an intriguing comparison with a story of a similar tragic death retailed by the late-19th century romantic author, Gertude Atherton (1894). Though the latter story is clearly fiction, finding an antecedent in the Kashaya folk history enhances the impression that some such event actually occurred. The sense of cultural continuity is echoed in the observations of Cyrille LaPlace (1854; Farris 1988) who visited in August 1839, toward the end of the Russian period. LaPlace even remonstrated to his host, Alexander Rotchev, that the Russians were having very little obvious effect on the customs of the local Indians. Rotchev's reply was that they were, perhaps in more subtle ways, because the Indians were becoming increasingly sedentary and attached to the Fort.

The Wife Beater [Herman James]--This is the tale of a man [not specified whether Russian, Creole or Aleut] and an Indian woman living together. He awakes one day very angry and gets mean, eventually striking his wife with an axe. A sheriff then took the husband away and locked him up. He was shut in a "place where a little house was standing," locked up for a week. Hazel switches were brought to the settlement. The man was then brought out with his hands and feet tied and was whipped for a long time ("half a day") until he fell down unconscious. When he recovered, he repented and said that he now saw the path of righteousness. He told a public gathering that he had done wrong and would be good from then on. Even so, the Indian woman left the man. Interestingly, she continued living in the settlement, but stayed alone, as did the man (Oswalt 1964:269).

It appears that ill-treatment of the Kashaya wives was not at all condoned and that wife-beating was severely dealt with. The description of the jail as a little house standing by itself is very interesting. Although current interpretation at Fort Ross has a cell within the Official's Quarters inside the stockade, I believe this grew out of an unfortunate misreading of some documents describing the buildings at Fort Ross. A closer reading showed that

what was actually stated was that the jail was adjoining one of the warehouses inside the stockade. The severity of the whippings obviously made a deep impression on the Kashaya (see also the next story) and they were undoubtedly impressed with the sense of justice of the Russians to punish one of their own in such a fashion.

The Suicide of a Wife [Herman James]--An Indian woman was married to an "Undersea man." They had been quarrelling. The man walked out of the house threatening to kill his wife if she were still there upon his return. He then left for work. The Indian woman finished eating, fed her children, went into the bedroom, and put on good new clothes. She then went off on a walk to the coastal cliff, but was followed by her child. When asked what she was doing, the mother said she was going "to die today." Although the child tried to grab her dress, the mother threw herself down onto the gravel beach. The child ran home. Others then came and carried her body back to her house. She was buried rather than cremated [this change in custom is particularly noted in the story]. When the husband returned home he was taken to the whipping place and whipped for a very long time ("almost a whole day"). He fell unconscious and died. He, too, was buried (Oswalt 1964:271).

This story also seems to impress one with the view that wrongs against the Indian wives were taken very seriously. There is ample indication that this woman was evidently well on her way to being acculturated. She was apparently living in one of the Russian style houses in the sloboda [village] adjacent to the stockade. The mention of her going into her bedroom to put on good new clothes, evidently a dress, before committing suicide is noteworthy. Also, there is the statement that after her death she was buried rather than cremated. It is not clear where she would have been buried. Presumably it would have been in the cemetery across the gulch from the stockade, but this is mere conjecture. If so she had clearly separated from her peoples' ways.

Two Undersea Youths freeze to death [Herman James]--This was said to have occurred about ten years after the Russian arrival (i.e., circa 1822). It speaks of what must be creole children growing up. Two young men decide to go hunt coots and travel a long way down to the mouth of the Russian River (11 miles from Fort Ross). They get soaking wet in their endeavor and it is worsened by a heavy, cold rain. It appears that the boys become exhausted and ultimately die of exposure in the middle of the night (Oswalt 1964:273ff).

This could be seen as a cautionary tale against the dangers of wearing too much clothing. The Kashaya were said to have worn very little clothing. A modern-day Kashaya, Otis Parrish, son of Essie Parrish, explains that the Indian view of cold was that one learned to ignore it, that it affected only the outer layer of one's body, but did not penetrate. Considering the frequency with which the lack of clothing is noted among the California native peoples, it is evident that they were capable of standing very cold weather and had ways of psychologically dealing with the cold rather than resorting to heavy clothing.

Tales of Fort Ross [Herman James]--A boat with a white sail appeared off Métini. A boat landed and the "Undersea people" appeared. It was on this occasion that they got this name. When they landed they built houses close to where the Indians were. After awhile the Indians began working for them but after 30 years living there they returned home (Oswalt 1964:277ff).

Since the Russians would have initially arrived at the beach at Fort Ross in baidarkas or perhaps long boats, the image of the people appearing to come out of the sea would certainly have contributed to the name given them (the Undersea People). This story continues on through the period of the next occupants, a German immigrant and his family named Benitz (1843-1867) and the eventual forced departure from Fort Ross of the Indians under a subsequent owner. It paints a broad, though sketchy, picture of Kashaya history from just before the arrival of the Russians and Aleuts and carries it beyond as if to demonstrate the enduring nature of the Kashaya people in their homeland. Despite many comings and goings, they remain. by Glenn J. Farris

TAKEN FROM "LIFE AT FORT ROSS AS THE INDIANS SAW IT:
STORIES FROM THE KASHAYA" BY GLENN J. FARRIS
COMPLETE TEXT AVAILABLE IN THE FORT ROSS LIBRARY

FORT ROSS STATE HISTORIC PARK ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION IN PROGRESS

An excavation is being undertaken this summer (June 23 to July 16, 1992) at the historic site of the Native Alaskan Village in front of the reconstructed Russian stockade in the Fort Ross State Historic Park. The excavation involves a collaborative team of archaeologists from the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the University of California, Berkeley (Archaeological Research Facility, Department of Anthropology).

Fort Ross was established in 1812 by the Russian-American Company, a mercantile monopoly that participated in the lucrative North Pacific fur trade. As the Company's southernmost colony in the Pacific, the Ross community served as a staging area for sea mammal hunts along the coast of California; as an agricultural base for raising crops and livestock; and as a small shipyard. None of these economic ventures proved profitable in the long run, and the Fort Ross property was sold to John Sutter in 1841.

The purpose of the excavation is to provide background research necessary to develop a "culture" trail with on-site exhibits that will take the public beyond the Visitors Center and reconstructed stockade complex to view the archaeological remains of the multi-ethnic Ross community. Native American laborers were the economic lifeblood of the colony, and the Russians depended upon them to build, maintain, and support the colony during its three decades of operation. The native work force included 75 to 123 Native Alaskans (primarily Aleuts and Koniag Eskimos) who hunted sea otters, fur seals, and sea lions for the Russian-American Company, and several hundred Native Californians (Kashaya Pomo, Southern Pomo, Coast Miwok) who labored in nearby agricultural fields for the Russians. The first leg of the proposed "culture" trail will include the Native Alaskan Village where many of the Aleut and Koniag Eskimo workers lived at Fort Ross. Some Native Californian people may have also resided at the site.

The excavation in front of you is attempting to locate the archaeological remains of the houses, work areas, and garbage dumps of the Native Alaskan Village. Most of the excavators are undergraduate and graduate students at the University of California, Berkeley. Last summer, excavators unearthed hundreds of bones from cows, sheep, sea mammals (whale, sea otter, sea lion) that showed evidence of human modification (butchering patterns). Large numbers of local shellfish and fish remains were recovered as well. Some redwood posts, possibly the support for fences or house structures, were also found. This summer we are expanding the area of excavation to evaluate whether these archaeological remains may represent the location of historic houses, butchering areas, or dump areas in the village.

Russian Rumors

A single Blackhawk helicopter came into Fort Ross at 1530 hours Friday [Ed. note: 3:30 p.m.]. It was a dark, ominous bird with two Darth Vader-like persons aboard. The persons were met by State Parks people, were given a tour of the Fort, were honored by a cannon shot. Then they climbed into their helicopter and, very dramatically, left.

By Sunday, a rumor had started that Friday's fly-in was merely advance scouting for a big deal to occur that very afternoon. The deal involved a visit to Fort Ross by high-

ranking military officials from the United States and the Commonwealth of Independent States, i.e., the old Soviet Union. It was mysterious!

Some of us speculated. We wondered if Gorbachev, who was in San Francisco, was about to make an end-run around protocol and visit Fort Ross, as we'd heard he visited Fort Point in the city. This enhanced rumor spread like fire at the Timber Cove Volunteer Fire Department Mother's Day Breakfast.

So, 3 o'clock Sunday afternoon found every local touched by the rumor clandestinely hanging out at Fort Ross. Several men and women and children donned Russian-period costumes and mingled with bemused, unknowing tourists.

At 3:15, three dark, ominous Blackhawk helicopters droned out of the south sky and landed on

the bluffs of Fort Ross. It was very impressive!

Each of these big birds cost an estimated \$6 million. Each had a crew of two. Each could lift an 8,000 pound payload. Friendly, informative crews opened their craft to the delighted public.

We in the know, meanwhile, were still building on rumors.

***We wondered if Gorbachev...
was about to make an
end-run around protocol
and visit Fort Ross***

As it turned out, an entourage of the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, his Commonwealth of Independent States four-star counterpart, two other generals, the wives, and interpreters, arrived by

car from Santa Rosa.

The group had seen a bit of wine country along River Road, had endured Dramamine Grade, and finally, in good spirits, arrived at Fort Ross.

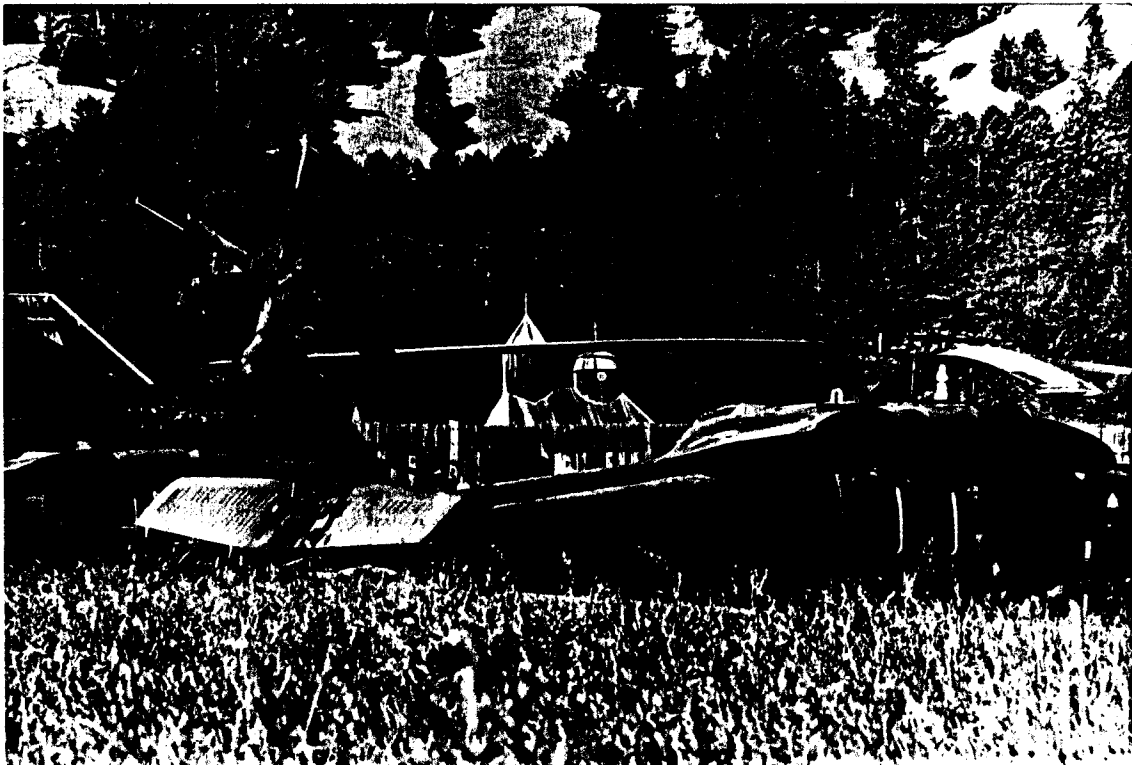
They were given an informed tour through the fort, and a two-cannon salute was fired, one for each chief.

After an exchange of mutual affection, the entourage boarded the helicopters and, very dramatically, left. There was no Gorbachev, but it was exciting anyway!

The event was kept secret—just so these people could actually enjoy a Sunday afternoon, out of uniform, together in America.

It was outrageously costly from a *person's* point of view. But it was streaks ahead of paying for missiles, satellites, silos, standing armies, and fear.

by John Sperry



The top brass arrive at Fort Ross.

Photo courtesy of John Sperry

!!ATTENTION ALL LIVING HISTORY DAY PARTICIPANTS!!

COSTUME SEMINAR

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 10:00-5:00

Would you like to improve your costume and accessories this year? Do you want to have an opportunity to look at appropriate cloth samples, cut out a pattern, learn about the correct accessories for your character, and have all your questions answered? If so, we have just the thing for you. A very hands on costume seminar.

There will be several knowledgeable volunteers on hand with samples, demonstrations, and discussion. Joyce Brandon is bringing her patterns to be copied or purchased, and possibly fabric for sale. Sherry Madrone will demonstrate the construction of a womans creole dress. John Middleton will discuss accessories and military uniforms. Plus several others discussing their area of costume expertise.

Those who are handy with a sewing machine can go home ready to whip an outfit together. While some of the rest of us may choose to hire one of the fine seamstresses to do our sewing for us. Whichever you choose there will be enough information, guidance, and suggestions to improve the quality and accuracy of your period dress, and increase your enjoyment in participating in Living History.

Please bring a notebook, questions, any articles of clothing, accessories, or swatches of fabric you wish to have examined for appropriateness, (including; shoes boots, hats, scarves, shawls, and jewelry), also bring either a sack lunch or simple potluck dish.



THERE IS NO FEE FOR THIS SEMINAR

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

PLEASE ENROLL ME IN THE FREE COSTUME SEMINAR ON JULY 12, 10:00-5:00

SEND SEMINAR REGISTRATION TO: FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION
19005 COAST HWY 1
JENNER, CA 95450
(707) 847-3437

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

ATTENTION ALL FRIA MEMBERS! IF YOU HAVE NOT YET RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 1992, PLEASE RENEW NOW! MEMBERSHIPS PAID FOR THE PREVIOUS YEAR EXPIRE WITH THIS NEWSLETTER, AND IT WILL BE THE LAST ONE YOU RECEIVE UNTIL WE HEAR FROM YOU.

(PLEASE DETACH AND MAIL WITH REMITTANCE)

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_____ I/WE WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER OUR TIME TO ASSIST THE ASSOCIATION. IF YES, IN WHAT CAPACITY? _____

THANK YOU!

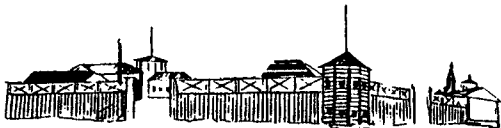
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