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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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Fort Ross Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) and California State Park cooperating association, connects people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks. © Fort Ross Conservancy, 19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450, [707-847-3437](tel:707-847-3437) www.fortross.org



**FORT ROSS
INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION
MARCH - APRIL 1993
NEWSLETTER**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS
DUE IN MARCH!**

DEAR MEMBERS OF THE FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION:

THANK YOU for your support in 1992. March is membership renewal month. Membership dues are due in March of each year, and run until the following year. **PLEASE CHECK YOUR NEWSLETTER LABEL.** If it expires March, 1993, it is time to pay your dues (even if you paid late last year!). Please use the renewal form and return envelope with this newsletter. Be sure to fill out the volunteer section if you wish to volunteer so that we can update our volunteer list at the same time. Again, **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
_____ \$5.00 REGULAR _____ \$7.50 FAMILY
_____ \$25.00 ORGANIZATIONAL _____ DONATION \$_____
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.
19005 COAST HIGHWAY 1
JENNER, CA 95450

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

THANK YOU!

**FORT ROSS FIELD SEMINARS
SPRING 1993**

TWINED BASKETRY CLASS
SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1993, 10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Twining baskets is a technique that has been passed on through many generations. One can create endless sizes and shapes with this versatile technique. At this class you will make a twined market basket, a round twined basket with a handle, using round reed. As the spring holidays approach, your imagination is the only limit to the wonderful Easter basket you can weave.

Drue Bannister is a local Cazadero woman who has been weaving and teaching in the Bay Area for over eight years. Because of the popularity and success of her classes, early registration is recommended. This class is appropriate for beginners and experienced weavers.

PLEASE BRING: SHARP SCISSORS OR PRUNERS, NEEDLENOSE PLIERS, POCKET KNIFE, SPONGE OR CLOTH, BUCKET OR WASHBASIN, ANY SPECIAL GOODIES TO ADORN YOUR BASKET (BEADS, FEATHERS, YARN, ETC.), AND A SACK LUNCH.

CLASS FEE: \$20.00 REGISTRATION. There is also an \$11.00 materials fee for reed which is payable to the instructor on the day of the class.

ARCHAEOLOGY WEEK SEMINAR
SUNDAY, MAY 16, 1993, 12:00 P.M.

This seminar will be held in honor of California's second annual Archaeology Week, the theme for which is "Celebrating California's Ethnic Heritage". Dr. Kent Lightfoot, Director of the Fort Ross Archaeological Project, U. C. Berkeley Archaeology Field School, will be giving a lecture and tour of the site. In addition, there will be a selection of papers on Fort Ross archaeology given by those involved in Fort Ross Archaeological research.

THERE IS NO FEE FOR THIS SEMINAR.

SEMINAR REGISTRATION FORM

NAME _____ PHONE _____
ADDRESS _____
BASKETRY CLASS (ENCLOSE \$20.00 REGISTRATION FEE) _____
ARCHAEOLOGY WEEK SEMINAR (NO FEE) _____

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

EARTHQUAKE OF APRIL 18, 1906
FROM: REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA EARTHQUAKE COMMISSION (1908)
ISOSEISMALS: DISTRIBUTION OF APPARENT INTENSITY, P.181

Fort Ross, Sonoma County. At Fort Ross, 0.75 mile from the fault, the intensity of the shock was probably greater than the actual damage would indicate. The old Russian Church and several other buildings suffered thru collapse of their underpinning, but all in a fair state of repair stood the shock, as did the more recently built dwellings.

The dwelling of Mr. G. W. Call, proprietor of the place, was violently shaken. The table was moved across the floor to the south and furniture generally was thrown to the ground. There was much broken crockery and glassware. The contents of a pantry, consisting of jars of preserved fruit, were nearly all thrown from the shelves. In cleaning up the wreck after the shock, 6 wheelbarrow loads of broken objects were picked up off the floors of the rooms. In Mr. Call's room a high case was thrown across the bed in which he was sleeping.

Mr. Call stated that in his neighborhood hanging lamps were caused to swing in a circle corresponding with the apparent movement of the sun. There were several shocks, quickly following each other; the first was not the strongest. They seemed to increase in force up to the third or fourth and come from different directions. He judged that there was a strong vertical impulse. Chimney tops were thrown off, some chimneys being shattered to the bottom. Many redwood and pine trees were broken off, some at the ground, being uprooted; but generally broken about halfway up. All loose furniture was turned over, and a few frame buildings set upon unbraced posts were shaken down. The tendency along the fault seemed to be to crowd the two sides together, as a water-pipe in one place had sprung up in a curve out of the ground. The fact that he found no trees broken at a distance of more than a mile from the fault indicates to Mr. Call that the shock was much stronger near the fault than elsewhere.

Mr. Call resided for some years on the South American coast and had experienced the disastrous effects of sea waves consequent upon earthquakes in that region. The moment, therefore, that he felt the shock he turned his attention to the sea, which is in full view of his house. He reports that it was perfectly still during the shock and afterwards.

South of Fort Ross, at Doda's ranch, a large barn about 150 feet west of the fault was found leaning to one side on the verge of collapse. Several of the dwellings and other smaller houses had slipped from their underpinning. All the chimneys had been broken off or destroyed; household articles and furniture had been thrown down, but no window glass had been shattered or even cracked.

Mr. Doda's daughter stated that she was standing in the kitchen at the time of the shock, and was lifted vertically from the floor more than once, in each case alighting on her feet. A ranch hand who was out-of-doors at the time stated that he saw the watertank thrown vertically upward about 5 feet and then fall in ruins.

In the forest between Plantation House and Fort Ross innumerable trees, many of them redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) of considerable size, had broken off some distance from the ground ... or had split lengthwise from the roots up. Some were uprooted altogether, as if by a hurricane. No particular preponderance in direction of throw was noted. Trees on the line of the fault were as a rule split vertically and more or less twisted. In some cases the butts had actually been sheared. A fine instance of this may be seen on the stage road 150 feet east of Plantation House.

At Seaview, a post-office on the summit of the ridge overlooking Fort Ross and probably 1.5 miles from the fault, the shock is described by Mr. Morgan, the occupant of the only house there, as very violent. In a room with two beds, one moved across the room to the south, the other was lifted from the floor. The chimney was thrown to the north.

On the wagon road from Seaview to Cazadero, the steep bank of the road-cuts, generally of disintegrated sandstone, had in numerous places slid down upon the road.

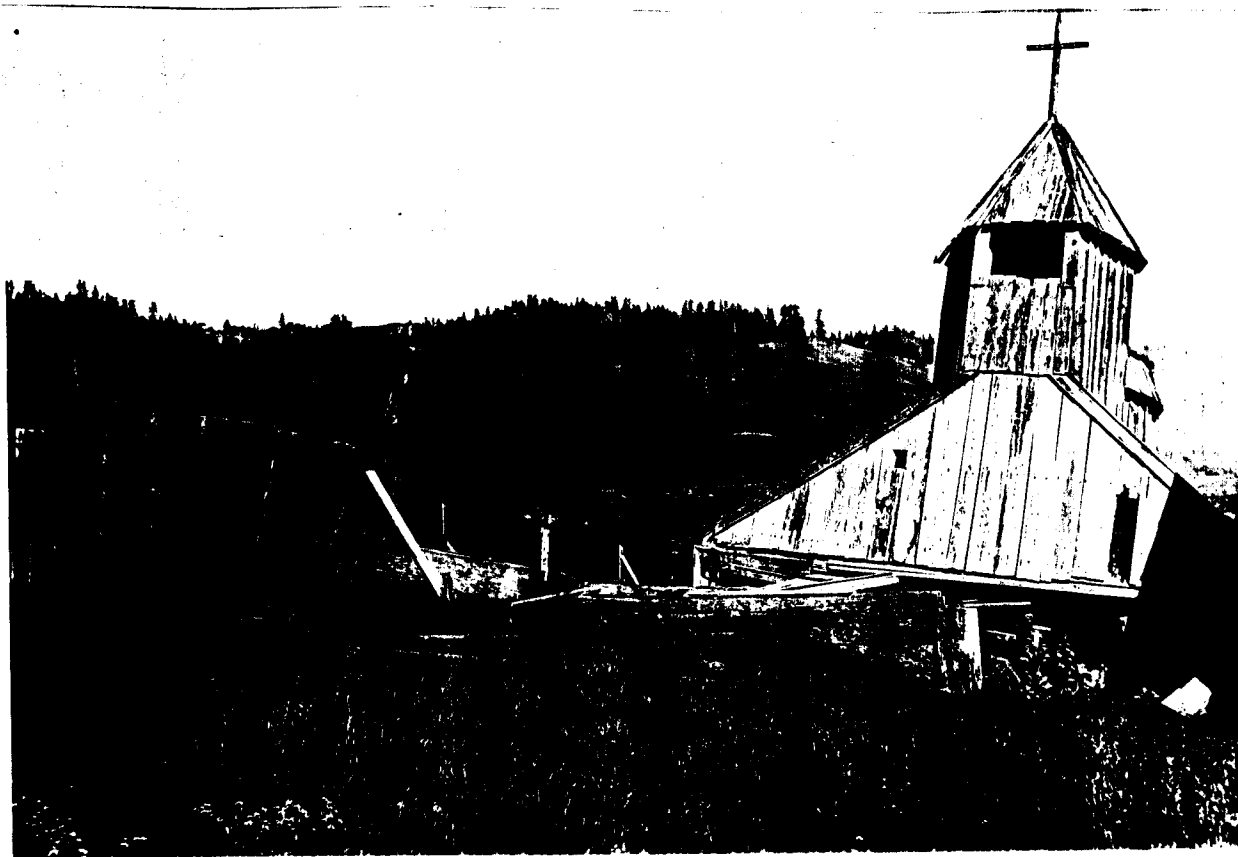
At Cazadero the shock was severe and chimneys were generally thrown, but no buildings were wrecked, all the structures being of wood. Mr. H. L. Conley, of this place, stated that according to his observation the shock was from north to south, chimneys falling south. In a store the chief walls of which trend north and south, hardly any damage was caused. Some pictures hanging against walls were turned around so as to face the walls. There seemed to be two maxima, the second being the strongest.



ROSA CALL BY EARTHQUAKE SURFACE RUPTURES
ON SAN ANDREAS FAULT (1906 PHOTO)



EMMA CALL BY "EARTHQUAKE TREE" (1906 PHOTO)



CHAPEL AFTER THE 1906 EARTHQUAKE LOOKING SOUTHEAST (1912 PHOTO)

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
TRANSLATED BY S. WATROUS, SEPTEMBER 1992 (PART III)

[September] 22 (Continued - Port Rumiantsev) ...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 build 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 VIII 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 VIII.

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.

[September] 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. [September 25, 26, 27 at sea, attempting to reach Ross] ...

...[September] 27...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 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.

[September] 28. By noon we were 2 1/2 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 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.

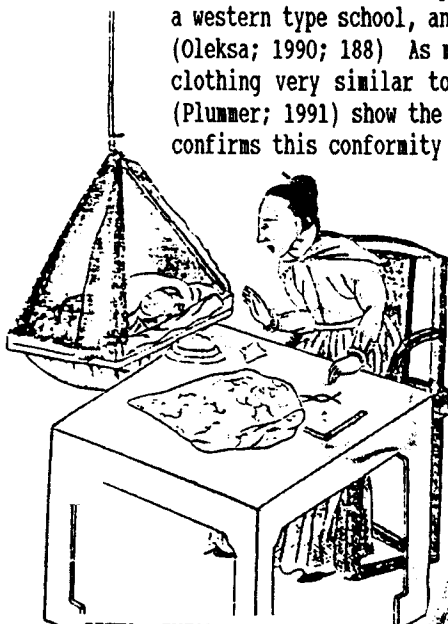
He noticed, it seems, that he had delayed us and that we had wanted to leave, for his face showed an embarrassment which we were not used to seeing. But perhaps the reason for his delay was none other than a desire to be hospitable to us, for he brought along for us pigs, rams, and live steers, and many 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. Wormskjold 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.

**CLOTHING AT FORT ROSS: A NEW LOOK
PART II TOWNSMEN AND CREOLES**

Townsmen (meschanie) occupied a position on the Imperial Russian social scale which approximated the petit bourgeoisie or lower middle class of other countries. They were free men in a country which practiced serfdom, and could travel and live throughout the empire as their passports permitted. The majority were occupied as tradesmen, craftsmen, clerks, and in the numerous occupations that cities and towns provided. In the Russian-American Company they served in the lower to middle managerial positions or were artisans, often acting as foremen for the occupations required to support the colonies. If one combines their number with those of the creoles, they made up the majority of the population at the Ross colony. (Petrov; 1988; 64)

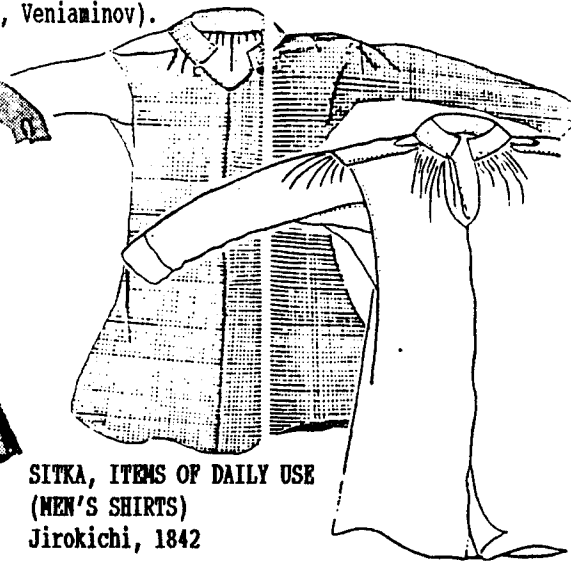
Creoles were the offspring of Russians and the aboriginal population of Russian America or were natives who "pledged their political allegiance to the Tsar. (Oleksa; 1990; 185) In 1821 the creoles were granted a special social status equivalent to townsmen. (Federova; 1975; 13) "This allowed them" Federova writes, "to advance themselves on equal terms with Russians in government service and obtain officer's ranks." Between 1830 and 1840 townsmen and creoles accounted for one quarter to one half of the Ross colony's population, and often outnumbered the Russians by as much as two to one. (Petrov; 1988; 64) One is tempted at this point to go straight to contemporary Russian costume sources and have a simple answer to what the majority of the colonists wore; unfortunately it is not so simple. V. Basanoff, writing in "The Archives of the Russian Church in Alaska" (Pacific Historical Review, Vol.II, 1933) states, "It is, however, characteristic of a new society that its social strata are not always determined by the class to which the newcomers belonged in the old country." Basanoff goes on to cite the case of Agafina Ivanova, a serf girl, the personal property of the nobleman A. G. Rotchev, who stood as godmother to several newly baptized children at Fort Ross. "Godparents usually belonged to a higher social strata, and in a small colony where everybody knew everybody we should consequently find in the rubric of spiritual parents only socially prominent people." This example alone would not indicate that the inhabitants of Ross dressed in a manner that would indicate a higher social standing. Recalling E. Kuskova's example (from Part I, Administrators) and Zagoskin's remarks concerning dress and social status, a pattern seems to emerge. Zagoskin wrote in 1842 this description of creole women in the colonial capitol, "With the spread of enlightenment came heightened luxury. Silk lace dresses and satin bonnets were ordered from Petersburg for the creole girls and in these they used to go barefoot to fetch water." (1967;68) The reference to the "spread of enlightenment" could refer to several things; the new privileges of 1821, the change in the administration of the colonies in 1818, or the arrival of Ioann Veniaminov and Baroness Von Wrangel. Much had evidently changed since Baranov's time when the women "of honor" (undoubtedly natives) "though they did not abandon their parkas and still covered their faces with a sleeve when they encountered a man, began to make their parkas of Chinese satin brought in the ships of the North American states. This was the first step towards worldliness and luxury." This "heightened luxury" extended to even the smaller redoubt of St. Michael where Zagoskin wrote that the creole women "could all waltz skillfully, dance the French quadrille gracefully, all could knit scarves very well and little neckerchieves and little caps." (1967; 258) These creoles were well aware of their social status and considered "any domestic occupation beneath her, as she firmly believes that because of her husband she should also be fed at Company expense." (1967; 258) This "enlightenment" that brought creoles and natives into the Russian Empire as subjects also brought to them the customs and duties of colonial citizens. They were educated at Company schools or sent to Russia for training. "To be creole came to mean that one had adopted certain Slavic European attitudes and traits, had been trained to some extent in a western type school, and thereby qualified for a position in the middle or upper management of the colony." (Oleksa; 1990; 188) As mentioned in Part I, these middle managers of the colonies were described as wearing clothing very similar to the townsmen and gentry of Russia. Illustrations from the journal of Jirokichi (Plummer; 1991) show the dresses and shirts typical of this class, and every other mention of creoles' dress confirms this conformity to European dress (Blaschke, Khlebnikov, Zagoskin, Veniaminov).



SITKA, INFANT IN CRADLE
Jirokichi, 1842



FEMININE STYLES
Jirokichi, 1842



SITKA, ITEMS OF DAILY USE
(MEN'S SHIRTS)
Jirokichi, 1842

Other than the drawings by Jirokichi, few pictures exist of creoles in Russian America. The illustration of rural Sitka in 1828 by Von Kittlitz shows a woman in European dress similar to the illustration by Kozlinsky of a Russian townswoman of the first half of the nineteenth century. The text to Kozlinsky's illustration describes "A chemise of the Russian style made of white muslin, the skirt of ornamented silk material (satin or silk), the skirt sewn from a straight breadth of cloth tied on the top with a tape. The apron (from the style at the start of the century) is made of cambric, finished with a pleated gather and lace, the apron strings are made of colorful narrow ribbon, tied in a bow. Shoes, without heels, are made of colored Morocco leather. On the head is a muslin scarf adorned with golden flowers. Daily dress is sewn in the same manner, but using simpler cloth: chemise of linen, occasionally of calico, the skirt of colored linen, nankeen cloth, or blue fustian. The head scarf is simple apron linen. Women's or girls dresses are identical, the only difference is in the headdress; women entirely cover the hair, girls leave open the top and the braid.



RURAL SITKA, Engraving
Friedrich H. Von Klittlitz, 1828



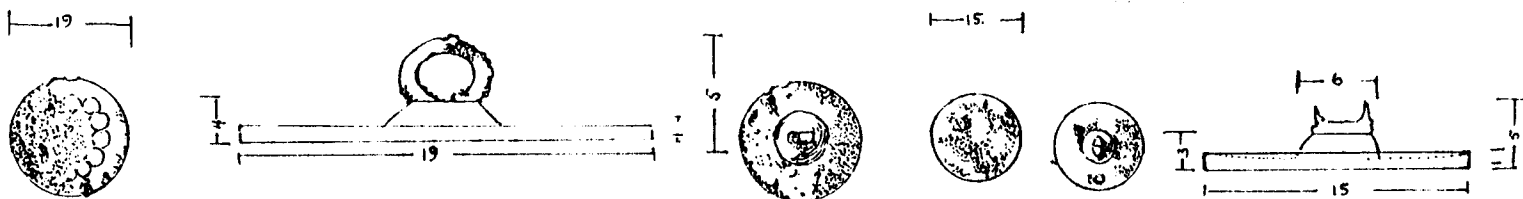
TOWNSWOMAN, Ink Drawing
V. Kozlinskii



WOMAN'S DRESS, Ink Drawing
V. Kozlinskii



Men's fashion was closer to the European. Russians were very fond of a visored cap (Kartuz) and occasionally wore their trousers inside their boots. (Malyshev, personal communication) The type of cloth was often of a less expensive variety (frieze rather than broadcloth) for everyday use, and linen supplanted cotton or muslin for office clothing. In 1991 the Cemetery restoration project unearthed a number of buttons with bits of black green frieze attached to and often surrounding the button. This was a rare chance to observe at close hand actual evidence of clothing at the Ross colony. The buttons, silver plated white metal or zinc, were attached to the cloth backing in a manner consistent with a uniform coat. The button holes, in black silk or linen showed a high quality of needlework equal to a professional tailor. Black green cloth had been prescribed by the Company since 1805 as a suitable cloth for jackets and coats. The type of coat or jacket that these cloth fragments and buttons indicate would be very difficult to reconstruct, but it is, with so little evidence of clothing at this site, a tantalizing piece of a puzzle that is slowly beginning to form a picture of life at the Fort. PART III LABORERS AND ALEUTS. TO BE CONTINUED



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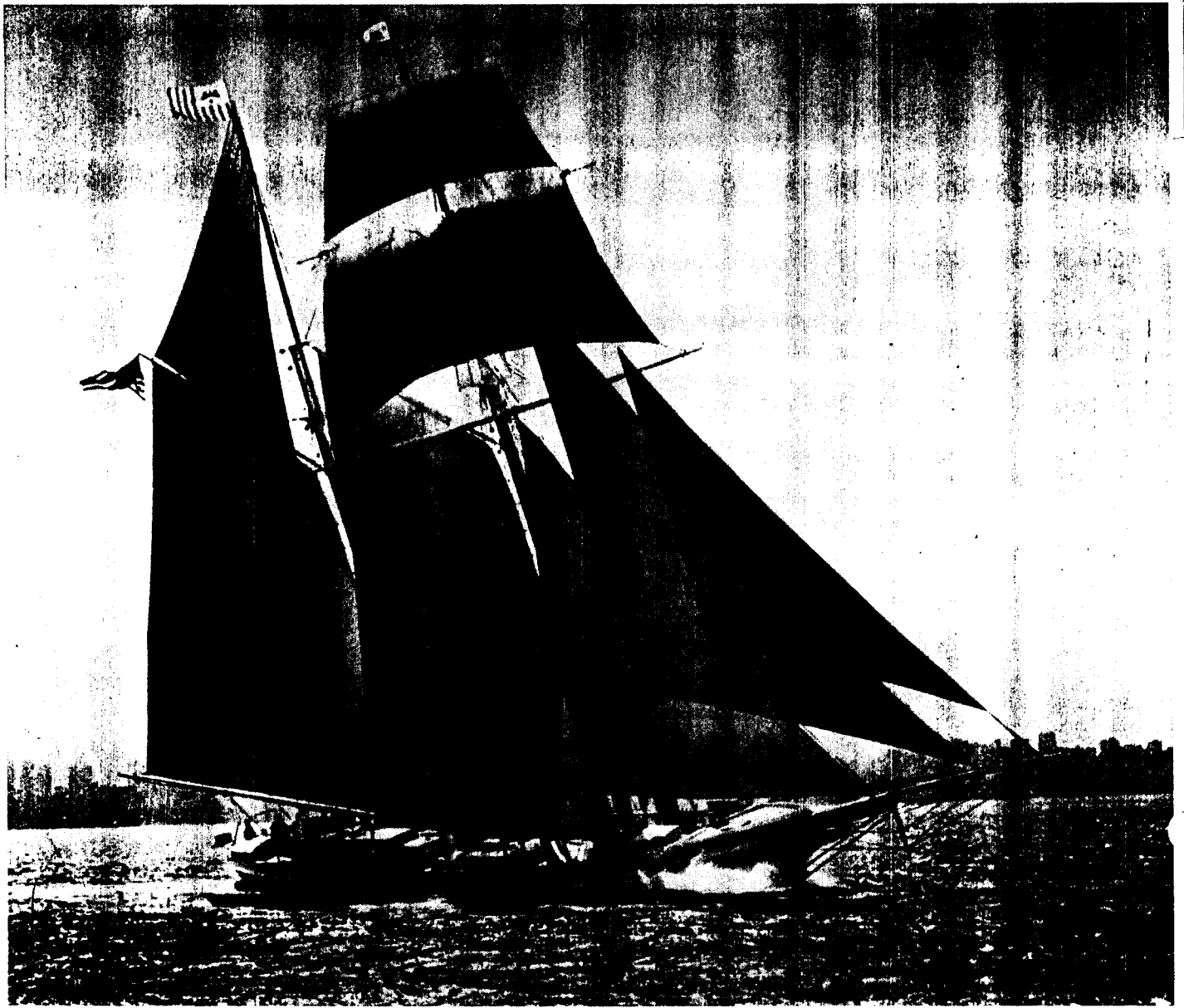
BUTTONS FROM CEMETERY RESTORATION
Ink Drawing by J. Middleton, 1991

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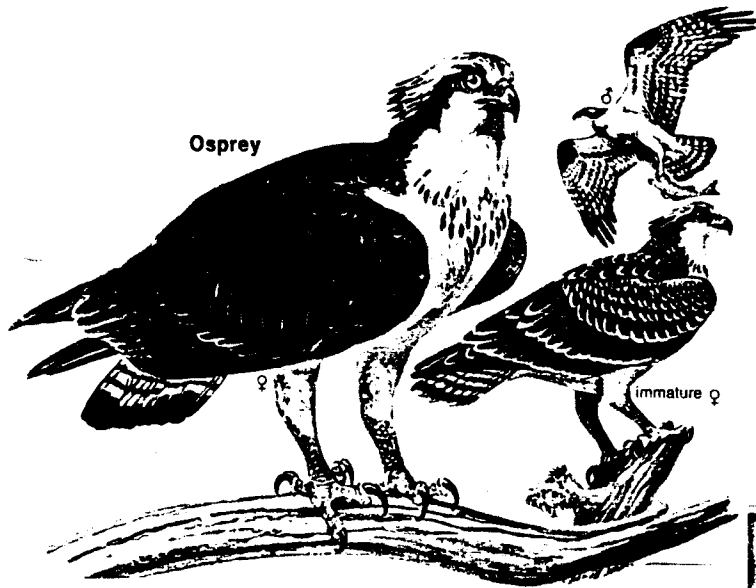
TOWNSMAN, Ink Drawing
V. Kozlinskii



I am thankful for the assistance of Dr. Alexei Istomin, Oleg Terichow, and Professor Stephen Watrous for providing research materials and information. John Middleton



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Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

L 22-25" (56-64 cm) W 58-72" (147-183 cm) Dark brown above, white below, with white head, prominent dark eye stripe. Males are usually all-white below; females have a necklace of dark streaking. Immature plumage is edged with pale buff above. In flight, the Osprey's long, narrow wings are bent back at the wrist, like a gull's; dark wrist patches are conspicuous. Wings are slightly arched in soaring. Ospreys nest near fresh or salt water; eat fish almost exclusively. Hovering over water, they dive toward prey, then plunge feetfirst to snatch it. Bulky nests are built in trees, on sheds, poles, docks; also on platforms specially constructed for Ospreys. Conservation programs and elimination of DDT in recent years have halted decline of species. Now fairly common in coastal range. Uncommon and local inland; seen chiefly during migration. Common call is a loud, whistled *kyew kyew kyew kyew kyew*.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*

Found throughout the world, the Osprey is usually seen near water, although a lack of suitable nesting sites often prompts it to move far inland. This bird lives almost exclusively on fish, which it takes from the water with its talons, descending on its prey like a terrestrial hawk. Its feet have tiny spicules on the bottom that help the bird to maintain its hold on slippery fish.

Identification 22-25". Large, hawklike; brown above, white below, with white head; dark brown line runs through eye and on side of face. Juvenile similar but more mottled. In flight, wings show distinctive bend at "wrist."

Voice Loud whistling and chirping given at nesting and during courtship; also a *kip kip ki-yeuk, ki-yeuk* when alarmed.

Habitat Coastal areas, lakes, and rivers.

Range Breeds from Alaska and north-central Canada to Newfoundland, south to California and Arizona, Great Lakes area, and Nova Scotia; south along Atlantic Coast to Florida and Gulf Coast. Winters along southern coasts.



NATURE NOTES FROM RANGER WALTON

FINALLY, REAL WINTER WEATHER!

* Incredibly strong southeast winds on January 12 caused some damage in the park. A thirty to forty foot section of the stockade wall between the chapel and the seven sided blockhouse was blown into the fort. The chapel was closed off temporarily while maintenance workers braced up the wall; it is now open. The wind was so strong that the anchor chain on the northwest gate was pulled right out of the ground. The Call House lost a few roof shingles, and the barn had boards blown off in one corner. White caps were blowing away from the shore. Trees blew down everywhere. Some of the old cypress trees near the Visitor Center lost their tops. On the north fork of Kolmer Gulch numerous large fir and redwood trees were blown down in a random pattern. The forest floor is several feet deep with debris, and large limbs are spearing the ground. In the midst of the debris calypso orchids were seen on February 28. A three foot diameter fir is down on top of a three foot diameter redwood, also down, and a very large redwood tree is snapped off sixty feet above the ground.

* Rainfall at the end of February totals 28.01 inches at Fort Ross. In 1986, the last year of significant rainfall in this area, the total at the end of February was 32.98 inches. There has been an enormous amount of rainfall on the ridges inland from the Fort. Cazadero total to date is 71.67 inches.

* Ospreys are back and signal the return of spring!

* * * * *

* Dan Murley and the staff would like to thank I.B.M. Corporation for their donation of file cabinets and a computer work table to the Visitor Center offices.

* And many thanks to Michael Stephenson and Melanie Lathen in the District office for purchasing a Hewlett Packard Desk Jet 500 printer for use at Fort Ross. Your newsletter should be much more legible with this new addition!

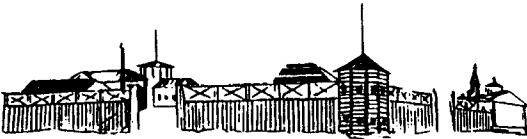
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**NEXT FRIA BOARD MEETING
SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 10:00 A.M.**



FORT ROSS INTERPRETIVE ASSOCIATION, INC.
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